GUIDE TO THE FE11 TALLENSI FILE

[This file contains ten sources, seven of which are by Meyer Fortes, a leading British social anthropologist, with other contributions by R. S. Rattray, C. W. Lynn, and A. W. Cardinall. Fortes received his degree in psychology at the University of London and subsequently studied under Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown before going into the field. Rattray, Lynn and Cardinall were all government officials at the time of their field work, with only Rattray having any real understanding of anthropological methods.

Since Fortes' basic orientation is toward the delineation of social structure and the function of the social groups within it, the File is very strong in these aspects, particularly in the functioning of kinship groups at the death of an individual, and with other aspects of culture as they impinge upon the interrelationships of the groups within the structure. As a result of this orientation, Fortes treats material culture and economics very sparingly. Cardinall and Rattray were also particularly interested in the social and political aspects of culture and also failed to treat material culture other than in passing. The addition of Lynn's monograph fills a gap in the economic sphere, but, in general, the data on economics, subsistence, history, material culture and human biology are rather skimpy.

The only special marking decision has been to place data on what Rattray calls the "clan" into category 614, Sibs.]

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XXXIII

THE TALENSE

History; Tribal, Clan, and Soog' *Organization*

●101 INTRODUCTORY: The Talense occupy the area shown on the
161 map. According to the 1921 census report they number 29,972 persons of both sexes. Specimens of the language, called Talene or
121 Talen', have been given in Chapter III. Their appearance, their houses, customs, religion, and organization all seem to me to be very similar to those of their neighbours, the Nankanse. Their languages, too, are very much alike. Had the Talense not been labelled with a separate appellation, I doubt if the anthropologist—save after, perhaps, a very minute investigation—would have considered it necessary to deal with them as a group distinct from the Namnam and the Nankanse. Nevertheless, in accordance with the plan which I mapped out, I have done so. Rites and customs, already investigated, discussed, and described, are here approached from a different angle. Results so obtained are always valuable, even where there is a certain inevitable repetition. The process serves also to fill gaps in the work which has gone before, to which the information obtained later may be considered as supplementary.

128 In dealing with this and the remainder of the tribes, I have endeavoured to group my facts, as far as possible, under the chapter headings already adopted. This arrangement will enable my readers the more readily to piece together the sum total of the data available concerning any one particular subject, and I hope will mitigate somewhat the defects in presentation for which I have already apologized.

173 The history of the tribal wanderings of this people follows the same lines as that with which we are now familiar. This history is the record
167 of the migrations, not of the tribe *qua* tribe, but of every clan, the composite of which now forms the group called the Talense (s. Taleŋa; language Talene.) The tribal histories, specimens of which are about to be related, tell of the migrations (within comparatively narrow limits of time and space) of the groups which have for some hundreds of years supplied the Territorial Rulers. Of the wanderings of the original people themselves, who are now largely merged with this foreign element, nothing is really known, except that they were undoubtedly of the stock which I have termed the 'Mole group', who seem to

173 have been the original inhabitants of these parts for a much longer 167 period than can be claimed for their aristocracy.

The chief Talense 'towns', in the sense with which we are now 103 familiar, are as follows: Tɔngo, Bade, Gorogo, Si, Winduri, Ten'zugu, ● 101 Tilega, Yamdiga, Biuŋ, Siega, Duse, Datoko, Gbee, Kpantia, Kpale, Wakyiga, Gbeogo, Zandoya, and Gbea. These settlements, including the subjects of the Chief of Kurugu, now constitute the Talense tribe.

173 *History of Tɔngo* (as told me by the present Chief, Kpama): 'We (i.e. his ancestors) came from Mampurugu, which we left owing to a 622 quarrel between *Misore* and his younger brother—whose name we do not know—about the Chieftainship. *Misore* left Mampurugu in consequence and came first to Boŋo, thence to Saamere; from there he passed through a dense bush and came to the hills. (The Tɔng hills.) At the foot of these hills we found a people whom our ancestors called Gundugo or Talense. We intermarried with these people and have all become Talense. *Misore* died here; his grave is marked by a big baobab tree. He was succeeded by his son, *Seyene*, who, now that his father was dead, returned to Mampurugu[1] and received from the Chief the Chieftainship of Tɔngo. *Seyene* died, and was succeeded by his brother, *Nambogeda*, who also returned to Mampurugu to ask for the Chieftainship. He died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, *Bɔyayeret*, a son of *Seyene*. About this time, the Chief of Mampurugu made one of his son's Chief of Kurugu, and placed Tɔngo under Kurugu. *Bɔyayeret* was succeeded by his "brother" *Sayepele*, a son of *Seyene*, who reported to Kurugu and held his Chieftainship from that ruler. *Sayepele* was succeeded by his brother *Nodeyene* (lit. Short-fowl). *Nodeyene* was succeeded by his younger brother, *Lebsekora* (Old-things-change). He, in turn, was succeeded by *Kusii* (Worn-out-hoe), a son of *Bɔyayaret*. He was succeeded by *Bileu*, who was succeeded by *Lobsaab* (Throw-away-food), his brother, who, in turn, was succeeded by *Belemsale*, his half-brother, who was succeeded by *Belemboo*, a son of *Kusii*. In his time a great famine came, and many people were sold (to the Dagomba). He was succeeded by *Kabu*, a son of *Lobsaab*. *Lobsaab* was succeeded by *Sapelega* (White-clouds), a half-brother of *Kabu*. *Sapelega* was succeeded by *Kakora*, a son of *Bileu*. He was followed by *Nekay*, a son of *Kusii*; followed by *Paheban*, son of *Belemsale*; *Sagbon* (Dark-cloud), *Lebenwana*, *Bupaa*, son of *Kusii*;

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[1] Mampurugu, as we shall see later, was the seat of the Head of the foreign element, who, coming somewhere from the eastward, had founded the empires of Mampruse, Moshi, and Dagomba.

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 161 131 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063. They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

103 173 167 563 622 793 The capital town (*teŋa*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice* Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief: 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs. [421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'* is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but [778] it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which
131 inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern
161 Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure
171 from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later
632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement' rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following table illustrates the above.

103 *Town.*	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
614 Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

132 to another, ranging from 25 inches to 45 inches per annum, but fluctuations occur from year to year in the same area. Erratic or abnormal rains may so disturb the cycle of food production as to subject a majority of the population to severe privation. The temperature in the vicinity of 10° 30′ N. latitude and 0° 30′ W. longitude varies from a minimum of about 70° F. to a maximum of about 93° F. A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing, so much so that the natives squat shivering round fires or remain indoors until the sun is high; from the forenoon until about 4 p.m. the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature. Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive. The peak of the rains comes in August–September. It rains so heavily then that many social activities are impeded. These conditions of vegetation and climate fundamentally influence the economy and the social life of the inhabitants of the Sudanese Zone.

● [101] 131 133 This book is concerned with the population of a very small section of the Sudanese Zone, a part of the region drained by the Volta river system. The head-waters of this system lie in French West Africa. About 20 miles south of the international boundary between the Gold Coast and French Ivory Coast, which has been arbitrarily fixed to coincide approximately with the eleventh parallel N. latitude, the Red Volta flows into the White Volta. Between these two rivers, on the east and south respectively, and the Sissili river on the west lies an area, arbitrarily truncated on the north by the international boundary, comprising two of the most heavily populated administrative districts of the Gold Coast. The eastern third of this area constitutes the administrative district of Zuarungu, the remaining two-thirds the district of Navrongo. The Red Volta separates Zuarungu district from another administrative unit, Kusaasi, and the White Volta forms a natural boundary between it and the Mamprusi district, to the south of which lies the territory of the Dagomba.

161 134 137 As the following table[1] from the census of 1931 shows, the Zuarungu district is the most densely populated part of this area; and as the population tends to be concentrated in the centre and north, the actual density of settlement exceeds the figures given. In some localities this is reflected

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[1] See *Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census*, Gold Coast, 1932, p. 3; and Cardinall, A. W., *The Gold Coast*, 1931, Population Map, p. 156. Mr. Cardinall remarks (p. 123) that 'A majority of the census officers were of opinion that the figures collected by them are lower than they should have been by from 2 per cent. to 10 per cent.'—a contingency inevitable in a country which is for the most part still pre-literate.

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
[361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161] periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts
491 were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of
161 the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

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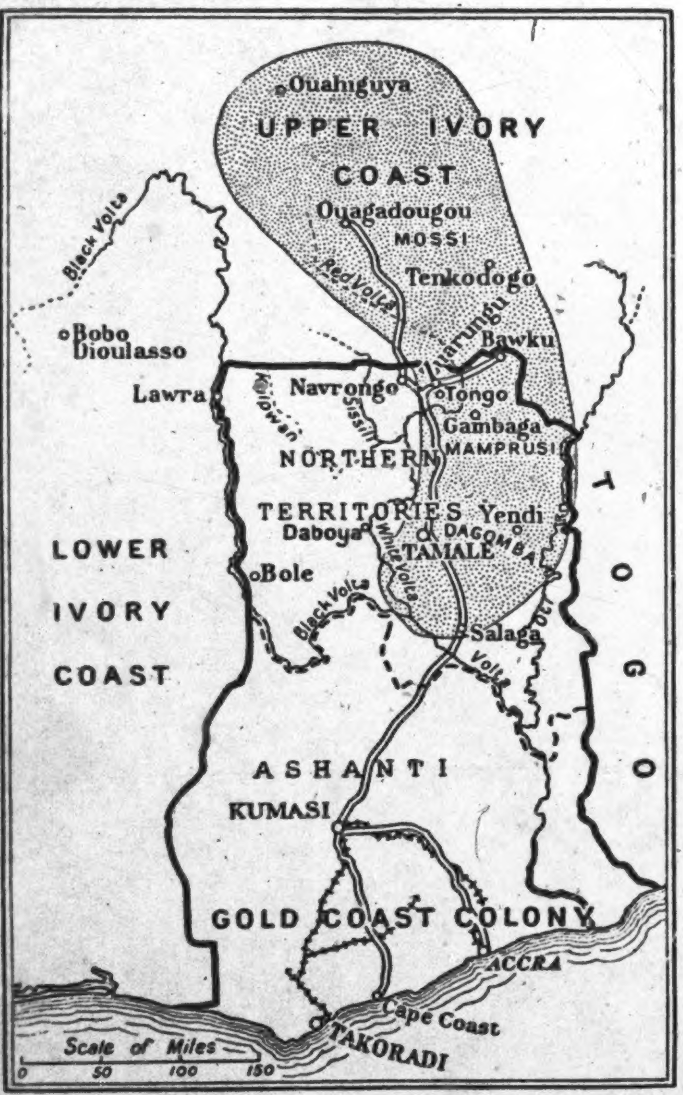
Ouahiguya
UPPER IVORY COAST
Ouagadougou
MOSSI
Tenkodogo
Red Volta
Kusasi
Black Volta
Bobo Dioulasso
Bawku
Lawra
Navrongo
Tongo
Kulpawn
Sissili
Gambaga
MAMPRUSI
NORTHERN TERRITORIES
Yendi
Daboya
White Volta
DAGOMBA
TAMALE
LOWER IVORY COAST
Bole
Black Volta
Oti
Salaga
Volta
TOGO
ASHANTI
KUMASI
GOLD COAST COLONY
ACCRA
Cape Coast
TAKORADI
Scale of Miles
0
50
100
150

BOUNDARIES OF THE GOLD COAST
The dotted portion shows the area occupied by Mole-Dagbane speaking peoples

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

101 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem
619 to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent
of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

167 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes com-
619 prise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that
claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other
648 than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim
to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[113] [1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves, in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people. Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters, and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 636
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the 175
embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared, but some of the values connected with it remain. The other institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of economic development was started, and social services were multiplied. The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF 'TALLENSI'

Tribal Divisions

● 101 TALELAND is, as we have seen, merely a portion of a far greater, ecologically uniform region, marked off only by an artificial boundary. The same kind of subsistence farming is practised throughout the whole region of which Taleland forms a part. The culture of its inhabitants likewise represents a far more widely spread type. Before we embark on our sociological analysis we must know what sort of a unit we are dealing with. Have the people of Taleland any form of cultural or structural unity and singularity that differentiates them from neighbouring sociogeographical areas? Or are they a fraction of a greater society arbitrarily circumscribed to suit the convenience of the field worker?

101 619 The question is not so easy to answer as might be expected. For the natives of Taleland, like the other so-called 'tribes' north of the Gambaga scarp, have no obvious political unity distinguishing them from like political units. In terms of their own political and social organization there is no single government exercising authority over all the people of Taleland, and only over them, within their own defined territory. This has been the most serious obstacle confronting British administration in this area.[1] We must approach the problem from a different angle.

197 101 In the literature and in administrative practice the inhabitants of Taleland are called the Tallensi[2] and are distinguished as a 'tribe' from neighbouring 'tribes', the Kusaasi on the east, the Namnam or Nabdam on the north, the Nankansi or Gorənsi (in Talni, *Gɔrisi*) on the west, the Mamprusi on the south of them. All these groups speak dialects of Mole-Dagbane. But Kusal, Nabte, and Gɔrni are closely akin to Mole, whereas Talni and Mampurule have closer affinities with Dagbane. These dialect areas have no strict boundaries. At the frontiers one passes through [191] intermediate zones where the people speak intermediate dialects or are equally familiar with two contiguous dialects. But it is clearly recognized, both by the natives and by outside observers, that the tribes enumerated above have more in common with one another linguistically than any of them have with the peoples of the same cultural type farther away, such as the Woolisi (usually called the Kassena in the literature and by the

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[1] For an outline of Tale political organization and a discussion of some of the theoretical problems raised by it, see *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Oxford, 1940.

[2] *Sc.* Talense (Rattray), Talansi (Cardinall), sing. Talenga, Talanga. This form, correctly Talɔnsi, sing. Talɔŋa, is taken from the dialect of the Zuarungu district (Gorəni, or in the dialect of the Tallensi, Gɔrni). The artificial spelling I use has been adopted to show that the Tallensi regard this phonetic form as a foreigners' version of the name by which they designate themselves. In their own dialect (Talni) they call themselves Talis, sing. Talɔŋa. Talni forms will henceforth be used for all vernacular words in the text. [p. 14]

[p.15]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945

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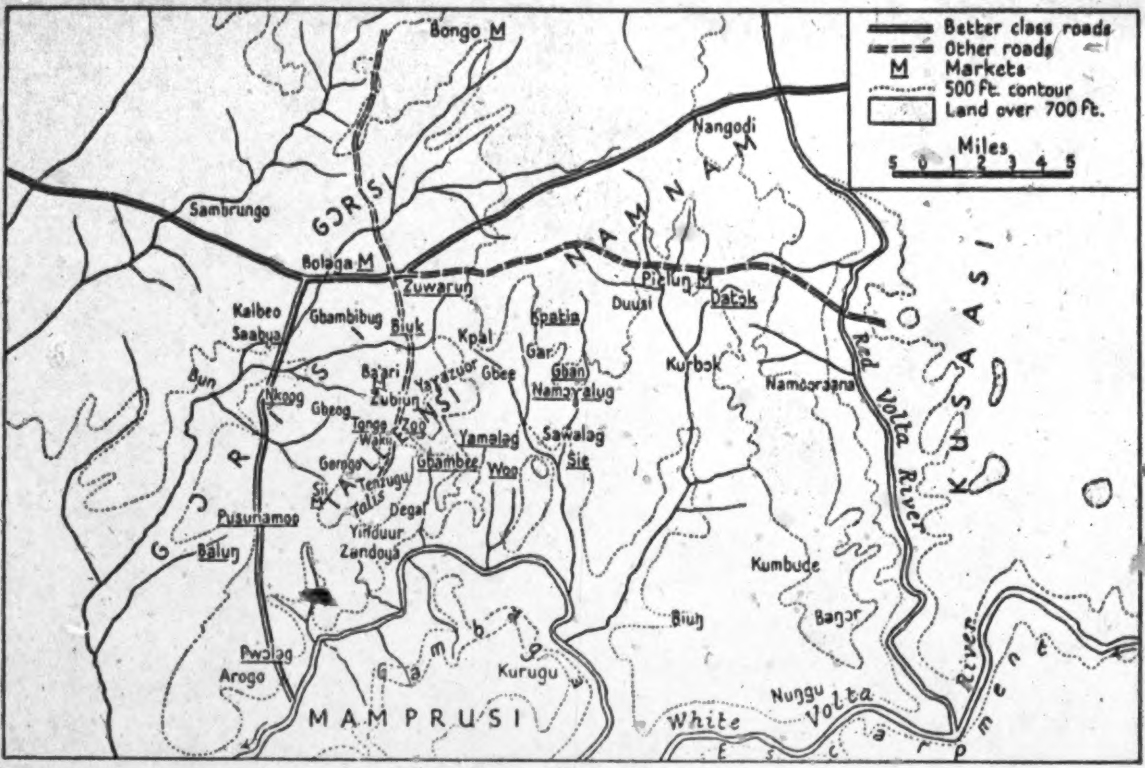
Better class roads
Other roads
M Markets
500 ft. contour
Land over 700 ft.
Miles
5 0 1 2 3 4 5
Bongo M
Sambrungo
GORISI
Bolaga M
Nangodi
NAMNAM
Zuwarun
Pielun M
Datok
Duusi
Kaibeo
Saabua
Gbambibug
Biuk
Kpal
Kpatia
Gar
Gban
Namoyalug
Kurbok
Namoorsana
Bun
Ba'ari
Yarazuor
Gbee
Zubiun
Nkoog
Gbeog
Tongo
Zoo
Waku
TALLENSI
Yamalag
Sawalag
Sie
Gorogo
Gbambee
Woo
Sii
Tenzugu
Talis
Degal
Yinduur
Zandoya
Pusunamoo
Balun
GURISI
KUSAASI
Red Volta River
Kumbude
Biun
Bangor
Pwolag
Arogo
Gambaga
Kurugu
Escarpment
MAMPRUSI
Nungu
White Volta
River

SKETCH-MAP OF TALELAND

Note: All place-names are spelt phonetically according to their Talni form.

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197 Administration) of Navrongo or the Bulisi (Builsa) of Kanjaga district, 101 whose tongues are not intelligible to Mole or Dagbane speakers.

In the same way it is well known that the Kusaasi, Namnam, Gorənsi, 171 and Tallensi are more closely allied in culture *inter se* than they are with 101 other neighbouring 'tribes'. In this part of West Africa one can often tell [304] where a person comes from by his facial cicatrizations.[1] People of these four groups all have the same facial marks, a slashed scar (*ben*) running diagonally downwards from the bridge of the nose across one or both cheeks, which are, in addition, often embellished with a neat tracery of tiny incisions (*yiis*) spreading in herring-bone lines over the forehead and down to the neck. These markings are an emblem of their cultural uniformity, as compared with neighbouring groups. Mamprusi and Mossi, frankly contemptuous of their nakedness and poverty, lump them all together under the sobriquet 'Gorənsi'. Since the coming of the white man they have been called 'the Farafaras' and they are beginning to accept this appellation, which is said to be derived from one of their customary expressions of greeting, *ni i fara-fara-fara*.

107 There are, in short, no precise linguistic or cultural boundaries between 101 these four groups. Nor are there precise political or structural boundaries between them. They overlap with one another in every way; and further 171 research would, I am certain, show that the Kusaasi, Namnam, and 619 Gorənsi also overlap to some extent with their neighbours other than the Tallensi. At the same time, each of these four groups is considered by members of the other three and by its own members to be in some way a distinct territorial, linguistic, and cultural group. It is, however, a distinction of degree, not of kind. Each group comprises a cluster of communities which have more in common among themselves, linguistically and in the details and nuances of custom, belief, and values, than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. They have closer social ties among themselves than any of them have with their other neighbours, though they have no apparent political unity and never, in the past, combined for war against external enemies or for common defence.

619 This largely implicit feeling of their difference from neighbouring 101 dialect areas which prevails amongst such a cluster of communities is not based on a conception of tribal unity. Sharp distinctions of custom, 621 belief, and values, as well as of structural relationships, are recognized within the cluster. They are, indeed, of fundamental importance for the social interrelations of the communities making up the cluster. On the same principle as before, the cluster is subdivided into smaller constellations of communities which have more in common, closer bonds, *inter se*, than any of them have with other communities. Culturally, and structurally, as we shall discover in the course of our study, society in the Volta region is built up on a segmentary principle. The degree of unity, coherence, autonomy, or singularity of a socio-geographic segment of

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[1] These distinguishing facial marks were noted by the first European traveller who visited the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the Frenchman Binger. Cf. Binger, Capitaine, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, 1893, vol. ii, pp. 34-7. For diagrams of these markings see Armitage, C. H., *The Tribal Markings and Marks of Adornment of the Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1924, especially figs. 4, 6, 26.

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619 to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101 reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621 This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101 the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648 is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101 settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gɔrni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common. The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191] Gɔrni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with Gɔris. Gɔrni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197] them and their Gɔre neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101 The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609 Gɔraŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, propinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101 is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

101 in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

101 Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Taləŋ
304 in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Gɔris (*Tam Talis pu ɛt lan—Gɔris tuomər nla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

361 To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale
103 settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial
133 relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map, p. 15), one of the
621 most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gɔre neighbours, on the other is Yayazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sɔk and Yaməlɔg, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tɛnzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Ŋkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santɛŋ, Teeləg, Sytk, and Wɔyar, separated from Tɛnzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawaləg. Between Zoo and Yaməlɔg lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yaməlɔg occupies a shallow depression between hillocks.
361 Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before
103 the homesteads of Sawaləg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can
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continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔyalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361
or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with 103
scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a popula- 101
tion of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174
habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrəg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101
sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186
the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tɛnzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tɛnzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔmərə Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔyaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔyaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamɔlɔg and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔmərə namoorət*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalɔg, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbərə Namnam sami*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət*.)[1]

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[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

101 184 186 The Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari people, however, do not accept this classification, which expresses the orientation of Tɛnzugu, without qualifications. The former admit their close territorial and political assimilation to Tongo, but they insist on their cultural distinctness, associating themselves, in this respect, with the Hill Talis. They quote in support other discriminatory indices than the Great Festivals. Firstly, like all the Talis, they do not have the avoidances of the first-born children distinctive of all Namoos (see below, Chap. V). On the contrary, all people of Zubiuŋ descent avoid eating tortoise (*pakur*), turtle (*mieŋ*), and cat (*sahoo*), the first two of which are also taboo to most of the Hill Talis. Secondly, they cite their mortuary and funeral ritual, the two points of crucial divergence being that they, like most of the Talis, dress the dead in a loin cover of sheepskin (*suona pɛhug*), whereas the Namoos use a goatskin (*suona buu*); and that to conclude a funeral they *ŋma ma'ala* with the sacrifice of many fowls, whereas the Namoos *ŋma wɔɣar*—a totally different rite in which weapons and household utensils are offered to the departed spirit. Finally, Zubiuŋ people say: '*Tam diɣa tɛndaan, ti·pu diit naam la*—We (like all Talis) have (lit. eat) the tɛndaanaship (i.e. the ritual office of Custodian of the Earth), we do not have the chiefship (like the Namoos).'

The Ba'ari people, with the added self-assurance due to their political independence of Tongo, declare themselves to be Talis on the same grounds, though their totemic avoidances differ from those of the hill folk. As a clinching argument they point out that the Great Festivals celebrated by the Talis form part of a cycle inaugurated by the senior Ba'ari tɛndaana.

Tongo shares the views of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari about their relationship to the Talis. Very often at a Zubiuŋ funeral I could not help being amused at the behaviour of Tongo visitors. Close neighbours though they are of Zubiuŋ with which they have, individually, innumerable ties of cognatic and affinal kinship, they always adopted a posture in keeping with this structural cleavage. They would sit all together, at a little distance from the spot where the rites were in progress, punctiliously preserving an appearance of indifference, as befits outsiders. At the same time, Tongo people emphasize their specially close local and political ties with their immediate neighbours which mark the latter off from the Hill Talis in certain respects. Similar distinctions are made in the Sie district. A Tongo, Ba'ari, or Tɛnzugu man bound for Sie or Datɔk says, 'I am going to Nabrug (the country of the Namnam)', unless it is necessary to be more precise. The people of Sie and a number of the neighbouring settlements are Namoos; yet talking about farming they say: 'The Talis always sow first and then we follow'—referring thus to all the settlements south-west of Zoo. But when they are discussing war or marriage, ritual or chiefship, they distinguish between Tongo and Zoo on the one hand—*ti mabiis*, our brethren—and the real Talis on the other. At Duusi and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ dwell the senior tɛndaanas of the district, whose social and ritual status is identical with that of the tɛndaanas of the Tongo district. 'Taləŋ' in contraposition to themselves means essentially someone from the vicinity

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[000] Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, No. 4.

of the Tong Hills; yet 'we and the Talis are one' they maintain. In proof 101
of this they point out that their *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət* Festival belongs to the same 186
cycle as *Da'a* and *Bɔɣaraam*, though they have but the vaguest hearsay 184
knowledge of the esoteric ritual of these festivals. Their neighbours at Sie and Datɔk they call Namoos.

Note: For convenience of exposition we shall adopt the following convention in this book. 128 Whenever we speak of all the inhabitants of Taleland, irrespective of their internal subdivisions, we shall use the name given to them by other outsiders and speak of them as *Tallensi*. When we wish to refer to that section of the Tallensi whom they themselves describe as the 'real Talis', we shall refer to them as *Talis*, distinguishing among them, when necessary, between the *Hill Talis*, who live on and around the Tong Hills, and the Talis of the Plain, who live nearer Tongo (i.e. Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Ba'ari, Yaɣazuor).

Nomenclature and the Structural Scheme

This nomenclature reflects a structural scheme of considerable complexity. 184 It points to institutional allegiances which segregate adjacent social units from each other and group together spatially dispersed units. The major cleavage it reveals is that between the Namoo communities, on the one hand, and the settlements of the real Talis and of those who claim to be akin to them, on the other. But it indicates, also, that there are other lines of division and bonds of union both within each major grouping and cutting across the cleavage. It is a cardinal principle of Tale social structure that every social grouping defined as a unit in one situation, or according to one principle, dissolves into an association of lesser and differentiated units in another situation or according to another principle. Variation in custom or in ideological emphasis is regarded by the natives as one of the most significant indices of group differentiation. It is also, as we shall see, an important factor of social integration.

It is therefore a topic of perennial interest to the natives to observe and comment on variations of usage and doctrine. The idea that identity of custom and belief is desirable or natural is inconceivable. Everybody adheres staunchly to the forms of social behaviour accepted in his own group without desiring to impose them on others. 'Look at the Namoos,' observed Ta'aŋ one day, 'don't they (i.e. different sections of the same clan) do different things at funeral ceremonies? But their use of a goat (in mortuary rites), that is all one. We Talis, again, using our sheep (in mortuary rites)—this is the same for all of us. But as for our ritual, we split up and do different things.' Each one with his father's ways, everyone with his ancestor's ways (*Sɔ ni u ba yɛl, sɔ ni u yaab yɛl*)—that is, every group has its distinctive ancestral customs—is a characteristic Tale aphorism. This attitude, emphasizing simultaneously community and differentiation, similarity of pattern, and divergence of detail, permeates Tale thought.

Myths of Origin

Whenever Tallensi discuss the cleavages in their society they trace 173

In marked contrast is the average person's ignorance of settlements, 823 even near at hand, with which his clan has no close social bonds or with which he has no personal links of kinship or friendship. Tallensi acquire their knowledge of geography and natural history gradually in childhood, by direct experience. It is already well established by the age of 9 or 10, and grows *pari passu* with the expansion of the child's social space. The basis of this is the child's natal settlement, where, except for occasional visits to kinsfolk elsewhere, it spends its entire childhood. But even adults had little liberty of movement in the past, since they could hardly go unmolested in settlements unrelated to theirs by clanship or political ties or where they had no kinsfolk. Most of the older people have never [484] been outside Taleland, and many of them have never, or only rarely, visited some of the settlements within an hour's walk of their own.

A Taləŋ inevitably has a profound emotional attachment to his native 186 settlement. It is striking how many Tale emigrants return home eventually after years of absence, casting aside the flesh-pots of Ashanti or the rich fields of Mampurugu. '*Kpala m-mah*—Here it is pleasant', they say, in spite of the penury of existence; for here are your kith and kin, here is the scene of your childhood joys and sorrows, and above all, the abode of your forefathers. The Taləŋ's empirical knowledge of his habitat is the precipitate in his thought and experience of the economic and structural facts that determine the local fixity of his native settlement. His affective attachment to it finds an institutionalized expression and support in the ancestor cult.

Settlement Boundaries

The hub of Taleland is Tongo (see map on p. 15). This ancient 621 settlement, geographically central and politically nodal in the network of interclan relations, provides a very good model of the structure of a typical Tale settlement.

As we know, the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis live in such close spatial 101 and social propinquity with Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and Zoo that these clans are 621 often spoken of collectively as 'the people of Tongo (Təŋdɛm)'. For precision, Tongo proper is referred to as Təŋ-Nayiri—the Chief's House of Tongo—all over Taleland. Throughout the Mole-Dagbane-speaking region clans which hold a chiefship are thus identified by reference to it. Those which have tɛndaanas are sometimes called Tɛndaaŋ, on the same principle. Thus outsiders distinguish between Sie-Nayiri and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ.

Təŋ-Nayiri, Tongo proper, forms an irregular block of homesteads, 101 somewhat less than three square miles in area and is one of the largest 161 settlements in Taleland. It comprised, in 1934, 192 homesteads and a 621 total population of about 2,400.[1] This does not include Tongo people

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[1] Calculations, based on my own census samples and on figures kindly supplied to me by the A.D.C. Zuarungu, show that in Taleland the average number of people of both sexes and all ages occupying a homestead is 12 to 14. Owing to the variation in the constitution of homesteads this figure must be accepted with reserve; but it is sufficient for a rough estimate of population in a country where accurate statistics do not exist.

621 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here [778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔɣar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field [608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

and the Earth when representatives of the various clans gather to perform 621
one of the great annual ceremonies, as their ritual obligations compel
them to, even though they are nowadays divided into two hostile camps.
For these are the occasions when the essential unity of Tɛnzugu—a unity
in relation to which the six clans rank merely as *yizugɔt*—can rightly be
insisted upon, when frank reproaches verging on warnings of spiritual
retribution can be directed against the destroyers of this unity.

Yet in other situations the component maximal lineages of a particular Tɛnzugu clan are referred to as its *yizugɔt*. Thus, in connexion with their distinct ritual offices in the cult of the External *Bɔyar* or their divergent clanship linkages, the three maximal lineages of Bunkiuk are always described as *yizugɔt*. For, like the clan in relation to its neighbour clans, the maximal lineage forms a distinct genealogical and residential unity within the clan settlement. Looked at from within, each maximal lineage is a relatively autonomous integral unit, the majority of whose members live close together inside its social boundaries, which are defined in relation to the other lineages of the clan in the same way as those of the clan settlement are defined in relation to neighbouring clans. The difference is one of degree only, the social boundaries of a lineage within a clan being more fluid than those of a clan. The stability of a settlement rests on the equilibrium of its sections with one another, and this depends upon their being precisely differentiated from one another.

The Sections of Tongo

Tongo proper (Tɔŋ-Nayiri) has four *yizugɔt*—Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and [491]
Kuorɔg. Two roads, laid down some years ago by the Administration, 621
which intersect almost at right angles where the Resthouse stands (see
map at end of book), by chance afford a convenient set of co-ordinates for 101
describing its layout. Puhug occupies most of the south-western quadrant and a corner of the south-eastern quadrant, most of which is Kuorɔg. Seug is an irregular block in the north-eastern quadrant. Guŋ is divided: part of it, Guŋ proper, lies across the watercourse to the west of Puhug; but the majority of its members live in the north-western quadrant, in a broad wedge between Zubiuŋ and Gbizug known as Dekpieŋ. A few Guŋ homesteads also lie on the border between Seug and Zoo. Nevertheless, scattered as it is, Guŋ constitutes a single *yizug* in all corporate affairs except those connected with modern administrative demands. In the latter the local criterion prevails, Dekpieŋ having its own headman and the Guŋ homesteads at Seug coming under the supervision of the Seug headman. Members of all four sections live at Zoo and at Gbambee, but they always act with their respective sections in matters of common concern.

The names of these sections are typical of section and settlement names 621
all over the country. Puhug gets its name from an ancient *puhug* or *pusaga* 101
(*Tamarindus Indica*) tree, which is said to have stood at the edge of the 137
sacred dancing-ground in the centre of the section from time immemorial.
It died long ago, but old men still remember seeing its stump. Guŋ is called after the silk-cotton tree (*Ceiba Pentandra*; Talni, *guŋ*) so common in the country. Trees of all kinds, and especially those as tall as the

101 137 silk-cotton, are prominent landmarks in a country of monotonous plains; hence settlements and sections often bear the names of species of trees found there.

621 101 Kuorəg was thus named, according to popular etymology, because the Soog Yikpɛmdaana, who holds the ritual jurisdiction over the land on which the homesteads of Kuorəg stand, ritually allocated or 'cut' (*kuo*) the sites for all these homesteads when Tongo men first settled there. In the same way popular etymology explains the name Dekpieŋ ('it is hard') as derived from the hardness (*kpeoŋ*) of the soil in that part of the settlement as compared with that of Puhug or Seug. Seug literally means 'the rainy season', but no one in Tongo was ever able to suggest how this section acquired its name; and this is characteristic of very many settlement and section names in Taleland.

621 173 To the people of Tongo their present residential constellation is the visible deposit, as it were, of the continuous expansion of the sub-clan through many generations within the limits of its geographical environment and social boundaries. They read the spatial disposition of the four sections as a record of their structural evolution, as a map of the contemporary constitution, and as proof of the chronological retrospect of the sub-clan. Mosuor came to settle at Puhug, where his grave still marks the site of his homestead. As his posterity increased in numbers, they began to move outwards in the same way as young men migrate to Zoo, Gbambee, and farther, nowadays, and for the same reason, shortage of farm-land. Thus Guŋ, Kuorəg, and Seug were occupied. Later, the descendants of those who founded Guŋ became too numerous for the land available there, and, prevented from expanding into Wakii by the social barriers between Tongo and that clan, filtered gradually into the area that is now Dekpieŋ. Arguing from what may be observed nowadays, they say that this was largely a process of occupying hitherto vacant land at a time when the population was very small. But it was partly, also, a process of dispossessing and pushing out to their present location the people of Zubiuŋ and of Gbizug, who claim to have lived at Puhug originally. In proof of this they cite their myths of origin, the fact that the dancing-ground in Puhug is sacred because it is the site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət's homestead, and the ritual jurisdiction exercised over part of the land of Puhug by Gbizug and over the remainder by Zubiuŋ. Indeed, there are Zubiuŋ graves on land now occupied by Dekpieŋ men which are said to date back only three to five generations. This proves that the people of Zubiuŋ were still yielding ground to the Təndɛm, as they themselves admit, when elders alive to-day were 'already born'.

621 577 There is nothing derogatory in such a retreat. On the contrary, Gbizug and Zubiuŋ elders boast of it as additional evidence of the dependence of the people of Tongo on their ritual benevolence and bounty. It is a cardinal rule of Tale ethics that a request for land to build on and farm—especially if it comes from a kinsman, friend, or neighbour—may not be refused if it can be granted without hardship. There was formerly, and there still is to a small extent, land to spare at Gbizug and at Zubiuŋ. Tongo people have innumerable ties of kinship and neighbourhood with Gbizug and Zubiuŋ, which are the more effective on account of the ties

3:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949

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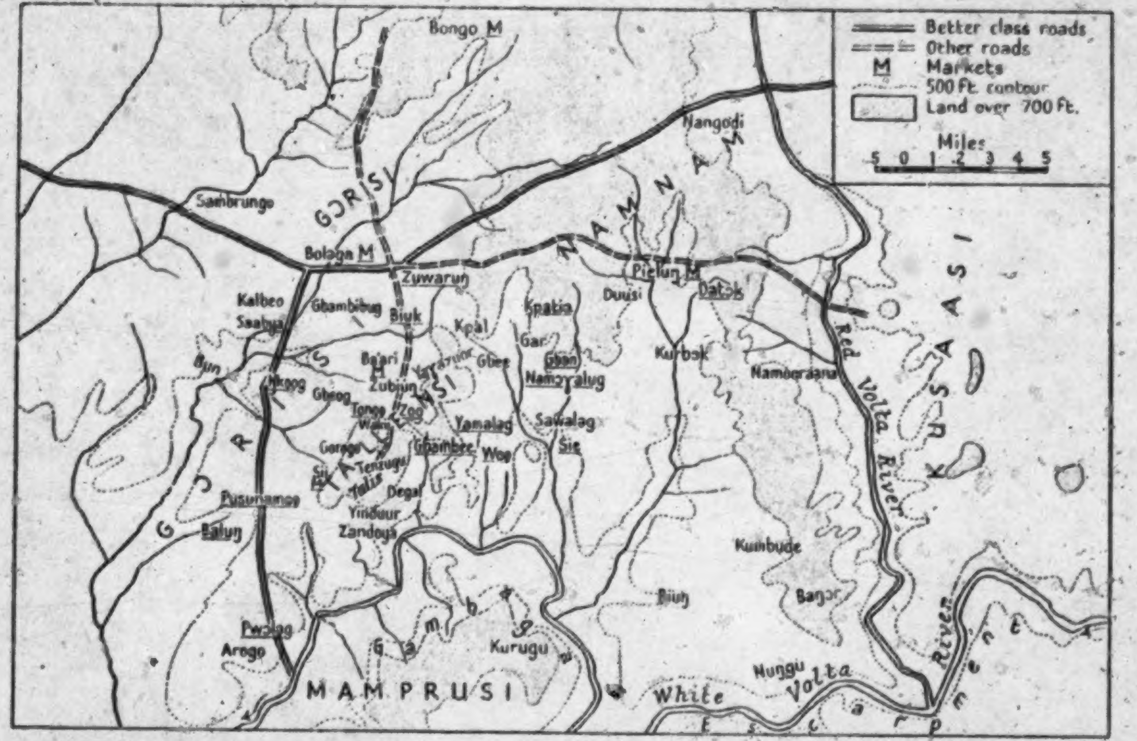
[p 282]



Better class roads
Other roads
M Markets
500 ft. contour
Land over 700 ft.
Miles
5 0 1 2 3 4 5
Bongo M
Nangodi
Sambrungo
GORISI
NAMNAM
Bolaga M
Zuwarun
Pielun M
Datok
Duusi
Kalbeo
Saabga
Gbambibug
Biuk
Kpal
Kpatia
Gar
Gban
Namoralug
Kurbok
Namoorana
Bijn
Mkoog
Gbeog
Ba'ari M
Yarazuor
Zubiun
Gbee
TALLENSI
Tonga
Wakii
Zoog
Yamalag
Sawalag
Sie
Goragor
Tenzugu
Gbambee
Woo
Sii
Tolis
Degal
Pusunamoo
GRUSI
Yinduur
Zandoya
Balun
Kuhbude
Biiun
Bagor
Pwolag
Arogo
Gambaga
Kurugu
MAMPRUSI
Nunggu
White Volta
Volta River
Red Volta River
KUSASI
Escarpment

173 have been the original inhabitants of these parts for a much longer
167 period than can be claimed for their aristocracy.

103 The chief Talense 'towns', in the sense with which we are now familiar, are as follows: Tɔngo, Bade, Gorogo, Si, Winduri, Ten'zugu,
101 Tilega, Yamdiga, Biuŋ, Siega, Duse, Datoko, Gbee, Kpantia, Kpale, Wakyiga, Gbeogo, Zandoya, and Gbea. These settlements, including the subjects of the Chief of Kurugu, now constitute the Talense tribe.

173 *History of Tɔngo* (as told me by the present Chief, Kpama): 'We (i.e. his ancestors) came from Mampurugu, which we left owing to a
622 quarrel between *Misore* and his younger brother—whose name we do not know—about the Chieftainship. *Misore* left Mampurugu in consequence and came first to Boŋo, thence to Saamere; from there he passed through a dense bush and came to the hills. (The Tɔng hills.) At the foot of these hills we found a people whom our ancestors called Gundugo or Talense. We intermarried with these people and have all become Talense. *Misore* died here; his grave is marked by a big baobab tree. He was succeeded by his son, *Seyene*, who, now that his father was dead, returned to Mampurugu[1] and received from the Chief the Chieftainship of Tɔngo. *Seyene* died, and was succeeded by his brother, *Nambogeda*, who also returned to Mampurugu to ask for the Chieftainship. He died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, *Bɔyayeret*, a son of *Seyene*. About this time, the Chief of Mampurugu made one of his son's Chief of Kurugu, and placed Tɔngo under Kurugu. *Bɔyayeret* was succeeded by his "brother" *Sayepele*, a son of *Seyene*, who reported to Kurugu and held his Chieftainship from that ruler. *Sayepele* was succeeded by his brother *Nodeyene* (lit. Short-fowl). *Nodeyene* was succeeded by his younger brother, *Lebsekora* (Old-things-change). He, in turn, was succeeded by *Kusii* (Worn-out-hoe), a son of *Bɔyayaret*. He was succeeded by *Bileu*, who was succeeded by *Lobsaab* (Throw-away-food), his brother, who, in turn, was succeeded by *Belemsale*, his half-brother, who was succeeded by *Belemboo*, a son of *Kusii*. In his time a great famine came, and many people were sold (to the Dagomba). He was succeeded by *Kabu*, a son of *Lobsaab*. *Lobsaab* was succeeded by *Sapelega* (White-clouds), a half-brother of *Kabu*. *Sapelega* was succeeded by *Kakora*, a son of *Bileu*. He was followed by *Nekaŋ*, a son of *Kusii*; followed by *Paheban*, son of *Belemsale*; *Sagbon* (Dark-cloud), *Lebenwana*, *Bupaa*, son of *Kusii*;

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[1] Mampurugu, as we shall see later, was the seat of the Head of the foreign element, who, coming somewhere from the eastward, had founded the empires of Mampruse, Moshi, and Dagomba.

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief: 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'* is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse. Pubuge* was 173 succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551] Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721 receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173 marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304 ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618 (python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173 A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622 have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103 ● Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632 *yi zut* (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* 622 (Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab* appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine 624

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Dateko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under th Chief of Nangode.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 131 161 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal.*[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 171 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later on among the Lobi. 632 Here again, we find particular clans grouped in certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement' rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following table illustrates the above.

103

Town.	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
614 Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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[1] Kusal is so mu[illegible]e Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

[p. 374]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

103

Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, 614 now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa).

My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart 614 of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., 611 also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft 154 transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

Traditions of the Kusase: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, 173 they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move 622 about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to 793 the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe tey*) and that person would

101 in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

101 Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Taləŋ 304 in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Gɔris (*Tam Talis pu ɛt lan—Gɔris tuomər nla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

361 To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale 103 settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial 133 relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map, p. 15), one of the 621 most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gɔre neighbours, on the other is Yaɣazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sɔk and Yaməlag, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tɛnzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Ŋkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santɛŋ, Teeləg, Syɛk, and Wəɣar, separated from Tɛnzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawaləg. Between Zoo and Yaməlag lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yaməlag occupies a shallow depression between hillocks. 361 Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before 103 the homesteads of Sawaləg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can
621

continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔɣalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361
or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with 103
scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a popula- 161
tion of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174
habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrəg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101
sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186
the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tɛnzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tɛnzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔmərа Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔɣaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔɣaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamɔlɔg and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔmərа namoorət*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalɔg, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbəra Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət*.)[1]

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[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

pression liable to flooding in the rainy season. The people of the Tong 361
Hills consider themselves to be particularly fortunate in this respect. 133
Their homesteads stretch densely across the slopes of the hills, and amid the great boulders and rocky piles of the summit. Singing the praises of their tiny fastness, they contrast it with the plain, where one is always ankle-deep in mud and slush during the rains and scorched by the sun in the dry season. On the hills, they say, a sheltered nook can always be found among the rocks, shady when the sun is most cruel, dry in the severest storm, where the children can play or the grown-ups sit and talk.

The Stability and Continuity of a Settlement

Stability and continuity are essential characteristics of a settlement. 621
They are implied in the native concept of a *tɛŋ* (settlement) as both a 361
definite locality and a fixed community. The ancient settlements have attained a very high degree of stability and continuity. The peripheral settlements are rapidly ceasing to be mere economic apanages to the older centres of habitation, and are taking on the form of permanent and stable units. Being still in process of organization, their structure is fluid compared with that of the ancient settlements, and the dynamic factors of Tale social structure sometimes appear more conspicuously in them than in the latter.

But the older settlements are by no means static. The bounds, the layout, and the internal constitution of a settlement alter continuously, if very slowly. Even in a single year one can see how processes of expansion and contraction, of segmentation and incorporation, are at work all the time. Whenever land changes hands by inheritance, or an office passes by succession, or a man achieves economic independence, a minor reshuffle in the collocation of homesteads takes place. The cumulative effects of these processes of slow but progressive readjustment are clearly exhibited in the contemporary structure of a settlement. They are documented in its constitution and layout, in the location of ancestral graves, the ownership of farm plots, and in ceremonial and political relations. Fixity of location and of the structural plan ensure the stability and continuity of a Tale settlement.

Topographical Distinctions and the Natives' Knowledge of Natural History

Precise local orientation is essential in the economic activities and 823
social relations of the Tallensi. Place-names are often derived from 103
prominent topographical or geographical features. Thus, Tɛnzugu means the head (*zug*) or highest part of the country (*tɛŋ*), Yayazuor means 'perched on a hill', and many other place-names are popularly believed to be corruptions of topographical or spatial metaphors. Within a settlement topographical variations are distinguished by terms like *tɛŋr*, the lower part (the locative of *tɛŋ*, here in the sense of 'ground'), and *saazugu*, the higher part (lit. head-high, or high up). Conspicuous patches of low-lying land, hillocks, rock piles, ditches, water-holes, streams, &c., are named, and are very often sacred spots. The name may indicate peculiar qualities of the soil, prominent trees, or other landmarks formerly or still

823 found at that spot. Thus, Sielug is an uninhabited part of Zubiuŋ, where
●103 clay (*siela*) is abundant near the surface, making it unsuitable for cultivation and therefore a favourite pasture. Naɣaberaabo'og ('cattle-poison-
[824] grass valley'), the tract of low-lying land renowned as the traditional battle-field of Tongo and Ba'ari, appears to be named after a kind of grass believed to be noxious to cattle. Other such names have a legendary flavour, but the Tallensi, with their characteristic realism, have no myths or legends to account for them. Locality names of this kind are Kumpeɣalɔyat ('Death carries quivers') and Kurbɔk ('Stooping ditch'). Sacred groves (*tɔŋgbana*) often serve as landmarks to identify a locality; e.g. Dooni (at Doo), means the precincts of that *tɔŋgban*, vaguely defined, as are all such localities, by position and not by definite boundaries.

823 We shall see later how the social structure of a settlement is anchored to a locality. The physical environment is built into the whole edifice of native life. Tale economic pursuits demand an intimate knowledge—unscientific but remarkably efficient at the level of their social organization and technical development—of natural history and topography. Tale leechcraft, on its empirical side, depends on this knowledge; and every prominent and many an inconspicuous feature of the landscape has its meaning and place in native social relations. A great boulder may be the children's playground, or the women's pounding-floor, or a shrine. A hoary baobab tree is not only an amenity and a source of useful products, but also a lineage shrine. A furrow, an outcrop of laterite, or a fringe of grass, may mark the boundary of a farm plot. A shrub, hardly noticeable on the bank of a dry watercourse, is a medicine. In consequence, the natural environment forms a very important aspect of the native's social space. In his own settlement, and especially in his section of the settlement, he knows every rock and tree and almost every tuft of grass, the qualities of the soil, and the ownership of farm plots.

In addition to his own settlement a man usually knows pretty thoroughly the natural environment of neighbouring settlements with which his clan has close social bonds and, more superficially, that of his mother's natal settlement and of settlements in which close extra-clan kin live. The great majority of men, even the younger men who have been abroad for lengthy periods, are all well versed in the geography, the vegetation, and the fauna of the tracts of bush and river-bank on the borders of Taleland, the economic exploitation of which is indispensable for the subsistence of
[824] the natives. Every dry season many men and boys have to go out to the nearest bush to cut grass for thatching, rafters for roofing, shafts for their implements, *bayana* (*Bauhinia*, spp.) bark for the rope used in house-building, canes for their bows and reeds for their arrows, tree-stumps for their shrines, and many medicinal roots and leaves. They go hunting in near and distant tracts of bush, so that most adult men are familiar with every hunting bush within a day's march of their settlement; and they go fishing in the pools left in the river-beds during the dry season. Women
[222] are as expert as men in these matters. They take part in the big fishing drives, comb the fields for edible herbs, seek out deposits of clay for pottery and gravel for beating floors, explore the neighbouring bush for firewood, for reeds to make sleeping mats, for fruits and edible leaves.

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	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

●104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

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[p.63]

121 the historical time span consciously recognized by the natives, that is, five or six generations, and probably for a much longer period. I have tried to show how this is associated with the lineage system.

● 105 121 At the same time it was clear that stability did not mean stagnation in Tale social life. Nothing could be farther from the way of life of the Tallensi than a rigid regimentation of social behaviour. Observation of the lineage system in action suggested that its distinguishing characteristic, as a regulating factor in the social structure, was its tendency towards equilibrium. This operated in such a way as to leave room for continual internal adjustments in the social organization without endangering its long-term stability.

The tendency towards equilibrium is marked in every sector of Tale society and in the society as a whole; and it is clearly a result of the dominance of the lineage principle in the social structure. Looking at Tale society in this way has helped me to see how the social structure is built up and how its parts are integrated with one another. The factors that determine this equilibrium require further study. But for this a full analysis, firstly, of the economic organization, and secondly, of the religious system of the Tallensi is necessary.

It seems to me that the equilibrium in the social structure is made possible by the conditions of Tale economic life. The almost complete absence of economic differentiation, by occupation or by ownership of resources, and, in particular, the absence of both material and institutional possibilities for capital accumulation or for technical advance, mean that economic interests do not play the part of dynamic factors in the social structure. We do not find permanent social groupings or classes organized solely on the basis of common economic interests, nor do economic differences decisively influence the incidence of political power or of leadership in public affairs. This is one of the major distinctions between Tale society and more highly differentiated West African societies such as the Nupe[1] or European peasant societies. There are no rich peasants and poor peasants, no landlords and tenants, no craft specialists, public officials or money-lenders, among the Tallensi. Economic factors are neutral, so to speak, in relation to the social structure, the primary constitutive factors of which are genealogical, local, and ritual relations.

But if the equilibrium of Tale society is made possible by the economic structure, and if the lineage system is the chief mechanism of social organization by which it is maintained, the system of religious values is undoubtedly the supreme sanction of its existence. I have been able to give only an indication of this as there has not been space in this book for an extensive treatment of Tale religion. Ritual activities are so conspicuous and so frequent in Tale social life that I was bound to give a great deal of attention to them in the field. One cannot understand the springs of conduct among the Tallensi without a good knowledge of their religious values.

121 The structural equilibrium of Tale society is associated with its segmentary form, which I regard as a particularly important characteristic of the social structure as a whole. Elsewhere[2] Evans-Pritchard and I have

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[1] Cf. S. F. Nadel, *A Black Byzantium*. [2] *African Political Systems*, Introduction.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Large-scale Framework of Tale Society

THE central subject of the first part of this analysis of Tale social 00C structure was the lineage system.[1] Our attention was fixed on the permanent large-scale framework of the society in relation to which individuals behave primarily as members of corporate groups. We observed that according to native belief and usage this framework has maintained its form from time immemorial and must continue to do so as long as their social system lasts. Our data left little doubt that in fact the macroscopic social structure of the Tallensi has been highly stable in form for at least five generations and probably for many more. We found evidence, however, that a continuous process of adjustment in the grading of structural relations between the component units of the total social structure underlies its stable form. These adaptations take place in response to economic, structural, and religious stresses. Though they do not alter the established forms of corporate grouping by means of which Tale collective life is organized, they do affect the social relations of persons as individuals and as members of corporate groups. Nor can there be any doubt that they are inherent in the social structure; whatever sets them in motion at any given time or in any given sector of the society, they are made possible by the dynamic factors inherent in the constitution of the stable large-scale units of social organization. We saw that units of Tale social organization can only be defined by reference to the way in which they emerge in corporate action in relation to other like units, and not by mechanical criteria.

For convenience of orientation I shall here sum up the principal 105 results of our previous study. The Tallensi[2] are typical of the great congeries of Mole-Dagbane-speaking peoples that occupy the basin of the Volta rivers in the French Ivory Coast and the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast.[3] In race, speech, culture, social organization, and economy they constitute a completely homogeneous community of sedentary farmers. But there is no 'tribal unity' among the Tallensi in the ordinarily accepted sense of this phrase. They have no fixed territorial boundaries, nor are they precisely marked off from neighbouring 'tribes' by cultural or linguistic usages. They have no political unity in the sense of being uniformly and exclusively subject to a single, centralized tribal government (other than that imposed by the British

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[1] *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, hereafter referred to as *Dynamics of Clanship*.

[2] Population (1931), approx. 35,000; density, approx. 170 per square mile.

[3] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. i.

105 Colonial Government),[1] and no judicial or administrative machinery such as goes with a centralized form of government.[2]

The 'tribal unity' of the Tallensi is, in general terms, the unity of a distinct socio-geographical region forming a segment of a greater region of similar cultural type, economic organization, and social structure. This region can be demarcated only by dynamic criteria. The Tallensi have more in common among themselves, both in sentiment and in nuances of cultural usage, and closer social and politico-ritual bonds *inter se*, than the component segments of Tale society have with other like units outside what we have called Taleland. This characteristic of Tale society has a special relevance for the investigation we are undertaking in this book. For, like the network of clanship ties and the bonds of common custom and of politico-ritual association analysed in our first book, the web of kinship spreads far beyond the social frontiers of the Tallensi. This is one of the ways in which the field of inter-personal relations is congruent with the structure of relations between corporate groups among the Tallensi.

The principle of segmentary differentiation and the associated principle of dynamic coherence operate in every department of Tale social organization. We described in our previous work how the Tallensi are internally divided by a major cleavage into two clusters of clans, the Namoo clans on the one hand, and the Talis[3] clans and their congeners on the other. These two groups are distinguished by differences in their myths of origin, their totemic and quasi-totemic usages and beliefs, the politico-ritual privileges and duties connected with the Earth cult and the ancestor cult, and to some extent by their local distribution. The clans belonging to each group are more closely interlinked by clanship and politico-ritual ties than any one of them is linked to clans of the other group. But very close bonds of local contiguity, and of politico-ritual interdependence and co-operation in assuring the maintenance of the common interests of the society—peace and the rule of custom, fertility of soil and of man, health and prosperity—unite the two groups. In particular, inter-personal ties of kinship and of affinity link the members of the two groups of clans to one another, so that practically every Namoo has kinsmen among the Talis and vice versa.

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[1] Since 1937, under the new system of local government introduced by the Administration, the Tallensi have a centralized Native Authority built up on federal principles and closely related to indigenous forms of political institutions. I am speaking, however, of the period prior to 1937. Moreover, the new political constitution has not yet been wholly integrated with the indigenous system of politico-ritual relations.

[2] This is further discussed in *African Political Systems*, ed. by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Introduction and pp. 239 ff.

[3] As explained in *Dynamics of Clanship* I use the following terminology for the sake of clarity: *Tallensi* (sing. *Taləŋ*) means all the inhabitants of *Taleland*; *Tale* is the adjective derived from Tallensi and is used to refer to things common to all Tallensi. *Talis* (sing. *Talis*) is used both as a substantive and as an adjective to refer to the 'real' Tallensi, as the natives call them, who live on and around the Tong Hills. They are usually contrasted with *Namoos* (sing. and adj. *Namoo*) who are also Tallensi but a different section of the population. This nomenclature is artificial, though derived from native speech forms.

These two groups of clans, we learnt, never combined for defence against or attack on neighbouring 'tribes'. Indeed, they were the traditional enemies of one another, and war sometimes broke out between Namoos and Talis in the Tongo area. But these wars were short and sharp. They were acute forms of internal dissension rather than wars as we understand the term, and they immediately set on foot actions to restore the *status quo ante*. Thus they served to emphasize the inescapable interdependence of the two groups.

The unity and moral solidarity of all the Tallensi emerge most conspicuously during the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. At these times the divergent interests that normally dominate the corporate actions of clans or groups of clans are set aside in obedience to ritual sanctions. A series of rites and ceremonies requiring the co-operation of both major groups of clans takes place, in which the greatest common interests and values of the whole society are dramatized and affirmed. The solidarity of the widest political community to which every Taləŋ belongs thus becomes temporarily supreme, and no intestine dissensions at other times can destroy it.

The Great Festivals bring out two points of special importance. They show, firstly, that the widest unified political community in which Tallensi participate is not a fixed group but a functional synthesis based on a dynamic social equilibrium. This equilibrium is maintained by the balancing against one another of like corporate units; by the play of the counterpoised ties and cleavages of clanship, kinship, and ritual allegiance; and through the agency of complementary politico-ritual institutions. And secondly, they show that the whole system hinges on the complementary roles of two types of politico-ritual functionaries, chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) and Custodians of the Earth (*tɛndaana*, pl. *tɛndaanam*). The office of chiefship (*na'am*) is considered to be characteristic of the Namoos, the tɛndaana-ship of the Talis and their congeners, but neither office is the exclusive prerogative of either group. The picture is further complicated by the existence of other politico-ritual offices, in particular among the Talis, connected with their cult of the External *Bɔyar*. The complementary functions of chiefship and tɛndaana-ship are rooted directly in the social structure, but are also validated by myths of origin and backed by the most powerful religious sanctions of the ancestor cult and of the cult of the Earth. The Namoos are believed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi who fled from Mampurugu many generations ago. Hence they claim remote kinship with the ruling aristocracy of Mampurugu. Their chiefship is derived from that of the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi, and this is

105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tendaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization ~~that~~ emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or sub-clan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member

● 105 THE DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION. Tale domestic institutions are very elaborate, and the organization of domestic life is subject to a considerable range of variation due to such factors as the economic position, size and age of the unit, the temperament and character of individuals, the social status of the senior male members, the distribution of economic and ritual specialization (craftsmen, diviners &c.), and so forth. To evaluate the full influence of these factors requires a mass of statistical information which we have not been able to obtain as yet; we must be content with merely indicating its range.

Tale society is essentially democratic; but differences of wealth are prominent. Chiefs and headmen, in virtue of the services they command, cultivate greater areas than any commoner, own much more live stock and have twice and three times as many wives. Both in its structure and in the organization of its domestic life, a chief's compound conforms to the same cultural pattern as the compound of the poorest plebeian; but it is economically entirely atypical. In every settlement, also, there are a few men of wealth considerably above the average. They always have a sufficiency of food, even in the leanest years. Chiefs, headmen, and wealthy men have therefore been excluded from the discussion in this paper.

592 596 341 Tale social organization has a well-defined spatial basis. The unit of residence is a mud compound (*yir*—house) inhabited by a joint family consisting of a group of men of close patrilineal kinship, their wives and children. Its architecture is significantly correlated to the structure and organization of the joint family at the particular phase it has reached in its development. One compound in three—14 out of 40, to be exact—has two or more entrance gateways (*zanɔr*),[1] each corresponding to a completely self-contained dwelling, and independent social unit consisting of one or more households. The plural entrance compound represents a stage in the process of segmentation through which the joint family passes in the course of about three generations, and which ends in complete fission and the setting up of several independent compounds.

592 596 The main gate is always owned by the head of the joint family (*yirdaan*, owner of the house) the most senior (*kpeem*) of the group of

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[1] Statistics quoted here and in subsequent paragraphs are derived from a sample of 40 compounds selected at random from a sociological census we made at Tongo.

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

●105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space in-
[231] side is divided into compartments by low walls. Livestock are kept in an open compartment near the entrance. The land lying
[241] between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a definite part of the farming system.

Fixed Cultivation.

[161] The high density of population necessitates a system of "fixed" cultivation. It is difficult to say whether the need for
241 "fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

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Identification

The Kusasi (Kusae, Kusal, Kusale, Kusan, Kusase, Kussi, Kussassi) are a tribe of the Mossi-Grunshi branch of the Niger-Congo linguistic stock. They number about 93, 000 (1948), and are closely akin to the Nankanse.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with hoe cultivation and use of manure. The staple crop is millet, followed by sorghum. Also grown are yams, (important in the S), sweet potatoes, groundnuts, beans, cow peas, okra, and Cucumis melo. Animal husbandry is important; cattle (often milked by Fulani herdsmen), sheep, goats, horses, donkeys, dogs, chickens, and guinea fowl are kept.

Sex Division of Labor

Both sexes engage in agricultural work (proportions not specified).

Property

Uncultivated land is controlled by the local headmen, who give permission to clear new land. Individuals enjoy heritable usufruct without right of sale. Cowries are used as currency.

Inheritance is patrilineal, with the eldest surviving brother as the principal heir. However, the ElSo inherits personal belongings, the compound farm (younger sons inheriting bush farms), cowries (younger sons receiving smaller shares), and the compound itself (to which he returns).

Marriage

Marriages are arranged, often while the couple are children, by the heads of the respective compounds. A "placation gift" of beer and a guinea fowl and a bride-price of 2-5 cattle are paid to the head of the bride's household by the head of the groom's. The groom owes annual bride-service until the birth of his first child.

There is general polygyny, which may be sororal (but not with a consecutively born Si of Wi). The first wife is chief wife. Secondary unions are preferential with BrWi, forbidden with FaWi, inferentially allowed with FaBrWi.

Family

The residential unit, occupying a compound, is a fraternal joint family, although married sons may attach themselves to father's compound with a separate gate. Succession is by YoBr in order of seniority.

1:Murdock--2 E-4 (No date) 1958 Fl Africa
Tallensi FE11
Kusasi

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Residence

The patrilocal rule prevails. Sons before marriage live in a special hut in the compound of their Fa. After marriage they either remove to a new compound a few hundred yards away, or remain in one or more huts attached to the father's compound but with a separate gate. When the Fa dies, the ElSo returns to the parental compound--at least if the father's brothers have left.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local exogamy prevails.

There are totemic patri-sibs, presumably exogamous, but they bear ancestral rather than animal names. They are inferentially divided into segmentary patri-lineages. There is also strict matrilineal exogamy but apparently no corporate matrilineal kin groups. Witchcraft is transmitted in the female line.

Kinship Terminology (F from Funke, otherwise from Rattray)

Fa--ba, oba (F), mba (my Fa--F). Mo--ma, uma (F), mma (my Mo--F). Ch--bi. Da--bi-pugle. ElBr--ber, pita (F). YoBr--pito, ma (F). Si--tɔ, ton (F). YoSi--biare (F). Rattray gives tɔ for sibling of opposite sex. Hu--sid, dao (F). Wi--poa, pua (F), mpua (my Wi--F).

Avuncular and male-speaking nepotic terms are bifurcate merging or alternatively descriptive.

Cousin terms are of Hawaiian type, or alternatively descriptive.

Settlement Pattern

The Kusasi live in neighborhoods of dispersed homesteads, each consisting of a family compound. The huts have circular mud walls and conical (never flat) thatched roofs, and are grouped roughly in a circle around a cattle kraal with a mud wall connecting adjacent dwellings.

Community Organization

Each neighborhood is a patrilocal clan-community.

Local Government

There are local headmen, who are clan chiefs. Their functions are primarily ritual ones, though administrative duties have been recently assigned to them. Succession is patrilineal--by the next eldest Br, then the eldest classificatory son.

1:Murdock--3 E-4 (No date) 1958 Fl Africa
Tallensi FE11
Kusasi

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State

Political integration above the community level is apparently lacking.

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Rattray, R. S. The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland. 2 vols. Oxford, 1932. (Has considerable information).

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Identification

The Namnam (Nabdam, Nabte) are a tribe of about 8,000 (1921) of the Gurensi nation, which also includes the Nankanse and the Tallensi. Their language belongs to the Mossi-Grunshi branch of the Niger-Congo linguistic stock.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with hoe cultivation and use of manure. The staple crops are probably sorghum and millet, but beans, groundnuts, and probably also cow peas and sweet potatoes are also grown. Sheep, goats, cattle, chickens, some horses and donkeys, and probably also dogs and guinea fowl are kept.

Property

Land is allocated by local headmen, apparently in heritable usufruct and reverts to him when abandoned. A distinction between personal and family property is inferential. Cowries are incidentally mentioned.

Inheritance is patrilineal. By inference from the kindred Nankanse and Tallensi the preferred heir is ElSo for personal property, eldest surviving brother for family property.

Social Stratification

Slavery and debt slavery are inferential.

Marriage

Marriage involves "placation gifts" (cf. Tallensi) and a bride-price in cattle.

Polygyny is inferential. Each wife has her own hut.

Family

Fraternal joint families like those of other Gurensi tribes are inferential.

Residence

The patrilocal rule prevails.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local exogamy is inferential.

Marriage with any first cousin is inferentially forbidden.

There are patrilineal totemic sibs and segmentary lineages, each with a head. Lineages are exogamous, but sex relations and probably marriage are not forbidden with persons of geographically and genealogically remote lineages of the same sib. Matrilineal exogamy also prevails, but there are no matrilineal kin groups.

Kinship Terminology

Fa--ba. Mo--ma. Ch--bi. So--dayɔ. Da--pɔvɔ-yɔ. Hu--ser. Wi--pɔv. ElBr--kpwɛm. YoBr--yebeg. Sibling of opposite sex--tɔ.

Avuncular and nepotic terms are basically of bifurcate merging type.

Cousin terms are of Hawaiian, or alternatively of descriptive (Sudanese) type.

Settlement Pattern

The Namnam live in neighborhoods of scattered homesteads, each consisting of a group of round huts with flat mud roofs or conical thatched roofs arranged in a circle or oval and connected by a mud wall to form a compound.

Community Organization

The local group is basically a patrilocal clan-community, divided into "sections" consisting of localized lineages. Clitoridectomy is practiced.

Local Government

There are local headmen or clan chiefs (tengdana) with ritual functions. Unlike the other tribes of the group these headmen are sometimes women. Succession is decided by a soothsayer in consultation with the lineage elders.

State

There is a paramount chief of Dagomba origin, occupying a capital settlement. He receives annual tribute in crops. His authority has been enhanced by the British and was probably originally minimal.

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Identification

The Tallensi (Talansi, Tale, Talen, Talene, Talense, Talni) are a tribe of the Mole-Dagbane group of the Mossi-Grunshi branch of the Niger-Congo linguistic stock. They number about 35, 000 (1931) on 300 square miles. With them are included the closely kindred Namnam (Nabdam); Fortes and Manoukian report that the Nankanse (Gurensi) and Kusasi (Kusase) should perhaps also be grouped with them as a single unit of 170, 000 and Rattray says the same. The Tallensi were conquered by the British about 1911, after severe military resistance.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with use of human and animal manure on homestead plots and fallowing of more distant fields. The staple crops are millets of both an early variety (Pennisetum typhoideum) and a late variety (P. spicatum), followed by sorghum. A little rice is grown, and cacao is a recent cash crop. Subsidiary crops include peanuts (Arachis hypogea), Bambara beans (Voandzeia subterranea), cow peas (Vigna sinensis), geocarpa beans (Kerstingiella geocarps), sweet potatoes (Ipomea batatas), yams, maize, Gyandropsis pentaphylla, okra (Hibiscus esculentus), H. cannabinus, and H. sabdariffa. Animal husbandry is distinctly subsidiary. Goats, sheep, numerous chickens and guinea fowl, dogs, some cattle, and a few horses and donkeys are kept. Cows are milked, and milk is drunk curded. There is considerable gathering, some petty trade, and a little hunting and fishing.

Sex Division of Labor

Men do the animal husbandry and most of the agriculture, though women grow peanuts, help at planting and harvesting, and grow vegetable gardens. The women gather and engage in petty trade. Men hunt.

Property

The tengdana or ritual headman has a ritual relationship to the land, which is owned by minor lineages. Individual men hold plots in heritable usufruct, originally alloted by lineage heads; these rights are not subject to sale or rent.

Inheritance is patrilineal. Lineage property (farm land, livestock, and ancestral shrines) pass from the lineage head to his successor (ElBr, then eldest Br or BrSo) by seniority. Individually acquired property (grain, personal possessions, goats and fowls, personal shrines, and land acquired by a man's own effort) is inherited by sons. A woman's cattle are inherited by her sons, other property being divided among her daughters. Men often lend and sometimes give land to SiSo.

Social Stratification

Slavery was formerly practiced, and there are pawns or debt slaves. There are individual differences in wealth, but no true social or economic classes. Slave status is not hereditary; children belong to the sib of their owner.

Marriage

There are three modes of marriage: (1) elopement with connivance of the girl's Mo or Si, gifts to her parents, and subsequent marriage payments; (2) arrangement between the heads of two joint families through an intermediary (pogosama), who is patrilineally related to the groom and also related to the bride, usually as a son of one of her female lineage mates; (3) infant betrothal, in which a rich man gives an advance on the marriage payments to a poor man for his infant daughter. The first mode is the commonest for a first wife. Marriage payments fall into three categories: (1) gifts at marriage, including fowls for sacrifice, (2) a "placation gift" at some time after marriage, consisting of fowls distributed among the elders of the bride's lineage, and (3) a bride-price, paid at a later date and often in installments, consisting of about 4 cattle or the equivalent in sheep or money. The bride-price is raised by the head of the groom's minor lineage and is paid to the head of the bride's minor lineage. That obtained for a girl should be used to secure a wife for her brother. There is also an obligation to do several days a year of agricultural bride-service for a number of years after the wedding.

Polygyny is general and preferred. About 40% of all married men are polygynous, but only 25% of those under 45. Each wife has her separate quarters in the homestead (her own hut). The senior wife is chief wife. Sororal polygyny is disapproved and rare, and the sororate is not customary. Levirate marriages are preferred with ElBrWi, allowed with YoBrWi, forbidden with FaWi, SoWi, WiMo, FaBrWi, and MoBrWi.

Family

A homestead or compound is typically occupied by a fraternal joint family, consisting of several brothers and/or half-brothers and their families. Often, however, the unit consists of a man and one or more sons or deceased brother's sons with their families. If a man lives with his Fa, he must use a separate gate to the compound.

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Residence

Residence is patrilocal. An unmarried man occupies a room in his mother's quarters, and he brings his wife there, but is obligated to provide her soon with a separate apartment or compound. When his father dies, and oftentimes or usually before, a man establishes an independent homestead, usually but not always in same community.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local exogamy is the norm. Residence is never matrilocal, but is occasionally neolocal or avunculocal.

Marriage is forbidden with any first cousin. Exogamy (for sex relations as well as marriage) extends from the patri-sib to the patri-lineages of Mo and FaMo and to all known matrilineal relatives (but if matrilineal connection is discovered after marriage, the union is not dissolved). Marriage is common with a younger woman of an older wife's patri-lineage.

Descent is primarily patrilineal. Matrilineal kinship (soog) and exogamy are recognized, but there are no corporate matrilineal kin groups. Patrilineal kin groups are segmentary. There are exogamous patri-sibs (called "maximal lineages" by Fortes), consisting of descendants of a common ancestor 8-10 generations back; sex relations are forbidden with remoter members, though marriage is allowed. The sibs are divided into sub-sibs or lesser lineages, into minor lineages (the land-holding units), and into "minimal lineages" (the children of one man). Each sib and segment thereof has a head, its senior male, who has charge of the ancestral shrine. Politico-religious offices are vested in the sib. Groups at all levels are corporate units, and are known by the name of the common ancestor. Sibs are associated with totemic avoidances and common ancestor rituals; they are localized as clan-communities.

A possible survival of matrilineal descent is the fact that ritual blood-guilt contaminates a murderer's matrilineal kinsmen. Another is matrilineal exogamy. Maternal ancestors are as important to an individual as paternal ones.

Kinship Terminology

Fa--ba. Mo--ma. Elder sibling of same sex--bier; younger--pit. Sibling of opposite sex--tau. Ch, BrCh (w.s.)--bii. Half-sibling--sungo. Term for Wi extended to BrWi.

GrFa--yaab. GrMo--yaab-pok. GrCh--yaang. MoBr--aheb. SiCh (m.s.)--aheng. FaSi--ba-pok. Special term for MoSi, used for MoSiDa.

Sibling terms extended to FaBrCh and MoBrCh, also to MoSiCh and FaSiCh.

Settlement Pattern

The local community is a neighborhood of dispersed family homesteads, each consisting of a group of round huts with mud walls and conical thatched roofs (sometimes flat mud roofs) surrounded by a mud wall. Each community has a territory (teng), a section of sacred earth. A homestead is enclosed with a mud wall.

Community Organization

Normally the community is a patri-clan, either a localized sib, a segment of a sib (which has dispersed territorially), or (more commonly) two or more sibs linked together by a myth of remote kinship or by long residential propinquity. A clan, always associated with a place, may include members of two or more sibs, each with segments in another community. Clitoridectomy and circumcision are not practiced.

Local Government

Each community has a ritual head, the head of the resident sib or the senior lineage. These headmen are of two types--*tengdana* and *na'am*. The former are of old Tallensi origin; succession is strictly by seniority; the office is called "custodian of the earth" and involves observation of taboos, sacrifices to the Earth, and other functions to prosper the people. The *na'am* or "chiefs" are found in sibs of Mamprusi origin; they own locust-bean trees and hunting or fishing places; they are appointed by an elector; the office can be "bought," and any man in good standing can aspire to it. A chief has rainmaking powers; a *tengdana* does not. Some clans have headmen of both types. Neither has significant administrative, judicial, or military functions. Chiefs wear a red fez. A chief appoints a group of titled elders, but they do not form a council.

State

There is no tribal organization, no form of central state. Some chiefs enjoy great prestige in other communities, but their functions are limited to their own.

Warfare

Hostility and punitive raids between communities are common, but war is uncommon. The spilling of blood is believed to desecrate the sacred earth.

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_____. The Political System of the Tallensi. African Political Systems, ed. M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, pp. 239-271. London, 1940.

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Fortes, M. and S. L. Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi. Africa, IX, 237-276. 1936.

Manoukian, M. Tribes of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. London, 1952. (A good secondary summary).

Rattray, R. S. The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland. 2 vols. Oxford, 1932. (A very modest amount of information).

1: Rattray, Robert Sutherland. The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland. Volume 2.
Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1932.

Pp. xi, 293-604.

Yale: Nkd82 932r v.2.

Omitted from Files: Pp. i-ii, iv, viii-xi, 293-338, 398-604.

[This source is the result of a two-year linguistic and ethnographic survey of the northern Gold Coast Colony (modern Ghana), with particular stress on the Nankanse, the largest tribal group in the area. As a result, the other tribes treated in this source, including the Tallensi and their close relatives, the Kusase and the Namnam, are somewhat summarily described and compared with the Nankanse as the "type culture" in the area. Stressed in these accounts of the Tallensi, Namnam and Kusase is ceremonial, with particular reference to the Ten'dan', the local priest, and to death, with its resultant distribution of property. Other aspects, particularly material culture, are dealt with in only a summary fashion. The author lived for more than 20 years in the Gold Coast Colony, first as a District Commissioner, and later as first head of the Anthropological Department in the Gold Coast Government. He was awarded the Rivers Medal in 1933. --Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1920 Evaluation: Ethnologist, Government Official-5
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary Processed in 1957

2: Fortes, Meyer. The Dynamics of Clanship Among the Tallensi: Being the First Part of an Analysis of the Social Structure of a Trans-Volta Tribe. London: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute, 1945.

Pp. xx, 270; 16 plates; 31 diagrams in the text (including one overlay); 3 maps.

Yale: Nkd82 945f.

[This source is devoted to a structural analysis of the clanship and lineage relationships among the Tallensi. It deals with the constitution and interrelations of the corporate groupings found in Tallensi society. He develops the idea that the tendency towards equilibrium is marked in every sector of Tallensi society and in the society as a whole, this tendency being a result of the dominance of the lineage principle in the social structure. He spends some time relating the economy and religion to the lineage system within the structure of the society. The interpenetrations of kinship with these aspects of the structure are left for a second volume. Material culture is touched upon only incidentally. Fortes received his doctorate in psychology from the University of London in 1930, studying subsequently under Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski. He is currently William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. --Analyst]

Field date: 1934-1937; 1943
Evaluation: Ethnologist - 5
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary
Processed in 1957

3: **Fortes, Meyer.** The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi: The Second Part of an Analysis of the Social Structure of a Trans-Volta Tribe. London: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute, 1949.

Pp. xiv, 358; 16 plates; 7 text figures; unnumbered diagrams; 1 map in text; index

Yale: Nkd82 949f.

[This source is the second volume of a description and functional analysis of the social structure of the Tallensi, a large group living in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast Colony (present-day Ghana). The emphasis here is upon the ramifications of kinship in a patrilineal society and its intermeshing with the lineage principle. Attention is paid to the importance of the mother and of matrilineal kin in this overtly patrilineal society, and the spiritual, rather than legal, bonds developing among them. Also stressed are the tensions which arise from the opposition of kinship and the lineage principle, and the reduction of these tensions. Material culture is touched upon only as it is relevant to the problem under discussion. Fortes received his Doctor of Philosophy degree in psychology from the University of London in 1930, and subsequently studied under Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown. While in the field he was influenced by the work of Raymond Firth. Fortes is currently William Wyse Professor

3: Fortes, Meyer.

of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. --Analyst]

Field date: 1934-1937, 1945
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1957

111 FE11 Tallensi

4: Fortes, Meyer and Sonia L. Fortes. Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi. Africa, Vol. 9, pp. 237-276. London: Oxford University Press, 1936.

Yale: Bk2.10 v.9.

[This article discusses principally the growing, preparation and eating of food among the Tallensi, and its relation to the domestic economy. The annual agricultural and economic cycles are outlined. Some recipes are given in an Appendix, pp. 274-276. --Analyst]

Field date: 1934-1936
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Ethnologists - 5
Processed in 1957

111 FE11 Tallensi

5: Fortes, Meyer. Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland. Africa, Supplement to Vol. 11, No. 4. London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1938.

Pp. 64; 4 plates.

Yale: Bk2 10 v. 11.

[This source gives a summary description of the ways in which the norms of Tallensi culture are inculcated in the Tale child, and a brief portrayal of the fundamental learning processes involved. Also included are statements on attitudes toward education, and the social sphere of the child, and a synopsis of the stages of the educational development of the child. Fortes was educated at Capetown and London where he received his degree in psychology. He is currently William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. --Analyst]

Field date: 1934-1937
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Ethnologist - 5
Processed in 1957

6: Fortes, Meyer. Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 67, pp. 131-142. London, 1937.

Yale: Nk10 +R81 v.67.

[This source examines the social structure of communal fishing among the Tallensi and the extent of the ensuing relations beyond the fishing itself. Attention is paid to fishing methods, ownership of the fish pools, division of the catch, and propitiatory magic and ritual. The author is currently William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. --Analyst]

Field date: 1934-1935
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Ethnologist - 5
Processed in 1957

7: Lynn, C. W. Agriculture in North Mamprusi. Gold Coast Department of Agriculture, Bulletin, No. 34. Accra: Issued by the Director of Agriculture, Gold Coast, 1937.

Pp. vi, 93; numerous tables; 1 map

University of California, Berkeley: S 338 G6A2 no. 24-36.

[This excellent source is a synthesis of information on the agricultural practices of the peoples of the North Mamprusi district, which includes the Tallensi, Namnam and Kusasi, as well as several other tribes. They are treated by Lynn as a single group since he believed that the agricultural methods of the area are the same, especially when contrasted to those of contiguous areas. The goal of the monograph was to locate the causes of food shortage in the territory and to suggest means of ameliorating them. This entailed a thorough analysis of native agricultural methods. The results are summarized in tables in the four appendices. Data on the farms of many of Fortes' informants (see 2: Fortes and 3: Fortes, this file) may be found in these tables. Also included is a section on experimental agricultural work undertaken to discover what crops were best suited to the area. At the time of the investigation, Lynn was Agricultural Superintendent for the Gold Coast Department of Agriculture. --Analyst]

Field date: 1932-1936 Evaluation: Government Official - 5
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary Processed in 1957

8: Fortes, Meyer. Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast. American Anthropologist, New Series, Vol. 38, pp. 590-604. Menasha: American Anthropological Association, 1936.

Yale: Nk10 Am37 v. 38

[This source contains a brief summary of the non-material culture of the Tallensi which serves as a background for the main part of the article, a description of the harvest festivals of the two main groups of the Tallensi. Also briefly noted is the Gɔlib festival of the Talis whose purpose is to ensure a successful sowing and harvesting of early millet and to call down the blessing of fertility in general. Fortes envisages these festivals essentially as being integrative mechanisms which restore the forces of social cohesion between the two opposing groups in Tallensi society, the Talis and the Namoos. Fortes is now William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. --Analyst]

Field date: 1934-1935
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Ethnologist - 5
Processed in 1957

9: Cardinall, A. W. The Division of the Year among the Talansi of the Gold Coast. Man, Vol. 24, article 47, pp. 61-63. London: The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1924.

Yale: Nk10 + M31 v. 24-25

[This source contains a brief description of the Tallensi calendar, the divisions of which depend primarily on the fall of rain, which is not completely regular. These divisions therefore do not correspond to regular months or moons, although there are twelve of them.- -Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1920
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Government Official - 5
Processed in 1957

10: Fortes, Meyer. Names among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast. Afrikanistische Studien, Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Institut für Orientforschung, Veröffentlichung Nr. 26, pp. 337-349. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955.

Yale: Fd12 +B44 26

[This short article gives a description of names and name-giving among the Tallensi. Each person has a public and a private name, the latter not being secret. The private name refers generally to an ancestor who is the guardian spirit of the owner of the name. The public name can refer to almost any circumstance of interest to the name-giver. The article closes with a brief discussion of names taken at the investiture of chiefs and ten'daanas. Fortes is William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. --Analyst]

Field date: 1934-1937
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist - 5
Processed in 1957

Cardinall, Allan Wolsey. The Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast: Their Customs, Religion and Folklore. London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1921.

Pp. xvi, 158; 12 plates; 1 map

University of Michigan: DT511.C27

[The material in this source contains much the same information as that in Rattray's "Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland" (see 1: Rattray, this file). In addition, it has been assessed as being very unreliable by other workers in the area. For these reasons, it has not been processed for the Tallensi file. --Analyst]

Fortes, Meyer. Kinship, Incest and Exogamy of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. In, Custom is King, Ed. L. H. Dudley Buxton, pp. 237-256, London: Hutchinsons Scientific and Technical Publications, 1936.

Yale: Nk12 936c

[This source has not been processed because the author states in a later publication (The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure. Africa, Vol. 14, p. 363, 1944) that this source is superseded by the 1944 paper. --Analyst]

Fortes, Meyer. The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure. Africa, Vol. 14, pp. 362-385, London: Oxford University Press. 1944

Yale: BK2 10 14

[This source contains little or no material not covered in detail in Fortes' later publication, The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi, which is source No. 2, in this file. --Analyst]

Fortes, Meyer. The Political System of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. In M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard, ed., African Political Systems, pp. 238-271. London: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute, 1940.

Yale: Nkd18 940f.

[This article contains only materials which are discussed in much greater detail by Fortes in other sources. It has not, therefore, been processed for the Tallensi file. --Analyst]

Fortes, Meyer. Marriage Law Among the Tallensi. Accra: Government Printing Department, 1937.

Pp. 23.

Harvard: Afr. Sudan F776 m (photostat copy)

[The information contained in this source was superseded by a later publication by Fortes (see 3: Fortes, this File). It has not, therefore, been processed for the Tallensi file. --Analyst]

112 FE11 Tallensi

Hilton, J.E. The Zuarungu District of the Northern Gold Coast. Conferência Internacional dos Africanistas Ocidentais, 6.ª Sessão, Volume II, Geografia e Outras Ciências da Terra, pp. 85-99. London: Scientific Council for Africa South of the Sahara, 1956.

HRAF copy

[This is a summary article, in English, Spanish, Portuguese and French, of a paper on the geography of the Zuarungu area, including the lands of the Tallensi; the area in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast where population pressure is most severe. A brief description is given of the geography, economy, distribution of population, and development and land planning in the Frafra sub-Native Authority of Mamprusi, which is Zuarungu. --Analyst]

Manoukian, Madeline. Tribes of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. Ethnographic Survey of Africa, Western Africa, Part V. London: International African Institute, 1952.

Pp. v, 102; end map

Yale: Nkd74 Et3 III. 5

[This source is a synthetic survey of the peoples and cultures of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, of which the Tallensi form a part. The author did no field work and the report is based almost entirely on the literature. Since the material included in this volume would only duplicate that already in the Tallensi File, this source was not processed for the Tallensi File. --Analyst]

Worsley, P.M. The Kinship System of the Tallensi: a Revaluation. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, vol. 86, pp. 37-74. London: 1956.

Yale: Nk10 +R81 86

[This excellent article contains no new data on the Tallensi, and therefore will not be processed for the Tallensi file. However, it should be noted that the author, on the basis of the material presented by Fortes, reaches conclusions concerning the Tallensi kinship system which differ considerably from those of Fortes.

Worsley takes issue with Fortes on his interpretation of the Tallensi kinship system as offered in the last chapter of The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi (3: Fortes, this file) on the grounds that it is inadequate and underestimates the critical significance of economic relations in Tale social life. He then proceeds to reanalyze the available data from the point of view of economics. Such varied aspects of Tale society as the basis of paternal authority, lineage solidarity and fission, land tenure system, marriage, and lineage 'reintegration' all have bases in economic activities. Worsley considers that Fortes' failure to consider economic aspects may possibly be due to his limiting of the realm of economics too narrowly to market relations. This delimitation, borrowed from economic theories principally evolved in and applying to industrial

Worsley, P.M.

societies, cannot be mechanically transferred to the study of primitive economies little above the subsistence level, where the market is but a small sector of the economy. Without reference to economics, Fortes' stress on equilibrium, on the balancing of social forces as a unifying principle in Tale society, does not correspond to the reality of social life.

Another factor which has created confusion in parts of Fortes' analysis is the neglect of history. Tale society today exhibits features that were absent in the 1920's, and is very different from what it was like long before this time, but this would not be evident from Fortes' studies alone. Such items as Tale society becoming part of the world economy, a new cash economy, the development of wage labor for foreign enterprises, and the need to meet new tax obligations, receive little or no treatment in Fortes' analysis. From these facts one would deduce that the society is changing form, but the movement is not repetetive and cyclical as Fortes suggests, but toward completely new social patterns.

Worsley reiterates throughout that his paper is not to be construed as a negation of Fortes' analysis, but as a complement to it. Worsley is currently at the Department of Social Studies of the University of Hull. --Analyst]

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

101 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem
619 to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

167 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes com-
619 prise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other
648 than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[113] [1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

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(2)—Report by Mr. F. A. Stockdale, C.M.G., C.B.E., on his visit to Nigeria, Gold Coast, and Sierra Leone—Colonial Office, London, 1936.

(3)—Lynn, C. W.—"Report on a Visit to Northern Nigeria to Study Mixed Farming"—Gold Coast, Department of Agriculture, Bulletin No. 33, 1937.

(4)—Muir, J. C., and Williams, T. L.—"Agriculture in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Districts of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast"—Department of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Year Book, 1930, Paper No. XXVII.

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(10)—Haines, A. H.—"Surveying for Agricultural Students, Land Agents, and Farmers"—Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1929.

(11)—Daniel Hall, Sir A.—"The Improvement of Native Agriculture in Relation to Population and Public Health"—Oxford University Press, 1936.

(12)—Annual Report on the Department of Animal Health, 1935-1936—Government Printer, Accra.

113

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(14)—Reports of Investigations into Water Supplies of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—Government Printer, Accra, 1937.

(15)—Howard, A., and Wad, Y. D.—"Waste Products of Agriculture, their Utilisation as Humus"—Oxford University Press, 1931.

(16)—Wakefield, A. J.—"Mixed Farming and Peasant Holdings in Tanganyika Territory"—The Empire Cotton Growing Review, Vol. XI, No. 2, April, 1934.

(17)—McCulloch, W. E., Dietetics Research Officer, Nigeria—"Food Shortage at Navrongo, Gold Coast"—Report to Chief Commissioner for the Northern Territories, Gold Coast, 1931.

(18)—Symond, J. E.—"Results of a Trial Shipment of Shea Nuts"—Gold Coast, Department of Agriculture, Year Book, 1928, Paper No. XXX.

FOREWORD

I

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The writing of this book has been a harder task than I anticipated when I began it in 1938. It has taught me that the hardest part of an anthropologist's work begins after he leaves the field. In the field he is engrossed in concrete human activities. It is true that he can never feel himself completely at one with the people he is studying, however gifted he may be, linguistically or psychologically. He may make some real friends among his hosts; but he can never adopt their cultural values. If he did, he would lose that detachment without which anything he wrote would be of no scientific value. All the same, he is carried by the living stream of social life. He hardly has to stop and think. Thus the crucial scientific task begins when he starts to write up his field material. It is not merely a question of putting his observations on record. Writing an anthropological monograph is itself an instrument of research, and perhaps the most significant instrument of research in the anthropologist's armoury. It involves breaking up the vivid, kaleidoscopic reality of human action, thought, and emotion which lives in the anthropologist's note-books and memory, and creating out of the pieces a coherent representation of a society, in terms of the general principles of organization and motivation that regulate behaviour in it. It is a task that cannot be done without the help of theory.

The task would be easier if social anthropology had a well-founded body of principles to which every new observation in the field could be related. This is not so; and though we all build on the shoulders of our predecessors, working out our problems with their hypotheses and findings implicitly or explicitly in mind, yet every new piece of field-work is unique in some respects, and every new monograph raises unique problems of analysis and exposition. There is inevitably, therefore, a large personal element in an anthropological monograph.

One of my difficulties lay in the complexity of the material I have tried to present. It is commonly accepted that primitive societies are much simpler than ours, both in their cultural make-up and in their social and economic structure. But even a very simple cultural heritage or social organization may be composed of a large number of strands and elements whose interrelations make up a very elaborate pattern. Simplicity in this context is much more a value concept than a scientific category. In social science it is partly a question of how closely and with what discipline one examines the data. I should have found it much easier to write this book at the end of my first tour among the Tallensi, but it would have been inaccurate in some points and defective in many. I did not know enough about the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Hill Talis, for example, at the end of my first tour, to understand its significance in the social structure. Indeed, this and many other matters only became clear to me in the course of writing this book.

[p. vii]

000 There were extraneous difficulties too. In 1938, to quote Lord Hailey,[1] there was 'no systematic demand for research workers' in anthropology in Great Britain. Then came the war, bringing with it issues of far greater moment than the study of the social structure of a remote and unimportant African people.

128 114 The requirements of war-time publication have made it necessary to publish separately the two parts of which this study of Tale social structure consists. Though each part is self-contained, I had hoped that they could appear together in one volume. A considerable amount of compression has been necessary in order to fit the book to the Procrustean bed of austerity printing. As my concern in this book is with Tale social structure, I have preferred to leave the descriptive data pertaining to my central theme fairly full, and to compress material that can be more fully dealt with in later studies. This applies particularly to what I have written about Tale religion. It is sometimes said that anthropological monographs tend to be too long. Unfortunately, in descriptive work of this kind brevity is not always reconcilable with accuracy, however attractive it may be from the literary angle. As it is, anthropologists have to exercise rigorous selection in presenting the small fraction of their field material that it is physically possible to publish. One of the objects of any descriptive monograph must be to record material that can be used for comparative and theoretical studies. Excessive brevity (which easily lapses into facile generalization) has often proved a more serious defect, from this point of view, than an inelegant multiplicity of detail. Failing statistical devices, there is no alternative for the anthropologist who wishes to support his general statements with the evidence of observed fact, but adequate descriptive detail. I fear that I have not obeyed this rule as strictly as I should have liked to, owing to lack of space.

121 My object, however, has been a limited one. I have not attempted to give an 'outline' of 'the whole culture'. I consider that a work of that kind is best done in the traditional ethnographic manner of such classics as Junod's *Life of a South African Tribe* or Smith and Dale's *Ila Speaking Peoples*. It is a different thing to study those attributes of a social system that pertain to it *as a whole*, by contrast with those attributes that pertain to a limited sector of the society or a single institutional complex. Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* and Evans-Pritchard's *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic of the Azande* are examples of the latter type of study. But all studies in social structure or political organization or economic structure, being concerned with the factors of social integration, are necessarily concerned with attributes of the whole society. It is chiefly because these categories of social relations are the constant elements in all social activities and constitute the common medium through which social activities are articulated with one another that we can speak of a society as a unit, or of its different aspects as being functionally interrelated or mutually consistent. What I have tried to do in this book is to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure at the level of corporate

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[1] Lord Hailey, 'The Role of Anthropology in Colonial Development', *Man*, xliv, 1944, No. 5; cf. also A. I. Richards, 'Practical Anthropology in the Lifetime of the International African Institute', *Africa*, xiv. 6, 1944.

121 as myths that sanction or reflect contemporary social relationships and usages.[1]

In short, my chief aim has been to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure; but I hope that the material will also be useful for comparative and theoretical studies.

II

114 My wife and I spent nearly two and a half years in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, between January 1934 and April 1937. For most of that time we were amongst the Tallensi.[2] Our head-quarters were at Tongo, which proved to be an ideal base for our work. There we were at the hub of Taleland and within a few hours' march or ride of any part of the country we might wish to visit. We trekked over most of Taleland and also visited the chief centres of the neighbouring tribes, in particular the Mamprusi. As there is no linguistic literature for the Tallensi, we had to learn their dialect from scratch, with the assistance of a semi-literate interpreter and the scanty literature on Mole and Dagbane. It took us about six months to learn enough Talni for workaday communication with the people. By the end of our first tour we became proficient enough to dispense with an interpreter. Nevertheless, I know only too well that we reached but a moderate standard in our vocabulary and in our appreciation of the finer shades of thought and feeling that can be expressed in Talni.

We were the only white people who had ever lived among the Tallensi for any length of time and the first to speak their dialect. After their initial suspicions had been allayed, we were quickly accepted and soon had many friends. Our first informants soon got to understand our aims and entered into the spirit of our work with sincerity and zeal. They were mostly men and women who assisted us out of friendship and trust in our good faith. I wish to thank them for their confidence in us and for the devotion with which they instructed us in the way of life of their people. We remember with gratitude the patience, tolerance, tact, and friendliness of many dozens of Tale men, women, and children. They welcomed us to their homes, their domestic occasions, and their esoteric and public religious gatherings. We learnt more from them about humanity than I have the skill to write of. Tɔŋ-Yikpɛmdaan, my first friend and mentor and one of nature's gentlemen, was a fount of wisdom. The late Chief of Tongo, Na Naam Bioŋ, was a proud, intelligent, and forthright man whose support stood us in good stead and whose great store of knowledge was freely opened to us. Many others, too numerous to mention, were our faithful friends and zealous helpers.

122 My field-work among the Tallensi was made possible by the grant of a fellowship from the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. I appreciate the privilege of having held this fellowship and record with gratitude the unfailing interest which the Directors (Dr. J. H.

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[1] As Radcliffe-Brown showed in *The Andaman Islands*, and Malinowski in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

[2] In 1943, in the course of other duties, I had occasion to spend some time in the Northern Territories. I found that no social changes of significance had taken place among the Tallensi since 1937.

Oldham and later Professor Sir Reginald Coupland) and the Secretary-General (Sir Hanns Vischer) took in the work of the Institute's fellows. I appreciate, in particular, the freedom they allowed us in carrying out the research entrusted to us and the encouragement they gave us to aim at high scientific standards. I am greatly indebted to Professor D. Westermann, who was one of the Institute's research directors. His great scholarship in West African languages and cultures made his counsel of exceptional value. The success my wife and I were able to achieve in learning Talni owed much to a short course we were fortunate enough to have with him. This, like my preliminary training at the London School of Economics, was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. 122

I chose the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for my field-work on the advice of the late Captain R. S. Rattray. His name is written in indelible letters in the annals of West African ethnology and I was proud to follow in his footsteps. His pioneer ethnographical survey of the Northern Territories saved me months of labour. 121

I made Tongo our head-quarters on the advice of Administrative and other Government officers working in the Northern Territories. My wife and I owe a special debt of gratitude to the then Chief Commissioner Mr. W. J. A. (now Sir Andrew) Jones for the keen interest he took in our work and for many helpful arrangements he made to facilitate it. We have also to thank Sir Andrew and Lady Jones for many personal kindnesses. I owe my understanding of the spirit and methods of colonial administration chiefly to Sir Andrew and his officers. 000

My wife and I also remember gratefully the unfailing kindness and hospitality of Colonel G. H. Gibbs, M.C., Sir Andrew's successor as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories, who was District Commissioner, Mamprusi, in 1934–7, and of Mrs. Gibbs. A visit to them was a heaven-sent rest from the strenuous routine of field-work. Many discussions with Colonel Gibbs helped to broaden my understanding of the problems of government and social development in the Northern Territories.

Captain J. L. Mothersill, Mr. E. W. Ellison, and Mr. A. F. Kerr, who were in charge of the Zuarungu district at various times during our stay there, put us greatly in their debt by their readiness to help us.

Our nearest European neighbour was Mr. C. W. Lynn, M.B.E., Superintendent of Agriculture at Zuarungu. Mr. Lynn's friendship was a great stand-by to us at all times. He was at that time engaged on his now well-known survey of native agriculture in the Zuarungu district and we had many long talks on this subject. Farming is a subject of supreme interest to the natives; and though it does not come into this book very much, I should have made little progress in the field without some knowledge of Tale agriculture. I received great help from Mr. Lynn on this side of my field-work. 114

I have, in this study, stuck to my last and dealt with an anthropological problem from an anthropological point of view. But I hope that what I have written will also be of service to Government officers in the Northern territories. 121

114 My first teachers in anthropology were the late Professor C. G. Seligman, F.R.S., and the late Professor B. Malinowski. Both were unorthodox teachers, in different ways, and the power of their influence lay as much in the points of view as in the subject-matter they taught. An anthropologist has to be in sympathy with the people he is working amongst; but he has to view their ideas and values objectively. He can succeed in this only if he has the conviction that his work is not only immediately useful, but represents a contribution to the general body of science by which his work is nourished. Both Seligman and Malinowski had the gift of making one feel this. Seligman's catholic conception of anthropology, backed as it was by great learning, enabled him to show his pupils what a vast and exciting field of study lay open to them. I owe more to him than I can speak of here, and without his encouragement would probably never have finished this book.

My debt to Malinowski is writ large in this book. My field-work was done under the inspiration of his teaching, and I have drawn heavily on his writings and on ideas debated in his classes.

My debt to Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown is as great. The final draft of this book was written while I was working with him at Oxford and every significant problem in it was discussed with him. The results are obvious in every chapter. My approach to the study of social structure in primitive society is basically derived from him.

000 I have to thank Professor Raymond Firth for opening up many new and fruitful lines of thought to me, both in discussion and through his writings.

Dr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard has a special place in my regard. I look upon him as my older brother in anthropological studies. I have, in this book, followed where he has led. His preliminary reports on the Nuer[1] gave me the clue to the lineage system among the Tallensi. He was working on his Nuer book at the same time as I was struggling with my Tale material, and there is very little in this book that does not owe much to discussion with him.

Mrs. B. Z. Seligman, Dr. Lucy Mair, and my wife read the manuscript of this book with critical attention. I wish to thank them for this most valuable service, by which they helped me to rescue many passages from needless obscurity. My wife has not only contributed some of the field data for the book but has also materially assisted in its authorship by comment and criticism. I am very happy to be able to dedicate this book to Mrs. Seligman both as a mark of esteem from a fellow anthropologist, and as a token of friendship.

I have also to thank Miss Phyllis Puckle for secretarial assistance; Captain V. G. L. Sheddick for help with maps; Mrs. B. Wyatt for her careful editing of the book; and Dr. Alice Meinhard for compiling the index.

Lastly, there remains a friend who has to be anonymous and to whom the quotation from Arthur Waley's book is addressed. Like many people concerned with practical questions of colonial government he has doubts about the practical usefulness of anthropology and, in particular, of a former is primarily a problem of genetic psychology, the latter of 121 cultural and sociological analysis. In studying education in a particular society we ought, ideally, to be able to take its cultural idiom for granted, whereas the first task of sociological analysis is to discover the cultural idiom. Thus, in Taleland one often finds a pair of small boys disputing with childish earnestness as to who is senior. Unless one has observed the scope of the principle of seniority in the social structure one is liable to dismiss this as mere childish play of no importance.

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[1] Published in *Sudan Notes & Records*, xvi–xviii, 1933–5.

Education, from this point of view,[1] is an active process of learning and teaching by which individuals gradually acquire the full outfit of culturally defined and adapted behaviour. In this paper I shall try to delineate briefly how it occurs in one African society, that of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. As it will be impossible to compass the whole process of social maturation within the limits of this paper, some of the more conspicuous changes and activities only will be examined.

The sampling problem. My observations were made in the course 114 of a field study of the Tallensi the object of which, in accordance with the usual ethnographical method, was the entire society and its culture. It is impossible in such a case—as other anthropologists have found—to follow up a special psychological problem in a manner commensurate with the criteria of experimental research in England. That will only be achieved when specialists can be induced to take over these investigations.

Such material as I am able to present consequently suffers most from 128 sampling deficiencies. Social behaviour among primitive people appears to be more standardized than among ourselves. Yet variations occur, distributed perhaps in accordance with the normal curve of error as among ourselves but perhaps not. The problem has still to be investigated. Ethnographers are principally interested in

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[1] An excursus into genetic psychology would be out of place in this paper, but the reader will observe how much it owes, *inter alia*, to F. C. Bartlett, *Remembering*; K. Koffka, *Growth of the Mind*; S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth of Young Children*; *Social Development of Young Children*; C. E. Spearman, *Nature of Intelligence*; and to the writings of Jean Piaget (*Language and Thought of the Young Child*, &c.). I have borrowed also from the anthropological writings already cited and from those of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, particularly from their writings on kinship.

226 789 There the psychological facts are, one might say, re-created, socially transformed by the magic into a collective risk against which protection is provided by the very act which affirms its existence. The magic is concerned not with the safety of individuals but with the security of the group. Above all, responsiblity for the security of the group rests, in the last resort, upon the owner of the pool, the one who brings the group into being. Through the magic this responsibility is affirmed as a privilege associated with the ownership rather than a burden. Individual magical precautions would be as incongruous with this communal situation as a particular individual's chances of injury are unpredictable. In brief, the magical organization of the situation depends upon the exploitation of psychological factors latent in it; but these psychological factors cannot be regarded as the source of the magic. Ownership, magic, and organization of the expedition constitute a unitary structure the disruption of which would entirely alter the significance of any of the constituents.

121 At the outset of this paper the view was expressed that every type of social situation exhibits a definite structure. An analysis was then made of a typical social situation met with among the Tallensi. Various institutions (chieftainship) techniques (magic) and norms of behaviour (disposal of the catch) each determined in part by a context lying beyond the boundaries of the fishing expedition, were shown to enter into the situation. It was suggested, also, that the fishing magic is the factor which binds the different components into a definite pattern. The question arises why is it that situations such as this exhibit a specific structure? Is it due to the peculiar ensemble of institutions, etc., represented? Is it due to the nuclear interest—*viz.*, the catching of fish—of the situation? Or is it due to the fact that what we differentiate as institutions, etc., appear in such situations, as the concrete responses of individuals and groups to one another in terms of social definitions and psychological impulses arising solely from the situation itself? This is a problem which requires the examination of many types of situations comprising similar combinations of institutions, techniques, and norms of behaviour.[1]

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[114] [1] This paper was written after my first expedition to the field, in 1934-5, as a Fellow of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

Assimilated lineages, therefore, all over Taleland, though thoroughly 618x
absorbed into the structure of the sub-clan or clan, suffer the same disabilities 554
as the more precisely differentiated attached lineages; they cannot, 576
however, make a virtue of this, as the latter sometimes can; they cannot 567
explain away their status. To tax a person, openly or explicitly, with being the descendant of a slave (*da'abər bii*) is one of the deadliest insults, however remote his slave ancestry may be. This is more than a matter of etiquette. It amounts, in certain circumstances, to blasphemy against the spirit of the man who originally adopted this slave ancestor. Thus, under this rule of courtesy to clansmen and respect for ancestors, the status of an assimilated lineage is never commented on publicly unless a serious issue hangs on it or a severe quarrel is involved. This exceptional circumspection about assimilated lineages shows better than anything else their ambiguous position in the clan.

Such elements of the social structure as these are not apparent at first 618x
glance. I did not discover the existence of assimilated lineages at Tongo until the end of my first year in the field. To do so it was essential to have a very thorough understanding of the way the lineage system works and of the internal structure of the Tale community. I was able then to notice and to be puzzled by the absence, or self-effacement, of certain people in situations where they would normally be representing their lineage segments. It was not the behaviour to be expected of them if their segments were of equal status with the authentic segments of Mosuor biis. Veiled hints began to have a meaning which confidential informants confirmed.

One of my earliest friends and frankest informants at Tongo was 618x
Saɣəbazaa, an elder in whom the chief had the greatest confidence and 115
who was universally esteemed for his industry and probity. Saɣəbazaa was the head (*kpeem*) of Nəŋsuur yidɛm, a major segment of one of the major segments of Tongo. One of its members held an important and confidential office under the chief. Nəŋsuur yidɛm appeared to be of the true agnatic line of Mosuor. I took this for granted the more readily because, when the Great Festival season came round and all the elders of Tongo were summoned to the chief's house so that a diviner could be consulted, it was Saɣəbazaa who consulted the diviner on behalf of the chief and the whole of Tongo, in order to ascertain what offerings must be given to Mosuor and the chiefly ancestors.

Nevertheless, Nəŋsuur yidɛm is an assimilated lineage whose founding 618x
ancestor is vaguely said to have arrived with Mosuor. Though almost completely absorbed by the authentic line of Mosuor biis, a last barrier remains, which I discovered only through one of the most striking of the events which revealed the existence and status of accessory lineages at Tongo. It showed also how there is a continuous process of adjustment going on in every sector of the social structure, resolving the tensions and contradictions latent in it.

It was an occasion of historic importance marking the climax of one 618x
phase in the absorption of the accessory lineages by the authentic lineages 769
of Tongo. The occasion was that of the great thanksgiving sacrifice to the founding ancestors of Tongo, Mosuor and his son Seɣahəg, which took place in 1936. Beer and animals were contributed by the chief, who gave

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THE TRIBES OF THE ASHANTI HINTERLAND

BY

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WITH A CHAPTER BY
PROFESSOR D. WESTERMANN

VOL. II

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1932

[title page]

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XXXIII

THE TALENSE

History; Tribal, Clan, and Soog' *Organization*

101 161 121 INTRODUCTORY: The Talense occupy the area shown on the map. According to the 1921 census report they number 29,972 persons of both sexes. Specimens of the language, called Talene or Talen', have been given in Chapter III. Their appearance, their houses, customs, religion, and organization all seem to me to be very similar to those of their neighbours, the Nankanse. Their languages, too, are very much alike. Had the Talense not been labelled with a separate appellation, I doubt if the anthropologist—save after, perhaps, a very minute investigation—would have considered it necessary to deal with them as a group distinct from the Namnam and the Nankanse. Nevertheless, in accordance with the plan which I mapped out, I have done so. Rites and customs, already investigated, discussed, and described, are here approached from a different angle. Results so obtained are always valuable, even where there is a certain inevitable repetition. The process serves also to fill gaps in the work which has gone before, to which the information obtained later may be considered as supplementary.

128 In dealing with this and the remainder of the tribes, I have endeavoured to group my facts, as far as possible, under the chapter headings already adopted. This arrangement will enable my readers the more readily to piece together the sum total of the data available concerning any one particular subject, and I hope will mitigate somewhat the defects in presentation for which I have already apologized.

173 167 The history of the tribal wanderings of this people follows the same lines as that with which we are now familiar. This history is the record of the migrations, not of the tribe *qua* tribe, but of every clan, the composite of which now forms the group called the Talense (s. Taleŋa; language Talene.) The tribal histories, specimens of which are about to be related, tell of the migrations (within comparatively narrow limits of time and space) of the groups which have for some hundreds of years supplied the Territorial Rulers. Of the wanderings of the original people themselves, who are now largely merged with this foreign element, nothing is really known, except that they were undoubtedly of the stock which I have termed the 'Mole group', who seem to

173 have been the original inhabitants of these parts for a much longer
167 period than can be claimed for their aristocracy.

The chief Talense 'towns', in the sense with which we are now
103 familiar, are as follows: Tɔngo, Bade, Gorogo, Si, Winduri, Ten'zugu,
101 Tilega, Yamdiga, Biuŋ, Siega, Duse, Datoko, Gbee, Kpantia, Kpale,
Wakyiga, Gbeogo, Zandoya, and Gbea. These settlements, including
the subjects of the Chief of Kurugu, now constitute the Talense tribe.

173 *History of Tɔngo* (as told me by the present Chief, Kpama): 'We
(i.e. his ancestors) came from Mampurugu, which we left owing to a
622 quarrel between *Misore* and his younger brother—whose name we do not know—about the Chieftainship. *Misore* left Mampurugu in consequence and came first to Boŋo, thence to Saamere; from there he passed through a dense bush and came to the hills. (The Tɔng hills.) At the foot of these hills we found a people whom our ancestors called Gundugo or Talense. We intermarried with these people and have all become Talense. *Misore* died here; his grave is marked by a big baobab tree. He was succeeded by his son, *Seyene*, who, now that his father was dead, returned to Mampurugu[1] and received from the Chief the Chieftainship of Tɔngo. *Seyene* died, and was succeeded by his brother, *Nambogeda*, who also returned to Mampurugu to ask for the Chieftainship. He died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, *Bɔyayeret*, a son of *Seyene*. About this time, the Chief of Mampurugu made one of his son's Chief of Kurugu, and placed Tɔngo under Kurugu. *Bɔyayeret* was succeeded by his "brother" *Sayepele*, a son of *Seyene*, who reported to Kurugu and held his Chieftainship from that ruler. *Sayepele* was succeeded by his brother *Nodeyene* (lit. Short-fowl). *Nodeyene* was succeeded by his younger brother, *Lebsekora* (Old-things-change). He, in turn, was succeeded by *Kusii* (Worn-out-hoe), a son of *Bɔyayaret*. He was succeeded by *Bileu*, who was succeeded by *Lobsaab* (Throw-away-food), his brother, who, in turn, was succeeded by *Belemsale*, his half-brother, who was succeeded by *Belemboo*, a son of *Kusii*. In his time a great famine came, and many people were sold (to the Dagomba). He was succeeded by *Kabu*, a son of *Lobsaab*. *Lobsaab* was succeeded by *Sapelega* (White-clouds), a half-brother of *Kabu*. *Sapelega* was succeeded by *Kakora*, a son of *Bileu*. He was followed by *Nekaŋ*, a son of *Kusii*; followed by *Paheban*, son of *Belemsale*; *Sagbon* (Dark-cloud), *Lebenwana*, *Bupaa*, son of *Kusii*;

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[1] Mampurugu, as we shall see later, was the seat of the Head of the foreign element, who, coming somewhere from the eastward, had founded the empires of Mampruse, Moshi, and Dagomba.

Lebzure, *Kunwase* (You-do-not-stroke-a-snake), son of *Lebkura.* In 173
his time we fired arrows at the people on the Tɔng hills; there was a 622
famine and we used to rob them. All the people, except Winkoŋo and Sia, rose against us, saying we were too proud. *Kunwase* was succeeded by *Kundizore* (Water-cannot-pull-down-a-hill), a son of *Sapelega.* There was also a war in his time which arose out of a quarrel during a hunting expedition, in which Bade and Yazore had taken part. Small-pox (called *Naba*, the Chief) also broke out in his time. *Kundizore* was succeeded by *Nalebseyo* (It-will-change-to-the-wet-season), son of *Kabu.* He was succeeded by *Pilibazaa* (Cover-them-all), son of *Bupaa.* During his time the Europeans came. *Pilibazaa* was taken by the [177]
white men to Gambaga and asked to pay two hundred cows because the Tɔng people had fired arrows at them (the Europeans). He died at Gambaga and was succeeded by *Kunbanbeo* (Cannot-know-tomorrow), a son of *Kundizore.* He was succeeded by *Yirisano* (Destroyer-of-compounds), alias *Dentele*, a son of *Lebenwana.* In his time the Europeans came and asked the Hill-people (Teŋ-zugu) to come and see them, but they refused. He was succeeded by myself, *Kpama*, son of *Pilibazaa.* I brought my father's bones from Gambaga, and they were buried outside his compound.'

The above list comprises twenty-eight names, and, with other 551
similar genealogies, supplies us with an approximate estimate of the 173
time when the foreigners from Mampurugu first extended their in- 622
fluence to embrace this area. The names of these Chiefs as here given are their titles only; it is forbidden to mention their real names. Such nicknames are called *sam-wur* in Talene, *saan-yure* in Nankane.

The ruling house at Tongo belongs to the *gwegmere* (lion) clan. 128
When I recorded the above and the other histories which follow I had 622
not as yet grasped the full significance of what I came to discover later, 565
namely, that in recording the history of these migrations as supplied by the Chiefs, I was really only tracing the origins of a minute section of the population, i.e. of those who formed the upper ruling class, and not of their subjects, who formed the mass of the people. In consequence I am unable, in the present instance, to specify the clans to which the majority of the inhabitants of the 'towns', already given, really belong. In my notebooks I find these clans, in nearly every case, recorded as 'the lion clan'. This is only due, however, to my having fallen into the error of failing to distinguish between rulers and ruled, and imagining the histories told me by Chiefs and their following to be applicable also to their subjects. I do not make any apology however,

128 for the inclusion here of such records, as, once their limitations and
622 significance are realized, they, equally with other information recorded,
565 go to form part of the composite picture which I am attempting to draw of the traditions of these people.

173 *History of Siega* (as told me by the Chief Zoaga): 'We came from
622 Mampurugu at the same time as *Misore* (see previous history). The Winkoŋo people are related to us (he refers, I believe, to the Chief of that place). My clan is lion; I am the seventeenth Chief of Siega. The Chieftainship is under (the patronage of) Kurugu and can descend to any one of the lion clan. My first-born also taboos a fowl. We have had a Chief, distinct from *Ten'dan'*, since ancient times. The first Chief of Siega was *Kukye*.'

History of Datoko (as told me by the present Chief, Borezina): 'We came from Mampurugu, but not with *Misore*. We travelled by way of Nuŋ (Nungo): from Nuŋ to Tula; from Tula to Kumbule; from Kumbule to Datoko. We met the Kusase people in the land, but drove them across the river (Volta). We marry the Kusase. We are of the lion clan. Chiefs of Datoko are appointed by Kurugu. The man who gives most presents becomes the new Chief, and on obtaining the Chieftainship will try to recover what he has paid. Now Chiefs are made by Government, but still go to Kurugu to receive the *muŋ'* (red fez). I am the son of the late Chief, and am ninth of my line. Datoko has six sections (*Yi-zug'*); each section, since Europeans came, is in charge of a *kambon-nab* (head gunman). Since ancient times we have had *Ten'dan'*. Their work and the Chiefs' work are separate. I settle all cases. The *Ten'dan'* performs the ceremonies when the rain does not fall, unless it is at my own *tengzan* (Nankane, *tingane*), when I perform the sacrifices.' (Here, it will be noticed, the *kambon-nab*, appointed by the Chief (who, when a vacancy occurs, bids with the
[624] other applicants for the post), are ousting the old time section-heads, called in Talene, *yi-zug-kpæm*, who have been forced into the background. The *Ten'dan'* (Nankane, *Ten'dana*) has also become more or less a nonentity.)

History of Ten'zugu (as told me by Ten'goli): 'My ancestor came from Nasia; he was called *Sumri* and was a son of the Chief of Mampurugu. When his father died he wished to succeed him, but was driven away and came to Bulbi. His enemies followed him there, and again he fled and came to Daa, at the foot of the Tong hills. Later he went on top of the hill and settled there. He found some people called Dagali. They were Talense. We married with them. The Dagali people

belong to the *Sensereg* (squirrel) clan. We were told by them that the 173 hill did not permit "arrows on the arms," i.e. war. We, too, said we 622 did not want bloodshed. When the *gologo* festival came, we all met on top of the hill and danced. At this festival, the *Ten'dan'* of Dagoli and myself made beer and sacrificed to the land. A month later we sowed.' (I had purposely allowed the Chief to digress from the subject; he now continued.) 'When we came from Nasia we did not see any one here, except the Dagoli people. The Tongo people (see history) had not yet arrived from Mampurugu (near Gambaga). The Dagali had no Chiefs, only *Ten'dan'*; they wore skins. *Sumri* did not become a *Na* (Chief), because he never went back to receive his Chieftainship from Mampurugu. He became *golog'dana* (owner of the drums). The first of my ancestors to go to Mampurugu to get the Chieftainship was *Kumalbeo*; he went to *Na Paya*, the "grandfather" of the present Chief of Mampurugu. He was succeeded by *Atabea*, called after the Chief of Mampurugu, who was his *seyr'* (guardian spirit); Nankane, *segere*.) He was afraid to go to Gambaga because the Europeans were there; he fought with the Europeans because he was told that they had come to take away our land. I am Atabea's son. I was made Chief by the Europeans, but have not yet been confirmed by *Naleregu* (i.e. by the Chief of Mampruse).'

With reference to the title 'owner of the drums', I asked this in- 622 formant if a man could not become a Chief in a new country independently of Mampurugu. He replied he could not do so unless 'he went to Mampurugu (near the present town of Naleregu, the former capital of the Mampruse State) whence spread all the black race.'

History of Yamdiga (as told me by the Chief): 'We came from 173 Mampurugu; my *Yaba* (ancestor) was *Misore*, as was that of Tongo, 622 Beug, and Siega. My ancestor was *Kamuni*, the eldest son of *Misore*; he was of the lion clan. The Chiefs of Yamdiga have been the following: *Gyenkaret*, *Nantog*, *Nakpeleg*, *Gingano*, *Mwampark*, *Nabsobug*, *Lebbaha*, *Na-kaba*, *Kungazur*, *Kunzerpuk*, *Kunoyokurt*, *Kosom*, *Lebdo*, and *Yinsagbeg* (lit. God's food, the present Chief). We have now [304] become Talense; we no longer circumcise, because the local people would not marry us. The Chief of Kurugu, our "father," still speaks Mampelle, but we no longer do so.'

History of Biun: 'We came from Naleregu (Mampruse), with *Misore*. Our clan is the lion clan; we also taboo goat, and our first-born do not eat a fowl, and women, after reaching puberty, do not eat fowls. We [262] eat goat's flesh, but do not wear its skin until death, when we are

173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
804 forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows
565 these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—
128 is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan),
784 but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tamperŋpeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

ashes) was blind, when a *sakur* and *meŋ* came and asked him what was 173
the matter. He replied, "Sickness." They said, "Open your eyes," and 784
he could see.'

In one of the tribal histories recorded above we again have an 784
example of the violation of a taboo after death—dressing the dead 766
body in a goat-skin. With regard to what we may call the 'royal clan', i.e. lion clan, I was told: 'In olden times, if any one killed a lion, the skin was sent to the Chief of Kurugu, who then sent it on to the Chief of Mampurugu. There a funeral ceremony was held for it.'

Blood Relationship: Relationship, transmitted through the female 611
line, is called *soog*' (compare the Nankanse *sõõ*). The *soog*' groups are well known, but, as far as I could discover, do not bear any special names. The *soog*' exhibits all the characteristics already noted with regard to the Nankanse *sõõ*.[1] A male cannot transmit a taint of witchcraft, inherited from his mother. 'If your mother can fly (*ik*) (that is, is a witch), you can fly.' (*Soe* is a witch in Talene).

'My sister's child is my *soog*', my brother's child is not; he is my son.' Again, *ziim* (blood) and *soog*' are synonymous terms.

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[1] See Chapter XVIII.

XXXIV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

The Clan Settlement. The Family Compound. The Section-head (Yi-zut-kyema). *The* Ten'dan'. *The Territorial Ruler*

621 613 THE constitution of a Talense *tey* is identical with that of the Nankanse. The *tey* (Nankane *teya*) is divided into sections, all the inhabitants of which trace descent from a common ancestor, but each, again, has, as its own more intimate ancestral spirit, a less remote ancestor, from which that particular section takes its name and to whom 'section-', as opposed to '*tey*-', sacrifices, are offered. A section is *yi-zug* (Nankane *yi-zuo*). A section-head is *Yi-zug-kpwem* (Nankane *yi-zuo kyema*).

At Tongo there are four sections, known as (*a*) Pusega, (*b*) Guŋa, (*c*) Korega, (*d*) Seug. The post of section-head of Pusega was vacant; as 'the funeral custom of the late *yi-zut-kpwem* had not yet been held, his successor could not be appointed'.

The section-head of Guŋa is *Sayezaa* (my informant, see Fig. 63); of Korega, a certain *Basego*; of Seug, vacant, for the same reason as (*a*).

613 [761] *Election of New Section-head*: Heads of other sections met and consulted the *bay* (Nankane *baga*) to find out why the late head of the section had died. The soothsayer might say, 'It was because he did not give one of the cows, *sull* (Nankane, *sulle*), which he received for his eldest daughter, to his ancestor.' After the funeral custom his successor was appointed. 'The man who had the right to take the deceased's *bagere* (here ancestral shrine) was the one to succeed. This man was already known; the *bay* was only consulted about the funeral.'

The successor to the section-head was the 'senior' man in that section, but he was not necessarily the oldest: e.g. *A* marries a wife, *C*, by whom he has three sons, *D*, *E*, *F*, and three grandsons *G*, *H*, *I*, sons of *D*, *E*, and *F*; *A*, in his old age, marries a young wife, *B*, by whom he has a son, *J*. This son may be twenty years or more younger than *G*, *H*, *I*, but if *A*'s brothers are all dead and also *D*, *E*, and *F*, then *J* will become section head before *G*, *H*, or *I*, 'because *G*, *H*, and *I* call *J* father.'[1]

613 178 The tendency here, as almost everywhere in the Northern Territories, is for these hereditary section-leaders, who were really the back-

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[1] See p. 279 [i.e. reference to similar [p. 346] practice among the Nankanse — A]

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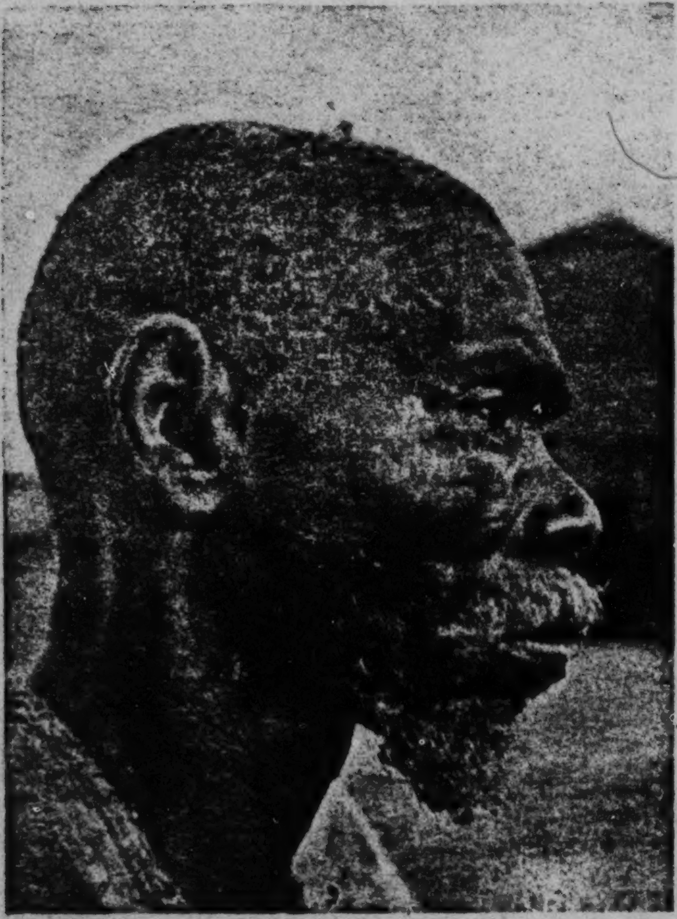

Fig. 63. Sayezaa—a section-head

[Facing p. 346]

613 178 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

793 *The Ten'dan'*: Among the Talense an investigation into the former status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 783 627 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs; this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die, except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*tey*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man tey*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

782 783 If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person, he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

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[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed. --Analyst]

Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is *a bagere'* (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan'*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes, axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become *Ten'dan'*.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

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[1] Nankane, *Kusoodana*.

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among 622 the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts. No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies, to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the 'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we [624] find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the *kambon na*, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly 622 twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. 554 It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named 'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his household 592 among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief 593 and pawn (verb, *nwe talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need 426 not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera.*)'

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[1] See Chapter XXVI.

XXXV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms. Rites de Passage. Shrines. Soothsayers

428 *PROPERTY and Inheritance:* The rules already given in Chapter XXII for the devolution of private, family, and ancestral property apply equally here. I noted, however, in many cases, deliberate attempts to mislead the enquirer, being repeatedly told that the son succeeds to his father's property to the exclusion of the brother. In every case where such a statement was made it was found that the wish was father of the thought, and that in no case was such succession in conformity with Native customary law. In one of the histories recorded in the previous chapter it will be noted that a son succeeded his father, but this was only due to the coincidence that when *Misore* was driven away from Mampruse he was not accompanied by any of his brothers. The real facts are, that, where there are no brothers, the eldest 'son,' not necessarily of the deceased—he may be son of deceased's brother—succeeds.

582 *Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms*: No new facts were disclosed which have not already been discussed, save in connexion with the marriage avoidances relating to cross-cousins.[1] With regard to these, the following, perhaps ingenious rather than convincing, excuse was given for the prevalent dislike for such unions.

582
586 'If you married your mother's brother's daughter, and quarrelled about the cows paid to your *aben* or *asen* (maternal uncle, Nankane *asiba*) for *sull*, (Nankane, *sulle*), this would lead to trouble. Suppose you quarrelled with your wife after marriage and she returned to her father, who is your maternal uncle, you would ask him to return the cows. Should he not do so, you would be entitled to seize cows belonging to any person from his, that is from your own mother's, town; you would descend into the valley (*sig boog nwoy nigi*; Nankane, *sig boo nyoge*). After doing so you could no longer perform sacrifices to your mother or to her mother; you would not sleep; your children would die, and your uncle would also suffer.'

Marriage with Father's Sister's Daughter: A somewhat similar explanation was given for this avoidance. 'You cannot marry her because

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[1] See p. 4.

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother,
or father, if alive. 171 The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782]
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sulľ bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo:

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be 793
taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

764 white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. 793 I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the graveside. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

764 Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines 622 were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

778 *Shrines*: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear [171] to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan'* of 782 Tongo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the 721 various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

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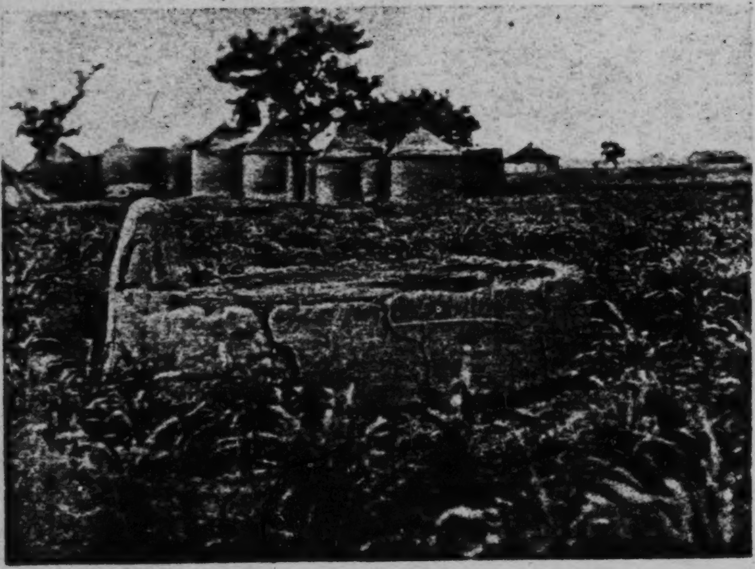

Fig. 64. Grave of Talense chief

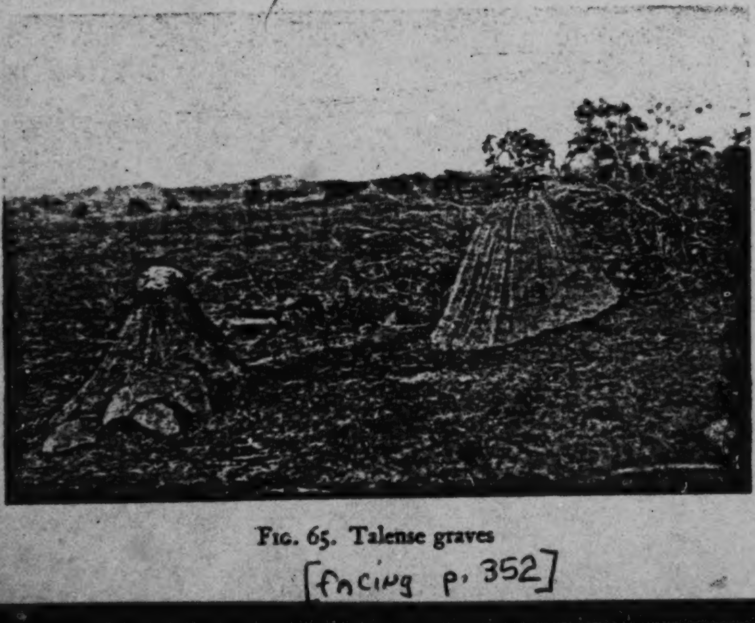

Fig. 65. Talense graves

[facing p. 352]

778 cine' or 'roots') is 'to prevent war'; it is called *mweleŋ* (compare Nan-
kane *mweleya*[1]). 'When the war cry is raised I will first sacrifice a fowl
782 on the stone, saying: "They want to shoot arrows, and I wish to stop
721 it; receive a fowl, and compel them not to shoot; let the women
and children sleep." The stone on top of the head-rest signifies that we compel people to sit down. After I sacrifice the fowl, cow dung and corn-cobs are placed round the pot and set on fire, while I say: "My father, call your father; let women and children sleep; they wish to shoot arrows; fire wants to burn the land, but I wish it to be cool." When the fire which I have lit goes out, the war is also burning out. The roots inside the pot are from a shea butter tree; when you eat shea butter your heart will become cool. This *tim bagere* (medicine shrine) is related to the one I wear round my neck which is also called *mweleŋ*. I take it off and place it on top of the stone when the fire is burning. Some *mweleŋ* are now used by Chiefs to encourage disputes in order that they may be able to fine people.'

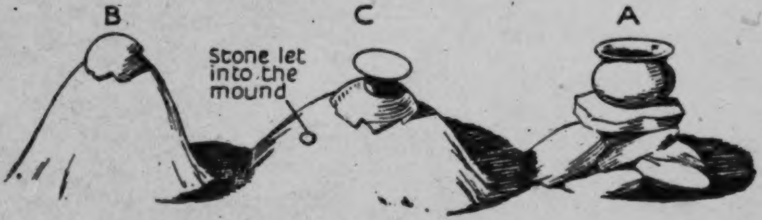

FIG. 66

778 [171] The above account was written nearly two years before my note on the same subject among the Nankanse.[2] I had, indeed, forgotten the latter, until I came to go over my notes in writing these volumes. It affords a good example, coupled with other evidence, of the close resemblance between the religion and customs of these two tribes, and also of the accuracy of the information imparted by two wholly independent informants. Unfortunately, the photograph I took of this shrine was not successful, but Fig. 66 A, is a rough diagram illustrating it and other shrines standing beside it. On the left of the *mweleŋ* fetish stand two conical mounds, B and C. B is, Sayebere informed me, that of his *yab-pɔk la o bi* (grandmother and her son). The clay mound had a flat piece of iron on top covered by a potsherd and stone. C is a *Yini zug-bagere* (God-above shrine). On the apex of the mound was a piece of iron let into the clay which was covered

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[1] See p. 303.

[2] See p. 304.

778 with congealed blood and fowls' feathers. The top was protected with the usual broken pot.

'Into the first, B, come the spirits of three persons to receive flour-water and fowls; they help me to find wives and children. The second, C, is my *Ƴini* who sent me down and gave me life and my Ten'dan'ship.

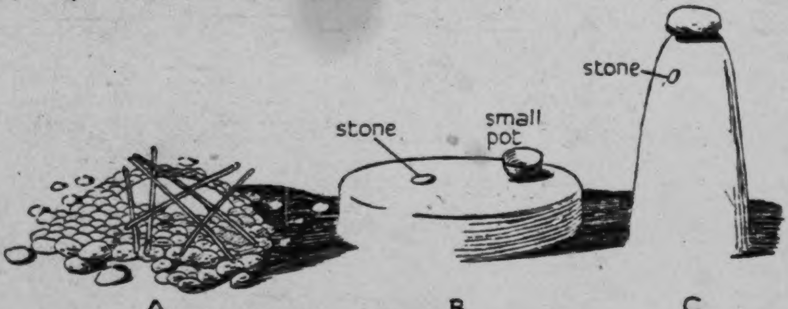

FIG. 67

It helps me to get life, women and children. God kept me formerly, afterwards he sent me.'

Facing these two shrines, and close to the wall of the *zoɣo* hut, were three more shrines, see Fig. 67.

B is the *Ƴini* of Saɣebere's father, Pirun. A he called a *Tobog'*. A consisted of a heap of round stones with sticks laid on top, surrounding a larger stone sunk in the ground. 'The small round stones are there for the *tobog'* to throw at anything bad coming into the compound. The *tobog'* is *tim* (medicine) to protect me and give me life,' he said, 'It belonged to my father'. I think there is little doubt but that this shrine was for the spirit of a man whom Saɣebere's father had [769] killed. (Compare the Nankanse *tobega.*) C was a tall conical shrine, with a stone let into the mud surface, called *duŋ-kpaleg*; 'It was my father's *bogere*,' said Saɣebere. 'The power of my hat and skin are in it. When I sacrifice to it, I call all the spirits of the old *Ten'dan'* and of my father to assemble and drink water, striking the stone let into the side with the stone which rests on top.'

778 769 [171] *Shrines Inside the Compound*: Inside the compound in the yard, called in Talene *dendɔŋ* (in Nankane *zinzaka*), is a large grain-store (*bur*; Nankane *bore*) with a chameleon (*nangan*; Nankane *ngana*) in bas-relief on the side (see Fig. 68; Saɣebere's hand is resting on the chameleon[1]). This is the shrine of his father's father's wife, a certain

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[1] Compare Fig. 30, which shows a similar shrine among the Nankanse.

[facing p. 354]

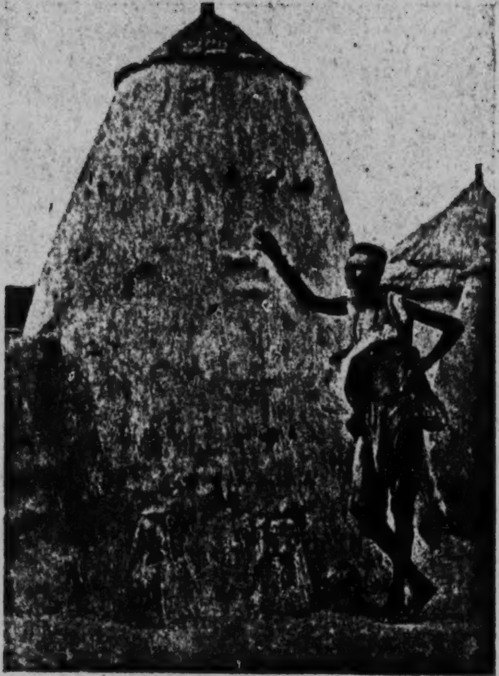

FIG. 68. 'Sayebere's hand is resting on the chameleon'

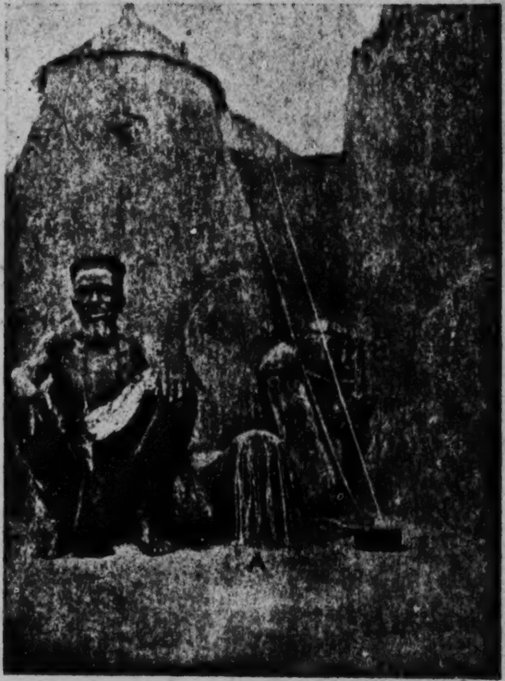

FIG. 69. Talense shrines

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1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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Bama.. At the foot of this grain-store were other shrines, seen 778
rather indistinctly in the photograph. 769

One is the shrine for the spirit of a woman called Tapur, who was a co-wife to Bama, both being wives of Saγebere's paternal grandfather. Another is a shrine of Bama. There was also a large stone. 'Bama asked for this through a soothsayer.'

Moving further round the grain-store we come to another series of shrines which are illustrated in the photographs, Figs. 69–70.

In Fig. 69 A is the shrine of the *Ten'dan's* own mother, Kurug; the actual spirit is in the head of a hoe let into the clay; B, a log of wood with a stone on top. I seem to have omitted to record what this was; C is a pot out of which an infant which has become ward of a spirit is given to drink.

Fig. 70 Saγebere called a *tim bager*', 'But,' he added, 'it is also 778
called *anoa-dok* (a mouth pot).'[1] He was in a state of great trepidation lest I should uncover it, saying, holding his nostrils as he spoke, 'It is my life. When I sacrifice to it I say, "Mouth pot receive and protect me from mouths".' It had, he said, many avoidances; these included: Passing behind its owner when he was eating; carrying a flaming faggot past it; mention of the word moon (*mwarega*) while its owner was eating.

The fetish consisted of a pot, covered with another broken pot, a bow, bundle of arrows, and a quiver. The bow, arrows, and quiver had, he said, been added to the pot after consultation with a soothsayer.

Bogere and Bagere: There seems a distinction between these shrines 776
so named, which hardly appears to exist among the Nankanse.

'A *bogere*,' said my Taleŋa informant, 'you fetch from your mother's 778
country after she is dead. You go to your mother's father's compound, 769
and take some earth from the *bagere* of your mother's father and put
this in a calabash, which your wife will carry home. She must not 775
speak to any one except her husband on the return journey. This soil will be put in a horn and is called my mother's *bogere*. Your mother's spirit may have become an iron bangle, that is a *bagere*; a *bogere* is like a shade to a *bagere*. A man's house may become 'bitter'; he consults and is told that it is his mother who wants a room. He makes one; that is a *bagere*. After that, he will go to his mother's home and bring earth from the mound which has been made there for his mother's father's spirit, and bring it home, and build a new mound with the

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[1] See p. 301.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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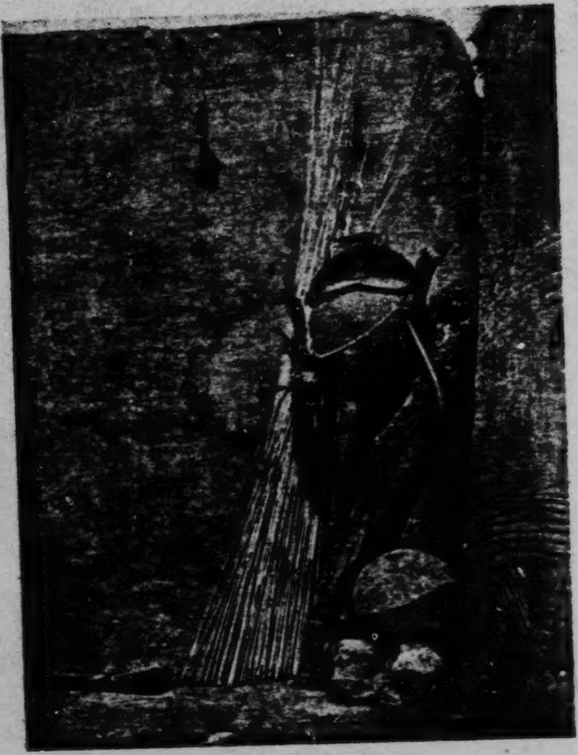

Fig. 70. A *tim bager*

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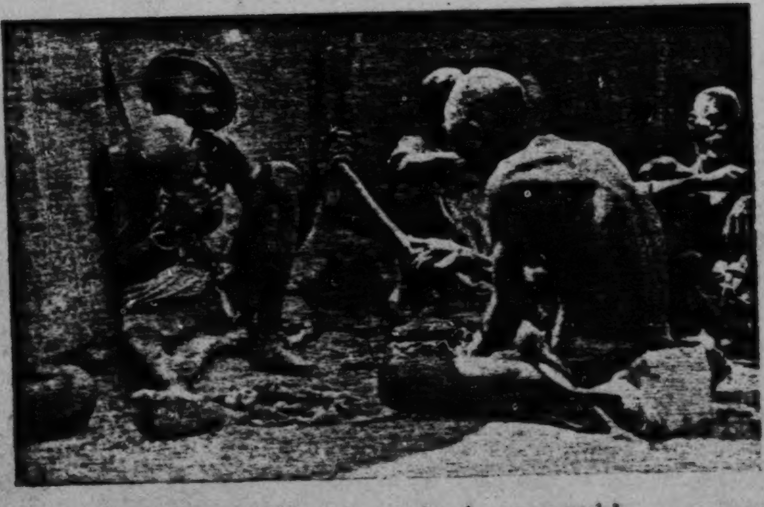

Fig. 71. 'The soothsayer then began to rattle'

[facing p. 355]

778 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere*
769 comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he
will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's spirit wants to punish (*eŋ*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband, "Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

171 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in con-
778 nexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but
791 when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's
769 mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's
town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives the power to the *bakologo*.'

A Seance attended at Tɔngo: A woman had died from snake-bite, and
787 after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's
761 compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family
769 of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The
ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with both hands and saying, *'N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor'* (I hold your sides, but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig. 71), and said, *'N ba Yin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n be, te te'*. (My father's *Yin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is; give us).

He then began to sing:

'Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Yi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam zeret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole [1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash,

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Fig. 72. Ancestral shrines

[facing p: 356]

on a gourd seed, on a hair ball from the stomach of a cow. I was later 787
told that all this was interpreted as meaning that the father of the dead 761
woman's husband had failed to give to his ancestor one of the cows 769
which he had received for a daughter, hence vengeance had been taken
on his son's wife.

After the seance a fowl was killed; this, falling on its back, was taken as proof that what the soothsayer had said was correct.

XXXVI

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Ceremonies in Connexion with Sowing and Harvest. The Talense Calendar

527 THERE appear to be at least three great festivals which are held by the Talense in connexion with the crops and harvest. These are:

(*a*) *Gologo*, held in the month of February by the whole of the Talense.

b) *Bugram Waa* (lit. the *Bugram* dance) held in October by the following towns: Sia, Winduri, Gorogo, Wakyi, Teŋ'zugu, and Gbeo.

(*c*) *Da koom*, *Da meŋ* or simply *Waa*, (the dance) held by Bade and Tongo, in the months of August and September.

[171] Among the Nankanse we have seen that the October festival is called *Tingana* (the Groves), or simply *Waa* (the Dance), a festival which is held by Winkoŋo, Orogo, Kologo, and Na, in rotation.

(*a*) *The Gologo Ceremony*: It was my intention to have attended this ceremony in person; hence I omitted to obtain a full description of it. I am informed, however, that during the time when the festival is being held 'every one is permitted to abuse his neighbour and even to laugh at any physical deformity, and that no one is allowed to quarrel'. [171] All this seems most reminiscent of the *Apo* ceremony, which has been described in another volume.[1] Circumstances, however, prevented me ever carrying out my intention, and a full description of this ceremony must be left to some other historian to record. I hope an account of it will be obtained before the extraordinarily rapid changes in conditions in these parts have interfered with or altered its characteristic observances.

527 793 796 535 *The Da koom and Da meŋ Ceremonies*: 'When we dance these, all our ancestors sleep. When the time approaches for the ceremonies, the *Ten'dan'* of Bade takes a calabash (*zu-gur*, lit. a head-calabash), puts it in a net, and hangs it outside the entrance to the *zoŋo* hut. When the rain falls, it is filled. Before dawn, early in the morning after the appearance of the new moon, the Bat (*Anglice* Bade) *Ten'dan'* pours out

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[1] See *Ashanti*, Chapter XV.

some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day 527
is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may
be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, 793
but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* 796
(or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the 535
water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'*
of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the
custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad
water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the
words:

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches 527
the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of 793
Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree
used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for 769
you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return 796
the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in
peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices.

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never 534
brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on
the land that it may know all is well.'

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests be- 241
came ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that 527
the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be
held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant.

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

805 *Months of the Year in Talane:*

OCTOBER. *Bugram Namboo.*
NOVEMBER. *Kabunubu Namboo* (harvest moon).
DECEMBER. *Koor-oro Namboo* (cold moon).
JANUARY. *Nyoo Namboo* (burning moon).
FEBRUARY. *Gologo Namboo.*
MARCH. *Sibig Namboo.*
APRIL. *Siga Namboo.*
MAY. *Namboo woo* (empty moon).
JUNE. *Nar-cheog Namboo* (cutting millet moon).
JULY. *Nar-birt Namboo* (bad corn moon).
AUGUST. *Daa-koom Namboo.*
SEPTEMBER. *Daa Namboo.*

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed 177
on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and
extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to 796
attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work. 776
Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity, but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally [778]
the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

'Its power is from God (*Na Yin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan*'; its 784
taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the follow- 776
ing avoidances:

(*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
(*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
(*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
(*d*) *Meya* (water turtle).
(*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
(*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
(*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la* [195]
a zia koom (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range 788
which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There 776
seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who 778
come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

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[1] It is also known as *Ta ni* and *Ta peiga*.

788 defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a
776 grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl.
778 There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the
punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come
down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

776 The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme
778 Being, does not, as far ~~as I could~~ discover, possess any shrine beyond
a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service
about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not
have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far
from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags.
The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than
ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

796 On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the
first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of
788 Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* had not yet appeared. From then onwards,
until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder
[484] and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who
I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi,
Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti
friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on
their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the
Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived. The former was a really
magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely
[77 proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the
Ten'dan' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

796 I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to
attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They
asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards
I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible
to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast
women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets,
and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75).
We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until
we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were
asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many
were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person
on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted.
I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how
I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

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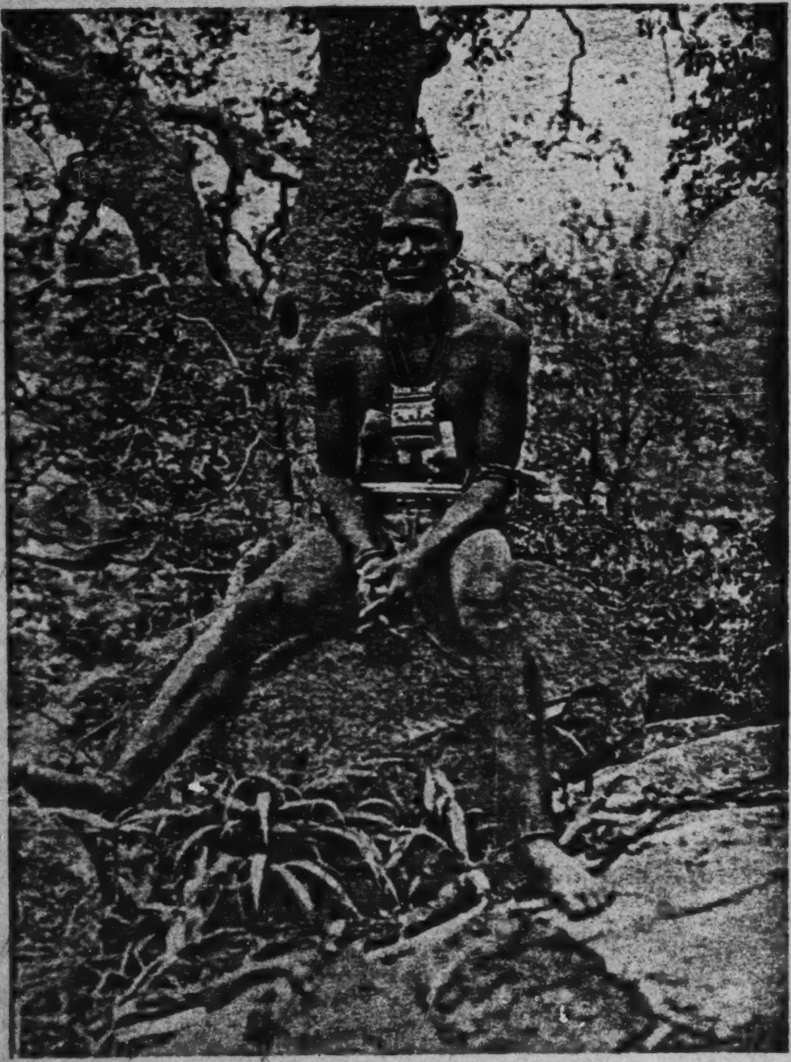

Fig. 73. The Chief of Teŋ'zugu

[facing p. 362]

might be retained, and that I would like a blessing on this task. I also said I hoped some day to fly over this spot, and I ended with the promise of a cow if these requests were granted.

I was, about this time, planning a solo flight from England to the Gold Coast. On 12 January, just eight months later, almost at the same hour, I was to look down from a height of 6,000 ft. through the harmattan haze on these same hills, just an hour before reaching Tamale, my journey's end.

To return to the cave. The *Ten'dan'*, after Aboya had finished what I asked him to say, spoke as follows:

'M'ba n bol i, bol i ba, ko o bol Takuru-nab ka ba tana zin Tɔŋ-nab nendan la ba dee Silmiga soma-soma; ko o kyen te tum o tuma sea ko o bort. O yi nye a zaag' on te i naf'. Fo me na mal o, ka dee i nafon. I yi mal o i na dee' i naf. Kye ku o yur' du gar' o tab zaa; kye ka naam, pabe naam. Tulg' de gbwaa o dan serge; ko o kyen len siliga, i to dee' i naf'; layem mora ban kab dol o a o bisi, ka bam n'deyir tir to.'

Translation: 'My father, I call your father that he may call Takuru-nab,[1] that they may come and sit before Tɔŋ-naba's face and receive the white man favourably; permit him to work at the work which he wishes to do. He says that if he sees all, he will give you a cow. Permit his name to mount up more than all his neighbours and let Chieftainship be added to Chieftainship. Do not allow fever to catch him any day; let him go and return (like) a hawk, that you may be able to receive your cow. Keep his children who will follow him, that they may receive and give us.'

At the end of this speech—which is rather amusing from our point of view for the prominence given to the matter of the cow—a long wail came from somewhere in the back of the cave. Every one then clapped their hands with a kind of masonic rhythm for the space of at least a minute.

Other pilgrims now rose one at a time, and the cave echoed to the old familiar Ashanti tongue. Their petitions were then translated into Talene, in which language they were finally recited by the *Ten'dan'*. At the end of each petition the pilgrim was asked his or her name and this was passed on, and at the termination of each request hands were clapped as before. This was all; the statement, the repetition in Talene to the god, a wail, the clapping of hands, silence, a shuffling or a squelch of a sweaty naked body, as the next pilgrim squirmed to his feet to tell of his troubles.

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[1] Possibly *Ta-kora*, see *Ashanti*, Chapter XIX.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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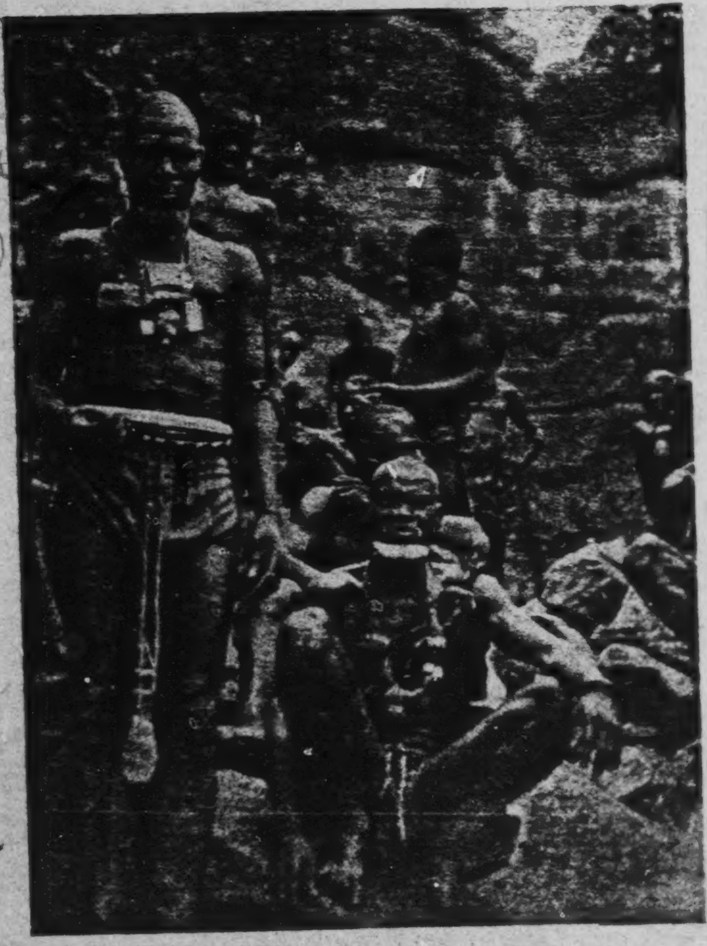

Fig. 74. 'The Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived'

[facing p. 363]

796 The following are a selection of these petitions; in my notebook; they are jotted down in the vernacular (Ashanti) of which the following
782 are literal translations:

'I was at my town of Mampon, and I heard about grandfather (*nana*, here a term of respect), so I came to lean upon him, that he might give me health, which I once had. I keep a store and I have two motor-cars. From that store I derive no profit whatever. As for my two motor-cars, when I ply them for hire and people enter them, I only incur debts and there is no profit in them. Because of that, and because I have heard of grandfather, I have come to ask him if he will show me the way to make profit. Again, I have four wives and they have either not borne children, or, if they have, the children die. Therefore help me, and permit my wives to bear children, and give my relations health and long life.'

Another: 'As for me, I come from Kwawu (in the Colony). Now the work which we do to-day is farming, but when I do it I get no profit. When I cultivate cocoa, and the trees grow, they die, or when the trees bear pods, they rot. I also have a store, but I get no profit from that; then I heard about *nana* and I came to lean upon him, that he may give me and all my relations life, my nephews and my "brothers" life, and that I may obtain much profit.'

Another: 'I am a clerk, who pays his debts, as my neighbours pay me what they owe me, yet I have not a copper (*capre*). I have four wives, yet none of them has a child; when one bears an infant, it dies. I have heard of *nana* and I have come to take myself and put myself in his hands that he may help me and let me get much money.'

Another: 'I come from a street in Kwawu. I have heard about *nana*. The work which men do these days is farming. I have a plantation, but I get nothing out of it; when the crops ripen, beasts (i.e. insects) eat them, and the cocoa-trees die. Whatever I do, I get in debt; therefore I have come to lean upon you, that you may help me and give me profit.'

A Woman's Prayer: 'I have come from a street in Kwawu, and I have heard of *nana*, and I have brought myself to lean on you, that you may give me life. I was in Kumase and I bore a child and it died, so I give myself to you, in order that if any one has caused this you may kill him, and guard me and let me bear another. If I do, I will repay you.'

Another: 'I have come from Mampon. I have heard about this god. I have a sickness in my belly; it never ceases; it cries out *ko! ko!*

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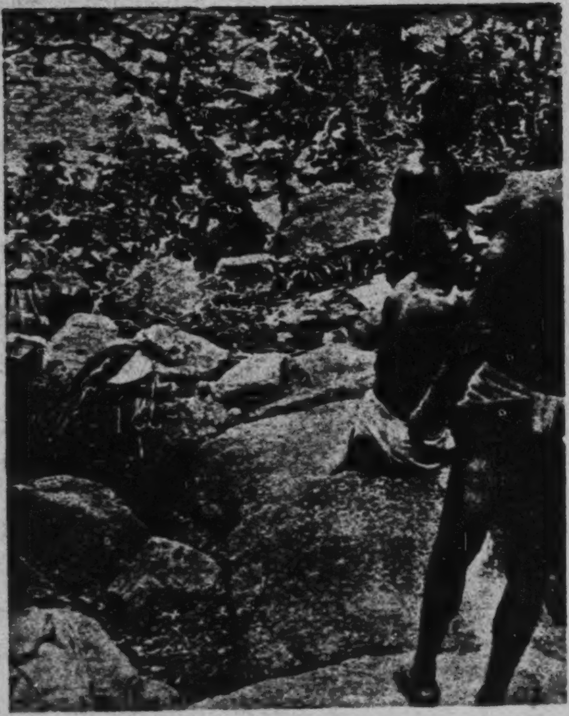

FIG. 75. 'Clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders'

FIG. 76. 'We came to the low entrance of the cave' [Facing p. 364]

Look to my sickness that it may cease. If any one is doing this to me, 796
catch him for me, or kill him and let me get health and strength.'

782
Another: 'I was in my town when I heard of this god, that he is strong, so I came to lean on him that he may help me. I am a person who drinks gin always and I am become a drunkard. Help me to stop drinking. Again, whatever work I do, I get in debt. If some one is doing all this to me, let *nana* catch him or kill him for me.'

When I state that these supplicants were educated men and women, 796
some of whom owned large businesses, well-furnished European houses, 177
and not a few of them their own cars, in which they had come hundreds of miles to visit this pagan god, the power and influence of the 771
old beliefs may readily be imagined. I need not multiply examples. All the petitions were based on the same formula—the god was *nana*, the supplicants had come to lean upon him (*dan nebo*). They were promised nothing. If their prayers were answered, they would bring back an offering. Nearly every one asked for 'money' or 'profit'.

When the service was ended, we all backed out again into the sun- 796
light and were led, complete silence being enjoined upon us, to the entrance of the second cave. Here the offerings were sacrificed over a mound so smothered in congealed blood and feathers as to hide its surface completely.

The *Ten'dan'* lifted up a round stone and tapped it against this altar. Each person then handed him the offering he or she had brought. Its throat was cut, the blood flowed on the altar, and the sacrifice was cast down. My sheep was sacrificed last of all. The photograph, Fig. 77, shows the old *Ten'dan'* about to cut its throat. All this was carried out
in complete silence. We all then returned to where every one had [302]
undressed, and each person was smeared with a line of red clay on the side of each cheek, between the breasts, on each forearm, on the legs and back. This ended the ceremony.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932
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[facing p. 365]

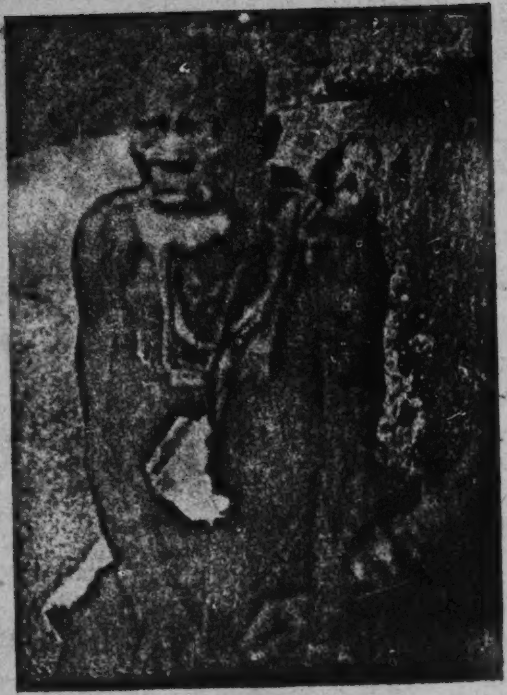

FIG. 77. The old *Ten'dan'* about to make the sacrifice.

FIG. 78. Talense women

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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NAMNAM

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
173 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*, I think he was *Zan's* son, but
it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse. Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin, Dayi, Kapeon, Too, Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwɛma* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab*
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine 624

---

[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under t Chief of Nangode.

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge
of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1]
report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed,
informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
[783] given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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NAMNAM

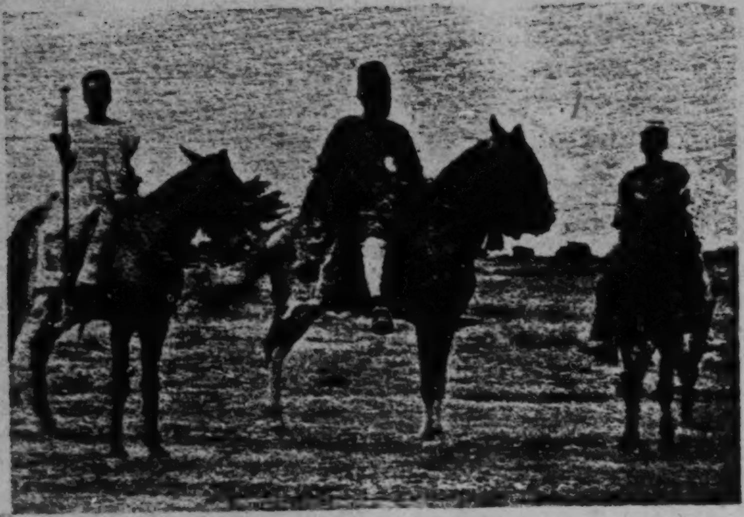

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FIG. 79. The Chief of the Namnam

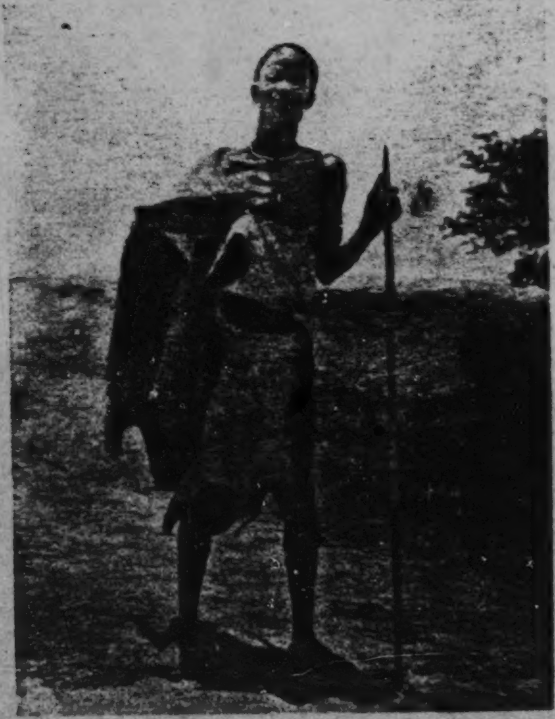

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FIG. 80. A Namnam *Ten'dan'* [facing p. 368]

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[3] have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

[3] [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over, but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike, even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

Suicide (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
793 and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains, a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622
624
793 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders, but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pak kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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NAMNAM

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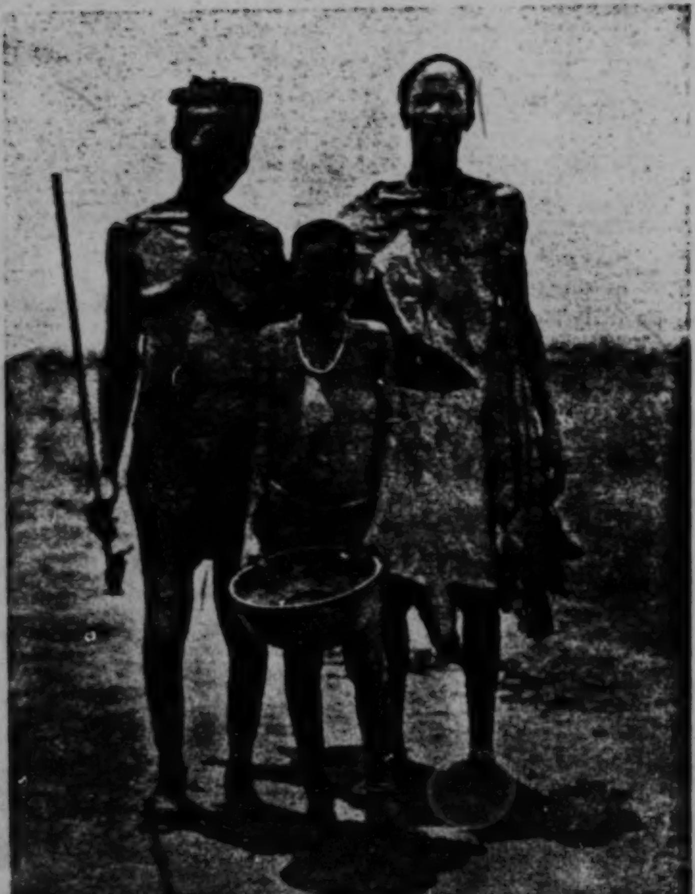

FIG. 81. A female *Ten'dan'* and attendants

[facing p. 370]

793 562 ***Woman Ten'dan'***: 'A woman might become a *Ten'dan'*. She has the right to offer sacrifices, and receive lost things. She sits down saying: "Land receive your water and all your things". After she has said so, a man cuts the throat of the offering. She has a calabash, not a string hat. She owns the land and can stop wars with the corn stalk.' (A female *Ten'dan'* is interviewed later.)

791 ***Rain-makers***: 'A rain-maker is separate from a *Ten'dan'*. He is called *Sa-ran*. We have none here.'

793 764 ***Ten'dan' and Funeral Customs***: 'The family of the deceased would "reach" the *Ten'dan'* and he would give them a place to make a grave; were he to refuse they could not bury him. The *Ten'dan'* would send the boy to mark out the grave, making a circle with a calabash and the pointed stick used for digging the grave. He will say:

'*Dakirig* (a grove) some one is dead, can I refuse to bury him, therefore may you hear, and let the "room" be a proper one that he may sleep well?' A sheep is then sacrificed near the grave.

764 ***Graves***: The Namnam bury their dead outside, not in, the compound. As many as twenty corpses may be in one grave. Men and women are buried in the same grave. The graves are circular with a bottle-neck. A boy or girl who has not any *nyere*[1] must have a separate grave.

834 A man does not have sexual intercourse with his wife for three years after she bears a child, i.e. if the child lives.

793 ***Female Ten'dan' (Ten'dan' poka)***: Akayiri, a female *Ten'dan'*, who may be seen in Fig. 81, told me the following:

'My ancestress was a *Ten'dan' poka* (a female *Ten'dan'*), called Banams. My grove is called Tinkyena; it is always a female *Ten'dan'* who is in charge of it. The calabash, which the little girl who always accompanies me carries, and my uncut hair, are the signs of my office. I own the land at Zoga. If the Zoga men want to fight, I will go between them, and place a corn stalk on the ground. Zoga has two *Ten'dan'*, a male and a female, but I own the land, as is proved by the fact that mine is the hind leg of all sacrifices; the male only gets a foreleg. Because "a female may kill a snake, but only a male cut off its head" (*poka ka kure wafo nwa zugo*), therefore, when I have given the sacrifice, the male cuts its throat. This male has no hat or skin. When I say that the land at Zogo belongs to me, I mean it belongs to the spirits. I am their servant. A male *Ten'dan'* may have a wife, but a

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[1] See p. 8. This only applies to a child whose mother is still young enough to bear children. [Nyere is a term applied to two children born consecutively of the same parents —Analyst.]

793 female one may not marry or even have a lover. When a woman is chosen as *Ten'dan' poka*, she will leave husband and children and go to Zoka to enter on her work, and the cows which her husband paid for her will not be claimed, as his wife has been chosen by the land, and if her husband claimed back the cows, he would die. I myself left home just a year ago." The Chief, who was present when this woman was speaking, said, 'We caught her and put the calabash and stalk in her hand, without telling her; she could not refuse; it was the word of our *Yaba* (ancestor). Her predecessor was my own wife; she was taken from me.'

She continued: 'Female *Ten'dan'* are chosen from one family; my clan is *loa* (a red squirrel ?)'.

This woman's small girl attendant told me she would be the *Ten'dan's* servant until she reached puberty and married, when another young girl would replace her.

793 I again asked the female *Ten'dan'*, if *Ten'dan'* owned the land. She
423 said, 'No, not really, the grove does, *Ten'dan'* are only children of the *tengwan* (grove)'.

Some Further Notes regarding Ten'dan' and the Land:

'In olden times, the *Ten'dan'* gave the Chief land to farm as well as lesser people. He, the *Ten'dan'*, would point out the place to make the farm and call the name of his grove, saying, "So-and-so wants to eat, help him". The *Ten'dan'* will turn over the first sod, and at that place, *kyili* seed will be planted, the leaves of which are called *bito*. When this farm bears its first crops, and thereafter each year, a basket of corn, a pot of beer, and some fowls are given to the *Ten'dan'* by its owner. As soon as land is totally abandoned, it reverts to the *Ten'dan'*, but as long as it is being cultivated, he cannot take it back, unless its owner offends. The *Ten'dan'* may give land to a stranger provided he
[326] lives in the *teya*. Before a smith used iron from the land, he would make a knife, an axe, and a nail called *pin kpa*,[1] and give them to the *Ten'dan'* before doing any work for others.'

The Godan: 'I am called *Ten'dan'*, there is one called *Godan* who wanders and kills meat. His work is to take people to the bush to hunt. When a beast is killed, he receives a foreleg; the remainder goes to the head of the section. The *Godan* "owns" the men whom he takes to the bush to hunt; he does not own any land. If one of my own section

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[1] Used by leather workers.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

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NAMNAM

[facing p. 372]

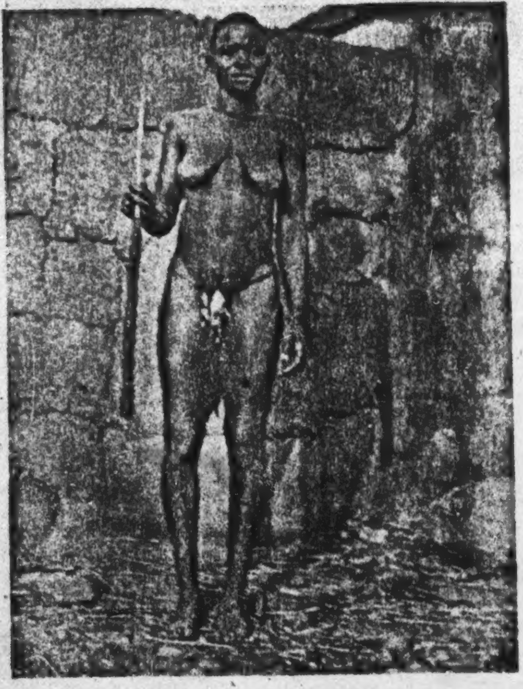

Fig. 82. A Namnam woman

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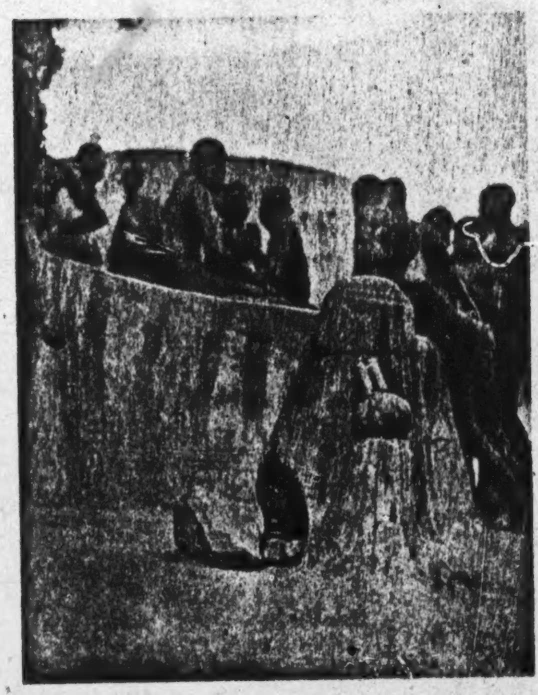

Fig. 83. Namnam children and shrines

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1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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NAMNAM

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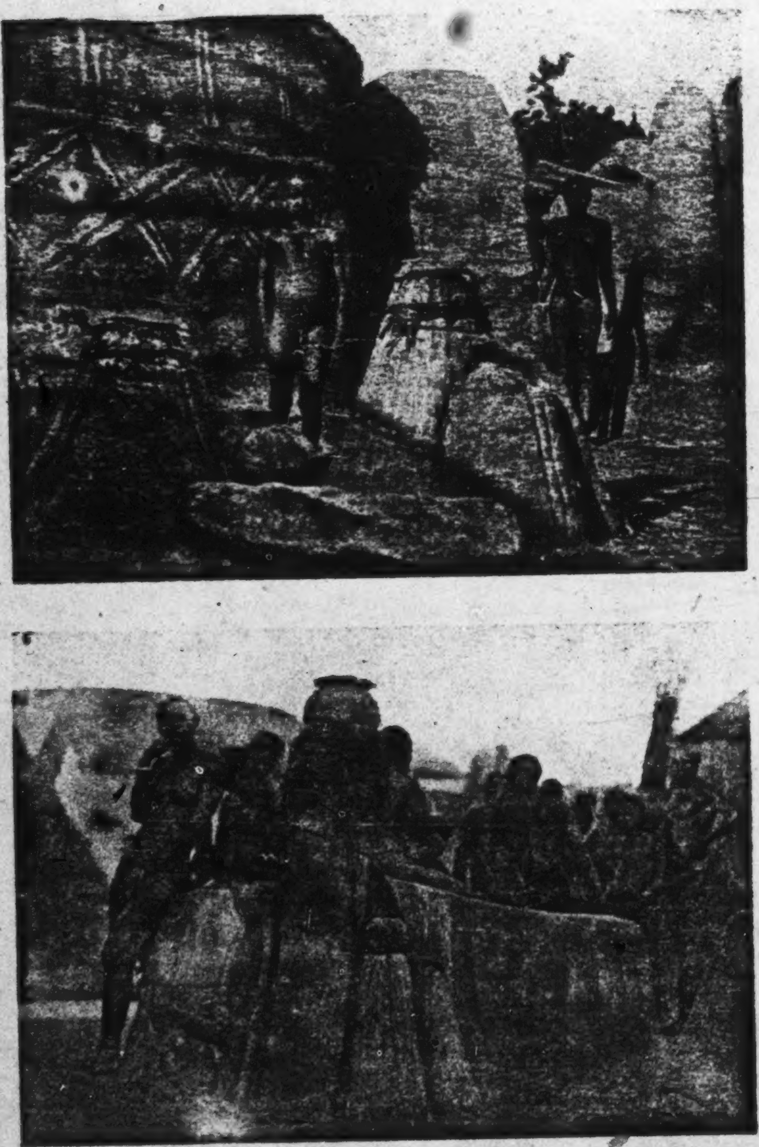

FIGS. 84–5. Namnam shrines

[facing p. 373]

NAMNAM

793

kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan'*, also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan'*. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan'* to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).' 793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan'* must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan'* has to be so careful not to eat new crops 173
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan'* of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which
131 inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern
161 Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated
territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular
Kusa, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been
given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to
themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the
clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure
171 from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate
the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its
totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen
trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan
taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later
632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in
certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement'
rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following
table illustrates the above.

103 *Town.*	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
614 Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

103

614 Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa).

614 My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

611 The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., 754 also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

173 622 793 *Traditions of the Kusase*: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe tey*) and that person would

173 622 793 die. He would tap the land with his fingers and say, "*Teŋ ya be, zagala saam ka nees teŋ la okom*" (If such a thing as the land really is, (here is) So-and-so who has offended and treated you as of no account, may you kill him).[1] The land will break his compound; his fowls, goats, sheep, children, wives will die. The offender would approach an Elder and "beat his hands" and ask him to intercede with the *Tenedan'* on his behalf. Chiefs now own the people, but *Tenedan'* still own the land. The first Chief of Kagbiri was my father. He was *Tenedan'* at the time when the Germans made him Chief. The present Chief is Ati, he is my father's child (i.e. son of the speaker's father's brother). My father, after the Germans made him Chief, used to delegate the work of *Tenedan'* to me, so when he died and Ati was made Chief we continued to do the same.'

177 793 622 171 At this place (Kagbiri) so far as I could see, we find the Territorial Ruler (who is not a foreigner, but one of the family of the former *Tenedan'*), and the *Tenedan'*, 'his brother', working in complete harmony. The Germans, it will be noted, whether by accident or design, had made the *Tenedan'* also the Territorial Ruler. The significance of the rather curious and suggestive procedure—which I have also noted elsewhere—whereby a *Tenedan'* who, by chance, has become Chief, delegates the religious part of his duties to another, should not be overlooked. The multifarious administrative and executive duties, which the Territorial Ruler is asked by us to undertake, cannot be wholly responsible for this. This may be proved by an examination of the position of a Chief in Ashanti, where these two functions—religious and secular—are combined in one person. Perhaps the bad example set by the majority of foreign Chiefs in these parts, who were always unconcerned with local land-gods, may partly account for this. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked, that by far the most important religious duties performed by Ashanti Chiefs for their people are the ceremonies in connexion with their own ancestral spirits, in which their subjects now join, and not those rites in connexion with the land, which has tended to become alienated, although theoretically they still belong to the Stool. Many Northern Territory Rulers, while ignoring land gods, would, nevertheless, lay claim to the land. The following are some further notes on the duties and privileges of the *Tenedan'* among the Kusase.

793 [787] 'When the rain does not fall, the Elders consult the soothsayer and report to the *Tenedan'* what the *baa* (soothsayer) has told them. The

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[1] Compare p. 370 (i.e., different practice among Namnam)

Tenedan' will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good 793
crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good
harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, 793
and the *Tenedan'* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) 782
where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a
Tenedan' is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made
on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to
the land. The land is not a human spirit.' The *Tenedan'* will say:

'"We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating, we cannot
refuse you yours, receive this beer." We pour out the beer and then [273]
kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow
(through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan'* will then ask every one to give
him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a
cow. Every one in the *teŋa* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan'*
will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children
too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan'* and eats of this
sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan'* and the *Teŋ-kpeem* (Elders of the *teŋa*) [623]
always discussed town affairs together.'

Succession to the Tenedan'ship: 'When a *Tenedan'* dies, his next eldest 793
brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest "son"; that
means the eldest of all the "sons" among the *Tenedan'* and his brothers.
In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan'*,
but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan'* had power to drive a
man out of the *teŋa*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would
remain until he lost everything.'

Tenedan' and the Land: 'A *Tenedan'* is in charge of all uncultivated 793
land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan'*, 423
saying, "*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I 425
wish to make a farm upon it". The *Tenedan'* will send a boy to look 782
at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn
up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the
farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and [273]
take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan'* to sacrifice to the land. This he
will do in his own compound, giving it to his father's *bagr* (shrine) to
give to the land, saying: "Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody
has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has
brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give
to the land that the farmer may get crops". The remainder of the
beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan'*
will also send his son to pour some on the land and say:

423 ' "Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm.
425 Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache
782 and belly-ache." '

'When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan'* a large
793 bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a
423 guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his "sons", but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan'* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan'* still "owns" the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'*, even if growing on a man's land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man's own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan'* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.'

793 *Lost Animals*: 'Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tene-
425 dan'*. I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries. Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. 'No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.'

'In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are "*Wen*" (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan'*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan'* only received a hind leg.'

224 *Go-dan*: 'We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost
624 a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan'* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

Kusase

not own the land, but is in charge of the hunting party for the time 224 624
that they are away in the bush.

'The *Tenedan*' would separate people fighting by spreading ashes 793
on the land between the combatants; no man may shoot an arrow 834
over this line. It is taboo to the land to have sexual intercourse in the
bush. Any one who found people doing so will collect a heap of leaves
and branches at that spot, and every one who passed there must add
more. Such a place is called *pey bok* (vagina hole).

'A woman may not become a *Tenedan*.'[1] *Tenedan*' have not any 793
distinctive dress from that of any Elder. There is no difference 462
between the funeral custom for a *Tenedan*' and that of an Elder.' 764

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[1] But see p. 371. [i.e. The opposite is true among the Nam Nam - Analyst]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

XL

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

The Family Compound (Yir) *and the Shrines* (Bagr) *which it contains*

351 171 KUSASE compounds (*Ya*, s. *Yir*) are roughly circular in shape, as are the huts which they contain, and are widely scattered like those of the Nankanse, Namnam, Talense, and Kasena, but there is one marked difference which immediately strikes the eye between the Kusase house and those already described. The former are not flat-roofed, but are neatly thatched (see Fig. 86). I now propose to describe a typical Kusase compound in detail. The main entrance which faces west is known as *zan pak nore* (compare Nankane *zenore*). It leads directly into the main yard which is also the cattle-kraal. The hut immediately on the left of the main entrance (it is sometimes on the right) is called *zɔŋ*, pl. *zon*. This hut is nominally where goats and fowls are shut up at night, but it is also used in the wet season as the place where the senior males in the compound sit and talk. When the head of a compound dies, his body is passed through a back doorway in the *zɔŋ* hut, instead of being taken through the main entrance. The *zɔŋ* (or *zɔŋo*) hut seems to figure largely on many such ceremonial occasions. Immediately outside the entrance of the compound is a grass-roofed hut without any walls, known as *suk* in Kusal (*Paka* in [776] Nankane). It contains a shrine called a *Wen bagr* (God's shrine), a circular mound like that seen in Fig. 142 at Tumu among the Isala. Let into the top of this mound is a sheep's horn and a stone. The stone is called *bagr bugr* (the *bugr* of the *baga*). The head of the compound and others sit or recline on this flat top, and in the very hot weather the compound head may sleep on it. It is sacrificed to at the sowing season, at the harvest, and when new beer is made from the first of the crops. 'The *Tenedan*' sacrifices to the land, I, the Chief, sacrifice on this *bagr*.'

751 Above the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut, through which the corpse of the head of the house is carried to burial, is a black cross (see Fig. 87) to guard against lightning.[1] The same symbol is put on trees in Kusase farms under which the farmer shelters, and for the same reason. At

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[1] The same symbol is used among the Isala to protect crops from menstruating women.

[p. 380]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

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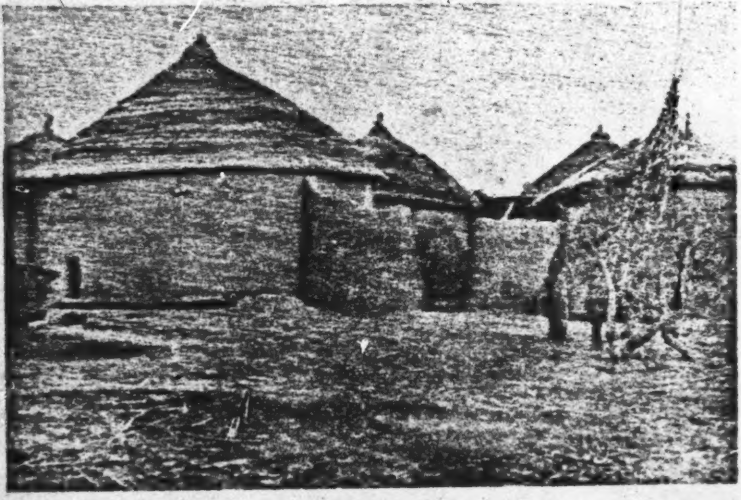

FIG. 86. A Kusase compound

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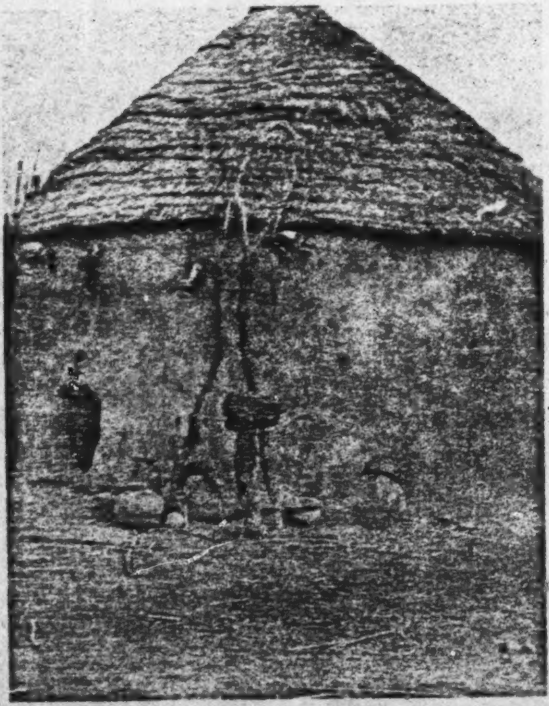

FIG. 87. The *zɔŋ* hut. Note cross above doorway [Facing p. 380]

751 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top,
778 and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round
with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On
[515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in
which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr*
(lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway
769 is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an
ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on
the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that
of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a
ba' bugr. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father
and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and
put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive
these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father
receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen*
(Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the
spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed
343 huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we
enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge
[347] of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside
342 this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a
horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog*
(compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other
342 called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The
778 second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the
755 *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God),
a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full
of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons
one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to
one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When
a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the
baa (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

351 751 782 342 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots. 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

342 361 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry- and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the latter. [778] He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

778 783 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

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Kusase

three days. At the end of that time, he will bury the "roots" which 783 the pot contains. Beer is then prepared and more roots sought for, 778 and two pots. A dog and a red cock are sacrificed on one pot; a goat and a white cock on the other. Water, in which the roots have been soaked, is used for making *sagbo* (porridge) in which the livers of the sacrifice are put. The murderer [illegible] the head of his family first take some of this food in their left [illegible] put it in the pots, after which they and any one else who has [illegible] a man (in war or otherwise) will partake of the rest of the [illegible] of the roots are burned and then powdered and put in [illegible] the head of the murderer's family (if he too has ever killed [illegible] one) and the murderer drink it. A similar sacrifice is made over these pots twice a year. When the murderer dies, the two pots are placed inside the *zɔŋ* hut, and the son of the murderer will continue to sacrifice on them, but unless he too has killed some one, he may not himself eat of these sacrifices. The following words are spoken when the sacrifice is being made:

'Medicine (*tim*) receive this offering and drive away that person 783 (the murdered man) that he may return to his own compound.' The relations of the murderer have also to bring a goat, a cock, and beer [793] to 'cover up the blood'. This is the work of the *Tenedan*'. He will make the sacrifice and say:

'Children have done something bad (*yele*) and blood has come forth and death resulted. Receive this offering and quench this fire.' The fowl and goat are sacrificed over a hole in the ground and the feathers of the fowl and undigested food in the stomach of the goat are buried in the hole. The whole of the sacrifice must be eaten at the spot where it is made. A child's bow and arrow is broken and placed in the same hole with the words, 'This is the bow and arrow which has caused the death; we have broken it; do not permit it to come out'.

'A man is very proud to have killed another in war, but not to have murdered one.'

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

XLI

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Rites de Passage

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IF the heir, who is the deceased's next eldest brother, is a *meŋ dan pud sob* (a greedy person) he will come, almost immediately, after the final funeral custom, to see about the division of the deceased's property.[1] He will tell the eldest son to produce all his late father's cowries. These the heir shares out among the sons, giving the eldest son most, because he is the one who will sacrifice to his father. The heir also takes some, but less than he gives to the eldest son. The eldest son accounts to the heir for all the cattle, sheep, horses, goats, donkeys, fowls, and guinea-fowls, which had belonged to the deceased, but once having done so, these remain under the care of the son, the heir drawing on them from time to time when he needs any. Though these remain in charge of the son, he has not any right to sell or lend any of them, and if asked to do so, he will say, "No, they belong to my 'father' ". The heir has already become head of his own compound, so he does not inherit the compound of the deceased. The deceased's eldest son will return to it and all his younger brothers who are married will quit, leaving only his unmarried brothers.'

Inheritance of Farms: 'The eldest son of the deceased takes the *saman* farm (near the compound), and his brothers who are "going out" take the *put* (bush farms). The heir has his own *saman* and does not take any farm of the deceased. Standing crops and crops in the grain-store are divided among those who had helped the deceased to work on his farm, but widows of the deceased who do not marry clansmen do not get any of this.'

Clothes, Hoes, Axes, &c.: 'The day the heir comes to see the property, he will see all these things, but will leave everything with the son.'

[778] *Shrines*: 'The eldest son will take his father's spirit, building a *bay* (shrine) for it; the heir will take the shrine of the deceased's father to his own compound and all family ancestral shrines and family ancestral "medicine". All personal "medicine" belonging to the deceased is taken by the son.'

The Leather Bag (*Kolog*): 'This is taken by the eldest brother of the

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[1] Among the Nankanse, the time this is done is from two to five months after the final funeral.

[p. 384]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his
father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally
used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they
must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any
man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings"
(*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon
will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has
ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut
them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know
they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some
one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's
widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these [586]
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back
the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then
remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have
been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the
clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new
payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two
widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives
the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise
they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows
and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries 614
outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first
husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

428 *Inheritance of Wife's Property*: All the property which a wife brings with her and everything she earns later at her husband's compound by her own individual labour—by brewing beer, making baskets and pots—on her death goes to her children. If she has no children her father's family will take it, not her husband.[1]

Son's Property: His brother takes it, including any wives. A father may not take a son's widow.

Rites de Passage:

787 *Birth*: 'When a woman conceives, we consult the soothsayer about
it, to find out if she will be delivered easily. When she gives birth, we
844 send a long piece of wood notched in three or four places (according
846 to sex of child) to the woman's mother. The husband may take this
himself, or, if he has other children, send it by one of them. This
stick is cut through at one of the notches and used for firewood.
Three or four days later, her mother will come to visit her daughter,
bringing some *dawa dawa*. A woman takes care not to be confined
inside a room. She will either go into the yard, or cattle-kraal, or to
the *saman* farm. Leaves are spread on the ground for her to bring
forth upon. The afterbirth (*zar*)[2] is buried in the compound farm
in a pot and covered by another pot. The heads of mother and child
are shaved on the day the navel string is cut. That of the child is
thrown down in the fowl-house, that of the mother in the *saman* farm.
The mother and child are bathed in warm water containing certain
leaves. From these leaves the child gets its father's taboos. If a
woman is confined in her mother's village, they would not dare to
bathe the infant in their medicine. They would send a messenger
to her husband, who would then dispatch some one with his medicine
to treat his wife properly. Neither the father nor any other male will
see the child until its navel string is healed up. When it finally drops
off, it is buried where the afterbirth was put. A child is not taken
outside until it becomes black, but as soon as the mother is better she
may go out and fetch water as usual. Sometimes a soothsayer may
say that an infant must be taken outside for the first time by such and
such a person. This woman must be a *poato* (i.e. a woman born in the
000 infant's father's town, a clanswoman). Five to six months after birth,

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[1] Among the Nankanse, what a woman earns while living with her husband belongs to him. Her private property, however, which she brought with her, belongs to her daughter.

[2] In Nankane, the afterbirth of animals is called *zale*, that of human beings *yala*.

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Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787]
father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782
then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

' "Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787
daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574
that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834
more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is
walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845
Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766
fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die." '

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583
barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586
them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul*. This sanction is very typical.

583 768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

584 585 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

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of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'.
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I 591
asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been
arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth
would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such,
for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom
would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner
would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible
for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants
a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [604]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows
for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back,
he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back
by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-pog*) 583
once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears
him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking
out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every
new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and
go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep
and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law [764]
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his
village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones.
When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an
egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law
they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne
a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets
of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child,
for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the
cows.'

Privileged Familiarity: 'A man may play and be familiar with his
607 sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents,
603 for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the
648 Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the
Mampruse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us,
and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with,
for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people,
however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where
do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief
of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the
filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right
into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat
607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse
each other.'

582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi
women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long
as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's
[587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still
alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow,
because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head
of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the
saman farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate
and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth.
The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot
and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.

[2] See p. 8.

[3] But see p. 508.

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764

facing p. 390

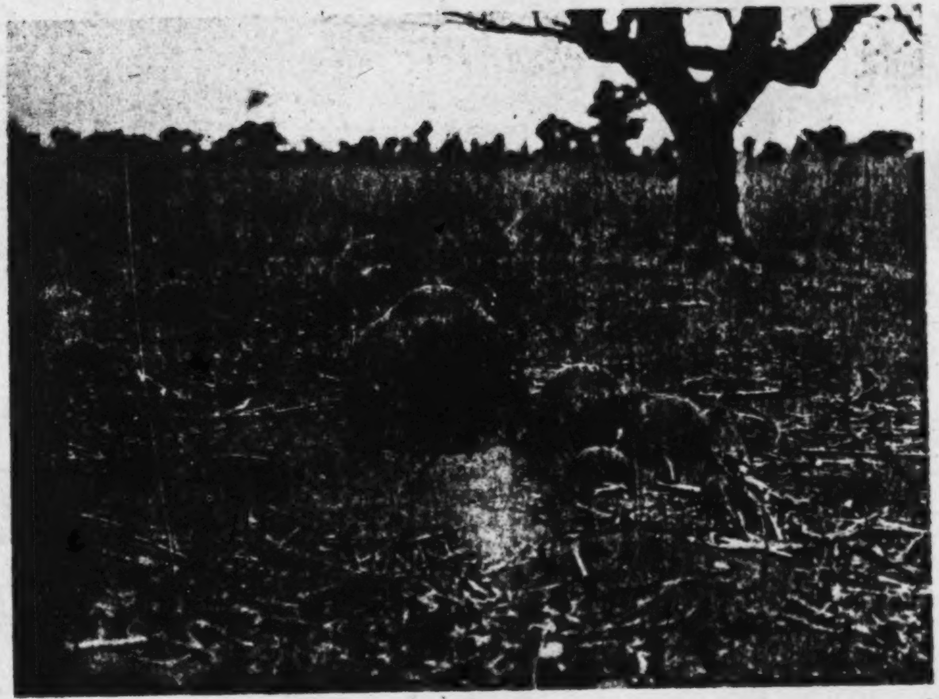

FIG. 88. Kusase graves

764 *biug* fibre girdle; children are buried naked; a person who dies of small-pox is buried in the bush in an oblong hole which is filled in.

[763] It is taboo to allow a man to die unattended. A person about to die is supported in his brother's arms. When a man dies, the corpse is laid out on a mat and his death reported to the Elders. The corpse is bathed in cold water, and a second time with warm water. The body is then removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter by the sons. In the *zɔŋ* hut, the corpse is dressed in a goatskin and a belt of *sug* and *bea* fibre put on it; the goatskin is passed between the legs and three cowries are placed on the pubes. It is then placed on a mat which is folded over it and the ends tied, after which it is passed out at the door, being received by sons-in-law outside who then carry it three times round the compound, if a female four times. The *bayas*
764 (sextons) then take it from them and bury it. The body is removed from the mat; one *baya* enters the grave and the corpse is handed down to him. A male is placed on his right side, a female on her left side, in the grave. A man is buried facing the east, a female the west, because a male rises up to open up the compound, a woman at sun-down is hurrying up to wash her pots and calabashes. When a male dies, and it is possible to get the grave ready, he is buried the same day. A *Tenedan'* encourages people to bury a corpse on the day of death, so that it will not be rotten and spoil the land. 'No one who has many brothers and sons can become rotten before burial.' Brothers and sons of the deceased begin to dig the grave, but as soon as the sons-in-law and brothers-in-law arrive, they take over the work. The *bayas* only walk about and superintend and say when it is deep enough. They put the body inside and close up the grave. If the deceased had 'medicine' his eldest son will take some stalks of *mus* and 'sweep' his father's body, after it has been bathed with tepid water, saying: 'My father, when you were alive, you had a thing which helped us all; it looked after our lives; you may perhaps take it away, so I am sweeping it (off you)'. He then brushes his father's body three times, and makes pretence of transferring what he has brushed from the grass brush into the pot containing the roots. Even if the deceased had an elder brother, the eldest son of the dead man will take his late father's medicine, but not any which his father had that belonged to *his* father; that is family medicine and goes to the heir. The goat whose skin was used to dress the corpse was killed being held by three persons and knocked three times against the wall of the *zɔŋ* hut, its throat being then cut to the accompaniment of the words: 'Here is material

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath [195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those who have lost their fathers.

764 765 'When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then [314] given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is 765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He 769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[171] [1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita*.

[535 831] [2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765 father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769 his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies. It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years, later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters' children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations, assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302] are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765 who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768 they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out. After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765 main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837 the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle. She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783 sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness. He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan*' will come and [793] sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201] in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it. The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

837 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood
783 drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the
765 woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'. There she is given new waist-strings.

765 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow
768 out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother. The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother,
602 and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives, my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos (*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[302
17] [1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

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carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764 or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602 When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya* (sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man, he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it, may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept, as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-fowl they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave. It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*) for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one, even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561 *ku-kweem* just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834 his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765 'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768 would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171] custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem* funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane *kaleŋa*), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*), and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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834 765 768 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property, it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women; any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 584 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

764 Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

and these are left on the grave. The iron heads of the hoes are washed 787
in water containing *grunyoa* grass (*nagwa* in Nankane, used to fumi- [783]
gate everything which has had contact with the dead). If the deceased [778]
had a *bakolog* (soothsaying shrine) it is fumigated with the grass.

Driving the Souls of the Living from Graves: 'Some *bayas* (sextons) can 791
see souls (*sis*) in graves. When they do so, they will take a potsherd 775
and put peppers and tobacco on it and set them on fire and place
them in the open grave in order that the soul may be driven out.'

This exhausts the information which I obtained while living with 000
the Kusase,[1] whom I found a charming and delightful people. I pass
on in my next chapter to describe the Builsa, whom Europeans know
better as the 'Kanjaga'.

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[1] The Kusase do not circumcise, nor do their women practise incision, unless 304
influenced by Mamprusi connexions, e.g. at Bawku. They file the teeth. The
women pierce the lower lip only.

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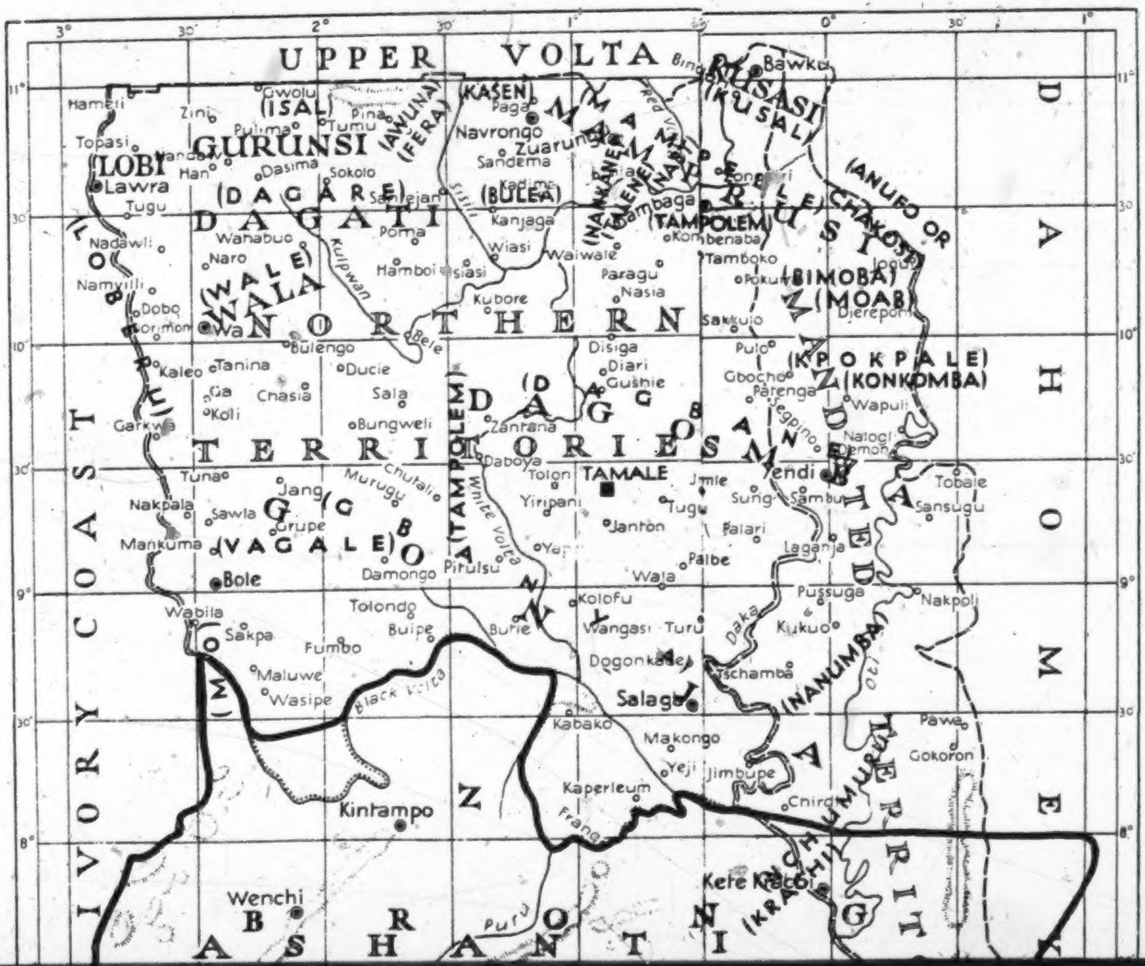
UPPER VOLTA
DAHOMEY
IVORY COAST
NORTHERN TERRITORIES
ASHANTI
LOBI
GURUNSI
(ISAL)
(AWUNA)
(FERA)
(KASEN)
MAMPRUSI
(NANKANSE)
(TALENSI)
(NABT)
KUSASI
(KUSAL)
(ANUFO OR CHAKOSI)
(DAGARE)
DAGATI
(BULEA)
(TAMPOLEM)
(BIMOBA)
(MOAB)
(WALE)
WALA
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GONJA
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(VAGALE)
NANUMBA
(NANUMBA)
(NCHUMURU)
(KRACHI)
TOGO
(MO)
BRONG
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Topasi
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Djerepon
Kanjaga
Wiasi
Waiwale
Paragu
Nasia
Nadawli
Wahabuo
Naro
Poma
Hamboi
Siasi
Kubore
Namyilli
Dobo
Dorimon
Wa
Bulengo
Bele
Kulpawn
Sissili
Sakkuio
Pulo
Disiga
Diari
Gushie
Gbocho
Parenga
Wapuli
Kaleo
Tanina
Ducie
Ga
Cnasia
Sala
Koli
Bungweli
Zantana
Garkwa
Natogi
Demon
Oti
Daboya
Tolon
TAMALE
Jmle
Yendi
Tobale
Tuna
Chutali
Murugu
Jang
Yiripani
Tugu
Sung
Sambu
Sansugu
Nakpala
Sawla
Grupe
Janton
Palari
Mankuma
Yapei
Palbe
Laganja
Bole
Damongo
Pirulsu
Wala
White Volta
Pussuga
Nakpoli
Wabila
Tolondo
Kolofu
Daka
Sakpa
Buipe
Burie
Wangasi
Turu
Kukuo
Fumbo
Maluwe
Dogonkade
Tschamba
Wasipe
Black Volta
Salaga
Kabako
Pawa
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Gokoron
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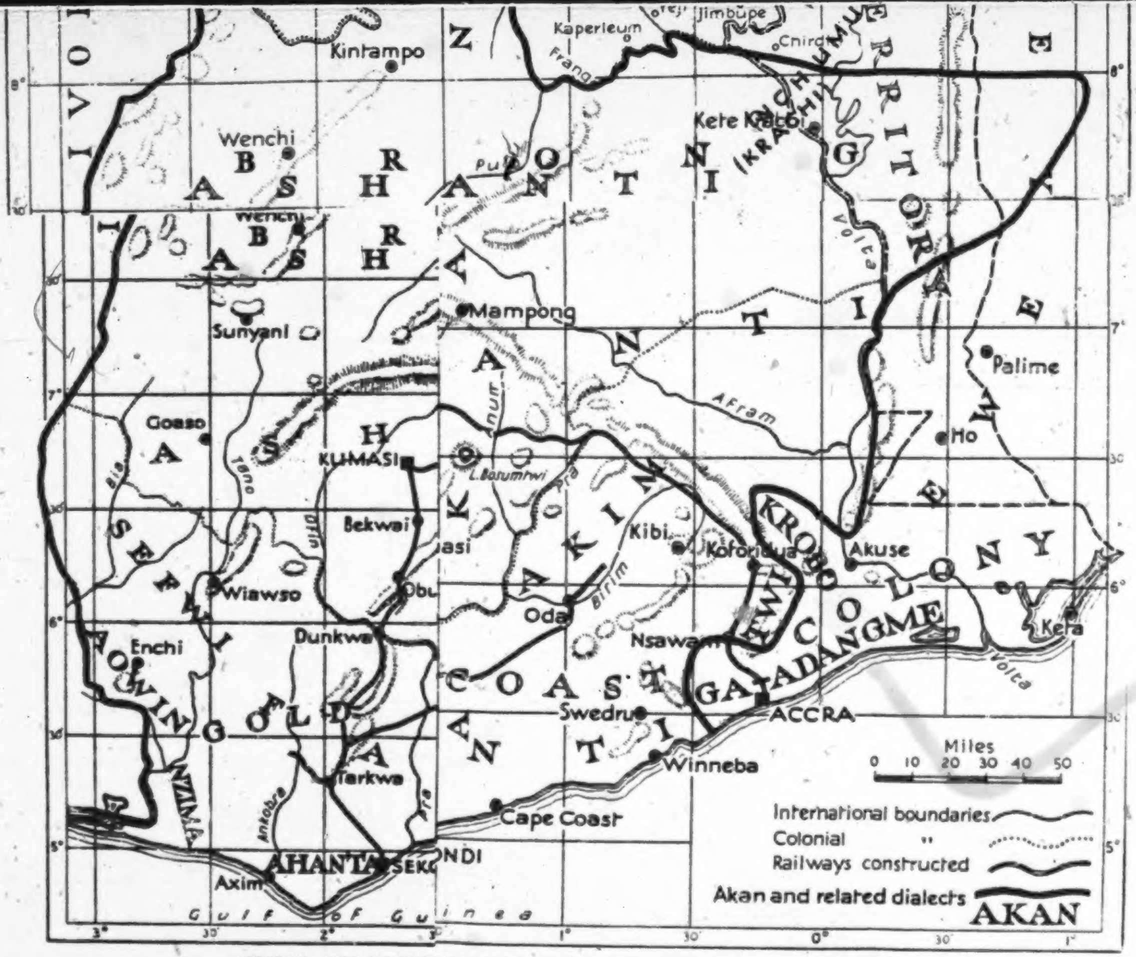
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Mampong
Sunyani
Goaso
KUMASI
L. Bosumtwi
Tano
Bia
Ofin
Anum
Pra
Bekwai
Wiawso
Obu
SEFWI
Enchi
Dunkwa
NZIMA
AOWIN
GOLD
COAST
COLONY
ANTI
AKIM
KWAHU
AFram
Birim
Kibi
Koforidua
Oda
Nsawam
Swedru
Winneba
ACCRA
GA
ADANGME
KROBO
EWE
Akuse
Palime
Ho
Keta
Volta
TOGO
TERRITORY
Tarkwa
Ankobra
Axim
AHANTA
SEKONDI
Cape Coast
Gulf of Guinea
Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50
International boundaries
Colonial
Railways constructed
Akan and related dialects
AKAN
8°
7°
6°
5°
30'
3°
2°
1°
0°

TRIBAL AND LINGUISTIC MAP OF THE GOLD COAST COLONY

[End Map]
L (C)
[Lower Half]

The names within brackets, thus, (BULEA), are those by which the languages are known to the tribes which speak them. They have been superimposed upon the official map published by the Survey H. Q. Accra 1927. The red line, indicating 'AKAN AND RELATED DIALECTS', is he re reproduced as shown on the original map, but it might now, in the light of our fuller knowledge, be extended to embrace GBANYA and CHAKOSI.

[End MAP (D) Lower Half]

1: Rattray
618

FE11 Tallensi FE11
Kusase

[Information concerning the groups which Rattray calls "clans" will be found in category 614.]

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THE DYNAMICS OF CLANSHIP AMONG THE TALLENSI

[p. i]

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMEN HOUSE, E.C. 4
London Edinburgh Glasgow New York
Toronto Melbourne Capetown Bombay
Calcutta Madras
HUMPHREY MILFORD
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY

[p. ii]

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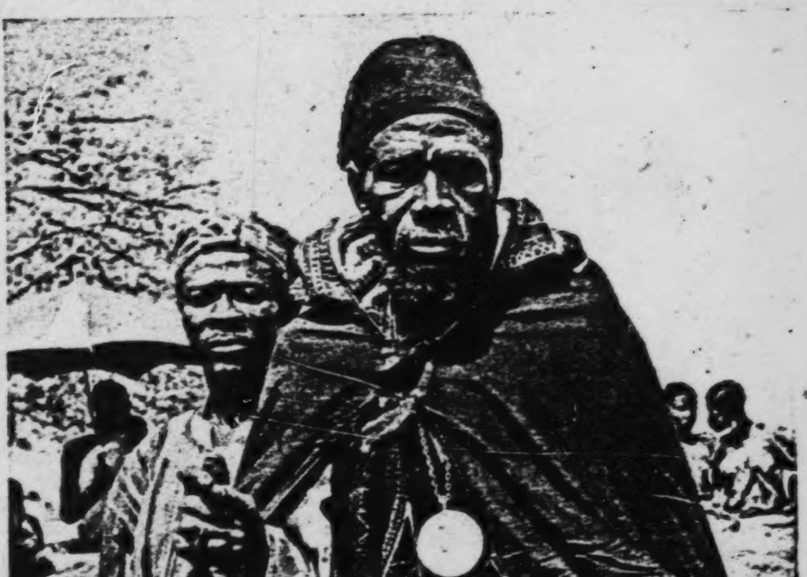

Na Naam Bioŋ, Chief of Tongo (d. 1941), wearing his red fez (*muŋ*) the chief emblem of his office, and clad in his finest ceremonial robes.

[Frontispiece]
[facing p. iii]

THE DYNAMICS OF CLANSHIP AMONG THE TALLENSI

Being the First Part of
an Analysis of the Social Structure of
a Trans-Volta Tribe

BY

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Published for the
INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN INSTITUTE
by the
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO
1945

000 *Hui Tzu said to Chuang Tzu, 'Your teachings are of no practical use'. Chuang Tzu said, 'Only those who already know the value of the useless can be talked to about the useful. This earth we walk upon is of vast extent, yet in order to walk a man uses no more of it than the soles of his two feet will cover. But suppose one cut away the ground round his feet till one reached the Yellow Springs, could his patches of ground still be of any use to him for walking?' Hui Tzu said, 'They would be of no use'. Chuang Tzu said, 'So then the usefulness of the useless is evident'.*

ARTHUR WALEY: *Three Ways of Ancient Thought in China*

[p. vi]

[pp. iv -v are blank]

FOREWORD

I

The writing of this book has been a harder task than I anticipated when I began it in 1938. It has taught me that the hardest part of an anthropologist's work begins after he leaves the field. In the field he is engrossed in concrete human activities. It is true that he can never feel himself completely at one with the people he is studying, however gifted he may be, linguistically or psychologically. He may make some real friends among his hosts; but he can never adopt their cultural values. If he did, he would lose that detachment without which anything he wrote would be of no scientific value. All the same, he is carried by the living stream of social life. He hardly has to stop and think. Thus the crucial scientific task begins when he starts to write up his field material. It is not merely a question of putting his observations on record. Writing an anthropological monograph is itself an instrument of research, and perhaps the most significant instrument of research in the anthropologist's armoury. It involves breaking up the vivid, kaleidoscopic reality of human action, thought, and emotion which lives in the anthropologist's note-books and memory, and creating out of the pieces a coherent representation of a society, in terms of the general principles of organization and motivation that regulate behaviour in it. It is a task that cannot be done without the help of theory.

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The task would be easier if social anthropology had a well-founded body of principles to which every new observation in the field could be related. This is not so; and though we all build on the shoulders of our predecessors, working out our problems with their hypotheses and findings implicitly or explicitly in mind, yet every new piece of field-work is unique in some respects, and every new monograph raises unique problems of analysis and exposition. There is inevitably, therefore, a large personal element in an anthropological monograph.

One of my difficulties lay in the complexity of the material I have tried to present. It is commonly accepted that primitive societies are much simpler than ours, both in their cultural make-up and in their social and economic structure. But even a very simple cultural heritage or social organization may be composed of a large number of strands and elements whose interrelations make up a very elaborate pattern. Simplicity in this context is much more a value concept than a scientific category. In social science it is partly a question of how closely and with what discipline one examines the data. I should have found it much easier to write this book at the end of my first tour among the Tallensi, but it would have been inaccurate in some points and defective in many. I did not know enough about the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Hill Talis, for example, at the end of my first tour, to understand its significance in the social structure. Indeed, this and many other matters only became clear to me in the course of writing this book.

000 There were extraneous difficulties too. In 1938, to quote Lord Hailey,[1] there was 'no systematic demand for research workers' in anthropology in Great Britain. Then came the war, bringing with it issues of far greater moment than the study of the social structure of a remote and unimportant African people.

128 114 The requirements of war-time publication have made it necessary to publish separately the two parts of which this study of Tale social structure consists. Though each part is self-contained, I had hoped that they could appear together in one volume. A considerable amount of compression has been necessary in order to fit the book to the Procrustean bed of austerity printing. As my concern in this book is with Tale social structure, I have preferred to leave the descriptive data pertaining to my central theme fairly full, and to compress material that can be more fully dealt with in later studies. This applies particularly to what I have written about Tale religion. It is sometimes said that anthropological monographs tend to be too long. Unfortunately, in descriptive work of this kind brevity is not always reconcilable with accuracy, however attractive it may be from the literary angle. As it is, anthropologists have to exercise rigorous selection in presenting the small fraction of their field material that it is physically possible to publish. One of the objects of any descriptive monograph must be to record material that can be used for comparative and theoretical studies. Excessive brevity (which easily lapses into facile generalization) has often proved a more serious defect, from this point of view, than an inelegant multiplicity of detail. Failing statistical devices, there is no alternative for the anthropologist who wishes to support his general statements with the evidence of observed fact, but adequate descriptive detail. I fear that I have not obeyed this rule as strictly as I should have liked to, owing to lack of space.

121 My object, however, has been a limited one. I have not attempted to give an 'outline' of 'the whole culture'. I consider that a work of that kind is best done in the traditional ethnographic manner of such classics as Junod's *Life of a South African Tribe* or Smith and Dale's *Ila Speaking Peoples*. It is a different thing to study those attributes of a social system that pertain to it *as a whole*, by contrast with those attributes that pertain to a limited sector of the society or a single institutional complex. Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* and Evans-Pritchard's *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic of the Azande* are examples of the latter type of study. But all studies in social structure or political organization or economic structure, being concerned with the factors of social integration, are necessarily concerned with attributes of the whole society. It is chiefly because these categories of social relations are the constant elements in all social activities and constitute the common medium through which social activities are articulated with one another that we can speak of a society as a unit, or of its different aspects as being functionally interrelated or mutually consistent. What I have tried to do in this book is to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure at the level of corporate

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[1] Lord Hailey, 'The Role of Anthropology in Colonial Development', *Man*, xliv, 1944, No. 5; cf. also A. I. Richards, 'Practical Anthropology in the Lifetime of the International African Institute', *Africa*, xiv. 6, 1944.

121 group organization. This is the framework of the political system of the Tallensi, which I have described briefly elsewhere[1] and hope to write about more fully later; and it is in its turn built up on the system of interpersonal social relations which I have called kinship in the narrow sense and describe in the second part of this study.[2]

As I am analysing Tale social structure in this book I treat Tale culture primarily as the content of social relations and not in its own right. I discuss customs, beliefs, conventional usages, religious values, and so forth, principally as indices of social relations. That is why I have not been able to make use of the concepts and methods of the students of culture history and of the psychology of culture. The recent work of Benedict, Mead, Bateson, Linton, and others in the United States promises to revolutionize the study of the psychology of culture; but as Bateson argues,[3] with admirable cogency, both the approach and the aims of that study differ from those of the study of social structure.

Except for one or two topics where they seemed apposite, I have made no use of comparative data, because my aim is entirely different from that of a comparative study. Actually, there is extremely little in the literature on the Voltaic region, apart from Rattray's and Labouret's works,[4] that is relevant, and the mere citation of information from other parts of West Africa would have no value in an analytical study. Africanists will see, however, that many features of Tale social organization are typical of patrilineal societies in West Africa and some Tale institutions have parallels in South, East, and Central Africa.

128 I have also kept general theoretical discussions out of this book as far as possible. It was Poincaré, I believe, who remarked that whereas physical scientists have a subject-matter, sociologists, for lack of a subject-matter, spend most of their time discussing methodology. I have tried to stick to my subject-matter, using whatever theoretical guidance I could find to make it clear and to interpret it to the best of my knowledge of the Tallensi.

121 Observation in the field showed that every significant social activity among the Tallensi is tied up with the lineage system. I set out, therefore, to investigate the function of the lineage in Tale social organization, and the result is this book. I consider that it should be the first task of every field-worker to give an account of the social structure of the people he has studied. On this foundation he can subsequently build his studies of separate functional systems, such as law or economics or religion, of particular institutional complexes or social mechanisms, or of the culture as a whole. As regards the Tallensi, I have no hesitation in saying that it is impossible fully to understand their economic, jural, or ritual institutions without a grasp of their lineage system.

While avoiding theoretical discussions I have drawn attention to characteristics of Tale society that have a wider theoretical interest. I was impressed, in the field, with the apparent stability of Tale society over

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[1] In *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard.
[2] Forthcoming under the title of *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi.*
[3] Gregory Bateson, *Naven.*
[4] Cit. *infra.*

121 the historical time span consciously recognized by the natives, that is, five or six generations, and probably for a much longer period. I have tried to show how this is associated with the lineage system.

105 At the same time it was clear that stability did not mean stagnation
121 in Tale social life. Nothing could be farther from the way of life of the Tallensi than a rigid regimentation of social behaviour. Observation of the lineage system in action suggested that its distinguishing characteristic, as a regulating factor in the social structure, was its tendency towards equilibrium. This operated in such a way as to leave room for continual internal adjustments in the social organization without endangering its long-term stability.

The tendency towards equilibrium is marked in every sector of Tale society and in the society as a whole; and it is clearly a result of the dominance of the lineage principle in the social structure. Looking at Tale society in this way has helped me to see how the social structure is built up and how its parts are integrated with one another. The factors that determine this equilibrium require further study. But for this a full analysis, firstly, of the economic organization, and secondly, of the religious system of the Tallensi is necessary.

It seems to me that the equilibrium in the social structure is made possible by the conditions of Tale economic life. The almost complete absence of economic differentiation, by occupation or by ownership of resources, and, in particular, the absence of both material and institutional possibilities for capital accumulation or for technical advance, mean that economic interests do not play the part of dynamic factors in the social structure. We do not find permanent social groupings or classes organized solely on the basis of common economic interests, nor do economic differences decisively influence the incidence of political power or of leadership in public affairs. This is one of the major distinctions between Tale society and more highly differentiated West African societies such as the Nupe[1] or European peasant societies. There are no rich peasants and poor peasants, no landlords and tenants, no craft specialists, public officials or money-lenders, among the Tallensi. Economic factors are neutral, so to speak, in relation to the social structure, the primary constitutive factors of which are genealogical, local, and ritual relations.

But if the equilibrium of Tale society is made possible by the economic structure, and if the lineage system is the chief mechanism of social organization by which it is maintained, the system of religious values is undoubtedly the supreme sanction of its existence. I have been able to give only an indication of this as there has not been space in this book for an extensive treatment of Tale religion. Ritual activities are so conspicuous and so frequent in Tale social life that I was bound to give a great deal of attention to them in the field. One cannot understand the springs of conduct among the Tallensi without a good knowledge of their religious values.

121 The structural equilibrium of Tale society is associated with its segmentary form, which I regard as a particularly important characteristic of the social structure as a whole. Elsewhere[2] Evans-Pritchard and I have

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[1] Cf. S. F. Nadel, *A Black Byzantium*.

[2] *African Political Systems*, Introduction.

tentatively described two main types of political organization found in Africa, a segmentary type and a pyramidal or centralized type. Among the Tallensi, who belong to the first type, it can be seen that the segmentary principle operates right through the social system as a dynamic factor of social organization. From one point of view it can be regarded as simply the obverse of the principle of equilibrium. It is connected, also, with the idea of polarity which plays a very big part in all Tale institutions.

These characteristics of Tale society are perhaps merely aspects of a common principle of social organization. I do not think there is anything novel or abstruse about them. Every anthropologist knows that kinship systems are built up on the complementary relationships of the two sexes in marriage and parenthood. The concept of segmentation derives from Durkheim.[1] So also does the concept of social equilibrium, via Radcliffe-Brown's and Malinowski's theories of structure and function. These or analogous concepts are common currency in contemporary social anthropology, and their virtue lies not in their explanatory but in their exploratory value. It is in this sense that I have used them.

There are other subjects of general theoretical interest for the study of which Tale society affords useful data. There is the problem of the range of social relations, in space and in time, consciously recognized in a primitive society without a centralized form of government and without permanent records of the past. I have touched on one side of this problem in discussing what I have called the field of social relations. The function of time in a segmentary social structure has recently been investigated by Evans-Pritchard,[2] and I have referred to it in this book. People like the Tallensi do not have the idea of historical time as a specific dimension of their social life. They do not think of the lapse of time as being associated with cumulative changes in their culture or social structure but rather as a periodical or cyclical rhythm of eternal repetition. They do not think of their history as something separate from, and leading up to, their contemporary way of life. They seem to live wholly in the present and immediately recollected past. But social life is a pattern of processes, and the time dimension is a significant factor in social structure everywhere. Among the Tallensi the time factor is, as it were, embedded in the social structure and, as with the Nuer, there is a direct correlation between the time perspective recognized by the society and the social structure. This suggests that the absence of a consciousness of history in primitive societies like the Tallensi is not due solely to lack of permanent records. There are primitive societies, especially those that have royal dynasties, in which a sense of history exists and is kept alive through folk-tales, ritual chants and heirlooms, royal ceremonies and praise songs, and so forth.[3] The political and social structure, including the principal political values of a people, directly shapes the notions of time and of history that prevail among them. Traditions of migration and of origins fall into place

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[1] Durkheim, E., *La Division du travail sociale.*

[2] Evans-Pritchard, E. E., *The Nuer*, ch. 3. Cf. also my paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', cit. *infra*.

[3] The large West African kingdoms—Ashanti, Yoruba, Dahomey, Mossi, and others—are good examples of such societies.

121 as myths that sanction or reflect contemporary social relationships and usages.[1]

In short, my chief aim has been to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure; but I hope that the material will also be useful for comparative and theoretical studies.

II

114 My wife and I spent nearly two and a half years in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, between January 1934 and April 1937. For most of that time we were amongst the Tallensi.[2] Our head-quarters were at Tongo, which proved to be an ideal base for our work. There we were at the hub of Taleland and within a few hours' march or ride of any part of the country we might wish to visit. We trekked over most of Taleland and also visited the chief centres of the neighbouring tribes, in particular the Mamprusi. As there is no linguistic literature for the Tallensi, we had to learn their dialect from scratch, with the assistance of a semi-literate interpreter and the scanty literature on Mole and Dagbane. It took us about six months to learn enough Talni for workaday communication with the people. By the end of our first tour we became proficient enough to dispense with an interpreter. Nevertheless, I know only too well that we reached but a moderate standard in our vocabulary and in our appreciation of the finer shades of thought and feeling that can be expressed in Talni.

We were the only white people who had ever lived among the Tallensi for any length of time and the first to speak their dialect. After their initial suspicions had been allayed, we were quickly accepted and soon had many friends. Our first informants soon got to understand our aims and entered into the spirit of our work with sincerity and zeal. They were mostly men and women who assisted us out of friendship and trust in our good faith. I wish to thank them for their confidence in us and for the devotion with which they instructed us in the way of life of their people. We remember with gratitude the patience, tolerance, tact, and friendliness of many dozens of Tale men, women, and children. They welcomed us to their homes, their domestic occasions, and their esoteric and public religious gatherings. We learnt more from them about humanity than I have the skill to write of. Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan, my first friend and mentor and one of nature's gentlemen, was a fount of wisdom. The late Chief of Tongo, Na Naam Bioŋ, was a proud, intelligent, and forthright man whose support stood us in good stead and whose great store of knowledge was freely opened to us. Many others, too numerous to mention, were our faithful friends and zealous helpers.

122 My field-work among the Tallensi was made possible by the grant of a fellowship from the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. I appreciate the privilege of having held this fellowship and record with gratitude the unfailing interest which the Directors (Dr. J. H.

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[1] As Radcliffe-Brown showed in *The Andaman Islands*, and Malinowski in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

[2] In 1943, in the course of other duties, I had occasion to spend some time in the Northern Territories. I found that no social changes of significance had taken place among the Tallensi since 1937.

Oldham and later Professor Sir Reginald Coupland) and the Secretary-General (Sir Hanns Vischer) took in the work of the Institute's fellows. 122 I appreciate, in particular, the freedom they allowed us in carrying out the research entrusted to us and the encouragement they gave us to aim at high scientific standards. I am greatly indebted to Professor D. Westermann, who was one of the Institute's research directors. His great scholarship in West African languages and cultures made his counsel of exceptional value. The success my wife and I were able to achieve in learning Talni owed much to a short course we were fortunate enough to have with him. This, like my preliminary training at the London School of Economics, was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

I chose the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for my field-work 121 on the advice of the late Captain R. S. Rattray. His name is written in indelible letters in the annals of West African ethnology and I was proud to follow in his footsteps. His pioneer ethnographical survey of the Northern Territories saved me months of labour.

I made Tongo our head-quarters on the advice of Administrative and 000 other Government officers working in the Northern Territories. My wife and I owe a special debt of gratitude to the then Chief Commissioner, Mr. W. J. A. (now Sir Andrew) Jones for the keen interest he took in our work and for many helpful arrangements he made to facilitate it. We have also to thank Sir Andrew and Lady Jones for many personal kindnesses. I owe my understanding of the spirit and methods of colonial administration chiefly to Sir Andrew and his officers.

My wife and I also remember gratefully the unfailing kindness and hospitality of Colonel G. H. Gibbs, M.C., Sir Andrew's successor as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories, who was District Commissioner, Mamprusi, in 1934–7, and of Mrs. Gibbs. A visit to them was a heaven-sent rest from the strenuous routine of field-work. Many discussions with Colonel Gibbs helped to broaden my understanding of the problems of government and social development in the Northern Territories.

Captain J. L. Mothersill, Mr. E. W. Ellison, and Mr. A[illegible] Kerr, who were in charge of the Zuarungu district at various times during our stay there, put us greatly in their debt by their readiness to help [illegible].

Our nearest European neighbour was Mr. C. W. Lynn, M.B.E., 114 Superintendent of Agriculture at Zuarungu. Mr. Lynn's friendship was a great stand-by to us at all times. He was at that time engaged on his now well-known survey of native agriculture in the Zuarungu district and we had many long talks on this subject. Farming is a subject of supreme interest to the natives; and though it does not come into this book very much, I should have made little progress in the field without some knowledge of Tale agriculture. I received great help from Mr. Lynn on this side of my field-work.

I have, in this study, stuck to my last and dealt with an anthropological 121 problem from an anthropological point of view. But I hope that what I have written will also be of service to Government officers in the Northern territories.

114 My first teachers in anthropology were the late Professor C. G. Seligman, F.R.S., and the late Professor B. Malinowski. Both were unorthodox teachers, in different ways, and the power of their influence lay as much in the points of view as in the subject-matter they taught. An anthropologist has to be in sympathy with the people he is working amongst; but he has to view their ideas and values objectively. He can succeed in this only if he has the conviction that his work is not only immediately useful, but represents a contribution to the general body of science by which his work is nourished. Both Seligman and Malinowski had the gift of making one feel this. Seligman's catholic conception of anthropology, backed as it was by great learning, enabled him to show his pupils what a vast and exciting field of study lay open to them. I owe more to him than I can speak of here, and without his encouragement would probably never have finished this book.

My debt to Malinowski is writ large in this book. My field-work was done under the inspiration of his teaching, and I have drawn heavily on his writings and on ideas debated in his classes.

My debt to Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown is as great. The final draft of this book was written while I was working with him at Oxford and every significant problem in it was discussed with him. The results are obvious in every chapter. My approach to the study of social structure in primitive society is basically derived from him.

000 I have to thank Professor Raymond Firth for opening up many new and fruitful lines of thought to me, both in discussion and through his writings.

Dr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard has a special place in my regard. I look upon him as my older brother in anthropological studies. I have, in this book, followed where he has led. His preliminary reports on the Nuer[1] gave me the clue to the lineage system among the Tallensi. He was working on his Nuer book at the same time as I was struggling with my Tale material, and there is very little in this book that does not owe much to discussion with him.

Mrs. B. Z. Seligman, Dr. Lucy Mair, and my wife read the manuscript of this book with critical attention. I wish to thank them for this most valuable service, by which they helped me to rescue many passages from needless obscurity. My wife has not only contributed some of the field data for the book but has also materially assisted in its authorship by comment and criticism. I am very happy to be able to dedicate this book to Mrs. Seligman both as a mark of esteem from a fellow anthropologist, and as a token of friendship.

I have also to thank Miss Phyllis Puckle for secretarial assistance; Captain V. G. L. Sheddick for help with maps; Mrs. B. Wyatt for her careful editing of the book; and Dr. Alice Meinhard for compiling the index.

Lastly, there remains a friend who has to be anonymous and to whom the quotation from Arthur Waley's book is addressed. Like many people concerned with practical questions of colonial government he has doubts about the practical usefulness of anthropology and, in particular, of a work of this kind. I consider it futile to debate this question and can 000 think of no more apposite answer to him than the Chinese philosopher's retort to a similar doubt.

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[1] Published in *Sudan Notes & Records*, xvi–xviii, 1933–5.

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

I have kept vernacular terms and phrases down to a minimum using 128 English equivalents, however approximate, for preference. But I have had to retain a few native words as special terms for lack of satisfactory equivalents. I have used the orthography recommended by the International African Institute, with one exception. I have used the symbol *h* medially and finally to represent a very open velar fricative. This consonant is interchangeable with *s* in Talni. Initially, this consonant is pronounced as in English, and is not interchangeable with *s*. Talni has neither semantic nor grammatical tone.

The Tallensi often drop a final vowel if it is not semantically significant and I have automatically followed this habit. Thus Tallensi, say *Gɔris* or *Gɔrisi*, *tɛndaan* or *tɛndaana*, *Yinduur* or *Yinduuri*, *yir* or *yiri*, *biis* or *biisi*, *na'ab* or *na'aba*, *Tɔŋ* or *Tɔŋo* according to the context.

OXFORD
December 1944

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Natural Environment of the Tallensi

131 137 THE Northern Territories of the Gold Coast lie entirely within the Sudanese Zone.[1] It has been variously described as 'parkland', 'savannah', or 'orchard bush' country, terms which indicate the sparse and uniform forestation characteristic of this zone. Stretching irregularly and almost right across Africa, between the eighth and the sixteenth parallels N. latitude, it merges into the Sahara on the north and is bounded by the tropical rain forest on the south.

137 132 The traveller in West Africa who enters this region from the south is impressed by the contrast with the forest belt. According to his predilections he will view it with pleasure or dismay after the massive and gigantic gloom of the forest. Here are no great trees a hundred or two hundred feet high rooted amid thick undergrowth and enveloped in tenacious creepers. The orchard bush country is a vast plain, in some parts monotonously flat, in others gently undulating and diversified by an occasional range of hills or a steep scarp. The tracts of bush, sometimes fairly extensive, which may be encountered in the less populated areas, resemble the secondary forestation of abandoned cultivations in the rain forest. Scattered trees, no larger than our oaks and beeches, man-high grass, and scrub constitute these patches of standing bush. In the dry season the landscape appears harsh and bare, and its general drab hue is hardly relieved by the shade trees in front of the native homesteads or the remnants of vegetation along the dry watercourses. The mud walls and thatched roofs of the homesteads seem to blend indistinguishably with the dusty country-side. In the middle of the wet season, when every footpath becomes a rivulet and every depression a bog, the homesteads are hidden behind ramparts of luxuriant grain, and the whole countryside is resplendent with the green of flourishing vegetation.

132 The climate of the Sudanese Zone exhibits two clearly defined seasons, a dry season lasting about half the year (October to March) and a wet season lasting the remaining six or seven months (April to October). Not only are there marked variations in the mean rainfall from one area

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[1] For a short account of the principal ecological and climatic features of the part of the Sudanese Zone that concerns us in this book, see Lynn, C. W., *Agriculture in North Mamprussi*, Bulletin No. 34 of the Gold Coast Department of Agriculture, 1937. Climate and vegetation are more fully discussed in Bégué, L., *Contribution à l'Étude de la Végétation Forestière de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire*, Publications du Comité d'Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française, 1937. These writers give lists of the common trees of economic value found in our area, of which the following are the best known and most frequently seen in inhabited places: Shea (*Butyrospermum parkii*); locust bean (*Parkia filicoidea*); baobab (*Adansonia digitata*); various species of acacia; the silk cotton (*Ceiba pentendra*); the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*). [132 137]

132 to another, ranging from 25 inches to 45 inches per annum, but fluctuations occur from year to year in the same area. Erratic or abnormal rains may so disturb the cycle of food production as to subject a majority of the population to severe privation. The temperature in the vicinity of 10° 30′ N. latitude and 0° 30′ W. longitude varies from a minimum of about 70° F. to a maximum of about 93° F. A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing, so much so that the natives squat shivering round fires or remain indoors until the sun is high; from the forenoon until about 4 p.m. the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature. Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive. The peak of the rains comes in August–September. It rains so heavily then that many social activities are impeded. These conditions of vegetation and climate fundamentally influence the economy and the social life of the inhabitants of the Sudanese Zone.

[101] This book is concerned with the population of a very small section of
131 the Sudanese Zone, a part of the region drained by the Volta river system.
The head-waters of this system lie in French West Africa. About 20 miles
133 south of the international boundary between the Gold Coast and French
Ivory Coast, which has been arbitrarily fixed to coincide approximately with the eleventh parallel N. latitude, the Red Volta flows into the White Volta. Between these two rivers, on the east and south respectively, and the Sissili river on the west lies an area, arbitrarily truncated on the north by the international boundary, comprising two of the most heavily populated administrative districts of the Gold Coast. The eastern third of this area constitutes the administrative district of Zuarungu, the remaining two-thirds the district of Navrongo. The Red Volta separates Zuarungu district from another administrative unit, Kusaasi, and the White Volta forms a natural boundary between it and the Mamprusi district, to the south of which lies the territory of the Dagomba.

161 As the following table[1] from the census of 1931 shows, the Zuarungu
134 district is the most densely populated part of this area; and as the popula-
137 tion tends to be concentrated in the centre and north, the actual density
of settlement exceeds the figures given. In some localities this is reflected

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[1] See *Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census*, Gold Coast, 1932, p. 3; and Cardinall, A. W., *The Gold Coast*, 1931, Population Map, p. 156. Mr. Cardinall remarks (p. 123) that 'A majority of the census officers were of opinion that the figures collected by them are lower than they should have been by from 2 per cent. to 10 per cent.'—a contingency inevitable in a country which is for the most part still pre-literate.

in serious soil erosion due to over-cultivation and in the diminution of 161
uncultivated bush land, so that firewood and other sylvan products 134
cannot be found within six or more miles of the settlements. 137

161

District	*Area*	*Population*	*Density per sq. mile*
Navrongo . .	1,551	120,870	77·96
Zuarungu . .	781	133,981	171·55
Kusaasi* . .	1,227	151,715	123·64
Mamprusi* .	2,719	61,520	22·62
Dagomba* . .	12,257	191,956	15·66

* Partly in Mandated Territory of Togoland.

In spite of the general similarity of climate and vegetation in the 241
Sudanese Zone, local variations produce significant ecological differences. 133
This is shown in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by the 134
differences in agriculture north and south of the Gambaga scarp. The steep scarp marks both a geological and an ecological line of division. South of it the rock formations are of sandstone and shale, north of it granite, quartz, and greenstone predominate. South of the scarp a form of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.), guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams will not grow easily and cereal crops form the staple food supply.[1]

The relative scarcity of population in the yam-growing districts com- 164
pared with the congested areas north of the White Volta may be due to 161
unknown historical and cultural factors, but endemic diseases have undoubtedly impeded population growth. While malaria, yaws, and leprosy, to mention only the commonest enemies of native health, are widespread throughout the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, sleeping-sickness is also endemic throughout the Mamprusi and Dagomba districts. In the central sectors north of the scarp sleeping-sickness occurs only sporadically near the rivers.

Topographical differences also appear to influence the distribution of 161
population. The high plateau which stretches from the White Volta 132
northwards is more suited for permanent habitation than the low-lying 133
flats which make up the greater part of Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the wet season they turn into quagmires, in the dry season they are arid tracts seriously short of water-supplies. North of the White Volta numerous streams and small rivers combine with the relatively greater elevation to drain the plateau effectively during the heavy rains; and though surface water becomes scarce in the dry season, shallow pits generally provide sufficient water for normal needs.

The district of Zuarungu is a typical portion of the Trans-Volta plateau. 133
A number of bouldery hills from 100 to 500 feet high are scattered over 131
its undulating surface. The most conspicuous are the Tong Hills, a small range stretching for about four miles just north of the river. It adds an

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M. and S. L., 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1936; and Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course
of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and
perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
[361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161] periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and
densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective
Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts
491 were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of
reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of
161 the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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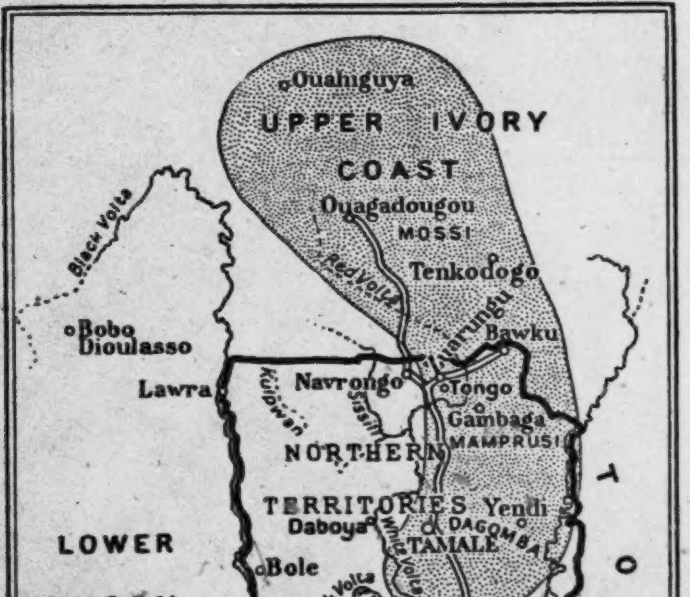
Ouahiguya
UPPER IVORY COAST
Ouagadougou
MOSSI
Red Volta
Tenkodogo
Kulurungu
Bawku
Black Volta
Bobo Dioulasso
Lawra
Kulpawn
Navrongo
Sissili
Tongo
Gambaga
MAMPRUSI
NORTHERN TERRITORIES
Yendi
Daboya
DAGOMBA
TAMALE
White Volta
Oti
LOWER IVORY COAST
Bole
Black Volta
Salaga
Volta
TOGO
ASHANTI
KUMASI
GOLD COAST COLONY
ACCRA
Cape Coast
TAKORADI
Scale of Miles
0 50 100 150

BOUNDARIES OF THE GOLD COAST
The dotted portion shows the area occupied by Mole-Dagbane speaking peoples

[p. 5]

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

101
619 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

167
619
648 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes comprise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[113] [1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

The institution distinctive of the autochthonous communities is the 171
office of 'Custodian of the Earth'. This ritual office, involving priestly 793
functions in connexion with the cult of the Earth, is found among many West African peoples from the Senegal to the mouth of the Niger. In the Voltaic region it is the exclusive prerogative of the autochthonous communities.

The ethnographic picture of to-day suggests that the population of the 174
Voltaic region was, in the past, constantly being redistributed by migrations of small groups. In the absence of written records that is all we can say. The fact that such migrations have gone on in the recent past, and are still going on in the central area, suggests that these migrations were (as they are) the result rather of ecological pressures and social forces than of large-scale conquests. But marauding slave-raiders may have been a cause of migrations in some areas. Two of the most notorious, Samory and Babatu, were spreading devastation in the north-western parts of the region at the time when the French and the British were partitioning the country during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Physically, culturally, in their economic organization, and their social 171
and political structure, the people of Taleland are typical in every respect of the tribes of the central Volta region.

General Characteristics of the Tallensi

The people of the central Volta region are of negroid stock. They are 144
not a notably fine physical type, but the best of them are attractive physical 141
specimens, as may be seen from the photographs in this book. Head
measurements of thirteen Tale men gave an average C.I. of 74·7. The 142
predominant head type appears to be dolichocephalic. In skin colour they 146
vary from black through chocolate brown to bronze, which the natives call 'red' (*bon-ze'e*) and regard as the most attractive bodily hue. Their hair is of the usual negroid peppercorn type. They have also the typical negroid nasal and lip forms, but the very broad, flat nose and markedly everted lips are not so common as in the tropical forest belt. Both men and women are of medium stature, the men being slightly the taller. Anybody over 5 ft. 7 or 8 in. is considered tall. Though they are mostly slight in build, all the somatic types with which we are familiar may be seen among these people: the stocky pyknic, the slim asthenic, the stalwart athletic, to use Kretschmer's terminology, are all common. Fat men or women, however, are very rare. Climatic conditions, density of population, and a primitive agricultural technique[1] all conspire to keep the average standard of nutrition low. In the best seasons the natives grow only enough cereals for their needs.[2] Their animal husbandry provides little surplus to exchange for cereals, and they have no crafts worth speaking of. The labour they supply to richer parts of the Gold Coast contributes very little return by way of foodstuffs to the home community. Like most subsistence farmers in Africa, their diet is notably deficient in animal protein.

[1] *Vide* Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

[2] This aspect of Tale economics is more fully discussed in Lynn, op. cit., and in Fortes, M. and S. L., loc. cit.

146 164 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. The [657] natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 515 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life [240] do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 183 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

obsequious among themselves. With all their respect for custom they are 181
not its slaves. Individual initiative, ambition and independence of action, 183
within the limits imposed by their social and material order, are common.

Tallensi do not question their traditional ritual values, but there is an element of what we should call rationalism in their religious attitudes. Their ancestor cult, an elaborate body of beliefs, rites, and ceremonies, is minutely woven into their everyday existence, but it does not pursue them with phantom terrors. On the contrary, it is the principal means provided by Tale culture for keeping the individual and the group on an even keel.

Stability; tolerance of physical hardship and discomfort as well as of human frailty and idiosyncrasy; a reasonable degree of conformity; a tenacious attachment to life fortified by an elaborate ancestor cult—these characteristics of Tale culture strike the observer at the outset. On the surface the Tale ideal is to have enough to eat, to be a successful parent, and to live at peace with one's fellows. Closer acquaintance, however, reveals hidden undercurrents. Beneath the overt stability and integration of the social order lie continuous tensions. Indeed the stability of Tale society can only be understood as a product of these tensions, created and maintained by the social processes that resolve them. Again, the natives' keen sense of the importance of social obligations hides a tendency to aggressive self-assertion. Tallensi are quick to anger if they feel themselves wronged, and are good haters. Their usual spirit of good-natured tolerance masks a proneness to suspicious watchfulness, and their frugality covers a spendthrift streak. These contradictions are subtly revealed in their religious practices. The strength of their ancestor cult rests not only on its predominant rôle as an integrating force in their social structure, but also on its profound psychological value for the individual. Tallensi react to misfortune with strong anxiety and guilt feelings from which they find a refuge in their ancestor cult.

This sketch of how the Tallensi strike a European calls for qualifications. It is couched in terms of our cultural values in order to help us to visualize these people in terms of a familiar vocabulary and automatic mental images. Objectively, from the standpoint of the people themselves, the value judgements implicit in our description lose their meaning. What we see as their poverty, dirtiness, poor health, and rudeness of culture they accept with equanimity as the normal conditions of their life. They have no grievance or shame about them. Being common to everybody, these conditions do not create rifts in their society or maladjustments in the individual as they do with us. They are in one respect simply part of the atmosphere within which the culture of the Tallensi (and their neighbours) develops its own richness and amplitude; in another, the material of significant themes in that culture.

Every aspect of Tale social life is conditioned by the fact that they are 181
a primitive peasantry. There is no division of labour apart from that of 241
the sexes. Censuses taken in various parts of the country show that not 463
less than 95 per cent. of the adult males are wholly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, and all of the odd 5 per cent. are partially dependent on the same source. Craft specialists work at their crafts only

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
241 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Tale-
land are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A
leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a
popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may
farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There
may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or
two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland
to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than
was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it
impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from
their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even
women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale,
Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some
carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to
work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the
Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of
labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The
experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration
from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked
up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years,
a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on
account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often
goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agri-
cultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get
away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny
in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity,
and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who
return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate
many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

464

relatives may impel a young man to run away to 'Kumasi', the symbol for everything south of the Black Volta. 167

Thus one finds that about one man in three has at some time or other 177 in the past two decades visited these, to the Tallensi, still foreign parts. In the settlements near the main roads the dry-season migration of young 167 men may, according to rough estimates made in 1936–7, reach over 10 per cent. of the adult male population. Administrative officers estimate that in 1938–9 about 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were working abroad with the apparent intention of staying away for a lengthy period. These men bring back small sums of money, ranging from a few shillings to four or five pounds, as well as clothes and other miscellaneous trade goods. Money and clothes[1] are eagerly desired by the Tallensi. These are the most important new wants that have grown up recently as a result of culture contact. Foreign utensils, implements, or tools have hardly entered the productive system of the natives. The foreign ideas and exotic information brought back by the young men arouse curiosity but have made no appreciable impression on the native scheme of values and beliefs, or on their practical knowledge. Labour migrants remain strongly attached to their families and natal settlements, and it is always assumed that they will eventually return. Hitherto, among the Tallensi, very few have been lost to their natal communities; and when they do return, they resume the traditional way of life. Though they are one of the influences modifying the strict letter of custom in minor respects, they are not a disintegrating ferment

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[1] Tallensi maintain that there has been a tremendous increase in the amount [191] of clothes worn since the white man opened up the country, and especially since the last war. They point out that nowadays every small boy has a loin- 177 cloth for festive occasions, whereas even twenty years ago a youth only obtained one when he began courting, at the age of 18 or 19. In those days the ordinary man rarely had a cloth or tunic. His only garb was an animal skin. Nowadays every man has at least one cloth to cover himself at night and to wear during the day when he is not working, and many have two or three garments—a cloth and a tunic, for instance—while well-to-do men have considerable wardrobes. All cotton goods are imported. The Mossi cloth used in former days is still a favourite, especially for loin-cloths and caps, and tunics for special wear. The bulk of it is still imported from French territory, but there are some Mossi weavers at Bolaga and Zuarungu who add to the supply. However, quite half if not more of the cotton goods worn by Tallensi is of European origin and the demand is increasing. I once listed all the clothes worn by a number of men and women from one of the most prosperous communities of Taleland as they passed my rest house on the way to the market. The figures are instructive as an indication both of the standard of living of the Tallensi and of the degree to which acculturation in this sphere has progressed. The sample consisted of 62 men and 64 women. Of the men, 35 (56 per cent.) wore cover-cloths of European cotton print; 18 (29 per cent.) wore Mossi cloths; 9 (15 per cent.) wore skins; 8 (13 per cent.) wore khaki shorts, several of them on top of native loin-cloths; the remainder wore native loin-cloths; 19 (30 per cent.) wore some form of European head-gear; 30 (48 per cent.) wore native-made caps. Thus 85 per cent. of these men were clothed, but none of them wholly. Of the women 12 (15 per cent.) wore a piece of cotton print and one wore a Mossi cloth—a very large incidence such as would not be found in most other Tale communities. The rest were nude, except for the perineal band and back-flap. As people dress up specially for market day, these figures are not indicative of everyday habits. The greater conservatism of women suggested by these figures is due in great part to their lack of opportunities for obtaining cash incomes for personal use.

177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Boləga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these
648 parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and
local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest
houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out
justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves,
in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people.
Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative
officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas
of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on
this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion
was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters,
and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but
also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think
of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary
authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 636
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the 175
embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared,
but some of the values connected with it remain. The other
institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They
function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for
they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often
an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political
troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between
interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those
created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic
changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth
have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows
on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities
due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction
in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is
commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were
established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of
economic development was started, and social services were multiplied.
The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF 'TALLENSI'

Tribal Divisions

101 TALELAND is, as we have seen, merely a portion of a far greater, ecologically uniform region, marked off only by an artificial boundary. The same kind of subsistence farming is practised throughout the whole region of which Taleland forms a part. The culture of its inhabitants likewise represents a far more widely spread type. Before we embark on our sociological analysis we must know what sort of a unit we are dealing with. Have the people of Taleland any form of cultural or structural unity and singularity that differentiates them from neighbouring sociogeographical areas? Or are they a fraction of a greater society arbitrarily circumscribed to suit the convenience of the field worker?

101 The question is not so easy to answer as might be expected. For the natives of Taleland, like the other so-called 'tribes' north of the Gambaga 619 scarp, have no obvious political unity distinguishing them from like political units. In terms of their own political and social organization there is no single government exercising authority over all the people of Taleland, and only over them, within their own defined territory. This has been the most serious obstacle confronting British administration in this area.[1] We must approach the problem from a different angle.

197 In the literature and in administrative practice the inhabitants of 101 Taleland are called the Tallensi[2] and are distinguished as a 'tribe' from neighbouring 'tribes', the Kusaasi on the east, the Namnam or Nabdam on the north, the Nankansi or Gorənsi (in Talni, *Gɔrisi*) on the west, the Mamprusi on the south of them. All these groups speak dialects of Mole-Dagbane. But Kusal, Nabte, and Gɔrni are closely akin to Mole, whereas Talni and Mampurule have closer affinities with Dagbane. These dialect areas have no strict boundaries. At the frontiers one passes through [191] intermediate zones where the people speak intermediate dialects or are equally familiar with two contiguous dialects. But it is clearly recognized, both by the natives and by outside observers, that the tribes enumerated above have more in common with one another linguistically than any of them have with the peoples of the same cultural type farther away, such as the Woolisi (usually called the Kassena in the literature and by the

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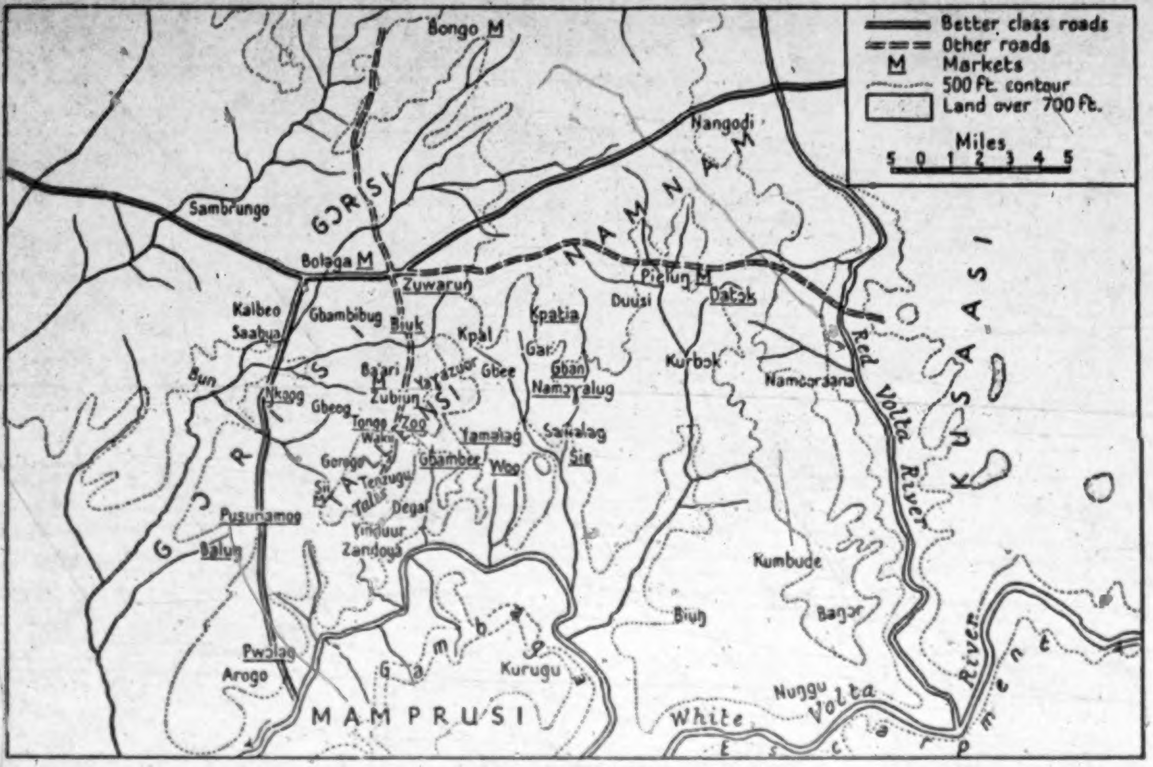
[1] For an outline of Tale political organization and a discussion of some of the theoretical problems raised by it, see *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Oxford, 1940.

[2] *Sc.* Talense (Rattray), Talansi (Cardinall), sing. Talenga, Talanga. This form, correctly Talənsi, sing. Talaŋa, is taken from the dialect of the Zuarungu district (Gorəni, or in the dialect of the Tallensi, Gɔrni). The artificial spelling I use has been adopted to show that the Tallensi regard this phonetic form as a foreigners' version of the name by which they designate themselves. In their own dialect (Talni) they call themselves Talis, sing. Taləŋa. Talni forms will henceforth be used for all vernacular words in the text. [p. 14]

[p.15]


Better class roads
Other roads
M Markets
500 ft. contour
Land over 700 ft.
Miles
5 0 1 2 3 4 5
Bongo M
Nangodi
NAMNAM
Sambrungo
GORISI
Bolaga M
Zuwarun
Pielun M
Datok
Duusi
Kalbeo
Saabua
Gbambibug
Biuk
Kpal
Kpatia
Gar
Gban
Kurbok
Namooraana
Red Volta River
KUSASI
Bun
Ba'ari M
Yarazuor
Gbee
Namoyalug
Nkoog
Gbeog
Zubiun
TALENSI
Tongo
Zoo
Wakii
Yamalag
Samalag
Sie
Gorogo
Gbambee
Woo
Tenzugu
Sii M
Talis
Degal
GURISI
Pusunamog
Yinduur
Zandoya
Balun
Kumbude
Biun
Bagor
Gambaga
Pwolag
Arogo
Kurugu
MAMPRUSI
Nunggu
White Volta River
Escarpment

SKETCH-MAP OF TALELAND

Note: All place-names are spelt phonetically according to their Talni form.

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[facing p. 16]

PLATE I

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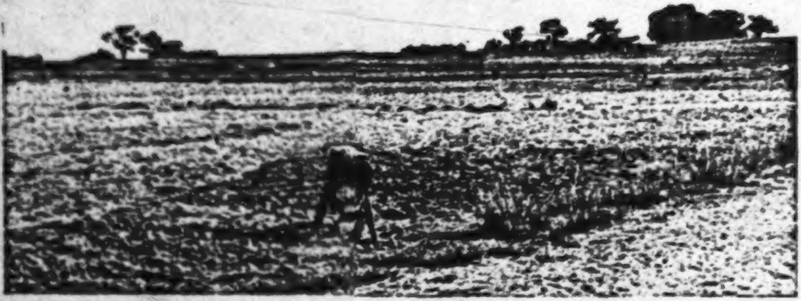
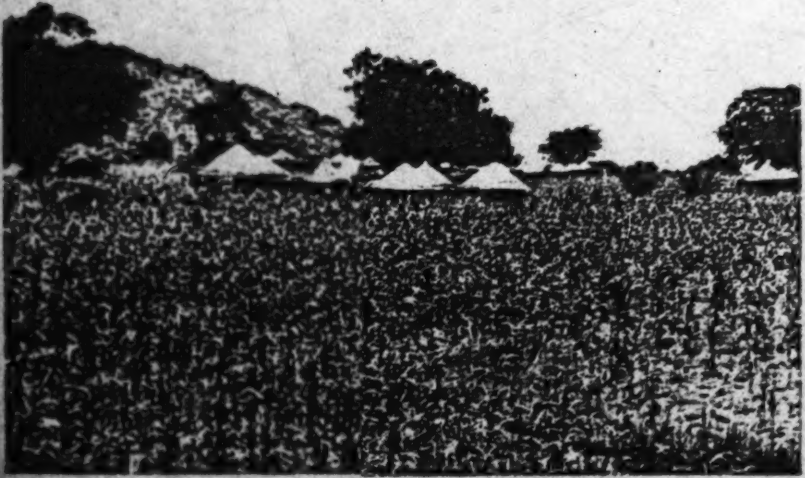


(*a*) Outskirts of a Tale settlement in the late dry season. In the distance (right) a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*).



(*b*) View of a Tale settlement about the middle of the rainy season.

197 Administration) of Navrongo or the Bulisi (Builsa) of Kanjaga district,
101 whose tongues are not intelligible to Mole or Dagbane speakers.

In the same way it is well known that the Kusaasi, Namnam, Gorɔnsi,
171 and Tallensi are more closely allied in culture *inter se* than they are with
101 other neighbouring 'tribes'. In this part of West Africa one can often tell
[304] where a person comes from by his facial cicatrizations.[1] People of these four groups all have the same facial marks, a slashed scar (*bɛn*) running diagonally downwards from the bridge of the nose across one or both cheeks, which are, in addition, often embellished with a neat tracery of tiny incisions (*yiis*) spreading in herring-bone lines over the forehead and down to the neck. These markings are an emblem of their cultural uniformity, as compared with neighbouring groups. Mamprusi and Mossi, frankly contemptuous of their nakedness and poverty, lump them all together under the sobriquet 'Gorɔnsi'. Since the coming of the white man they have been called 'the Farafaras' and they are beginning to accept this appellation, which is said to be derived from one of their customary expressions of greeting, *ni i fara-fara-fara*.

197 There are, in short, no precise linguistic or cultural boundaries between
these four groups. Nor are there precise political or structural boundaries
101 between them. They overlap with one another in every way; and further
171 research would, I am certain, show that the Kusaasi, Namnam, and
619 Gorɔnsi also overlap to some extent with their neighbours other than the Tallensi. At the same time, each of these four groups is considered by members of the other three and by its own members to be in some way a distinct territorial, linguistic, and cultural group. It is, however, a distinction of degree, not of kind. Each group comprises a cluster of communities which have more in common among themselves, linguistically and in the details and nuances of custom, belief, and values, than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. They have closer social ties among themselves than any of them have with their other neighbours, though they have no apparent political unity and never, in the past, combined for war against external enemies or for common defence.

619 This largely implicit feeling of their difference from neighbouring
101 dialect areas which prevails amongst such a cluster of communities is not
based on a conception of tribal unity. Sharp distinctions of custom,
621 belief, and values, as well as of structural relationships, are recognized within the cluster. They are, indeed, of fundamental importance for the social interrelations of the communities making up the cluster. On the same principle as before, the cluster is subdivided into smaller constellations of communities which have more in common, closer bonds, *inter se*, than any of them have with other communities. Culturally, and structurally, as we shall discover in the course of our study, society in the Volta region is built up on a segmentary principle. The degree of unity, coherence, autonomy, or singularity of a socio-geographic segment of

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[1] These distinguishing facial marks were noted by the first European traveller who visited the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the Frenchman Binger. Cf. Binger, Capitaine, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, 1893, vol. ii, pp. 34–7. For diagrams of these markings see Armitage, C. H., *The Tribal Markings and Marks of Adornment of the Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1924, especially figs. 4, 6, 26.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE II

[facing p. 17]

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(*a*) A Tale grandmother.

(*b*) A pair of marriageable maidens dressed up for a visit to the market.

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619
to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101
reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are
identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621
This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101
the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648
is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101
settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gɔrni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common.
The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191]
Gorni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with
Goris. Gorni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197]
them and their Gore neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101
The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609
Gɔrəŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, propinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101
is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

101 in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

101 304 Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Taləŋ in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Goris (*Tam Talis pu ɛt lan—Gɔris tuomər nla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

361 103 133 621 To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map p. 15), one of the most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gore neighbours, on the other is Yayazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sɔk and Yaməlag, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tɛnzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Dkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santeŋ, Teelag, Syek, and Woyar, separated from Tɛnzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawalag. Between Zoo and Yaməlag lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yaməlag occupies a shallow depression between hillocks.
361 103 621 Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before the homesteads of Sawaləg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can

continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔɣalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361
or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with 103
scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a popula- 161
tion of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174
habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrɔg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101
sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186
the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tɛnzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tɛnzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Boog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔmɛra Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔyaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔyaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamalag and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yaɣasuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔmɛra namoorət*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalag, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbɛra Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛɣɔn-lɛbɛgət*.)[1]

[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

101 The Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari people, however, do not accept this classifica-
184 tion, which expresses the orientation of Tɛnzugu, without qualifications.
186 The former admit their close territorial and political assimilation to Tongo, but they insist on their cultural distinctness, associating themselves, in this respect, with the Hill Talis. They quote in support other discriminatory indices than the Great Festivals. Firstly, like all the Talis, they do not have the avoidances of the first-born children distinctive of all Namoos (see below, Chap. V). On the contrary, all people of Zubiuŋ descent avoid eating tortoise (*pakur*), turtle (*mieŋ*) and cat (*sakoo*), the first two of which are also taboo to most of the Hill Talis. Secondly, they cite their mortuary and funeral ritual, the two points of crucial divergence being that they, like most of the Talis, dress the dead in a loin cover of sheepskin (*suona pɛhug*), whereas the Namoos use a goatskin (*suona buu*); and that to conclude a funeral they *ŋma ma'ala* with the sacrifice of many fowls, whereas the Namoos *ŋma wɔyar*—a totally different rite in which weapons and household utensils are offered to the departed spirit. Finally, Zubiuŋ people say: '*Tam dira tɛndaan, ti pu diit naam la*—We (like all Talis) have (lit. eat) the tɛndaanaship (i.e. the ritual office of Custodian of the Earth), we do not have the chiefship (like the Namoos).'

The Ba'ari people, with the added self-assurance due to their political independence of Tongo, declare themselves to be Talis on the same grounds, though their totemic avoidances differ from those of the hill folk. As a clinching argument they point out that the Great Festivals celebrated by the Talis form part of a cycle inaugurated by the senior Ba'ari tendaana.

Tongo shares the views of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari about their relationship to the Talis. Very often at a Zubiuŋ funeral I could not help being amused at the behaviour of Tongo visitors. Close neighbours though they are of Zubiuŋ with which they have, individually, innumerable ties of cognatic and affinal kinship, they always adopted a posture in keeping with this structural cleavage. They would sit all together, at a little distance from the spot where the rites were in progress, punctiliously preserving an appearance of indifference, as befits outsiders. At the same time, Tongo people emphasize their specially close local and political ties with their immediate neighbours which mark the latter off from the Hill Talis in certain respects. Similar distinctions are made in the Sie district. A Tongo, Ba'ari, or Tɛnzugu man bound for Sie or Datok says, 'I am going to Nabrug (the country of the Namnam)', unless it is necessary to be more precise. The people of Sie and a number of the neighbouring settlements are Namoos; yet talking about farming they say: 'The Talis always sow first and then we follow'—referring thus to all the settlements south-west of Zoo. But when they are discussing war or marriage, ritual or chiefship, they distinguish between Tongo and Zoo on the one hand—*ti mabiis*, our brethren—and the real Talis on the other. At Duusi and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ dwell the senior tendaanas of the district, whose social and ritual status is identical with that of the tendaanas of the Tongo district. 'Talaŋ' in contraposition to themselves means essentially someone from the vicinity

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[680] Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, No. 4.

of the Tong Hills; yet 'we and the Talis are one' they maintain. In proof 101
of this they point out that their *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət* Festival belongs to the same 186
cycle as *Da'a* and *Bɔyaraam*, though they have but the vaguest hearsay 184
knowledge of the esoteric ritual of these festivals. Their neighbours at Sie and Datɔk they call Namoos.

Note: For convenience of exposition we shall adopt the following convention in this book. Whenever we speak of all the inhabitants of Taleland, irrespective of their internal subdivisions, we shall use the name given to them by other outsiders and speak of them as *Tallensi*. When we wish to refer to that section of the Tallensi whom they themselves describe as the 'real Talis', we shall refer to them as *Talis*, distinguishing among them, when necessary, between the *Hill Talis*, who live on and around the Tong Hills, and the Talis of the Plain, who live nearer Tongo (i.e. Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Ba'ari, Yaɣazuor). 128

Nomenclature and the Structural Scheme

This nomenclature reflects a structural scheme of considerable complexity. It points to institutional allegiances which segregate adjacent social units from each other and group together spatially dispersed units. The major cleavage it reveals is that between the Namoo communities, on the one hand, and the settlements of the real Talis and of those who claim to be akin to them, on the other. But it indicates, also, that there are other lines of division and bonds of union both within each major grouping and cutting across the cleavage. It is a cardinal principle of Tale social structure that every social grouping defined as a unit in one situation, or according to one principle, dissolves into an association of lesser and differentiated units in another situation or according to another principle. Variation in custom or in ideological emphasis is regarded by the natives as one of the most significant indices of group differentiation. It is also, as we shall see, an important factor of social integration. 184

It is therefore a topic of perennial interest to the natives to observe and comment on variations of usage and doctrine. The idea that identity of custom and belief is desirable or natural is inconceivable. Everybody adheres staunchly to the forms of social behaviour accepted in his own group without desiring to impose them on others. 'Look at the Namoos,' observed Ta'aŋ one day, 'don't they (i.e. different sections of the same clan) do different things at funeral ceremonies? But their use of a goat (in mortuary rites), that is all one. We Talis, again, using our sheep (in mortuary rites)—this is the same for all of us. But as for our ritual, we split up and do different things.' Each one with his father's ways, everyone with his ancestor's ways (*Sɔ ni u ba yɛl, sɔ ni u yaab yɛl*)—that is, every group has its distinctive ancestral customs—is a characteristic Tale aphorism. This attitude, emphasizing simultaneously community and differentiation, similarity of pattern, and divergence of detail, permeates Tale thought.

Myths of Origin

Whenever Tallensi discuss the cleavages in their society they trace 173

173 them back to differences of origin. Everyone knows that all Namoos came originally from Mampurugu, how long ago nobody can tell. The tradition of Tongo, as it was related to me on many occasions, is as follows: The ancestor who founded Tongo was Mosuor. He was the Paramount Chief (*na'ab*) of Mampurugu, but had to flee the country after being vanquished in a fight for the chiefship. When he reached Tongo the Gbizug tendaana, Genɔt, was living there. Mosuor came to the house but found nobody there; for Tendaan Genɔt had seen him coming and had sought refuge in the nearby hills. Now, there is a watercourse a little distance off and there he found a shallow pit beside which stood a *kɪŋkaŋ* (*Ficus*) tree which was shedding its leaves. A path led from this water-hole towards the Hills and someone had been carrying water which had spilled over on to this path. 'Thereupon', to quote the version of one of my Tongo informants, 'our ancestor said, "There is someone in these hills who comes to fetch water here". So he caused the dry fig leaves to be scattered on the path and went to hide quietly. In due course he saw Tendaan Genɔt stepping along the path, while the leaves crunched *kaya*, *kaya*, coming to fetch water. Thereupon our ancestor Mosuor, having seen him, caught him and asked him what he was afraid of. Why did he run away and hide? Genɔt replied that he had seen him wearing a gown and that there was something on his head all red, and fear took hold of him.[1] So Mosuor brought him back and asked, "Who owns this house?" He said that it was his house, and Mosuor brought him home thither and said that he himself would settle down here and Genɔt as well. He said that Genɔt would be his tendaana to carry out the sacrifices on his behalf.'

Gbizug elders told the story of Mosuor in much the same way but omitting the trick by which Mosuor caught their ancestor, adding that it was the horses and guns of Mosuor that inspired fear in Tendaan Genɔt.
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608 They say, also, that having accepted Mosuor as a settler and having allotted land to him close beside his own homestead, he told Mosuor what were the taboos of the country (*tɛŋgɔn-kiha*), and entered into a solemn pact of blood-brotherhood with him. They *ŋma pɔlɔŋ*, cut wrists. A cut was made on the wrist of each, and each licked the blood of the other. Thus '*ba lɛɛba mabiih, ba lɛɛba soog*, they became brethren, they became uterine brothers' and pledged themselves and their descendants to perpetual peace. This was a unique instance of blood-brotherhood, which is not practised in Taleland to-day.

773 According to this tradition, Tendaan Genɔt told Mosuor of his kinsmen, the Ba'at-Sakpar Tendaana, the Wakii Tendaana, the Degal tendaana, and the Ka'ar tendaana. These five were the original inhabitants of the country. They sprang from the Earth itself, say their descendants. At Gbizug they declare that Tendaan Genɔt's ancestor Bumbiogta'adug sprouted from the earth (*u bulme na*), he had no father or mother (*u ka ba u ka ma*). Pressed further they say, '*u yi Naawun zug sig na*—he descended from Heaven'. Heaven and Earth are one, they contend; they have the same mystical value. At Wakii they call their first

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[p.92] [1] A red fez and a cloth tunic are the distinctive costume of chiefs of Mampuru origin. Tendaanas may not wear garments of cloth. They are ritually obliged to wear skins only. Chiefs and their clansmen may ride horses, tendaanas not.

ancestor Tɛŋənbuləg—Earth-begotten—and give the same myth of his 773
origin. The people of Degal and of Ka'ar attribute a similar origin to their first ancestors. Tɛndaan Genət is said to have begotten Dagbeog (Bearded man) whose descendants are the Gbeog people, who are therefore a 'brother' lineage to Gbizug (=*Gbeog zug*, the upper part of Gbeog).

One of Gɛnət's 'brothers'—the exact genealogical relationship is regarded as of no consequence, some describing him as *soog* (uterine kinsman), others as *pit* (younger brother)—was Daziug (Red man), a hunter who founded the Ba'at-Sakpar line; and another 'brother' of his founded one of the Zubiuŋ lineages. Indeed all the primordial tɛndaanas were 'brothers' in a more general sense, the concepts of kinship serving here consciously to identify them with one another.

These myths, meagre as they appear, are laid down with a finality of conviction that makes any question of their historical truthfulness irrelevant.

Most of the Hill Talis are also alleged to have been immigrants originally 173
who arrived to find the Degal Tɛndaana living on top of the hills. But their myths of origin are as deficient in circumstantial detail as those of the primordial tɛndaanas. Thus candid people at Yinduuri said complacently: 'We don't know, it is said that our ancestor came from Tampaləŋ in Mampurugu, but now we have all become Talis.' People of other clans told a vague story of an ancestor wandering about the uninhabited hills, sheltering in caves, until one day he observed the smoke of a fire. Going towards it he discovered the Degal tɛndaana, and later settled on the Hills. Gorogo is said to have been founded thus by Woolisi immigrants, Sii by Bulisi and Mamprusi, and some of the Tɛnzugu lineages by Mamprusi, Kusaasi, or Gorisi. The origins thus attributed to any community symbolize special ritual relationships with the areas they are alleged to have migrated from, which are still maintained.

All these myths of origin become intelligible when it is realized that 173
they are nothing more than formulations of the contemporary scheme of 811
political and ceremonial relationships. The Tallensi themselves are philosophers enough to appreciate this. Many Namoos, for example, privately view the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas with unaffected scorn. 'They lie', declared Sayabazaa, a shrewd and respected elder of Tongo, himself a kinsman of the present[1] Gbizug tɛndaana. 'A human being can't emerge sprouting out of the earth. The rain falls, and the millet comes up, trees come up, grass comes up; but we have never seen a human being sprout up.' When I tried to defend the tɛndaanas, he countered triumphantly: 'And if their ancestor really sprouted up, why don't they let a person sprout again?' Then, with a sudden inspiration he proposed an explanation: 'Suppose you come and settle here and your children succeed you, and their children, and their children succeed and so on, and so on. Then, one day strangers come and ask your descendants whence they have sprung. Will they not say that their ancestor was begotten of the earth? We Namoos', he concluded, 'are immigrants (*kpɛcha*) here.' This acute estimation of the myths gives a clue to their

[1] The present time throughout this book refers to the years 1934-7.

173 ideological significance as a counterweight to the Mosuor legend and 811 as a dogma of prior habitation.

[171] In the Sie district the Sawaləg people, whose political and ceremonial relations with the Sie Namoos are exactly parallel to those of Gbizug with Tongo, also declare that their ancestor came into being miraculously, self-generated. In the identical phraseology of the people of Gbizug and Wakii, they say, 'Our ancestor descended from Heaven', or 'Our ancestor sprouted from the earth'. I once challenged the clan-head of Sawaləg to prove how this was possible. His answer, shrewdly rationalistic, deserves to be recorded. 'We have not heard that our ancestor came from any other land. We have no other land to return to as the Sie people (immigrant Namoos) have. If they desecrate (*sayəm*, lit. spoil) the land here, they return to their (original) land yonder (at Tongo). That is why we say that we have descended from Heaven'—an interpretation which coincides with that of Sayəbazaa, the Namoo.

173 177 622 The covenant between Mosuor and Tɛndaan Gɛnət, again, accords well with a myth which is but a projection into the unchallengeable past of the present-day relationships between Gbizug and Tongo. The amorphous and unstandardized myths of origin with which the Hill Talis are satisfied symbolize the remarkable social integration they had achieved before their subjugation by the British in 1911. For nowadays the Hill Talis are rent by factions and by an intestine struggle for power amongst the various ritual office-holders. Rival claims are validated by citing established custom, by appealing to the memories of men, or, in the last resort, by the fabrication or distortion of myths of origin. The Administration recognizes as chiefs only those clan heads whose title is derived directly or indirectly from the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi. Hence we find the Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu justifying his pretensions to recognized chiefship by concocting, for the benefit of a white inquirer, a story of how the founder of his lineage migrated thither from Mampurugu—a story which his enemies scoff at. The Sii Bɔɣaraan, on the other hand, tries to strengthen his claim to precedence by alleging not only a Mampuru origin for his ancestors, but also that they were the very first to come and settle on the Hills.

173 These new myths are part of the defensive ideologies engendered by social conflict, but they follow the axioms of Tale thought. The Tallensi have no conception of a mythological or historical past of their society when people lived and behaved differently from to-day. The past is but an extension into the days of their forefathers of the life of to-day on the same rational plane of existence. Their history is to them not a sequence of events or a progression but a continuity. All that matters of the past, which lies beyond the span of man's recollection, lives on in the social structure, the ideology, the morality, and institutions of to-day. These are the palpable proofs of things that happened '*oh ho, ti banam ni ti yaanam ni*—in the days of our forefathers and ancestors'; one can infer from them what must have been the state of society in those far-off times. Conversely, the social arrangements which prevail to-day are valid, sensible, and appropriate not only because they achieve desired ends but also because *banam ni yaanam ndaa piil na*—the forefathers and ancestors

started and transmitted them. Custom is not inviolable in its own right. 173 It is compelling because it is the legacy of the ancestors.

These notions are perfectly explicit in the behaviour and thought of 178 the natives, for whom they have a profound moral value. *Banam ndaa ɛŋ de, yaanam ndaa ɛŋde*—our forefathers used to do it, our ancestors used to do it, is a recurrent formula in every ceremonial speech or ritual invocation during the Great Festivals. So the Samiitna'ab protesting his loyalty to traditional values and to the Kpata'arna'ab, in the latter's feud with the Gɔlibdaana, exclaimed: 'It is the young men who are causing the trouble. They desire their cloths and their caps; but I know only what my ancestors did (*man mi la n-yaanam ndaa ɛŋ siem*). My ancestor (*n-yaab*) wore a skin and I, too, wear a skin; my ancestor knew nothing of cloth. I know only my forefathers' path and I adhere to that (*man mi la mbanam suor, man dɔla dɛni*).'

In the same way, and because their social system engenders so strong 181 a sense of the continuity and stability of their culture and social organiza- 867 tion, Tallensi always stress the importance of passing on to their descendants the way of life bequeathed to them by their forefathers. At ceremonies or when disputes are argued out before a chief or a lineage head, it is not uncommon to hear the old men praise the young men who attend. 'Thus,' the old men say, 'they (the young men) will learn the customs (*yɛla*) of our ancestors.' Tallensi place an extremely high value on their social order. An individual or a particular corporate group might desire to alter his or its position in the society. A man might desire to have greater prestige or more power than his neighbours. A clan might strive to assert its supremacy over other clans, whether or not it is entitled to do so. No one would dream of trying to overthrow the whole social order or of agitating against the existing customs and values.

This does not mean that Tale customs never change, or that the Tallensi 178 believe this to be the case, or invariably resist cultural changes. There 184 have been many shifts in custom and usage during the past two decades. The imposition of peace and an embryonic judicial system have diminished the tensions that kept unrelated clans apart and so have made it unnecessary for them to over-emphasize the emblems and symbols of their separateness. Fifteen years ago men of a tɛndaana's clan used to observe strictly the taboo against wearing gowns and trousers, the distinctive garments of chiefs and men of chiefly (i.e. Namoo) clans. To-day the young men of tɛndaanas' clans all wear such clothes outside the territory with which they have direct ritual ties. By this simple compromise they make the best of both worlds, the old world of strictly defined local, genealogical, and politico-ritual exclusiveness and the new world of free movement, unrestricted social intercourse with all and sundry, and cheaper clothes. They wear the ancient prescribed garb of a skin and a loin-cloth on ritual occasions, especially during the Great Festivals, when they take a pride in advertising their politico-ritual status. This change of custom does not cut athwart the basic values and principles of Tale social organization. It has arisen because the young men of tɛndaanas' clans are as eager to display themselves in fine clothes as the young men of other clans, and because the wearing of clothes is economically easier to attain than

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Golibdaana, in his
overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
178 with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Golibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power
failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
578 building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and
legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

of the group to which it refers. Owing to the balanced distribution of 173 political and ceremonial functions between units of structure, the members 773 of a group always overrate their own relative significance while non- 578 members underrate its importance. These, sometimes contradictory, valuations find expression, also, in the way myths are presented. It is the technique of contraposition coming to the surface again. When, therefore, in these days new tensions develop, erupting sometimes into open conflict, they are inevitably reflected in the cast given to their myths of origin by interested parties.

The Major Cleavage in Tale Society

Our reconnaissance of the cultural landscape of the Tallensi has left us 000 with a tangle of facts which do not fall into an obvious pattern. The reader may rest assured that his perplexity bears no comparison to that of an ethnographer seeking, for the first time, to understand Tale culture and social organization. The perspective changes as the investigator shifts his vantage point. The greatest puzzle of all is why there is so little apparent unity and coherence in an area of such dense and close habitation, carrying a population that has been sedentary for a long time, has a more or less homogeneous culture, and a strong sense of the continuity and stability of its social order. Leaving aside this puzzle, for the present, let us see what are the positive conclusions to which our survey leads.

The point of primary importance is that a major cleavage runs through 184 the whole of Tale society. On the one side stand communities or parts of communities the members of which are generally agreed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi. These are the Namoos. On the other side stand similar social groups who claim to be and are accepted as the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and earlier immigrants whom they absorbed. This cleavage is given a symbolic formulation in myths of origin the historicity of which need not concern us.

This cleavage is so fundamental that it permeates the whole social out- 184 look of the people. One sees it most vividly in the martial choruses chanted 764 at important funerals. One of the high lights at the opening ceremonies of the funeral of an important person is a grand mimic war march (*dee*) of the men of the clan. In their finest clothes, weapons in hand, plumed helms on their heads, blowing whistles and accompanied by drummers, the men gather in lineage squadrons to march round the settlement, and eventually mass at the house of the funeral. They march irregularly in an unorganized mob with excited children trailing behind and women dancing on the flanks trilling the shrill *kpɛləmət* cry of elation. And as they march, especially as they approach the funeral house, they chant defiant challenges against their traditional enemies in the wars of former days. 'Yo ho!' they chant, 'we might rise one day at break of dawn to sally forth against certain people.' 'Is it not because of us', the Namoos chant taunting the Talis, 'that you have water to drink?' And again, 'Do you not mock at them, do you not laugh at them?' And now and then a man leaps forward, crouches scowling, pretends to shoot off an arrow, and cries scornfully, 'If it were not for the white man, by now we would be meeting them in battle'. It is all play-acting, but there is an

184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the
764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger
of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have
[579] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group
of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound
of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those
of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration
[123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my
field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as
796 composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region
of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined sociogeographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Gɔris,
796 Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take
648 the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring
Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

holds an important ritual office connected with the paramount chiefship 184
of Mampurugu. But, as befits their interstitial socio-geographic position 796
between the Mamprusi and the Tallensi, their Harvest Festival belongs 648
to the Tale cycle and is, in fact, the last of one of the series constituting
the cycle.

The differentiation of Taleland into lesser regions follows the same 184
general principle as the differentiation of the Mole-Dagbane-speaking 796
peoples into 'tribes'. A region is a socio-geographic segment of the society
in which the communities that constitute it have a greater degree of
interdependence and cohesion with one another than any of them have
with other neighbouring communities. And this interdependence and
cohesion is a function of the common interests symbolized in the Great
Festivals. The regions overlap in so far as the communities belonging
to one region have other interests in common with and other loyalties
towards communities belonging to a neighbouring region.

This is the façade of Tale society. Behind it lie the bricks and mortar 000
of the social structure. It is at that level of Tale social life that we must
look for the foundations of the principles of social organization whose
superficial action we have met with in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

PARADIGM OF THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

613 182 TALE society is built up round the lineage system. It is no exaggeration to say that every sociological problem presented by the Tallensi hinges on the lineage system. It is the skeleton of their social structure, the bony framework which shapes their body politic; it guides their economic life and moulds their ritual ideas and values. The social life of the Tallensi cannot be understood without a knowledge of the principles that govern their lineage organization.

128 These principles will be briefly and formally stated in the present chapter. This will give us a paradigm by which to orient our analysis. Something of this sort, though less systematic and abstract, is in the mind's eye of every well-informed native when he discusses the structure of his society or takes his part in public affairs. The schematic analysis given here will be amplified in later chapters and some repetition is therefore unavoidable. In studying a society of this type we cannot avoid traversing the same ground repeatedly from different directions. For the same basic units, relations, and principles of structure lie behind all forms of association and all organized social activities.

A preliminary bird's-eye view of the lineage system is important, also, in another respect. A lineage always functions as a whole. Whenever a lineage emerges in social action it does so as a product of its component parts and of the relations between them; when a part of a lineage emerges in social action it does so relatively to other parts of it and to the whole. Anyone wishing to understand the way a Tale lineage functions must think of it as a field system, in which the behaviour of the part is regulated by its relation to the whole and the behaviour of the whole is a product of the relations of the parts.

613 From the Tale point of view a lineage is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the known descendants by a known genealogy of a single known and named ancestor in an unbroken male line. From the sociologist's point of view it is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the recognized descendants by an accepted genealogy of a single named ancestor in a putatively continuous male line. It is, in other words, a strictly unilineal, agnatic descent group.

Lineages vary in *span* proportionately to the number of generations accepted as having intervened between their living members and the founding ancestor from whom they trace their descent. The lineage of minimum span, which we shall call the minimal lineage, consists of the children of one father. The lineage of maximum span, which we shall call the maximal lineage, is the lineage of widest span to which any of its members belongs. It consists of all the descendants in the male line of the remotest common patrilineal ancestor known to the members of the lineage. Whenever we speak of a lineage without qualification to indicate its span, we use the term in the generalized sense of a lineage of any span

and any order of segmentation. What is meant by *order of segmentation* is defined below.

The number of antecedent generations reckoned to the point of convergent ascent varies slightly from one maximal lineage to another in Taleland. It is, as will be clearer later, proportional to, and an index of, the range of segmentary differentation in the existing maximal lineage. Eight to ten ascendant generations are usually reckoned between contemporary minimal lineages and the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage of which they are part. Genealogies are not remembered for their own sake by the Tallensi. They are relevant, primarily, as the mnemonics of the lineage system. They are bound up with the institutions which demonstrate and make overt the formal unity, or the internal differentiation of a lineage. Among the social events in which this occurs most conspicuously and frequently are sacrifices to ancestor spirits and mortuary and funeral ceremonies. The latter, especially, epitomize the entire social structure and enable one to see precisely how the lineage system is constituted.

All Tale lineages are hierarchically organized between the limits of the minimum span, i.e. the minimal lineage, on the one hand, and the maximum span, i.e. the maximal lineage, on the other. Thus every minimal lineage is a segment of a more inclusive lineage defined by reference to a common grandfather, and this, in turn, is a segment of a still wider lineage defined by reference to a common great-grandfather; and so on, until the limit is reached—the maximal lineage, defined by reference to the remotest agnatic ancestor of the group. But a minimal lineage crystallizes out, as we shall see, only on the death of its founder. Until then it is submerged in a wider lineage.

Within a lineage of whatever span each grade of segmentation is functionally significant. Each segment has its focus of unity, and an index of its corporate identity, in the ancestor by reference to whom it is differentiated from other segments of the same order in the hierarchically organized set of lineages. Sacrifices to the shrine of this ancestor require the presence of representatives of every segment of the next lower order; and this rule applies to all corporate action of a ceremonial or jural kind of any lineage. This is the fundamental rule of the lineage organization.

The solidarity of a lineage is a function of the co-operation of its major segments, i.e. the segments of the highest order. In matters that concern the lineage as a whole, and in situations which express its corporate unity, members of the lineage co-operate as representatives of its major segments. The lesser segments constituting each major segment receive explicit recognition only in relation to the major segment. They emerge, then, as major segments of a major segment, and their segments, again, emerge only in relation to them; and so on down to the minimal segments. In these affairs of common concern, rights and duties, privileges and obligations are distributed equally amongst the major segments of a lineage. This emphasizes their equality of status.

A lineage of any span emerges in any of its activities as a system of aliquot parts, not as a mere collection of individuals of common ancestry. It represents an equilibrium, maintained by the relations between its

613 constituent parts. The simplest way of achieving this is for its internal differentiation into segments to be of a limited and balanced kind. That is why only the first order of segmentation, a division into major segments, is recognized in the corporate activities of a lineage. In Tale theory the source of this primary segmentation of the lineage is the minimal lineage, in which a group of brothers (two or more) are differentiated from one another as individuals each of whom is the potential founder of a new lineage, but are united through their common father. A pair of brothers by the same father (*sunzɔp*, sing. *sunzɔ*) are the potential originators of a pair of major segments of the lineage deriving from their father. So all major segments of a lineage of any span are visualized as being derived from brothers, sons of the lineage founder, and are described as *sunzɔp* to one another. Their lineage ties, summed up in the concept *sunzɔt* (brotherhood), are thought of as being founded on, and derived from, the ties that hold between brothers. By the rule of exogamy women members marry out of the lineage, so they do not contribute to its perpetuation and do not affect its organization.

613
575
[591] The growing-point of the lineage, it will be seen, is the family. It is always patrilocal; ideally, it is also polygynous. Thus children of the same man are differentiated from one another as children of different mothers. This provides a further criterion of differentiation within the lineage. Like the sons of different mothers and the same father, segments of a lineage may, in certain situations, be distinguished from one another by reference to their different progenitrices. In other situations, like the sons of one mother, segments of a lineage may be grouped together by reference to a common progenitrix.

613 A maximal lineage cannot, by definition, have any *sunzɔp* identified strictly in terms of common agnatic descent. If it had it would be a segment of a more inclusive lineage. The ancestor who founded it must be unique, in retrospect. As we have seen, he may be accounted for by a myth; but his unique place in the genealogical tree can sometimes be naturalistically explained. If the formation of recent lineage segments is studied, it can be seen that segments sometimes disappear, owing to the extinction of a branch of the lineage. When this happens, the surviving segments reach a new equilibrium. The defunct collateral line is forgotten in due course, together with its genealogy; for this no longer has any structural significance. Thus an existing maximal lineage may be merely the surviving segment of what might have been a wider maximal lineage.

It is characteristic of Tale social organization, however, that maximal lineages do often have *sunzɔp*, either through ties of clanship, or by incorporating, or being joined to, lineages not strictly of the same agnatic descent.

A lineage is a temporal system. Continuity in time is its fundamental quality. Its constitution and dimensions at a given time represent a phase of a process which, as the natives see it, has been going on in exactly the same way from the beginning of their social order and is continuing into the future. The contemporary phase of a lineage is more than a product of its past; it embodies all the significant changes that have occurred in it

throughout its past; and it is, at the same time, the embryo of its future 613
organization. A Tale lineage cannot be dissociated from its temporal extension.

A maximal lineage is fixed with reference to its founding ancestor, who 613
is the focus of its unity and the symbol of its corporate identity. From 769
time to time its unity and identity become explicit in the common cult of this ancestor and in the regulation of intra-lineage relations which hinges on it. The ancestor cult is the calculus of the lineage system, the mechanism by means of which the progressive internal differentiation of a lineage is ordered and is fitted into the existing structure. It is also the principal ideological bulwark of the lineage organization.

Every maximal lineage is continually expanding and proliferating 613
through the fission of its minor segments. But though its span is thus constantly increasing, its form does not alter. It has a fixed centre and a fixed locus we might say. In theory it always remains the same lineage, and new maximal lineages cannot arise through the splitting up of an existing maximal lineage. It is a unit of common agnatic descent, and no branch of it can ever repudiate this. In theory ties of descent can never lapse. A maximal lineage is also an exogamous unit, and no branch of it [582]
can contract out of this bond.

To the contemporary observer the Tale lineage system appears as a stable and finally established factor of the constituted social structure, the ground plan of which was laid down in the distant past by processes which are still going on. In any maximal lineage, therefore, the fission of minor segments does not alter the equilibrium of the major segments at any given time. Changes in minimal lineages, in fact, cannot alter the equilibrium of any segment greater than the minimal. This is reflected in the naming of lineages and their segments. Every lineage is named after its founder, and as long as a lineage persists it bears the same name. Thus the names of segments greater than the minimal may be regarded as fixed once for all. A lineage is called the 'children (*biis*) of so-and-so' or 'the house (*yir*) or people of the house (*yidɛm*) of so-and-so'. These ways of denoting a lineage are interchangeable. A lineage may also be described as a 'room' (*dug*) of a superordinate lineage. This indicates that it is being thought of as a segment of the latter.

This formal analysis will be more easily understood from the diagram which follows. It shows, in a simplified way, the structure of a major segment of a maximal lineage which is assumed to have only two major segments. The major segment not included must be homologous with the major segment shown here since a lineage necessarily divides into segments of equal order. Similarly, the relations of the two major segments of our hypothetical maximal lineage to each other are repeated, at a lower order of segmentation, in the relations of the major segments of each major segment to one another. In the diagram the relations of subsegments X and Y to each other, within the framework of Major Segment I, are identical in form with those of Major Segment I and its brother (*sunzɔ*) segment, Major Segment II, and this rule holds for every subsequent order of segmentation. We shall later on study the interests, rights, and obligations associated with such an ordered series

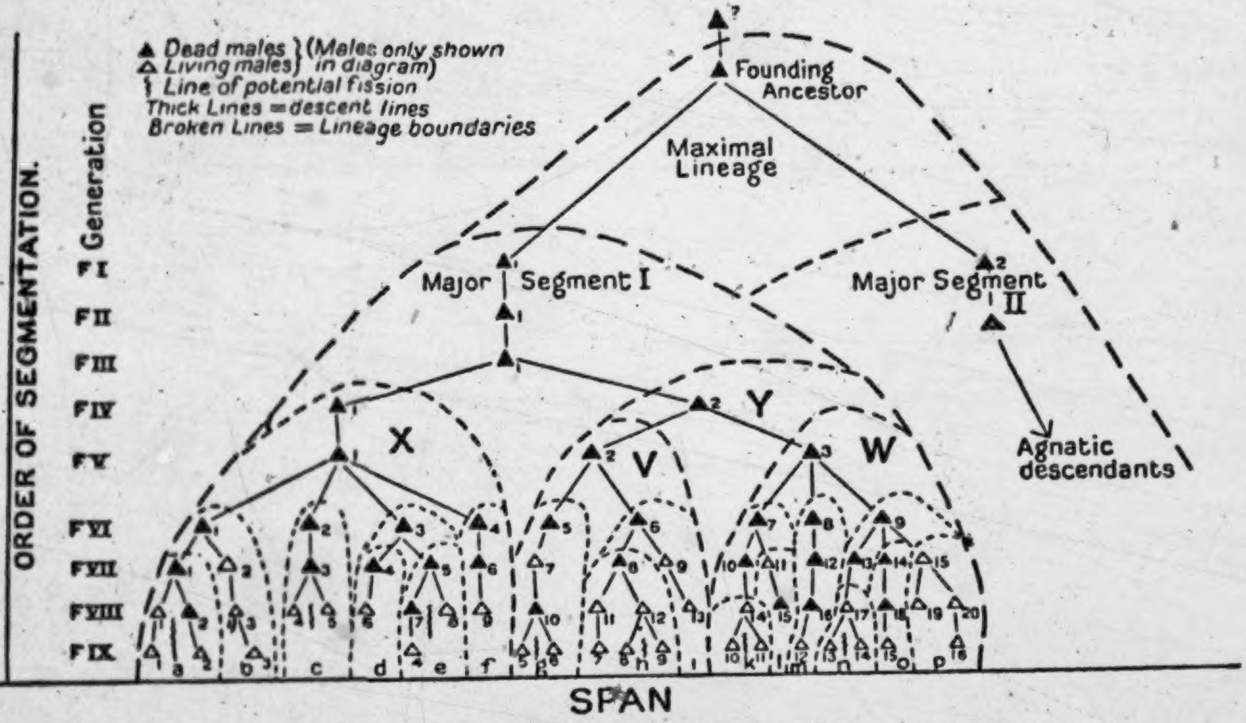
▲ Dead males } (Males only shown
△ Living males } in diagram)
⸾ Line of potential fission
Thick Lines = descent lines
Broken Lines = Lineage boundaries
Founding Ancestor
Maximal Lineage
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
Agnatic descendants
X
Y
V
W
ORDER OF SEGMENTATION.
Generation
F I
F II
F III
F IV
F V
F VI
F VII
F VIII
F IX
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
h
j
k
l
m
n
o
p
SPAN

Diagram illustrating the Paradigm of the Lineage System of homologous inter-segment relations, and see, then, how they vary in kind and are graded in precision.

If we describe a major segment of a maximal lineage as a primary segment, then segments of the order of X and Y in the diagram can be called secondary segments, and Y is split into two subsegments (tertiary segments) of the next lower order V and W. These have, respectively, two (g and $h+i$) and three ($k+l$, m, and $n+o+p$) segments of still lower order; and some of these consist, as the diagram shows, of subordinate segments of the lowest order, i.e. minimal segments. X has no segments co-ordinate with V and W, but has four segments of the next lower order ($a+b$, c, $d+e$, and f), some of which are subdivided into minimal segments.

These are all various ways of grouping the same thirty-five males in a set of lineages of common agnatic descent. Women members are excluded from the diagram for the reason previously stated. In some situations each grouping emerges as a lineage in its own right; in others it acts as a segment of a lineage of higher order. When, for example, the 'house' (*yir*) of F.VI.1 (i.e. $a+b$) assembles to sacrifice to his spirit, it acts as a self-contained corporate unit, a lineage. Both its segments, a and b, must be represented and the animal sacrificed is divided equally between them. The portion given to a is then equally shared, again, between F.VIII.1 and his brother's son F.IX.2—i.e. the two nascent segments of the house of F.VII.1. Actually, during the lifetime of F.VII.2, the head of the house of F.VI.1, a remains only a potential lineage, submerged in $a+b$.

The same rule holds for the higher orders of segmentation. The house of F.VI.1 is a segment—a 'room' (*dug*)—of the house of F.V.1—i.e. of the lineage X. When sacrifice is made to F.V.1, all the four segments of X must be represented and the animal slaughtered is divided equally amongst them, to be redistributed by each segment amongst its subsegments. F.VII.2 is head of lineage $a+b$ and sacrifices on their behalf to their immediate founder F.VI.1. He is also head of X sacrificing, on behalf of all its four segments, to F.V.1 and F.IV.1.

The minimum differentiation of X requires the recognition of the same four segments of equal status, whether F.IV.1 or F.V.1 be considered as the focus of the lineage, since there are no intermediate segments derived from F.IV.1. Contrast lineage Y, the minimal differentiation of which recognizes two segments of a higher order than the four which constitute X—i.e. of an intermediate order between the segments derived from F.III.1 (X and Y) and those derived from F.V.1, 2, and 3. The constitution of lineage X has the same form as that of the whole lineage, the agnatic posterity of F.III.1, of which it is a major segment.

In lineages thus constituted an ancestor who has no significance as a focus of differentiation from other co-ordinate lineages loses his structural relevance and has no distinct ancestor-shrine. He is merged with a predecessor who still symbolizes the focus of differentiation of the lineage, and often no doubt fades into oblivion. In this way genealogies get telescoped and the ranking of structurally insignificant ancestors gets confused. Thus Major Segment I would probably be named the house of F.I.1 after the ancestor who symbolizes their differentiation from the co-ordinate major segment derived from his 'brother', F.I.2. The tendency is to retain the ancestor to whose generation the fission of the segments can be most appropriately attributed. The naming, here, would fit in with the relations of the two major segments as representing the primary differentiation of the maximal lineage one generation nearer than the founding ancestor. Though F.II.1 and F.III.1 are still invoked in sacrifices, their order of succession tends to be confused. F.II.1 will lapse more easily than F.III.1, who will be remembered as the actual father of F.IV.1 and F.IV.2.

Similarly, lineage X will be described as the house of F.IV.1 when its status as a major segment of the house of F.I.1, co-ordinate with Y, is the main issue. But members of its constituent segments might also describe themselves collectively as the house of F.V.1, after the most recent ancestor from whom their lines of descent diverge, when stressing their connexion as 'rooms' of a single lineage. Which nomenclature is used depends on the situation and on the range of the lineage concerned in it.

These usages illustrate again the natives' inveterate habit of naming social units by contraposition. They explain, also, why no historical validity can be attached to their genealogies, beyond the time of their great-grandfathers. A genealogy maps out a particular set of lineage relations; it is not a true record. Thus it is impossible to ascertain, as it is from the Tale point of view irrelevant to ask, whether or not any ancestors intervened between the founder of a maximal lineage such as is here sketched and the originators of its existing major segments. If there were any, it is quite possible that they have been dropped from the genealogy because they are redundant, in terms of the structure of the lineage. Similarly, the ancestor whose name is preserved as the founder of the maximal lineage may have been preceded by others whose names have lapsed from tradition for the same reason.

Lineages of the same order of segmentation are not all of equal span. Though lineage span and order of segmentation overlap, they are not interchangeable categories. Lineage *c*—the house of F.VI.2—is co-ordinate with (i.e. of the same order of segmentation as) lineage *a*+*b*—the house of F.VI.1—but of a lesser span. Lineage X, similarly, has a lesser span than lineage Y. The span of a lineage is a measure of its internal differentiation, whereas its order of segmentation defines its relations, as a corporate unit, with other units of a like sort.

The distinction is important in the conduct of lineage and community affairs. Co-ordinate segments are brothers (*sunzɔp*) to one another, irrespective of span; but a lineage of small span is more closely integrated than one of large span. Thus the major segments of our diagrammatic maximal lineage are *sunzɔp*, being descended, as it is thought, from a pair of brothers by the same father; so are X and Y; so are V and W; so are the four constituent segments of X, the two constituent segments of V, and the three constituent segments of W; and the same rule holds for the lesser lineages down to a pair of brothers, like lineage *c*, who are also *sunzɔp*.

It is evident that brothers (*sunzɔp*) can be graded according to their genealogical distance from one another. The natives say '*ti a ba yɛni*

biis—we are the children of one father', when they want to stress recent 613
common ancestry, or '*ti a yaab yɛni biis*—we are the children of one ancestor', whenever they emphasize remote common ancestry. The same contrast is expressed in the appellations *dug* (room) and *yir* (house). Members of lineage V, for example, will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* (members of one room) by contrast with members of lineage W, whom they would describe as *ti yidɛm* (people of our house). Members of X will say 'We, the children of so and so (F.IV.1), are four rooms', but they will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* in contrast to Y, who would be called their *yidɛm*, e.g. at funeral ceremonies. Thus the segments of X or of Y are closer *sunzɔp* than are X and Y, which, again, are closer *sunzɔp* than are the major segments of the maximal lineage. A specially close tie is acknowledged also between lineages of common agnatic ancestry which have a common ancestress. Thus, if F.V.1 had three wives, from whom have sprung, respectively, segments *a*+*b* and *c*, *d*+*e*, and *f*, then the first two segments regard each other as closer *sunzɔp* than either of the other two.

Genealogical distance and the tie of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are most 613
palpable in situations which bring out the structural equilibrium of the 764
set of lineages. When, for instance, a funeral occurs in lineage *g*, contributions of cooked food will be made by the *sunzɔp* as follows: by the head of *h*+*i*, the closest *sunzɔ* segment, on behalf of that segment; by the head of W on behalf of the whole lineage, not by its constituent segments, the contribution being given to its *sunzɔ* V, not to the segment *g*; and by the head of X, if it is the funeral of an elder, on behalf of the whole of X, when the recipient unit is considered to be Y, not *g*. If the other half of the maximal lineage, Major Segment II, sends a contribution, it will be given by the head of the segment on behalf of the whole unit as an obligation owed to the *sunzɔ* segment, the house of F.I.1. Cooked food, beer, and the meat of ceremonially slaughtered animals are distributed according to the same scale of genealogical distance, and the allocation of ritual duties, though less strictly regulated, depends on it, too. Hence any members of W who may be present at the funeral are regarded as representing W, however many segments of W they may individually represent. They are entitled only to those portions of food, beer, and meat which are the due share of W. An identical share can be claimed by members of X who may be present, whether they come from one of its segments or from all; and the same holds for the major segments of the maximal lineage. *Sunzɔt* here implies duties and privileges vested in the lineage as a corporate unit and exercised on its behalf by any representatives of that unit in relation to other units of a like sort.

There are many other institutions and situations in which the tie of 613
sunzɔt operates in the same way and receives precise and formal recognition according to the same rules. It operates thus in all corporate actions and in relation to all corporate interests of a lineage. It dictates the manner in which every activity associating people in groups is organized. Hoeing and building teams organize their work broadly along the lines [476]
of the lineage structure and distribute the food they receive in reward in accordance with it. In a hunting party lineage *sunzɔp* have the right to

613 'pull out' (*fɔ*) a foreleg of any animal killed by a member of a *sunzɔ* lineage. But for the present we are concerned only with the paradigm of the lineage system, a mere definition, though necessarily a somewhat lengthy one, of the fundamental concept of Tale social organization. The principal interests which direct the life and activities of a lineage, the critical jural norms which regulate the relations of its members and subdivisions to one another, the chief doctrines, myths, ceremonial usages, and ritual observances in which its structure is conceptualized and its existence and coherence invested with value for its members, will be considered at later stages of our inquiry.

CHAPTER IV

CLANSHIP: THE NAMOOS

The Dispersion of Mosuor biis

For the Namoos of Tongo[1] history begins with Mosuor. Of his Mampuru forbears nothing is known. When a Namoo piously invokes the names of Toohug and Gbamwaa, the mythical founders of the Mampuru State, these are to him mystical words. Dominated in his moral and mystical thought by the ancestor cult, he is ready to infer that they were probably remote ancestors of the Mampuru stock; but no one in Taleland knows the myths which the Mamprusi relate about them. There is at the present time constant intercourse between the Tallensi and the Mamprusi, especially between the Tale chiefs and the court of the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu (*Mampurugna'ab*); but the myth of Toohug and Gbamwaa has not diffused to the Tallensi, for it has no relevance to their internal social structure, and the names alone suffice to symbolize the bond of common stock with the Mamprusi.

Mosuor died at Tongo. His grave indicates where his homestead stood, a stone's throw from the sacred dancing-ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, which was the site of Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's homestead. After Mosuor's death, it is related, his eldest son, Naŋkamuŋ, wished to assume the chiefship at once; but a younger son, Sɛyahɔg, insisted that his father's death should be ceremonially reported to the Mampurugna'ab, the fountain-head of their chiefship (na'am). He went secretly to do so, and was invested with his father's chiefship by the Chief of the Mamprusi in return for a payment of 100 cattle. Naŋkamuŋ, resenting his younger brother's guile in robbing him of his patrimony, thereupon seceded and settled at Yamɔlɔg beside the people of Sɔk and their tɛndaana. This place, it is related, came to be called so because Naŋkamuŋ declared that he would go and settle just nearby (*yama yama*), where he could keep in touch with his kinsfolk at Tongo.

Sie, which the Namoos say means beside (*sie*, side) Yamɔlɔg, was founded by another 'son' of Mosuor, Kuŋkye. Sie people claim to have been the first settlers in the area. On the other hand, with characteristic emphasis on their own priority, Sawalɔg people assert that Kuŋkye was received by their ancestor the Sawalɔg tɛndaana, who had 'sprouted from the earth'. The tɛndaana allowed him to settle there beside (*sie*) himself, after having presented him ritually to the Earth shrines. This myth is a replica of that told by the Gbizug people, and symbolizes a structural and ideological relationship of the same order as that which exists between Gbizug and Tongo.

Yet another 'son' of Mosuor—the exact genealogy is obscure, since *bii*, child, can be used to refer to any descendant—migrated to Biuk, where his descendants adopted the speech and customs of the Gɔris.

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[1] The correct vernacular form is Tɔŋo, but we shall keep the more familiar English form throughout this book.

The Chain of Sub-clans

x618 Thus came into being this chain of four patrilineal sub-clans (Tongo, 613 Yaməlɔg, Sie, and Biuk), each the skeleton of a community. From these primary nuclei colonies have continually hived off to settle in neighbouring areas, particularly at Gbambee, Gorogo, Ba'ari, Woo, and Datɔk. Each sub-clan is itself a composite system of lineages: authentic lineages constituted by the direct line of agnatic descent from the clan founder, Mosuor; attached lineages, linked to these usually by the dogma of [611] sister-descent; and assimilated lineages. The attached lineages are identified as *ti tau biis*—our sister's children—descendants in the direct male line of a female member of one of the authentic lineages. The stereotyped formula attributes the origin of such a lineage either to a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) who came to live in his mother's brother's (*ahəb*) [586] community, or to a sister who was divorced by her husband by the irrevocable procedure of blowing ash on her (*pɛbh*), and returned to the shelter of her parental home with her children. By this form of divorce a man renounces his rights in his children, who henceforth become members of their maternal lineage, as if they had been illegitimately begotten by a lover. The agnatic posterity of such children, as of any spinster's son, becomes a lineage attached to that of their ancestor's mother.

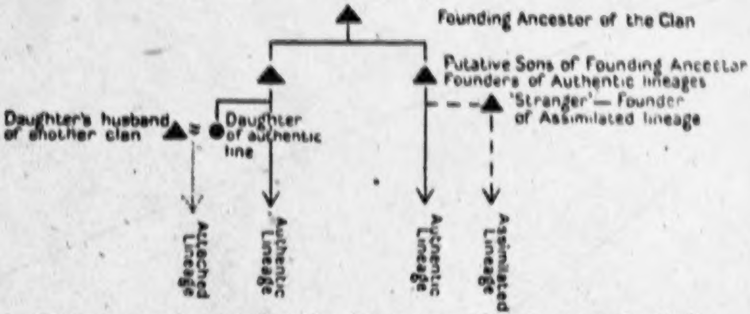

Founding Ancestor of the Clan
Putative Sons of Founding Ancestor
Founders of Authentic lineages
'Stranger'—Founder of Assimilated lineage
Daughter's husband of another clan
Daughter of authentic line
Attached Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Assimilated Lineage

Diagram showing Relationship of Accessory Lineages to Authentic Line

We shall call these 'attached lineages' because they are linked to the authentic lineages by actual or putative cognatic ties. An attached lineage maintains its continuity and distinctness, like any other lineage, even if its patrilineal progenitor is alleged to have repudiated its ancestress and his own progeny.

The existence of the assimilated lineages is often traced to an ancestor who was a 'kinsman' (*mabii*) accompanying the founder of the authentic lineage when he first arrived. Of some such lineages, however, it is whispered that they sprang from slaves of the authentic lineage with which they are connected, or from foreign refugees who sought their protection. The term used for these lineages is intended to convey that they are incorporated in the sub-clan by virtue of their dependence on and participation in the life of an authentic lineage. We shall also describe these two kinds of lineages collectively as accessory lineages.

This summary statement follows closely the formulations of the 613
Tallensi themselves. They normally think of a lineage, a set of lineages, 618X
or a community, as a unit in relation to other units of a like sort, irrespective of its internal differentiation. Thus, Tongo people say: '*Tam ni* 574
Yamələgdɛm ni Siedɛm ni Biukdɛm a la yaab yɛni biis—We and the people of Yamələg, and the people of Sie and the people of Biuk are the children of one ancestor.' The place-name serves to designate the social group. Once, at Sie, some young men from Tongo, members of an assimilated lineage, called on me. 'We've only come on a visit', they said, '*day'a ti mabiis n a Siedɛm?*—Are not these people of Sie our kinsfolk?'

Such intercourse is constant amongst the three Talni-speaking branches of Mosuor's posterity (*tu'u*). Biuk, both because of its fusion with the Gəris and its geographical location, is somewhat isolated from regular contact with its Talni-speaking clansmen. But the ties which control this voluntary fraternization emerge more precisely in a number of critical norms and institutions.

The Critical Norms of Clanship

Most important of these is the rule of exogamy. Marriage is uncon- 618X
ditionally prohibited between the four branches of Mosuor's posterity— 582
i.e. between members of the authentic lineages of Tongo, Yamələg, Sie, and Biuk. The prohibition extends to the assimilated lineages as well, but not to all attached lineages, though the natives state it as if it applied to the entire sub-clan. They regard it as the inevitable corollary of their common ancestry. It is, therefore, the widest extension of the rule which prohibits marriage within the agnatic lineage. I discovered only one instance of the transgression of this rule at Tongo, and this occurred in abnormal circumstances.

A second critical norm always cited is: '*ti diit taaba pakoya*—We marry 587
one another's widows.' A Tongo man has the right to seek the hand of 618X
the widow of a Yamələg, a Sie, or a Biuk man; but in actual practice remarriage of widows is restricted by so many other conditions that this leviratic right is mainly significant as an ideological index of clanship. It is the correlative of the rule of exogamy and, like it, the widest extension of a right which holds primarily within the lineage. Occasionally this right is exercised in its widest sense. The Chief of Tongo, for example, has availed himself of it to solve the problem of accommodation for himself and his retinue when he is compelled to visit the Administrative Headquarters at Zuarungu. An elderly widow at Biuk is nominally his wife and he may therefore stay in her house without embarrassment. In another case a middle-aged Yamələg widow elected to marry a stalwart young man from Tongo in preference to any of her dead husband's closer kinsmen. It is extremely unlikely that either woman would have been permitted to marry so distant an agnate of her dead husband if she were still capable of child-bearing. Nevertheless, it is an essential consequence of the leviratic right that if a man from one of the sub-clans should succeed in marrying a young widow of a member of another, no reprisals could be publicly undertaken against him, whereas anyone outside the range of clanship would be courting armed vengeance by such an act.

587 When, some forty years ago, a Tongo man married a Zoo widow and his
x618 son was shot dead in revenge by a Zoo man, the Chief of Tongo forbade
a raid of retaliation. It was, my informants said, a just vengeance since
[682] 'we don't marry the widows of Zoo people'.

Again, it would be a serious breach of solidarity for a member of one of
x618 the sub-clans to abduct the wife of a member of any other, and I have
627 never heard of such a case. Warfare between them is inconceivable, so the injured group would have to rely upon moral pressure through the chief and elders of the offender's community. But these measures would undoubtedly succeed, even in these days when rebellious young men can flee to foreign lands.

x618 This is likewise the widest extension of a restriction which holds with
587 greatest force for the segments of a maximal lineage belonging to the same sub-clan, e.g. for the segments of Tongo *inter se*. In a lesser degree it applies also to ex-wives. A man who marries the former wife of another, even if the marriage was severed for just and accepted reasons, incurs the hostility of the first husband's entire lineage both towards himself personally and towards his clansmen as a group. Reprisals will be taken when an opportunity occurs. When the parties are clansmen, feelings about such acts become very bitter, and the more so the closer the tie. Marriages of this kind take place from time to time, producing conflicts and reprisals but not disruption of clanship ties.

x618 Another proof of kinship (*mabiirət*) usually cited by the natives is that
721 warfare between the four sub-clans was forbidden. They were allies in war in the old days. They did not all come to one another's help, nor were they each other's sole allies. But they could call upon one another's assistance in the name of kinship. The recollections of the oldest men go back no farther than the time of their grandparents, four or five generations ago. They tell of ancient fights in which Tongo, Sie, and Yamələg supported one another; but Biuk, it seems, maintained an isolationist policy in the wars and feuds of its Tale kinsmen. The greatest war still remembered in tale and anecdote occurred forty or fifty years ago. Yamələg became involved in it; and when Ba'ari raised the war-cry against Yamələg, Sie and Tongo attacked Ba'ari on the flanks.

Mosuor biis: a Maximal Lineage

x618 These four branches of Mosuor's agnatic posterity (*tu'u*) constitute what appears to be a single, dispersed clan—the only clan of this type in Taleland; more accurately, it is a maximal lineage—the most inclusive agnatic lineage to which any descendant of Mosuor in the male line (i.e. any member of the four branches) can belong. In the eyes of the natives an important qualification is that the four branches are of equal status though graded in seniority. Tongo is the most senior because it remained in possession of the original home of the clan—'*ti waabi daboog*, the ancient home-site of all of us', they say—and has retained the custody of Mosuor's grave and *bɔyar*, the shrine which symbolizes the perpetuity,
x618 identity, and common ancestry of the entire maximal lineage. Yamələg,
Sie, and Biuk follow in that order; but they no longer participate in
769 sacrifices to Mosuor. Each of them has its own ancestral *bɔyar*, enshrining

its founding ancestors and its own differential line of agnatic descent. 618x Each sub-clan sacrifices separately to its own founding ancestor. Mosuor 769 is regarded as the common ancestor of all the sub-clans, but the cult of his shrine is the sole prerogative and duty of the Tongo branch of his posterity. According to Tale interpretation, a long period of territorial separation, bringing about political independence of one another, has inevitably resulted in the corresponding religious autonomy of each unit. A *bɔγar* cannot be separated from the grave and the home-site (*daboog*) of the ancestor it enshrines. Though the custody and cult of Mosuor's *bɔγar* are the exclusive province of the Tongo branch of the clan, because residence, lineage, and ancestor cult must have a concurrent continuity, these rights and duties are held to be exercised on behalf of the whole clan.

An unusual incident showed how the cult of Mosuor's *bɔγar* is related to the constitution of the clan. It was on the occasion of the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other early ancestors of Tongo described below (pp. 53–4). When the beer was being distributed, a man called out that there was a young man from Yaməlɔg present. This was quite unprecedented. The elders began to discuss the situation vigorously. The people of Yaməlɔg had no right to attend such a sacrifice; but they were Mosuor's agnatic descendants, and if one of them turned up by chance, could he be excluded? 'Is not Mosuor their ancestor as well as ours?' At this point the Yaməlɔg man stepped forward. He said that the question was of no importance; he was not a complete outsider intruding on the ritual of people not connected with him, neither was he there as a representative of Yaməlɔg; he had come solely in his personal capacity, to 'scrounge' some of the beer and meat, and not to take part in the sacrifice. In short, though he could not be turned away from the sacrifice (as, say, a Zubiuŋ or Zoo man would have been) without offence to the clan ancestors, his presence there did not signify a claim by Yaməlɔg to be represented at such rites, nor would it establish a precedent for the future. On this understanding, so amicably reached, he was given a courtesy portion of beer and meat.

As with the ancestor cult, so with the chiefship. Each sub-clan has 618x its own chiefship (*na'am*), in keeping with its territorial and political 622 autonomy, but the prototypical chiefship is that of Tongo, since it was established by Mosuor. Just as the four sub-clans are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) to one another, so their chiefs are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) equal in status but graded in seniority of rank, Tongo being the most senior and Biuk the most junior.

The equality of status of the four sub-clans is paralleled in the structure 618x of the maximal lineage which they constitute. In their relations of clan- 554 ship they are distant 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*), treating one another as relatively autonomous lineages. A Tongo man, when his conduct is determined by the norms of clanship, thinks of Yaməlɔg, Sie, or Biuk as a corporate unit. Its internal structure is of no relevance to him. At any of these places, in any relations of clanship, he represents Tongo, taken as a unit, irrespective of his position in its internal structure.

The children of Mosuor think of their maximal lineage as finally and 618x

x618 immutably established. The colonies which have budded off since the foundation of the four primary sub-clans rank only as minor segments of the sub-clans from which they come. Bɔləgraanyidɛm at Woo, Puliebɔryidɛm at Gorogo, Doohyidɛm at Ba'ari, all count as minor segments of their paternal sub-clan, Tongo.

The Lineage Principle in the Structure of the Clan

x618 764 Distant *sunzɔp* do not regularly attend funeral celebrations, but when an important person dies they occasionally come to pay their respects, though they do not bring contributions. Yamələg people used to be frequent visitors at big Tongo funerals before their present chief quarrelled with the Chief of Tongo (Tɔŋraana). Sie has a closer tie with one of the segments of Tongo (the house of Kabuu) through their founder's mother than with the others, hence a Sie party would be very likely to turn up for the funeral of a Kabuu-yir elder. Biuk has a similar link with Nɔŋsuur-yir at Tongo, and when Sayəbazaa, the head of that lineage, died in 1936, a party of mourners from Biuk came to the funeral. *Sunzɔ* lineages, as we have seen, are entitled to particular portions of animals slaughtered as offerings to the dead, of beer, and of the food contributions. Whatever the motives which bring a party, or even an individual, from Sie or Yamələg or Biuk to a funeral at Tongo, the prescribed share (*tɔrəg*) is given to them; a hind leg to the most senior of the three sub-clans which may be present, a foreleg to any of the others.

Each sub-clan behaves and is treated as a major segment of the maximal lineage in such a case; Tongo, the host segment, being regarded as a unit in contraposition to the guest segments and other more distant *sunzɔp*. If the other sub-clans are not represented, the major segments of Tongo emerge as the relatively autonomous units of the highest order, the one celebrating the funeral being the host segment. The host segment retains one hind leg of the beast slaughtered—the share of greatest distinction—and the other hind leg is the rightful share of the *sunzɔ* segment of equal status and grade in the lineage system. The forelegs, the shares of lesser distinction, go to *sunzɔ* segments which are more distant genealogically. The situation is always organized as an equilibrium of aliquot parts.

Thus, when the party from Biuk came to Sayəbazaa's funeral they received a hind leg of the cow which was slaughtered, since neither Yamələg nor Sie was represented. Tongo people have the same rights at the other places. In such situations, in conformity with the principle of unit representation, any member (or members) of the unit who happens to be present exercises the prerogatives or carries out the duties appropriate to that unit. When the meat or beer is being apportioned at a Tongo funeral and Yaməlɔg or Sie people are known to be present, the man in charge of affairs—who is acting also as representative of a unit, his segment of the sub-clan—calls out, 'Are any Yaməlɔgdɛm here?' and hands them their share; and so on for the others. I once saw this principle pushed to an absurd point. A Mampuru tramp followed me to a funeral ceremony in the hope of begging some money from me. When his presence was discovered, some were for driving him away immediately, 618x others maintained that as he had followed me he should share my portion 764 of the beer; but one elder demanded that he should be treated with special courtesy. '*U a Mampurug na'ab bii*—he is the child (i.e. subject) of the Chief of Mampurugu', the old man solemnly insisted, and he proceeded to welcome the ragged tramp respectfully. So a pot of beer was offered to him, somewhat grudgingly, as a scion of the Mamprusi, the ancestral stock of the Tongo Namoos, whom he was here regarded as representing. It was the logic of the situation which caused the intruder to be assigned a specific place in the structural scheme. When we dispersed nobody took any more notice of him.

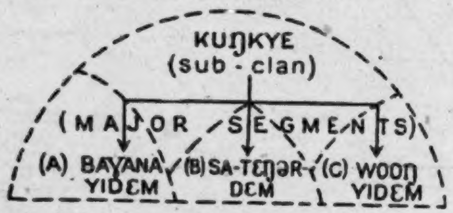
We describe the four units we have been dealing with as sub-clans 618x together constituting a single clan, for convenience of reference; for the Tallensi have no terminology corresponding to this. People of the four sub-clans say, '*Mosuor ndɔɣa ti waabi*—Mosuor begot us all'; or '*ti dɔɣʊm a bukɔ'la*—our birth is one', i.e. 'our line of descent is single'; or they describe themselves simply as Mosuor biis, the children (i.e. descendants) of Mosuor. Such expressions indicate the fundamental canon of clanship, that of descent from a common ancestor in the male line. This equates the clan with the agnatic maximal lineage. Having stated this dogma, a man may add, '*ti a bim bukɔ'la*—we are of one kind', or '*ti buurət a dekɔ'la*—our stock is one'; but neither *bim* nor *buurət* is equivalent to the concept 'clan'. They are used for classes of plants, animals, and inanimate objects as well as for social groups; *buurət* is most commonly heard in the sense of 'seed', its primary meaning, e.g. *naar-buura*, seed of early millet. '*Toog kama a bim bukɔ'la*—All sickness is of one kind', I was once told. The segments of a maximal lineage may be referred to as *ti bim, ti bim*, each of our kind, when their relative autonomy rather than their unity is emphasized.

Tale clanship, however, involves a wider nexus than the lineage system from which it derives. Clanship operates on the same level of relations as the lineage system, within the limits of common agnatic descent. It implies the notion of convergent patrilineal ascent; but in actual fact its range is extended by modifications of the strict rule of patriliny. The lineage system is the core of clanship, but not the whole of it. Lineally discrete groups are linked together by ties of clanship, so that the clan organization as a whole consists of a series of interlocked chains of linked maximal lineages.

The Internal Differentiation of the Clan: (A) *Sie*

The canon of agnatic descent from Mosuor, strictly applied, defines a range of membership—which could be measured by a count of heads—embracing the four settlements we have mentioned and their offshoots. At Sie those who fall within this range comprise the three major segments of the sub-clan: (A) Baɣana yidɛm; (B) Sa-tɛŋərdɛm; (C) Wooŋ yidɛm. These are all the agnatic posterity of Kuŋkye, the founder of the settlement of Sie, and can best be described as Kuŋkye biis, the children of Kuŋkye. They are the people of Sie proper.

*618



But Sie also includes a pair of accessory lineages, (D) Daaŋ yidɛm and (E) Kalǝŋkaa yidɛm, which are locally and structurally combined to form a single section known as Sie-datɔk.

SIE—the settlement

Sie proper	Sie-datɔk
Kuŋkye biis true sub-clan of Mosuor biis	Two accessory lineages: Daaŋ yidem and Kalǝŋkaa yidɛm

SIEDEM
'The people of Sie'

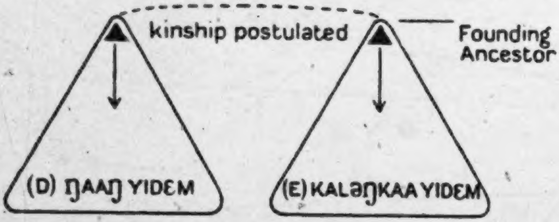
*618 173 Their original patrilineal ancestors are said to have come from Kurugu in Mampurugu, long after the foundation of the settlement by Mosuor's 'son' Kuŋkye. As in very many of these traditions of an ancestor who migrated from elsewhere, the motives attributed to him are the same as those which frequently prompt young men to move out to the periphery of settlement nowadays—the temptation of ample land when there is a shortage of farmland at home, or the desire for independence. The Sie-datɔk lineages are, therefore, considered to be of the same Mampuru stock (*buurǝt*) as the other Namoos. They have the same funeral ritual and totemic observances as all Namoos—a fact which is the most palpable proof to the natives that they are Namoos.

As with the myth of Mosuor, there is no means of verifying this tradition. The Sie-datɔkdɛm advance as evidence the fact that they still maintain political and social contacts with Kurugu; but other Namoo clans and lineages have similar relations with the people of Kurugu and do not, on those grounds, claim kinship (*mabiirǝt*) with them, except in so far as all Namoos speak of themselves as the kin (*mabiis*), in the widest sense, of the Mamprusi. The Tallensi, as we have already observed, do not make these critical comparisons. Their tradition accounts satisfactorily, in their view, to the Sie-datɔk lineages—and also to the people of Sie proper—for their being Namoos, and for their relations with the authentic lineage of Mosuor biis at Sie.

*618 In relation to each other the two lineages of Sie-datɔk act as the major segments of an inclusive maximal lineage, though they do not claim to have a single common ancestor. This assimilation is rationalized by the dogma that their ancestors were kinsmen (*mabiis*), though of what degree they do not profess to know, nor do they consider it relevant. This dogma, like their tradition of origin, is validated by the existing structural

618ˣ

relations which it subsumes under the canon of agnatic descent. The two lineages co-operate in ritual and secular affairs like lineages which are close *sunzɔp* to one another. Each lineage, for example, sends through its principal elder the formal contributions due from a brother (*sunzɔ*) lineage to funerals of the other and is entitled to receive the share of meat, beer, and other ceremonial gifts due to a *sunzɔ* lineage. Marriage between members of the two lineages is, of course, prohibited; widows of members of both may be inherited by members of either; and, though they have no common ancestral *bɔyar*, when either sacrifices to its ancestral *bɔyar* representatives of the other may attend and will be given a courtesy portion of the meat of the sacrifice.



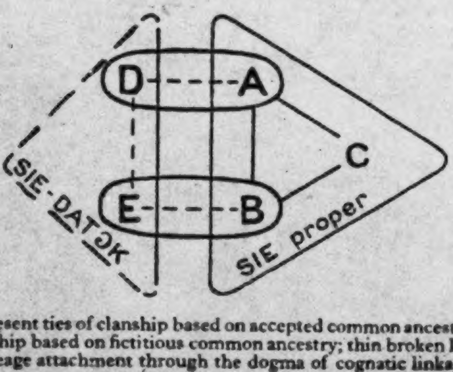
In the political, economic, and ceremonial affairs of the community Sie-datɔk acts as a single section (*yizug*). We shall go more fully into the significance of this term later. Here it is enough to say that it implies corporate action as a local and lineage segment of the larger unit which also includes Sie proper. But the two component lineages of Sie-datɔk are separately incorporated into the structure of the sub-clan. (D) Daaŋ yidɛm is an attached lineage of (A) Baɣana yidɛm and has the same reciprocal ties of clanship with it as it has with its other *sunzɔ* lineage (E) Kaləŋkaa yidɛm of Sie-datɔk. (D) Daaŋ yidɛm and (A) Baɣana yidɛm do not intermarry; the injunction against abducting one another's wives is rigorously maintained; they have joint leviratic rights; and the bond of reciprocity of services, contributions, and claims in ritual and ceremonial situations holds. (D) Daaŋ yidɛm participate in sacrifices to the lineage ancestor of (A) Baɣana yidɛm, but not on an equal footing with the latter. The portion of the sacrificial meat they receive is what is due to an attached lineage, not to a lineage of the true agnatic line. For their relation to (A) Baɣana yidɛm is explained by the usual dogma of descent from a 'sister's son' (*tau bii*). (E) Kaləŋkaa yidɛm are attached in the same way to (B) Sa-tɛŋɔrdɛm whose 'sister's' descendants they are said to be. The symmetry of this arrangement, and of the formulas by which it is rationalized, should be noted. It is an instance of the working of a principle we shall constantly meet with in the analysis of Tale social structure: the tendency of every field of structural relations to take the form of an equilibrium of ties and cleavages.

If we analyse the lineage structure of Sie more fully, we can see that the ties which bind the two lineages of Sie-datɔk are of the same type as those which bind the three segments of Sie proper, and spring from the same central notion of unilineal, agnatic descent or of presumptive x618 convergent ascent in the male line which takes its place where common patrilineal ancestry is not self-evident. The differential incidence of these ties, which is correlated with local distribution, creates cleavages which demarcate Sie-datɔk and Sie proper as relatively autonomous corporate units. But a further differentiation in the distribution of these ties within the same field of relations counterbalances these cleavages by binding each segment of Sie-datɔk to a segment of the counterposed corporate unit of Sie proper, and the canon of agnatic descent is once again modified to subsume these ties.

A significant feature of this constellation of ties and cleavages is that the two Sie-datɔk lineages each have ties of clanship with only one major segment of Sie proper and not with the others, or with the other branches of Mosuor biis. Between (D) Daaŋ yidɛm on the one hand and (B) Sa-tɛŋərdɛm and (C) Wooŋ yidɛm on the other, there are no reciprocal rights and duties, nor are they prohibited from intermarrying; and the same rules apply to the relations of (E) Kalɔŋkaa yidɛm with the two Sie lineages which have no clanship ties with it. Tongo, Yamələg, and Biuk lie completely outside the range of the clanship ties of either lineage.

The three segments of Sie proper, having a common agnatic ancestry, are major segments of a single lineage. Each has the rights and duties of *sunzɔp* to both of the others. They sacrifice together to their common ancestor's *bɔɣar*, as equal partners. As a corporate unit they have a bond of supreme importance in their chiefship and in their cult of their common ancestral *bɔɣar*. Common agnatic descent, the chiefship, and the cult of one ancestral *bɔɣar* are functions of one another. They establish equality and reciprocity in the rights and duties of the three segments towards one another and they mark off Sie proper uniquely as a corporate unit. Neither of the Sie-datɔk lineages has the right to hold the chiefship or to participate in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of Sie.

The spatial grouping of these five lineages parallels closely their structural relations. Taken together they form a continuous local aggregate. But each unit occupies its own more or less distinct quarter of the community. The spatial and social concatenation of Sie proper and Sie-datɔk can be represented in a diagrammatic way thus:



Solid lines represent ties of clanship based on accepted common ancestry; heavy broken lines, ties of clanship based on fictitious common ancestry; thin broken lines, ties of clanship based on lineage attachment through the dogma of cognatic linkage

Spatially and structurally Sie-datɔk is closer to (A) Bayana yidɛm and (B) Sa-tɛŋɔrdɛm than to (C) Wooŋ yidɛm. The coincidence of spatial and social affiliation is a regular feature of Tale social structure.

There are also at Sie proper one or two accessory lineages which are said to be of recent origin in terms of generations. Though their members may not hold the chiefship or take part in sacrifices to the ancestral *bɔyar*, they are more intimately incorporated into the major segments to which they are attached than are the lineages of Sie-datɔk. One at least is said to be of slave descent.

To outsiders, to neighbouring settlements, and even to the other branches of Mosuor biis, Sie and Sie-datɔk together form a single community, which will act as a unit in a matter of common interest, such as the abduction of a wife, whichever one of the five lineage segments is directly involved. But looked at from within, this unit resolves itself into a number of differentiated parts of identical form, which are so articulated with one another that each of them has unique ties with some of the rest, and no such ties with others. A social event occurring in one of these component lineages of the sub-clan of Sie mobilizes a different set of lineages from that which would be mobilized by the same event in any other of the lineages, even in a lineage linked to it by clanship. Thus, in a funeral of a member of (C) Wooŋ yidɛm, only the three major segments of Sie proper are directly concerned. Only they are bound to render ceremonial services, duties, and contributions, and only they have the corresponding rights and privileges of *sunzɔp*. A funeral of a member of (A) Bayana yidɛm brings (D) Daaŋ yidɛm also into active and obligatory co-operation; and this co-operation unites, for a time and with reference to a common bond which cancels out the lineage cleavages, three segments which are not linked by clanship. The structure of the sub-clan, on the plane of clanship, is such that there can never be an irreconcilable conflict between any of its segments or between any combination of segments and any other combination of segments. There will always be a segment linked by ties of clanship to both parties to hold the balance between them and to work for reconciliation. Just as the stability of a tent is the product of a number of guy ropes pulling with equal force in opposed directions from a single centre, so the cohesion of Sie is a function of the balance attained between the ties and cleavages that link and differentiate the component segments. This is a characteristic feature of Tale clanship.

The Internal Differentiation of the Clan: (B) *Tongo and the Status of Accessory Lineages*

Sie is typical of Tale clan organization in that it is not an exclusive, closed genealogical unit, or part of such a unit. Sie proper, as we know, is a branch of Mosuor biis. Its three *sunzɔ* sub-clans vary slightly in structure from it and from one another, but the basic plan is the same; only the details vary in their interrelations and complexity.

At Tongo there are, formally, two major segments, but one of them has split into three lesser segments which function as major segments in the affairs of the sub-clan. This is an adjustment to maintain the internal equilibrium of the sub-clan. Each major segment consists of several

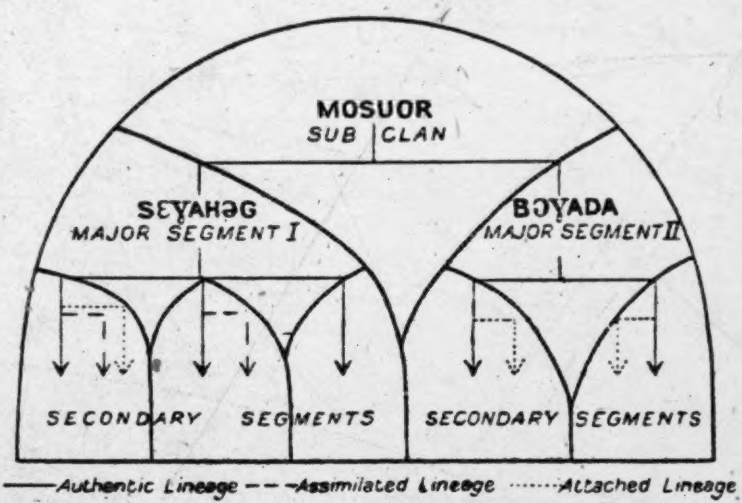

MOSUOR
SUB CLAN
SƐYAHƏG
MAJOR SEGMENT I
BƆYADA
MAJOR SEGMENT II
SECONDARY SEGMENTS
SECONDARY SEGMENTS
Authentic Lineage
Assimilated Lineage
Attached Lineage

Diagram showing the major segments of Tongo by descent

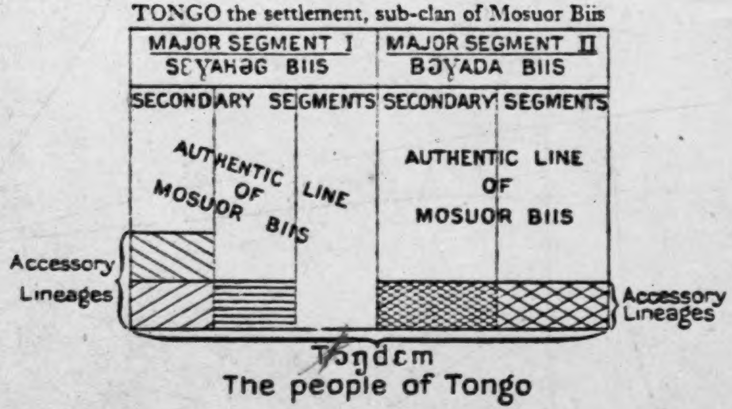

TONGO the settlement, sub-clan of Mosuor Biis
MAJOR SEGMENT I
SƐYAHƏG BIIS
MAJOR SEGMENT II
BƆYADA BIIS
SECONDARY SEGMENTS
SECONDARY SEGMENTS
AUTHENTIC LINE OF MOSUOR BIIS
AUTHENTIC LINE OF MOSUOR BIIS
Accessory Lineages
Accessory Lineages
Tɔŋdɛm
The people of Tongo

Diagram showing general structure of Tongo

secondary segments of authentic agnatic descent from Mosuor, together with one or more accessory lineages. Thus there are three attached lineages, said to have sprung in the male line from 'sisters' sons' (*tau bii*, pl. *tab biis*) of the authentic lineages to which they are attached. They are incorporated into, and live in close proximity to, the branches of the two major segments to which they are respectively attached. Being scattered thus they have no organization *inter se* like that of Sie-datɔk to give them a unity and solidarity counterbalancing that of the authentic lineages, which are united by their common patrilineal descent. They have, in consequence, become almost completely submerged in the authentic lineages. Only one attached lineage (Zɔŋ yidem) still intermarries with other members of the sub-clan, provided they belong to a different major segment from that to which Zɔ̄ŋ yidem are attached, and these marriages are not encouraged. At Sie, by contrast, 15 out of the 43 wives of Siedatɔk are members of Wooŋ yidem or other branches of Mosuor biis not related to them by clanship ties. 618x

The attached lineages at Tongo are accounted for by the stereotyped tradition which is found, in similar circumstances, all over Taleland. The story is that a woman of the authentic lineage concerned (e.g. Lɛbhtiis yidem)—a 'sister' in the classificatory sense—married a member of one of the Hill Talis clans and bore children to him. Later, however, her husband divorced her by the rite of 'blowing' (*pɛbh*), by which he not only banished her from his home but disowned the children she had borne to him. She returned to live at her parental home, where her children grew up and settled, and where one son gave rise to the lineage attached to his mother's brother's lineage. Because of their founding ancestors' paternity, which even the act of formal repudiation of wife and child could not extinguish, two of the attached lineages preserve the totemic taboos and some of the funeral customs of the Hill Talis. It is a religious duty which they say could not be abandoned without the greatest peril.

Apart from this mark of distinction and the disabilities which will be mentioned later and which apply to all accessory lineages, they participate in social events as ordinary segments of the lineages to which they are attached. They can even represent these lineages in relation to other groups.

An attached lineage is said, sometimes, to have sprung from an unmarried girl's son (*yiyeembii*). His paternity never having been socially recognized, it has no influence on his social role or on that of the lineage which originates from him. Thus, such a lineage has all the customs and observances of its maternal lineage—the lineage, that is, of its founder's mother, to which her son is reckoned as belonging. The third attached lineage at Tongo is said to be descended from an unmarried 'sister's' son and their ritual observances confirm this view. 618x 848

Tongo also includes several assimilated lineages. These are indistinguishable, at first sight, from the authentic lineages either by the criterion of differences in custom or from their manner of participation in the social events which mobilize structural relations. Whatever their real origin may be alleged to be, they are linked to the constellation of authentic lineages by the fiction of direct agnatic descent from the founder of the whole sub-clan, Mosuor himself. They are, as this implies, more closely welded into the sub-clan than are the attached lineages. It would be inconceivable, for example, for a member of an assimilated lineage to marry any other member of the sub-clan. 618x

Attached lineages, everywhere, are incorporated into a lineage of authentic descent by an indirect route, as it were. They are hinged on to the true agnatic line by a compromise, as descendants of a woman of the true agnatic line. This introduces a clear distinction by the canon 618x 554

*618 554 of descent. The status of an attached lineage is always somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, there is nothing derogatory, by native standards, in the link through a woman, as will be more fully appreciated when we come to the domestic side of Tale social structure.[1] It is but an accident of birth, argue the natives, which made their ancestress a woman instead of a man; otherwise they might have been as much members of the unbroken patrilineal line as the authentic lineages. This explains why attached lineages do not hesitate to advertise their identity by holding to distinctive ritual usages and traditions of origin, and why they may, as at Sie, have a place in the social structure which makes use of their genealogical position. The 'accident of birth' is capitalized as a factor of social organization. On the other hand, there is no escaping the fact that it bars the attached lineage from complete absorption by the authentic line. Its members are debarred from the privileges which are indefeasibly bound up with the unbroken agnatic line and symbolize the uniqueness of this line. They could not at Tongo, for example, participate in sacrifices to Mosuor until recently (see below, pp. 54-5), and they cannot succeed to the custody of his *bɔyar*. They can join in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the authentic lineage-segment to which they are directly attached; but they cannot hold the custody of his *bɔyar*. The Tongo chiefship is of course rigorously closed to them. All these are crucial values, and to be excluded from the rights and privileges associated with them is a distinct disability. The rights which an attached lineage has in the sub-clan are in part a concession. Thus, though its status need never be glossed over, it cannot be vaunted.

*618 554 567 Assimilated lineages, by contrast, cannot be discriminated by means of an explicitly accepted modification in the canon of agnatic descent, since they are always regarded as having sprung from 'strangers' (*saan*, pl. *saam*), slaves or refugees. To incorporate them in the lineage structure of the sub-clan there is no alternative but to assimilate them by a fiction. A male slave is thus incorporated into his master's family and a refugee into that of his protector. Homeless and kinless, they must be endowed with a new social personality and given a definite place in the community. But the bond of actual paternity cannot be fabricated; the fiction is a makeshift and always remains so. A slave or a refugee can never acquire the one right which is conferred exclusively by the tie of blood, or as the Tallensi say, of begetting (*dɔyam*), the right to offer sacrifice directly, as the owner (*daana*) of his shrine (*bayər*)[2] to the spirit of the patron whom he has described in his lifetime as his father (*ba*). In this respect they have no advantage over matrilateral kin, for a man's spirit can receive direct sacrifice only from his agnatic posterity. Like matrilateral kin, also, an adopted slave is barred from rights of inheritance and succession that are confined to the agnatic line, even though he is for all practical purposes the child (*bii*) of his patron in a way that a matrilateral kinsman could never be.

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[1] This is dealt with in the second part of this study, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

[2] *Bayər* (pl. *baya*) is the generic term for any ancestor or medicine shrine; *bɔyar* (pl. *bɔya*) is the special shrine dedicated to the founding ancestor of a lineage.

Assimilated lineages, therefore, all over Taleland, though thoroughly 618x
absorbed into the structure of the sub-clan or clan, suffer the same disabilities as the more precisely differentiated attached lineages; they cannot, 554
however, make a virtue of this, as the latter sometimes can; they cannot 576
explain away their status. To tax a person, openly or explicitly, with 567
being the descendant of a slave (*da'abər bii*) is one of the deadliest insults, however remote his slave ancestry may be. This is more than a matter of etiquette. It amounts, in certain circumstances, to blasphemy against the spirit of the man who originally adopted this slave ancestor. Thus, under this rule of courtesy to clansmen and respect for ancestors, the status of an assimilated lineage is never commented on publicly unless a serious issue hangs on it or a severe quarrel is involved. This exceptional circumspection about assimilated lineages shows better than anything else their ambiguous position in the clan.

Such elements of the social structure as these are not apparent at first 618x
glance. I did not discover the existence of assimilated lineages at Tongo until the end of my first year in the field. To do so it was essential to have a very thorough understanding of the way the lineage system works and of the internal structure of the Tale community. I was able then to notice and to be puzzled by the absence, or self-effacement, of certain people in situations where they would normally be representing their lineage segments. It was not the behaviour to be expected of them if their segments were of equal status with the authentic segments of Mosuor biis. Veiled hints began to have a meaning which confidential informants confirmed.

One of my earliest friends and frankest informants at Tongo was 618x
Saɣəbazaa, an elder in whom the chief had the greatest confidence and 115
who was universally esteemed for his industry and probity. Saɣəbazaa was the head (*kpeem*) of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, a major segment of one of the major segments of Tongo. One of its members held an important and confidential office under the chief. Nɔŋsuur yidɛm appeared to be of the true agnatic line of Mosuor. I took this for granted the more readily because, when the Great Festival season came round and all the elders of Tongo were summoned to the chief's house so that a diviner could be consulted, it was Saɣəbazaa who consulted the diviner on behalf of the chief and the whole of Tongo, in order to ascertain what offerings must be given to Mosuor and the chiefly ancestors.

Nevertheless, Nɔŋsuur yidɛm is an assimilated lineage whose founding 618x
ancestor is vaguely said to have arrived with Mosuor. Though almost completely absorbed by the authentic line of Mosuor biis, a last barrier remains, which I discovered only through one of the most striking of the events which revealed the existence and status of accessory lineages at Tongo. It showed also how there is a continuous process of adjustment going on in every sector of the social structure, resolving the tensions and contradictions latent in it.

It was an occasion of historic importance marking the climax of one 618x
phase in the absorption of the accessory lineages by the authentic lineages 769
of Tongo. The occasion was that of the great thanksgiving sacrifice to the founding ancestors of Tongo, Mosuor and his son Sɛɣahəg, which took place in 1936. Beer and animals were contributed by the chief, who gave

x618 769 a cow, and by all the segments of the sub-clan—the heads bringing a sheep each, the elders next in seniority in each segment a goat each, and the junior elders bringing fowls. It was noticeable that assimilated and attached lineages also brought contributions of fowls, by express command of the chief. Never before in the memory of the oldest men had so many animals been slaughtered in sacrifice to the ancient ancestors (*yaabkɔrəg*, pl. *yaakɔrəb*) of the sub-clan on one day; and a great concourse of men of all ages, such as had never in living memory gathered for such a sacrifice, assembled for the occasion. Among them were several members of assimilated and attached lineages, but, surprisingly, none of the senior elders of these lineages. The authentic segments were there in full force, their senior elders acting as their formal representatives and taking the lead in the rites. In the days of their youth, some of the old men murmured with disapproval, only the heads of the authentic lineages used to be present at sacrifices to Mosuor. A noisy crowd of men of all ages would have been considered altogether out of keeping with so sacred and esoteric a *bɔyar* as that of the founding ancestor. But times [622] have changed; these are the chief's orders; and if it is obligatory for every authentic lineage to be represented at such a sacrifice, it is also the right of any of their male members to participate if they wish. There were whispers, also, about 'strangers' (*saam*) being present, and I thought, at first, that they must be referring to me.

The ceremony proceeded with the usual alternation of reverential solemnity and conviviality and lasted far into the night. But for two incidents one might have forgotten the presence of those men who by the strict canon of agnatic descent were intruders. There was a long delay at the outset while the elders of the segment which has the custody of the graves and shrines of the clan founders (Lɛbhtiis yidɛm) held a private conference at the house of their lineage head. This aroused the suspicion of some of the better informed men amongst the crowd waiting impatiently for their arrival. Next day we learnt that these suspicions were justified. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm had been debating with some acrimony, though inconclusively, what was the right line to take about the presence of members of accessory lineages.

Later, there was another hitch just before the culminating rite, the actual sacrifice to Mosuor's *bɔyar*. There were whispered consultations. An impetuous member of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm protested that the intruders should be shut out, but he was overruled by an elder who counselled moderation in view of the chief's wishes.

Next day these incidents were threshed out by the chief when all the elders met to congratulate him on the success of the sacrifices. He rated Lɛbhtiis yidɛm scathingly for their reactionary conduct. 'Times have changed', he said in the course of a long harangue, 'and you must disregard those old tales. Anyhow, you are only my deputies. It is I who really own Mosuor's *bɔyar*, and it is I who will suffer the penalties if Mosuor is offended by what I am doing. And what if some people are of slave descent? They won't steal the *bɔyar* from you. If a man has a slave he calls him to come and join in sacrifices to his ancestors; his slave is like his son. Mosuor established (*naam*, lit. created) all of us, he owns

all of us (i.e. those of alleged slave descent as well). Who are you to 618x
decide who is or is not to be allowed to take part in sacrifices to him?' 769

Crest-fallen, the supporters of the *status quo ante* begged the chief's pardon. It was a victory for the forces of community integration and a personal triumph for the chief over the cleavages due to the strict application of the canon of agnatic descent.

One of the chief's most intimate and influential elders commented to 618x
me afterwards, cautiously but with a hint of regret, that soon it would become impossible to withhold the chiefship from the accessory lineages now that they had practically won the right to participate in the most esoteric ritual cult of the true agnatic sodality. But the battle for consolidation is not yet over. The presence of some members of accessory lineages at the sacrifices was not part of a deliberate scheme to gain equality of status but was an unthinking reaction to the whole situation—the unusual publicity of the ceremony, its emphasis on an all-embracing solidarity of the whole sub-clan, and the chief's insistence on interpreting this to mean all the people of Tongo and not only those of true agnatic descent from Mosuor. Some elders of the accessory lineages were as dubious about the affair as some of the elders of authentic lineages. To take part in sacrifices from which one's fathers and grandfathers (*banam ni yaanam*) had been rigidly excluded might well be an offence against one's own ancestors, even though the chief had taken the responsibility on himself. Members of accessory lineages do not resent their disfranchisement as a disability to be fought against, but accept it as part of the fixed order of society validated by the whole religious system.

Thus these elders of the accessory lineages will not take it for granted that they now have the same rights as the authentic lineages. They are aware, also, that the occurrence has left behind a good deal of hidden resentment which may, at some future crisis, precipitate a violent reaction against the inclusion of accessory lineages in the ritual brotherhood of Mosuor biis. The forces of integration are strong at Tongo; but the genealogical cleavages in its lineage structure are so fundamental that this historic sacrifice may yet prove to be a warning against their abrogation rather than a precedent for it.

This episode brought out more vividly than anything I had previously 618x
encountered the significance of the ancestral graves and shrines, in 778
particular of Mosuor's *bɔɣar*, as the focus of the sub-clan's unity and the symbol of its corporate identity; for it was obvious that until they were able to participate on equal terms in sacrifices to this *bɔɣar*, the accessory lineages would not be regarded as, or feel themselves to be, completely absorbed by the authentic lineages.

Tongo, we may conclude, though it is more closely knit than Sie, is 618x
also an open system in its lineage structure; and this is equally true of 184
Yamələg and Biuk. This peculiarity of the clan organization is more precisely apparent in the asymmetrical linkages of the component lineages of the different sub-clans of Mosuor biis. It is evident from our analysis that the ties of clanship summarily posited by the natives as linking *all* of Tongo with *all* of Sie, *all* of Yamələg, and *all* of Biuk, measured by the strict canon of agnatic descent as well as by the critical norms of clanship,

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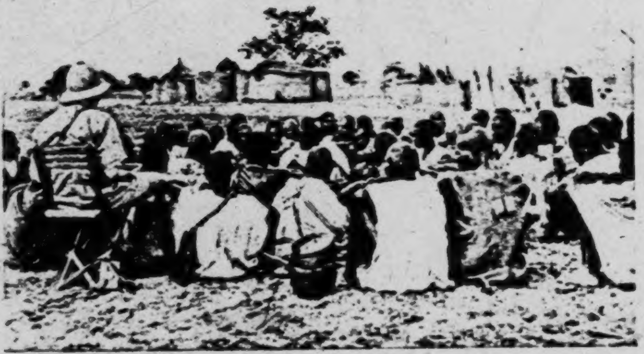

(*a*) Elders of a Maximal Lineage assemble to sacrifice to their Founder.

The Maximal Lineage is a corporate unit: The elders of a maximal lineage, representing all its component segments, assemble to perform a sacrifice on the grave of one of their founding ancestors. Note that (a) only men are present; (b) the members of each segment sit together; (c) the close-packed form of the group, an index of the strong sense of lineage solidarity in such situations.

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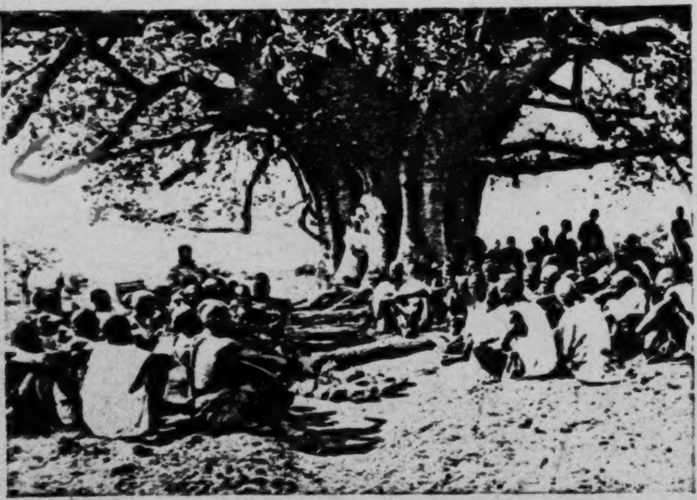

(*b*) Prayer preceding Sacrifice to Clan Founder.

An episode in the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other founding ancestors, at Tongo, in 1936. Men of the sub-clan assembled at Mosuor's grave (stones in foreground) and tree shrine (baobab tree). The photograph was taken as the prayer preceding the sacrifice was being offered.

[facing p. 56]

x618 184 really hold only for the authentic lineages and, through them, for the assimilated lineages. The natives ignore this qualification when they make general statements about their clan organization—not because they reason obliquely, but on sound sociological grounds; for in their corporate relations with one another the four sub-clans treat one another as units irrespective of what the internal structure of each may be. Members of accessory lineages can represent the whole sub-clan in relation to one of the other sub-clans.

The Nexus of Clanship Ties

x618 Let us go back to Sie. The two lineages of Sie-datɔk have no ties of clanship with the distant *sunzɔp* of the Sie proper lineages to which they are attached by ties of clanship—that is, with Tongo, Yamələg, or Biuk. But to balance this they are linked by ties of clanship to other units with which the authentic lineages of Sie have no such ties.

Gban is a Namoo community adjacent to Sie. The people of Gban ([illegible]bandεm) comprise three maximal lineages: (F) Dabierugyaɣardεm; (G) Gbandaan yidεm; and (H) Buŋwari yidεm. Taken together these three units form a local clan; they are linked by all the ties of clanship, but they do not claim to have a single common ancestor or postulate the convergence of their lines of ascent as do the Sie-datɔkdεm. (F) Dabierugyaɣardεm claim to have been the first to settle there, as their ancestor came there from Kurugu—like the ancestors of Sie-datɔkdεm, it will be remembered—before the founders of the other two maximal lineages arrived. But now they have all become *dɔyam bukɔ'la*—one consanguineous kin.

Sie-datɔk and Gban are linked by ties of clanship exactly in the same way as the component lineages of each are linked *inter se*, and as the two lineages of Sie-datɔk are linked to the authentic lineages of Sie to which they are attached, or as Sie and Tongo are related to each other.

Just as Sie proper has a closer bond with the segment of Kabuu yidεm at Tongo than with the other Tongo lineages, so the senior lineage of Sie-datɔk, (D) Daaŋ yidεm, has a special tie with the senior segment (Tasoo yidεm) of (F) Dabierugyaɣardεm at Gban. Their respective ancestors are said to have been kin (*mabiis*) whose common home was Kurugu. Hence these two lineages attend each others' sacrifices to their respective founding ancestors and are entitled to the portion of the sacrificial animal due to close *sunzɔp*, a hind leg (*gbεr*). If there is a funeral among (D) Daaŋ yidεm, representatives of (F) Dabierugyaɣardεm will be sure to attend and assist as a matter both of loyalty and of duty; representatives of the other two Gban lineages may or may not turn up, as they please. It is not an obligation to do so, though they have clanship ties with Sie-datɔk. It is as if the primary tie of clanship between Gban and Sie-datɔk is that which links (F) Dabierugyaɣardεm to (D) Daaŋ yidεm and that this tie is merely extended to the other component lineages of the two units, through the effect of their bonds with the two lineages primarily interlinked. The relation is similar to that which obtains between any of the assimilated lineages of Tongo and the authentic

PLATE IV

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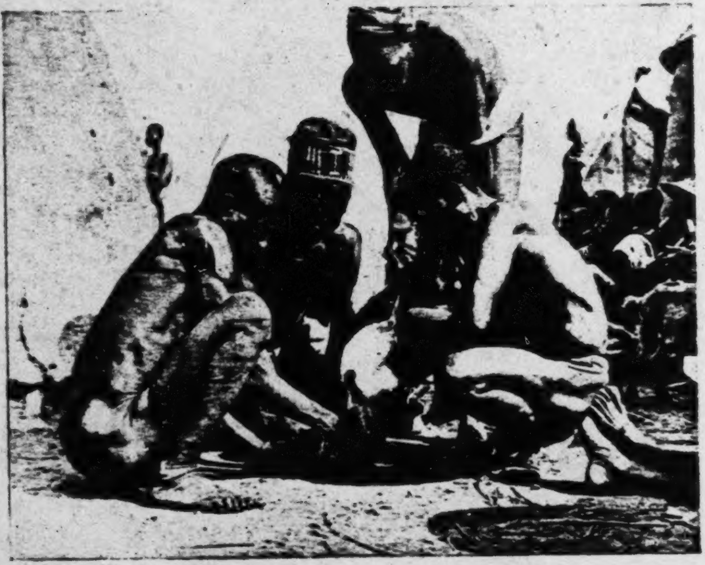

(*a*) Ritual strangling of a goat to provide the loin cover for a Namoo elder's burial.

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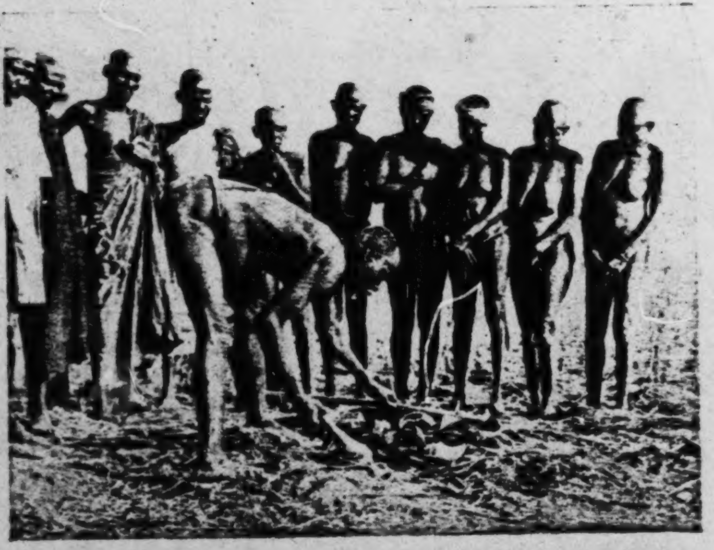

(*b*) *Ŋma woɣar*, the final rite of a Namoo funeral, is peculiar to Namoos.

[facing p.57]

lineages of Sie. There are gradations in the operation of clanship ties in this case.

Gbandem have no ties of clanship with Sie proper or with the other branches of Mosuor biis, with all of whom they intermarry freely. Their only connexion with one another is that they are all Namoos.

To complete the picture let us look again at the Tongo end of this chain of clan linkages. There the attached lineages should, by formal reckoning, have ties of clanship with the communities of Talis from whom they are

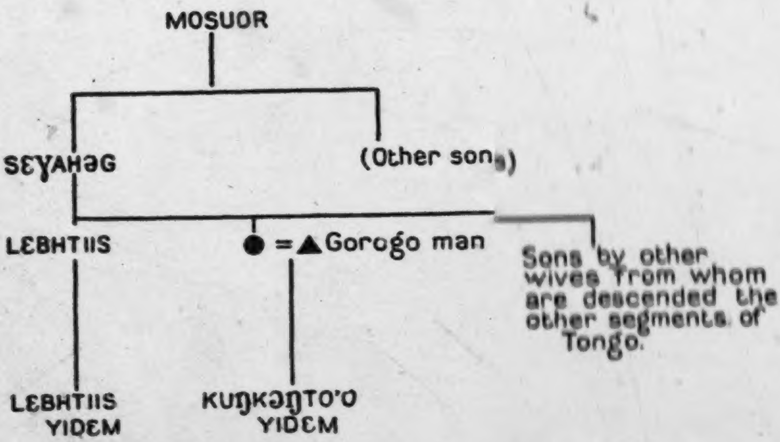

Diagram showing the genealogical tie between an attached lineage, Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm, and the authentic lineage, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, to which it is attached.

said to have sprung on the male side. But these ties are now purely nominal owing to the advanced stage of fusion with the authentic lineages of Tongo which these attached lineages have reached. Gorogo people never come to funerals celebrated by Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm of Tongo, the attached lineage which is said to have originated from a 'sister's son' of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm begotten by a Gorogo man who later divorced his wife (see diagram above). Yet Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm retain most of the funeral ritual and the totemic taboos of the Talis. They account for this on the grounds that their founding ancestor was initiated by his Gorogo father into the *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis[1] before being disowned by him. They are bound therefore, through the principle of lineage continuity, to maintain his ritual observances. What is more significant, Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm freely marry Gorogo women. They argue in defence of this—following exactly the logic of the lineage system and the principles of kinship—that they no longer know which of the component lineages of Gorogo is their *dɔyam* (consanguineous kin) and therefore forbidden in marriage to them, and which of them are not *dɔyam* and therefore marriageable. The criterion of exogamy has lapsed; and one reason for this, without a doubt, is that Tongo and Gorogo are on opposite sides of the great cleavage between

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[1] Cf. pp. 103 ff. below.

Namoos and Talis. Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm could maintain ties of clanship with Gorogo only if they had the necessary degree of corporate autonomy within the lineage structure of Tongo. But they are so thoroughly incorporated into this lineage structure as to count merely as a segment of the third or fourth order. They are completely identified with Tongo, and the conflict of loyalties would be too great if they had ties of clanship also with Gorogo. Abandoning these entirely, Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm regard Gorogo as a single unit, any member of which they may marry. In such cases the Tallensi choose the course of least restriction and most advantage.

The two lineages of Sie-datok are intercalary between Gban and Sie proper; (A) Bayana yidɛm of Sie are an intercalary lineage linking Sie proper with Sie-datok and so are (B) Sa-tɛŋərdɛm; but Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm of Tongo are not an intercalary lineage.

There is, however, one intercalary lineage at Tongo the status and structural ties of which introduce a factor of clanship which is obscured elsewhere by the convention of always subsuming clanship ties under the dogma of common ancestry. Ligər yidɛm are an assimilated lineage whose founding ancestor is believed to have been a refugee from afar, a Gɔrəŋ. Their homesteads merge with those of Gbizug on one side and those of the authentic lineage of Tongo to which they are assimilated on the other. Ligər yidɛm have ties of clanship with Gbizug, though only the minimal ties of mutual exogamy and fraternity; the right to inherit one another's widows would never be exercised though it is formally presumed to exist; and there are between them no ties of a cult of a common ancestor or even of attending one another's sacrifices to lineage ancestors. No other Tongo lineages—the *sunzɔp* of Ligər yidɛm—have ties of clanship with Gbizug, and Ligər yidɛm have no ties of clanship with the lineages of Gbeog, Ba'ari, and other adjacent communities who are the *sunzɔp* of Gbizug (cf. p. 82).

This linkage, which so much resembles those of the intercalary lineages at Sie, is particularly illuminating. Ligər yidɛm, as a Tongo lineage, are Namoos, sharply separated from the Gbizugdɛm who are Talis, in ritual observances and in their political allegiance. This enhances their ties with Tongo, and explains why their clanship ties with Gbizug are no more than minimal. The stronger pull is that of Tongo. When there is a death among Ligər yidɛm both their Tongo *sunzɔp* and their Gbizug *sunzɔp* send representatives and contributions to the mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and it is interesting to see how the different significance of the two sets of ties comes out then. In the esoteric phases of the ceremonies Gbizugdɛm play no part and bring no contributions; but in the non-ritual formalities they have as prominent a role as the Tongo *sunzɔp*. Ligər yidɛm act reciprocally whenever there is a funeral at Gbizug.

In this instance a bond of common ancestry between Gbizug and Ligər yidɛm is not invoked. Gbizug elders say that Ligər yidɛm are their 'kin' (*mabiis*) because the Gɔrəŋ from whom the latter are descended first sought the protection of the Gbizug tɛndaana of that time, though they do not know which of their tɛndaana ancestors this was. Upon inquiry it appeared that the stranger came from a community of Namoos, having the same funeral ritual and totemic avoidances as the Tale Namoos.

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So the tɛndaana sent him to the Chief of Tongo, but, having already accepted him hospitably, he also gave the homeless man land to build on and to farm near his own homestead. There the stranger's posterity (*tu'u*) have remained ever since 'sitting down together with' (*kab siin ni*) Gbizugdɛm but assimilated to Tongo. For this reason, say Gbizug elders, '*tam nso Ligər yidɛm*—we own (in the sense of being *in loco parentis* to) Ligər yidɛm'. Ligər, which means Darkness, was the name given to this stranger because he came in the darkness of night, crouching against the wall of the homestead for safety, to implore protection and hospitality. The name enshrines the myth. But the important point is that the local situation of Ligər yidɛm, between the homesteads of their Tongo *sunɔɔp* and those of their Gbizug *sunɔɔp*, corresponds exactly to their structural articulation and to the way this is represented in the symbolism of the myth. We shall find other instances later confirming the surmise that clanship ties, here, are a function of local ties.

That does not mean that local ties, however close they may be, always imply corresponding ties of clanship. All social ties between corporate units in Taleland, whether they are based on actual or putative genealogical links, on local contiguity, on ritual collaboration and interdependence, or on political connexions, tend to be assimilated to clanship. Whenever and wherever such ties operate, they reflect common or mutual interests which find expression in relations of amity and co-operation modelled on those that hold between corporate units linked by ties of clanship. But these relations of clanship are modified in numerous ways according to the structural context of the particular ties they express.

A number of Tale clans have accessory lineages with intercalary relations exactly like those of Ligər yidɛm at Tongo; yet Tongo itself affords an instance of a lineage which is locally intercalary but not bilaterally linked by ties of clanship to the units on either side of it. Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, who have been previously mentioned, live between the authentic lineage of Tongo to which they are primarily assimilated (Siiyɛŋ biis) and Zubiuŋ, the genealogically independent clan of Talis who are close neighbours of Tongo. Nɔŋsuur yidɛm were the first people of Tongo to come and live in that part of the settlement, according to their traditions. It is said that their ancestor who first built his homestead there was a 'sister's son' (*ahəŋ*) of Zubiuŋ and was therefore given land to build on and farm by the then Zubiuŋ tɛndaana. Thus Nɔŋsuur yidɛm live on Zubiuŋ land; they have cordial and intimate relations of neighbourliness with the people of Zubiuŋ; they speak of themselves in some situations as 'sister's sons' (*ahəs*) of Zubiuŋ in virtue of the kinship tie which their ancestor had with the latter; but they have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ. They always take part in important Zubiuŋ funerals, but as neighbours (*yi-kpeedɛm*) and as classificatory *ahəs*, contributing, through their lineage head (*kpeem*), the donations due from *ahəs* and receiving the shares of meat, beer, and foodstuffs due to *ahəs*. Ligər yidɛm, despite their ties of clanship with Gbizug, do not participate in sacrifices given by the latter to their lineage *bɔɣar*; Nɔŋsuur yidɛm are generally represented at important sacrifices made by any of the Zubiuŋ maximal lineages to their lineage *bɔɣar*, but, again, in their role of classificatory *ahəs*. The pull of Tongo is the decisive factor.

x618 The Gbizug legend of how Ligər yidəm came to dwell at Tongo is well known to Tongo elders who are versed in such matters, and is regarded by them as true. It would never, of course, be brought up in public, especially if any Ligər yidəm were present. The elders of Ligər yidəm accept this story, but they would be indignant at any suggestion that it is in any way derogatory. The assimilated lineages at Tongo stand in a marginal relation to the authentic posterity of Mosuor, and this is reflected in the general attitude of tacit discretion about their presumed origins and the disabilities these entail. These cannot be covered up, and no upright person would wish to do so; but they are not matters of which a public display is made unless there is a really serious issue at stake.

x618 It is unnecessary to describe at length the lineage structure of Yamələg
648 and Biuk, both of which closely resemble Tongo. At Biuk we enter the country of the Gərisi. Not only do the people of Biuk, though linked by ties of clanship with Mosuor biis, speak Gorni and practise some Gore customs not found among the Tallensi, but they are also linked by clanship ties, through intercalary lineages, with the Gərisi of Zuarungu. These clan linkages of the people of Biuk with Gərisi are not known to the people of Tongo, Yamələg, and Sie, nor are they of any interest to them. Biuk marks the limit of their frame of social reference, though the chain of clanship ties which links them to one another extends beyond it, across the frontier of linguistic and cultural variation.

x618 Our analysis of the clan structure of Mosuor biis and their clanship ties with other units may be summed up in the following table and diagram. For the sake of simplicity Yamələg and Biuk are omitted, since they constitute only a wider ramification of the structural arrangements represented in the table.

TONGO

Authentic lineages (grouped in four major segments of the sub-clan)	have ties of clanship with	All Yamələg All Sie All Biuk
Accessory lineages (distributed amongst the four major segments; no corporate organization *inter se*)	have ties of clanship, extended from those of the authentic lineages with	All Yamələg All Sie All Biuk
One assimilated lineage (Ligər yidəm)	has, in addition, ties of clanship with	Gbizug (Talis)

SIE PROPER

Authentic lineages (forming three major segments)	have ties of clanship with	All Tongo All Yamələg All Biuk

These ties of clanship extended to the accessory lineages at Sie.

Authentic lineage (A) (Bayana yidəm)	has ties of clanship with	Lineage (D) (Daaŋ yidəm) of Sie-datək
Authentic lineage (B) (Sa-trŋərdəm)	has ties of clanship with	Lineage (E) (Kalənkaa yidəm) of Sie-datək

SIE-DATƆK 618x

Two maximal lineages constituting a relatively autonomous corporate unit	each has ties of clanship with	one authentic lineage of Sie, but not with the others
	no ties of clanship with	the other three branches of Mosuor biis
One lineage (D) (Daaŋ yidɛm)	has ties of clanship with	one lineage (F) Dabierugyayardem of Gban

By extension of the clanship ties between Daaŋ yidɛm (D) of Sie-datɔk and Dabierugyayardem (F) of Gban, both lineages of Sie-datɔk have ties of clanship with all Gban.

GBAN

Three maximal lineages not claiming convergent ascent. (A composite local clan)	have ties of clanship with	Sie-datɔk
	but no ties of clanship with	Mosuor biis.

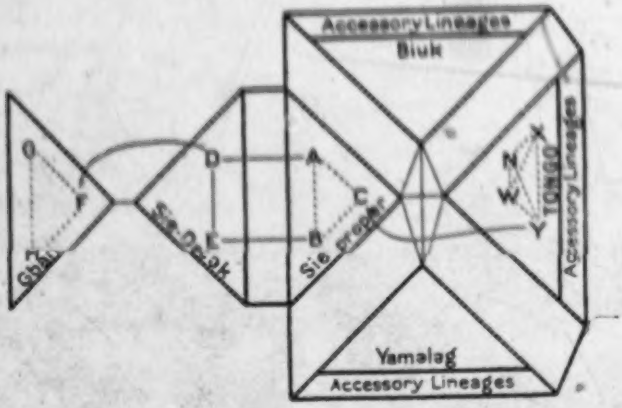

Diagram showing the Nexus of Clanship Ties from Gban to Tongo
Clanship Ties are shown thus ————
A. etc. = Major segments of clan or sub-clan

The Field of Clanship

To avoid circumlocution we may speak of this system of linked lineages 618x as a clan organization. We can describe Mosuor biis collectively as a clan, 621 and each of the four locally distinct branches of this agnatically defined grouping as a sub-clan—overlooking, for the sake of simplicity, the peculiar association of accessory lineages within each sub-clan. We can, more appropriately, subsume the principles which determine the connexion between lineage and lineage in the chain, both within the clan or sub-clan and across clans, under the concept of clanship. This would be isolating a special sense of the associated Tale concepts *mabiirət* (kin), *dɔyam* (consanguinity), and *sunzɔt* (brotherhood), which emerges quite clearly when these terms of wider meaning are applied to relations

*618 621 between corporate units. We may define a clan, then, as a set of locally united lineages, each of which is linked with all or most of the others by ties of clanship, which act together in the service of certain common interests indicated by the bond of exogamy, by reciprocal rights and duties in events such as the funeral of a member of any one of them, and by the ban on intestine war or feud; and which act as a corporate unit in respect of these common interests in relation to other such units. We must stress the point that the clan, as here defined, is a local unit, occupying a specified locality from which it takes its name.

This definition applies to the ideal type of the Tale local clan. It does not exhaust all the attributes of social relations based on clanship ties among the Tallensi. In the case of Mosuor biis, we should substitute 'sub-clan' for 'clan' in this definition, though the natives would contend that it is merely a matter of degree. They would say that the four branches of Mosuor biis represent a particularly wide dispersal of what is really a single local clan of the more usual kind. Many other Tale clans have colonial offshoots, but as they are not so well differentiated, either genealogically or spatially, as Mosuor biis they are not reckoned as separate units of clan organisation. Again, there is a difference between a sub-clan like Tongo, all the component lineages of which are segments of a single inclusive lineage and have a common founding ancestor, and a clan like Gban, the component lineages of which are genealogically independent maximal lineages. Gban is an example of what might be called a composite clan. Lastly there are units such as Sie-datok, which has the corporate structure of a composite clan, but with so much less local and lineage autonomy than is characteristic of a clan that it is regarded by the natives as an appendage of Sie.

*618 Tale clans, as these few examples show, are very varied in their constitution. But the ground-plan of all is the same. The core of every clan is a maximal lineage. In the special case of Mosuor biis, a major segment of the maximal lineage is the foundation of each sub-clan, but these major segments are functionally homologous with the maximal lineages of composite clans. The maximal lineage, everywhere, is a clearly defined structural unit. It is the only irreducible unit of the clan organization.

Tale clan organization can best be understood if we realize that every maximal lineage is the centre of a field of specific social relations marked out by the ties and cleavages established by the principles of clanship. The dimensions of the field of clanship of a lineage, in the narrow sense, are determined by the fundamental principle of clanship, the canon of agnatic descent, applied directly, fictionally, or by a compromise through the assumption of a cognatic link. Even clanship ties which seem to be rooted in local contiguity are translated so as to fit in with this principle. It is the organizing principle of social relations on the plane of clanship. All corporate units tend to be modelled on the agnatic lineage; all social ties and cleavages between corporate units tend to operate in accordance with the norms premised by the patrilineal principle.

Clanship ties and cleavages mark out, for each lineage, one or more other lineages in relation to whose members its own members are automatically subject to the rule of exogamy, and have, in theory, the unconditional right to inherit widows. This is the minimum definition of the field of clanship of a lineage. It is equally important, from the Tale point of view, that a lineage is, in its corporate capacity, vested with specific rights and duties in relation to other lineages in its field of clanship; and these rights and duties may be exercised by any of the male members of a lineage on its behalf. Clanship, as thus defined, is the basis of Tale political organization.

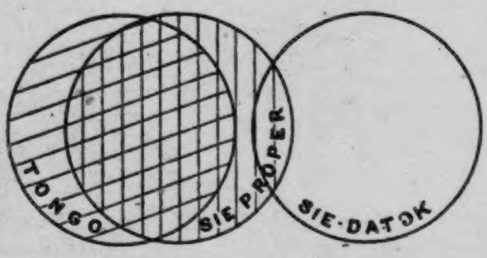
TONGO
SIE PROPER
SIE-DATOK

Diagram illustrating the overlapping of fields of Clanship.

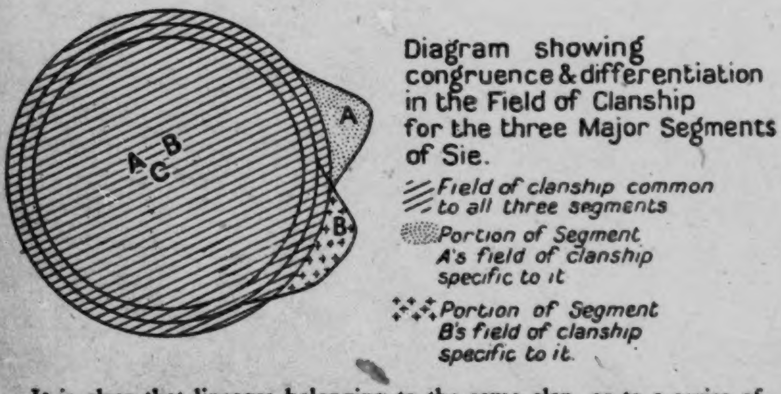
Diagram showing congruence & differentiation in the Field of Clanship for the three Major Segments of Sie.

A
B
A B C
Field of clanship common to all three segments
Portion of Segment A's field of clanship specific to it
Portion of Segment B's field of clanship specific to it.

It is clear that lineages belonging to the same clan, or to a series of linked clans such as we have been describing, do not have completely congruent fields of clanship. Here again it is the canon of agnatic descent that principally determines the degree of coincidence of the fields of clanship of any two lineages. There is a field of clanship common to all the authentic segments of Mosuor biis, the region—to use a spatial analogy—where the particular fields of clanship of all these segments overlap. But the fields of clanship of all the segments do not overlap completely; each has a region of clanship specific to itself. This is especially well illustrated by the component lineages of Sie-datok. Stated in these terms a clan is the region where the fields of clanship of two or more lineages have the maximum overlap, and a chain of linked clans can be resolved into a series of overlapping fields of clanship of varying

*618 dimensions. The clan is also the region where a lineage's clanship ties have the maximum force; for, as we have seen, there are differences in the range and precision of the rights, obligations, and participation in the secular and ceremonial matters of common interest implied by the ties of clanship which a lineage has with other lineages.

A lineage's field of clanship is not homogeneous. As will become clearer when we have analysed one or two more chains of linked lineages, spatial distance and genealogical distance are the main factors upon which the incidence and variation of the rights and duties of clanship depend. The farther away a lineage lives from another with which it has ties of clanship, the less intercourse is there between their members and the less likely are they to co-operate in those situations and events which mobilize these ties. Again, the closer the genealogical links, actual, putative, or fictional, between two linked lineages the more regularly will they co-operate and the more effectively assert the rights and perform the duties of clanship.

The principles so far elicited have a general application throughout Taleland. But the clan of Mosuor biis is unique. The typical clan in Taleland is a single local unit of the composite kind. Mosuor biis are certainly the most numerous patrilineal descent group in Taleland.[1] It must not be forgotten that in addition to the four localized branches of the clan which form its recognized major subdivisions, there are the minor colonial offshoots.

*618
811 The natives see no difficulty in explaining the numerical preponderance of Mosuor biis. It is, in their eyes, due simply to a fecundity greater than that of other lineages. Members of Mosuor biis themselves give this a mystical rationalization. They say that they are prolific because they all have but one religious cult, that of their ancestors, which binds them to one another in mutual amity and solidarity. In their cult of their ancestors each branch of Mosuor biis seeks not only its own increase and prosperity but the increase and prosperity of all its clan brethren as well. To do otherwise would be a sin inviting the wrath of the common ancestors of the whole clan. But in composite clans, they say, each component lineage has its own independent ancestral and other ritual cults. It is jealously concerned with its own increase and prosperity, even regarding it as an advantage if other maximal lineages of the same clan are diminished. Such an attitude brings down mystical retribution; for those who seek the ill of their fellow men are bound to suffer ill themselves.

*618 These views are not accepted among members of composite clans, who consider their own cults to be no less founded on, and instrumental in

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[162] [1] To take a complete census of the members of Mosuor biis, even of the male members only, would be impossibly laborious and time-consuming for an anthropological field-worker limited to a short stay in the country. Sample censuses were made at Tongo and Sie. Going by these and by recent counts made throughout Taleland by the Administration of the taxable male population, I should estimate the male members of Mosuor biis (including accessory lineages) as not less than 2,000. The women are so scattered, owing to patrilocal marriage, that it is impossible to estimate their numbers. No other clan in Taleland can, I should judge, reckon more than half this number of male members.

maintaining, amity and solidarity in the clan, and no less efficacious in promoting their increase and prosperity than the ancestral cult of Mosuor biis. Such mystical interpretations are, in fact, a reflex of the social structure. They throw no light on the problem of the numbers of Mosuor's posterity. Without historical documents we must accept it as one of the given facts of Tale society. 618x

Here a point of particular interest may be noted. Though they are held, in common with other Namoo clans in Taleland, to be an intrusive group by origin, the clan of Mosuor biis forms the backbone of Tale political organization. They place their founding ancestor some eight to ten generations back counting from the heads of existing minimal lineages. But the clans which claim to be autochthonous and to have antedated all the Namoos of Taleland in their occupation of the country give pedigrees of about the same chronological extension. It is obvious therefore that no means of estimating the relative lengths of time during which Namoos and non-Namoos have been settled in Taleland are provided by their genealogies. Like their myths of origin, the chronological retrospect implied in Tale clan or lineage genealogies has no historical value. The chronological depth of their genealogies and the fact that they preserve the graves of significant ancestors seem to justify the inference that the Tale Namoos have occupied their present settlements for not less than two and possibly for three centuries. The Tallensi, however, do not evaluate their genealogies in this way. Genealogies are significant to them as one of the principal instruments for organizing their present social relations. They are kept alive only in so far as they serve this end, and have no value, therefore, as a measure of the time during which a clan or lineage has been in existence. The uniform genealogical retrospect of Namoo and non-Namoo clans in Taleland is a reflex of the stability and coherence of their social and political relations. The only historical inference one can justifiably make is that their present social order has been in existence for a greater length of time than the memories of the oldest living natives can compass. This is the essence of the statement 'It has been thus since the days of our fathers and forefathers', which the natives regard as a sufficient explanation of the origin of most of their institutions. 127 173

CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gɔrisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Ɖkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*baŋ*) by one major segment of Bayana yidem at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

We have noted that Tale culture is homogeneous. Thus the totemic 184
taboos of the Tale Namoos and their characteristic funeral rites, distinctive as they are, are homologous in form and function with the totemic observances and funeral rites of non-Namoos. We shall see the evidence for this when we examine the more elaborate differentiation of Talis and other non-Namoo clans and lineages by totemic and other ritual observances. Tallensi know this and take it for granted, as they also take for granted variations in the ritual observances of different communities which are presumed to have identical ritual forms. They attribute such variations to the influence of neighbouring communities. In fact the homologous usages of neighbouring communities have features in common which do not occur among more widely separated clans with the same practices.

But the taboos of the first-born and the goatskin loin-cover of the dead 171
are fixed and unalterable. All Tallensi know that these are the distin- 784
guishing *kiha* (sing. *kihər*)—literally, forbidden things, but meaning ritual injunctions as well as prohibitions—of all Namoos, 'from Dagbɔŋ to Mooga', as the natives say.

Namoos say that they observe these *kiha* 'because it is the custom of our ancestors (*ti yaab yɛl nla*)'. They require no other explanation, but accept such ritual observances as facts of immemorial antiquity and part of the fixed order of society. The taboo of the fowl is the only one of these observances for which a myth of origin exists, and this is typical of the Tale myths purporting to account for the origins of totemic avoidances, being apparently trivial in content and neutral in emotional tone. Considering the fluid form and content of such myths and the fact that they are never deliberately taught, this myth is remarkably consistent in outline among Namoo clans in Taleland.[1] Tallensi display no interest in the private myths of any social group other than their own, and therefore make no secret of these myths. Knowledge of them is not deemed to be a necessary condition of adherence to the tenets they enshrine. Most young Namoos and many older men, even those who have themselves to observe the fowl taboo—an onerous enough restriction in a society whose chief sacrificial animal is the fowl—are ignorant of or but hazily acquainted with the myth. The men who know it tell it without reticence.

Significance of the Totemic Taboos of the Namoos

The fowl taboo, Namoos say, came about because 'a fowl did a great 773
service to our ancestor'. He had a wife, and people came to her with slander of her husband, trying thus to persuade her to leave him. This made her very unhappy. But one day a broody hen sitting in the woman's grinding room told her not to weep. When her husband returns from the farm she must prepare a drink of flour-water for him, said the fowl, and it would fly up and dash the calabash from his hand. If he then killed the fowl in anger the woman would know that he was a wicked man, and if he spared it she would know that people were slandering him maliciously. When the man came home, the plan was carried out. Far from injuring

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[1] Different versions of the myth are found among Namoos outside Taleland, but the central theme is the same. All versions stress the point that the intervention of a fowl was responsible for the birth of the clan.

773 the fowl, the man merely said, 'The fowl is thirsty'. Thus his wife knew that people had been deceiving her and she remained with him. Afterwards she bore a daughter, and vowed solemnly that her child should never eat fowl. Later a son followed, and the man declared that the boy too must refrain from eating fowl. That is why the first-born son and first-born daughter of all Namoos have the fowl avoidance; but later children may eat it, for if they, too, were prohibited, who would consume the fowls which men sacrifice to their ancestors?

771 If we bear in mind the enormous importance Tallensi attach to marriage and progeny, we can sympathize with the respect they pay to the common domestic fowl in return for this apparently trivial benefit conferred on their ancestor. Of course nobody knows or cares who this ancestor was, but it would not occur to anybody to doubt the truth of this tale. Every day some animal, domestic or wild, becomes a shrine (*bayər*), the symbol and medium of contact with the ancestor spirits, to some person or another in every Tale settlement; and the occasion of this ritual transformation of a commonplace creature is always a piece of good or ill fortune associated with it. Nor would the fact, admittedly contrary to ordinary experience, that a fowl broke into speech, disconcert the natives. They see no need for explaining away such incongruities, either by invoking the supernatural or by referring it to a fabulous age when animals possessed the power of speech. 'That is the story', they declare, and that is enough for them; as we might say, it fits in with the logic of the myth.

186 This casual attitude to the myth is due to the fact that the natives attach little importance to it in comparison with the observance it seeks to explain. For the myth is simply a formulation of the idea that the fowl taboo is the fundamental symbol of the social definition of Namoos. Everywhere within the social ambit of the Tallensi, and at all times, Namoos are those who are subject to distinctive ritual and moral restrictions in virtue of their agnatic descent; and amongst these the fowl taboo is crucial. That is how others think of Namoos, and that is how they themselves visualize their social identity. Through these observances the individual identifies himself in thought and feeling with the fraternity of clans of which his own is a part and, what is of equal significance, with the dead but still regnant forebears.

The anonymity of the ancestor in the myth shows that he stands for the prototype of all the ancestors who must necessarily have gone before in order that the present generation of men should exist, and to whom the living owe their whole social order. It is a notion entirely in keeping with the ideas underlying the kinship system of the Tallensi. But for the intervention of the fowl, says the myth, the Namoo stock might never have come into existence; and the taboo which commemorates that event came into being with the birth of their stock, which was at the same time the birth of their role in society. All Namoos, it must be remembered, are concerned with their totemic observances; for those who are themselves exempt from them have this privilege only because they are the brothers or sisters of individuals who are compelled to observe them.

577 The fowl taboo and the ritual observances associated with it symbolize

the paramount moral values of the Namoos. The oath a Namoo swears 577 by his father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells to rebut an accusation or assert his honesty is evidence of this.

The natives think of these rules as coeval with their social order. 613 They are axioms of conduct, which men accept without questioning as 577 they accept the fact that one is born a Namoo. Since they are binding on and restricted to the patrilineal line of descent, these avoidances serve to express the ultimate and unconditional validity of agnatic descent, through which the individual's place in a corporate unit is irrevocably fixed at birth, and by which his whole social and spiritual destiny is largely controlled. Through ignorance or stupidity, irreverence or lack of self-control, individuals sometimes, though very rarely, break these taboos. Such lapses will bring down mystical retribution on the sinner's head; that is his affair. They cannot impair the intrinsic validity of these rules or undermine their obligatory character.

It would be inconceivable for a Namoo to flout the taboo of the 688 goatskin loin-cover for the dead. To do so would be a sacrilege so gratuitous and so lunatic as to lie beyond the bounds of sane human behaviour. Actually a situation in which such a sacrilege would be possible would never occur, for the simple reason that a death is an affair of the clan. The clan elders conduct all mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and the inviolability of the prescribed ritual is thus safeguarded by the mechanics of its performance.

It is otherwise with the fowl taboo. This too the natives consider to 688 be something so fundamental and axiomatic that it requires no sanction 673 against possible breach except by accident. The danger of a breach occurs only with children. The first-born child who eats a fowl or even a hen's egg, either through inadvertence, through greed, or through childish recklessness, may sink into a decline (*u burəmrəme*), or at the least will break out in a rash on the head (*u zug koorəme*). But such a transgression by a child is venial, and the antidote is simple. The child is given an infusion of fowl droppings in water to drink which makes him vomit and so purges him.

Observation and questioning show that breaches of this taboo are 688 as rare as the natives assert them to be. I have often seen a first-born 613 man (*nɔ-kihir*, pl. *-kihib*, one who taboos the fowl) sacrificing fowls to his ancestor spirits and leaving them to others to consume. After such a rite a *nɔ-kihir* always washes his hands carefully lest he contaminate his food at the next meal with the blood of the fowl. Not only do parents, siblings, and other relatives take care to prevent children from breaking the taboo, but the children who have to observe it have a horror of doing so. By the time they are five or six years old children will tell an inquirer with great emphasis, 'I am an eldest child, and I don't eat fowl'. Though they do not know the myth that accounts for the taboo, they appreciate its obligatory character.

We have spoken of these taboos as symbols of moral values because, 577 though binding on all Namoos, they do not imply specific ties either 784 political or ceremonial, and are obligatory on individuals. Their observance is in the last resort a matter of conscience and belief. In the widest

577 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with
784 non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

613 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔɣar*)
428 of the founding ancestor of Bɔɣada biis at Tongo was a case in point.
627 Saŋbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'aləm, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'aləm, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔɣar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔɣada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'aləm, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*mieŋ*), and the crocodile (*baŋ*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pɛhug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Puliebər yidɛm, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'aləm and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle.
[787] A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

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[787]
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No one was surprised when Tinta'aləm gained the verdict. Thus the ancestors themselves vouched for the legitimate status of Yidaan biis.

Other Namoo Clans

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The most important of the Namoo clans that come within the political orbit of Tongo, though not related to it by ties of clanship, is the contiguous clan of Zoo. A number of Tongo families live on Zoo land, which was not so densely populated as Tongo 50 or 60 years ago and could therefore accommodate some of its overflow population. In the same way, a number of Zoo families have overflowed into the neighbouring locality of Gbambee, where they live among Tongo people. These ecological adjustments are facilitated, though not solely determined, by the structural ties between Zoo and Tongo, and by the fact that both are Namoo settlements. Ten out of the thirty-nine homesteads at Zoo belong to Tongo people, and they are members of all but one of the major segments of Tongo. By contrast, Tongo people are reluctant to move out to vacant parts of Zubiuŋ, where the people, though their neighbours and cognatic kinsfolk, are Talis in their ritual beliefs and practices. In recent years only one Tongo man has done this as a temporary measure.

618 x

The people of Zoo (Zoodɛm) comprise two maximal lineages. One of these, Zoo proper, is a maximal lineage of three segments, to one of which is attached a 'sister's son's' lineage. Their founding ancestor, Yikpɛmdaan, is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*) of Mosuor, whom he accompanied from Mampurugu. As Zoodɛm marry any of the descendants of Mosuor, the fiction of original kinship (*mabiirət*) here emphasizes the cultural and political solidarity of the two groups, not a genealogical connexion.

Living side by side with Zoodɛm proper (Yikpɛmdaan biis) is another maximal lineage known as Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm. These two maximal lineages exclude one another from the cults of their respective founding ancestors and from the ritual observances connected with them. Indeed, Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are affiliated to the Talis by ritual observance and cult. Nevertheless, Zoodɛm proper and Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm have all the ties of clanship that hold between constituent lineages of the same clan who consider themselves to be *sunzɔp*. The explanation they give is that 'it is because we live together side by side (*tin kab ziin ni taaba la zugu*)'. Here clanship is attributed to local coalescence. These clanship ties are shown in all ceremonial matters that concern either of the lineages as well as in their co-operative enterprises. Though they do not take part in the esoteric ritual of one another's funeral ceremonies, they act as *sunzɔp* to one another in the public and exoteric phases of the ceremonies. If a party of Zoodɛm proper set out to pay their respects to a deceased relative-in-law, they will always be supported by some young men from Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm; and if a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is summoned to take a working party to help his father-in-law, he will always be accompanied by a few young men of the other lineage.

Zoo-Yiraaŋ is linked by ties of clanship to one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ.[1] Zoodɛm proper have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ or with any other clan. Yet they are often described as 'our

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[1] See ch. VI.

618 *sunzɔp*' by Tongo people, and they take the part of distant *sunzɔp* in their
corporate relations with Tongo. Thus, an important funeral at Tongo
618 always attracts a large contingent of Zoo people, and vice versa. When
764 Doohraan, one of the senior elders of Tongo, died, Zoo turned out in full
force to join in the celebrations that inaugurated the funeral. A cow was
slaughtered as an offering to the departed, and when it was divided up
the Zoodɛm proper received half a foreleg, as distant *sunzɔp*, the other
half going to Zubiuŋ, as the closest unrelated neighbours of the Tongo
lineage which was celebrating the funeral. On this occasion Zoo-Yiraaŋ
sent a number of young men to swell the ranks of their *sunzɔp*, the Zoodɛm
proper, so that they could make as grand a display as possible. They
themselves cannot take part in a Tongo funeral as an independent unit.
618 At the same time it is explicitly recognized that Zoodɛm proper are the
621 *sunzɔp* of Tongo only by courtesy. They do not have the rights and duties
of true clan *sunzɔp*. Tale social structure, highly determinate as it is, is flexible, and allows of such extensions of its basic principles. It allows the translation into the idiom of kinship and clanship of the ties of contiguity or of ceremonial or political solidarity. For the ties of clanship-by-courtesy recognized between Zoo and Tongo rest upon their spatial contiguity and political interdependence. The maximal lineage of Zoo proper has the custody of a special shrine connected with the chiefship of Tongo. According to their myth of origin, their founding ancestor performed the ritual services associated with this shrine for Mosuor when he was Chief of the Mamprusi and followed him to Tongo. These ritual services still vested in Zoodɛm proper form a strong bond between them and Tongo.

On the other hand, the fact that both groups are Namoos is an essential factor of their clanship-by-courtesy. By contrast the people of Zubiuŋ, who are as closely associated with Tongo spatially, politically, and by reciprocal ritual services, and, like the people of Zoo, always fought on the side of Tongo in the old days, are Talis, properly speaking; thus there is a stricter social separation between them and Tongo. They are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy by the latter; they refrain from the ritual or ceremonial activities of the people of Tongo in which Zoodɛm proper can and do take a part greater than that of mere spectators.

At the same time the genealogical and corporate independence of the people of Zoo proper, in relation to Tongo, is precisely marked. Neither group takes part in the cult of the lineage ancestors of the other; and if, for instance, in a fu[illegible] ceremony men of Zoo proper perform ritual services for a Tongo lineage, or vice versa, they do so because true clan *sunzɔp* are not present.

618 One infallible test of their differentiation from the clan of Mosuor biis
is the fact that the two groups intermarry. Another is the rule about
621 raiding. A generation ago, before the white man imposed the rule of his
628 law, raiding (*ŋɔk*) was a common method of self-help in Taleland. It was
the final resource of a man who wished to retrieve a debt owed to him
by a member of another clan. If, for instance, a Tongo man owed a
Wakii man cattle for a marriage he had contracted, and withheld pay-
ment unduly long or in bad faith, the latter would resort to self-help.

He would set out one day with some of his close agnates, fully armed, and 618x
they would try to seize by stealth and drive off as many cattle and sheep 621
belonging to any clansman of their debtor as they could lay their hands on. 628
Thus they could seize live-stock belonging to any Tongo man. Or if the chance presented itself they could seize live-stock belonging to people of Yamələg or Sie, and would answer protests by 'pointing to' (*paal*) their Tongo debtor. This was legitimate, but they could not legitimately seize cattle belonging to a Zoo man in settlement of a debt due to them from a Tongo man. The Zoo people would be entitled to take severe reprisals, for Zoo and Tongo have no ties of clanship. They 'marry one another's children (*ba diit taaba biis*)'. Men who were youths in those days, and who themselves took part in such adventures, usually cite these rules of *ŋɔk* when they are explaining the nature and ramifications of clanship ties.

The people of Zoo proper have not the same local, political, and ceremonial ties with Yamələg or Sie, and are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of these two communities. But Yamələg and Sie feel more closely akin to Zoo than to their non-Namoo neighbours.

The ties between Tongo and Zoo influence their relations in innumer- 618x
able ways. A census of Zoo shows that every Zoo family (including Zoo-Yiraaŋ) is related to Tongo either by cognatic or by affinal ties. Zoo men show a preference in marriage for women from Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie, rather than women from other equally near settlements. Thirty-five (29 per cent.) of a large and representative sample (120) of Zoo wives are Tongo women; and if the Yamələg and Sie women are added they make up together 56 (47 per cent.) of Zoo wives. I once heard a group of elders discuss this fact, of which the people of Zoo and Tongo are well aware. A Zoo man said, 'Tongo girls like marrying us because we are such diligent farmers and always have plenty of food'. The Tongo elders denied this, and protested that they gave their daughters to Zoo rather than to men of Wakii or Tɛnzugu because of the bonds between them. 'Would we not rather', said one of them, 'marry our daughters to you, or even to Zubiuŋ, or the more distant places that used to fight on our side, than to nearer settlements which were our enemies?' Because of these ties, too, it is a grave affront for a Zoo man to abduct a Tongo man's wife or vice versa, or for a member of one clan to marry the former wife of a man of the other.

Again, the people of Zoo proper through their political head, the Chief 618x
of Biuŋ, control the great annual hunt in the Kparəg bush. They are less 224
strict in enforcing their rights to animals which fall to the weapon of a Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie man, than to those killed by men from other places. There is greater co-operation and camaraderie between hunting parties from Zoo, Tongo, Yamələg, and Sie than between any of them and parties from other settlements. When the Chief of Biuŋ sends round to announce the hunt, his messengers go to all the other Namoo chiefs in Taleland, who pronounce a blessing on the enterprise and send back fowls as a contribution to the sacrifices that will have to be made. Among them the blessing and contribution of the Chief of Tongo are regarded as the most important.

These relations between Tongo and Zoo are always a matter of degree

*618 and depend on the particular situation. To quote the Kparəg hunt again, 224 if a man from Zoo proper kills an animal and a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is present, he is entitled to take (*fɔ*, lit. pull out) a foreleg; but if a Tongo man arrives on the scene first he will claim the *sunzɔ*'s foreleg; and if the only people who happen to be near are a Tɛnzugu party they will do the same. But if a number of other hunters are present, then a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man takes precedence over a Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie man, and any of these take precedence over Talis or others. A final example of the influence of the ties and sense of solidarity holding between Zoo proper and the posterity of Mosuor may be mentioned here. Three or four generations ago Biuŋ was colonized by the Zoo family which then held the chiefship of that place. Now reduced to about a dozen homesteads, Biuŋ was a flourishing settlement two or three decades ago, to which people had flocked from all parts of Taleland and even farther afield. But the greatest number of settlers, except those from Zoo, came from Tongo. It was regarded as the natural, temporary outlet for young men who were short of land at Tongo. By contrast Tongo men rarely went to Datɔk as temporary colonists, though it is reputed to be equally if not more fertile than the lands of Biuŋ, and had much more room for settlers.

*618 The lineage structure of Zoo is analogous to that of Gban. Both are examples of the commonest type of clan found in Taleland, the composite clan consisting of a single local community made up of two or more maximal lineages united by ties of clanship, either or all of which are again, as a rule, linked by similar ties of clanship to component maximal lineages of other clans.

At Sɛk, right among the Hill Talis, is another small Namoo group similar in structure to Zoo and connected with Tongo by the same fiction of kinship (*mabiirət*). Similar ties also connect Tongo with Dkoog (Winkogo), a large and thickly populated settlement comprising one maximal lineage and an attached lineage which is intercalary between it and Wakii. Like Zoo, both these groups marry the descendants of Mosuor; but distance and their separation from Tongo by a belt of Talis impede intercourse between them. Both groups have, in addition, a political tie with Tongo, in that their chiefs are appointed by the Chief of Tongo. In fact the people of Dkoog claim that their founding ancestor was a relative—some say a son—of Mosuor, who migrated to Dkoog from Tongo. Undisturbed by the contradiction between this claim and the absence of a bond of exogamy with Tongo, they explain this by their spatial and social separation from Tongo. For the people of Dkoog speak Gɔrni and have a greater affinity with their Gɔrisi neighbours in some of their customs than with the Tallensi. This, however, they regard as irrelevant, and they staunchly uphold their connexion with Tongo as their most important tie of political and social affiliation.

Neither the people of Sɛk nor the people of Dkoog are regarded as *sunzɔp* of Tongo. On account of their political ties with Tongo and the ceremonial relations these entail, they are sometimes figuratively described as the children (*biis*) of the Chief of Tongo. They are not, for example, represented as corporate units at Tongo funerals. On the other hand, in the matter of wives, their quasi-clanship ties with Tongo are strictly

upheld. I have heard the Chief of Tongo upbraid a young man of his 618x
own segment of the sub-clan for abducting the wife of a Sɛk man. The chief denounced this breach of *mabiirət* as a depravity possible only since the coming of the white man, and ordered the girl to be sent back.

Other Namoo communities are found at Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, and 621
Kpələg (or Pwələg), beyond Dkoog. For practical purposes these Namoo groups are almost entirely cut off from Tongo. Culturally they are Gərisi, but Tongo people describe them as 'our kinsfolk (*ti mabiis*)'; and there is even a myth to the effect that Pusunamoo was founded by a kinsman of Mosuor who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu but parted company from him before he reached Tongo. As, however, these places lie beyond the horizon of the regular social relations of Tongo, their 'kinship' with Tongo becomes effective only by chance. They have no ceremonial relationship with Tongo. They do not attend Tongo funerals except as individuals drawn thither by personal cognatic ties, and they would not easily obtain redress if one of their wives were abducted by a Tongo man. Nevertheless, their 'kinship' with Tongo, nominal though it seems to be, forms an essential element, in all the Namoo communities mentioned, of the natives' view of their society and its structure. To some extent also the chain principle holds. Pusunamoo and Baluŋ have a good deal of social intercourse and regular social relations with Dkoog, and the latter serves as a link between them and Tongo. They are thus linked with Tongo loosely and by a relay, but more substantially than merely by a fiction, and through Tongo with the other branches of Mosuor's descendants.

In the Sie district, as we have seen, of the Namoo clans not held to be 621
connected by origin with the children of Mosuor, Gban has the closest 619
links with the latter. In the social perspective of a Tongo man, however, its identity tends to be masked by Sie. Gban is thought of as a satellite clan of Sie, in the same way as Zoo is regarded as a satellite clan of Tongo by the people of the Sie district. Spatial and political relations give rise to this point of view, and the habit of classifying social groups by contraposition gives it ready expression. This is the case also with Naməyalug and Gar, which are connected with Sie in much the same way as Zoo is with Tongo. There are other Namoo clans or Namoo segments of composite clans in this district which fall within the political orbit of Gbee. Some are linked by ties of clanship to adjacent settlements of Gərisi or Namnam. Some have so far assimilated the customs and dialectal peculiarities of their Gərisi or Namnam neighbours that people from the centre of Taleland hardly consider them to be Tallensi, though they themselves claim to have closer social affinities with the Tallensi than with the Gərisi or Namnam. In this interstitial area the mosaic of micro-cultural variations and the pattern of clan organization, though similar in principle to what is found in the vicinity of Tongo, are very intricate.

Namoos from this area marry extensively with Sie and Yamələg and more frequently with Tongo than the peripheral Namoo communities on the other side, viz. Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, and Kpələg. Thus, any Tongo man is far more likely to have cognatic ties with a place like Naməyalug

619 621 or Kpatia than with Baluŋ. He has more frequent social contact and closer economic relations with the former places than with the inhabitants of the latter. In the past the people of Sie sometimes took up arms to aid Gbee or Kpatia, and Tongo people might have been drawn in to aid Sie. A Tongo man therefore thinks of Gbee and Kpatia (and this applies to the other Namoo communities in their vicinity as well) as potential war allies of his clan in former times. He never thinks of Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, or Kpɔləg in this way. In spite of this, Tongo people insist that the people of Pusunamoo, at any rate, are closer kin to them than, say, the Namoos of Gbee or Kpatia, since their founding ancestor was a relative of Mosuor himself. There seems to be a contradiction between the actualities of social relations and the formal ties of putative genealogy. Other things being equal spatial proximity exercises a stronger pull than assumed genealogical proximity. This principle has a general application in Tale social structure.

The Meaning of 'Namoo'

621 The meaning of the appellation 'Namoo' in the social structure of the Tallensi has now become clear. We have examined it from the vantage point of Tongo. Had we elected to start from Gbee, for example, we should have obtained a picture built on the same principles but with a different perspective. Gɔrni-speaking Namoos beyond Kpatia, who have so remote and occasional a relevance for the normal life of Tongo that even nowadays hardly anything is known of them, are a significant element in the social frame of reference of the people of Gbee. Their community of stock and of distinctive custom which all Namoos in Taleland and the adjacent areas recognize, is not thought of as confined within territorial or political boundaries. But for every maximal lineage and clan their fellow Namoos are distributed on a graded scale of relevance according to their structural ties with them. Several factors affect the relevance of one Namoo group for another: ties of clanship; political ties; the ties of spatial contiguity or proximity; the belief in a special tie, closer than that of general kinship (*mabiirət*), by which Namoos are grouped together, and which, though assimilated to the tie of clanship on mythical grounds, is not so close as true clanship ties. All these, taken together, map out the main structural ties of any Namoo maximal lineage. These ties fall in a series of concentric zones, as it were, by which all the Namoo communities are arranged on a scale of diminishing social relevance for the unit that forms the centre of the given network of structural relations. Theoretically they extend 'from the land of the Dagomba (Dagbɔŋ) to the land of the Mossi (Mooga)', but the greater their distance in space from the central unit, the less likely are they to be actualized in the ordinary life of any of its members. In fact, outside a geographical radius of some five or six miles the farther zones of Namoo connexions have hardly any relevance for the central unit.

The pattern of social relations arising out of clanship ties in the narrow sense holds for other structural ties assimilated to them in form but founded on different factors. In respect of these ties, too, every Namoo clan or maximal lineage may be regarded as the centre of a field of

effective structural relations with other Namoo clans and lineages. The fields of neighbouring clans and lineages overlap one another in series, cutting across the blurred boundaries of dialect and of variations in custom. Thus Tongo's field of effective structural relations includes Biuk and Ŋkoog. These units lie in the Gɔrni-speaking area and have

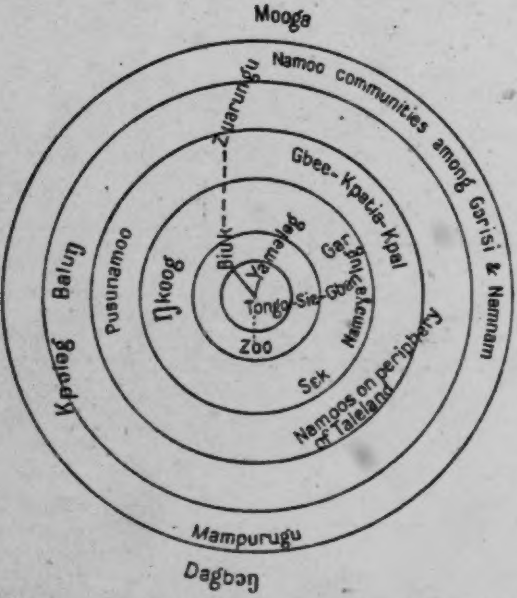
Mooga
Namoo communities among Gɔrisi & Namnam
Zuarungu
Gbee-Kpatia-Kpal
Biuk
Yamalɛg
Gar
Tongo-Sie-Gbeog
Namyalɛwan
Zoo
Ŋkoog
Pusunamoo
Balug
Kpatɛog
Sɛk
Namoos on periphery of Taleland
Mampurugu
Dagbɔŋ

Diagram showing the Field of Clanship Relations of the Namoos of Tongo

effective structural relations with Gɔrisi who are only of peripheral relevance for Tongo. Tongo's field of effective structural relations overlaps that of Ŋkoog and that of Biuk. The latter includes the Namoos of Zuarungu, who are Gɔrisi, and whose field of effective structural relations overlaps that of Kumbahug. So one could trace out a series of overlapping fields of structural relations right across the country 'from Dagbɔŋ to Mooga', and running in every direction from any chosen starting-point. This constitutes the apparently limitless social ambit that corresponds to the notion of the common stock of all Namoos.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUCTURAL RELATIONS OF THE TALIS

A General Point

162 A NUMERICAL estimate of the Namoos in Taleland cannot be made from the published census figures. In the Tongo district alone they would include, on a rough reckoning, over a third of the population; the rest are the Talis.

184 The Talis, as we have seen, are distinguished by name and by myths of origin from the Namoos. Close neighbours though they are, Talis and Namoos are distinctly segregated from one another by locality, and this is associated with clear-cut structural cleavages. It is necessary, however, to emphasize that Talis and Namoos are also inseparably bound to one another by ceremonial and politico-ritual ties. In addition, all Talis and all Namoos are connected with one another as individuals by an elaborate network of cognatic and affinal ties. In the present chapter we are concerned with the constituted social relations of the Talis amongst themselves, treated in isolation from the background of their social relations with the Namoos, but this background must be borne in mind.

The Clan Structure of Zubiuŋ

X618 The clans and lineages of the Talis form corporate units of the same kind as those of the Namoos. They are connected with one another by a network of constituted ties of the same type as those that link Namoo clans and lineages in a chain system, but more elaborately distributed and articulated. Again, the paradigm applies generally, but the perspective of each clan and lineage is peculiar to itself. To keep the parallel with the Namoos we shall take as our starting-point the group of Talis most intimately associated with Tongo, the people of Zubiuŋ (Zubiuŋdem).[1]

621 As we have previously mentioned, the people of Zubiuŋ live in such close contiguity with the Tongo Namoos that anyone ignorant of the structure of the community would be unable to draw a line between the homesteads of one group and those of the other. Investigation shows that Zubiuŋ homesteads form an irregular but continuous aggregate, quite distinct, spatially, from Tongo. The nearest Tongo neighbours of Zubiuŋ are the accessory Tongo lineage of Nɔŋsuur yidem. Consistently with the basic principles of Tale clanship, Nɔŋsuur yidem have an intercalary status between Tongo and Zubiuŋ. The legend which relates that the ancestor of Nɔŋsuur yidem was a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of Zubiuŋ is the rationalization of their intercalary role. But though they mediate between Tongo and Zubiuŋ in political matters, for example, they have no ties of clanship with the latter, as we have previously seen.

x618 Zubiuŋ consists of three maximal lineages, residentially distributed in a way that exactly parallels their structural relations. The homesteads of

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[1] Total male members, at home and abroad, about 250.

[p. 78]

the Yakɔradɛm ('the people of the old homes') mingle with those of their 618x Tongo neighbours and spread out irregularly into what is properly Ba'ari. The next block of homesteads, separated from them by a stone's throw and known as the Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm ('the people of the Kpaɣara side'), so named after a sacred pool in their midst, abuts on the fields of other Tongo neighbours and straggles over into the part occupied by the third maximal lineage. These, the Yapaasdɛm ('the people of the new homesteads'), have Zoo homesteads as their neighbours on one side and somewhat more distantly Ba'ari neighbours on the other. By the criteria of clanship with which we have become familiar, Zubiuŋ forms a single clan; the three maximal lineages act together as a unit in all secular and religious affairs of common interest.

Outsiders regard Zubiuŋ as a single unit, like Tongo or Zoo, and the relations of its constituent maximal lineages to one another are organized on the plan of a single maximal lineage of three segments. Thus, the mortuary rites or funeral ceremonies of an important member of any one of these lineages cannot be carried out without the presence and collaboration of representatives of the other two lineages. They have the reciprocal privileges and obligations of close clan *sunzɔp* in relation to one another. They speak of one another as kinsmen by consanguinity (*dɔɣam*).

Nevertheless, it is generally known that the three segments of Zubiuŋ 618x are of diverse origin. The Yakɔradɛm have a status senior to the others. 554 According to the myth, which has already been recorded, their founding ancestor (*yaab*) was a 'brother' of the primordial Gbizug tɛndaana. They were the first to settle at Zubiuŋ. The Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm, who are next in order of seniority, claim that their line was founded by immigrants who accompanied Mosuor as his Gbandaat—a ceremonial office which is still their exclusive prerogative in relation to the Chief of Tongo. The Yapaasdɛm are said to be offshoots of the other two lineages, and are therefore the most junior. The relative status of the three lineages is shown in all their corporate activities. Thus, if they make a joint sacrifice and the sacrificial animal is provided by either of the senior lineages, the Yapaasdɛm receive only a shoulder (that is, a junior portion) as their rightful share, whereas the other lineages receive the legs (the senior portions). The two senior lineages are relatively equal in status compared with Yapaas.

Overlooking this diversity of origin, the people of Zubiuŋ say: 'We 618x have become consanguineous kin (*ti leeba dɔɣam*).' One focus of their 778 unity and corporate identity as a clan is their External (*yɛɣha*) *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpalɔg, a sacred grove whose mystical powers are renowned and respected far beyond the borders of Taleland. Duunkpalɔg is the shrine of all the ancestors of all three maximal lineages. 'All our ancestors are there (*ti yaanam woobi be nɛɣha*)', is the formula used by the natives to define this shrine. Any ritual event which involves a sacrifice at Duunkpalɔg requires the presence of all three lineages, each represented by its head (*kpeem*), and he should be accompanied by the head of each constituent segment of his lineage and by any other of its mature male members who are able to come. The ideological dominance of

PLATE V

x618
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(*a*) Clanship at Zubiuŋ: Elders of Kpaγara yaγar awaiting the representatives of the other two maximal lineages at the entrance to the External *Bɔγar* Duunkpalɔg, in order to perform a sacrifice.

764
x618

(*b*) The duties of *sunzɔp*, at Zubiuŋ: The rite of 'sowing a field' for the dead during a tendaana's funeral. One representative of each maximal lineage of the clan has to take part.

[facing p. 80]

x618 Duunkpalɔg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the
778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child
placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a
[551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages
x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a
764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

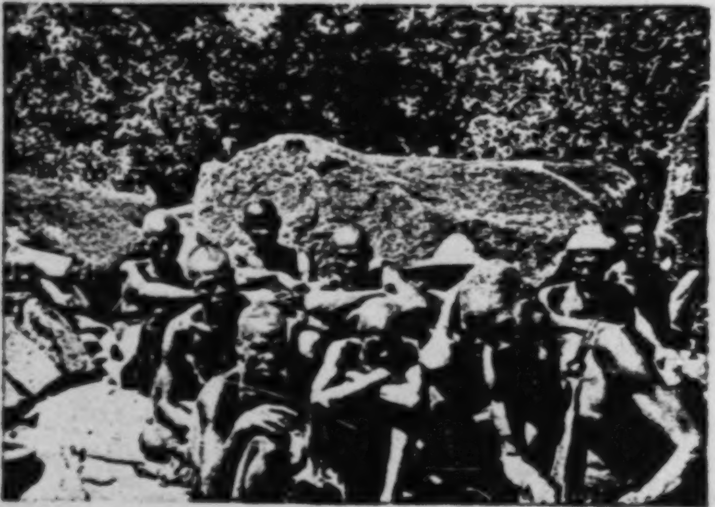
Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously
778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is
794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of
782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these
182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say
771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpalɔg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

PLATE VI



(*a*) Ritual collaboration among the Hill Talis: A sacrifice at the External *Bɔɣar* of which Kpata'ardem are the principal custodians. Representatives of Gundaat, Samiit, Sakpee are present while the head of Kpata'ar performs the sacrifice.

(*b*) A sacrifice at the Earth Shrine, Doo, of which Kpata'ardem are the principal custodians. Representatives of Kpata'ar, Tamboog, Degal, and Bunkiuk are present on this occasion.

[facing p. 81]

*618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tendaana, both receive sacrifices.
182 But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a
771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

774 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both
769 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve
182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages.
613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar* (*dugni bɔyar*), the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpaləg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth-shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tendaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tendaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tendaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

*618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of
182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[773] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one
178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpaɣara-yaɣar
182 tendaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders
578 to Duunkpaləg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdem did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tendaana-elect to Duunkpaləg. The Yapaasdem, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves. 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at t[illegible] exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

178 forefathers in that way (*ti ku zaŋ ti banam bah ŋwala*)'. Some of the
182 younger men of Yapaas were merely being tiresome. 'You'll see',
578 countered the man who had spoken earlier, sceptically, 'some day there
will be a quarrel over something, the division of meat at a sacrifice, or the
inheritance of a widow, or something of that sort, and then you people of
Zubiuŋ will split up.'

578 Meanwhile, we continued to wait for the Yapaasdɛm, for the ritual could not be performed without the presence of their representatives. In due course they arrived. Far from expressing contrition, they excused themselves by accusing the others of having bungled the sequence of the rites. A violent argument followed, but one of the elders cut it short. No doubt, he said, the Yapaasdɛm preferred a different order of the rites. That was their affair. The senior lineages had no intention of copying them. To-day the ceremonies were *their* concern, and now that all the lineages were properly assembled they might as well get on with the business.

Linked Maximal Lineages and the Field of Clanship

X618 Corresponding to this structural differentiation within the clan, each
maximal lineage has its distinct field of clanship. One segment of
Yakɔradɛm, known as Pulien biis, is an attached lineage descended from a
[567] 'sister's son' of the authentic lineage. Another segment (Zaŋgɔbɔg yidɛm)
is an assimilated lineage, said to be of slave descent. Members of this segment are debarred from holding the tɛndaana-ship. Pulien biis have the right to hold the office, but mainly in a titular capacity, for they are barred from its most essential responsibilities. In other respects these accessory lineages have been fully absorbed by the authentic line of Yakɔradɛm, and participate in all the corporate activities of the latter.

The Yakɔradɛm have ties of clanship with Gbizug, which counts as the senior segment of Gbeog, and is bound to Gbeog proper by the usual ties of clanship. But there are no ties of clanship between Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Gbeog proper. They may not marry a daughter of Gbizug; they may and do marry Gbeog women, who would of course be barred by the rule of exogamy from marrying into Gbizug. Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra also have ties of clanship with Ba'at-Sakpar, one of the major segments of the clan of Ba'ari; but they have no ties of clanship with any of the other Ba'ari maximal lineages. Similarly, they have ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ, but not with the Namoo lineage of Zoodɛm proper. The other two component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ are excluded from this field of clanship. For instance, they can and do marry Gbizug, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zoo-Yiraaŋ women.

X618 These extra-clan ties of clanship are rationalized in various ways.
811 Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar claim to be the consanguineous kin (*dɔyam*) of
Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, because, as the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas relate, the founding ancestors of all three lineages were 'brothers'. The Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are claimed as kin (*dɔyam*) of the latter because their founding ancestor is said to have been a 'sister's son' of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. It should be noted that such a remote cognatic link does not in every case establish ties of clanship. The same fiction is used to account for the existence of

attached lineages, as well as for certain ritual and political ties between 618x
some groups. Thus, one segment of Tongo has a special ritual role as 811
intermediary in the politico-ritual relations of Tongo and Zoo, and this is rationalized by the same fiction; but it does not involve ties of clanship with Zoo.

There is a close parallelism between the inter-clan linkages we have 618x
described and the spatial relations of the groups concerned. Gbizugdem 621
are the nearest non-Namoo neighbours of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra on one side; Ba'ari is contiguous with them on the other side; and Zoo-Yiraaŋ live side by side with their clansfolk at Zubiuŋ-Yapaas. There is an asymmetry in these clanship ties which appears to be mirrored in the fictions accounting for them. Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are linked by clanship ties in exactly the same way as they are linked with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, but neither has ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ.

Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra has more frequent and closer relations and a stronger 618x
sense of fraternity with Gbizug than with its other two linked maximal 764
lineages at Zoo and at Ba'ari. This is fostered by proximity and by the belief enshrined in their myth of origin. Thus, when a Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra tendaana dies and his funeral ceremonies are performed, the heads of all three linked maximal lineages have to send an obligatory contribution of porridge, specially prepared 'to set out for the dead (*zien kpiim la*)'. They act, then, in the same way as the other two Zubiuŋ lineages, which are also obliged to send this contribution. But Gbizugdem do more than make a merely formal acknowledgement of their ties with the dead man's lineage; they take part in the funeral to a much greater extent than Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ. Their representatives never fail to attend all the important ritual events of the funeral, whereas the representatives of the other two linked maximal lineages appear only at the exoteric public ceremonies, such as the final divination when the beer is distributed. The social relations of Gbizug with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra give them a place, as it were, half-way between the other Zubiuŋ maximal lineages and the other two linked maximal lineages in point of intimacy and corporate cohesion.
Every Yakɔra man knows the wives of the men of Gbizug almost as well [587]
as the wives of his own clansmen. He speaks of them all as his 'wives', for he has a right to inherit any of them if they remain widows. If he meets one of them by chance he will chaff her, as if she were a Zubiuŋ wife. Most of the wives of the men of Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ are quite unknown to him, though formally he has the same rights in respect of them.

The Gradation of Clanship Ties

What distinguishes the bonds of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra with Gbizug from 618x
their apparently identical bonds with their clansmen of Zubiuŋ is this: the latter are bound to perform all the duties of close *sunzɔp*, the former are under the much more limited obligation of giving expression to their ties of clanship through one or two formal acts. The latter, for example, are obliged to attend and to conduct all the important rites of a Yakɔra tendaana's funeral, whereas Gbizugdem come voluntarily, and if they undertake any task do so out of courtesy and friendliness. Similarly, the

x618 privileges of clanship have the force of rights in the case of *sunzɔp* belonging to the same clan, but are subject to a wider margin of flexibility and voluntary adjustment in the case of extra-clan *sunzɔp*. Some privileges which the former can claim are not held by the latter.

x618 764 In short, here, as with the Namoos, clanship, or more specifically the ties of clan brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) between lineages, is a matter of degree. An illustration will show how it works. We shall take again the example of a distribution made at a funeral ceremony, but the same rules apply in all other aspects of clan relationships. A food distribution of minor importance, usually managed by the younger men, with an accompaniment of considerable hilarity, occurs on the evening of *Kogbeda'ar*, about the middle of the funeral ceremony. It is an occasion on which one usually hears the claims and counter-claims of the different groups represented argued out with great fervour. On *Kogbeda'ar* of the late Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra tɛndaana's funeral the meat of the animals contributed was divided out among the *sunzɔp* lineages as follows: Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm, as the closest *sunzɔp*, received the share of greatest distinction, the hind leg of a sheep; Yapaasdɛm, the next closest *sunzɔp*, received the shoulder of a sheep; Gbizugdɛm, next in order of closeness, received the hind leg of a goat (for the Tallensi, unlike ourselves, regard the sheep as a nobler animal than the goat). Lastly came the Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm, whose share was the foreleg of a goat. Ba'at-Sakpardɛm were not present on this occasion; had they been they would have been entitled to a portion equivalent to the hind leg of a goat. The closest ties of clanship are those which entail the most definite and strict obligations and carry in compensation the most definite rights and superior privileges. These are the ties that bind the lineage to the other lineages which, with it, make up a single composite clan.

x618 The attached lineage of Pulien biis shares the extra-clan ties of clanship of the authentic lineage of the Yakɔradɛm, but it has in addition a tie of clanship independent of the authentic lineage. This links it to one of the segments of Sakpee, a Tɛnzugu clan. According to their tradition, their ancestor Pulien was begotten by a Sakpee man, who later divorced his wife, Pulien's mother, by blowing ashes on her. The recent history of this relationship throws an interesting light on the factors which keep alive the ties of clanship between linked maximal lineages, and on their dynamic characteristics.

x618 588 About a generation ago a Sakpee man married a daughter of Pulien biis in defiance of the exogamic ban. The protests of the elders of both lineages were fruitless. The drastic sanctions which might have been resorted to were out of the question; in theory, because the two lineages were related by ties of clanship; in practice, no doubt, because they were extremely difficult to apply on account of the political barriers between Zubiuŋ and 'Tɛnzugu. So the matter was allowed to slide, and left to the arbitrament of the ancestor spirits. The marriage, said the elders, would be sterile, or all the children would die. In the end, however, the offending couple reared a large and successful family; so apparently this breach of kinship (*dɔyam*) was not a sin after all.

In spite of this, Pulien biis continued to maintain their ties of clanship

with Sakpee. The innovation made by one couple was not regarded as a 618x precedent. Their transgression was at length accepted with equanimity (the Tallensi are a practical-minded people), but not allowed to undermine the established norms. Then, four or five years ago, a young man of Pulien biis wanted to marry a Sakpee girl. When the elders of both lineages forbade it, he invoked this precedent, but to no avail. Taking advantage of the liberty of movement which people now have, the young couple eloped to Kumasi. The girl's father was faced with a *fait accompli.* He had no alternative but to accept the placation gifts and part of the bride-price necessary to make it a legitimate marriage, though he did so very reluctantly. Soon afterwards came the funeral of the late Yakɔra tɛndaana, who had been a member of Pulien biis. And for the first time in living memory their linked lineage at Sakpee omitted to send their contribution of porridge or to attend even the public phases of the ceremonies. When the beer was being distributed to all the *sunzɔp* lineages, someone remarked that the name of Sakpee had not been formally called. This provoked a discussion about the relationship of Sakpee to Pulien biis. 'You are no longer *sunzɔp*', one Zubiuŋ elder maintained, 'you have intermarried and become relatives-in-law.' The elders of Pulien biis unanimously denied this, and tried to find excuses for the Sakpeedɛm. They claimed that people can be *sunzɔp* to one another and yet marry, as is done in Tongo and Zoo. This quibble was debated with vociferous good humour. Eventually one of the elders settled the matter in a typical spirit of compromise. 'Listen,' he said, 'we and Sakpee have now become *sunzɔp*; but we used to be *yidɛm* (that is, branches of the same lineage). Marriages have caused that.'

The process[1] is incomplete; but it looks as if there is sure to be a 618x realinement of the structural ties between Zubiuŋ-Pulien biis and Sakpee 178 in the course of time. This change is a response to a conflict of loyalties—those arising from the ties of clanship, and those of opposite value arising out of the divergent ties of locality and of politico-ritual dependence between Zubiuŋ and Tongo, and between Sakpee and the other clans of Tɛnzugu. The other two Zubiuŋ maximal lineages have ties of clanship with two other major segments of Ba'ari, but with no other clans. Kpaɣara yaɣar have clanship ties with the section of Lakum yidɛm, and Yapaas with the section Guŋdɛm at Ba'ari. These ties operate in the same way as the extra-clan ties of Yakɔra with Gbizug, though less regularly. Thus Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari are interlinked by three mutually independent sets of ties of the same order, each Zubiuŋ maximal lineage having clanship ties with one Ba'ari lineage and not with the others.

The Pattern of Clanship among the Talis

This is the common pattern of clanship among the Talis. The clan is a 618x local unit comprising two or more relatively autonomous maximal lineages, which regard themselves and are regarded by others as together forming a single unit. It is not a closed unit, but its constituent maximal lineages look upon one another as the closest clan *sunzɔp* in their entire x618

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[1] A similar process in the distant past may explain the absence of exogamic ties between Tongo and D-Koog and other instances of this sort.

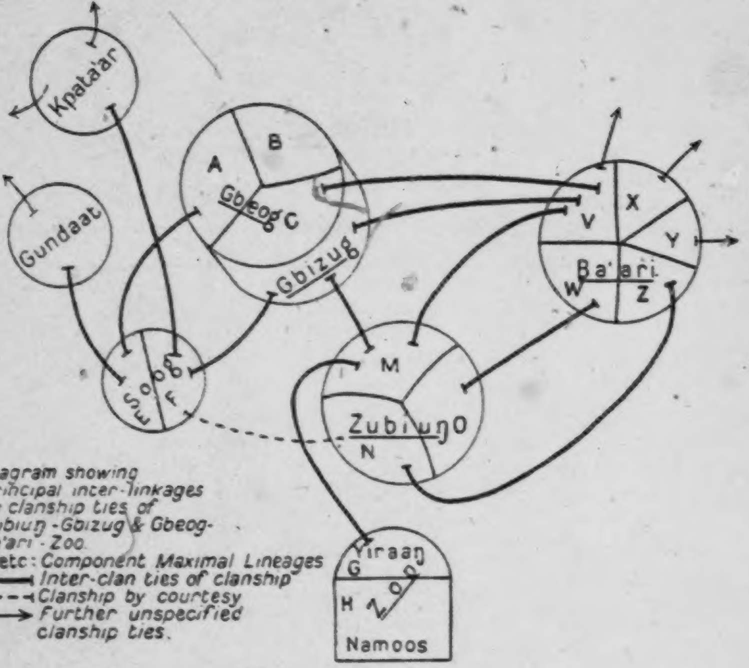
Kpata'ar
Gundaat
A
B
Gbeog
C
Gbizug
X
V
Y
Ba'ari
W
Z
M
Zubiuŋ
O
N
E
Zoo
F
Yiraaŋ
G
H
Namoos

Diagram showing principal inter-linkages by clanship ties of Zubiuŋ-Gbizug & Gbeog-Ba'ari-Zoo.
A etc: Component Maximal Lineages
━ Inter-clan ties of clanship
- - - Clanship by courtesy
⟶ Further unspecified clanship ties.

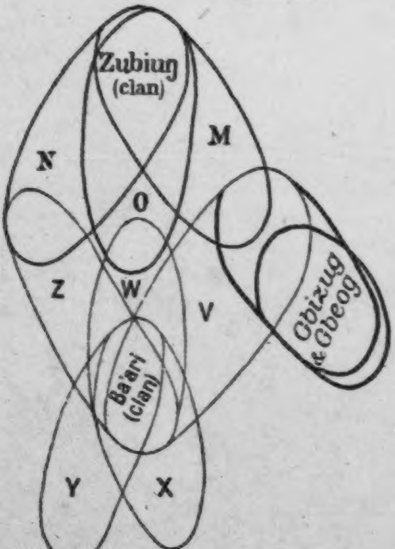
Zubiuŋ (clan)
N
M
O
Z
W
V
Gbizug & Gbeog
Ba'ari (clan)
Y
X

Diagram showing the relations of clanship between Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Gbeog & Ba'ari in terms of overlapping fields of clanship of the component maximal lineages.

[p. 86]

field of clanship. This means greater mutual dependence in both secular and ritual affairs, more frequent and regular co-operation, and a stronger solidarity than with linked lineages of other clans; it means the regular exercise of mutual privileges and the fulfilment of mutual obligations which are not so strongly binding on linked lineages of other clans, who therefore often omit to exercise them. The constituent maximal lineages of the same clan are united by ties of common interests and common values more powerful than those that bind any of these lineages to a linked lineage of a neighbouring clan. Thus the clan forms the region of greatest integration between a maximal lineage and any of its neighbouring maximal lineages, but it has no hard-and-fast social boundaries. Clanship ties cut across clans, and the basic rule of inter-clan linkage is that spatial proximity is translated into terms of putative genealogical connexion. It will be seen that these Talis clans have the same form as many composite Namoo clans. In principle, too, there is only a difference of degree between their structure and the more close-knit structure of the sub-clans of Mosuor biis. In both, the same kinds of common interests and common values form the basis of the unity and solidarity of the group, and these are expressed in the common ritual allegiance of its subdivisions.

The Mesh of Clanship among the Talis

The interlinkage of adjacent or neighbouring clans in accordance with the pattern we have described above runs in a complicated network through all the Talis clans. So complex is the overlapping of the fields of clanship of adjacent and neighbouring maximal lineages that the whole system might be compared to a piece of chain mail. It is worth while following up one or two of these series of linkages in order to get a clearer picture of the system.

We have described the linkage of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra with Gbizug. At the level of clanship Gbizug, as we have seen, counts as one of the two major segments of Gbeog. Between Gbizug and the other major segment, Gbeog proper, runs a winding watercourse. The people of Gbizug and the people of Gbeog claim to be descended, respectively, from two brothers who were 'the sons' of the primordial tɛndaana, Gɛnɔt. Both have clanship ties with the maximal lineage of Sakpar at Ba'ari, but not with the other sections of Ba'ari. There is also, however, an attached lineage at Gbeog who have an intercalary position between Gbeog and Ba'at-Lakum yiri (the Ba'ari lineage linked with Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣara-yaɣar) similar to the relationship of Zubiuŋ-Pulien biis and Sakpee, and explained by the same fiction. Members of this attached lineage may not marry women of the rest of Gbeog or of Gbizug or of Ba'at-Lakum yiri, but may marry into any lineages of other clans with which Gbeog and Gbizug and Ba'at-Lakum yiri have ties of clanship.

Corresponding to their close ties of clanship, which resemble those of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ with one another, Gbizug and Gbeog have a common cult of the supreme *tɔŋgban* in their area, though its custody is directly vested in the former. Their relative autonomy, however, corresponding to their spatial division, is symbolized in the

*618 tɛndaanaship and in other religious cults. Each segment has its own tɛndaana, the Gbizug tɛndaana being the senior of the two, and in addition the Gbeogdɛm have the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, like Zubiuŋ and the Hill Talis, whereas the Gbizugdɛm do not participate in this cult. This cleavage comes into operation also in the political and jural relations of the two segments, so that in very many situations Gbeog emerges as an independent settlement.

Both segments have ties of clanship with Soog, the Talis clan sandwiched between Tongo and Wakii. But there is an additional bond between Gbeog and Soog, which is not shared by Gbizug, for one-half of Gbeog is associated with Soog in a common cult of an External *Bɔɣar*, in the same way as the three sections of Zubiuŋ are associated in the cult of their External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg. The other half of Gbeog has a separate External *Bɔɣar*. Gbizug has ties of clanship also with Degal, the Tɛnzugu clan, in virtue of the alleged 'brotherhood' of the four primordial tɛndaanas. Yet Wakii and Ka'ar, the clans sprung from the other two primordial tɛndaanas, are merely the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of Gbizug, though both, and especially Wakii, have closer spatial, jural, and ritual relations with it than Degal has.

[608] Soogdɛm have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ, but regard them as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. They are linked by a ritual relationship which comes into effect whenever a Zubiuŋ tɛndaana dies. There was for a long time an estrangement between the two clans, because some years ago a Zubiuŋ youth married the ex-wife of a Soog man. A ceremonial reconciliation [627] under somewhat dramatic circumstances took place recently when ritual necessity compelled the elders of the offender's lineage to send a deputation to beg the pardon of the Soog elders. Apart from this intermittent and very limited ritual collaboration, the clanship-by-courtesy of Soog and Zubiuŋ is very weak. One of the standing jokes in Zubiuŋ concerned two [735] of the lineage heads of Soog. These two old men are notoriously poor through bodily infirmity, and therefore make use of every opportunity of getting free food or drink. Thus, whenever there is a funeral at Zubiuŋ they appear as representatives of their clan to claim their share of beer and meat as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy; but Zubiuŋdɛm have long ceased to go to Soog funerals.

From Ba'ari the mesh of clan linkages continues across the dialectal boundary with the Gɔrisi. Ba'at-Sakpar has clanship ties with Sanaab biis, a section of Bɔləga. 'They are our kinsmen', said the Ba'at-Sakpar tɛndaana-elect, 'even though they have become Gɔrisi.' Another Bɔləga section are similarly related to Ba'at-Lakum yiri. Ba'at-Guŋ, on the other hand, have ties of clanship with Tamboog on Tɛnzugu, and Ba'at-Dun biis have ties of clanship with Samiit on Tɛnzugu. Yaɣazuor and Gbee are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy to all sections of Ba'ari.

The internal constitution of Ba'ari is interesting, in that the whole clan is grouped around Ba'at-Sakpar. Thus, Ba'at-Lakum yiri has the status of an attached lineage of Sakpar. Their founding ancestor was said to have been a sororal nephew of Sakpar, begotten by a Zubiuŋ man—hence also their ties with Zubiuŋ; and Ba'at-Guŋ is similarly an attached lineage of Lakum yiri. Being related to Sakpar by a remove, Guŋ is allowed to

marry with them, though it is politically and ritually part of the clan of 618x Ba'ari.

Apart from these variations the pattern of clanship at Ba'ari is the same as at Zubiuŋ, the pattern common to all the clans mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. Local relationships run parallel with clanship ties, so that spatially contiguous lineages are more closely linked than spatially distant lineages. The component maximal lineages of each clan have a well-defined autonomy in relation to one another, organized in each case around a ritual office (either the tɛndaanaship or some other office associated with the cult of the Earth or the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*) which is exclusively vested in a particular lineage. Each maximal lineage has its distinctive field of clanship within which 'brotherhood' (*sunzɔt*) varies in degrees of closeness from that which prevails within the clan to that of *sunzɔt*-by-courtesy. The field of clanship of any one maximal lineage overlaps, but is not congruent with, that of any other maximal lineage of the same clan; and the unity and corporate identity of the clan are focused in the cult of the *Bɔɣar*, the common shrine of all the ancestors, and the cult of the Earth. Lastly, every maximal lineage has an intercalary function corresponding to its local and clanship ties.

The further extensions of this mesh of clanship ties can be rapidly 618x summarized. Soog is locally and structurally intercalary between the 621 cluster of clans we have been discussing and Tɛnzugu. Internally constituted like Zubiuŋ, it has ties of clanship with Sakpee, Gundaat, and Kpata'ar, all three Tɛnzugu clans, and with Wopo'ohug near Gbambee. Gundaat and Tamboog are clansfolk as well as neighbours. Though they are more autonomous in relation to each other than two segments of the same clan, their reciprocal privileges and obligations are closer than those of linked lineages of different clans. They have similar ties to those of Gbizug and Gbeog, though their origins are said to be diverse. Both have ties of clanship with one segment of Sakpee but not with the other, and Gundaat also has ties of clanship with an attached lineage at Wakii and with Wɔyar.

Kpata'ar, contiguous with Gundaat but not related to it by ties of clanship, comprises three maximal lineages. It is the senior of these, Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, who have ties of clanship with Soog; and they also have such ties with Degal and with one section of Sɛk, the Namoo group at the foot of the hills, as well as with their next-door neighbours Dakuor yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The second maximal lineage, Nakyeet yidɛm, is linked with Sakpee—but not with the lineages of other clans to which the other sections of Kpata'ar are linked. The third lineage of Kpata'ar is on the point of extinction, and its clanship ties need not be enumerated.

Bunkiuk, besides being linked with Kpata'ar through Dakuor yidɛm, includes two more maximal lineages, Gəlibdaan yidɛm and Yiraan yidɛm, which have no ties of clanship with Kpata'ar. Gəlibdaan yidɛm have clanship ties with one of the constituent lineages of Yinduuri but not with the rest of Yinduuri, and Yiraan yidɛm are the *sunzɔp* of Sipaat. The closest extra-clan *sunzɔp* of the latter are the people of Sii, from whose founding ancestor they also claim to be descended. But whereas Sii has clanship ties with Yinduuri, their neighbours on one side, and with a section of

x618 Kpɔlɔg (Pwɔlɔg), Sipaat has no ties of clanship with either of these
621 places. Yinduuri, a clan whose inner constitution is a miniature replica of the whole system of interlacing clanship ties which we have been describing, is contiguous with Zandoya but has no ties of clanship with it. Zandoya's clanship ties link it with Gorogo, which in turn is linked with a group of Gɔrisi, who live in the Bɔlɔga district.

This is but one series of concatenated clan linkages running from end to end of the Tongo district and even, like those of the Namoos, extending across to the Gɔrisi. Similar chains of clanship ties link the other Talis clans to one another and to this series; and the whole forms an elaborately reticulated system which stretches beyond the linguistic and cultural frontiers of Taleland. By these chains of clanship ties the Talis are linked on to peoples outside Taleland who live quite beyond the boundaries of their regular interests and concerns.

x618 We have been discussing clanship in the narrow sense—that is, ties implying the prohibition of marriage, joint leviratic rites, the reciprocal privileges and duties of *sunzɔp*, and such things as the liability in former times to be raided for one another's debts. As a rule, every constituent maximal lineage of every clan has such ties with one or more territorially contiguous lineages of neighbouring clans. Most of them also have clanship ties with some lineages of clans not adjacent to them, but not very far away, reckoning the distance in terms of the number of unrelated clans intervening and not by geographical criteria. There is no fixed rule; but within this cluster of settlements it is always a safe prediction that the greater the distance separating two clans the less likely are they to be linked by clanship.

x618 In addition, every clan recognizes one or more clans in its vicinity as
608 *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. Soog and Wakii; Gundaat, Kpata'ar, and Bunkiuk; Yinduur and Zandoya; Sii and Gorogo: these consider one another to be *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, and they generally appear at one another's funerals in this capacity.

x618 As with Zubiuŋ and the clans adjacent to it, so among the Hill Talis,
[183] the ties which make up the field of clanship of any maximal lineage are not all of equal strength. The critical norms have an absolute value. Clanship prohibits intermarriage, vests defined rights and obligations in each lineage, and implies a solidarity which is incompatible with hostile acts like war or abducting one another's wives, or raiding one another's cattle. If these norms are infringed, as inevitably happens now and then, they are not thereby invalidated. The infringement tends to provoke processes which cancel out its effects and either re-establish the invulnerability of the norms or bring about a new alinement of structural ties, which neutralizes the breach. At the same time spatial distribution has a selective influence on the extent and frequency of the intercourse between lineages linked by ties of clanship. Proximity encourages more frequent and regular co-operation in situations which mobilize ties of clanship. Other factors, too, influence the gradation of clanship ties, the most important of these being the fact that solidarity, co-operation, and mutual dependence are greater within the clan than between linked lineages of different clans. Besides having a specific field of clanship, each maximal

lineage is also a region where different fields of clanship overlap. This is 618x
what gives it its intercalary functions (see Diagram on p. 86).

Quasi-Clanship: Joking Partnership

Beyond the lineage's field of clanship lies a zone of social relations with which it has no constituted ties. For example, Zubiuŋ has no constituted ties with Zandoya. When Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the young wife of a Zandoya man, this was his justification for an act which would have been considered an outrage if she had been the wife of a Ba'ari man. Again, when Saɣabo of Kpata'ar clandestinely brought home the wife of a Gorogo man, the elders of his lineage were ready to shield him. A few months later another youth of the same lineage eloped with the wife of a man belonging to a linked lineage, and the same elders peremptorily sent her home to her former husband.

Somewhere between clanship and potential enmity come two other 618x
kinds of ties belonging to the same class of structural relations as clanship 602
and generally accounted for as arising out of some form of kinship (*mabiirət*). Each clan among the Talis, and in some cases a particular maximal lineage, has one or more joking partnerships with other clans or lineages. Thus Ba'ari has a joking partnership with Gorogo, Zubiuŋ with Sakpee and Gundaat, Kpata'ar with Wakii, Degal with Samiit, and so forth. The natives describe these relationships in the following terms. They say, 'We tease one another (*ti kiehət ni taaba*)', or 'We abuse one another (*ti turɛ taaba*)'. If they are asked for an explanation they say, 'It is laughter (*la'at*)', 'it is brother-in-lawship (*dakiirət*)'. Talking of it always raises a grin.

The joking partnership has two conventional modes of expression. When, for example, a Ba'ari man meets a Gorogo man or woman on a path by chance they abuse each other with impunity, in such terms as 'you ugly thing (*bonbɔraga*)', or 'you good for nothing (*boŋwari*)', or some similar objurgation. Spoken in anger, these are deadly insults. Between joking partners, who shout them out with mock seriousness, they arouse only a roar of laughter. As we have noted, the natives compare them with the joking relationship of affines of the same generation. A man will tease his wife's brother (*dakii*) or sister (*dakii-pɔk*) or his sister's husband (*dakii*) or a clansman's wife in this way, and a woman her brother's wife (*pɔɣakii*) or her husband's sister (*pɔɣakii*), to the amusement of both.[1]

The other gesture of privileged aggression which is a convention of the 618x
joking partnership I once observed at a Zubiuŋ funeral. A cow had been 764
slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and the elders were distributing 602
the meat. A huge crowd of people had gathered, as is usual, for the occasion, and the tumult was indescribable. The division of the meat was still in progress. This process is always accompanied by loud and what appears to be truculent argument. Suddenly a youth sprang forward from the middle of the crowd, snatched the leg of a sheep, and sprinted off at top speed. There was a moment's consternation, and then an uproar. Laughing and shouting taunts and mockery at the top of their voices, the crowd looked on as one of the most respected elders of Zubiuŋ dashed off

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[1] But marriage is not prohibited between joking partners.

x618 764 602 in pursuit. The youth zigzagged through the crowd, flourishing his leg of mutton, and threw it to a companion as the old man reached and grappled with him. For a few minutes they wrestled on the refuse heap, the old man pretending fury with the most realistic mimicry, as he cried out, 'you thief, you scoundrel', and his opponent making a pretence of resisting vigorously. A horde of small boys pranced around them with joy, and the elders at the gateway shook with laughter. Then it was all over, and everybody's attention reverted to the serious business of dividing the meat. 'Those young fellows are Sakpeedem', an elder explained to me; 'we and Sakpee abuse each other, it is brother-in-lawship, and not fighting.' This incident was a striking instance of how a social definition steers a situation. Anyone but a Sakpee man acting thus would have been set upon and manhandled; even a Zubiuŋ man, if he were to commit such an unthinkable act, would have been severely mauled.

x618 608 602 When the natives speak of this as brother-in-lawship, they make it clear that they are speaking figuratively. A clan's joking partners are usually clans that live just beyond the range of its effective ties of clanship. They are clans who actually are or might be the *sunzɔp* of its *sunzɔp* by clanship or by courtesy. Thus they lie on the border between two zones. On the one side lies the zone in which the clan has precisely defined social ties implying specific rights and obligations and resting on the assumption of amity and solidarity. Serious conflict with these clans is regarded as incompatible with the basic axioms of social relations, and when it occurs it always precipitates action designed to re-establish normal social relations. On the other side live people with whom no direct structural ties exist; they may be friendly if they wish, but they can be hostile with impunity. They are clans whose wives can be abducted or seduced, if one is bold enough, without infringing the loyalty of clanship or necessarily incurring instant reprisals.

Joking partners lie between these two sets of clans, and are likely to be connected with both by structural ties of one kind or another. Thus the joking partners of my clan are not our *sunzɔp* nor our possible but inaccessible enemies. They are the *sunzɔp* of our *sunzɔp*, in relation to whom both my clan and theirs have similar rights, obligations, and sentiments. This is a bond of friendliness between us. But they are also the *sunzɔp* of our possible enemies, who may side with them against us, and this is a source of latent opposition between us. The conventions of the joking relationship symbolize piquantly the interstitial status of joking partners between friends, who have rights, duties, and loyalties to one another, and potential enemies. Their privileged aggression reconciles the conflicting definitions of *sunzɔp*, whose right to a share of the meat symbolizes reciprocal bonds, and non-*sunzɔp* who have no right to it because of the absence of reciprocal obligations; of people who are near (*pɔ̃rəga*)—a significant concept in Tale political thought indicating both spatial and social proximity—and those who are far (*zaa ha*); of people whose friendliness can be relied upon, and those who are incalculable.

This is obvious both in the custom of mock abuse and in the snatching of meat or other food at a funeral ceremony. The joking partners obtain a share of the meat almost as if they were *sunzɔp*—but by a burlesque of

seizing it by violence, almost as if they were hostile intruders. *Sunzɔp* 608
have *a priori* no need of force to assert their privileges; if they did resort 618x
to it the affront would be so grave as to rupture the ties of clanship with 602
them. Unrelated strangers could only get one of the shares due to *sunzɔp* if they had the temerity to seize it—but they would be fortunate if they escaped with their lives, even in these days of curbed passions. The mock aggression of a joking partner is a caricature blending these contradictory ways of behaviour.

Joking partners are not obliged to tease one another. They do so spontaneously when the situation seems appropriate. People who are greatly unequal in years or status, or personally related by cognatic kinship, will not act in this way. The joking partnership merely fixes the group with whose members such behaviour is appropriate in appropriate circumstances; a casual encounter, for instance, where anybody but a joking partner or a close kinsman would be met with the customary greeting—'*ni i tooma*', lit. 'with your work'. It is also appropriate, as we have seen, in situations such as funeral ceremonies, where there is a very strict determination of attendance and behaviour by clearly defined social ties. But even there joking partners turn up largely by chance. They happen to be passing, or a few young men, hearing of the funeral and knowing that there will be dancing and girls, go for the lark of it. For distant *sunzɔp*, too, attendance at funeral ceremonies is very often a matter of chance, but it is also very often the result of a decision by responsible elders.

Such institutionalized joking partnerships do not appear to exist among 608
the Namoos. This may be correlated with the less elaborate interlocking 618x
of constituted ties and cleavages among them than among the Talis. An
analogous practice which throws light on the ideas implicit in standardized 184
joking partnership was, however, in vogue among the several branches of 602
Mosuor biis until recently. When there was a funeral at Yamələg a party of relatives-in-law (*deenam*) would sometimes pass through Tongo from Wakii or Tɛnzugu carrying the obligatory food contributions consisting of a basket of porridge and a whole sheep or goat cut up and cooked. Tongo youths would then, if they had a chance, intercept them and compel them to give up most of the food, leaving only a small portion to prove to the Yamələg people that their relatives-in-law had discharged their obligations. The Yamələg people would naturally be indignant; they would denounce the Tongo youths as thieves and rascals, and upbraid their relatives-in-law for yielding so timorously. Then they would wait for an opportunity to recoup themselves in kind. Next time a similar party of relatives-in-law bound for Tongo from Nabərug passed through Yamələg they would be waylaid and robbed in the same way. It was thought of as a practical joke, and accepted as such by the victims. The annoyance it caused soon blew over and did not leave a lasting grudge, for it was understood to be an exaggerated enforcement of the rights of *sunzɔp* to a prescribed share of such contributions if they happened to turn up at the funeral.

In the same way, twenty years ago, a Tongo man who chanced to be 608
passing through Yamələg when the guinea corn was ripening or the 602
618x

602 ground-nuts ready for harvesting, might pluck a few twigs of guinea corn 608 or pull up a bunch of ground-nuts to stay his hunger. He would shout x618 out, 'Whose corn is this, yo-o-o? I am going to pluck some.' The owner, standing on his flat roof, would probably remonstrate and swear, but he would not raise a hue and cry, for this was not theft but an exaggerated assertion of clanship ties. Nowadays, since the political [578] jealousies between the chiefs of Tongo and of Yamələg have brought about a state of chronic hostility between the two places, this pleasant custom has fallen into disuse. It is impossible to tease people with whom one has open or suppressed enmity; it would certainly provoke a fight.

x618 Such liberties, it is of interest to note, could never be taken with the people of Sie or Biuk, though they, too, are the clan *sunzɔp* of Tongo. For, as my informants explained, 'they are too far away, and therefore they would resent it'. On the other hand, while any Tongo man can pluck a handful of guinea corn or a bunch of ground-nuts from a clansman's field at Tongo if the two men are on good terms, no one would dare to intercept the food contribution of another Tongo section's relatives-in-law. A serious quarrel would inevitably result. 'We are too near each other, we are like the members of a single family', explained my informants. Every segment of Tongo is likely to be represented at the funeral ceremony at which these contributions from relatives-in-law are shared, to claim the share due to it. For any segment to anticipate this by violence would be a gratuitous insult implying that the other segments do not respect its rights. The people of Yamələg and of Sie used to act in the same way towards each other before the political jealousies that to-day poison their relationship arose.

184 All Tallensi think alike on matters of this sort, which fall within the x618 ambit of their common culture, whatever their particular structural affiliations may be. This Namoo custom and its recent obsolescence fit the pattern we have established for the more conventionalized joking partnerships of the Talis.

x618 Yet another kind of joking which I have several times witnessed 602 adds confirmation to our analysis, the more so because it is entirely 578 informal. This occurs between the members of two maximal lineages which are bound to one another by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence. They are usually maximal lineages which have complementary politico-ritual offices, such as a chiefship and the tɛndaanaship complementary to it. A large element of tension is necessarily involved in these relationships. Mutual loyalty and solidarity in situations involving common interests are counterbalanced by mutual suspicion in matters concerning the private interests and possessions of each lineage. Behind a strong sense of amity and interdependence lurks a jealous vigilance in regard to reciprocal rights and duties.

When, therefore, representatives of the two groups meet in a ceremonial or jural situation, the more aggressive among the elders often taunt one another playfully at moments when ceremonial formality is relaxed. Gbizug and Tongo men, for example, have a habit of doing this. The Chief of Tongo and the Gbizug tɛndaana, on the rare occasions when they meet in public, will interrupt a long and ceremonious discussion with a

jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual 602
coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tɛndaana's brother, who often deputizes for 618x
him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of 578
the tɛndaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony
together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests
here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative
of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive
you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh
good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true,
but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to your- [789]
selves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's
ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have
a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often
tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony
together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohəg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiirət*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations 184
which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also 571
confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular
interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles
of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of 571
clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, 577
but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each
other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihər*). No
member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other.
'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity,
as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they
don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would
fall to pieces (*ba yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this
bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most
calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls
only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

571 Hence, people connected in this way are careful not to ask each other
577 for things. In the hunt, if a member of one group kills an animal and any members of the other group happen to be on the spot, the slayer will not lay a hand on the kill until the latter have cut a portion for themselves.

765 Sometimes it happens that a great tragedy overwhelms a member of
571 one group and he abandons himself to grief, refusing food, drink, and consolation. Then, as a last resort, his relatives send for the head of the
577 lineage whose requests cannot be refused, to persuade the stricken man to face life again. This happened, for example, when Puyɛl of Wakii's child was accidentally burnt to death. He was prostrate with grief, and said that he wished to die. Thereupon his brothers sent for the Bɔɣarna'ab of Gundaat, the clan to whose members Puyɛl's lineage must yield, and the Bɔɣarna'ab persuaded him to accept food and water, a sign that he was ready to throw off his despair. 'It is a matter of our fathers and our ancestors', the Bɔɣarna'ab declared when he told the story. 'He dare not refuse; I would call on the Earth, and my *bɔɣar*, and our ancestors, to witness, and his house would be destroyed if he remained obstinate.' Elders of other Talis clans explained the inviolability of this bond in almost the same words. It rests upon religious sanctions, the cult of the Earth and the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, common to all the Talis.

The Rationalization of Clanship Ties

811 Tallensi have no explanation to offer for the joking partnership or the bond of privileged moral coercion between clans or lineages, though they regard them as being somehow connected with the network of clanship. 'It is a matter of our fathers and forefathers', is all that even the best informed elders have to say about these ties.

*618 Clanship ties, however, always have the warrant of dogma or myth, as
811 we have seen. It is worth while examining a few more instances.

Sometimes common agnatic ancestry is claimed, though no common ancestor can be cited by name or any point of convergence of the different genealogies suggested. This is the case with Yinduuri and Sii, for instance. Frequently the fiction of a cognatic link is used. Thus, in explanation of the clanship ties existing between Degal and Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm of Kpata'ar, it is said that the latter are the sororal nephews (*ahəs*) of the former. The name of the Degal woman who is thus alleged to have been the progenitrix of the Kpata'ar lineage is unknown, and no Kpata'ar man would even speculate as to which of their ancestors might have been her husband. Similarly, Dakuor yidɛm of Bunkiuk are said to be the descendants of a sororal nephew of Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm with whom they have ties of clanship. The fictional character of this formula is revealed when we compare the neighbouring clan of Samiit. The people of Samiit say that their founding ancestor was a Wakii man (hence their ties of clanship with Wakii), who migrated to the top of the hills because he had by accident killed and eaten a python, which is a taboo at Wakii. After wandering about for some time, he found refuge with the people of Gundaat, one of whose daughters was later given to him as a wife. The people of Samiit are the posterity (*tu'u*) of this pair. Strictly speaking, therefore, the people of Samiit are the sororal nephews of Gundaat; and

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yet they have no ties of clanship with the latter. Questioned about this anomaly, Samiit elders brushed it aside coolly with the remark, 'That is a long time ago, so now we marry one another'. But this argument, which is also met with elsewhere, runs counter to the basic principle of Tale exogamy, that consanguinity, however remote, is always a bar to marriage, not to speak of its obvious contradiction of the explanation of the Degal-Kpata'ar and other similar clanship ties. The Samiit elders, characteristically, admit these logical contradictions, but remain indifferent to them. For the structural ties that constitute the field of clanship of a particular lineage are validated independently of those that constitute the field of clanship of any other lineage. Theory and myth are made to fit the facts of social structure. It is enough if the fictions and myths utilized to explain the different linkages of a particular maximal lineage are consistent with one another. The Samiit story, which is typical of many others, proves, incidentally, that the explanations alleged for present-day structural ties are often myths of origin. Even if a Taləŋ killed a tabooed animal by accident, it would be unthinkable for him to cook and eat it; and if by some mischance he did commit this sacrilege, he would not flee his settlement on that account.

Owing to the dominance of genealogical relationships and the ideology of kinship in Tale social organization, most of the formulas accounting for the clanship ties of maximal lineages are couched in the idiom of kinship. But in many cases this is not so. We have already had instances where clanship ties are attributed to local coalescence; but there are cases in which this rationalization cannot work.

Take, for instance, Gundaat and Tamboog. These two adjacent maximal lineages are considered to be on an equal footing with the other clans of Tenzugu. But they are united by clanship ties as intimate as those that unite the component lineages of a single clan. Thus, as we have already noted, when either clan celebrates mortuary or funeral ceremonies, the ritual duties which normally devolve on close *sunzɔp* are undertaken by the other. When the placation gift (*sɛndaan*) is sent for a bride from one of these units, the live cock which forms part of it is always presented to the head of the other. This reciprocal privilege is usually confined to the component lineages of a single clan; and it is the same with political and economic activities in which co-operation is usually restricted to the clan. But according to their nebulous myths of origin, these two clans have a totally diverse ancestry. To explain their clanship ties the elders of these two clans fall back on an *a posteriori* argument which is common in similar circumstances all over the country. They say, 'We sacrifice together at a single shrine, so how can we marry one another? (*ti kab haabət bayər dekɔ'la, ti le na ntuo ndi taaba?*)'. The implication here is that clanship ties are a consequence of 'sacrificing together'. This is inaccurate as a description of fact, but the formula draws attention to the most important overt factor of organization in the social structure of the Tallensi. We have met it already in our study of the Namoos and some of the Talis clans; but its remarkable elaboration among the latter deserves further attention.

CHAPTER VII

CLANSHIP AND RITUAL COLLABORATION

782 *The Significance of Sacrificing Together*

182 SOCIAL ties and cleavages are most conspicuously affirmed in Tale ritual. Ritual collaboration and common ritual allegiances are indices of common interests and mechanisms of solidarity. The core of Tale ritual thought, doctrine, and performance is the sacrifice (*kaab*). In some situations a libation of water into which a handful of flour has been stirred (*zɔm kuom*, flour-water) is a sufficient sacrifice. In others, and more characteristically, domestic animals (fowls, guinea-fowls, goats, sheep, cattle, and dogs), with or without the addition of beer, are sacrificed. The selection of the animal depends on a multiplicity of factors, such as the relative importance of the shrine at which it is offered, the importance of the occasion, the status of the suppliant, or the group offering the sacrifice. No other situation evokes so vividly and so directly, both for the native and for the onlooker, the sense of the significance, for the Tallensi, of their continuity with their ancestors, and the strength and reality of the moral cohesion of such corporate units as lineages and clans.

To sacrifice together (*kab kaabɛra*) is the most binding form of ritual collaboration. According to the ethical and religious ideas of the Tallensi, it is totally incompatible with a state of hostility—that is, with an open breach of good relations. Personal feelings are of secondary importance in this connexion. One can sacrifice with a person whom one despises or dislikes, as long as these feelings do not lead to an infringement of the ties of mutual obligation. But one cannot sacrifice propitiously with someone who is an enemy. This, according to native theory, would cause the ancestors to become angry, for 'as you are towards each other so are the spirits of your ancestors towards one another'. Therefore, if avowed enemies sacrifice together, mystical retribution will follow. To sacrifice together means not only to acknowledge a common spiritual tutelage, but also to eat together of the sacrifice; in short, to unite in a sacrament. Thus it is both an expression and a pledge of mutual amity and dependence.

Ritual Relations in Namoo Clans

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782 As our analysis of the clan structure of Mosuor biis has shown, the final barrier to the complete absorption of an accessory lineage into one of the sub-clans is its exclusion from sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the sub-clan. This is the disability that excludes accessory lineages from the right to hold the chiefship of the sub-clan. But accessory lineages participate in sacrifices to the shrine of the ancestor who is regarded as the founder of that segment of the sub-clan to which they are attached or assimilated. The shrine (*bɔɣar*) of the founding ancestor of the sub-clan is usually in the custody of one of its segments, whose head (*kpeem*)

has, by right of succession, the duty of sacrificing to it on behalf of the 618x whole sub-clan. Whenever sacrifice is made, all the segments of the 782 authentic lineage must be represented. Accessory lineages are not represented, but they regard the representatives of the authentic segments to which they are linked as representing them also.

Thus, Nɔŋsuur yidem, of Tongo, are assimilated to the authentic segment of Siiyɛŋ yiri, and are present at sacrifices made to the founding ancestor of Siiyɛŋ yiri. But no member of Nɔŋsuur yidem could ever succeed to the custody of Siiyɛŋ's *bɔγar*. Now when sacrifice is made to Mosuor's *bɔγar* on behalf of the whole sub-clan, representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri must be present; and Nɔŋsuur yidem, who cannot be present, regard these representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri as representing them as well. This view is justified, for when the portion of the sacrificial animal which falls to the share of Siiyɛŋ yiri is di[illegible]d out, some will be given to Nɔŋsuur yidem also 'to cook and set out for their ancestor spirits (*kpiinam*).' As it is expressly forbidden for anyone not a member of the clan or the wife of a member to eat of this meat, this obviously signifies an acknowledgement of the indirect religious dependence of Nɔŋsuur yidem on the ancestors of the authentic lineage to which they are structurally linked. Though formally barred from the sacrament by the dogma of agnatic descent, accessory lineages are in practice indirectly admitted to it.

This arrangement is thoroughly in keeping with Tale ideas of the 618x representation of corporate units. But where the centripetal forces of 182 co-operation and solidarity within the local community are as great as at Tongo, it is an unstable compromise. In all secular affairs, and in other ceremonial and ritual events, the accessory lineages exercise all the duties and privileges that spring from solidarity and fellowship. They cannot be rigidly barred from the crowning ritual act that witnesses to the solidarity of the sub-clan, and most categorically pledges its constituent units to amity and co-operation. We have seen how this results in pressure to admit the accessory lineages to the cult of Mosuor's *bɔγar*, exerted indirectly by them but supported vigorously also by the most powerful agent of cohesion in the sub-clan, the chief. The unity of the sub-clan in practical affairs is evidently felt to be negatived by the ritual discrimination against some of its elements.

In other Namoo clans the correlation of ritual collaboration with the jural and material aspects of clanship is even closer. At Dkoog, for instance, the attached lineage, Alaa biis, participate in all sacrifices to the shrine of the clan's founding ancestor, but they are prohibited from holding the chiefship. Politically and locally Alaa biis form an integral part of Dkoog, even though they intermarry with the two segments to which they are not attached. But their strongest bond of unity with the authentic branches of the clan is their right to take part in the cult of the clan *bɔγar*. This has been made easier by the fact that the custody of this *bɔγar* is vested in Abɔkrə biis, the segment to whose 'sister's son' Alaa biis trace their origin. It can be interpreted as an extension of the right to participate in the cult of the founding ancestor of Abɔkrə biis. One sign of the close social affiliation of Alaa biis to Dkoog is that they do not participate in the sacrifices of the Wakii lineage with which they are linked by ties of

x618 clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an
182 offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be
made at the External *Bɔyar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

x618 Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in
182 form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will
184 be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External
778 *Bɔyar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are
769 built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of
the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔyar* among
the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent
maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔyar*
of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔyar* is kept at the house of the segment head
in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔyar* of
one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔyar* itself consists
of one or two small pots (*kpatarəg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel
made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and
covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually
indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

182 As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units
in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔyar and the Earth

x618 A. *Zubiuŋ*. We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ
182 becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔyar*, Duunkpaləg, the common shrine
778 of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of
782 the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the
cults of the *Bɔyar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of
769 clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration
with the clan structure is relatively simple, and is analogous to what is
found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal
lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of
their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpaləg *Bɔyar*. It is described as an
External *Bɔyar* (*yɛŋha bɔyar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being
out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being
bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

x618 But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔyar*,
778 'the *bɔyar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal
769 lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages
similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni*

bɔyar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the 618x
External *Bɔyar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it 778
symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that 769
particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔyar*, that
is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpalɔg in ritual
homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔyar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage,
as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting
bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia,
and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and
feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure— 618x
on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the 769
clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing
these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but
according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute
these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same
pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult
of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship 618x
never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpalɔg or at any of the Zubiuŋ 782
Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ 769
maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very
elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the
constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in
the ceremonies of inducting a new tɛndaana into his office, or in the
funeral rites of a deceased tɛndaana—members of the linked lineages of
that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of
the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the
case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari*. The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component 618x
units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the 778
principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. 782
Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require
the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the
accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that
one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with
two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and
obligations of close *sunzɔp*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, [794]
and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔyar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated
with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔyar* and a
focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric
aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only
the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages
of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected
with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked
lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of
Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yayazuor,
who are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties [608]
of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

x618 general ritual bond in the tendaanaship and the special ritual relationship
778 with the Earth which this office imposes on a group that has the preroga-
782 tive of it, and they have a specific ritual bond that comes into action
during the Great Festivals.

x618 At the level of these ritual relations, Ba'ari, Gbizug, Wakii, and
608 Yaɣazuor are brethren (*mabiis*) to one another. Gbizug, it will be remembered, is also linked to Ba'ari by clanship ties; through it, therefore, the scheme of linkage by clanship ties is interlocked with the scheme of linkage through ritual ties; and the myth in which the social relations of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are symbolically pictured expresses this double-sided interdependence. As will be clearer presently, the organization of ritual ties between corporate units, like that of clanship ties, follows the field principle. Working at different levels of the social structure in the service of different interests, the two systems are interlocked but not congruent. They reinforce each other by counterbalancing each other; and both kinds of ties are translated into the basic idiom of Tale social relations, the idiom of genealogical connexion.

C. *Gbizug*. We shall see this more clearly if we consider the role of Gbizug in this configuration. As we have noted before, linked maximal lineages have the right to participate in exoteric ceremonies (such as funeral ceremonies) in which the corporate identity of the particular Ba'ari lineage with which they have clanship ties emerges; but clanship ties do not give them the right to take part in the religious cults in which the corporate unity and identity of the whole clan emerges. They have no bonds with the clan as a whole, but only with the relatively autonomous segments of the clan. Gbizug, however, is bound to a segment of the clan by clanship ties and to the whole clan by ritual ties, and the bridge between these two sets of ties is Ba'at-Sakpar. Gbizug has no loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari, other than Ba'at-Sakpar, on the level of clanship; in this respect Gbizug is a threat to the stability of Ba'at-Sakpar's field of clanship. The latter's loyalties to Gbizug might in certain circumstances clash with its loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari. Compromise and adjustment are made possible by the scheme of ritual ties. The partly independent fields of clanship of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are adjusted to one another at a different level of social organization. In the frame of ritual relations, Gbizug is, as it were, assimilated to the whole clan of Ba'ari, drawn into the field of clanship of Ba'at-Sakpar.

It follows that on this plane of ritual relations Gbeog and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra are indirectly bound to the whole of Ba'ari, for Gbizug represents its whole field of clanship in its corporate ritual relationship with Ba'ari. At a further remove Zubiuŋ Yakɔra is the bridge between the whole of Zubiuŋ and the whole of Ba'ari through Gbizug; and this rule extends, by a series of removes, to all the Talis.

The Underlying Principles of Ritual Collaboration

x618 We must try to see clearly the principles underlying this bewildering
182 hierarchy of social ties between corporate units in Taleland. It is as difficult to state this principle simply and precisely as it was for the writer to elicit it from the confusing and, at first sight, inconsistent welter of

facts with which he was faced in the field. Maximal lineages are the 618x
smallest corporate units that emerge in political action. The social and 182
political relations between maximal lineages are regulated by ties of clanship. These ties constitute fields of social relations in which larger corporate units, which we have called clans, emerge. These are the largest corporate units that act in political matters. At the level of social and political relations between clans—that is to say, where the fields of social relations, constituted by clanship ties, overlap one another—clanship ties no longer suffice as the organizing mechanism. Here we meet with the interaction of more complex units and regions of Tale social structure than the maximal lineage. The social interests in response to which these interactions occur are more complex and more diffuse than those that are served by clanship. Consequently, an organizing mechanism of a different order comes into play, the mechanism of ritual.

Ritual is the appropriate mechanism of social organization at this level because the interests involved are not of a practical or utilitarian kind but of a moral kind—in fact, the most general moral interests of the natives, the maintenance of their existing institutions and norms of social behaviour. We must emphasize that we are dealing here with levels of organization correlated with different grades of social interests, and not with hard-and-fast forms of social grouping. We are dealing with different expressions of the same underlying forces. The same categories of ritual values and forms of association serve as a differentiating and integrating mechanism both at the level of social relations between maximal lineages and at the level of interclan relations. And clanship forms the bridge between the two levels as well as the organizing factor at the lower level. Both factors operate at both levels but with inverse dominance. That this is so can be seen from the natives' habit of conceptually assimilating all their social ties to the pattern of genealogical relationship and evaluating them all by the touchstone of kinship. The basic pattern of organization is that which we have described in our analysis of the clan system.

The ritual configurations and connexions at the higher level are obviously modelled on clanship configurations and connexions. The reason for this is simply that the ritual relations we are here concerned with exist between corporate units, maximal lineages or clans, defined by the canon of agnatic descent and by their place in the whole system of clanship.

We can say then that a Talis clan has a field of ritual relations overlapping but not congruent with its field of clanship ties. The fields of ritual relations of adjacent clans are articulated with one another so as to form a connected system linking all Talis to one another. It is through this system that the major cleavage between the Talis and their congeners on the one hand, and the Namoos on the other, is transcended; and the cycle of the Great Festivals is the medium through which this ritual system is regularly, obligatorily, and conspicuously brought into action. Let us see how the system extends to the Hill Talis.

The Scheme of Ritual Collaboration among the Hill Talis 794

The ritual relations of clans and lineages among the Hill Talis, though 618x
based on the same principles as those of Ba'ari, have a much more complex 182

x618 elaboration. Among them the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*,[1] homologous
182 though it is in function and doctrine with its Zubiuŋ counterpart, includes
794 peculiar esoteric elements lacking in the latter. This cult is the pivot of their Harvest Festival, *Bɔɣaraam*, which takes its name from the External *Bɔɣar*, of which it is essentially a sacrament. The sacrament includes an initiation cult, by which the males are brought into the *Bɔɣar* sodality and bound to its obligations and observances.

Each *Bɔɣar* has a number of ritual functionaries who hold office by virtue of being the heads of the maximal lineages in which these ritual offices are vested. As a rule a particular maximal lineage has the exclusive ownership of one office, and the ritual offices connected with a particular *Bɔɣar* are distributed among all or most of the corporate units (maximal lineages) that owe allegiance to that *Bɔɣar*. They usually include maximal lineages of a single clan, maximal lineages of other clans linked to them by ties of clanship, and territorially adjacent maximal lineages not related to them by clanship.

The cult of the Earth (*Tɛŋ*), again, is localized at a number of sacred spots, the most exalted of which are the foci of ritual association and collaboration between groups of clans and maximal lineages *not* connected by clanship. As in the *Bɔɣar* cult, the ritual roles are distributed among the heads of the corporate units owing allegiance to a particular Earth
[778] shrine. Each maximal lineage has, in addition, its private lineage *bɔɣar*, the symbolic seat of its own ancestors, as well as the special shrine that symbolizes and is bound up with the ritual office vested in that lineage.

Though each ritual office of a particular *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is vested in one maximal lineage, the other member-units of the congregation have an interest in that office. There are certain occasions when all the ritual functionaries must be present in order that the rites of worship may be performed. This is the case during the Great Festivals, and the concrete manifestation of this principle is the common sacrament partaken of in the rites at the *Bɔɣar* and the *Tɛŋ*.

793 Again, there is an order of seniority among the ritual functionaries of a
794 *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ*. The most senior is the chief custodian of that shrine.
182 Members of his lineage have a private relationship with the shrine, in addition to their public duties in connexion with it. They may, through
x618 him, bring private sacrifices to it in misfortune, or out of gratitude. But this functionary is also the direct intermediary between the congregation and the shrine. The priestly duties of its cult fall mainly on him. He is obliged to preside at all rites in which the whole congregation takes part, and the lineages of the other functionaries are dependent on him for the proper performance of the rites. This does not give him political power over them, for he is only *primus inter pares*, but it enhances the prestige of his office and makes it the pivot of the whole constellation. Thus all the functionaries and their respective lineages have a particular interest in the senior, pivotal office.

Furthermore, the installation of a ritual functionary in his office is

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[1] For the sake of clarity whenever reference is made to an external *Bɔɣar*, a capital *B* will be used; when any other kind of *bɔɣar* is referred to a lower-case *b* will be used.

always the privilege of another functionary of the same congregation, or 793
of a neighbouring congregation. The effect of this is to maintain particu- 794
larly close bonds of interdependence and mutual amity between pairs of 182
clans or maximal lineages and thus to strengthen the force of ritual 618x
collaboration as a sanction of mutual loyalty and cohesion. If the *Bɔyar*
or *Tɛŋ* congregation is coterminous with a clan (as at Zubiuŋ), the relation-
ship tends to be mutual or circular—A installs B and B installs A, or
A installs B and B installs C who in turn installs A. The arrangement
is then plausibly subsumed under the relations of clanship. In a con-
gregation of unrelated maximal lineages the relationship may be mutual
between some pairs of lineages and circular between other sets of lineages,
which will often include lineages belonging to mutually installing pairs.
Thus, A installs B and B installs A; but A also installs C, C installs
D, and D installs E.

It often happens, also, that the ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage belonging to one *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is installed by a ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage of a neighbouring congregation. The two lineages may be connected by clanship ties and the arrangement explained by invoking these. Or they may be adjacent to each other; or they may belong to the same *Bɔyar* congregation but different *Tɛŋ* congregations (or vice versa), so that it is only with respect to one context that the parties can be said to belong to different ritual groupings.

In every case it comes to this: that maximal lineages bound to each other 794
by one set of ritual ties, with respect to one focus of ritual cohesion, are 182
divided from each other, and bound to maximal lineages of other con- 618x
gregations constituted with reference to the same category of ritual
relations, by another set of ritual ties. Thus the division between ad-
jacent *Bɔyar* congregations (or *Tɛŋ* congregations), mutually exclusive by
reference to the particular *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* at which each worships, is
bridged by the ritual interdependence, in terms of another ritual category,
of some of their respective member lineages. And the system extends
chainwise throughout all the clans of the Hill Talis.

We have here a more elaborate reproduction of the pattern of ritual relations that was observed to hold between Ba'ari and its neighbours. Indeed, the schematic formulation attempted above gives only an inkling of the labyrinthine intricacies of these ritual relations among the Hill Talis. In this pattern the cult of the External *Bɔyar* and the cult of the Earth have a very significant relationship, as we have previously indicated. It can be seen more explicitly than at Zubiuŋ or Ba'ari that they form polar principles in the total system of public ritual values and relations.

This appears quite clearly in the doctrines and ritual practices of the 182
Hill Talis. *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* are always coupled together in ritual activities. 794
Together they exercise a mystical rule over the life and health, the fertility 796
and prosperity of man. The differences in the way in which they are
concerned with these fundamentals of human existence are like a com-
plementary division of labour. This is well shown in the annual cycle of
the Great Festivals. Thus *Gɔlib*, the Sowing Festival just before the first
rains, is centred on the Earth cult. It dramatizes man's dependence on the
fertility of the soil and on the rain for his livelihood, and the dependence

182 of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme,
794 through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the
beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the
796 chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔyaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔyar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔyar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔyar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔyar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔyar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔyar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔya* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

782 So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔyar*, the officiant in his
794 invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔya*, enumerating them by name, to
[552] 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔyar*
has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also
have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔya* of all the Talis clans are

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[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔyar* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔya* 782
of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of 794
the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual 619
community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of 794
every Talәŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔɣar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔɣar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔɣar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) 794
are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social 171
groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔɣar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔɣar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔɣar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkәra*)'.

Bɔɣar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage 182
associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious 794
conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of 613
loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔɣar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

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[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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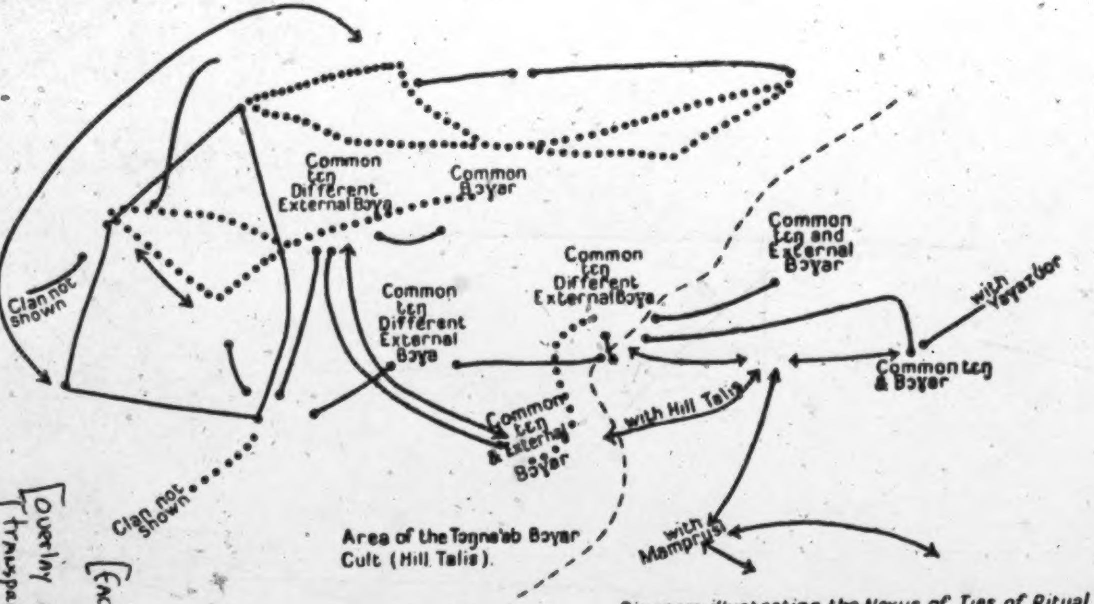
Common tɛŋ Different External Bɔɣa
Common Bɔɣar
Clan not shown
Common tɛŋ Different External Bɔɣa
Common tɛŋ Different External Bɔɣa
Common tɛŋ and External Bɔɣar
with Vayazbor
Common tɛŋ & Bɔɣar
Common tɛŋ & External Bɔɣar
with Hill Talis
Clan not shown
with Mamprusi
Area of the Tɔŋna'ab Bɔɣar Cult (Hill Talis).

Diagram illustrating the Nexus of Ties of Ritual Collaboration
(only a small selection of these ties shown)

Clans or Maximal lineages connected by lines thus •——• collaborate in the Cult of the Earth (tɛŋ) and/or in rites of the Festival Cycle associated with that cult. Clans connected by continuous line or figure collaborate jointly in Cult of the Earth.

Clans or Maximal lineages connected by lines thus ←——→ have reciprocal or complementary ritual relationships associated with politico-ritual offices mainly chiefship (na'am) or Tendaanaship.

Clans or Maximal lineages connected thus • • • collaborate in cult of External Bɔɣar (Tɔŋna'ab); those connected by continuous dotted lines do so jointly.

[Facing p. 108]

[Overlay on p. 109]
[transparent in original]

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field. Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔɣar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔɣar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔɣar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
184 single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine
769 (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to
assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the
Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a
[793] Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[779] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
769

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

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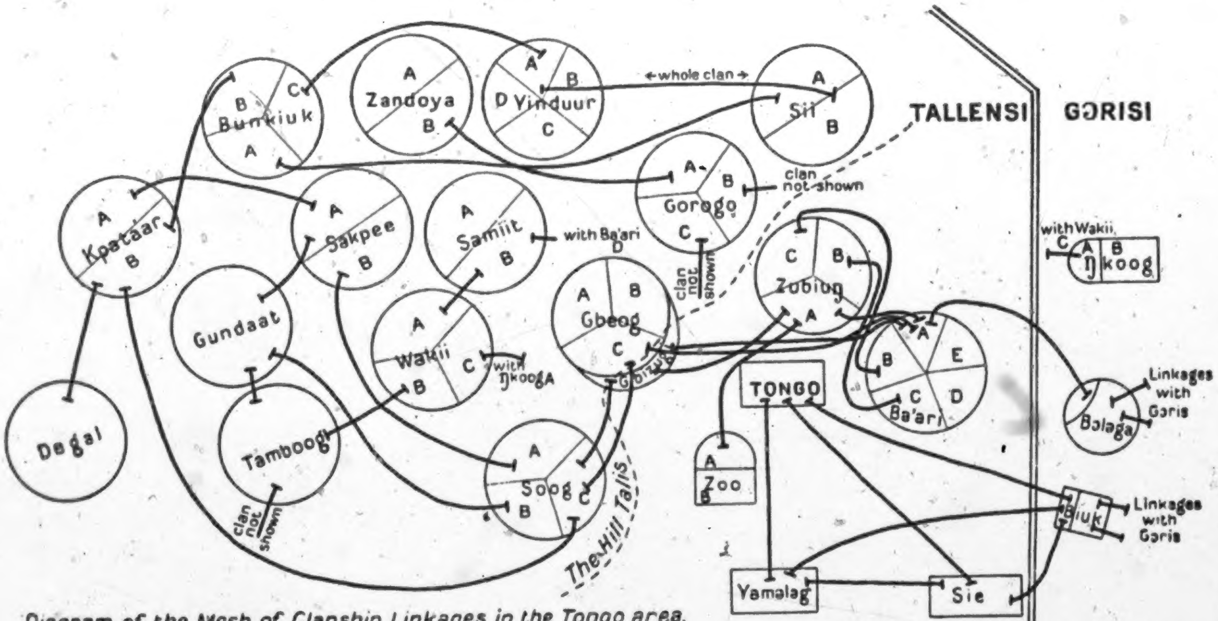
[p.109]


TALLENSI
GORISI
Bunkiuk
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clan not shown
clan not shown
with Wakii C
A
B
Ŋkoog
Gundaat
Wakii
A
B
C
with Ŋkoog A
Gbeog
A
B
C
Gbizug
Zubiun
A
B
C
Ba'ari
A
B
C
D
E
TONGO
Bolaga
Linkages with Goris
Linkages with Goris
Dagal
Tamboog
clan not shown
Soog
A
B
C
The Hill Talis
Zoo
A
B
Biuk
Yamalag
Sie

Diagram of the Mesh of Clanship Linkages in the Tongo area. (principal clans only)

○ *Talis clans*

▭ *Namoo clans*

⊢—⊣ *Clanship ties*

182 [778] 794 x618 769 of the people of Gbizug is the grave of their primordial ancestor, Tɛndaan Gɛnət. This grave, situated on the reputed house-site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, is in the sole custody of Gbizug, and is associated with the tɛndaanaship, therefore with the Earth cult. But whenever a new Gbizug tɛndaana is installed, representatives of Gbeog, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra must be present at the rites performed at Gɛnət's grave. This is a matter of right and duty, subsumed under the rights and duties of their clanship ties and validated by the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas. But one segment of Wakii must also be represented at these rites, not in virtue of clanship ties but of the kinship (*mabiirət*) in the figurative sense that is held to prevail between all tɛndaana clans. It is effective in this case because of the proximity and the ritual collaboration in the Great Festivals of Wakii and Gbizug.

x618 It is significant that the people of Soog, despite their clanship ties with Gbizug, do not come into the field of its ritual relations. On the surface this appears to be correlated with their spatial separation from Gbizug. It is only by their attendance at the exoteric ceremonies that accompany the installation or funeral of a Gbizug tɛndaana, and by the rights to special portions of meat and beer that they can exercise on these occasions, that the clanship ties between Soog and Gbizug impinge on the latter's field of ritual relations.

x618 794 769 On the other hand, the clanship ties of Soog with Gbeog have a ritual embodiment in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. All the segments of Gbeog practise this cult; but some of them owe allegiance to the *Bɔyar* of which the people of Soog are the senior custodians, and the others have a separate *Bɔyar* of their own. Soog and Gbeog do not have a common Earth shrine. In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog forms one united community and Soog another.

182 x618 In this intricate tissue of ritual relations we see again, as at Ba'ari, the interweaving of clanship ties, neighbourhood ties, and ties of ritual interdependence *per se*, forming syntheses of politico-ritual relations at a higher level than those that are possible in terms of any one of these categories. This interweaving can be seen at any of the ceremonies in which a particular field of ritual relations is actualized. It is particularly clear among the Tɛnzugu clans, where we can see, more plainly than at Gbizug or Ba'ari, how it is produced by the counterbalancing of ritual ties against clanship and local cleavages, and of ritual ties of one sort against those of another sort.

x618 769 Soog has a specific ritual tie with one major segment of Sakpee, the head of which installs the senior ritual functionary of the Soog External *Bɔyar*. This segment of Sakpee, Sakpee I, has its own *Bɔyar*. But it unites with the other major segment, Sakpee II, in the worship of a common Earth shrine, the custody of which is vested in Sakpee II; and Sakpee II owes allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* Bona'ab, the senior custodian of which is the head of Kpata'ar. Soog, though linked by clanship ties with Kpata'ar, has no direct ritual connexions with it. Their fields of ritual relations overlap at Sakpee, which forms the bridge between them at this level.

Kpata'ar provides a typical instance of the structure of the ritual fields

of any of the Hill Talis clans. Each of the two maximal lineages that 618X
constitute Kpata'ar, Kpata'arna'ab yiri and Nakyeet yiri, has its own 769
private lineage *bɔyar*. Though bound by all the reciprocal duties and privileges that make them the closest clan *sunzɔp* of each other, the genealogical cleavage between them is somewhat more strongly emphasized than it is between the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ, for example. The head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is the head of the clan, and *eo ipso* the senior ritual functionary and principal custodian of the Bona'ab *Bɔyar*. The head of Nakyeet yiri has a complementary role in relation to him in political, ritual, and jural affairs that concern the whole clan.

The politico-ritual office held by the head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is symbolized in a shrine that is ancillary to the External *Bɔyar*. It is in the sole custody of Kpata'arna'ab yiri. But when sacrifice is offered at it on prescribed occasions Nakyeet yiri must also be represented; and in addition Dakuor yiri, the component maximal lineage of Bunkiuk with which Kpata'arna'ab yiri has ties of clanship, must be represented and share in the sacrament. Thus, both Nakyeet yiri and Dakuor yiri, though they themselves have no ties of clanship, take part in a common sacrifice with Kpata'arna'ab yiri because of their clanship ties with the latter. In this case the central region of the field of clanship of Kpata'arna'ab yiri becomes actualized in a sacrament that symbolizes the exclusive rights to a particular politico-ritual office held by that maximal lineage.

But what about the worship of the External *Bɔyar*, Bona'ab? As its senior custodians, the men of Kpata'arna'ab yiri can sacrifice there alone or accompanied by Nakyeet yiri, if they desire the intercession of the *Bɔyar* in matters that concern them only. When the Great Festivals come round, however, it is obligatory for the whole congregation of the *Bɔyar* to join together in the performance of the ceremonies. The other communicants, beside the two segments of Kpata'ar, are Gundaat, Samiit and two of its linked lineages, together counting as a single unit, and Sakpee II.

The cult of the *Bɔyar* Bona'ab is the central force uniting this group 182
of maximal lineages. It is, we must emphasize, not a permanent bond of 618X
union that operates at all times and under all conditions, but a synthesis 769
that emerges chiefly in the context of the Great Festivals. During the [796]
festivals their interdependence in the cult of the *Bɔyar* imposes mutual amity and solidarity on this group of maximal lineages. At other times this is not always an effective sanction of amity and goodwill. For these ties of ritual collaboration are not homogeneous. Underneath them run other ties which reinforce them in the context of the *Bɔyar* cult but might act against them outside of this context. There are first the ties of clanship linking Kpata'arna'ab yiri with Nakyeet yiri, Nakyeet yiri with Sakpee, Sakpee with Gundaat, in a chain, as it were. Then there are the [608]
ties of clanship-by-courtesy which link all these lineages with one another. Samiit and Sakpee have bonds of local contiguity because they 'sit together on the same land' under the ritual jurisdiction of the Sakpee tendaana. Gundaat and Samiit are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, bound by a covenant of mutual amity which they trace back to the alleged kinship ties of their mythological founding ancestors. Gundaat and Kpata'ar

182 have not only bonds of local contiguity, but an additional tie of ritual
x618 interdependence in that their heads install each other in their respective
769 ritual offices. Similarly, Sakpee and Samiit have an added ritual tie in that their heads each have a special role in the ceremonial installation of the other. Finally, the head of Samiit exercises a special politico-ritual function in relation to the head of Kpata'ar. It is his task, in times of great social emergency, formally to adjure the head of Kpata'ar to initiate the ritual procedures necessary to avert disaster.

Thus, underneath the general collaboration of the communicants of Bona'ab with one another in the *Bɔyar* cult, and interweaving with it, spread these particular, divergent ties between different pairs of maximal lineages. In many situations these subordinate ties hold fast where the superordinate ties of ritual collaboration between all the communicants are not strong enough to override the cleavages between them. It is a
[578] striking thing, for instance, that whereas Nakyeet yiri and Sakpee have tended to side with the Gɔlibdaana of Bunkiuk in the struggle for power that has been going on between him and the head of Kpata'ar during the last few years, Gundaat has stood staunchly by the latter. The general bond of ritual collaboration in the *Bɔyar* cult has not ensured the support of the whole Bona'ab congregation for Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm in this struggle, and even the specific ties of clanship between them and Nakyeet yidɛm have not been proof against the lure of the Gɔlibdaana's fleshpots.

It is characteristic of Tale society that the structure of a community, whether it be a permanent community or a temporary community such as emerges in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, is directly mirrored in every situation and every institution in which this structure becomes manifest. To take a very simple example: when the congregation of Bona'ab assembles there for a sacrifice, the representatives of the different maximal lineages sit in a fixed order. Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm sit in the place of greatest honour, since they are the senior custodians, and the other lineages are distributed as shown in the diagram opposite. It will be seen that this diagram gives a picture also of the structural relations between the different lineages, and incidentally of their local relations to one another. It shows in a nutshell how local, structural, and politico-ritual relations are interlocked with one another and converge to create and maintain interclan co-operation and solidarity. The diagram shows also how the ritual roles in any of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship at the *Bɔyar* are distributed amongst the different maximal lineages.

182 Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm are the senior custodians also of the supreme
x618 Earth shrine of Tɛnzugu, Doo; but in the cult of Doo they have a completely different set of ritual collaborators from those associated with
794 them in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. They have a different field of
796 ritual relations counterpoised to that of which the External *Bɔyar* is the focus. The units associated with Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm in the cult of Doo are Degal (linked by clanship ties to them, but having its own External *Bɔyar*), Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk (who have no clanship ties with Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, and are the senior custodians of a different External

Bɔyar from theirs), and Tamboog (who also have no clanship ties with 182
Kpata'ar, and have an independent External *Bɔyar*). These four units 769
must be represented at all rites performed at Doo during the Great 794
618x

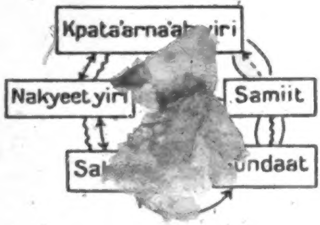

Diagram showing the seating arrangements at ceremonies in the sacred grove of the External Bɔyar BONA'AB, as reflecting the structural relations underlying ritual collaboration in the Bɔyar cult.

⟷ = Clanship ties
〰 = Ties of local contiguity
- - -> = Specific ties of politico-ritual interdependence
⬭ = Other social ties.

Festivals. Each one has also a private Earth shrine, with which the other three groups have no connexion, but their common allegiance to Doo binds them to one another in mutual ritual dependence. This should mean also, and by all accounts formerly did mean, a bond of mutual amity and cohesion; for there is nothing, according to Tale belief, which the Earth abhors so greatly as strife between those who worship it together at the same shrine.

To-day the cult of Doo furnishes an outstanding instance of the rela- 182
tivity of such ritual sanctions to the structural relations of the corporate 618x
units amongst which they are effective. During the Great Festivals, the 794
four maximal lineages meet as of old to perform the prescribed rites at Doo. For this limited period and this objective they are obliged to set aside their antagonisms and collaborate amicably. At other times, how- [578]
ever, they are divided by the struggle for power that has been going on between the Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab. Both Degal (in spite of their clanship ties with Kpata'ar) and the majority of the Tamboog people have been seduced by the wealth and power of the Gɔlibdaana.

The pull of loyalty to Kpata'ar sustained by the common cult of Doo 578
has not, however, remained altogether ineffective. In order to make their religious relations with Kpata'ar consistent with their newly arisen political hostility to them, the supporters of the Gɔlibdaana have tried to oust Kpata'arna'ab yidem from their traditional status in relation to Doo. They would thus, if they succeeded, have put Kpata'ar in the position of a faction opposed to the rightful principals in the cult of Doo.

578 On the other hand, there are dissidents in the Gɔlibdaana's camp who rationalize their opposition to him and find a rallying motive for it in the traditional loyalty which they owe to Kpata'ar in virtue of their reciprocal ties of ritual collaboration.

182 For Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, Degal, Bunkiuk, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm, and Tamboog, their common allegiance to Doo counteracts their divergent loyalties to their respective *Bɔɣar* congregations. Doo, however, does more than merely bind these four units to one another. It is the focus of integration of the four *Bɔɣar* communities they represent; and it is the point of confluence of the distinctive fields of clanship and of local ties of these four units. The ritual of the Gɔlib Festival when closely analysed shows that Doo is the palladium of all the Talis, the centre about which the equilibrium of all their corporate relations with one another swings.

Thus, to be specific, Tamboog is regarded as representing Wakii, and therefore, in virtue of the latter's ties with Gbizug, Zubiuŋ, and Ba'ari, these clans as well. Tamboog also represents Wɔɣar and the other members of its *Bɔɣar* congregation. Kpata'ar represents the other units constituting its *Bɔɣar* congregation, and through them Soog and Gbeog. Degal represents the Talis on the east slope of the hills and the adjacent plain. Bunkiuk represents its *Bɔɣar* congregation, which includes segments of Zandoya, Yinduuri, Sii, and Gorogo. And intersecting these groupings run the numerous ties of clanship, joking partnership, clanship-by-courtesy, privileged coercion, and local contiguity, that link up particular members of different groups.

We have considered only the two major ritual institutions through the medium of which the clans of the Talis are articulated into interdependent sets, and these again serially interlocked in a single system. There are also a number of other religious institutions ancillary to the cults of the *Bɔɣar* and the *Tɛŋ* in which more localized forms of ritual collaboration unite maximal lineages and clans, not otherwise ritually related, on certain occasions. It would be tedious to deal with them at length. It is enough to say that their effect is to interweave more closely the numerous threads which form the amazing web of politico-ritual relations among the Talis. They make the system complete to its last detail.

182
796 The all-embracing range of this web of politico-ritual relations comes out most plainly in the Great Festivals. The cycle requires the ritual co-operation not only of all the Talis but of the Namoos as well. The distribution of ritual roles and responsibilities amongst the clans is such that every corporate unit has a specific role associated with a particular phase of the cycle and with particular ritual emblems. Thus the cycle of the Great Festivals unites all the Tallensi in the performance of one connected series of ritual acts, and this is a bond of profound importance for all their social relations with one another.

The Great Festivals are dramatizations on the plane of ritual symbolism of the most vital and universal values of the Tallensi. They express the idea that the common good of all the Tallensi is founded on the inescapable interdependence of their elaborately differentiated clans and lineages. This common good, the ritual of the Great Festivals might be interpreted

182 796 to declare, is not a matter of expediency or calculation but the essence of life for the individual and the community. It is a sacred necessity; and men must be in harmony amongst themselves and with the mystical powers that control their lives if they desire to gain the beneficence of these powers for this end. The ritual, the sacrifices, and the prayers to the ancestors and to the Earth, pleading for the fruitfulness of the land, of women, and of the flocks and herds, for health, prosperity, and peace, and offering thanks at the end of the agricultural year for these boons, eloquently express the Tale conception of the common good. In the rites of the Great Festivals the widest community that has social relevance for any Taləŋ emerges, not as a hard-and-fast political unit, but as a temporary synthesis of all the forces of social integration operative in Tale society. This is an expression of the fact that, though they have no centralized government, the Tallensi do form a single body politic, albeit one without defined territorial boundaries. This unit is built up on the widely ramifying structural ties which knit the independent corporate units together. But its ultimate basis is a body of moral and jural norms and values accepted as binding by all Tallensi, and defended from the disruptive action of conflicting sectional interests by the most solemn ritual sanctions of Tale religion. The function of ritual collaboration between clans and lineages is to maintain the unchallengeable validity of these norms and values; for upon their observance the attainment of the common good ultimately depends.[1]

Native Thought and the Realities of Social Structure

582 We have digressed to survey the scope and function of ritual collaboration among the Talis in order to see what truth there is in the maxim that 'those who sacrifice together do not intermarry'. As a generalization it is obviously inaccurate; but it is valid for particular instances of linkage by clanship ties, though only as an *a posteriori* inference.

829 Tale elders do not fall into this error of deduction through lack of intelligence or ignorance of their social organization. Among the Tallensi, as among most primitive peoples, what appears to us to be defective logic usually proves to be a product of the social organization as it is apprehended by native thought. When an individual Taləŋ applies the maxim we have criticized to his own particular field of social relations—not to that of his lineage or clan—it is perfectly apposite. For an individual in his personal capacity can only sacrifice together with other individuals if they are his kinsfolk or clansfolk; and this implies automatically that he cannot marry their daughters or sisters.

829 602 In the social philosophy of the Tallensi, as will be shown in the next volume of this study, kinship is the model of all social ties between individuals and groups. The ties of clanship, ritual collaboration, or local contiguity are visualized as so many different extensions and transformations of the fundamental patterns of kinship. For the individual this is accurate to a very large extent. There is a kinship element in all his social

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[1] This aspect of Tale political organization and its wider sociological implications are discussed in *African Political Systems*, cit. supra.

829 relations; for him they are all contained within a single frame of social
602 reference, determined, at bottom, by his parentage. He cannot connect the rules and conditions that govern his own social behaviour with the general principles of Tale social structure. He has no means of ascertaining these, since the Tallensi do not make a systematic study of their own society. Every native knows only a limited sector of the social system, and the picture he has of it is built up out of his direct experience of the way in which it acts upon the day to day conduct of his life. Individuals who have the same or nearly the same field of social relations tend to have the same picture of their society; and individuals who have different fields of social relations tend to interpret their social behaviour and the structure of their society by the same concepts and along the same lines in so far as the same principles determine Tale social structure in every sector of the society. When we speak of Tale social philosophy or Tale thought, we do not mean that the natives have a systematic body of objective knowledge about their own society. We mean only the common denominators in the knowledge of their society that they have individually. Such knowledge, though partially inaccurate and transmitted only in face to face contact, is necessary for the existence of every society. For men employ their social notions in their relations with others and adapt their concepts to those of their fellows in carrying on collective life. Common notions emerge out of corporate and co-operative social action for common ends. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi this knowledge is widespread and tends to be uniform; hence the common denominators stand out.

829 When a native harks back to kinship in order to explain or interpret
602 any social tie that directs his corporate or co-operative activities, he is
x618 putting forward a common point of view, but not an objectively accurate one. The outside student, seeing Tale social life on a wider scale than any native, can see differences in the significance of kinship for the individual, and of clanship for a corporate unit. Thus, matrilateral kinship has a different value for the individual from what it has in the sphere of clanship. In the former case, matrilateral kinship confers definite privileges and obligations on an individual in relation to other individuals or to defined groups, and it has the same value for everybody. In the latter case, it is one of several fictions used to rationalize ties of a
[601] particular kind between corporate units. For example, the sister's son (*ahəŋ*) of a Ba'ari man is not entitled by right of matrilateral kinship to participate in sacrifices at Ba'at Da'a; but Ba'at-Lakum yidem exercise this right in virtue of clanship ties accounted for by the fiction of descent from a sororal nephew. Similarly, it is evident to the sociologist that the exogamic barrier by which ties of clanship are distinguished from other social ties has a different structural value from the prohibition against marrying a maternal kinsman; for the former is a factor of solidarity between corporate units, and the latter the index of a particular tie between certain individuals. But the natives lump them together.

829 Thus it comes about that the Tallensi describe and discuss the social
602 relations of corporate units in terms of kinship, using such concepts as
x618 *sunzɔ*, *mabii*, and *dɔɣam*. The primary significance of these concepts will
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be discussed in our next volume. It will be useful, however, to sum up the meanings attached to them in the context of the structural relations between corporate units. 829 602 618x 601

The term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*) means literally sibling by the same father. It is applied by the members of a particular lineage or clan to another lineage or clan with which they have a defined structural relationship, involving reciprocal rights, duties, and interests, identical with or analogous to those that obtain between segments of a single lineage. The natives visualize this relationship, which they describe by the abstract noun *sunzɔt*, as modelled on the social relationship of brothers.

Mabii (pl. *mabiis*), literally mother's child, and the abstract noun *mabiirət*, are more loosely used and have a wider range of reference. In its primary sense *mabii* denotes a kinsman of the same generation, in particular a sibling, as distinguished from kinsmen of a preceding or succeeding generation. Its emphasis, however, is not on the reciprocal rights, duties, and interests of siblings, but on their equality of status and on the sentiments of brotherhood based on common descent. A man can speak appropriately of his brother as his *mabii*, but not of his son. Lineages of the same order of segmentation can be described as *mabiis*, but not a segment of a lineage in relation to the whole lineage. Related clans, or even clans that have some distinctive usage in common, can speak of one another as *mabiis*. In certain circumstances all the Tallensi may be described as *mabiis* by contrast with non-Tallensi. *Mabiirət* means 'to be akin to one another in some way'—by kinship in the narrow sense, in a kinship context; by local propinquity, political or ritual association, common custom, or merely common race, in other contexts. It is reminiscent of our own phrase 'kith and kin', which we apply to our actual kinsmen in one context, and to our 'cousins', the Australians or Canadians, in another. We have tried to convey this by translating *mabiirət* by 'kinship in the wide sense'.

Lastly, there is the concept *dɔyam*, derived from the verb *dɔy-*, to bear or beget a child. Its primary reference is to kinship by consanguinity; hence it is most appropriately used to refer to a structural tie based on a known or accepted genealogical connexion. It serves to distinguish such ties from apparently similar ties for which no genealogical connexion or at most a very general community of stock is postulated. Thus, a Tongo man will describe the people of Yamələg as 'our *dɔyam*', but not the people of Zoo; they are merely 'our *mabiis*'. *Dɔyam* has no reference to the relative status of the parties or to their precise jural relationship. Father and son, uncle and nephew, a person and his distant cognate, clansfolk, members of linked lineages, are all *dɔyam* to one another. The term refers to the tie of consanguinity itself.

All three terms are frequently used in a metaphorical way to express attitudes of amity, solidarity, or goodwill, such as are taken for granted amongst kinsfolk, even where the parties concerned have no social ties based on genealogical connexion. To give an instance, Soog and Zubiuŋ were estranged from each other for a long time. At length they were compelled for ritual reasons to meet and become reconciled. Pledging their clans to everlasting amity and goodwill in the future, the two spokes-

829 men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no
602 one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so,
×618 let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used
601 here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana ɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

648 The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the
×618 Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the
171 country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔləgâ, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔləga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which

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[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deen*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

among the Talis would be linked by clanship as well. There is therefore 648
greater variation in the degree of overlapping between the fields of clanship 618x
of contiguous lineages than among the Talis. 171

Some clans in this area are closed units forming by themselves a miniature replica of the whole system. Thus, Duusi proper consists of three maximal lineages, bound together by ties of clanship, but none having clanship ties with any other lineages or clans. These three lineages are said to be 'consanguineous kin with one another (*dɔɣam ni taaba*)'. But there is no myth to account for their coalescence, nor is it rationalized by genealogical fictions. They are structurally differentiated in a similar way to the maximal lineages of Zoo. Thus, one lineage has the exclusive right to the chiefship, another to the tɛndaanaship, and the third to the ritual office of Yiraan, which holds the balance between chiefship and tɛndaanaship. The ritual observances of the three maximal lineages differ from one another and they have no common ancestral *bɔɣar*. One focus of integration for the whole of Duusi is the supreme *tɔŋgban*, Ziug, whose custody is vested in the lineage that holds the tɛndaanaship, but whose cult requires the co-operation of the other lineages as well. The other focus of integration is the chiefship, which demands both political co-operation and ritual collaboration among all three maximal lineages.

The loose articulation of this set of clans as compared with the Talis is reflected in their lack of a common appellation. One reason for this, no doubt, is that the line of cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in terms of structural relations, ritual observances, and politico-ritual roles and offices, is not so clear cut as in the Tongo district. At Sie, where it is most precise, the Namoos are identified as *naditib*, those who hold (lit. eat) the chiefship, in contraposition to the *tɛndaanditib*, those who hold the office of tɛndaana, namely the people of Sawalɔg and Tɛndaaŋ; and this cleavage runs parallel to their clanship relations and ritual observances. (Throughout the area, as among the Gɔrisi and Namnam, a settlement or part of a settlement occupied by *tɛndaanditib* is usually referred to as Tɛndaaŋ, and *tɛndaanditib* lineages are often described as Tɛndaaŋdɛm.) But in several other clans *naditib* and *tɛndaanditib* are constituent maximal lineages of the same clan. This is similar to the distribution of ritual offices amongst the maximal lineages of a Talis clan; but in this case the *naditib* lineages are usually Namoos, whereas the *tɛndaanditib* lineages fall into line with non-Namoo clans like Sawalɔg and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ in their ritual observances and social alliances. Among these clans, therefore, the ties of clanship often cut across the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos; the social and political alinements of clans or maximal lineages in accordance with their ritual observances cut across their alinements by clanship ties. The general effect is to link Namoos and non-Namoos more closely together than in the Tongo district, but in a looser system than is found among the Hill Talis.[1]

The *tɛndaanditib* clans and maximal lineages of the Sie district declare 618x

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[1] *Naditib* is compounded of *na'am*, chiefship and *di* to eat—here in its metaphorical meaning of 'to have the prerogative of an office'—and the plural suffix *-b* (< *ba*), people; *tɛndaanditib* comes in the same way from *tɛndaan*, *di*, and *-b*.

618 themselves to be akin to the Talis, and are so regarded by the latter, though only in the very broadest sense. There is, of course, no clear boundary between the two aggregates of clans, either territorially or structurally. The *tɛndaanditib* maximal lineage of Gbee and the people of Yaɣazuor have ties of clanship, but Gbee is considered to belong more closely to the Sie district than to the Tongo district, whereas Yaɣazuordɛm are definitely Talis united by ritual bonds and clanship-by-courtesy to Ba'ari. Indeed Yaɣazuordɛm were always regarded as potential enemies by the clans of the Sie district. In two famous wars still recollected by the [721] old men, almost all the clans of the Sie district, both *naditib* and *tɛndaanditib*, including even the *naditib* maximal lineage of Gbee, were ranged against Yaɣazuor and Ba'ari. Thus, Gbee forms one interstitial group between the Tongo district and the Sie district. Similarly, Sɔk, near Yamələg, forms another interstitial group, considered by each aggregate to be more closely allied to the other.

CHAPTER VIII

TOTEMISM AMONG THE TALIS AND OTHER NON-NAMOOS

The Unity of all the Talis

It is commonly said, everywhere in Taleland, that the Talis are 'all one' (*bonyeni*). The Talis themselves, in spite of their elaborate differentiation by clanship ties, always picture themselves as a cohesive group. As might be expected, the implications of this idea vary considerably as between the Talis adjacent to Tongo and the Hill folk. For any of the latter, with the exception of Yinduur and Sii, it meant in the old days, among other things, mutual assistance in war against the Namoos. Yinduur and Sii, however, never fought against Tongo, and sometimes took the side of Tongo on account of their ties with it through the chiefship held by the clan head of Sii. Yet nobody would be more indignant than a Sii man if it were seriously suggested that this indicated closer bonds between his clan and the Tongo Namoos than between his clan and the other Talis; for in a fight between the Talis and any settlement other than Tongo, Sii and Yinduuri would rally unhesitatingly to the side of their 'kin', the Talis. The people of Zubiuŋ, again, invariably took the side of Tongo in war, whereas the people of Ba'ari generally ranged themselves with the Hill clans. Gbizug, bound by equally strong politico-ritual ties to the other Talis and to Tongo, was ritually prohibited from taking part in war between them at all. In keeping with its function of maintaining the political balance between the Namoos and the Talis, it was the traditional peace-maker. But Gbeog fought with its Talis kin and might even attack Zubiuŋ. Thus by the crucial test of warfare the Talis do not form a single, permanently cohesive group. But at the same time, clans that stood outside the Hill Talis cluster, or opposed them in warfare, never infringed their specific ties of clanship by doing this. Zubiuŋ, for instance, would fight against the Hill Talis in a general war, but not against Ba'ari, with which it has clanship ties. For the same reason Sii, coming to the aid of Tongo, would attack Gorogo or Gbeog but not a Tenzugu clan. 619

These divergent loyalties in war are indices of divergent social and political ties springing from the internal structural differentiation and local relationships of the Talis. They are an aspect of the interlocking of Talis and non-Talis in the social system. They do not invalidate the claim of the Talis to be a cohesive group. Their unity is based on the network of structural ties binding them to one another. It is symbolized, in native thought, by a number of ~~ritual~~ observances that are closely correlated with their social ties and cleavages; and its most significant expression is the cycle of the Great Festivals.

Funeral Customs as Criteria of Social Alinement among Talis Clans

For a Namoo, the social definition of the Talis is primarily 'those who

[p. 121]

619 gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pɛhug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tɛndaana.

764 884 Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*walɔg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teelɔg lineages, use only a piece of string.

619 184 The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

173 Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Woolɔga country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teelɔg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

577 764 The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihər*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihər*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

764 182 Funeral rites have a twofold symbolic value for the Tallensi. They symbolize the corporate unity and identity of the lineage and clan and its ties with other clans; but they also symbolize the group's dependence on and moral responsibility to their ancestors, collectively and individually. This is shown very well in the custom of each clan's using a particular kind of loin cover for the dead and in the associated custom of swearing an oath by the father's loin cover. They show that ritual symbols of social differentiation and association among the Tallensi are not mere emblems of intergroup differences. They are emotionally charged symbols of the fact that the corporate unity and identity of the group is created by the moral bonds of its members among themselves and of each member with the ancestors of the group. We shall return to this presently.

619 171 184 In spite of their deviant mortuary customs, the people of Gorogo, Ka'ar, and Teelɔg consider themselves to be, and are considered to be, as much a part of the Talis aggregate as any other Talis clans. Conversely it is known among the Talis that some clans of Gɔrisi and Namnam, as well as many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, dress their dead in a sheepskin loin cover. The Talis do not on this account acknowledge any of these groups as Talis or as being kin to them. Again, some clans in the Sie district gird their dead with an oribi skin. But they deny having any ties with Ka'ar. Indeed, their elders are quite unaware that they have this custom in common with Ka'ar, and are not in the least interested in hearing of it. This is a significant difference between the Namoos, all of whom have the same mortuary observances, and the Talis and their congeners. This difference extends to other manifest ritual usages that serve to differentiate corporate units from one another.

764 184 Certain other funeral rites are also stressed as rigorously distinctive of the Talis and as common to all of them. All Talis, it is said, conclude a funeral by the rite of *ŋma ma'ala*. Members of the deceased's maximal lineage, and the heads of the other lineages of the clan, contribute a large number of fowls, which are slaughtered as a sacrifice to mark the final departure of the dead person from the social sphere of the living and his aggregation to the ancestors. In reality, almost every clan has its own modifications in the details of the rite. In some clans it is performed for all males who have begotten children, in others for lineage heads only, in others for both men and women; and the people of Kpata'ar omit the rite altogether. The rite is found also among many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, with diverse local variations.

Similar local variations from clan to clan appear in the other parts of the funeral ceremonies where the usages of the Talis contrast with those of the Namoos, and many, if not most, of these distinct customs are found among the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie district.

These variations in ritual observances, and their correlation with structural ties and cleavages, are constantly brought to an observer's attention. They form a common topic of discussion and comment at funeral ceremonies. One is often reminded of them by the behaviour of women at these ceremonies. A woman's husband's clan very often has different ritual practices from those of her father's clan. Now, married

764 184 daughters always come to funerals in their paternal family. They have special ritual duties, some specific to that clan, some more general. They are apt, then, to follow the procedures to which they have become accustomed in their husband's home and have, therefore, to be closely supervised.

In all these mortuary and funeral rites there is a tendency for the plainsmen to have one type of variant, while the Hill clans favour another. There is less variation in the details of rites among the clans of either group than between the two groups, and the clans at the foot of the Hills show variants of ritual usage intermediate between those of the plains Talis and of the Hill clans. Thus, one of the most solemn and sacred of the rites which transform the brute fact of death into the mystical fact of spiritual status is the rite of *kpe kpiintaŋ*. It is usually regarded as distinctive of the Namoos, but it occurs also in the funeral ceremonies of tɛndaanas and elders at Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Gbizug, and Wakii (the Talis clans contiguous with the Namoos) as well as among some of the non-Namoo clans of the Sie area. The Hill Talis attribute this to contamination by the customs of the Namoos. There are one or two rites which the plains Talis have and the Hill Talis lack altogether. There is, therefore, a broad distinction corresponding to the division between the clans that celebrate *Da'a* and those that celebrate *Bɔɣaraam* as their Harvest Festival. But the two clusters overlap, as they do structurally, and the Talis overlap with the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie area by the criterion of funeral customs as they do by those of locality and structure.

182 184 764 The funeral customs of the Talis, it is clear, are directly correlated with the structure of the society. The broad patterns of doctrine and ritual practice are the same for all Tallensi, and are an indication of their uniform culture and of a social structure which embraces all the Tallensi in a single system. More specific patterns of doctrine and practice are followed exclusively by the Talis and their congeners elsewhere in Taleland. They are an index of the structural differentiation of these clans from the Namoos. Some of these patterns are common to all or most of the Talis clans, and correspond therefore to the network of clanship and other structural ties linking them all to one another. Other specific patterns of funeral customs mark off lesser regions within the whole cluster of Talis clans. And finally, variations in detail correspond to the genealogical differentiation of clan from clan and lineage from lineage, and to the fact that each unit has a specific field of social relations not wholly congruent with that of any other unit of a like sort. The natives understand this. As we have noted before, they see variant ritual beliefs and practices of all kinds, and especially variant mortuary and funeral customs, as ways in which the corporate identity and the continuity of lineage and clan are expressed. They consider such variations within the limits of common patterns as belonging to the very fabric of their social organization.

Totemic Avoidances and Clanship Ties

784 184 The connexion between ritual observances and the social structure can be even more plainly seen in the totemic avoidances of the Talis and the

other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos 784
are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in 184
many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans, no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to violate (*galəm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence. It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu əbət*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth
to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals [262
prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages, 853]
when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness, not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners 784
in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But 771
like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage 184
totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example, call a totem a sacred object (*bayər*). The emphasis is on the avoidance, the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, 784
though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch 184
these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them; for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their 627
congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear 184
an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in 618x
this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath, uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence,

627 I was told. I have never heard it used by anybody, and this itself shows
184 how seriously it is taken.

x618 The oath by the totem is not quite so serious a matter, though it could not be uttered with impunity. The formula is: '*Pakur ni nnuoni*—the tortoise and inside my mouth', if the totemic animal is the tortoise, or, in free translation: 'By the tortoise which I may not eat.' This oath might be used in trivial circumstances. Thus, if a man were wrongly accused of adultery he might swear by his father. But if he were accused of having appropriated something belonging to a friend or relative without permission, though admittedly without intending to steal it, he would swear to his innocence with an oath by his totem. It is the sort of oath, too, informants said, that one might use to assert one's truthfulness in an argument. A person who swears falsely by his totem would decline in health and begin to waste away (*burəm*), but he could probably be saved by atoning sacrifices. A person who swears one of the greater oaths, including the oath by one's father, falsely, will probably die. That is how the natives distinguish the degrees of sacredness they attach to these oaths. Again, I have never heard a totemic oath used, but I have discussed the matter with many people, both young and old, and their views are unanimous. Tallensi are reluctant to swear an oath except in an issue of real importance, and then they resort to the most solemn oath that is appropriate in the situation.

784 There is nothing secret about these totemic avoidances. Knowledge of them is public and widespread, though not always accurate where the totems of other clans than one's own are concerned. People become acquainted with the totemic avoidances of other clans through their ties of extra-clan kinship, and women spread the knowledge of the totemic avoidances of their paternal clans among the clans into which they marry. An amusing instance of the way in which this knowledge spreads occurred with one of my own boys. He was a Namoo, and one day bought a live water-tortoise from a Tenzugu youth. This is a great delicacy, but, as he told me afterwards, the cooking of it cost him almost more trouble than it was worth. For he had to cook it himself, out of doors in a borrowed pot, because his wife, a Tenzugu woman, was prohibited from eating this animal and refused to let him contaminate her kitchen or her cooking utensils with it.

It is never necessary for Tallensi to ask one another what their totemic avoidances are. When a person is required, for ritual reasons, to observe the taboos of another clan, the people of that clan who come to perform the rites that impose these taboos on him tell him about them. But one can ask a person, 'What do you (i.e. such and such a clan or lineage) taboo? (*ya kiha lani*)', or, 'What do you swear by? (*ya pɔta lani*)', in order to ascertain a group's totemic avoidances.

784 The animals most widely avoided among the Talis are the tortoise
184 (*pakur*) and the water tortoise (*mieŋ*). Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and most of the
x618 Hill clans taboo both these animals. But there are several exceptions.
None of the clans on the Degal side of the Hills keep these avoidances, nor do the people of Tamboog, and only the senior maximal lineage of the three constituent lineages of Soog has them. The people of Degal,

for example, avoid the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*); the Tamboog people do not eat the dog (*baa*), the leopard (*yeogbaa*), the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*), and the hare (*suoŋ*). 781 184 618x

The majority of the clans which observe the two characteristic avoidances of the Talis have additional discriminatory totems. Zubiuŋ has the cat (*sakoo*); at Wakii it is the snake (*waaf*), and this includes all species of snake, even the innocent little green *bɛnɔrəg* which children of other clans kill and eat. A whole group of clans, including all that part of the network of linked lineages that connects Bunkiuk, Yinduur, Siiŋ, and Gorogo, taboo the snake and the crocodile (*baŋ*) in addition to the land and water tortoises. Among these clans a snake that injures a domestic animal or a person is killed without hesitation, and if it is of an edible species, such as the python (*waɣakpɛm*), it will be given to a friend or kinsman of a neighbouring clan which does not taboo snakes. This rule applies to all species of dangerous animals that serve as totems to a clan. If they injure mankind, or man's property, they are transgressing (*galəm*) and deserve to be killed. This does not mean, however, that the Tallensi conceive of a special tie of friendship or kinship between a clan and its totem animals. But we shall come back to this point later.

Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, with the exception of one accessory lineage, do not fall into the same circle of totemic avoidances. Their taboos vary from one maximal lineage to another. Thus, Ba'at-Sakpar taboos the dog and the hare; but Lakum yiri has no totemic avoidances.

When a clan or lineage has several totemic avoidances they are all considered to be of equal importance. In some situations the totems common to several clans are stressed, in others the natives draw attention to those which differentiate units among a number that have some common totems. There is no precise correlation between the ties of clanship and the distribution of totemic avoidances. Tamboog and Gundaat, closely allied as they are by ties of clanship, have different totemic avoidances. The constituent maximal lineages of clans like Soog and Ba'ari have no common totems, nor have the linked lineages of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari, or Soog and Sakpee. Conversely, common totemic avoidances do not by themselves indicate the existence of clanship ties. Ba'at-Sakpar has no clanship ties with Tamboog, though both taboo the dog and the hare, and the avoidance of the Degal people is found also among some clans of the Sie area which have no ties of clanship with Degal. It follows [582] from this that (as among the Namoos) common totemic prohibitions are not a bar to marriage; lineage and clan exogamy operate in terms of clanship ties only.

On the other hand, clanship ties are in some instances associated with 618x totemic avoidances. Dun biis of Ba'ari are said to observe the same 784 avoidances as the Hill Talis, because they have clanship ties with Samiit. Alaa biis of Ŋkoog have the totemic taboos of Wakii, as well as those of Ŋkoog proper (a Namoo clan), because of their clanship ties with Wakii. Both these are attached lineages, whose descent is attributed to a son of a clan sister who had been married to a Samiit and a Wakii man respectively and had subsequently been divorced and sent back home with her children. The two lineages thus preserve the avoidances of what would

*618 784 have been their founding ancestors' paternal clans. In other cases the correlation is not so clear, since the attached lineages concerned are intercalary between clans that have the same avoidances. But it is not a general rule that attached lineages preserve the avoidances of the clan of the alleged father of their founding ancestor, as can be seen from the case of Ba'at-Lakum yidem, who do not keep the Zubiuŋ taboos.

Thus Talis sometimes cite common totemic and other ritual observances as a sign of clanship ties, and at other times deny any necessary connexion between ritual observances and clanship ties. When they want to emphasize the close interdependence, or the sense of community of a particular group of clans, by contrast with other Talis or non-Talis clans, they tend to pick on common ritual observances in proof of this. But on the other hand, they are equally ready to quote peculiar totemic taboos as signs of the genealogical or social singularity of a clan or lineage. The apparent inconsistency does not worry them. For, as we have seen, Tallensi cannot visualize precisely the structure of their society in its entirety, and there is good evidence for both views in the ritual observances of the Talis. There is a tendency for some clans that are closely interconnected to have some totems in common, and for others to have different totems.

*618 784 184 The totemic avoidances found among the clans of the Sie district in general follow the pattern found at Ba'ari; but in this area there is no close-knit nuclear aggregate of clans like the Hill Talis. The relative autonomy of the maximal lineage stands out more markedly, and there is consequently a greater diversity of totemic avoidances.

Totemic Myths

773 We have previously remarked that Namoos show little interest in the mythology of their totemic taboos. This attitude is characteristic of all Tallensi. Talis elders, whose authority and wisdom in ritual matters were widely respected, and who willingly gave me information of the most secret kind, were content to dismiss the question of the origin of their totemic taboos with some trite remark such as, 'We grew up to find it thus'. But here and there one comes across a myth accounting for the origin of a totemic taboo, especially in the Sie area. They are all expansions of the text 'The animal conferred a benefit on our ancestor *(u daa maal ti yaab la)*'. Though they all have the same moral, they vary greatly in substance.

773 539 Thus, according to one version, the avoidance of the tortoise and water-tortoise among the Hill Talis began in this way: 'Our (anonymous) ancestor' was suffering severely from thirst once and could find no water. He saw a tortoise crawling along and followed it. The animal reached a heap of dry leaves, which it scratched aside revealing a spring. Thereupon 'our ancestor' vowed that never again would he or his descendants eat the tortoise; and as the water-tortoise is merely another species of the same family, this taboo naturally extends to it as well.

According to another version, which is worth quoting as an example of the variations in these myths, 'our ancestor' was on a journey and was

held up by an impassable river. He noticed a water-tortoise descending 773
the bank, and followed it. Thus he was led to a ford, which enabled him 539
to cross. Thereupon he vowed that he and his descendants would refrain from eating this animal and its brother species, the tortoise.

Similar myths are current among other clans that taboo aquatic animals. Thus one of the segments of Sie have the special avoidance of the crocodile in addition to the usual fowl avoidance of the Namoos. The head of this segment told me the following myth in explanation. There was a communal fish drive, during which their ancestor, Layɛn, dis- [226]
appeared. He was given up for lost, and next day a party was dispatched to search for the body. But when they reached the river, they found him sitting on the bank with a crocodile at his feet. He told them that the crocodile had saved his life (*fa u ŋovor bah*) by holding him down and covering him up. Hence he vowed that he and his descendants would never again eat crocodile.

In the same way the elders of Gban narrate that 'their ancestor' was 773
suffering with a swollen hand. He asked friends to lance it, but they 539
thought this was unnecessary. Then one day, as he sat resting his hand 757
on his head because of the pain, a large grasshopper of a species with sharply serrated legs (*saŋkaan*) landed on it. The ancestor scared it away. As it leaped off, it kicked out and ripped the skin of the festering hand with its saw-edged legs. This let out the accumulated pus and cured the hand. Thereupon the ancestor vowed, in the phrase that usually concludes these myths, 'May he grow old with his grandson, but no descendant of his should ever again eat the *saŋkaan* (*ɔn kɔrəgən ni u yaaŋa, ka ɔn bii ku le di saŋkaan*)'.

Other myths of this kind relate how the anonymous ancestor was saved 773
from an enemy about to slay him by the opportune appearance of the 539
totemic animal. Thus, according to one of the elders of Sawaləg: 'Bows were in conflict (*tap ndaa ŋme*)', ('Perhaps', he added, as an afterthought, 'there was a fight with Mamprusi who came to raid for slaves') 'and our ancestor fled, seeking refuge in an animal's burrow. The enemy was about to break open the burrow when a squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) darted past. They turned to pursue it, and left our ancestor. Thereupon, he vowed never to eat the squirrel again, neither he nor his descendants.'

As this sample of totemic myths shows, the pattern is the same as that 773
of the Namoo myth accounting for the fowl avoidance. They are more 787
unstable in content, however. The two versions of the tortoise myth were obtained from two equally authoritative elders of the same clan. There is, indeed, always an element of speculation, or of *ad hoc* construction, in these myths. Listening to them one often has the feeling that they are being elaborated by logical deduction. The starting-point is the premiss that the totemic avoidance was due to a vow made by 'our ancestor' in gratitude for an extraordinary service that saved his life. The process of reasoning is to deduce an action on the part of the animal consistent with its known peculiarities of appearance and of behaviour. Informants are never able to tell one where and when they first heard these myths. They say vaguely: 'We heard them from our fathers.' This method of reasoning, however, is congenial to the Tallensi. It forms the

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔɣar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔɣar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

774 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔɣar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units t[illegible] owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔɣar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so
a supplicant coming to the *Bɔɣar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also
from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔɣar* in the
Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the
snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence,
children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔɣar* must avoid
all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have
independent External *Bɔɣa*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔɣar* congregation. This means that the clans and
lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the
ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It
implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-
ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of
redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation,
or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife,
though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member
lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling
of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another,
among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of
to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious
community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔɣar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794
sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the
rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them
over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing
Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔɣar* or the coercion of an
adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult to 776
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔɣar can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛɣɔr*) of an individual. An
ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native
religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist
(*ɔn m-mar n-ɣɔvɔr ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) must keep the totemic
avoidances of the *Bɔɣar* community. This applies particularly to non-
Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims
to the *Bɔɣar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual
dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born,
as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis them-
selves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards
of the *Bɔɣar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual
guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into com-
[551] munion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
[582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-
Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi;
and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of
the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts
and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the
benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace,
and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the
totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured
kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe con-
duct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client
lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛyəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic
avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's
lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will
have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and
as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between
the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of
sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus
he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to
inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the
agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of
maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes
have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who
observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the
totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo
of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that
it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl
in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer
remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary
totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

leopard taboo of Ŋkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of 776
the Talis. 784

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems 184 is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛɣər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛɣər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔɣar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛɣər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔɣar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔɣar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔɣar* and the *Bɔɣar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that 608 sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be 776 called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔɣar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔɣar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔɣar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔɣar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with 608 lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when 769 the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔɣa* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔɣar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding 182 pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

182

been discussing have a deeper meaning to the natives than merely as convenient indices of social differentiation. It is on account of their deeper meaning that they serve also, in certain contexts, to identify corporate units. The very casualness with which Tallensi speak of their totemic taboos; the unquestioning way in which they take their funeral customs for granted; and at the other extreme, the connexion of these ritual observances with the supreme religious institution of the Hill Talis, whose influence pervades their whole social life, all show that we are dealing with something that goes down to the axiomatic ideas and values that underpin the social structure.

182 611 These ritual institutions, with their common pattern of injunction, oath, and determination by descent or quasi-descent, form part of an interlocked system of religious values that springs directly out of the social structure. Their common focus is the notion of dependence on the ancestors determined by the fact of descent. But it is not descent in its physiological sense that they refer to. They symbolize the fact that descent, to the Tallensi, axiomatically creates bonds of moral and ritual interdependence and obligation. It is because, as we have previously seen, Tallensi tend to read into all ritual relations, whatever their derivation, corresponding genealogical relationships; because the relations of mutual amity and co-operation, even though only in a limited sphere of conduct, imposed by ritual ties are of the same type as those imposed by ties of kinship; because all the rights and duties determined by descent are kept in force by the sanction of the ancestor spirits, that the values appropriate to the sphere of kinship and descent merge with those expressed in religious cult and doctrine. There is a syncretism in the Tale system of ideas and values that images their syncretic social structure. Lineage system and ancestor cult interfuse and at the same time mirror each other.

613 Our analysis can be carried farther if we consider what lineage membership means. It is created by the bare physiological fact of patrilineal descent. But the physiological links between the individual and his ancestors and between all the living members of the lineage have no social significance except as the kernel of the social relations and bonds that come out in economic affairs such as the ownership and use of land; in the exercise of moral and jural rights and duties, as in marriage or parenthood; in ritual belief and practice, as in the ancestor cult. This is the stuff of individual and collective life for the native wherever—and this applies to almost everything he does—the fact of descent is relevant. Membership of his lineage, or his clan, or of a religious community means, to the individual, a particular collection of people taken severally in some situations, collectively in others, with whom he has certain kinds of known and regular social relations reflecting their common interests, and based on the continuity and integrity of the group; and he submits to a number of restraints on word and deed in order to maintain his relations with them. A man experiences this in a multitude of particular actions and events, day after day.

As a member of a particular lineage a man has definite rights and duties and enters into a stream of social relations from which all who do not

belong to that agnatic line are excluded. It is a fact that marks him off from a great many people who come into his range of contact. It determines, for example, whom he may or may not marry, what social roles he may or may not exercise, who will support him in his troubles, where he will make his farms, and especially which named ancestors ritually accessible at certain definite, material shrines govern his life. Of course lineage membership, as we know, isolates only the central area of a person's field of social relations, as this is determined by his birth. Lineage membership, clan membership, and membership of the wider [61] community of the Hill Talis, or of a *Bɔɣar* congregation, are all primarily determined by the fact of birth; and the social relations by which one zone is distinguished from the next in the total field all belong to the same category.

All the members of the lineage are equally members of it, irrespective of age, sex, or status. The social bonds that define the limits of the lineage and mark its social identity for its members are equally binding on all its members. They all share the sentiments engendered by membership of the lineage. They all feel themselves to be embraced within its corporate unity. These are matters of everyday practical experience. But behind them lies the deep sense of the continuity of the agnatic line. This takes the form, in the individual, of a great pride in his ancestry and a strong feeling of identification with the other members of the lineage and with the lineage as a unit in their common dependence on their ancestors.

At their simplest, the totemic and funeral taboos of the Talis are symbolic expressions of the irrevocable and supremely important fact of lineage membership. But if that were all, they might not have taken a ritual form. Among the Talis we can see more plainly than among the Namoos why these symbols of the social identity conferred on individuals and groups by agnatic descent take the form of ritual observances.

Agnatic descent, as we have pointed out, automatically puts one under moral bonds to certain other people. There is no choice about membership of one's lineage. And there can be no questioning or choosing in the matter of the basic norms of lineage relations. One has rights and duties towards one's co-members of the lineage, amity for them, interest in them, common concerns with them, simply and solely because they are of the same agnatic line. Lineage norms are absolutely binding, and the sanction for this is the common ritual dependence of all the members on their ancestors. This is crystallized in the cult of the lineage *bɔɣar*, the thing in which the spiritual jurisdiction of the ancestors over all the lineage members is made tangible and accessible to human thought and action. The lineage as a social entity is founded on moral and ritual imperatives. This is how the natives feel it: we need not here concern ourselves with possible scientific explanations of this fact. What matters is that this sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage relations, explicitly brought out as it is in the cult of the ancestors, is also diffused through all the relations of lineage members. The function of totemic taboos is to crystallize in a clear-cut, concrete, external object of no intrinsic significance this diffused sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage bonds. The taboos are simple and definite

613 imperatives symbolizing those other more fundamental imperatives. The very fact that they are trivial in themselves and can be easily remembered and kept without hardship by young and old make them the more effective as social symbols.[1] The natives, of course, cannot formulate such an explanation of their totemic taboos. It can only be inferred from their attitudes and actions just as we infer from our economic actions and attitudes that coins and notes are the symbols of goods and services.

Totemic taboos, it must be remembered, are not the only ritual observances through the medium of which the Talis mark the fact of lineage membership. Lineage membership has many facets, as we have seen, and sometimes one facet is uppermost in thought or action, sometimes another. Two of these facets have principally concerned us here. A person's membership of the lineage emerges in its corporate activities as a unit of social structure; common interests and concerns prevail and the individual counts only as a component of the group. It is as a corporate unit that the lineage has its ritual focus in the lineage *bɔyar*. Though each member stands under the governance of the *bɔyar*, he cannot approach it except through the lineage head and in association with representatives of every branch of the lineage. On the other hand, every member of the lineage carries his lineage membership about with him, as it were, even on his private occasions; it is an abiding attribute of his social personality. We see this most plainly in the case of a woman member who is debarred by her sex from sharing completely in the corporate unity of the lineage. Yet she retains her membership of it all her life as a birthright.

It is this aspect of his lineage membership that is symbolically projected in the totemic taboos for the individual himself. They are to him a sign of his lineage membership and all that it means, a constant reminder of his moral bonds with his fellow members and his ancestors. Through them he expresses his pride in his ancestry and the deep value he attaches to the body of custom bequeathed to him and his fellows by his ancestors.

We can see, now, how the totemic equivalence of distinctive funeral customs comes about. Everything symbolized by totemic avoidances comes ultimately from the fact of birth, as a gift from one's father. On his death he goes to join the ancestors. The rites that transform him into an ancestor spirit express recognition of his role as transmitter of the unique agnatic line, and of the ritual sanctions he represents for the correct conduct of his son as a member of the lineage.

613
x618 But membership of the lineage by birth makes one also a member of the clan. And this entails obligatory social relations with members of

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[1] The connotation given to the word *symbol* in this argument will strike the reader as a cross between Freudian usage and Durkheimian usage. We mean by it (*a*) a complex of a material object, together with the ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and conventional actions associated with it, which (*b*) has no self-evident utilitarian or logical significance to the observer or even to the natives but (*c*) can be understood as explained in the text above. The point of importance for us is that the symbol carries a strong emotional charge and has the value of a direct moral imperative. If this were lacking we should have preferred to call Tale totems emblems or distinguishing devices.

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618x
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is
through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social
order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔɣar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618x
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the
Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔɣar*.

The External *Bɔɣar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔɣar*, parallel to 618x
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and 778
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794
each External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of
maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Taləŋ (*u pana baŋ Taləŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Taləŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔɣar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔɣar*, and often invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔɣar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

769 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most
778 solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order be-
881 queathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of
794 the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm
881 *kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when
627 he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial)
881 fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with
771 the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

182 771 to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line.

182 One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' with the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔyar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔyar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔyar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔyar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔyar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔyar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔyar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔyar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔyar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest.

794 611 It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔyar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔyar* is the pivot.

182 184 In sum, then, the totem stands for the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage, the External *Bɔyar* for the interdependence of lineages in a single religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔyar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have

184 182 extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more distinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

619 It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Talɔŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tɛndaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔyar* cult, which extends as far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

182 771 But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos, funeral rites, and *Bɔyar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

784 171 The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

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[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134–5.

speak only of the Voltaic area, the animal species referred to above occur 171
among the totemic avoidances of people as remote from the Tallensi, 784
both spatially and linguistically, as the Isala and the Lobi,[1] as well as
among all the other 'tribes' of the area.

Confining ourselves to Taleland and to the settlements of Gɔrisi 171
fringing this area, we find that the totemic avoidances include birds like 784
the canary (*wurəg*), the turtle-dove (*daŋman*), the domestic fowl (*noo*), and 136
several other species; reptiles, like the snake, the tortoise, the water- 262
tortoise, and the crocodile; fish, like the *tunəg*; insects, like the large grasshopper
(*saŋkaan*); rodents, like the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) and the hare (*suoŋ*);
ruminants, like the goat (*buu*) and the sheep (*pɛhug*); carnivores, such as
the cat (*sakoo*), the dog (*baa*), and the leopard (*yeogbaa*); and a variety of
other animals, such as the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*) and the bush-pig (*dee*).[2]

It is impossible to find any common trait amongst this variety of 171
creatures. Some play an important part in the economic life and the 784
food-supply of the natives, but the majority are negligible in this respect.
Many are prized as delicacies by those who are permitted to eat them; 231
and, on the other hand, some are despised as food. No adult would 262
willingly eat grasshoppers, canaries, or small edible snakes, though little
children, who eat almost any small animals they can lay their hands on,
quite often do so. Several of these animal species are regarded as always
potentially dangerous in the magical as well as the physical sense. Such
are the crocodile, snakes, the leopard, and other wild carnivores. But
many, on the contrary, are entirely innocent both in the magical and the
physical sense. Some have a place in the meagre folk-lore of the Tallensi,
including such diverse creatures as the monkey, the turtle-dove, and the
cat. Cats, for instance, are considered to be pre-eminently the domestic
companions of women, but with a streak of the wild animal in them.
Women treat them with a mixture of solicitude, appropriate to a valued
pet, and of pseudo-ritual respect that meets with good-humoured ridicule
from the men. Incidentally, clans that have the cat as a totem show no
particular respect towards household cats, nor are household dogs treated
differently by people who may and people who may not eat the dog.

The totemic animals of the Tallensi thus comprise neither a zoological 171
nor a utilitarian nor a magical class. All that can be said of them is that 784

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[1] For the Isala and other 'tribes' of the Voltaic area, see Rattray, op. cit. 182
His report on the Isala is in vol. ii, pp. 465 ff. For the Lobi, see ib., vol. ii,
pp. 425 ff., and Labouret, op. cit., pp. 227 ff. Rattray does not distinguish clearly between the different kinds of ritual prohibitions and injunctions coupled with patrilineal descent, some of which are not totemic in the sense we have given to this term. But his observations and those of Labouret confirm the conclusion that there is no precise correlation between these avoidances and clanship ties. Labouret's account of the attitudes and values associated with totemic avoidances among the Lobi shows them to resemble closely those of the Tallensi.

[2] Rattray's list for this area, op. cit., vol. i, p. 236, includes also several big-game animals, such as the roan (*keo*), hartebeest (*sɛbəg*), bush-cow (*yeognaaf*), and elephant (*wɔbəg*), as well as the lion (*gbiaŋmər*), the hyena (*gbiŋgbɛr*), and the hippo (*ɛmər*). But here, as elsewhere in the book, Rattray appears to have lumped together ritual observances that are similar in form though not in function, and he does not state clearly what clans or settlements hold particular taboos.

171 they are generally fairly common domestic or wild creatures. We have
784 shown that the totemic avoidances of the Tallensi have a symbolic value
182 in relation to their social organization. They are not, however, explicable simply as a function of the social structure. We cannot dismiss the choice of animal symbolism for this function as an accident of history or as mere coincidence. To understand it we should have to probe more deeply into the religious beliefs not only of the Tallensi but of all the peoples of this culture area. Animal and food taboos play a very important part in the ritual symbolism of Voltaic culture and indeed of West African cultures in general. We have repeatedly emphasized the intrinsic relation of the religious system of the Tallensi to their social structure. In a social system such as theirs, ritual ideas and values and the morphology of the society are interrelated as mind and body in the higher primates. But these two aspects of Tale society are not merely the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Though Tale religion springs directly out of the social structure, it is fed by streams whose sources lie beneath and beyond the social structure. We cannot pursue this theme here in detail, for it leads to problems of Tale psychology, and indeed of human psychology, that lie outside the scope of this study. We can only give an indication of the line such an enquiry would take. To do this we must consider some other forms of animal symbolism that appear in Tale religious beliefs.

Taboos of the Earth

778 Animals of all kinds can be endowed with ritual significance for individuals or groups among the Tallensi. They become sacred objects (*baya*, sing. *bayər*) forming part of shrines (*baya*, sing. *bayər*) dedicated to named ancestor spirits, on which sacrifices are offered. A *bayər* animal is an individual animal or a species found in a particular place. Totem animals are not *baya*, since they are whole species respected everywhere and not associated with particular shrines.

784 Certain 'taboos of the Earth' (*tɛŋən kiha*) form a class of animal taboos
171 standing between *baya* in the narrow sense and totems. Some Earth taboos are universal. Thus, throughout the Voltaic region it is a taboo to appropriate any unclaimed object of iron found lying on the ground. Other Earth taboos are specific to localities coming under the ritual jurisdiction of particular clans or lineages. All over Taleland large reptiles such as the crocodile (*baŋ*), the python (*wayakpɛm*), the tree- and water-lizards (*uuk* and *wuu*) are taboos of the Earth. They may not be killed within the precincts of any important Earth shrine. In the bush, where men have no social bonds with the land, and therefore no ritual bonds with the Earth at specific places, they are not sacred. Binding on everybody, these taboos hold with extra force for members of lineages that have tendaanas (see also pp. 187–8 below).

784 Tallensi say these animals are 'the people of the Earth (*tɛŋən nirəba*)'
778 as men are people of such and such a settlement. They symbolize the mystical power of the Earth as it acts on human life, sometimes beneficently, sometimes punitively. This is what the natives mean when they say 'The Earth is a living thing (*tɛŋ la a bonvor*)'.

This mystical power is focused for a particular social group in the Earth 778 shrines of their own settlement—that is why the Earth animals are not 183 sacred in the bush. And the ritual efficacy of the Earth at a particular place depends on its connexion with a particular social group holding the office of tendaana for that place. The animals therefore symbolize the moral relations of men, as these are determined by their social ties with particular tracts of the earth. They symbolize the function of locality in Tale social organization.

One logical element in this symbolism is obvious. The mystical 'livingness' of the Earth is symbolized in the living creatures it harbours. But this is not all, for otherwise other earth-dwelling creatures might have been selected as well.

The special relationship of the sacred Earth animals with the clan 778 holding the tendaanaship for the area is focused in one species, as a rule. 184 Thus the python is specially sacred at Gbizug, the crocodile at Zubiuŋ. To kill one of these animals at home is almost as bad as murder. For they are more than Earth taboos; they are 'ancestors' (*yaab*, pl. *yaanam*) to the group concerned. If found dead in the settlement, they are given a token funeral. The sacred crocodiles living in the Zubiuŋ water-hole are treated with an almost human familiarity. 'They are our ancestors, they would not injure us', the people say. In some clans carnivores like the leopard or the lion have this function, but are not considered Earth taboos. The natives say that their ancestors who have held politico-ritual office 'rise up again (*ihigərəme*)' after death as these animals. Tallensi deny that this is a belief in reincarnation or in the transmigration of souls. These taboos have attributes of totems, of Earth taboos, and of personal ancestor symbols; and the common thread is the notion of the ancestors as a living mystical force, symbolized in living creatures. The animals symbolize the immortality of the ancestors, that is, their efficacy and power in the life of their descendants. The ancestors are where their descendants are. One reason why the lineage is tied to its locality is because the ancestors are tied to it. They are spiritually present in the social life of their descendants in the same way as the sacred animals are present in sacred pools or in the locality with which the group is identified.

Functional Differentiation and its Symbolism

An important inference emerges from our argument. Lineage and 182 locality are interwoven and interdependent factors of Tale social structure. But they are functionally discrete factors. We have previously seen how their interdependence is reflected in Tale religious ideology. We see now that their functional discreteness within the pattern of interdependence is also expressed in ritual symbols. The formally similar and associated but functionally distinct symbols we have discussed bring this out.

Tale society is highly homogeneous and integrated. But this is a [181] resultant of the balanced interplay of a number of functionally discrete 182 factors and of the inter-articulation of many clearly defined social units. Tale religion gives ritual expression and sanction to these principles.

182 Every functionally differentiated aspect of the social life carries specific norms of conduct. It implies specific social obligations, jural rights, and, very often, economic relationships. It usually has a morphological correlate, as offices are vested in particular lineages, localities are associated with lineages, and social roles are transmitted by descent or determined by kinship. Hence every functionally differentiated aspect of social life tends to be subject to specific ritual sanctions within the general frame of the ancestor cult and to be identified by particular ritual symbols. In terms of the individual's place in the social system, this means that Tale religious ideology recognizes the fact that a man's social personality is compounded of many roles corresponding to the different functional aspects of social life in which he takes part. But this multiplicity of social roles does not obliterate the individual. Though he is a microcosm of his society he is always, also, uniquely himself. At times this is the prime determinant of his behaviour, at others a particular social role or membership of a corporate group is decisive. Totemic and other ritual symbols are the ideological landmarks that keep the individual on his course.

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182 We see this very well in the case of a chief or other politico-ritual functionary. The man himself with his personal qualities, his career, his good or ill fortune is one thing. He also belongs to his lineage, and is subject to the code of lineage rights and duties. His title to his office rests on this. Then he is also a chief, with the special ritual and secular privileges and responsibilities of his office. Each facet of his social personality corresponds to a different functional aspect of social life—the aspect of private relationships, of lineage membership, of politico-ritual office representing common or corporate interests. Each aspect has its ritual imprimatur, made explicit largely in the form of symbolic actions or taboos, especially animal taboos. Chiefs, for instance, may not eat the bush-pig (*dee*) and the dog (*baa*); the natives say that is because they are scavengers and therefore unclean in both the physical and the mystical sense.

182 The use of ritual symbolism in this context is not fortuitous. It reflects the supremacy of the ancestors as the sanction of the social order. Men cannot visualize their ancestors, but they experience their intervention in human affairs; and this gives a clue to the importance of animal symbolism in Tale religion.

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776 As a member of a corporate group, a man comes under the spiritual jurisdiction of the common ancestors of the group, focused in the lineage *bɔyar*. This relationship is symbolized, *inter alia*, by his totemic taboos. As a unique individual his immediate ancestors have most relevance for him. The pattern of his life is broadly the same as that of his contemporaries. But particular events such as an illness, or the birth of a child, have a personal significance in his own biography. The Tallensi sum this up in the notion of Personal Destiny (*Yin*). Certain ancestors of his become a man's *Yin*. They are revealed to him gradually in the course of years. The process begins with some stroke of good or, more usually, ill fortune that singles him out. He builds a shrine to his *Yin* ancestors in which are incorporated material symbols of the occasions on which they were revealed to him. And animals play a big part in these

symbols. It may be a domestic animal peculiarly associated with the man 182
because he reared it. But far more significance is attached to a bush 776
animal killed in the hunt, or an aquatic animal caught in a fish drive. Encountering such an animal is a matter of luck. Overcoming it demands skill and has an element of danger; and this singles out the successful hunter or fisherman from his fellows. It is a sign of the intervention of his *Yin* ancestors in his life and the animal is an obvious choice as a symbol for them. It should be stressed that the question of economic value does not come in at all. Bush and aquatic animals have very little economic value. It is as symbols of personal achievement and luck that they have meaning.

But what is the common psychological theme in these different categories of animal symbolism? The relations between men and their ancestors among the Tallensi are a never-ceasing struggle. Men try to coerce and placate their ancestors by means of sacrifices. But the ancestors are unpredictable. It is their power to injure and their sudden attacks on routine well-being that make men aware of them rather than their beneficent guardianship. It is by aggressive intervention in human affairs that they safeguard the social order. Do what they will, men can never control the ancestors. Like the animals of the bush and the river, they are restless, elusive, ubiquitous, unpredictable, aggressive. The relations of men with animals in the world of common-sense experience are an apt symbolism of the relations of men with their ancestors in the sphere of mystical causation.

It is an interesting point that the commonest and most widely respected 182
totem or quasi-totem animals are what Tallensi call 'teeth-bearers' 613
(*nyindem*)—reptiles and carnivores, whose weapons are their teeth and who live and defend themselves by attacking other animals or even men. The symbolical link with the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors is patent.[1] This is, no doubt, the chief reason why other species of earth-dwelling animals are not selected as Earth taboos.

To sum up, animals are peculiarly apt symbols for the livingness—the immortality—of the ancestors as this emerges in the various functionally differentiated aspects of the social life. They symbolize, in particular, the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors as the supreme sanction of Tale cultural values. They serve to crystallize in simple, concrete, unequivocal imperatives and images the notion of the binding force of the moral code which is not clearly apparent in the diffused and particularized imperatives that make up the day-to-day experience of it. Different animal symbols stand for different aspects of the moral code, but they all form a connected series corresponding to the unitary basis of that code and the all-embracing sanctions of the ancestor cult. The principles of right and wrong, of duty and justice, of what is permissible and what is prohibited in social life fall into a consistent scheme among the Tallensi. And as the existence of the society depends on the maintenance of this code, its ultimate sanctions are necessarily of mystical form.

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[1] Teeth are a common symbol of aggression among many peoples. The association is familiar to psychologists. We have it ourselves—witness our expression 'to show one's teeth'.

ООИ This digression on the significance of animal symbolism has been necessary in order to put Tale totemism and related ritual ideas into the perspective of the social structure as a whole. We have, however, only touched the fringe of a vast subject in Tale social life. Even the material used here would lend itself to deeper analysis. A psychoanalytic interpretation (which I am not competent to undertake) would shed interesting light on the structure of the moral conscience among the Tallensi.

CHAPTER IX

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE CLAN ORGANIZATION

The Concept of a Clanswoman

WE have occasionally referred to the role of women in the clan organization of the Tallensi, but this subject deserves further consideration. 562 618x In a certain sense women illustrate the principle of the corporate unity and identity of lineage and clan more strikingly than men. On [591] marriage women leave their paternal settlements to reside with their husbands. They never, however, lose their status as members of their own patrilineal lineage and clan. It is true that they have not the same jural rights and duties as their clan brothers and cannot exercise a responsible role in lineage or clan ritual; for, as we shall see in the second part of this study,[1] a woman is a minor in jural and ritual matters. Nevertheless, women are subject to the critical norms of clanship in the same way as men. They are bound by the same rules of exogamy as the men, and by the same ritual observances that distinguish maximal lineage from maximal lineage or clan from clan. They also have certain privileges as members of their patrilineal descent group. We deal with these points in outline here. The details will come more appropriately in our next volume.

The term *pɔɣayabələg* sums up the status of a woman as a member of her patrilineal maximal lineage and clan. It can best be translated as 'woman of the clan'; and it refers to a woman of the clan or maximal lineage whether she is residing at her father's house or living with her husband. *Pɔɣayabələg* denotes the general status of clanswoman irrespective of what segment of the clan she may belong to. At all funeral ceremonies, for instance, certain duties and tasks both of a ritual and non-ritual kind fall on *pɔɣayabəlis*. Some of these tasks, such as the gathering of firewood, are usually performed by young unmarried *pɔɣayabəlis*. The girls who volunteer for these tasks are treated as a single group, irrespective of what segment of the clan they belong to. Other tasks and ritual duties that have to be carried out by clanswomen fall upon older women, usually married women who return home specially for the funeral. Any woman of the clan who is qualified by her knowledge and seniority can perform these duties. If a married woman living with her husband is asked where she comes from, she always replies: 'I am a *pɔɣayabələg* of such-and-such a clan.'

It is a maxim that all *pɔɣayabəlis* are equal to one another in relation to their natal clan. 'No one owns a *pɔɣayabələg*, we all own her (*sɔ pu so pɔɣayabələg, ti waabi nso ka*)', is the native formula. The implication is that the clan as a whole is the primary unit claiming the allegiance of a

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[1] Forthcoming shortly under the title of *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

562 *pɔɣayabələg*, particularly of one who is living at her husband's house. x618 To be sure, her kinship ties with her own family and with the segment of the maximal lineage to which her father belongs are not severed; indeed, a woman's relations with her paternal clan are largely regulated and mediated by these ties. The concept of *pɔɣayabələg* implicitly stresses the fact that it is a woman's fate to be married out of the clan and to be cut off from its routine corporate activity; and it contains the idea that a woman thus separated from her parental home is felt to belong primarily to the widest corporate unit that stands in contraposition to her husband's, where his relations with her are concerned.

Thus outside the range of the lineage segment in which generation differences are recognized, a *pɔɣayabələg* is referred to as 'our sister (*ti tau*)' by any of her clansmen, and she speaks of them as *ntap*, 'my brothers'. A man visiting the settlement of another clan makes himself at home in the rooms of any *pɔɣayabələg* of his clan. When the cow-peas are ripening, a *pɔɣayabələg* visiting her clan settlement—her 'father's house' (*ba yiri*), as it is described by extension of the concept of the father's house or lineage in the narrowest sense—may pluck cow-pea leaves (*bɛŋət*) for herself anywhere in the settlement. A Yamələg or Sie *pɔɣayabələg* can do this at Tongo, for instance, if she is merely passing [578] through on her way elsewhere. No one would resent it; but if the wife of a member of a segment of the clan other than his own were to pluck a man's cow-pea leaves without his express permission, it would lead to a quarrel. Similarly, it is customary for women to come and collect a basket of grain from the men of their parental family after the harvest. A *pɔɣayabələg*, however, is permitted to ask any of her clansmen for a gift of this kind. Thus it sometimes happens that a Yamələg or Sie woman married to a man at Yinduuri comes to a clansman at Tongo after the harvest for a gift of grain, or a Tongo woman married to a man at Datɔk or Duusi calls on a clansman at Sie for such a gift. As these examples indicate, a *pɔɣayabələg* of a linked maximal lineage counts as a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan.

562 764 When a woman's funeral is celebrated by her husband's people the last act is 'to send her home (*kulh*)' to her father's house. For this ceremony a large party of men and women in their gayest clothes, led by the nearest agnates of the dead woman and escorted by drummers and musicians, sets out for her husband's settlement to 'receive her funeral (*die koor*)'. When such a party is being assembled, messages are sent to the heads of all the constituent lineages of the clan, and representatives are generally sent from all the lineages to accompany the party. It is partly a matter of duty, and partly an act of courtesy and a voluntary demonstration of clan solidarity. Sometimes young people of linked lineages join the party, knowing that it will be lavishly entertained by the affinal clan and that there will be dancing and girls to flirt with. Fetching the funeral of a *pɔɣayabələg* is an affair of the whole clan.

562 613 The *pɔɣayabələg* has a formal status in the lineage and clan, and this status is recognized as an intrinsic element in the structure of the lineage and clan. The fiction behind this is the idea often explicitly stated by the natives that but for an accident of birth she might have been a man

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562
of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613
relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔyayabəlis*, deprived by
an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan.
This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784]
pɔyayabələg of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the
homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own
brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage
ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there
simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives,
of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with
Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔyayabələg* might,
in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident
of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied
as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the
lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic
rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For
these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously
represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal
descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔyayabələg* as 562
an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854
example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some
months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be
ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔyayabələg* of the clan. Usually
she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to
carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787]
will be a suitable *pɔyayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the
ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the
clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a
pɔyayabələg is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with
the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's
mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the
house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task;
it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being.
Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and
mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's
patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔyayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔyar* is significant in 562
this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793
shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769
case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral
male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian
of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status
of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a
consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔyayabəlis* have the right to take part

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔɣar*, the married *pɔɣayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior *pɔɣayabələg*, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔɣayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔɣayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔɣar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his successor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
[787] invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔɣayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination. Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔɣar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔɣar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal 604
nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their 618x
cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four 587.
generations back.

Though the *pɔɣayabəlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a 764
single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are 571
often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of 562
the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔɣayabəlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member
of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and [252]
food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔɣayabəlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubɛnib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔɣayabəlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubɛnib* (from *dug*, room, and *bɛ*, to stay or be) because they are identified with the *dugdɛm*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubɛnib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubɛnib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gɔre woman married to a Tɛnzugu man requires the help of *dubɛnib*, she calls upon all the other Gɔre wives, of whom there are very few, of Tɛnzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Gɔreland

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔɣayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔɣayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔɣayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔɣayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
A *pɔɣayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacri-
562 fices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[292] to join. A *pɔɣayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔɣayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*daɣat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

x618 Lastly, a married *pɔɣayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔɣasama* —a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔɣayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious
in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

means of which the lineage acquires wives. But what is more important, 613
the women carry the descent of the clan into other clans, and thus build 562
up that network of interclan kinship ties which breaks down the rigid 602
exclusiveness of the lineage and clan, interweaves clan with clan, and is one of the factors that restrain strife between clans and prevent Tale society from splitting into anarchic fragments. Since the tie of descent is indestructible, women members of the lineage and clan have definite rights and duties in all those practical and ritual institutions which bring out most precisely the solidarity and corporate identity of the lineage through the passage of time and the mutability of generations.

CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A SETTLEMENT

Introduction

621 A TALE settlement is a miniature of the whole society, and reveals all the basic principles of the social structure. No two settlements are identical in topography, shape, size, or social composition; but all have the same social form, based on the same principles. Yet it is no easy task to describe a settlement as the natives see it. It cannot be isolated from neighbouring units of the same kind by inspection; for though it is locally fixed it is not territorially circumscribed. Its structure is unintelligible without reference to the lineage system, but ecological exigencies and political and ritual ties and cleavages play an important part in it as well.

361 221 The anatomy of a settlement appears in fullest relief during the dry season. Then the homesteads stand out starkly against the dun background of bare earth or the glare of rocks and boulders piled up in red-grey masses in the hilly areas. The foot-paths winding between the homesteads scar the land as if etched into it by generations of feet. Every shade tree in front of a homestead is an inviting landmark. Sacred groves, looking temptingly cool when the sun is high, are unmistakable. The water-holes, pits, and ditches, flooded beyond recognition in the latter part of the rainy season, can easily be distinguished. The boundaries of farm-plots, overgrown with crops and weeds during the rains, are now clearly visible. The landscape is a map of the social relations of the people. This is the season, too, when life goes on largely in the open. There is leisure for gossip and conversation; for paying visits, strolling in the market, going a-courting, making long journeys, dancing in the moonlight; for hunting and fishing drives; there is time also, and the necessary supplies, for the performance of funeral ceremonies and other ritual activities. It is in such events that the structure of Tale society is most vividly actualized.

Types of Settlement and Distribution of Population

361 Two main types of settlements are found: those of ancient habitation (*tɛŋkɔrəg*, old country), covering all the centre of the country, especially on and around the Tong Hills, and including the majority of the Tallensi; and those of recent foundation (*tɛŋpaaləg*, new country), towards the periphery of this area. Though the basic plan is the same, the principles on which a settlement is built operate with different emphasis in each type.

361 621 Neither territorial extent nor density of aggregation affects the basic plan of a settlement. The range of variation is very great. Moreover, processes of expansion and contraction continuously alter the extent of a settlement. Thus, Yaməlǝg and Tongo are ancient settlements of the same general structure, though the latter is four or five times the size of

the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, 361
is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 621
600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of
Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it
takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one 361
part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north 161
side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain
stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse
population.[1]

Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During 361
the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for 132
cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live 166
there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always
cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view 361
of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and
studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are [342]
identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil
itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settle- 361
ments, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements 161
nearer to the periphery. I cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 [162]
(*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwəlɔg (Kpɔlag), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Volta—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due
to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta
161 plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Talәŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*bulәg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*kolәg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

pression liable to flooding in the rainy season. The people of the Tong 361
Hills consider themselves to be particularly fortunate in this respect. 133
Their homesteads stretch densely across the slopes of the hills, and amid the great boulders and rocky piles of the summit. Singing the praises of their tiny fastness, they contrast it with the plain, where one is always ankle-deep in mud and slush during the rains and scorched by the sun in the dry season. On the hills, they say, a sheltered nook can always be found among the rocks, shady when the sun is most cruel, dry in the severest storm, where the children can play or the grown-ups sit and talk.

The Stability and Continuity of a Settlement

Stability and continuity are essential characteristics of a settlement. 621
They are implied in the native concept of a *tɛŋ* (settlement) as both a 361
definite locality and a fixed community. The ancient settlements have attained a very high degree of stability and continuity. The peripheral settlements are rapidly ceasing to be mere economic apanages to the older centres of habitation, and are taking on the form of permanent and stable units. Being still in process of organization, their structure is fluid compared with that of the ancient settlements, and the dynamic factors of Tale social structure sometimes appear more conspicuously in them than in the latter.

But the older settlements are by no means static. The bounds, the layout, and the internal constitution of a settlement alter continuously, if very slowly. Even in a single year one can see how processes of expansion and contraction, of segmentation and incorporation, are at work all the time. Whenever land changes hands by inheritance, or an office passes by succession, or a man achieves economic independence, a minor reshuffle in the collocation of homesteads takes place. The cumulative effects of these processes of slow but progressive readjustment are clearly exhibited in the contemporary structure of a settlement. They are documented in its constitution and layout, in the location of ancestral graves, the ownership of farm plots, and in ceremonial and political relations. Fixity of location and of the structural plan ensure the stability and continuity of a Tale settlement.

Topographical Distinctions and the Natives' Knowledge of Natural History

Precise local orientation is essential in the economic activities and 823
social relations of the Tallensi. Place-names are often derived from 103
prominent topographical or geographical features. Thus, Tɛnzugu means the head (*zug*) or highest part of the country (*tɛŋ*), Yayazuor means 'perched on a hill', and many other place-names are popularly believed to be corruptions of topographical or spatial metaphors. Within a settlement topographical variations are distinguished by terms like *tɛŋr*, the lower part (the locative of *tɛŋ*, here in the sense of 'ground'), and *saazugu*, the higher part (lit. head-high, or high up). Conspicuous patches of low-lying land, hillocks, rock piles, ditches, water-holes, streams, &c., are named, and are very often sacred spots. The name may indicate peculiar qualities of the soil, prominent trees, or other landmarks formerly or still

823 found at that spot. Thus, Sielug is an uninhabited part of Zubiuŋ, where
103 clay (*siela*) is abundant near the surface, making it unsuitable for cultivation and therefore a favourite pasture. Nayabεraabo'og ('cattle-poison-
[824] grass valley'), the tract of low-lying land renowned as the traditional
battle-field of Tongo and Ba'ari, appears to be named after a kind of grass believed to be noxious to cattle. Other such names have a legendary flavour, but the Tallensi, with their characteristic realism, have no myths or legends to account for them. Locality names of this kind are Kumpeyalɔyat ('Death carries quivers') and Kurbɔk ('Stooping ditch'). Sacred groves (*tɔŋgbana*) often serve as landmarks to identify a locality; e.g. Dooni (at Doo), means the precincts of that *tɔŋgban*, vaguely defined, as are all such localities, by position and not by definite boundaries.

823 We shall see later how the social structure of a settlement is anchored to a locality. The physical environment is built into the whole edifice of native life. Tale economic pursuits demand an intimate knowledge—unscientific but remarkably efficient at the level of their social organization and technical development—of natural history and topography. Tale leechcraft, on its empirical side, depends on this knowledge; and every prominent and many an inconspicuous feature of the landscape has its meaning and place in native social relations. A great boulder may be the children's playground, or the women's pounding-floor, or a shrine. A hoary baobab tree is not only an amenity and a source of useful products, but also a lineage shrine. A furrow, an outcrop of laterite, or a fringe of grass, may mark the boundary of a farm plot. A shrub, hardly noticeable on the bank of a dry watercourse, is a medicine. In consequence, the natural environment forms a very important aspect of the native's social space. In his own settlement, and especially in his section of the settlement, he knows every rock and tree and almost every tuft of grass, the qualities of the soil, and the ownership of farm plots.

In addition to his own settlement a man usually knows pretty thoroughly the natural environment of neighbouring settlements with which his clan has close social bonds and, more superficially, that of his mother's natal settlement and of settlements in which close extra-clan kin live. The great majority of men, even the younger men who have been abroad for lengthy periods, are all well versed in the geography, the vegetation, and the fauna of the tracts of bush and river-bank on the borders of Taleland, the economic exploitation of which is indispensable for the subsistence of
[824] the natives. Every dry season many men and boys have to go out to the
nearest bush to cut grass for thatching, rafters for roofing, shafts for their implements, *bayana* (*Bauhinia*, spp.) bark for the rope used in house-building, canes for their bows and reeds for their arrows, tree-stumps for their shrines, and many medicinal roots and leaves. They go hunting in near and distant tracts of bush, so that most adult men are familiar with every hunting bush within a day's march of their settlement; and they go fishing in the pools left in the river-beds during the dry season. Women
[222] are as expert as men in these matters. They take part in the big fishing
drives, comb the fields for edible herbs, seek out deposits of clay for pottery and gravel for beating floors, explore the neighbouring bush for firewood, for reeds to make sleeping mats, for fruits and edible leaves.

In marked contrast is the average person's ignorance of settlements, 823 even near at hand, with which his clan has no close social bonds or with which he has no personal links of kinship or friendship. Tallensi acquire their knowledge of geography and natural history gradually in childhood, by direct experience. It is already well established by the age of 9 or 10, and grows *pari passu* with the expansion of the child's social space. The basis of this is the child's natal settlement, where, except for occasional visits to kinsfolk elsewhere, it spends its entire childhood. But even adults had little liberty of movement in the past, since they could hardly go unmolested in settlements unrelated to theirs by clanship or political ties or where they had no kinsfolk. Most of the older people have never [484] been outside Taleland, and many of them have never, or only rarely, visited some of the settlements within an hour's walk of their own.

A Taləŋ inevitably has a profound emotional attachment to his native 186 settlement. It is striking how many Tale emigrants return home eventually after years of absence, casting aside the flesh-pots of Ashanti or the rich fields of Mampurugu. '*Kpala m-mah*—Here it is pleasant', they say, in spite of the penury of existence; for here are your kith and kin, here is the scene of your childhood joys and sorrows, and above all, the abode of your forefathers. The Taləŋ's empirical knowledge of his habitat is the precipitate in his thought and experience of the economic and structural facts that determine the local fixity of his native settlement. His affective attachment to it finds an institutionalized expression and support in the ancestor cult.

Settlement Boundaries

The hub of Taleland is Tongo (see map on p. 15). This ancient 621 settlement, geographically central and politically nodal in the network of interclan relations, provides a very good model of the structure of a typical Tale settlement.

As we know, the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis live in such close spatial 101 and social propinquity with Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and Zoo that these clans are 621 often spoken of collectively as 'the people of Tongo (Təŋdɛm)'. For precision, Tongo proper is referred to as Təŋ-Nayiri—the Chief's House of Tongo—all over Taleland. Throughout the Mole-Dagbane-speaking region clans which hold a chiefship are thus identified by reference to it. Those which have tɛndaanas are sometimes called Tɛndaaŋ, on the same principle. Thus outsiders distinguish between Sie-Nayiri and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ.

Təŋ-Nayiri, Tongo proper, forms an irregular block of homesteads, 101 somewhat less than three square miles in area and is one of the largest 161 settlements in Taleland. It comprised, in 1934, 192 homesteads and a 621 total population of about 2,400.[1] This does not include Tongo people

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[1] Calculations, based on my own census samples and on figures kindly supplied to me by the A.D.C. Zuarungu, show that in Taleland the average number of people of both sexes and all ages occupying a homestead is 12 to 14. Owing to the variation in the constitution of homesteads this figure must be accepted with reserve; but it is sufficient for a rough estimate of population in a country where accurate statistics do not exist.

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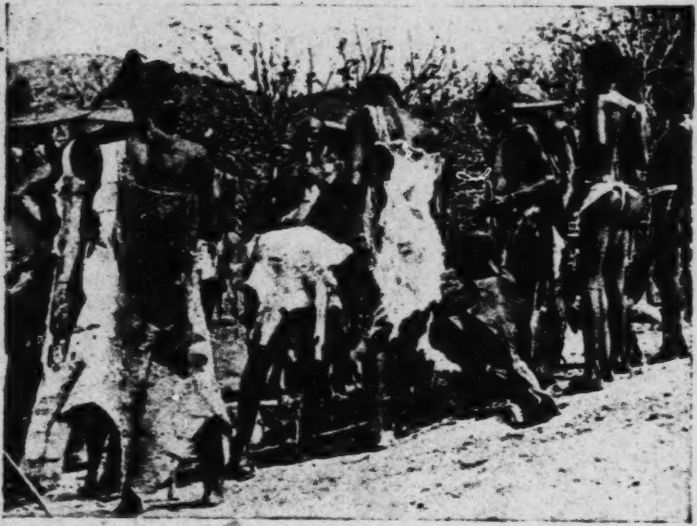

(*a*) The Unity of all the Talis: The chief tɛndaanas of all the Talis settlements assemble to perform the rite of 'blowing the whistles' to inaugurate the Gɔlib Festival.

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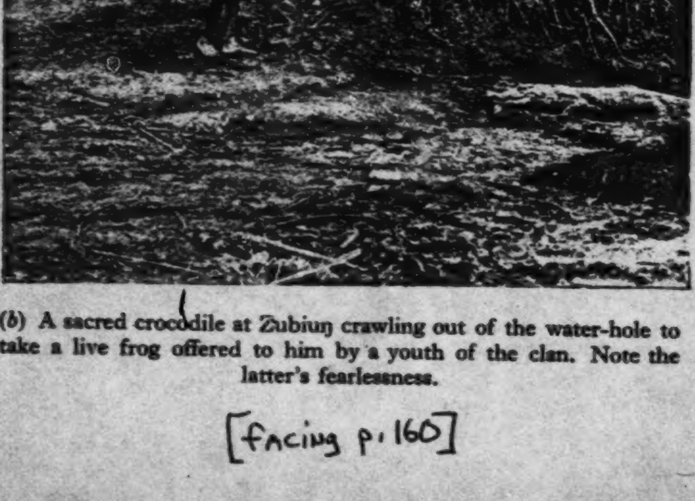

(*b*) A sacred crocodile at Zubiuŋ crawling out of the water-hole to take a live frog offered to him by a youth of the clan. Note the latter's fearlessness.

[facing p. 160]

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living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here
[778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔyar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔyar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field
[608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

PLATE VIII

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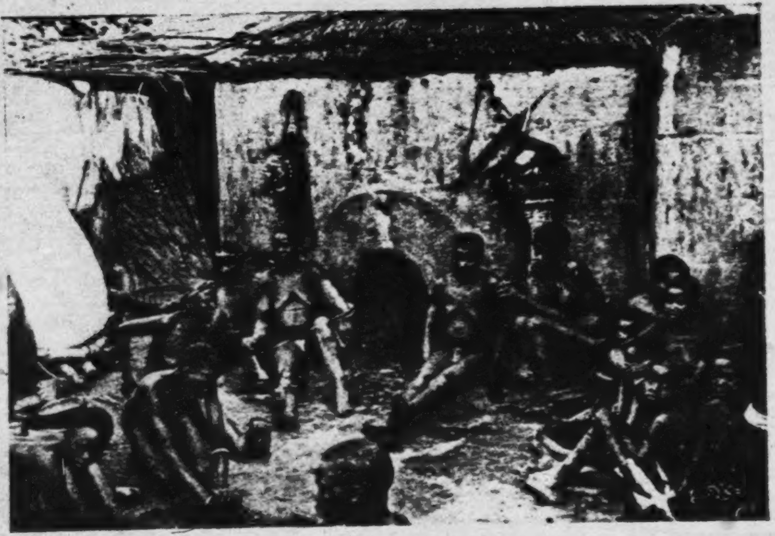

(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔyayabəlis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[Facing p. 161]

618 [608] one another in funerals and similar ceremonial events. These ceremonial reciprocities do not prevail between Tongo or Zoo and any of the Hill Talis clans adjacent to them.

621 184 Nevertheless, a palpable social boundary still prevails between Tongo and Zubiuŋ, but one far less determinate than that between Tongo and its other Talis neighbours. No Zubiuŋ homesteads are so situated as to be surrounded on all sides by Tongo homesteads, and vice versa; there is no indiscriminate mingling of the homesteads of the two clans. Looked at from within, both Zubiuŋ and Tongo are self-contained spatial units within their respective social circumferences. This is correlated with their contrasting totemic observances, clan cults, and politico-ritual offices; their mutual exclusiveness by the canon of agnatic descent and the liberty to intermarry that goes with this; and their consequent divergent jural interests as distinct corporate units; the people of Tongo are Namoos, the Zubiuŋdem Talis. The observer is constantly apprised of this in the attitudes and opinions of individuals, in economic activities, and in jural and ritual events, the very activities and events which reveal the close bonds of the two groups. Tongo people never scrupled to raid their weaker Zubiuŋ neighbours for cattle owed to them, as many old men relate from personal experience. On the other hand, responsible elders and chiefs of Tongo, in those days, disapproved strongly of resort to violent self-help against Zubiuŋ by their people, though they could not always prevent it—an attitude they would never adopt in regard to the other Talis. To-day Tongo and Zubiuŋ people regard one another with a certain amount of suspicion and good-natured superiority, tempered with a tolerance which the former never show towards the other Talis.

621 184 166 A similar, but more elastic, social boundary exists between Tongo and Zoo. There are no Zoo people living inside Tongo, but no less than 11 of the 39 homesteads situated on the land under the ritual jurisdiction of Zoo-Yiraaŋ, within the social circumference of Zoo, are the homes of permanent immigrants from Tongo. The bond of common stock (*buurət*) between these two locally allied and politically associated Namoo clans blurs the cleavages between them. Tongo people find it the more congenial to live amongst Zoo people in considerable numbers because they have the same ritual observances, mortuary and funeral customs, and politico-ritual offices and values. It is mainly cultural differences of this kind that deter them from settling amongst the people of Zubiuŋ.

The one-sided filtration of Tongo people into Zoo, and the absence of the reverse process, are due mainly to the density of habitation—which is so great as to preclude immigration—and the obvious excess of population at Tongo. Zoo people who wish to emigrate, temporarily or permanently, move farther afield, to Gbambee or Biuŋ. In any case, the flow of migration from Tongo to Zoo has apparently reached saturation, for it has now practically stopped. But this movement, though at bottom an ecological readjustment, has been canalized by the social structure; and while it brings out the affinities of Tongo with Zoo, it also emphasizes their separateness. Because they are structurally independent of each other, Tongo people only migrate to Zoo if they have matrilateral kin there who will grant them land to build on and farm. By contrast,

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ,
178 which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us,
and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo.
This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time; but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *teŋ* is not a *teŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the contradiction [578]
between the conception of a defined territorial boundary fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties, ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations. But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tɛnzugu, in particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit subcommunities within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Gɔlibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Administration 578
as headman of Tɛnzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tɛnzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Gɔlibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Gɔlibdaana, crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong, took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

621 comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Degal tɛndaana, the ritual
578 'owner' of the land of Bunkiuk, the Gɔlibdaana's clan. As the head of
423 Bunkiuk and headman of Tɛnzugu, which includes Degal, he held political
authority over all the territory under the ritual jurisdiction of the latter. Hence this strip of territory, as far as the watercourse, belonged to him. The people dwelling there were no concern of his; let them go elsewhere if they wished.

The Yinduurna'aba, a simple and inarticulate old man, who has never mastered the wiles of modern headmanship, protested vehemently. The Gɔlibdaana's arguments were untenable. The ritual jurisdiction of tɛndaanas had nothing to do with the matter. In any case the Zandoya tɛndaana would contest the Degal tɛndaana's claim. Everybody knows that tɛndaanas acknowledge no boundaries. The group in question was a segment of Zandoya. How could they belong to any other political unit than the latter? To talk of their abandoning the land on which their ancestors had dwelt was preposterous. Indeed, the whole situation was something quite unheard of; it could never have occurred before the coming of the white man, when everyone had his acknowledged place in the society. The truth was that the Gɔlibdaana was deliberately trying to entice his people away from him.

There the matter rested. The case was widely discussed and public opinion, except for the Gɔlibdaana's supporters, sided unanimously with the Yinduurna'aba. Five other cases of the same kind came to my notice; and in all of them the verdict of native custom is unequivocal; social affiliation and not alleged territorial boundaries define the extent of a community. Even the new settlements, though they sprawl more widely than the old settlements and are usually surrounded by considerable tracts of uninhabited land, have no defined geographical boundaries. They can and do go on expanding.

The Concept of the Tɛŋ

621 A Tale settlement can only be identified as a unit by reference to the lineage relationships, politico-ritual ties and cleavages, and jural rights and duties, prevailing within it and between it and its neighbours. That is why we have avoided the word 'village', which conjures up the image of a neatly isolated, compact territorial unit. *Tɛŋ* (pl. *tɛs*) is the native concept denoting a settlement; but no English translation can convey its exact sense. In some ways it is reminiscent of the deme of ancient Greece, a coalescence of local association, lineage organization, common religious cult, and political solidarity. None of these factors serves to demarcate a *tɛŋ* absolutely from adjacent *tɛs*; all of them link together neighbouring *tɛs* or parts of *tɛs* as closely in respect of that one category of social relations as they unite segments of the same *tɛŋ*. A settlement is only a relatively autonomous community. One might perhaps define it as the region of maximum overlap of all the categories of social relations found among the Tallensi.

621 Native linguistic usage reflects this, for *tɛŋ* has a width of reference
619 varying with the situation. A man beginning a discourse on marriage
829 with '*ti tɛŋɔ, nyɛn di pɔɣa* . . .—In this our land, if you marry a wife . . .'

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage 621 customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. 619 They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to 829 themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one another. Tɛnzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized; but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on [578] between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*', but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to native custom.

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as 621 a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the Tɛnzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted, is the keel of Tale social organization.

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual 621 significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in 182 the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and 771 its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu sɔyat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character).

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we 621 may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settle- 618x ment name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages 551 whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name of a well-known *tɔŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are called Saniiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her

621 clan from her husband's, e.g. Namooga, the appellation used by Talis for
x618 their Tongo wives. Lastly, it may be a name taken from some politico-
551 ritual office vested in her clan or maximal lineage, e.g. Bɔyaraan, for Sii
women, Tɛndaan-bii for Gbizug women. This shows how, without explicit formulation, the notions of locality, lineage, sacred attributes of the Earth, distinctive customs, and politico-ritual office—the major themes of Tale social and political organization—are linked together in a single ideological configuration.

The Section—Yizug

621 With the exception of the settlements of a few small clans not divided into maximal lineages of independent descent, all clan settlements are further divided into sections. The principles that regulate the structure of the settlement as a whole also determine the structure of its sections and of segments of these sections. This rests on the fact that the different orders of segmentation in the maximal lineage are serially homologous. An old-established settlement is the home of a clan or sub-clan. It is built up on the lineage system. All groupings and alinements that emerge in corporate affairs tend to follow lineage ties and cleavages. Thus, a section is a local subdivision of the *tɛŋ* occupied by a defined segment of the clan or maximal lineage. *Yizug* (pl. *yizugɔt*), the native term here translated by 'section', means literally 'Superior House',[1] and shows that the genealogical criterion predominates in the native definition of a section. Occasionally people speak of a *yizug* or part of a *yizug* as a *faaŋ* (quarter, pl. *fɔna*), using a term more common among the Mamprusi, when they are thinking of it primarily as a residential unit.

In the new settlements, however, the *yizug* [illegible] predominantly a local subdivision. This is due to their genealogical heterogeneity and political immaturity. At Datɔk, for example, one finds Gɔrisi, Tallensi, and Namnam from many different clans, drawn thither by the need for land, and connected with one another not by lineage but by ties of extra-clan kinship and affinity. Moreover, before British rule brought security and gave the titular chief of Datɔk real authority over it, its population was small and largely temporary, and constituted a group of loosely associated neighbours, not a political community. In these circumstances the subdivision of the settlement on strictly local lines is inevitable, the more so as the present-day administrative organization is based on territorial groupings.

Primarily, a *yizug* is a localized lineage segment of a clan settlement. But, characteristically, the Tallensi often extend its reference to denote a whole clan, considered as a member of an interlocking group of adjacent clans that have a greater degree of political solidarity and social cohesion *inter se* than any of them have with other clans. Tɛnzugu, as we have seen, is the outstanding instance of such a community. Tɛnzugu elders often describe the six clans dwelling there as 'our six *yizugɔt*' when they recapitulate stories of fights with Tongo in the days of long ago. It is a phrase constantly heard in the invocations to the ancestor spirits and the Earth when representatives of the various clans gather to perform 621 one of the great annual ceremonies, as their ritual obligations compel them to, even though they are nowadays divided into two hostile camps. For these are the occasions when the essential unity of Tɛnzugu—a unity in relation to which the six clans rank merely as *yizugət*—can rightly be insisted upon, when frank reproaches verging on warnings of spiritual retribution can be directed against the destroyers of this unity.

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[1] *Yir*, 'house', or, in this context, 'lineage', and *zug*, 'head', or by extension, 'superior, supreme'.

Yet in other situations the component maximal lineages of a particular Tɛnzugu clan are referred to as its *yizugət*. Thus, in connexion with their distinct ritual offices in the cult of the External *Bɔyar* or their divergent clanship linkages, the three maximal lineages of Bunkiuk are always described as *yizugət*. For, like the clan in relation to its neighbour clans, the maximal lineage forms a distinct genealogical and residential unity within the clan settlement. Looked at from within, each maximal lineage is a relatively autonomous integral unit, the majority of whose members live close together inside its social boundaries, which are defined in relation to the other lineages of the clan in the same way as those of the clan settlement are defined in relation to neighbouring clans. The difference is one of degree only, the social boundaries of a lineage within a clan being more fluid than those of a clan. The stability of a settlement rests on the equilibrium of its sections with one another, and this depends upon their being precisely differentiated from one another.

The Sections of Tongo

Tongo proper (Tɔŋ-Nayiri) has four *yizugət*—Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and [491] Kuorəg. Two roads, laid down some years ago by the Administration, 621 which intersect almost at right angles where the Resthouse stands (see map at end of book), by chance afford a convenient set of co-ordinates for 101 describing its layout. Puhug occupies most of the south-western quadrant and a corner of the south-eastern quadrant, most of which is Kuorəg. Seug is an irregular block in the north-eastern quadrant. Guŋ is divided: part of it, Guŋ proper, lies across the watercourse to the west of Puhug; but the majority of its members live in the north-western quadrant, in a broad wedge between Zubiuŋ and Gbizug known as Dekpieŋ. A few Guŋ homesteads also lie on the border between Seug and Zoo. Nevertheless, scattered as it is, Guŋ constitutes a single *yizug* in all corporate affairs except those connected with modern administrative demands. In the latter the local criterion prevails, Dekpieŋ having its own headman and the Guŋ homesteads at Seug coming under the supervision of the Seug headman. Members of all four sections live at Zoo and at Gbambee, but they always act with their respective sections in matters of common concern.

The names of these sections are typical of section and settlement names 621 all over the country. Puhug gets its name from an ancient *puhug* or *pusaga* 101 (*Tamarindus Indica*) tree, which is said to have stood at the edge of the 137 sacred dancing-ground in the centre of the section from time immemorial. It died long ago, but old men still remember seeing its stump. Guŋ is called after the silk-cotton tree (*Ceiba Pentandra*; Talni, *guŋ*) so common in the country. Trees of all kinds, and especially those as tall as the

621
101 silk-cotton, are prominent landmarks in a country of monotonous plains;
137 hence settlements and sections often bear the names of species of trees found there.

621
101 Kuorəg was thus named, according to popular etymology, because the Soog Yikpɛmdaana, who holds the ritual jurisdiction over the land on which the homesteads of Kuorəg stand, ritually allocated or 'cut' (*kuo*) the sites for all these homesteads when Tongo men first settled there. In the same way popular etymology explains the name Dekpieŋ ('it is hard') as derived from the hardness (*kpeoŋ*) of the soil in that part of the settlement as compared with that of Puhug or Seug. Seug literally means 'the rainy season', but no one in Tongo was ever able to suggest how this section acquired its name; and this is characteristic of very many settlement and section names in Taleland.

621
173 To the people of Tongo their present residential constellation is the visible deposit, as it were, of the continuous expansion of the sub-clan through many generations within the limits of its geographical environment and social boundaries. They read the spatial disposition of the four sections as a record of their structural evolution, as a map of the contemporary constitution, and as proof of the chronological retrospect of the sub-clan. Mosuor came to settle at Puhug, where his grave still marks the site of his homestead. As his posterity increased in numbers, they began to move outwards in the same way as young men migrate to Zoo, Gbambee, and farther, nowadays, and for the same reason, shortage of farm-land. Thus Guŋ, Kuorəg, and Seug were occupied. Later, the descendants of those who founded Guŋ became too numerous for the land available there, and, prevented from expanding into Wakii by the social barriers between Tongo and that clan, filtered gradually into the area that is now Dekpieŋ. Arguing from what may be observed nowadays, they say that this was largely a process of occupying hitherto vacant land at a time when the population was very small. But it was partly, also, a process of dispossessing and pushing out to their present location the people of Zubiuŋ and of Gbizug, who claim to have lived at Puhug originally. In proof of this they cite their myths of origin, the fact that the dancing-ground in Puhug is sacred because it is the site of Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's homestead, and the ritual jurisdiction exercised over part of the land of Puhug by Gbizug and over the remainder by Zubiuŋ. Indeed, there are Zubiuŋ graves on land now occupied by Dekpieŋ men which are said to date back only three to five generations. This proves that the people of Zubiuŋ were still yielding ground to the Təndɛm, as they themselves admit, when elders alive to-day were 'already born'.

621
577 There is nothing derogatory in such a retreat. On the contrary, Gbizug and Zubiuŋ elders boast of it as additional evidence of the dependence of the people of Tongo on their ritual benevolence and bounty. It is a cardinal rule of Tale ethics that a request for land to build on and farm—especially if it comes from a kinsman, friend, or neighbour—may not be refused if it can be granted without hardship. There was formerly, and there still is to a small extent, land to spare at Gbizug and at Zubiuŋ. Tongo people have innumerable ties of kinship and neighbourhood with Gbizug and Zubiuŋ, which are the more effective on account of the ties

of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. 621
To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet 577
closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by 621
territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one 613
locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. 571
Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another
section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find
it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but
mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of
Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a
section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage
criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits
set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably
stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counterpart
in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a
stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section
is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any
of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been
chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo
section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists
between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and
regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding
moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section,
both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them
and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent [578]
hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections
than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one
another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the 621
territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of 618x
ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point
emphasized by the Yinduurna'ab in the case previously quoted. Tongo
stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies
on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the
Gbizug tɛndaana's ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual
jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpɛmdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly
on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect.
The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*
and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of
neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaana's
clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth
(*tɛŋən kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For
example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is
a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and
youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

621 ×618 representative capacity; they attend funerals elsewhere in Tongo only in a personal capacity as kin or affines of the bereaved family. Similarly, when the Gbizug tɛndaana invited the men of Tongo to a collective hoeing—an invitation to which his politico-ritual relations with Tongo gave the weight of a command—it was to Puhug mainly that he directed the invitation, and the elders of Puhug saw to it that their sons turned out in full force. For, as they explained: 'We stand in awe of the Gbizug tɛndaana, he sacrifices (to the Earth) on our behalf.' From Dekpieŋ, the neighbours of Gbizug, came only three young men, and the other sections [202] merely sent messengers to convey their good wishes for a fruitful day's work. Such ties, however, are only effective as long as amicable relationships prevail between Tongo as a whole and the particular tɛndaana's clan.

This brings us back to our starting-point: the social boundaries of Tongo. It is evident that they are largely a function of the social and political relations which each section has with its immediate neighbours, and which differ slightly from section to section.

CHAPTER XI

LAND, LOCALITY, AND THE EARTH

Definition of the Bonds between People and the Land

621 As we have already seen, there is in Tale social organization an intrinsic connexion between every defined social group or part of a social group and a specific locality. Now there are, as yet, no communities in Taleland consisting of aggregations of individuals or families of completely heterogeneous cultural or genealogical origin, whose sole common interest in the locality they occupy is utilitarian, and whose sole bond with one another is their common subjection to a single political authority. As we shall see, even in the new peripheral settlements, which are now, under the pressure of land shortage, being permanently occupied by mixed populations, the decisive bonds of association are ties of consanguineous and affinal kinship. It could hardly be otherwise in a society so homogeneous and also lacking centralized government.

The connexion between community and locality has the three aspects found in all Tale social institutions. It is utilitarian—for men build their homes on the land and get their livelihood from it; it is also morphological, particular units of the social structure being tied to defined localities so that the social unit and its locality form a single entity; and it has a moral and ritual coefficient. Men have moral and ritual relations with one another and with the land in virtue of their occupancy or utilization of particular portions of its surface. We have touched on this in our preliminary remarks on the Tale concept of *tɛŋ*. We return, here, to the further elucidation of this concept.

621 421 The bonds between a community and a locality, or between an individual or a lineage and land, are summed up in the idea of 'ownership' (*soləm*). This concept, which occurs in various contexts, has certain general implications. Where it is a matter of property such as land, or where persons or localities associated with social groups are concerned, to 'own' (*so*) them means to have responsibilities towards and for them, rights over and on behalf of them, privileges and duties in relation to other individuals or corporate groups in virtue of being the 'master' (*daana* or *-raana*) of the land, locality, or person in question. In every case, there is no such thing as purely utilitarian ownership. Utilitarian ownership exists within a framework of the relations of a defined social group to the land, the person, the locality; and this framework, in turn, is held together by a scheme of moral and ritual values and sanctions.

Thus, in the case of land, exercising or acquiring 'ownership' for productive purposes is regulated by clanship and kinship ties and limited by the moral and ritual values of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. In some circumstances clanship or kinship may be the more important determinant, in others ritual considerations may be the vital factor. The three aspects of 'ownership' may be vested in the same individual or group, or in different individuals or groups. But they are always there.

621 The natives cannot imagine any tract of land or territory being totally
421 unconnected with a human group. Most tracts of uninhabited bush are 'owned' by chiefs, who have ritual jurisdiction over hunting rights. But some tracts of untilled and uninhabited land (e.g. between Biuŋ and the river) appear to have no 'owners', either secular or ritual. The natives say the 'owners' have died out. The land did at one time have a connexion, perhaps only a ritual connexion, with a human group, and this connexion remains mystically effective still. Such areas of *wasak*, as the natives call them, are economically a free good. Anyone can come and build or cultivate there. But a man who does so will try to find some person or some clan to offer sacrifice to the Earth on his behalf, as the residuary legatee of the defunct 'owners', through local or clanship ties with them. If he fails to find anyone, he will consult a diviner to find out for himself where the sacred spots are in this stretch of *wasak* and make the sacrifices himself, thus creating a moral bond with it. Nowhere is the Earth inert; and its mystical powers are a reflex of its relations with human groups.

The three functionally differentiated aspects of man's relations to territory in Taleland are interconnected in Tale thought and custom in a rather complex way, and local differences blur the general principles. The simplest approach will be from the starting-point of land used for agricultural purposes. This is by far the most important economic use of land, but not the only one. There are few products of nature on the earth's surface that the natives do not make some economic use of, or rely on for other practical purposes. It is easy to see, therefore, why the natural environment is built into the social organization and invested with values and meaning in the social philosophy and ritual beliefs of the Tallensi. Our analysis would lead to the same conclusions if we started from uncultivated bush (*moog*), for instance, the source of essential products such as firewood, wild fruits, shea nuts, thatching grass, reeds for mat-making, rafters, medicine roots, and so forth, as well as of game and wild fowl.

Farm-land and Subsistence

311 Land means many things to the Tale farmer. He distinguishes, firstly, between the soil (*tam*) and the arable, or tilled land (*kuob*). He recognizes and takes into account different kinds and qualities of soil. This is something independent of the tillage of the land; and, conversely, cultivation (*kuo*, from *kɔ*, to hoe) turns any kind of soil (*tam*) into arable (*kuob*). Tilled land, again, is classified, without reference to soil qualities, by its location and by the kind of crops grown on it. Thus, every farmer has one or more home farms (*saman*) in the settlement and one or more bush farms (*poog*) in an area free of human habitations. In addition, a particular farm is merely a parcel of land, a bit carved out of a *teŋ*. In this context a *teŋ* is a stretch of territory in its useful, material aspect. One can speak of such and such a *teŋ* as being very fertile, or as having a sandy soil (*tambiihug*).

241 Farming is the basis of the Talɔŋ's livelihood. A failure of crops,
731 nowadays, spells widespread privation. Thirty years ago it would have brought famine. Tallensi often talk of this, especially when unpropitious

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years
ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine
is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing
this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and
forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black
man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy
grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on
the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among
distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567]
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke
down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535
end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend
the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good
year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young
mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders
fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There
is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ
kpɛŋya*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere
of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of
ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale
ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence.
For the individual the physical well-being of himself and
his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of
offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual
symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep
it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go
back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this:
'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring
be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul
guul, ka dɔyam dɔya, ka gwom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241
natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and
talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and
industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency
between a *pukpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious
hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption.
One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

731 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the
241 majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-
165 being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

788 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent
771 state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When
782 things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 778
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. [193]
To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

PLATE IX

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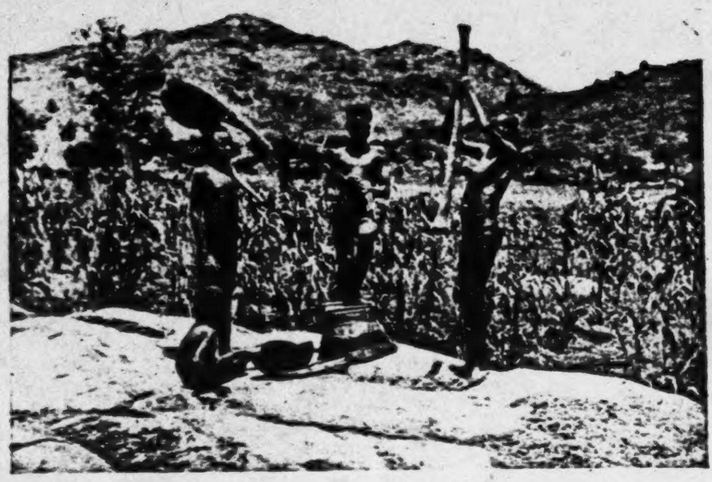

(*a*) A large boulder in the middle of a settlement forms a natural mortar where young girls go to stamp guinea corn.

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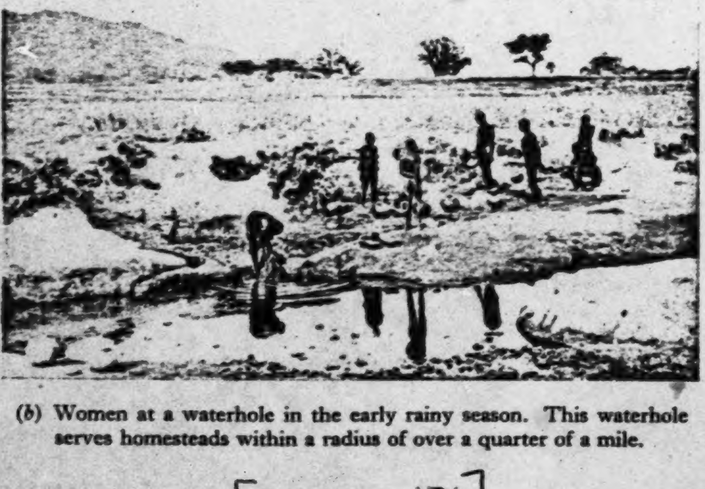

(*b*) Women at a waterhole in the early rainy season. This waterhole serves homesteads within a radius of over a quarter of a mile.

[facing p. 176]

779 the earth (*tɛŋənpiïma*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray
425 animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *tɛŋənpiïmər*. It must be
688 handed to a tɛndaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

774 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak
774 of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in
793 human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but
[567 he is given to a chief and not to a tɛndaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified
to sell a human being into slavery; a tɛndaana would commit a sacrilege
622] against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *yo-a-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ŋmaarəme*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 682 577 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 682 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 471 [461] 431 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*) —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dis-
471 possessed without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut' (*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*solɔm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among
613 the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*) what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-
577 existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
[686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of
471 the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688
with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471
corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays 432
there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*waləg*) such
difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471
punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's dependants 688
and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613
thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration.
The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve
his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation
of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely
on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to
prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them
on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471
and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426
now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its
present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not
redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated
by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant
man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in
the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his
reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to
pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his
ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could
talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension
were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to
redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do
not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths
in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common.
I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his
right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the
significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782]
act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's
lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the
lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must
provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made
at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members
must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The
ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower.
Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the
transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land,
even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors
will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471
always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426
ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

471 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the
426 process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the
602 household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit
471 of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

621 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is
471 security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage
182 security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of the *teŋ* as a community. The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

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[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621
not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471
loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182
the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends. There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity, and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farm- 577
land. It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a ground- 471
nut plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them. And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred
in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167]
twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days. Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621
use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471
is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands 182
of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious. This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of. For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *tɛŋ* at its widest extent, symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure, of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependents, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tɛndaanaship

The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico- 622
ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages. 793

622 793 [184] These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External *Bɔɣar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

622 793 554 Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*) ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

622 793 As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔɣar* cult function as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

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[177] [1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

tern still prevails. Their function is 'to prosper the community (*maal tɛŋ*)'. 622 Overtly and most conspicuously this is a ritual function. By their conscientious 793 observance of the ritual rules of conduct that symbolize their respective offices, their responsibilities for the community to the mystical powers, and their mutual relationships, as well as by taking the lead in ritual acts calculated to preserve or restore the goodwill of these mystical powers, they maintain the well-being of the community. Actually, these ritual attributes symbolize the fact that chief or tɛndaana is the hub of clan unity and solidarity, the representative of the common interests and of the common values that enable men to visualize and to hold fast to this common interest.

The polar conjunction of chiefship and tɛndaanaship is expressed in 622 the obligatory ritual collaboration, with complementary roles, of chiefs 793 and tɛndaanas. It mirrors the fusion of the two principles that shape 182 the total social field which ultimately determines the prosperity of the individual. One is the principle that the fate of the individual and of the community is determined by the practical and utilitarian concerns and needs that bind man to the earth and put him at the mercy of natural phenomena. The other is the principle that the attainment of prosperity and security, both for the individual and the community, depends upon the integration of the community. The two principles fuse in the notion that the prosperity of the land (*tɛŋ*)—that is, of the community dwelling on its territory—depends on the united strength of the chiefship and the tɛndaanaship, in the last resort. When drought or an epidemic threatens, chiefs and tɛndaanas meet together to decide on ritual measures to be undertaken to avert it. When war temporarily cuts through the tissue of structural ties that holds the clans of Taleland together, the social equilibrium is finally restored by the ritual collaboration, according to ancient custom, of chief and tɛndaana. The death of a chief or tɛndaana [787] leaves 'the land empty (*tɛŋvoog*)', as if its sentinel has departed, until his successor is installed. The death of a chief, Tallensi say, portends want—at best a scarcity of food in his own clan, at the worst a famine throughout the whole country. 'The land dies (*tɛŋ la kpiirəme*)', the people starve, and social life breaks up. This always happens when a Chief of Tongo dies. It is the one disaster, Tallensi declare, which even the white man's rule cannot avert. The death of an important tɛndaana is also ominous, but not likely to be so disastrous, since there is usually at least one other tɛndaana in the same clan and there are a great many tɛndaanas in the country.

The principles underlying the structure of a society are never embodied in a perfectly unambiguous way in its social institutions. Social life, even in the most stable and unprogressive of societies, demands continual reshufflings, readjustments, and revaluations of social relationships. Though the distant past has no record among the Tallensi, their society exists in time like every human society. Events leave a deposit in its structure, though they themselves vanish into the limbo of oblivion. Thus, in some clans the two principles we have been examining are very clearly brought out in the precise separation by office, ritual observances, and genealogical limitation of the functions of chiefship and tɛndaanaship.

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves
of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
776 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect
471 bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth
impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

ritual custody of a particular clan or maximal lineage. Such a territorial 778
section is the *tɛŋ* of a particular tɛndaana. He is the master (*daana*) of 779
that locality (*tɛŋ*), exercising ritual jurisdiction over it on behalf of the 793
maximal lineage or clan which has the ritual ownership of it, in virtue of 471
being the head of that unit. He is the mediator between the Earth and the
people whose interests lie in that fraction of its physical surface. When
the concept *tɛŋ* is coupled with a tɛndaana it has a double meaning. It
denotes both a stretch of territory and a place of contact with the mystical
Earth. It may be used to designate a single Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) and
its precincts, a total area of anything from about 20 square yards to an
acre or two; and it can be applied to the whole of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*, which
includes a number of *tɔŋgbana*.

Tɛndaanas' *tɛs* vary greatly in extent. As I have no exact measurements, 471
I can only indicate roughly the range of differences. Small *tɛs* are the 793
rule in the older and more densely settled part of the country. The area
of a clan settlement on Tɛnzugu, for instance, perhaps a square mile altogether, may be divided amongst three or four tɛndaanas. On the other
hand, at the peripheries tɛndaanas have ritual jurisdiction over large
tracts of land, many square miles in extent. This is largely due to the
absence of permanent settlement in these parts until recently, and the
still relatively scanty population living there.

Tallensi do not think of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* in terms of its size but in 471
terms of its position relatively to the *tɛs* of neighbouring tɛndaanas. 793
Tɛndaanas themselves claim that their *tɛs* have definite boundaries, but 779
when asked to show them they become very uneasy and quote the
maxim 'The boundaries of a *tɛŋ* must not be pointed out (*Tɛŋən tentɔris pu pa'ana*)'. When my bona fides was, at length, accepted by the Tallensi I
was able to persuade several tɛndaanas to have the boundaries of their *tɛs*
shown to me. My guides were always ill at ease, and apparently felt that
what they were doing verged on sacrilege. Chiefs and elders of clans that
do not have tɛndaanas usually declare that it is impossible for tɛndaanas
to have boundaries (cf. p. 164); for are not neighbouring tɛndaanas
always 'kin' (*mabiis*)—by clanship or by ritual ties? Do they not often
sacrifice together at one another's Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) or go by stealth,
at night, to sacrifice at a neighbouring tɛndaana's Earth shrines? Tɛndaanas do not deny this. In every group of contiguous maximal lineages,
each presided over by a tɛndaana (as for instance Gbeog, Gbizug, and
Zubiuŋ), the senior tɛndaana (in this instance the Gbizug tɛndaana)
always claims to be the real 'owner' of the aggregate of *tɛs* held by the
group of tɛndaanas. He talks of this aggregate of *tɛs* as if it were one *tɛŋ*
apportioned amongst his junior 'brothers' and himself for the greater
convenience of performing the priestly duties of the tɛndaanaship. They
divide their common spiritual jurisdiction rather than a distinct stretch
of territory; and in principle this rule embraces the whole of Taleland.
For the powers of the Earth are indivisible, the Earth is a unity. When the [782]
Gbizug tɛndaana sacrifices to his supreme *tɔŋgban*—or, as he often
phrases it, his *tɛŋ*—Kpɔŋkparəg, he invokes all the important *tɔŋgbana* of
Taleland, up to the limit of the field of politico-ritual relations in which
Gbizug participates, from Duusi in the north-east to Biuŋ in the south.

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793 Like the tɛndaanas all the *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, and even beyond Tale-
779 land, are described as 'kin' (*mabiis*) to one another. In principle, *tɛŋ*,
the Earth, cannot be divided up; it is the tɛndaanaship which is distributed.

471 This explains the diversity and lack of precision one finds in the
793 boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs*. Like settlement boundaries they are determined by social rather than physical facts, though here and there conspicuous topographical features may be fixed upon as landmarks from which to take a bearing. Doo *tɛŋ*, the area immediately surrounding and including the supreme *tɔŋgban* Doo of Tɛnzugu, is an example of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* that can easily be distinguished. Homesteads on Doo *tɛŋ*
[341] may not have roofs of thatch (*mopin*) but must have flat roofs (*bɛa*, vb.) of
mud. This is a quasi-totemic taboo of this *tɛŋ* (cf. p. 142). Standing on the wall of granite boulders that overlooks this part of Tɛnzugu one can see where the mud roofs end and the thatched roofs begin. I was very reluctantly told about, and later shown, what purported to be the fixed physical boundaries of Doo *tɛŋ* by men of Kpata'ar, the clan which has ritual jurisdiction over it. A ditch, a line of large boulders, a prominent tree, a path, such were the landmarks by which they went. But the striking thing about this boundary was that, almost all the way, it followed the social boundaries between Kpata'ar and Gundaat on the one side, and between Bunkiuk and Samiit on the other. In the closely settled parts of the country, wherever *tɛndaanditib* clans are in occupation of the areas under their ritual jurisdiction, there is a noticeable tendency for the alleged physical boundaries of *tɛs* to coincide with social boundaries between clans or maximal lineages.

621 Settlements like Tongo, where people believed to be of immigrant
471 descent occupy land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans, are
793 instructive. Tongo, like many other Tale settlements, stretches over the ritual territories of several tɛndaanas (cf. p. 169). The alleged boundaries between the *tɛs* of the Gbizug, Soog, and Zubiuŋ tɛndaanas run through Tongo. As the people of Tongo put it, these clans at various times allotted portions of their own land for Tongo people to build and farm on. Physical landmarks are pointed out as indicating these boundaries. But if they are examined it will be seen that they tend to coincide with the social boundaries between sections (*yizugɔt*) or between segments of sections (*dugɔt*). (See map at end of book.) Wherever part of a tɛndaana's boundary runs between homesteads of men of the same segment (*dug*), the homesteads (rarely more than one or two) on the wrong side of the boundary have not been sited there for more than a generation. The continual slow shifting about of homestead sites in a settlement through the course of generations is paralleled by a shifting of the boundaries between farm plots; for they pass through alternate phases of being divided up, wholly or in part, among the segments of a nuclear lineage that has reached a phase of fission, and of being reconstituted, wholly or in part, at a later stage of lineage integration. These internal adjustments often result in a spilling over of one section of a clan into what was till then regarded as the area of a neighbouring unit of like sort.

178 We lack historical documents; but we can infer from the contemporary
dynamics of Tale social life that the boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* shift

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178 boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621 boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793 clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpiɛŋ, barring 471 two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of Dekpiɛŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his *ahəb* (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622 The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793 people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779 their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793 responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471 is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782] to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage, the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342] the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)' ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764] ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775] and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kɪe*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋgbana*
782] —for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas.
My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and con- 793
siderable moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the
formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations
of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say
gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed
ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.'
The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the state-
ment implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But
this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's
curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term
'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply
a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties,
privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community
with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to
the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The
material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine
or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to
be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major
emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the
earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of 784
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material 622
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is
sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be
sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and
is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction
between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common
and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a
Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of
their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis
on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship.
And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as
the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises
an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

425 of his own sub-clan. This is the central field of integrated social relations
471 pivoting on this chiefship. But his ritual status also affects the prosperity
× 618 and welfare of Zubiuŋ and Zoo directly and that of the Hill Talis in-
directly. In fact, in the last resort, it affects all the clans of Taleland that
622 have a place in the cycle of the Great Festivals. 'The community (*tɛŋ*)
784 cannot be subdivided (*bɔk*)', the Chief of Tongo once told me in explana-
793 tion of the ritual significance of his office. Famine, pestilence, war cannot
be dammed and confined to one place. And so if the Chief of Tongo dies
the whole country suffers, though his own clan will perhaps suffer most
and the remoter zones of his politico-ritual influence least.

182 The bonds between man and land, community and locality that are so fundamental in the structure of Tale society cannot be understood apart from this context of ritual values and moral norms. Difficult as they are to grasp and pin down in exact language, they are as ever present to the native's mind as his sentiment of attachment to his native soil. They cause men who have been away from home for many years to give up splendid farms in Mampurugu or good jobs in Kumasi to return to take up their patrimonial land.

CHAPTER XII

THE LINEAGE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

General Features

A CENTRAL factor in the continuity and stability of a Tale settlement 613 is the economic organization; but the persistent morphological framework, the factor that gives its peculiar stamp to the form of a Tale community, is its lineage skeleton. The critical feature is the congruence of local aggregation and continuity with lineage aggregation and continuity.

To observe the operation of the lineage principle in the structure of a 613 Tale settlement, we must isolate for consideration its male population. 618x '*Bumpɔk pu meet yiri*—a woman does not build a house', say the natives, in words reminiscent of the Roman formula, *mulier finis familiae est*. That is to say, a lineage is not perpetuated by its women members, but only by its male members. We have previously studied the Tale lineage system in its macroscopic structure, from the outside, as it were. We proceed, now, to study it from within.

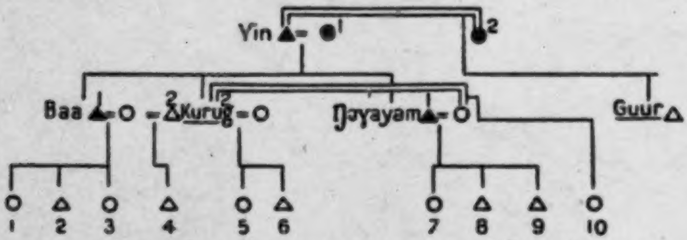
We shall keep Tongo as our model. Tongo is the *tɛŋ* of the senior of the four branches of the clan of Mosuor biis, each of which has the form of a maximal lineage though it is in reality only a major segment of a maximal lineage. In addition, there are at Tongo several accessory lineages linked to the authentic line of Mosuor biis by some genealogical fiction or other. If allowance is made for the special linkage of these accessory lineages to the authentic line of Mosuor biis, we can place all the men of Tongo on a single, patrilineal, chart. All their lines of ascent converge in Mosuor. They all belong to the same set of lineages, graded in segments of increasing span and rising order of segmentation and contained within the lineage limits fixed by their unilineal ancestry.

Births and deaths among its members continually change the composition of the sub-clan. Deaths of male members often cause further segmentation in the lineages of smallest span. They do not affect the lineage equilibrium of the sub-clan as a whole, for this is a function of the relations between the segments of highest order. The structural relations of all segments of an order higher than the minimal segments are finally fixed. If we take any one of these supra-minimal segments by itself, its place in the whole system can be altered only by the extinction of a coordinate segment of a lineage of greater span of which it forms a part. Hence the point of time chosen for an analysis of the system is immaterial.

Analysis of a Lineage from Within

Since all the men of Tongo can be included in a single genealogical 613 tree, it is immaterial whom we choose as the starting-point for our

613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody
[142] else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a
man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the
[487] rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of
✓ [177] some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*)
and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayɔlis*). But one would have to know
[515] the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb
of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body-
[577] cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious
farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his
section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map
at end of book.)



[*NB: Double lines (=) show marriages*]

[128] *in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed*
Living men △
Living women ○
Dead men ▲
Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Dɔɣayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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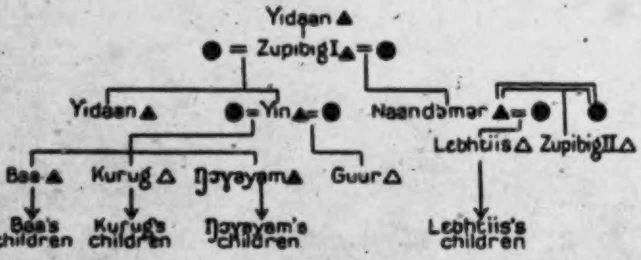
[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

germs of a further segmentation by agnatic lines is present in this unit. Baa's children and Dɔyayam's children, being minors, still form part of Kurug's joint family; they are economically, jurally, and ritually dependent on him. But they have different fathers from Kurug's children. The effective minimal lineage, which is functionally the corporate unit of lowest order, may, and here does, comprise several morphologically lower minimal lineages.[1]

By the canon of agnatic descent Baa's children form one segment of the effective minimal lineage, Kurug and his children another, Dɔyayam's children a third, and Guur a fourth. As, however, they have no functional autonomy at this phase of their development, they may be regarded as minimal lineages submerged in the effective minimal lineage identified by reference to their immediate common progenitor, Yin. Eventually each of these submerged segments will become segregated as a relatively autonomous effective minimal lineage.

About 80 yards from Kurug (homestead No. 11), live Lɛbhtiis and Zupibig (II), whom he describes as his *pirib* (sing. *pit*), younger brothers, with their families. They have the following genealogical relationship to each other and to Kurug:



Lɛbhtiis is the head of an effective minimal lineage (Naandɔmər yidɛm) of exactly the same span and order as that (Yin yidɛm) of which Kurug is head. They are segments of the inclusive lineage of greater span and next higher order, Zupibig yidɛm, named after their common grandfather (*yaab*), or, more usually, Yidaan yidɛm, after their common great-grandfather (*yaab*). Kurug, the oldest of the four brothers (*sunzɔp*), is the head of this lineage, which we shall call a nuclear lineage.

Next door to Lɛbhtiis (homestead No. 10) live Deemzeet, whom Kurug and his brothers refer to as *ti ba* (our father), and his deceased brother's two sons (*biis*), Tɔbəg and Dɔbil, whom Kurug describes as *mpirib* (my younger brothers), and Lɛbhtiis as *mbiernam* (my older brothers).

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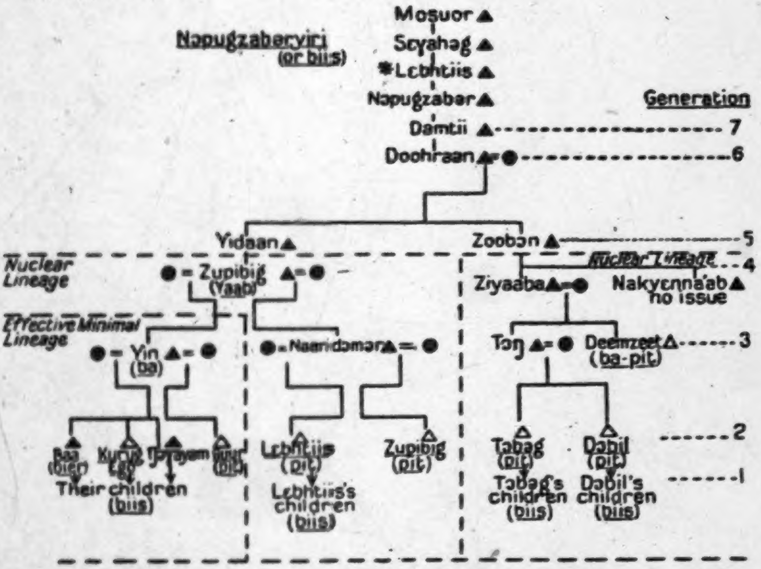
[1] The introduction of so many indicator terms for the different grades of lineage segments requires an apology, but experience has shown that some such artificial device is necessary if the Tale lineage system is to be made clear to the English reader. The distinction here drawn between the *effective minimal lineage* (or segment) as the functional unit of lowest order, and the *minimal lineage* (or segment) as the morphological unit of lowest order, is important. An effective minimal lineage is usually the framework of a domestic family and includes women members.

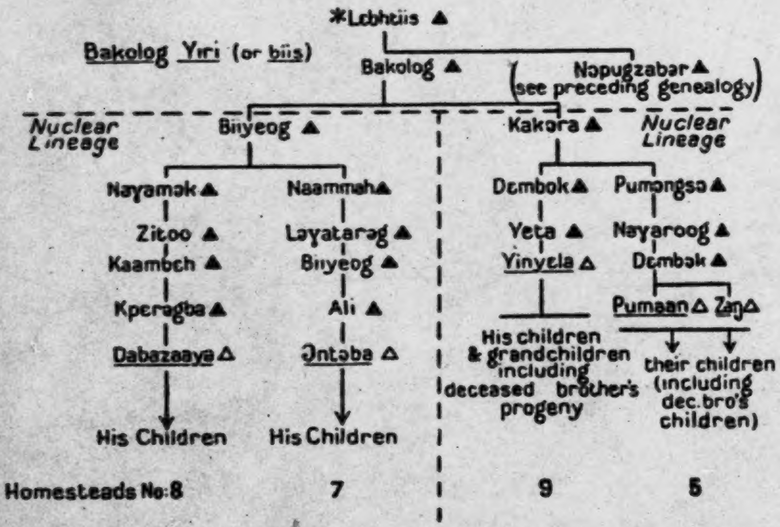
6/3 Deemzeet's house (*yir*) has the following genealogical relationship to Zupibig yidem:


Mosuor
Napugzaberyiri (or biis)
Seyahag
*Lebhtiis
Napugzaber
Generation
Damtii
7
Doohraan
6
Yidaan
Zoobon
5
Nuclear Lineage
Nuclear Lineage
4
Zupibig (Yaab)
Ziyaaba
Nakyennaab no issue
Effective Minimal Lineage
Yin (ba)
Naandomar
Toŋ
Deemzeet (ba-pit)
3
Baa (bier)
Kurug
Tarayam
Guur (pit)
Lebhtiis (pit)
Zupibig (pit)
Tobag (pit)
Dobil (pit)
2
Their children (biis)
Lebhtiis's children (biis)
Tobag's children (biis)
Dobil's children (biis)
1

Taken by itself, Deemzeet's house has the same internal structure as Kurug's or Lebhtiis's; but Tobag and Dobil are men of mature years with grown children. Though still formally under the jural, economic, and ritual authority of Deemzeet, they have considerable autonomy in ritual, jural, and economic affairs that concern their own segment (Toŋ biis) of [589] the nuclear lineage. If Deemzeet, a timid old bachelor, had any children, the relative independence of Toŋ biis would be more obvious. The nuclear lineage of which Deemzeet is head has reached a more advanced phase of internal differentiation than that of which Kurug is head. This is due, partly, to its being an older lineage, which existed in its present form when Kurug and Guur were still minors under the tutelage of their own father, Yin, and Lebhtiis and Zupibig (II) were minors dependent on their father, Naandomor. But Deemzeet's house is not the older lineage in the sense that its members are older than the members of the lineages with which we are contrasting it; it is older in that it represents an earlier phase of the segmentation of the inclusive lineage of which Kurug's house, Lebhtiis's house, and Deemzeet's house to-day form the constituent and co-ordinate segments. Its head is a generation superior to Kurug and Lebhtiis in terms of their common descent. Thus it is the senior of the two segments. The span of a lineage being a function of its internal genealogical constitution, a three-generation lineage has a wider span than a two-generation lineage. But the order of a lineage is determined by its segmentary relationship to other lineages which are complementary to it—brother (*sunzɔ*) segments—in a greater, inclusive lineage. Lineages are differentiated in terms of their genealogical distance 613 from one another within their common agnatic descent.

The whole lineage we have been analysing is often designated Doohraan yidɛm (or biis), by reference to its ancestor, Doohraan; but it is more frequently described as Nɔpugzabər yidɛm (or biis), going back to Doohraan's putative grandfather. This lineage is the skeleton of what may be called an expanded family, each of its component effective minimal segments being the foundation, similarly, of a domestic family.[1] [597]

Nɔpugzabər yidɛm constitute a major segment of a wider lineage. Homesteads 5, 7, 8, and 9, the closest neighbours of the homesteads of Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, are occupied by the various branches of a lineage of the same order as Nɔpugzabər yiri. Its genealogical structure is briefly as follows:


*Lɛbhɛiis ▲
Bakolog Yiri (or biis)
Bakolog ▲
Nɔpugzabər ▲ (see preceding genealogy)
Nuclear Lineage
Biiyeog ▲
Kakɔra ▲
Nuclear Lineage
Naɣamək ▲
Naammɛh ▲
Dɛmbok ▲
Pumɔngsɔ ▲
Zitoo ▲
Laɣatarəg ▲
Yeta ▲
Naɣaroog ▲
Kaambɛh ▲
Biiyeog ▲
Yinyɛla △
Dɛmbɔk ▲
Kpɛragba ▲
Ali ▲
Pumaan △
Zaŋ △
Dabazaaya △
Ɔntəba △
His children & grandchildren including deceased brother's progeny
their children (including dec. bro's children)
His Children
His Children
Homesteads No: 8
7
9
5

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[1] Tale domestic organization is analysed in our next volume. Here it is sufficient to say that the modal family unit is the polygynous, agnatic joint family occupying its own homestead. This is the prototypical *yir*, house (pl. *yea*). Its typical substratum is an effective minimal lineage of two, or less commonly, three generations. Thus it may consist of two or more brothers (half or full brothers or cousins); or a man and some or all of his sons, and, occasionally, grandsons, together with the wives and young children of all the males. The joint family always constitutes a single jural unit; most often, but not always, it is also a single economic unit. The pivot of this *yir* is its male head (*yirdaana*, owner of the house). He represents the continuity of the patrilineal line in the structure of the family. He is the (patricentral) focus of co-operation and of jural and ritual unity in the family. This is symbolized by the position of the granary in the centre of the homestead and by the reservation of the space in front of the gateway (*zanɔr*) for the affairs of the men. Complementarily, each woman has her own separate quarters in the homestead where her children live under her care, and where she is mistress in domestic affairs. This is her *dug* (lit. room, pl. *dugət*); and this is the prototype of the lineage *dug*. Thus the children of the family—that is, the lineage growing out

613 We have set down only the agnatic affiliation of the heads of the effective minimal segments of the lineage, for the relations of these segments with one another are determined by these ties, not by their respective internal constitutions. The head of this lineage (Bakolog yiri) was Yinyɛla; he died in 1937—a hoary ancient and one of the oldest men in Tongo, at least 75 years of age. He called Ɔntəba *yaaŋ* (grandson), and Dabazaaya *yaaŋkalee* (great-grandson), and Pumaan, a man in the late forties or early fifties, *bii* (child).

Mutatis mutandis, Bakolog yir has the same internal organization and residential distribution as Nɔpugzabər yir, though it is more differentiated.

Nɔpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm are two co-ordinate segments (*dugət*) of the wider lineage (*yir*) Lɛbhtiis[1] yidɛm. From Deemzeet to Lɛbhtiis inclusively seven generations are reckoned. From Yinyɛla to Lɛbhtiis only six generations are reckoned. This is not fortuitous, for Yinyɛla claims to belong to the generation of Deemzeet's father.

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm include three more *dugət*, segments co-ordinate with Nɔpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm. These are:—

(*a*) Nɔdɛɣər yir, the only surviving branch of which comprises but a single segment of narrow span consisting of three full brothers and their children who live in homestead No. 12.

(*b*) Pɔɣasɔŋ yir, whose members occupy homesteads 17, 22, 28, 29, and 33.

(*c*) Gbɛn yir, in homesteads 18, 19, 20, 23, 24.

As with Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, a count of seven generations, inclusive, separates the heads of these three lineages from their ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. All these segments preserve the names of what appear to be redundant ancestors, like Damtii in the genealogical chart of Nɔpugzabər yidɛm. For, in conformity with their structural relations as co-ordinate segments of a single lineage, their particular genealogies must be congruent (see Ch. III). Bakolog yidɛm, with one ascendant generation less in their pedigree, fit into the set on the assumption—which they uphold vigorously—that their head belongs to the generation of the *fathers* of the other segment heads.

We need not analyse the internal organization of these last-mentioned segments of Lɛbhtiis yir. With variations of detail they duplicate the plan of Nɔpugzabər yir. The segments are homologous with one another; their sub-segments are constructed on the same plan; and so, on a bigger scale, is the greater lineage which embraces all of them. Bakolog yidɛm within Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, like Zoobɔn yidɛm within Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, is relatively senior to its brother-segments, and Nɔdɛɣər biis, though a segment of a very narrow span compared with the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yir, is nevertheless co-ordinate with them.

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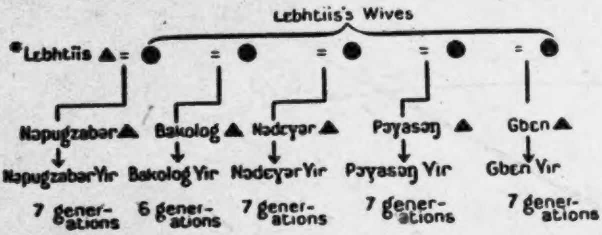
[597] of it—are genealogically and socially united by reference to the patricentral *yir* and the patrilineal line, and similarly divided into distinct segments by reference to their respective matricentral *dugət*. This is the pattern on which lineage segmentation is based. Again, what is a joint family in one generation generally splits, as the children grow up, into two or more joint families in the next generation. They then constitute what we have called an expanded family.

[1] The founding ancestor, Lɛbhtiis, of this lineage should not be confused with his living descendant of the same name, previously mentioned. In the genealogies given in this chapter Lɛbhtiis the ancestor is distinguished by an asterisk.

Diagrammatically, the agnatic filiation of the branches of Lɛbhtiis yir 613
(or biis) can be represented as follows:



These five segments form a set of co-ordinate segments, all except Bakolog yidɛm reckoning seven generations inclusively between their present lineage heads and their common ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. Their corporate unity and common interests are symbolized by the ancestor shrine dedicated to the 'fathers' (*banam*) of the lineage, culminating in Lɛbhtiis. This is the *bɔγar* of Lɛbhtiis, the *banam bɔγar* (shrine of the forefathers) held by the head (*kpeem*) of the whole lineage, who may be a member of any of the five *dugət*. In 1934 the head of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, Naandɔmər, who was also head of his own segment of Nɔpugzabər yiri died, and as his final funeral rites were not immediately performed, the *banam bɔγar* remained in the custody of his son, who carried out the duties of head of the whole lineage in his late father's name. Naandɔmər's prospective successor as *kpeem* of Lɛbhtiis yir was Yinyɛla, the *kpeem* of Bakolog yir.

Each segment also has its particular *dugni bɔγar* (shrine of the 'room'). 613
This, as will be explained presently, is known as its 'mothers'' *bɔγar* 778
(*manam bɔγar*)—the shrine of its eponymous founding ancestor among the sons of Lɛbhtiis, and his mother—the symbol of its differentiation, by reference to maternal origin, from its brother (*sunzɔ*) segments of the same descent, and of its specific corporate unity and identity in contraposition to those other segments.

Each segment tends to form a coherent residential cluster, situated on 613
land which has been owned by its members for several generations, and in 361
close proximity to the graves of their ancestors. The lineage as a whole 167
tends to form a local aggregate, though a somewhat looser one than any of its segments. But not all the members of the lineage reside in Puhug, or at Tongo, at a given time. There are its married *pɔγaγabəlis* (women members) and absent male members. In Nɔpugzabər yiri two young men were away in 1934, one farming in Mampurugu, another working somewhere in the colony; three of the younger 'sons' of Bakolog yir were away at Kumasi, where they had been for several years. One subsegment of Pɔγasɔŋ yidem has been established at Yaməlɔg for a generation or so; and several members of the other two segments were away in Mampurugu and Ashanti.

Numerically Nɔdeγər yir is exceptionally small, for it has only eleven 613
male members. The other segments have between twenty and thirty male members each, counting infants as well. Numbers, we must again emphasize, do not in any way affect the status of a lineage or the rights

613 and duties vested in it. Nɔdeɣər yidem suffer no jural or ritual disabilities because they are so much inferior in numbers to their brother segments.

The Principle of Segmentation in the Lineage

There are two factors of great importance in the dynamics of the lineage system: the principle of segmentation in the lineage and the connexion between lineage aggregation and locality.

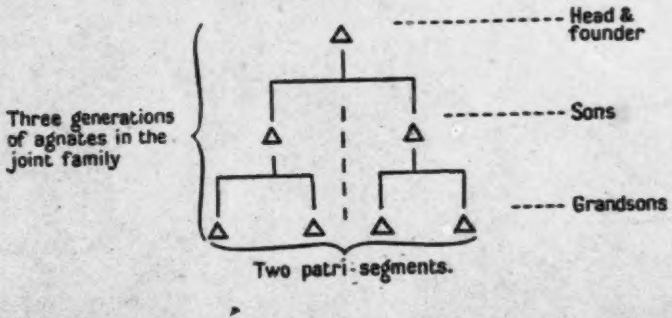
A striking characteristic of the Tale lineage is the rigorous precision with which its members fall into a set of hierarchically articulated segments, of homologous form but all exactly differentiated both genealogically and functionally (cf. Ch. III). This segmentary differentiation of the lineage follows the pattern of the family even to nomenclature. For the lineage grows out of, and through the medium of, the family, and throughout its existence a lineage develops uniformly, so that it preserves the form in which it was originally moulded.

To put it more accurately, a lineage grows by continuous internal differentiation in successive generations. It grows by the continuous multiplication of its parts, not by the mere accretion of new members. And this takes place by the splitting up of its cells, the minimal segments, into new minimal segments in successive generations. This process follows the lines of cleavage laid down in the joint family.

596 The polygynous joint family forms an integral unit with respect to its male element, the group of agnates upon which it is based and which gives it stability and continuity. This unity of the joint family is summed up in the concept of the patricentral 'house' (*yir*). But it is a unity superimposed upon a strict cellular differentiation into matricentral 'rooms' (*dugət*), each centred upon a wife.

613
596 The group of male agnates in the joint family constitutes an effective minimal lineage at a given time. Each male is a potential agnatic line; a pair of brothers are two potential segments of a lineage. In terms of their common patrilineal descent this group of males forms a single corporate unit. This is the essential *yir*. But this unity contains within itself two sets of cleavages: firstly, a stratification by generations, and secondly, a differentiation by descent. The generation principle acts in this way (cf.

Hypothetical Genealogy, I

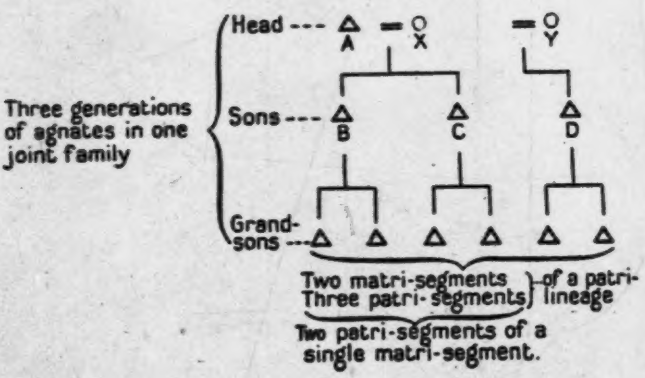


the hypothetical genealogy, I): Two brothers who are distinct as individuals 613 are identified with reference to their common father; in all social activities 596 in which they take part as the *sons* of their father they are, as it were, merged. During their father's lifetime they have, in fact, no independent jural status, but are, to speak figuratively again, submerged in his jural personality. Their sons, if the joint family survives as a unit for another generation, will be divided into two patrilateral groups with reference to their respective fathers, but fused into a single jural and economic as well as genealogical unit with reference to their grandfather. In this way the stratification of the effective minimal lineage into generations automatically splits it into patri-segments.[1]

Simultaneously, however, the centrifugal influence of the *dug* is at work. Brothers by the same father may have different mothers. Among the Tallensi this carries with it an emphatic affective discrimination. Half-brothers (*sunzɔ*, pl. *sunzɔp*) are divided by a wedge of sentiment which arises not only out of their independent emotional ties with their particular mothers, but also out of the structural, economic, and moral relations of the *dugət* within the *yir*. It reflects the social autonomy of the *dug* in relation to other *dugət* of the *yir* and the polarity of *dug* and *yir*. Conversely, full (*soog*) brothers have the most intimate bond in the whole gamut of Tale social relations, a bond implying an identity of interests, an emotional cohesion, and mutual loyalty so great as to override any kind of personal or social variance.[2] Thus, within the joint family, maternal origin (*ma dɔyam*, lit. 'mother's bearing') may divide the sons of one man in sentiment and by an additional index of descent. The patrilateral unit is segmented into incipient matrilateral segments.

What happens in the next generation can best be seen from the following hypothetical genealogy:

Hypothetical Genealogy. II


Head
A
X
Y
Sons
B
C
D
Grand-sons
Three generations of agnates in one joint family
Two matri-segments
Three patri-segments
of a patri-lineage
Two patri-segments of a single matri-segment.

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[1] This terminology is borrowed from Daryll Forde, *Marriage and the Family among the Yakō*, L. S. E. Monographs on Anthropology, No. 5.

[2] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *Africa*, xiv, 7, 1944, for a discussion of the concept of *soog*.

We assume a joint family containing three generations of male agnates—the head, his three sons, and his six grandsons, and we neglect the maternal origins of the latter. The six grandsons are divided into three equal patri-segments with reference to their respective fathers, and form a single corporate lineage with reference to their common grandfather. But they are genealogically split into two segments with reference to their respective *grandmothers*; and one of these matrilaterally defined segments (matri-segments) can be split into two patri-segments, of a lower order. Patrilateral origin and matrilateral origin work in polar opposition to each other. An agnatic group united by their patrilateral origin can be subdivided in accordance with their matrilateral origin; and vice versa, an agnatic group united by reference to their matrilateral origin can be subdivided by closer patrilateral origin.

Note that this is not a question of matriliny versus patriliny. Matrilateral origin works as a factor of cleavage only within a patrilineal group, in contradistinction to strict patriliny. Either focus may be the critical one in a given situation; but the other is not thereby obliterated; it merely becomes latent. The pattern operative here is that of the joint family. Patri-segment and matri-segment are related as *yir* and *dug* in the joint family, matri-segment and matri-segment as *dug* and *dug*. They are, indeed, nothing other than the parallel, in the structure of the unending lineage, of the balance of forces that characterizes the joint family. Members of one matri-segment are the offspring of one *dug*, members of one patri-segment may be the offspring of several *dugət*. The natives use the terms *yir* and *dug* to define the relations of lineage segments to one another. *Dug*, then, always bears the implication of a cohesive integral segment within the fissile *yir*. It stands for solidarity as opposed to the latent divisions in the *yir*, obviously reflecting its primary sense of the irreducible, uncleavable matricentral cell within the potentially divided *yir*.

Segmentation by matrilateral lines in the nuclear lineage plays a very important part in the development of both the joint family and the lineage. Economic, jural, and affective relations in the joint family are influenced by matrilateral (*dug*) affiliation; and when in course of time a joint family splits up, fission takes place in the first instance between matri-segments. Members of the same *dug* hold together longer than members of different *dugət*. Thus, two full brothers (*soog*, pl. *saarət*) continue to live in the same homestead, to farm together, to be jurally and ritually one, long after two half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) have found it necessary to separate. Often the split, which inevitably comes between separate lines in the nuclear lineage, is retarded in the case of *soog* brothers, and does not take place until their death. Children of *soog* brothers even after fission have closer ties than children of half-brothers.

These principles of segmentation are not merely a method of genealogical classification of individuals, but an indispensable regulator of corporate activities, operating at every level of lineage organization. This requires the preservation of the names of all relevant ancestors and ancestresses, but genealogical classification has no meaning except as a shorthand for the many and complex relations of individuals and groups.

The living members of a lineage are continually experiencing, in their

daily life, the antithesis between patrilateral and matrilateral ties in the 613
joint family. There is also the principle of the continuity and identity of 596
the lineage. Members of the same lineage are identified with one another and with their lineal ascendants. Tallensi think of a lineage as a continuous, even eternal, group, a unit persisting through time as well as existing at a given time. A particular lineage to-day is the same lineage that it was at its inception two, three, or *x* generations ago. Segments of a clan or maximal lineage have the same structural position relatively to one another as they had in the beginning, only on a different scale; and in the beginning segmentarily related lineages sprang from brothers. As these founding ancestors were related, so are their contemporary agnatic descendants related. Hence co-ordinate segments of a lineage are described as *sunzɔp* ('brothers by the same father'), and the bonds of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are the nucleus and prototype of the bonds between co-ordinate segments. Two co-ordinate segments whose founding ancestors were full (*soog*) brothers have closer ties than similar co-ordinate segments descended from a pair of half-brothers. The lineage is always growing, but can never break the unchanging frame laid down at its beginning. It is almost as if a single person has undergone a quantitative metamorphosis with the passage of generations.

Lineage ties cannot lapse or be renounced. A maximal lineage once 613
established can never split into two or more independent (i.e. mutually exogamous) maximal lineages, as in some other areas of Africa, and territorial dispersion does not break the lineage tie, even after many generations. In fact, the whole stream of Tale social life emphasizes and reinforces the sense of lineage continuity, and of the identification of members of a lineage with one another, with their predecessors, and with their prospective successors. This is the basis of the corporate unity and solidarity of the lineage, and of the lineal transmission of rights and duties, ritual observances, office, property, and debts; and for this reason any member of a lineage can represent any other member, living or dead, or the whole lineage, in relation to other lineages of a like sort. This, too, underlies the usage by which members of a lineage can refer to their founding ancestor either as their 'father' (*ba*) or as their 'ancestor' (*yaab*), a term which denotes any patrilineal ancestor beyond and including the grandfather. It explains the conception of the lineage progenitrix—the founding ancestor's mother—as the 'mother' (*ma*) of the lineage. It must be added that even when a lineage is envisaged as a *dug* deriving from its progenitrix, it takes its name from her son, as its agnatic founding ancestor as a branch of a more inclusive lineage.

The rules of lineage segmentation can be summed up as follows: 613
Whenever a lineage is envisaged as an inclusive corporate unit embracing 778
two or more subordinate segments, it is identified by reference to its founding *ancestor*, as the starting-point of its descent. It is thought of as a *yir*, house, 'the children of one father (*ba yɛni biis*)', on the model of the patricentral joint family (*yir* in the primary sense) in which the offspring form a single genealogical and social unit with reference to their common father. Its focal ancestor shrine is designated the '*bɔɣar* of the fathers (*banam bɔɣar*)', a notion that stresses the dominance of the father-figure

613 in the unity of the patrilineal descent group and in the coherence of the
778 family. But when a lineage is visualized as a set of segments, these are differentiated by reference to their respective *progenitrices*, just as in the joint family the offspring can be subdivided in accordance with their maternal origins. The focal ancestor shrine of each segment is then called 'the *bɔγar* of the mothers (of the segment) (*manam bɔγar*)'. It is identical in form with the 'fathers' *bɔγar*' but complementary to it in function. Its name stresses the predominance of matrilateral origin in the differentiation of the segments of a lineage, by contrast with the patricentral lineage as a whole. Tallensi speak of a 'mothers' *bɔγar*' as being the shrine of the segment's founding ancestor and his mother, by contrast with the 'fathers' *bɔγar*', which they say is the shrine of the founding ancestor of the lineage only. But they recognize that a 'mothers' *bɔγar*' will in the course of time become a 'fathers' *bɔγar*' when the segment undergoes internal differentiation into sub-segments, and may function as a 'fathers' *bɔγar*' if the segment is already so differentiated. When a segment of a lineage is thus distinguished from co-ordinate segments of the same lineage, it is also implicitly contrasted with the whole lineage. It is thought of as a matri-segment, though named after its founding ancestor, and is described as a 'room', *dug*—'the children of one mother (*ma yeni biis*)'—of the 'house', *yir*, on the model of the joint family in which the matricentral *dug* is a segment of the patricentral *yir*.

613 Maternal origin (*ma dɔγam*) thus has significance only within the frame of patrilineal descent, as the polar opposite of paternal origin (*ba dɔγam*). Taken by itself, every lineage, no matter what its span or order may be, has only one founding ancestor and one progenitrix, this man's mother. The progenitrix of a lineage becomes significant only when it is considered in conjunction with other lineages of the same descent. Both morphologically and functionally every lineage represents an equilibrium based on the polarity of maternal filiation and patrilineal descent which runs through the whole genealogical structure of Tale society.

[778] Obviously any segment of a lineage which comprises two or more sub-segments can function as a *dug* in one context or situation and as a *yir* in another. Its focal ancestor shrine thus functions as a *manam bɔγar* in one context and as a *banam bɔγar* in another. In principle a maximal lineage of wide span must always act as a *yir*—and hence its focal ancestor shrine is always a *banam bɔγar*; but by a stretch of the term it may be referred to as a *dug* when someone wishes to lay special stress on its genealogical unity and corporate solidarity in contrast to other similar units. The
[682] murder of a fellow member of the same maximal lineage is, for instance, always dealt with as 'an affair of the room (*dugni yɛl*)', which stringently excludes reprisals.

A few maximal lineages have so narrow a span, due, no doubt, to the extinction of collateral lines, that they function as medial or inner lineages (wide *dugət*), a distinction that will be clearer presently. Thus the maximal lineage of Gundaat is not subdivided into ritually and jurally differentiated major segments. Its head, the Gundaat-Bɔγarna'ab, explained this in a manner which shows how clearly many Tale elders grasp the mechanics of their own social structure. 'We have not yet achieved *sunzɔt* (division into brother (patri-) segments)', he said, 'but we shall 613 eventually do so. Our line of descent has not yet gone far enough, for we are all the children of one woman (i.e. the descendants of a common progenitrix not very far back). A woman's offspring do not split up, it is a man's offspring that split (*Bumpɔk dɔɣam pu bɔkəra, buraa dɔɣam m-bɔkət*).' In fact, Gundaatdɛm form a lineage of rather narrow span considering the number of ascendant generations which they reckon to their founding ancestor.

Incidentally the Bɔɣarna'ab's statement brings out vividly the native conception of a lineage as a perpetual entity, 'going on (*kyɛŋ sa*)' for ever, unitary and identical beneath the surface of its changing personnel, the 'children of one woman (or one man)' as long as it lasts.

According to this scheme, in the set of lineages we have been analysing, Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, the agnatic descendants of Nɔpugzabər, constitute one of the five *dugət* of the *yir*, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, which in turn is a *dug* of the section (*yizug*) of Puhug, and this in its turn is a *dug* of the sub-clan of Tongo. Nɔpugzabər yir, again, may in certain situations be regarded as consisting of two *dugət*, Yidaan biis and Zoobɔn biis; and as Tɔbəg and Dɔbil are *soog* brothers, their agnatic descendants will form a single matricentral segment, with greater cohesion than Yidaan biis.

Though *dug* and *yir* are relative concepts—relative both to each other and to the particular situation in which a given order of lineage segmentation is critical—there is a sense in which *dug* has a more precise connotation. As usual in Tale social organization no rigorous criterion can be found for this. It can be defined only in dynamic terms. Tallensi tend to think of the field of lineage relations as made up of three broad zones: the zone of clanship,[1] as when a man says, 'I am a Tongo man'; within this zone, the zone of section (*yizug*) relations, as when a Tongo man says, 'I am a Puhug man'; and within this zone, the zone of *dug* relations, which lies between the limits of the major segment of the *yizug* to which the individual belongs, on the one hand, and a level of segmentation of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm—that is, with a common ancestor placed about five generations back, on the other. Thus, if a man says of another member of his clan, 'We are *dugdɛm* (members of the same *dug*)', one can infer that he is thinking of a lineage segment of an order between that of Doohraan yidɛm and that of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug, though the exact genealogical extension of the lineage intended will vary from clan to clan.

This notion of the *dug*, to which we have given a purely morphological 571 formulation, is a reflex of the configuration of social interests that regulate 613 the corporate functions of the lineage. The zone of clanship is correlated with interclan and intersettlement political and ritual relations, and with the maximum extension of the rule of exogamy. The zone of *yizug* relations is correlated with intra-clan political and ritual relations, with the aliquot distribution between segments of the clan of rights to politico-ritual offices, and with the complementary rights and duties of the major segments of the clan, upon which the maintenance of its structural equilibrium depends. The zone of *dug* relations corresponds to a field

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[1] Cf. Chapter IV.

571 613 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 613 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 [578] Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. [835] [837] Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

sexual relations with a brother's or father's wife is a grave sin. What is 613 more important, the solidarity of this *dug* very often rests on a common economic interest in patrimonial land, to which every male member of the lineage is a potential heir. This common interest in land gives the cohesion of the narrow *dug* a foundation upon which its moral solidarity, reinforced by the close bonds of sentiment its members have with one another, rests so firmly as to make it almost infrangible. The narrow *dug* is the widest lineage unit that always stands together like one man, right or wrong. Dissensions between its members are regarded [578] as personal quarrels even when they follow the lines of genealogical cleavage within it. However acrimonious they may be, they are not permitted to divide the unit into mutually hostile segments.

Neither the wide nor the narrow limits of the *dug* can be fixed by a count of ascendant generations. The narrow *dug* may place its founding ancestor from four to six generations up the tree of ascent, the wide *dug* from five to seven generations back, reckoning from its present living head inclusively. It varies from clan to clan, the dimensions of the *dug* being always relative to the span and the degree of internal segmentation of the maximal lineage of which it forms a segment. As we have seen, there are maximal lineages like Gundaat which are so little segmented that they still function as wide *dugət*. Furthermore, a unit that is counted as a *dug* to-day may in a generation or two segment into two or more *dugət*. And it must be remembered also that in composite clans the section [618]x (*yiẓug*) is genealogically a maximal lineage, so that the *dug* constitutes a major segment of a maximal lineage.[1]

Thus the *dug* is a flexible unit and more difficult to visualize than the maximal and minimal lineages. It cannot, like them, be isolated by a morphological criterion; we identify the *dug* only when it emerges in social action.

It will simplify our analysis and save some confusion if we give a name to the *dug* in the context of the lineage structure. This is justifiable as well as expedient, for in a particular clan the *dug* has a determinate lineage span and segmentary order at any given time. We shall therefore use the terms 'medial lineage or segment' for what we have called the wide *dug*, and 'inner lineage or segment' for the *dug* in its narrow limits. We thus have a hierarchy of lineage segments: the effective minimal lineage or segment, the nuclear lineage or segment, the inner lineage or segment, the medial lineage or segment, the section or major segment, the maximal lineage.

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[1] In many maximal lineages we find an intermediate grade of *dug* which is less closely integrated than the narrow *dug*, but more so than the wide *dug*. In diachronic terms it readily falls into place as a phase in the process of internal differentiation by which the narrow *dug* develops into a wide *dug*. In the set of lineages we have been considering the segment of Bakolog yidem of Lebhtiis yidem behaves like a *dug* of this sort. It has a somewhat wider span than Doohraan yidem, but a powerful contributory cause has been the personality of the *dug* head, Yinyela, whose actions have led the heads of the effective minimal lineages to reject his headship on several occasions and to stress the relative autonomy of their sub-segments in consequence.

Lineage Grouping and Local Grouping

613 We come now to the question of the connexion between lineage
621 grouping and locality. A lineage like Nɔpugzabɔr yiri, though its span
596 is comparatively small, exhibits all the important principles of lineage structure and will suffice as a crucial example.

In all the old-established settlements we find a very close correlation between lineage proximity and residential proximity among the members of the clan who live there. Close agnates tend to live near one another, so that residential proximity is almost a measure of lineage proximity. A segment of small span tends to be a close residential cluster, and segments of larger span, up to the major segments of a maximal lineage, tend to form residential blocks.

We can see this most readily if we look again at the residential dispersion of a group of agnatically related joint families, bearing in mind that the men of a joint family form a lineage. For as the homestead is the material integument of the living structure of the joint family, so is the localization of the lineage, growing out of the spatial arrangement of the homestead, the spatial counterpart of the lineage structure.

592 As will be remembered (see p. 199), the elementary case is that of two
full (*soog*) brothers, who often continue to occupy a single homestead
602 long after they have set up separate families. Each will have more or less
596 self-contained quarters, but the homestead will have only one gateway (*zanɔr*), one cattle-yard (*sapak*), and one room for the family head (*zɔŋ*), signifying that it is a single homestead. Half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) may share a homestead in this way, but they usually separate more distinctly when they have growing families. Each will have his own gateway, &c., and *party walls divide his section of the homestead completely from those of* his brothers, making it what may be called a semi-detached homestead. Such a set of semi-detached homesteads may house a man and his mature first-born son, or a man and his deceased brother's sons. Sometimes two or more ortho-cousins (brothers, in native terminology) live thus side by side.

613 More usually, however, men whose nearest common ancestor is a grand-
621 father occupy completely separate dwellings, often very near to one another. Men whose nearest common ancestor is a great-grandfather never have permanent homes adjoining one another in this semi-detached way. These conditions of residence signalize successive stages of segmentation as the effective minimal lineage expands and splits into new effective minimal lineages. But what residential arrangements will prevail in a particular lineage segment depends, also, upon other circumstances, the most important of which are the economic and religious relations, and the character and disposition of the individuals concerned. Residential collocation is not a simple function of lineage relationship. There is a *tertium quid* linking them: the combined effect of land tenure, on which the whole economy of the household rests, and of the ancestor cult. For example, when a joint family splits, the man who leaves the ancestral home usually builds a homestead for himself on land belonging to the

613 621 nuclear lineage; but this land may be some distance from the ancestral home, owing to the scattering of holdings.

Looking at it from the native point of view, we should say, not that individuals tend to live near one another because they are agnatic kin, but that all lineages down to the effective minimal lineage tend to be tied to localities; and the more closely lineages are related, the greater is the spatial propinquity of their dwelling areas. The distribution of households is not rigidly parallel to the lineage structure at a given time. Mere spatial proximity cannot be directly translated into terms of lineage proximity. There is a diachronic element as well. Kurug's homestead (No. 6), for example, is nearer to Pumaan's (No. 5) in yards and feet than to Lɛbhtiis's; but Kurug is closer to Lɛbhtiis than to Pumaan in lineage. This is due chiefly to changes in the internal structure of their respective nuclear lineages in the last twenty or thirty years. The spatial relations of homesteads to one another reflect lineage relations in their diachronic aspect.

The Concept of the Lineage Home

613 621 778 Lineages tend to be tied to specific localities even if many of their members are permanently or temporarily away from the lineage home. Some representatives of the lineage will generally continue to reside near the ancient home where the spirits of the ancestors still dwell. The *daboog*, the site of the original home of the lineage, the first dwelling-place of its founding ancestor, is a hallowed spot. It is identified by reference to ancestral land and to the graves of the ancestors. These are the fixed things. Homesteads are not eternal. Their collocation reflects the *structure of the lineage* at a given time; but it changes as the composition and segmentation of the lineage alters. Whenever an alteration of this sort occurs, there is a corresponding reshuffle in the housing arrangements. New homesteads are erected, old homesteads replanned and rebuilt or abandoned. A lineage being an organic unit has, in native eyes, but one home (*yir*), though the material embodiment of this home is distributed at any given time. The *daboog* of the lineage of Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, the original homestead site of their ancestor Nɔpugzabər, is on what was in 1934 the home farm of the head of the lineage, Deemzeet, a stone's throw from his gateway. The graves of Nɔpugzabər and his sons, and a tree which sprouted on Nɔpugzabər's grave and is believed, therefore, to enshrine his spirit, mark the spot where his gateway (*zanɔr*) stood.

From this arises the concept of the lineage *zanɔr*. All the homesteads of its members together make up the lineage home (*yir*), and this home has its single gateway (*zanɔr*), the lineage *zanɔr*. The notion is pre-eminently symbolical, but its material embodiment is the homestead of the lineage head, and therefore, specifically, the gateway of his homestead. It applies to all levels of lineage organization, up to the maximal lineage. In a maximal lineage the site of the founding ancestor's homestead is generally a sacred spot, often marked by the erection on or near it of a [554] miniature room to represent the ancestral *zɔŋ*. This room is one of the shrines connected with the lineage *bɔyar*, and its custody is vested in a

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613
and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621
on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778
tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding [557]
ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes
possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But
many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive
the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [423]
by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [1049]
organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits 613
on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 621
life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 602
and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day,
and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies [191]
are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

613 621 602 [769] where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of residence, common interests, and common experience. The local concentration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

613 621 571 In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the [587] segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close [602] agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to 613
their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with 621
the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant 571
agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, 182
religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties 613
with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and 621
the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted, most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face communication and association in the organization of their collective life. Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by
their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the [212
absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, 401
communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of 371]
Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are the most important factors in the situation.

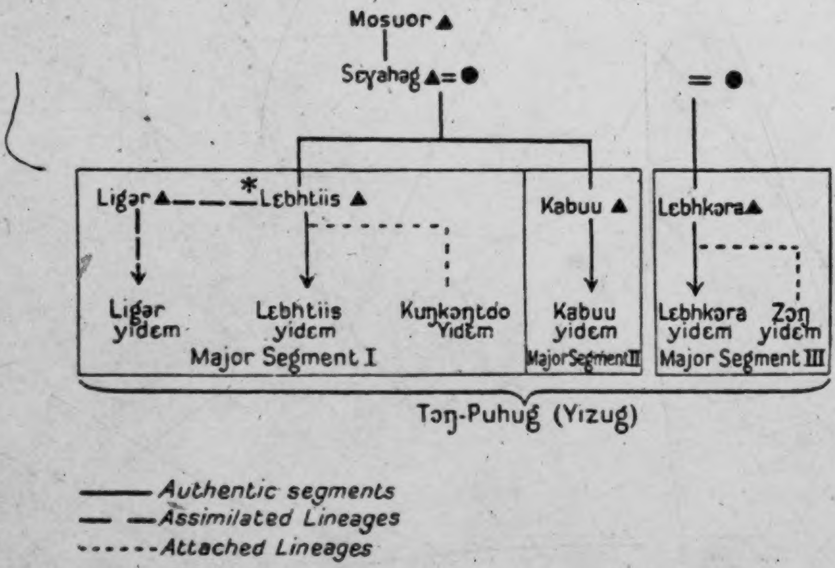
The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo. 613

Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster 621
of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligɔr yidɛm (see above, p. 57), homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic lineage with which Ligɔr yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm, the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son (*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

613 it forms a segment, is the structure of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm writ large. Dis-
621 counting the accessory lineages, Puhug comprises three major segments. It has two more lineages of the same order of segmentation as Lɛbhtiis yidɛm: Kabuu yidɛm and Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm. One segment of the former occupies the south-west or topmost (*zugni*) corner of Puhug (homesteads Nos. 25, 26, 27), abutting on the mass of great boulders that lies between Puhug and the watercourse that separates it from Wakii. The other [166] segment occupies the group of homesteads at Kumpɛyalɔyat. A minor branch, including the head of this segment, migrated to Yamələg some twenty years ago, and other members of it are settled at Gbambee, Woo, and in the outlying parts of Taleland, while some are abroad. Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm, together with their attached lineage, Zɔŋ yidɛm, live in the group of homesteads—Nos. 30, 31, 32, 34—adjacent to Kuorəg. These three major segments of Puhug (reckoned as *dugət*, medial lineages, in this context) are agnatically related as follows:


Mosuor ▲
Sɛyahəg ▲ = ●
= ●
Ligər ▲
*
Lɛbhtiis ▲
Kabuu ▲
Lɛbhkɔra ▲
Ligər yidɛm
Lɛbhtiis yidɛm
Kuŋkɔŋtdo Yidɛm
Kabuu yidɛm
Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm
Zɔŋ yidɛm
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
Major Segment III
Tɔŋ-Puhug (Yɪzug)
Authentic segments
Assimilated Lineages
Attached Lineages

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm and Kabuu yidɛm are *soog* (full brother) segments, it will be noted, and though they are not considered to form a single *dug* within Puhug, they have somewhat closer ties than either has with their *sunzɔ* segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis, while Ligər yidɛm have closer ties with Lɛbhtiis yidɛm than with the others, on account of their special connexion with the former. In the economic, ritual, and jural concerns of the section all the segments have the same status and the same degree of relative autonomy. But Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are recognized as the senior branch, and so rank above the others. The head (*kpeem*) of Lɛbhtiis yir is *ipso facto* the *kpeem* of Puhug.

The lineage structure of the other three *yizugət* of Tongo follows the same

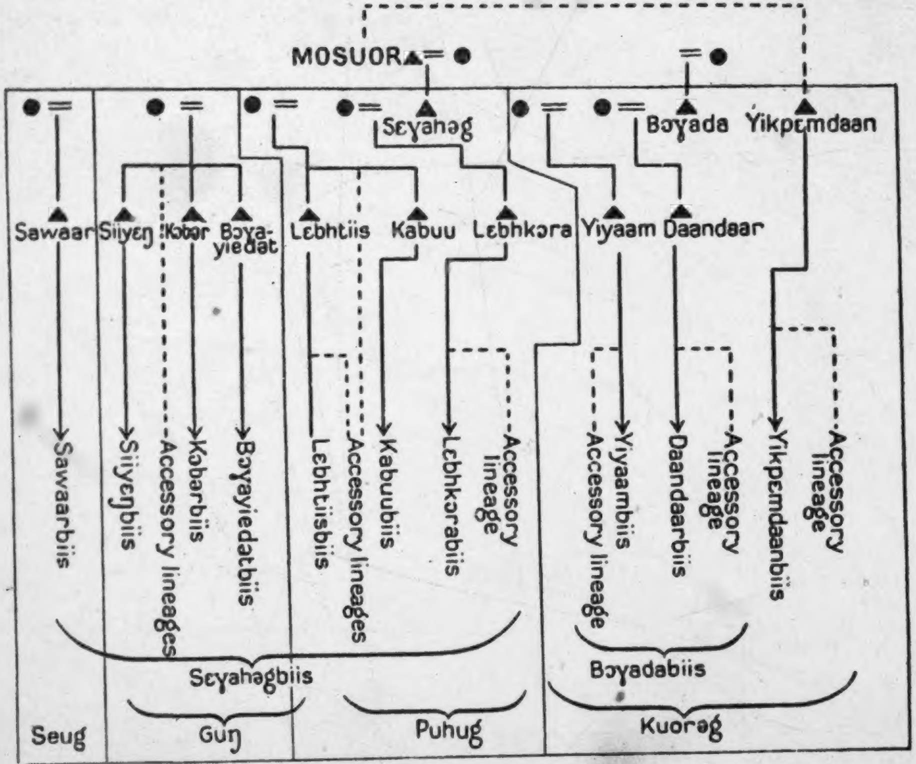
plan; and the architecture of the sub-clan as a whole is that of the *yizug* 613
on a larger scale. A skeleton genealogy (see p. 214) will suffice to show this. 621

Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg are constituted according to the same general plan as Puhug. But each section has features peculiar to itself, specializations of the general principles of *yizug* structure due to the particular genealogical constitution of each, and to the demographic and structural relations with one another of the four sections. This is characteristic of Tale social organization. Like the maximal lineages of a composite clan, co-ordinate segments of a maximal lineage are homologous with one another in structure, but frequently different in genealogical composition.

Viewed in terms of its own diachronic and local constitution, each is unique, its present form the precipitate of its own peculiar history. Thus Guŋ, as we have seen, is not a single local aggregate like Puhug. But the principle that lineage proximity and residential proximity go together prevails. Leaving aside those who have settled permanently or temporarily in outlying places, the Guŋdɛm at Guŋ proper are almost all Kɔbər yidɛm. The centre of settlement of Siiyɛŋ biis is Dekpieŋ. Bɔɣayiedət yidɛm are most scattered; but each of its segments tends to be a small local aggregate, and wherever in outlying places a cluster of homesteads belonging to Guŋ men is formed—at Zoo, at Gbambee, and at Woo—these men are almost invariably members of a single minor segment of the lineage.

The three segments of Guŋ (excluding Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, the assimilated lineage) are considered to be more closely united than the segments of Puhug because they have a single common progenitrix. They speak of themselves as 'members of one *dug* (*dug yɛni dɛm*)' in contraposition to the other sections of Tongo. Seug is the most homogeneous section of Tongo, both residentially and genealogically, for it consists of only one segment, of the same order as the component segments of the other *yizuɣət*. The members of Seug, too, speak of themselves as members of one *dug* in contraposition to the other three sections. Kuorəg is the most heterogeneous, genealogically, of the four sections. Its members are also more widely dispersed, most of them having moved to Gbambee in the past [166] thirty or forty years.

Puhug and Kuorəg both show clearly how local association is a factor of section organization in a maximal lineage in the same way as it is a factor of clanship in composite clans. Genealogically, Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm of Puhug are a lineage of the same order of segmentation as Seugdɛm; yet they do not, like the latter, constitute a separate *yizug*. Close local association with Puhug makes them a part of that section. Similarly, Yikpɛmdaan yir of Kuorəg on genealogical reckoning alone should rank as a section. Its founding ancestor is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*), possibly a 'brother' but certainly not a son, of Mosuor, who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu. The head of this lineage, who has the hereditary title of Yikpɛmdaan, has a position of special dignity at Tongo. He is in one sense the senior elder (*kpeem*) among all the elders of the sub-clan. Yikpɛmdaan's high status is due to his hereditary ownership of a special shrine (*bɔɣar*), Zoonkpaləg, which is both his lineage *bɔɣar* (*banam bɔɣar*) and a clan *bɔɣar*, analogous to the External *Bɔɣar* of the Talis, for the whole of Tongo. It is the shrine


MOSUOR
Sɛɣahəg
Bɔɣada
Yikpɛmdaan
Sawaar
Siiyɛŋ
Kɔbɔr
Bɔɣa-yiedat
Lɛbhtiis
Kabuu
Lɛbhkɔra
Yiyaam
Daandaar
Sawaarbiis
Siiyɛŋbiis
Accessory lineages
Kɔbɔrbiis
Bɔɣayiedatbiis
Lɛbhtiisbiis
Accessory lineages
Kabuubiis
Lɛbhkɔrabiis
Accessory lineage
Accessory lineage
Yiyaambiis
Daandaarbiis
Accessory lineage
Yikpɛmdaanbiis
Accessory lineage
Sɛɣahəgbiis
Bɔɣadabiis
Seug
Guŋ
Puhug
Kuorəg

Note: Daandaar biis are often referred to as Yidaan biis, after a title held by their founding ancestor

613 621 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔɣar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔɣada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛɣahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔɣada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛɣahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔɣada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zɔŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seɣahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zɔŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contraposition between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of [782] unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53-4). I have heard members of Zɔŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 613 621 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yɔrug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated, contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yɔrug Yin had been the head of Bɔɣada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates [273] [554] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Sayawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔak*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

764 quarters) for the other three sections of Tongo, since one of the hind
613 quarters (*gbɛr*) remains with the 'owner of the funeral', the man who is
621 celebrating it. Thus the genealogical cleavage between Kuorəg and the
rest of Tongo asserted itself. Kuorəg was treated as the *sunzɔp* of the rest
of Tongo and received a forequarter, the remaining hind quarter going
to the other three sections. There are stories of intra-clan quarrels in the
[578] old days in which Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug banded themselves together
against Kuorəg.

613 621 Nevertheless, in the corporate affairs of Tongo as a whole Kuorəg emerges as a segment of the same order as the other three sections. It is one of the four co-ordinate sections (*yizugət*). A significant index of this is the fact that in all four sections nine generations of ascendants are reckoned inclusively between the present section heads (*yizug kpeem*) and Mosuor. No Tongo man, however profoundly versed in the traditions and customs of his clan, is aware of this, however. Tallensi never have occasion to work out the genealogical relations of all the minimal segments of a maximal lineage with one another.

A man's genealogical knowledge is built up gradually and piecemeal in the give and take of social life, by participation in jural, ritual, and ceremonial activities. But a man of wide experience knows the lineage ancestry of the component segments of his own *dug* as far as its founding ancestor; he will know who were the putative brothers of this man, the founding ancestors of the other major segments of his section, and their sons, the founding ancestors of large sub-segments like Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, in his section; and he will know the founding ancestors of the other *yizugət* of the clan, and possibly their sons; but he will not know the whole descent of other major segments of other sections.

The nine-generation ladder of ascent found at Tongo is an index of the structural differentiation and internal equilibrium of the clan. As we have already observed, the maximal lineage (and Tongo functions as a maximal lineage, though strictly speaking it is not one) is unalterably fixed. Its major segments cannot be altered in relation to one another by further segmentation of its minimal segments. Its internal equilibrium is a function of the relations between its major segments; and the same principle applies to each major segment. This is symbolized in the tree of ascent of the people of Tongo. The structure of the maximal lineage does not permit of the recognition of more than one generation between Mosuor and his nine putative grandsons. Following the simplest possible pattern of symmetrical lineage segmentation, all Mosuor's progeny are first divided into two major (matri-)segments in accordance with the stereotyped scheme of differentiation by reference to their progenitrices; and each of these is again segmented on the same principle. Kuorəg counts as a section of the same order as Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug in the corporate affairs of the whole sub-clan, because this is necessary for the equilibrium of the sub-clan. The internal differentiation of Sɛɣahəg biis has reached an advanced stage. The relative autonomy of the three sections that constitute it is now so great that they can only act together as equal partners. Each of these three sections has a corporate unity and common interests that sometimes bring it into conflict with the other two

613 621 or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

613 621 161 Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and children), including members of the section and their families who live at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller area than any of the other sections.

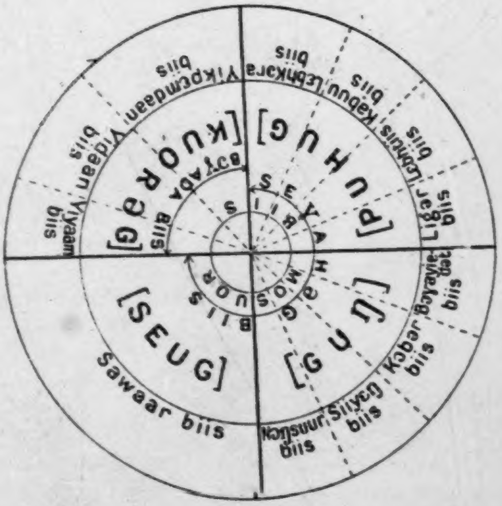
613 621 182 These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things. When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or ceremonially [782] slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section, as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides. Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and [787] Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*, that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug on the other.

613 621 The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

613 sex, station in life, character, and reputation of the deceased all influence the reactions of people to a death and the range of participation 613 in the funeral ceremonies. Every death is the corporate concern of the 621 deceased's medial lineage—his *dug* of the *yizug*. It is less stringently the 764 corporate concern of the whole *yizug*. Funerals of old and important men evoke the participation of the whole clan or sub-clan, but it is clan solidarity and corporate obligation on the level of the section that draw *sunzɔ* sections to the ceremonies. Only the death of a chief, a tɛndaana, or other politico-ritual functionary, is the obligatory concern of every segment of the clan or maximal lineage. Funerals of women and young people or children impose no obligations on *sunzɔ* sections of the

Diagram showing internal segmentation of Tongo.



—— Thick lines mark off sections (Yizugat)

- - - - Broken lines mark off major segments of sections, that is medial lineages (dugat)

deceased's (or her husband's) section. Whether or not their representatives come to condole with the bereaved household or to take part in the burial and funeral ceremonies rests entirely with the individual members of these sections and depends on individual ties of neighbourhood, kinship, or friendship with the deceased's family and *dug*. A funeral, even that of a politico-ritual officer, is primarily the direct concern of every member of the deceased's segment of the clan or maximal lineage. It concerns *sunzɔ* segments only at the level of corporate relations, because every event that affects the existence and constitution of one part of the clan or maximal lineage impinges on its common interests.

622 621 613 [241] We may contrast with this a corporate activity in a wider sense, such as the sacrifice to Mosuor at Tongo, to which we have several times referred, the Harvest Festival, or the communal hoeing of the chief's bush farm, which has become an established custom under British rule. The pivot of these activities is always the chief, who stands for the whole sub-clan and its common interests and values, and whose office transcends the cleavages inherent in its lineage segmentation. In these activities the

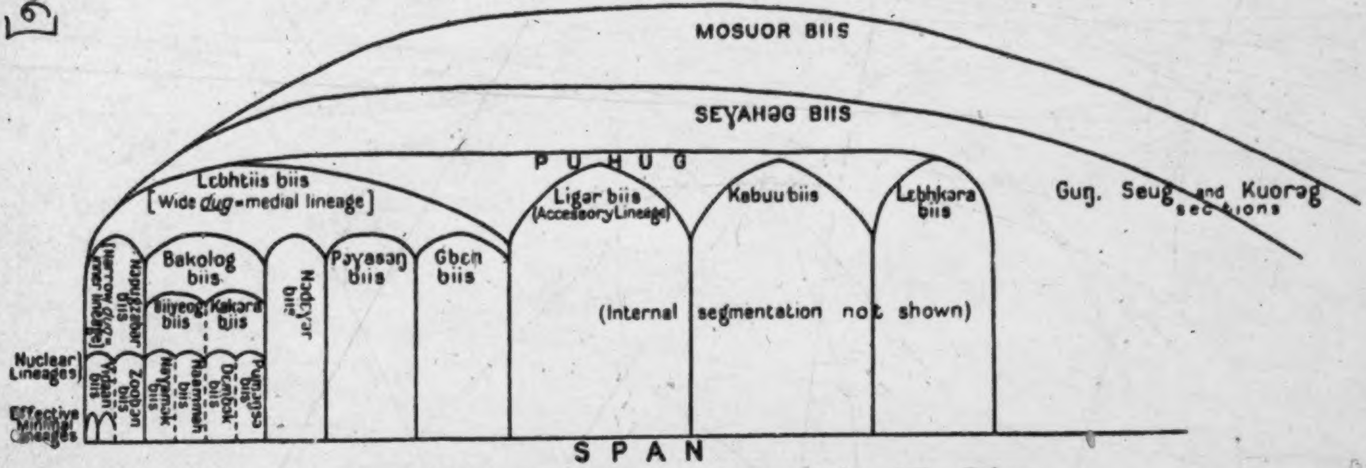

MOSUOR BIIS
SEƔAHƏG BIIS
P U H U G
Lɛbhtiis biis
[Wide dug = medial lineage]
Ligar biis
(Accessory Lineage)
Kabuu biis
Lɛbhkara biis
Guŋ. Seug and Kuorəg sections
[Narrow dug = inner lineage]
Napugzabar biis
Bakolog biis
Biiyeog biis
Kakara biis
Nadɛyar biis
Pɔyasaŋ biis
Gbɛn biis
(Internal segmentation not shown)
Nuclear Lineages
Effective Minimal Lineages
Yidaan biis
Zoopɔn biis
Nayɛmak biis
Naamneh biis
Dɛmbok biis
Puŋaŋsa biis
S P A N

Diagram showing the internal segmentation of Tɔŋ-Puhug

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a
sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar*
and Sɛɣahəg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose
section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and
officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Gɛnət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahəg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tendaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour- 461
water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bɔɣar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

778 The graves of Sɛγahɔg and Bɔγada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔγada's grave
is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested
in Kuorɔg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly
Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbɔr, and Bɔγayiedɔt, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie
buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority
of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or
diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through
the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus
Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted
as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival
and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading
of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakɔradɛm,
Gɛnɔt's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that
remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by
Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔγada's grave is proof to the
natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants
to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorɔg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans
the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the
segments of these *yizugɔt* to follow the same rule more markedly. The
correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of
the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo
clans living in the vicinity of Yamɔlɔg and Sie—the group of clans which
the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos
—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate
forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small
cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔγar* takes the place of
the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of
the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most
important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is
often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession
also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the
maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the
actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought
into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office
of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds
known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

Structure of Peripheral Settlements

In the newer settlements there are no lineages of large span. Where 613
segments of maximal lineages, whose homes are in the old settlements, 621
have been settled for more than a generation, those of their members 166
remaining in the peripheral settlements do not always live in close proximity to one another. People shift readily to take up new land, and spread widely so as to have a large area for cultivation immediately around the homestead, as we have learnt. But the tendency for a lineage to become locally stabilized on the land of its ancestors, near their graves and original home, operates strongly too, and has been strengthened in recent years. .

Many men at Woo, Biuŋ, and Datɔk now live on land originally broken for cultivation by their fathers, grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers. A powerful incentive to remain there is the fact that they now hold this land by right of inheritance. An irresistible sanction binding them to these new settlements is the fact that their fathers and grandfathers lie buried there. Born and bred in these settlements, they look upon them as their homes, while maintaining strong ties with their original clan settlements, which they regard as the clan homes.

The effect is to establish new, permanent, local nuclei for minor branches of lineages anchored in the old settlement. Around these nuclei we sometimes find a small cluster of homesteads, the heads of which are all members of a lineage segment of two, three, or at the most four generations. But this is far from common. As we have mentioned before, these settlements have been, and are being, occupied by people of very diverse genealogical origin from all parts of Taleland and neighbouring areas. This is particularly marked in the case of Datɔk. Biuŋ and Woo have been settled chiefly by people from Tongo and the places immediately adjacent to or socially connected with Tongo. In addition to the bonds of local cohesion the inhabitants of these places have also the ties of political and ritual interdependence which they bring with them from their original clan settlements. At Datɔk no such bonds are carried over into the new community. A Gban man may have as his nearest neighbours a man from Ba'ari, a man from Bɔlɔga, a man from Yamɔlɔg, and a man from Bongo. The basis of political unity is locality rather than lineage. The sections of Datɔk, for example, are local units, wards, or quarters, not genealogical-cum-local units.

But it is characteristic of Tale social organization that the bonds of local association never stand alone and are never sufficient in themselves to generate bonds of solidarity. Mere contiguity requires some degree of mutual accommodation. It does not, in a society without a constituted legal system or territorially organized political units, create mutual legal obligations, or provide a basis for corporate relations between individuals. Hence it must be reinforced by, and indeed founded on, more fundamental ties which are morally and jurally binding in their own right. In the older settlements lineage ties have this function; in new settlements [602]
kinship ties take their place.

The following excerpt from a census of a part of Datɔk illustrates this.

613 It will be seen that both affinal and cognatic kinship ties regulate the collocation of homesteads.

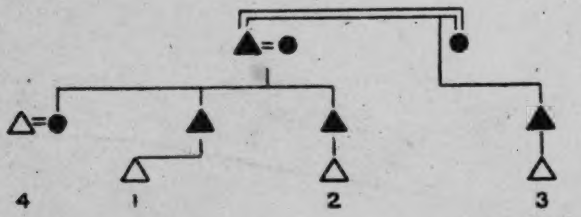
621 *Section: Zalɔmwuuri.* (A local subdivision of Datɔk, named after the
166 stream forming one of its boundaries.)

Homestead 1. This belongs to Latammi, a man of about 55, whose father, a Gar man, came to build his house and to farm here about fifty years ago. He died and was buried at his new home. Latammi, his eldest son, then inherited the homestead and the surrounding farm-land, and remained living there.

Homestead 2. About 200 yards away, is owned by Latammi's father's younger brother's (*pit soog*) son. This young man formerly shared Latammi's homestead but recently moved out to set up in his own.

Homestead 3. About 250 yards away from 1. Latammi's father's half-brother (*sunzɔ*) built this homestead, having come to settle here shortly after Latammi's father. This man died recently and the homestead and surrounding farm-land now belong to his son.

The following genealogy shows how the heads of these three homesteads are related:



Together they constitute a lineage of small span, a segment of a greater lineage whose home is at Gar. Their residential collocation is exactly the same as it would be if they were living at Gar or in any of the older settlements.

Homestead 4. About 200 yards from 1. This is the homestead of a Ba'ari man who migrated to Datɔk about three years ago. He is a brother-in-law (sister's husband) (*dakii*) of Latammi's late father (see genealogy above), and was, on this account, given land on which to build and settle by the latter's half-brother's son of Homestead 3.

Homestead 5. About a quarter of a mile from 1. This belongs to Naambɔn, whose father, a man from Bɔlɔga, came to build and settle here some forty years ago. This man had first migrated from Bɔlɔga to Kosabɔlɔg, on the outskirts of Duusi. While he was living there Teroog (now an old man), a member of the same maximal lineage as Latammi's father, who lives in another section of Datɔk, married one of the Bɔlɔga man's daughters. The land he held at Duusi proved to be unsatisfactory, so Naambɔn's father decided to move to Datɔk. Through the good offices
[606] of his son-in-law, Teroog, he was introduced to Latammi's father, who (as a son-in-law (*deem*) in the classificatory sense) gave him land to settle on near the fringe of the huge area he had marked out as a farm for himself.

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such 166
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry 602
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settle- 571
ments. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔɣaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE XI

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(*a*) The grave of Tendaan Genət and the space believed to have been occupied by his homestead and Mosuor's, now the sacred dancing ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, at Tongo. Note that it is not cultivated.

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341

(*b*) A miniature homestead symbolizing the ancestral home of a maximal lineage or clan. Note the lineage *bɔɣar* against the outside wall.

[FACING p.224]

621 loyal to the interests of these clan settlements. But the political structure
613 of the newer settlements is rapidly crystallizing out, on the basis of a
177 territorial unity reinforced by inter-individual kinship ties. This process has been greatly accelerated under the influence of British rule, with its stress on the territorial definition of political units and the support it gives to chiefs and headmen in the exercise of administrative and judicial functions.

Seniority and Authority in the Lineage

613 In the course of our morphological analysis of the lineage system from
182 within, we have made many references to the corporate activities in which this system emerges. As in our study of clanship, it has been convenient to speak as if the lineage structure exists and persists apart from the activities in which it emerges. But this is only an analytical device which we shall consider more fully presently. The implied distinction between the structure of the lineage and its functions does, however, bring out the important fact that the lineage structure is more than any of its functions. It is the integral of what is common to all Tale institutions in which the patrilineal line operates as an organizing principle. It is the general factor of consistency, coherence, and continuity in the social structure.

613 The concept of social structure essentially implies ordered extension *in time* as well as ordered articulation *at a given time*. This is often overlooked in the study of primitive society. Among the Tallensi the lineage system enables us to see the operation of the time factor in social structure in a very concrete way.[1] We see how the lineage structure at a given time incapsulates[2] all that is structurally relevant of its past phases and at the same time continually thrusts its growing-points forward. The dynamic equilibrium of a lineage is an equilibrium in time.

The key position, whenever a lineage emerges in function—and this applies to lineages of any span and all orders of segmentation—is that of the lineage head (*kpeem*). He is, to revert to an analogy previously used, the keystone of the arch. He does not stand above the lineage; he is part of it. *Kpeem* literally means 'senior': a *kpeem* is a senior, an elder. The head of the lineage is the most senior male of the group. The head of a lineage and his age or generation equals in the lineage are collectively designated 'the elders (*kpcm*)'. They are for the most part the heads of the component segments of the lineage.

613 The rule of seniority, as might be expected in so homogeneous and
888 equalitarian a society, plays an important part in all Tale social relations. When a group of boys are out herding cattle the oldest among them are in charge. The women of a household defer to the most senior by generation, age, or marital status among them. In all collective activities of men the places of honour are taken by the most senior men, the *kpcm*. Seniority commands deference at all times.

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[1] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *cit. supra*; also Forde, op. cit. and his previous papers cited there; and a brilliant discussion of this point in E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, ch. 3.

[2] I owe this valuable concept to R. G. Collingwood's *Autobiography*.

PLATE XII

415
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(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔɣar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔɣar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

782
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(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔɣar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p.225]

613 561 Seniority (*kpɛmət*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔɣam pu yakət dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

613 [554] No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Tɔŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*ɛŋ yaləŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔɣar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

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[648] [1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next volume of this study.

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tendaana says of another 'I gave

613 Tallensi say that lineage headship is conferred by inheritance of, or succession to (the same term, *vaa*, vb. is used for both), firstly, the custody of the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔyar*), and secondly the patrimonial property (*faar*), in particular the home farm (*saman*) of the lineage. Within the nuclear lineage, or at most the inner lineage, both conditions apply; beyond that limit lineage headship does not confer title to land, except in a few special cases; it is determined solely by succession to the custody of the *bɔyar*. The rules of inheritance and succession are backed by the most powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and supported by the whole fabric of the social system. Within the medial lineage inheritance disputes occur so rarely as to be negligible. This is a reflection of the strong solidarity of this unit, and of the recognition of classificatory fatherhood within it. Beyond that range succession disputes are settled either by the arbitration of the maximal lineage head or by an appeal to the ancestors through divination or an oracle test.

613
577 The range of application of the two conditions of *kpɛmət* define the gradation of powers and functions discharged by lineage heads. Within the nuclear (or at most inner) lineage the head has paternal authority[1] associated with his control of the farm-land and of the labour of his dependants. He has corresponding jural and ritual responsibilities for the junior members of the lineage. Formally, his is the decisive voice in all matters in which the lineage emerges as a corporate unit—for example, in the disposal of the daughters in marriage and in the payment of bride-price for sons' wives. Beyond the nuclear lineage the lineage head's powers and authority are purely moral and ritual. He cannot, for instance, command the services of any member of the lineage (outside his nuclear lineage) as of right, nor is he responsible for any of them in such matters as bride-price payments. And the degree to which he commands the loyalty of his lineage co-members depends considerably on his personality. They will always support him unhesitatingly where the common interests of the lineage are concerned, but they might not, in private matters, treat him with the confidence due to his status if he lacks tact or tries to be dictatorial. A lineage head represents the lineage. He is the pivot of its corporate unity. Everything he does as lineage head is for and on behalf of the lineage. Hence he never takes action in corporate affairs without consulting and obtaining the consent of the heads of all the component segments of the lineage. In fact a lineage head very rarely takes action in corporate matters without the presence of all the senior male members of the lineage. Thus it is common for the initiative and drive in corporate activities to come from younger men of intelligence [illegible] forceful personality, though they are carried out by, or in the name of, the lineage head. This is especially the case when, as often happens, lineage heads are old and infirm. Tinta'aləm's senility did not diminish the respect and affection in which he was held by all the people

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[648] him land to dwell on and therefore I am his superior' he must not be taken literally. He is referring to a tradition of settlement going back to the founding ancestors of their lineages.

[1] We analyse the function of classificatory fatherhood and of paternal authority in the lineage more fully in the second volume of this study.

of Təŋ-Kuorəg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied,
often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 769
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody 182
of the lineage *bɔγar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔγar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage 182
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔγar* is 782
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, but all who participate feel them to be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines. And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage), and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔyar* of his medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of a sacrifice to the *bɔyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's* duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
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of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders, makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage. It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of interlineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not, the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway. This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—cf. p. 208) (*Ti yela kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves 224
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and 587
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head of her nucleur lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

613 price;[1] and conversely, it is he who is directly responsible for the payment 582 of bride-price for the wives of members of the nuclear lineage, and for any other outlay entailed by the marriage formalities. But for all these transactions the formal consent (which is in fact never withheld) of the medial lineage head is required. This has the force of a blessing. When 613 the bridegroom's people send the placation gifts (*lu sendaan*) by which the 583 marriage is regularized, the messenger goes first to the head of the girl's medial or maximal lineage, and gives him a live cock, the most important item among the placation gifts.[2] By accepting the live cock the lineage head signifies the acquiescence of the whole lineage in the marriage and the blessing of the ancestors thereon. Whether or not bride-price is paid, the girl is thereafter the jurally recognized wife of the bridegroom. As a rule it is perfectly safe for the lineage head to accept the cock, as placation gifts are only sent when the head of the girl's nuclear lineage consents. But cases do occur in which they are sent without the knowledge of the latter as a dodge by which to compel him to acquiesce in the marriage. Then if the head of the medial lineage accepts the live cock, the head of the girl's nuclear lineage must perforce acquiesce. This makes the marriage binding but does not secure it against dissolution through action taken by the head of the girl's nuclear lineage.

In the same way, when a woman's father's people come to demand the payment of bride-price from her husband's nuclear lineage, they go first to the head of the husband's medial lineage. He conducts the messengers to the head of the husband's nuclear lineage and formally presides over the negotiations.

Marriage transactions illustrate a very important principle of Tale jural relations. They are always relations between lineage units. Even when they appear to involve only particular individuals the lineage framework is implicit in the transaction. But this does not mean that all Tale jural relations are based on the concept of collective responsibility. On the contrary, jural responsibility is precisely fixed on particular individuals or exactly defined corporate units. This is graphically summed up in many Tale maxims. Thus they say 'A pipe sounds best in its owner's mouth (*Yiig m-mah ka daana nuoni*)'—that is, an action should be answered for by the person directly responsible for it. What we find, rather, is that all jural relations involve a configuration of rights on one side and a configuration of responsibilities on the other, both corresponding to the range of lineage segments involved. And no jural transaction is complete until the whole configuration of rights and responsibilities, on both sides, is brought into action. Though marriage formalities involve primarily the nuclear lineage and medial lineage, they presuppose the entire framework of maximal lineage and clan relations; and this is the case with most other jural relations among the Tallensi.

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[1] Subject to limitations that will be detailed in our next volume.

[2] In many clans there is an arrangement between pairs of medial or maximal [602] lineages that have some special tie of kinship by which the *sendaan* cock for a girl of one lineage is delivered to the *kpeem* of the other lineage and vice versa. E.g. this arrangement obtains between Lebhtiis yidem and Kabuu yidem at Tɔŋ-Puhug and is a sign of their close kinship as lineages sprung from one original progenitrix (see p. 212).

CHAPTER XIII

THE FORM OF TALE SOCIETY

The Socio-geographic Region

OUR survey of the macroscopic structure of Tale society has led us 181 from the consideration of the natives' habits of grouping themselves by name, through an analysis of Tale clanship, to the ritual institutions that form the crowning mechanism of co-ordination in the system, and finally to the internal structure of the settlement and the lineage. An ethnographer accustomed to think of a native society as a unit of social organization marked off by precise territorial, political, or cultural boundaries might protest against our frequent references to 'Tale society'. But this habit of thought, appropriate enough in dealing with island communities, nomadic tribes, or territorially organized states, must be discarded if we wish to understand the structure of societies like that of the Tallensi. For the concept of a society as a closed unit, a sort of thing distinguishable from like things in the same way as one house is distinguishable from another or one animal from another, we must substitute the concept of society as a socio-geographic region, the social elements of which are more closely knit together among themselves than any of them are knit together with social elements of the same kind outside that region. We must substitute a relative and dynamic concept for an absolute and static one. If we look at the area of Voltaic culture as a whole, we can imagine innumerable currents of social life flowing through it in all directions. There are major currents and tributary currents. They intersect in all sorts of ways. But at particular places the forces of which the currents are an expression act in such a way as to draw together a large number, if not all, of the major currents. These regions of maximum confluence would correspond to what we have called a socio-geographic region, or a society. If we follow any single current from a region of maximum confluence it leads us right out of that region into another region. It is only if we look at the region from within that we see the coherence it has as a result of the confluence of many social currents.

But metaphors are proverbially treacherous and we must return to our proper subject-matter. The concept of society we have formulated enables us to see clearly the most characteristic feature of Tale society. It is a segmentary[1] system. At bottom this is a consequence of the fact 631
that the Tallensi have not got a centralized, unified, political organization. 171
This is clear if we compare the Tallensi with some other African peoples such as the Tswana of Bechuanaland Protectorate,[2] the Bemba of Northern

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M., and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (editors), *African Political Systems*, 1940, 'Introduction', and Evans-Pritchard, E. E., *The Nuer*, 1940.

[2] Cf. Schapera, I., *Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, 1938, and 'The Political Organization of the Ngwato', in *African Political Systems*, cited above.

631 171 Rhodesia,[1] or the Ashanti of the Gold Coast.[2] These peoples have a pyramidal social structure corresponding to their pyramidal form of government. From the village to the tribal unit we find a hierarchy of territorial-political units, the greater made up of a collection of the lesser, and culminating in the whole tribal unit. This is associated with a corresponding hierarchy of political offices, from the village headman to the paramount chief at the apex. Among the Tallensi[3] there is no single person or body of persons vested with supreme executive and administrative authority over the whole of Taleland. Government is laterally distributed amongst all the corporate units that make up the society, instead of being vertically distributed as in pyramidal societies. All the corporate units are, broadly speaking, politically equal; all are segments of the same structural order.

621 This is one aspect of what is meant by describing Tale society as segmentary in form. But the concept has further implications. The corporate units that compose Tale society are not a casual agglomerate of concrete bodies, but are socially articulated and interconnected with one another; and they are thus interrelated in a segmentary series. This principle of association between defined social units runs right through the structure of Tale society. It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system. This rule holds whether the associations are temporary, for a particular end, or form permanent groupings. Furthermore, the principles according to which the associations occur are either uniform for a whole series of segments of increasing dimension or are so related to one another that principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.

128 This is an architectural way of looking at the structure of Tale society. It is the line we have largely followed in the preceding chapters, where we have been concerned with the largest corporate units into which the Tallensi are organized. Our attention has been fixed mainly on the permanent edifice in which social relations and activities are congealed rather than on their emergence in process. We have been analysing the product of social segmentation rather than the process itself. To distinguish between product and process is, however, merely an analytic convenience in dealing with social facts. In reality what we denote as a product is a set of regularities and recurrences of process. A corporate unit is really the sum total of corporate relations and activities occurring amongst a defined group of individuals. We can think of a maximal lineage as an architectural segment of a composite clan in the same way as we can picture one storey of a modern building as a lateral segment of the whole. A maximal lineage, however, differs from a part of a building of brick and wood in that it is not always 'there', tactually and visibly.

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[1] Cf. Richards, Audrey I., 'The Political System of the Bemba Tribe', in *African Political Systems*, and *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, 1939.

[2] Cf. Rattray, R. S., *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, 1929.

[3] A fuller analysis will be found in the 'Introduction' and in my article on 'The Political System of the Tallensi' in *African Political Systems*.

It emerges when certain social processes and activities are in play; it is 183
potential when they are not in play. Difficult as it is to convey this to a reader, it is something which the observer is constantly aware of. A maximal lineage emerges only in relation to other maximal lineages, and a clan in relation to other clans. When we speak of lineages being segmentarily related to one another and to the composite clan embracing them, we mean that their relations are mutual, symmetrical, and summative. A is related to B in the same way as B is related to A and the sum of their interrelations gives us a set of relations of the same kind but of higher order.

Putting it thus abstractly, however, leaves out a point of the utmost importance. The relations between individuals and between groups in which corporate units like the maximal lineage emerge are social relations. They are subject to jural, moral, and ritual norms; they are the means of achieving human purposes, of getting a livelihood, of marrying and procreating, of expressing emotional attitudes, organizing the intercourse of people, and so forth. A maximal lineage emerges in terms of jurally, morally, and ritually defined ties and cleavages that exist between it and other specified maximal lineages. A segmentary relationship between lineages or any other social units implies the existence of specific ties and cleavages which have the effect of making each unit a determining factor in the emergence of the other units. This is the basis of the concept of a field of social relations which we have used to describe the way in which lineages are differentiated from and articulated with one another.

The concept of a field of social relations has enabled us to see how 121
clanship acts as a factor of social integration. Through the overlapping of the fields of clanship of adjacent maximal lineages chains of clanship ties interlinking a whole group of lineages are established. Thus each lineage can be regarded as the centre of a series of zones of clanship of increasing amplitude and diminishing integration. The clan is the central region of such a system, a wider community like that of the Hill Talis constitutes the next region, and beyond that lie still wider regions of diminishing importance for the members of the lineage that is taken as the starting-point.

We have seen that there are three major sub-regions within the socio- 621
geographic region we have called Taleland, within each of which there is a greater degree of interarticulation of lineages and clans, and therefore closer integration, than there is between them. But the three sub-regions overlap with each other and with adjacent non-Tale regions. They have a particularly important connecting system in the chain of sub-clans of Mosuor biis.

This system of regions or communities constituted primarily by the 621
operation of the ties and cleavages of clanship is the foundation of a 182
scheme of ritual values and relationships which serves to reinforce the clanship organization by means of mystical sanctions and by co-ordinating the interrelations of lineages and clans at a higher level. Among the Tallensi the web of clanship and the web of ritual relationships take the place, as mechanisms of social integration, of a constituted governmental

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
184 men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[555] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577
ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721
reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life.
There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173
kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives.
At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst
it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they
shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one.
Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or
political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more
influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his
prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime,
about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛlɔg*)'
him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which
resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges
and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good
farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worthwhile life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682
the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577
the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721
in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was
not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the
Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In
1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk
about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury,
lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their
long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse
still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors
of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards.
And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their
young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the
animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721
matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673
for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might
follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib 682
died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an
unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after
another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out
his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him
and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills
Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one
of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628
neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578
of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—
that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations,
in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

[illegible] 578 to enforcement by explicit or implicit sanctions—it prevailed only within the clan or a cluster of closely interrelated clans, or between individual kinsfolk of different clans. Even so, every line of social cleavage was a source of weakness to the sanctions of right. It needed very little temptation or provocation for men of different clans or maximal lineages, however close the links between their respective groups, to lay violent hands on one another's property, person, or dependants. There was a general atmosphere of non-cognizance of rights *as such*. Times of crisis, such as famine, brought about a relapse into lawlessness.

691 628 In consequence the ultimate sanction of jural rights outside the clan was self-help. If a man could not recover a wife who had been abducted or a bride-price debt owing to him through the intermediation of the elders of his clan and those of the abductor's or debtor's clan, he had the right to use self-help and make a raid on the cattle of the offender's clan. This was legitimate and reprisals were not allowed. If the offender were to attempt any, his clansmen would not support him. But these raids 726 might result in an armed clash with the cattle herds. Men might be killed; and then war flared up.

721 628 578 But raiding (*ŋɔk*), as a measure of self-help, in itself was not an act of war. It led to war if men were killed, but not if there were no bloodshed. Sometimes, even if a raid ended in an affray and men were killed, a reconciliation was made before an interclan fight could develop. The Tallensi distinguished precisely between raiding, as a method of self-help which they considered a legitimate jural device for redressing a wrong, and warfare. The custom of raiding reinforced warfare because it provided occasions for armed clashes and because of the habit of mind that lay behind it. Though this habit ran counter to the moral repugnance of the Tallensi to shedding human blood, it tolerated the use of violence as the proper ultimate means of asserting one's rights. This attitude still survives, to some extent. Men still carry their weapons when they go on a journey. Disputes over wives or unpaid debts sometimes bring the parties to the brink of a sanguinary fight. One reason why these fights are suppressed by the natives themselves before they become serious is the fear of the white man with his armed police in the background. Another [177] and more powerful reason is the system of chiefs' tribunals and District Commissioners' courts imposed by the British. This judicial system has become an established part of native life. It has provided an effectively sanctioned alternative to self-help and made the latter obsolete (cf. p. 13). But in the past the attitude of mind we have described led the natives to think of warfare in its corporate aspect as a mechanism for redressing wrongs that could not otherwise be put right. Considering their lack of a single, all-embracing government and their segmentary social structure, it was inevitable that conflicts should often arise that could only be settled by fighting.[1]

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[1] In this connexion it is worth noting that the Tallensi have only one term, *zabər*, for every kind of fighting, from a quarrel between co-wives to a war. But, in addition, war was distinguished by referring to it euphemistically as 'arrows' (*peema*). Thus a war is identified as 'the arrows of so-and-so', after its chief instigator.

Forty years ago, when no man ventured outside the bounds of his own 578 settlement without weapons, when it was a common thing for a little group of armed men to raid the cattle of another clan in settlement of a debt, when a passing member of a different clan could be set upon and robbed, if he was unprotected, a trivial argument might lead to blows in the twinkling of an eye. Thus many fights occurred between clans and 721 lineages. But general wars, involving all the Tallensi, were less frequent. Only three seem to have taken place in the last three or four generations.

These general wars always took place between Tale clans or between some Tale clans and neighbouring non-Tale clans. The Tallensi never united for defence or offence against other 'tribes'. Wars began between adjacent clans which were not united by direct or indirect ties of clanship, and then spread by mobilizing the opposing forces along the lines of structural interconnexions which we have described. This was a basic feature of warfare. Tongo could not fight Gorogo directly, for to get at the men of Gorogo the Tongo warriors would have to cross the hostile territory of Gbeog and Wakii. Tenzugu could only fight Tongo if Wakii and Soog gave their men passage and took their side. A general war therefore inevitably followed the line of major cleavage between the Namoos and non-Namoos. An example will show how this occurred.

Some fifty years ago a quarrel between a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man led to a general war. It began in the way many of those wars did, with an argument about a wife. There was dancing at Yaɣazuor one night and a Kpatia man who was present was accused of trying to abduct the wife of a Yaɣazuor man. Next day one of the annual communal game drives took place. A bush turkey was brought down and both a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man claimed it. Such disputes were and still are common at these big game drives, when it is often difficult to determine whose club or arrow inflicted the death blow on an animal. In the circumstances, with the competitive spirit at its highest pitch, with men standing beside their clansmen with weapons in hand, with the excitement of the chase as a stimulus, words soon led to blows. Besides, the squabble of the previous evening over the woman was still rankling. So fighting broke out between the men of Yaɣazuor and the men of Kpatia.

Next morning the alarum was raised at both settlements. Ba'ari at 726 once came out to help its *sunzɔp* the Yaɣazuor men. Namɔɣalug and Sie rallied to the side of their fellow Namoos at Kpatia. Yamɔlɔg followed suit. Tongo, to assist Sie and Yamɔlɔg, attacked Ba'ari. Gbeog then attacked Tongo to help Ba'ari; Wakii and Soog, followed shortly by Tenzugu, came out to support their kin, the Gbeog people; Zoo immediately set out against the Hill Talis in support of Tongo, and Zubiuŋ, hitherto neutral, followed suit. Then Gorogo came to the help of Gbeog; and Sii and Yinduuri, mindful of their ties with Tongo through the chiefship of Sii, attacked Gorogo from the rear. All this happened in two or three days. Then the Gbizug and Wakii tendaanas, armed with 728 their ritual peacemaking powers, intervened and compelled the combatants to lay down arms. Tongo and Wakii made peace and the news was broadcast from clan to clan. Once two important representative clans made peace thus, all the others had to stop fighting. The ties of clanship

728 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire when its allied clan made peace.

727 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the
721 old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in
721 its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

[621] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region
[182] is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was
726 that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied
411 men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows,
[701] their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

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[1] A clan-head could initiate a just war of revenge, with the consent of all the clan elders, and after consulting a diviner, in theory without incurring mystical blood-guilt. And yet, in after years, misfortunes falling on his descendants might be ascribed to this act.

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have
seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely [462
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights. As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of the wound.

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(a) Yikpemdaana of Tongo, the *kpeem* of Toŋ-Kuorəg.

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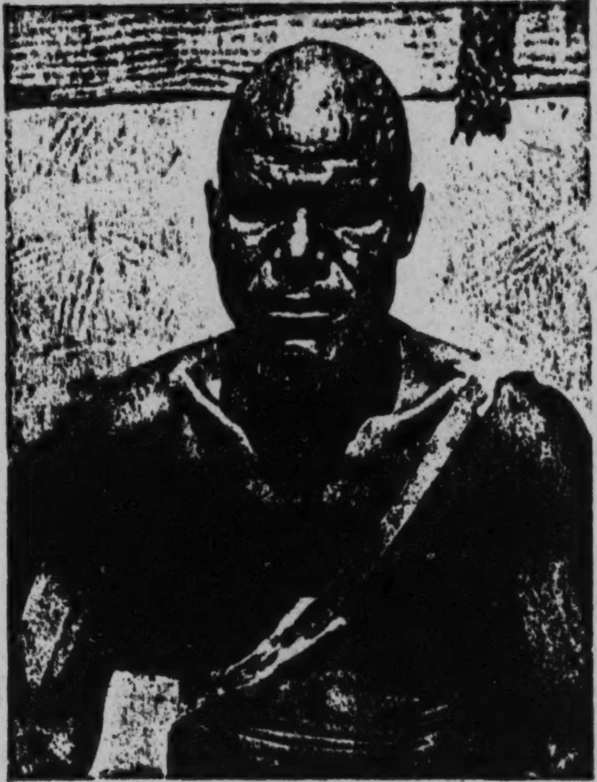

(b) Loyani, a highly respected junior elder of Zubiuŋ.

[facing p.240]

621 and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a
511 direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which
291 produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its
[465] own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land;
311 but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the
433 past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the
721 society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances
that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
272 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

× 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
508 contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed
during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

PLATE XIV

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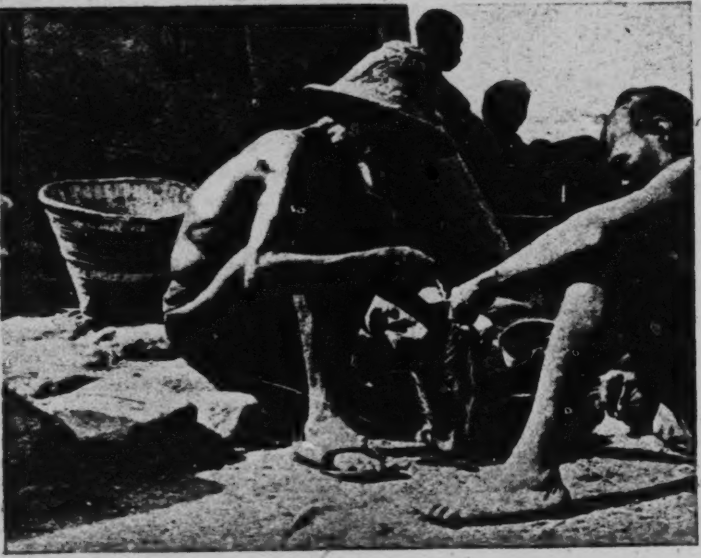

(*a*) *Sunɔɔp m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

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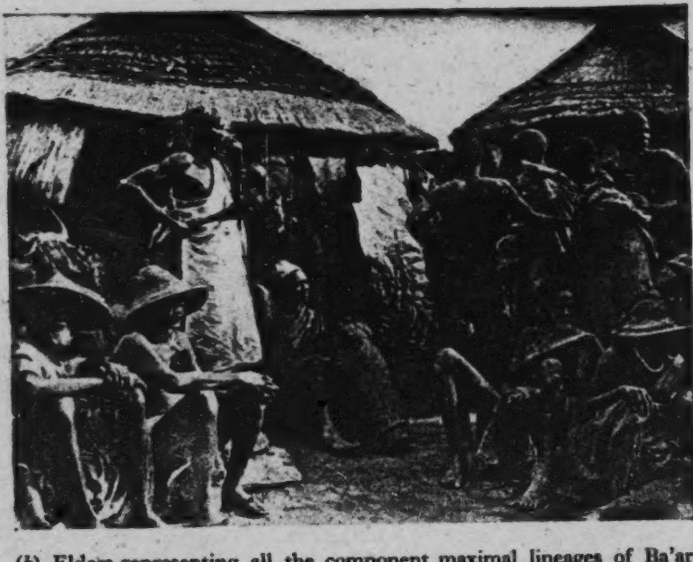

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tendaana at his homestead.

[facing p. 241]

578 acts as peacemaker. But in principle they go back to the same facts as general wars, the structural differentiation of maximal lineages and clans.

We can see that Tale wars were in fact a kind of intestine feud within a single homogeneous social region, rather than wars in our sense. We have refrained from calling them feuds because they were usually short and sharp and never led to a long series of mutual reprisals. If one war was followed a year later by a war of revenge, as in the instance given in this chapter, that was the end of it. One might even describe them as a [669] kind of civil war, since they sprang from the cleavages inherent in the social structure, particularly the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos. They served to keep these cleavages alive, to defend the corporate unity of the maximal lineage and clan and the corporate rights associated with it, against other like units. They were, at bottom, a mechanism for resolving tensions within the society[1] and not an instrument of political action against outsiders. The ever-present possibility of war was a potent factor in maintaining the segmentary structure of the society. It achieved this by enhancing to the utmost both aspects of the social differentiation of maximal lineages and clans—the demarcation of unit from unit by genealogical and local criteria, and the corporate solidarity of each unit in its own right. However much the Tallensi 578 deplored bloodshed among them, as in civilized nations, in warfare all 186 personal interests were subordinated to the common interest of the clan or maximal lineage, whether its cause was just or not. All normal activities were suspended and every man, woman, and adolescent child took some part in the fighting or in caring for the wants of the fighters. Clan patriotism reached a pitch of fervour which no other occasion could evoke. It was felt as passionately by the women and girls carrying water to the fighters and dragging the wounded away, and by the old men at home who tended the wounded and went around from shrine to shrine making sacrifices to the ancestors, as by the fighting men. Something of this spirit comes out to-day in the inaugural ceremonies of an important elder's funeral, when the whole clan turns out for a pageant mimicking the activities of war.

578 182 Yet there was never any danger of wars or smaller fights breaking the society up into a number of anarchic fragments. They were inhibited from doing so by the countervailing influence of the strong social ties between traditionally hostile groups. Indeed their very occurrence [728] stimulated the reassertion of the overriding common interests of the society and the reaffirmation of the bonds of unity between the factions. In a war between Namoos and non-Namoos peace had to be made quickly and the *status quo ante* restored because the two groups are so closely interconnected by ties of marriage and kinship that the majority of members of one group have bonds of duty, affection, and mutual interest with members of the other; because they are such close neighbours; above all, because they are bound together by ties of politico-

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[1] These tensions persist, though they are kept well in check by fear of the British Administration. The new judicial system provides a safety valve to some extent; but they break through, chiefly in the form of political intrigue, as we shall see in the next section.

ritual collaboration in a series of complementary relations the proper 578 maintenance of which they believe to be indispensable for their common 182 welfare. This is the basis of the ritual sanctions against instigating war and shedding blood and of the moral repugnance associated with them. A war temporarily upset the equilibrium of Tale society; it could not destroy it.

The social system of the Tallensi, in its widest extent, is held together 182 by its religious superstructure. Its unity is none the less real because it appears only on the highest plane of common religious values known to the natives. As we have noted, the complementary politico-ritual offices of the chiefship, which is typically a Namoo office, and the tendaanaship, typically an office found amongst non-Namoos, constitute the focus of the institutions that maintain this unity; and the annual cycle of the Great Festivals are at once the chief sanction and the supreme expression of it. The coming of the white man has made very little difference to the way [177] these institutions operate in relation to the fundamental structure of Tale society. They continue to be the crowning mechanism of equilibrium in Tale society, because its segmentary social structure has kept its traditional form and vitality. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that only a strong and universally accepted religious sanction could hold such a society together. In practice the equilibrium is achieved by the distribution of mutually complementary offices among the segments of the society, all of which are essential for the performance of definite ritual duties.

It is a significant index of the type of social system presented by [728] the Tallensi that the widest range of social solidarity found among 796 them is evoked by their Great Festivals. Great stress is laid on the ritually sanctioned truce to all fighting or discord between clans or maximal [582] lineages during the Festivals. That is why marriages are forbidden during 182 the *Gɔlib* Festival. The Festival Cycle begins with the Harvest Festivals. These are celebrated by single clans or groups of linked maximal lineages independently of one another and serve to enhance the sense of clan and lineage solidarity. The climax is the *Gɔlib* Festival, immediately before the rains. This gives ritual sanction and dramatic expression to the idea of the close-knit interdependence of all the Tallensi with one another. Its reiterated themes are the common interests of all the Tallensi—food, peace, and fecundity—which must be achieved if they are to survive, and the supreme common values—the cult of the ancestors and of the Earth—by which the whole of Tale social life is steered. The lesson of *Gɔlib*, to the Tallensi, is that men cannot realize their greatest common interests or pursue their greatest common purposes in mutual enmity. *Gɔlib* is the most powerful counterweight to war and to the tendency of each clan and maximal lineage to set its own corporate interests above the common interest of the whole society. It is noteworthy that the Great Festivals do not presuppose the suspension of the primary loyalties of the segments that make up Tale society. They represent a synthesis, for the time being, of these primary loyalties—a synthesis that is possible only by giving full scope to the feeling of clan and maximal lineage unity and singularity in each group. *Gɔlib* emphasizes the mutual dependence of Namoos and Talis, but it does this by simultaneously enhancing the

796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within
182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they
625 always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare
681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments; on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of
721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels
182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in
769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182
of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769
bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182
principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of
the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to
more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of
thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment
of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector
of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests
evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182
constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618X
evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the
lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Taləŋ identifies
himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to
which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidɛm*)' and
of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)' and 'our children (*ti
biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions
to-day, a Taləŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an
argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or
a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's
or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182
for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426
groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old
days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman of his debtor,
but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different
clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former
case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman,
the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567]
into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had
been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the
clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously
made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations.
It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt.
Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the
mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583
unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426
man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'.
Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted
the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled.
The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original
wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss
of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals
such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the
abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682
clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618X

682 x618 Some sixty years ago a Tamboog man was killed by a group of Yaməlɔg men with whom he quarrelled at a dance. Two or three years later a couple of Tamboog men met a Yaməlɔg man alone in the bush and slew him in revenge. The Yaməlɔg people understood that this was a case of 'wiping out a debt' and the matter was regarded as closed.

x618 431 The principle of representative status enhances the sense of lineage or clan solidarity. We have seen how, in ceremonial situations, any member of a lineage or clan is regarded as representing the whole unit. I have often seen men refuse gifts of meat or food at ceremonies because these had no precedent and accepting them would be equivalent to committing their lineage or clan to reciprocate in the same way at some future time.

613 764 x618 Co-operation in ceremonies, especially in funerals, brings to light the institutional machinery of lineage and clan solidarity. Its basis is the distribution of duties and privileges among the different segments of the lineage or clan concerned in the situation, in accordance with their segmentary relationship to the group principally affected. Thus in funerals, in accordance with the maxim 'Brother lineages take charge of one's affairs (*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*)', members of a close brother lineage of the bereaved lineage supervise the ceremonies. In addition, all the segments of the maximal lineage or clan concerned send prescribed food contributions and receive prescribed shares of beer, meat, and food distributed during the ceremonies. Funerals are important because the death of a person may entail a rearrangement of social relations in a segment and this is a matter of common interest to the whole clan.

x618 These obligatory reciprocal services and privileges constantly remind the individual of his dependence on his clansmen for the proper management of the critical events of his life. In consequence the obligation of reciprocity is strongly felt, in both secular and ritual matters, the strength of the feeling being relative to the lineage relationship of the parties. When a man invites a collective hoeing party (*pooh kpa'arəp*) it is always co-members of his medial lineage who turn up in largest force. Distant clansmen only come if they have ties of personal matrilateral kinship with him. And the motive usually given for responding to such an invitation is 'To-morrow I may need the help of a hoeing party'. Public opinion is critical of those who do not conform to the conventions of mutual assistance, and when they find themselves compelled to call for assistance in collective hoeing or housebuilding or some similar activity, they are left in the lurch.

578 618 Intra-clan disputes involving lineages of a higher order than the nuclear lineage very rarely arise over economic affairs—that is, in effect, over the ownership of land or live-stock. Disputes in higher order lineages arise over the inheritance of widows or marriage with a woman who was formerly the wife of a member of a different segment of the clan. Members of the deceased husband's medial lineage feel they have a prior claim to a widow's hand and sometimes object to her marrying a man of a different branch of the clan. And if a marriage is dissolved, no matter what the reason may be, it is regarded as a grave breach of clan solidarity for any other member of the husband's clan to take her to wife. It arouses suspicion of collusion between the woman and the second

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husband. In both types of case conflicts reflect the importance of wives 618x as a common interest of the lineage and clan.

But the chief source of intra-clan discord is rival claims to priority in the exercise of rights of a politico-ritual nature, which are generally vested in lineages and are associated with the dominant values of the society. The conflict may be precipitated by a clash of personalities. But very often the underlying pressure comes from a change in the internal constitution of the lineage that has been taking place gradually with the passage of the generations and is not yet recognized. In the course of two or three generations an inner lineage may ramify so widely that its members claim the status of a medial lineage when it comes to succeeding to the headship of a more inclusive lineage, and this claim may be resisted by the other branches of the more inclusive lineage. It is such conflicts that eventually get resolved by the setting up of a new equilibrium in which the change is recognized by the redistribution of reciprocal rights and obligations. Intra-clan discord is often due to the universal human propensity to resist infringements of one's recognized social rights or one's self-regard; or to the complementary tendency for individuals to assert themselves by aggressive action. But it is probably more often a phase in the structural development of a lineage or clan, a symptom of a hitherto unrecognized internal change in its structure. This does not make the conflict less acute or disturbing while it lasts; but it does mean that there are always social forces at work that counteract the conflict even while it is going on and will prevent it from disrupting the corporate group entirely.

These processes are so characteristic of the social system of the Tallensi 578 that they could be illustrated from the contemporary history of any clan 618x or maximal lineage. Tallensi say that intra-clan conflicts have increased 177 since the coming of the white man. They maintain that the suppression of warfare and of self-help, and the new freedom of movement, have greatly diminished lineage and clan solidarity. People no longer need the help of their kinsmen as much as they used to. But careful inquiry shows that intra-clan discord was as common forty or fifty years ago as to-day and sometimes more violent. Many of the most deep-seated and intractable antagonisms within and between lineages or clans to-day go back to conflicts that began fifty or sixty years ago.

A typical instance is the dispute between the Gbizug tendaana and the 793 Gbeog tendaana which began with the immediate predecessors of the 578 present tendaanas. The dispute concerns the degree of autonomy to which the Gbeog tendaana is entitled in his ritual jurisdiction over the *tɛŋ* of Gbeog (see p. 87). He claims full autonomy. The Gbizug tendaana as 'elder brother' (*bier*) in ritual status of the Gbeog tendaana, and head of the senior maximal lineage of the clan, citing ancient custom, claims to have an over-right over the Gbeog tendaana. He says that the Gbeog tendaana is simply his deputy and should therefore render to him the perquisites that a tendaana receives for the performance of such ritual services as marking out graves. The men of Gbizug are unreservedly on the side of their lineage head. The men of Gbeog are torn between their loyalty to their maximal lineage and the greater solidarity

773 578 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as the Gbizug tɛndaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tɛndaana. For a short while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two tɛndaanas together again, when the Gbeog tɛndaana had to perform the principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tɛndaana. But soon afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tɛndaanas are right, they say. The Gbizug tɛndaana is going by 'what used to be (*dɛn daa a siɛm*)', the Gbeog tɛndaana by 'what is now (*dɛn a siɛm zinala*)'. It is a problem of adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be a Gbizug tɛndaana who will accept the present position. Then the two tɛndaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 x618 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co-operation and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of conduct. Yinyɛla's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members of Yinyɛla's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solidarity [208] as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment. The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors, concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means [769] of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in 182] which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

578 [780] We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago Gbaləg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbaləg went to settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father, stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo. Yet Gbaləg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man, boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But [787] the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578
demanded that Gbaləg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787]
among his forefathers. This meant that Gbaləg's sons should beg the
Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors.
But Gbaləg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to
do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother
Naŋbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There
was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be
done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by
custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear
to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578
At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x
of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was
sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋbeog, now the
recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783]
behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋbeog gave a young bull and
several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his
father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be
present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation.
Naŋbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and
brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects
he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of
whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbaləg's defection was thus
erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613
solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x
source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral
premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of
Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display
of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577]
of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own
right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen,
the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a con- 182
sideration of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage member- 183
ship. There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions
centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the
identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their
common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the
correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife.
Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings
and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan.
These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms.
This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife,
the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband
if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and
613 lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political
182 circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British
175 rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the
578 substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system
622 of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of
578 the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-
622

pensation sink into the background, the sanctions inherent in the native 177
social structure prevail, and the traditional ties of politico-ritual collabora- 578
tion come into force. But when the new interests brought into being 622
by the influence of the British Administration come to the fore, the traditional social ties and the sanctions associated with them no longer prevail. For among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, such ties and sanctions do not function at all times and in all circumstances. They work in the context of the scheme of social relationships of which they form a part and not in other contexts. These new interests mobilize the existing corporate units of Tale society. Thus they tend to deepen some of the cleavages that exist, and to weaken the countervailing ties, between lineages and clans. It is noteworthy that rivalry for the rewards of political power under the British Administration is most acute between clans that have close ties in the native social system. As was the case with war in former days, clans and maximal lineages that are widely separated from one another, either locally or in terms of their fields of social relations, cannot come into conflict or competition with one another. Thus political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and his 'younger brother' the Chief of Yamələg is severe and has led to estrangement between these two branches of Mosuor biis. But there is no political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and the Chief of Datɔk. Competition for politico-ritual office within clans is fiercer than it was in the past and less scrupulous, though it still follows the lines of cleavage in the lineage structure.

At the same time some chiefs have used their new powers to weld their clans into closer unity on the political plane than existed in the old days. This has happened at Tongo and at Sie. But it has not been to the benefit of the social balance in the greater society. By strengthening the autocratic ambitions of these chiefs, the closer unity of their clans has tended to aggravate the antagonisms between clans.

B. *Pecuniary Competition among the Hill Talis*

A new factor of disequilibrium that has had a very disturbing influ- 177
ence among the Hill Talis is pecuniary competition which has become 434
associated with certain traditional institutions. Many families nowadays 438
obtain driblets of money through members of the family working abroad, 578
or by petty trade. But the pecuniary competition we are referring to concerns money on a scale unprecedented in Tale history; and its disruptive influence is due to its association with a traffic in ritual benefits comparable to that of the notorious Southern Nigerian oracles.

The centre of this traffic is the Tong Hills, and its disruptive influence 178
has been greatest among the Hill Talis, where it has brought violent 438
competition into the sphere of the common ritual interests and values 578
which form the bulwark of their cohesion. The integration of the Hill Talis in the native social structure depends, as we have seen, on a meticulous balance of local, clanship, and ritual ties and cleavages focused in the politico-ritual offices vested in the heads of maximal lineages. So nicely calculated is the distribution of these politico-ritual functions amongst the various maximal lineages that none can claim

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external
[554] sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gorisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

This aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔɣar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal
lineages which own the particular *Bɔɣar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔɣar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔɣar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔɣar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation-
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from 486
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔɣar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔɣar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔɣar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔɣar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these 782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice 425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or misdeeds.

431 This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it. The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional 788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those 439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own 434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔyar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal 439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidem of Bunkiuk. The head of this lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded 471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country, recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his [595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other [595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been 471
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar 794
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

PLATE XV

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(*a*) A mimic war parade at Ba'ari to inaugurate an elder's funeral.

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(*b*) The widest politico-ritual community includes all the Tallensi. Part of the vast gathering of people from all over Taleland who come to take part in or watch the concluding ceremonies and dances of the Golib Festival. Note the dust cloud raised by the dancers.

[Facing p. 256]

621 622 177 578 lineages inherent in the native social structure. The majority of the Gɔlibdaana's own maximal lineage share in the profits of his monopoly and are solidly behind him; the maximal lineages of the leaders of the opposition are solidly against him; but many of the maximal lineages that have clanship or ritual links with both sides are split. Many of the young men of these lineages side with the Gɔlibdaana—enticed, their elders say bitterly, by his lavish gifts. The older men are uneasily neutral or tacitly opposed to the Gɔlibdaana because he has brought dissension to the Hills and has flouted some of the ancient ritual customs. Both parties try to manœuvre the opposition into a position which will set the Administration in motion against them; the leaders of both parties say that the white man's authority is the only force that will help them to victory. And they feel particularly bitter because the vigilance of Administrative officers has frustrated all their efforts to exploit this potent sanction.

At the same time they try to use the sanctions of their own social structure to gain their aims. For outside the struggle for control of the pilgrim traffic, the ties of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration remain valid as before. During the Great Festivals the feud sinks into temporary abeyance. The Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab speak with hatred of each other when it is a question of political power or the pilgrim traffic; they continue to perform those rites of the Great Festivals and of the Earth cult in which they are ritually obliged to collaborate, with apparent cordiality. This is a 'separate thing' they declare. It would be an appalling sin bringing catastrophe on the whole country, they say, if they threw over these bonds.

But the new alinements in the pecuniary struggle and the traditional social structure cannot be kept apart in watertight compartments. The Kpata'arna'ab and the Gɔlibdaana try to coerce each other through their mutual ritual obligations. They try to put pressure on each other through maximal lineages that are intercalary between their lineages; and to win over the other maximal lineages with which they have clanship or ritual ties.

Experienced elders maintain, with the sceptical candour that is one of the few charms Tallensi have for an ethnographer, that this can never decide the issue. Putting it at its highest, the bonds of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration are a double-edged weapon. If Kpata'ar tries to coerce Samiit to side with it by refusing to collaborate with Samiit in the rites of their common External *Bɔyar*, the ancestors might well blame Kpata'ar and punish them. Tallensi are not—so the old men say—restrained from doing something to their personal advantage by the fear of mystical penalties. 'Who fears death before death comes upon you?' It is only after a death occurs that the survivors see in it signs and omens referring to their social relations with one another.

578 764 Whenever a death occurs in any of the Hill clans, especially if it is the death of an important person, the chronic discord between them is openly recollected. It is both a symptom of the general feeling of uneasiness and a move in the game of attempted mutual coercion by mystical sanctions. A funeral almost inevitably causes this feeling to be ventilated. For people of all the Tɛnzugu and many other clans are present, as kinsfolk, affines,

578 764 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted [787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors, for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 578 787 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have, at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 578 621 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have not been limited to Tɛnzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar* as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular [177] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly. Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not [477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals. The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

622 Chiefship of Tongo, to which the Gɔlibdaana's office has a politico-ritual
578 relationship.

621 The point that must be stressed, however, is that the Gɔlibdaana's
182 monopoly has not yet thrown the existing scheme of structural alinements
621 into complete disorder. It is a factor of disequilibrium and may, in the
578 course of a few more years, make serious rents in the complex fabric of
the social and politico-ritual relationships of the Hill Talis. Up to the present the native social structure, and in particular the web of ritual collaboration, has resisted the corruption and kept in check, to a very considerable extent, the dissensions due to this new force. This might well go on as long as the Administration keeps the ring impartially, and as long as the Gɔlibdaana and his maximal lineage accept the politico-ritual values on which the integration of the Hill Talis rests, and abide by the principal jural and moral norms of the society. So far the struggle has not given rise to new corporate associations running counter to those of the existing social structure. In fact, it has on the whole been canalized along the lines of cleavage laid down in that structure. It has deepened some of the existing cleavages and sharpened some of the inherent tensions of the system; but it has also accentuated some of the ties and enhanced the dominant values of the system. Thus the only section of Kpata'ar that has vacillated, at times, in its loyalty is Nak-y-eet yidɛm, the assimilated lineage. They have been influenced by their lineage differentiation from Kpata'ar proper, their consequent subsidiary interest in the politico-ritual status of the head of Kpata'ar proper, their clanship ties with the Sakpee section that has gone over to the Gɔlibdaana, and the greed of their lineage head. But their intercalary structural position between the two factions is shown in their divided counsels. Some of the older men are whole-heartedly for Kpata'ar, one or two adhere publicly to the Gɔlibdaana, several try to keep on good terms with both parties. When they have to take a stand as a corporate unit, their bias is towards the Kpata'arna'ab in ritual and intra-clan affairs, and towards the Gɔlibdaana in matters of law and government coming within his purview as a headman under the Administration. On the other hand, the ancient ties between Kpata'ar and Gundaat have been greatly strengthened, the bond of goodwill between Kpata'ar and Tongo, based on their politico-ritual interdependence, given a new meaning, and moves to defend the traditional social order stimulated.

POSTSCRIPT

This book has dealt with the constitution and interrelations of the 613
corporate groupings found in Tale society. But this is only one major 621
aspect of Tale social structure. There is another major aspect of no less 182
importance, the system of interpersonal social bonds that constitutes the
Kinship System in the strict sense. The lineage and clan organization
forms the permanent framework of social relations in Taleland. But it is
based on certain fundamental categories of thought and axioms of conduct
that derive from a different cross-section of Tale social life, the domestic
organization. The well-worn simile of the warp and the woof is apposite
here. We can think of the lineage and clan organization as the warp of
the social fabric of the Tallensi. Interwoven with it, sustaining it, and
in turn shaped and regulated by it, is the intricate web of interpersonal
relations we have described as the Kinship System in the strict sense.
Kinship ties grow directly out of the biological, psychological, and social
relations of men, women, and children in the domestic nucleus of Tale
social life, the agnatic joint family. Unlike lineage ties, they involve the
equal and parallel recognition of descent through both parents; and because
of this bilateral criterion of social identification in kinship relations, they
cut across the lineage structure.[1]

This second major aspect of Tale social structure, the Kinship System, 121
is the subject of our next volume, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*.
Our aim will be not a detailed analysis of all Tale interpersonal relationships through all the levels of social behaviour, but an investigation of their place in the social structure in relation to the lineage and clan organization.

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[1] Cf. my previously cited paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure'.

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[p. 271]

2: Fortes
618

FE11 Tallensi FE11

[For information on clan-barrios, see category 116, pp. 40-65, 71-75, 78-105, 108-113, 116-120, 125-128, 136-137, 147-148, 150-152 160-161, 165-166, 169-170, 189-191, 205-206, 241, 245-249]

621
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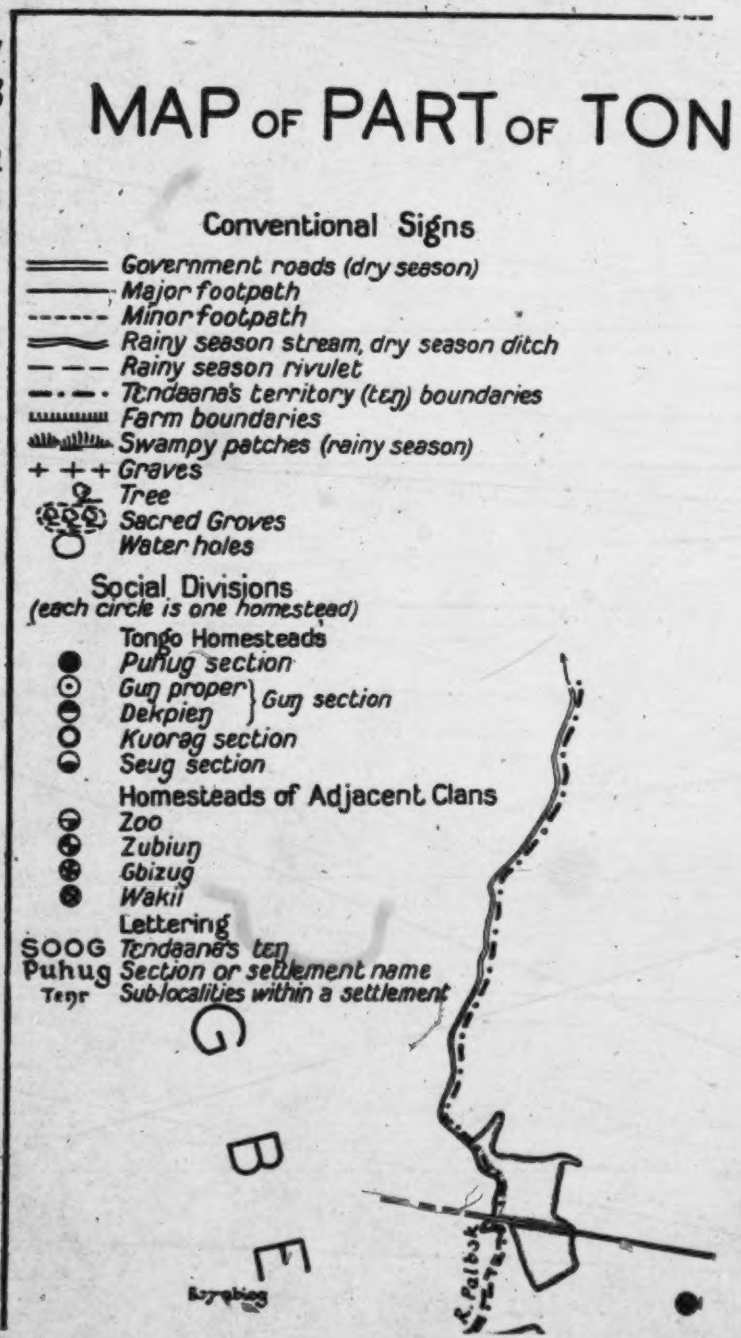
MAP OF PART OF TON
Conventional Signs
Government roads (dry season)
Major footpath
Minor footpath
Rainy season stream, dry season ditch
Rainy season rivulet
Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries
Farm boundaries
Swampy patches (rainy season)
Graves
Tree
Sacred Groves
Water holes
Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)
Tongo Homesteads
Puhug section
Guŋ proper
Dekpieŋ
Guŋ section
Kuorag section
Seug section
Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
Zoo
Zubiuŋ
Gbizug
Wakii
Lettering
SOOG Tɛndaana's tɛŋ
Puhug Section or settlement name
Tɛŋr Sub-localities within a settlement
G
B
E
Boyɛbiog
R. Palbok

[End-map (A)]

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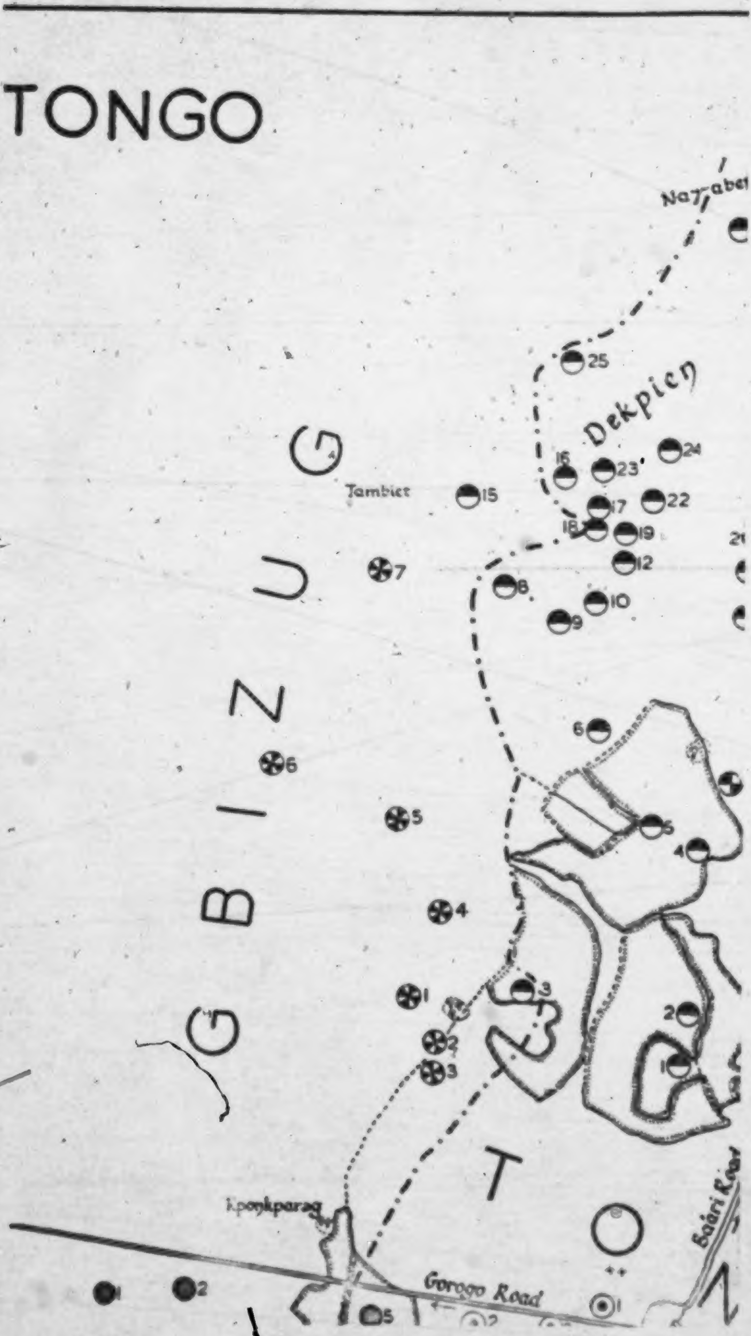
TONGO
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Dekpieŋ
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Tambiet
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9
GBIZUG
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1
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3
1
TONO
Kpoŋkparag
Gorogo Road
Bɔári Road
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[End-MAP (B)]

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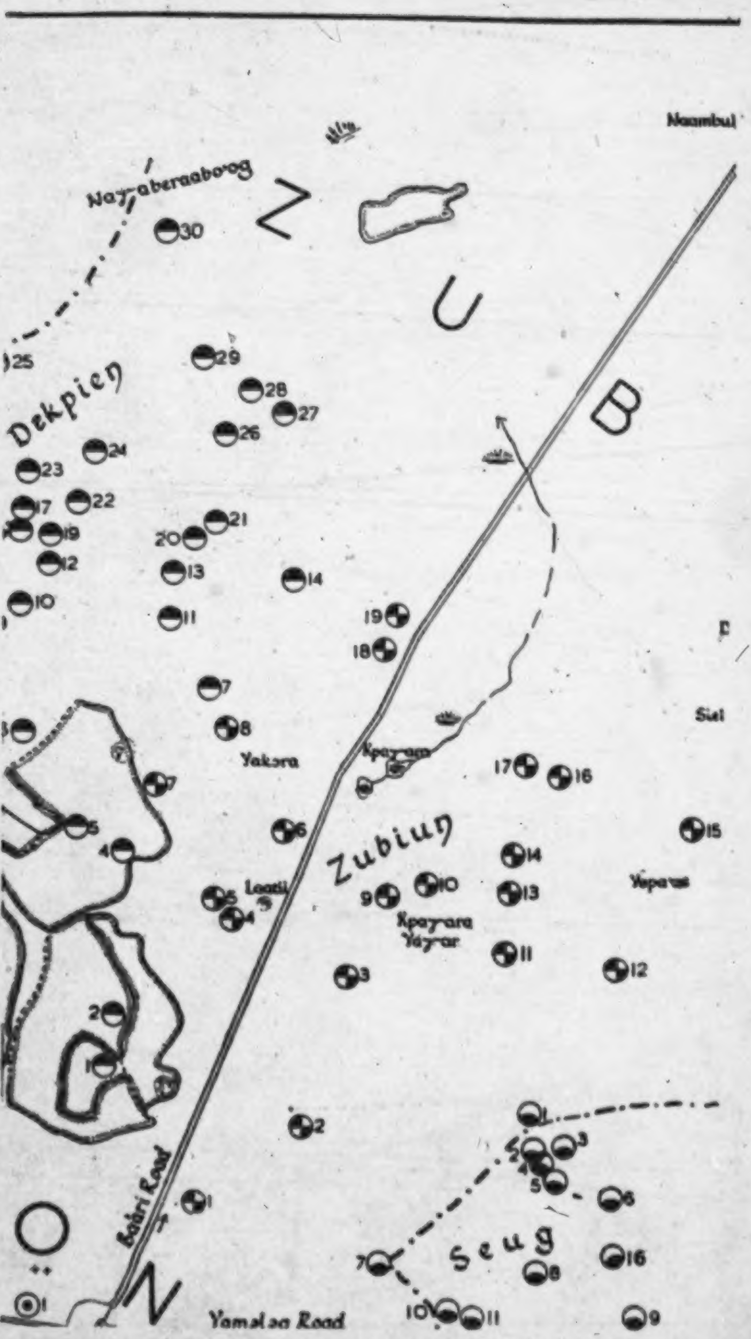
Naambul
Nayaberaabo'og
Z
U
B
Dekpieŋ
Yakɔra
Kpaɣam
Sial
Zubiuŋ
Laati
Kpaɣara Yaɣar
Yaparas
Seug
Babiri Road
O
N
Yamalaa Road

[End-MAP(C)]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945.
FE11 Tallensi FE11

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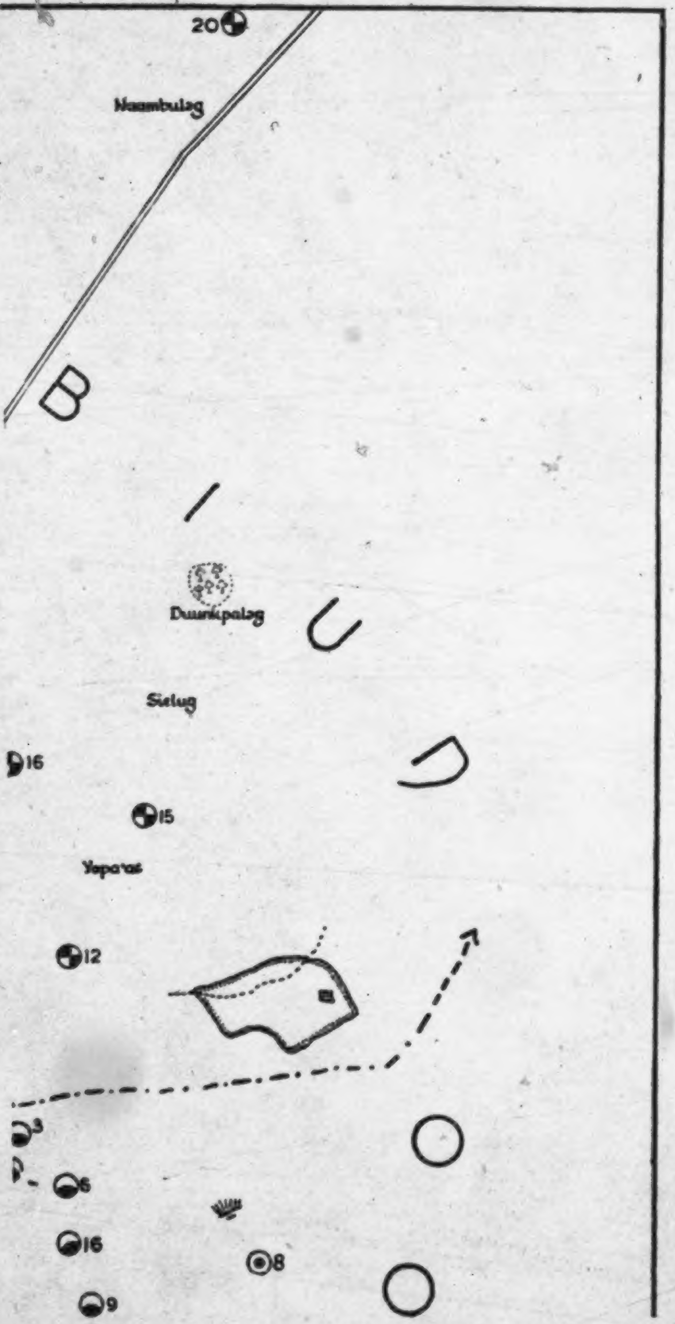
20
Naambulag
B
I
Duunkpalag
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Sielug
D
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Yapa'as
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[End-MAP (D)]

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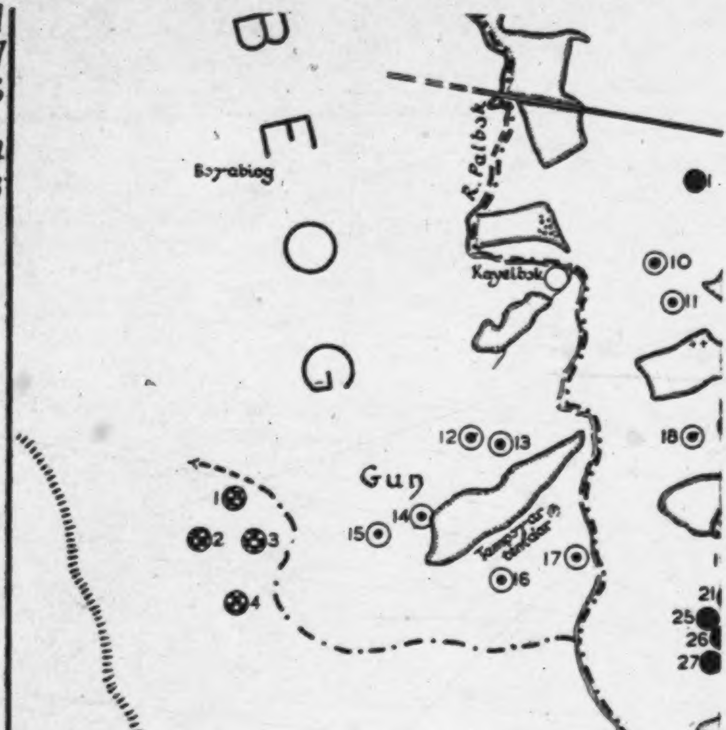
BEOG
Bɔyabiog
R. Pɔlbɔk
Kayalbɔk
Guŋ
Tong Hills
WAKI
1
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SI

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Naŋ*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakora sec

[End-Map(E)]

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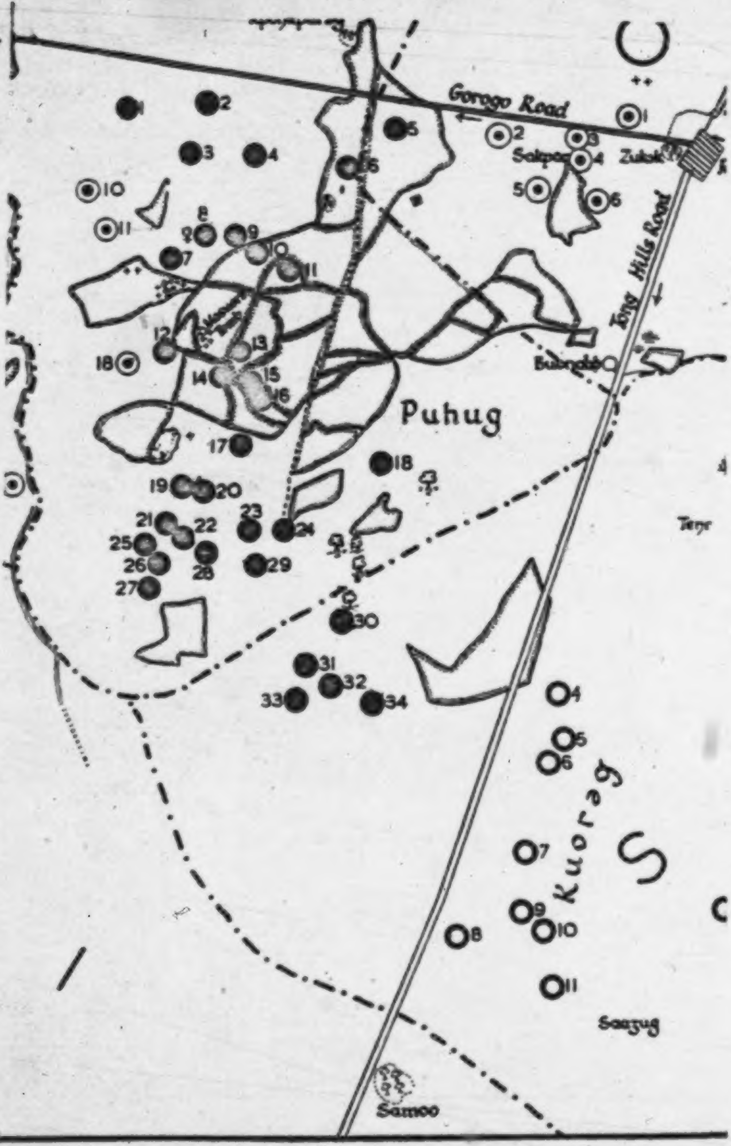
Gorogo Road
Tong Hills Road
Puhug
Kuorag
Sakpoo
Zubiuŋ
Bubnde
Teŋr
Saŋzug
Samoo

SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Tɔŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social n and Guŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).

d of the Yakɔra section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpəyarı few Wal

The I covering

[End-MAP (F)]

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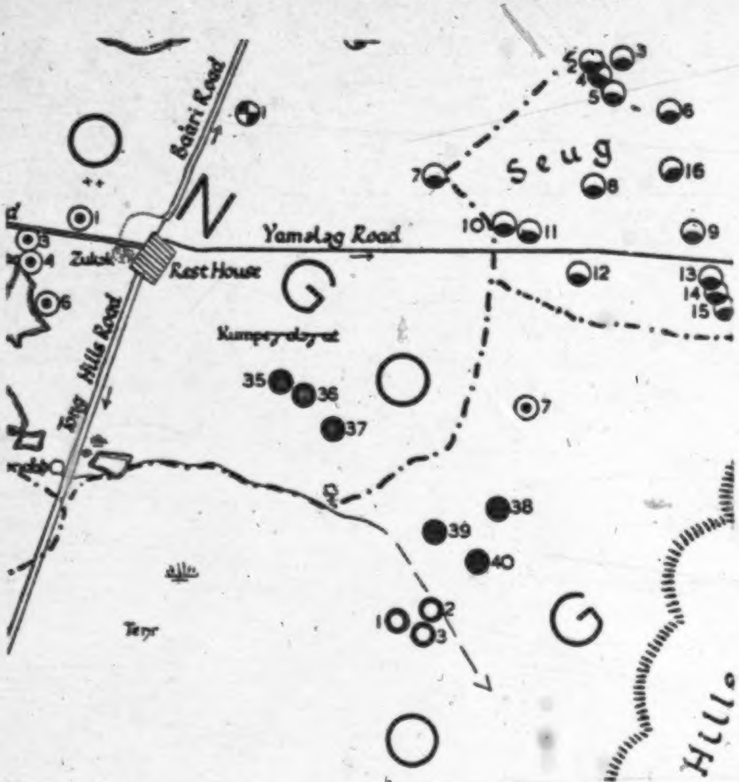
Baàri Road
N
Yamolag Road
Zubok
Rest House
G
Kumpeyolbyiat
Seug
Tong Hills Road
Teŋr
G
Tong Hills
S
Saaŋug
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3
4
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13

PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

aal Kpayara yayar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
en few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
ŋ- covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' g

[End-MAP (G)]

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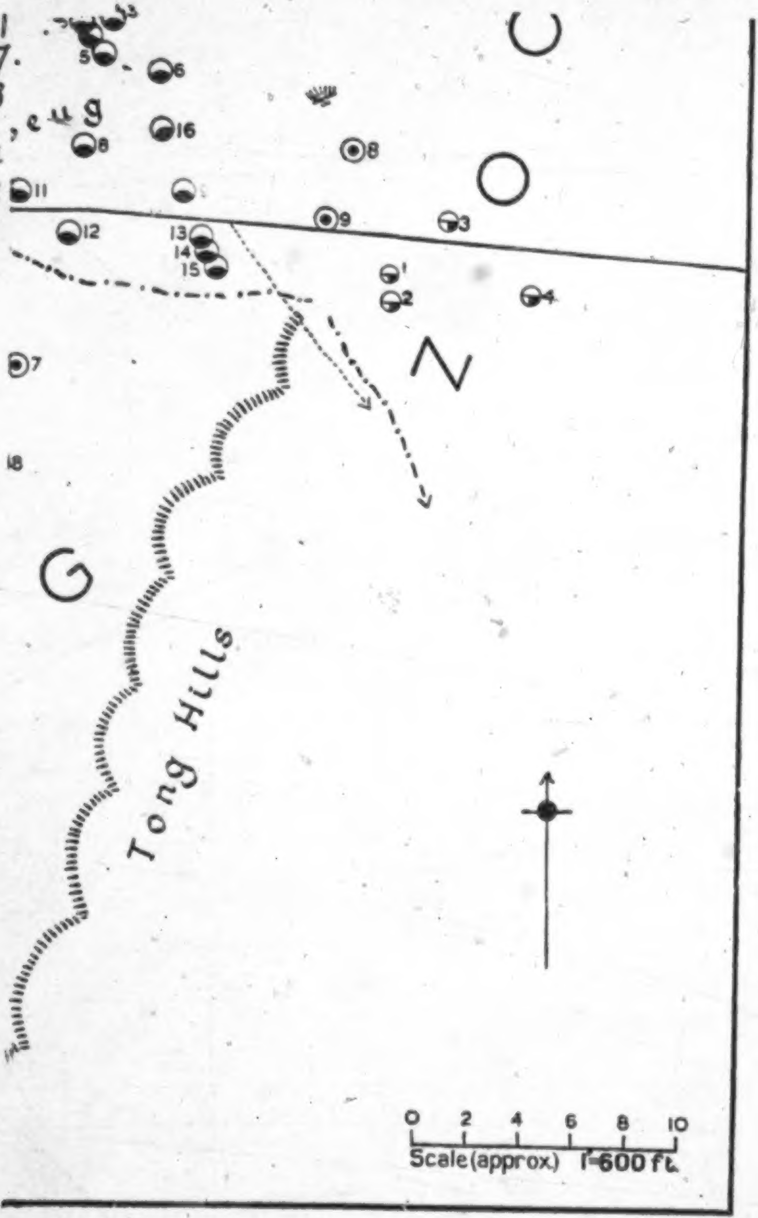
5
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Tong Hills
0 2 4 6 8 10
Scale (approx) 1"=600 ft.

TS

three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a situation of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid he founding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-MAP (H)]

[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

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THE WEB OF KINSHIP AMONG THE TALLENSI

*The Second Part of an
Analysis of the Social Structure
of a Trans-Volta Tribe*

by

MEYER FORTES
READER IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Published for the
INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN INSTITUTE
by the OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO
1949

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Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C. 4
GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS CAPE TOWN
Geoffrey Cumberlege, Publisher to the University

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

[p. iv]

TO MY WIFE
AND FELLOW-WORKER
SONIA L. FORTES

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FOREWORD

121 THIS book concludes the investigation of Tale social structure begun in *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, 1945. It carries the analysis into the domain of family life and the social ties that grow directly out of marriage and parenthood. This is the domain of kinship, in the current usage of social anthropology.

000 No subject in the whole range of anthropological studies has been so voluminously investigated and debated as kinship. It is no exaggeration to say that every anthropologist of repute has, at some time or another, written about kinship. Nor has this interest been confined to anthropologists. The marriage customs of primitive peoples, their modes of domestic organization, their rules of inheritance and descent, the laws, morals, and religious beliefs associated with family life among them, have furnished material for scholars of many kinds. It is nearly a hundred years since Bachofen's reconstruction of primordial mother-right and McLennan's theory of exogamy and endogamy upset long-standing beliefs about the nature of the human family. It is exactly a century since Lewis Morgan, who may justly be regarded as the father of the scientific study of kinship in primitive society, first wrote about the Iroquois clan. Since then psychologists and philosophers, sociologists, jurists, historians, and others have drawn constantly on the mounting quantity of data concerning primitive kinship to support their theories or confute their opponents.

121 Fortunately for the anthropologist who ventures to write about kinship, the vast mass of literature on the subject contains only a small amount of generalization that has stood the test of modern field research. But this alone would not excuse the omission of reference to the work of other students of the subject in a book on kinship. The chief reason why I have, in this book, referred only to those authorities whose writings have direct bearing on my material is because the general problems of kinship lie outside the scope of a descriptive monograph.

At the same time the truism that facts only acquire meaning for science in the light of an adequate theory is specially relevant to the study of kinship. 'No systematic thought has made progress apart from some adequately general working hypothesis, adapted to its special topic', says Whitehead.[1] Kinship studies, right up to

---

[1] Whitehead, A. N., *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 286.

121 the present time, have suffered from working hypotheses not adapted to the topic. I was fortunate in that both my chief teachers on this subject, the late Professor Bronislaw Malinowski and Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, approached it with working hypotheses founded on the realities of field observation. Their theories have the merit of being adapted to the methods of observation available to the anthropologist in the field and to the kind of data within his reach. They can be tested in the field, as is most cogently shown in Raymond Firth's book *We, the Tikopia* (1937), which appeared while I was among the Tallensi. I found this book a mine of ideas and a most valuable stimulus to observation.

I have not, however, attempted to give a comprehensive account of family life and kinship among the Tallensi in this book. I am concerned only with kinship in relation to the social structure—that is, in my view, with the fundamental principles of Tale kinship relations as they enter into the organization of collective life. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi the common denominators of thought, feeling, and action stand out very clearly and the principles governing social behaviour are not so difficult to discern as might be supposed.

178 It is of interest to add that I was able to pay a very short visit to the Tallensi in 1945, after this book was finished. I found that as far as their social structure was concerned there had been no appreciable change since my wife and I first went to Taleland in 1934. But there are many signs that they are on the threshold of a period of rapid change. The war has opened up wider horizons to many of the young men who saw active service. Native Administration has developed greatly; schools are being established; missionaries have started work inside Taleland. The social structure I have described may well undergo many modifications in the next few years, though I do not believe it will alter much in fundamentals for decades.

M. F.

OXFORD 1948

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Large-scale Framework of Tale Society

THE central subject of the first part of this analysis of Tale social structure was the lineage system.[1] Our attention was fixed on the permanent large-scale framework of the society in relation to which individuals behave primarily as members of corporate groups. We observed that according to native belief and usage this framework has maintained its form from time immemorial and must continue to do so as long as their social system lasts. Our data left little doubt that in fact the macroscopic social structure of the Tallensi has been highly stable in form for at least five generations and probably for many more. We found evidence, however, that a continuous process of adjustment in the grading of structural relations between the component units of the total social structure underlies its stable form. These adaptations take place in response to economic, structural, and religious stresses. Though they do not alter the established forms of corporate grouping by means of which Tale collective life is organized, they do affect the social relations of persons as individuals and as members of corporate groups. Nor can there be any doubt that they are inherent in the social structure; whatever sets them in motion at any given time or in any given sector of the society, they are made possible by the dynamic factors inherent in the constitution of the stable large-scale units of social organization. We saw that units of Tale social organization can only be defined by reference to the way in which they emerge in corporate action in relation to other like units, and not by mechanical criteria. 000

For convenience of orientation I shall here sum up the principal results of our previous study. The Tallensi[2] are typical of the great congeries of Mole-Dagbane-speaking peoples that occupy the basin of the Volta rivers in the French Ivory Coast and the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast.[3] In race, speech, culture, social organization, and economy they constitute a completely homogeneous community of sedentary farmers. But there is no 'tribal unity' among the Tallensi in the ordinarily accepted sense of this phrase. They have no fixed territorial boundaries, nor are they precisely marked off from neighbouring 'tribes' by cultural or linguistic usages. They have no political unity in the sense of being uniformly and exclusively subject to a single, centralized tribal government (other than that imposed by the British 105

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[1] *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, hereafter referred to as *Dynamics of Clanship*.

[2] Population (1931), approx. 35,000; density, approx. 170 per square mile.

[3] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. i.

Colonial Government),[1] and no judicial or administrative machinery such as goes with a centralized form of government.[2]

The 'tribal unity' of the Tallensi is, in general terms, the unity of a distinct socio-geographical region forming a segment of a greater region of similar cultural type, economic organization, and social structure. This region can be demarcated only by dynamic criteria. The Tallensi have more in common among themselves, both in sentiment and in nuances of cultural usage, and closer social and politico-ritual bonds *inter se*, than the component segments of Tale society have with other like units outside what we have called Taleland. This characteristic of Tale society has a special relevance for the investigation we are undertaking in this book. For, like the network of clanship ties and the bonds of common custom and of politico-ritual association analysed in our first book, the web of kinship spreads far beyond the social frontiers of the Tallensi. This is one of the ways in which the field of inter-personal relations is congruent with the structure of relations between corporate groups among the Tallensi.

The principle of segmentary differentiation and the associated principle of dynamic coherence operate in every department of Tale social organization. We described in our previous work how the Tallensi are internally divided by a major cleavage into two clusters of clans, the Namoo clans on the one hand, and the Talis[3] clans and their congeners on the other. These two groups are distinguished by differences in their myths of origin, their totemic and quasi-totemic usages and beliefs, the politico-ritual privileges and duties connected with the Earth cult and the ancestor cult, and to some extent by their local distribution. The clans belonging to each group are more closely interlinked by clanship and politico-ritual ties than any one of them is linked to clans of the other group. But very close bonds of local contiguity, and of politico-ritual interdependence and co-operation in assuring the maintenance of the common interests of the society—peace and the rule of custom, fertility of soil and of man, health and prosperity—unite the two groups. In particular, inter-personal ties of kinship and of affinity link the members of the two groups of clans to one another, so that practically every Namoo has kinsmen among the Talis and vice versa.

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[1] Since 1937, under the new system of local government introduced by the Administration, the Tallensi have a centralized Native Authority built up on federal principles and closely related to indigenous forms of political institutions. I am speaking, however, of the period prior to 1937. Moreover, the new political constitution has not yet been wholly integrated with the indigenous system of politico-ritual relations.

[2] This is further discussed in *African Political Systems*, ed. by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Introduction and pp. 239 ff.

[3] As explained in *Dynamics of Clanship* I use the following terminology for the sake of clarity: *Tallensi* (sing. *Talɔŋ*) means all the inhabitants of *Taleland*; *Tale* is the adjective derived from Tallensi and is used to refer to things common to all Tallensi. *Talis* (sing. *Talis*) is used both as a substantive and as an adjective to refer to the 'real' Tallensi, as the natives call them, who live on and around the Tong Hills. They are usually contrasted with *Namoos* (sing. and adj. *Namoo*) who are also Tallensi but a different section of the population. This nomenclature is artificial, though derived from native speech forms.

These two groups of clans, we learnt, never combined for defence against or attack on neighbouring 'tribes'. Indeed, they were the traditional enemies of one another, and war sometimes broke out between Namoos and Talis in the Tongo area. But these wars were short and sharp. They were acute forms of internal dissension rather than wars as we understand the term, and they immediately set on foot actions to restore the *status quo ante*. Thus they served to emphasize the inescapable interdependence of the two groups.

The unity and moral solidarity of all the Tallensi emerge most conspicuously during the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. At these times the divergent interests that normally dominate the corporate actions of clans or groups of clans are set aside in obedience to ritual sanctions. A series of rites and ceremonies requiring the co-operation of both major groups of clans takes place, in which the greatest common interests and values of the whole society are dramatized and affirmed. The solidarity of the widest political community to which every Talɔŋ belongs thus becomes temporarily supreme, and no intestine dissensions at other times can destroy it.

The Great Festivals bring out two points of special importance. They show, firstly, that the widest unified political community in which Tallensi participate is not a fixed group but a functional synthesis based on a dynamic social equilibrium. This equilibrium is maintained by the balancing against one another of like corporate units; by the play of the counterpoised ties and cleavages of clanship, kinship, and ritual allegiance; and through the agency of complementary politico-ritual-institutions. And secondly, they show that the whole system hinges on the complementary roles of two types of politico-ritual functionaries, chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) and Custodians of the Earth (*tɛndaana*, pl. *tɛndaanam*). The office of chiefship (*na'am*) is considered to be characteristic of the Namoos, the tɛndaana-ship of the Talis and their congeners, but neither office is the exclusive prerogative of either group. The picture is further complicated by the existence of other politico-ritual offices, in particular among the Talis, connected with their cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. The complementary functions of chiefship and tɛndaana-ship are rooted directly in the social structure, but are also validated by myths of origin and backed by the most powerful religious sanctions of the ancestor cult and of the cult of the Earth. The Namoos are believed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi who fled from Mampurugu many generations ago. Hence they claim remote kinship with the ruling aristocracy of Mampurugu. Their chiefship is derived from that of the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi, and this is

105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tendaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization that emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or subclan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member

587 of his lineage or clan, other than those whom he describes as his 'fathers' or 'sons'.

361 621 Every Tale clan is anchored to a particular locality from which it takes its name. In the central area of Taleland, around the Tong Hills, the present clan settlements appear to date back not less than eight to ten generations. But they have not been and are not territorially static. There are no strict territorial boundaries between adjacent settlements. The homesteads of a settlement merge with those of the adjacent settlements, and the boundaries between them are definable only in social terms, as a function of their ecological and politico-ritual relations at a given time. In the same way every segment of a clan—that is, each of its component maximal lineages—is anchored to a local subdivision of the clan settlement, though many of its members may be dispersed elsewhere.

621 619 182 A striking feature of Tale social organization is the system of inter-clan linkages which constitutes one of the principal forces of cohesion in the society. The genealogically and socially autonomous maximal lineage or clan is not a closed group. The component maximal lineages that form the segments of adjacent clans have ties of clanship identical with those that unite them to one another within their respective clans. Thus if two adjacent clans have segments A, B, C, and D, E, F, G, respectively, then A (but not B or C) may have clanship ties with D (but not with E, F, or G); B may have clanship ties only with E, and C with F. Each of these maximal lineages also has clanship ties with segments of other neighbouring clans. Thus each component maximal lineage of a clan has a field of clanship that includes the other segments of the clan as well as segments of other clans. This results in a network of interlocking clanship ties that embraces all the separate clans of Taleland. All the Talis clans and the main block of Namoo clans are interlocked in this way in two clusters which are in turn similarly connected at certain points. Moreover, this system of linkages ties the Tale aggregate on to adjacent clans of other neighbouring 'tribes'. Thus we observe that at this level of social structure—the skeletal level, so to speak—as in its territorial and cultural relationship to neighbouring 'tribes', Tale society is a segment of a greater society. The network of inter-clan linkages is one of the principal factors by which the socio-geographic region we have called Taleland is differentiated as a distinct segment of this greater society.

626 It is also one of the main factors of social equilibrium in Tale society. Dissension between neighbouring clans is kept in check by the mediation of maximal lineages linked by identical ties to both; and warfare is inhibited from disrupting the entire social order by the intervention of social and ritual obligations arising *inter alia* out of the fact that enemies are related directly or indirectly by clanship ties. It is this, in part, that gives Tale wars the complexion of acute family quarrels.

613 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also
ipso facto an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differen-
769 tiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as
well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult
778 of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine
(*bɔɣar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a composite clan has its lineage *bɔɣar*, distinguishing it from the other segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se* by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors. The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔɣar* known as an External *Bɔɣar*. An External *Bɔɣar* is usually a sacred grove, or a shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

771 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor
of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult
794 of the External *Bɔɣar* is another important factor of cohesion and
equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of
182 the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It repre-
769 sents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those
of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not associated in the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, collaborate in the rites of
the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally
[778] in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of
a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social relations in terms of the External *Bɔɣar* cult, and yet a third field of corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity. Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all, moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and the tɛndaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

maximal lineage emerges as a corporate unit irrespective of its internal constitution. The main characteristics of the latter can now be briefly summarized.

A *maximal lineage* is divided into a number of segments all of the same form as the whole lineage but of regularly diminishing order of segmentation. Each segment is identified by reference to its founding ancestor. He marks the point on the genealogical tree of the whole maximal lineage at which that segment's line of descent connects with the other lines of descent sprung from the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage. Thus every maximal lineage is divisible, in the first instance, into two or more Major Segments. This is the highest order of segmentation. Each Major Segment embraces (or is believed to embrace) all the agnatic descendants of one of the sons of the founder of the maximal lineage. At the next level each Major Segment is itself divisible into Major Segments, each embracing the agnatic descendants of one putative son of a son of the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage; and this formula holds at every generation level of the maximal lineage structure (see Fig. 1). The lowest order of segmentation, at the opposite end of the lineage scale to that represented by the maximal lineage, is that of the *minimal lineage* or *minimal segment*, which we define as the group comprising only the children of one man. This is the narrowest agnatic group to which a person can belong.

It is clear from the above that every person belongs to a hierarchy of lineage segments lying between the minimal and the maximal limits of his maximal lineage. Different orders of segmentation become relevant for his conduct in different degrees and in accordance with variations in the social situation. As a farmer, for instance, his productive activities are mainly determined by his membership of his minimal lineage. If he wishes to marry, membership of his maximal lineage is one of the factors limiting his choice of a bride; but the completion of the jural formalities is governed by his membership of a segment of intermediate order. At the same time a very important aspect of the lineage organization is the fact that even when only a segment of a lineage emerges in any corporate activity its status and functions are influenced [illegible] the total lineage field including, at the limit, the field of clanship. [illegible] lineage segment emerges in action only as a relatively autonomous unit. Its activity is regulated by its relationship to other like segments of the lineage and to the whole. Conversely, a lineage or lineage segment always functions as a combination of segments, not as a collection of individuals of common descent. Every lineage or lineage segment, in fact, represents a dynamic equilibrium of mutually balancing segments.

To the contemporary observer a maximal lineage is fixed in form and dimensions, and all its segments except the minimal segments are fixed in relation to one another. Only the complete extinction of a segment can alter the balance. But the degree of relative autonomy which the segments

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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[8 J]

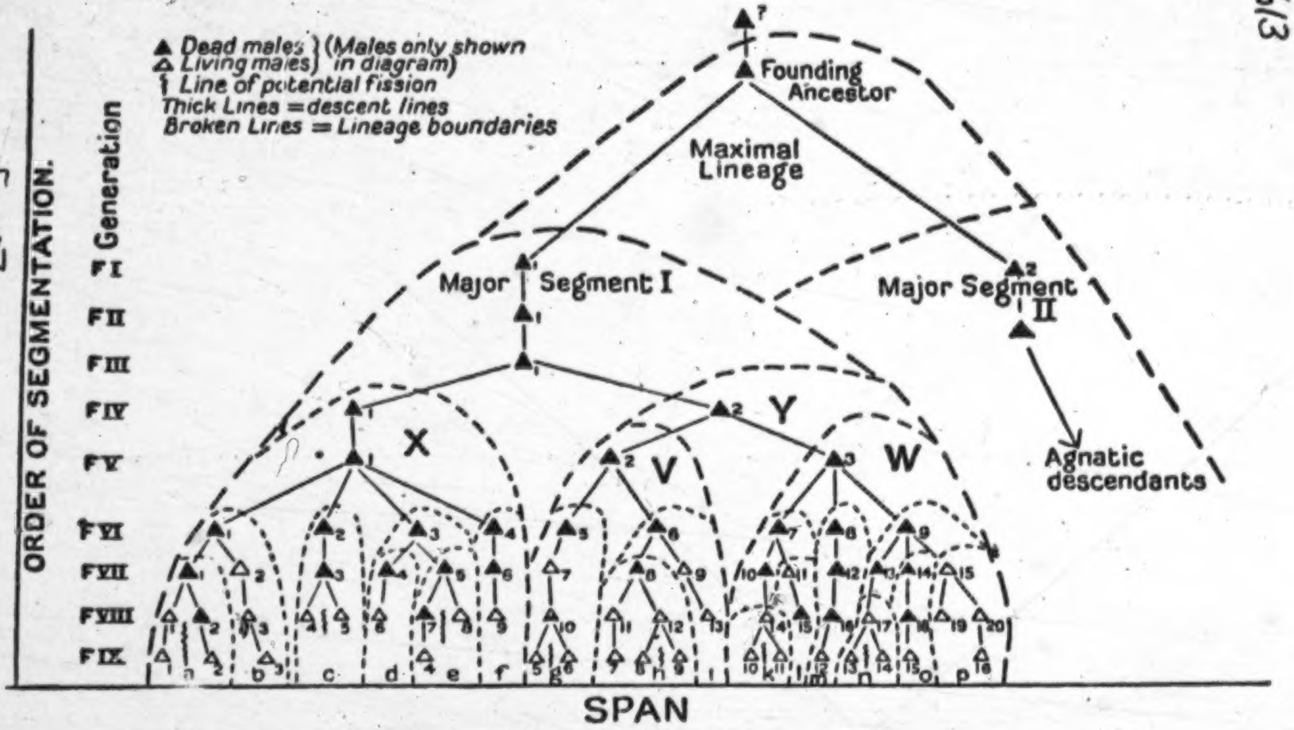
▲ Dead males } (Males only shown
△ Living males } in diagram)
⦚ Line of potential fission
Thick Lines = descent lines
Broken Lines = Lineage boundaries
ORDER OF SEGMENTATION.
Generation
FI
FII
FIII
FIV
FV
FVI
FVII
FVIII
FIX
Founding Ancestor
Maximal Lineage
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
X
Y
V
W
Agnatic descendants
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
h
i
k
l
m
n
o
p
SPAN

FIG. 1. (Reproduced from *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 34.)

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of a particular order have in ritual, jural, and economic affairs gradually alters with each generation. Thus, while their father is alive, two or more brothers have no jural or ritual or economic autonomy, either severally or as a group. The minimal segment of which they are the nucleus is submerged in the more inclusive lineage segment of which their father is the head. If their grandfather is still alive they and their father come under his jurisdiction and have no autonomy as a lineage segment independently of the segment of higher order of which the grandfather is the head. Thus the *effective minimal lineage*, as we have labelled it in order to simplify our analysis (that is, the narrowest lineage segment which is recognized in corporate activities), is not the same as the morphological minimal lineage. It may include two or three generations of agnates.[1] But the group that constitutes an effective minimal lineage in one generation may, in the next generation, split into two or more effective minimal segments.

In the same way, to simplify our exposition, we have distinguished three other grades of segmentation in the maximal lineage,[2] the *nuclear* lineage or segment, the *inner* lineage or segment, and the *medial* lineage or segment. These grades of segmentation vary in dimensions from one maximal lineage to another and from one generation to the next in the same maximal lineage. They cannot be precisely defined by morphological criteria, for they are distinguishable only in functional terms, by the incidence of jural, ritual, and economic rights, duties, and privileges.

The effective minimal lineage is marked by the fact that it commonly forms the basis of a domestic family which usually constitutes a single unit of food production and consumption.

The nuclear lineage generally forms the basis of what we shall later designate the expanded family. Its male members have a common interest in, and joint rights of inheritance to particular patrimonial farm-lands; and the head of the lineage bears the formal jural responsibility for any of the members in such matters as the payment of bride-price. The founding ancestors of such a lineage may be placed from four to six generations back, reckoning from contemporary minimal lineages. A nuclear lineage may include two or more effective minimal lineages.

The inner lineage, which may include two or more nuclear lineages, may, but does not necessarily, have a common interest in patrimonial land. Like the nuclear lineage, it is not the basis of a unit of production or consumption. Its characteristic feature is that it is the widest lineage within which generation differences are socially recognized. From this it follows that incest with a woman member of the same inner lineage is strongly reprobated and sexual intercourse with the wife of any other

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[1] Very rarely four generations; never, to my knowledge, more.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

613 member of the lineage is regarded as a grave sin. The head of the inner lineage still bears jural and ritual responsibility for all junior members of the lineage but to a lesser extent than the head of the nuclear lineage. The founding ancestor of an inner lineage may be placed five to seven generations back.

A medial lineage includes two or more inner lineages. It may be a major segment of a maximal lineage or a major segment of a major segment. Its founding ancestor may be placed from six to eight or nine generations back. Its segments do not, as a rule, have a common interest in patrimonial land. The seduction of a co-member's wife is not invariably considered to be a sin. If it is a lineage of wide span, embracing several sub-segments, and the parties are distant agnates, this might be treated simply as a jural offence.

Generation differences are usually no longer recognized for jural purposes at this range of patrilineal connexion, and the lineage head has no jural responsibility for or ritual obligations on behalf of individual members who are not of his nuclear or, at most, inner lineage. A significant index of the medial lineage is that it marks the limits within which a man is prohibited from marrying a patrilineal kinswoman of his mother. He cannot, as a rule, marry a woman of his mother's maximal lineage who belongs to her medial lineage; he is almost always allowed to marry one who falls outside this range of agnatic kinship with his mother.

It must be emphasized that these distinctions are not made by the natives. The lineage units thus identified are often fairly clearly defined in practice in certain maximal lineages at a given time. But what holds for one maximal lineage does not hold for another of the same clan or for the same maximal lineage at another time. And borderline cases are common, so that a lineage which functions as an inner lineage in one situation may be treated as a medial lineage in another. These distinctions are based on the gradation of rights and duties observed in Tale jural and ritual relations in which lineage segments emerge as corporate units. Hence in considering the incidence of jural or ritual rights and duties, or in determining the scope of kinship sentiments, we cannot always lay down exact limits within which they apply, in accordance with this set of labels. In function as in form the different grades of lineage segments tend to merge into one another; and distinctions that hold at one period will not do so a generation later. As a lineage ramifies, the relative autonomy of its component segments tends to increase in proportion; so that a segment that functioned as a nuclear lineage at one time may, twenty or thirty years later, exhibit all the characteristics of an inner lineage, in corporate activities.

Finally, it should be noted that the Tallensi have no term for the lineage. A lineage of any order is designated the 'house' (*yir*) or the children (*biis*) of the founding ancestor, as in most West African societies which utilize the lineage principle in social organization. In contexts 613 where the emphasis is on the lineage considered as a segment of a more inclusive lineage, it is commonly described as a 'room' (*dug*) of the more inclusive 'house' (*yir*). But when Tallensi speak of a *dug* without further specification they generally mean a segment of the order of an inner or medial lineage.

As this nomenclature shows, the internal constitution of the lineage is modelled on that of the polygynous joint family. The standard pattern is that the segments of a lineage trace their descent from the sons by different wives of their common founding ancestor. We shall consider this subject more fully in this book. In consequence, co-ordinate segments of a lineage are referred to as 'brother' (*sunzɔ*) lineages, and their reciprocal rights and obligations, as well as the conventional patterns of sentiments holding between them, are modelled on the mutual relations of brothers.

At the end of our previous book we pointed out that our study of the 121 structure of corporate groups and their interrelations in Tale society covered only one aspect of the total social structure. We spoke of the first part of this study as an analysis of the warp of the social fabric. Our task now is to examine what might be called the woof of the social fabric. Our starting-point, this time, is not the organized corporate group or the framework of continuity and stability in the social structure, but the individual. Our main interest will be in the standard forms and processes of person-to-person relationships and their connexion with the large-scale framework of the society. Our subject, in other words, is Tale kinship in the narrow sense, viewed in relation to the lineage system.

CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

128 THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

613 The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and
ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural
601 basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow
121 sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

602 The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

the social structure as a whole kinship is the fundamental binding element. It furnishes the primary axioms of all categories of interpersonal and inter-group relations. 602

From the standpoint of the individual, all the norms and conditions that govern his social behaviour fall within a single, syncretic frame of reference; and kinship forms the base line from which this frame of reference is projected. This is a consequence of the syncretic structure of Tale society, based as it is on genealogical connexion. The alinement of individuals and groups for all social purposes follows genealogical lines; with few exceptions, social relations always have a genealogical coefficient. And because they have a common foundation in the genealogical structure of the society, Tale institutions interlock with one another in a consistent scheme. For the same reason Tale social relations do not fall into distinct categories with only adventitious connexions between them. Economic relations serve jural, political, and religious ends as well; political relations are at the same time religious relations; jural rights and duties are aspects of economic, religious, and political bonds.

The extent to which the idiom of kinship dominates Tale thought about human affairs is shown by the tendency of the people to explain conduct that conforms to the norms by appealing to kinship. The late Chief of Tongo, for example, justified his conciliatory tactics with the Gɔlibdaana, in spite of the latter's provocations, on the grounds of their ties of cognatic and affinal kinship. On the other hand, departure from normal standards of conduct is apt to be ascribed to personal idiosyncrasies. Thus when Zayahkpemɔre fought with his older brother over the division of their late father's land, the elders of his lineage ascribed it to his violent temper and lack of intelligence. In keeping with this idiom of thought, a gross breach of kinship duty is the prototype of the Tale notion of sin. 602 578

Cognatic and Agnatic Kinship

It is essential to distinguish two kinds of genealogical ties among the Tallensi. There are, firstly, cognatic ties, that is, ties of actual or assumed physical consanguinity and of the social relations entailed by them, which link person to person or an individual to a lineage or one lineage to another in a specifically defined and particular bond. Such ties may be traced through males only, through females only, or through both males and females. Secondly, there are lineage ties, social relations based on the tie of common agnatic descent. 602 611

Cognatic kinship and agnatic kinship have different, in some situations even opposed, functions in Tale collective life. The distinction turns on the principle that lineage ties always unite people in or relate them to corporate groups serving common interests and held together by common values, whereas cognates do not necessarily form corporate

611 groups. Cognates have mutual bonds of sentiment and reciprocal obliga-
tions, but not necessarily common interests. All the members of a given
602 lineage have the same agnatic kin and therefore identical lineage ties;
but only identical siblings—that is, brothers or sisters by the same parents—have the same cognatic kin.[1] By automatically making him a member of maximal lineage and clan, his agnatic descent fits the individual into the constituted framework of Tale society. It is this that gives him his political status in the society. It gives him also a special field of defined social relations with clear contours. Cognatic kinship creates a number of contingent social ties for the individual, valid for him only. Unlike lineage ties, they differ in quality; they multiply in the course of his lifetime; in theory their range is indeterminate, since there is no limit to the reckoning of cognatic kinship. Tallensi often discover cognates of whom they were previously ignorant, in the most unexpected places in their own country, even in their own clan. But it is extremely rare for anyone to discover a hitherto unknown agnate, even in these days of relatively great mobility.

602 The Tallensi maintain, and genealogies of individuals bear this out, that if enough were known of the genealogical relationships of the people of adjacent settlements, they would all be found to be related to one another. In the clan itself, under the surface of its strict patrilineal organization, the filaments of cognatic kinship bind individuals together by special personal bonds which operate independently of lineage ties. This complex and unlimited ramification of cognatic kinship gives these relations great fluidity, in contrast to the comparative fixity of lineage relations. Individuals are often connected by multiple cognatic ties which are differentially effective in different situations; and, as will be clearer later, cognatic ties make breaches in the barriers of lineage and clan exclusiveness, thus extending widely the flow of social relations.

The domestic family is the matrix of all the genealogical ties of the
593 individual, the contemporary mechanism for ever spinning new threads
602 of kinship, and the focal field of social relations based on consanguinity.
In it we can observe the working of the nuclear patterns of kinship and the formation of the ideas and values which steer the individual in all his genealogical relationships. In the domestic family we get the sharpest picture of the interaction between cognatic kinship and agnatic or lineage ties. We have there the elementary ties of cognatic kinship linking parent to child and sibling to sibling, and we have also the agnatic tie which

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[1] These are the kinsfolk whom Rivers called a man's *kindred*; vide *Kinship and Social Organization*, p. 80. I am avoiding this term as it is best used to refer to a defined social unit in Rivers's sense. Sibship among the Teutons and Celts was reckoned bilaterally on this principle, cf. Vinogradoff, P., *Outlines of Historical Jurisprudence*, vol. i, ch. viii. But the kindred as a defined social unit does not exist among the Tallensi.

sets apart the males as the nucleus of the lineage. We can see the centrifugal, sundering force of matrilateral kinship counterbalancing the centripetal, uniting pull of patriliny. In the context of family life we can see the play of conflict and compromise in the working out of the primary equilibrium of Tale social organization, due to the interaction of these two sectors of social life. 573 602

Through his primary relations of consanguinity in the domestic family the individual is linked to agnates in other families and to cognates in other families and clans. There is, however, one significant difference between intra-familial and extra-familial bonds of kinship. Unlike the latter, the former are necessarily ambivalent, each relationship containing within itself both an agnatic and a cognatic component. In a joint family of three generations, for example, a child's relationship with his father differs from his relationship with his grandfather or his mother. Though these are all cognatic relationships, the tension and latent rivalry in the relationship of father and son stand in marked contrast to the comradeship of grandfather and grandson. On the other hand, grandfather, father, and son belong to the same lineage segment; they are united by a common interest in patrimonial land and in the product of their joint labour, by a common ancestor cult, by rights and duties vested in that lineage in relation to like segments of a greater lineage, and by their common concern for the continuity of their line. These are part of the whole complex of common interests and values that mobilize corporate action and maintain corporate solidarity in the maximal lineage and clan of which they form a segment. The men of a joint family may be thrown into conflict with one another on account of their cognatic relationships, but they act in union and on behalf of one another and of the whole unit in virtue of their lineage ties. 596

There is another paradox in the structure of the Tale family that is of importance for our inquiry. Consanguineous relationships arise out of parenthood; but parenthood presupposes marriage, a union of a man and a woman who are, by definition, not kin. The bonds of kinship are rooted in a bond the very essence of which is the absence of kinship. Hence comes the ambivalence inherent in intra-familial cognatic relations. Hence comes, also, another category of social relations, both in the family and between members of different families and clans, relations of affinity. There are two axes, as it were, in the structure of the family, the axis of kinship and that of marriage. 593

Before we discuss kinship in the domestic family more fully, we must consider a few matters of more general import. For the constellation of ties and cleavages that makes up the focal field of kinship is conditioned by the formative principles and values that shape the greater society into which the domestic family fits and which it helps to knit together. All person-to-person relations in the family are biased by the values attached to patrilineal descent and maternal origin in the total social structure. 593 602

The Generic Concept of Kinship

602 Among the Tallensi the generic concept of kinship, *dɔɣam*, subsumes all kinds and degrees of genealogical relationship, however remote, through one or more progenitors or progenetrices. But its primary reference is to procreation. One might perhaps translate it by the word 'generation' in its etymological sense. Its root, the verb *dɔɣ*—to bear or beget a child—signifies both the male and the female function in procreation. *Dɔɣam*, the abstract noun, describes the process, or the act, or the physiological capacity, of bringing a child into the world, as well as the ties thus created. The logic behind this generalized concept of kinship is plain. Every genealogical relationship goes back, eventually, to one pair of parents. Both in fact and in Tale kinship theory the parent-child bond is the nodal bond of kinship.

Though the Tallensi see every genealogical relationship as a tie of physical consanguinity, this is not the thing that matters most. What matters most is the social relations entailed by consanguinity. A genealogical tie between two people or two genealogically defined units comes into action in the palpable facts of economic life, jural relations, moral values, ceremonial duties, and ritual ideas and performances. Genealogical ties very often have economic or political utility and are sustained by powerful moral and religious sanctions. But behind all this lies a general notion which the natives themselves do not need to formulate but which is implicit in all their kinship behaviour. A great deal of Tale kinship custom is specific. In ceremonial situations different categories of kin often behave in prescribed ways which sharply distinguish them from one another. At a funeral ceremony, for example, one can tell at once, from the kind of gifts they bear and the attitudes they display, whether a party of mourners are relatives-in-law (*deenam*), clansmen (*yidɛm*), or sisters' children (*ahəs*), of the bereaved. But in the routine of ordinary life the intercourse of kinsfolk has no such formal precision, and is often indistinguishable from the intercourse of friends, neighbours, or other associates. Not even the native, attuned as he is to the fine nuances of his cultural idiom, could tell whether two women working and chatting amicably together are co-wives, mother and daughter, or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The general notion we have mentioned corresponds to this indeterminate and elastic manifestation of kinship.

582 602 The Tallensi indicate it most clearly in connexion with the rules governing a proper marriage. They draw a sharp distinction between *dɔɣam*, kinship, and *deen*, in-lawship. The crux of the rule of clan exogamy and of the collateral prohibition of marriage with consanguineous kin of any degree (and the natives do not distinguish these two classes of restrictions) is the principle that *dɔɣam* and *deen* are irreconcilably contradictory. They must not be 'mixed' (*gyɛt*).

A striking illustration of this antithesis occurred at a sacrifice that 602 Diŋkaha made to one of his ancestors. An ambitious and none too scrupulous braggart of considerable intelligence and drive, Diŋkaha 577 had been very useful to me and had made the most of his connexion with me. One of the objects of this ceremony was to show off his friendship with me to his clansmen, and his prestige among them to me. It was, therefore, a specially lavish occasion. In the middle of the ceremony Diŋkaha's father-in-law called in. The old man was respectfully received and ushered into his daughter's rooms. Diŋkaha finished the sacrifice and began to distribute the meat. Various members of his lineage and clan received the portions due to them. And then, intoxicated with conceit at having his white friend in his house and at the obvious appreciation of his stock, in consequence, in the eyes of his clansmen, a rash impulse overcame him. Holding up a goat's foreleg—one of the ritually prescribed portions that should be reserved for those entitled by birth [illegible] share in the sacrifice—he launched out into a speech, the gist of which was that he desired his father-in-law to accept it in order to mark this special occasion. A sombre look came upon the old man's face. He was visibly shocked. Speaking gravely but curtly, he refused the gift. *Deenam*, he said, do not sacrifice together; it is an unheard-of thing; he could not accept the gift. Diŋkaha retired in discomfiture behind a smoke-screen of apologies.

Marriage implies the absence of kinship ties between the parties; 581 kinship, the impossibility of marriage. Kinship ties exist in their own right; *deen* is an artificial alliance of a contractual nature. The parties 602 to a marriage deliberately and voluntarily enter into a bond, the bride's guardian permitting her to marry in return for a promise on the part of the bridegroom's guardian to pay him four head of cattle. Kinship ties are not voluntary and are automatically binding. The parties to a marriage are bound by rights and duties which did not exist before. Kinship automatically entails moral, jural, and ritual bonds, whereas there is an avowed element of mutual coercion, and therefore potential tension, in the relations of in-laws. They rely upon a special, impartial jural instrument, the bride-price, for the adjustment of their rival claims on the woman.

Tallensi think of *deen* as a relationship for ever fraught with the 602 possibility of conflict over these claims. Nearly all their litigation nowadays, like much inter-clan fighting in former days, concerns bride-price 578 debts or the rival claims over a woman or her children of father-in-law and son-in-law. Such quarrels are incompatible with kinship. They would cut to pieces the solidarity of kinsfolk—that is why, say the Tallensi, kinsfolk do not marry. *Dɔyam*, in short, presupposes some degree of identification of the parties concerned, mutual or common interests, and especially a bond of amity that excludes strife which might fix a permanent gulf between them.

602 577 These norms of kinship the Tallensi regard as axiomatic, one might say as the *a priori* moral premisses of their social behaviour. Behind the utility of kinship in practical life and the jural and ritual sanctions that buttress kinship ties stands the notion of kinship as the rock-bottom category of social relations, inviolable in its own right. The root of this notion lies in the bond between parent and child and it reflects the fact that genealogical relationship is the binding medium of Tale social structure. The Tallensi are outspoken sceptics about human nature. They take it for granted that the ideal norms of kinship will often be violated. They know well, however, that they are usually effective and cannot be destroyed by the transgressions of individuals; for these, in the end, always bring their own revenge and are compensated for in the total flow of collective life. In any case, the lapses of individuals, and the fact that strong sanctions exist to check them, do not diminish the absolute, *a priori* character of kinship.

602 769 It is worth noting that economic reciprocity—which is a conspicuous element in kinship, especially among close kin—and jural rights and duties have a much less direct connexion with this fundamental assumption of kinship than religious bonds have. This is connected with the important place of ancestor worship in Tale society. To trace genealogical relationship it is necessary to recollect common ancestors; and if these have religious value, ritual allegiance to a common ancestor or ancestress inevitably forms an intrinsic feature of kinship ties and their most powerful sanction. The more distant a genealogical tie is, the more does it become a matter of moral and ritual, rather than of jural or economic, relations. We shall see this in more detail when we come to compare social relations within the domestic family with the relations of kinship outside the domestic family.

Two Classes of Kinship Relations

602 Any relation of kinship belongs to one of two classes. If people say 'We are *dɔyam*', the basic analogy they have in mind is that of siblings. Two men who are cognatically related to the same lineage—e.g. two men who have a common maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yir*) or whose fathers or grandfathers had a common maternal uncle's lineage—describe themselves thus. They visualize their relationship primarily as one of common though independent religious allegiance to a particular line of common ancestors, in sacrifices to whom they may both partake. By the operation of the lineage principle two lineages might consider themselves to be related in such a manner. Kɔnbameŋ and Pudiniba, two young men of the same clan but of different sections of the clan, were good friends. When I asked them how their friendship had arisen, they resorted, characteristically, to the idiom of kinship. Being members of the same clan is not a sufficient reason for so personal a relationship as friendship. The reason they adduced was that they were both sister's

sons (*ahəs*) of the same Tɛnzugu clan. This had brought them together. 602 Similarly, there is a much closer bond between Ziŋgan biis and Tambil biis, two of the five segments of Bɔɣayiedət yidɛm of Tongo, than between either of these segments and the other three segments, because their founding ancestors were sister's sons of the same clan.[1]

The other and more important class of kinship ties presupposes the analogy of the parent–child relationship. When a person says of another '*n-dɔɣume*—I have begotten (born) him', or, speaking of lineages, '*ti dɔɣabame*—We (my lineage) have begotten (born) them (their lineage)', what is meant is that the latter can trace a line of descent to the former or to the former's lineage. A man refers to a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) or to a classificatory *ahəŋ* in these terms. When I was staying at Kpata'ar, my servants received unusually generous hospitality and were obviously much more at ease than they had been at some places we had previously visited. I was several times told in explanation (on one occasion by some Kpata'ar children) that my two local boys were *dɔɣa* by the Kpata'ar na'ab's lineage. The father of one and the paternal grandfather of the other had been sister's sons of Kpata'ar. Again, two lineages can be related in this way, as, for instance, Naɣasaa yidɛm of Kpata'ar and Dmanpiog yidɛm of Gbeog are. The most important feature of such a relationship to the natives is that the lineage or individual of the senior generation sacrifices to their or his ancestors on behalf of the lineage or individual of the junior generation.

The idiom of kinship has such a dominant place in Tale thought that all social relations implying mutual or common interests tend to be assimilated to those of kinship. This happens, as has been shown in our previous volume, with ties of local contiguity and of politico-ritual interdependence between lineages and clans.

The Native Theory of Conception

The Tallensi, we have said, take cognizance of a very wide range of 842 genealogical relationships, and they regard all such relationships as based on the physical fact of consanguinity. The starting-point for this lies in their notions about the physiology of conception. In their view man and woman have equally vital roles in the act of conception. Hence kinship through one's mother, and, consequently, through her ascendants, counts equally with—though admittedly less influentially than, and differently from—kinship through one's father and paternal line.

Dɔɣam is the power of procreation. In women it is connected with 841 menstruation, the external signs and periodicity of which are known to 842 everybody, and the nature of which man, woman, or child readily refers to without the slightest squeamishness. A girl is said to be fit for childbearing (*u saɣa dɔɣam* [or *dɔɣabu*]) when her monthly courses become established, her breasts develop, and her body takes on womanly

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 211 ff.

841 contours. Before a woman menstruates (*lu sie*, lit. fall from the waist), and after she ceases altogether to menstruate, she cannot bear children.
842 When a woman has monthly periods she is capable of conception; when she is pregnant her periods stop. Thus menstruation, say the Tallensi, is a condition like pregnancy (*sie a puur*). It is the sign of capacity for child-bearing.

842 A man's *dɔyam* becomes fruitful some time after puberty (*u solɔme*, verb), the main sign of which is the emergence of pubic hair. At first,
831 when the adolescent boy begins to have nocturnal emissions, his powers of procreation are not yet mature. It is only after some time, when he is completely *sol*, that he becomes capable of procreation. For procreation depends not on the sexual fluids ejaculated in the act of coitus by both man and woman, but on an active principle, as it were, in these fluids, the *ŋaamis*. The natives cannot explain more precisely what the *ŋaamis* is or how it works. What they maintain, emphatically, is that conception, both among men and among animals, cannot occur without sexual congress, and that it depends on the mingling (*gɛrəm*) of the male sexual fluid with the female sexual fluid, or rather on the happy conjunction of their respective procreative essences (*ŋaamis*). Thus the function of the male is as essential as that of the female in procreation, and every child knows this.

842 Much evidence could be quoted in proof of this. Tallensi know that a male's procreative potency resides in the testicles (*lana*), and they
831 castrate small livestock which they want to prevent from breeding. The suspension of sex relations with a wife who has a nursing child is not a ritual matter, subject to mystical sanctions, but a practical necessity in order to prevent the woman from conceiving again too soon. Its observance is a question of conscience and self-control and few men get through life without a lapse. Some, I was told by one of my most trustworthy informants, practise *coitus interruptus* in order to avoid impregnating a nursing wife. Some men believe in a 'safe period'. I once heard a theory of this kind stated by a man to a couple of friends. His very
[841] modern-sounding theory was that the 'safe period' follows shortly after menstruation, since menstruation is a sort of pregnancy, and a pregnant woman cannot conceive again. But the clearest indication of the role attributed by the Tallensi to sexual conjugation in procreation was given in a conversation I listened to at the Chief of Tongo's house. The chief and the elders were talking about the White Fathers at Boləga. Garbled ideas about their doctrines have reached many Tallensi. Jesus was mentioned. One man said that the Fathers claimed that His mother conceived Him without knowing a man. A vigorous argument followed. Most of the men were openly sceptical, saying that it was quite impossible. But one or two had a deeper respect for the white man. True, they admitted, black people cannot have children without sex relations; but perhaps the white man, with his wondrous powers and knowledge,

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has a medicine which enables women to conceive without the participa- 842 tion of a male.

The notion of a procreative essence as distinct from the sexual fluid, however vaguely formulated it is, is of importance. Tallensi distinguish between sexual vigour or desire and the power of procreation. They know that people who are sterile (*kundɔɣar*) lack the latter but are not necessarily deficient in the former. Na'abzɔ, gossip said, was sterile because in his wild young days as a soldier he had lived with a Dagban woman who had maliciously caused him by some magical means to 'pour away all his power of begetting (*kpaa u dɔɣam waabi bah*)' in excessive intercourse with her. The uncharitable believed that he was impotent to boot, but others were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

The Tallensi regard *dɔɣam* as, above all, a very precious human 842 function, quite apart from the pleasures of sex. Thus, when Zikihib's young wife was left a grass widow for three years by her vagabond [837] husband and had a child by a lover, it was unanimously condoned. Was she, it was argued, to cast away her powers of child-bearing for nothing (*zaŋ u dɔɣam bah wari*) just because she had a faithless husband and was herself too devoted to her children by him to run off with another man?

Lastly, the notion of the *ŋaamis* is the point at which mystical beliefs 842 enter into the theory of conception. The obvious physiological facts of parenthood are summed up in the maxim, 'A man and a woman unite 781 to procreate a child'. But behind plain physiology lies a mystery. Sometimes a man sleeps with his wife on a single occasion and she becomes pregnant (*u ŋɔɣa puur*—lit. she seizes a belly). At other times a man has relations with his wife regularly for months and she fails to conceive. Thus conception depends, in the last resort, on Heaven (*Naawun*), the Final Cause by which the Tallensi rationalize chance and which they invoke when empirical or less recondite mystical explanations fail. There is an essential mystical factor in procreation; and if a man or a woman fails to beget or bear a child, appeals can be made to the ancestor spirits and other mystical powers that intervene directly in human destiny. That is why a barren woman in her heart of hearts never gives up hope of having a child as long as she is still of child-bearing age, though the Tallensi know that barrenness is often a fact of nature beyond cure by either empirical or mystical agencies.

The Significance of Paternity and Patriliny

A person's genealogical ties are fixed by his parentage. Among the Tallensi these are the ties that plot the trajectory of the individual's life. 602 The rights and duties that are critical for his role and status in society all stem, in the last resort, from the fact of birth. A person cannot divest himself, or be divested, of the bonds created by his birth and yet remain a member of the society; nor can he fully and unconditionally acquire

602 these bonds except by birth. No other ties can wholly supersede them in linking person to person and affiliating individuals to defined social groups.

602 611 We have noted, however, that not all genealogical ties have an equal value. Though a person acquires significant social ties through both parents, his agnatic relationships have an outstanding importance; and this is particularly so for a man. For not only is patrilineal descent the vertebral principle of Tale social organization and the vehicle of the continuity and stability of the social structure, but men hold the reins of authority, direct economic life, control the political organization, and are supreme in religious and ceremonial thought and action. From his father a man derives his rights to inherit land and other property, his clan membership and the political rights and ritual obligations that go with it, and his ritual relations with his most important ancestors. A woman does not inherit land or other property of value, nor does she succeed to political or ritual office. But clan membership and the concomitant totemic observances,[1] as well as her ritual allegiance to her patrilineal ancestors, mean a great deal for her social destiny and for her children. In short, paternity is the predominant side of parentage in this conspicuously patriarchal society.

842 848 Like many other primitive societies, the Tallensi recognize a distinction between physiological paternity and jural paternity—between *genitor* and *pater*, as Radcliffe-Brown puts it. However, the Tallensi feel very strongly that a person's physiological father is his or her right jural father. The assumption is that all the social attributes that come to one from one's father should come from a father who both begot one and recognizes one as his legitimate offspring. Thus there is an inevitable tendency for conflict to arise if a person's physiological and jural paternity do not coincide. Such a person tends to be penalized in respect of his social status, for jural paternity by itself cannot altogether take the place of physiological cum jural paternity.

848 The conflict is least in the case of an adulterine child, who is always accepted as the rightful child of its mother's husband. No difficulties at all arise in the case of a daughter, who marries out of the lineage as soon as she is nubile. An adulterine son has complete and unreserved filial status. He has full rights of inheritance, of succession, and of ritual access to his putative patrilineal ancestors. Nevertheless, the blot on the scutcheon is not without effect. The story of Sayəbazaa's first-born son, Kologo, illustrates this.

848 578 Some years before my first visit to Tongo, Kologo had left his father to go and farm near Datək. There seemed to be no adequate motive for this in his case. But when Sayəbazaa died, in 1936, and Kologo as chief mourner had to be summoned for the mortuary rites, I was able to piece together how it had occurred, from guarded hints and veiled comments

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

made by other members of the family and by one of Saɣəbazaa's maternal kinsmen. Kologo, it appeared, was an adulterine child. Saɣəbazaa 848 could never forget this, though it was not a thing that was ever mentioned 578 in public. A man of strong principles, inclined in any case to keep a firm hand on his children, Saɣəbazaa was often over-severe with Kologo. The tension admitted by custom to exist between a man and his first-born son was exacerbated. At length Kologo deliberately violated—or so Saɣəbazaa said—the Namoo taboos of a first-born son; and Saɣəbazaa thereupon cursed him and expelled him from the house. It was evident from the remarks which gave the clue to the story that the seed of discord here was Kologo's physical paternity, though it did not affect his rights to inherit his father's property and ancestral shrines.

This kind of psychological friction is said not to occur in the special 837 case of a child begotten in permitted extra-marital intercourse, which the Tallensi do not regard as adultery (*pɔɣambon*). A man who is sterile or impotent may allow his wife to conceive by another man. The proper way to do this is for him to inform the elders of his lineage first. With their blessing and consent he may give his wife permission to find a lover wherever she wishes—'*u gəma, nye puur, ən nye Moog ni Zaŋbiog ən nyɛbma*—let her walk about to get a belly; if she meets a Mossi man or a Hausa man (i.e. any passer-by) let her copulate'—is the traditional formula with which he sets her free to be promiscuous, if she chooses, in order to become pregnant. Sensible men and women prefer a more reputable procedure, however. Either the husband asks a friend or kinsman not of his own clan to deputize for him sexually, or he lets the wife choose one of her own distant clan-brothers as a lover. This man is then formally deputed (*galəh*) to be the woman's lover by being presented to the lineage elders, who sacrifice a fowl on his behalf to the lineage ancestors, with an explanation of the circumstances and pleas for a blessing on the affair. The arrangement, though formal, is strictly private, for no man willingly admits to sterility or sexual incapacity; and when, as inevitably happens, it leaks out, public opinion is sympathetic rather than contemptuous. Tallensi say that such cases of begetting a child by proxy do not occur very often.

While I was in Taleland, Baŋam-Teroog's junior wife had a child by a deputed lover. Teroog was an old man, shrivelled and half-blind with age. He once begged me for medicine to restore his fertility, but admitted with regret that he was probably too old for procreation. He deputed his closest friend and distant sister's son, Naabdiya, to beget a child for him. The liaison continued throughout the woman's pregnancy, but ceased as soon as her child was born. I often saw Teroog with this baby, fondling and caressing it with a tenderness that showed more eloquently than words that he regarded it as his own child. Naabdiya, for his part, though his relations with Teroog were as cordial as ever, took no more interest in the infant than any man might take in

837 his friend's children. Tale sentiment takes no cognizance of physical paternity in this situation. No kinship tie is recognized between the physiological father and the child he was deputed to beget. One might almost describe it as, from their point of view, a kind of artificial insemination.

The case of an unmarried woman's child (*yi-yeem-bii*) is different. 848 It is brought up as the foster-child of her father or brother. If it is 611 a girl, no difficulties occur, as she will eventually marry and Tale kinship ideas permit *her* children to regard her mother's lineage as their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yir*). She will even be allowed to marry into her mother's clan provided it is a different major segment of the clan. Several instances of this are on record; for no stigma attaches to anybody concerned, since an illegitimate child is not a true clan member.

An illegitimate boy's circumstances are not so easy. The evidence of two cases I was acquainted with amply confirms conventional opinion on this subject. Such a boy will grow up to all intents and purposes as a child of his mother's father's or brother's family and as a full member of the clan. He will be treated exactly like other sons of the family, whom he will call his brothers. His quasi-father will, for example, provide the cattle and take the responsibility for his marriage, as would not be done for a legitimate sister's son (*ahəŋ*) growing up in his maternal uncle's (*ahəb*) home. But he has two fundamental disabilities, which nothing can overcome and which pass, by the principle of the corporate identity of the lineage, to his agnatic male descendants. He [428 has no right to inherit his quasi-father's patrimonial estate, though he 769] may be permitted to do so if there are no other heirs; and he has no right to sacrifice directly to his spirit, or consequently, to the lineage ancestors. He cannot, therefore, succeed to the custody of lineage ancestors' shrines or hold an office vested in the lineage. The tie of true agnatic descent, which alone confers these rights, cannot be fabricated.

An illegitimate boy's status in the lineage is in fact, therefore, inferior 848 to that of his quasi-brothers. He is always liable to a certain amount of covert contempt, though good manners forbid the mention of his irregular descent in the normal course of events. But if he gets involved in a quarrel with his quasi-siblings or quasi-clansmen, even as a child, they might well taunt him as an interloper (*zaŋkuomər*). His lot may be harder, if he has an intractable character, than that of a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with his mother's brother (*ahəb*); for the latter has a home of his own to fall back upon, where he is entitled, by right of legitimate descent, to his patrimonial inheritance, protection, and communion in the ancestor cult. In no circumstances, however, can an illegitimate son be deprived of those rights that belong to him. His quasi-father's home is his home, his mother's clan his clan. From him may spring an accessory lineage of the clan. In theory, incidentally, he may marry a daughter of a different major segment of his adoptive clan, but I know

of no case, in recent years, of this having occurred. Public sentiment 848
would not be sympathetic to it, since he is felt to be so closely connected with the clan.

It sometimes happens that a woman who has an illegitimate child 848
takes it with her when she gets married, and the child is brought up in her husband's house. Eŋwala's illegitimate son, Kumahe, grew up thus 583
under the care of her husband, Yɛanbɔrəgya. The boy and his stepfather were greatly attached to each other. Kumahe farmed with Yɛanbɔrəgya like his own sons, and was treated like a son in the ordinary affairs of the household. When he began courting a daughter of his stepfather's clan, Yɛanbɔrəgya gave him fatherly support and counsel. But when Kumahe's prospective parents-in-law asked for an advance payment on the bride-price, Yɛanbɔrəgya neither provided it nor took responsibility for it. For Kumahe had not acquired filial status in Yɛanbɔrəgya's lineage, and the responsibility for the payment of bride-price on his behalf rested with his jural guardian, his mother's brother. Kumahe belongs to his mother's clan, and both he, his stepfather, and his mother's brother told me, at different times, that he would undoubtedly return one day to live amongst this clan.

The status of a male slave (*da'abər*) in former times was similar, 567
though in some respects less advantageous. The Tallensi seem to have kept few slaves.[1] It is said that a man usually bought a male slave if he lacked a son to help him with his farming and to support him in his old age. Slaves were never natives of Taleland but hapless strangers from other parts of the Northern Territories found wandering in the country. Having no kinsfolk in Taleland to protect them they fell a prey to anyone who chanced to encounter them. Their only security lay in the taboo that made it obligatory for them to be handed over to chiefs, who alone had the ritual status entitling men to sell fellow men. To fit them into the social structure they were incorporated into the family and lineage of their owners by being placed under the spiritual guardianship of one of their owner's lineage ancestors' shrines. This gave a slave a quasi-filial status of the same kind, with the same rights and disabilities, as an illegitimate son's.

In his social relations with his quasi-paternal family and clan a slave was indistinguishable from an illegitimate member of the group. In a quarrel he might be abused as a slave—'a bought thing (*bonda'abər*)'—and his quasi-clansmen would be inclined to regard him with a kind of patronizing contempt. But his owner would take up the cudgels for him as energetically as for one of his own sons if he were wantonly

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[1] When they are questioned on the subject, men of 50–60 can usually quote one or two slaves they knew of in their childhood, never more. The impression I got from talks with many people was that there were never more than five or six male slaves living at any one time in Tongo, and correspondingly fewer in smaller settlements.

567 insulted or molested; for it was held to be both good policy and a moral duty to treat a slave no differently from a son. As the ward of the lineage ancestors, he had a place and a moral status in the lineage; but, Tallensi say, he was bound to harbour some resentment at his invidious social position, and would certainly try to abscond if he were ill-used.

These ideas are as active as ever among the Tallensi; for a few ex-slaves still survive, and there are one or two sons, grandsons, and remoter agnatic descendants of slaves in many settlements, who, by the lineage principle, retain their ancestors' social status in a much attenuated form. These people have exactly the same place in society that they would have occupied in former times. To judge by their participation in social activities, both profane and ceremonial, there is no obvious distinction between them and other members of the clan. They are as loyal and patriotic members of the clan as any other members of it. Wɔla of Zoo always took a leading part in the public affairs and ceremonial activities of Zoo. I was surprised to discover accidentally that he was an ex-slave. I was told on excellent authority that he is still often teased about his slave status, but that he takes it in good part, saying that since the coming of the white man a slave is as good a man as his neighbour. Usually no one would so affront a man and his quasi-relatives as to refer pointedly to his slave status or descent if he did not provoke it by offensive conduct. Wrongly to accuse a person of slave descent, if only by implication, is a deadly insult. And even those of whom it is true never voluntarily betray it. Not everyone has Wɔla's aggressive sense of humour, and good manners require that tact and discretion be exercised in such delicate matters of social standing.

Analogously, a slave girl's (*da'abpɔk*) status resembled that of an illegitimate daughter. She was taken in marriage like any other girl, so her children had no disabilities in respect of their patrilineal connexions. They regarded their mother's quasi-paternal kin as their maternal uncle's lineage. But I have records of cases in which the descendants of a slave woman have sought out her true paternal kin in a distant land in order to establish correct ritual ties with them.

567 602 All the men with whom I discussed the question affirmed without hesitation that it would be disgraceful and immoral to treat a slave, or an illegitimate son or brother, differently from true agnatic kin. But they all emphasized, nevertheless, that a slave or an illegitimate son cannot possibly become a son or a brother in the full sense of these terms. He can be to you *in loco filii* or *fratris* but not *filius* or *frater*, since he cannot sacrifice directly to his quasi-father's spirit or inherit, [842] as of right, his patrimony. The principle at issue is that physical father and social father, *genitor* and *pater*, must be the same person. The vicissitudes of marriage illustrate the same point.

611 842 It often happens that a young woman becomes the bride of one man, is later married to another man, by whom she conceives or has a

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The 611
second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its
life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father 842
a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so much importance to having children that they generally make every effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony, or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the
care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When 611
she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the 583
cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law (or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted 611
as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare, when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours, sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted 613
into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without 618
any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt
to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition 602
to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance of his father's estate, but was elected tɛndaana over the heads of men who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow of redemption.

The Ritual Coefficient of Patriliny

602 769 All these cases of irregular paternity bring out a point of central importance in native thought. As we shall see in more detail later, the bonds of physical consanguinity and the concomitant social ties created by parenthood are *ipso facto* spiritual and moral bonds. They have a ritual coefficient in which the natives see their deepest meaning and value. One's bonds with one's lineage imply a ritual bond with one's patrilineal ancestors and other mystical forces associated with the existence and well-being of the lineage. They are the chief mystical powers governing the life of the individual. Legitimate paternity is a *sine qua non* for a right relationship with one's agnatic ancestor spirits who watch over one's whole life from the moment of birth. There is a spiritual hiatus between an illegitimate son or a slave's son and his adoptive lineage ancestors. Being only indirectly under their tutelage, and unable to gain direct contact with them by offering sacrifices himself, he cannot use them to master the vicissitudes and frustrations of life as freely as a true scion of their line. Also, as we have seen, the ancestor spirits are the principal sanction enforcing a man's rights to full filial status in his physical father's lineage. As we have observed, political and ritual office can be held only by men who are legitimate members of the lineage in which these offices are vested; and the sanction for this lies in the key functions of these offices in the cult of the ancestors and of the other mystical powers coupled with the lineage.

834 842 769 All social relations in which agnatic descent has a decisive function have this ritual coefficient. Legitimate paternity is bound up with a man's exclusive rights over his wife's reproductive powers, conferred on him by marriage. A child's legitimate paternity is jeopardized if it is conceived or born in a situation in which its father's marital rights do not prevail. Hence, sexual intercourse between a man and his wife (and by extension between any man of the husband's medial lineage and a woman of the wife's medial lineage) at her paternal home is rigorously tabooed; it is a ritual 'pollution of the room (*sayam dug*)'—i.e. an outrage against the lineage identity—of the girl's father; for a woman has the status of a daughter in her father's house, where she comes under her father's authority and the tutelage of his ancestors.

611 769 In keeping with this, a child must not be born in its mother's father's, or brother's house. Its ties with its maternal kin must not be confounded with its bonds with its paternal kin. These represent opposed forces in its social world, and matrilateral kinship ties must not be allowed to become a threat to lineage ties. A woman bears a child to her husband, an additional member of his lineage and clan. When she conceives, it is the right and duty of her husband and his family to care for her. His ancestor spirits must guard her and the unborn child. In the perilous hour of childbirth she must be cared for by her husband and his family,

and watched over by his ancestors. If she or the child dies in childbirth 611
the responsibility falls on her husband. A child should be born under 769
its father's roof, literally into the lineage to which it comes as a profit (*ŋoor*) and a responsibility, and under the auspices of its patrilineal ancestors, the spiritual arbiters of its destiny, to whom it will later in life bring sacrifices. Its life will depend on these ancestors, one of whom [776]
will immediately demand to be made its spiritual guardian, charged with preserving its life (*mar u ŋɔvɔr*).

Not only should a child be born under its father's roof, but it should, 854
ideally, be reared, or at least be brought through the first dangerous months of infancy, in its father's house. Circumstances occasionally 769
compel a child to be entrusted to the care of its mother's family, and the Tallensi are practical enough to accept this necessity with equanimity. But they are extremely reluctant to let a young infant pass out of the direct tutelage of its paternal kin and ancestors even for a short while. Thus strong objection is raised if a young wife takes her infant and goes to stay at her parents' house for some time. Here, again, practical necessity may leave no alternative, but there is always a feeling of uneasiness, as can be seen from the following case. When Nindɔɣat of Zubiuŋ died, his youngest wife went home to her father's house at Tɔŋ-Seug, about a quarter of a mile from her late husband's house, taking her infant of some six months with her. Nindɔɣat's brother and prospective heir tried to prevent her going, but she was not well, and they had to admit that she would be better cared for by her mother than by her co-wives. So they allowed her to go. A couple of weeks later, however, the baby fell ill, and though the young mother was staying only a few minutes' walk from her late husband's house, she returned to it immediately. 'She came running back home', her late husband's brother told me, 'because the child was ill. Its (dead) father had not agreed for it to be taken away (that is, the dead father, now a spirit, had mystically caused the child's illness as a sign of his displeasure). And supposing the child were to die at its maternal uncle's house? Should we not say that they had caused the death of our child?' The proper ritual measures to cure the child, without which practical leechcraft could not avail, could only be taken by its father or his representative in its father's house. The young mother believed this as firmly as her late husband's heir.

For all these reasons it is a taboo (*kihɔr*) for a child to be born in its 844
mother's father's house. His ancestor spirits cannot watch over mother and child, for they do not 'own (*so*)' the child. It is, therefore, dangerous 783
for the child's health and chances of survival. Of course, such a thing 769
may, and sometimes does happen by accident. Then the child's father must, whenever he can afford it, erase the pollution by the ceremony of 'removing the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the birth from his father-in-law's house. He sends a sheep and beer to his father-in-law as a placation

844 783 769 gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be performed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

842 613 The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔɣam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔɣam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

604 One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

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[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

strictly differentiated from a son in jural terms. The kinship tie between sister's son and mother's brother is an important breach in the genealogical fence enclosing the agnatic lineage; it is one of the main gateways of an individual's social relations with members of other clans than his own. 604

But the recognition accorded to the mother's agnatic kin does not bring out the deeper implications of maternal origin as the complementary of paternal origin. These implications are contained in the concept *soog* (pl. *saarət* or *soorət*). This concept involves the idea of matrilineal descent in contrast to that of patrilineal descent. Both in its range of efficacy, its mode of operation, its jural and ritual value, and its emotional and sentimental connotation, matrilineal descent stands in contrast to patriliny. 611

For obvious physiological reasons the bond of consanguinity with one's mother is unique and unalterable; and it is a peculiarly personal bond. The fact that one's jural status is not derived from one's mother serves to emphasize the personal nature of this bond. A person's mother may desert his father and leave him to be reared (*ugh*) by another woman; he may feel some resentment over this all his life; but she remains his true mother, 'the mother who bore him (*ma dɔɣarug*)'. Nothing can alter this fact or extinguish the kinship ties that arise from it. 593

We postpone for a later chapter a consideration of the emotional ties of mother and child. The concept *soog* has definite emotional implications; but here we are concerned with its implications for the social structure. *Soog* means a bond of consanguinity which excludes completely any reckoning with lineage affiliation. People who are *saarət* define themselves biologically as 'the offspring of one womb'—or, in the actual phraseology of the natives, 'to have come from one vagina (*yi pɛn yɛni*)'. This is the common way of stating it; occasionally, but far less commonly, one hears people defining themselves as patrilineally related by the corresponding phrase 'to be the children of one penis (*woor yɛni biis*)'. 611 613

Saarət, therefore, are uterine kin. Between mother and child there is a uterine bond corresponding to the agnatic bond between father and child; and children of one woman are *saarət*, irrespective of their paternity. A woman may have children by different men of the same clan or of different clans; they are *saarət*, irrespective of their clan affiliations. 611 593

Soog is more than the bond of personal kinship between mother and child, and between siblings by the same mother. It is the bond of uterine descent perpetuated through the female line in the same way as the bond of agnatic descent is transmitted through the male line. Uterine siblings are *saarət*; uterine sisters' children are *saarət* (but not uterine brothers' children, for the children of men are not their father's *saarət*); uterine female cousins' children are *saarət*; and so on, 611

611 theoretically, without limit. In short, people of common uterine descent are socially identified with one another; but they do not form a corporate group.

611 The social recognition of the uterine line entails not only that *saarət* have defined ways of behaving towards one another, but also that the
602 fact of matrilineal descent is given an institutional embodiment. Matrilineal descent confers distinctive social attributes on people. In this Tale culture follows the rule found in most West African cultures that recognize both lines of descent.[1] The dominant line of descent confers the overtly significant attributes of social personality—jural status, rights of inheritance and succession to property and office, political allegiance, ritual privileges and obligations; and the submerged line confers certain spiritual characteristics. Among the Tallensi it is easy to see that this is a reflex of the fact that the bond of uterine descent is maintained as a purely personal bond. It does not subserve common interests of a material, jural, or ritual kind; it unites individuals only by ties of mutual interest and concern not unlike those that prevail between close collateral kin in our culture. While it constitutes one of the factors that counterpoise the exclusiveness of the agnatic line, it does not create corporate groups competing with the agnatic lineage and clan. Carrying only a spiritual attribute, the uterine tie cannot undermine the jural and politico-ritual solidarity of the patrilineal lineage.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Witchcraft

754 The critical spiritual attribute carried by the *soog* line is the potentiality of being a witch (*sɔi*, pl. *soob*—a term evidently cognate with
602 *soog*). This potentiality adheres only to the female line and defines that line in social terms. 'This is my *soog*' a person usually says when introducing a uterine relative. 'If he (or she) flies magically (*ayat*) I, too, fly magically; if he sees magically (*nye*) I, too, see magically.' The potentiality of being a witch is hereditary in the female line. A woman's son and daughter may both become witches if she is a witch. If a person is accused of being a witch, all his or her *saarət* are automatically suspect of this inborn mystical vice. His agnatic kin are not implicated, not even his own father or his half-siblings by the same father. These are the points Tallensi invariably stress, both among themselves and in answer to an inquirer, if they are asked to define the meaning of *soog*.

754 It is significant that witchcraft occupies a minor place in Tale mystical thought and ritual action, and that is one reason why the Tallensi make no secret of its hereditary transmission in the female line. They

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[1] Cf., e.g., R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti*; C. D. Forde, 'Kinship in Umor—Double Unilateral Organization in a Semi-Bantu Society', *American Anthropologist*, xli, 1939.

The relationship of mother and child is the root of the uterine (*soog*) tie

[facing p. 32]

have no clear notion of witchcraft, no detailed theories of its mode of operation, and no institutionalized means of combating or sterilizing it. A witch (*sɔɔi*) is supposed to fly about (*u ayarəme*) at night in the guise of a ball of fire; she—for the Tallensi tend to think of a witch as a woman, though they say that men may be witches too—is supposed to be clairvoyant, to 'see (*nye*)' hidden things. She can recognize fellow witches, foresee death coming to a particular person, prophesy an epidemic, and so forth; she may be beneficent, able to impart luck to a person in a mysterious way, or maleficent, killing people by eating (*ɔb*) their souls (*sii*). This is the sum of Tale ideas about the nature of witches. Actually, these qualities make up what is mainly an imaginary stereotype. One never hears of particular individuals being credited with the socially useful qualities or being suspected of possessing the anti-social qualities attributed to witches. Witchcraft is only attributed to people *ex post facto*, when an event occurs for which an explanation in terms of witchcraft is sought. 754

Witchcraft is something on the fringe of Tale mystical thought and ritual values. I have more than once heard elders of the most conservative way of thinking, to whom the native scheme of ritual values is the most important thing in life, declare roundly that there is no such thing as a witch. Though the Tallensi do not put it into clear words, they obviously feel that the idea of witchcraft is a mixture of superstition and folk-lore, and not a part of the system of mystical and ritual values that really matters for the conduct of life. Of course, superstition and folk-lore are not wholly negligible. Circumstances occur, now and then, in which people fall back on the idea of a witch's occult aggression in order to cope with anxieties and frustrations that are normally neutralized through the agency of the ancestor cult; and then a particular person may be accused of being a witch. Significantly, in every case that has come to my notice, some dating back twenty or thirty years and all of them together numbering less than ten, the accused has been a woman. Most accusations of this sort are in the first instance made by women against co-wives, and are symptomatic of the tensions inherent in the joint family. 754 771 [595]

An accusation of being a witch is the private affair of the accused's husband and his maximal lineage, her paternal family, and those of her *saarət* who are in touch with her. In former days, if the accusation was confirmed by a diviner, the accused might insist on undergoing the arrow ordeal (*kuh sɔ-peema*), or be compelled to do so by her husband's lineage and her *saarət* in order to prove her innocence. She had to stab herself with a poisoned arrow in public at the same time as a branch of a *keŋkaŋ* (Ficus) tree was plucked; and if she were guilty, it was believed that she would die before the branch withered. But it is characteristic of the Tale attitude to witches that a person who died thus was accorded a proper funeral—unlike, for example, a person who 754 602 [787] [627]

PLATE 2

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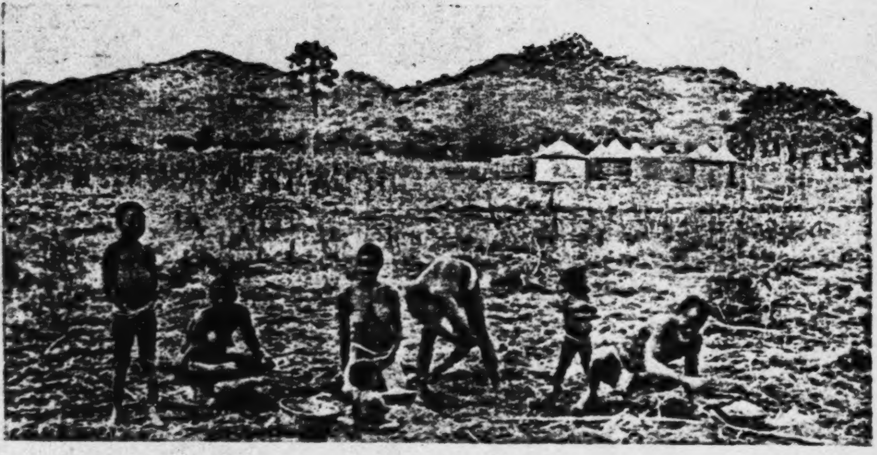

a. The domestic family is the matrix of kinship. A family party out lifting ground-nuts on the home farm. Their homestead is in the background. From right to left: the head of the family, his infant daughter, his adult son, the latter's wife and baby, the family head's wife and daughter

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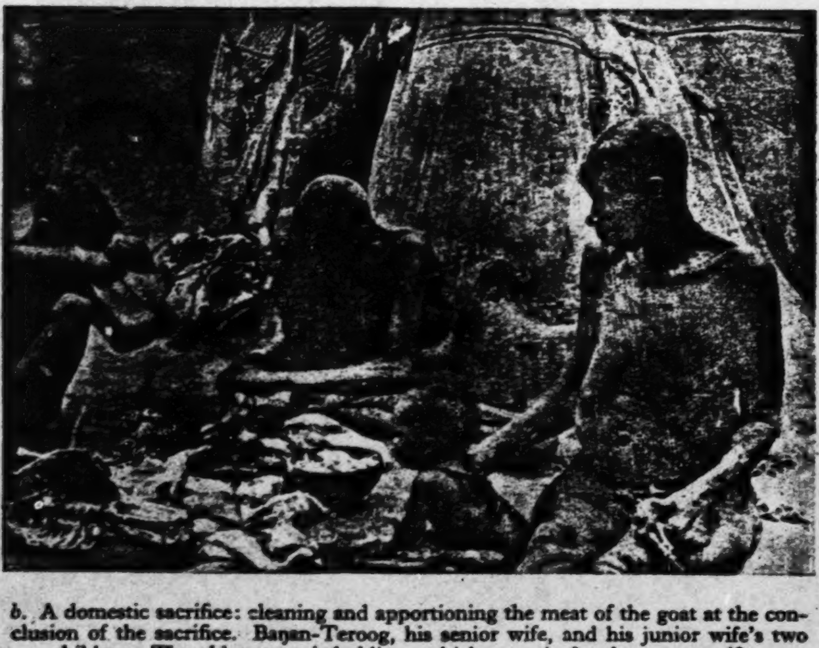

b. A domestic sacrifice: cleaning and apportioning the meat of the goat at the conclusion of the sacrifice. Baŋan-Teroog, his senior wife, and his junior wife's two children. The old woman is holding a chicken ready for the next sacrifice

[facing p. 33]

754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moyaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp. His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
787 reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt. There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence. The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock (*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant, as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the theme of one of the dance songs of the Golib Festival. 'Wherever she goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
754 mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
[771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

The idea of witchcraft is not

easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is 754 by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based 613 on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not 827 connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas. 754 Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of 611 witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the 761 slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical 783 responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

761 blows and my visitor gets killed by accident. Then the slayer will bear 783 one kind of mystical blood-guilt and I will bear the *tyuk* guilt. I may not realize this; indeed, it may not be discovered until, on the occasion of my death, the diviner reveals that my ancestor spirits caused my death in retribution for my unpurged *tyuk* guilt. This was the case with Siiyɛlib of Tongo. When he died it was revealed through divination that he had borne the *tyuk* guilt for the punitive expedition against the Hill Talis twenty-five years previously. He had lodged a complaint against a Yinduuri man with the District Commissioner, and the white man's attempt to bring the Yinduuri man to book had led to the first brush with the Hill Talis. Other incidents followed, but the real reason why the white man launched a punitive attack on the Hill Talis a year or so later was because he had been enraged by the insults and defiance of the people of Yinduuri when he went to arrest the abductor of Siiyɛlib's wife and child. The test of historical accuracy would have been quite irrelevant in this context. Siiyɛlib's clansmen were interpreting the facts subjectively, in accordance with the native system of moral values and mystical beliefs, so as to fit his death logically to the morally and ritually significant events of his social biography.

A person who bears *tyuk* guilt must be ritually cleansed—'to wash *tyuk* (*su tyuk*)' is the technical expression—or else he and his family will be dogged by sickness, death, and other disasters. After the cleansing rites, the medicinal roots used are wrapped tightly in the skin of a species of civet cat (*tyuk*—hence the general term for this complex of ideas and actions) and the bundle is lashed securely to a rafter of the man's room. It must never be disturbed; if it is, quarrelling and fighting break out. A strong wind shaking the rafters of the room is enough to stir up strife. *Tyuk* once incurred remains a taint for ever; for it is really the evocation of a latent proclivity (so one must interpret the ideas of the natives on this subject) that goes with the uterine line. When a man undergoes the *tyuk* cleansing rites he summons all his *saarət* who are known to him to come and 'eat' the medicine with him, for this dangerous proclivity once evoked in one of them involves them all.

The concept of *tyuk* guilt and its connexion with the uterine line is less explicit than that of witchcraft. There is no idea of its being a potentiality transmitted by birth from mother to child. Even more than witchcraft it is a *post hoc* inference; but the natives do not explicitly attach a *propter hoc* interpretation to it. Uterine kin do not share their *soog*'s *tyuk* guilt; they are, as it were, mystically contaminated by it, by reason of their *soog* tie. As one informant put it, *tyuk* is 'contagious to (*de lɔŋəra*)' *saarət* like a disease, or it 'kindles (*de ta'agəra*)' *saarət* like a spreading fire. If a man has incurred and washed *tyuk* then the most trivial argument in which he happens to be involved is often in danger of becoming a real quarrel; and his *saarət* also become hot-tempered, or, perhaps, become prone to give vent to hot temper.

It is analogous to the way in which a man's agnatic descendants 783 become liable for his sins, though it is not so rigorous and consequential 611 in action as the responsibility for sins and delicts that adheres to the male line. *Tyuk* is connected primarily with males; though it is of minor significance in the social definition of uterine kinship, compared with witchcraft, it obviously fits in with the principles of Tale social organization in the same way.[1]

Uterine Kinship as a Personal Bond

As we have observed, the fundamental distinction between uterine 611 kinship and agnatic descent is that the former does not give rise to 602 corporate units of social structure. *Soog* is essentially a personal bond, a bond of mutual interest and concern uniting individual to individual. Witchcraft, similarly, is an individual act of mystical aggression due to personal malice against an individual. The model of the relations between *saarət* is the affection, devotion, and strong feeling of mutual identification that prevails between parent and child or between full siblings of the same sex. Its keynote is mutual trust as between equals. It is never thought of as a matter of rights and duties but as a matter of sentiment, of spontaneous goodwill and intimate, personal confidence. Hence the term *soog* is often loosely used to refer to someone with whom one has a relationship of a similar sort, or to denote a very close relative of a class of relatives, whether or not they are true *saarət*. An intimate and trusted friend is like your *soog*, the Tallensi say. Two daughters of the same lineage, but of unrelated mothers, married into a single joint family feel themselves to be particularly closely related and identified with each other by contrast with their conjugal family, and thus speak of each other as 'my *soog*'. The children of two men who were uterine kin, keeping up the friendship of their fathers, talk of themselves as *saarət*. Two men of the same lineage, whether they are close or distant agnates, who have a common maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*)—i.e. whose mothers' brothers belong to a single segment of a maximal lineage—feel a bond of personal kinship distinguishing their relationship with each other from their relationships with their co-members of the lineage. In contexts where they wish to emphasize their personal bonds in contrast to their common membership of the lineage they might describe each other as 'my *soog*'. And I once heard 611 a man refer to his son-in-law as 'my *soog* son-in-law (*n-deem-soog*)'. This 606 is a contradiction in terms, for marriage being prohibited between kin of any degree, a man cannot be both a son-in-law and a *soog*. But the 602 speaker explained that he was using this term in order to distinguish

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[1] There is an interesting psychological problem here, but it lies outside our present scope. *Tyuk* and witchcraft might be regarded as the male and female aspects, respectively, of deep-seated vindictive impulses connected with the mother.

606 611 602 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*; they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

835 The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

582 602 Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*. [586] If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bɔk*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'aləm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpemdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpemdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'aləm, are well known. Tinta'aləm

never undertakes anything of importance without consulting Yikpɛmdaan; Yikpɛmdaan need never be in want of a sheep or goat to sacrifice if there are sheep and goats in Tinta'aləm's house. If any member of the lineage segment of which Tinta'aləm is the head gets into difficulty, he goes at once to Yikpɛmdaan for counsel and help. 602

A more telling case is that of Lɔɣani and Gai. They belong to different segments of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra.[1] Many years ago Gai quarrelled with the elders of the maximal lineage over the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar*. The Yakɔra Tɛndaana of the time took an oath binding all the people of Yakɔra to have nothing to do with Gai in jural and ritual matters until he apologized and a ritual reconciliation was made. Gai and his family keep aloof from all corporate activities of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. He has obstinately rejected several indirect advances made to him suggesting a reconciliation. One day there was a funeral at Gai's house, and I called to see how a man who is virtually ostracized by his clan would manage an affair that is usually a corporate activity of the whole clan. Finding no other Yakɔra people at the funeral, I went round to Lɔɣani's house afterwards. We discussed Gai and his affairs; and Lɔɣani, with that blunt candour that has won him general esteem, told me the whole story. Gai's conduct, Lɔɣani concluded, was specially distressing to him. 'For', said he, with a trace of bitterness, 'Gai is my *soog*. I should be the one to go to his help immediately and to support him in all his troubles. But if I did, would not the people of Zubiuŋ say that I was breaking faith? Would I not be rejecting the oath of the late (Yakɔra) Tɛndaana? And so I can do nothing.' 602 626 578

In this case Lɔɣani's position of influence and responsibility in the maximal lineage compels him to put the interests of lineage unity before those of his *soog*, and Gai's obduracy makes it more difficult for him to compromise. The case of Ɔndieso and Nɛna'ab, who are also *saarət* belonging to different segments of the same maximal lineage, is more usual. They 'borrow (*pɛŋ*)' things from each other on the same principle as do members of an expanded family. Normally, if a man borrows something from a member of a lineage segment other than his own, it is a debt that must be repaid in due course. Eight or nine years ago, Ɔndieso borrowed a goat from Nɛna'ab's son. No request was ever made for repayment; but about three years later, Nɛna'ab borrowed three shillings from Ɔndieso; and this was tacitly understood, by both, to have cancelled the debt of the goat. In 1936 an ancient quarrel between Ɔndieso's segment and Nɛna'ab's segment that had been dormant for years flared up again owing to a dispute over the inheritance of a widow. For some months the two segments were completely estranged, the more so as the head of Nɛna'ab's segment had taken the dispute to the chief and so brought the slur of publicity on the head of Ɔndieso's segment. Just then there was a death in Nɛna'ab's family; 602 578 [426]

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi, passim.

602 578 and Ɔndieso was one of the first to come to the help of his *soog* in his sorrow. The other members of Ɔndieso's segment demonstratively remained away.

602 Other ties of matrilateral kinship also create bonds of personal attachment between members of the same maximal lineage, but none is so effective as that of uterine kinship.

The Dispersion of Uterine Kin

602 582 591 The majority of a person's uterine kin are, however, dispersed among other clans than his own. This is a natural result of the rule of clan exogamy. But Tallensi, as we shall see later,[1] tend to marry into nearby clans rather than into distant clans. A woman of clan A marries into the adjacent clan B; her daughters marry into the next clans C and D; their daughters marry into clans E and F; and so the process goes on. The result is, firstly, that with the passage of the generations the uterine line becomes more and more dispersed; and secondly, that any person's genealogically nearest uterine kin are also, generally, his spatially nearest uterine kin. In practice, it is these near *saarət* whom he knows and knows of; it is they who are concerned in witchcraft accusations or *tyuk* guilt. His more distant *saarət*—distant in both the genealogical sense and in residence—are often unknown to him. The main reason for this is that uterine kinship remains effective only through personal contact. The children of sisters know one another because their mothers have kept in touch, visited one another, and often helped one another all their lives. Similarly, the uterine grandchildren of sisters know one another, if they live near one another, because their mothers have kept in touch, though not so faithfully as true siblings. Often these contacts are maintained into the fourth generation of a woman's uterine descendants; rarely beyond the fourth generation; and a person does not, as a rule, know all his or her *saarət* whose link with him or her is a common great-grandmother. Some of them will, as likely as not, be Gɔrisi or Namnam and he will not even know of their existence.

602 [769] In principle, however, uterine kinship is never extinguished, and it often happens that people of different clans, who are strangers to one another, discover by chance that they are distant *saarət*. Supposing, for instance, a man proposes to make an important sacrifice to a lineage ancestor. His agnatic co-descendants of this ancestor are bound to be present; but he will also send to tell the cognatic descendants through women of that ancestor and some of them will come. Two men of different clans may be present who now discover, for the first time, that they are cognatically related through the lineage of their host. They trace out their genealogical connexion (*tumh dɔɣam*) and find that they are distant *saarət*. I have seen this happen more than once, and the delight of the men concerned was a vivid testimony to the meaning

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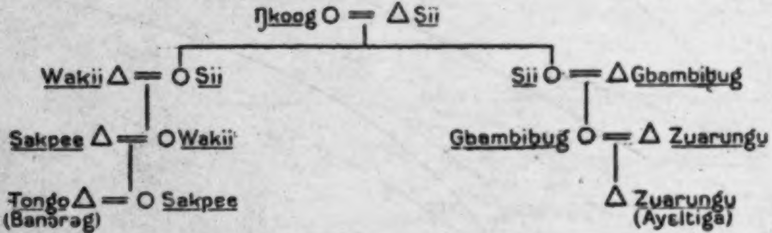
[1] Cf. Ch. XI.

of *soog* kinship to the Tallensi. Each of them has found a new friend who will be to him as a brother. If he has business in his *soog*'s clan he will be able to go there with an easy mind; for he will be assured of an hospitable welcome in his *soog*'s house and of his *soog*'s assistance in his suit. Moreover, through this *soog* he will be introduced to other distant *saarət* unknown to him but known to his *soog*. 602

Saarət discover one another in other ways too. One evening I met Banərəg's wife coming from my boys' quarters. She told me that she had taken some food to one of the boys, Ayɛltiga, a native of Zuarungu, who, she had just learnt, was her *soog*. She had been to see her maternal grandmother's sister's son, at Gbambibug (she herself is a Sakpee woman), and he had told her that Ayɛltiga was their common *soog*. So she had hastened home to call on her newly found *soog* and had cooked a meal for him to show him the hospitality due from a *soog*. She told me this with many expressions of pleasure.

The following genealogy shows the connexion between Banərəg's wife and Ayɛltiga. It is typical of the genealogical range within which uterine kinship is usually effective. 601 602 611



(Clan name of each person beside the sex symbol; personal names in parenthesis)

As this genealogy shows, the uterine line can be thought of as 'travelling' from clan to clan with the generations; and that is how the natives visualize it. 'Our mother' (the progenitrix of the line), said Banərəg's wife 'went forth from Ŋkoog (*yi Ŋkoog ŋa*) and married into Sii; and then his (Ayɛltiga's) grandmother (*ma kpeem*) married Gbambibug and my grandmother married Wakii; and then his mother (*ma*) married Zuarungu and my mother married Sakpee.' The *soog* line is visualized as a continuous entity. *Saarət* often refer to each other by kinship terms, but in a very loose way. A person is inclined to speak of a *soog* as, for instance, 'my elder sibling', simply because he or she is senior in age, though possibly junior in generation. More commonly a *soog* is simply 'my *soog*'; and if it is a woman, she tends to be identified with the uterine line as a whole and is described as 'mother (*ma*)', irrespective of her generation status, especially if she is older than the speaker. A relationship similar to that of parent and child often exists between *saarət* who differ considerably in age.

602 The usual range of effective uterine kinship is a good illustration of the correlation between spatial relationships and genealogical relationships in the social space of the individual. The physical range of the individual's social contacts and communication with others is, as we have already noted, a function of his range of social relations, which is determined principally by his genealogical connexions. In the days before the establishment of the British peace, matrilateral, and especially uterine kinship, played a very important part in enabling people to travel outside their normal range of social contacts, and so to build up social relations with members of clans usually inaccessible to their own clansmen. A story will illustrate how this occurred.

602 574 484 When the Gorogo-Yikpemdaana was a young man of 17 or 18, sometime during the first decade of this century, a food shortage approaching famine, such as periodically swept the country, descended on the Tallensi. He decided to make a journey to Gbimis, in Mampurugu, across the White Volta, in order to barter some livestock for grain. But such a journey was full of peril. A Taləŋ wandering in Mampurugu would be set upon and killed or taken as a slave by any armed Mamprusi who encountered him. So he went, first, to a *soog* at Pwalagu. This man escorted him across the river to another *soog* living in a small village there, and this *soog* conducted him to Gbimis. Under the safe conduct of his Mampuru *saarət* he was able to carry out his project. In later years he often made this trip to Mampurugu to buy things for resale in the small markets of Taleland.

Though people can travel where they will in freedom and security nowadays, it is still usual for anyone having business of a ritual or jural kind with a distant or unfamiliar clan to follow the web of uterine kinship thither. The route is much curtailed, but the principle remains. If Banɔrəg's wife's brother, a Sakpee man, has such business at Bongo, he will probably go to his *saarət* at Zuarungu, stay the night with them, go on next morning to a *soog* at Yaraga, and find out from him or her if they have a *soog* at Bongo with whom he could stay and who will guide him and act as his spokesman with *his* clansmen.

602 476 431 In the same way uterine kin assist one another in economic matters. A man who loses time in his farming programme through illness will often ask a *soog* from a neighbouring settlement to come and do a day's hoeing for him where he would not ask for such help from a clansman. Again, crops do not ripen at the same time throughout Taleland. There may be an interval of several days or several weeks between the harvest at Sii and the harvest at Datək. It is the custom, at harvest time, especially at the time of the early millet harvest after the hungry months, for people living in areas that have a late harvest to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts of grain from relatives living in early harvesting areas. Later, when the early harvesting settlements have exhausted their supplies, people will go to kinsfolk in later harvesting areas to beg for grain to tide them

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over. Such reciprocal gifts pass between kinsmen of all categories. 476
But the giving is specially generous and cordial between *soog* kin. 431

In keeping with the unrestricted range of cognatic kinship among the
Tallensi, the close ties of kinship between male *saarət* are extended to 602
their children and sometimes to their grandchildren. With men whose fathers were *saarət*, whether they belong to the same clan or not, the formal ties of kinship are often mellowed by the affection and trust of a friendship like that of their fathers. This is rarer with grandsons of male *saarət*, but not unknown. I have seen a man break down with grief over the death of a clansman who was his father's *soog*'s son. He would have felt no sense of personal loss at all if this extra bond had not existed between him and his dead clansman. Again, there was Tiezien of Kpata'ar's lifelong friendship with his father's *soog*'s son at Zuarungu—a friendship which would not normally have arisen between a Taləŋ and a Gɔrəŋ living eight miles apart.

A link of uterine kinship is often used to define the relations of 602
individuals who are not themselves directly related by kinship. A typical
case that shows how far the classificatory principle can be pressed, if 582
there is a *soog* link in the chain of relationships connecting two people, is the following. Zaawɔmya of Bunkiuk began courting the young widow of a Wakii man. But in the course of making inquiries he discovered that the girl's late husband's father's mother and his own mother had been distant *saarət*. Zaawɔmya concluded, therefore, that the girl's late husband's father would have stood to him in the relationship of an 'older brother' (*bier*), since he would have called the latter's mother his 'mother' (*ma*). Hence the girl's husband would have been his 'son' (*bii*) and the girl herself his 'daughter-in-law' (*sampɔɣa*). 'Well just think of it', he said to me, when he told me the story, 'how can a man marry his daughter-in-law? So I gave it up.' When
Mansami, Ɔmara's own father's brother's son ran away with the wife [578]
of Ɔmara's father's *soog*'s son at Dkoog, there was a bitter quarrel between them. Ɔmara accused Mansami of disgracing his (Ɔmara's) kinship ties and ordered him either to give up the girl or leave the homestead. Mansami, obstinately insisting that he and the girl's husband were not related, made this the pretext for keeping her and went off to stay with his mother's brother. Such roundabout connexions through a *soog* link are often exploited for ulterior motives. A common trick of fathers who object to a daughter's marrying a particular man is to allege a remote kinship tie of this sort between the girl and her suitor. The latter and his family head may be sceptical of the alleged evidence for this but they can do nothing about it.

CHAPTER III

THE HOMESTEAD AND THE JOINT FAMILY

Homestead and Family—a Single Social Entity

361 592 PHYSICALLY a Tale settlement is an aggregation of homesteads irregularly distributed at varying distances from one another.[1] A homestead is the domicile of a domestic family. The edifice of pile and thatch, and its occupants, constitute a single entity. There is no word for either apart from the other. The native concept, *yir* (pl. *yea*), a house, means primarily the joint family as a coherent social unit residing in its own dwelling. An unoccupied homestead is a dead shell, left to crumble into ruins.

592 When a homestead is abandoned it becomes a *daboog* (pl. *dabaar*), a word applied both to an empty homestead in any stage of decay and to the site of a former homestead, and carrying two main and complementary implications that spring directly from the dominance of the lineage principle in Tale social values. *Daboog* stands for something good and worthy of praise when it refers to the site of a person's father's or grandfather's homestead, or, by extension, to the site or locality of an ancestor's homestead. A *daboog* in this sense is a symbol of the origins and a portent of the good fortune of an existing lineage; it is an object of personal attachment and religious reverence; though vacant it is not dead; the spirits of the ancestors still abide there, and it may be reoccupied some day; it is a symbol of the living continuity of a line of descent. *Daboog* can also be used to describe the site of a former human habitation left deserted and forlorn through the extinction of a line of descent. No ancestor spirits dwell there; it is an accursed spot, a monument of human sin, and a symbol of the most terrible mystical retribution that can befall a Taləŋ. A curse one sometimes hears uttered when a grave injury has been suffered at the hands of an unknown person is: 'May his house lie in ruins and tobacco be grown there (*K'u yir doon daboog ka ba tɛŋ taba waal nɛŋha*).' A ruined homestead provides an exceptionally fertile patch of soil, suitable for growing tobacco. If a man's line of descent is extinguished, there will be no one to claim ownership of his *daboog*, and anyone who wishes will come and plant tobacco there.

592 769 A homestead is always built for a particular family. From the day when the site is chosen it is the scene of human labour, of organized co-operation, and of religious and moral preoccupations. It must be lived in from the laying of the foundations, lest evil mystical agencies desecrate it. Ancestor shrines are immediately installed in it; for the spirits of a man's fathers and forefathers abide in his house, presiding

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

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over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities 769
in their lifetime.

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's 592
father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is conse-
crated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, 783
and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who 778
formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tendaana under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebeet*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them.

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the 592
elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has
three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They 181
represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another.

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two 592
planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic
descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and 571
the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Taləŋ than of the modern Englishman to say 592
that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall
imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their home- 361
steads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

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[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

592 361 no foundation in fact. The climate, the kind of raw material which is plentifully at hand, the economic system, and the social organization of the natives rather than the alleged lawlessness of former times, determine their mode of house-building. In any case, homesteads very often stand closer than fifty paces together, the distance at which a mediocre shot can hit a tree—though I have seen an arrow carry four times that distance.

592 181 A Taləŋ's home is his castle in the psychological rather than the material sense. It is the centre and fount of his major interests, his dominant purposes, his deepest emotional attachments, and his whole scheme of values; it is his shelter, his storehouse, the stage of his life's drama. The Tallensi, unlike many African peoples, have no age sets or initiation schools. A person grows up and receives his entire education at home. If he practises a craft, such as leatherwork, or is a diviner, his home is his workshop or consulting place.

As an adult, all his economic enterprise issues from his home and is devoted primarily to its upkeep. Unless he is one of the few *nouveaux riches* of to-day he keeps all his material possessions there, and houses all his livestock within its walls. His sex life, in maturity, is centred there. His children, the supreme object of his aspirations, are born and grow up in his home under his care and control. He worships his immediate forbears there. His personal destiny, past, present, and future, revolves about his home, its stages perpetuated in the many shrines and other ritual objects that are housed in it. He receives his friends and relatives at home, and dispenses hospitality there; and if he [961] has nothing to do would as lief recline under the shade tree at his own gateway as go making calls on others. Even the young men who like gallivanting about the markets spend much of their leisure at home.

592 181 626 The quintessence of his home, to a Taləŋ, resides in his children, and above all his sons, the vehicles of his immortality. That is the essential meaning of *mar yiri*, 'to have a house'. Ask any native what happens to a man who does not adequately expiate a sacrilege such as murder. '*U yiri ŋmaarəme*—his house will fall to pieces,' is the answer, given with emphatic and solemn conviction, and often with circumstantial illustrations from experience or hearsay. A parent curses an insubordinate child, a chief or tendaana curses a clansman who has grossly insulted him, '*u ku nye yiri*—he will not see (i.e. have) a house', that is, he will die without offspring to perpetuate his line and to sacrifice to his spirit; and this is an extremely serious matter. It never fails to bring the culprit to heel with humble apologies. On the other hand, '*i na nye yiri*—you will have a house', is the most propitious blessing a diviner can convey to a man from his ancestor spirits.

592 593 Patrilocal residence and the tendency for the lineage to be localized give a man's domestic life greater continuity than a woman's. His natal family and his conjugal family are both strung on the same

lineage. The latter grows directly out of the former and very often 592
occupies the same dwelling as, or one close to that of, the former. For 593
a woman marriage signifies a sharp break. As wife and mother she generally lives in a different, even if familiarly close, clan settlement from that of her birth. A man, living all his life side by side with the other members of his lineage, participating in the hierarchy of the corporate units that make up the lineage system, identifying himself with all its members through their common jural, economic, and ceremonial interests, makes an easy, self-evident, and gradual transition from the status of a minor (*tarəm*) under his father's control to that of a father and head of a household. The change in status and social role from that of a daughter and member of one lineage to that of a wife and mother in the settlement of another is more drastic and complex. A woman has no rights in or ties with the community[1] in which she spends the greatest part of her life, exercises her heaviest responsibilities, achieves her most cherished fulfilment, and acquires her strongest emotional attachments, except through her family by marriage, her husband, and her children. Thus a woman's life is fraught with many possibilities of conflict between the loyalties and sentiments towards her natal lineage and those which she gradually builds up in relation to her husband's lineage.

The effect of all this is to make the home of even greater importance for a woman than for a man. Her conjugal home is the supreme and almost the sole domain of her labour and life. Her children are the very hub of her existence. She is first and foremost a housewife and mother, toiling devotedly in the care of her children, in attending to her husband's needs, in giving her contribution of labour and skill to the economy of the household, and in the numerous household tasks that call for daily attention.

The Architecture of the Homestead in Relation to the Structure of the Domestic Family

Tale homesteads are solidly constructed of pile (puddled mud, *tan*), 342
and they are built to last. Erecting the circular walls tier by tier, 462
plastering them, roofing the rooms, stamping the floors, adding the small contrivances and the decorations that increase the comfort and attraction of the homestead, are all tasks requiring considerable skill, care, and co-operation. They are not the work of specialists, though some men and women have more skill in them than others, and many people have such poor skill that they never undertake them. The conventional division of labour involves both sexes equally in the building of a homestead. Building and thatching is men's work; plastering, drawing the crude lines and geometrical designs that

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[1] She may, and usually does, have cognatic kinsfolk there, but her ties with them are valid only for the particular individuals.

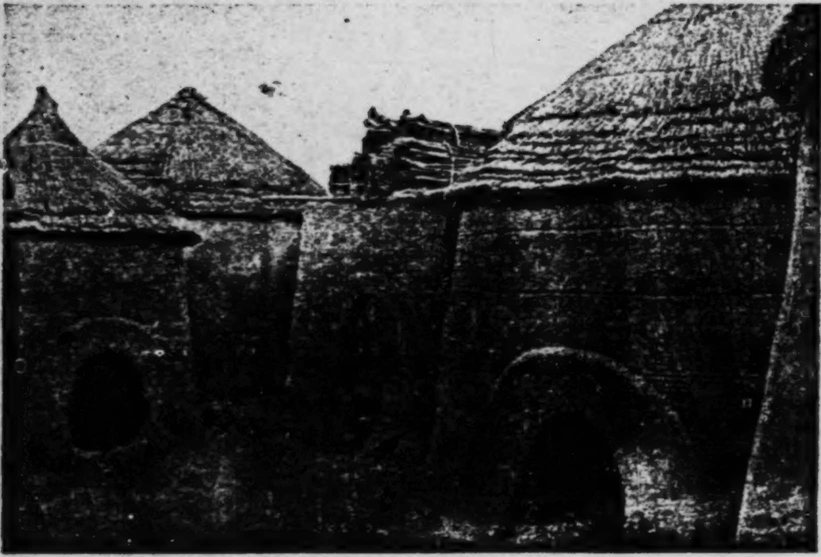
342 462 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All [476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes. With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation. In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

592 554 Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy. Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the efficacy of these social ties.

592 341 We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men, women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning. Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

PLATE 3



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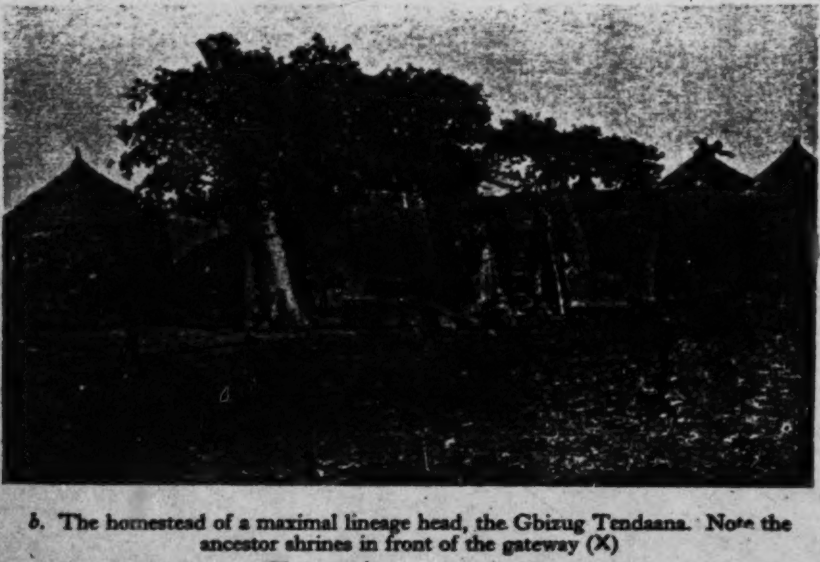
a. Interior of a woman's *Dug*. The rooms from right to left are: a store-room (*Da'ŋboog*), a dry season kitchen (*Da'aŋ*), and a small *Dakir* for the woman's young son and daughter-in-law. The woman's own sleeping-room (*Dakir*) is farther to the right, not visible. Note how clean and bare the *Dendɔŋo* is and note, also, the bundles of dry guinea-corn stalks on top of the open kitchen. These have been saved for fuel in the rainy season



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b. The homestead of a maximal lineage head, the Gbizug Tendaana. Note the ancestor shrines in front of the gateway (X)

[facing p. 48]

sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When 592
his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every 341
morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or [778
two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the 192]
alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the 341
cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihər*) of the
Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tendaanas are therefore 778
obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tenzugu all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth shrines (*təŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout. This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and 341
condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and 554
experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gəlibdaana of
Tenzugu and the Yikpemdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular 592
room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White Fathers' Mission at Boləga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom, and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious, upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance. The Təŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration, but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. 592
A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or
lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense 356
relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing like Yelnsar of Təŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

[facing p. 49]

PLATE 4

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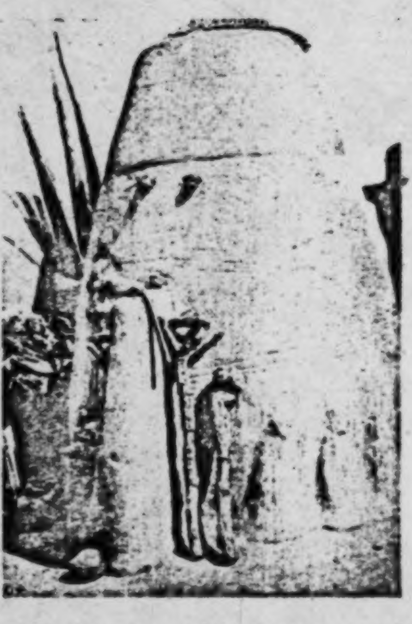

a. The central granary in the homestead of an elder. Note the array of ancestor shrines on the granary. The granary is about 10 ft. high and 5 ft. in diameter at the base

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b. In the *Dɛndɔgo* of the senior woman of the family. The infant children of several wives of the family left in the care of one of them. (This is the homestead of the head of a medial lineage. Note the lineage *bɔɣar* against the wall on the left, part of it supported on a tree-stump and part on the floor in shallow pottery dishes)

592 ashamed of it and exert himself to the utmost to have it repaired. But
a poor man who has the energy and can himself build and thatch, or
356 has a son or sons skilled in these crafts, will generally keep his homestead in a satisfactory condition. On the other hand, even men who own cattle and sheep are apt to wait until the thatch is rotted through and the walls collapse before undertaking essential repairs. The ingrained thrift of the natives, fostered by their narrow margin of sufficiency in food-supplies, induces them often to submit to discomfort which would tax less hardy folk to breaking-point rather than expend food and other resources to alleviate it.

356 Indoors, Tale homesteads are usually surprisingly tidy. A good housewife sees that her quarters are swept every morning. Litter indoors is a sign that the mistress of those rooms is a lazy or a sick woman, or one too harassed by family cares or poverty to look after her home properly. A good housewife has her floors regravelled and beaten almost every year to keep them hard and smooth.

592 But individual idiosyncrasies do not affect the layout of a homestead; for apart from minor variations this depends wholly on the constitution of the domestic unit. The layout of a homestead is an index to the structure of the domestic family occupying it.

The simplest domestic and procreative unit is the elementary family—a man, his wife, and their young children—occupying their own homestead. Often the man's mother (*ma*), either his own mother (*ma dɔɣarug*—the mother [of] bearing), or a surviving co-wife (*nentaa*) of his mother lives with him. The whole group constitutes one household, that is, a single economic unit all the members of which are mutually dependent on one another for the production of their common food-supply and the satisfaction of most other wants. Essentially this is a matter of pooling labour and skill, of utilizing land in common, of drawing on the food, livestock, and to some extent monetary resources built up by joint effort, for the benefit of any member of the unit, and of mutual assistance from any private resources that the members may have.

592 A good example of a domestic family of this kind is that of Ɔndieso
351 of Tɔŋ-Guŋ, a man in the late thirties whose homestead stands on the
border of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ and Gbizug. Outside his homestead, 10 or
778 12 yards from the gateway, stands the usual shade tree. Ɔndieso's tree is also, like almost all shade trees, an ancestor shrine. Between it and the gateway is a bare space, with the midden heap (*tampɔɣar*) on one side and a large, round, flat-topped ancestor shrine built of pile on the other. It is the shrine of his late father's *Yin*. One or more ancestor shrines stand thus at the entrance to every homestead. '*Ɔn nso yirla*—it owns the house', the natives say, meaning by this a spiritual and not material ascendancy in the affairs of the family. It stands outside, at the entrance, as a spiritual sentry guarding the welfare of the house.

If the head of the house is still junior in status in the lineage hierarchy, 592
as Ɔndieso is, it will be the shrine dedicated to his father's Destiny 351
(*yin*), or it may be his father's divining (*bakologo*) shrine. The house is
still under the spiritual jurisdiction of Ɔndieso's dead father, though he 778
himself now owns it in the temporal sense. A man of greater social maturity, with grown children and higher lineage status, would very likely have his own *yin* or *bakologo* shrine at his gateway. His house is established; it is no longer the fulfilment of his father's destiny, as is the house of a young man, though it may still be known by his father's or grandfather's name. For as long as a homestead remains standing it is known by the name of the man who first built it.

A bird's-eye view would show a homestead as covering a roughly 592
circular or oval area (Figs. 2*a* and 2*b*). The space in front of the gateway
(*zanɔne*—at the gateway) belongs pre-eminently to the menfolk. The 593
public phases of funeral and mortuary ceremonies, which are corporate concerns of the lineage and are conducted by the men, take place there. When anything touching the rights, duties, or interests of the head of the family in his capacity as a member of a particular lineage calls for consultation with fellow members of the lineage, the *zanɔne* is the gathering place. It is the proper place for him to receive greetings, condolences, or congratulations, and to conduct formal negotiations in a matter such as the payment of bride-price owed to him or by him. In the dry season he often rests there, beneath the shade tree, during the sweltering afternoon, chatting with a friend or fondling an infant left in his charge while its mother is busy indoors. Women of the house come and go freely, and often sit or lounge about in front of the gateway; but when 'an affair of the men (*buraas yɛl*)' is in progress they keep away.

The gateway (*zanɔr*) always faces west to south-west, 'where the sun 351
sets (*nintaŋ nluut*)'. This is a convention never broken by the Tallensi, though they have neither a naturalistic explanation nor a mystical rationalization for it, and it is not subject to mystical sanctions.[1]

The gateway is a V-shaped opening, about a foot wide at the base and 3 to 4 feet wide on top, between two round pillars (*meelɔŋ*) forming part of the wall of the house. Large irregularly spaced holes are made in these pillars for short logs to be inserted at night as cross-bars against which a heavy, hollow board (*bɛluŋ*), cut from a tree-trunk, or a bundle of poles can be leaned to close the gateway. Tallensi say that they build the gateway thus in order to bar it the more securely against the

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[1] As the rain-bearing winds blow from the south-east, and the tornadoes that [132]
begin and end the rainy season come from an easterly direction, it is possible that the placing of the doorway on the western side of the house is an adaptation to this feature of the climate. Anyone who has experienced the discomfort of a tornado whirling straight into a room, or of a heavy rain, in this region will appreciate the usefulness of placing the only entrance into a homestead on the lee side. But no native has ever given me this obvious explanation, though this may be due to inadequate inquiries on my part.

[Text is continued on p. 54.—Analyst]

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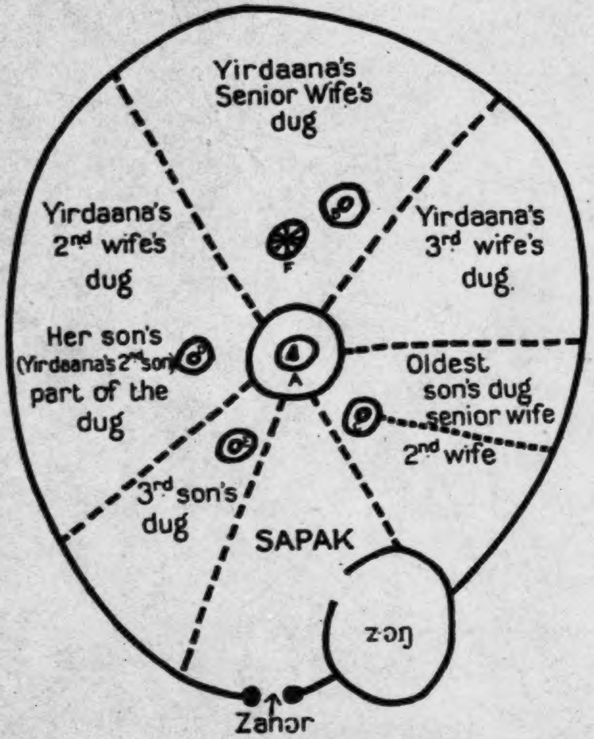
Yirdaana's Senior Wife's dug
Yirdaana's 2nd wife's dug
Yirdaana's 3rd wife's dug.
Her son's (Yirdaana's 2nd son) part of the dug
Oldest son's dug senior wife
2nd wife
3rd son's dug
SAPAK
zɔŋ
Zahɔr
F
A

FIG. 2*a*. Diagram (not to scale) showing the layout of the different *dugət* in a large jöint family homestead. The head of the homestead (*yirdaana*) has three living wives and three married sons, one with two wives.

A — Principal granary (*buur tenta'ar*) of the *yirdaana*
B — Small granary belonging to *yirdaana*
C — Oldest son's private small granary
D — Second son's private small granary
E — Third son's private small granary
F — *Yirdaana's Yin* shrine

[p. 52]

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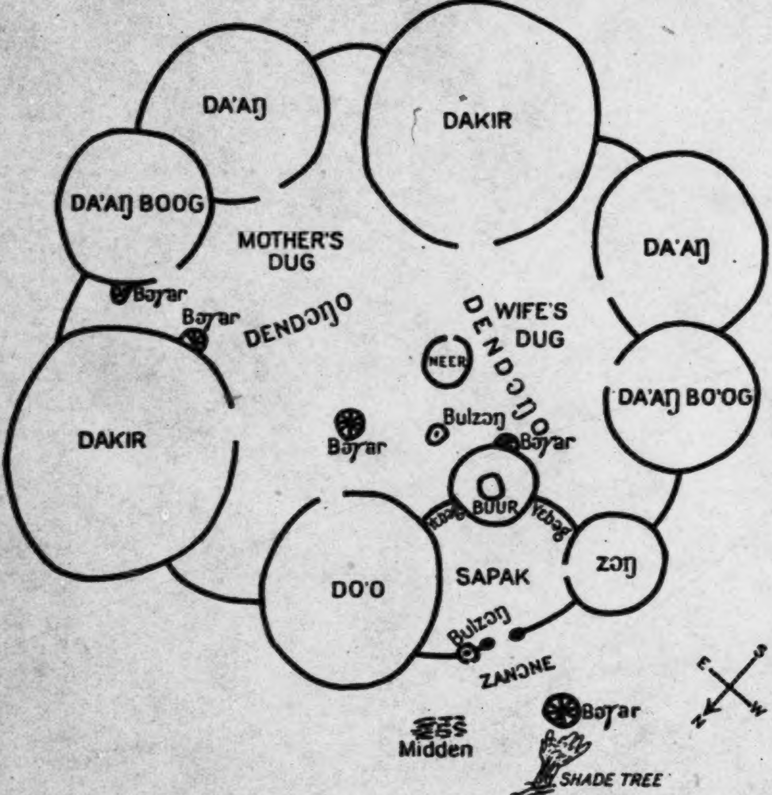
DA'AŊ
DAKIR
DA'AŊ BOOG
MOTHER'S DUG
Bɔɣar
Bɔɣar
DENDƆŊO
WIFE'S DUG
DENDƆŊO
NEER
DA'AŊ
DA'AŊ BO'OG
Bulzɔŋ
Bɔɣar
Bɔɣar
DAKIR
BUUR
Yebɔg
Yebɔg
ZƆŊ
SAPAK
DO'O
Bulzɔŋ
ZANƆNE
Bɔɣar
Midden
SHADE TREE
E
S
W
N

FIG. 2*b*. Diagram of Ɔndieso's homestead, showing the layout of the quarters and the rooms, (Scale: 1:45 approx.)

Glossary

Bɔɣar	Ancestor shrine
Buur	Granary
Bulzɔŋ	Shelter for hens
Da'aŋ	Unroofed dry-season kitchen
Da'aŋboog	Storeroom and wet-season kitchen
Dakir	Sleeping-room
Do'o	Room for adolescent boys
Dendɔŋo	Open courtyard
Sapak	Livestock yard
Zanɔne	Open space at the gateway where the men foregather
Zɔŋ	The homestead head's special room
Neer	Grinding-room
Yebɔg	Low dividing wall

[p. 53]

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every [622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its members.

351 556 231 [514] Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any. One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls and guinea-fowls.

[361] 342 From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*, and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable possessions, his livestock. [556] Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth, the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that to the Talɔŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. [782] They are also the principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers. In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the *zɔŋ*, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber, communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey, for the night.

342 778 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality. It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342
partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778
room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like
Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck
into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather
tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be
incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s
lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock
there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in
Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds
his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔɣar*)
always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*;
the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard.
Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ*
must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there
and the lineage *bɔɣar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it.
The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the
zɔŋ, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the
Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622]
of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in
which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great
Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623
deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most
conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social 554
personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 764
subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his 778
own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave
through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose.
But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole
specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tɛbhɔm nla*—This
is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me.
The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman
who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and
to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt,
an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint
of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and
I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is
unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*,
when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried
out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about
the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is
finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611
dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
778 of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes
his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the
zɔŋ of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors,
is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr*
of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11
and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages
later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors else-
where than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say,
transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery
she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*.
She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage
against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized
in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not
confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this
ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

342 Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary
course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a
yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the
sapak. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or store-
room and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and
6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One
suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more
numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more
smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with
a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
[351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a
Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the
domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters
and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the
smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and
guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this,
life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and
the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency
of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

volume.[1] The granary symbolizes all the sentiments and ideas, the 343 apprehensions and joys which the struggle for food evokes in Taleland. 181 It stands for the security of the domestic unit in this struggle. In the organization of the household its importance comes from the fact that 592 it is the focus of the economic cohesion and stability of the domestic group. Into it goes the product of the joint labour of the household, from it comes their sustenance. In filling the granary and in the consumption of its contents, the labour of men, women, and children is [578] equally essential, and the rights of all equally valid. When a joint family splits up, the commonest pretext is friction over grain supplies. The family which hives off does so on the ground that it needs its own, independent food-supply. 'They have each his own granary (*ba mara ba buur ba buur*)', is the formula summing up the economic relations of brothers occupying a single homestead but having separate households.

The granary belongs to the head of the house, the *yirdaana*. No one 592 may enter it without his authorization, least of all his wife. A devoted and trusted wife may be allowed to descend (*sig*) into it to issue the grain 343 (*loo ki*) for cooking if there is no suitable male within reach—Tale conventions are not rigidly complied with if doing so involves excessive and absurd inconvenience. But it would be scandalous if she did so on her own initiative. The contents of the granary are formally the property of the head of the household, to be distributed at his discretion. There is no other place in the homestead which is so rigorously private to him. Besides the grain for current consumption, he stores the seed for next year's crop there. He hides a particularly cherished object, or money which he wants to conceal from other members of the family, in his granary, secure in the knowledge that no one will dare to tamper with it there.

The *zɔŋ* enshrines—in both the physical and the ideal sense of this 343 concept—the notion of the continuity of the lineage; the *buur* stands for the social personality of the *yirdaana*, as the centre of an independent 181 domestic family, its economic fulcrum, its jural and ritual head, controller and representative. The position of the granary in the architectural pattern of the homestead corresponds to that of the head of the house in the structure of the family, as the unique link between its parts and the source of its unity.

Tallensi say that a man's soul (*sii*) is in his granary. Using the same phrase one says of a person, '*n siig mbɛ u ni*—my soul is in [drawn towards] him', meaning that one feels a special affinity with him. Among the Namoos the identification of a man with his granary is symbolized explicitly in the taboos that his first-born children have to observe.[2] A man's granary, his cap and tunic, his bow and quiver,

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1937.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. v.

343 are the emblems of his individuality. They participate in it, for they
181 are imbued with his body 'dirt (*daɣət*)'—a concept which has a physiological facet, meaning the exuviae adhering to a man's garments, quiver, or other objects constantly handled by him, and a mystical facet implying the quintessence of his individuality. The Talis also acknowledge this complex association between a man and his granary and other intimate possessions, expressing it in analogous customs, in the routine of family life and in their ideals of family relations.

351 To enter the living-quarters of a homestead one climbs over the low dividing wall (*yɛbəg*) at the back of the *sapak* by means of a step (*bimbimər*) and descends, by a similar step on the other side, into an irregular courtyard (*dɛndɔŋo*, pl. *dɛndɔma*) of beaten gravel, which is surrounded by a number of rooms. According to the wealth, rank, or status of the *yirdaana* this *dɛndɔŋo* varies in size from about 20 to about 6 square yards.

592 This *dɛndɔŋo* belongs to the principal woman (*dugdaana*) of the house.
The *dɛndɔma* of junior wives are smaller. In Ɔndieso's house the senior
593 woman is his mother's surviving co-wife, whom he calls his 'younger
342 mother' (*mapit*, lit. 'mother's younger sister'), and who has remained
351 with him since the death of his father. Her rooms occupy roughly the left half of the homestead, facing inwards from the *sapak*. From this *dɛndɔŋo*, turning right between a small room beside the granary and a larger room straight ahead, one enters a similar *dɛndɔŋo* in the middle of another set of rooms, those of Ɔndieso's wife. These take up roughly the right half of the homestead, facing inwards. The *yirdaana*'s mother's (own mother, or proxy-mother) rooms always occupy the position of honour in the centre of the arc; his senior wife's (*poɣakpeem*) rooms lie on the right-hand side of these; his second wife's, or his younger brother's senior wife's rooms lie on the left, looking inwards. The rooms of the other wives of the head of the family or of his brothers are distributed as convenience dictates. For example, wives who are clan sisters will usually have adjoining quarters; wives who get on badly will be put in well-separated rooms. If none of a man's father's widows is living with him, and he has more than one wife, his senior wife occupies the central group of rooms, his second wife those on her right, and so forth. Generally the women's apartments all communicate with one another. But if a woman has a quarrelsome disposition or gets on badly with her co-wives for any other reason, her quarters will be separated from those of the next-door wife by a low party wall, to prevent undue trespassing by her co-wives or their children.

342 A woman's apartments make up a self-contained section in the home-
stead. This is her *dug* (pl. *dugət*). Basically *dug* means a single room,
593 but it is extended to mean the single set of rooms belonging to one wife. In the Tale family every woman with children is entitled to her own *dug*. Women guard this right jealously, and if a man has not built separate quarters for his wife by the time that she has had her first child,

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off 342
to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug* 593
and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately. The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person. A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife, mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family.

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments, but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, 595
the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in the case of the latter.

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that 778
are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman.
They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is 595
custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him.

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the 775
ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, 769
into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary rites, make this clear.

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. 592
Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights, after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing or gossiping or asking riddles.

592 A woman is entitled to have at least three rooms in her *dug*, a sleeping-room (*dakir*) a dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*) and a storeroom (*da'aŋboog*). Men of substance often allow their older wives a fourth room (*boog*), which always has a flat mud roof and serves as an extra storeroom and a guest-room, or as a room in which a daughter-in-law can be temporarily accommodated, or where the *yirdaana* can sit and talk to his visitors in the rainy season.

342 The *dakir* is the largest room, usually 10 to 12 feet in diameter.[1]
592 Here the woman sleeps with her young children; here her husband comes to her at night; here she is confined when she bears him a child;
[352] here she keeps her sleeping-mats and her few personal treasures; and here, if she is his senior wife, her husband's best cloth or tunic, his bow and quiver, and other personal belongings. Her husband and children have free access to her *dakir*. Other members of the family must generally ask her permission to enter it or a family quarrel will result. To enter a *dakir* one crawls through an arched doorway, 2 to 3 feet high and about the same in width. Inside darkness reigns, relieved only by the glimmer of light that enters under the eaves and through the doorway, or a small aperture high up in the wall.

343 A stretch of wall 2 or 3 feet long forms a shallow recess between the *dakir* and the unroofed dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*). Here one generally
592 sees a bundle of firewood stacked in a corner, or, in the right season, a heap of shea nuts. The *da'aŋ* itself is horseshoe-shaped and smaller than a *dakir*—from 4 to 8 feet across the shorter axis and 6 to 9 feet across the longer axis. The doorway is usually about 4 feet high, so that one can go in and out easily, as domestic tasks require. As it is for use in dry weather only, it is open to the sky. After the harvest, millet and guinea-corn stalks are spread on top, partly as a shield from the sun but chiefly as a reserve of firewood. The cooking-hearth (*ɔɔrəg*), the water-pots (*kɔwoor*), the cooking-pots and dishes (*dɔɣat* and *laas*), the stirring-stick (*vugər*), and ladles (*bies*), lying about in none too orderly a fashion, show well the uses to which this room is put.

Adjoining the *da'aŋ* is the larger, roofed *da'aŋboog*, the storeroom and larder. This room often has a doorway leading into the *da'aŋ* and not into the *dɛndɔŋo*, for the greater convenience of the housewife. Here the housewife keeps her stocks of foodstuffs—her dried vegetables and condiments, the odd piece of dried fish or meat she has hoarded, a pot of millet, perhaps, which she acquired by her own efforts, and so forth—as well as the utensils she is not using, and any bulky articles belonging to her or other members of the family. Here she also cooks in the wet season. At a pinch it may be used as a sleeping-room for a visitor

or adolescent son. The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* also serve as a sort of drawing-room. 343 A guest who must be treated with respect is invited to step 592 round to the kitchen to have his meal there in private, a suitor is told to go round to the girl's mother's kitchen to plead his suit with her.

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[1] The diameters of a room are always discrepant, it may be by an inch or two or by as much as a foot, so that its base is never a perfect circle. The natives themselves do not notice this as it is due to their crude method of marking out the circle for the base with the foot.

The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* are the counterpart in the social sphere of 576 a woman of the *zɔŋ*, cattle yard (*sapak*), and granary (*buur*) in that of a man. They mark off the economic field reserved for her and the social 592 sphere in which she is supreme. Etiquette and convention show this, and, as in the case of the *zɔŋ* and the *buur*, ritual notions give expression to it and put the seal of mystical value on it. Women do not have ancestor shrines of their own. But in her storeroom an old woman keeps her *zaalɔŋ*. This is a long rope net, holding a neat pile of polished calabash dishes (*ŋman*) of all sizes which she has accumulated during her married life. One of these is her *kumpiog*, 'basket of death'. It is the symbol of her mortal existence.[1] When she dies it stands in her *dɛndɔŋo* and is eventually taken, with the most meticulous ceremonial care, to her eldest surviving daughter. In this room also she keeps her main storage pot (*dɔk*). It is to her what a man's granary is to him. One sign of this is the rule that her first-born daughter may never, in the mother's lifetime, open it. She does so ritually when her mother's funeral is completed.[2]

Lastly, there is the grinding-room (*neer*), a vastly important item in 343 the organization of the domestic economy, and in the personal relations of the women of a family with one another. 592 It is always a small, low room, 3 or 4 feet in diameter, with a doorway barely large enough to admit a person on hands and knees. A hole under the eaves, the size of a soup plate, lets in a glimmer of light. A waist-high table built of mud, in the hollow surface of which two nether grindstones are embedded, takes up most of the interior. In a small homestead like Ɔndieso's one *neer* is enough, and his mother and wife share it, though the older woman seldom has occasion to use it as her daughter-in-law does most of the cooking for the family. If there are several women in a household, more than one grinding-room is needed. One reason for [252] this is purely mechanical. Grinding the grain for the main meal, in the evening, takes at least an hour, in the period of plenty. The women and girls do this at any time of the day, but prefer to do it in the afternoon. Thus more than one woman may want to use the *neer* at the same time. 343 But there is another reason as well. Co-wives are apt to squabble over 592 the use of the grinding-room, especially if they do not get on harmoni- 578

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[1] The calabash is the commonest domestic utensil and it symbolizes a woman in many contexts. For instance, when a man's wife bears a child he will send to tell her parents; and the messenger reports, with the euphemism the Tallensi always resort to on such occasions, that the woman has born 'a calabash' (*ŋman*) if it is a girl, or a 'staff' (*duor*) if it is a boy—the staff being a hunting-weapon carried by men.

[2] Cf. Ch. VIII below.

343 ously, for it is connected with that precise equality of grain rations to
592 which co-wives are entitled and about which they are extremely touchy.
578 To obviate these squabbles, which sometimes kindle suppressed
antagonisms into serious quarrels, a man usually provides a separate
grinding-room for a wife with a fractious disposition.

592 In a large and well-ordered house there is a great deal of free and easy communication between the different *dugət.* Children in particular go about freely from one woman's quarters (*dug*) to another's, since they are related to all by actual or derived filial ties. The men, too, are free of all the *dugət*, for the women are all either their 'mothers' (*manam*)—own mothers, or fathers' other wives, their wives (*pɔɣaba*)—own wives or brothers' wives, or daughters-in-law (*sampɔɣaba*)—own sons' or brothers' sons' wives. Men and their children, members of the same lineage, are the 'owners' of the homestead. They have determinate rights, duties, and sentiments towards all the women. The women are more circumspect, especially about the *dug* of a co-wife (*nentaa*) or husband's mother (*daŋaampɔk*) if their personal relations are not too cordial; for their social inter-relations are indirect and contingent on their marital ties, unless, as sometimes happens, they belong to the same or to linked clans and have, in consequence, a direct bond of solidarity. In spite of this, the general impression left by a visit to a large house is one of friendly co-operation unsullied by jealous distinctions.

The natives themselves have no illusions on this score. They do not take it for granted that all the women of a family will get on well with one another. They recognize clearly that the spatial differentiation of each *dug* in a house corresponds to its structural differentiation; and with this goes a certain degree of domestic privacy and a differentiation of sentiment and of emotional attachments that may become a source of friction. The *dug* (that is, a woman and her children by one man) constitutes the irreducible unit of Tale social structure, both jurally and morally, held together by the strongest social and emotional bonds conceivable to the Tallensi. The *dug* is the Taləŋ's conceptual model of infrangible solidarity, and his emotional symbol of unstinted nourishment, of complete security, and of parental devotion. It is the prototype, also, of the closely integrated matri-segment within the formally unified patrilineal lineage, as has been shown in our previous volume.[1]

In general, as the foregoing suggests, a man has no room of his own. He keeps his personal belongings in his wife's *dug* and eats and sleeps there, or in his various wives' rooms in turn, if he has more than one. Chiefs, old men, and rich men sometimes have rooms of their own, usually in their senior wives' *dɛndɔŋa*, where they keep their more bulky personal belongings and to which they can retire if they want privacy. The Gɔlibdaana and the Gorogo Yikpɛmdaana, as we have seen, make an exaggerated display of their private rooms. But as a matter of fact,

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

592 vanity apart, they do require ample storage-room for the large quantities of clothes, the saddlery and trappings of their horses, the innumerable odds and ends of European origin, and many articles of native production which they have accumulated by purchase or gift. Their good fortune is exceptional. Others content themselves with small and modest private rooms. Leatherworkers and blacksmiths also often have private rooms where they keep their tools and the materials of their craft. [282 326]

No special provision is made for young children or girls. They live in their mothers' rooms. An unmarried young man usually has a special room of his own, essentially a sleeping-room (*doo*), in his mother's *dug*; and if there are several adolescent boys in a family a *doo* may be built for them in one of the women's *dugət*.

592 611 The construction of the dwelling-house shows graphically the division of the domestic family into two complementary spheres. On the one hand, we have the sphere in which the patricentral *yir* predominates; on the other, that in which the matricentral *dug* has priority. It is the line of cleavage between descent from the father (*ba dɔγam*) and descent from the mother (*ma dɔγam*), principles which are antithetical in form but complementary in function in the domestic organization. Maternal origin supplies the canon of differentiation within the family, paternal descent the principle of integration. In the polygynous joint family, which is the natives' ideal domestic unit, the constituent *dugət* are relatively autonomous in relation to one another, and in certain respects even mutually opposed. The *yir* combines them into a single integral unit, but they are not swallowed up; they retain their specific identity according to maternal origin. The *yir*, then, is the complementary factor to the *dug*; it is also the synthesis of a group of *dugət* at a higher level of organization. This, as has been shown in our previous book, is both the structural model and the social matrix of the lineage system.

The Developmental Cycle of the Joint Family

596 We have found it convenient to fix our analysis of the Tale homestead by reference to the simplest kind of independent domestic unit. But the elementary family, as we have already remarked, is neither the ideal nor the most common type of independent domestic unit in Taleland; for the typical substratum of a domestic group is not the individual breadwinner but an effective minimal lineage.[1] The domestic group grows, changes, and dissolves with the growth cycle of this lineage, and a particular elementary family is only an episode in this cycle. The structure of the Tale family cannot be divorced from its existence in time. We have to examine it as a process. At any given time we find domestic families at every stage of development in a Tale community.

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[1] Cf. p. 9 above for a definition of this unit. A full analysis of its constitution is given in *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

596 The characteristic domestic family of the Tallensi is the agnatic joint family, and other forms of domestic group appear as phases in the growth cycle of a joint family. In a random sample of sixty-one domestic families from Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it, recorded in 1934, forty-one, or about two-thirds of these, were joint families.[1] A joint family consists of two or more close agnates, members of a single effective minimal lineage in all but exceptional cases, and often comprising all the members of a particular effective minimal lineage, together with their wives, children, and other dependants, if any,

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[1] This sample of 61 domestic families which is cited throughout this chapter, includes domestic families from 5 clans, but the majority are from Tongo. A similar sample taken in the Sie district gave approximately the same results. As has been mentioned, about two-thirds of these families were joint families. The remainder were either elementary families (i.e. consisting of a man, his wife or wives, and his young children) which had been parts of joint families 5 or 10 years previously and would probably become joint families again in a decade or so; or they were joint families augmented by one or two close agnates of the family head and their dependants, or by other kinsmen. Such an augmented joint family functions in the same way as a joint family in the narrow sense. Thus if the time factor is taken into account all Tale domestic families can be described as joint families.

The composition of the joint family can be regarded from a slightly different angle, which supplements what has just been said. Considering the family from the point of view of the relationship of the head to the other male members, our sample breaks up as follows:

- 11 elementary families (1 man, wife or wives, occasionally his mother, and his young children).
- 22 families in which the head was the father of the other adult male(s).
- 25 families in which the head was the older brother of one or more of the other adult males.
- 3 families in which the head was the grandfather of one or all the other adult males.

The commonest type, it will be seen, is the joint family presided over by either a 'father' or the senior amongst a group of brothers.

[162] The mean number of persons (men, women, and children) per domestic family of our sample is 10·4, distributed as follows:

Number of persons per family

	1–5	*6–10*	*11–15*	*16–20*	*21–5*	*Total*
Frequency	8	28	17	4	4	61

The mean number of adult males (i.e. over 18, approximately) per family is 2·6; of wives, including widows of deceased members, 3·4; of minors, including adolescent daughters, 4·4. The frequency distributions are as follows:

Number per family

Frequency of	*0*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*Total*
Adult males .	0	10	25	13	7	4	0	2	..	..	..	..	..	61
Wives . .	0	6	16	14	13	4	3	3	0	2	..	..	..	61
Minors . .	2	4	11	9	11	8	4	4	1	3	2	1	1	61

occupying a single homestead. All the men of a joint family are therefore related to one another through a common father or grandfather or, infrequently, great-grandfather. A joint family may consist of two or more brothers (full or half-brothers or paternal cousins), with their wives and children, and perhaps an old mother; or a man and some or all of his married sons with their wives and children, together with unmarried sons and other dependants; or an old man, some or all of his married sons and grandsons, with their wives and children and other dependants —'sons' and 'grandsons' in the last two classes being understood in the native classificatory sense as including both own and deceased brothers' sons and grandsons. Joint families of the last-mentioned class are not very common. Here and there one meets a joint family combining features of two classes or having a rather wider range of agnates or other male kin; but these are unusual.

A joint family is obviously a composite unit. If the subordinate 596
families constituting it are taken separately, some or all may be monogynous, elementary families; but one or more of the male members may 595
have more than one wife, and there will thus be subordinate polygynous families within the joint family. For though a Taləŋ starts his career as a family man with only one wife, his aim and ideal, throughout his life, is to have as many wives as he can afford. Actually, judging by the previously quoted sample,[1] the incidence of polygyny among the

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[1] The following table sets out the relevant figures:

Table showing the Distribution of Wives of 146 Men over 18 Years of Age, belonging to 61 Domestic Families 162

	Married men						*Single men*	
Estimated age of men	*Number of wives*					*Total men*	*Un-married*	*Widowers or deserted*
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*			
18–30 . .	32	3	..	..	..	35	18 (most under 30)	17 (most over 30)
31–45 . .	21	13	3	2	..	39		
46 and over .	14	14	3	5	1	37		
Totals .	67	30	6	7	1	111	18	17
							35	
Percentages						*Total 146 men*		
Of whole sample	46	20·5	4·1	4·8	0·7	76% married		24% single
Of married men	60·4	27	5·4	6·3	0·9			

The table shows the distribution of effective wives, i.e. wives who fulfil both the sexual and the economic duties due from a wife, or, in a few cases, at least the economic duties. There were 9 non-effective wives, in addition, in this group: 3 incapacitated by leprosy or other chronic disease; 1 senile; 3 elderly women nominally inherited by their late husbands' younger brothers but

596 Tallensi is only about 40 per 100 married men and two out of three
595 polygynists have only two wives. The modal number of wives is one.

Moreover, plurality of wives is mainly the privilege of older men, because they have both more resources and a longer marital history than the young men. Three-quarters of the married men under 45 have only one wife each.

596 A joint family is an organized economic and jural unit forming a single household under the authority of the oldest by age or generation of the group of agnates upon which it is based. Its component families are its segments, ordered and articulated in conformity with the lineage relations binding this group of men to one another. This appears in the layout of the homestead. The head of the joint family is the hub of the whole house, as we have seen, and each wife has her own quarters. It is shown, for example, in the fact that a young married son with no children, or only one or two infant children, generally occupies one of the rooms in his mother's *dug*, or, if his mother is dead, in the senior *dugdaana*'s *dug*; for his conjugal family counts, as yet, only as a segment of this *dug* in the social and economic organization of the house.

Taken over a long enough period, the joint family is seen to be a transitory unit. As the younger male members grow up, marry, and have children of their own, inner tensions begin to assert themselves and a tendency to split up appears. If fission does not occur in the lifetime of the head of the joint family, it is almost invariably precipitated by his death. Some or all of the component families then set up in their own independent homesteads, though it may be some years before complete dispersion supervenes. Thus it happens that an elementary family, which was at one time a part of a joint family, comes to occupy its own

162 residing with grown-up sons; 2 inherited wives who had not yet joined the menage of their new husbands and were unlikely to do so for a considerable time, if at all. Seven of these non-effective wives were the wives of men in the 46 *plus* group. If these are reckoned as well, the distribution is altered somewhat in favour of the polygynists. There would then, for instance, be 3 men with 5 wives each.

In addition to the 111 married men, this sample of domestic families includes 35 single men, 18 of whom, mostly young men, had never been properly married, and 17 of whom were single at the time of the census, owing to the death or desertion of their wives.

Estimates of age given here and elsewhere in this book are very approximate. The difficulties of guessing the age of Africans in societies where chronological age is taken no notice of are well known. In making the above estimates I took the Tong Hills Expedition of 1911 as a base-line. From what I was told of the appearance, size, and activities of a person at the time of that well-remembered event, a guess could be made at his or her probable age in 1934. If one person's approximate age was established in this way, others who were agreed to be his or her contemporaries could be put into the same age-group. For example, the age-group 18–30 includes a number of men who said they were babes in arms in 1911, and the age-group 46 *plus* includes all those who were young married men in 1911.

homestead accompanied often by the family head's old mother. This is the usual history of the independent elementary family in Taleland; and about 1 in 8 of the domestic families of our sample have this constitution. Often, however, when a man secedes from the joint family he already has more than one wife, though his children are all still under marriageable age. Polygynous domestic families of this class occur in about the same proportion—1 in 8—in the sample. And thus the cycle begins again. As the children grow up and marry, each fraction of the dismembered joint family evolves into a new joint family, or at least has the possibility of doing so.

A joint family splits up—into family segments, be it noted, not into a number of dispersed individuals—if it has existed long enough to have reached an advanced stage of internal differentiation; but during its existence it is a remarkably cohesive unit. The fissiparous tendencies inherent in its structure are kept well in check until the pressure of economic needs, psychological friction, or a radical alteration in the constellation of the social relations, such as occurs when the family head dies, makes them irresistible. The split follows the lines of cleavage inherent in the structure of the effective minimal lineage on which a particular joint family is founded, and it takes place by stages.

We shall study the process of fission in the joint family later. Here only the results concern us. The simplest split occurs when the oldest son of the family head 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)',[1] or 'cuts his own gateway (*bit u zanɔr*)' in the family homestead, during his father's lifetime. He thus sets up an independent household, though perhaps living in a semi-detached part of the paternal homestead. But when the old man dies, he frequently returns to the parental home, and the joint family is reconstituted under his authority.

Permanent fission usually occurs between brothers (full, or half-brothers, or paternal cousins), or by the secession of the family head's deceased brother's sons. It begins, and may persist until the family head's death, as a purely economic division. Thus two full (*soog*) brothers—the older being the family head—may decide to farm independently because the growing economic wants of their respective families no longer permit them to maintain a common household. The bond of full brotherhood (*soog*) inhibits further fission altogether, or until such time as both men have adult children. Until then they generally continue to occupy the same homestead, using a single common gateway, cattle-yard (*sapak*), and *zɔŋ*. Their respective sections of the homestead, called their *dugɔt* by contraposition with the common *yir*, will be separated by a party wall with a ladder on either side, giving access for essential communication without a detour via the *sapak* but preventing trespass by their respective families. Each man is the head of his own, relatively independent, household, working its particular fields and having its own granary; but the older brother has authority over the whole *yir* in jural and ritual matters, exercises general supervision over the affairs of all its members, and, above all, controls the utilization of the patrimonial land and cattle and is the titular owner of all heritable, non-personal property of all its members. Pumaan and Ẓaŋ are full brothers sharing a house in this manner.

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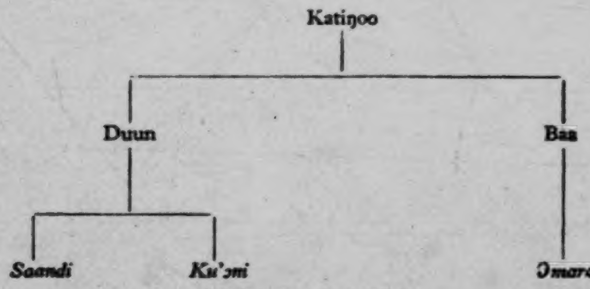
[1] The intra-family tensions which lead to the 'going out' of the eldest son will be discussed later. They are rationalized, and the secession of the eldest son is given a mystical sanction by the taboo which, among the Namoos, forbids a man ever meeting his first-born adult son face to face in his gateway after the latter has a family of adolescent children. Non-Namoos do not have the taboo, but the beliefs expressed in it are as strong among them as among the Namoos. Cf. below, Ch. VIII. [578 784]

Two half-brothers, or two first cousins (*sunzɔp*-brothers) whose fathers were full brothers (*saarɔt*) sometimes share a homestead thus, if they get on cordially, especially while the children of both or either are still too young for productive labour. Thus Naabdiya and Barimoda are half-brothers who occupy a single homestead with one gateway in this manner.

In time, however, the combined effects of economic needs, structural cleavages, and personal tensions lead to a further stage of separation. It takes longest, as we have noted, with full brothers whose genealogical equivalence,[1] mutual identification, and reciprocal affection are greatest, and occurs most readily with cousins, between whom the corresponding cleavages are more explicit. The younger man cuts another gateway for himself (*bit u zanɔr*), and henceforth has his own *zɔŋ* and *sapak*. The homestead now really consists of two separate, semi-detached dwellings, each occupied by one domestic family and household.

An example of this is Katiŋoo yiri at Zoo. This homestead is occupied by the three grandsons—Saandi, Ku'ɔni, and Ɔmara—of Katiŋoo, who died about a generation ago. Each of these men, who are all over 45, is the head of a joint family with grown-up children. Their lineage relationship is as follows:



(Living men in italics.)

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[1] Cf. Ch. X below.

This house illustrates an advanced stage of segmentation, involving a split between two full brothers (*saarət*) on the one hand, and between paternal cousins (*sunzɔp*) on the other. The three domestic families occupy three separate sections of the common *yir*, divided from one another by walls of the same height as the outer walls of the homestead, each with its own gateway, *zɔŋ*, and *sapak*, and communicating internally by means of ladders. They are described as the component *dugət* of the common *yir*. Saandi, the oldest of the three 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*), and head of the lineage of Katiŋoo biis, occupies the central section. Economically the three domestic families are wholly independent of one another, but Saandi exercises a certain degree of jural and ritual authority over the whole *yir*. As its spatial configuration implies, such a unit has less domestic solidarity than, for example, that of Pumaan and Zaŋ

Finally comes the stage of complete spatial segregation of the domestic families derived from segments of a single joint family. This occurs often between the families of half-brothers, and invariably, in due course, between the families of cousins. Thus Kurug and Lebhtiis of Təŋ-Puhug occupy separate homesteads, 100 yards or so apart, with their respective domestic families.[1] These homesteads were built by their fathers, Yin and Naandəmər, who were half-brothers and decided to separate after the death of *their* father, Zupibig. It may happen also in a family like Naabdiya's, when the head of the homestead dies and is succeeded by his younger brother or half-brother. Then his oldest son, if he is a man of mature years with a growing family, may in due course move out to set up on his own with his family and younger siblings.

In this way a joint family evolves into an *expanded* family in the course of a generation or so. An *expanded* family generally forms a close local group. The heads of the several joint families comprising it are all members of one lineage segment of a low order, expanded from what was an effective minimal segment one or two generations before. They have intimate social and personal ties and their families, *pari passu*, have closer intercourse with one another and stronger mutual loyalties than any of them has with other neighbouring families. They retain, in an attenuated degree, many of the intimacies and conventions that normally prevail in the joint family. Their relations to one another are analogous to those of the *dugət* of a joint family, but the lineage of the family heads operates more formally as the basis of their cohesion than in the case of a group of families sharing a common residence. When such a group of domestic families is described collectively as a *yir* and severally as *dugət*, these terms refer to the lineage relationship of their male members. For there is no specific term for the expanded family, nor has it a precise social definition. It exists in the conduct of its members to one another, not as a demarcated social unit. It is the widest field of domestic relations for any joint family.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 193.

It is evident that the domestic families that make up a settlement at any given time exhibit various degrees of internal differentiation. It depends mainly on the length of time the particular domestic family has been in existence. At one extreme we find families like that of Baripɛta, a man of about 35, who in 1934 had one wife and one infant. With him lived also one of his late father's widows and his young unmarried full brother. We might describe this as a young family. It constitutes a single economic and jural unit.

At the other extreme is the family of a man like Yinyɛla, whose age in 1934 could not have been less than 75. His household comprised his adult sons (all of them married or old enough to have wives, and the oldest a man of about 40 with adolescent children), his three young children, varying in age from about 11 to 2 years, and his deceased brother's son with his wife and children. He had had many wives, three of whom were still surviving, two elderly women and one a young woman whom he had married six or seven years before. This joint family had reached such an advanced stage of internal differentiation that the competing interests of its component families (the family segments) were becoming difficult to keep in check. The common resources of the household did not satisfy all the wants of Yinyɛla's brother's son's and his own eldest son's families; and these two men began to cultivate supplementary farms for their own use. Yinyɛla's domestic family was, in fact, on the verge of breaking up, though it was still an economic and jural unit under his authority. Had he not died in 1937 his brother's son would have moved out and his eldest son would have 'cut his own gateway (*bit u zanɔr*)'. In between these extremes are families like that of Nayabil of Kpata'ar, representing a stage of development to which a simple family like Baripɛta's may attain in a decade or so. Nayabil has four wives. His children range in age from about 17 to infancy. His mother and younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) with his wife and child live with him. In twenty years, if all survive, this family will resemble that of Yinyɛla in 1934.

Broadly speaking, families of the first and third kinds are those of men under middle age, who have but little voice in the jural and ceremonial affairs of the community, and families of the second kind are those of the elders (*kpeem*, pl. *kpɛm*) and near-elders (*kpeemtayalis*), men past middle age, who have the dominant role in controlling and organizing social life. About half the domestic families in a settlement belong to each of these two broad divisions. In the highly differentiated joint families which have been in existence for a considerable time, the age range of the *yirdaana*'s children and grandchildren often runs from middle age to infancy. For a man goes on taking new wives, if he can, as long as his reproductive powers last. Old men are notoriously

desirous of having, and are indulgent to, a young wife (*pɔɣabil*), not 596
only for sexual motives but also, and mainly, in order to have a strong
young woman about the house to administer those creature comforts
to which they are said to become more and more addicted as they grow
older. Thus siblings by the same father (*ba ukɔla biis*) may differ in
age by as much as a generation. A man's younger half-brother or sister
may be younger than his own children though senior to them in
generation. This has important effects on the lineage organization.

The custom of the levirate introduces a component of some significance 596
in the constitution of the joint family. In the 61 domestic families
of our sample there were 111 married men, and no less than 21—more 587
than one in five—had one or more inherited wives. An inherited wife
usually brings her young children by her first husband (if she has any)
with her. They grow up side by side with her children by her second
husband, who is responsible for their support. Tale kinship ideas make
this a simple and self-evident arrangement; but it means, nevertheless,
a division within what is normally the most compact and cohesive element
of the domestic family, the matricentral *dug*, in accordance with
the different paternity of the children. Generally a widow of childbearing
age marries a close agnate of her deceased husband—his brother
or first cousin—who is, therefore, a close classificatory father of her
children. This makes it easy for them to regard her second husband
with some of the devotion and affection due from children to their own
father, especially if they are still very young. Still, this is a weak place
in the cohesion of a family, at which a split easily occurs; for no man,
say the Tallensi, can wholly take the place of one's true father. If a
widow marries a distant agnate of her late husband, the latter's heir may
demand the custody of his children when they are old enough to do
without a mother's care. This splits the *dug*. But it also creates compensatory [602]
bonds of uterine (*soog*) kinship between her sons belonging
to different lineage segments.

Sometimes a man's dependants include a deceased brother's children 596
whose mother has died or married out of the family. Such children are,
for all practical purposes, his own children, but the sons frequently 736
secede when they have children. Much less commonly, a man may have
an orphaned sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with him in as intimate a relationship,
ostensibly, as if he were his son or brother. Actually, both jural
and sentimental reservations hedge round a sister's son's position in the
family, for his descent bars him, in the last resort, from ever acquiring
real filial status.[1] It is significant that in the old settlements extremely
few cases of this kind occur, and it is always assumed that the nephew
will eventually return to his natal settlement—though he does not always
do so. In the new settlements, where personal kinship ties largely
replace lineage ties as the basis of local aggregation, not only sororal

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI below.

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nephews but more distant cognatic and even affinal kin frequently live with a kinsman until they can set up in their own homesteads.

Sometimes, too, an unmarried sister's child (*tau-bii*) may grow up and live in its uncle's family. It may be an illegitimate child (*yi yeem bii*—a maiden's child), or one whose mother's bride-price was not paid, and who therefore belongs to her father unless or until it is redeemed (*pɔhəg*) by the payment of a cow by its genitor or his heir. A sister's child is to all intents and purposes a child of the family. But not being of the true agnatic line, it is subject to certain jural disabilities which have no consequence for a girl but handicap a boy, as we have previously seen.

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The domestic families of chiefs and headmen are unusual only in respect of size. Their newly won riches enable chiefs and headmen to acquire numerous wives and to maintain households that appear enormous in the eyes of the ordinary man. A petty headman may have ten or more wives. The late Chief of Tongo, a chief of modest means compared with some of his peers in Taleland, had more than thirty. The Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu has at least eighty. The Chief of Datɔko is reputed to have a hundred, but he denies this and claims to have only a modest fifty. Except that their domestic economy and organization is more complex and that there is at times more friction between the womenfolk, these hypertrophied joint families have the same pattern of organization as those of ordinary folk.

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It is noteworthy that this pattern has not been disturbed by the social changes which have, in recent years, followed the subjection of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast to European political, economic, and cultural influences. Family disorganization has barely begun to appear in Taleland. There is hardly a domestic family in the country—not one in our sample—which has wholly escaped the effects of these contact influences. One or more of their members is or has been abroad in Mampurugu, Ashanti, or the Colony, for longer or shorter periods of time, farming, working for wages, or trading. But the number of men abroad, at any given time, for very long periods is relatively small[1] compared with other parts of West and Southern Africa, and their absence has little effect on the structure of the residual family. Their labour is lost to the family, but as they are no longer a drain on its resources this does not upset its internal economy. Similarly, as they are mostly young men[2] with little or no responsibility for the management of family

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[1] Estimates based on my own census material and on Nominal Rolls drawn up by Administrative Officers for tax collection show that an average of just under 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were away from home and not likely to return in the immediate future, in the years 1936 to 1939. This estimate may be compared with the 60–80 per cent. of able-bodied adult males absent from tribal reserves in Northern Rhodesia and Nyassaland quoted by Lord Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 701.

[2] Reliable information on the ages of these absentees cannot be obtained. But from personal contact with many of them, both on their return home and

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affairs, their absence does not disturb jural or ritual relations centred 177
in the family. It is like a tree which remains a tree morphologically and 167
physiologically even if some of its minor branches have been lopped off.

The foregoing is true of the great majority of Tale families. The 596
structure of the normal family can still be accurately described without 177
reference to contact influence, in spite of the fact that a few families can 177
be found in every settlement which have been badly mutilated by the 183
prolonged absence abroad of their male members. Admittedly the norms of family relations have not remained completely insulated from these influences. With the ease of modern communications and the openings for work abroad, young people have incentives and opportunities which their fathers never had for resisting the authority of their elders and for breaking away from the family for a longer or shorter time. But as yet these new incentives and opportunities appear only as modifying factors in the play of the culturally defined family relations. They do not represent a conflicting set of norms, creating divisions within Tale society. For instance, a young man who is still jurally a minor cannot at will leave the domestic family to which he belongs by birth and set up an independent household. He can do so only in compliance with the moral rules and social conventions that regulate the fission of families. In fact, the motive to break away will only arise when certain standard changes take place in the composition of the domestic unit to which he belongs, or when he reaches a stage of social maturity which precipitates certain standard tensions between him and the head of the unit. The alternative for a young man who, in these days, hankers after independence is to leave the community until such time as he is prepared to settle down. He has to seek work abroad, in Ashanti or the Colony, or in the service of the white man nearer home. He is assured of a cordial welcome home whenever he decides to return, whether it be for a few weeks only or permanently. But if he makes up his mind to settle down at home it can only be within the existing social framework, and this means complying with the norms of family organization. There is no other way by which he can get married or acquire a house site or farm-land in his natal settlement, let alone play his part in community affairs. Hitherto these norms have been so well maintained that no returned emigrant has been known to flout them.

Summing up, we see that the Tale domestic system has three morphological 592
strata. It consists of a segmentary economic formation—households of different dimensions and degrees of economic self-sufficiency—embraced within a segmentary jural and ceremonial formation—domestic units not necessarily congruent with households grouped under family heads—and this again contained within a system of residential grouping in which the changes of phase in domestic structure are crystallized.

in places like Kumasi, I can say with certainty that the great majority are under 30.

592 A domestic unit is most clearly identified by the fact that it has a single common gateway. Though the three domains of domestic organization are not absolutely congruent, the commonest residential unit is the single household, which is also a single though not necessarily completely independent jural and ceremonial unit.[1]

596 We have been considering the typical development of the joint family as a process of successive fission and dispersion. But the contrary process of reintegration also plays an important part in this development. The changes in the composition of the joint or expanded family that lead to changes in the status and social roles of its senior male members cause it to split up in the circumstances that have been indicated, but they lead to a fusion of independent units in other circumstances. The decisive factors are jural status in the lineage, with which go rights over patrimonial land, and economic capacity.

Let us take a sample case. When Katiŋoo died (see genealogy, p. 68) his eldest son Duun became head of the effective minimal lineage and joint family and inherited the patrimonial farm-land. Duun and his full brother Baa continued to occupy their father's homestead, using only one gateway. After a while—four or five years, perhaps—Baa asked to be allowed to farm for himself as his children were growing up. He still occupied the same homestead as Duun, but his quarters were separated from those of Duun by a high party wall (*bcŋər*), he had his own granary, farmed for himself, and was solely responsible for supplying the food and other wants of his wives and children. The domestic family now consisted of two households.

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[1] The following table shows this clearly:

162 *Table showing the Distribution of Domestic Families (= Gateways) and Households (= Units of Food Economy) in relation to Homesteads*

Domestic families per homestead .	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	34	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	44
No. of domestic families . .	34	10	12	0	5	0	0	0	61
Households per homestead .	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	25	11	4	2	0	1	0	1	44
No. of households	25	22	12	8	0	6	0	8	81

(Mean number of persons: per homestead, 14·5; per domestic family, 10·4.)

The 61 domestic families of our sample occupy 44 homesteads. On the average there are 1·4 gateways (i.e. 1·4 domestic families) per homestead; but more than half of the 61 families occupy their own homesteads, with one gateway apiece. There are 81 households in the sample group, an average of 1·9 households per homestead and 1·3 households per domestic family. But nearly a third of these households are single domestic families dwelling in their own homesteads.

Five or six years passed and Duun died. Baa was now head of the 596
lineage and family. The patrimonial land passed to him. For a short time Duun's two sons, Saandi and Ku'ɔni, continued to occupy their late father's section of the homestead and farmed in partnership, independently of Baa. But they soon decided to move out. They went to build at Gbambee, on their late father's bush farm. At first they shared a homestead and farmed together. Then Ku'ɔni began to farm for himself and, a little later, wished to have his own gateway. At this stage the expanded family sprung from Katiŋoo consisted of two homesteads, one at Zoo, occupied by Baa and his sons with their families, who together made up a single household, and the other at Gbambee, consisting of two semi-detached parts occupied by Saandi and Ku'ɔni respectively, with their families, and constituting two separate households.

A little later Ku'ɔni separated altogether from Saandi and went to build his homestead at Zoo on a piece of land that had been their father's personal farm. This site proved to be mystically unpropitious and soon Ku'ɔni moved again. This time he returned to his father's (and grandfather's) original home (*daboog*) and built semi-detached quarters for himself adjoining Katiŋoo's old homestead, still occupied by Baa. He remained economically independent of Baa; but both he and Saandi were still under Baa's jural and ritual jurisdiction, as his brother's sons. A process of partial reintegration had, however, occurred.

Then Baa died and Saandi became head of the lineage and heir to the patrimonial land. So he moved back to Zoo, where he built semi-detached quarters for himself adjoining the group's original home. This happened quite recently; and the distribution of Katiŋoo yir is as we have described on p. 69. Saandi, Ku'ɔni, and Baa's son Ɔmara have each their separate, semi-detached quarters and their separate gateways; they are economically independent of each other; but jural and ritual jurisdiction over the unit is in Saandi's hands.

But this is not the end of the story. If Saandi were to die suddenly, 596
none of his sons would be old enough to farm for himself and support
Saandi's widows and children. So they would all join Ku'ɔni's house- 736
hold, and remain in his custody—the widows as his wives (unless they remarried other men, when they would fade out of the picture altogether), the children as his children—until Saandi's oldest boy was old enough to set up an independent household. The process of gradual dispersion would then start again. If, Saandi being dead, Ɔmara were also to die suddenly, leaving no son old enough to support his household, his children would also join Ku'ɔni, and thus all the branches of Katiŋoo's family would be reconstituted into a single unit for the time being. The whole cycle would take from twenty to thirty years.

Our illustration has been in part hypothetical so as not to confuse the 596
reader with too many genealogies. But this is not a fanciful case. A dozen family histories that have followed the pattern outlined above

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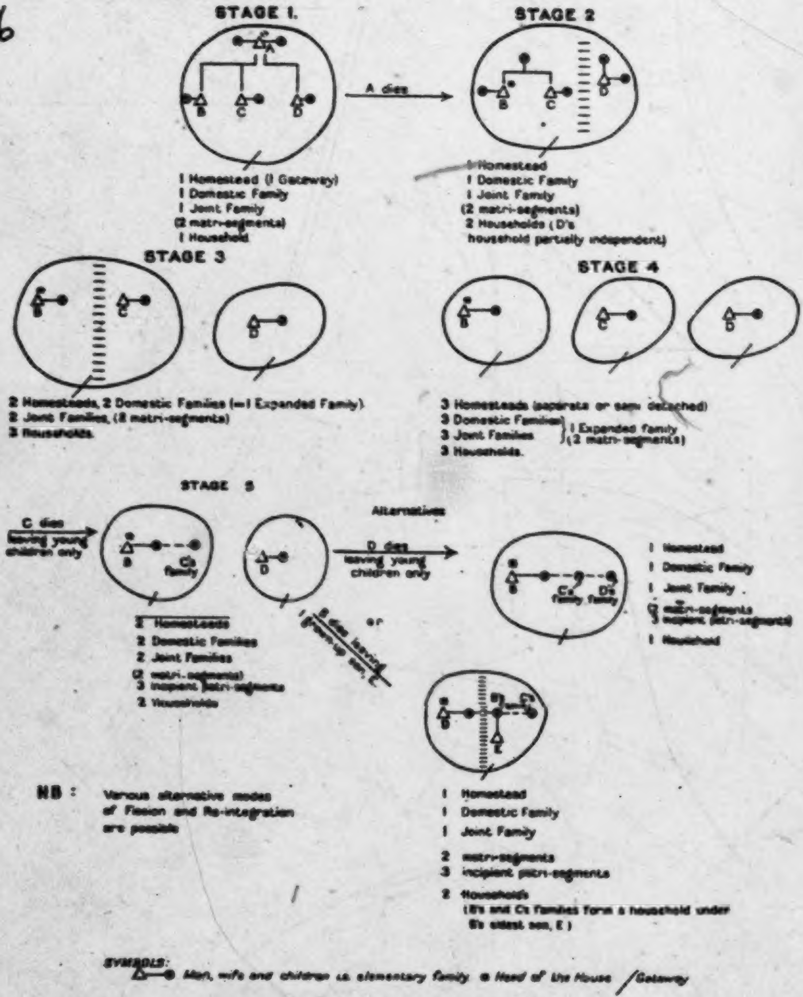
STAGE 1.
A
B
C
D
1 Homestead (1 Gateway)
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
(2 matri-segments)
1 Household
A dies
STAGE 2
B
C
D
1 Homestead
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
(2 matri-segments)
2 Households (D's household partially independent)
STAGE 3
B
C
D
2 Homesteads, 2 Domestic Families (=1 Expanded Family).
2 Joint Families, (2 matri-segments)
3 Households.
STAGE 4
B
C
D
3 Homesteads (separate or semi detached)
3 Domestic Families
3 Joint Families
1 Expanded family (2 matri-segments)
3 Households.
STAGE 5
C dies leaving young children only
B
C's family
D
2 Homesteads
2 Domestic Families
2 Joint Families
(2 matri-segments)
3 incipient patri-segments
2 Households
Alternatives
D dies leaving young children only
B
C's family
D's family
1 Homestead
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
(2 matri-segments
3 incipient patri-segments)
1 Household
or
B dies leaving 1 grown-up son, E
D
B's
C's
E
1 Homestead
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
2 matri-segments
3 incipient patri-segments
2 Households
(B's and C's families form a household under B's eldest son, E)
NB: Various alternative modes of Fission and Re-integration are possible
SYMBOLS:
Man, wife and children i.e. elementary family
Head of the House
Gateway

FIG. 3. Diagram showing the developmental cycle of the Joint Family.

[p. 76]

could be cited. Such a history explains why Tiezien of Kpata'ar, for instance, has the sons of two of his late brothers living and working with him; and why Yinworəb of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg has both a brother's widows and young children, and his own young half-brothers, as members of his household.

We shall consider the main factors that determine this cycle of development in a later chapter. We shall see that economic needs and structural cleavages are chiefly responsible for fission in the joint family and religious and jural sanctions for the reintegration of an expanded family.

CHAPTER IV

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE FAMILY

The General and the Particular in the Pattern of Domestic Relations

611 IT is clear from Chapter II that *dɔɣam*, the fact of birth, the event that fixes one's descent immutably, takes precedence over all other conditions governing the social relations and the social roles of a Talɔŋ. This principle comes out in all departments of Tale social life, and nowhere so plainly as in the organization of domestic life. We turn, therefore, to examine the working of kinship in the domestic family, which we have called the focal field of kinship.

593 It is important to bear in mind that kinship relations in the family group are inter-articulated in a single configuration, dominated by the *patria potestas* of the male head of the family. The relations of father and child are coloured by the relations of mother and child that coexist with them, and the relations of mother and child acquire a special accent in the context of the relations between co-wives. Particular domestic relationships appear in their true light only when they are considered as part of the total pattern. The polarity of *dug* and *yir* moulds them all; all play a part in the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces in the structure of the family. All, moreover, are subject to the pull and pressure of genealogical connexions and groupings outside the family circle.

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606 The natives are very conscious of this, and take it into account in the management of their lives. They say, for instance, that a woman's parents continue to have great influence over her for some years after her marriage and that is why her husband must keep on the good side of his parents-in-law. 'Don't you know what in-lawship means?' said Bayankura, somewhat lugubriously, when I found him hard at work helping to rebuild his father-in-law's homestead. Again, Tiezien's family believed that he was much under the influence of his senior wife, Tanzoo. So when by various pretexts he caused both of his late brother's sons to lose the young wives they had recently taken, they ascribed it morosely to Tanzoo's jealousy of their mother, Tiezien's second wife.

181 We shall not attempt a full-dress study of Tale family life; here we are concerned only with the structurally significant norms. In a society as homogeneous and economically undifferentiated as that of the Tallensi, people of the same sex, age, and social standing tend to have the same life history; and organized units such as the lineage and the family tend to have a stereotyped structure and development. The common denominators of action stand out.

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156 Yet it is a constantly reiterated assumption of the natives that no two

people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, 828 they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships. 156 People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experiences, his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew 123 intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees in families like those of Kutɔbis of Tɔŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of Tɔŋ-Puhug.

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but 596 there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevitable, some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the 156 structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain 578 dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas an erratic man like Kutɔbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor in the cycle of changes that a family passes through.

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life 602 of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance, and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

592 In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential
life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this
262 in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential
576 autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to
which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces
574 himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out,
521 informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out
gafarra ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dɛndɔyo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be
so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart
[584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy.
Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate 596
association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, 362
and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and
her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. 576
Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room.

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can 593
confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know
about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. 596
He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Taləŋa can keep his own counsel if need be.

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not 593
remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At 581
one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another.

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. 581
They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage
throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with 589
men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of
Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who
would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously [158]
mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly
that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

581 589 said, had never had the enterprise to find a wife. I heard of no woman who had never married. Deformities which do not wholly incapacitate a person or arouse repulsion are not a bar to marriage. The blind, the deaf, and the lame find spouses if they are otherwise able-bodied and presentable.

Tallensi attach immense importance to marriage, not only because it is the sole means to the most ardently desired of all ends, the procreation of legitimate children, but also because no man or woman can adequately satisfy all his or her wants or lead a normal social life, after reaching maturity, without a spouse. Sooner or later a man must have a wife and a woman a husband. Hence 'finding a wife (*pɔɣa booga*)' is the most urgent preoccupation of unmarried men, apart from getting a living. Among unmarried young men it is an obsession, the most absorbing pursuit of their leisure and an interminable topic of conversation. A girl's life is entirely directed towards marriage from childhood onwards.

581 181 It is a common thing to find a group of men discussing the relative importance of farms and wives, the two basic practical interests of the natives. They seldom fail to come down to the fundamentals. I have heard an elder sum it up somewhat in this fashion: 'If you don't farm you will have no food; and if you have no food you die. Then what is the use of a wife without food? But if you have no wife you will have no children and your life is wasted.' In the end, however, it is usually agreed that farming is the more important, for the man who lives long enough will not lack a wife and without food one cannot support a family.

556 Land and wives have many features in common, as their juxtaposition in native thought shows. Both stand for the fulfilment of fundamental social needs. Both come under the jurisdiction of the lineage, though they are of direct service to individuals. But there are certain differences which show the special importance of wives. There is no intense competition for the possession of land. Owing to technical and economic limitations there is no inducement to accumulate land. Wealth—that is, property acquired by saving, or in exchange for surplus grain or cash—consists pre-eminently of livestock; and the use to which livestock is principally put is in acquiring wives, performing sacrifices, celebrating funerals, and, to a much lesser extent, competing for certain politico-ritual offices. Such wealth is, therefore, really equivalent to provision for delayed consumption or special forms of consumption arising out of ritual obligations or differences in status.[1] It has no durable productive value. Compared with livestock, the purchase of farm-land is insignificant

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[1] But Tale standards of wealth are extremely low. Except for a handful of chiefs and headmen—who have herds of cattle numbering from 20 to 50, and, in at least one case, apparently, over 100, as well as numbers of small stock—a man with a dozen sheep, a few goats, and three or four head of cattle is considered to be wealthy (*bondaan*).

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1] Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of. [432] [578]

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of competition both between individuals and between corporate groups. This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests. 578 583

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter. 691 185 578

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief 581 595 622

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

581 595 622 or headman or important elder, backed as it often is by lavish gifts to her parents, security of the bride-price, and the attraction of his wealth and power or status. Few parents would hesitate to force their daughter to accept such an offer. Chiefs and headmen do in fact have an excessive number of wives. The five biggest chiefs and headmen of the Tongo district had between them about 160 wives of all ages in 1936. Their predecessors of a generation ago would have had perhaps 30 between them, at the utmost. The extra 130 wives they have means that probably 100 other men have been cheated of wives. This has no doubt diminished the chances of early marriage for a proportion of young men, but not so greatly as the men assert. All the evidence of Tale domestic institutions and of Tale genealogies goes to show that wives were always highly prized because they were always at a premium.[1] In consequence, no unmarried girl or woman of child-bearing age lacks suitors, and no wife of child-bearing age need endure an intolerable marriage. She can always find another husband. That women take advantage of their scarcity value is what one would expect; but they do so to a smaller extent than one anticipates. This is due partly to the strength and stability of the patrilineal lineage system, expressed in inter-personal relations in the power of the *patria potestas*, and partly to the great value women set upon wifehood and motherhood. Life is a failure to a Tale woman who never becomes a wife and mother.

The Stability of Marriage

586 587 582 In consequence, partly, of the scarcity value of wives, but more, no doubt, of the conflict of loyalties and interests which has to be overcome, marriage tends to be unstable in the initial stages. A young man rarely settles down permanently with his first bride, and young women generally treat their first marriage as an experiment unless the husband is a much older man to whom they have been married by formal negotiation. In the course of collecting census material I noted the marriages of over a hundred men. There is not one man over the age of 30, approximately (excluding a few physically or psychologically abnormal men), who has failed to experience one or more unsuccessful and usually short-lived marriages. Most men of 30 to 40 can give a history of five

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[582] [1] I have no demographic evidence suggesting that there was formerly or is now a marked deficiency of marriageable women as compared with men in Taleland. My own crude demographic inquiries suggest a sex ratio of about unity among the Tallensi. Polygynous marriage, therefore, inevitably means competition for wives, even though women are usually married by the age of 16 or 17, as near as one can guess, and men rarely succeed in finding a wife before the age of about 25. The natives maintain that the age of marriage for girls has been decreasing rapidly since the coming of the white man (cf. my paper, 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, xxv, 1943, 3-4).

or six abortive—or rather, to translate the native attitude into our own 586
terms, experimental—marriages. Men of over 50 say, with a laugh, that 587
they cannot remember all the women they have married who left them
after a short time. Women are more discreet about their marital history; 582
but observation leads to the conclusion that between 50 and 60 per cent.
of all married women have had more than one husband.[1]

A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, 586
generally the woman, or through that of the wife's guardian. The Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by withholding the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women,
according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can [828]
seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.

Despite these initial pitfalls of marriage, families do get established 581
and remain stable. Though the idea of marriage as a lifelong and irrevocable bond does not exist among the Tallensi, many couples do settle down for life, and many other couples remain united for a long enough stretch of years to produce one or more children.

Many complicated circumstances have an influence on this. Naturally, 581
the jural formalities must be properly complied with. That is to say, 583

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[1] Many of these experimental marriages are not marriages at all, according to the strict letter of custom, since they are sometimes dissolved before placation gifts have been made and often before any instalment of the bride-price has been paid. Some last only a few weeks. But they are always called marriages; for it is a fact that many marriages that begin in exactly this way do turn out to be stable in the end. Counting as 'wives' only those for whom bride-price was paid and who bore children to their husbands, I found, among a randomly chosen group of 20 men over 45, approximately, that only 2 had had 1 wife each; only 3 had had 2 wives each; the remaining 15 (= 75 per cent.) had all had more than 2 wives each. Altogether, these 20 men had had 71 wives (average 3·5 wives each); they had lost 21 (average 1 each) by death; and at the time of the census they had 45 wives (average 2·25 each). But most of them claimed to have 'married' from 10 to 20 times and were able to give a fairly complete history of these abortive 'marriages'.

Among a randomly chosen group of 20 women of child-bearing age—who were therefore not yet at the end of their matrimonial careers—6 (= 30 per cent.) had had only one husband each; 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had only 2 husbands each; the remaining 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had more than 2 husbands each, 4 of them having had more than 3 husbands each. Apart from the propensity to choose a final husband by trial and error, the custom of [illegible] levirate helps to increase the number of husbands a woman may have in her lifetime.

581 the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*)
583 to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price
acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the
[586] bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over
a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man
has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently
desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole
bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to
compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses
obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers
his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for
another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give
her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash
or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy
grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives
a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and
over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights
nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

582 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage.
Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot
593 remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law
he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away,
though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned
to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By
contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband,
he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to
stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known
to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of
[789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might
curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

583 Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at
least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on
691 the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives
of the lineage. Pukiehət's wife was taken from him five times because
he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came
back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehət. The
chief put it to her that Pukiehət was, in effect, treating both her and her
guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave
him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehət saw he was in danger
of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically
and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough
to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are 586 taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a really effective force in maintaining the marriage.

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or 581 ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond is of vital importance in this relationship.

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects 581 to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of 586 consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima, Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may [842] decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside [685] by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace, formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women. Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, [827] however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat during sleep is a grave [illegible] offence endangering the life of the husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent back to her parents.

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. 602 The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are 593 of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When

602 593 a woman marries she does not forfeit her status as a daughter of her natal lineage (*pɔɣayabələg*) or lose her personal ties with her parents and siblings. We have discussed this, in its broader aspects, in our previous volume[1] and confine ourselves here to family ties. Throughout her life she keeps in close touch with her parents and siblings and other members of her clan, especially her close agnates. If, as is common, other daughters of her clan have married into her husband's clan, these will be the classificatory co-wives with whom she has most contact and to whom she gives and from whom she receives most help, kindness, and support. She visits her natal settlement, as well as her sisters married elsewhere, regularly, and is often visited by members of her parental family. She not only has emotional bonds with her natal family that time never erases, but she also retains certain privileges, which have almost the force of rights, in it and in her natal clan, as we have shown in our previous volume. Her natal family and clan also have claims on her all her life. This is strongly marked in the first two or three years of marriage, before motherhood, habit, and an increasing share in its routine have knit her firmly into her conjugal family.

574 593 In the early years of marriage a woman seldom lets an opportunity of visiting her natal family go by. She calls in to see how they are on her way to or from market. Now and then she comes to stay a few days. If she is ill she will generally come to stay with her mother, who will tend her much more carefully than her co-wives or in-laws. When Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan's daughter developed an asthmatic complaint she stayed with her parents for nearly a year. When Da'amɔ'ɔ's wife went down with guinea-worm she took her three-months-old baby and went to her father's house until she was cured, though it is considered a risky thing to take so young an infant out of its father's house. At sowing or harvest time a man often sends for a young married daughter who has no child to come and help. At all times a married daughter is informed, and sometimes sent for, if there is serious sickness in her parental home. She must be sent for if a member of her parental family dies; and she will go even if it means leaving a tiny infant in the care of a co-wife for a day or two.

761 602 On this matter Tallensi are extremely sensitive, for death is the great test of all social ties among them. All relatives of the dead, and especially the principal mourners—parents, spouses, children, siblings—have defined ritual observances, ritual duties, and practical tasks in mortuary and funeral ceremonies. A death often comes as a shock to these close relatives, and especially the death of a parent or sibling to a married daughter of the family. Her mother-in-law or husband will break the news gently to her with a tactful periphrasis. But she must be told and sent for, else she—and, backing her up, her conjugal family—would be deeply offended. On her part, not to go when thus summoned would

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial ceremony.
Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tenzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live, expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

613 Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One 769 of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*), to whom her husband will have to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is [777] selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate (*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors. [761 If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an 789] evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

602 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the con- 593 trary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

members of two mutually exclusive corporate groups. That is why the 602
lineages of husband and wife are implicated in the marriage and have a lasting interest in its course and in the offspring that come from it. Tale speech and etiquette reveal this, and the classificatory extension of affinal kinship depends on this. Thus if your friend's son or daughter has recently married, you do not ask him 'Whom did he (she) marry?', but 'Where (i.e. which clan) did he (she) marry?', and 'A child of whose house (i.e. what segment of the clan) did he (she) marry?'. We shall take up this thread again at a later stage of our analysis. At present we are concerned with the consequences for the relations of husband and wife of their divergent lineage ties.

The tension due to these opposing sets of social ties appears most 578
acutely in the early stages of marriage, obviously as a result of the fact
that marriage is an alliance between two genealogically independent 582
corporate units with rival interests in the protagonists. Every marriage in which the husband is a young man begins as a struggle, carried on with many wiles, stratagems, pretexts, and even threats of or recourse to force. Firstly, the suitor has to compete with other young men whom his would-be bride and in-laws often play off astutely against him. The largest part of his courtship consists in winning over the girl's parents with frequent presents and soft words. To elope with her he must buy the secret connivance of her mother or brother, for her father will always stand out for a negotiated marriage. This is not only an acknowledgement of the father's right to dispose of his daughter's hand, but a guarantee of the consent of the bridegroom's guardian and lineage elders and hence of the payment of the bride-price on demand. It is a defeat for the bridegroom, who has to bow to the will of his father-in-law.

The real struggle begins, however, only after a man succeeds in 578
carrying off his bride by elopement. If the elders on both sides tacitly
accept the match as a good one, it becomes a matter of mere formality; 602
but all the conventions of the jural transactions necessary to make a 628
legitimate marriage are couched in the idiom of a struggle between hostile groups. That is why they must take place through an intermediary, the *pɔɣasama*, a clansman of the bridegroom and a cognatic kinsman of the bride, bound to hold an even balance between the two parties by reason of his kinship with both.[1] But often enough the struggle turns into a genuine and sometimes acrimonious battle for the girl which may go on for weeks or months. It is then that the lack of a constituted legal system in Tale political organization makes itself felt. The girl's father resorts to all sorts of devices to coerce her abductors. He may use ritual pretexts, exploit ties of cognatic kinship with the abductors' lineage or clan, even, in extremity, threaten to kill himself on their doorstep, or, in the old days, to stir up war against their clan. I have been present at several violent altercations between a party of men

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[1] Cf. pp. 317–18 below.

578 602 627 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It is not until the formal placation gift (*sendaan*) is sent to the girl's father with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

675 583 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 576 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan. The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

574 593 A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority. Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two, though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may have other wives at home. [837] It must be admitted, however, that wives run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes, for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law, his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

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solve the conflict between these antithetic bonds in favour of her conjugal family. 593

Tallensi say that a woman is like a stranger or guest (both ideas are contained in the native word *saan*) in her husband's house during the first year or two of marriage. Standing outside the intimate life and vital concerns of the family, she cannot yet be relied upon. Gradually she grows accustomed (*malɔm*) to her conjugal family; and after some years, when she has several children, she becomes so far absorbed into the family that full trust can be reposed in her and she takes a full and self-confident part in family affairs. 593

It needs little observation to see how apt is this description of the gradual absorption of women into their husbands' families. On a visit to a homestead to which a newly wedded wife has just been added, one can easily observe the 'shyness (*valɔm*)', as the Tallensi call it, of the new wife (*pɔɣa*) and her husband (*sɛt*) towards each other. This goes farther than formal etiquette. Good manners require that a woman should always show respect to her husband in public. She walks behind him if they have to go anywhere together on a ceremonial occasion. She stoops or kneels whenever she offers him food or drink. But this behaviour is customary for a woman with all adult males other than her own children. It is a sign of the general attitude of respect due from women to men in a society so dominated in public social relations by the patriarchal principle. The 'shyness' of a newly married wife comes out in other ways. She tries to keep out of her husband's way as much as possible during the day, busying herself zealously with the household tasks given to her by her mother-in-law. She is submissive to all his requests. She speaks to him only when she is spoken to. She takes no initiative in anything. 593 576

This attitude is even more marked in her behaviour towards her parents-in-law (*daŋaam*, pl. *daŋaanam*), to whom she is bound to show formal deference at all times, and to her adult brothers-in-law, with whom she must always be circumspect because of the incest barrier which we shall discuss later. It often comes into her private relations with her husband if he is much older than she is. She will flirt and be more companionable with a young husband, in private, natives say; for he is probably like herself a *tarɔm*, junior, under authority, and connubial joys mean so much to him that he comes down to an equal footing with his wife for their sake. 606 593

The Relationships of a Wife with her Relatives-in-law

A woman does not avoid any of her relatives-in-law or her husband, nor are her relations with them regulated by strict prescription. She maintains a general attitude of deference, modesty, and complaisance towards them. A well-behaved young wife is industrious and obedient in helping her mother-in-law with her domestic work, and she will be self-effacing and deferential towards her father-in-law, her husband, 606 607

606 and his adult brothers. The only relaxation of this attitude occurs with her sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakie*, pl. *pɔɣakies*). With them, often her equals 607 in years and her companions in work, she can laugh and play and joke. Like herself, they are already, or are fated to be, married out of their natal families to 'strangers'. This is a bond of fellowship superadded to that of sex and often age. But they also belong to the opposite camp. Identifying themselves with their brothers and their lineage, they sometimes speak of her as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)', and she sometimes refers to them as 'my husbands (*n-sɛrib*)'. They will take the side of their brother if she comes into conflict with her husband or deserts him. Her relationship with them is typical of the ambivalence that underlies the joking relationship among the Tallensi.

601 In the first year or so of marriage a woman tries to avoid having to address her male in-laws and her husband directly in public. If they ✓ 576 address her it will be in a somewhat formal and courteous way, her husband and his brothers using her clan name, her father-in-law addressing her as 'mother (*ma*)'. She is most at home—but in a very deferential manner—with her mother-in-law, in whose rooms and under whose care she lives, whose domestic duties she largely takes over, and who also addresses her as 'mother (*ma*)'. To any member of the family she speaks of her father-in-law as 'father (*ba*)' and of her mother-in-law as 'mother (*ma*)', and she addresses the latter by this term. Outside the family a woman speaks of her husband as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)'; of his brothers as 'my older' or 'my younger husband (*n-sɛt-bier*, or *n-sɛt-pit*)'; and of his parents as 'my father (mother)-in-law (*n-daŋaamdoog*, masc.—*n daŋaampɔk*, fem.)'. Her husband speaks of her as 'my wife (*mpɔɣa*)'; his brothers as 'my older or younger brother's wife (*m-bier* or *m-pit pɔɣa*)', or in some situations as 'our (i.e. the lineage's) wife'; her parents-in-law as *sampɔɣa*.

606 The status of a woman in her conjugal family is most sharply focused in her relations with her parents-in-law. For it is they who form the axis around which the family revolves. Its unity, its independence, the management of its material affairs, and the maintenance of its well-being all reside in them. Though the general impression one receives of a woman's relationship with her parents-in-law is one of affability and ease, it is potentially anomalous, particularly in the early years. As their son's wife she is in the position of a daughter to them. She will give valuable and indispensable service in the economy of the household. She will produce children to augment the family and the lineage. But, as she herself knows and feels, she is an intruder. She is made to feel this in the early years of marriage even if, as so often happens, she belongs to an adjacent clan, and was personally well known to her conjugal family before marriage. For marriage creates entirely new associations between individuals and families. If she was married by elopement she knows that she is on trial, perhaps the object of a

hidden struggle between her husband and her father-in-law. Though she is in the position of a daughter to her parents-in-law, she cannot feel for them nor they for her the love and devotion that moderate the strictness of parental authority and give a tone of easy-going friendliness to the normal intercourse of parents and children. One side of the parent-child relationship, the authority of parents over their children, looms foremost for her. The cleavage between successive generations and the tension that holds them apart, are underlined at the expense of the mutual devotion and identification of parents and children. 606

Parents-in-law, for their part, have ambivalent feelings towards their daughter-in-law. Behind their ostensible pride and pleasure in their son's marriage lurks the shadow of resentment. A man realizes that his son's marriage is the first step in his eventual emancipation. It is the seed from which grow responsibilities and interests that compete with those he owes to his natal family and threaten his loyalties to them. A woman sees in her son's marriage a sign that her reproductive life is over. Tallensi hold that it is improper, and to some extent mystically dangerous, for mother-in-law and daughter-in-law to bear at the same time. Hence parents often, though covertly, try to prevent a first son marrying young, or else, in self-defence, display exaggerated conceit at a son's early marriage. Only the coming of grandchildren, coinciding as it does with the habituation of the daughter-in-law to her conjugal family, and itself a distinction inspiring great pride and joy in the grandparents, compensates for the renunciations implicitly required of a man's parents when he takes a wife. 606 578 [843]

Inevitably, therefore, there is an element of tension in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. The fact that the daughter-in-law is under the power of her husband's family, particularly of her father-in-law, and that they are formally, if not openly, opposed to her paternal family, to which, however, she is still attached by the strongest ties of duty and sentiment, may add to the strain. It may be quite superficial in a well-regulated family or in the case of an approved marriage, apparent only in the conventions of speech and etiquette. In an ill-managed family, or if there is opposition to the marriage, it often comes out openly. Parents-in-law complain of their daughter-in-law's manners or actions, or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law have petty squabbles. As time passes the strain is mitigated with the gradual absorption of the daughter-in-law into her conjugal family. It is never wholly erased. Even in so well organized a family as Ɔmara's, there was a standing feud between his younger wives and his mother. The old woman, half-sunk in the hebetude of senility, complained ceaselessly of the neglect of her daughters-in-law; and they often quarrelled with her vehemently on account of what they regarded as her exorbitant demands on their firewood, their labour, and their food-supply.

The conventions of behaviour followed by parents-in-law and daugh-

606 578 ter-in-law towards one another, and the terminology of address associated with them, put a protective fence between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. 'My mother', or 'my father', in this context means 'a person to whom I owe punctilious respect'. The relation is one of reciprocal respect, because it is based on something in the nature of a contract. The daughter-in-law's attitude is an exaggeration of one aspect of filial respect towards the parents. This aspect is more prominent in kinship relations outside the focal field and in ceremonial relations patterned on, but structurally different from, true parent-child relations, than in the latter. It is reminiscent of the behaviour of his clansmen to a chief or tendaana on formal occasions, when his symbolic position as father (*ba*) of the clan is most apparent.

Naturally the barrier between father-in-law and daughter-in-law is stricter than between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law owing to the difference of sex, though it is not obvious to an outsider. Once she is accepted, a man usually treats his daughter-in-law with kindness and affability. In public he treats her with a familiar friendliness, in the same way as if she were his daughter. But whereas he scolds his daughter without hesitation, he does not scold or criticize his daughter-in-law directly. It would offend and hurt her, and upset their amicable relations. The barrier between them—and this applies in a lesser degree to the mother-in-law too—can be maintained only on the basis of mutual courtesy and affability. Where the barrier is most sharply emphasized is not in their public intercourse but in their relations as
[835] members of opposite sexes. For a man to have sexual relations with, or even sit on the same mat as, his daughter-in-law is a sin of the first magnitude. '*Dɛn n-kih pam!* (that is an extreme taboo)', say the natives, with every sign of repugnance. It is a sin that can never be wholly atoned for. Sooner or later the culprits will be slain by the ancestor spirits; for, like incest with a father's wife of which it is the counterpart, it destroys irreparably the moral and religious bonds of father and son. I heard of an old man who died some years ago who used to have his daughters-in-law sit on his lap, and 'play' with them. This, my informants said scoffingly, was just the ill manners of an old dotard. But Gunyaam's seduction of his daughter-in-law was revealed to me with bated breath. It was no wonder, my informant said, that he died soon after, and that misfortunes crowded on his family.

The relations of daughter-in-law to parents-in-law are well summed up in the statement always made by Tallensi if they are asked for an explanation of the terminology of address used between these relatives. They say: 'We stand in awe of them (parents-in-law or daughters-in-law)', (*ti zootbame*, lit. 'we fear them').[1]

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601 [1] This terminology of address is of considerable theoretical interest. Rattray (op. cit., p. 6) attributes the custom of addressing a daughter-in-law as 'mother' (customary also amongst the Gorisi, Namnam, and other peoples adjacent to

The Relationship of Husband and Wife

The closest bonds a woman has with any member of the family into which she marries are her bonds with her husband. Habit, economic co-operation, and the jural authority of husband over wife bring them closer and closer together as the years pass. But these mutual interests are insufficient by themselves. The true cement of their union is the birth of children. Children give the union its *raison d'être*. They become the focus of the common interests, common pride, and common devotion of the partners, without which their economic co-operation or the other satisfactions they get from marriage would be meaningless. As we have already seen, one thing Tallensi never tire of stressing is that the object of marriage is to have children. When she has borne two or three living children to him a woman will be most unwilling to leave her husband, however hard her life with him may be.

The arrival of children not only forges closer the emotional bonds of husband and wife, but it also unites them socially in a firmer compact.

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the Tallensi) to the 'horror of a father having intercourse with a son's wife'. He does not take into account the fact that mother-in-law and daughter-in-law also address each other reciprocally as 'mother'. As is mentioned above, the Tallensi themselves have no complete explanation for this usage, and this applies to the neighbouring 'tribes'. Many informants amplified the conventional formula 'We fear them' by pointing out that it was a degree of respect similar to that due to a mother. As we shall see later, the respect due to one's mother is almost a sacrosanct norm. The natives do not explicitly associate the mode of address with the horror of incest between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, but they do stress the latter in discussing the relationship of father-in-law and daughter-in-law. We shall see later that incest with a daughter-in-law is coupled with incest with one's mother as among the most serious kinship sins conceivable to the Tallensi. Rattray's inference, therefore, probably isolates one element in the usage, but it is a suppressed element. The incest barrier is a factor of importance in the relations of father-in-law and daughter-in-law in very many patrilineal African societies. Logically, however, it would seem to be more in keeping with the relationship of parent-in-law and daughter-in-law for the former to address the latter as his or her daughter, as is customary in a number of African societies. Here, however, a combination of circumstances arising out of the lineage principle comes into the picture. A daughter-in-law is not under her parents-in-law's authority and control in the same sense as their daughter is. She is not a substitute daughter, but their son's wife and a potential mother of their grandchildren of the same lineage. She is a stranger in theory, standing outside the scheme of lineage loyalties and sanctions, yet at the same time the one person on whom the whole future of the lineage depends. Again no Tallensi ever suggested that a daughter-in-law is called 'mother' by her parents-in-law because she is a future mother of lineage members. It is rather her ambiguous position as a stranger tied to the lineage that is uppermost in their thought. Her being addressed as 'mother' by her parents-in-law may be a means of stressing this and of over-emphasizing the respect due to her from them, the usage being a metaphoric derivation from the mode of address used to one's mother and, by extension, in an honorific sense to old women in general. In short, this usage aptly symbolizes the tensions in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law, in respect to which the latter is almost on an equal footing with the former.

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In the joint family it marks them off as a separate and potentially independent family segment. A mother of two children usually has her own quarters, or her own part of her mother-in-law's *dug*, if her husband's mother is one of several wives of her father-in-law. She is a *dugdaana*, mistress of her rooms, in a small way, with some freedom of action where its affairs are concerned. She begins to regard the work that falls to her share, not merely as her contribution to the economy of the household, but more as serving the needs of her children and husband. He, for his part, begins to think of the future in terms of his wife and children. He may still accept a position of dependence on his father or older brother as a matter of course; but the separate needs of his wife and children are recognized in the allocation of food-supplies. He makes an effort to extend his private farm plot in order to grow a little food to tide his own family segment over lean periods. It may be many years before he achieves independence, but his aspirations towards it have a definite channel and a clear objective.

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The greater intimacy of husband and wife, after several years of marriage, is shown in their greater familiarity with each other in public. The woman does not hesitate to address her husband by his name or title, and he may use a nickname for her. By the time a woman has grown old with her husband she is on terms of comradeship and equality with him, for she now identifies herself completely with his interests. An old couple often show great devotion to and affection for each other. The man often has such confidence in his wife that he will discuss all his affairs with her, and she can exercise considerable influence on his decisions in family matters, though the last word still rests with him. Though she still shows deference to him in public, she no longer keeps in the background. She speaks her mind freely to him and before him. Often when I have talked to men about domestic organization, kinship, marriage, children, or even their private religious and magical shrines, their wives of senior standing have stopped to join in the conversation. I have seen a lineage head's senior wife listen to a group of lineage elders thresh out a domestic squabble and give her opinion without restraint. A suitor always tries to gain the favour of a girl's mother; for, though she lacks authority to give him the girl, she can sometimes be persuaded to connive at an elopement, or at least to say a good word for him with her husband, and this may sway the balance in his favour.

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Nevertheless, it is a basic assumption of the Tallensi that a wife never ceases entirely to be a 'stranger' in her husband's clan. For she never, as we have learnt, loses the social identity conferred on her by birth as a member of a different clan. She does not adopt her husband's totemic taboos; and though her health and fertility, being essential for the satisfactory performance of her wifely role, come under the guardianship of his ancestors, she does not participate in the cult of his lineage ancestors. When she attends the sacrifices made to domestic shrines by the joint

family head, she does so as a privileged spectator. She has this privilege 593
because her welfare is bound up with that of her husband and children,
and theirs with hers. She remains outside the religious and moral 769
solidarity of her husband's clan and maximal lineage, and, indeed, has
only a contingent interest in the solidarity of his minimal lineage. It is
noteworthy that women, both daughters and wives, are excluded from
the esoteric ritual activities in which the moral sanctions of the unity
and continuity of lineage and clan are embodied. In religious, jural, 593
and political matters—all of which are closely interconnected—Tale
women have the status of minors. This exclusion is most stringent in 562
the case of the Earth cult and the cult of the lineage *bɔɣar*. But the
segregation is not so rigid as to keep women in entire ignorance of or
wholly disinterested in these male monopolies. Their welfare depends
upon the propitious outcome of these activities as much as that of their
menfolk. They see, hear, and discuss among themselves and with their
menfolk ritual affairs and jural actions that concern their husbands'
lineages of which, indeed, wives and children often form the main
subject. They grind the flour, brew the beer, and witness the prepara-
tions for esoteric religious rites. They see the public and semi-public
phases of big religious ceremonies and overhear the endless consultations
and discussions between the men which these ceremonies always produce. 593

A wife, therefore, can be in sympathy with the interests and can respect
the values that rule the actions of her husband and her sons as members 578
of their agnatic descent group, while being herself excluded from an 787
effective public role in relation to them. But a cleavage remains. Thus
in a conflict between her husband's clan and her father's clan she might
very well take the side of the latter, not openly, it is true, but covertly.
How strongly the natives feel this was shown at the divination ceremony
following the death of Siiyɛlib of Tɔŋ-Seug. This divination was so
cryptic and involved that I could make no sense of it. Fortunately I was
able to get an explanation from one of my most trustworthy informants,
a close agnate of the dead man. Siiyɛlib's death, it appeared, was a
mystical retribution for a grave sin he had committed many years before.
He had been one of the instigators of the white man's attack on the Hill
Talis, and was an accessory, therefore, to the slaughter of many men.
Now there were several Talis present at the funeral—kinsmen, affines,
and, last but not least, wives of the dead man and his close agnates. If
Siiyɛlib's sin were publicly brought out in the divination it would stir
up all their hostile feelings. They would feel resentful towards Siiyɛlib's
surviving agnates on account of his complicity in the destruction of their
fathers and grandfathers. And this would produce strife between the
men of Seug and their Talis wives, their Talis cognates, and their Talis
affines.

The social and psychological cleavage which underlies all the rela- 593
tions of husband and wife is the structural kernel around which the 578

593 578 basic dichotomy of *dug* and *yir* crystallizes. The comradeship which grows up gradually between husband and wife with the lapse of time is the obverse, paradoxical as it may seem, of a process of gradual emancipation of the wife. As her children grow up, the centre of gravity of her life shifts more and more to them and away from her husband. If she has a grown-up son, her interests and emotions become centred more and more on him and his family by marriage. They constitute her *dug*, in which she is secure, honoured, and titularly, if not effectively, supreme. It is her son and grandson who will honour her spirit and commemorate her in worship after her death. Her son has become the effective breadwinner, and she looks to him for sustenance. If a young woman loses her husband, her grief is aggravated because she realizes that she has lost the head and pivot of her young family and must face uprooting and readjustment to a new partner. An old woman mourns the death of her husband greatly, too, but her grief is mitigated, if she has a son, by her feeling of security and of fulfilment. 888 The death of an adult son, especially an only son, is an irreparable tragedy to her.

593 Thus it happens that a woman who has been twice married often lives, in her old age, with the oldest son of her first marriage, rather than with her husband. This was the case with Tiezien's old wife, Naaho; and the reason Tiezien and Naaho's son, Nyaaŋzum, gave for this brings out a point of the first importance. Laughing, they said, 'She is no use any longer as a wife, she can't cook; and she has no vulva now (*u le ka pɛn yaha*)—that is, her reproductive powers are finished. And they laid special stress on the last point.

A woman attains her fullest freedom in the family when she ceases to have sexual value, that is, from the native point of view, when she ceases to be reproductive.

The Sexual Relationship in Marriage

831 836 The sexual relationship is the corner-stone of Tale marriage. At first sight this is puzzling to the observer, for the Tallensi have a thoroughly matter-of-fact attitude about sex. They regard sex as a normal and natural appetite. Any aspect of the generative functions can be discussed without circumlocution in the presence of men, women, or children. A young woman, or a girl, may show signs of shyness or coyness, but no one ever shows any real embarrassment. Bawdy or salacious talk about sex is common amongst men; very rarely does it verge on the obscene. The Tallensi take it for granted that children will indulge in sexual play, and attach no value to prenuptial chastity. In the ritual of the Arrow Medicine (*Peentee*) for protection in war, the services of a virgin boy and virgin girl are required. These children are bound to the medicine by a taboo of chastity in early childhood; but they are released as soon as they approach puberty; for by that time, the natives say, they cannot be expected to resist sexual temptation. Tallensi say

that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since 831
the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriageable girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. 836
Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love 831
affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members
of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not con- 835
sidered to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan 836
does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them. This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply contrasted with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction, characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the 581
same thing (*Pɛn nyɛbəg ni pɔɣadir, bɑ ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 831
'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is fundamental as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider 581
first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By 593
marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as [576]
a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth. She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

581 593 which cannot be done without the assistance of women. He can command other services from her. For instance, nowadays he can send her to buy grain for him in distant markets and sell it for him in the home market; and he can ask for many little services that make life more comfortable for him. A man has a right to these services; but it is a right limited by the principle of reciprocity.[1] In return a man is bound to protect and care for his wife, in particular to provide her with a home, with food, and with curative treatment if she is ill.

There is an obvious material basis for the economic reciprocity of 593 592 husband and wife. Primarily it is a function of the system of economic co-operation, by means of which the household satisfies its material wants. The head of the family owns the land and the livestock from which all draw their sustenance. The men do the heavy work of farming and care for the livestock. The women perform the tasks already mentioned. Within this subsistence unit the rule of reciprocity of economic rights and duties governs the economic relations of parent and child, of brother and brother, as well as those of husband and wife. For it is an application of the wider principle that all those who pool their labour in the common task of providing food and shelter for the household are entitled, severally, to a just share in the product of their common labour.

The authority of husband over wife in the matter of economic duties 593 421 and services is tempered, also, by a principle that really follows as a logical corollary upon the principle just stated. The products of individual industry and enterprise belong to the individual, subject to the nominal over-right of anyone who has authority over him or her, in particular, of the head of the family. The rule applies to all property relations between the members of the family. Thus, as soon as a wife acquires a *dug* of her own she begins to have a certain degree of economic autonomy, and this increases with the passage of time, as her children become more and more able to do without her regular care. She has her own vegetable plot allocated to her by her husband. She often has a ground-nut plot of her own, which she cultivates herself. She has her small private store of grain, obtained by gift from her father or brothers or other kinsmen. Her vegetables, her ground-nuts, and her grain do not go into the pool of family resources. They do, however, serve to supplement these resources; for it is a woman's duty to provide the vegetable food, and it would be unthinkable for her not to use other supplies she may possess to feed her children and her husband in time of scarcity. But if her private supplies are not required for this purpose she can dispose of them as she pleases. She can exchange them for money or goods, or use them to give hospitality to her own kin or guests. The same rule holds for such things as shea fruit and shea butter, which [437] it is a woman's duty to provide for the household. Thus, it is common for women to barter surplus shea nuts for household utensils, and these are entirely their own property.

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[1] Cf. p. 213 below.

are entirely their own property. A woman owns the sleeping-mats she makes. A potteress is in the same position as a blacksmith or leather-worker. She keeps the money or natural products for which she exchanges her pots. Nowadays many women who live near a market carry on a regular or intermittent petty trade in cooked food. Sometimes, borrowing the small capital (two or three shillings is sufficient) with which to start, they keep the profits of their trade. It is not uncommon for women to own livestock, mainly poultry but often sheep and goats, and occasionally a cow. They may be obtained by gift or purchase, in the case of small stock, or by exchanging the natural increase of small stock for more valuable stock. A woman's sheep, goat, or cow will be herded with the family livestock, but her 'ownership' (*soləm*, from *so*, to own) remains secure. 593 421 [426]

A woman's clothing, and her household utensils, most of which she provides for herself, belong to her solely. They are distributed, on her death, to her daughters, daughters-in-law, and sisters. Any money or livestock she may possess passes to her sons on her death, these being what might be called consumers' capital goods, the appropriate owners of which are men. They remain, therefore, in her *dug*, and do not accrete to the patrimonial property of her husband's effective minimal lineage. But it is an accepted principle that her husband has an over-right to them in her lifetime. For, as the natives put it, 'How can a man own his wife and not own the products of her labour?' 768 422 593

There is a quibble in this statement, the concept 'own' being used first in the sense of 'to have authority over', and secondly to mean 'having full rights of disposal over'—rights *in personam* being equated with rights *in rem*, to speak in lawyer's language.[1] And the Tallensi are not blind to this. Theoretically a man is entitled to utilize his wife's property as he wishes. In practice, he would not dare to do so without her consent, and the transaction is looked upon as a loan (*samər*). True, like all loans within the domestic family, it is not subject to book-keeping. But just as the woman feels morally bound to put her possessions at her husband's disposal if he is in difficulties, so her husband feels in honour bound to repay her in time, and generously, if he has any self-respect. Similarly, if a woman contracts a debt without her husband's knowledge and explicit permission he cannot be held liable. But no 'man of sense' would publicly repudiate his wife's debt. He reserves his reproaches for the privacy of the home. Significantly, a man does not, as a rule, settle his wife's debt. He will try to temporize with the creditor—an art in which the Tallensi are past masters—until his wife succeeds in finding the wherewithal to satisfy him. Or, if the husband cannot avoid paying the debt, he considers this as an advance 593 426

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[1] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession', *Iowa Law Review*, xx. 2, Jan. 1935, for an illuminating discussion of the anthropological relevance of these legal concepts.

593 426 which, it is tacitly understood, his wife will one day make good. Often such debts between spouses are straightened out by mutual borrowings, tacitly understood to cancel one another. Very often, however, a man has to cajole his wife with definite promises to repay before she will lend him her property. But the natives are emphatic about one point: that all such transactions belong to the give and take of marital co-operation and solidarity. It is one of the ways in which a woman stands by her husband and a man by his wife.

The Husband's Authority over his Wife

593 578 As might well be expected, these rights and duties of spouse to spouse do not rest on anything in the nature of a formal compact. There is no jural machinery or sanction by means of which a husband or wife can be compelled to perform his or her duties to his or her partner. A man can, and sometimes does, chastise his wife for incorrigible laziness, disobedience, or a misdemeanour detrimental to the unity of the family. He does it usually in a fit of anger or exasperation, as one would strike a child, and not as a deliberate punishment. For though Tallensi think that such disciplinary measures are right and necessary sometimes (women being kittle cattle, who will not always listen to reason), they consider them to be a regrettable and undignified necessity not entirely in keeping with the relationship of marriage, and at bottom repugnant to a self-respecting man. That is why when a quarrel between husband and wife ends in blows, neighbours hearing the commotion rush in to separate the pair and calm the enraged husband. 'I often scold my wives', said a Tale friend to me, after a heated argument with one of them, 'but I have never, as I sit here, lifted a hand to them. How could I thrash my wife, seeing that she gave up her father and her mother to come and marry me?' To beat a wife, in short, shows a poor appreciation of her.

Women admit the right of a man to strike his wife, and they see it as a feature of the authority over her conferred on him by marriage. But in fact, cases of wife-beating are far from common. Judging by the cases I have heard of, they are least likely to occur at the two extremes of the marriage cycle. A young man fears that he may lose his wife if he beats her; an older man, as the statement quoted above shows, with a wife of long standing, feels that it is incompatible with their mutual trust and comradeship.

593 627 A woman will not, as a rule, bear a grudge for blows struck under provocation. But if she is excessively, or, in her opinion, unjustifiably thrashed, she will run away from her husband. She may go off with another man; or she may return to her father or brother, who, if he is a self-respecting man, will take her part and refuse to give her up until her husband apologizes and promises better behaviour in future. In any case, it is a troublesome affair for the husband. It is worth noting, also, that in her conjugal family only a woman's husband has the right

to strike her. Her parents-in-law, for instance, despite their authority over her, would not do so. If anything, they would try to restrain their son from beating her. Only her husband has that combination of authority and intimacy in relation to her which permits the use of physical force upon her. 593 627 [606]

But flight is not the only weapon a woman has in order to maintain her rights and privileges in her conjugal family. Once she is fairly free from the leading strings of her mother-in-law, she is the mistress of her time and energies. It is an accepted axiom of married life, which no man questions, that a wife is free to dispose of her time as she pleases, provided she does not hamper the essential economic activities of the household, or neglect her children, or remain away from home for unwarrantable periods or at times—e.g. during the Great Festivals—when all the members of the family should be together. The routine of domestic tasks, over which men have no control, is a strong line of defence against the interference of men in their wives' disposal of their time. But differences of opinion on this matter are a common cause of squabbles between husband and wife. A young woman dresses up to go to market; her husband objects, saying that other men will be paying court to her there, or that the children will be left hungry all day; she insists; and a heated argument ensues. Nine times out of ten the woman has her way. Occasionally the husband succeeds in stopping her, by persuasion or by force. It is only at sowing or harvest time, or when, for instance, preparations for an important ceremony are in hand, that a man has full control over his wife's time. 593 461 578

At all times a wife's freedom to arrange her work and her leisure as best suits her may subject her husband to inconvenience. If, at the end of the day, she is too preoccupied or too tired to cook, he can but grumble and go hungry. And if he annoys her she can make a point of being too busy to attend to some want of his or too tired to cook the evening meal. This, men say frankly, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of keeping on good terms with one's wife.

Tallensi regard these utilitarian rights and duties, services and attentions of husband and wife towards each other as a most important feature of marriage. But it is clear that they do not constitute the unique relationship that distinguishes the marriage tie from other social ties of the Tallensi. Thus a woman performs much the same utilitarian services as daughter in her natal home, and as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law in her conjugal home. They are but a part of the whole configuration of co-operation, mutual help, reciprocal services, etiquette, and mutual tolerance that keep the wheels of family life running smoothly. And it is clear, also, that they imply the existence of common interests that create a sense of mutual moral obligation. 593 581

This underlying bond of mutual moral obligation is the basic sanction of reciprocity and co-operation in the domestic family. In the case of

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
•581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔyat
[578] of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔyat tried to lay hands
on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
581 spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripeta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripeta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual
relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries.
She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by
her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
[837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife,
whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

[837]

succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife, and may 581
sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery.
Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that 585
of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was 587
pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried, but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology) of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy, he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's marriage with the woman had never been consummated.

It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with 581
her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by
her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this 585
line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how Baŋyɛlib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning, as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She was helpless, and Baŋyɛlib, who had purposely stayed in the room, 'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree.
Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time [842]
in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to procreation rather than to gratification.

Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, 595
she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the
support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must 578
divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say, somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the jealousy (*ŋuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for him in revenge.

-586 684 We have previously said that the Tallensi have no institutionalized procedure for divorce. This needs to be qualified. A very drastic procedure to which we have referred in our earlier book[1] exists by which a man can get rid of an objectionable wife. It is usually described as 'blowing (on)' (*pɛbh*) a wife, for it consists in the man's blowing ashes over his wife. By this action he expels her utterly from his house with all her brood. He casts her off and disowns her children; and he forfeits the bride-price. Everybody knows of this custom, and it is held to be [613] entirely licit for any husband. The origins of attached lineages[2] are often attributed to clan sisters who were allegedly divorced in this way. But it is impossible to get a record of a single case that has occurred within the last forty or fifty years, or, indeed, within living memory. Though natives say that a man could, if he wished, 'blow on' his wife if she angered him continuously, or if she were dissolute, or were objectionable in any way, in fact her delinquencies would have to be of so grave a nature as to imperil his life and the welfare of the family for a man to cut through his marriage ties irrevocably at such enormous sacrifice.

The example of such a misdemeanour always quoted is concerned with their sexual relations. It is a taboo (*kihər*) for a woman to deny her husband's sexual rights over her. She would do so, by implication, if she were to kick him over in the act of coitus.[3] This is a sin of such gravity that the marriage must be dissolved at once or else disaster will come upon both partners. For it means that husband and wife have fallen out so badly with each other that they have come into sexual conflict.

This is implied, also, in a more symbolic way, if the disagreements between husband and wife come to a head in her attacking him with her stirring-stick (*vugər*) and his retaliating with his bow (*tap*). The stirring-stick, an indispensable implement for cooking porridge, is one of the emblems of femininity, and the bow, the principal weapon of the chase and of warfare, the chief emblem of manhood in Tale custom and ritual. Men are by convention excluded from the kitchen; women, both by convention and by ritual injunction, from the chase, and from contact with its magical and mechanical appurtenances when they are being [834] used for hunting. One of the very rare occasions on which sexual continence is ritually enjoined on men is when they are poisoning arrows for hunting or war. Thus, a fight between husband and wife with bow and stirring-stick is a fight in terms of their opposed sexuality, a repudiation of the fundamental bond of marriage. It is a sin, and the couple will die if they do not immediately sever their marital relationship completely.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] Ibid., p. 51.

[833] [3] The point lies in the postures adopted by the Tallensi in coitus. As in many other primitive cultures, the woman lies on her back, and the man squats on his haunches between her thighs. She can, therefore, easily push him over with a kick, the natives say.

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with 586
genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his 684
wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the 158
sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against 827
the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the 686
others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have 578
coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his
rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if 833
she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If 684
any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman 581
marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and
even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its 613
members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman 618
trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

613 581 587 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife, implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however, not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

581 837 593 The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Unlike the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extramarital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non*. Tallensi express contempt for the Gorisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeembii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbobis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbobis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbobis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

His family had had a windfall of two daughters in half a generation and that meant eight cows. 848

Yet the Tallensi believe emphatically that a girl can only realize her womanhood to the full by bearing legitimate children. For this she must marry; and marriage means having only one husband at a time. It is as her husband's sexual mate that a woman is most sharply separated from her natal family; it is her husband's exclusive rights over her reproductive powers that definitively makes them husband and wife. 848 581

This proposition applies also to the husband's field of social relations. Within the region of family and kinship ties where generation differences are socially recognized, sexual relations may occur only between married partners. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman of the family who is not his wife is incest. The Tallensi have no name for this act. They say, simply, 'It is tabooed (*de kihme*)'; and they look on it with unanimous revulsion. Translating their ideas into our cultural idiom, we should say that they regard any form of incest as an unnatural act.[1] 835

Incest, to a Taleŋa, includes sex relations with a sister or daughter, that is, a woman of one's own lineage: with a mother, the wife of one's own or classificatory father; with a brother's wife; and with a son's wife. Such acts of misconduct are considered incestuous if they occur within the limits of the expanded family—that is, the family group based on the inner lineage (the narrow *dug*). The natives stress this, putting the emphasis on the fact that the narrow *dug* is the smallest lineage segment with a common ancestor shrine (*bɔyar*). Such acts are, also, often regarded as incestuous within the limits of the family cluster based on the medial lineage, particularly if this lineage has a narrow span.

Incest occurs occasionally in every Tale community. Such an act soon leaks out, and is remembered with contempt for many years. I have discussed such cases with many informants, and was able, also, to witness the public reaction to two cases that occurred during my field work.[2]

There are no penal sanctions against any form of incest, nor are the culprits believed to be subject to automatic mystical retribution. Incest is so incompatible with the pattern of co-operation and the structure of disciplinary and affective relations in the family that this itself serves to banish it from the field of family relationships. Though incest taboos are never deliberately inculcated, the habits, attitudes, and organization of family life (to put the native expressions into sociological language) create internal barriers against incest, in the normal person. This applies particularly to incest with a sister or daughter, whether it is a single impulsive act or a more lasting liaison. Tallensi explain that a normal 835 577

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[1] A preliminary analysis of this subject was given in my paper, 'Kinship, Incest, and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King: Essays presented to R. R. Marett*, 1936.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

684 577 man does not even have sexual desire for a sister or a daughter. This is the standard, conscious, sexual attitude to a sister and it is in keeping with the conscious attitude about incest with a sister or daughter. Such an act is spoken of as tabooed (*kih*), but it is neither a crime nor a sin. It is simply despicable conduct that the culprits ought to be ashamed of as unworthy of grown persons. Even children talk of copulation with a sibling as something beneath contempt, though, in fact, it is common knowledge that up to the age of about 8 or 9 boys often try to have sexual intercourse with a small girl playmate in their play and for the most part playmates are close lineage siblings. Adults reprove the children if they discover them in this kind of play, but dismiss it as due to childish irresponsibility.[1] This, indeed, is the essence of the general attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter. It is disreputable, because it does not conform to the accepted standards of responsible adult conduct. Only in the case of incest with a full (*soog*) sister is there a feeling of horror. It is felt to be unlucky in a vague way. She is the person of the opposite sex with whom a man is most fully identified. What is more important, she perpetuates their mother's uterine line and therefore stands for the indestructibility of the unique bond between mother and child. Sexual intercourse with her would be almost like incest with one's own mother; and this feeling is extended to distant female uterine kin (*saarət*) as well.

Incest with a mother, a brother's wife, or a daughter-in-law is in a different class of reprehensible acts. It is a taboo for a man even to sit on the sleeping-mat of a woman related to him in any of these ways (and thus, we may presume, symbolically betraying a wish to seduce her). To have intercourse with her is a very grievous sin. It is utterly repugnant to Tale morality.

684 577 539 Incest with one's own mother the natives regard as a thing of such monstrous iniquity that it is ridiculous to conceive of anyone who is not mentally deranged committing it. Incest with a father's wife, other than one's own mother, or a brother's or son's wife is almost as heinous a sin and is regarded with little less horror; but it is known to happen sometimes. In one of the cases that occurred during my stay in Taleland, a man raped his father's elderly wife (his own dead mother's co-wife), whom he called '*ma-pit* (younger mother)'; in the other, a notoriously dissolute young man seduced his father's brother's wife, whom he would [626 533] also describe as '*ma-pit*'. Both were publicly derided in the songs sung during the dances of the Great Festivals. One of the songs about the second man went as follows:

Badiemaal (his name) you who rape vaginas, Oh!
Bakyɛlbanɔya (the woman) is a slut.
Zimbil-Badiemaal is a dog.

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[1] Cf. my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, Memorandum XVII, International African Institute, 1938.

684 Badiemaal, is this how you behave?
Zimbil-Badiemaal will never inherit the (lineage) *bɔɣar*;
577 Why did you copulate with Naaho's wife?

539 *Badiemaal, pɛnzieruŋ, woo-oo!*
Bakyɛlbanɔya a bumbarɔŋ.
Zimbil-Badiemaal, u a baa.

Badiemaal, i ɛŋa ŋwala?
Zimbil-Badiemaal ku vaa bɔɣar;
I nyɛb Naah pɔɣa bo?

It was widely held that both of these men would take the first opportunity to get out of Taleland.

The Tallensi explain that such acts are so severely reprobated because
613 they cause deep and irreconcilable 'enmity' (*diuŋ*) between father and
684 son, brother and brother, and this is a mortal blow to the solidarity of the family and the lineage. They arouse the wrath of the ancestors.
577 If the injured father, brother, or son does not bring the matter up before the elders of his medial lineage or maximal lineage, he will be struck down by the ancestors. If he does, he must be ritually reconciled with his offending son, brother, or father. But in spite of such a formal reconciliation, 'the enmity remains within'. The sinner will never be able to offer sacrifice to his injured father with a clear conscience, or an injured son to the spirit of his father who so grievously sinned and offended him; nor may two brothers between whom this bitter inner discord prevails sacrifice together. Therefore, as the scornful song about Badiemaal declares, the sinner cannot, with a clear conscience, inherit the shrines common to the lineage; and since a man's sins spiritually taint his children and children's children, the sinner's whole line of agnatic descendants will be virtually outcast from the moral unity of the lineage, even if they are allowed to participate formally in the cult of its ancestors. Again, a man who has seduced his brother's wife cannot inherit her after his death, for he has broken the bond of brotherhood. The incestuous sexual act is sinful because it disrupts the moral relationship of father and son or brother and brother, and thus undermines the solidarity of the lineage at its core. There is a magical deterrent as well, which reflects this. If two men have sexual relations with the same woman and one of them gets ill, the other may not see him; it would cause him to sink and perhaps die; and to shun a sick parent, sibling, or child is the very negation of family solidarity.

593 A man's 'fathers', 'brothers', and 'sons' within the limits of the nuclear lineage are the men who have the most direct interest in his wife, espe-
613 cially in her reproductive powers. They will all be concerned in, and one or other of them will be responsible for, the payment of her bride-price. His children mean almost as much to them as to him. They

PLATE 6

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a. Kinship *versus* affinal relationships: sons-in-law, sitting in the customary posture of respect, on the right, come to offer condolences to their father-in-law's family and lineage on the occasion of a death

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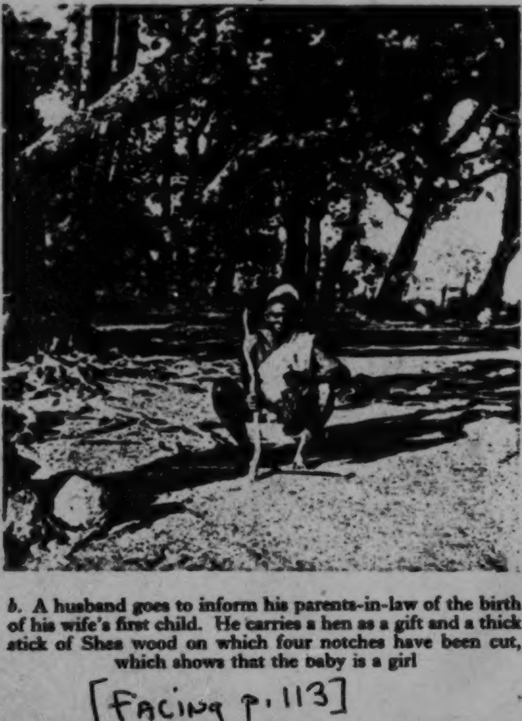

b. A husband goes to inform his parents-in-law of the birth of his wife's first child. He carries a hen as a gift and a thick stick of Shea wood on which four notches have been cut, which shows that the baby is a girl

[Facing p. 113]

PLATE 5

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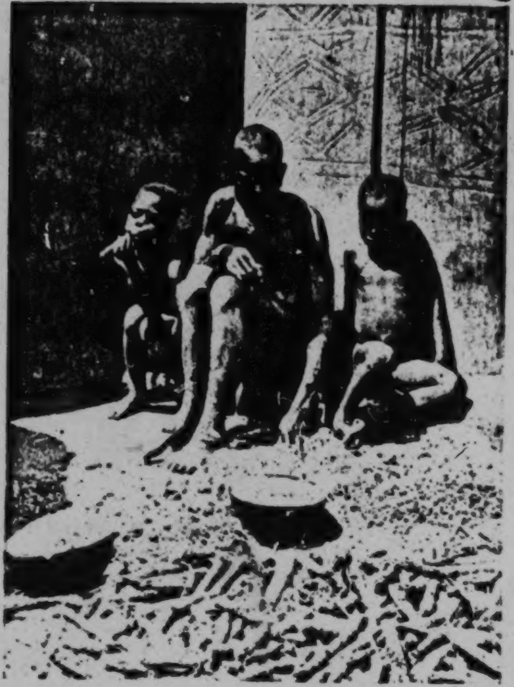

a. A senior wife (*nɔyakpeem*) in her *dɩndɔŋo* sorting newly harvested millet. With her are one of her daughter's children and the small son of a co-wife

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b. Homeward bound from a visit to her father's house, where she has received a gift of some millet and other foodstuffs

[facing p.112]

593 613 [587] replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

613 835 577 We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kɔrih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

835 613 What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly

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[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the 835
inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some
doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous 613
or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a distant clan-sister (*pɔɣaɣabələg*) do not clash with the habits, morals, and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships. Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen. Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that 584
they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the latter's settlement.

A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry 835
her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so
familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or 613
daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan
seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge 837
that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own. The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation. There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives to stay long at their parents' homes.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

837 684 613 577 By contrast, sex relations with the wife of a member of the same lineage or clan outside the range of the inner lineage is a wrong. It is not incest, but the most reprehensible form of adultery. It does not bear the same moral stigma as the corresponding form of incest, nor does it carry religious penalties for the adulterer. Unless the two men concerned have personal cognatic ties, which makes the offence more serious, they are related to each other only as members of related lineage segments. Their personal identity is submerged in the corporate unit, and the offence is interpreted as an injury to the husband's segment by the culprit's segment of a like order. What is a moral and ritual offence in the inner lineage shades over into a misdemeanour or jural injury in the wider lineage. The shift of evaluation is correlated with a change in the intensity though not in the kind of interests involved, and a widening of the span of the unit. The wider lineage has similar but less direct interests in a man's wife than his inner lineage; its unity and solidarity are of the same order as, but less intimate than that of the inner lineage. It has a jural and political unity and solidarity, primarily associated with formal sentiments of amity and mutual loyalty; whereas the cohesion of the inner lineage (based as it is on common economic interests, co-operation and consultation in the everyday affairs of life, contiguous residence, and minimal internal segmentation for jural purposes such as marriage arrangements with other lineages) is primarily moral, and associated with strong emotions of person-to-person amity and loyalty. Thus, beyond the range of the inner lineage, when the customary ritual reconciliation between the segment of the adulterer and the segment of the husband has been completed, the matter is over and done with so far as the public relations of the parties are concerned. No material compensation is made to the husband, and, in the absence of a judicial system, there is no one who can inflict a penalty on the adulterer. The wronged husband may harbour resentment against his wife's seducer; the magical danger inherent in their seeing each other if either is ill remains as a barrier between them; but the corporate unity of the lineage and clan to which they both belong is restored.

[626] Still, adultery with the wife of a clansman or of a member of a linked maximal lineage[1] (to which the same rules apply) creates dissension in the corporate body. It violates the principle that all men of the clan have a formally equal interest in the wife of a fellow member. It leaves behind rankling animosity that hinders united action. For these reasons it usually arouses an outburst of anger against the wrongdoer. Public opinion is a strong sanction against it therefore. Though cases are far from common, they occur more frequently than the corresponding form of incest. I was able to obtain details of a few cases that occurred immediately before and during my stay in Taleland. In one case the husband and his brothers were so outraged that they fell upon the offender in his

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to 837
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence 577
compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrəg samər*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*dayət*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔɣambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔɣar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her 765
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *kaa gabɛ*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies
581 are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of
834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his
[768] funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

593 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the
562 critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's
602 parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in
562 a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to
606 one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another 602 regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires, 606 and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); [572] and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law.

On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even 602 conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical to *dɔyam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never obliterates this.

A man must show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their 606 representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits 264 down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pɔt nɔba*), 574 bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual functionary, or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they 576 in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement.

Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well- 602 defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that 606 a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his

602 606 parents-in-law, particularly in the early years while he is not quite sure of his wife. If his father-in-law sends for him to help with the hoeing, or with house building, or his mother-in-law requests him to help thatch her rooms, he must respond with alacrity and bring as large a party of his clansmen to assist him as he can manage. In this way a man shows honour to, ingratiates himself with (*giem*), his affines; for these services are not enforceable obligations, and usually cease to be asked for after the marriage has become stabilized. They bear no relation to the bride-price, and are lavishly recompensed. A visiting work-party brought by a son-in-law expects generous hospitality, and the father-in-law, if he is a reputable man, would feel that he had lost dignity if he did not feed and entertain the work-party well. But though these services cannot be enforced, no man would risk offending his parents-in-law by refusing them. These material demonstrations of respect, gratitude, and goodwill are essential for the smooth working of a relationship artificially established by a jural compact. Parents-in-law praise and like an obliging son-in-law, even if he has not paid the bride-price, the natives say.

602 607 This is one side of the affinal relationship. It also has an aspect of friendliness and familiarity, as we have seen, which comes out most conspicuously in a man's relations with his siblings-in-law. A man has a joking relationship with his siblings-in-law similar to that of his wife with his sisters and distant clansmen. It goes so far that a man may sleep with an unmarried sister-in-law (*dakiipɔk*) who is visiting his house, and is therefore in that situation identified with his wife. A man's siblings-in-law belong to the familiar and friendly generation of his wife. They are identified with her. But they also belong to the potentially hostile lineage of her father, whose heir a brother-in-law will one day be. In very many ways a man's siblings-in-law are sympathetically drawn to him; but their rights in relation to his wife may pit them against him. The convention of joking serves to reconcile these two potentially discordant elements of their relationship. But when the marriage has lasted many years, and the possibility of a conflict of rights disappears, the element of friendliness in the relationship can assert itself without prejudice to its jural aspect. Thus, conventional teasing usually drops out of the intercourse of siblings-in-law of long standing.

606 764 431 The formal distance between affines is further shown in the duties and obligations to which a man is liable on the death of a son-in-law or parent-in-law. On the death of a parent-in-law a man is obliged to attend the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. He should come escorted by a large party of clansmen and their wives, and the mourning party should wear their finest clothes and be led by drummers and musicians. A son-in-law should provide the gravestone for a parent-in-law. He should distribute money freely to the grave-diggers, to the drummers, singers, and musicians, whose raucous noise stimulates the crowd

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women 764
tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of 431
the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to
the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These [576]
duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition,
there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand [554]
opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law.

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of 606
prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small 754
contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution
is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This 431
consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a 574
large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samər*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells [436]
(*laɣapieləb*, pl. *laɣapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *laɣah*, pl. *ligəri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown.

606 754 431 574 fully repaid in the bestowal of his daughter as a wife. A similar sanction to that mentioned in the case of a son-in-law operates here.

764 602 If one watches the behaviour of men at the funeral of an affine, one can see that they feel themselves to be under strong constraint. They and their clansmen accompanying them keep together, and when there are no ceremonies or festivities in progress they stay apart from the rest of the crowd. In former days a mourning party of affines always carried arms, and it is said that fighting sometimes broke out at funerals. When Tallensi comment on the ceremonial obligations of affines, they emphasize the feeling of constraint associated with them. One is impressed by the contrast between this attitude and the attitudes associated with the ceremonial obligations that follow on the death of a clansman or cognatic kinsman. It is as if the native feels his ceremonial obligations to an affine to be forced on him from outside, without his choice, whereas he seems to accept his duties and obligations on the death of a kinsman willingly and from within.

602 431 It is evident that reciprocity between affines is different in character from that which prevails between people who have a bond of common interests, such as members of the same family. There is not the same free give and take. When gifts or services pass between affines, whether they are prescribed or ostensibly spontaneous, there is a deliberate effort to counterbalance them. A sort of book-keeping occurs. This appears most clearly in the jural formalities of marriage, but it comes out quite plainly in the apparently voluntary services and reciprocal hospitality of son-in-law and father-in-law. The side that benefits feels impelled to make an equivalent return in order not to give the other party grounds for a grudge. And people who flout this convention not only upset their good relations with their affines and so provide pretexts for conflict with them, but also incur the censure of public opinion.

606 431 One incident will illustrate this. Banɔrəg asked his son-in-law, a member of an adjacent clan, to come and help him finish the hoeing of his home farm. The young man brought a couple of his clansmen and they worked with zeal from early morning till sunset. Then they went home, politely refusing Banɔrəg's invitation to come home with him for the evening meal. Had they come as a formal hoeing party they would have been entitled to a good meal as a reward at the end of the day. But they had come informally, and their own homes were near enough for them to get back in time for the evening meal. They spoke of their day's work for Banɔrəg as a simple act of courtesy to a father-in-law. As we watched them saunter homewards, Banɔrəg said to me 'Sons-in-law are shy (*deenam mmar vi*). They can't come home with you (their father-in-law) and eat with your children (as if they were your kin)'. But next day Banɔrəg sent a large basket of millet flour to his daughter with orders to cook a generous meal for her husband and his friends. He would feel ashamed, he told me, if he did not 'thank' the young men

thus; and besides, people would say he was mean. This attitude does 606 not occur with the true reciprocity that prevails in the domestic family 431 or between near kin.

Sex in the Relationship of Affines

While, therefore, the relations of affines assume the existence of a 602 formal distance between them, they are not encumbered by avoidances or other social barriers that make friendliness impossible or ordinary social intercourse a burden. There is amity as well as opposition in their relationship. In one matter only is there a rigorous barrier between affines. In respect to sex and procreation they are strictly separate. The emphasis is on the deed, not the word; there is no prohibition against talking to or in the presence of an affine about sexual matters.

One aspect of this ban on bringing sex into the relationship of affinity 602 is the native attitude about a sexual offence against an affine. For a man 577 to seduce the wife of an affine is almost as heinous a transgression as intercourse with the wife of a man of one's own expanded family, though it is not regarded as incest; and the offence is nearly as bad if the culprit is a close agnate of the woman's husband's affine or the woman the wife of a close agnate of the affine concerned. It is a grave offence, also, if a man or his close agnate abducts the wife of an affine or his close agnate. There are no explicit mystical sanctions against either of these wrongs, but Tallensi describe them as 'a thing of enormous evil (*yɛlbiog tenta'ar*)' bound to bring ill fortune on the wrongdoer, and in any case involving such serious social consequences that no man in his senses would descend to them. They think of the possible culprit as being the son-in-law, and they say that the father-in-law would take away his daughter and the bride-price be forfeited. Affines are bound to fall out with one another now and then. Usually apologies proffered through an intermediary lead to their making it up again. But in the case of a sexual [783] offence against a father-in-law, it is quite impossible to beg or receive pardon. For it is a sin; it 'pollutes the room (*sayam dug*)' of the injured man.[1]

'Pollution of the room' in this sense is very rare among the Tallensi. But it is not unknown for a man to abduct the wife of the father- or brother-in-law (true or classificatory) of one of his own clansmen. The elders of both the abductor's medial lineage and the wronged husband's medial lineage are then extremely indignant. The latter demand the return of 'their' wife; and in all the cases I have come across the former see to it at once that the woman is sent back to her husband.

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[1] Cf. p. 28 above. *Sayam dug* has the double sense of a mystical defilement of the sleeping-room—the inner sanctuary of family and of reproductive life—and of an irreparable infringement of lineage rights. If the offender is a distant clansman of the true son-in-law, a ritual reconciliation between the two lineages might be allowed after the defilement has been ritually removed.

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It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman, anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house. Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

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The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly within the limits of the medial lineage. [576] A man may not even meet his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

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An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

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Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They 584
expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations
with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about 574
as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are 834
more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to
flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach
of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors
seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep
in separate rooms.

These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry 574
season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the
rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which 834
a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every
day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was
told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated
case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it
came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned.
The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases
showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her 606
father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of
the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we 783
have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous 844
position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens
so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution
can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as
we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood
(*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this
to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her
parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently
went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy
and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his 606
father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will 783
not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in
the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. 827
The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting
is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel
vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality
of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The
context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's
house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism
being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through
the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

835 626 Finally, the prohibition of sexual relations between father and daughter or brother and sister in the expanded family also links up with this complex. Tallensi say that if a man's daughter becomes pregnant before marriage he will hasten to marry her off as soon as possible, if she does not elope with a suitor of her own accord. A man once told me that people do this for fear that it might be said of them, 'Oh, so-and-so is not marrying his daughter off because he wants to keep her for a wife for himself'. I do not know if this statement accurately represents the way men feel the pressure of public opinion in cases of this sort; but it is an accurate indication of the feeling that a woman's procreative powers are out of place in her father's home and belong properly to her husband's home.

The Adjustment of Co-Wives to One Another

595 We have still to consider one of the main problems of adjustment that face a woman in her husband's family, her relations with her co-wives (*nentaa*, pl. *nentaas*). These include both her husband's other wives and his brothers' wives. A woman refers to a co-wife as 'younger (or older) sibling of the same sex (*pit* or *bier*)', and addresses her by her clan sobriquet, e.g. Namooga. A woman's children describe her co-wives as 'mother' (*ma*), with the suffix *pit* or *bier* according as she is junior or senior to their own mother, and address her as 'mother of such-and-such a clan', e.g. *ma Namooga*.

Women do not, as a rule, object to their husbands having other wives as well. Indeed, it often happens that a monogamist's wife presses him to marry again so that there should be someone to share the work of the household with her, or even takes the initiative in finding another wife for him. It is quite common for women to bring younger clan sisters, or a brother's daughter, a sister's daughter, or a daughter of a mother's brother's lineage, to live with them with a view to their eventually marrying their husbands or husbands' brothers. From such marriages spring cognatically related matri-segments of a lineage, with a special link through their progenitrices in addition to their agnatic ties.

Through this custom of fetching in (*pie na*) a kinswoman-wife (*poγa-soog*) one often finds women related by kinship married into the same joint family or the same expanded family. But this is not a preferential marriage. It is due simply to the inertia of kinship. A woman who wants to bring a girl into her husband's house usually does so because she has need of someone to help her with the care of an infant or because she is ill or elderly and has no daughter or daughter-in-law to relieve her of the heaviest domestic tasks. And she looks naturally to her kinsfolk, upon whom she has claims by right of birth, to provide her with a suitable girl. Again, though the Tallensi do not like two full or half-sisters to marry the same man or to marry into the same joint family, it is not a taboo. A man who particularly likes his son-in-law and his people

readily consents to another daughter's marrying into the same joint 595
family; and this cordiality is easily extended to more distant clansmen on both sides. A Tenzugu man who has a son-in-law at Zubiuŋ with whom his relations are cordial will be pleased to see another daughter marry this son-in-law or one of his close agnates; and if the son-in-law himself or a member of his medial lineage comes to seek the hand of a daughter of the father-in-law's medial lineage, the men of that lineage would be favourably disposed to the suitor.

Another factor favouring successive marriages with women of the same lineage or clan is the preference of the natives for wives from a nearby rather than a distant clan. A man looking for an additional wife tends to turn his eyes first to the same neighbouring settlements in which he formerly sought a wife, and men of the same lineage tend to seek wives in the same settlements, as we shall find.

When co-wives refer to one another as 'sisters' they are using a kinship term in a metaphorical sense to indicate their social equivalence— [601]
that is, their identity of role and status in their conjugal home and settlement. But if they are kin they speak of one another as 'sisters' in a deeper sense. They have a bond of mutual attachment that holds independently of their relations as wives of the same man or the same lineage. As 'sisters' in the kinship sense they help each other more regularly and more altruistically; they share such things as foodstuffs and firewood more readily; they mother each other's children with more devotion and with a greater feeling of common interest in them; they live together more harmoniously, in general, than unrelated co-wives. This is especially true of a woman and a co-wife whom she has 'fetched in' as the term *poɣasoog*, literally a *soog* sister wife (that is, a wife who is like a *soog* sister to another wife), suggests. The older woman watches over the younger almost as if she were a younger full sister or her own daughter.

Tallensi take it for granted that co-wives are apt to quarrel. 'Oh yes', 595
both men and women say with a laugh, if they are asked about it, 'co- 578
wives quarrel—but nevertheless they stay on.' The point is that quarrels between co-wives are taken as a matter of course and do not lead to a wife's desertion. These quarrels may be nothing more than the flaring up of frayed tempers; for among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, people who live so intimately together as the members of a family are prone to fall out over trifles. Or they may be real fights, beginning with taunts and insults and ending with blows. Neighbours, usually men of the husband's lineage, hearing the uproar, may rush in to separate the women, if the husband himself or other men of his family are not on the spot to do so. For there is no one among the women of a household with authority to discipline the others. The senior mistress of the home, whether she is the mother or the senior wife of the owner of the house, ranks above the rest of the women, but has no disciplinary authority over them.

595 578 According to the natives, quarrels between co-wives are often due to one or other of them having an intractable disposition. Men add that women lack self-control and are very prone to petty jealousy; they are apt to quarrel if they think they are being unfairly treated, if, for instance, one wife seems to receive more than a fair share of her husband's attention. But wh[illegible] actual cases of such quarrels are examined they are seen to be a[illegible]on of the tensions springing from the cleavages in the structure [illegible] domestic family. They are temporary disturbances of the balan[illegible]n the relatively autonomous matri-central *dug* and the incl[illegible]entral *yir*. That is why they occur so rarely between women [illegible] related by kinship or clanship, and who therefore think of their *dug*[illegible] as subdivisions of a single wider *dug*. Co-wives live in harmony as long as they act in the interests of the common *yir*; dissensions arise between them when they do not accept the paramountcy of the *yir*, and assert their relative autonomy in relation to one another. In the normal run of family life the interests of the common *yir* come first, for the sustenance of the family and the general welfare of all its members depend upon proper co-operation between them, resting on mutual loyalty and goodwill.

595 462 241 The women of the household, both those who are co-wives to one another, and those who are mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or mother and daughter to one another, usually work together harmoniously to perform their share of the productive labour of agriculture. They work under the direction of the head of the house, and the products of their labour accrue to the common food supply. This is a part of the co-operative economic organization of the household. Thus at sowing or harvest time one often sees a whole family working together in the fields. When a sowing party is at work one sees the men striding vigorously ahead, dibbling the holes with their long heavy dibbles cut from saplings, while the women follow behind, chattering and laughing amicably as they sow the grain. And when the harvest is in full swing, one sees similar cheerful family parties out on the field or homeward bound at dusk in Indian file, the men in front, perhaps carrying their pear-shaped wicker coops in which they have collected a brood of chickens that had been allowed to run in the fields during the day, the women sauntering close behind them, the heavy baskets of grain on their heads, and small boys and girls gambolling in the rear blowing [534] their whistles and shaking their rattles (*kiŋkaɣah*) of serrated calabash disks.

595 The independence of the *dug* comes out in the utilization of the food-supply. As the women have to supply the vegetables for cooking the relish which the natives regard as an indispensable accompaniment to their heavy porridge, each woman who has her own *dug* is entitled to a vegetable patch beside the wall of the homestead. Except for the senior woman of the house, who has a slightly larger vegetable patch

PLATE 7

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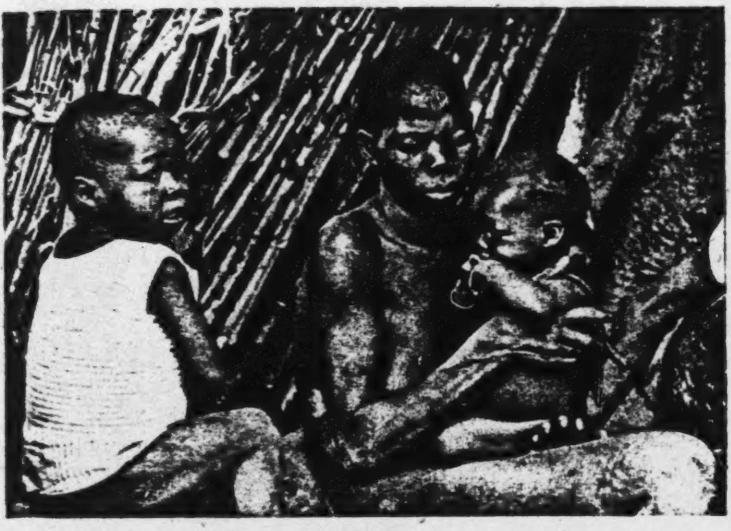

a. A senior wife takes care of her junior co-wives' infants while they are away at the water-hole

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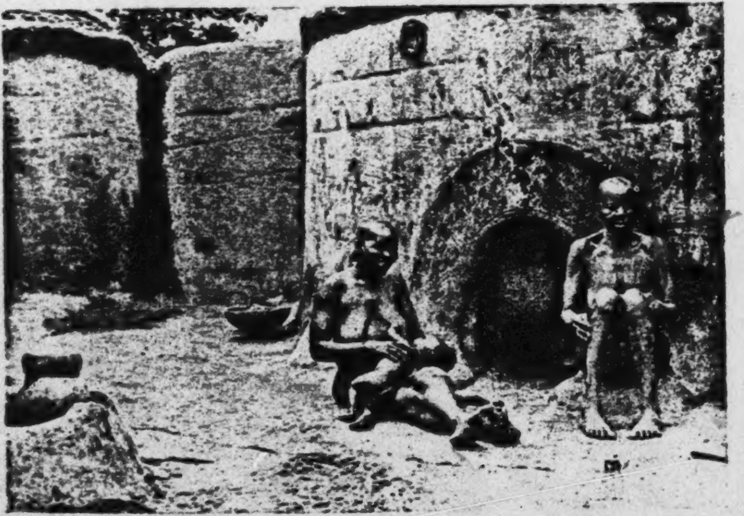

b. A pair of devoted co-wives. The younger woman (with her infant) is about 35, the older about 65, their husband over 70. The older woman has a son of about 45

[facing p. 128]

595 than the others, all the women must be allocated more or less equal plots for this purpose. Each woman, with the help of her daughters or a [222- daughter-in-law, collects and stores wild herbs and edible leaves, buys 263] condiments and seasonings like salt, pepper, and locust bean balls, sometimes with the proceeds of her own petty trading in the markets, and collects shea nuts for the preparation of shea butter, the most important source of fat and the most prized emollient in the native cuisine, for the use of her own *dug*. If a man gives a penny or twopence to one wife for the purchase of seasonings, he must, either immediately or on subsequent market days, give some money to his other wives for this purpose. If he obtains some meat, he must either distribute it amongst all his wives or give all of it to his senior wife to use or preserve for the benefit [846] of the whole family. Only a wife in childbed is entitled to have extra luxuries, which it is the duty of her husband to provide.

Though each woman cooks for herself with an eye to the feeding of 595 her own children and her husband, in the first place, co-wives are 25 obliged to share food prepared with grain from the common supply. In times of plenty, if all the wives of a man have cooked a meal, each woman dishes out a portion of porridge and the accompanying relish for her husband, a portion for herself and her child or children eating with her, and a smaller portion for each of her co-wives. The husband should taste all the dishes sent in to him by his wives, and should pass on to the older children who do not eat with their mothers the dishes he does not want for himself. In times of scarcity a man's wives may cook in rotation for the whole family. But if a woman has a private supply of grain, obtained by trade or from her own relatives, she is entitled to use it for feeding her own children and the husband only; she need not give anything to her co-wives or their children.

In the production and utilization of food-supplies, as this brief sketch 596 shows, the common interests of the *yir* are distinctly paramount. Co-wives co-operate most harmoniously, both among themselves and with the other women of the household, in this sphere of family life. In the organization of productive labour and of the domestic economy, and in the conventions regulating mutual help in this sphere, the dependence on one another of all the members of a household for their sustenance is constantly emphasized. But the relative autonomy of the *dug* is never wholly submerged. The women do not pool the products of their individual labour and enterprise. They do not pool their utensils, and family quarrels sometimes arise because one woman or one woman's child has borrowed and damaged a utensil belonging to another. They keep their firewood supplies, the accumulation of which is one of their most arduous tasks, jealously separate; and they do the same with vegetables and seasonings. There is sometimes friction between co-wives over the use of the grinding-room. But it is significant of the balance usually maintained between the centrifugal tendencies of the *dug* and the

PLATE 8

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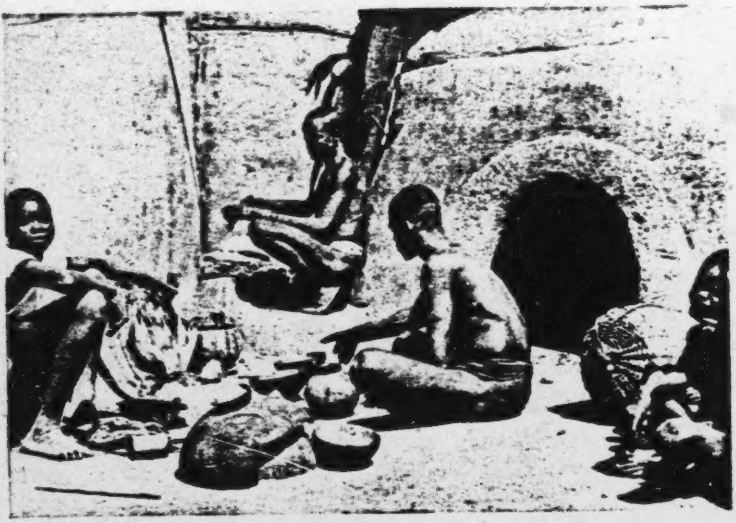

a. A domestic sacrifice of fowls, guinea-fowls, and beer. The head of the joint family is addressing the shrine, which occupies a recess in his senior wife's *Dug*

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b. Ɔmara and his four youngest daughters—each the daughter of a different wife—having a snack at mid-day

[facing p. 129]

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-operation and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the household. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 854 855 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir* is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family. A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty [292] of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children. This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing. Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 736 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

602 736 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things, we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest 736
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had
their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside
extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get
the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her children 602
from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for
the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to
co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives. 595
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost
anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who
resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite
common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's
child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between
co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out
of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave
carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife
of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and
therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the
women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past.
So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*)
and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations
of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most
of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or
death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association
between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft
brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the
male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been compelled 627
to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

595 627 178 578 paternal kin and more strongly by her uterine kin (*saarət*), insist on doing so. If she survived, she and her children and other *soog* kin would never forgive her accuser. There would be chronic friction in the family. If she died, her children and other *soog* kin would still resent the imputation against them and would have a lifelong grievance against her accuser and her children. The accuser would in any case bear the ritual blame, and would be in danger of mystical retribution. Nowadays, to judge by one case that came to my notice, the accused woman and her kin insist on an oath by the *bɔɣar*, usually the *bɔɣar* of the husband's medial lineage. Both women swear to the justice of their case before the *bɔɣar*, and the one who suffers a serious misfortune soonest—a misfortune such as grave sickness or death in her own *dug* of the house—is deemed to be in the wrong. Whatever the outcome, it amounts to one member of the family invoking the *bɔɣar* which watches over the welfare of the whole group to injure another member of the unit; and this is a sacrilege, even if it is done in the name of justice. It must be atoned for by sacrifices to which both women and their husband (or husbands) have to contribute. But the *bɔɣar* is never wholly appeased; it may still bring misfortune on the family for the sacrilege. And, of course, both women and their *soog* kin might continue to harbour resentment. An accusation of witchcraft, itself the symptom of the conflicts latent in the structure of the polygamous family, breeds endless discord.

595 But it must be emphasized that such cases are rare. For the most part women rub along pretty well with their co-wives. In this the senior wife (*pɔɣakpeem*)—seniority being reckoned according to order of marriage—may exercise a great deal of influence, especially if, as is likely, she is older than the others. Though she has no disciplinary authority over her younger co-wives, she has considerable moral authority over them. As her husband's closest confidante among his wives she knows all the affairs of the family and has its interests close at heart. She stands for the common allegiance of the wives to their husband and the family. A wise and tactful senior wife will keep an eye on the household economy and on the children without seeming to interfere with the liberty of her younger co-wives. Looking up to her with respect and affection, her younger co-wives will accept advice and guidance from her that does much to make the routine of family life smooth and pleasant. The fiction that she is the real mistress of the house (*dugdaana*) and that all the children 'belong' to her in a special sense gives her a formal status that makes this easier. If a suitor calls to see a girl of the family he must pay his respects to the senior wife before he goes to greet the girl's own mother. [431] If a woman's son-in-law sends her gifts of sweet potatoes, yams, and guinea-fowls at the time of the Harvest Festival, she will call all her co-wives proudly to see the gifts, and will distribute some of the tubers among them; but in addition the senior wife will receive a guinea-fowl as a mark of special honour. In such ways is the mistress of the

595 house apprised of what is going on in the quarters of the younger women and enabled to exercise benevolent supervision over them.

595 846 Her supervision is of special importance when any of the younger women is confined. She sees to it that mother and child are properly attended, that the rites of confinement and of emergence from seclusion are properly performed, that mother and babe are bathed in the prescribed way, and that the mother is given nourishing food. I was passing Ɔmara's homestead one afternoon, about a fortnight after the birth of a child to one of his wives, and called in. The new baby's mother was just coming out of the gateway with an empty water-pot on her head, and I noticed that she was looking far from well. Ɔmara's senior wife, a woman of sterling character, unsoured even by the leprosy that was rapidly getting a hold on her, was sitting outside in the shade. 'Where are you going to?' asked the older woman. 'To the water-hole,' replied her young co-wife. 'Don't go alone,' said the senior wife, 'I'll come with you'; and she rose to accompany the girl. For the first few weeks after the birth of her child a woman must not go about alone outside the homestead. She is still suffering from 'the dreams of a parturient woman (*pɔɣarɔɣah za'ahug*)'; that is, she is weak and liable to hallucinations or attacks of terror—or, as the natives think of it, to attacks from evil trees and stones—which might drive her mad. That was why the older woman accompanied the young mother. Many such incidents could be quoted in illustration of the concern shown by a senior wife for the welfare of her juniors.

595 [578] Of course, not all senior wives exercise their role in a wise and unselfish spirit. A woman with an overbearing disposition may make life difficult for her juniors. One result will be that each woman tends to keep strictly to her own *dug* so as to avoid clashing with the senior wife or the other women, and co-operation between co-wives tends to follow the letter of convention rather than the spirit of family unity. Again, there are families in which the senior wife has through age, infirmity, or weakness of character resigned the effective supervision of the household to a younger co-wife, though she still remains the titular senior. But observation shows that on the whole senior wives conform to the pattern we have outlined above. Their position in the family, their responsibilities and privileges, shape them to this pattern.

596 It must be remembered, also, that the size and stage of development of a family have a great influence on the relations between co-wives. In a family like that of Da'amo'o of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ who has but recently set up in his own homestead, there are only three women, two being Da'amo'o's wives and the third his younger brother's wife. They are all young women round about the age of 20, two with an infant each and the other still a maiden (*pɔɣasarət*). In such a family the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* is rudimentary. The three girls work in co-operation and live together harmoniously like sisters and with no visible distinction

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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of status or role. In another family of this kind the mistress of the house may be the family head's mother, and then she will exercise the role we have attributed to the senior wife in the preceding pages. In a joint family that has reached an advanced stage of development the women will be related to one another in a more complex scheme. Any particular woman may have one or more close co-wives, the other wife or wives of her husband; there may be, in addition, her co-wives at a remove, the wives of her husband's brothers; her own mother-in-law and perhaps a co-wife of this woman who is her mother-in-law by extension; and possibly daughters of the family. In such a family the wives of one man often feel a strong bond of solidarity in contradistinction to the wives of the other men of the family. The cleavages between the component family segments of the joint family are sharper than those between the wives of one man. As their children increase and get older, the women of each family segment aline themselves more strongly with their husband in his efforts to separate off. They begin to find the communal commissariat irksome and pressure from them often has a decisive influence on their husband's wish to 'go out on his own'.

CHAPTER V

PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LINEAGE

Some General Principles Recapitulated

ALL Tale genealogical connexions go back to the fact of procreation. 593
Hence the relations of parents and children are the focal point of the whole kinship system. Our task here is to investigate the notion of *dɔyam* in its primary social context.

We have emphasized elsewhere that the social structure of the 613
Tallensi is not intelligible if it is stripped of its temporal dimension.[1] The essence of the lineage system is its continuity in time; from this comes its strength and its stability. But it might have been otherwise. Such a system might well, with each generation, grow narrower and more rigid in all its parts, like an endogamous aristocratic caste. Or it might, as has happened with the Tallensi, spread itself more and more widely by continual ramification and so keep its strength without losing suppleness.

How has this come about? The central dynamic factor is the pattern 613
of relations between parents and children, especially between fathers and sons. The continuity of the lineage is a continuity of successive 593
generations, and this has two aspects. There is the straightforward, cumulative continuity of descent, epitomized in the notion of patrilineal descent; and there is the dialectical continuity of the filial generation ousting and replacing the paternal generation. In terms of patrilineal descent, father and son are identified with each other and united by common interests; in terms of the sequence of generations, they are not. Indeed, there comes a time in the lives of father and son when they almost seem to be rivals. In a lesser degree this holds also for mothers and daughters. We shall have a good deal to say on this topic in what follows.

The strength and stability of the Tale social system is in part a result of the institutionalized means the culture offers for the reconciliation of conflicting motifs in the focal field of social relations. They enable a balance to be struck between the common interests of successive patrilineal generations and their divergent interests due to the difference of generation, as well as between the centripetal pull of the agnatic line and the centrifugal drive of matrilateral kinship. The principle of reciprocity is of outstanding importance in this context; and the structural mould that makes these reconciliations possible is the ramifying form of the lineage.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii, and my paper 'Descent in the Social Structure of the Tallensi', *Africa*, July 1944.

593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

861 [538] [431] Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of parenthood as *dɔγam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb, 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔγam*)', often quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a 'cow of rearing (*ughug na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian, and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure, only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it. It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and that is the hardest part.

593 855 In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly 78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 861 828 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

and conform to them. Extreme cases illustrate this best. There is the 593
harsh disciplinarian whose sons fret under his control and often take 861
the first opportunity of running away. Saɣəbazaa was said to have been
a man of this kind—puritanical, industrious, and inclined to be over- 828
strict with his children. Four of his sons left him to seek work abroad. He made his daughters marry men he chose for them, and when one of them ran away with another man he whipped her and sent her back to her first husband. At the opposite extreme are men like Guna'ab and Yɛanbɔrigya. They are casual and irresponsible. Guna'ab's sons were often pointed out as an example of bad parental influence. They did not farm but tried to earn a living by trading in chickens; they were reputed to be lazy and extravagant, and showed no respect to their father or his brothers—'just like their father', people said.

Nevertheless, it is a fundamental axiom that the ties of rearing do 593
not wipe out the absolutely binding ties of procreation (*dɔɣam*). Whether 861
a person is reared by his own parents or not, whether he is badly or well brought up, nothing can erase the binding ties between parents and children. It is desirable for children to be brought up by their natural parents because then there will be no contradiction between the ties of *dɔɣam* and the adventitious ties of affection created by upbringing.

By Tale custom, if a woman leaves a husband by whom she has had a child and is properly married to another man, the child lives with her during its infancy. When it is five or six years old it can be claimed by its natural father. This is called 'separating (*pɔhəg*)' it from its mother. Tallensi think it immoral to separate a child from its mother before it is well able to fend for itself. I once heard a group of elders expostulate angrily with a man for taking his two children, aged about 4 and 7, from their mother who had married another man. The elders said the children would not thrive in the care of another woman; their father was acting out of sheer malice. He would be well advised to leave them with their mother for another three or four years and then claim them. Their prophecy was right, for the children pined away and both died within a year. This is an extreme case. But it is a good illustration of a problem that often arises when men claim the custody of their children from an ex-wife. A compromise between the claims of natural parenthood and jural paternity has to be struck which will not endanger the child's life.

Rights and Duties of Parents

We shall have much to say about the rights and duties of parents and 593
children in this book and it will be useful to list here briefly the most important of them. The central fact is the dominance of the father in all social relations; but this is balanced by the personal equality of the parents in the intimate domestic sphere.

A father's first duty to his children is to provide them with food.

593 He is not bound to provide them with clothes, but a good father buys a loin-cloth for a small son and may give a daughter money to buy a waistband and the materials for her back-flap (*voog*). He should also allow his adult sons the time and opportunity to work a little for themselves and so earn enough to buy clothes. He may allow them to wear some of his clothes, on special occasions.

It is a father's duty to send for and pay someone who has the necessary medicine to treat his child in illness. He must consult a diviner to find out what the illness is due to and must perform the sacrifices prescribed by the diviner to help in the cure. This is one aspect of the father's responsibility for the general welfare of his children. Great importance is attached by the Tallensi to the father's duty of making sacrifices to the ancestors on behalf of his children.

A father is jurally responsible for his sons and unmarried daughters. This is not particularly significant or onerous until children reach adolescence. Little notice is taken of damage caused by a child. But if it is serious—for example, if small boys allow cattle they are herding to damage crops—the injured party can inflict condign punishment on the culprits. He will also protest to their fathers. A father's responsibility for his children is of chief importance in questions of marriage. Thus a father is responsible (within the limits of his lineage status) for his son's bride-price payments and for any breaches of custom, involving conflict with other lineages or clans, that his child commits. In theory a father is also responsible for a son's debts unless they are of a petty kind. If his son gets mixed up in a fight he must appear with him in court. He must take steps to effect a ritual reconciliation with a lineage or clan to which injury has been caused by his son or daughter.

A father's rights are more comprehensive. He 'owns' (*so*) his children. He has the right and the duty of disciplining them. Hence he has the right to inflict corporal punishment on them. In the old days he could, in theory, sell them into slavery if he wished, and a few cases are known of this having occurred. But such an act, like any action that endangers the child's life, is morally reprehensible. He has the right to pawn (*zien talɔma*) a son or daughter in return for a loan, and I know of several such cases that occurred before the coming of British rule. This practice has, however, become almost obsolete since it is feared that the Administrative Officers will prosecute anyone found to have pawned a child. A father has the right to dispose of a daughter in marriage as he pleases and to use her bride-price as he pleases. He can do it in such a way as to make her in effect a pawn for a loan which will later be reckoned as an instalment of her bride-price. Men often give a young daughter of 9 or 10 years and upwards to someone from whom they receive loans. The girl is virtually a pawn (*talɔma*), and the understanding is that when she is old enough she will marry a member of the lender's family. If, when the time comes, she refuses to do so, her

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father may marry her off to someone else and will repay the loan out of her bride-price. A father has the right to take his daughter away from a husband whom he objects to.

A father has full disposal over his son's labour and skill. He also has an over-right over any personal property his son may acquire by his private enterprise. He decides whether his son shall live and farm with him or set up his own household.

A father's rights and duties have no legal sanctions in Tale society. They rest on a moral basis being inherent in the form of economic co-operation and property relations, the jural and ritual customs, and the whole complex of mutual dependence in family and lineage. They are never stated as a formal code by the natives, as we have done here, though explicitly recognized by them.

A mother's rights and duties are less precisely defined. Though they have the same basis and sanctions, at bottom, as paternal rights and duties, this is not so overt in native thought or practice. The affective basis of the relations of mother and child has a different tone to that of the relations of father and child. Hence many of a mother's rights are, in practice, dormant. Thus she is entitled to thrash her children, but it would be considered unbecoming and even unnatural in a mother to do so except under extreme provocation.

A mother has the right to the obedience and the respect of her children. She controls her daughter's work in the domestic sphere in tasks such as cooking, fetching water and firewood, and so on, but not in extra-domestic productive activities. For women's work in agriculture (e.g. harvesting) daughters come under their father's orders. A mother is entitled to assistance from her sons in the cultivation of her private vegetable and ground-nut plots. If her son is married, a mother has the right to leave all her domestic chores to be done by her daughter-in-law. A mother has the right to receive small gifts, such as tobacco and guinea-fowls, from her daughter's suitors. She may accept more substantial gifts, such as money and hoes, and in return pledge herself to help the suitor to elope with her daughter, even if this is contrary to her husband's intentions. If her daughter is married by arrangement, the mother is entitled to certain formal gifts of guinea-fowls and grain from the bridegroom's people. She is entitled to ask for help from her daughter's husband in roofing her rooms and in other tasks that are of concern to herself only. She is entitled to gifts of guinea-fowls and yams or sweet potatoes from her daughters' husbands at the time of the Harvest Festival. But most important of all is a mother's right to be supported by her sons from the time that they become capable of farming. Whether she has a husband or not, she will generally live with a son after she gets past the age of child-bearing.

A mother's chief duties are to care for her children in childhood. She must cook for them and see that they are fed. She must nurse them

593 in illness. She is mainly responsible for their training in habits of cleanliness. She also has to teach her daughters housekeeping skills.

This formal summary is interposed here as a means of orientating our analysis. The reality, we shall find, is not so simple.

Classificatory Parents and Own Parents

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Tallensi affirm that no one can wholly take the place of a person's own parents. A child may be brought up by its dead father's brother or dead mother's co-wife. Outwardly there is nothing to distinguish the relationship of such a child, during its pre-adolescent years, to its proxy parent from that of a child living with its natural parent. Men or women point with pride and affection to orphans in their custody as 'my children'. They claim to care for them as conscientiously and devotedly as for their own children. But, the natives say, there is always something lacking; and observation shows that the affective ties of proxy parent and child are much weaker than those of natural parent and child. Sometimes, indeed, there is an acknowledged emotional barrier between them.

[167] One can see this in young children like Gundaat, whose story is told in a previous chapter (p. 130). A young child is more restrained, more formal, with a proxy parent than with a natural parent. Boys seem to be less amenable to proxy parents than to own parents, especially as they approach adulthood. When young men who have been abroad, working in Ashanti or the Colony for a period of years, are questioned about their motives for leaving home, the commonest reason they give is the death of a parent. 'My father (*ba*) died, and my junior father (*ba-pit*) took over the house (*die yir*) and so I went away', is the usual formula. One soon discovers that there was always some tension and often friction between the youth and his father's brother. The youth says that his *ba-pit* did not treat him properly; and when one questions his *ba-pit*, he usually says 'the boy did not respect (*nan*) me'. This is a modern development of what is a deeply ingrained feature of Tale social organization. A man will often continue to live and farm with his own father until the latter's death. I know men of 40 and over who are still living with their own fathers. But very rarely does this happen with a father's brother. A dead man's sons break away from the parental home when a father's brother inherits it as soon as they are able to. In such a case there is usually a convergence of different factors of segmentary differentiation in the lineage. The emotional cleavage serves as the catalyst that directs and accelerates the normal processes of splitting along economic and structural lines of cleavage.

This is the negative aspect of the idea that one's natural parents should be one's social parents, as it appears in the classificatory extension of the parent-child relationship. On the positive side it follows from this conception that all those who are socially identifiable with

one's parents and play a part in one's upbringing can, and in certain 593
circumstances must, stand to one in the relation of proxy parents. 855
The rule applies most directly to the men and women of the same 736
domestic unit who are identified with one's parents by generation and by social role—to one's father's brothers (*sunzɔp*), including his full and half-brothers and first cousins on his father's side, who are his prospective successors; and to one's mother's co-wives (*nentaas*). If these men and women all belong to the same household they are directly concerned with the production of food, the provision of shelter, and the satisfaction of the other wants of the unit upon which the physical welfare and growth of a child depends. If the men belong to relatively autonomous economic units but to the same domestic unit, they will nevertheless have a common interest in the family patrimony, to the inheritance of which they all have rights, and a common ritual dependence on the immediate ancestors of the nuclear lineage. The women will sometimes help in caring for one another's children; the men will sometimes help one another in farming and always act as a unit in ritual and jural matters under the authority of the most senior of them. And the ritual care of a child is of as much importance as its physical care. A child will not thrive (*maan*) if it is not under the spiritual wing of its patrilineal ancestors, as we have learnt.

Outside the domestic unit the terms *ba* (father) and *ma* (mother) and 602
the distinctive modes of behaviour correlated with them, are not
extended beyond the expanded family (i.e. the family cluster built up 613
on the inner lineage) in normal circumstances. The only exception is in the case of a uterine kinsman or kinswoman of a parent, who is identified with the foundress of the uterine line and is therefore described as a 'father' or 'mother' irrespective of genealogical distance.[1]

Within the clan or maximal lineage it is a cardinal rule that generation differences are not recognized beyond the limits of the inner lineage. 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage—*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*' is the Tale maxim. This is correlated with the structural relations of the inner lineage to lineage segments of higher order. The inner lineage is likely to be the widest segment with a common interest in patrimonial land. In relation to the clan or the maximal lineage it is usually the smallest recognized corporate segment, whose members are significant for the clan only as members of the segment. As will be remembered, it is also the unit within which sexual relations with a co-member's wife are definitely sinful. In short, the inner lineage (and the family cluster which is its residential and familial correlate) marks the limit beyond which a person takes part in corporate activities not in his own right and in his personal capacity but as a member of the

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[1] Kinship terms without inverted commas stand for the primary meaning of the terms, e.g. (natural) father; those between inverted commas stand for the extended or derived meaning of the term, e.g. (classificatory) 'father'.

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segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidem*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that [736 768] a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

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Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements. There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series [601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-meŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-meŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma, bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

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[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Goris and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kema* and *yɛbəga* for senior and junior.

children of about the same age playing together who are classificatory 613
parent and child. A 9- or 10-year-old will explain that he calls his
companion 'father' or 'child' because 'my father begot (*dɔɣa*)—or was 602
begotten by—his father and calls him child—or father', using the 593
concept *dɔɣ* in its generalized sense of a recognized relationship of
belonging to successive generations.

The decisive tests are in terms of the jural and ritual relations in which kinship comes into action, and not in terms of a count of generations. Thus paternal authority is an aspect of the organization of productive co-operation in the household; it accompanies defined property rights, and entails jural responsibilities in matters like marriages and deaths as well as ritual duties to the ancestors. These are the things that make up a father's social role. Postponing further consideration of this for the present, we may note that, broadly speaking, three zones can be discerned within the limits of the inner lineage. First, that of Ego's natural parents, who exercise the full social roles of parents; second, that of Ego's proxy parents, seldom more distantly related to the natural father than agnatic second cousins (and their wives), and distinguished by the fact that they share and may take over the social roles of the natural parents; and third, that of Ego's classificatory parents, who are most unlikely (for no rigid line of demarcation can be laid down) to take on the true parents' social roles. The authority and responsibility of a classificatory father is of a general nature, and a man is subject to it only in virtue of his lineage membership.

As we shall find later, these principles hold not only for the classificatory extension of parent-child relationships but also for siblings and matrilateral kin. The regulating mechanism is the lineage structure.

We are defining the gradations that can be observed in the tone and 593
emphasis of the parent-child relationship in the broadest terms. We
are speaking of norms; and as we have previously remarked, the norms 602
do not always emerge as simply as this in the actual relations of parents and children. They are subject to the distorting influence of many social and personal factors in this as in other departments of Tale life. Da'amo'o, who ran away from home as a boy when his mother died, must have had very little love for his old father, who was, by all accounts, a hard, arrogant, and demanding martinet. Baŋ, on the other hand, who lost his own father in early childhood and grew up under the care of a distant lineage-brother of his father, Tendaan Gieŋ, whom his widowed mother married, was deeply attached to the latter.

As in most primitive societies, there are always a number of people whom a Taləŋ, child or adult, will refer to as his 'father' or 'mother', or 'child', at any given ti[illegible] But, as has already been suggested, a natural parent or own child is clearly distinguished from others to whom one stands in the same social relationship. It is enough to visit a large domestic family for half an hour, at a time when the whole

593 family is at home, to see this, especially where young children are
concerned. With adults the discrimination is not so obvious in the
602 ordinary daily routine as with children. I have seen a babe of six months
left in the care of its mother's co-wife, whimper and strain eagerly
towards its mother when it saw her arrive at the homestead with a load
of firewood in the company of two other women of the household. An
older child will run to its own mother for protection, if it is frightened,
clutching her knees and thrusting its face between her thighs. A small
boy of 3 to 6 years of age will try to follow his own father about wherever
he can; and a little girl of this age hangs around her own mother, as
she gets on with the household tasks, in a way that would be impossible
with her mother's co-wife. On the other side, one can easily notice the
difference between the sympathy and often grief of a woman over the
illness or death of a co-wife's child and the utter prostration into which
a mother falls if such a misfortune strikes her own child. Similarly,
a man shows deep concern over the sickness or death of his brother's
child. He will abandon a visit he has planned to a relative, give up
work for the day, shelve any plans he may have made; for next to a
death, nothing is so upsetting to a Tale household as the illness of a
child. But this is as nothing compared with his grief over the death,
or his distress at the illness of his own child.

613 This affective discrimination of own parents and own children is the
psychological counterpart of the differentiation of descent lines within
602 the lineage and of segments within the family. Sentiment and structural
relationships go hand in hand and the ritual superstructure of Tale
society mirrors both. This consistency of the total scheme of social
relationships means that we can make inferences about aspects of the
relationship between parents and children that are not expressed in
their ordinary intercourse, from ritual ideas and practices and from the
[782] changing pattern of co-operation and association between them. The
fact that a man can only sacrifice directly to the spirits of his own parents
and to antecedent ancestors through his own parents, and not to or
through the spirits of proxy parents, is as important a factor in the
unique bond of parent and child as the fact that a child is usually
brought up by his own parents.

Structural arrangements and ritual ideas show that, in spite of the precise discrimination of own parents and own children, proxy and classificatory parents do have a parental role even during the lifetime of own parents. They take pride in these children, and speak of them as 'my children'. Everyone who is 'father' or 'mother' to a person must be treated with the respect due to a parent and has some degree of authority over him or her. I recall one day seeing Sinkawol, a young man of about 25, instructing Kyekambe, a lively boy of about 12, in a task connected with house-building. They both belonged to the inner lineage of which Nyaaŋzum of Kpata'ar was the head. This lineage presents a remarkable jumble of ages and generations owing to the 613 longevity and protracted fertility of its founder, Kuŋkɔŋki. Because a period of about fifty years elapsed between the birth of Kuŋkɔŋki's 602 first son and the birth of his youngest son, the latter's children are 'fathers' to his older brothers' children, some of whom are three or four times their age. That is how Sinkawol came to be the classificatory 'son' of Kyekambɛ. Now and then Sinkawol had to speak sharply to his pupil. I asked if he would hit the boy if he did not obey his instructions. 'Oh no', replied Sinkawol gravely, 'I cannot strike him. He begot me. He is my father. If he were my brother or my son I wouldn't hesitate to clout him.' Kyekambɛ could not exercise authority over Sinkawol owing to his social immaturity and inexperience. But he would take precedence of Sinkawol in matters of inheritance, and when he grew up would be entitled to precede Sinkawol in rights of succession to ritual office, if he wished to.

Proxy and classificatory parents also feel a responsibility for the 593 welfare of their 'brothers' ' children. Thus if two brothers have separate households, they are not obliged to assist each other with food in times 602 of shortage; and pride restrains a man from asking for help from a brother who is economically independent of him. I have seen men grow wan with hunger, through living for days on end on nothing but wild herbs; but they would never ask for assistance from their better-off brothers. It is up to the latter to offer a gift of grain voluntarily. And [431] when such a gift is given (it is usually only 3 or 4 lb. of grain, enough for a couple of meals) it is offered as a gift for the children and their mothers. The giver will send a calabashful of grain to his brother's wife, with a message that it is for the children. As the natives always say, 'Your brother's children are your children. You cannot see them growing thin with hunger and let them starve.' A woman, too, will sometimes give food to the children of a co-wife of the same joint family, if the two women get on well together.

A proxy parent's authority over his or her classificatory children during their own parent's life cannot be exactly defined. It depends on the situation in which authority is exercised, on the personalities and economic relationships of the people concerned, and especially on the genealogical closeness of own parent and proxy parent. Ɔmara and Saandi are agnatic first cousins (brothers, in native terms) occupying adjoining semi-detached homesteads. They do not farm together. Saandi has no direct responsibility for feeding Ɔmara's children or for educating them. He is, however, directly interested in their welfare and upbringing. For as the head of the nuclear lineage, he must be consulted, and will have an influential, though not the decisive voice in all matters of a jural or ritual kind affecting Ɔmara's children—such matters, for instance, as the marriage of a son or daughter, or the rites of placing a child under the ritual guardianship of an ancestor. If he

593 sees any of Ɔmara's children misbehaving he can stop them and punish
them if necessary. But ordinarily, though he can scold Ɔmara's children,
602 he would cause grave offence to Ɔmara if he were to strike them. When, to quote a case that occurred in a similar structural setting, Pumaan's son threw a stone at Zaŋ's (Pumaan's younger brother's) wife, Zaŋ shouted anathemas at the boy and complained to the neighbours but dared not whip him; that was Pumaan's prerogative. For Zaŋ and Pumaan have separate households and are both sticklers for their rights. By contrast, Bɔyazie, who lives and farms with his older brother and gets on extremely well with him, can command obedience from and can discipline the latter's children by corporal punishment if need be. But even in such a case a man might hesitate to strike his brother's children if he and his brother were not on terms of the greatest mutual trust. If Saandi asks his brother's son to do an errand or a job for him the boy will usually obey, but he cannot be compelled to do so, as he can by his own father. Co-wives, as we know, are particularly cautious in dealing with one another's children.

593 There is, however, at any given time, only one man who has full paternal authority over a person, child or adult. In the first instance it is the man who begot him or her; and if this man dies, it is the man who takes on his social role, that is his distinctive rights and duties, by inheritance. The critical rights and duties are those connected with the land and other patrimonial property which the child's father owned or was heir to, and those connected with the cult of the child's father's father. In practice this means the head of the household to which the child belongs, who is also the person who sacrifices to the child's grandfather's spirit; and this limits the range to the child's father's brothers by the same father.

During a child's minority a father's agnatic cousin (brother in native
429 terms) may act *in loco parentis* if the father's nearer male agnates are
428 lacking; but it is a position of trusteeship rather than of full paternal
authority. The son will set up an independent household as soon as he
602 is able to farm for himself. He will then take possession of any land which his father acquired by his own efforts and will become the effective owner of, for example, bride-price cattle obtained for his own sister, though he cannot dispose of them without the formal consent of the head of the nuclear lineage. In relation to an adult, a father's cousin (or remoter classificatory 'brother' of the same inner lineage) retains only the ritual and jural attributes of a father; and this chiefly in virtue of being head of the inner or nuclear lineage to which the person belongs. Important as these attributes are, they represent a less direct and personal authority than that of one's own or one's proxy father.

603 We shall see later that the relations between grandchildren (*yaaŋ*, pl. *yaas*) and grandparents (*yaab-doog* or *ba-kpeem*, masc. *yaab-pɔk* or

ma-kpeem, fem.) are a foil to those of parents and children. It is convenient here to state the range within which grandparents are acknowledged. On both the mother's side and the father's side grandparents are primarily one's own parent's own parents. The terms are extended to own grandparents' siblings (in particular to a grandfather's brothers) and their wives, but rarely beyond that limit, and never, in my experience, beyond a grandfather's agnatic cousin. This is correlated with the cycle of development of the joint family. By the time a man has grandchildren he is not likely to be still sharing a homestead with his brother, let alone cousin, and his classificatory siblings will have only a formal interest in his grandchildren. 603

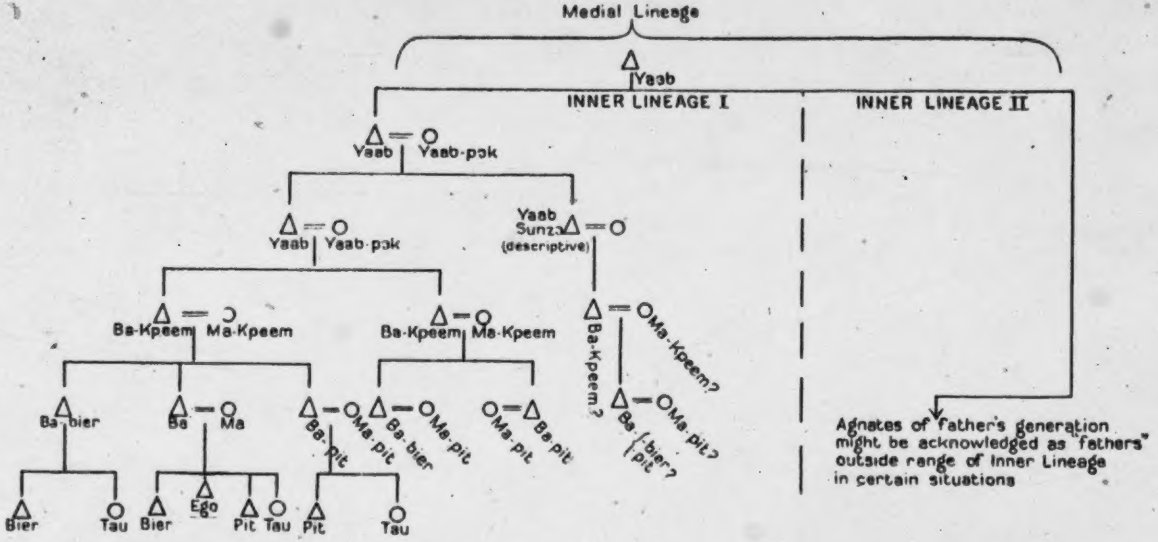
The diagram on p. 148 sums up this discussion of the range of parenthood acknowledged by the Tallensi.

The Significance of 'Having no Father alive'

Clearly the formula 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage' covers a complicated tissue of social relationships. Another aspect of it appears in the significance Tallensi attach to whether or not one's father is alive. 593

This is a matter of considerable practical importance, more particularly for men, but also for women. A person's status in his clan, and in every segment of it to which he belongs, depends largely on whether 'his father is alive (*u ba be*)' or not (*u ba ka*). It is correlated with the distribution of jural and ritual authority and responsibility in the lineage. During his own father's lifetime a person's status is submerged in that of his father for jural and ritual purposes. He comes directly under his father's authority, as we shall see presently. He attains his first degree of independence only on the death of his own father. This is shown to some extent in every department of his life, but most significantly in the sphere of ritual. A man cannot make sacrifices to his patrilineal ancestors in his own right while his own father is alive. His father does this on his behalf. It is only when his father dies that a man can sacrifice directly to his ancestors; for such sacrifices can only be offered through the medium of his father's spirit. 593 885 [782]

This marks a very important stage in a man's social maturation, whatever his chronological age may be. Henceforth the responsibility for keeping the goodwill of his ancestors rests directly on his own shoulders. It will be he himself, for instance, not his father, who decides whether a sacrifice demanded by such-and-such an ancestor should be offered at once or postponed. And with this first stage of ritual responsibility usually goes some degree of autonomy in jural and economic matters, as we shall see presently. Nevertheless, no man attains full autonomy within the limits of the lineage system until he is altogether 'fatherless'. While he has a proxy or classificatory father alive he is still to some extent under paternal authority. It is worth


Medial Lineage
Yaab
INNER LINEAGE I
INNER LINEAGE II
Yaab
Yaab-pɔk
Yaab
Yaab-pɔk
Yaab Sunzɔ (descriptive)
Ba-Kpeem
Ma-Kpeem
Ba-Kpeem
Ma-Kpeem
Ba-Kpeem?
Ma-Kpeem?
Ba-bier
Ba
Ma
Ba-pit
Ma-pit
Ba-bier
Ma-pit
Ma-pit
Ba-pit
Ba-/bier? /pit
Ma-pit?
Bier
Tau
Bier
Ego
Pit
Tau
Pit
Tau

Agnates of father's generation might be acknowledged as "fathers" outside range of Inner Lineage in certain situations

Terms:

Ba = *Father*
Ma = *Mother*
Yaab = *Grandparent & Ancestor*
Ba-Kpeem = *Grandfather*
Ma-Kpeem = *Grandmother*

Kpeem = *senior*
bier = *older like sex sibling*
pit = *younger like sex sibling*
tau = *opposite sex sibling*
pɔk = *female*
? = *Acknowledged in certain situations only*

FIG. 4. The range of parenthood.

885 593

considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight into the working of the classificatory principle.

764 784

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

613 602

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits [601] of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

613 or father's father's brother's son is still alive would not claim to be
602 fatherless. For, in matters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in relation to other like units, he has no independent status. The unit is under the authority of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. Similarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved and the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

613 We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how
593 the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog. When Sebɔg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bɔɣabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sebɔg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔɣar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔɣabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the
[784] elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then Bɔɣabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

782 Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain
593 of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External *Bɔɣar* are known as 'tabooed fowls (*nɔkiha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten,
[784] by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

593 In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

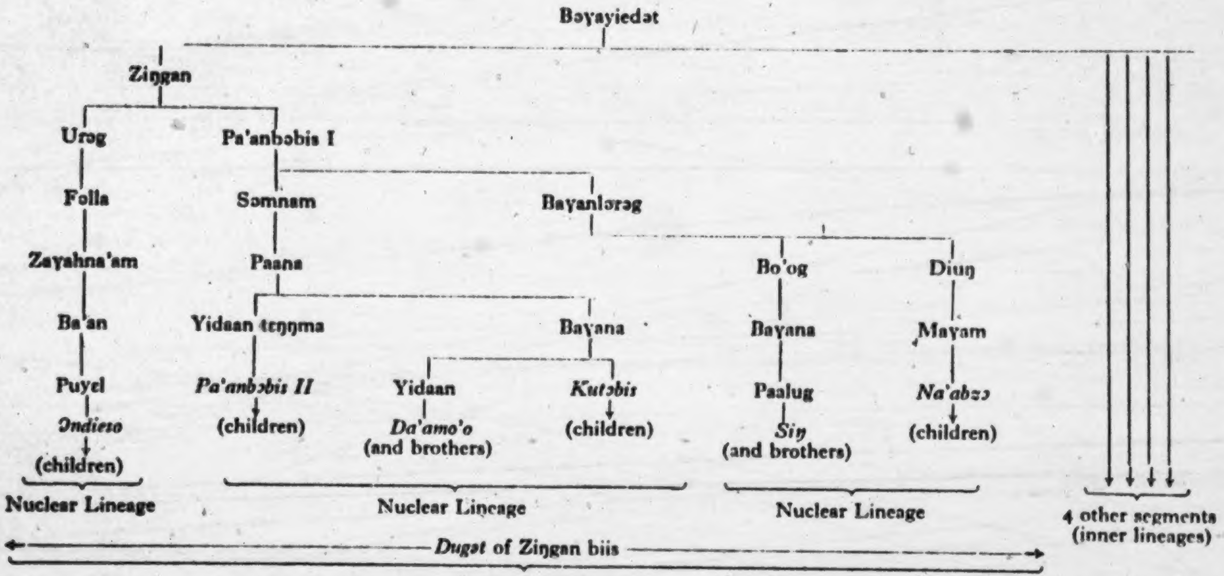
father or proxy father alive. But let us take a more complicated as well as more commonplace case.

Ziŋgan biis form an inner lineage, one of the five inner lineages that together constitute the medial lineage of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri of Tɔŋ-Guŋ. The genealogy overleaf shows the agnatic relationships of the members of Ziŋgan biis we are concerned with here.

The head of the whole inner lineage is Kutɔbis. He is also the head of one major segment of the lineage, Pa'anbɔbis biis; the head of the other major segment, Zaɣahna'am biis, is Ɔndieso. Within his own segment of Ziŋgan biis Ɔndieso is master. He farms for himself; he sacrifices directly to his own father's and ancestors' spirits; he owns his sisters' bride-price cattle and can dispose of them as he pleases and is responsible for finding the bride-price for his own wives or his sons' wives. In these matters that concern his nuclear lineage primarily he does not acknowledge Kutɔbis as his 'father'. He looks upon Kutɔbis as only the head of the inner lineage. As such, he must be formally consulted by Ɔndieso in matters that involve jural or ritual relationships with other lineages or clans, such as arise through marriage. Thus, if Ɔndieso's daughter is sought in marriage, it is Kutɔbis who receives the emissary with the placation gifts from the bridegroom and keeps the fowl he brings, thus signifying his formal assent and regularizing the marriage. Nevertheless, it is a purely nominal authority that Kutɔbis exercises. The real decisions rest with Ɔndieso. Again, if Ɔndieso seduces the wife of, say, a Gbeog man, the injured man's lineage head will protest to Kutɔbis and negotiations for the reconciliation rites will be carried out by the latter. He will accept nominal responsibility for Ɔndieso in this matter and will take charge of the arrangements that concern Ziŋgan biis in the reconciliation rites. But the animals required for the rites must be supplied by Ɔndieso himself. To give a third example, Kutɔbis will be summoned at once if there is a death in Ɔndieso's family and will preside over the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. But, again, the animals and foodstuffs that have to be provided by the 'owner of the funeral'—the person actually responsible for its performance—must be supplied by Ɔndieso. Kutɔbis has, in fact, no power directly to order Ɔndieso to do anything; he has no claims, as of right, on Ɔndieso's services or material help; he has no responsibility for Ɔndieso's welfare, apart from the general moral responsibility he has for the welfare of the whole lineage. As the natives say, he 'owns' Ɔndieso 'with the mouth only (*nuoni maa*)'. All this is implied when Ɔndieso says: 'If it is a question of the (inner) lineage only, I have no father (*la a dug pooni maa, nka ba*).' Kutɔbis's relations with him arise from the fact that Kutɔbis is *dug kpeem*, head of the inner lineage, custodian of the founding ancestor's *bɔɣar* and of the lineage *zanɔr*. If he were Ɔndieso's classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather', it would make no difference to their relations. The symbolic expression

613

[p 152]


Bɔyayiedɔt
Ziŋgan
Urɔg
Pa'anbɔbis I
Folla
Sɔmnam
Bayanlɔrɔg
Zayahna'am
Paana
Bo'og
Diuŋ
Ba'an
Yidaan tɛŋŋma
Bayana
Bayana
Mayam
Puyɛl
Pa'anbɔbis II
Yidaan
Kutɔbis
Paalug
Na'abzɔ
Ɔndiɛto
(children)
Da'amo'o
(and brothers)
(children)
Siŋ
(and brothers)
(children)
(children)
Nuclear Lineage
Nuclear Lineage
Nuclear Lineage
4 other segments
(inner lineages)
Dugɔt of Ziŋgan biis
Inner Lineage
(*Dug of Bɔyayiedɔt yiri*)

Living members of the lineage *italicized.*

Bɔyayiedɔt yiri = 1 medial lineage.
(*dug* of Guŋ section) comprising five inner lineages.

of this is clearest in funeral customs. If Paanbɔbis II, Kutɔbis's 613
brother, were to die, Ɔndieso would take part in all the rites prohibited to men whose fathers are still alive. He would not refrain out of respect for Kutɔbis.

But in matters which involve Ziŋgan biis as a segment of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri, Ɔndieso acknowledges Kutɔbis as his 'father'. Thus when Bontuɣa, who belonged to one of the other four inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt biis, died, Ɔndieso went to the funeral as one of the representatives of Ziŋgan biis. He then refused to take part in the rites tabooed to men who have fathers alive, saying that if he did it would be an insult to Kutɔbis.

Ziŋgan biis also appear as a unit in reckoning prohibited degrees of 613
kinship for purposes of marriage. As we have mentioned before, the
inner lineage is the widest corporate group that is a jural unit in marriage. 582
A distant 'sister's son' (*ahɔŋ*) of Kutɔbis would not be allowed to marry a daughter of Ɔndieso. And this criterion applies also to the inheritance of widows. If Kutɔbis were to die, Ɔndieso could not seek any of his widows in marriage, because they are his classificatory 'mothers'. On the other hand, he could do so if Kutɔbis were his classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather'. He can court the widow of any member of any of the four other inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri since generation differences are not recognized beyond the boundaries of Ziŋgan yiri.

In spite of the ambiguities lurking in his relationship to Kutɔbis, the 613
predominant affective tone it has for Ɔndieso is that he is a 'son' and
will remain a 'child' (*bii*) in public affairs that involve the whole clan 554
as long as Kutɔbis or any of his brothers is alive. Until they are dead there will always be a living if shadowy representative of paternal authority standing between Ɔndieso and his remote ancestors—and that means between him and the world at large, as it impinges on him through the corporate activities of the whole clan. This influences Ɔndieso's attitude to life considerably. He feels that he has not yet reached full social maturity, though he is much more intelligent and better informed than many of the clan elders. One sees and feels this vividly enough in one's intercourse with the natives, but it is not easy to pin down. It came out, for instance, in Ɔndieso's behaviour whenever he accompanied me to the Chief's court. He always took a back seat then, as befits a 'youngster'. It came out also in his attitude to Kutɔbis whom he despised for his uncouth ways and all-round incompetence, but yet deferred to with the modicum of respect that is correct in one's relations with a 'father'.

A man who can say 'I no longer have any fathers' associates himself 613
with the elders, the *kpɛm*, in thought and action even if he is younger 622
in years than some men whom he calls 'sons'. He thinks of himself as
a 'father', in particular in relation to the ancestors, as one who has the 554
duty of watching over the welfare of others. It is most marked among

613 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their
622 predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed,
554 some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the
Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔγa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

778 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully
554 established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔne*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a
[888] house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

601 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in
613 the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is
554 Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

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[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without first obtaining Kutɔbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutɔbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only. 613 554

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutɔbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10*s*. He showed it to Kutɔbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutɔbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bɔyayiedɔt yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutɔbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30*s*. to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutɔbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutɔbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutɔbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutɔbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutɔbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutɔbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutɔbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them. 613

Our discussion of what it means to a Talɔŋ to have a father alive or not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them. 613 178 601

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

601 613 178 the lineage often leads to conflict and it is in these conflicts that the process of fission is often completed. They arise chiefly in connexion with the inheritance of widows and the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar* (that is, to the headship of the lineage)—the two situations in which consistency between the corporate unity of the inner lineage and the recognition of generation differences is most severely tested. What happens is that the heads of what were previously regarded as the component segments of an inner lineage advance contradictory claims to the custody of the lineage *bɔɣar*. One may claim it on the grounds of seniority of generation—being the classificatory father of the other—while his opponent refuses to admit this and claims seniority by age. It is a conflict between 'seniority of begetting (*dɔɣam kpɛmət*)' (i.e. by generation) and 'seniority of predestiny' or, as we might say, chance (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*) (i.e. by age). The long-drawn-out quarrel between Yinyɛla and the other elders of Tɔŋ-Puhug turned on a point of this kind. Yinyɛla claimed to be a generation superior to the heads of all the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri,[1] but the other elders would not admit the validity of this claim. The genealogical evidence supported Yinyɛla, and the precedents he quoted from the days of his father and grandfather were probably accurate. But that was not the question; the relations of the segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri had changed in the last two generations and, as the elders put it, 'begetting has died out (*dɔɣam kpiya*)'.

An earlier stage in the fading out of classificatory kinship appeared in the controversy over Baroog's widows. Nindɔɣat's eldest son was discovered to be secretly courting one of the women and Baroog's father immediately raised an outcry. Nindɔɣat, he protested, was his 'son' and Baroog's 'brother', hence Nindɔɣat's son would be committing incest if he married Baroog's widow, his classificatory mother. But Nindɔɣat stood by his son, arguing that they were no longer members of a single inner lineage but of two separate inner lineages. 'We are each our own *dug* (*ti a ti dug ti dug*),' he said. The weight of public opinion in the clan was against him, however, and the woman in the case took fright. But a split in the lineage is inevitable, though it may take a generation to complete.

Change of Status Due to Death of 'Father' Shown in Property Relations

613 835 There is more to be said about the social consequences of having or not having a father alive, and we shall revert to the subject later from another point of view. What is so far clear is that a man's social status, particularly in jural and ritual matters, but also in economic affairs, advances step by step with the dying off of his fathers. Strictly speaking, he is not altogether autonomous until he has no more fathers within the range of the inner lineage, but in practice he is free of effective

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 196.

paternal control when he has no more fathers in the nuclear lineage. 613
The death of his own father marks the beginning of what might be called this process of emancipation, though it is not overtly felt to be 885
that by the natives. As previous references have shown, this is usually the thin end of the wedge that in due course splits the joint family economically and eventually gives the sons jural and ritual independence. It is not too much to say that the cycle of fission and reintegration in the joint family, with its co-ordinate processes of ramification in the lineage, is kept in motion by the deaths of fathers. That is one reason why the relations of successive generations are most conspicuously symbolized in funeral rites and ceremonies.

Underlying all changes in status due to the extinction of particular social relationships are changes in property relations which include, for the Tallensi, both rights over people and rights over material objects and economic resources. These rights pass from one generation to the next by inheritance or succession. There are rights over farm-land, the basic capital resource of the natives, and over homesteads; rights of disposal over livestock and other valuables, as well as over services and social bonds that have been created in exchange for valuables; rights over the working power and allegiance of men, women, and children; and last but not least, rights to the custody of ancestor shrines and other religious objects and to the politico-ritual offices that go with some of them. 421

All these property relations are tied directly to the lineage structure; they are graded and interlocked with one another in conformity with that structure. They fall into two major categories: patrimonial rights and property, for which the Tallensi have a specific term, *faar*; and individual rights and property, for which there is no specific term. Looking at it through native eyes, in terms of the continuity of the lineage and the march of the generations, we can see why this is so. *Faar* belongs to the lineage—it may be only the nuclear lineage or it may be the maximal lineage. All the members of the lineage are potential heirs to it. But the man who is in possession at a given time has complete freedom in using it—though not in disposing of it. On the other hand, individually acquired property and rights belong to the individual. A 'fatherless' man is free to use, dispose of, or destroy his individually acquired property—be it a piece of land, an animal, a garment, money, or whatnot—as he wishes. A man subject to some degree of paternal authority is in theory obliged to be ruled by his 'father' in the use and disposal of his individual property, though in practice he has a very large measure of freedom in this matter. But the crucial point is this. Individual property becomes patrimonial property when, as inevitably happens on the death of the original owner, it is inherited. In this way it comes about that every segment of a lineage tends to have its own transmissible *faar*. 613 421

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The general rules governing inheritance and succession are simple. Because they are so closely tied up with the lineage structure and come under the strongest sanctions of the ancestor cult, they are seldom, to my knowledge, deliberately violated. But they leave room for adjustments and compromises, to some extent also for arbitrary action bordering on injustice, that seem, on the surface, to contradict them. Inheritance and succession follow the lineage and go from fathers to sons in order of seniority by generation or by age.[1] Within the inner lineage, that is, within the range in which classificatory kinship is recognized, seniority by generation (*dɔɣam kpɛmət*) takes precedence over seniority by age (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*), beyond that range it is entirely a matter of seniority by age. This is what the maxim 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage' implies. Since a 'son' cannot take precedence over a 'father' in the inner lineage, it follows that a man's next senior 'brother' inherits before his oldest 'son'. But Tallensi say 'A father's property is heritable; a brother's property is not (*Ba bon nɛvaagət; mabii bon pu vaagəra*)'. A 'brother' inherits from a 'brother' only what came to the latter from their 'father' (plus what has accrued to it by natural increase or improvement), not what the latter acquired by his own effort. Theoretically all 'brothers' are coheirs and the senior is merely the manager with first pick of the inherited property. It is this which leads to apparent anomalies. Thus when Kurug died his oldest brother Sawɔŋba inherited the *faar* land. But he preferred to stay on in his homestead at Gbambee rather than move back to the lineage *daboog* at Kuorəg. This homestead and the *faar* land surrounding it therefore remained in the hands of Kurug's sons. When Sawɔŋba died there were no more 'fathers' and the oldest generation of men in the inner lineage were all 'brothers'. Again the heir preferred to stay at Gbambee. If the next heir of Sawɔŋba's branch also refuses to go back to the lineage *daboog*, the chances are that the *faar* land there will cease to be regarded as patrimonial property of the whole inner lineage and will become *de facto* the *faar* of the branch that stayed on at Kuorəg.

The point of this is that whereas 'brothers' are equal to one another 'fathers' and 'sons' are not. A 'brother' inheriting lineage *faar* is not on the same footing as a 'father'; he cannot exercise all the rights and the authority of a 'father' which belong intrinsically and exclusively to a 'father's' social status, 'because of begetting (*dɔɣam la zugu*)'. A proxy father who has no brothers alive is at liberty to use his rights over *faar*

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[1] The private property of women is an exception, but it is of relatively small importance in the total economy and its mode of transmission is, in fact, quite consistent with this principle. A woman's household utensils and garments are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law on her death. Any livestock she has acquired by her own efforts or through her cognatic kin go to her sons and become their joint private property. The reason for this is that livestock, unlike utensils and clothes, can breed and so become *faar*, which is not transmissible by descent from or through women.

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in an arbitrary manner and to his personal advantage. If he wishes, he can, for example, pawn *faar* land or consume *faar* cattle in spite of the protests of his 'sons'. They have no redress. Or a father may use his position to distribute parts of the patrimonial land among his sons and proxy sons so that they should all have some good land to work for themselves after his death. The 'son' who inherits cannot cancel such gifts. A 'brother' would arouse fierce opposition from his junior 'brothers' if he attempted to use or dispose of *faar* arbitrarily without their consent. When disputes occur over the division of patrimonial lands or other property that passes by inheritance, it is always amongst a group of 'brothers', never between 'father' and 'sons'.

The difference of emphasis due to difference of generation appears most plainly in the inheritance of rights over people. Tallensi say that 'an older brother (who succeeds to headship of the household or lineage) is like a father (in relation to his juniors) (*Bier yman ni ba la*)'. But they also add that he is nevertheless not a father. An oldest brother, as senior son, steps into the shoes of his 'father' in relation to society at large. He does not acquire paternal status within the lineage *vis-à-vis* his 'brothers'. The rights he exercises over dependants are shared by them. And when he is succeeded by a 'brother' the latter does not assume new rights over these dependants but merely extends his existing rights.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage, where generation differences no longer count, questions of inheritance and succession turn chiefly on rights to the custody of the shrines of founding ancestors. The moral and ritual authority of heads of lineages beyond the range of the inner lineage rests on their custody of these shrines. Sometimes, ritual offices like the tɛndaanaship go with the succession to the custody of maximal lineage shrines; and in many cases this also confers rights to control the use of or to have sole use of certain farm-lands vested in the head of the maximal lineage.

It follows from the foregoing that when a 'father' dies there very often is a wide rearrangement of property relations in the whole hierarchy of lineage segments to which he belonged. To take an actual case, let us return to Ziŋgan biis (p. 152). When Yidaan, the head of the inner lineage, died in 1933 he was succeed[illegible] by his brother Kutɔbis as head of the domestic family. As Kutɔb[illegible]as oldest by generation in the inner lineage he succeeded to the cust[illegible] of the lineage *bɔɣar* of Ziŋgan.[1] He would not have done so if, say, [illegible]ndieso had been senior to him by generation, though younger in years.

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[1] About a generation ago, as is still the case with many lineages of this order, there was a tract of low-lying (*bo'og*) land that went with the *bɔɣar*, and the head of the inner lineage automatically had control over it. Any member of the lineage could, however, farm part of it with his nominal permission. After Pa'ana's death this land was divided into three parts, one part going to Ɔndieso's grandfather, another to Bayanlorag's descendants, and the third to Pa'ana's sons.

613 428 Kutɔbis also inherited the lineage *bɔɣar* of Pa'anbɔbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and brother's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbɔbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutɔbis. With this *bɔɣar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbɔbis's homestead. If on Kutɔbis's death the present head of Baɣanlɔrəg biis, Na'abzɔ, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutɔbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Baɣana, Pa'ana, and Sɔmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Sɔmnam's line of descent. On Kutɔbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbɔbis II. Lastly, Kutɔbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Baɣana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Baɣana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutɔbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutɔbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutɔbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

613 593 784 601 On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*ɣman*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

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[1] This was because Kutɔbis and Yidaan were *saarət*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have 613 a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser importance 593 of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social 784 status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. 601 The range within which classificatory 'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso 613 both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. 601 But if one of the wives dies, Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head [765] shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother 888 and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VI

THE MORAL BASIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF PARENT AND CHILD

The Fundamental Axiom of Parenthood

593 BEFORE we try to unravel further the complex strands that unite parents and children we must elucidate an idea which the Tallensi put forward as the fundamental axiom of parenthood. We have mentioned it already in our analysis of the notion of descent, but we have to examine it now from the point of view of the person-to-person relations of parents and children. It is the axiom, clearly stated by the natives and apparent also in Tale values and usages, that the fact of having begotten or borne a child creates an absolute moral bond between it and its parents. This idea is felt by them to be the real ultimate sanction behind right conduct in the relations of parents and children; and there is a very close agreement between ideals and actualities in this province of Tale social life.

593 888 855 Ignorance of hygiene and medicine, insufficiency of food and clothing, magical ideas, and Tale cultural standards in matters such as cleanliness or ventilation are undoubted handicaps to the child in its struggle to grow up. But sheer, callous neglect of a child by its parents, such as we sometimes hear of in more civilized societies, would be regarded with horror by all Tallensi and is unheard of. Similarly, a person who abandoned an aged parent to destitution would be regarded as a good for nothing (*boŋwari*). It happens occasionally, nowadays, when young men who find life irksome at home can so easily sneak off to foreign parts and stay away for many years. But it is a very rare thing and is universally reviled.

The Tribulations of Parenthood

593 If one asks a native why parents are and should be devoted to their children; or on what grounds they claim to 'own' (*so*) their children and to be entitled to their services, affection, gratitude, and respect; if one asks a girl who is keeping sullenly indoors, because she has been forcibly recovered from the lover she eloped with and beaten into the bargain, why she submitted passively to her father; or if one asks a young man nursing a bitter grievance against a father who has stopped him from marrying the girl he was courting why he does not defy the old man; if one asks any Talɔŋ, man or woman, such questions as these the answer invariably is, 'It is *dɔyam*'. 'Have you not begotten (or borne) them?' 'Has he not begotten you?' And then, almost always, comes the afterthought which contains the crux of the explanation, '*Dɔyam pu tɔ?*—Is not begetting (bearing) hard?' The phrase sounds

trite, especially after one has heard it fifty times. But it is charged with deep emotion for the native to whom it stands for all the tribulations and anxieties connected with the whole task of bringing up a child. 593

Men say that these tribulations begin with the act of sex itself. 831 Desired though it is for the pleasure it gives, sexual intercourse is debilitating. Ejaculation (*duum duurəm*, a term primarily used for micturition) is a giving up of something vital that is a source of strength and youth. That is why young, unmarried men are so much more vigorous than married men.

Then there is the strain under which a man lives during his wife's 843 pregnancy, particularly if it is a first pregnancy. Pregnancy, the creation of life, must not be brought into contact with death. Hence he, as the father of his wife's coming child, must not take direct part in mortuary or funeral rites. If he is one of the bereaved, the rites he is compelled to undergo are modified so as to eliminate contact with the corpse or objects symbolizing it. No particular evil is thought to follow on a breach of this taboo, which can, in fact, be magically purged if circumstances compel a man to it. But no man would be so callous as to flout the taboo deliberately.

Again, a man must not cut a new bush farm while his wife is pregnant, lest she miscarry. Both are critical events, affectively as well as socially, involving economic readjustments and the assumption of new responsibilities. Preparing a new bush farm absorbs you completely; it is, the natives say, 'a commotion of the heart (*suhkpɛləg*)'. But when your wife is pregnant you 'take heed only of her pregnancy (*i wona u puur la*)'. You cannot give attention, at the same time, to a new and vital economic enterprise like cutting a new bush farm. Apart from a wife's pregnancy only two other critical happenings are so obsessing as to be considered mystically incompatible with making a new bush farm—building a new house, a momentous undertaking, both materially and ritually, which marks an important change in a man's social personality; and taking a new wife, which also involves or portends big readjustments in one's social relations. It is significant that a man who is cutting a new bush farm or building a new house keeps away from funerals outside his own inner lineage since they are both emotionally disturbing and a distraction. All these critical events demand watchfulness and solicitude, for unknown dangers of both a physical and a mystical kind threaten their outcome. A man has to go about consulting diviners. He offers special sacrifices to his ancestors and puts the matter in their particular care.

Another sign of the concern that tempers a man's joy at his wife's pregnancy is the caution he must use in the chase. He must not kill certain mystically dangerous animals, else his wife may miscarry or bear a deformed child.

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A man's close relatives are also concerned when his wife is pregnant, especially if it is a first pregnancy. His mother and the older women of

602 843 the family keep an eye on the girl lest she overstrain herself or break one of the dietary taboos. If his father is alive it is he who visits diviners and appeals to the ancestors.

The woman's paternal family, too, are concerned, especially in a first pregnancy. When they have been informed of it, her father appeals to his ancestors to bless her in her coming ordeal, and her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood, as her time approaches. It is also her mother's duty, round about the fourth or fifth month, to send one of [292] her co-wives to 'gird the girl with a perineal band (*suol u voog*)', the garb of a matron; for until she has a child a woman wears no genital covering.

The prohibition against giving or accepting bride-price during a woman's pregnancy expresses this general solicitude too. Bride-price transactions involve tension and possible conflict between her father's people and her husband's; and this is not only distressing to her but dangerous to the unborn child. If, for instance, her father, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, as some men are heartless enough to do, takes her from her husband because the bride-price is not paid, the child's legitimate paternity may be prejudiced, as we have noted before, and its health suffer, or the woman herself have a difficult labour.

843 844 846 The solicitude for a woman with child reaches its peak at her confinement and during the subsequent three or four weeks, until she has regained her strength and resumes her normal activities. Many men have described to me their feelings in the hour of a wife's labour. 'You sit listening to her cries and groans of agony. You can't sleep. Your heart is clenched with fear and pity. You do not know how it will end. Do not women die in childbirth or become ill? Do not children die or get injured at birth?' A man's relief and happiness when his wife has passed safely (*salɔg*) through her confinement is written plainly in his voice and gait. Zaŋ, one of the most morose men I have known, was all smiles and affability on the morning after his wife's confinement. [777] When friends and neighbours congratulate a man on his good luck (*zusɔŋ*, lit. good head) it is as much on account of his wife's safety as on the child's arrival.

846 During the days of seclusion—three for a boy and four for a girl—and for the next week or so, it is the husband's duty to provide sustaining food and appetizing condiments for his wife. He will go out to fetch large logs for the fire that must be kept going day and night in the woman's room while she and the babe are still weak and liable to catch cold. Every morning he will go out or send someone to collect the leaves and herbs to infuse in the hot water with which mother and child are bathed. And if necessary he will himself carry water from the water-hole or do other services for her comfort that men usually consider to be beneath their dignity.

846 602 A confinement also involves extra labour and the dislocation of routine for the womenfolk of the husband's family. The care of the woman and

the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846
wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are
near, might give some help too.[1] The younger women fetch water and 602
cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593
begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of
a father's tribulations. Talking with men immediately after the birth 854
of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some
days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family [787
visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as 776]
a spiritual ward (*sɛɣəraan*) to guard its life (*gúr u ŋɔvər*) and watch over its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabələg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper [165]
'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, vol. xxxv, nos. 3 and 4, 1943.

843 844 For a woman too, and for any native who is looking at it from the point of view of motherhood, the difficulties of bringing a child into the world centre round pregnancy and labour. Tale women generally seem to take a pregnancy in their stride, especially later pregnancies. They go on with their household tasks until the last minute. Children are sometimes born in the bush, and quite often born outside on the home farm, where the mother has been busy with some task. Miscarriages due to the strain of heavy work such as fetching heavy loads of firewood or going to distant markets to buy grain by the sack, and bringing it home by head carriage are not uncommon among multiparae. Primiparae, as we have seen, are usually watched over by older women, but miscarriages due to overstrain occur among them too. A woman who has had a child is trusted to look after herself.

843 But in spite of their apparently casual attitude to it, women think of pregnancy as fraught with weariness, discomfort, and anxiety. A woman thinks of the purely physiological discomforts such as the attacks of sickness and giddiness she may suffer. She thinks of the circumspection she must use in her eating and drinking. Very thin gruel, cold left-over porridge, sweet potatoes, too much cold water, are all things which would injure her health and must be avoided; nor may she eat honey, else her babe will be born with a catarrhal snuffle. A woman thinks, also, of the increasing lassitude that makes her household tasks more and more burdensome as her term approaches. She remembers the store of firewood she must gather and the provisions she must lay in for her confinement, though it is hard enough to satisfy the current needs of the household. And at the back of her mind she has always the fear of a miscarriage. She is subject, also, to ritual taboos, the most important being the avoidance of funerals.

844 Then, of course, there is the act of giving birth (*dɔy*) in the narrow sense. Tale women do not think of it in anticipation with terror or repugnance, but they do associate it with pain and possible complications. The crude midwifery of the old women who assist at a birth, relying in part on magical measures, cannot correct a breech presentation (*tula*) or expel an undescended placenta.

846 Women always put particular emphasis on the agonies of the hygiene of confinement. Mother and child are subjected to a course of hot baths, douching, and massage which the natives say is extremely painful. A white onlooker finds the process harrowing, to say the least. Water heated to nearly boiling-point is used and medicinal leaves and herbs are infused in it. The infant goes rigid with pain when it is washed in this decoction, and the mother squirms and shrieks as it is sluiced over her body and still tender sexual parts. Massage and oiling with shea butter follow the bath. The treatment is given twice or thrice daily during the days of seclusion and is gradually reduced over the following two or three weeks, fewer baths being given and the temperature of the

water lowered. Tallensi think it is essential for the health of the mother 846
and babe, and one important item in it is forcing some of the decoction down the babe's throat. Whether or not it actually has a cleansing or invigorating effect must be left to medical judgement. For the native women it has the double significance of an ordeal, and a prescribed treatment that they would not dream of neglecting.

As we have seen, the care of the child on the ritual side falls on its 854
father. The much more exacting physical care of the child in its parlous passage through infancy is its mother's responsibility. This is stressed when Tallensi insist that it is not on account of a magical taboo but because a child is still partly dependent on the breast until it is about three, that sexual intercourse between a man and his nursing wife is discontinued. They say that a child requires the undivided care of its mother until it can run about and eat solid food by itself, and that it will wilt away through lack of nourishment if she conceives prematurely. Nursing mothers become pregnant only too often through lack of self-control, but this is never condoned by public opinion. The [847]
only time a Tale woman tries to induce an abortion is when such an accident happens, for no sacrifice is too great to preserve her living child.

When Tale parents are asked what were the special difficulties they 854
had to overcome in rearing their children, they always mention sickness first. Mothers especially have a great dread of sickness in their children. 855
One does not notice this in the easy-going, placid atmosphere of a well-conducted family when there is no 'sleeplessness' (*gɔgiŋgara*), to use the apt native euphemism for sickness. But one sees it when a child gets ill. Minor ailments throw its mother into a state of anxiety. Serious illness puts her into a panic or prostrates her with grief. She refuses food—which is always regarded by the natives as a sign of severe illness or great emotional distress—and stops all her work. I have seen illness in adolescent or adult children have this effect on women; and the younger the child the more do they suffer.

It is easy to imagine what the death of a child in infancy or childhood 761
means to its mother. A man is expected to control his emotions, but a woman may express her grief freely. A father's grief is palliated, also, 593
by the active role he takes in the ritual by which the emotional shock is neutralized. A woman's part in this ritual is more passive and she feels the blow more acutely in consequence. A mother remains inconsolable for many days and even weeks over the loss of a child.

The way Tallensi think of a mother's grief over the death of her child was brought home to me when Diŋkaha's little girl of about three died after a lingering and horrible illness. He had been devoted to the child and was greatly distressed, but in a few days he had accepted the diviner's verdict philosophically and was his old bouncing self again. His wife, on the other hand, broke down completely. Then, a couple of weeks later, news came that an older child of hers by a former husband, with

761 593 whom it was living, had also died suddenly. Diŋkaha, greatly concerned for his wife, warned all the members of his family not to say anything to her about it. If she heard of this calamity now, he said, she would surely die. Later on, when she had settled down again he would himself break the news to her.

765 593 Incidentally, fathers do not always get over the death of a child, whether an infant or an adult, with ease. It is easier for a young man, the Tallensi say, because he thinks to himself that his wife can still bear children to him. But even young men have been known to abandon [762] themselves to despair. An extreme case was that of Dɔɣayam, who pierced himself with a poisoned arrow when his favourite child died; and the average Talɔŋ, it must be remembered, speaks of suicide with contempt. The grief of a father when a grown-up or adolescent son dies is very moving. When Pumaan's son Kpeemi and Tinta'alɔm's son Suor, both fine young men in the twenties, died, it was as if a shock ran through the whole community. On both occasions the men of the clan gathered in full force to mourn at the bereaved house and the atmosphere of tragedy was felt by all. I cannot forget the picture of Pumaan, as taciturn and dour a man as one could meet anywhere, holding himself tautly, his face ashen, his eyes staring ahead, stoically suppressing his despair as an elder should do. Tɛndaan Teroog, an old man over seventy, made no pretence of stoicism when his eldest and only adult son died leaving a number of wives and children. He simply pined away and followed his son to the grave in a couple of months.

593 769 When Tallensi say that it is hard to bring a child into the world, they have in mind more than the physiological facts of birth, and the dangers of infancy and childhood. They think of the whole gamut of social and emotional relations between parents and children arising out of the fact of birth. For a Talɔŋ, as we have seen, does not become altogether independent of his parents until their death—nor, indeed, even after their death. The pragmatic bonds of jural and economic dependence become transformed into the equally strong, nay stronger bonds of ritual dependence on the ancestor spirits of whom the parents are the immediate prototypes and intermediaries. And in many ways the ritual relationships of the Tallensi with the spirits of their parents give a truer insight into the parent–child bond than their visible behaviour towards one another. 'Fear the dead but do not fear the living (*Zom kpiim ka di zo vopa*)', says one of their proverbs which enshrines their feeling that a person is under a far more compelling bond with his parents when they are dead than during their life. We shall return to this presently.

593 The gist of our analysis is that to the Tallensi parenthood means responsibility that weighs heavily at times. This comes out both in the notion that bearing or begetting a child is hard and in the correlated notion of the importance of rearing. At the same time there is no native, man or woman, who would not insist that a person has lived in vain if he

dies childless, and that children are the greatest source of joy and pride, comfort and support that anybody can have. The Tallensi are much like ourselves in this matter and do not think there is any inconsistency between these two aspects of parenthood. Their whole philosophy of life is like that. Realists as they are, they take it for granted that life has many risks and troubles, but, as they often put it, 'Does anybody desire death on that account?' When I told them that Europeans often refrain deliberately from having children, they were either sceptical or appalled. 593

The Parent–Child Bond as an Absolute Bond

Tallensi say that the bonds between parent and child can never be obliterated and may not be repudiated. This is a fundamental moral principle and it goes back to the notion that bearing or begetting children is hard. From it follows the duty of filial piety.

You cannot disown your child. 'Even if your child is a good-for-nothing, you have no alternative but to keep him,' said Loɣani, one of the most intelligent and upright men I knew. 'Have you not suffered to beget him?' he went on. 'How can you reject him? You are always thinking of your children's good, though they are often selfish and think only of their own advantage. Your child may be lazy or ill-behaved. But yet you cannot drive him away, you cannot harass him so that he quits you.'

Many examples could be quoted to illustrate the strength of this ideal. I sacked one of my servants for petty theft. A day or two later an elder who was known to be one of my friends came to intercede for him. He admitted that the man was a thief, but he was very disappointed when I declined to take him back. 'You are his father,' he said, 'and you ought to take him back.' Then, after a short silence, he added gravely, 'You white men! You are not like us. You do not understand the meaning of "to beg forgiveness".' 593 685

A better instance is an incident in which Loɣani himself was concerned some days after he made the comment quoted above. A youth of Loɣani's clan stole a fowl owned by another member of his own joint family, whom he called his older brother (*bier*). The theft, a despicable thing in any case, was made blacker by the youth's attempt to conceal it; and when it was discovered, the whole clan was agog with it. The culprit's father, in his shame and anger at the disgrace brought upon his family, struck and cursed him saying that he must never again set foot in the house. Thereupon the young man took refuge with Loɣani, whose son was his friend. Loɣani himself, like all respectable people, was shocked at the theft. 'Heaven save me from theft,' he said, when he told me the story. 'Death were better than that. It is shameful.' And he went on to describe how everybody scorns and derides a thief. Nevertheless, as soon as the boy arrived Loɣani went to the elders of the boy's lineage to get them to intercede with the father to withdraw his [577] [789]

593 685 curse and take his son back. But meanwhile the boy sneaked away and went to his brother in Mampurugu for fear of public ridicule. 'But', said Loɣani, 'one day he will return and his father will certainly take him back.' It is because a man cannot disown his child that a Tale father always stands by his son in what the natives call *pɔɣadir yɛla*, marriage affairs, the test occasions of jural responsibility. A man may have strong private objections to his son's marriage and eventually cause it to be dissolved. He may criticize and scold his son for it. But in public he will support the boy if the marriage does not infringe some rule of kinship or convention of social relationships. This, it should be noted, is not the same thing as a man's responsibility for his son's bride-price which rests on a different principle. For the same reason a woman can never be denied refuge in her father's house if she has nowhere else to stay.

593 A woman, too, cannot disown her child. Indeed Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for a woman, bound as she is to her child by even stronger emotional bonds than a man. It happens, of course, that women desert, or are taken away from one husband to marry another and leave a child behind. But if the child is still too tiny to fend for itself it accompanies its mother until it is old enough to be separated (*pɔhɔg*) from her. Tallensi are very critical of a woman who deserts a child when she leaves its father, though not without ulterior motives; for a runaway wife is a loss, whether she leaves children or not. As has been mentioned, they say that in such cases 'Rearing is more important than bearing'. And yet, they say, a woman yearns after her child no matter who has the custody of it. She might easily desert a later husband to return to an earlier husband with whom she has left a child; and if a woman who has been married more than once returns to her first husband, his rights take precedence of all the others' by Tale custom. That is why men object strongly to a wife's attempting to visit or even see a child she has left with a former husband. I have seen a man keep watch on his wife for days lest she make such an attempt. 'Do you know what bearing (a child) means to a woman?' he said, in explanation. In any case, her marital history makes no difference to the *soog* (uterine) tie between a woman and her child and to the social relationships arising out of it. 837 As we have already learnt, there is no surer guarantee that a woman will stay with a husband than if she has two or three children by him. If she has children, a woman who commits adultery almost invariably returns to her husband, risking the wrath of his ancestor spirits and enduring the shame of a semi-public confession. If she has none, she usually runs off with her paramour.

593 577 The ideas we have been discussing are not thought to have a ritual sanction where own parents and children are concerned. But with proxy parents, as might be expected, a ritual sanction comes into the picture openly. A man who disowns or ill-treats or in other ways neglects the

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duties of a 'father' to a dead brother's children, especially minor children, incurs the anger of his paternal ancestors. Human nature being what it is, Tallensi say, it happens all too often that men behave disgracefully to a dead brother's children. Sometimes retribution comes in their lifetime. Sometimes, however, the sanction which re-establishes the moral law only comes into action after their death. Then the diviners who are consulted declare that they have not been 'accepted' (*die*) by the ancestors whom they have gone to join. Their own sons must make ritual amends to set the matter right, and so the moral principles they sinned against are vindicated.

Filial Piety

The counterpart of parental duty and devotion is filial piety. It is regarded by the Tallensi as an equally binding moral principle and an equally strong motive of individual conduct; and they trace it back, also, to the tribulations parents undergo in bringing a child into the world. It is not a formally elaborated doctrine, as among the Chinese, nor a dogma of faith, as among the ancient Hebrews, nor a legal principle, as in ancient Rome, but a diffused norm of conduct. The Tallensi would laugh at the idea of kowtowing to a parent, and their respect for parental authority is far from being blind obedience. For one of the significant characteristics of the relations of parents and children is their ambivalence. In everyday intercourse there is a freedom in these relations, verging on camaraderie. Yet they are full of tensions due to the self-assertion of children against their parents. It is the characteristic picture of the relations between successive generations in a patrilineal society—parents and children bound to one another by the strongest ties of sentiment and interest but latently pitted against one another, particularly in the case of fathers and sons. Filial piety among the Tallensi can be interpreted, in some of its expressions, as a bulwark against the disintegrative effects of these tensions or as a stabilizing mechanism of behaviour the main function of which is to close the gap between parents and children if it threatens to become too large.

We have seen how important it is for a man's status whether or not he has a father alive. If anything, his status is advanced by the death of his nearest fathers, and it is not until he is 'fatherless' within the nuclear lineage that he attains jural autonomy. In this, as in all aspects of the relations of father and son, Tale custom is ambivalent. After a certain stage of social maturity men desire to be free of paternal restraint, and yet they are glad to leave the bigger responsibilities for their lives in the hands of a father. It is not surprising that the affective stress, in Tale thought, is on the blessings of having a father alive.

Speaking conventionally, Tallensi say that one must obey one's father, respect him, work for him, take his side against everybody else—even

593 against one's mother—'*ɔn dɔyi la zugu*—because he begot you'. One's dependence on him increases one's attachment and sense of duty
577 towards him. Dependence on one's father is a good thing, a highly desirable and advantageous state of affairs, and the essence of filial piety is to accept this condition of dependence as the right thing in life. Tallensi say that a man has no cares while his father is alive. He looks after all one's affairs (*maal i yɛla*). He takes charge of the farming, attends to all ritual matters such as sacrifices to the ancestors and the consultation of diviners if one is ill, and assumes responsibility for such things as the payment of bride-price. He takes care of the house (*gur yiri*) both in the physical sense of always staying at home and in the jural and ritual sense of being its responsible head, leaving his sons free to go about as they please. The emphasis is on the father as the one who bears all responsibility for one's welfare in economic, jural, and ritual matters. That is why, the natives say, a man mourns the death of a father, for henceforth he must take on the burden of responsibility for himself. It means the end of protection and security in relation to society at large and to the spirits of the ancestors.

The picture is overdrawn but not inaccurate. The burden of social responsibility does not weigh so heavily as this statement implies. Siŋ and Gbana, both young men in the twenties, managed their households very well. But both often bemoaned their fate in having been left fatherless when still boys. 'If my father were alive I would have had a wife by now', said Siŋ, 'and Na'abzɔ (his proxy father) would not have used my sister's bride-price cattle for his own purposes.' The death of the father often means the uprooting of his sons. 'Now', said Kɛlibsɔ after his father's funeral ceremonies were over, 'we (he and his brothers) shall become poor men. When our father was alive we had a large home farm to cultivate. Now our junior father (*ba-pit*) will take that and we shall have to go and farm our bush farms. Soon the day will come when we shall move out, for who knows how a *ba-pit* will look after you?' I have heard boys of 9 or 10 talk in this way after the death of their father. It is easier for a woman who has her husband's protection. But even she suffers a sad loss in the death of her own father. His heirs, even her own brothers, will never have quite the same intimate and personal interest in her and her children.

[769] There is a direct connexion between this emphasis on the dependence of children on parents and the worship of the ancestors. Nor is the underlying feeling of a hidden antagonism between father and son, of which we shall have more to say presently, altogether incongruous with this overt stress on the security the father symbolizes. The social relations of father and son, at every stage of the latter's development, are always a compromise between the mutual dependence of father and son and the limited dependence enjoyed by the latter.

There is not the same degree of tension between mother and child or

even mother and daughter, and hence, perhaps, Tallensi do not have 593
such a definite conventional rationalization of their attitudes towards the
mother. They say you respect your mother and cherish her in old age 577
because she bore and fed you. In childhood you were more attached
to her than to your father; you ran to her whenever you were tired or
hungry or ill and she comforted and fed you; as an adult you realize the
importance of 'father's begetting' (*ba-dɔɣam*) in jural, ritual, and economic
matters such as marriage or landowning, and in crises like sickness or
death; but your mother is still honoured as the centre of your domestic
arrangements if you are a man, and if you are a woman, she is the one
person you can always come to in sickness or trouble, in the certainty
of loving attention. Comfort, emotional security, and food—these
are the distinguishing qualities of a mother in Tale thought. It corresponds
to the more personal character of the bonds between mother
and child, by contrast with the jurally and ritually weighted ties with
the father.

Tallensi say that one must respect one's living parents; but to one's 769
dead parents one owes reverence and submission in surpassing degree.
That is what the proverb 'Fear the dead and do not fear the living' 577
means to them.[1] One can defy a living parent sometimes and rely on
being forgiven; one cannot defy a dead parent. One can live without
the help of a living parent, if necessary, but not without the mystical
protection of one's dead parents.

In the religious practice of the Tallensi the ancestors exercise their 769
powers without compunction. They punish and slay as arbitrarily as
they bless. Every dry season men return to rebuild their parental homes 577
which have been allowed to lie in decay for many years. They come 167
from Mampurugu, from outlying parts of Taleland, or from Ashanti
and the Colony. Some have been away for years. Pal of Zubiuŋ had
a prosperous farm in Mampurugu, where he had gone to settle on being
discharged from the regiment after the war of 1914–18. During his
fifteen years in Mampurugu he had become fairly wealthy, with five
wives, a horse, several head of cattle, and a quantity of good clothes.
Dema of Tɛnzugu, who joined the regiment as far back as 1912 and
had lived in Ashanti as a trader since his discharge after the war, was
obviously a man of considerable wealth by Tale standards. Both
returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads in 1935–6. They told the
same story. Wives and children had died; there had been repeated
bouts of sickness in the family; other misfortunes had piled up over the
years; and all, as the diviners declared, because they had 'rejected
(*zaɣah*) their fathers (*banam*)' by remaining in foreign parts. It did not
matter much while there were older brothers at home to 'give water
(*zaŋ kuom ti*)', that is, make sacrifices, to the ancestral shrines. But

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[1] The verb *zo*, to fear, has a wide range of meaning and here it means to show respect towards, to revere, to stand in awe of.

769 577 167 when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not done so. Dɛma is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to abandon in Mampurugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the same with Na'abzɔ, Kaɣar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

769 577 757 While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every native owns some 'roots (*ŋaɣa*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you (to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔɣam la zug, nyɛn dɔɣəm la zugu*).'

577 593 769 Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan, with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛɣəraan*) of one of her paternal forbears and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance [782] to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers. A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

of his dead mother's spirit; she is not tied to the lineage home in the 577
same way as a father's spirit is and can be 'given water' more easily 593
wherever the man happens to be. Nevertheless, his welfare and that of 769
his dependants rests as much on his maintaining good relations with her spirit as with his father's spirit.

Filial piety among the Tallensi is a great deal more than a customary 577
injunction to honour and respect one's parents. Psychologically it is
a very complex sentiment. Even during their lifetime parents have 593
quasi-mystical attributes, as we shall see more clearly when we consider
the relations of parents and first-born children, and these dominate the 789
sentiment. A parent can bless or curse a child. A parent's curse, in particular, is greatly dreaded, as we have previously noted, and, in consequence, only resorted to in case of gross affront or unforgivable defiance on the part of a child. If a parent expresses or merely feels resentment against a child, that is equivalent to a curse which may cause it illness or other harm. Thus one element in the sentiment of filial piety is respect for the blessing and fear of the curse of a parent. That is why, men say, it is sometimes embarrassing to have an old mother in one's house, though one is bound to keep her, both in duty and out of
affection. For old women become completely egoistic. All they think [888]
of is having enough to eat and being comfortable, and if they are crossed they are apt to curse anybody incontinently.

In a large joint family one often finds a young man with a growing family of his own torn between his devotion to his father and his desire to be economically independent so as to provide for his wife and children more satisfactorily. He cannot go out to farm on his own without his father's blessing and consent else his venture will surely fail. He begins to drop hints or makes a tentative approach to his father. But if the latter shows displeasure he retreats at once. I have seen this happen more than once. When Tɔγalberɔgu wanted to go out to farm on his own, his father Naabdiya reproached him, saying that *he* had not deserted *his* father as Tɔγalberɔgu now wished to desert *him*. Tɔγalberɔgu apologized and withdrew. But, as Naabdiya told me, 'I still had resentment in my heart and he still secretly cherished his plan'. A couple of weeks later Tɔγalberɔgu developed a large boil in the armpit. In panic he begged an elder to ask Naabdiya to forgive him and formally withdraw his implicit curse, which, he was certain, was the cause of the boil. It was the same with Yinyela's son Duun. Though as an eldest son he felt entitled to start farming on his own, he dared not ask that hard old man's permission for fear that it might arouse his resentment.

It is an interesting point that when a young man who has been living 577
and farming with his dead father's brother, for example, sets up in his 593
own homestead, the pretext for the separation is often not an economic one. It is commonly recognized that the young man moves out because he needs more land and freedom to provide for his family by himself.

577 But if the father's brother does not take the initiative of pointing out to
his 'son' that he would be better off on his own, the latter cannot do so.
593 It would be like suggesting that his proxy father is not treating him as
fairly as his own father. The usual course of events is that something goes wrong with the young man's affairs. It may be a trivial mishap, such as a hen being caught by a hyena, or something more serious, such as the sickness of wife or child. The young man goes with his proxy father to consult a diviner; and the diviner declares that the trouble was caused by the young man's own father, because the young man has not yet built his own homestead. The dead father lets it be known that he wants to go directly to his son's own house to accept sacrifices and not have to go to his brother's house as a mere guest. Thus the dictates of filial piety are subtly and doubly fulfilled.

577 Filial piety, as these examples show, is the psychological bridge
between the relations of parents and children in life and in the ritual
593 relationships of the living with the ancestors. All the ancestors are
769 projections of the parents, different manifestations of the images Tale
culture draws of certain aspects of the parents that do not appear in conventional, overt behaviour. This is clear, also, from the element of reverence that enters into the sentiment of filial piety.

Siŋ's father and Na'abzɔ were the sons of two brothers. When Siŋ's
577 father died, Na'abzɔ married his widow and took charge of the children.
But Na'abzɔ is a notoriously cantankerous person. So Siŋ took his
593 younger brothers and mother and set up in his own homestead as soon
as he was old enough. In jural and ritual matters, however, Na'abzɔ is still his 'father'. Passing Siŋ's house one day with an elder I heard sounds of violent quarrelling between him and Na'abzɔ. Na'abzɔ stood on the flat roof of a room in his house hurling abuse at Siŋ, who replied angrily, but politely, from his gateway 50 yards away. My companion and I turned aside to talk to Siŋ. It appeared that Na'abzɔ had as usual been nagging Siŋ and his brothers unreasonably. He demanded that they should leave their own farm-work to come and hoe his farm. When Siŋ asked for his help, which was indispensable, in an important ritual matter, he had refused out of petty spite; and now he had upset Siŋ's sister's marriage by arbitrary and inconsiderate demands on her husband. I asked Siŋ, 'Why don't you take hold of Na'abzɔ and thrash him? That should stop him.' He looked at me in dismay and said, 'No, no. I couldn't do that. It is forbidden. He is my father. He begot me.' My companion, almost as shocked, chimed in, 'No, you can't strike your father, you can't strike your mother. They have borne (*dɔɣa*) you. He who strikes his father or his mother is a good-for-nothing.' He went on
to say that everybody knew what sort of a person Na'abzɔ was, but Siŋ
577 must be patient. It would all come right. For would not Na'abzɔ die
593 one day and Siŋ inherit all his property? Similar comments were made
627 by everybody I met about Dɛŋkumis's brother's son, Dmaarəb. The

young man was a lazy spendthrift and there was constant trouble 577
between the two. One day Dɛŋkumis forcibly stopped him from beating
his wife and he turned and struck Dɛŋkumis. There was an uproar, for 593
other men of the lineage set upon Dmaarəb with sticks and fists. Next 627
day Dɛŋkumis, followed by all the men of his lineage segment, dragged the delinquent to the chief. As it was a *dugni yɛl*, an affair of the inner lineage, the chief dealt with it as head of the clan. Trembling with anger and contempt he read the youth an excoriating homily on how a person ought to behave to his parents. Dɛŋkumis, ended the chief, had been too patient with the worthless scamp just because he was his brother's son. Let him beware. Another action of this kind, and Dɛŋkumis would be commanded to throw him out of his house.

Another story deserves recording as an example of the working of 577
filial piety. Kuŋaaŋba was born when his father was an old man. At 593
that time a famine swept the country. A distant clansman of his father
seized his mother and her babe to sell them into slavery and recoup [567]
himself for a debt owed to him by Kuŋaaŋba's father. But the woman managed to escape. When the famine was over she returned home to find her husband dead and his brother Gəlime at the head of the household. Gəlime, however, disregarding the rule that whoever inherits a man's property and status must take over his duties and liabilities, at first refused to have her back. She was like a corpse that had come to life again, he said. But his own wife, with an independence of spirit that Tale women often show, threatened to leave him if he did not take her co-wife and the child back, so he gave in. In due course Kuŋaaŋba's mother remarried one of her late husband's classificatory brothers, under whose care the boy grew up. Jurally and ritually Gəlime remained his 'father'. Then Kuŋaaŋba went to work for the white man at Kumasi. He returned with a quantity of clothes, a bag of salt, and three or four pounds in cash. He found Gəlime, now an old man in decline, left almost destitute, as his own sons, whom he had always treated with severity, had both run away to the Colony. Kuŋaaŋba at once took the old man to his own house. He gave him a cloth to wear, bought a supply of grain for him, and left him some money when he himself departed for another spell of work abroad. Thereafter Kuŋaaŋba took care of Gəlime as if he were his own father until the end of his life. 'For', said Kuŋaaŋba, as he concluded his simple tale, 'was he not my father? What did it matter that he had treated me badly in my childhood, since I am still alive and healthy? I couldn't leave my father to die of starvation just because his own sons were wastrels.' I asked Kuŋaaŋba if Gəlime had ever expressed remorse for having neglected his duty to him in his childhood. 'No,' was the answer, 'he would not do that. He would keep it to himself but his heart would be sore (*u suh ndum*). And now that he is dead he will (as a spirit) do good to me.' It was true, commented an elder who had listened to the story; a son who had

577 no charity (*ɔn kɛ sugəru*) would perhaps have done otherwise, but
593 Kuŋaaŋba's way was the right way.

It is on the death of a parent that filial piety is most sharply evoked, just as it is the death of a child that brings out most poignantly a parent's love and devotion. We have referred to this previously. In this matter filial sentiment and ritual sanctions converge.

The supreme act of filial piety sons owe to their parents is the per-
764 formance of their mortuary and funeral ceremonies. If a man or woman
577 dies leaving no sons then this duty falls upon his or her nearest proxy
sons. The initiative and chief responsibility rest with the oldest living
593 son. The burial rites must be carried out immediately; but when and
765 how the funeral ceremony is to be made is for the sons to decide. No
one can put pressure on them to hurry on the funeral if they wish to postpone it for several years. It is customary to delay the funeral of an elder, an old woman, or a person holding a ritual office until the third year after his or her death, ostensibly so as to enable the sons to collect the large stock of grain and the livestock required for the ceremony. Meanwhile, in the case of a man the sons exercise the social role of the
[793] deceased. If he was a tendaana they will perform the duties and exercise
the rights of his office, and this may be a motive for delaying his funeral beyond the customary period. The old men who are eligible for the office can object and grumble; they cannot compel a dead man's son to make his father's funeral. The issue lies between the dead man and his sons. If they delay unduly they will incur their father's anger. For until his funeral has been celebrated he dwells between the world of the living and the world of the spirits. As the Tallensi say, his one leg is in the earth (among the spirits) and his other on the surface of the earth (among the living) (*u gbɛr dɩkɔ bɛ teŋni ka gbɛr dɛna bɛ doorni*). He cannot 'join his forefathers (*paag u banam*)' until he has been 'taken back into the house (*kpɛɛh dugni*)' as a spirit. And the situation is the same with a dead mother, though she is of less jural importance.

The duty of burying a parent and celebrating his or her funeral is
769 the first step in the most exacting of all filial duties, the cult of the dead
577 parents. Native thought and behaviour show that the Tallensi feel it as
an inescapable compulsion of conscience, and not as a mere act of pro-
764 priety. Tallensi are quite matter-of-fact about the corpse (*kum*) of a
dead parent. They describe it as the 'slough (*fɔrəŋ*)' of the soul (*sii*). What they are concerned about is the spirit (*kpiim*) of the dead parent. A man cannot rest secure until he has assimilated his father's or mother's spirit into the framework of his life, domesticated it, so to speak, as the expression *kpɛɛh dugni* shows; and this is the function of the funeral ceremony. For that reason Tallensi want to have the graves of their parents near their dwellings. True, a man's ancestor spirits accompany him wherever he goes, but they are most tangibly present in his house, where he sacrifices to them. It often happens that a man has to be

buried in one of the peripheral settlements, or abroad, where he has 769
been living temporarily. Then, if his sons return to the ancestral home, 577
perhaps years after his death, he will one day, through a diviner, order
them to exhume (*gurəg*) him and rebury him among his ancestors at the 764
ancestral home (*daboog*). The notion that when a person dies he joins
his ancestors (or a woman her husband's ancestors as well as her own), [775]
and that his body should therefore lie among their bodies, is a basic idea
in Tale religion and an obvious reflex of filial piety.

As the case of Sawəŋba's daughter, previously quoted (p. 89), shows, 764
daughters are as much bound as sons to mourn the death of a parent.
All the children of the deceased must come to the funeral so as to 765
undergo the mourning rites. They are ritually unclean until they
have done so and have had their heads ritually shaved (*kuo zug*) in 577
sign of it. Though the ritual uncleanness (*dayət*) of a person who 783
has lost a parent does not interfere with normal life, it is felt to be
a psychological burden, for, as we have noted, until a dead person's
funeral has been made, his or her social personality is not wholly erased
from the real world. I have heard children of 10 or 11 say gravely that
they wished their mother's or father's funeral could be made soon so
that they could 'shave off the uncleanness (*kuo dayət la bah*)'. The
uncleanness adheres primarily to the deceased's own children, but it
also affects proxy children who have no living parent (as determined by
the criteria of 'fatherlessness' or 'motherlessness') of the same sex as the
deceased. One of the ways in which Tallensi demonstrate respect and
affection for a classificatory parent such as a [illegible]er's agnatic cousin or
a classificatory father's wife, who has never been a proxy parent to
them, is to undergo the chief mourning rites for him or her—provided,
of course, the mourner is 'fatherless' or 'motherless' in that situation.
When an old man or woman who was the last of the generation of
'fathers' or 'mothers' of the inner lineage dies, the men and women of
the lineage to whom he or she is a classificatory parent gather from far
and wide for the funeral and all undergo the rites of shaving the head.
It is not compulsory for anyone to have the head shaved for a
classificatory parent, but it is a pious gesture which at the same time
proclaims the solidarity of the lineage. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* might
be a Tale proverb. Old grudges are forgotten—though not necessarily
buried for ever—and men and women who have been estranged from
their classificatory brothers and sisters or the deceased parent turn up
to the funeral to do the proper thing.

Nowadays the death of a parent is one of the strongest sanctions that 577
induce the men who go to work abroad to return home, if only for a
while. The absentees may dawdle for weeks or months or even two 765
or three years—for funeral ceremonies can be postponed, as we have
noted, for periods up to three, four, or more years—but most of them
come home eventually for the rites. Those who delay so long that their

577 765 relatives at home decide not to wait for them are the exceptions that prove the rule. In a few cases they are men who have struck root in their new environment after many years of living there and find it difficult to get away. Sometimes they find it easier to procrastinate because they originally left home through a quarrel with the deceased parent. But generally they tarry because the deceased is a proxy parent or because they have older brothers at home who will conduct the funeral. Later, perhaps, when the mantle of the lineage headship falls on their shoulders they will return, like Pal and Dema, to take over and end their lives in the ancestral home. It is a feature of Tale custom that natural human weaknesses are not unduly penalized by public opinion. As long as he lives a man can always try to make good his derelictions of filial duty. It lies between him and his ancestors. The community is neutral.

577 765 593 At funeral ceremonies of old people one also sees that filial piety includes pride in one's parents. The *koordaana*, owner of the funeral or chief mourner (that is, the deceased's oldest son), and his brothers strain their resources to the utmost to provide a lavish funeral. It is not uncommon for nearly the whole harvest of a household to be consumed in making the beer and providing the cooked food required. In addition, animals must be slaughtered in honour of the dead. A poor man may be able to give his father only a couple of sheep or goats which he has had to borrow for the purpose. On the other hand, when Doohraan, the head of Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, died, rich in years and in honour, his sons slaughtered a cow, a donkey, and about a dozen small stock for his spirit; and Saɣawuob postponed his mother's funeral for two years so that he should be able to give her a cow. At a big funeral, when the war parade (*dee*) and the whole concourse of clansfolk, kinsfolk, neighbours, and friends of the dead stand milling at the gateway, the oldest son climbs on to the wall to address the crowd. Wearing [242] his ceremonial plumed helmet of straw, with a large red cock in his hand, he looks down haughtily upon the crowd and delivers his harangue. [537] His speech, spun out with all the tricks of rhetoric in the Tale repertoire, is proud almost to the point of arrogance. He is relating the great deeds of his dead father or mother. They may seem trivial, sometimes, to the cold-blooded ethnographer—so and so borrowed five cows and paid them back in two years; so and so was a redoubtable farmer who in one year sold enough grain to buy three cows; another man boldly carried off his wife from under the noses of Mamprusi who had seized her; and this old woman was a potteress who by her own efforts earned the money to buy two cows, and in addition had been faithful to her first and only husband until his death. But it is not the substance so much as the occasion of these funeral panegyrics that matter to the Tallensi. At the end of his speech the son beats the cock (or if he is a rich man it may be a goat) to death on the wall and flings it to the crowd with a challenge that any person who can claim equal achievements should take it. But

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can 593
match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so. 765

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride
in one's parents among the Tallensi. They always show off an old 593
parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often 577
been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man 888
or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long
speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and
children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am
his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride
and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old 777
people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck
(*zusɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather
than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full?
(*U pu di ŋɔɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death
of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished
the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular
superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and
senile, as Doohraan was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage,
the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their
ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding
he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his
consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as
everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among 593
the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect,
affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, 577
supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor
cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall
see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication
of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole
that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relationships. 577
A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from
his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from 613
his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage
is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as
its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin
through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral
kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic
motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through
his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion,
and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

577 613 is usually land that has come to him by inheritance from his father.[1] It is hallowed land because it has come to him thus. This land is the basis of his local and economic ties with his lineage and clan. In psychological terms it stands for the most significant aspects of his own development and of his relationship with his father. It was here that he learnt to farm, working side by side with his father and thus coming to know every inch of it. His father's social personality is for him closely associated with this land, with the homestead which stands on it somewhere, and with the family graves including, in time, those of his parents, that lie there. When he inherits this land it is the principal sign that he has at length stepped into his father's shoes.

577 613 166 The cycle of development through which the nuclear lineage regularly passes shows the working of filial piety very clearly. A typical history is that of Ba'ahug's house. When Ba'ahug inherited the homestead and the home farms of his nuclear lineage, at Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg, about thirty years ago, he had living with him his son Saŋgbɔŋ and his full brother Zɔŋ. Then Ba'ahug died and his brother Zɔŋ inherited the homestead and the patrimony. In due course Saŋgbɔŋ moved out to build his homestead on his own father's part of the patrimonial bush farm at Gbambee, and there he brought up his family. In 1934 Zɔŋ died and Saŋgbɔŋ inherited the homestead and patrimony. He remained at Gbambee, however, until 1936. There had been illness and other mishaps in his family, and the diviners declared that his father, who was buried beside the original homestead at Kuorɔg, was demanding that he (Saŋgbɔŋ) should go back there. So in 1936 he handed over the homestead at Gbambee and some of the land there to his oldest son and returned to take up his abode in the ancestral homestead. For him the cycle of development from the domestically unitary joint family through the phase of its dispersion and back to a phase of unity was completed. The unity would have been more obvious still if he had made his oldest son accompany him to the old homestead, and if his late 'father' Zɔŋ's children had remained with him. Actually Zɔŋ's sons, finding that the land that would now be available for their use was insufficient, decided to move to Biuŋ; and there was no need for Saŋgbɔŋ to summon his own oldest son to come and live with him as the homestead at Gbambee is regarded merely as an outpost of the ancestral home. There is this advantage, also, about keeping up the Gbambee outpost, that when Saŋgbɔŋ dies Zɔŋ's oldest son will be the heir and will return to resume the ancestral home and lands. This will mean that Saŋgbɔŋ's sons will probably have to move out to their father's land at Gbambee, so the homestead might as well be kept up. If Saŋgbɔŋ had died at Gbambee before inheriting the ancestral home he would have been brought home to Kuorɔg for burial beside his father and forefathers.

In the next generation there will be a new development. For Saŋgbɔŋ's

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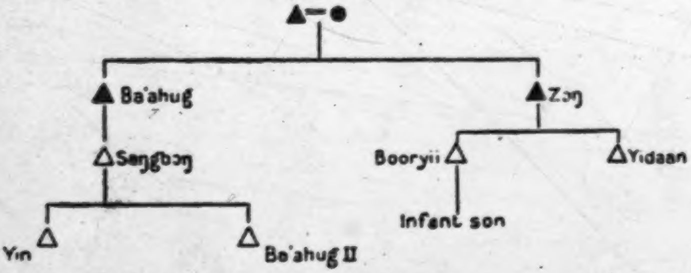
[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

sons their father's home and land has a double location. In terms of 577
their own experience and immediate attachments it is the home and land 613
at Gbambee; in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage it
is the home and land at Kuorəg. The oldest of them may go back to 166
Kuorəg when he inherits the patrimony. The younger may prefer to stay at Gbambee when he becomes head of the lineage and leave the Kuorəg homestead and land to the other branch of the lineage. He will be living in what is to him his father's homestead and on what is to him his father's land in the most intimate and personal sense. And when he dies his kinsmen will probably be informed by the diviner consulted on the day he is buried that he desires to be buried at Gbambee and not at Kuorəg. Thenceforth a new home is established for one of the lines of agnatic descent sprung from Saŋgbəŋ. This branch will still maintain close jural, economic, and religious ties with the other branches of the same segment established at Kuorəg and will act together with those branches in all corporate affairs, but it will be independently localized. Thus filial piety which has drawn Saŋgbəŋ back into the local orbit of his ancestral lineage, and will keep him there even after death, will be the ostensible incentive that will make one of his sons establish a new home for his posterity at Gbambee.

The following genealogy shows the agnatic relationship of the individuals that have been mentioned:



And the table on p. 184 shows the cycle of development of this nuclear lineage as we have sketched it.

The natives are well aware, of course, that these processes of dispersion and reintegration in the nuclear lineage arise directly out of the genealogical cleavages and economic needs of its component segments. But the chief sanction for each defined stage in the process is, in their eyes, filial piety. Objectively, it appears to the anthropologist as a socially accepted rationalization or pretext covering a rearrangement of property and jural relations made necessary by economic needs and the logic of the social structure; subjectively, it is felt by those concerned as an irresistible ritual sanction, crystallized as a command from the father's spirit. It works consistently in the direction of keeping the lineage intact [1]

[1] [Text continued on p. 185.—Analyst]

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[p.184]

Date	At Kuorəg	At Gbambee	Elsewhere
c. 1920	Ba'ahug Zoŋ Sangbaŋ Booryii		
1933	Zoŋ Booryii Yidaan	Sangbaŋ Yin Ba'ahug II	
1936	Sangbaŋ Ba'ahug II (and other sons)	Yin	Booryii Yidaan (At Biuŋ)
19—?	Boorvii Yidaan and their children	Yin Ba'ahug II and their children	
19—?	Yin [Yidaan and/or Zoŋ's grandsons in separate homestead?]	Ba'ahug II (Ba'ahug II establishes new home at Gbambee)	[Zoŋ's surviving sons and/or grandsons may have a homestead of their own at *Kuorəg*, or at *Gbambee* or at *Biuŋ*]

in relation to its local and spiritual focus. Economic necessity is undoubtedly the chief incentive to fission in the joint family, but the process of reintegration is as much or more the result of ritual and affective forces. 577 613 166

This is the essence of the pull exercised on every Taləŋ by his father's original home (*daboog* pl. *dabaar*), and on lineages in their corporate existence by the *daboog* of their founding ancestor. We have already recorded several cases of men who returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads after many years of absence. As these instances show, it often involves an economic loss when a man gives up fertile land in a peripheral settlement to return to one of the ancient settlements where the soil is less productive. There are many men who in their young days farmed at Biuŋ or Gbambee or Datɔk and had many cattle, sheep, and goats then but now have no more than their neighbours. Their explanation is that they had to give up their farms in the peripheral settlements to come and rebuild their fathers' original homesteads, thus exchanging plenty for poverty. This was the story of Saɣəbazaa and Na'ampaahya, of Saandi, Loobuol-Kugər, and of Saɣawuob, and of many more than need be mentioned here, in addition to those already referred to. It was the religious and affective associations of their ancestral homes that drew the Hill Talis back to the hills in 1936 after twenty-five years of exile, in spite of the economic sacrifice this meant for a great many of them. Down on the plains most of them had all the land they needed immediately around their homesteads. It was fertile land, too, won from the uncultivated bush. They were better off for food than they had been on the hills. But they gladly gave up their temporary homes and farms to return to their exiguous stony patches and strips on their hilltops, the crops of which have to be supplemented by farming bush farms three or four miles away. For all their rationalizations about the better climate and pleasanter surroundings of the hills, the truth was that it was a matter of faith. On the hills they were back among their fathers and forefathers, and this gave them a sense of religious security they had lacked on the plains. It meant, also, that they were back in the right local setting of their clan and lineage relationships.

The return of the Hill Talis to their ancestral homes is a striking case because it involved the building of between 250 and 300 homesteads[1] in two dry seasons and the movement of over 2,000 people. But every dry season, within a settlement, one finds men rebuilding homesteads on the long-deserted sites of their fathers' homesteads. This happens when a man at length succeeds to the position his father held in the lineage structure. So Deemzeet built a new homestead on the site of his own father's homestead when he became head of the section of Puhug at Tongo. Or it may be simply that a man has a series of

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[1] A minimum estimate. The total number of homesteads built or rebuilt was probably nearer 500, but I was not able to check this.

577 misfortunes and learns from a diviner that this is due to his dead father
613 who is angry with him for leaving his *daboog* site derelict. That was the
166 case with Pa'anbɔbis and Mambaŋya.

We have said previously that the sentiments, the rights, and the duties
577 of parent and child to one another are traced back by the natives to the
fact of birth; but in actual social usage they are fortified by strong
593 ritual sanctions. Tallensi have these in mind when they say that a
688 father's authority is irresistible because 'he sacrifices for you (to your
ancestors)'. Your father 'owns (*so*)' you because he begot (*dɔɣa*) you; and he sacrifices (*kaab*) on your behalf because he begot you; you can only approach your ancestors through your father while he is alive, and if you do so after his death it is always through the intermediation of his spirit. It all goes back to the fact of birth, but the ritual sanctions are the most important instrument by which a father's authority is maintained, as our discussion has several times shown, particularly in the case of a proxy or classificatory father. Siŋ cannot defy his proxy father Na'abzɔ 'because', as he says, 'he sacrifices for me'; Da'amo'o chafes under the vexations Kutɔbis and his sons frequently put upon him, but he cannot, for the same reason, disregard Kutɔbis's authority over him as his late father's brother. It is very rarely indeed that a man in a paternal position will refuse to sacrifice on behalf of another who is in the position of a 'son' to him; but the fear of this sanction has a restraining influence in cases such as those of Siŋ and Da'amo'o. The whole hierarchy of authority in the lineage rests on this ritual office. Most of the men of Yinyɛla's inner lineage were opposed to his cutting himself off from the rest of Puhug, but they had to 'follow (*dɔl*)' him because he had custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* and 'sacrificed for them'.

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

TO complete our analysis of the norms governing the relations of 593
parents and children we must now glance at their development in
the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at suc- 183
cessive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first
the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their
authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle
of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differentiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the
surface.

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally 854
naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, 593
they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of
the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the [751
sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or 515]
so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the
day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older
brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's
co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother.

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of 853
its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least
the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It 854
is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels
inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has

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[1] Tallensi distinguish different stages of infancy according to the feeding-habits and level of physical skill reached by the infant. They never count months or years, but a parent is often able to state roughly how many months or years have elapsed since the birth of the child, working it out, most commonly, by reference to harvest and sowing times or to the Great Festivals. A babe in arms is *bilie*; until it is weaned it is described as 'still suckling (*u na mɔɣarme*)'. If it is said to be still suckling but 'eating a little porridge (*u diit saɣabo biel-biel*)' one can infer that it is at least 2. The unweaned infant's stage of development is further specified by stating whether it is crawling (*u bɔɣarme*) or walking (*u kyenme*) or already talking (*u vɔlənnrɔme*). When the child is weaned it is said to 'have left off milk (*u tuk biiliim*)'. Lastly comes the stage, at between 3 and 4 years, when it is said to be old enough to have another immediately following sibling (*u saɣa nyeer marəga*)—an idea we shall explain in a later chapter. The subject-matter of this chapter is supplemented by my paper, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, cit. supra. [856]

nothing else to do, her babe is at the breast, sucking hungrily or, if it
853 is replete, just playing with the breast with its mouth, its fingers, and its
854 toes. If the mother is away another woman of the household will give the baby medicated water to drink when it cries or will put it to her breast for comfort. It may be any woman of the family, but will usually be a co-wife.

By the age of 18 months a baby's diet is being regularly supplemented
853 with small lumps of porridge, often pre-masticated by its mother. It is
862 gradually and usually painlessly weaned by increasing its solid food (chiefly porridge), until it is eating the same food as the adults. The only time Tale women have to wean a baby abruptly is if they become pregnant through lack of self-control during the nursing period. Tallensi say that this distresses the baby but that harsh measures are not required as a pregnant woman's milk disgusts a baby. They also say that the premature deprivation of its mother's milk prevents the child from thriving. In fact the premature pregnancy of its mother is probably more of a psychological deprivation for the child than a nutritional loss. By the time a child has its milk teeth and is able to run about, at the age of about 3, it gets no more nourishment from the breast. But its mother's breast is still its chief solace. If it is in pain, or frightened, or just tired and peevish, it cuddles into its mother's arms and clings to her breast for consolation, and a younger baby makes this impossible.

The completion of weaning marks the first stage in the child's physical
855 and psychological severance from its mother. It has learnt to do without
593 its mother for hours or days at a stretch. It remains contentedly in the care of an elder sister or other member of the household or even its maternal grandmother, as long as it is well and not hungry. It runs about and plays with other children of the homestead and neighbouring homesteads. It can talk fluently and so communicate its wishes to others. And its independence is increased when its mother becomes pregnant again and it can no longer run to the breast for comfort. Its mother is still the centre of its universe—and will remain so for two or three years more, in the case of a boy, and until marriage, for a girl—but the toddler has begun to glimpse the wider social space into which it is growing. Since it began to crawl it has often been told to 'go to your mother (own mother)', 'go to your mother so-and-so (mother's co-wife)', 'go to your grandfather (or grandmother)', 'go to your father (own father)', 'go to your father so-and-so (father's brother)', 'go to Yin, Tee, Baa (a sibling)' by one or other member of the family. Thus it has learnt to divide the people who come into its social space into 'own mother', 'own father', 'other mothers and other fathers' (who take care of it now and then), and 'other children', those whom it plays with, or eats with, or sees about the house. Own parents stand out clearly to the infant—its mother for obvious reasons, its father, as one man put it, 'because she (his little daughter) is often told and because she sleeps with her mother and sees

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A
baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. 593
I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its 751
mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking,
to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What
discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period
comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until
it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative [515]
from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is
an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain
water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a
decoction of roots (*ŋaɣa*), the generic term for any vegetable products
used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by
the child's spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). After its bath the mother lays the
child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth,
and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It
splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is
poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected 514
to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt
to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside 863
in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may
happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training
or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a
gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications
with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the
adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the 593
child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There 789
is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have
anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. 826
I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic
of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to
nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of
milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt
to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously
affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her
breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

593 (*Man daa nye fara dɔɣi ki cŋəm la ŋwala*)', this is a curse of the most
789 terrible kind. For that reason, no doubt, none of my informants could quote an instance of a mother actually putting this curse on a child.
826 The symbolism is of interest, however, in view of the stress Tallensi lay on the mother as food-giver in their conventional picture of her.

Childhood

857 593 The next three or four years of a child's life are probably its freest and happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the immediate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in being with their parents too. They will hang around their mother in the kitchen and trot around or sit with their father when he is resting under the shade tree. They see and hear everything that is going on in the house and are tolerated at all domestic occasions. In this way, and through their mimetic play, they build up the rudimentary schemas[1] of ideas, manual dexterities, and sentiments out of which grow the skills, interests, and values of later life. Love and indulgence is still the keynote of their parents' and other close relatives' attitude to them. Tallensi say that small children at this stage are still more attached to their mother than to their father because it is she who feeds them. In fact, as we have already mentioned, throughout a Taləŋ's life he thinks of his mother as the one who gave him food without stint, going hungry herself, if need be, so that her child might be fed.

857 868 593 By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex; and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it still remains free to play for much of its time. But from the age of 7 or so boys and girls are eager to participate in the adult routine of life and they become more and more involved in it. They begin by being given the simplest economic and household tasks such as scaring the birds from the fields of ripening grain, tethering the goats, rounding up the poultry—tasks which children of both sexes perform—or sweeping the house, carrying a tiny pot of water, gathering edible fungi or herbs for the pot, which girls only do. A very common task of both girls and boys at this stage is acting nursemaid to a baby. As this shows, there is very little social differentiation between them as yet.

857 593 462 868 By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division of labour customary among the Tallensi, and with it the corresponding division of social roles and ideals. Boys start following their older brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any. They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12 reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother

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[1] Cf. the discussion of this concept in my Memorandum just cited.

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857
own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home
farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593
chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462
of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of
9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868
plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a house-
wife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and
motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155
their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔɣat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861
ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it
is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔɣa yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593
and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and 867
social maturity permit. Its parents will henceforth assert their authority
and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social
and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only
the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

861 through love and solicitude. Tallensi have a maxim. 'If you do not harass your child it will not acquire sense (*Nyɛn pu mugh i bii la u ku ŋɔɣa yam*).'
593 They do not mean by this that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, as
867 I thought when I first heard it, but that a child must be kept in order and made to conform to accepted standards or else it will not learn to conduct itself properly. They think of this as being chiefly a father's task. A mother, they say, will not thrash (*bo*) her child for misbehaving; she will only scold and upbraid (*nuom*) it. A father has the strength of will (*suhkpe'emər*) to thrash his child for misbehaving, and it is his duty to do so.

593 However, a father does not cease to be tolerant, kindly, and affectionate when his child becomes old enough for discipline. I have never
861 seen a child actually being thrashed by its father, but I have had many accounts of punishments received by children and by men and women in their childhood, and I have often heard children scolded by a father or mother. From what has been said in the early parts of this chapter it can be surmised that Tallensi are very long-suffering with their children. If they punish them it is in anger admitted by the child to be justified. I have heard of children being punished for disobedience, for neglecting or spoiling a task entrusted to them, for yielding to temptation and breaking a food taboo, for stealing a mother's co-wife's ground-nuts, and for other similar faults. They are punished, that is, either for defying the authority of their parents, or for failing to conform to moral or ritual custom or good manners, or for causing economic loss or damage.

In fact Tale children are not often punished. By the time they are
593 considered to be mature enough to deserve punishment for faults they
867 have learnt to accept the control and authority of their parents and seniors as a natural thing and have begun to develop an adult's conscientiousness about the standards and values of their culture. It is noteworthy, for instance, that Tale children are rarely disobedient. Even adults rarely defy a parent's commands. A child of 7 or 8 usually keeps totemic taboos as strictly as an adult.[1] A 9- or 10-year-old has watched sacrifices to the ancestors often enough to have a good idea of what they mean. He knows what a ritual sanction is even if he does not yet understand it. His sense of property is well developed. He distinguishes clearly between *tuum* and *meum*. He knows his father's hen or sheep or cow and his father's brother's, and he can trace the boundaries of his father's farm plots. He has begun to take a responsible part, though but a very small one, in the scheme of domestic organization pivoting around his father. This is the root of his submission to his father's authority.

593 Two stories illustrate these points very well. When Naabdiya was about 8 years old he was lying on a mat in his mother's *dɛndɔŋo* one
863 evening, half asleep, listening to the conversation of his parents. The

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

PLATE 9

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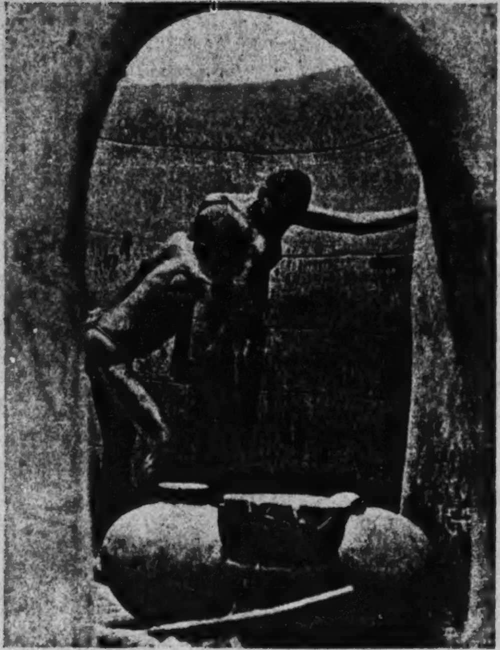

a. The tribulations of motherhood: the daily bath and massage of the mother after childbirth

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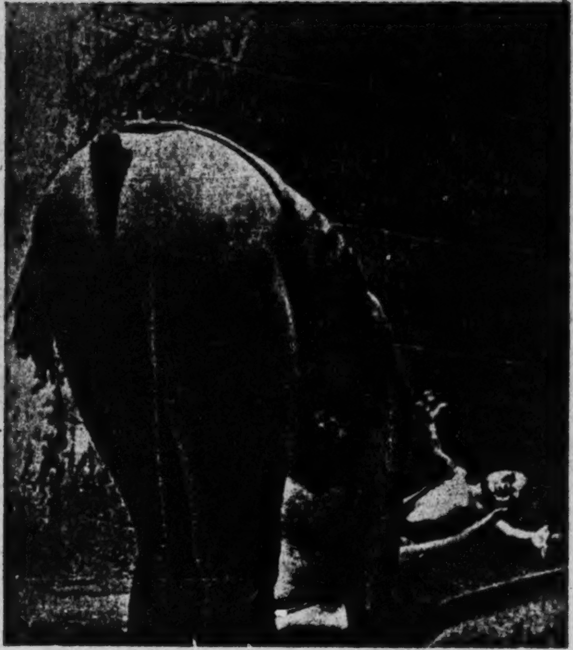

b. The husband's mother and a co-wife of the new mother give her new-born baby its daily bath. The water is so hot that the baby goes rigid with pain

[facing p. 192]

593 863 desire to urinate overcame him and being drowsy he wetted the mat. His father saw this and flew into a rage. 'You, a big lad, and you do this,' he stormed. 'You yourself will wipe the mat with your body'; and he commanded the child to roll in the urine so as to wipe it up. 'I wept', said Naabdiya, 'and I was afraid, but I began to roll in the urine. Then my mother cried out to my father to leave me alone. "Do you want to kill the child? (she cried) I suffered to bear a child and you want to kill him. I myself will wipe it up." But my father did not allow her to do it. A woman's heart is soft because she has borne the child. Thus my father taught me wisdom (*paalɔm yam*).' The moral drawn by Naabdiya needs no comment.

593 The other story shows the strength of paternal authority and the degree to which a boy of 10 or 11 has become imbued with the values of his culture. The boy is Yindɔl, the first-born son of Zaŋ. In 1936 his father went to Kumasi for some months. Before leaving he put aside a small quantity of grain for the family's needs and gave orders that on no account should anybody go into the granary to take any more grain until his return. The supplies he had put aside were soon exhausted. With the help of small gifts from her kinsfolk his wife managed to scrape a meal every other day for her three children. She herself lived almost entirely off wild vegetables which she cooked to supplement the children's porridge. But though they were practically starving neither she nor Yindɔl would go to the granary, because, as Yindɔl said when he told me of their plight, Zaŋ had forbidden it, and in any case he, as a first-born, could not go into his father's granary. Why did his mother not ask her husband's brother to get her some grain from Zaŋ's granary? I asked. 'Oh no', said the boy, speaking as if he were the head of the house in his father's absence, 'she dare not do that. Besides, we shall need that grain for the farming season.'

593 866 But at the same time as the child is learning to take the authority of his father for granted and fitting himself into the configuration of domestic relations, a contrary process is emerging. This process springs from the psychological and social cleavage that underlies the strong ties of duty, affection, and common interest between parents and children, the universal cleavage between successive generations. The structure of the family gives this process its form; and it is expressed through the economic organization and in ritual values. The 12-year-old is becoming differentiated as a person in his or her own right. Indeed, with boys this process commences at an earlier age, and its first sign is a small boy's refusing to sleep in his mother's room. Girls often continue to sleep with their mother until they are approaching puberty, unless there is a grandmother in the house; then they will go to sleep with her when they are about 6 or 7. A boy, however, is ridiculed by his playmates if he still sleeps in his mother's room after the age of 7 or 8. Generally boys of that age sleep with a grandparent or with the older boys in their

PLATE 10

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a. Kinship patterns are not specific in public etiquette or domestic intercourse. An unposed group having a rest in the middle of the day. From left to right: *Kpana Teŋ*, his daughter-in-law, his grandson, and his youngest child

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b. A father eating with his youngest son while his oldest son lounges beside them (Hill Talis)

[facing p. 193]

593 *doo*, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep
in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children
866 over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come
to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older
children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night
when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the
[864] suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations
between their parents.

As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his
868 mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of
866 which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut
plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for
602 instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a
loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them
in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too,
as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding
from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be
given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already
has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition
by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize,
inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his
matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*)
or uncle (*ahəb*), but sometimes his father's *ahəb* or some other kinsman
of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal
uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Taləŋ
can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of
selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was
bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from
the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to
[782] take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage
bɔyar as a thank-offering.

The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as
866 a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition
593 to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral
kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the
yir in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at
animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation
of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads,
at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that
time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build
on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at
a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants
and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

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[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

The economic self-differentiation is both a sign of his psycho-
logical and social self-differentiation from his father and a stimulus to it. 866
Naturally it results in conflict at times.[1] For example, Kpana-Tee took 593
his grandson, a boy of about 14, to live with him because the boy had
quarrelled with his father, Kpana-Tee's oldest son, who was farming on 578
his own in one of the peripheral settlements. The youngster had two hens which he had bred from a hen given to him by his *ahəb*. He wanted to sell one in order to buy a loin-cloth for the Gɔlib Festival. His father said this was extravagance and forbade it. But the boy, supported by his mother, insisted that he could do what he liked with his 'things' (*bon*). This angered his father so much that he thrashed him. Thereupon the boy ran away to his grandfather, who took his part, and told him not to go back home for the present. As a man grows older the chances of such conflicts due to the clash between paternal authority and filial self-determination increase and are only kept in check by the sanctions of filial piety.

The process of incipient self-differentiation at this stage is distinctive 866
of boys. It does not occur with girls before pubescence. Until that stage
their relations with their parents continue to have a more childish stamp 593
than is the case with their brothers. Whereas a 10-year-old boy would be ashamed to be found hanging round his mother when she is busy in the kitchen, a 10-year-old girl still enjoys sitting among the infants listening to her father in conversation with other men at the *zanɔne*. One notices that little girls of about this age are more quiet and docile than boys. Attached as they are to their mothers, they do not yet show that diffidence towards their fathers in public which another two or three years will bring. They do not feel the weight of the father's authority yet, beyond the ordinary discipline he exercises over their manners and habits. But there is a rapid change as they get nearer to puberty and at the same time become more proficient in women's work and more absorbed in the social world of the women. A 12-year-old girl shows more respect to her father in public than her brother does. Like her mother she will always stoop or crouch to greet a male visitor of her father's or when she is offering her father food. With her mother she is to all appearances on intimate and friendly, almost sisterly, terms. She may still be sleeping with her mother, especially if the latter is past child-bearing age.

Between the age of about 7 and the beginning of pubescence at about 593
12 to 14 years of age, the pattern of parent–child relations crystallizes 867
out in the form it will have for the rest of the child's life. Proxy parents and classificatory parents are correctly discriminated and set in proper relation to own parents. Kinship sentiments are finally formed.

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[1] But this is not associated with overt signs of 'adolescent instability', nor is there an institutionalized group revolt of adolescents against the generation of the fathers. Cf. my previously cited Memorandum.

Parents and Children in Everyday Intercourse

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One of the most interesting things about the relations of parents and children among the Tallensi is their conduct to one another in the intercourse of everyday life. It brings out, incidentally, the distinction always clearly made between own parents and proxy parents. There is a familiarity, almost a camaraderie, between parent and child that makes the observer wonder how the authority of the parent can be as effective, and the respect and obedience of the child as sincere as the evidence of custom and belief show them to be. In this matter the Tallensi resemble us more closely than they do some other primitive peoples. It is most striking in the case of the father. From babyhood up, Tallensi address their father, both own father and classificatory father, by his name. The term *ba* (pl. *banam*), father, is used to refer to one's father or classificatory father but never in addressing him, while he is alive. After his death it is often used in addressing him in prayer as an expression of reverence. It is also used as a term of respect when addressing someone from whom one is begging a favour, or to show particular deference or courtesy, chiefly to old men. A passer-by greeting an old man not closely related to him or her, or a person of rank such as a chief's brother, addresses him as father; a person asking a small boy not closely related to him or her, for a drink, says, 'Bring me the water, oh my father'; a man who has come to intercede with a friend on behalf of the friend's son pleads, 'Desist, oh my father, desist'. Similarly, parents speak of a child as *m-bii*, 'my child', of a son as *n-dawoo* (pl. *dawoos*), 'my son', of a daughter as *m-pɔɣawoo* (pl. *pɔɣawoos*), 'my daughter', but always address a child by name.

With this mode of address goes great freedom of speech and behaviour towards a father, particularly one's own father. If children are asked about their attitudes to their parents they always say that they do not 'fear' (*zo*—in the sense of 'to stand in awe of') their own father as much as they 'fear' their father's older brother. Children will speak directly to their father, argue with him, contradict him politely, if necessary, laugh with him. No topic of conversation is tabooed or barred by etiquette.[1] No one can tell from the behaviour to each other in ordinary intercourse of a man and his adult son or married daughter that they are parent and child. In fact, the greater the apparent comradeship of a young adult with an old man, the more likely is it that they are own father and child.

One's mother, on the other hand, is never addressed by name but always as '*ma*, mother'; but a mother's co-wife is commonly addressed by the name used for her by her in-laws. There is also more restraint in the manner in which a person speaks to his mother than in his manner

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[1] Sex matters, for instance, are freely discussed between parents and adult children, subject only to the rules of polite conversation.

of speaking to his father. A boy might order his mother about when 573 the family is out harvesting, for instance, and a girl might argue with her mother as spontaneously as if she were an equal. But the underlying 576 attitude of deference can always be detected.

This undertone of deference is also present in intercourse with the father, only less obviously than in relation to the mother. For instance, if a child is some distance away and its father or mother wants to call it, he or she will shout the child's name. But if a child, even when grown up, wishes to call a parent he will go up to him or her. A boy or a man will borrow his brother's cloth without asking permission. He will not take anything belonging to his father without permission. If two brothers or sisters or a sister and brother are eating together either will start first and both may be dipping their hands into the dish of porridge at the same time. If a child is eating with his parent he will wait for his parent to begin first and to tell him to eat, and will wait for his parent to finish and leave the dish to be 'cleaned out (*veeh*)' by him. In particular, the familiarity between parents and children never goes so far as mutual teasing, as in a joking relationship. If a native is asked about this he frowns and says that it would be most offensive for a son or daughter to tease or joke with (*kooh*) a parent or vice versa. You cannot tease or joke with your parent or your child, the Tallensi say, because you do so with your grandparent or grandchild. We shall return to this presently.

We see, again, that there is an apparent paradox in the relations of Tale parents and children. The natives cannot explain it and are puzzled if they are asked for explanations. But if we take into account the whole complex of parent–child relations an interpretation is possible. What we meet again is that ever-recurring principle of Tale social organization, the conjunction of polar forces, the synthesis of tendencies that work in opposite directions. The sense of continuity between the generations, which is so strong among the Tallensi, has to be reconciled with the sense of divergence due to differences of generation and of interests between them, if the relations of parents and children are to run smoothly. In terms of sentiments and attitudes the authority parents have over their children must be reconciled with their love for them; and children must be able to show respect for their parents, to bow to their control, without ceasing to love them and without foregoing their own independence. Children are the fulfilment of their parents' life—and at the same time felt to be in some way their parents' rivals. Parents suffer and spend themselves to give life to their child. They provide for him and fix his place in society. But he can never escape from their constraint. In all their relations with each other parents and children have to cope with actually or potentially conflicting motives and sentiments as well as with the pull and pressure of divergent social forces.

The familiarity and friendliness between parents and children in their everyday relations is one of the means by which these diverse

593 576 tendencies are reconciled. The liberty to address his father by name is a reassurance, to the child, of the love and solicitude that lie behind the authority his father exercises over him. Perhaps it is also an expression of the identification of father and child by the lineage principle. And the greater deference in his behaviour towards his mother than towards his father is a sign that he recognizes her control, though she seems to have only love and devotion for him. Familiarity in everyday intercourse compensates for the filial piety due to a parent in the more formal, particularly in the jural and ritual aspects, of parent–child relations. The greater overt freedom with the father compensates for the greater emphasis on respect and dependence in the child's relations with him; the franker signs of deference towards the mother compensate for the greater emphasis on her love for her child as against her authority over him.

593 Clearly there is a very high degree of consistency between the social images of the parents projected in the cultural norms of the Tallensi and the actual behaviour of children to parents. The mother is thought of as the food-giver. Her love for her children is subject to no limits or laws and her status in relation to them is almost sacrosanct. Her relations with them are based on love tempered with authority. The father is thought of as the source of discipline, the guardian of good conduct. He is strict without being harsh or tyrannous. His role is of special importance in the face of the community at large and in relation to the spiritual powers that govern human life. His relations with his children are based on his authority over them, his responsibility for them, and justice tempered with love.

Adolescence and the Principle of Reciprocity

883 For a Tale boy the years between about 13 and 20 bring changes in degree rather than in kind in his relations with his parents. There is no affective or social break to mark a transition from childhood to adulthood among the Tallensi. Even among the Hill Talis initiation into the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* is not associated with adolescence; it can take place at any age. A boy's social development is a process of gradual advance along lines laid down in early childhood.[1] As he grows older

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[1] 856 Tallensi distinguish the main phases of a boy's development not by chronological age but by two criteria of a broader character, either separately or together, according to the situation. They have a physiological criterion and an economic one. Physiologically they distinguish three major phases, after babyhood, in a boy: (*a*) when he is still a 'small boy (*bumbil*)' with undescended testicles, showing, as they put it, only a 'pale scrotum (*lanzee*)'; (*b*) Pubescence, denoted by the verb *sol*, to mature physically, and marked by the testicles descending (*lana sigərəme*) and the emergence of pubic hair (*saŋkperuŋ kɔbət*). They say 'he has matured completely (*u sol ba'ahme*)' of a boy who has reached puberty and is entering manhood. (*c*) Lastly comes adulthood, when he is a 'grown man (*bɔnkɔrag*)'. It is by reference to these physiological phases that men often date events in their life. The second criterion is that of advancing economic proficiency. A 'small boy' is capable only of scaring the birds from the newly

he grows more and more proficient in the economic skills he began to 883
acquire in childhood and better versed in the details of his culture. By the time he is 20 or so he knows most of what is known to his people about farming and animal husbandry, hunting and fishing, and building. He is wholly imbued with the values of his culture and has a good working knowledge of its institutions and customs. It is enough to enable him to play his part as a young man in the life of his community, but there is still much to learn which only years of experience and responsibility will give him. He is, however, an active if unimportant participant in corporate activities of the lineage and clan, and in the management of family affairs, with a right to his own opinions. In step with his growing social maturity a boy's field of social relations increases in range and in depth. His father's authority begins to loom larger, but at the same time his father's responsibilities on his behalf also increase and his own self-differentiation advances; and a theme that was of minor effect in their relationship hitherto comes into prominence. This is the principle of reciprocity.

During this period the identification of father and son is greatly 593
deepened. It grows out of the intimacies and co-operation of everyday
life. As they work side by side on the farm the father teaches his son 883
farming skills and lore. When he performs a sacrifice at home his son 882
is his assistant, learning from him how to carry out such rites, and what doctrines and beliefs lie behind them. In such situations he learns the names of his ancestors and begins to understand the structure of the lineage system and where he fits into it. He makes the acquaintance of matrilateral and sororal kin who come to take part in rites of this sort. The division between the men of the lineage and the women of the lineage, and the distinction between the father's side of the family and the mother's side become of direct practical relevance to him. Sometimes a man will call his adolescent and adult sons to him and tell them various things they ought to know in case he gets ill or dies. He tells them about his farms and other property, about his debts and those who owe him debts, and, a most important matter, about his ancestor and medicine shrines. In doing this he is, in effect, telling them what he knows of the history and traditions of his lineage and clan. These are matters which a man does not speak about to his daughters or wives. If they learn of them it is only incidentally, through listening to the conversation of the men. Daughters and wives are present at domestic sacrifices to ancestor spirits, but only sons are allowed to share in the cult of a man's private medicine shrines. Most important of all is the responsible

sown farms or from the ripening grain; a lad of 7 or 8 can be trusted to take care 856
of sheep (*dɔl pihi*); older boys, up to the age of 14 or 15, are cattle herds (*hiem nigi*) and already help with the hoeing; after the age of pubescence a boy works on the farm side by side with the men—he farms (*u kɔɔrɔme*). These phases are also used to date events, often in conjunction with the physiological criterion.

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part an adolescent begins to play in the household economy. His work becomes an essential contribution to its welfare and hence he has a voice in its management.

A man who grew up under his own father's direct tutelage and learnt the arts of life from him in this way is said to be one who 'reached' (*paa*) —that is, knew in person—his father. Tallensi perceive that this is a mechanism of primary importance not only for maintaining the cohesion of the family and the lineage, but also for the transmission of their culture to their offspring. A man quoting precedents from the past for instance, in support of a claim to a debt or to a right to succeed to a particular office, bases his argument on the statement, 'I reached my father and saw such and such things', or, 'I reached my father and he told me this or that'. A man well versed in the details of the social structure, of ceremonial activities, or of economic lore, or in the finer points of etiquette, morals, traditions, and beliefs, says proudly, in explanation of his knowledge, 'Did I not reach my father?'; and a common excuse offered for ignorance is that the person concerned 'did not reach his father'.

The identification of father and son becomes of considerable social importance at this stage and henceforth. Thus it is a very common thing for youths of 18 and upwards to represent their fathers in jural and ceremonial affairs that do not demand their fathers' personal presence. If a man is asked by a clansman to act as intermediary (*pɔyasama*) in a marriage transaction, he will often send his son as his deputy. And if the intermediary chosen is a young lad, his father will act for him. So also a man sends his sons with the customary gifts he is obliged to contribute to his father-in-law's or mother-in-law's funeral. Old men always delegate their sons to act for them in political matters and often in jural affairs. In disputes about wives it is a common thing to see a man's son coming to the tribunal as his father's representative to answer for the actions of the brother whom he accompanies. In jural and ceremonial situations the identification of father and son is coextensive with the range of recognized generation differences within the inner lineage.

We have previously remarked that the identification of father and son is a fundamental element in the structure of the lineage. It is also, and more significantly from our present point of view, a fundamental feature of the normal personal relations of father and son. This is seen most simply in the affection and devotion so often found between father and son and in the strength of the sentiments and religious values associated with the father's original home.

The relationship of mother and son also changes during this phase, but again there is no abrupt break. As a boy approaches manhood he becomes more and more absorbed in the activities and interests of men and sees less of his mother in everyday intercourse. But his affec-

tion for her remains. He still helps her to cultivate her ground-nut plot, 543
if he has no younger brothers to take this on, and assists her in other 883
ways. Later on, when he marries, his intimacy with his mother will be
revived. It is to her *dug* that he brings his wife and in her care that he 882
places the girl.

A girl grows away from her father as she approaches puberty. This [881]
is not due to physiological taboos, for there are none connected with a girl's puberty or with menstruation in general. There are no ceremonies to mark a girl's attainment of physiological maturity, nor is there any break in her affective relations with her parents. The only significant break in the steady process of social maturation for a girl is her first marriage. Her growing away from her father is due to the sexual division of labour and the corresponding division of interests in the family. Though there is no barrier to ordinary social intercourse between the sexes in a domestic family, there is the separation of interests and activities that we have mentioned before, and adolescent boys and girls are caught up in it.

A girl of 13 or 14 years and over does not run to her father and cuddle up to him as her 6- or 7-year-old sister might do. She is with her mother and the other women most of the day assisting with the more arduous domestic tasks. She helps to clean the house, to fetch water and collect shea fruit or firewood, to grind the millet, to cook, and to care for the younger children. At harvest time, or when they are beating the floors of their rooms, she does a full day's work with the other women. She is already adept in all these feminine skills and is well versed in all the gossip of the women. A girl of 12 or 13 can be left in charge of the house for a day or two while her mother is away. She goes to market by herself to buy or sell things for her mother; and also, a more important consideration for her personally, to display her charms and flirt with the young men. She accompanies older girls on firewood parties or when they go to dance at funerals.

When a girl approaches puberty her mind is set upon marriage.
Tallensi estimate a girl's stage of development before marriage by the [856]
appearance of her breasts. Leaving aside betrothal of a girl in childhood, which does not require her consent, a girl is not considered to be mature enough for serious courtship until her breasts are formed (*u biiha n-yi*). She is then called a maiden (*pɔyasarət*). Before that stage, when her breasts are budding (*u biiha m-pukət*), suitors may already be coming to her or soliciting her parents. A girl may be married before she menstruates (*lu sie*), though it is not considered seemly for her husband to sleep with her until she is capable of child-bearing. When her suitors come to her, probably the only person who knows which of them she likes best is her mother; and if she and her lover decide to elope her mother may help them. As we know, the bonds of affection between mother and daughter remain as strong as ever after the latter's marriage

593 and are kept alive by frequent interchange of visits and of gifts. Thus, in the shea fruit season it is a common sight to see a young woman 882 carrying a basket of shea nuts to her mother or fetching one from her 883 mother. Even if a girl marries someone her mother dislikes, this seldom estranges them. If a woman with a young child has to go away for a few days and her mother is near, she usually choose to leave the child with her mother rather than with a co-wife. Thus during pubescence a girl's intimacy and identification with her mother deepens both in terms of her social personality and on the affective level. This is the genetic basis in behaviour and sentiment of the social tie conceptualized in the notion of *soog*.

It must not be thought, though, that a father's affection for his daughter fades away as she approaches marriageable age. Far from it. But it is inevitably biased by the expectation that she will sooner or later leave his household to marry, bear children for another clan, and cease to be a daily care and concern to him. Hence the saying that girl children are of no profit (*ka ŋoori*). Tale women are as proud as their brothers of their paternal ancestry. As we know, they never lose their bonds with their lineage kin; but they come, in time, to identify themselves primarily with their husbands' interests and not with their fathers'. Her divided interests and sentiments bring it about that when a girl reaches womanhood the element of antagonism in her relations with her father may become prominent. I have never seen it overt in relation to the mother.

As we have already recorded, a father's authority over his daughter is most conspicuous in connexion with her marriage, and it is this that often creates conflict between them. This is due largely to the fact that self-differentiation for a woman, both in economic terms and in status, comes through marriage. In principle, as we know, a man can dispose of his daughter's hand as he pleases, resorting to corporal punishment, if need be, to force her to comply with his wishes. Principles and practice often coincide, but, as we have seen, a good father tempers his autocratic rights with consideration for his daughter's wishes and welfare, particularly if, as is frequent, she is supported by her mother.

593 Usually, however, a man has much affection for a married daughter, and a woman, particularly in the early years of marriage, often remains greatly attached to her father. For instance, Toŋ-Yikpemdaan, perhaps because he had lost most of his children, was greatly attached to his two married daughters. When one of them was attacked by a mysterious lingering illness he himself went to fetch her home and insisted that she should stay with her mother until she became well again. But a man's attachment to his sons is very much greater as a rule. A man may be greatly distressed at the death of a young married daughter, but it is as nothing compared with his grief over the death of a young adult son. And this applies to women too, though they suffer great grief at the death of a married daughter.

These affective divergencies spring from the different social relations of father and son on the one hand, and father and daughter on the other. Though a woman's ties with her paternal family are never severed, a man's jural responsibilities for his daughter cease with her marriage. He never loses the moral and religious authority of a father, however, or the corresponding ritual responsibilities for her. His curse is as potent as ever. The shrine of her spirit guardian is in his keeping and he sacrifices to it on her behalf when her husband requests him to do so. His chief ritual responsibility arises if she is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). It is his duty to have the rites of exorcism performed so that she can bear children and fulfil satisfactorily her role as a wife. He is obliged to send ceremonial gifts to the funeral if she or his son-in-law dies; and he must 'fetch her funeral home (*die koor*)' and carry out the rites that bring her spirit back to her ancestral fold when she is dead. He has a very definite social and personal interest in her children too. When a woman bears her first child her husband must send immediately to tell her parents and they demonstrate their continued affection and concern for her and her children by sending her gifts of food and other necessaries as generous as their means allow. A poor man might send only a basket of unthreshed guinea corn or millet and a couple of guinea-fowls, while his wife sends some shea butter, vegetables, and firewood. A rich chief I knew, when his first-born daughter had her first baby sent a procession of his younger wives bearing an assortment of gifts, including a 25-lb. bag of salt, several baskets of grain, a sheep, six guinea-fowls, and various luxury articles. Throughout her life a woman has a right to substantial gifts of grain from her father's house at harvest time, and to a home if she is left homeless. Women make a special point of collecting these gifts of grain at harvest time whether they are in want or not. As Tanzoo, the wife of a well-to-do man with enough grain and to spare, said when she received a large basket of early millet from her brother, 'I should feel ashamed not to fetch this grain. My co-wives would scoff saying I have no brother, no father.' Thus it is a source of pride, a test of family solidarity and, most important, a recurrent demonstration of a right to share in the products of the patrimonial estate which they might have owned if they had been born men.[1] These duties that a man has towards his daughter are the nucleus of his relations with her children. They are socially prescribed and fall upon his heirs when he dies.

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From Adolescence to Adulthood

Let us return to the relations of father and son during this phase of the latter's growth and study it more closely. The son is a member of

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 178.

593 his father's household making an essential contribution to its economy
882 by his labour and skill; he is his father's future heir; he will one day sacrifice to his father's spirit; above all, it is through him that his father's agnatic line is socially and physically perpetuated. And yet there is the cleavage of successive generations between them and the self-differentiation of the son which begins in childhood.

From adolescence onwards economic co-operation is the sheet anchor
593 of the relationship between a youth and his father. The guiding prin-
421 ciple is the rule that all those who work together to supply the needs of the household are entitled to a just share in the products of their common labour, and its corollary that the fruits of individual labour belong to the individual. But the working of this rule is complicated by the fact that the head of the household owns the land and 'owns' (that is, has authority over and responsibility for) his dependants. Thus a man 'owns' his son's labour and the products of it. Strictly speaking, a son cannot own property of any kind while his father is alive, and a father can dispose of a son's property as he pleases. By this rule a man does not even 'own' his children if his father is alive; and this means proxy father as well as own father. Tallensi assert this rule very emphatically, both in speech and in act, for they hold it to be the crucial sign of a father's authority. Though this authority arises automatically from the fact of begetting, its most concrete expression is found in the economic relations of father and son. When I asked the Chief of Tongo how many cattle he had he replied soberly that he had none; all his cattle belonged to his old father Nakyɛna'ab. Though, in practice, Nakyɛna'ab will not forbid the chief from doing what he pleases with these cattle, the chief never disposes of a cow, either in ritual or by sale or in jural transactions such as the payment of bride-price, without telling his father and obtaining the old man's formal consent.

The Tallensi regard the economic relations, the jural relations, and the moral and ritual relations of father and son as different aspects of the same thing. Each of these categories of relations has a binding force on the other categories. A man 'owns' his son because he begot him; but he sometimes says that he has authority over his son because the latter is dependent on him and that he has responsibilities for his son because the latter works for him. In the same way a son must work for his father as an obligation of filial piety; but his work is also the return he makes for his father's economic support and for the ritual and jural responsibility his father bears on his behalf. Just which factor is emphasized depends on the particular situation. The different elements of this configuration are linked together by the principle of reciprocity. Its essence is the idea that duties imply equivalent rights for the *taram*, the junior or inferior person, as well as for the *kpeem*, the senior or superior.

This configuration is not peculiar to the relations of own father and son. It is the general pattern prevailing between the head of a household

and any of his dependants—between husband and wife, proxy father and son, older brother and younger brother. And, as we have mentioned before, its elements often stand out more clearly where the consolidating effect of the emotional ties between own parent and own child is absent. They emerge clearly, also, when there is a divergence between a son's (or other dependant's) desire for independence and his father's (or the household head's) claims on his labour and loyalty. 593 421

By the time a young man marries he has advanced on the path to economic independence beyond the stage of breeding chickens for himself. He has his own ground-nut plot and generally also his *sensɛyar*. This is a plot of land allocated to him by his father, or the head of the household, where he can grow the ordinary cereal crops. It may be no more than a few hundred square yards or it may be up to an acre in size. The larger his father's home farm (*saman*) is and the fewer his brothers, the larger will a young man's *sensɛyar* be. A man allocates these private plots to his sons with an eye to the future. When, in course of time, the sons (or *their* sons) separate, each will keep the plot given to him by their father as the portion of the patrimonial land that henceforth belongs exclusively to his agnatic descendants.

A young man cultivates his private grain plot and ground-nut plot in the spare time left after he has done the work required of him on his father's farm, which always has the prior claim. There is no hard-and-fast arrangement. Much is left to the young man's own discretion. He knows very well that the first essential is to make sure of the common food-supply. At the same time his father manages to keep a discreet but sharp eye on his economic activities. It is a firm rule of etiquette that no member of a family should go anywhere without informing the head of the family. When a young man goes off to hoe his grain plot or ground-nut plot in the morning he will tell his father, in what seems to be a casual aside, what he is going to do, if he has not already told him the previous day. Then the father will either let him go or he will ask his son to leave it for a day or two until they have finished this or that job on the household farm. 593 461

In a well-run family, and at most times, this loose arrangement works perfectly smoothly. But there are times when clashes occur; and there are families in which friction over this issue is common between father and son. For instance, there was the tussle between Naabdiya and his younger son Mosuor. Mosuor wanted to lift his ground-nuts so as to sell them and buy a new cloth for the Giŋgaaŋ Festival. Naabdiya, however, insisted that *his* ground-nuts should be lifted first, before the dry weather hardened the ground and made the task more laborious. Mosuor protested that Naabdiya was being unfair to him; Naabdiya's wife and the other children could help him in the meanwhile; and Mosuor went off to his ground-nut plot. This incensed Naabdiya, who cried out that the boy was flouting his commands, and in his anger he 593

593 pronounced the ominous words, 'You will see'. In an hour or two Mosuor's temper cooled off and he began to feel uneasy over the enormity of his offence. His father had uttered what amounted to a curse; and before the day was out he had called on one of his father's oldest friends to ask him to go and beg Naabdiya's forgiveness for him.

593 421 We have seen in a previous chapter that as a son grows older and his conjugal family increases, his desire for independence grows stronger, owing to the increasing wants of his wife and children. But it is not easy for a son to obtain his father's permission to set up on his own. It may take five or six years of pressure on the son's part before the old man gives way. A son only desires to go out on his own if he has younger brothers who will remain at home to work for his father—there would be no motive if he were the only son. When these younger brothers marry the pressure on the common resources of the household grows and it becomes expedient to disperse temporarily. Economic separation does not remove a son from his father's authority. He can be and often is called upon to help with the work on his father's land; his property still belongs formally to his father. Indeed, any sheep, goats, and cattle he may acquire by his industry or receive for a daughter's bride-price are housed in his father's homestead and not in his.

593 167 Nowadays a common form of independent labour and enterprise by young men is to go south for a season or longer. The chief economic stimulus for this is the desire for money to buy clothes or to make certain of the payment of bride-price for a wife. A father is not bound to provide his sons—or any other dependant—with clothes. These young men go in the dry season carrying crates of fowls to sell or seeking 'white man's work'. The youths who go at other times of the year are often stealing away without permission. But in the dry season, when farm work is at a standstill, a man will often give his sons permission to go south until the rains commence. Some men do so very readily in the hope that the boys will bring back money and 'things'. Others are still reluctant to let their sons go off, even for a short while, lest they should be tempted to stay away for a long time. Tallensi say that the freedom of movement of to-day is undermining parental authority. They say that if a man is severe with his sons, as he has every right to be, they simply run away and go south. Hence the men who think that working abroad spoils a youth or who cherish the ideal of keeping the family together all through their life, and therefore try to restrain their sons from going south, have to be tactful in handling them. Observation shows that it is usually the wise and considerate father, the man who manages his family well, who succeeds in restraining his sons from making long sojourns abroad. Where there is much friction between father and son, the son is apt to find a way out by going south; and, as we have mentioned, the likelihood of a son's leaving home is increased if one or both of his own parents are dead and he is living with

a proxy parent. As is natural, fathers and sons take different views of 593
this situation. Sons do not think that they are showing a lack of filial
loyalty when they go abroad. For, they argue, it is only a temporary 167
absence and the money they earn will eventually accrue, in part at least,
to the family exchequer. As has been mentioned previously, no man
ever turns away a son who comes home from abroad, whether he brings
any goods and money or not; and a son who does bring back 'things'
and money is doubly welcome.

We said earlier that a father owns all his son's property. This might 593
seem to contradict what was said about the independent ownership by
a son of the livestock he acquires by breeding from a gift hen or by other 421
means. The Tallensi themselves do not admit a contradiction in this.
They see it as an instance of the gradation of rights and duties that is
distinctive of their whole social organization. A father's over-right
entitles him to veto his son's using his own property in ways that seem
extravagant; but it would be an injustice rightfully resented by the son
if he were stopped from using his fowl or goat or sheep for purposes that
public opinion considers legitimate. Thus everybody would agree that
a father who forbade a son from using his own fowls and guinea-fowls
in his courtship, or from selling his own ground-nuts in order to buy
a cloth, would be acting unfairly. The case of Kpana-Tee's grandson
(p. 195) illustrates this principle.

The rights of a father and the rights of a son in the son's property are
reconciled by the principle of reciprocity. If a man makes use of his
son's goat or sheep he should, in due course, make an equivalent return;
for example, by using one of his own sheep or goats to do something for
the son. This object is immediately achieved if the son's property is
used for the son's benefit, as in the payment of bride-price. There is no
book-keeping, but in the long run the son should feel that the gains he
has received are commensurate with the amount of his own property
that has been used up. A proxy father should be more careful in this
regard than a man's own father. A proxy father is less concerned about
the future of his 'son' than the latter's own father would be and is there-
fore sometimes inclined to take selfish advantage of his paternal authority.
Though they have no alternative but to submit, young men deeply
resent unfairness of this sort, whether on the part of their own father or
on that of a proxy father; and this may be the first stimulus to their
determination to set up on their own.

This is epitomized in one of the reasons Tallensi regularly produce 593
when they are asked why young men secede from their paternal house- 596
holds. They say: 'It is because of hens and eggs.' Every man has at
least a hen or two, even if he has nothing else, and, as we know, his hen 422
symbolizes the starting-point of his accumulation of property. But hens
lay their eggs anywhere and this gives rise to petty quarrels. Anybody
who finds an egg claims it and another member of the family may dispute

593 the claim. But if the head of the family claims an egg no one can gainsay
him, so a young man might find himself left without any eggs to breed
596 from. That is why he wishes to be independent. It is a kind of rudi-
422 mentary myth summing up the economic causes of family fission. The point of interest is the emphasis on the inequitable behaviour of the 'father'. He uses his economic authority to his own advantage without making an equivalent return and thus prevents the 'son' from getting a start on the road of economic independence.

593 The adjustment of father's rights and son's rights has an added subtlety where cash is concerned. Supposing a young man returns from abroad with four or five pounds in cash that he has saved. According to the letter of custom he should hand all of it over to his father. But money, unlike a cow or a sheep, can be easily concealed and does not require attention; our young man can retain a part of his savings without his father's knowing of it. If it is his own father he may keep only a few shillings, particularly if he has recently been, or is about to be married and the money is wanted to pay his wife's bride-price. If it is his proxy father he will probably hand over only a pound or two, unless, again, the money is required for the bride-price of his wife; and then he will try not to hand over the money until his father-in-law actually demands the bride-price. It is common knowledge that this is the regular practice of young men returning from abroad. Fathers have no power to stop it, though most of them would like to; for up to a point, the young men are within their rights. Have they not 'taken their own legs and gone to get their money' by labour that is always arduous and sometimes dangerous? Again conflicts are inevitable, though as yet not more frequent than over other forms of property. For some men are only too apt to fritter away the money entrusted to them by a dependant before the time comes for it to be used for the benefit of the latter.

As we have mentioned before, one of the heaviest responsibilities a
593 man bears on behalf of his son, or for a dependant standing in the same
584 economic and jural relationship to him, is in 'marriage affairs'. It is the bridegroom's father or proxy father who has to undertake the series of jural actions required from his paternal kin in order to legitimize the union. In marriage by arrangement (*pɔɣalak*) it is the bridegroom's father who starts the negotiations and carries them through. The young man himself hardly sees his bride, after his first few courting visits, until she is brought to his home. In marriage by elopement (*pɔɣazaŋər*) the bridegroom's father's consent is essential for the marriage to be properly concluded. While, as we have already indicated, a father never openly disapproves of a son's marriage, but on the contrary always displays apparent pleasure over it, he can easily cause it to break down by holding back the bride-price.

As we know already, the two significant jural acts in the conclusion of a marriage are the sending of the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) and the

PLATE II

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a. The first-born son of a Namoo is ritually 'shown' his father's granary for the first time on the last day of his father's funeral ceremony

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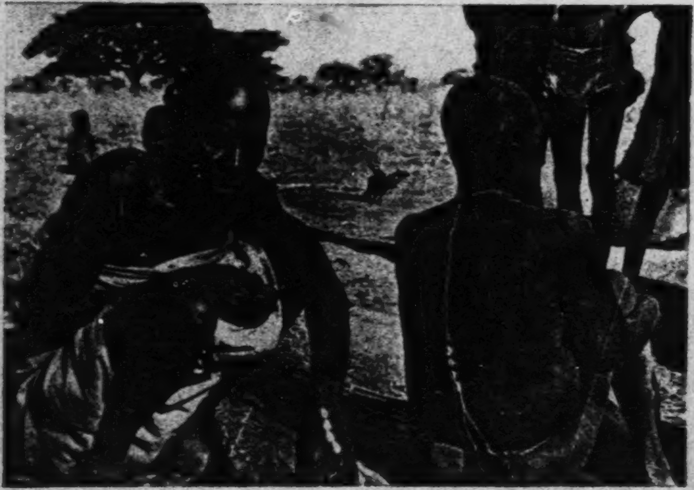

b. The youngest son and the youngest daughter of a dead woman wear the *doolug* during the concluding rites of their mother's funeral

[facing p. 208]

593 payment of at least a part of the fixed bride-price of three cows and a
bull, or their equivalent. The essential responsibility for the performance
584 of these two acts lies with the bridegroom's father or father's
heir, subject to the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.
Formally, the bride's paternal kin send their invitation to the bridegroom's
paternal kin to *lu sɛndaan* through the head of the latter's
nuclear or inner lineage, and make their demands for bride-price
through the same channels; for no jural act takes place except in the
framework of the lineage system. But actually the responsibility for
satisfying the bride's kin falls on the bridegroom's father. He must
'find the things'—the fowls and guinea-fowls—for the placation gifts;
he must send off the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) who carries them to the
bride's family; he must furnish the animals or goods or money to pay
the bride-price. 'Is it not his child? (*Pa u biiga*)' say the natives, implying
that this is a duty arising out of the fact of parenthood. In part it is
593 a specific duty; in part it is an aspect of a general responsibility that a
672 man bears for his son's jural relations. Thus if his son's wife is abducted
it is the father who calls on the other members of his inner lineage to
426 stand by him in taking action to recover the wife. If his son has abducted
another man's wife the father is directly answerable. Strictly speaking
a son cannot contract a debt involving heritable property such as cattle
or large sums of money without his father's authorization. Even if the
son is a man of substance, a wise creditor will insist that his father's
(and also his brothers' of the same nuclear lineage) consent to the transaction
be obtained first and made known to him. If this is not done the
creditor's chances of recovery are small. It becomes a question of one
man's word against another's and Tallensi are past masters in the art of
putting off a creditor. The concurrence of the debtor's father and
brothers fixes liability for ever, and if the debtor dies before settling the
debt his father, or his heir, is liable. These rules do not apply to small
sums of money, say a shilling or two, or things of small value such as
a hen or a loin-cloth. But petty borrowing and lending rarely takes
place between people who are not friends or close kin, and it is thus
generally fitted into the scheme of reciprocal aid that obtains between
friends and kinsfolk.

593 In their jural aspect these obligations of a father arise from the fact
of 'begetting (*dɔɣam*)'; in their economic aspect they are greatly influenced
584 by the principle of reciprocity. Where obligations of such great
social consequence are involved, the principle of reciprocity is not
577 limited to particular individuals but it binds their heirs and successors
as well owing to the operation of the lineage principle. One or two cases
will show how these two aspects are interwoven.

While Tampoyar was courting his wife he had very little recourse to
his proxy father's help. The few shillings he had received from selling
ground-nuts and a fowl or two sufficed to provide the occasional penny

PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

[facing p.209]

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he gave the girl whenever he saw her in the market and the gifts of tobacco and kola nuts he took to his prospective parents-in-law. He had some guinea-fowls of his own and his proxy father gave him a few more to take as presents to his prospective mother-in-law. Just when he thought the time was ripe to elope with the girl her father warned him not to attempt it as she was under a ritual taboo which prohibited her from marrying in this way. To his chagrin Tampɔɣar was therefore compelled to ask his proxy father Kurug to negotiate for the girl's hand. At this point Kurug began to temporize. Marriage by arrangement is an expensive business. Had not Tampɔɣar better wait a while until the guinea-fowl chicks were bigger? Tampɔɣar's answer was a fit of sulks, a warning to his 'father' that he felt injured. Had he not stayed at home to help with the farming when he could easily have followed some of his contemporaries to Kumasi? Then he would have earned enough to pay the expenses of his marriage himself. Why should he tire himself out in farming if this was the treatment he got in return?

Meanwhile Kurug had been talking to the other men of his inner lineage about the affair. He felt that it was high time Tampɔɣar had a wife, and he knew that if the young man were frustrated his work during the coming farming season would suffer. Moreover, he might take it into his head to run away to Kumasi. Kurug's lineage brothers shared his views. Besides, Kurug had enough cattle to pay the bride-price at once if need be and it was his duty to get a wife for the youth. It was his duty as the boy's proxy father; it was a return he owed the boy for the labour he had been contributing for several years to the household economy; it was, also, a return he owed to Tampɔɣar's dead father. When the latter died Kurug had inherited his wife and his property as well as his children. Kurug had benefited from this inheritance and must now repay it to the dead man's son. And so he at length agreed to arrange the marriage. He asked one of his neighbours and clansmen, whose grandfather had been a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) of the bride-to-be's clan, to act as intermediary and began to get together the fowls and guinea-fowls that would be needed for the ceremony by which the bride is given to her future husband's lineage representatives.

Kurug himself provided the bulk of the 'things' required for this ceremony, but Tampɔɣar gave a couple of his own guinea-fowls. Kurug provided the basket of millet with which the bride's mother's co-wife was 'seen off home (*beeh*)' when she paid her the customary formal visit shortly after the marriage, and he provided all but one of the fowls and guinea-fowls for the placation gifts, Tampɔɣar himself giving one fowl. Lastly, it was Kurug who gave the two cows which Tampɔɣar's father-in-law demanded as the first instalment of the bride-price. These were cows to the purchase of which Tampɔɣar's labour had contributed; and if Kurug had died before Tampɔɣar's marriage, Tampɔɣar would have inherited them.

This case, typical of dozens that occur every day among the Tallensi, shows how the motif of duty and the motif of reciprocity are intertwined. This appears still more clearly when 'father' and 'son' farm separately. Thus Sayabo of Kpata'ar was Nyaaŋzum's late half-brother's son. He occupied the same homestead as Nyaaŋzum, but separate quarters with an independent gateway and farm for himself. When Sayabo abducted a Gorogo man's wife, the injured husband, supported by his father-in-law, brought a case against Sayabo at the chief's court. Nyaaŋzum, together with Sayabo and almost all the other men of their inner lineage, went to answer the suit. Nyaaŋzum's defence was simple and straightforward. He knew of no bar to the marriage. They had no kinship ties with the girl's paternal kin, nor clanship ties with Gorogo. In former times Kpata'ar men and Gorogo men had not hesitated to abduct one another's wives. He was ready to pay the bride-price at once if the 'owner of the child (*biiraan*)'—that is the girl's jural guardian in this case, the father—agreed. The latter, however, refused to accept Sayabo as a son-in-law, so she was returned to her first husband and Nyaaŋzum forfeited his hearing fee of three shillings. Incidentally, this fee was made up of a shilling contributed by Sayabo, a shilling from Nyaaŋzum, and a shilling from another member of the inner lineage. 593 691 577

Why was Nyaaŋzum so ready to accept the responsibility for Sayabo's marriage and to answer for him at court, seeing that Sayabo was not farming with him? In the first place it was his duty as Sayabo's proxy father; and being a man of principle he would not evade such a duty. Even if he disapproved of the young man's behaviour he must answer for it in public, and he was under a jural obligation to pay the bride-price for the youth's wife, from his own resources if need be. In fact, however, he would not have offered to pay the bride-price with such alacrity if it were a question of using his own resources, for he had his own sons to think of. Another factor came into the situation, as Nyaaŋzum himself explained to me. 593 577

When Sayabo's father, Nyaaŋzum's half-brother Galəmoyar, died, Nyaaŋzum inherited a number of cattle from him. Some were cattle Galəmoyar had received as bride-price for a younger sister of his and Nyaaŋzum's. These cattle accrued to the *faar*, the patrimonial property, in the strict sense; Nyaaŋzum was entitled to dispose of them as he pleased since he was the last of his father's sons. In addition, Galəmoyar's herd included cattle he had himself bought or had received in payment of his daughters', Sayabo's sisters', bride-price. As Sayabo was still only a boy, Nyaaŋzum took possession of these cattle too. In theory he could dispose of them as he pleased. In practice Sayabo had a prior right to them, since they were his father's own earnings and his sisters' bride-price animals, and Nyaaŋzum had merely a nominal over-right. Nyaaŋzum had utilized most of these cattle for his own purposes; but he considered himself morally bound to make an equivalent return

593 577 for them to Saɣabo. This was the main reason why he was ready to meet Saɣabo's bride-price debt immediately. There was also a religious sanction in the background. Had he refused to support the youth, Galəməɣar's spirit would have become angry. He would have gone to their father's spirit and protested against the ill-treatment his son was receiving at his brother's hands, and the father would have punished Nyaaŋzum.

593 672 In the same way the father is the person who bears the essential jural responsibility for his son if the latter commits adultery. Though the negotiations for the reconciliation with the offended lineage or clan are carried out through the head of the inner lineage or medial lineage or even wider lineage segment to which the wrongdoer belongs, the animals sacrificed in the reconciliation rites are provided by his father.

593 577 Similarly a father is responsible for his son in all ritual matters in which the son is concerned as a member of the lineage or as the person through whom his father's line is perpetuated. A man is responsible to the ancestor spirits for performing the rites by which his child, boy or girl, is placed under the mystical care of a spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). It is the father's duty to provide the flour, beer, fowls, guinea-fowls, or other animals needed for these rites. If a child gets ill, its father has the duty of consulting a diviner and is obliged to provide any money, animals, or other goods that may be needed for the sacrifices to the ancestors, the treatment, and the payment of the medicine owner. Of course, if it is his own child a man does not think of such obligations as a duty but rather feels them to be a natural action of love and solicitude. But I have known cases where a proxy child was concerned in which the proxy father was less moved by affection than by his sense of duty and fear of mystical retribution. Among the Hill Talis it is a father's duty to provide the animals, flour, and beer required for his son's initiation into the External *Bɔɣar* cult. And, to complete this catalogue of examples, a father must take the initiative and provide the 'things' needed for the rites of exorcism, if his son is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). If his daughter-in-law is the sufferer, he must request her father to come and perform the exorcism and must provide the contributions due from the girl's husband's family.

593 The mutual rights and duties of parents and children among the Tallensi have a feature of particular interest which has already been indicated in the course of our analysis, but deserves further notice. They can be used as weapons of coercion by one side against the other, the principle of reciprocity being turned into an *ad hoc* sanction. The case of Tampɔɣar illustrates how a son can make use of the fact that his working power is essential for the household economy to force his father to get him a wife. This sanction is openly admitted by fathers. One day at Yinduuri I came upon a group of men engaged in a vehement argument. In the middle of the group was a man whose leg was badly

swollen with guinea-worm. It appeared that he had recently inherited his late brother's widow and her two children, a boy of about 16 or 17 and a girl of about 15. He had given this girl in marriage to a Sii man, but she had taken a dislike to him and had the previous day run back home again. Now the Sii man was anxious to make sure that the girl would be regarded as his legitimate wife. He feared that she would either be kept at home now, or else take the first chance of eloping with someone else. So he at once sent an intermediary with the prescribed placation gifts, and this emissary had just arrived. But this procedure was quite contrary to custom. The placation gifts must not be sent or accepted if the bride is at her father's house. The group of men was discussing the situation. It was in the course of this discussion that the girl's proxy father said that he could not take any decision without consulting her brother. 'He is a youngster (*bii*)', he said, 'and I own him. But he is the girl's brother. And you see that I am laid up with a bad leg. If I don't consult him, will he help me on the farm and do my errands for me?' 593

In using these mutual rights and duties as a sanction parents have the advantage over children. Within the limits of the inner lineage a father's payment of his son's bride-price is thought of as an obligation to the son. But as against the society at large it has an extra nuance. A son has no jural *locus standi*. He cannot get a wife unless his father is prepared to accept responsibility for the bride-price, even if he himself provides the means of payment. Thus Naaho, who was earning good wages, paid all the expenses of his courtship. He bought all the 'things' needed for marrying his wife by arrangement, as well as the two cows asked for her, out of his own pocket. But he was powerless to arrange the marriage by himself. He had to appeal to his father's brother, under whose paternal authority he was, to undertake this. It is true that it would be a most unusual thing for any man to refuse to take formal responsibility for his son in such a situation. But the mere fact that the latter cannot do without his assistance reinforces his authority over his son. Again, this consideration is of more importance for a proxy-father's authority than for the natural father's. It is the same, as has been observed earlier, with the ritual sanctions a proxy father commands.

We have spoken of the principle of reciprocity in the preceding paragraphs without attempting to define it. To do so it is necessary to take into account a wider context than the relations of parents and children. 593
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The principle of reciprocity or, more accurately, of equivalent returns[1] is implicit in the relations of parents and children. The natives see it as following on the mutual rights and duties of parents and children, and not as an explicit rule of conduct. There is a large voluntary element in

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[1] I am indebted to Professor Radcliffe-Brown for this concept and for stimulus in appreciating its significance. I owe much, also, to Malinowski's *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*, both here and elsewhere in this book.

593 its working, as we have seen. Moreover, it applies equally to all members of a household and is implicit in all kinship and affinal relations. It
577 arises out of common interests, mutual rights, and mutual obligations and is a way of giving expression to them. As these interests, rights, and obligations are of different kinds and degrees, corresponding to the differences in quality and degree of the relations involved, so there are different kinds and degrees of reciprocity. But all forms of equivalent returns have the general purpose of keeping social relations on a stable and mutual footing. The greater the field of common interests between persons, the less does deliberate calculation enter into the working of this principle. Hence the closer and more personal the relationship between people, the less formal is the rendering of equivalent returns for services or loans. Mutual services, between lineage segments, as, for instance, in the performance of one another's funeral ceremonies, are highly stereotyped. A son-in-law's services to his father-in-law must be immediately recompensed with food and drink. But between father and son, brother and brother, or husband and wife there is a continual give-and-take on a basis of all-in reciprocity. Equivalent returns cannot be demanded; it depends upon the good sense of the person concerned as to when and how he makes them, even in situations where custom lays down a definite norm. Meanness or selfishness in this respect gives rise to ill feeling and so to disharmony.

Tallensi sum up the observance of the principle of equivalent returns
593 under the idea of debt (*samər*). Debts are goods or services accepted or
577 requested on the definite understanding that they will be repaid and it is a maxim that debts never die (*sama pu kpira*). A man's heirs are liable
426 for his debts.[1] Where equivalent returns are the customary mode of recompense, accepting goods and services is not a debt. A man 'borrows' (*pɛŋ*) money or a cow from a distant clansman and that is a debt; he 'takes' (*zaŋ*) or 'accepts' (*die*) his son's or wife's belongings if he needs them, and it is not a debt (*la ka samər*).

The most important criterion determining whether or not a particular service or gift or loan creates a debt is kinship. Members of a nuclear lineage and of an expanded family do not incur debts by borrowing from one another. The same rule applies to cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of a nuclear lineage. If a man obtains something from his own mother's brother, for example, it is not a debt. This is definite. In theory there can be no debts either between members of the same inner lineage, or cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of one inner lineage. What happens in practice varies from case to case and from lineage to lineage. We have seen how this works out among the members of Ziŋgan biis. Another instance is 593 that of Yinworəb and his 'son' (his grandfather's brother's great-grandson) Kadɛne. 577 Yinworəb gave Kadɛne three shillings to pay the hearing fee when he was summoned to the chief's tribunal. This was not a debt. 426 Three or four months later Yinworəb borrowed a goat from Kadɛne. Again, this was not a debt but it was tacitly understood to be an equivalent return for the loan of the three shillings. By contrast, Lɔyani used some sheep belonging to Maantiya, his father's half-brother's grandson and therefore his 'son'. This he regarded as a debt because the sheep were earmarked for the payment of Maantiya's wife's bride-price.

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[1] Unless, as has been mentioned, they were not made a party to the debts at the time they were incurred or were not told of them by the debtor himself. The question of the procedures and sanctions that can be used to secure payment of a debt do not concern us here. One of the chief sanctions is public opinion. A defaulter finds it very difficult to borrow again.

Outside the inner lineage, however, a debt is incurred by accepting goods or services from a clansman. The only exceptions are if the lender is also a matrilateral kinsman of the borrower—e.g. a uterine kinsman—or a close friend.

The principle of reciprocity, as seen in operation in the family and 613 lineage, ties on to a more general theory of social action in Tale society. It is a particular application of the principle of equilibrium in the social 577 system. The idea that in the long run mutual services or favours should balance is inherent in Tale social organization. Canalized by the lineage system, it means that a son or grandson or later descendant can make or expect equivalent returns for an action of his father or grandfather or earlier ancestor. It is a matter of pride as well as of moral or jural obligation to see that one benefit is balanced by another. For example, it is a common thing at an elder's funeral to see a distant clansman of his, who is not obliged to do so, bring a sheep or goat as a valedictory offering to the dead. The donor explains that there is a special reason for this offering. The deceased had been a friend of his father. When his father died the deceased brought a goat as a valedictory offering to his father. His goat is a return gift. The maxim that 'debts do not die' springs from this principle; and it applies not only to the relations of the living among themselves but to their relations with their departed ancestors. A grandson may have to atone for his grandfather's sins, as happened with Kuwaas. Years of constant ill luck were attributed by a succession of diviners to the sins of his paternal grandfather, whose name he bore. Kuwaas I, as Chief of Tongo, had betrayed his office by abandoning his clan and seeking only his personal safety once when the Hill Talis attacked Tongo. This was a grave sin against the ancestors, [688] who demanded a large expiatory sacrifice, and until this was paid the sin would continue to lie heavily on the descendants of Kuwaas I. The right of self-help by raiding, and the notion that retaliatory warfare and retaliatory abduction of women are simply 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)',[1] belong to the same category of ideas. The principle of reciprocity underlies all these categories of social behaviour.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 236, 245.

The Duty of Supporting the Parents in Old Age

888 517 593 Parents retain their rights and authority over their children throughout their lives. A man may be so senile that he can take no active part in household or public affairs. He is still the father of his children and the head of the household, the owner of the farms and livestock that belong to the household. Any of his sons living with him is automatically bound to farm for him. On this basis alone, and apart from the dictates of filial piety, an old man who has a son need not lack economic support. It is the same with an old woman who has a son. In her case, however, the stress is on the duty—a duty which is felt to be in part a privilege—of a son to care for his old mother, since she does not own any land.

An old man who has no adult sons need not necessarily lack food or shelter. He either has land of his own or can obtain some from a kinsman, and it is a question then of securing labour to work it. This, however, is no easy matter. Sporadic assistance can be obtained from kinsmen and neighbours, but it is impossible to get regular full-time labour. No one would go and work another man's farms for a whole farming season, either for a wage or as a kinship obligation. Thus an old man in this position is not likely to have more than the minimum of food and other necessaries. Tɛndaan Teroog was in this position. His only adult son was not living with him and he was dependent on others for the cultivation of his land. When his neighbours and kinsmen were too busy with their own farms to help him, his wife did the weeding in a rough-and-ready way. If it were not for the gifts of grain sent to him by his adult son from Mampurugu, Teroog and his family would have lived at starvation level right through the year. As it is they were just managing to subsist.

Cases like that of Teroog are not numerous, simply because the number of old men who are incapable of doing some work for themselves is small. In the whole of Tongo I knew only six old men (apart from chronic invalids) who were completely incapable of work. Another ten or fifteen (according to the criterion of efficiency employed[1]) could work, but would probably not have been able to support themselves and their wives without assistance.

A somewhat different and less frequent case is that of Sabaalug. He is an old bachelor living with his half-brother. But he does not help with the farming and so is not entitled to be supported by his brother. He keeps himself by 'scrounging' (*bimh*) a bit of food or a basket of millet, a few pence or an old garment from his matrilateral kinsmen and friends. A childless old woman like Tɔŋ, who lives with a 'son' of her long dead husband ekes out a poor existence in the same way. Tallensi are very

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[1] Kurwaas, for example, might have done much more work if he had not had two adult sons; Vɔŋraan-Tee would certainly have worked less if he had had a son to help him; Ta'aŋ spent so much time on ritual and communal affairs that he did less work on his farms than he was capable of.

tolerant of such old folk, but they consider their mode of life a pitiable 988
one, not so much from the purely material aspect as from the social side. 577
'Who will mourn his death? Who will give him a proper funeral?' they 573
say. But such cases serve as examples for an argument they often put forward. I once heard it very well put in a comment on life in the coast towns. There, said the speaker, you starve if you have no money. Here, at home, no one need die of destitution. If he has no children he can always find a roof with a kinsman, either one of his close agnates or his mother's brother's people, and keep himself alive by the gifts of food he gets from kinsfolk and friends. Though a man is not bound to be overgenerous, and he is not compelled to feed a kinsman living with him who does not contribute to the common pool, it is an offence against the ancestors to refuse food to a kinsman in straits.

Still rarer are instances of people who come to live with a daughter in their old age. I knew of only two cases, one that of an old man, the other of a woman. It is considered to be unbecoming for a man or woman to live with a married daughter. It is not compatible with 'in-lawship' (*deen*) and Tallensi say it causes friction. A married daughter contributes to her parents' material welfare indirectly. Her chief contribution is through the bride-price paid for her. A cow received for a daughter's bride-price may be the starting-point of the accumulation of more livestock. In times of severe shortage a bride-price animal may be used to purchase grain and so save the family from starvation. Most important, however, is the use of a daughter's bride-price to pay off bride-price debts of her natal family. It helps, therefore, to add to the woman-power of her father's household upon which a large part of the household's productivity depends. The occasional assistance given to a man by his daughter's husband in farming, house-building, thatching, and so forth is a small item relatively to the total labour required to maintain a household, but it is enough to turn the scales in a difficult year. Many of the homesteads that were being built on the Tong Hills in 1936 would not have been completed that dry season if the owners' sons-in-law from other parts of the country had not come to their aid.

In short, a native's chief economic asset in old age (and this applies to sickness too) lies in the possession of sons, best of all own sons, but also proxy sons, that is, all those who have an interest in the patrimonial land which is for the time being in his keeping. As we already know, more distant 'sons' than those of the nuclear lineage are very unlikely to live with and work for a man whom they recognize as a classificatory father. Tallensi say that one of the reasons why sons are preferred to daughters is because they will farm for one when one is old. Women are even more apt than men to emphasize the insurance value of sons just because they are more dependent on a son's sense of moral obligation to care for them.

Yet Tallensi do not explicitly state it as one of the duties of a son to

888 577 593 support an old father economically. They assume support of an old father to follow automatically from the economic and jural relations of parents and children and from the moral obligations of filial piety. It is simply an aspect of co-operative production and joint consumption in the household under the household head's management, and a result of the principle of reciprocity. If a man's only son, for example, were living in his native settlement and refused to have his father or proxy father in his homestead, it would be a monstrous breach of ethics. He would lay himself open to immediate punishment by the ancestors; he would, indeed, be unable to participate in the life of the community since he could not act for himself in ritual or jural affairs.

888 593 577 167 This is an hypothetical instance, for I know of no such case. But nowadays the question of supporting an aged parent does occasionally arise when men emigrate from their native settlements to seek work abroad or to farm outside Taleland. Cases are occurring of men who stay away abroad and postpone their return home from year to year, leaving an aged parent to struggle on alone. They are far from numerous —I knew of some six or seven only, counting two cases where the sons had genuine grounds for their absence.

Native opinion about these absentees is illuminating. They are not criticized for neglecting to send money home regularly. Tallensi do not expect regular remittances from relatives working abroad and still tend to regard the occasional remittances that are sent home as windfalls. Absentee sons are censured rather for deserting their parents, for leaving them without the companionship and the social support of a son. Tɛndaan Teroog's son used to send baskets of guinea corn and maize to his father from Mampurugu. Nevertheless, the old man kept pressing him to return home; and when the son died suddenly people said it was because he had 'rejected' (*zaγah*) his father. He should have come home long ago to be his father's companion (*kɔγal*, vb.), to act for him in jural matters, assist him in ritual activities, and manage the household for him. The same sentiment was uppermost in Maantiya's mind when he explained why he could not leave his proxy father Saantarɔba, though the latter was able to support himself and his wife with occasional assistance from kinsmen. Maantiya went down to the coast every dry season carrying fowls to sell and usually stayed away three or four months. He was always home again before the rains began. He said: 'I cannot abandon my father. He has no one else.' When I was going home in 1937 a number of men asked me to find their absent sons in Kumasi or Accra or elsewhere in the south, and to try to persuade them to return home. 'Tell them', said one old man, 'that we do not care about the money or things, but we want them to come home.'

888 593 577 We have said that there is a more definite emphasis on the duty of a son to provide for his mother. There was an old woman at Kpata'ar whose only son had been abroad for some years. She sent him many

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messages begging him to return, but to no avail. 'That good-for-nothing', said Tiezien, contemptuously, telling me about this youth. 'He leaves his mother to starve here while he goes wandering abroad. He is no person (*u ka nit*).'[1]

This feeling that it is a son's bounden duty to support an aged mother is strongly marked in the case of one's own mother. It sometimes happens that a woman is widowed while still young and is left with one or two young children. She remarries into her late husband's clan and has children by her second husband. When she gets past child-bearing age, even if her second husband is still alive, she usually goes to live with her oldest son of the first marriage. Tallensi say that the right person to support such a woman is this son, as her second husband has no further interest in her after she ceases to be able to bear children.

Any surviving widow of one's own father or proxy father (i.e. a close co-wife of one's own mother) is felt to be entitled to support, but in this case a ritual sanction enters the picture. Tallensi say a man is bound to support his own mother 'because she bore you (*ɔn n-dɔyi la zugu*)' It is a direct moral duty to her. But one has to support a mother's widowed co-wife because she was one's father's wife and he would be angry if one did not. This rule applies only to widows of fathers of one's own nuclear lineage. Outside that range no obligation is felt to support an old widow whom one's mother would have called her co-wife. It now becomes a question of more abstract ethical values summed up in the concept *dulɔm*. There is no exact equivalent for this concept in English. According to Tale ethics, any act of deliberate malice or even thoughtlessness that causes trouble or suffering to another person through no fault of his own is immoral. For example, deliberately giving a person wrong information that leads him into trouble; or refusing to give or lend a person something that can well be spared, and so causing him to suffer a serious loss; or if one is in a position to prevent a person getting hurt and makes no effort to do so—all such actions come into this category of moral delinquency. They incur *dulɔm*. The concept covers both the sufferer's resentment and the ethical stigma attaching to the wrong done to him by allowing evil to befall him. The native phrase is 'it brings (or is) *dulɔm* (*de mar dulɔm*)'; and *dulɔm* bears mystical retribution in its track.

Tallensi say that if an old woman whom one calls 'mother' (either because she is the widow of a classificatory father, or out of courtesy, because she belongs to one's mother's generation of wives of the clan) has no one to support her and appeals to one, it is *dulɔm* to refuse her. *Dulɔm* is one of the reasons why one cannot refuse food to a kinsman in need. It was the reason Kuŋaaŋba gave for allowing his old 'mother'

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[1] This expression of contempt contains a wealth of meaning for the native. It means, broadly, someone who has no sense of decency or is oblivious of his social responsibilities.

888 593 577 Tɔŋ to stay with him. Banɔrəg furnished another instance. One afternoon he looked in on his way home from the market and found two elders with me. He told us he was having some trouble with Ziba, a young man of his inner lineage. Ziba had an old woman, whom he called 'mother', living with him; but he had suddenly decided to get rid of her. Banɔrəg told us how he had expostulated with the heartless young man. 'It is an evil thing to do', he concluded, amid murmurs of assent from the two elders. 'A man who drives out an old woman to starve becomes blameworthy before Heaven (*u kpera Naawun taale*); it is *dulɔm*.' Banɔrəg's efforts, in this case, were in vain since he had no paternal authority over Ziba. The intervention of an older kinsman does not always check disgraceful treatment of domestic relatives, and public opinion only takes notice of it after the event and then often has no power to make the culprit remedy it.

A Methodological Point

593 181 The cases we have quoted in the preceding pages are précis of statements, opinions, and explanations given to me by Tallensi themselves. If space allowed, a score of cases could be quoted for each one I have recorded. I mention this because it might seem incredible, to anyone who has not lived amongst the Tallensi, that a people so primitive in their mode of livelihood should balance up rights and obligations in the most commonplace activities of their lives in so calculating a fashion. But the picture I have sketched is not a distortion. Description and analysis inevitably reduce human action to slow motion and men's motives to a seemingly mechanical pattern. In reality Tale parents commonly act as spontaneously and generously as parents in any other country and their children respond as spontaneously and sincerely. But even the most spontaneous actions and feelings of the natives occur within the framework of their social organization and subject to the values postulated in their culture. Social organization and cultural values allow of alternative forms of action and affect in any particular situation, but not of infinitely numerous alternatives. Where the relations of parents and children are involved these alternatives are not unlimited; and allowing for differences of personality and character, as the natives themselves do, we can say that the alternative that will be selected in a particular situation is determined by the structural relations of the individuals concerned. Men's motives and their social relations are closely integrated with one another among the Tallensi, as we have emphasized before. In their actual social behaviour Tallensi do not have to stop and think out every situation before they act. The individual's ideas and attitudes have been shaped by the social structure and the cultural norms. The framework of his social relations is as much a part of him as he is a part of it. He automatically evaluates every situation in terms of his social relations. To put it crudely, every Talɔŋ carries a set of

labels bestowed upon him by the social system and a set of ideas and attitudes implanted in him by his culture. In every situation he responds to the relevant labels borne by the other people who enter into it with action springing from his ideas and attitudes. What we have tried to do is to examine this process of response in slow motion and to show how the ideas and attitudes evoked by certain labels can be traced back to the structural relations of the people concerned. 593 181

CHAPTER VIII

TENSIONS IN THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Rivalry between Parents and Children

593 578 PERHAPS the most extraordinary feature of Tale parents' relations with their children is the recognition, in custom and belief, of the latent antagonism behind their mutual identification and comradeship, their devotion and co-operation. We have already had some glimpses of this. A psycho-analyst might say that the Oedipus complex is apparently openly recognized in Tale culture. He would have to add that it is built into their social organization in such a way as to enable them to control it. The mystical ideas and ritual symbols in which the rivalry between successive generations is clothed form the cultural mechanism by which it is neutralized and made to serve socially useful ends.

784 [184] 578 543 We have discussed the taboos observed by first-born children among the Namoos in our previous book. We showed there[1] that the distinguishing mark of all Namoo clans as opposed to non-Namoo clans is the observance of these taboos. Among all Namoos a man's first-born son and daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, may not wear any of their father's garments or his quiver, or look into his granary during his lifetime. The latter taboos are connected with the fact that a man's clothes and quiver and granary are intimately identified with his social personality. As the natives put it, a man's clothes and quiver are imbued with his bodily exuviae from constant contact with his body, while his granary is associated with his unique status in the patricentral family. It is easy to see that these possessions are peculiarly apt symbols of a man's social self. It is not surprising, therefore, that though these taboos are not formally observed by non-Namoos analogous usages with the same symbolic significance occur among them.

In our previous book we studied the significance of these taboos as quasi-totemic symbols in the system of inter-clan relations; but they have other dimensions of meaning as well, like all Tale customs and ideas that give expression to fundamental elements in their social organization. For they go back to deep and universal tendencies in human psychology. These taboos have a particular meaning in the contemporary structure of Tale society as symbols of corporate units; but underlying this is the deeper meaning they have in the relations of successive generations and for the individual himself in the conduct of his life.

We are concerned here with these latter aspects of their meaning. We cannot attempt to unravel all that lies behind them, but their super-

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. v and viii.

ficial symbolism is transparent. What they mean is that a child may not 593
be equated with his or her father while he is alive. As we have observed,
though these taboos do not occur among non-Namoos, the ideas and 578
sentiments they express are as frankly admitted by them as by Namoos.
It was a Tɛnzugu (Talis) man who gave me the clearest statement I
obtained on the struggle between the Destinies (*Yina*) of father and son.
I remember also being struck by this during the ceremony of exorcising
the evil Predestiny of Sinkawol of Kpata'ar's wife. Just as the most
important rite of all was begun somebody noticed that Tiezien,
Sinkawol's proxy father, was absent. Nyaaŋzum, Sinkawol's proxy
grandfather and Tiezien's proxy father, shouted for Tiezien to come
out of the homestead. Tiezien shouted back, in some anger, 'No, I
won't come. They are exorcising my daughter-in-law's *Yin* and I should
be there? Oh no. Is she your (plural) wife or mine? No, it is not for
me to be there.' There was a moment's pause and then Nyaaŋzum
called back, 'Well, leave it then, you are right.' The point was that a
man must not equate himself with his son, particularly where the latter's
procreative status is concerned. But grandfather and grandson are
equated with each other, as we shall see more fully later. And by the
same principle a woman must not be equated with her daughter in her
reproductive capacity. Thus when a man's daughter becomes a mother [784]
for the second or third time he gives up sleeping with her mother even
if she is still of child-bearing age. Tallensi call this an important taboo.
It is significant also that among both Namoos and non-Namoos an analogous
taboo to that of the father's granary holds between a mother and
her first-born daughter. While her mother is alive a girl may not uncover
her mother's chief storage-pot (*u pu sugəl u ma doko*). This taboo
is not stressed so much as those that discriminate a child from its father,
as might be expected in a society so thoroughly organized around the
patrilineal line. But it does show that the tension between the generations
among the Tallensi is not the product of *patria potestas* only, but
arises out of the whole network of the relations between parents and
children.

The avoidances of first-born children are not the only customary 593
expression of the tension between the generations. A man and his oldest
child do not eat together. 'You and your oldest child do not dip your 264
fingers into the same dish of food together,' the natives say, 'for if you did
perhaps his finger-nail might scratch you and that would bring misfortune
on both of you.' This prohibition is not subject to ritual sanctions,
though the misfortune that would follow the symbolic act of aggression
would be of a mystical character. Tallensi share a dish with the youngest
child for preference; and it is not an uncommon sight to see a man eating
with his youngest child while his oldest son is sitting near by eating
separately.

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Then there are the restrictions we have already mentioned that must be
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observed at funeral ceremonies by anyone who has a parent of the same sex as the deceased still living. Similarly an oldest son may not deputize for his father in making sacrifices to an ancestor shrine which is in the latter's custody; 'he is too near to inheriting the shrine', the Tallensi say. The implication is that if an oldest son deputizes for his father in relation to the ancestors he is anticipating his inheritance and this is tantamount to wishing his father dead. Even during the interval between the mortuary rites and the final funeral ceremony of a dead father it is his younger sons who make sacrifices in his name to the ancestor shrines that were in his possession and will be inherited by the oldest son.

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All these customs indicate how strongly the Tallensi feel that there is an underlying rivalry between parents and children that must not be allowed to drive a wedge between them. While his parent (particularly his father) is alive, a child (particularly a son) must not act in any way that suggests a desire to usurp the parent's place; and this holds vice versa for the parent too, as the incident between Tiezien and Nyaaŋzum shows. It is implicit in the Tɔle concept of incest. It can be summed up in the formula that father and son may not take each other's place in the procreative relationship, which is the fundamental relationship defining their positions in society relatively to each other; but this principle is extended to all social relations of father and son, particularly the first-born son. Tallensi state this quite openly, and it is worth quoting what Yarɔg of Gbizug, who is not a Namoo, said to me once in this connexion. There had been a ceremony the previous night at which the Gbizug tɛndaana had been represented by one of his younger sons. I asked Yarɔg why he did not sometimes deputize for the tɛndaana in these ceremonies, for surely he knew more about the rites than his younger classificatory brothers? 'No', he replied, 'that is impossible. I am like the tɛndaana's oldest son, for my father was his full (*soog*) brother; I cannot put on his cap and skin and perform these rites for him. We are Talis and it is not a taboo for us, but it would not be right, it would not be seemly.'

We have seen that the undercurrent of rivalry is most apparent in the relations of father and son. Marriage removes a daughter from the arena of possible conflict with her parents and her social role does not create interests and motives that bring her into competition with either of her parents. She cannot take the place of either her father or her mother. Removal from their control has the effect, if anything, of strengthening her uterine tie with her mother and her lineage tie with her father. The first-born daughter is associated with the first-born son in these taboos by the principle of sibling equivalence.[1] She is the first-born child of her sex, and stands for the filial generation as much as her brother does. It is their first child, whether it be son or daughter, that makes a married couple into parents. Moreover, we must not forget the Tale maxim that

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[1] This principle is discussed in Ch. X below.

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she might have been a son but for the accident of birth. A son's situation is entirely different, as we have shown in the preceding chapters. He remains a member of his parental family all his life. He does eventually take the place of his father in the life of the community and could be suspected of wanting to hurry on the day when this will happen. His desire for independence is liable, as we have seen, to run counter to his father's plans and demands. Every advance in his social and economic development might be interpreted as an added threat to his father's dominance. He will not be his own master until he has no father. The very principle of reciprocity which plays such an important part in their economic co-operation conceals mutual jealousy about property. And the social cleavage between his generation and his father's is emphasized by the wider context of fatherhood. A man's father's brothers, who are identified with his father both by generation and by birth, stand between him and his full independence as his father's heir. Even after his own father's death they retain authority over him. As we have seen, the cleavage between successive generations usually comes to a head more decisively with a proxy father than with one's own father.

Tallensi themselves make no bones about the matter. 'Your oldest son is your rival (*I bikpeem a i dataa*)', the men say bluntly. I have heard this phrase used by both Namoos and non-Namoos from every part of the country. 'Look at my oldest son', an elder once said to me. 'He would not care if I should die to-morrow. Then he would inherit all my possessions, he would own the *zɔŋ* and he could take his ease. The things connected with an oldest son are hard (*bikpeem yɛla ntɔ*).'

This candour in fathers is not matched by their sons, who never admit the rivalry. They laugh it off as 'an affair of custom (*de yɛl nla*)', or simply say that it is a ritual matter, a taboo (*kihər*) like any other taboo that one accepts without questioning. And they generally launch out, with obvious sincerity, into the kind of panegyric on the advantages of having a father that has been previously quoted (p. 172). This is as one might expect, for it is the fathers who feel the threat to their dominance; and they feel it the more strongly as they grow older and their powers decline.

The taboos of first-born children begin to be enforced in early childhood. By the age of 7 or 8 a child takes them as seriously as his parents.[1] But it is only after the son is married and has a growing family, when the father is getting on in years, that the opposition symbolized in ritual observances emerges as an opposition in practical life. It coincides with the son's increased striving to free himself from his father's economic control. This is expressly symbolized, among all the Tallensi, in a taboo which the first-born son begins to observe about the time he gets married. He and his father must not meet face to face in the gateway of their common homestead. This taboo is as scrupulously observed as

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

593 the other taboos of first-born children. Its meaning is plain if we bear in mind what the gateway and the *zɔŋ* symbolize in the structure of the
578 family and the lineage.[1] Significantly enough, a first-born daughter does not observe it.

Eventually, when the son's older children are reaching adolescence, the opposition between his father and himself culminates in his formal separation from his parental family. We have noticed before that fission in the joint family is basically due to structural and economic factors. In the case of an eldest son's hiving off, Tallensi say that it is often brought about by the jealousies of the womenfolk. The son's wife or wives complain that they are not getting a fair deal in the distribution of food-supplies in the joint family. They are always nagging at their husband on that account. So when a son 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)' natives say it is in order the better to support his wives and children. But the separation is actually due as much to the relations between the man and his father as to the purely economic causes. It is an instance of the convergence and congruence of structural principles and economic necessities.

Most commonly an eldest son separates off formally by cutting a
593 new gateway for himself in the family homestead. The native phrase
578 is *bit u zanɔr* ('slit his gateway'), and it describes precisely what happens. The wall of the homestead is cut through so as to make an extra gateway
884 leading into the son's quarters. Though he and his wife and children will very often use the main gateway, he is by status the owner of his own subsidiary gateway and cannot formally clash with his father. At the same time he achieves a considerable measure of economic independence. He will have his own bush farm and small home farm and be responsible for providing the bulk of the food required by his wife and children. But he still helps his father and younger brothers with their farm work, and receives some food-supplies from his father in return if his own supplies are insufficient for his needs. Sometimes, however, an eldest son moves out altogether. His father may let him build a homestead on a bush farm belonging to the family, or he may migrate to one of the peripheral settlements. As we have seen, it usually takes a few years for a son to achieve this step. I have heard young men who were pressing their claims for a separate gateway express impatience with an obstinate old father and even resentment against his apparent tyranny. But when the parting comes it is usually amicable, and father and son continue to be on excellent and intimate terms thereafter. The son is still under his father's final authority in jural and ritual matters.

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The Native Theory of the Tension between the Generations

578 Tallensi explain the rivalry between father and son by means of the
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[1] Cf. Ch. III above.

mystical concept of the *Yin* or personal Destiny.[1] There is, they say, an inborn antagonism between the *Yin* of a father and the *Yin* of his eldest son. While the son is still young his *Yin* is weak, but as he grows older his *Yin* grows more powerful and wants to make him master of his own affairs. The son's *Yin* wants to destroy the father's *Yin*; but the father's *Yin* desires the father to live and be well and remain master of the house. It wishes to continue to receive sacrifices from the father. Therefore it will try to destroy the son's *Yin*, and if it is the stronger *Yin* it will cause misfortune and perhaps death to the son. That is the reason why father and son must avoid meeting in the gateway of the homestead and why it is better for them to separate, after the son has reached a stage of maturity when his *Yin* begins to be as powerful as his father's. In the same way an oldest daughter's evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) is a threat to her mother's life and health. When Sinkawol's wife was waiting for her evil Predestiny to be exorcised she was not allowed to go and visit her sick mother for fear that her *Yinbe'er* might cause her mother to get worse. 573 578 777

To appreciate the profundity of this interpretation we need to understand the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is one of the most difficult of their religio-psychological ideas to translate into our categories of thought. Indeed, it is not a precise notion but, like all Tale ritual ideas, a configuration of mutually overlapping ideas, beliefs, and values. 777

Yin is the shortened form of *Naawun* or *Naayin*, the Tale term which can best be translated as Heaven. But whereas *Naawun* is concerned with all mankind, each person's *Yin* belongs uniquely to that person. It is the symbol of his individuality, of what makes his life history different in his own eyes from that of every other person. If he falls ill he is enduring something that is the common human lot, and he tries to cope with his illness by the same measures that anybody else would take. But, he asks himself, why should he have fallen ill just at this time and not his brother or somebody else, for instance. When he kills an animal in the hunt, or buys a cow, or marries, or has a child he goes through experiences that every man has, and his social personality takes on attributes that are part of the social personality of every man of about the same stage of social maturity. Yet they are his own private experiences. They form part of the unique continuity of his personal development. None of them was inevitable. They are due to the intervention of chance in his life; or, as the Tallensi believe, to the action of the mystical agencies that dictate the course of human life.

These, very briefly, are the ideas, as nearly as one can translate them into our modes of thought, behind the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is a mystical notion because their ideas of causality are couched in a ritual idiom and are rooted in ritual beliefs; and it serves several ends. Tallensi do not

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 144, for a discussion of this concept from a different angle.

777 conceive of the inner life of the individual as a distinct phenomenon apart from the external, material, and social facts of his life. But they understand clearly that each person is unique as an individual. The notion of *Yin* is the means by which they visualize the connexion between the material and social facts of the person's life and his individuality. It enables them, also, to see a tendency and a determinism in the life of the individual by reference to which they make the intervention of chance intelligible and emotionally tolerable.

A person's Destiny has various aspects, some or all of which may emerge in the course of his life. There is, first of all, his Predestiny (*nuor Yin*, the *Yin* of the mouth). This is the fate the individual has preordained for himself before birth. In his pre-natal state he 'spoke when he was with Heaven above (*u daa vɔləm Naayin zugni*)'. Both men and women have this *Yin*; and it is this *Yin* that sometimes manifests itself as an evil *Yin* (*Yinbe'er*), when the individual is pursued by chronic bad luck in the important things of life—things like health, marriage, parenthood. He (or she) had declared before birth that he does not want to have parents or children or a spouse or any of the good things of life. A child suffering from an evil Predestiny is constantly ailing; a man so afflicted cannot find a wife or is deserted by every wife he marries; or he loses his children one after the other in infancy; or he is for ever having bad crops or losing his livestock; and a woman with a *Yinbe'er* loses her children one after another in infancy, or her husband, or perhaps she herself gets ill of some wasting disease. Moreover, this ill luck that haunts the unwitting sufferer is also a constant danger to his family. A child's evil *Yin* may cause the death of a parent or a sibling; a man's or woman's evil *Yin* spoils the life of his or her spouse, children, and parents as well as his or her own life. [578] The evil *Yin* symbolizes all the subterranean animosities and aggression latent in the relations of members of the joint family with one another. The cure is a ritual exorcism, carried out by the maximal or medial lineage of the sufferer, but this is not always successful.

If a woman's Predestiny is harmless or beneficent it remains latent, as it were. It is not objectified in any way as she has no ritual status.[1] Her *Yin* is subordinate to and submerged in her father's or her husband's *Yin*. But a man's Predestiny, if it is beneficent, may declare itself to him, usually after adolescence, but occasionally before. Thus a young man may kill an animal in the hunt and this will declare itself, through a diviner, to be the vehicle of his *nuor Yin*, and demand that he dedicate a shrine to it.

[1] Women have no *Yin* or other ancestor shrines as they have no independent relationship with the ancestors. This is a reflex of their status in Tale society as jural and ritual minors who do not play a part in maintaining the continuity of the society or the equilibrium of the body politic independently of their relationship to their fathers or husbands.

But a man's most important *Yin* is that with which certain of his ancestors are associated. This too may come to him in childhood, though it does so more commonly in early manhood. Usually it manifests itself to him through an accident or a coincidence. Thus a young man falls ill shortly after he has bought a new hoe or killed an animal in the hunt. The diviners then declare that his illness was caused by his *Yin*; his ancestors so and so, and so and so, are thus revealing themselves as his *Yin*; the hoe or the animal is their vehicle; they brought illness on him because they demand that he should accept them as his *Yin* and sacrifice to them. The young man will then build a shrine dedicated to these ancestors placing the skull of the animal or the blade of the hoe on it, and will henceforth sacrifice to them on this shrine. This is his first and most intimately personal shrine, and it plays an enormous part in his life thereafter. As far as his own personal affairs are concerned, it will always be his most important link with his ancestors. It is through his *Yin* that they exercise the most direct influence upon his life and that he seeks to maintain their goodwill specifically for himself. When he becomes head of his joint family he will entrust most of the children born into the family to his *Yin* as spirit guardian. Every important step in his social development will be registered in his relations with his *Yin*; it may be by a special sacrifice, or it may be by a change in the location of the shrine, or the addition of an ancestor to the group of ancestors who have revealed themselves (*naam*) as his *Yin*. A man's *Yin* is both the chart of his life and the helm with which he steers his way through life. 777 778

All the ancestors and ancestresses of a man have a potential mystical relevance for his life, but they have the same potential relevance for any of their descendants. His *Yin* ancestors, on the other hand, are concerned exclusively with him, for his own sake, so to speak. They form a particular combination, usually of very recent forebears, who do not belong together in just that grouping for any other of their descendants. They may be patrilateral or matrilateral ancestors or a combination of both lines. Thus a man might have as his *Yin* ancestors his father, father's father, father's father's mother, and her father, while his brother has their father, father's mother, and father's mother's father as his *Yin* ancestors. Of another pair of brothers, one's *Yin* ancestors may be their mother's father, maternal grandfather, and maternal great-grandfather; and the other's might be their mother's mother, her father, and his father (see Fig. 5, page 230). 777 769

Thus when a Talɔŋ says that his *Yin* and his eldest son's *Yin* are mutually dangerous, he is saying that his son's successful growth and development into and through manhood is a threat to his authority and primacy in the family, a symbol of the inevitable decline in his physical and mental power that comes with age, and a warning that he must in due course make way for the next generation; and yet it is also the 593 578 777

593 crowning achievement of his life, the most significant sign that his *Yin* has
777 prospered him (*maal*) well. The relations of father and son are a balance
578 between their ties of solidarity and mutual identification, which form the
central link of the lineage system, and the cleavage due to their belonging
to successive generations. Once more we encounter the fundamental principle of Tale social organization, that every constellation of social relationships is made up of a polar balance of ties and cleavages.

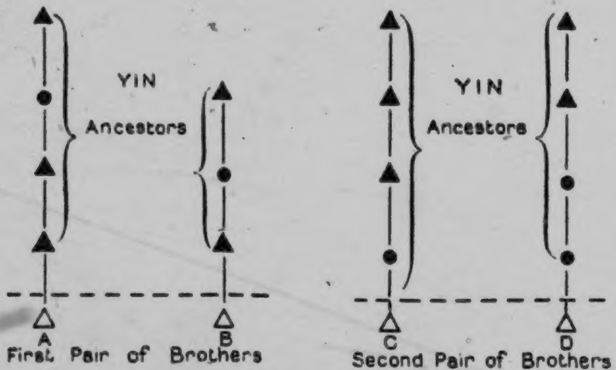

FIG. 5. *Yin* Ancestors.

The Discrimination between Oldest Children and Youngest Children

593 The cleavage between father and first son obviously plays an impor-
578 tant part in the cycle of development of the joint family and lineage.
The oldest son's breakaway from the parental home is the first phase of fission of the joint family, and it is not until after his father's death that he and his brothers are likely to become reunited into a single domestic unit.

We have spoken sometimes as if the cleavage between successive generations lay solely between parents and their first-born children, at other times as if it were a gulf between parents and all their children. In practice, tension crops up between a parent and any of his or her adolescent or adult children, but one reason why it is always likely to be sharpest with oldest children is simply because they have gone farthest along the road of social and economic maturity and so symbolize
the filial generation most effectively of all the children. Among
593 non-Namoos it does not seem to matter whether the oldest children
578 are first-born or merely the oldest surviving children. Among the
184 Namoos, however, there is the striking peculiarity of their fixing the
ritual and affective bar between the generations on the first-born children. If a man's first-born son is dead, and even if he died in infancy, the oldest living son does not assume the taboos of the first-born. The

tension that develops between a father and his oldest surviving son is 593
never as great as that which occurs between a man and his first-born 578
son. An oldest surviving son may in time begin to farm on his own, but
he will very often stay in his father's homestead, for his *Yin* is not a 184
danger to his father's.

Tallensi have no explanation for this. Their only comment is to point 593
to the fact, which can often be observed, that parents discriminate 578
between their older children and their younger children, especially
between the oldest and the youngest. Youngest children are the favourites, upon whom they lavish all their tenderness when they have long ceased to make a show of affection for the older children. A man's or a woman's last child (*bikpa'ar*) is the apple of its parent's eye. Tallensi say that a last child is always spoiled and pampered, and therefore grows up to be vain, lazy, and extravagant. Guńa'ab was a man of this stamp, and his older brothers explained contemptuously that he had been their mother's *bikpa'ar* and they had been unable to discipline him after their father's death.

Tallensi say that a person's younger children, and in particular the youngest child, feel their dependence on their parents till the last. There is, as in so many aspects of the relations of parents and children, an element of reciprocity in this. For a man's youngest son, for instance, is still farming with him when his oldest son is farming either wholly or partly for himself—'thinking of how to feed his wife and children rather than of his parents', they often say. 'If I die to-day', men have said to me, 'do you think my oldest son will weep? Oh no; but my youngest son, he will shed bitter tears.' There is much truth in this. I have more than once seen a man's youngest son being harshly rated by an older brother for abandoning himself to grief over his father's death. Because older children no longer need their parents' care they do not inspire the same affection as young children. In the eyes of the natives, therefore, the discrimination between youngest and oldest children is a natural result of the process of upbringing. But I have heard women say, also, that a woman's love for her *bikpa'ar* is due to her seeing in him the sign of the end of her reproductive powers.

It is, however, not merely a matter of the vagaries of parental psycho- 593
logy. This discrimination runs deeply into the social structure of the 787
Tallensi. A curious but enlightening indication of this occurs with
divining (*bakologo*) shrines. When a diviner dies, the clairvoyant power
associated with his shrine sometimes passes on to one of his sons by a
process which the Tallensi think of as a kind of mystical contagion (*lɔŋ*).
The son who is selected for this privilege is always a younger son. There 593
is more sympathy between father and younger son than between father 765
and oldest son. But the best indication of this is found at funeral cere-
monies, where the oldest and the youngest children of the deceased 578
have distinctive mourning duties. The oldest son and oldest daughter,

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as the chief mourners, have the most arduous mourning duties. They have to take part in almost every rite, both by day and by night, and these rites are mystically dangerous to those who participate in them. Hence they have to be carried out very carefully. All the participants must, for instance, observe absolute silence throughout these rites. The youngest son and youngest daughter, on the other hand, wear the *dooluŋ* string as a special emblem of mourning. The *dooluŋ* string is decorated with four cowrie shells for a dead mother and three cowrie shells if the deceased is the mourner's father. The youngest son wears it on his hand, looped about his middle finger in a prescribed fashion; the youngest daughter wears it round the neck and waist and down the back.

The most important of these rites are those which conclude the funeral. The rites differ in content from clan to clan, as we have mentioned in our earlier book,[1] but their symbolism is the same for all clans. Everywhere they symbolize the removal of the social personality of the deceased from the world of the living and his or her incorporation among the ancestors. They symbolize also the emancipation of the children from the control of their living parent and the assumption by the oldest son or daughter of the father's or mother's position in society. This is evident from the rites by which the customs, taboos, and articles which stood for the cleavage between the generations are ritually annulled or transferred to the son or daughter. In the case of a woman, among all the Tallensi, the principal rites are 'the sealing of the store-pot (*bea dok*)' and the sending of the *kumpiog*.

The rite of 'sealing the store-pot' is the only ritual act performed solely by women for a woman. On the last day but one of an old woman's funeral a group of old women, her co-wives, sisters-in-law, and friends, together with her daughters, gather in her sleeping-room. They take one of her large store-pots, put inside it a ladle, a dish, and other articles characteristic of women's activities that belonged to her, and solemnly seal it with a potsherd plastered over with mud and cow-dung. Beer and porridge are offered on the pot to her spirit. Her oldest daughter takes part in these rites, and then the pot is hidden in a place where she is not likely to see it. She may not come near it until it is finally disposed of. Next day the pot is ritually opened by the old women and the oldest daughter, who thus symbolically discards the taboo which she had to observe all her life if she is a first-born, or since her mother's death if she is not. Later the pot is removed from the house and taken by one of the old women. The daughter must never see it again.

At the end of the funeral ceremonies a dead woman's *kumpiog*, the special pot and calabash which stand for her social personality as a woman and mother, is solemnly and extremely carefully carried to her oldest daughter's house and given to her, as we have noted before.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. viii.

For a man these final rites are more elaborate and variable. Among 765
the Namoos the high-water mark of the rites is the induction of the 593
first-born son and first-born daughter, if they survive, into those secret
and forbidden things which they have avoided since infancy. The first- 578
born son is dressed in his father's cap and smock, turned inside out.[1] [292]
A stick with a loop of string, and a piece of hollow bamboo, specially
prepared for the occasion and symbolizing the father's bow and quiver,
are hung round his neck. Then a procession is formed of all the children
of the dead man, his first-born daughter following immediately behind
the first-born son and holding on to the smock. An old man leads them
round the homestead three times. Then the first-borns are taken inside
through their dead father's *zɔŋ*, and are taken up to look into his granary
for the first time in their lives. The whole rite is felt by the onlookers [781]
to be overwhelmingly solemn and the 'showing of the granary (*paal
buur*)' is for them an intensely dramatic moment. A hush comes over
the crowd of spectators as the son ascends to the granary and his mentor
puts a hand behind his head and pushes it forward so that he peers into
this hitherto-forbidden place. The son himself appears quite unperturbed, though this is one of the decisive moments of his life. I have been told by men who have been through this rite that they felt quite calm and collected at the time. But Tallensi are that way, and this is perhaps a sign of the efficacy of their ritual practices.

Among the Talis and other non-Namoos, the parallel rite is that of sending the quiver (*ta'ah loko*) of the dead man to the External *Bɔyar*. When an old man dies, his quiver is hidden in his principal granary by one of the elders and his oldest son and daughter are thereafter forbidden to look into the granary until the end of the funeral ceremonies. 'If they did', a Yinduuri elder once explained to me, 'they would see the spirit of the dead man and die.' Younger sons and daughters are free to look into the granary. This is of particular interest as a parallel to the Namoo taboos; but with the Talis the ritual and affective expression of the tension between father and eldest son is concentrated in the period when its meaning is most significant to the son, the transition period between the extinction of his father's social personality and his assumption of his father's place. For the rite of 'sending the quiver', the 'quiver' (consisting of a real bow and a symbolical quiver exactly like that used by the Namoos) is taken from the granary by the oldest son. Followed by his father's senior surviving wife he is escorted by the clan elders to the External *Bɔyar*. Sacrifices are made to the ancestors and especially to the dead man, who now belongs to the realm of the ancestors, and his 'quiver' is left in the *Bɔyar* in token of his final departure
from the world of the living. 593

We must conclude that the distinction Tallensi make, both in custom 578

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[1] To distinguish the context of death from that of life and to symbolize the reversal of the taboo.

593 578 and in sentiment, between oldest children and youngest children is of more than casual significance. It is as if the two major aspects of parent-child relations are split apart and distributed so as to make them more easily reconcilable. The mutual identification, mutual love and devotion of parents and children are focused in the relations of parents with their youngest children; the cleavage between successive generations is focused in the relations between parents and oldest children; and we can easily see why this is so. For it is the latter who will take the place of the parents on their death, who seem to be standing on the threshold waiting for them to die. The emphasis of the Namoos on first-born children is, as we have noted, due to the fact that it is the first-born child which makes a man and woman parents. Hence, if a first-born dies, its parents have to undergo a special purification rite; and a wife who has not borne a child to her husband does not undergo the purification rites for a widow when he dies. Later children do not change the role and status of a person in the same way; they do not make him or her more of a parent. Nor does the sex of the first-born matter, though the agnatic principle makes a first-born son of greater importance to a man than a first-born daughter. This and the principle of the equivalence of siblings explain why both sons and daughters are subject to the taboos of the first-born among the Namoos.

The Ancestors as Parent Images

593 769 578 577 The ambivalence in the relations of parents and children is more dramatically expressed in the ancestor cult than in any other aspect of Tale culture. We cannot discuss this at length here. We can only note that there is a direct continuity between the relations of parents and children in life and their relations after the parents' death. The worship of the ancestors is a culturally standardized projection on to the mystical plane of the tangle of attachments, reciprocities, tensions, and submerged antagonisms that bind parents and children to one another in life. Anyone unfamiliar with the speech and customs of the Tallensi would often find it impossible to tell, in some situations, whether a man is speaking of his living father or his dead father. The dead parents are the prototypes of all the ancestors. Distinctions of name and generation conceal the same primary images. This is clear from the fact that no man can sacrifice to an ancestor or ancestress except through the medium of the spirit of the parent who links him to that ancestor or ancestress.

It will not surprise the psychologist, however, to learn that the attributes with which the spirits of the parents are invested differ in some respects markedly from those that are conventionally assumed for living parents. The disciplinary limitations imposed by the demands of economic and social adjustment and by the rationale of reality are no longer operative. The figures of the dead parents are clothed in qualities that are in part highly magnified versions of their most praiseworthy qualities

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in real life and in part distorted reflections of the tensions that exist between parents and children in reality. It is no misrepresentation to describe them as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent and long-suffering; but the emphasis is far more on the persecuting than on the protecting attributes. The distortion is most striking in the case of a mother's spirit. All ancestor spirits are apt to reveal themselves more often by the misfortune they inflict than by the benefits they bring. They emerge as sanctions of conduct more by reason of the punishments they bring down on wrongdoers than because of the benefits they confer for right doing. But the spirits of female ancestors are believed to be specially hard, cruel, and capricious. This is remarkable when we consider the love and devotion a mother shows for her child throughout his life. As we have observed elsewhere,[1] there is a never-ending struggle between a man and his ancestors. It is psychologically rooted in the relations of parents and children during the lifetime of the parents. Sacrifices and prayers are reminiscent of the principle of reciprocity in the real relations of parents and children. They contain the same elements of acquiescence, justice, and hidden coercion. They show another aspect, though, in the propitiation, reverence, and gratitude they often express.[2]

We can see why filial piety towards the dead parents is more strongly stressed than towards the living. While he is alive a person's father has direct jural and ritual authority over him; when he dies, the father becomes the paramount sanction of moral conduct for him; and this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, in only a lesser degree to the mother. The oath 'by my father and his goatskin (or sheepskin) and his three cowries' discussed in our previous book[3] is one proof of this. The centre of gravity of the whole social system of the Tallensi is the relationship of father and son, and it is the idea of filial piety that keeps this relationship in balance in the face of all the forces that tend to divide father and son. In this as in other respects the Tallensi are typical of patrilineal and patriarchal societies of simple culture from many parts of the globe, both ancient and modern.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 145.

[2] As death, among the Tallensi, is always believed to be mystically caused by a particular ancestor spirit or a group of ancestor spirits (material causes such as sickness being recognized as necessary but not sufficient without the mystical adjunct), it follows that a dead father or mother can kill (*ku*) his or her own child. The converse is impossible, since children, in life, have no jurisdiction over parents. I have asked Tallensi if patricide ever occurs or is known to have occurred. My most trusted informants said they had never heard of a case and thought the very idea abhorrent beyond measure. The idea of matricide they considered even more vile and unnatural. [761 682]

[3] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 66.

CHAPTER IX

GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN

603 596 WE have mentioned earlier that the relations of grandparents and grandchildren can be regarded as a foil to those of parents and children. Tallensi themselves often draw the contrast. It is particularly striking with the paternal grandparents. For in a three-generation joint family the head is a grandfather and the senior *dugdaana* a grandmother. As head of the family the grandfather holds jural, economic, and ritual authority over all its members, including those whom he calls grandchildren, and there is a contrast between his authority and his familiarity in personal relations with his grandchildren. It reflects the contrast between the cleavage due to difference of status and role in terms of the lineage principle and the ties of cognatic kinship between grandchildren and paternal grandparents. This contrast does not occur with the maternal grandparents, in whose relations with a daughter's child the question of authority does not arise. When Tallensi say that a person can die happily if he or she has 'reached grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' they refer primarily to paternal grandparent and grandchild.

603 601 A grandchild of either sex refers to a grandfather of either line as *ba-kpeem*, literally 'older father', or more formally as *yaab*, and to a grandmother of either line as *ma-kpeem*, literally 'older mother', or more formally as *yaab-pɔk*. Grandparents are addressed by personal name or, in the case of grandmothers, by the clan name used for them by their affines. A grandchild is described as *yaaŋ* by any of its grandparents and addressed by his or her own name.

603 The essential feature of the relationship between grandchild and grandparent is that they can tease and joke with each other and each other's spouses. As we have seen, between parent and child this would be almost equal to sacrilege. A grandchild can tweak his grandparent's ear—hence the diviner's sign for grandparent, pointing to the ear—or pretend to mock him or her as 'an old baggage (*bonkɔrəga*)' or play practical jokes on them such as snatching at their food. Grandparents, reciprocally, tease their grandchildren, calling them 'you ugly thing (*bonlɔrəga*)', or by similar epithets that would be insults in another genealogical context. This joking relationship holds for both sets of grandparents, and serves the purpose of reconciling the potentially conflicting elements in their relationship.[1]

With it goes an intimacy and mutual trust, more particularly between

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[1] Cf. the similar usage between siblings-in-law, p. 120. Joking in the present case reconciles the familiarity permissible on the grounds of personal interest and the social equivalence of alternate generations, with the respect due to grandparents because of their age and their lineage status.

patrilineal grandparent and grandchild of the same sex, such as is not 603
found between any other kinsfolk, close or distant. Its nearest parallel is the relationship of full siblings. And as a grandchild grows older this aspect of its relations with its grandparent becomes stronger. Nothing delights grandparents so much as to take care of their grandchildren in babyhood or early childhood. Children often sleep with a grandparent, as we have noted. A woman whose father- or mother-in-law is alive always has someone with whom to leave her baby. Joking is one of the ways in which the grandparent shows his or her joy in the child. But as the grandchild grows older and begins to associate on more adult terms with its grandparents, these demonstrations of affection become unnecessary. Occasionally, as mood and situation dictate, a grandfather or grandmother will throw out a jest at a grandchild. Thus I once heard an old man call out to his grandson's wife with a laugh, as she sauntered past, that she ought to get a wider back *voog* [291]
(the decorated flap worn by women over the intergluteal fold) as the one she was wearing was immodest. But it is more likely to be the grandchild who occasionally throws a jest at the grandparent.

There is, then, a kind of freedom and equality between grandparents and grandchildren which could not exist between parents and children. A grandparent does not normally discipline a grandchild. A paternal grandmother has no command over her son's children. I have heard a crotchety old grandmother complain of her grandchildren's noisy habits and lack of obedience but have never heard of a grandmother punishing her grandchildren. The gifts given to her by a granddaughter's suitors are brought as a gesture of respect for the senior woman of the house, but she cannot, as a rule, influence her granddaughter's choice. A paternal grandfather often gives an order to a grandchild or administers a scolding. Tallensi, however, think of a grandfather's scolding as something quite different from a father's discipline. They regard it as a friendly correction. If serious disciplinary action against a grandson is necessary, a grandfather leaves it to his son. A grandfather's jural and ritual authority over a grandson or granddaughter follows from his being the head of the joint family, 'owning' all its members. Thus he can override his son in such matters as the marriage of the latter's son or daughter. But if there is a conflict of wills between him and his grandchild in such a matter he will rely on his son to enforce his decision.

I remember the occasion when Maanlɛrəg eloped with his sister's husband's younger sister in defiance of the veto of the elders of the inner lineage. Nyaaŋzum, Maanlɛrəg's own late paternal grandfather's half-brother, as head of the nuclear lineage, stormed and raged but he could do nothing directly. 'Why don't you control your sons?' he shouted at his 'sons' (his late brothers' sons) Tiezien and Bəɣaraam, the culprit's 'fathers'. In fact, it is notorious that grandparents spoil their grandchildren, especially their oldest grandchildren, those whose birth makes

603 them into grandparents. Again, this is especially marked with the paternal grandparents. The first-born son among Namoos, in whom the cleavage between parents and children is focused, is his grandparents' particular favourite. His grandmother will always have some titbit for him to eat, his grandfather tries to shield him from his father's authority. 'Look at Nɔbya', said Samane of his first-born son, 'he spends his time in play [that is, having a good time]. He never lacks for anything. He does not want to work. That is because he is the oldest grandchild. When he was a child he used to be with his grandparents always and they spoilt him. Now he goes to his grandfather if he wants anything.' The story of Kpana-Tee and his grandson, which we have previously related, is typical of many cases in which father and son disagree and even quarrel over the latter's treatment of his son. The alternate generations seem to be in league against the generation between them.

Maternal grandparents spoil their daughter's children in the same way, but there is not the feeling that they are acting in opposition to the parents. Maternal grandparents do not see so much of their daughter's children as paternal grandparents of their son's children. But from infancy a child is often taken to visit its maternal grandparents, and children over 4 or 5 are sometimes left in the care of their mother's mother for days or weeks on end. This is a kind of holiday for the child and is generally greatly enjoyed. Also, as we have mentioned before, a motherless child, especially a little girl, is often sent to her maternal grandmother and may grow up with her.

603 765 The death of a grandchild is felt as a heavy blow by grandparents of both lines. But they do not have to undergo special mourning rites as parents have to. Curiously enough, it is the maternal grandparents, and in particular the grandmother, who is singled out by custom as the greatest sufferer by the loss of a grandchild. The maternal grandparents may not attend the funeral of their grandchild, though their children may. They must grieve alone at home. And if it is a daughter's first-born dying in babyhood a special rite of consolation has to be performed at the maternal grandparents' home. After the infant's mother has been ritually purified she goes to her mother's house accompanied by one or two co-wives and carrying gifts from her husband. When she arrives a simple and very moving rite is carried out symbolizing the consolation offered by the child's father's people to its grandmother, almost as if the father's people were apologizing for the child's death. Then mother and daughter weep together and the daughter remains for a few days to keep her mother company. Tallensi say that this is done because the grandmother has lost her *soog*.[1] They have no explanation for the taboo against maternal grandparents attending a grandchild's funeral. It can be con-

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[1] Cf. Ch. II above. The rite is a reflection of the recognition of the uterine tie as a personal tie. It symbolizes, also, the recognition of a woman's parents, in particular of her mother, as the source of her reproductive powers.

jectured that the taboo is connected with the fact that the rights over a woman's reproductive powers belong to her husband and must not be confounded with her parents' authority over her. If they came to the funeral of their daughter's child they would have to be received with respect, and it might seem as if they were on a par with the child's paternal grandparents. For the same reason, perhaps, a married woman's parents do not attend her funeral in person, but are represented by other members of her natal family and lineage. 603 765

For a man his son's children stand for the certainty that his line of descent will go on. The wheel of the generations has come full circle. When he and his wife die it will be announced to all the world. On the day of his or her funeral the youngest grandson will be placed before a drum with the drumsticks in his hands and the youngest granddaughter before a calabash with two pieces of cane in her hands. When the signal is given for the funeral to begin they will strike the drum and calabash and cry out, 'Oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather (*N-yaab yee*)'. And when the funeral is concluded the son's children and the brothers' sons' children will have their heads shaved in mourning in the manner prescribed for grandchildren. Half the head will be shaved and half left unshaved. [302]

The equivalence of alternate generations is shown by the fact that a grandson may marry the widow of his paternal or maternal grandfather, or of any man whom he calls grandfather, other than his own grandmother. This rule is of practical significance when an old man dies leaving a young widow, and all the men of his inner lineage are either 'sons' or 'grandsons' to him. Then the grandsons who are old enough are encouraged to woo the widow, and the elders of the lineage put pressure on her to choose one of them so that she can remain a wife of that lineage. It was thus that Tiezien married his own paternal grandfather's youngest widow. At that time she had a young infant at the breast who was Tiezien's own father's half-brother. Tiezien was then about 18 or 19. He thus had the unusual experience of bringing up a child who was his proxy father. To-day Tiezien, a vigorous man of about 70, is ritual head of Kpata'ar; but his proxy father Nyaaŋzum, whom he reared, is the head of their inner lineage. Tiezien was made politico-religious head of the clan (*Kpata'ar na'ab*) over Nyaaŋzum's head according to the rule that 'begetting does not cross the *dug*';[1] but within their *dug* he is nominally subject to Nyaaŋzum's authority. This might lead to considerable friction between them if they were not as devoted to each other as they are. The marriage of a grandson with his grandfather's widow is, however, an uncommon occurrence, chiefly 603 587

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[1] Headship of the clan, in this case, goes by selection from amongst the eligible elders, but usually comes to the oldest man in the clan. Tiezien could, however, not have accepted the offer without the consent of his proxy father, Nyaaŋzum. [618]

603 587 [777] because it is not very usual for a man to have a grandson old enough to take a wife, when he dies, and also to leave a young widow.

The converse marriage of a grandfather with the widow of his 'grandson' of the same inner lineage is said to be permissible but not good. Tallensi think it is incongruous and therefore likely to be unlucky. I learnt of only one such case that has occurred in recent years, and my informants pointed out that all the children born of the marriage had died.

Old women make use of this rule when they are left widows. A widow must either remarry one of her husband's clansmen or else go home to her father's house and marry from there as if she were a spinster. For an old widow remarriage is a formality since she is past child-bearing, and will in any case live with her sons. So when she is asked to choose her new husband from amongst those of her late husband's clansmen who offer her marriage *pro forma*, she often announces, 'I choose a grandson (*man luogɔra yaaŋ*)'. She thus satisfies the formal requirements and can go on living with her sons.

Within the lineage inter-personal relations of grandparent and grandchild are not extended beyond the inner lineage—that is, the range within which generation differences between individuals are recognized; but the term *yaab* is applied to any patrilineal ancestor except the father. On the mother's side only the mother's own parents and proxy parents are recognized as grandparents; but any lineage with which a person has matrilateral connexions is described as his *yaab yiri*. Thus any patrilineal ancestor's mother's lineage is a *yaab yiri*; and the letter of custom entitles a man to marry the widow of any member of his *yaab yiri*. In practice such marriages are exceedingly rare, for the widow's husband's lineage-brothers and clansmen resent them strongly. But there have been one or two instances in the past generation in which a young widow eloped with her deceased husband's classificatory *yaaŋ*. What the outraged members of the deceased husband's lineage most resent is that they cannot claim the return of the bride-price. The only sanction they can use is to refuse to sacrifice to their ancestors on behalf of the 'grandson' who has so flouted them; but this is a double-edged weapon. They may not use it, since the 'grandson' was within his formal rights in marrying one of their widows. Hence they would arouse the wrath of their ancestors if they sought to penalize their 'grandson' ritually. This extension of leviratic rights to matrilateral kin is associated with the notion that a woman might have been born a man but for the intervention of chance, and her descendants might therefore have been of the true agnatic line. It will be better understood when we have considered the relations of mother's brother and sister's son (Ch. XI below).

CHAPTER X

SIBLINGS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Concept of 'mabiirət'

TALLENSI make a distinction between kinship that implies a 593
difference of generation, summed up in the concept *dəγam*, and
kinship that implies identity or equality of generation, summed up in 613
the concept *mabiirət*.[1] *Mabii* (lit. mother's child) is the general term for 601
a sibling of either sex and of any degree of consanguinity, and it is extended, as we have shown in our previous volume, to corporate groups, linked by patrilineal descent, that are of equal status. Its primary reference is to a sibling by the same parents as the speaker's when only the fact of siblingship is relevant—that is, when difference of age or sex is not relevant to the situation. Tallensi sometimes use the term in contrast with *babii* (lit. father's child), a usage that indicates very neatly the underlying implications of the term *mabii*. Thus Tallensi say that a man's *mabiis* have first claim on the inheritance of his widows, but that his *babiis* are also entitled to marry the widows. To the native this means that a man's brothers of the same *dug* have a stronger claim than his clansmen of other *dugət—dug* here being a lineage segment defined relatively to the agnatic distance between a particular suitor for a widow's hand and the deceased. A man of the same inner lineage as the deceased will call himself a *mabii* of the latter by contrast with another suitor of a different inner lineage but the same medial lineage; and the latter will call himself a *mabii* of the deceased by contrast with a more distant clansman, whom he will describe as a *babii*. Thus the use of the term *mabii* implies a relationship between the parties as if they were agnates who have a common progenitrix over and above their patrilineal ties. When a native describes another as his *mabii*, however distant their genealogical ties, he is tacitly implying a close personal element in their relationship for that moment and in that situation, as if they were children of the same parents, by contrast with a pair of distant agnates. A man will speak of a matrilateral relative of a different clan in this way in some situations. Thus a Tongo man, telling me the story of his first visit to Kumasi, related how he had stayed with a *mabii*, a Ba'ari man, who had loaned him the money for his lorry fare. Abroad, in Kumasi or Accra, a Taləŋ speaks of any other Tallensi he meets there as his *mabiis* by contrast with all the foreigners amongst whom they live. And this is not merely a form of words. Abroad, Tallensi who have no ties of kinship or of locality, who would probably never have met or heard of each other at home, assist one another as if they were kinsmen.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii, p. 117.

593 In the broadest sense, then, *mabiis* are cognates who are on terms of equality with one another and have a mutual interest in one another's welfare. In the narrowest and prototypical sense *mabiis* are siblings by the same parents. The emphasis is on their equality of status due to a common relationship with their parents.

The Equivalence of Siblings

The key to the social relations of siblings in Tale society and to the effects on the whole social structure of the sibling bond is the principle to which Radcliffe-Brown has given the name of 'the social equivalence of siblings'.[1] It is as true of the Tallensi as of the Australian aborigines that 'there is a very strong, intimate and permanent social bond between two brothers born and brought up in the same family', and that they 'occupy similar positions in the total social structure'. As we shall see, the latter proposition has to be translated into terms of the lineage organization to give it the appropriate connotation for the Tallensi. Siblings derive their social equivalence—that is, equivalence in jural, ritual, and economic relations, as opposed, for example, to private marital relations—from their common relationship with their parents. Outside the lineage range of strictly reckoned classificatory kinship, the recognition of siblingship implies not so much similar positions in the social structure as similar roles in certain situations due to membership of the same corporate groups, or, with matrilateral kin, to having common ascendants. We have, in fact, already had a good deal of evidence in preceding chapters of the social equivalence of siblings. We have seen also how the recognition of siblingship varies in significance according to the lineage context. What we wish to do now is to study the sibling relationship in its own right. By bringing the evidence together in a unitary picture we shall be able to see what constitutes the social equivalence of siblings. We shall find it useful for purposes of our analysis to distinguish between the solidarity of siblings and their equivalence.

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But before we examine the social equivalence of siblings more fully it is worth noting that there is, among the Tallensi, a correlated principle of social action of very wide application. Individuals who have the same social role or have had similar socially critical experiences are identified with one another whenever their role or these experiences come into a situation. The best instance is the case of co-wives who always speak of each other as sisters. All chiefs are regarded as 'brothers' (*mabiis*) because of their chiefship; so also are tendaanas. We have seen how men who have no father or mother alive are identified with one another at funeral ceremonies by the fact that only those who have undergone this social experience may take part in certain rites. Similarly only those who have themselves lost a wife or a husband may look after

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[1] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, 'The Social Organization of Australian Tribes', Part 3, *Oceania*, I, 1930–1, pp. 428–9.

the widow (or widower) during a funeral, or assist in the rites of purifying 593
the widow or share her meals. Tallensi assert that a breach of this 608
rule is impossible as no man or woman who had not had the experience
would take charge of a widow. It is a taboo (*kihər*), and anyone who [778]
infringed it would die. Again, owners of diviners' shrines (*bakologo*
shrines—the diviner is called *baya*) are identified in certain situations,
though they do not form a corporate body of any sort. Thus when a
new diviner's shrine is being set up for a man certain portions of the
beer used in the rites can be drunk only by men who already have such
shrines, and it is they who carry out the final rites by which the actual
power of divination is conferred on him. Similarly it is only men who [783]
have themselves undergone the experience and the treatment who may assist in the ritual of purifying a homicide or a man who has slain a big game animal such as a bush cow. The list of illustrations could be extended, but this will suffice to show how deeply rooted the idea is. It is, however, only a determinant of individual conduct and sentiment, giving rise to *ad hoc* co-operation in certain situations, and not a principle of association in corporate units.

Factors modifying the Sibling Bond

The solidarity and social equivalence of siblings are conditioned by a 593
number of factors. Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of
age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance 613
are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure. Siblingship does not cancel out the uniqueness of the individual, as symbolized in the notion of the *Yin*, and socially crystallized in the precise differentiation of the lineage segment which he or she founds. This factor, with its counterpart in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with the years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and, consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin. Thus the sibling relationship, while itself an important constitutive factor of the lineage structure, is reciprocally moulded by that structure. The relationship of brothers among the Tallensi might very well have been different from what it is if their social organization provided for the continuous merging of collateral lines of descent in lineal lines,[1] so that lineage branches springing from brothers were not specifically recognized, but only the inclusive trunk-line deriving from a distant ancestor.

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[1] This appears to be the case with the Nuer at higher levels of lineage structure (cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, 1940, ch. v) and among some Southern Bantu tribes, such as the Zulu (cf. E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, 1936).

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The influence of these modifying factors is recognized in the kinship terms used for the sibling relationship. Most of these have already been recorded, but it is convenient to bring them together again in this place. Within the limits of recognized generation differences, siblings never address one another by kinship terms, but always by name. Outside that range it is also not customary to address people by the kinship terms for siblings, in the ordinary way. When the terms are used it is either as a gesture of courtesy or half in jest, to single out a person from a group; or they are used in addressing distant clansmen or members of linked clans with whom one is not well acquainted. The usage conforms to the rule that kinship terms—other than those for mother (*ma*) and parent-in-law (*deema*)—are not as a rule used in addressing close relatives and are chiefly used towards distant relatives as a sign of special respect or courtesy. On the other hand, the terms for siblings are regularly used in referring to or making statements about brothers and sisters.

Tau (pl. *tap*) is the term for a sibling of opposite sex to the speaker or the subject of a statement. A man will say '*N-tau n-ɛl Ba'arɔ*—My sister is married to this place Ba'ari'; and a woman, '*N-yɛa n-tau yiri*—I am going to my brother's homestead.' The term *tau* has no age significance, as age differences do not affect the social relations of opposite sex siblings, but the suffixes *-kpeem* (senior) and *-bil* (junior) can be added for descriptive clarity.

An elder sibling of the same sex is *bier* (pl. *biernam*), a younger is *pit* (pl. *pirəba*).

A sibling by the same mother (whether or not the father is the same) is called *soog* (pl. *saarət*) without reference to sex or age; but sex and relative age can be indicated by combining *soog* with the preceding terms. Thus *tasoog* is a *soog* of the opposite sex; *bier-soog* is an older *soog* sibling of the same sex; *pit-soog* is a younger *soog* sibling of the same sex. These terms, as we have seen,[1] are extended to all uterine kin.

A sibling of different maternal origin is described by the term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*). Anyone who can be regarded as a sibling by the rules of classificatory kinship may be referred to thus, and the term is also used in corporate relations to denote co-ordinate lineage segments.[2] By itself *sunzɔ* may indicate a patrilineal sibling of either sex, but the suffixes *-pɔk* (female) and *-doog* (male) are often added to indicate the sex of the person referred to.

The Solidarity of '*soog*' Siblings

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The interplay of the various factors that mould the relations of siblings can best be understood by studying their genetic development. True siblings always grow up together in their natal family through the formative years of childhood, whether they remain together after adolescence or separate. Thus the mutual attachment and identity of interests of siblings, particularly of brothers, is built up on common upbringing and a common body of affective experience. In the older settlements the children of an expanded family, or even of a group of families based on a medial lineage, grow up together. Hence one finds, as has already been recorded,[1] that any member of an inner lineage knows the life-history of every other member. 593

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[1] Cf. Ch. II above.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 201.

This common background of siblings is illustrated in children's play-groups.[2] In the older settlements the play-groups of children under 8 or thereabouts rarely include children who belong to different medial lineages. It is the children of a group of adjacent homesteads, who are *ipso facto* members of the same inner or at most medial lineage, that form regular play-groups. Children of one sex of the same joint family or expanded family between whom there is not a wide age-gap always play together in the same group. Siblings of like sex learn together, and to an important extent from one another, the economic skills and practical knowledge they will need in order to get their livelihood. As nearly common a body of experience as is possible for separate individuals shapes their social personalities and directs their interests, ideals, and purposes towards culturally defined goals and values. In Tale society men or women of equal social maturity tend to think and feel alike in the same situation. Thus the similarity of character marking them out amongst their age-fellows which one very often observes in a pair of brothers or sisters is noteworthy,[3] the more so as differences of temperament and intelligence are not obliterated thereby. It is, indeed, just this uniformity of character that makes it difficult for some brothers and sisters to get on well with each other. 593 857

The ties of mutual attachment, loyalty, and solidarity in social matters that unite siblings are graded according to their genealogical closeness. They are closest for full (*soog*) siblings and progressively less close for those who have only a father in common, a paternal grandfather in common, a paternal great-grandfather in common, or more remote connexion. 593

These differences are laid down in earliest infancy. The intimacy and close mutual identification of full siblings is rooted in their common dependence on their mother in childhood. It is to her that they look for food and emotional security, and a mother's care is given to all her small children equally and in a group. In the hunger months if a woman gets hold of a little grain to cook some food for her children, she calls them all to eat of it and they all sit down together around the dish. The first lessons in sharing equally are learnt in this setting. The 6-year-

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 210.

[2] I have given a short description of these play-groups in my '*Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*', previously cited.

[3] The processes of education that lie behind the formation of social personality among the Tallensi are more fully discussed in the paper just cited.

593 old, admonished sometimes by his mother, tries not to eat too greedily lest his 2-year-old brother or sister eating with him should not have his fill. The 11- or 12-year-old, copying his parents, will take a mouthful or two and then say he has had enough, leaving the dish to be finished by his younger siblings. Thus are the seeds of the concern for each other's welfare commonly found between full siblings planted through the precept and example of the mother.

593 As we have seen, children sleep with their mother in infancy and early childhood. The feeling of emotional security this gives to a child
857 thus becomes associated with his maternal siblings. Tarəmba, aged about 9, was playing with his usual companions of about the same age—four other boys and a little girl. All but one of these children came from the same expanded family. I stopped to chat to them. After a while we got on to the subject of parents. Yindubil said he preferred his father to his mother. Tarəmba interrupted, exclaiming, 'Hee! he 's telling fibs. It 's only because his mother has run away. My mother is dead and so I can't help it, I've got to like my father best. But if you have a mother it 's different. She is the one who gives you food; and when night comes you sleep beside her, and you don't have bad dreams. If
[828] you sleep alone you have bad dreams.' For a Taləŋ sleeping badly or having bad dreams is the arch symptom of a state of anxiety. Tarəmba's wistful remarks sum up vividly what a mother means to a Taləŋ as the focus of his sense of security, and this affect adheres to a full sibling. It forms a strong motive in the reluctance of full brothers to part and set up separate households or separate homesteads. Tɔbɔg and Dɔbil were full brothers (*saarət*), both middle-aged men with adult children. They lived together and farmed together in great amity. I knew them well and had occasion more than once to discuss with them one of my stock subjects, why *soog* brothers do not, like half-brothers, separate when their families start growing up. 'No', they said, 'thus it is pleasant (*ŋwala m-mah*). Being together thus we help each other. We two sitting here, are we not the children of one mother? He and I, we come from one vulva (*ti yi la pɛn yɛnni na*).' This is the standard explanation given for the lifelong partnership of *soog* brothers.

Soog siblings are generally devoted to each other and always, as far as my observation goes, unquestioningly loyal to each other in relation to other people. One sees this very clearly in the behaviour of young children. Babies and infants are often left by their mothers in the care of older children. A woman may ask one of her co-wives' children to keep an eye on her infant for a little while, but it is not usual for an infant to be left for hours on end, or a whole day, in the care of a half-sibling. So if one sees an infant being carried about by a young girl of 10 or 11 one can be fairly certain that they are either full siblings or that the little nursemaid is the infant's mother's classificatory 'sister' or 'child', whom she has specially brought to live with her

as nursemaid to the baby. If one sees a boy taking care of an infant one can be certain that the children are *saarət.* A boy will gladly keep an eye on a baby half-brother or half-sister for an hour or so, but he will refuse to take care of the baby for a longer period. Not so with his *soog* sibling. Boys delight in carrying their infant *saarət* about or having them with them in the same play-group. All children are very patient and affectionate with younger *saarət.* A homely sight is that of a little boy or girl of about 6 or 7 kneeling beside a baby sibling on the ground and caressing its face with slightly parted lips.

Tale children often squabble among themselves, with that mixture of earnestness and fantasy that runs through so many of their group activities; but I have never seen a child trying maliciously to hurt another. Between siblings, especially full siblings near to each other in age, squabbling is regarded as a normal habit. It is one of the signs of their equality and familiarity. So one sometimes sees a little boy or girl of 3 or 4 angrily pummelling a sibling of 7 or 8 and the older child playfully warding off the childish blows. Or one sees an infant howling in rage for something and his elder brother or sister patiently soothing him. Yindubil, aged about 8, whose mother had run away, was being brought up by his father's younger wife. Her little son, Mɔɣar-pu-la'at, aged about 4, was very fond of Yindubil and followed him about wherever he went. Said Yindubil, of his half-brother, with a grin, 'He 's quarrelsome, always wants to scrap with me. But I don't mind; he 's my *soog*[1] and besides he 's not greedy. If our mother prepares some food for us he always waits for me to come and join him.' Passing Bayankura's homestead one morning I found his children standing about in front of the gateway. As I came up, the youngest, a boy of about 3, ran to his brother, a lad of 11 or 12, and clung to him. Their half-sister, aged about 9, laughed and said to me: 'He (the infant) is afraid of you, so he runs to his *soog.*' I asked, 'Why didn't he run to you?'—for a small child runs to its mother or older sister more readily than to a brother or its father for protection. 'Oh', she replied, 'he likes his *soog* better than me.' I asked Kyekambɛ, aged about 11 or 12, whom he liked best, his small *soog* brother Badiwona, aged about 6, or his half-brothers who were his constant playmates. 'Badiwona', he said emphatically, 'we are one mother's children, and some day, when I move out to farm on my own, he will come with me, the others won't.' Similarly, Maɛŋya, aged about 12, and his *soog*-brother Tɛndaanbon, aged about 8, were inseparable. They helped each other to hoe their respective ground-nut plots and always went about together. They ate together regularly out of the same dish; they went on errands together.

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[1] Not in the strict sense, of course. But this is a very good example of how being brought up by the same 'mother' creates sentiments of attachment similar to those of true *saarət.* I came across several instances of this.

593 857 [155] Once a smaller boy who was with them hit Maɛŋya. Maɛŋya turned furiously on the small boy; but it was somewhat comical to see Tɛndaanbon equally angry with the assailant. Like many full or half-siblings of about the same age and the same sex, these two boys were extraordinarily alike in character, modelling themselves obviously on their father. They had his blunt and honest habits of speech, his diligence and readiness to oblige, and a sense of responsibility beyond their years.

Until one of them reaches the age of about 9 or 10, and sometimes even after that age, *soog* siblings are frequently together irrespective of sex. That is why one often sees a little girl with a group of small boys, or a little boy with a group of small girls. Between the ages of about 9 and 12 the sexual dichotomy prevailing in Tale culture begins to have a strong influence on the children, as we have seen. Different economic activities divide boys and girls. One rarely finds girls accompanying the herd boys or boys going for firewood with their mothers and sisters. Boys are beginning to share the interests and activities of the men, girls those of the women. Boys go about with their 'mates' (*taab*, sing. *taraan*) or 'chums' (*dɔləntaas*, sing. *dɔləntaa*) of about the same age, and girls with their girl chums. Boys of 11 and 12 are apt to be rather scornful of girls, and girls of this age turn up their noses at their boy contemporaries. Overtly, their attitudes to one another remind one of the latency phase in European children. Children round about 11 to 13 do not play together much in groups except on special occasions. Girls, in particular, are at home a good deal.

593 572 This is the time, therefore, when the sex factor begins to exercise a strong influence on the relations of siblings; age differences also become significant; and with this emerges a distinction between the social aspect of siblingship and the affective, personal aspect. A boy of 11 to 13 may make a boon companion of a half-brother or a classificatory brother from a neighbouring homestead of about his own age, leaving his younger *soog* brother or sister to his or her own devices if the difference between them is considerable. When Kɔyatee came to see me it was always with one of his chums who belonged to a different branch of his medial lineage, never with his younger *soog* brother or sister.

It is the same with girls at this stage. Ba'anzee's best friend was her classificatory 'daughter' of about her own age from the next homestead. They used to come up to the camp to call on my wife, as they generally announced to me, their arms affectionately round each other's neck. Maanyeya's daily playmate was her classificatory sister of about the same age from a neighbouring homestead—until her mother had a baby who wholly absorbed Maanyeya's delighted attention.

This tendency to seek outside friendships, though still chiefly among siblings of the same inner lineage, increases with the approach of adolescence. From the age of about 14 to 16 up to about 18 to 20 many

boys are keenly learning the art of courtship and are experimenting 593
with sex. They have sweethearts (*gab*, pl. *gabnam*), most commonly 572
slightly younger girls of the same clan whom they call 'sisters' in the widest sense. These girls may have serious suitors from other clans, but not being quite ripe for marriage find much more pleasure and excitement in their freer relations with their clan 'brothers'. With them [836]
they can indulge in sexual play, not always stopping short of intercourse, without criticism. Now when boys go to visit their sweethearts they often like to have the company of a friend (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) of about the same age, who has a similar interest in such adventures. For this a boy prefers a friend from another homestead, a not too near classificatory brother, to a close brother. Later on such a pair of friends will help each other in serious courtship, for one cannot carry on a serious courtship without a friend to act as spokesman and go-between. And a distant brother is preferable to a close brother as a friend in affairs of the heart. It helps to keep them secret from the other members of one's family, and that is desirable because it is a point of honour with every young man to find a wife for himself. The same motives operate with girls between the ages of about 13 and marriage at 16 to 18 years of age. A girl likes going to market with a girl friend of about her own age who is equally interested in the young men around. But if a girl is thinking of eloping with a suitor she prefers to confide in her mother or her clan-brother sweetheart. Having no rights in the bride-price they will—for a bribe from the suitor—help her to get away, whereas her own brothers will insist on a marriage by arrangement so as to make sure of the bride-price.

But the divergence of interests and companionship in the years 593
immediately preceding and following adolescence does not disturb the personal intimacy and attachment of *soog* siblings. Custom prescribes 264
that husband and wife should eat separately. So a man eats with one or two of his younger children, and each of his wives eats with one of her younger daughters or an infant. The other children are divided up, one dish of porridge to this pair of boys or that pair of girls or even to a girl and a boy. They may be full siblings or half-siblings, and the porridge they are eating on a particular occasion may be of their mother's co-wife's cooking. Nevertheless, every child continues to think of his own mother as the food-giver and of his *saarət* as those with whom he automatically shares food. A boy of 12 does not sleep in his mother's room, yet he still regards her as the source of his sense of emotional security. In a small and harmonious polygynous family the children are almost equally at home in all the women's quarters, but in a large joint family the children of one woman tend to be in her quarters for most of the time that they are indoors.

Of many other signs of the lasting intimacy of full siblings and their 593
closer identification with each other than with their half-siblings, the 578

593 578 best is this. A 12-year-old is conscious of his seniority (*kpemət*) in relation to his younger siblings. He orders them about and pulls them up if they are not behaving properly. But whereas he would not hesitate for a moment to smack a younger *soog*, he will not go further than scolding a younger half-sibling for the same offence. Tallensi say that if you strike your younger *soog* it does not matter; your mother or your father may rebuke you afterwards and the affair is forgotten. But if you strike a half-sibling—even if the child has behaved so disgracefully that public opinion will be on your side—you cause friction in the family. The child's mother gets annoyed with you and with your mother and quarrels arise.

593 835 There is another interesting indication of this. As has been previously mentioned, Tallensi do not designate incest between brother and sister as sinful. When they say it is forbidden (*kih*), as they sometimes do, they mean it rather in the sense that it is disgraceful, scandalous, and unnatural than in the narrower ritual sense. If they are asked why then it is so uncommon, considering the many opportunities and temptations that surely offer, they explain it by the intimacy of siblings in childhood and adolescence. They deny that the temptation exists. 'Look', said Sinkawol, arguing this point with me, 'my sister, is she not marriageable? And here am I, however attractive she is, I do not even notice it; I am never aware that she has a vagina; she is just my sister and someone will one day come and marry her and I will give her to him and get my cows. You and your sister grow up together, you quarrel and make it up, how can you desire to have intercourse with her?' This is a stock argument with the Tallensi.

593 864 At the same time the natives are the first to point out that sexual play in childhood generally begins with a classificatory sibling. Family play is a regular thing in the under-8 play-groups; and the final realistic touch is for the 'husband' and 'wife' to pretend to have coitus. This is common knowledge, and adults laugh at it. A standing joke is to tease a small boy about his so-called sweethearts. As we have seen, Tallensi say that small children 'have no sense (*ka yam*)', and therefore it is not a breach of propriety or morals for them to play at coitus with a sibling. Every man I questioned on the subject told me, with a grin of amusement, that his first sweetheart was a 'sister', sometimes of the same expanded family, more often of the same inner or medial lineage. 'We were very small and didn't know better', they said.

But Tallensi maintain stoutly that even small boys of 6 or 7 do not play at coitus with their *soog* sisters or half-sisters. There are exceptions, of course, they readily admit. There are stupid children, precocious children, and badly brought up children. Among such children instances of brothers copulating with sisters are bound to occur. It has been known to happen even with adolescents, who are presumed to 'have sense'. If it is found out, the culprits are given a severe thrashing

and are taunted for months afterwards by their fellows. But these are 593
not the reasons why children so rarely commit this impropriety. It is
because of the intimacy, the closeness to each other in daily life, of 864
brother and sister. Children do not need to be told that it is wrong to copulate with a sibling of the same joint family; they know it themselves. And, in fact, children from the age of 6 or 7 and upwards always say, with an expression of disgust, that sexual play with one's own siblings is wrong. Moreover, though they are not taught it as an avoidance, they are well aware of the conventional attitudes on the subject from listening to adult conversation.[1]

Incidentally, there are no taboos on conversation on sex matters 521
among the Tallensi. Men, women, and children are all outspoken about 831
sexual matters, though young women are apt to use euphemisms and
to talk more circumspectly than men. Some men also say that it is 593
embarrassing to talk about sexual subjects in front of young wives or female relatives-in-law. But no native hesitates to discuss these subjects in the presence of his sister.

These ties of mutual affection and devotion between *soog* siblings 593
last throughout life and are extended to their children too. One sees
this most dramatically in the grief people show, and especially women, 761
over the death of a *soog* sibling. Tallensi say that very often the loss of a full brother is a greater shock to a woman than the death of her husband. A husband is replaceable, a full brother not, they add. When Kpe'emi died his wife fainted and afterwards sat about disconsolately, weeping at intervals for days. His *soog* sister also fainted, but, the men said, it had been much more difficult to revive her than her sister-in-law and she became ill with grief. Seeing the two young women together one could not doubt that it was the sister who felt the blow worst.

Another vivid demonstration of the strength of this tie between 593
full siblings occurred when Tendaan Teroog performed the succession 793
ceremony on succeeding to the custody of his maximal lineage *bɔɣar*. A large crowd had gathered, chiefly men—clansmen, and neighbours and matrilateral kinsmen of Teroog's maximal lineage. Amongst them my

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[1] The psychological undercurrents of these conventional attitudes do not concern us here, but it may be remarked that there is probably a strong and partly overt sexual component in the affective relations of brother and sister. I was struck by this when I once had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of Yamzooya (aged about 11) and his *soog* sister (aged about 8) who were playing together in a corner of the room where I was chatting to their father. The children, who were quite naked, stood embracing each other, the boy with his legs round his sister's, and they twisted and wriggled about as if they were engaged in a mixture of an orgiastic dance and a wrestling-match. They were both in a state of high excitement, panting and giggling and muttering to each other, with obvious sexual pleasure. They seemed to be oblivious of their surroundings. This game went on for about twenty minutes after which they separated and lolled back as if exhausted. These two children were most attached to each other.

593 793 eye was caught by an old woman who seemed to be particularly privileged, as she walked about giving orders, and greeting the guests. I was not surprised to learn that she was Teroog's only surviving full sister (*tasoog*). He presented her to me with great pride, holding her hand affectionately. She sat beside him throughout the rites, listening intently to his long invocation to their ancestors, prompting him once or twice, and helping him as if she and he were jointly succeeding to the ownership of the *bɔyar*. One could see that the notion that any woman might well have been in her brother's place in the social system if it were not for an accident of birth has a very concrete meaning to the Tallensi.

593 Full (*soog*) siblings, as we have already related, constantly visit one another, bringing and taking away gifts. When a woman has a baby, her full sister hastens to her with a bundle of firewood or a dish of soup ingredients. If a person falls ill, his full siblings come running to see him. When Kuur fell and broke his ankle there was consternation among his immediate relatives. Two of his half-brothers rushed off at once to consult a diviner about the accident—no laughing matter, as they well realized, for a man in the fifties—while his full sister stayed behind to nurse him. His wife hovered about helplessly, only approaching him when his sister called for some more hot water. The sister came to him every day for the next week or so and was his most devoted nurse.

593 622 We have described before, also, how full brothers generally hold together, economically and residentially, longer than half-brothers and often throughout their lives. This is due, basically, to their close identification with and attachment to each other. One constantly comes across examples of this. Samane was the Chief of Tongo's right-hand man and probably the only person who had the chief's absolute trust. Why, I once asked Samane, did the chief not put the same trust in his own son Saa? 'Don't you see', said Samane, 'the chief and I are born of one father and one mother. We are as one. He will have no secrets from me or I from him. A man's brother is more to him than his son. Saa wouldn't care[1] if the chief died and he succeeded. I want my brother to live, for his being chief is just as if I were chief myself.' Again, one of the very few cases I knew of men working abroad sending home regular remittances of money was Sɔyar's policeman brother. When I praised him, Sɔyar said, as if in explanation, 'He is my *soog*'.

593 422 This comes out very clearly, too, in the property relations of full brothers. Men of the same joint family borrow one another's clothes freely, though the individual ownership of the clothes is never in doubt and the owner's permission is always necessary. But full brothers behave almost as if their clothes were their common property. Hence when a man dies his full brother often takes some of his clothes, instead of leaving all to his sons. There is also a specific ritual sanction in this relationship, the common subjection of full brothers to their mother's

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[1] He was the chief's first-born son. Cf. p. 225 above.

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spirit, perpetuating, on the religious plane, their common dependence 422
on her in her lifetime.

It must not be thought, however, that friction between full siblings
never occurs. That would be contrary to human nature, the natives 593
often declare. As amongst most peoples, sibling solidarity conceals a 578
strong element of rivalry. Indeed there is one circumstance in which
it is taken for granted that *soog* siblings will be prone to quarrel all their 856
lives, even if they do not set up separate homesteads. Two successive children of the same mother and father are regarded as born rivals. The second of the two children, irrespective of sex, is called the *nyeer* of the first. The first *nye* (verb = immediately precedes) the second, who *taɣal* (verb = immediately follows) the first in birth order. The definition applies strictly to birth sequence, not to survival order. A child is not its older *soog* sibling's *nyeer* if between them their mother had another child who died in infancy, or a miscarriage—for a miscarriage counts as a birth. The concept *nyeer* is regularly used to indicate an infant's degree of maturity. An infant that has a *nyeer*, or is old enough to have a *nyeer*, is entering the second conventionally recognized stage of social development, childhood proper. So if a native is asked about the stage of development reached by a particular child and says, 'It has a *nyeer* (*u mar nyeer*)' or 'It is fit to have a *nyeer* (*u saɣa nyeer marəga*)', one can infer that the child is between 3 and 5 years old—or, to keep to native categories of thought, that it is weaned, no longer needs the constant care of its mother or a nursemaid, and is beginning to fend for itself, to join in children's play-groups, and to become acquainted with the world outside the homestead walls.

A child and its *nyeer* are believed to be rivals almost from the day the
nyeer is born. This predisposes them to be ill tempered with each other 593
and wrangle on the most trivial provocation. Often when I have noticed 578
two children bickering or annoying each other in some petty way, my companion—a man or an older child perhaps—has said with a laugh, 'There 's someone and his *nyeer* (*nit ni u nyeer nla*)'. Once at a funeral ceremony there was an argument between the two sons of the dead man. It ended with the older giving the younger a buffet across the mouth that drew blood. Relatives intervened and separated them. Then an old woman, their father's *soog* sister, with mingled pleading, protests, and sighs, dragged the younger brother away to attend to his cut lip. He was weeping with injured pride and humiliation, exclaiming, 'If he were not my older brother (*bier*) I would kill him'. The people sitting around commented scathingly on this shameless spectacle. Then someone remarked, 'Oh well, it 's a case of a man and his *nyeer*'. It had all begun, I learnt, from the younger lad's accusing the older of having appropriated something belonging to him and the older losing his temper with him for fussing about ridiculous trifles on such a solemn day.

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If a person is ill tempered or unnecessarily sharp with him, or appears to dislike him, a Taləŋ retorts with 'Why do you dislike me? Am I your *nyeer*, or what? (*I yaagəm bo? Man a i nyeer bɛ?*)' This formula is always spoken half-mockingly; for the rivalry of successive children, though assumed to be in the very nature of their relationship, is not taken too seriously. It is not, like the underlying rivalry of father and first-born son, subject to ritual sanctions. It is simply an acute expression of the familiarity and equality of siblings and does not destroy their solidarity.[1] Tallensi themselves say that successive siblings often get on together admirably and stand together as staunchly as any other full siblings. I have never heard it said that *soog* brothers are quicker to set up separate households if they are successive siblings than if they are not.

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Tale custom recognizes the rivalry of successive siblings in a number of other ways. Thus successive siblings (this applies chiefly to brothers) may not be buried in the same grave. If they are, their spirits will be continually quarrelling and persecuting their descendants until they are exhumed and separated. Again, successive sisters may not be married to the same man or even to the same clan. But this rule is, to my own knowledge, often broken. If they do happen to be married into the same clan the sisters must avoid being pregnant at the same time or, if they are, they must not see each other during their pregnancy. If they do one or both will miscarry. Here it is belief rather than practice that is a sign of the rivalry of successive siblings. Tallensi object to having two sisters married to the same man for prudential reasons. They say that it is obviously more difficult to get eight cows out of one man in payment of bride-price than it is to get four cows. Nevertheless it does sometimes occur. A well-to-do son-in-law who has his father-in-law's esteem can often persuade the old man to give him another daughter to wife. If the girls are successive siblings, a very simple magical rite involving the burying of a hoe at the entrance of the husband's homestead serves to 'cut' their *nyeer* relationship.[2] [789]

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[1] I do not know whether successive siblings quarrel more often than non-successive siblings. Tallensi say they do. Knowing the Tallensi, I have no doubt that conventional expectation itself acts as a stimulus to petty wrangling between successive siblings. Every time they have a disagreement not only onlookers but they themselves put the conventional interpretation on the situation, and this is bound to make them more touchy in relation to each other than to other siblings. In every aspect of Tale social life cultural definitions and expectations direct behaviour in this way. On the other hand, I knew several pairs of successive siblings who got on extremely well together and to all appearances never said a cross word to each other. Tallensi admit that this is quite common and explain it by the invariable stock phrase 'It 's all a matter of character'.

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[2] A question that immediately suggests itself is, whence does the rivalry of successive siblings arise? I have put this question to many Tallensi. The usual answer is in terms of the cliché that 'it is in the nature of things (*de yɛl nla*)'.

To return to our main subject, squabbles between children, whether they are successive siblings or not, are laughed away. When adult brothers and sisters quarrel it is taken more seriously. The irresponsibility—as the men view it—of women in marriage often leads to family quarrels. A woman who runs away from a husband to whom she has been given, or obstinately returns to one from whom she has been taken, arouses her father's and her brothers' anger. There may be a temporary estrangement between them. But in the end they usually become reconciled again. If she does not give in, her father or brothers do. 'They have no alternative but to give in (*ba kɔŋ ka diegəra*)', the natives say. Before that happens, however, there may be a father's curse on the girl and hard words spoken to her and her husband by her brothers. 573 578

Adult *soog* brothers also fall out at times, but in contrast to disputes between half-brothers this seems very rarely to become either the pretext or the stimulus to their deciding to separate. Tallensi ascribe it to peculiarities of personality. The very fact that full brothers are often alike in character may be the cause of friction between them. To give one or two illustrations, there was the case of Zaŋ and his older *soog* brother Pumaan. They were both inclined to be solitary, egocentric, excessively touchy about their status, and suspicious of others. The strong competitive streak in them inevitably coloured their relations. So Zaŋ often complained that he found Pumaan's authority irksome. But there was never, as far as I could discover, an open quarrel between

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But one or two more thoughtful informants appeared to have an inkling of the deeper sources of this peculiarity. They connected it with the fact that the older sibling is 'set aside' or 'left to itself (*bah*)' by the mother when she becomes pregnant with its *nyeer*. That is to say, the child's physical weaning is completed and simultaneously its affective attachment to its mother—a very possessive attachment with unweaned Tale babies—is brought to an end. A *nyeer* dispossesses its immediately preceding sibling of their mother's undivided care and devotion in both the physical and the psychological sense. This is a fact of observation and one which has a direct influence on family life. As we know, Tallensi maintain that it is very difficult for a woman to take care of two unweaned infants, hence the prohibition against a woman's becoming pregnant again before her infant is old enough to do without her undivided attention. When this custom is broken, so that a premature pregnancy follows, the parents are said to *nye* their child. As this term, cognate with *nyeer*, suggests, and conventional opinion confirms, a premature *nyeer* is believed to endanger a child's life. On the analogy of what is known to happen in our society, it can be surmised that the open acknowledgement of rivalry between successive siblings is a culturally standardized safety-valve for the jealousy and resentment the older sibling has against the younger for robbing him of their mother's attention. This explains also why successive birth order is the significant feature and not survival order. The older child's resentment will be directed only against its immediately next-born sibling, the one on whose account it was 'set aside', whether that sibling lives or not. It is possible, moreover, that open acknowledgement of the rivalry of successive siblings prevents it from turning into a disruptive element in the relations of siblings. 828 [843]

593 578 them, and Zaŋ stood unswervingly by Pumaan, when the latter took sides against the head of their own medial lineage in the dispute over the succession to the clan *bɔγar*. Nindɔyat and Yintee, who, unlike Zaŋ and Pumaan, still farmed together, were cast in the same mould. Both were notorious for their instability and aggressiveness. They were known to quarrel frequently and on at least one occasion came to blows. But no one could have been more loyal to Nindɔyat than Yintee, in particular where the possessions of the family were concerned.

In short, though *soog* siblings come into conflict at times it does not undermine their solidarity. The reason for this is obvious. The crux of the sibling relationship lies in its social definition. Personal qualities may modify its content in particular cases; they cannot break up its structure; and this holds for every degree of sibling relationship. In the case of *soog* siblings the infrangible core is the relation of uterine siblings to and through their mother, as members of the matricentral *dug* in contraposition to the patricentral *yir*, first in the joint family and later in the lineage. The significance of this factor, the notion of maternal origin, can be judged from the relations of *soog* brothers who have different fathers. They may have no common economic interests and may grow up separately, after the early years of childhood. But they have very firm ties of affection and mutual loyalty, which are often expressed through mutual economic aid. Sie and Da'amo'o were *soog* brothers thus related, their mother having first been married to Sie's father and after his death to Da'amo'o's father, who belonged to a different medial lineage of the clan. Sie was the older of the two by ten or fifteen years. Whenever he was in trouble over something Da'amo'o went to seek Sie's advice rather than his proxy father's. This principle, as we have noted before, is of general validity in Tale social structure. It appears in the stronger cohesion and amity always found between individuals and lineages whose progenitors were *saarət* than between those who are only patrilineally connected. Nɛna'ab and Ɔndieso remained great friends in spite of the long-standing quarrel between their two inner lineages, because their mothers were full sisters. At the level of maximal lineage organization, Seug is a much more closely knit section of Tongo than the other three sections, because the founding ancestors of the two major segments of Seug were sons of one mother.[1]

Solidarity and Equality among sunzɔ Siblings

593 605 But the critical importance of the idea of their common parentage, bilaterally or unilaterally, in the relations of siblings is best shown in the differences between the relations of *soog* siblings and those of half-siblings and other paternal siblings (*sunzɔp*). Tallensi tend to draw a line between *soog* siblings and all other sibling relatives within the same nuclear lineage or inner lineage. Thus half-siblings (i.e. children of

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 213.

the same father by different mothers) and ortho-cousins (father's brothers' children) are all lumped together as *sunzɔp* of close degree, referred to by sibling terms. Though the exact degree of patrilineal kinship between a pair of siblings has a direct effect on their mutual and common interests and on their place in the family structure, Tallensi tend to feel the same way towards an ortho-cousin as towards a half-sibling. This is natural since brothers' children often grow up together in the same domestic family. 593 605

The social and personal relations of *sunzɔp* siblings of the same nuclear lineage are identical in pattern with those of *soog* siblings. But they differ, markedly at times, in degree; for the affective as well as social relations of siblings are a function of their genealogical distance from one another, and in particular of the cleavages fixed by differences of maternal parentage.

Many indications of this have been given in previous chapters and in the preceding paragraphs, for one cannot isolate the relations of *soog* siblings from the total context of family relations or from the total field of sibling relations. Having different mothers or different fathers creates significant differences in the social relations and personal intercourse of children with their parents and with each other. It stamps the child's experience of the common domestic environment and family history uniquely for himself and his full siblings. The structural correlate of this, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, is the distinctive field of cognatic kinship which goes with different maternal origin. Hence his social position in relation to his siblings is directly reflected in his sentiments and attitudes towards them. Differentiation in the field of genealogical ties carries with it differentiation of status, rights, and duties, and this has an immediate counterpart in affective behaviour. Thus, whereas it is assumed that full brothers will remain together for most of their lives, half-brothers are expected to separate in due course; and whereas discord between *soog* brothers is felt to require explanation by reference to personal idiosyncrasies, what is felt to call for such explanation in the case of half-brothers is their adhering to each other when most people would expect them to separate. 'It is only because we are on such good terms that Barimoda (his younger half-brother) still shares the homestead with me', said Naabdiya, when he was describing the organization of his domestic family. 593

In childhood and adolescence paternal siblings may be the greatest comrades in play and work. The affective cleavage between them comes out chiefly in the domestic circle—when they go off at night to sleep in their respective mothers' quarters; when they seek the solace of their own mothers in sickness or distress; when an older sibling merely scolds his younger *sunzɔ* for a fault for which he would have smacked his *soog*; and so forth. The relations of *sunzɔ* siblings are strongly coloured by the social and personal relations of their mothers. *Sunzɔ*

593 siblings whose mothers are or were classificatory or clan sisters have stronger bonds than those whose mothers were not kin. Such ties, intersecting those of patrilineal kinship, are very common. The children of a woman and her *pɔyasoog*[1] (a 'sister' or other kinswoman she brings into the family as a child to look after her baby, and who later marries her husband or another man of the family) feel almost as close to each other as if they were full sisters' children. Most common, however, are cases such as that of Naabdiya and Barimoda, who trace their long-lasting amicable association back to the excellent personal relations of their mothers.

After adolescence, with the attainment of greater economic responsibility, the cleavage between *sunzɔ* siblings becomes more apparent, though it is still largely masked by membership of the same domestic and economic unit. Paternal control and the common needs of the unit hold their divergent interests in check. Sex differences become significant in the same way as with *soog* siblings; but brothers are usually partners in work and often comrades in leisure.

593 865 At this time the pattern of their future relations emerges clearly. Its keynote is a free-and-easy comradeship on terms of equality. Differences of age, formally recognized in the terminology of kinship and socially significant as they are in the distribution of authority, rights, and duties, hardly influence the personal relations of brothers in young manhood, or even later. No Taləŋ, man, woman, or child, will submit to arbitrary authority without resistance. If any demand made on another person in virtue of superiority of generation, age, or sex is felt to be unreasonable or unjust it will be resisted. Quite small children, obedient as they are, jib at commands from parents or older siblings if they think them unreasonable or unfair.

593 This attitude is particularly strong among siblings. The basis of their social and personal relationships is the principle of sharing (*tɔt*). This principle underlies the social relations of siblings of any degree as well as of corporate units whose relative standing is assimilated to those of siblings, such as co-ordinate lineage segments. As we have noted earlier, it is one of the chief contrasts between the relations of father and son and those of brother and brother. It is summed up in the maxim: 'A man and his father do not share; a man and his brother share (*Nit ni u ba pu tɔta; nit ni u mabiig ntɔt*).'

593 428 423 As will be recollected, this maxim is most clearly illustrated in the rules of inheritance. Brothers are coheirs, even though the effective management of the lands and chattels they inherit from their father is vested in the oldest of them at any given time. Hence if a man has only 'sons' to consider in dealing with property that has come to him by inheritance from his father or brother, he is in theory free to dispose of it as he pleases. But if he is merely the oldest of a group of brothers

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[1] Cf. Ch. IV. above.

inheriting from their father he will be effectively restrained by his 593
brothers. This rule is constantly met with in discussions of the pledging 428
of property or the sale of land or cattle. Naabdiya summed up these
rules very well in reference to the various farms held by the members 423
of his inner lineage of Kunduzoor biis. First there was the home farm originally inherited and left intact by Kunduzoor at the time of his death, now owned by the last of his and his brothers' sons, Na'am. Na'am could, if he wished, sell some or all of this land, since on his death it will pass to men whom he calls 'sons'. 'We (the sons) could protest but we could not restrain him', said Naabdiya, 'but Kunduzoor (i.e. his spirit) would be angry and would slay Na'am.' Then there was some land Kunduzoor had himself acquired and left intact, heritable only by his direct descendants. The largest part of this was now owned by Na'ampa'ahya, the oldest of his true grandsons. 'He cannot sell this land', said Naabdiya; 'we, his brothers (who will inherit after him) could restrain him. In the old days we should not hesitate to draw arrows in order to do so, but now we would drag him to the chief, who would forbid the sale.'

The records of land sales in the past which I collected at Tongo amply confirm Naabdiya's statement. When Na'ampa'ahya inherited this land from the last of Kunduzoor's own sons it was as oldest of a group of brothers. So he had to 'cut off (*ŋma*)' portions of it for his other brothers. These distributed portions are normally re-amalgamated with the main block of patrimonial land as the brothers inherit from one another and add their portions to the main block. But if friction develops between brothers over a serious issue, it may result in one of them refusing to let his portion revert to the patrimonial land. Such a case occurred in Naabdiya's inner lineage in his father's time. One of Kunduzoor's sons, having become his father's heir, took offence at an apparent slight put upon him by a son of his father's brother. So he took an oath that his portion of the patrimonial land should never revert to the brother who would inherit from him and made a bond with his brothers that they should act likewise. Such a compact could never have been made by a man with his 'sons'. Characteristically, the compact left uneasy consciences. A generation later deaths occurred in the lineage.
Diviners said they were a punishment for certain actions that resulted [787]
from this compact and Kunduzoor's grandsons were commanded to annul it. They could no longer do so in fact, but a token annulment and an expiatory sacrifice to their grandfather were considered sufficient.

In accordance with this principle we find that duties and rewards are 593
distributed among siblings on a basis of equality of status, though in proportion to such distinguishing personal attributes as age, ability, need, and in conformity with the demands of the situation. When brothers work together as a team in the production of the household's food resources, each is expected to contribute the maximum share he is

593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal
593 treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for
578 the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment
in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are
584 married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *sunzɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbɔm. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbɔm.

The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations
593 of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are
613 quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood,
593 first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the
867 children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

of distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have 593
seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are
sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this 867
pattern.

The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the 593
genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is
into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; 613
then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family.

As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic 593
of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course,
in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally 602
relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action.

The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences,
postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one 593
another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land.

We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full 593
economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his
self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no 884
inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity.

The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately 593
with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the 884
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593 884 578 cleavages between *sunzɔ* siblings, both on the level of jural and economic relations and in sentiment, more prominently to the fore. It is the starting-point of those intra-familial tensions that, according to native views, stir up jealousies between co-wives who are wives of brothers. As we know, these tensions are said to culminate, very often, in quarrels over alleged unfairness in the apportionment of food-supplies, or over the treatment of children, or other ostensible acts of discrimination between co-wives. This is one of the reasons most often adduced for a man's leaving the paternal homestead to farm on his own. From these tensions arise also those disagreements between brothers over petty trespasses on one another's property or independence, summed up in the conventional formula of 'quarrels about chickens and eggs'. The stage is thus set for the typical process of residential and economic fission in the joint family along the genealogical lines of cleavage inherent in it. The equality in status and rights of brothers in relation to one another within the lineage thus attains its maximum emphasis in the social structure. The natives are well aware of the economic pressures behind this process; but they also see that these pressures would not work out in just the way they do if it were not for the inherent dichotomy in the structure of the family and the lineage. These two factors mutually determine and reinforce each other.

593 578 613 This brings up a point of some importance. It is conceivable that tension between brothers, whatever it is a symptom of, might result in young men separating after the death of their father, or after marriage, to take up land wherever they can find any. Thus a group of brothers would be scattered without respect to their lineage ties; and this process would in a few generations lead to the disintegration of the present highly localized lineage structure, and the emergence of a system of dispersed intermingled clans such as is found in many West African societies.[1] In fact, as previous chapters have shown, there is a slow process of dispersion in progress among the Tallensi all the time, but it has not led to a breakdown of the lineage system. The lineage ramifies, it does not break up into independent units that sever their genealogical ties with the main branch.

The basis of this is the fact that brothers separate but do not thereby relinquish membership of their maximal lineage. They do not sever their social and personal bonds with one another; which means that they do not forfeit any of their rights or relinquish any of their duties as sons and brothers. They are independent only within the bounds set by the corporate unity and the common interests of the lineage system. For it is only through his position in the lineage system that a Taləŋ is able satisfactorily to secure his rights and perform his duties as a responsible member of his society. Of this we have had ample evidence.[1] 593 Again, there are strong economic elements in the individual's adhesion to the lineage. There is the pressure due to the form and organization 578 of Tale economy as a whole, which tends to restrict excessive mobility. As Tallensi themselves often put it, shrewdly picking on the key item 613 in their productive cycle, it is all a question of manure, including human excrement. A home farm in one of the old settlements kept at a high level of fertility by continuous manuring is not light-heartedly abandoned.[2] This fact, and the scarcity of unutilized and unowned farmland in the old settlements, puts a premium on the right to inherit land in them. To-day, it is true, the pressure of these forces has been relaxed by the opening up of an easily accessible external labour market and of facilities for trade both in Taleland and with other areas. These extraneous outlets have made life easier for the natives but they have not, as we have observed before, materially altered their traditional mode of livelihood. In fact they serve to emphasize the contention of the natives that economic motives are of secondary consequence in maintaining lineage unity.

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[1] This would appear to be the case among the Ashanti (cf. R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, ch. viii) and the Jukun (cf. C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom*, ch. ii), to cite only two widely separated examples.

It is not joint interest in, and equal rights to the inheritance of, 593 their patrimonial lands which alone hold a group of brothers together. Men who leave their natal settlements on account of land shortage do not 577 return home eventually only because they have at last inherited their 764 patrimonial lands. The decisive sanction, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, lies in the obligation of filial piety and what it stands for in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage. The focus of unity for every lineage is the authority of the father, either the real authority of the living father or the mystical supremacy of the dead father or his surrogate, an ancestor spirit. Men like Yinworəb and Da'amo'o gave up wage labour in Kumasi very reluctantly to return home because the death of their fathers left them at the head of their respective joint families, and other similar cases have been quoted in an earlier chapter (p. 179). Similarly, a group of brothers may be scattered, some at home, some in a peripheral settlement, some in Mampurugu, some working abroad. On certain ritual occasions those who are near enough make a point of returning home. Family funerals, in particular, bring the scattered members of the family together. The three chief mourners at Tɛndaan Gieŋ's funeral were his brothers' sons Gikoo-Duun, who lived near Sameni in Mampurugu, Saanbuohba, who had been farming near Tola on the Red Volta for some years, and Baŋ-Duun who had been living at Biuŋ for nearly twenty years. They all

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[1] In preceding chapters as well as in *Dynamics of Clanship, passim.*

[2] We have touched on this subject in our earlier book, chapters i and xi. It is more fully considered in C. W. Lynn's report, *Agriculture in North Mamprussi* (Dept. of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Bulletin 34, 1937), and in M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936.

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577 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni*
764 *yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years
later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its
593 psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its
validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the
613 total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers
occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic
578 and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zaɣahkpɛmɔre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zaɣahkpɛmɔre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zaɣahkpɛmɔre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zaɣahkpɛmɔre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds
of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another.
601 As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the
784 wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔɣa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

of the same inner lineage as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' or even as 'my wife 593 (*m-pɔɣa*)'; and, reciprocally, a woman speaks of her husband's brother 681 of the same inner lineage as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)' or, preferably, as 'my husband's older (younger) brother (*n-sɛt-bier* or *n-sɛt-pit*)', but does not 784 address him thus. The proper reciprocal term of address is *n-kpee* ('my neighbour'), or *n-dakïi* ('my sibling-in-law'). The terms for husband and wife are used in address only between a man and a distant clan-brother's wife.

The penalty for breaking this taboo has both a literal and a figurative 593 meaning, in the sense that the brothers will never share anything again 784 or take part in corporate activities as co-members of the same lineage. It amounts to social and religious ostracism for the sinner, and Tallensi 682 say he would not long survive or his line of descent would perish. A similar penalty is said to follow the killing of a brother, whether it happens by accident or design. As we know, incest with a brother's wife is said to occur, though extremely rarely; fratricide by a brother of the same inner lineage as the victim is felt to be so abhorrent as to be likely to happen only by accident in exceptional circumstances. It has happened once or twice in the past, informants say, when brothers fought over the division of farm-land, but I have not heard of any cases having occurred in the last thirty years or so.[1]

The strength of the sanction we are considering can be judged from 593 its incidence, in an attenuated degree, in cases of intra-clan homicide where the parties are not brothers of the same inner lineage. If this 682 happens, whether intentionally or by accident, the maxim 'A cow has 784 trampled her calf to death (*naaf n-nɔ bu bïi ku*)' applies—that is to say, it is as if a cow had trampled its calf to death; so it is forbidden, on pain of bringing down the wrath of the ancestors, for the victim's close agnates to 'cancel the debt' by killing one of the slayer's close agnates. This rule holds also for lineages or clans interlinked by clanship or ritual ties. The guilty party offers expiatory sacrifices to the Earth and [783] then a ritual reconciliation is effected between the two units concerned. But thenceforth the close agnates of the slayer—members of his nuclear lineage, usually—will not participate in a sacrifice in which the close agnates of the victim take part. If the homicide was deliberate, this taboo will even extend to all the patrilineal descendants of the two men. Thus Wakii-Sagbarug yidem and Kuruugdem are adjacent maximal lineages linked by clanship and ritual ties. On certain occasions they meet to sacrifice together at an Earth shrine common to them. The Kuruug people refrain from attending these sacrifices if the chief officiant is a member of a particular segment of Sagbarug yiri. A Kuruug man told me the reason for this in confidence. Some four or five

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[1] There is a legend that one of the early chiefs of Tongo slew his brother in order to get the chiefship. Tallensi say this was following the customs of the Mamprusi. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

593 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidem slew the
682 ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice
784 together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective
ancestors.

593 Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brother-
hood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact
578 that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties
602 to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one another.

In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings
593 sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classi-
602 ficatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Tɔŋ-Tɔbəg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzɔ* siblings.

593 As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests
involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible
602 guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few
613 examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will be much more likely to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔɣadir yɛla*) involve the common
interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from
the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a
situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*)
brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main
actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is
not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son.
But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For
instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the
payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at
moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*)
acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but
of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody
understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain
the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment
and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action
vis-à-vis non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a
question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of
the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will
come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a
man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224]
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal,
especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days 602
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

593 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan
602 talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or
even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple
579 of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few
minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come
to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most
476 apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized
co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most
764 conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals
or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in
jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies.
The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)'
sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous
book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating
the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives
of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various
rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did
not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a
different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a
segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi
belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment,
who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened
by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of
[837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's
wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head
of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his
behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to
sunzɔp is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares
of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the
Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the
affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential
features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social
relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same
571 quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a
835 consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting
the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations
qua clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage
siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with
clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful,
and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered
to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their
inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were 593
non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but
may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's 571
wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's 835
wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength
of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between 593
brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office
is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. 622
No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the 584
same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social 593
equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists
between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with 554
the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

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[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

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covers almost every standard social relationship of siblings in Tale society. Siblings are laterally identified with one another, so to speak; brothers can replace one another in the social structure in a way that gives rise to a minimum of readjustment in the social relations of any other people affected. This contrasts with the vertical identification of parent and child, which rests on the continuity of the descent line not on actual or potential identity of social roles. This is a generalized formula. It leaves out of account a very important item, the effect of the sexual dichotomy of Tale culture. The distinctive social roles imposed on men and women by this factor restrict the identification of brother and sister to a narrow sphere, and the functions of women limit the social equivalence of sisters to their relationship with each other's children.

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In infancy and childhood the equivalence of siblings is of little consequence. It comes out chiefly in the rule that parents should not discriminate between their children (proxy children as well as own children). Tallensi say that, in practice, one cannot help preferring one son to another or one daughter to another. One child may be more obedient or industrious or better tempered than his brothers and sisters, so one will be inclined to favour him; and there is the admitted bias in favour of younger children, especially the youngest, as we have seen. Moreover, proxy children are rarely as dear to the heart of a parent as own children are. Even a mother, whose love for all her children (except the youngest) is proverbially without bias, sometimes has favourites among them. There is plenty of evidence for these admissions. The Chief of Tongo had well over two-score children; among them his favourites were a son and a daughter of about 18, born soon after he was appointed chief. Nor do such preferences stop with childhood. Tiezien reposed his trust in his late brother's two sons, who had grown up in his care. The only son he had of his own who was old enough to assist him in public affairs was, he said good humouredly, too stupid.

But, say the Tallensi, this is a matter of *feelings*—what 'your heart desires (*i suh mboot*)'. When it is a matter of *rights*, to discriminate between children is bad, almost sinful; it is like rejecting one child for the sake of another. It would be regarded as iniquitous for a man to let some of his children go hungry while others were well fed. With two adult sons, as we have seen, it is considered right for both of them to be assisted to marry before either is allowed to have two wives. It is the same with other things in which there is an element of right or duty; and the majority of natives are very conscientious in this matter, at least as far as their own children are concerned. Nowadays, in particular, as has often been emphasized to me, if a man has two sons and does not deal with them equally, the one who feels himself unjustly treated soon finds an opportunity for running away to seek work abroad. Sensible parents follow this rule conscientiously even in trivial matters. Ɔmara

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite
ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops
is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of
twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have
seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine
charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and
treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still
prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought
by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it
will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal
child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the
age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)]
and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is
a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring 165
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth
regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive,
851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their
[783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence
of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded
and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which
593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are
593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults
571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should
591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her
571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs
of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins)
165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

PLATE 13

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a. Children of a single domestic family. From left to right: Da'ano'o's child, his late father's child, his agnatic cousin's (i.e. classificatory brother's) child

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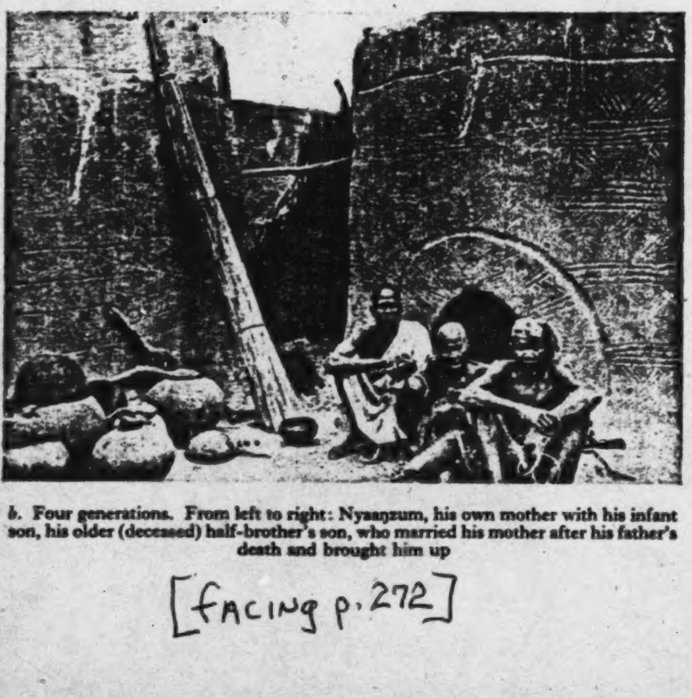

b. Four generations. From left to right: Nyaanzum, his own mother with his infant son, his older (deceased) half-brother's son, who married his mother after his father's death and brought him up

[facing p. 272]

593 voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head
571 of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark
583 at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in
593 the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman
571 with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another
607 indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (*deem*)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

593 Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters
601 speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our
607 wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*sɛt*) in the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

PLATE 14

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a. Siblings by the same parents have breakfast together. The bigger children are a boy and a girl. Note that thev are eating out of the same dish

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b. Successive (*nyeer*) *soog* brothers

[facing p. 273]

593 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly
apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every
571 one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies
764 certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical
instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)',
602 one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter'
of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually
the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is
celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the
clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' pretending to
whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not
always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act
instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is
qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace
a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's
son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Sayawuob's mother's funeral
Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been
a daughter of the clan section to which Sayawuob belongs and that made
him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double
identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There
is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other
daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification
of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen,
in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident
593 of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers
562 is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the
daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it
emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔɣayabələg-kpɛŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of
women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality
with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs;
but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may
speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of
the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to
be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the
[782] lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper
ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her
symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She
may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own
full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that
in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a
lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members 613
in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. 593
The token funeral performed for a woman by her father's people, after 562
her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔγayabələg-kpɛŋ* [766]
not by her own father's heirs but by the head of the inner or medial or even maximal lineage, her status-brother, so to speak. Tallensi say she belongs to the whole lineage not to her paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow 595
may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan
or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two 587
principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', 595
and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint 613
leviratic rights is one of the critical norms of clanship,[1] implying that
all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither 593
absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to 587
them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

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595 property it is good enough if she marries any one of them. In practice,
613 a widow of child-bearing age who has children by her late husband
587 usually consents to remarry one of his close brothers.

Next to a brother of the nuclear lineage, a brother of the late husband's
587 inner lineage is considered to have a strong claim to his widow's hand.
613 If a man dies leaving two widows of child-bearing age it is considered
proper for one of them to be given to a member of her late husband's
595 nuclear lineage and for the other to go to another nuclear segment of the same inner lineage. If a widow appears to be unwilling to marry her late husband's half-brother, for example, and is prepared to marry one of his 'brothers' of the same inner lineage, she is usually allowed to do so by the head of her husband's nuclear lineage. The new husband is still spoken of as having inherited the widow. In every case that came under my notice widows of child-bearing age married into their late husband's inner lineage if they had young children. But in a few cases, amounting to about three out of ten, these second marriages broke down after a time. Childless young widows often prefer to go back to their parental home and try their luck again on the marriage market.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage a 'brother' of the dead man has only the rights of a clansman. If the widow is of child-bearing age he will have to be very circumspect in courting her; for he can only marry her if she chooses him in preference to other claimants, and this means she must be courted. Hence it is more usual to speak of 'marrying' (*di*) a widow than of 'inheriting' (*vaa*) her in such cases. But it would be a very bold woman who, left a widow while still capable of bearing children, rejected a husband's brother of the same inner lineage in favour of a clansman of his. Only in exceptional cases would such an action not create ill feeling between the two clan segments concerned. Such an exceptional case occurred when Baroog died leaving nine widows. His father tried hard to persuade several distant clansmen of his to seek the widows in marriage. The reason was that Baroog had no adult brothers in his nuclear lineage and so few in his inner lineage that they would not be able to inherit all the widows. For few men wish to inherit more than one widow at a time. Rather than let them return to their fathers and be sought in marriage by men of other clans, Baroog's father preferred to see them marry distant clansmen of his.

587 Widows beyond the age of child-bearing have complete freedom of
choice in selecting a new husband from among their late husband's clans-
595 men. Often such marriages are merely nominal. The woman continues to live with a grown-up son and her new husband comes to visit her occasionally and sends her a little grain now and then. If the widow has no adult son she will live with her new husband, adding to the labour power of his household and to its indirect sources of income through the gifts she obtains from her patrilineal kin, for example, or any private property of her own, such as a couple of sheep or goats.

Inheritance of a grandfather's widow by a grandson, in the patrilineal line, is confined to the inner or at most the medial lineage for the simple reason that generation differences are not reckoned beyond those limits. 587 595 Such marriages are not common because few men live long enough to have adult grandsons. The case of Tiezien, previously recorded, who married his grandfather Kuŋkɔŋki's young widow is the only one of its kind I encountered. For at least another generation or two the custom of inheriting a grandfather's widow will probably survive in that lineage. For Nyaaŋzum, Tiezien's proxy father whom he brought up, is the last of his generation in that medial lineage, hence his widows will have to go to his own or classificatory grandsons.

A sister's son (*ahəŋ*) cannot marry his true mother's brother's (*ahəb*) widow. That would be incest, since he identifies his *ahəb* with his mother and therefore thinks of him as a quasi-father. He can marry his *ahəb*'s son's widow or his *ahəb*'s father's widow; for he regards the son as a 'brother', and the father is his grandfather. If the sister's son and mother's brother are uterine kin (*saarət*), marriage of the latter's son's widow to the former is generally approved of by the dead man's inner lineage—provided, of course, there are no better claimants among the dead man's brothers—for a uterine *ahəŋ*, as we shall see more fully presently, is considered to be almost as closely related to his mother's brother's nuclear lineage as a born member of it. Nevertheless, such marriages are rare, and the few instances I heard of all seemed to be due to special circumstances. In one case, in which I knew the parties personally, the woman was suspected of being sterile, and the sister's son was known to be a special favourite of his mother's brother; in others the women were apparently too old for child-bearing.

In theory any member of another clan who can trace kinship with the clan of a widow's late husband through an ancestress can be called a 'sister's son' or a 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' in the widest classificatory sense. I heard of two or three cases of such distant *ahəs* marrying the widows of members of their classificatory 'mother's brother's lineage', but the women were all elderly and the marriages were purely nominal. There was one case, however, in which a man eloped with the widow of a member of the inner lineage from which his paternal great-grandmother had come. This was widely spoken of as a scandal, and the pair were never forgiven by the first husband's nuclear lineage; but nothing could be done about it as the *ahəŋ* had the support of the letter of custom. The truth is that a 'sister's son' has no chance against the corporate solidarity of his 'mother's brother's' lineage. He can succeed only if they tacitly withdraw their claims or openly give him permission to court the widow.[1]

The levirate thus brings out clearly the social equivalence of siblings and shows how it is graded in accordance with genealogical distance. 593 595

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[1] Cf. p. 240 above, and Ch. XI below.

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We might mention here that the institution of the sororate, which is considered by some authorities[1] to be the natural complement of the levirate, only exists in a rudimentary—some might say vestigial—form among the Tallensi. It comes up if a man loses his only wife and is left a lone widower. Then his father-in-law sends a party of mourners to the funeral who take with them a young girl of his clan—perhaps one of his own daughters, perhaps the daughter of a 'brother' of his inner or medial lineage. This girl, a real or classificatory sister of the dead wife, is presented to the grief-stricken widower. She has been brought, the father-in-law's messengers say, 'to sit on your knees, to console you, to dry your tears, to be your wife' and so take the place of her dead sister. It is, however, more a gesture of condolence than a real offer of a substitute for the dead wife. Tallensi say that very occasionally the girl might stay on as the wife of the widower; most commonly she goes home immediately after the funeral or within a few weeks. Her deputy wifehood is purely ceremonial, for she is usually too young to do all the housekeeping or to be slept with.

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The rules of inheritance among brothers also illustrate the gradation of their social equivalence in accordance with their genealogical distance. These rules have been considered from various angles in earlier contexts and little remains to be added. Their operation, as we have seen, depends on the conditions of economic co-operation to a very considerable extent. If two brothers farm together they automatically have joint rights in all lands, livestock, and other resources they possess. If one dies the other does not so much inherit his property and position in society as amalgamate it with his own. What was formerly managed by two men conjointly now becomes the concern of one man. There is practically no change, to begin with, in the social relations of their dependants as the result of the death of one brother. When Nindɔyat died his *soog* brother Yintee inherited the homestead they had both occupied. Nindɔyat's wives at first stayed on as Yintee's wives, his children naturally remained in the homestead. They had lost their own father, but there was no change in their social position or their economic condition as a result of his death. If brothers farm independently they inherit from each other in order of seniority and of degree of consanguinity. Patrimonial property, rights, and ritual objects that have been transmitted intact from their fathers are inherited strictly by seniority amongst the group of brothers who trace their descent to the original holder of these possessions. But property acquired by the deceased's own father goes only to his brothers by the same father, in order of seniority. And the custody of his children will pass to his genealogically nearest brother whether or not he is the heir to the patrimonial property.

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Here a revealing jural fiction deserves mention. Brothers are thought

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[1] Cf. Lowie, R., *Primitive Society*, p. 33.

to be closer to one another than father and son—this is one aspect of 593 their social equivalence, as we have previously observed. In theory 428 this holds for any brother of the same inner lineage, in practice it is only full or half-brothers who feel such close bonds. Now any land a man acquires by his own efforts goes to his sons, not to his brothers. There is no question about this. The sons have contributed by their labour to the acquisition of the land and this is their title to it. Cattle acquired by purchase also belong to the man's sons; but the heir to the patrimonial property, if he is a proxy father to or a father's brother's son older than the man's own sons, has titular control over the use to which they may wish to put any of their father's livestock. It is different with clothes and weapons; and here the fiction we have mentioned comes into the picture. Clothes are very intimately associated with a person; they are a sort of extension of his individuality, as was suggested in an earlier chapter. A man's bow, his quiver of arrows, his knife, and his spear are also thought of as symbols of himself as an individual in a way that land is not. The fiction is that such personal effects should be inherited by a man's brothers, not by his sons. Thus when a man's funeral is finished his brothers of the inner lineage assemble in his *zɔŋ*. His oldest son fetches all his personal effects in. But the brothers do not divide them amongst themselves. At most they might take an arrow apiece from the dead man's quiver. The other personal effects they will restore to the sons. 'We have seen it and now you keep it', they say. A full or half-brother, especially one who has farmed with the deceased, may, if he desires, take some garments. He may take all if the dead man's children are all too young to farm for themselves, as he then becomes their proxy father in fact as well as in name. Even then he might return some of the clothes to the sons when they are old enough to use them.

In the same way a woman's personal effects go to her daughters on her death, but her close sisters may claim some of them if they wish, For example, every woman accumulates a number of calabashes (*ŋman*, pl. *ŋmana*) during her lifetime. There is a good material reason for this, for there is hardly a more useful domestic utensil than the ubiquitous calabash dish. A woman will, however, store away her best calabashes for use on special occasions only. As she grows older she collects more and more of these select calabashes, and an old woman may have as many as forty or fifty. She keeps them in her large string bag (*zaalɔŋ*), hung up in the darkest corner of her sleeping-room. At the bottom of the *zaalɔŋ* bag is the largest and finest calabash. This will be part of her *kumpiog* (basket of death) when she dies. In it she keeps her particular treasures. Because of this an old woman's *zaalɔŋ* is as sacrosanct as a man's granary—to which, in fact, Tallensi compare it. No one but the old woman herself ever looks into the bottom calabash of the *zaalɔŋ*. When she dies an old woman's *kumpiog* is taken to her oldest daughter, who also gets the *zaalɔŋ* bag. But she does not get all

428 593 the calabashes. The old woman's close sisters have first pick of the calabashes and the remainder are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law.

Outside the inner lineage, as has been previously indicated, succession goes by age seniority. Succession to the custody of a maximal lineage *bɔɣar* or to a politico-ritual office such as a chiefship or tɛndaanaship follows this rule. This, as we can now see, is in conformity with the principle that members [illegible] same maximal lineage or clan who are not of the same inner [illegible] titular 'brothers'.

593 602 It is in the usages [illegible] kinship, however, that the social equivalence of siblings [illegible] apparent. We have already dealt at length with the [illegible] roles within the lineage and it is necessary only to [illegible] they are based on the principle of the social equivalence of brothers. We shall find, in the next chapter, that it is an equally important factor in the web of matrilateral and sororal kinship ties, outside the agnatic lineage.[1] We shall see that, as in the ramification of lineage structure, so in extra-clan kinship bonds the tie of siblingship is the principal mechanism of their wide-spreading reticulation.

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[1] This is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the chief mechanism responsible for classificatory kinship in primitive societies. Tale material amply supports him. See Radcliffe-Brown, 'Social Organisation of Australian Tribes', previously cited, and his articles on 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', *South African Journal of Science*, xxi, 1924, and on 'The Study of Kinship Systems', *J.R.A.I.*, lxxi, 1941.

CHAPTER XI

THE WEB OF EXTRA-CLAN KINSHIP

Some General Points Restated

WE propose now to bring together and amplify a number of lines of argument that have been introduced in previous chapters concerning the place of matrilateral and sororal kinship ties in Tale social structure. 602

According to our argument in Chapter II, there is a distinction of primary significance between agnatic bonds and those kinship relations that unite members of different maximal lineages and clans. The former constitute the foundation of corporate social units; they cannot be understood except within the framework of such units. The latter are personal, linking individual to individual or an individual to a corporate unit with which his or her agnates have not necessarily any genealogical relationships. Thus they do not form the basis of corporate associations. They may and often do, in fact, entail loyalties that run counter to those evoked by membership of the agnatic lineage. They imply different kinds of interests from those that unite members of a lineage. They are, as we have previously learnt, widely diffused, both for the individual and for the members of a particular lineage; and they are, in theory, without limit, both in respect of geographical range and of generation distance. In practice only a limited number and a limited range of a person's matrilateral and sororal kin ever become socially relevant for him. Geographical proximity, genealogical proximity, and the nature of the situations in which extra-clan kin normally play a part determine this.

We can describe these kinship ties as matrilateral and sororal ties because the crucial link in the genealogical chain is always a woman, whom Ego calls either his mother or his sister or father's sister, using these terms sometimes in the primary sense, sometimes in a derived, classificatory sense. Tallensi, speaking of this subject, have a saying: 'It is women who cause kinship to spread widely (*Bumpɔɣas nkye ka dɔɣam ɛŋ yalɔŋa*)'.

There are two types of extra-clan kinship ties, as we know from previous chapters. There are the ties of uterine kinship (*soog*) which we have described in Chapter II. These are symmetrical relationships derived from the genealogical and social equivalence of sisters. Uterine kinship unites individuals on a basis of equality, as if they were siblings. Their friendship, mutual affection, and mutual interests are modelled on the relations of uterine sisters. There is no compulsion about these ties; they are not visualized in terms of binding rights and duties, but as being at bottom voluntary.

The characteristic example of the other type of extra-clan kinship ties

[p. 281]

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

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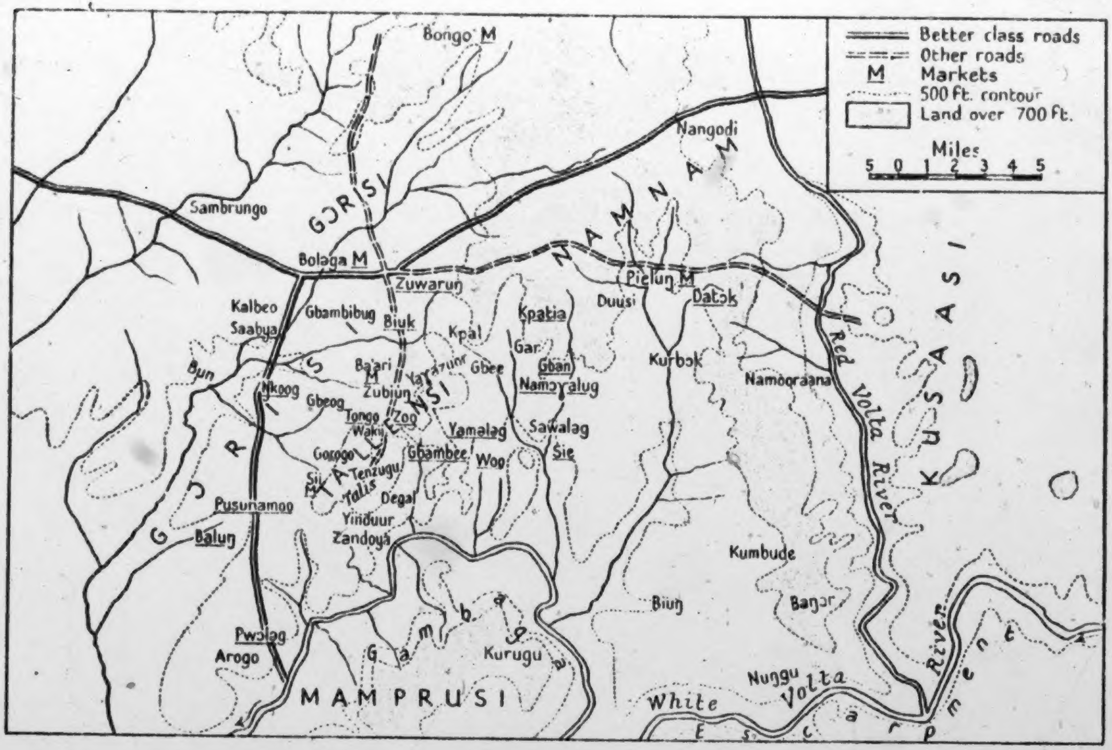
[p 282]


Better class roads
Other roads
M Markets
500 ft. contour
Land over 700 ft.
Miles
5 0 1 2 3 4 5
Bongo M
Sambrungo
GORISI
Nangodi
NAMNAM
Bolaga M
Zuwarun
Pielun M
Datok
Duusi
Kalbeo
Saabya
Gbambibug
Biuk
Kpal
Kpatia
Gar
Gbee
Gban
Namoyalug
Kurbok
Namooraana
Bun
Nkoog
Gbeog
Ba'ari M
Yarazuor
Zubiun
Tongo
Wakii
Zoo
TALENSI
Yamalag
Sawalag
Sie
Gorogo
Sii
Tenzugu
Talis
Gbambee
Woo
Degal
GURUSI
Pusunamoo
Yinduur
Zandoya
Balun
Kumbude
Biun
Bagor
KUSAASI
Red Volta River
Pwolag
Arogo
Gambaga
Kurugu
MAMPRUSI
Nuggu
White Volta River
Escarpment

is the relationship of mother's brother (*ɔhəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*). In a broad sense it is true to say that all matrilateral-sororal kinship ties except those of *saarət* have the same form as the relations of mother's brother and sister's son. This is a reciprocal relationship of the same class as that of parent and child. Thus Tallensi always say of any sororal kinsman 'I (or we) begot him (*man* [or *tam*] *dɔɣuwa*)', and of any matrilateral kinsman 'he (or they) begot me (*u* (*ba*) *dɔɣəma*)'. This phraseology is reminiscent of the way in which the relationship of successive generations within the agnatic lineage is defined. It points to an aspect of the mother's brother–sister's son relationship which is absent in that of *saarət* linked through their mothers only. A mother's brother, being a man, has jural and ritual rights, duties, and powers in virtue of his membership of his patrilineal lineage, and they condition his social relations with all his kinsmen. Moreover, they are not extinguished by his death. They pass to his heirs and descendants as part of the network of rights and duties embodied in the structure of the lineage. A man's relationship to his sister's son, as we shall see presently, necessarily has a jural and ritual coefficient. It is not a voluntary relationship and it is necessarily extended to include, in different degrees, the whole of the mother's brother's inner lineage. Being thus tied to the lineage structure it is perpetuated in accordance with the lineage principle.

The statement that extra-clan kinship ties are relationships between individuals, or between individuals and corporate groups, has therefore to be qualified in one particular. As the preceding paragraph implies, and as evidence cited in our earlier book shows,[1] lineages can be related as 'mother's brother' to 'sister's son'. We have seen that this is the relationship assumed to exist between accessory and authentic lineages in some clans, and between some linked lineages of different clans.[1] But conceptually in all cases, and, no doubt, historically in some, these linkages between corporate units go back to a mother's brother–sister's son bond between individuals, perpetuated in accordance with the lineage principle.

This description represents native thought and behaviour more accurately than generalizations about the classificatory extensions of the primary relationship. The chief criterion by which a native identifies his mother's brother or a lineage standing in the relationship of a 'mother's brother' to his lineage is that 'he sacrifices on my behalf (*ɔn nkaabət tirəma*)' or 'they sacrifice on our behalf (*bam nkaabət tiit tam*)'. This implies a specific ritual duty and privilege vested in a particular person or lineage, not a vague general relationship with a certain class of relatives.

We shall find that the structure of all extra-clan kinship relationships of the form we are discussing is the product of three factors: the principle of the social equivalence of siblings; the principle of generation

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

602 differences; the principle of lineage continuity. It is because all three principles enter into it that the relationship of mother's brother and sister's son has a jural and ritual coefficient.

Kinship Terms

601 Before we go any farther it will be convenient to list all the kinship terms used in this context by the Tallensi (see diagram, p. 285). As 602 usual, they are primarily terms of reference, rarely used as terms of address between direct relatives of the particular classes. A man never addresses his own mother's brother as *ahəb*, but always by his name, and vice versa. These terms are used as terms of address only in speaking to distant relatives of that class who are not personally well known to the speaker and therefore have to be addressed somewhat formally, or as a special gesture of courtesy. Thus Kpanaraana, during a case at the chief's court, said to the girl whose marriage was in dispute: 'My grandmother (*m-ma-kpeema*), tell us your story.' This was a gesture of courtesy because the girl was a clanswoman of his paternal grandmother. Similarly Ga'ab always addressed my clerk Naaho, who was probably his junior by twenty-five years, as *n-ahəba*, because his mother was a clanswoman of Naaho, and his relationship with the latter was purely formal.

A person describes his or her mother's brother as his or her *ahəb* (pl. *ahəbnam*), and is described as *ahəŋ* (pl. *ahəs*) irrespective of sex. There is, significantly, no term for mother's brother's wife. She may be described as 'the wife of my *ahəb* (*n-ahəb pɔɣa*)', and be addressed by her clan name; or she may be described metaphorically, and addressed respectfully, as 'mother (*ma*)'. Similarly, there is no term for the spouse of an *ahəŋ*. I have heard men speak of a sister's son's wife as *ahəŋ*—by identifying her with her husband—and as *deema* (in-law), or *bii* (child)—by the speaker identifying himself with his sister. By a similar identification a man may address his sister's son's wife as *ma* (mother), just as if he were her husband's father, or he may use her clan name. Corresponding usages apply in speaking of and addressing a sister's daughter's husband.

A mother's father is referred to as 'grandfather' (*yaab* or *ba-kpeem*) and a mother's mother as 'grandmother' (*ma-kpeem*). The reciprocal term is *yaaŋ*, grandchild of either sex. But grandparents and grandchildren address each other by name.

The mother's brother's children are described and referred to as 'mother's brother's children (*ahəb biis*)' or as 'siblings of the same (or opposite) sex (*bier*, *pit*, *tau*)'. But, as we shall observe presently, there are many significant situations in which a mother's brother's son is identified with his father and called *ahəb*. Mother's brother's child and father's sister's child address each other by name. They describe one

another's spouses as siblings-in-law (*dakii*) and address them by name, or by the kinship term if they wish to be specially courteous. But as Tallensi often point out, all such terms transferred by metaphor from the lineage context to a matrilateral context are used in a figurative sense. 'It is a figure of speech only (*la a nuoni maa*—lit. it is only of the mouth)', they say.

The father's sister, it should be added, is described as *ba-pɔk* (pl. *ba-pɔknam*) (female father)—an apt description of her social position in relation to Ego—and is addressed by her name. Another term of reference for the father's sister is *pugərəba.*[1] It is not commonly used for the father's own sister, however, but for a classificatory father's sister or father's father's sister. The father's sister's husband is referred to descriptively or metaphorically as *ba* (father) and is addressed by his name, or as 'father', as a mark of special courtesy. A woman refers to her brother's children as her 'children (*biis*)', identifying herself, as this suggests, in sentiment and behaviour with their father. She and their spouses call one another *deema* (in-law). She may use this term in addressing them and they in speaking to her, if they are not well acquainted; or the father's sister may address her brother's son's wife by her clan name or as 'mother', as if she were the girl's parent-in-law; and she will usually address a brother's daughter's husband by his name.

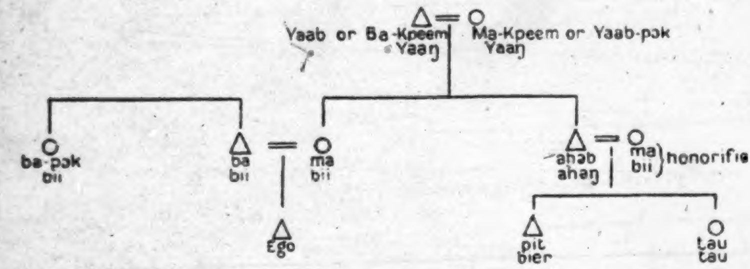

FIG. 6. Kinship terms used by Ego (top) and their reciprocals (bottom).

An incidental point of interest emerges from a consideration of the kinship terminology used in this context. It appears, and observation shows this to be a fact, that the spouses of matrilateral and sororal kin do not come into the picture directly. A man is only interested in his mother's brother's wife, for instance, in so far as her welfare and behaviour affect his mother's brother's and his children's welfare. He has no direct social relationship with her.

The classificatory extensions of these terms will be considered later.

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[1] This is the Mampele variant of *ba-pɔk*, commonly used instead of the latter term among the Mamprusi. Etymologically *ba-pɔk* is 'father-female' and *pugərəba* is probably compounded of 'woman (*puγ*)' and 'father (*ba*)'.

The Socio-spatial Aspect of Extra-clan Kinship

From the point of view of the total social structure the most important function of extra-clan kinship is to make a number of breaches for the individual in the rigid genealogical boundary of the maximal lineage and clan. It creates bonds of amity and loyalty for him with members of other clans, irrespective of the corporate, political relations that may prevail between his clan and those other clans. The individual is not confined within the boundaries of his clan for social purposes. He has not only channels of communication with other clans, but sources of material aid and moral support outside his own clan. In the past this was of great practical importance. As we saw in the case of uterine kin, it meant that people could move about the country with some security, in spite of the absence of centralized government and in spite of the tendency for each local clan to be politically self-contained and on terms of latent hostility with other geographically near clans. Under the safe-conduct of a mother's brother or sister's son or other relative of these classes a Tongo Namoo, for instance, could go among the Hill Talis. He could rely on receiving hospitality from his Talis kinsfolk and on assistance from them in carrying through the business that took him amongst his clan's potential enemies.

In theory, it will be remembered, kinship ties are never extinguished. This has a bearing on our present topic. If the extra-clan kinship ties of any native are investigated one finds that they spread, like the spokes of a wheel, to most of the clans in the neighbourhood of his own clan. Naabdiya of Tong-Seug, for example, had his mother's brother at Wakii, his father's mother's brother at Ba'ari, more distant matrilateral kinsmen at Kpata'ar, Gorogo, and Yinduuri, and uterine kin in the Sie district (see map on p. 282). He had his own sister's sons at Wakii and father's sister's children in the Sie district. Every native has such a constellation of cognatic kin among neighbouring clans. This is one reason, perhaps, why all Tale rules of hospitality can be summed up in the single rule of obligatory hospitality to kinsfolk. Everybody has close cognates in five or six neighbouring settlements, and more distant kin, most perhaps unknown to him, in half a dozen more settlements. As the natives themselves say, if a person knew all his extra-clan kinsfolk, he would find a kinsman in every settlement in Taleland. The trite observation so often made by European travellers in Africa, that natives seem to have 'brothers' in every village, is only too true of the Tallensi.

The consequence is that a continuous and vigorous flow of interpersonal social relations between clans and beneath the surface, as it were, of the constituted lineage structure, goes on all the time. Disputes between members of different clans can be adjusted through the mediation of common kinsmen without setting in motion the organs of corporate political life. This is one of the chief functions of the *pɔyasama* (see p. 318) in marriage affairs, for example. However the lineage system separates individuals and corporate groups from one another, or sets them against one another, this underlying network of extra-clan bonds knits them together; and this is a very powerful factor in maintaining the equilibrium of Tale society. In the social structure as a whole it has a complementary function to that of clanship. In the old days it acted as an unseen brake on the tendency of clans to resort to fighting as a means of settling their differences; and if fighting did break out it gave an extra stimulus to any efforts directed towards making peace. For, as likely as not, every man on either side had relatives among the enemy and was swayed by divided loyalties. These bonds probably helped to keep down the number of casualties in inter-clan fighting. For it is a sin to slay a kinsman in war. 'If you saw a kinsman on the other side', said Tiezien, 'you shouted to him to get away lest your arrows hit him by mistake; or else, you yourself moved away to another place.' One could not shoot off one's arrows at random but had to pick out an enemy, making certain that he was not a kinsman. 602

These extra-clan kinship ties are not indiscriminately distributed. They fall into an order in accordance with the field principle which our investigation of clanship brought to light.[1] That is why they reinforce the forces of social integration in the society at large rather than the forces that encourage clan isolation. Though every member of a clan has his own particular bonds of extra-clan kinship, the tendency is for most members to have extra-clan kinship ties with the same clans. Thus members of one clan tend to have a common field of extra-clan kinship ties; and as the lineage principle encourages the attachment to a whole lineage or clan of sentiments and interests directed towards one of its members, the result is that members of one clan all tend to have personal sentiments of amity and loyalty for the same neighbouring clans. In accordance with the field principle this means that members of any particular clan will have more and closer extra-clan kinship ties with adjacent clans than with more distant clans, and with clans linked to theirs by special ties rather than with clans with which theirs has no political or ritual ties.

This appears quite plainly if a distribution map is made for a sample of the wives of men of a clan, showing the natal clans of these women. Since it is through marriages that extra-clan kinship ties are woven into the lineage fabric, such a map shows the distribution of the most important ties of matrilateral kinship for a particular clan, the ties they have with their mothers' brothers. 602 128

We reproduce here a diagram (Fig. 7) constructed for a sample of wives of Tongo men. Similar diagrams for a sample of Kpata'ar wives

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

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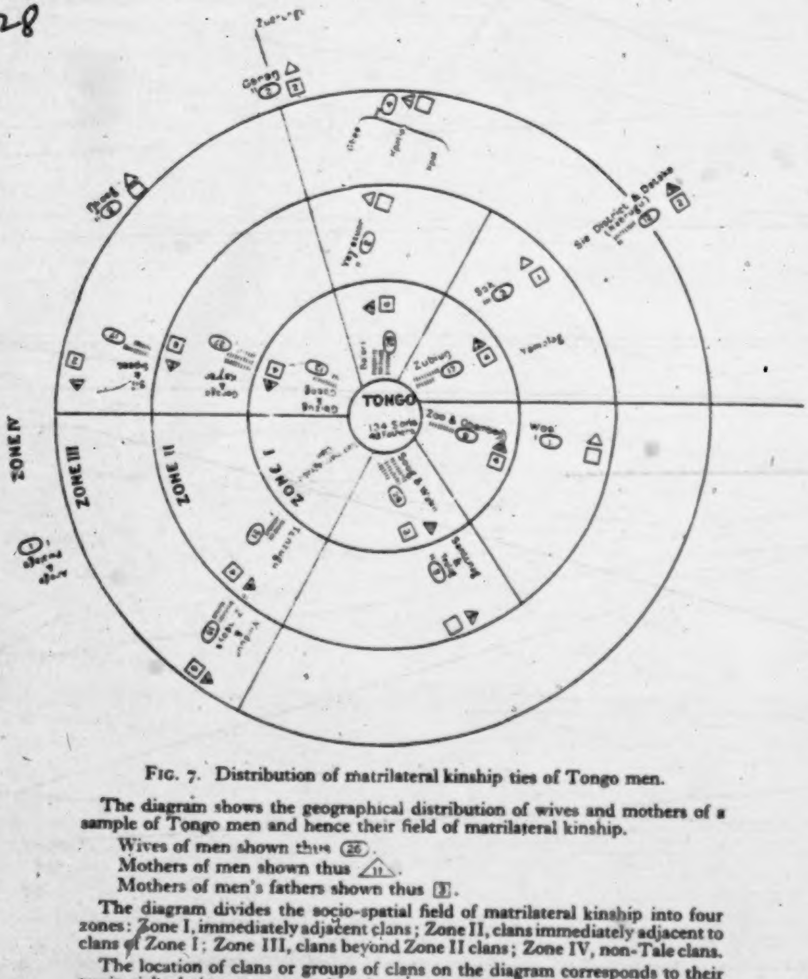

FIG. 7. Distribution of matrilateral kinship ties of Tongo men.

The diagram shows the geographical distribution of wives and mothers of a sample of Tongo men and hence their field of matrilateral kinship.

Wives of men shown thus (26).
Mothers of men shown thus △11.
Mothers of men's fathers shown thus [3].

The diagram divides the socio-spatial field of matrilateral kinship into four zones: Zone I, immediately adjacent clans; Zone II, clans immediately adjacent to clans of Zone I; Zone III, clans beyond Zone II clans; Zone IV, non-Tale clans.

The location of clans or groups of clans on the diagram corresponds to their territorial relations to one another; but the zones are socio-spatial not territorial regions. Most clans of Zone I are within 2 miles of Tongo; most clans in Zone II are between 2 and 5 miles of Tongo; most clans of Zone III between 4 and 7 miles of Tongo. But some clans in Zone III are spatially nearer to Tongo than some clans in Zone II, and vice versa, and one or two non-Tale clans are spatially nearer than some clans in Zone III. Though there is a high positive correlation between social distance and territorial distance, the correspondence is not perfect. The emphasis of the diagram is on the social distance from Tongo of the clans included.

[p. 288]

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[Facing p. 288]

PLATE 15

a. Classificatory sisters' sons (*ahɔs*) partake of the porridge ritually cooked by the *pɔyakiis* during one phase of the maternal uncle's (*ahɔb*) funeral ceremonies

b. A group of 'siblings' of the same inner lineage dividing a lizard which they have killed

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and a sample of Sie wives have exactly the same form and show that the same principles operate throughout Taleland.[1]

A sample of 134 men from all four sections of Tongo, who were living at Tongo at the beginning of 1934, was chosen for this test. The distribution according to their natal clans of all their wives—living, dead, or separated—who had borne children to them was marked on a map. The distribution by clan of origin of the mothers of these men was plotted on the same map. As a number of the men were brothers and some were polygynous the total number of mothers recorded is smaller than the number of wives. Lastly, the distribution by clan of origin of these men's fathers' mothers was plotted on the same map; and as their fathers were fewer than they are and some were polygynous, the total number of their paternal grandmothers recorded is less than the number of their mothers and much less than the number of their wives. The diagram therefore shows the socio-geographic distribution of (*a*) these men's fathers' mothers' brothers' (*ba ahəbnam*) clans; (*b*) of their own mothers' brothers' (*ahəbnam*) clans; (*c*) of their children's mothers' brothers clans.

Table showing the Field of Extra-clan Kinship Ties

Total number of men, all sections of Tongo	134
Total number of their wives	205
Total number of their mothers	64
Total number of their father's mothers	46

Zonal Distribution of Kinship Ties

	Incidence		
	Mothers' brothers of		
Zone	*Men's children*	*Men themselves*	*Men's fathers*
Zone I	93	33	21
Zone II	56	12	13
Zone III	47 } 56	18 } 19	9 } 12
Zone IV	9	1	3
	205	64	46

It will be seen that the total field of extra-clan kinship ties for Tongo is directly complementary to the total field of clanship ties, and largely congruent with the field of politico-ritual ties we have previously established for this clan.[2] Within this field there are four zones of density graded in accordance with spatial and social distance from Tongo. Thus

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[1] They also operate among the Gorisi, as a sample of marriages collected in one of the sections of Boləga showed.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv and v.

PLATE 16

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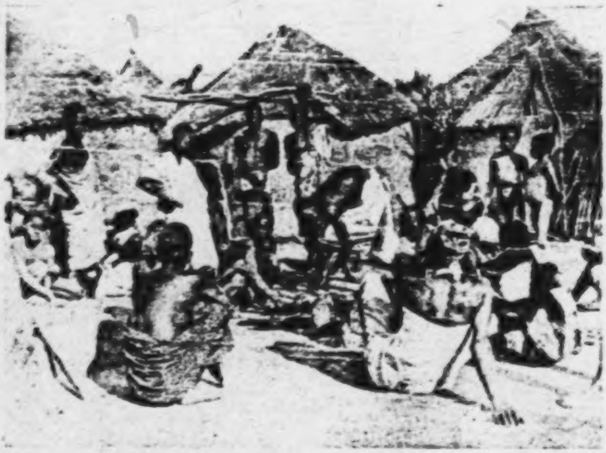

a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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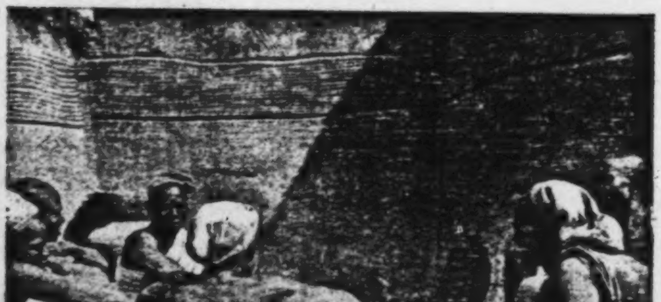

b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[FACING p. 289]

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602 128 Tongo people, individually, have closer and more numerous kinship ties with the immediately adjacent clans of Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Wakii, and Zoo than with clans in the next zone, such as the Tenzugu clans. On the other hand the incidence of such relationships with Yinduuri is markedly greater than with any other clans of Zone III, because Tongo and Yinduuri have a bond of friendship through the chiefship of Sii, as has been explained in our previous book.[1]

602 It will be seen, moreover, that the field of extra-clan kinship is relatively constant for a particular clan through several generations. For its form is approximately the same for children, fathers, and grandfathers. This suggests a regular tendency in the social structure rather than a chance result of the random choices of individuals. As we have previously stated, men seek for wives preferably amongst the nearest eligible women—that is amongst the women of clans that are spatially or socially nearest to their clan. The whole weight of the social structure lies behind this tendency. The restrictions on mobility in the past encouraged it. But the most important factor was, and is, the circular relationship that exists between marriage and extra-clan kinship ties. Marriages create extra-clan kinship ties; social contacts between members of different clans are largely canalized by extra-clan kinship ties; and these ties lead to contacts that in turn bring about new marriages. The modifications that are coming into this sequence nowadays are proof of this argument. The freedom of movement now possible has led to a great expansion of the social space of the younger men. They are beginning to take wives from distant parts, very often outside Taleland, in increasing numbers.

As every Tale clan has a similar field of extra-clan kinship ties, the fields of adjacent clans overlap. The bonds of extra-clan kinship between any two adjacent clans are not only reciprocal but bilateral. Just as many Tongo people, for example, have mothers' brothers at Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, and Wakii, so many Wakii, Ba'ari, and Zubiuŋ people have mothers' brothers at Tongo. Lɔyani of Zubiuŋ Yakɔra provides a good instance of multiple bilateral ties between men of adjacent clans. His mother was a woman of one segment of Tɔŋ-Puhug; one of his sisters married into another segment of Puhug; one of his daughters married a member of yet a third segment of Puhug. If we multiply such cases by the total population of Taleland we can get some impression of the intricacy of the web of extra-clan kinship ties. I have never yet been in a situation where a group of natives have gathered for some activity, whether secular or ceremonial, in which it was impossible for any person present to establish some genealogical (or, if it came to the worst, affinal) link with the lineage principally concerned. Merely being sisters' sons—actual or classificatory—of the same clan can become an effective bond of amity in certain circumstances. The following is a trivial illustration of this.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 89 and 121.

Early one morning I met Baripeta. His hoe on one shoulder, and a chicken coop suspended from the other, showed that he was bound for his bush farm. But he was not taking the path that led there. I asked him where he was going. 'Oh', he said, 'I am going to congratulate Tinta'aləm on his succession to their lineage *bɔɣar*. He and I are both Yinduuri *ahəs* and so his good fortune naturally makes me happy.'

The result of this overlapping of the fields of extra-clan kinship of adjacent clans is that these ties are interwoven to form an elaborate mesh, parallel, on the level of individual relationships, to the mesh of clanship on the level of corporate group relationships.[1] Hence the native thinks of his matrilateral kinship bonds as linking him to such-and-such a person of a different clan, who is himself linked similarly to someone in yet another clan, and so on to the limits of his social horizon. Nor are these connexions confined to Taleland. Tallensi often emphasize their [186] cultural and social distinction from Gɔrisi, Builsa, Namnam, and other neighbouring peoples. But they are quite likely to end a discourse on this theme by saying, 'However, our kinsfolk are among them (*ka ti dɔɣam le bɛ nɛŋha*)'.

It must be remembered, though, that most of these ties are only potential for a person for most of his life. He does not, as a rule, know of his more remote extra-clan kinsfolk until they become relevant for him on some special ritual occasion. This may happen once or twice in a lifetime. But when the need arises he can always trace them by following out (*tumh*) his kinship ties step by step, as we shall see presently. On account of this, and of the complex interweaving of these kinship ties, it is a common thing for individuals to be connected by more than one route, or to be distant kin without knowing it. Thus when I asked Puɛŋyii why he had formerly attached himself to the Gɔlibdaana, whom he now professed to regard as the arch-enemy, his answer was 'because we are kin (*ti a dɔɣam la zugu*)'. He went on to explain that, firstly, the Gɔlibdaana was a distant 'sister's son' of his (Puɛŋyii's) inner lineage, and, secondly, he and the Gɔlibdaana 'both come from Gorogo' on the maternal side. Puɛŋyii's mother's mother and the Gɔlibdaana's mother were both daughters of the same inner lineage of Gorogo. 'If my mother's mother's brother's (*ma ahəb*) people make a sacrifice to their lineage *bɔɣar*, the Gɔlibdaana and I both go to it', he said. This is a simple instance. More complicated multiple relationships are very common, cases in which, as the natives put it, 'they have begotten each other (*ba dɔɣa taaba*)'. That is to say, two persons may be related in such a way that by one route A calls himself a 'sister's son' of B and by another reckoning the relationship is reversed. The relationship of Puɛŋyii and the Gɔlibdaana can, in fact, be interpreted in this way. Identifying himself with his inner lineage, Puɛŋyii can say, 'I have begotten the Gɔlibdaana'—since the Gɔlibdaana looks upon

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. iv, v, vi.

602 Puɛŋyii's inner lineage as his distant 'mother's brother's lineage'. On the other hand, the Gɔlibdaana can make the same claim in regard to Puɛŋyii by identifying himself with his 'sister', Puɛŋyii's mother. In the ordinary intercourse of daily life it is immaterial which relationship is stressed. The blanket concept of kinship (*dɔɣam*) covers all. But in special ritual situations a specific relationship emerges as the decisive one. For example, if the head of Puɛŋyii's inner lineage were to die, the Gɔlibdaana might, if he were on good terms with the deceased, as a gesture of respect, send a gift of millet flour and a fowl as a contribution to the funeral, on the grounds that he is a 'sister's son' of the lineage.

Many instances could be quoted of people discovering hitherto unknown extra-clan kin by chance, as it is a common occurrence. It was on a chance visit to Tɛnzugu that Kuŋaanba learnt that Nyaaŋzum was the head of his father's mother's brother's inner lineage. Since then Kuŋaanba has become a regular visitor to and a great personal friend of Nyaaŋzum's family. In the same way it happens that people get married and discover later that they are kin. Tallensi say this probably happens very often but seldom becomes known. It is only if the couple lose several children one after another that it comes out. A diviner then reveals it as the cause of their misfortunes. Thus apprised of it, they consult the elders of their lineages and try to 'trace out (*tumh*)' their kinship. Whether they are successful or not—and they usually are—
[789] they then perform the rite of splitting kinship (*bɔk dɔɣam*), and this makes it permissible for their marriage to continue. It happened thus with Pukiehɔt, and this was one of the reasons why his in-laws were so angry with him for not paying his wife's bride-price. It was bad enough, they complained, that their daughter's marriage should be a breach of kinship; but, on top of that, here was her husband for ever hedging over the payment of the bride-price.

The natives know very well that they have closer and more numerous matrilateral and sororal kinsfolk among adjacent clans than among more distant clans. We have seen (Ch. II) how they visualize this situation for uterine kin (*saarɔt*). They tend to think of their close matrilateral kin as being spatially near and their more remote extra-clan kin as being far away geographically as well. But they do not of course, realize that all the extra-clan kinship ties of a lineage or clan, taken together, fall into a regular and definite socio-spatial order. They think of these relationships from the individual angle always. At the same time they are very conscious of the mutual reaction on one another of the clanship and lineage structure and these extra-clan kinship ties. Thus Tongo people say that it is much more satisfactory to have one's mother's brother at Zubiuŋ or Zoo than at Ba'ari or Wakii. The local and political cohesion of Zubiuŋ and Zoo with Tongo make it easier to keep in touch with one's mother's brother, make one readier to accept and be accepted

by his clansmen as a classificatory kinsman, and predispose *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* to greater mutual confidence, than if one's *ahəb* belongs to the traditionally hostile Talis. On the other hand, a man whose mother's brother is at Wakii does not wish evil to befall that clan, and he may find himself in an embarrassing position if there is conflict between his own clan and that clan. 602

Kinship Amity

Outside situations in which specific extra-clan kinship ties correlated to defined modes of conduct emerge, the social relations of kin are governed by a general rule of amity. A kinsman of any degree is a person in whose welfare one is interested and whom one is under a moral obligation to help in difficulties, if possible. A good illustration of this occurred one day when I was on a visit to Kpata'ar. Nyaaŋzum asked, in the customary way, what was the news from Tongo. I ran through the conventional items—the chief, the crops, current gossip, births, marriages, and deaths. When I told him that Gbεn-Tɔŋ's mother had died he exclaimed, 'Eee! And why haven't I been told? I'll have it out with Gbεn-Tɔŋ next time I see him. This is his maternal ancestors' home (*u yaab yir nla*). I sacrifice on his behalf so that he may sleep peacefully; and now that he is not sleeping well (i.e. has trouble), if he does not send to tell me, is that as it should be?' Thus also Banɔrəg complained that he had given away about twenty baskets of grain in a period of one month after his harvest to kinsfolk who had come to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts to tide them over a time of food shortage. But, he concluded, 'you can't refuse a kinsman (*i ku tuo nzayah i dɔγam la*). One day I myself may have to go and ask my kinsmen for some grain.' A kinsman in need of hospitality cannot be refused, though there is no obligation to go out of one's way to persuade him to accept it. In the old days if a person saw anyone wantonly molesting a kinsman of his from another clan, it was his duty to intervene. It is wrong to seek a kinsman's harm and a sin that will bring down the wrath of the ancestors to cause his death. In 1936 the Tɔŋraana and the Gɔlibdaana were compelled to meet in order to try to settle one of the latter's grievances against the former. At the end of the long and fruitless discussion the Tɔŋraana burst out, with scarcely veiled vexation, 'You and I, Gɔlibdaana, are kin. We have begotten each other. Why do you seek my enmity always?' 602 577

As we have previously learnt, one of the most important duties of kinship in the old days was to protect a kinsman in one's own clan territory. A typical example is the story of Banam-Teroog's journey to Sandema in the Builsa country, some fifty [illegible]xty years ago. Had he gone openly by himself he would certainly have been caught and sold into slavery by the Builsa. He had been commanded by an ancestress, through a diviner, to go to her home in Builsa country and perform the

602 577 rites of setting up a shrine dedicated to her. For safety's sake all the travelling on such journeys was always done at night. During the day the traveller lay low in a kinsman's house. So Teroog set off one night. He went first to his father's mother's brother's home at Gorogo. Thence he was escorted to his father's mother's mother's natal home at Sii. The Sii people took him to a more remote kinsman at Balung and from there he was conducted, by similar stages, to Sandema. His return journey was made in the same way. The whole trip took nearly a month. The same journey can be done on foot, nowadays, in three or four days each way.

Similarly Zubiuŋ men relate how in the old days their Tongo neighbours, being of a different and unconnected clan,[1] used sometimes to raid their livestock to recover bride-price debts. As the people of Tongo were much more numerous than those of Zubiuŋ resistance was generally impossible. But if a Zubiuŋ man had a close matrilateral or affinal kinsman at Tongo, this afforded him some protection. His kinsman would intercede to get any livestock of his that had been seized restored to him, or, if the debtor were a very close agnate of his, to arrange a settlement between creditor and debtor. Often the head of an intercalary lineage, such as Nəŋsuur yidem,[2] undertook this on behalf of his classificatory mother's brother's lineage.

602 782 Nowadays the most important obligations extra-lineage kin have towards one another are in ritual matters, and these are unavoidable obligations. This applies especially to kin of a senior generation in relation to those of a junior generation. A person owes ritual allegiance to his matrilateral ancestors as well as to his paternal ancestors. In fact, in the strictly personal affairs of the individual, his matrilateral ancestors have as decisive a role in his life as his patrilineal ancestors. This accords with the recognition given to maternal origin in the social structure and with the rule that kinship never dies out. Hence there are many occasions in the life of a man when he has to go to his mother's brother or to someone standing in that order of relationship to him to ask him to sacrifice on his behalf. For it must be remembered that the canon of agnatic descent prohibits anyone other than a true patrilineal descendant from sacrificing to an ancestor or ancestress. Thus if a man wants to sacrifice to his mother's spirit guardian he has to go to her natal home and ask her father (or his heir) to perform the sacrifice. Herein lies the force of the statement commonly used to define extra-clan kinship ties, 'I sacrifice on his behalf', or 'he sacrifices on my behalf'. The whole weight of the ancestor cult stands behind these and other ritual obligations of extra-clan kin to one another and no Taləŋ would violate them.

602 582 If we add to this the rule that marriage between extra-clan kin of any degree is forbidden, we can see that there is much in common between

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

[2] Cf. ibid., pp. 59 and 78.

the basic rules of inter-personal sentiment and conduct for extra-clan kin and for members of one clan or lineage. As in the lineage, so among extra-clan kin, the pattern of sentiment and conduct we have sketched has greater force with close than with distant kin. The differences between kinship within the lineage and kinship outside the lineage lie less in the sphere of individual sentiment and conduct than in the different structural implications of the two kinds of social ties. 602 582

The Classificatory Extension of Extra-clan Kinship

At the outset of this chapter we referred to the classificatory extension of extra-clan kinship ties. This requires further elucidation. In the early stages of my field-work this aspect of Tale kinship seemed to me extraordinarily confused. The natives seemed to label any extra-clan kinsman a 'mother's brother (*ahəb*)' or 'sister's child (*ahəŋ*)' quite indiscriminately. The only distinction they appeared to make was in terms of generation differences. A person was apparently labelled a 'sister's son' if he was related to the speaker through any ancestress who was a member of the latter's clan, and he was described as a 'mother's brother' if the woman forming the link was the speaker's mother or ancestress and a member of the other person's clan. 602 601

This apparent confusion soon resolves itself into an orderly picture if the three principles in accordance with which kinsfolk are identified with one another are applied. In addition we must take into account the socio-spatial distribution of these kinship ties, and, especially, the time dimension without which no aspect of Tale social structure can be understood. Naturally the natives themselves do not consciously use such general conceptions in sorting out their kinship bonds; to them it is simply a question of spontaneous adjustment within the everlasting stream of social relations.

The most important of these factors is the lineage principle. An indication of this is found in the constant reference made by natives to their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yiri*) or maternal grandfather's lineage (*yaab yiri*). If a native is asked about his matrilateral kin the first thing he mentions is his *ahəb yiri*—the clan and perhaps clan segment of his mother's brother. The interpretation given to the concept *yiri* varies according to the situation, and follows the rules that govern its usage within the clan or lineage. For instance, I went to Tenzugu one day accompanied by two Tongo men. When we reached Kpata'ar one of them said 'This is my *ahəb yiri*', and explained that his mother was a Kpata'ar woman (*pəɣayabələg*). A little later he stopped and broke off a couple of heads of ripe millet in a farm through which the path wound. I twitted him with stealing other people's crops. 'No', he replied, 'this is my *ahəb yiri*. This is La'ab's farm and I am an *ahəŋ* of his *dug*. They won't object to my taking a few heads of millet.' Thus

602 at first he was using *ahəb yiri* to refer to the clan and later he used it for the inner lineage of his mother's brother.

601 In keeping with the principles of lineage structure, a man visualizes his relationship with his mother's patrilineal kin as having three degrees. There is, firstly, his bond with his 'true *ahəb* (*ahəb ni yɛlmɛŋər*)'—his mother's full (*soog*) brother, if she has one, or her oldest paternal half (*sunzɔ*) brother. This is the man who will sacrifice on his sister's son's behalf (if *his* father is dead). Apart from this there is no distinction between the 'true *ahəb*' and his brothers of the same nuclear lineage. The next level is that of the mother's brother's *dug*, his inner or at most medial lineage. A sister's son describes this *dug* collectively as his *ahəb yiri*, or, by contraposition with the clan, as his *ahəb dug*. Like any member of this inner lineage he distinguishes between its members in accordance with the rules of classificatory kinship. That is, the men whom his *ahəb* calls 'father' he calls 'grandfather', and he jokes with them; the men and women whom his *ahəb* calls siblings he calls *ahəb* or mother; and he describes those whom his *ahəb* calls his children as brothers and sisters. He may not marry a daughter of this inner lineage, and if he has sexual relations with one it is as disgraceful as if she were his close agnatic sister. He may not court a widow of any man of this inner lineage whom he calls *ahəb*, and if he seduces the wife of such a man it is incest. He may in theory court the widow of a member of this *dug* whom his mother's brother calls 'son' and whom he, therefore, regards as a sort of brother.

Finally, there is the level of his mother's brother's clan beyond the range of his inner lineage. Again the rules of classificatory kinship in the clan context apply. Beyond the range of his mother's brother's inner lineage a man does not distinguish between members of his mother's brother's lineage (his *ahəb yidɛm*) by generation. He can marry a daughter of the clan, or court a widow of any man of the clan, at this range.

Reciprocally, a man calls a child of a daughter of his inner lineage 'an *ahəŋ* of our *dug* (*ti dug ahəŋ*)', and a child of a daughter of a different inner lineage of the clan 'an *ahəŋ* of our lineage (or clan) (*ti yir ahəŋ*)'. There are a number of ritual ceremonies at which all the segments of a clan or maximal lineage must be present. Funerals of politico-ritual functionaries such as tɛndaanas, and the ceremony by which a man takes over the custody of a lineage *bɔɣar* shrine, are ceremonies of this kind. *Ahəs* of every branch of the clan usually attend such ceremonies. Then they are divided into two groups: *dugni ahəs*, those who are linked through their mother or an ancestress to the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony; and *yɛŋha ahəs*, outside *ahəs*, whose mothers or ancestresses came from other segments of the clan.

The lineage principle operating in relation to the flux of time introduces a new feature. A man dies and in due course his social roles pass

to one of his sons. The son now assumes the duties his father had as a mother's brother. He now sacrifices on behalf of his father's sister's sons and becomes their *ahəb* in function. So a mother's brother's son is, in certain situations, called *ahəb* by identification with his father in accordance with the lineage principle, even while his father is still alive—in anticipation, as it were, of the role he will one day have. On the same principle a sister's son's son may be identified with his father in relation to the latter's mother's brother's sons and lineage. Thus Ɔmara once introduced a young man from Gorogo to me as his *ahəb*. I expressed surprise, as I knew his mother came from Woo. He then explained that the young man was really his father's *ahəb* (*ba ahəb*)—not, of course, his father's true mother's brother, but the grandson and successor of the latter.

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Through the operation of the lineage principle such a relationship can, in theory, go on for ever. The mother's brother's role—progressively attenuated, as we shall see presently—passes from one generation of the original mother's brother's agnatic descendants to the next. And this brings out a point of importance. The crucial element in the mother's brother's role is his duty to sacrifice to his ancestors on his sister's son's behalf whenever the latter requests it. By the lineage principle the latter cannot sacrifice to his maternal ancestors directly at their original home. The mother's brother is bound to perform this duty or else suffer the wrath of his ancestors. He can refuse only if his *ahəŋ* has very gravely offended him. Then this duty becomes a right which he uses as a sanction. He receives no recompense for this other than his prescribed share of the animal sacrificed, which must always be provided by the sister's son. The mother's brother's role goes with this right of sacrificing to his lineage ancestors' spirits. Hence, after the death of all of the grandfather's sons—all the true mother's brothers—it is in fact vested in the head of the lineage descended from the grandfather.

Now let us glance for a moment at the other side of the relationship, the sister's son's position. A man has no interest in or bonds with any of his sister's children's agnates except her children. They are not his kin through his sister. In theory he or his son can marry any of his sister's children's female agnates if they are not related to one another by another link. In practice such marriages with a woman member of the sister's husband's inner lineage are not countenanced. One objection is that the girl might be a proxy or classificatory daughter of the sister, which would make the marriage seem incestuous. A stronger objection is that such a marriage would amount to exchanging one woman for another. This the Tallensi disapprove of on the grounds that it must inevitably breed discord between the two lineages concerned. It is incongruous for the same inner lineages to be both sons-in-law and fathers-in-law to one another. You cannot, as the natives put it, both owe bride-price to and claim bride-price from the same man, or owe filial respect to and

601 be entitled to filial respect from the same person. The objection does not hold outside the range of the sister's husband's inner lineage. An 602 *ahəb* is concerned only with his sister's own children; and *his* agnatic descendants are genealogically related and socially concerned only with *their* descendants—that is to say, with the matri-segment (sprung from the sister of the original *ahəb*) of the lineage sprung from her husband. Such is the history—or, more frequently, the putative history—lying behind the *ahəb–ahəŋ* relationships of lineages of different clans with one another. Every lineage and every segment of a lineage has its *ahəb yiri* in this sense. When the relationship (whether real or putative) is assumed to be remote it may have only a ceremonial function or may serve as an explanation of clanship linkage; when it is not too remote it emerges from time to time in ritual or jural activities. And it follows from the structure of the lineage that the farther back by number of generations the relationship is located, the wider will be the span of the lineages concerned.

There is a further complication. A woman's children have a tie, through her, with her *ahəb yiri*—their mother's mother's brother's lineage (*ma ahəb yiri*). This is a bond of a rather limited and formal significance; nevertheless it is kinship (*dɔyam*); it prohibits marriage between a man and a woman who are directly related by such a route, and it often emerges in ritual relations. Indeed a man and his sister's, or father's sister's, daughter's son may be on terms of friendship and special intimacy, if, as is quite possible, they are clansmen or neighbours. The friendship of Pumaan and Saɣəbazaa, both of Tongo, went back to a relationship of this kind; and Saɣəbazaa, who was in the mother's father's position, spoke of Pumaan as his 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)'. By the lineage principle a relationship of this kind can be sustained for several generations, but it tends to fade out with the passage of the generations. Still more roundabout extra-clan genealogical connexions are recognized in special circumstances, the parties being linked by various combinations of male and female antecedents.

A relationship such as that of Saɣəbazaa and Pumaan is assimilated to the pattern of mother's father–daughter's son relationship. As this shows, there are two categories of extra-clan extended kinship ties. One type is assimilated to the *ahəb–ahəŋ* (mother's brother–sister's child) tie, and the other to the *yaab–yaaŋ* (mother's father–daughter's child) tie. The criterion is simple. If two individuals or lineages are linked through one woman (i.e. at a remove of one generation) only, they are *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* to each other: if the chain of genealogical connexions includes more than one woman (i.e. more than one female generation—a woman and her mother), making it a secondary matrilateral tie, the parties are *yaab* and *yaaŋ* to each other. Thus Lɔɣani called himself, in various contexts, an *ahəŋ* of Təŋ-Puhug, because his own mother came from there; an *ahəŋ* of Gorogo because his father's mother came from that place; and

also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Təŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sɔk—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sɔk; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence. 601 602

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1] 604

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u ŋman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u ŋman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl with a perineal band (*suol voog*). This is a proud moment for her, as the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have entered the ranks of the matrons (*pɔɣaŋaaŋ*, pl. *pɔɣaŋaas*). Then, before[2] 604 843 431 [884]

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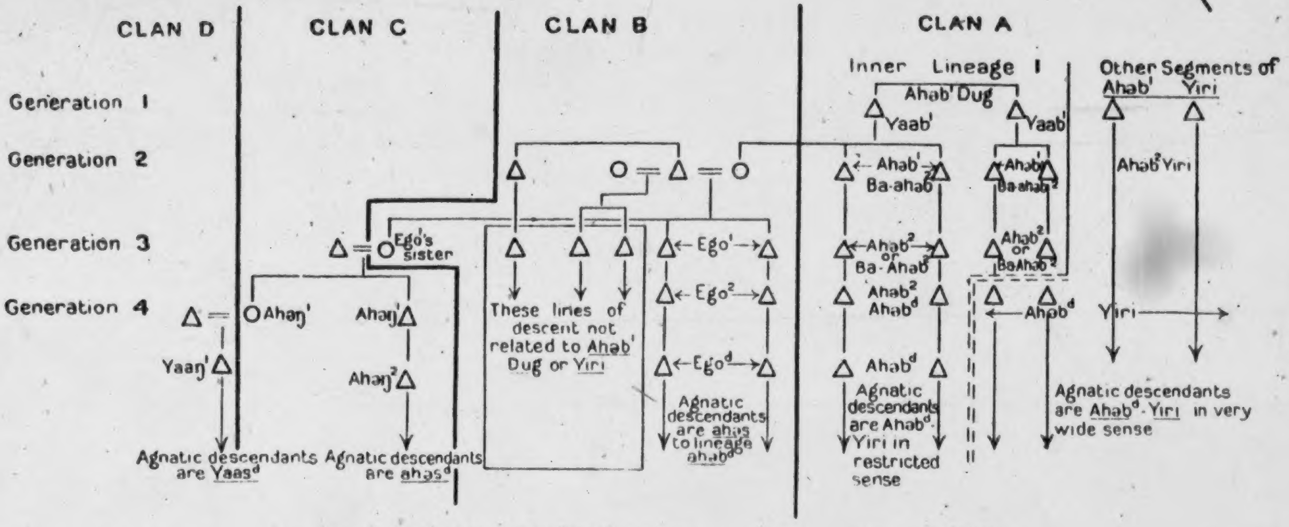
[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

[2] [Text continued on p. 301.-Analyst]

[p. 300]


CLAN D
CLAN C
CLAN B
CLAN A
Inner Lineage I
Ahab' Dug
Other Segments of Ahab' Yiri
Generation 1
Generation 2
Generation 3
Generation 4
Yaab'
Yaab'
Ahab'
Ba-ahab²
Ahab²
or
Ba-Ahab²
Ahab²
Ahab^d
Ahab^d
Ahab²Yiri
Ego'
Ego²
Ego^d
Ego's sister
Ahaŋ'
Ahaŋ'
Ahaŋ²
Yaaŋ'
Yiri
These lines of descent not related to Ahab' Dug or Yiri
Agnatic descendants are Yaas^d
Agnatic descendants are ahas^d
Agnatic descendants are ahas to lineage ahab^d
Agnatic descendants are Ahab^d-Yiri in restricted sense
Agnatic descendants are Ahab^d-Yiri in very wide sense

↓ = Agnatic descendants of indicated ancestor ←→ = pointers

FIG. 8. The extension of *Ahəb–Ahaŋ* relations.

The diagram reads as follows: Ego^1's true mother's brothers are designated *Ahəb*^{1}, Ego^1 calls them *Ahəb*, Ego^2 (Ego's son) calls these men *Ba-ahəb*, hence they are also designated *Ba-ahəb*^{2}. Ego^d (Ego^1's agnatic descendant) calls *Ahəb*^{1}*'s* agnatic descendants *ahəb*, hence they are designated *Ahəb*^{d}. Similarly with all the other relationships placed on the diagram. The index figure or letter shows what the Ego bearing the same index calls that person or group.

the child is due, her husband sends a sacrifice for her spirit guardian to 604 her father, to secure the blessing of her patrilineal ancestors on the 843 ordeal she is soon to undergo. When the child is born, a messenger is again dispatched to announce its birth to the girl's parents. He is 431 received with the hospitality due to a bearer of particularly glad tidings. Now the girl's mother sends her four new calabashes. These are the [854] infant's toilet-vessels—one for giving the infant its daily medicated water to drink, one as a dipper for use when bathing it, one as a slop basin, one for scooping up its excrement. These private toilet utensils are in part a magical protection for the baby. The occasion is also marked, as we have learnt, by a special gift of foodstuffs to the new mother from her father. All these formalities are not necessary for children after the first; it is enough to send a message on the birth of the child. But the woman's paternal relatives are no less interested in these later children than in her first child.

A child makes the acquaintance of its mother's paternal family very 604 early in life. Its mother's sisters and mother's mother, if she is not too old, are frequent visitors to its mother. Its mother's brothers may be frequent visitors too, especially if they are on friendly terms with its father. But it is not till the child reaches the age of about 5 or 6, when it begins to be taken on visits to its *ahəb yiri*, that it clearly distinguishes these relatives. The person who matters most to a small child at its mother's brother's house is its maternal grandmother (*ma-kpeem*), in whose quarters and under whose care the child lives.[1] Old people, both [574] men and women, love to have their daughters' young children to stay with them, and pet and spoil them quite as much as their sons' children. As will be remembered, grandchildren joke with their maternal grandparents. At harvest time, in particular, old women often have daughters' children to stay for a week or two, so that they can enjoy the good food available at that time. Playing and eating and sleeping with the children of the house, a child learns to regard them as siblings, and partly through imitating them, partly through coming directly under the discipline of his mother's brother, a child thus visiting its *ahəb yiri* learns to think of its *ahəb* as a 'sort of father'. He hears all the gossip of the family. When a domestic sacrifice is performed he is present and receives the portion of the animal—the neck (*naŋgoor*)—prescribed for an *ahəŋ*. I have more than once seen a small boy of perhaps 8 receive the neck of a sacrifice, amid an amused chuckle from his mother's brothers. If a woman dies leaving a young child of less than 5 or 6 years old it is a common thing for the child to be sent to live with its maternal grandmother for a year or two until it is old enough to need only a minimum of maternal care.

Thus, a child learns to think of its *ahəb yiri*, in the strict sense of its mother's brother's homestead, at first, in the more extended sense, later, as a place where it is given food, shelter, affectionate attention, and

status in almost the same way as in its own home. It is not surprising to find that most Tallensi know almost as much about the affairs of their mother's brother's family as they do about their own family, and that they often have a very good knowledge of the distinctive ritual practices and ideas of their mother's brother's clan. For though a sister's child is not admitted to the esoteric ritual ceremonies of his maternal kinsmen's clan, he often hears them discuss the less sacred aspects of these ceremonies and takes part in the domestic rites that are interspersed with them.

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[1] This follows directly from the constitution of the joint family.

A great attachment may thus grow up between mother's brother and sister's child, in particular, the sister's son. This is especially the case when *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* are uterine kin (*saarət*), that is when the mother's brother is the full brother of the mother of the *ahəŋ*. The sentiments and attitudes a person has towards his mother are extended in a modified form towards her brother, and the latter extends to the sister's child the attachment he has to his sister. When I first met Barimoda at Baŋgam-Teroog's house the latter said, pointing to Barimoda, 'This is my child (*m-biig nla*).' Knowing that Barimoda and Teroog belonged to different clans, I demurred. Whereupon Teroog said: 'He is my full (*soog*) sister's son; and if you and your *soog* sister together have a child, is he not your child too? (*N ta-soog biig n-a-u; ka nyɛn ni i ta-soog n-kab dɔya bii, daya i biiga?*).' Barimoda was as much at home in Teroog's house as in his own. Seldom a day passed without his visiting the old man. Since Teroog's only adult son lived far away, Barimoda did for him many of the things a son would have done. He enlisted the help of his brother's sons to get Teroog's small home farm hoed and was his counsellor in all his problems, as sons usually are to a father enfeebled with years. Being an old man and head of his lineage, Teroog very often had to make sacrifices to his ancestors. On these occasions he always sent for Barimoda. Once, through a trifling disagreement with Teroog's younger wife, Barimoda refused to attend a sacrifice at Teroog's house. Naabdiya, Barimoda's half-brother and a friend of Teroog's, and I happened to be present. After the sacrifice Teroog offered the neck of the goat sacrificed to Naabdiya. Another man, able, like Naabdiya, to claim a distant matrilateral connexion with Teroog's clan, would have considered himself a 'sister's son' in this situation and have accepted the prescribed portion. But Naabdiya refused. No, he said, everybody knew that Barimoda was Teroog's favourite *ahəŋ* and always came to such sacrifices. If he, Naabdiya, now accepted the sister's son's portion Barimoda would resent it. In a few days his sulky mood would pass and he would resume his usual relations with Teroog. Teroog agreed and added that he would send the goat's neck to Barimoda with a conciliatory message. Everybody in Zubiuŋ knew of Barimoda's devotion to his *ahəb-soog* and spoke highly of him for this. So when Teroog's son died and he insisted that Barimoda should be allowed to inherit one of the widows, it met with general approval among the men of Zubiuŋ. 604

The relationship of Kpɛlimɛrəme and his mother's full brother Kuur was similar. One incident may be quoted as a particularly forcible illustration of the intimacy and attachment that often exist between *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*. Kuur was suffering from a very painful and repulsive skin disease which had finally attacked his genitals, turning them into a disgusting, ulcerated area. When Loɣani, Kuur's younger paternal brother, came to ask me for some medicine to treat this sickness, he said that the mere sight of it made him vomit—and, as he remarked, he was known to be a man of stout heart (*suhkpeemərdaan*) in dealing with sickness or death. I gave Loɣani some disinfectant, and advised cleansing and bathing the affected parts with it. Loɣani looked dubious and then explained that Kuur was in too great pain to carry out the treatment himself, Kuur's children were all too young to do it, and his disease was so revolting that none of his more distant relatives would undertake the task. Then an idea struck him. There was someone who would do it—Kpɛlimɛrəme. And in fact Kpɛlimɛrəme did undertake the unpleasant task and performed it faithfully for several weeks. 'Do you think,' said Kpɛlimɛrəme to me, 'I would let my *ahəb* die if I knew of any way of saving him?' 604 757

Such a relationship is common between sister's son and mother's full brother. As a rule there is not such great intimacy and devotion between a man and his half-sister's son. It is, however, only a matter of degree. Ɔmara was very attached to his half-sister's children, especially to her eldest daughter. He was as proud of her marriage to the Chief of Bongo as her own father was. Yɛanbərigya, like most Tallensi, was a constant visitor to his *ahəb* at Samiit. Once at a public sacrifice at which he was the only non-member of Samiit present, his mother's brother's clansmen teased him saying that he might as well come and join them for good. Anyhow, they chaffed him, he was really a son of Samiit since his mother's bride-price had not been fully paid.[1] He rejoined, jokingly, that he belonged both to Samiit and to his own clan. 604

As a rule, too, a sister's daughters do not after marriage have such constant and close contacts with their mother's brother's people as a sister's sons. Any interest a woman has in relatives other than her husband's people is chiefly directed towards her parental family, and she keeps in touch with her mother's brother's people through her mother and brothers. A woman lacks the bond of common interests due to identity of sex that reinforces the ties of mother's brother and sister's son. A woman also has no need to maintain ritual relations with her

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[1] If a woman dies leaving adult sons before the fourth cow of her bride-price is claimed, her paternal kin are normally obliged to waive it in favour of her sons. This is interpreted as a sign of their quasi-parental interest in the sons' welfare and marriages.

604 *ahǝb*. Nevertheless she has much the same attitude to him as her brothers have and will, if need arises, go to him for help as if he were her father. A woman will go to her mother's brother for a basket of grain at harvest time if her husband's grain supplies are very low and she knows that her father or brother has none to spare.

These personal bonds are transferred, in accordance with the principles we have previously made clear, to sons and grandsons and collateral relatives, as well as to the lineages, of *ahǝb* and *ahǝŋ*. Yarǝg of Gbizug was a close friend of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's family at Puhug. Saɣǝbazaa, who was both a neighbour and a distant classificatory *ahǝŋ* of Zubiuŋ (since both the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage and one of his inner lineage forbears were sister's sons of a Zubiuŋ lineage), took great pride in being the *ahǝŋ-kpeem*, most senior of the 'sisters' sons' of that clan. He took a keen interest in its affairs and never missed attending important ceremonies anywhere in Zubiuŋ. The elders of the clan spoke of him with respect as 'our elder brother (*ti bier*)'. But naturally, the more distant the relationship is, the less intimate and the more formal do the mutual interests of *ahǝb* and *ahǝŋ* tend to become.

604 Death is the key test of kinship sentiments. The day after Kpe'emi's death I happened to call at the house of his mother's full brother,
765 Lɔɣani. I found Lɔɣani and his brother sitting listlessly at their gateway and the house was as quiet as if there were a person on his death-bed inside. The women, who should have been out collecting firewood, were at home, and the children, usually playing boisterously at that time of the day, sat in corners, talking in subdued voices. When I asked what was the matter, Lɔɣani said mournfully, 'Have you not heard of our child Kpe'emi's death? That is our grief (*ti suhkpɛlǝg nla*). We sitting here, our bodies are prostrate (*ti nɛŋgbina nkpi*—lit. our bodies are dead). We have no thought for food or drink or work.' Barimoda was deeply affected when his *ahǝb* Teroog died, though he was then a very old man. Barimoda could not publicly manage the funeral but he did in fact manage it behind the scenes. As we shall see later, an *ahǝŋ* has certain
[578] customary obligations to fulfil at the funeral of his *ahǝb*. The feud between the Gɔlibdaana's faction and the Kpata'arna'ab's supporters at Tɛnzugu placed many men in the camp opposed to that of their *ahǝb* or *ahǝs*. Kpata'ar men and Bunkyiuk men stopped having any contacts with each other. But just then the mother's brother of Naɣabil of Kpata'ar died. I was with the Kpata'arna'ab, the head of the maximal lineage, when Naɣabil came to tell him of this. 'I want to tell you', he said, 'because he (the dead man) is my true *ahǝb* (i.e. mother's full brother) and if I do not go to the funeral to mourn his death it would be unseemly (*de ku maali*). Besides', he went on, turning to me, 'if I don't go my mother (also dead) would be angry because I was scorning her brother's funeral.' The Kpata'arna'ab at once gave Naɣabil permis-

sion to go, saying that the quarrel between the two clans had nothing to do with the question of personal kinship ties. As this example shows, there is a strong element of moral (but not jural) compulsion in the respect owed by a sister's son to his mother's brother, and the sanction behind it is the allegiance every man owes to his maternal ancestors. 604 765 [577]

On the level of sentiment and affective attitudes there is clearly a close resemblance between the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child and that of father and child. The difference, and it is a fundamental difference, lies in the fact that *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* have no common economic or jural interests. Thus a man can be familiar with all the affairs of his *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* and be keenly concerned that they should go well, but he is under no responsibility for their satisfactory outcome. The tension underlying the relationship of father and son is absent, and in this important respect the relationship of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* resembles that of mother and child more closely. An *ahəb* must be respected by and he has considerable moral authority over his *ahəŋ*; but he cannot demand obedience from him as of right. This will be clearer from what follows. 604

Here it is pertinent to ask why the mother's brother and not her father—though he is the head of her natal family—holds the key position in the network of social relations that bind a person to his mother's patrilineal kin. As our analysis makes clear, it follows from the interaction of the principle of the equivalence of siblings and the principle of the cleavage between successive generations. A person cannot identify himself with his mother in relation to her father. He cannot have the status of a son and the status of a grandson in relation to the same person. On the other hand, as the preceding discussion makes clear, it is in conformity both with the logic of the social structure and with the pattern of sentiments uniting parent and child, for a person to extend to his mother's brother the filial attitude he has towards his mother. He can consistently be his mother's son and at the same time have a quasi-filial status in relation to her brother.

The Place of Gifts in the Relations of Ahəb and Ahəŋ

An *ahəb* demonstrates his interest in his sister's son's well-being by the gifts (*piini*) he occasionally gives him. The theory is that they are given freely out of kinship amity. By the rule of reciprocity there should be a similar freely-given flow of gifts and services from *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*, but the emphasis lies on the generosity of the *ahəb*. A man is under no jural or ritual obligation to give things to his sister's child; he does so voluntarily as a quasi-paternal gesture. And though an *ahəŋ* has no property rights in the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*, he is, in theory, allowed certain liberties with things belonging to them, as if he were a kind of son of the clan. This is explained by the formula that but for the accident of 604 431

604 431 birth his mother might have been an owner of these things. In the past, when people moved about less freely than now, a man passing through the clan settlement of his *ahɔb* could seize any guinea-fowl he saw and collect any guinea-fowl eggs he came across[1] irrespective of which member of his mother's brother's clan they belonged to. Nowadays this custom is objected to. Tallensi say that with people moving about so freely and frequently as they do now, it would soon lead to the destruction of all their flocks of guinea-fowl. But an *ahɔŋ* is still at liberty to cut himself a few heads of guinea corn or millet from any farm when walking through the settlement of his *ahɔb*, if he is feeling hungry.

Women *ahɔs* have an analogous privilege of much more practical value. As we have learnt, if a woman has a small baby she often gets a young sister of her own inner lineage or clan to come and live with her and be the infant's nursemaid. If there is no suitable girl in her father's lineage, she is entitled to ask her *ahɔb* or her father's *ahɔb* to give her a little girl. This is a very common practice.

604 426 Sister's son and mother's brother cannot contract debts towards each other. If a man borrows money or livestock from an *ahɔb* or *ahɔŋ* repayment cannot be demanded. It rests with the borrower to make an equivalent return in due course. Ɔndieso provided an amusing illustration of this rule. He borrowed three shillings from Naambulɔg, a member of the lineage of his paternal grandfather's *ahɔb*, and a friend of his. For about a year nothing was said about this loan and the friendship of the two men continued as before. Then a disagreement developed between Kutɔbis, head of Ɔndieso's inner lineage, and the head of Naambulɔg's clan, for which the latter was in part responsible. As it was a question of a right vested in the inner lineage, Ɔndieso supported and indeed instigated Kutɔbis. He was particularly angry with Naambulɔg. Thereupon the latter immediately demanded repayment of the loan, thus symbolically relegating Ɔndieso to the class of non-relatives, and Ɔndieso ostentatiously repaid two shillings. Repaying Naambulɔg in kind, he had deducted one shilling for two fowls Naambulɔg had borrowed from his brother two or three years previously.

604 431 When Bontuya died his son Ba'andoog had to sacrifice a white bull to the dead man's *Yin* shrine before starting the funeral ceremonies. Ba'andoog went to his father's sister's son, who, he knew, had a white bull, and asked for the animal. Very reluctantly the *ahɔŋ* parted with his bull. As he explained to me afterwards, it was a very fine young bull. 'But', he said, 'Bontuya begot me and I have no power to refuse him anything.' Several months later the father-in-law of the *ahɔŋ* came to him demanding a cow of his daughter's bride-price. The young man promptly went

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[1] Guinea-fowl are only semi-domestic birds. They live out of doors and are very difficult to catch alive. They also lay their eggs out of doors. The privilege of an *ahɔŋ* therefore had more of a token value than any practical worth. But I know several men who claim to have used their privilege at least once.

to his mother's brother's house and Ba'andoog gave him a cow of some- 604
what greater value than the white bull to give to his father-in-law. But
such exchanges are exceptional. A fowl, a sixpence, a slab of tobacco, 431
a few kola nuts, these are the more usual kinds of gifts that pass between extra-clan kin.

There are two gifts from a mother's brother to which great significance 604
is attached. One of these is the gift of a hen to a lad from his *ahəb* when
he becomes capable of productive labour. This is almost a universal 431
custom among the Tallensi. As we have shown in an earlier chapter,
its importance lies in that it marks the beginning of the economic (and, 556
therefore, in due course, social) self-differentiation of a boy within the joint family. It symbolizes, and in many cases actually serves as, the starting-point of the accumulation of wealth by individual effort. It was the proud boast of Barimoda that starting as a small boy with a fowl given to him by his father's *ahəb* he had eventually 'achieved' (*paa*) a cow from which he had had several calves. In every settlement one can find two or three men who have matched this achievement, but it is more common to find men who have 'achieved' a goat or a sheep in this way. And though Tallensi always speak as if they began with one hen this is not strictly true. A boy may receive fowls from two or three matrilateral kinsmen, and he may be given more than one fowl by an *ahəb* who is specially attached to him. Koyatee was unlucky with the first hen his true mother's brother gave him. When it died he told his *ahəb*, who gave him another. He successfully bred a brood of chickens from this hen and was given yet another hen by the same mother's brother.

An *ahəb* has no claims on livestock bred in this way by his sister's son. 604
Very often, if a man needs a fowl for a sacrifice and has none that is
suitable, he will send to ask his sister's son for one; but this is not con- 431
nected with the gift of a hen he may have made to the latter many years 769
before. The equivalent return for the mother's brother's hen is made in another way. As has been previously mentioned, when a man 'achieves' a cow, after starting with his mother's brother's hen, he owes this cow to his mother's brother's lineage ancestor shrine (*bɔyar*). He keeps the cow until it is too old to calve and then takes it to his mother's brother's lineage as a thank-offering to his maternal ancestors. For, say the natives, it must surely have been their beneficence that gave him prosperity, since the hen came from their son.

Far more important is the gift of land by an *ahəb* to an *ahəŋ*. There 604
are degrees of finality about such a gift. It is a very common practice
for both men and women to beg a plot of land from an *ahəb*—or any 426
other extra-clan matrilateral kinsman—living in an adjacent settlement to plant with ground-nuts or sweet potatoes. The land given for these purposes generally lies on the outskirts of the donor's settlement, near that of the recipient. As often as not, it is land too exhausted for grain crops; or else it is land not required by the *ahəb* that season. Use of the land

604 426 is granted for one season only, but the *ahəŋ* is often allowed to retain it for several years with the tacit understanding that it must be surrendered whenever the donor asks for it, as he will do a season in advance when he wishes to resume cultivation of it. The gift is made without any special ceremony and the recipient pays no rent. If he gets a good crop he usually gives his *ahəb* a basket of ground-nuts or sweet potatoes as a token of gratitude. But this is entirely optional. A person may borrow a ground-nut plot in the same way from a uterine or other matrilateral or sororal kinsman in his or her own clan and the same rules apply. Women also borrow plots for ground-nuts from their own kinsmen belonging to their husbands' clans. This practice is so common that it can be described as the normal thing for young men, especially if they are unmarried and farming with their fathers. Nor is it shortage of land that makes young men ask an *ahəb* for a ground-nut plot rather than their fathers. Nayabaal, Nalebseug, and Mosuor, all youths aged between 15 and 20, had borrowed ground-nut and sweet potato plots from their mothers' brothers' people, but the fathers of all three had ample land. Indeed Nayabaal's father allowed two of his *ahəs* to grow ground-nuts on a distant piece of fallow land belonging to him. A strong motive is the knowledge that a youth's father will, as a rule, not interfere with the manner in which the youth may wish to dispose of a crop grown on his mother's brother's land as he might if it were grown on land belonging to the nuclear lineage. There is always the feeling that anything obtained through the use of lineage resources must be at the disposal of the whole domestic group if it is required. Thus borrowing a ground-nut plot from one's mother's brother reflects the association we have previously stressed of individual self-differentiation in economic and social terms with maternal origin. But there is also a more important jural reason. A man cannot refuse his son or brother's son if the latter asks for some land to use for himself and the father has spare land. But then he cannot take possession of the land again without very good reason. The result is that if a man obtains a plot of land from his father or the head of his nuclear lineage for growing ground-nuts he tends, in due course, to establish *de facto* possessory rights over it and it never reverts to the patrimonial land. Unless, therefore, a man wishes deliberately to endow a son or brother's son with land, to be held in perpetuity by the latter's agnatic descendants, he prefers not to grant such a dependant a plot for his private use. He cannot make such a grant to one son or brother's son only; he would have to give similar plots to his other sons and proxy sons. Resort to matrilateral kin avoids this dilemma.

This arises also in the more serious business of borrowing land to cultivate as a regular bush-farm for a period of years. A man who wants a new bush-farm commonly tries to get one from a matrilateral or sororal kinsman or lineage. It is very rare for land to be borrowed from a clansman who is not also a matrilateral or sororal kinsman, for permanent

cultivation. It is felt to be incompatible with clanship ties. Clansmen 604
form a corporate unit, in theory made up of a vastly expanded group
of brothers. In theory, every member of a clan or maximal lineage has 426
an interest in and a potential right to inherit the property of any other member of the clan. Hence if a lineage segment dies out all the land formerly owned by its members passes into the ownership of the next higher lineage of which it forms a segment, and is vested in the head of that lineage. Thus if a man were to lend land for permanent farming to a clansman he would never be able to demand its return. The lender, moreover, would not give the land with that feeling of personal interest in the recipient's welfare and desire for his prosperity that an *ahəb* has towards his sister's son or an *ahəŋ* towards his mother's brother. A matrilateral kinsman gives freely, solely out of consideration for the needs of his kinsman, not because the latter has a right to what he asks for; and the spirit in which the gift is made carries with it the blessings of the giver's ancestors. There is an advantage to the giver in that what is voluntarily given can be taken back without affecting the relationship of the parties, and an advantage to the recipient in that restoring the borrowed land to its owner does not mean a surrender of a right.

I have recorded the ownership of a large number of bush-farms. They 471
fall into three approximately equal groups: those which are said to have
belonged to the lineage from time immemorial; those which it is claimed 425
were bought by an ancestor; and those which, it is said, were obtained by an ancestor by gift from a mother's brother or other matrilateral kinsman. The latter explanation is so common and so stereotyped that it may well be mythical in many cases. But cross-checking and the fact that such gifts are still commonly made show that the claim is true for most cases. I witnessed the whole procedure twice, when two men well known to me obtained gifts of bush-farms from matrilateral kinsmen. Ɔmara, a Zoo man, obtained his from the head of the inner lineage at Zubiuŋ to which his paternal great-grandfather's *ahəb* had belonged; and Sɔmbura from Ba'ari obtained his from his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage at Tongo. These cases are the more significant in that it has been the practice, for several generations, for Tongo people to get land from their matrilateral kinsmen at Zoo, and for Ba'ari people to resort to their kinsmen at Yayazoor for grants of bush-farms.

The procedure is as follows. A man looking for a new bush-farm 604
sees a suitable piece of land which he knows belongs to his true or to a
classificatory mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*). He ascertains that 425
it has not been cultivated for the last ten or fifteen years, which suggests that the owners are not hard pressed for land. He then goes to 'beg' (*soh*) the land from his *ahəb yidɛm*. The land Ɔmara desired belonged to his lineage *ahəb*[1] Dawoog's inner lineage; and partly for this reason,

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[1] i.e. the progenitrix of Ɔmara's medial lineage had been a daughter of Dawoog's inner lineage.

604 partly because Ɔmara's relationship was with the whole inner lineage, not with Dawoog personally, the request had to be placed before the 425 assembled elders of the inner lineage. The land could not have been granted without their unanimous consent. This having been obtained, a day was fixed for handing over the land. Early in the morning of the appointed day Ɔmara, followed by his oldest son, arrived bringing a [782] fowl and a guinea-fowl and a large basket of guinea corn. Dawoog then summoned all the men of his inner lineage, and proceeded to sacrifice the birds to his lineage ancestors at the lineage *bɔɣar*. Addressing the ancestors he explained all the circumstances of their 'grandson' Ɔmara's request and exhorted them to bless his labour and to grant that the new farm might bring him prosperity. It was a long prayer detailing exactly how Ɔmara was related to Dawoog's lineage and promising that he would bring further offerings in gratitude to the *bɔɣar* whenever the new farm produced good crops. The flesh of the birds was divided amongst all present, including Ɔmara, in accordance with the customary rules.

Ɔmara and his son, accompanied by two young men and an elder of the *ahəb yiri* deputed by Dawoog, then repaired to the bush-farm. The elder showed Ɔmara the boundaries of the farm and the young men hoed a strip along one boundary to symbolize marking them out (*kyie*). They then set to, with the aid of Ɔmara and his sons, to hoe a small patch, and so symbolically to hand over the right of working the farm. This was symbolized, also, in a simple rite in which the elder handed Ɔmara a large pellet of soil from the farm, mixed with a handful of the flour used in the sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, to eat.

The procedure was identical in the case of Sɔmbura, with one exception. The land belonged to his *ahəb* Saɣamane's nuclear lineage, so there was no need to obtain the consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Saɣamane did, however, inform them because, as he put it, 'you cannot [577] undertake so important a transaction without the knowledge of your "brothers" and "fathers", and besides, telling them makes them witnesses to the act'. It means that there will always be some member of the inner lineage who knows the circumstances and conditions of the gift.

Tallensi attach very great importance to the ritual steps in this trans- 604 action. They secure the blessing of his matrilateral ancestors for the 577 recipient of the land. Without this, they believe, failure and even disaster would overtake him when he starts farming the new bush-farm; 425 for, they say, the land really belongs to the ancestors who first cultivated it. Moreover, the ritual formalities also have an explicitly stressed jural function. It is a solemn covenant between the parties, made in the presence of the ancestors, in which all those who have rights in the land avow their consent to the gift and the recipient pledges himself to abide by the implicit conditions of the tenure of the land. The arrangement

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has the sanctions of the ancestor cult behind it, and the guarantee of having been made with the public consent of all who have an interest in the land.

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The recipient pays no rent or dues for the land. During the first three or four years he must give a basket of guinea corn or millet to the grantors after every harvest. If he has had good crops it will be a large basketful; if he has had a poor season it will be a small basket. In subsequent years he need only bring a gift of grain if his crops are good and if he wishes to do so. Some of this grain will be ground into flour and a libation poured to his matrilateral ancestors at their *bɔyar*, expressing thanks for their beneficence. This serves also to reaffirm the ownership of the land by the grantors. Occasionally, too, he may bring a fowl to offer at the ancestral *bɔyar* of his *ahəb* lineage in gratitude for the beneficence of the ancestors whose land he is working.

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In principle, the lineage that grants the land can recover use of it at any time by giving the recipient a year's notice. But this right would only be exercised, in practice, if the latter offends them in any way—for instance, by withholding the gifts of grain in spite of having excellent crops. As a rule, therefore, the *ahəŋ* retains the use of the land until he no longer requires it. It then reverts automatically to its proper owners. If the original recipient dies, his son may continue to use the land without specially renewing the arrangement with his *ahəb yidɛm*.

Now supposing the farm is so large that the recipient need not cultivate all of it at one time. By cultivating and fallowing different portions of the farm in rotation he and his sons after him may keep it in use continually. If this goes on for two generations, by which time all the individuals who were present in person at the original transaction are probably dead, the land passes into the effective ownership of the original recipient's lineage, in the third generation. The successors of the original grantor no longer have the right of recovering the land but they are still the nominal owners of the land. If it is wholly abandoned they may resume occupation; the users may not sell the land; and if they grossly offend the nominal owners, the latter can, in theory, turn them off it.

This right is most emphatically claimed, though it is, by all accounts, very rarely exercised. An incident concerning Ɔndieso is suggestive of what might happen. Ɔndieso quarrelled with his neighbour and the head of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. The latter, in his anger, ordered Ɔndieso to leave the land he was farming. This land had been given to Ɔndieso's grandfather by his mother's brother, the then Gbizug Tɛndaana. Ɔndieso, previously defiant, was filled with dismay. Not to comply with the tɛndaana's demand meant risking both the wrath of his matrilateral ancestors and the vengeance of the Earth whose cult is so closely bound up with Gbizug. So he went across to Deemzeet, the head of Puhug section of

Tongo and therefore the senior lineage head of all Tongo, and begged him to intercede. As Deemzeet was also the head of the Gbizug Tɛndaana's grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the choice was doubly fortunate. Deemzeet thereupon sent two of his sons to plead with the tɛndaana, who consented to withdraw his demand if Ɔndieso would bring a fowl and a guinea-fowl to sacrifice to the ancestor who had originally made the gift of the land, in sign of contrition.

Though Ɔndieso climbed down for fear of mystical retribution, both he and others maintained that the tɛndaana had exceeded his rights. The land Ɔndieso's grandfather had been given was no longer a bush-farm. Ɔndieso's father's brother had been given leave to build on it and the homestead had stood there for two generations. This, they considered, gave Ɔndieso a title amounting to complete ownership of the land. Had his *ahəb* been an ordinary person and not a tɛndaana, whose ritual position gives his fulminations the force of a curse, Ɔndieso could have ignored his demand.

It has always been and still is a frequent practice for men to solicit a site for a homestead and a piece of land to make a home farm, from a matrilateral kinsman, if they wish to set up an independent homestead. As we have recorded in our earlier book, this is how many Tongo people have come to live at Zoo and this is how many immigrants into the peripheral settlements find sites for their homes.[1] We mentioned there that it is considered to be morally wrong to refuse such a request if one has land to spare.[2] The rules of tenure are the same as for a bush-farm borrowed from a matrilateral kinsman. But if the house site and home farm have been continuously occupied by the same nuclear lineage for two or three generations, their ownership is considered to be entire. Their title rests not only on the passage of the generations but on the fact that they have begun to bury their dead there and to transmit the land in accordance with the rules of inheritance. Indeed, Tallensi say that only the person who originally granted the land can really recover it. Even his immediate heir could not compel the recipient to surrender the land. The latter could, if he wished, refuse to go. He would invoke the common ancestors of his hosts and himself and this would be sufficient—unless he had committed some particularly heinous breach of kinship amity against his hosts. Pa'anbɔbis furnishes a case in point. Many years ago, owing to a quarrel with his older half-brother he went to build his homestead on a bush-farm he had borrowed from his matrilateral kinsman and clansman Mambaŋya. There he lived for perhaps twenty years. Then Mambaŋya asked him to relinquish the land. He said his sons were growing up and wanted more land to cultivate. So Pa'anbɔbis went back to his original home. Both men understood and admitted in private that Mambaŋya's story was a polite

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 161, 221.

[2] Ibid., p. 163.

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pretext. The point was that he did not wish this land to be lost to his sons altogether; and he therefore took the precaution of getting it back in his own lifetime.

If a man gives land over which he has full rights of disposal to his own sister's son, this amounts to an outright gift. The land belongs to the sister's son and his heirs in perpetuity. This is always explained by the jural fiction that the *ahəb* (identifying himself with his sister) has, like a father, bestowed a portion of his own land on 'his child'. When the *ahəb* dies the *ahəŋ* has the same rights in respect of the share of the patrimonial land allocated to him as the *ahəb*'s own sons have in respect of any shares he might have given them. It is an application of the rule that siblings are equals. Barimoda and Kpelimɛrəme both had farms given to them on these terms by their mothers' brothers and both said they would never part with their farms. Wherever a branch of one clan is found settled on land coming under the ritual jurisdiction of a neighbouring clan, the origin of the relationship is traced back to such a gift of land. Thus Nɔŋsuur yidem of Tongo occupy and own land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra Tɛndaana.[1] They ascribe their rights in their land and the fact that they are living on Zubiuŋ land to their founding ancestor's having been a true sister's son of the Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra Tɛndaana of his time. He was given a very large piece of land by the tɛndaana and came to live there. It is this land that his descendants now occupy.

The Status of an Ahəŋ as a Foster-child in his Ahəb's Family

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We have mentioned before that a boy who loses his own parents and cannot settle down with a proxy father sometimes goes to live with his mother's brother. A few cases of this sort are found in every settlement. As a rule the boy eventually goes back to his natal home to settle down there; occasionally he settles permanently in his mother's brother's settlement. In any case, he never loses touch with his natal home and never forfeits his rights and status in his own lineage and clan. He does not, as we know, become a member of the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*. This brings us back to the question of the jural relations of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*.

A boy who grows up in his mother's brother's household is treated exactly like a son and is indistinguishable from a son of the family, to the outsider. Thus it was many months before I discovered that Puvəlimra was not the Gbizug Tɛndaana's son but his sister's son. He was probably in his late twenties and had lived with the tɛndaana since boyhood. He continued to farm with the tɛndaana after the latter's oldest son had established his own household. He was, indeed, the tɛndaana's right-hand man, more trusted by him, in some ways, than

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 59.

604 his own sons. More surprising, Puvɔlimra was admitted to all the esoteric rites of the Earth cult and often represented the tɛndaana in
597 ritual activities. He was permitted to do this because he belonged to a lineage holding a tɛndaana-ship allied to that of Gbizug. Had he been a Namoo, he would have been excluded from all but the domestic religious rites of the tɛndaana.

He was a great favourite, too, with the tɛndaana's children. But one
604 of the sons once made a revealing comment on Puvɔlimra's position.
605 He spoke in a slightly patronizing tone, though not offensively so. 'Puvɔlimra', he said, 'is our child (*u a ti bii*). We like him to stay with us and we may not deny him anything. But one day he may decide to go home and we can't restrain him; or if he offends us we can tell him to go. He is not our person (as a member of the lineage is). However much the tɛndaana may like him he cannot inherit our ancestor shrines or our farms or our homestead. It is because he gets on so well with the tɛndaana that he stays.'

This comment is typical of conventional opinion on the position of
604 an *ahəŋ* in the family of his *ahəb*. Puvɔlimra himself, Gikoo-Duun, and
602 Bayana, three young men who either lived or had lived with their mothers' brothers, defined their position in exactly the same terms. It would be an offence against the ancestors to deny an *ahəŋ* a home, but he has none of the fundamental rights of a son; his position depends on the personal attachment to him, and concern for him, of his mother's brother. An *ahəŋ* in Puvɔlimra's position, it is sometimes suggested, is apt to be more compliant than a son, so as to ingratiate himself with his *ahəb*. He cannot make demands as of right, as a son may do. Said Gikoo-Duun: 'I was a small boy when I went to live with my *ahəb-soog* at Saamər (in Mampurugu). Later I went out on my own to build my homestead and farm for myself near him. It was not because of a quarrel. But my mother's brother will not take care of (i.e. take responsibility for) my affairs (*u ku maal n-yɛla*). He will not marry a wife for me. If he does give me one cow to help pay my wife's bride-price and we should some day quarrel, he will say I must pay it back. He is not of my people. My people are here at Zubiuŋ. Even though I am far away, they (the Zubiuŋ people) will look after my affairs. If I were to die to-day they would make my funeral and inherit my things. Do you not see that I come here (to Zubiuŋ) regularly to sacrifice to my ancestors?'

As we know, one of the major jural responsibilities of a father for his son is in marriage affairs. Hence the fact that a sister's son has no claim, as of right, on his mother's brother's assistance in this important matter is a good test of their jural relations. Puvɔlimra's marriage created the first rift between him and his mother's brother. The marriage was beset with difficulties. The girl's father feared that he would never get the bride-price as Puvɔlimra's proxy father was a blind old man who lived

on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tendaana 604
refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvəlimra
succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the 602
girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at
Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made
to the head of Puvəlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it
to Puvəlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it.
It was then that the Gbizug Tendaana made Puvəlimra a present of a
bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over
to Puvəlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time
being; but that dry season Puvəlimra went, for the first time in his life,
to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull
to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for 597
the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his
foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopting 602
the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb*. It is as if his mother's
bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a
son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son.
And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the
care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors
instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of
inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the
clan settlement of his *ahəb*. He retains only ritual ties with his paternal
clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded
in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*. At Gbeog, for instance,
there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a
Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled
there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual
matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos
and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families
their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral.
When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen
in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite
possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage
of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not 602
forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care 613
of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For
example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day 577
killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own
nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home
to his *ahəb*. The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent
segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's
'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share
is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriage-
able age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people
before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of
an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly,
183 they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great 622 lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tɛndaana. In 183 addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahəŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office.

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an 425 *ahəŋ* or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a particular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in 622 former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yɛa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tɛnzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahəŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman.

Certain powers normally held by tɛndaanas only are sometimes vested 793 in lineages that do not have tɛndaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo 604 Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyɛbəg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahəŋ* of the tɛndaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tɛndaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors.

The Ahəŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahəŋ* forms a link between his father's 604 lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahəŋ* is always chosen 584 as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

604 *pɔɣasama*. As has been previously stated, he is a clansman of the
bridegroom who is also an *ahəŋ* of the bride's clan—*ahəŋ* being under-
584 stood to include any sororal kinsman of whatever degree. The reason
for this choice was well put by a group of elders with whom I discussed this subject. 'He (the *pɔɣasama*) is our (the bridegroom's clan's) person and is also their (the bride's clan's) person. He may not deceive us nor may he deceive them. If he deceives either of us the ancestors will not permit it.'[1]

The *pɔɣasama* appears in every transaction between the two parties
604 to a marriage. He takes the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) to the bride's
584 father. When, later, the bride's father sends messengers (*duondɛm*) to
demand the bride-price, the *pɔɣasama* conducts them to the person
764 responsible for paying the bride-price and assists in the negotiations.
Many a marriage is saved by the skill and patience of a *pɔɣasama* in persuading the bride's people and the bridegroom's people to a compromise on the question of bride-price payments. He must be present whenever bride-price payments are made; for if, at any subsequent time, a dispute should arise as to what was paid, his word is final. The *pɔɣasama* also acts as intermediary in all the formal claims, services, and duties that arise between the parties as a result of the marriage. He is the messenger who goes to announce the birth of her first child to the bride's parents. If a woman's father or mother dies, the *pɔɣasama* conducts the party sent by her husband with his obligatory food contributions to the funeral, and he hands these contributions over to his 'mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*)'. In this and similar jural or ritual relations between the husband's people and the wife's people, the *pɔɣasama* has to be present both as a witness of the transaction and as a mediator, in case the recipients object to the quantity or quality of the food contributions or the payments offered. For though the obligations of the parties in such situations are clearly defined by custom, there is room for much quibbling over details. Custom declares that a man must kill and cook a goat or a sheep to send to his father-in-law's funeral at a certain stage. But one man will, out of generosity or as a special sign of respect, kill a large goat, whereas another will be mean and choose a puny animal. I have seen violent arguments arise between a son-in-law's messengers and his late father-in-law's lineage over a point of this sort. The mere presence of the *pɔɣasama*, even if he is but a young lad, has a conciliatory influence. As will be remembered, the *pɔɣasama*'s role does not come to an end on his death. It passes to his brothers and sons, like any other attribute of his social personality.

604 There are other situations in which an *ahəŋ* acts as intermediary
between the members of his paternal clan and his matrilateral clan. For
778 example, the setting up of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine for a man is done

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[1] *'U a tam nit ka le a bam nit; u ku too m-paah tam, u ku too m-paah bam-mi; ɔn paah ti sɔ kpiinam la ku sayi.'*

for him by the lineage of the ancestress who has demanded the erection 604
of the shrine. The diviner-to-be is himself a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' or 778
'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' of the men who come to perform the ceremony of
establishing the shrine. But in addition, a member of his clan who is
also an *ahəŋ* of the visitors' clan is deputed to act as intermediary. He
goes out to meet the visitors when they approach and escorts them to
the homestead of the diviner-to-be; and he acts as spokesman for the
latter throughout the ceremony. Thus he formally 'shows' (*paal*) the
visitors the beer and the fowls and the goat that have been provided for
the ceremony and acts as mediator if there is a disagreement about the
amount or quality of these provisions. In the ritual situations that make
up the ceremony the visitors sit together in a group and the diviner-to-be
and his clansmen sit together in a group. Between the two groups sits
the selected *ahəŋ*. As is customary in all such situations, the two parties
do not address one another directly. They address the intermediary,
who 'passes on (*zaŋ ti*)' what was said to the other party.

Similarly, if a dispute occurs between segments of different clans, for 604
instance over the abduction of a wife, the injured group might send one
of their members who is a 'sister's son' of the abductor's clan, with a 627 ✓
message of protest and a demand for the return of the wife. An *ahəŋ* is
the appropriate person to act as go-between in negotiations between
different clans. In the system of clanship ties, it will be remembered,
intercalary lineages are sometimes credited with being the agnates of
one clan and the 'sister's sons' of the other.[1]

As has been suggested, Tallensi maintain that an *ahəŋ* acting as an 604
intermediary in inter-clan transactions is bound to be equally faithful to
both parties. This does not mean that an *ahəŋ* is always equally loyal in 613
sentiment to both his patrilineal and his matrilateral—especially his
immediate maternal—kin. Tallensi say that when there is a clash of
interests a man will always side with his patrilineal kin while endeavouring,
if possible, to refrain from bringing harm on his maternal kin. The
behaviour of an *ahəŋ* in war between his and his mother's brother's clan
is a case in point.

But there is a belief which suggests that the loyalty of an *ahəŋ* to his 604
mother's brother's lineage may, in some circumstances, outweigh his
loyalty to his own clan. In the old days of warfare, it is said, if a man 613
was killed in fighting, there was a way of taking vengeance on the slayer
by means of sorcery. The arrow that slew the victim was extracted, and 754
the clan and lineage of the slayer were ascertained. This was easy.
Every inner or medial lineage of a clan usually has a distinctive mark
(*daan*). One lineage, for example, may tie a tiny guinea-fowl feather at
the base of the arrow-head, another may use a particular species of
grass. By inquiring from their sororal kinsmen in the enemy clan the
victim's lineage brothers soon discovered which lineage the slayer

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 44 ff.

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belonged to and who he was. The method of sorcery was to dip this 'evil arrow (*peembier*)' secretly into some food or drink the slayer was about to take. If this was done he would die. The problem then was to find someone who would carry out this task. It could not be done by any of the victim's clansmen since it required intimate contact with the slayer's family.

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If there was a daughter of the victim's clan, or better still, inner lineage married to a member of the slayer's inner lineage, she might be persuaded to do it. Such an action would be a grave sin, for which the woman's husband's ancestors would punish her with death. But sometimes women hate their husbands so much in their hearts, Tallensi say, that they will risk anything to injure them and their clan. And if the dead man was a close agnate of the woman, she might put vengeance for his death above her duty to her husband's clan. Alternatively, an *ahəŋ* of the victim's inner lineage or clan, who is a member of the slayer's inner lineage or clan, might be persuaded to undertake the commission. Only a man who had a deep grudge against the slayer would undertake so wicked an action for which the clan ancestors would certainly punish him with death. But enmity between clansmen, even between brothers of the same inner lineage, is not unknown; and as Tallensi often assert, the belief that the ancestors may punish an action with death does not always restrain an unscrupulous man. Whether or not this act of sorcery was ever carried out I cannot tell. It is impossible to obtain verifiable information on a point of this sort. But what is of interest is the belief itself. Assuming that it is founded on fantasy, it still suggests that the loyalties of an *ahəŋ* are felt to be more evenly divided than is conventionally admitted.

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There is other evidence for this view. The Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu earned the hostility of most of the maximal lineage and clan heads of the Tongo district by his high-handed drive to aggrandize himself.[1] In public his opponents had the support of practically all their clan or lineage elders. But amongst them there were, in every clan, one or two private sympathizers of the Gɔlibdaana. The usual explanation was that these men were 'sisters' sons' or 'grandsons' of his inner lineage or clan. One of the Chief of Tongo's most trusted and devoted elders used to visit the Gɔlibdaana regularly. Another elder of the chief pointed out to me, in explanation, that the first was an *ahəŋ* of the Gɔlibdaana's inner lineage. He quoted several other men who were *ahəs* of the Gɔlibdaana's inner lineage and maintained close contact with him. It was through them, he added, that the Gɔlibdaana kept himself so well informed of everything that happened at Tongo, even of matters that should not be known outside the chief's family. He admitted that the Chief of Tongo probably had similar contacts with the Gɔlibdaana's faction and kept himself informed of the Gɔlibdaana's activities in the same way.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 251 ff.

The Ritual Relations of Matrilateral and Sororal Kin

We have previously observed that the distinguishing attribute of an 604 *ahəb* in Tale thought is that he sacrifices on behalf of his *ahəŋ*; and *ahəŋ* in this context includes all sororal kin, both those who are strictly *ahəs* 602 and those who are strictly *yaas*. This is an indication of the importance attached to the ritual relations of extra-clan kin.

As with all the social relations of mother's brother and sister's son, their ritual relations vary in frequency and degree according to their genealogical distance. Thus a male *ahəŋ* is obliged to send a ready cooked fowl to be 'set out (*zien*)' in commemoration of his *ahəb* when the latter's funeral is being celebrated. A child of 3 or 4 will have the fowl sent in his name by his parents; a man of substance might, as a special gesture of affection and respect, send a sheep instead of a fowl. No *ahəŋ* would fail in this duty where his true mother's brother is concerned. I have known men who were small children when a mother's brother died, and whose parents omitted to send fowls to the funeral in their name, make up for it years later on the occasion of a funeral in the family of their *ahəb*. Not infrequently, men will voluntarily send a fowl or a sheep as a tribute to the funeral of a father's mother's brother. But it is exceptional for such a tribute to be offered at the funeral of a more remote 'mother's brother'.

When a man sacrifices to an ancestor spirit, any descendant of that 602 ancestor has the right to be present and to share in the sacrament. The only exceptions are the cult of the clan or maximal lineage *bɔɣar* and, 604 among the real Talis, the cult of the Earth and of the External *Bɔɣar*. 769 It would be incompatible with the functions of these cults as foci of social integration on the highest level of corporate structure to allow non-members of the lineage concerned to take part in them. But an *ahəŋ* may attend domestic sacrifices to any of his matrilateral ancestors and sacrifices to the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔɣar*) of the lineage of his true or classificatory mother's brother.

If a man proposes to make a sacrifice to one of his immediate antecedents (say, his father or grandfather), and if he is going to sacrifice anything larger than a fowl or guinea-fowl (say, a goat or a sheep or a cow), he is in duty bound to inform his sisters. He is not bound to tell his deceased sister's sons, but he generally does so, particularly if it is so important a sacrifice as a cow. A cow is seldom sacrificed to a shrine of lesser standing than a lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence when such a sacrifice is planned, the man who is making it should, in theory, inform all the sororal descendants of the lineage. He does not actually do so; he informs his own sisters' sons and his father's sisters' sons and leaves it to the other members of the lineage (who will, of course, automatically be present) to inform their close *ahəs* if they wish to. But news of such a sacrifice travels fast owing to the complex interweaving of kinship ties,

602 604 769 [764] and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance. It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are informed, distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

604 782 An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bɔɣar*, there are always *ahəs* present; perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

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[778 769] [1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

ahəs, representing perhaps five or six clans, over the division of the 604 cow's neck amongst themselves. It is on such occasions that the *ahəs* 782 divide into two groups, the *dugni ahəs*, who are sisters' sons of the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony, and the *yɛŋha* (outside) *ahəs*, whose matrilateral links are with other segments of the clan. Etiquette dictates that the choicest and largest part of the meat apportioned to the *ahəs* should be given to the 'outside *ahəs*'. The *dugni ahəs*, it is argued, have many more opportunities of attending ceremonies of this inner lineage and receiving their shares of the sacrificial meat.

There are certain ceremonial occasions on which sisters' children of 604 all degrees usually turn up in large numbers.[1] They include not only *ahəs* of the lineage immediately responsible for the ceremony but also 764 remote *ahəs* and 'grandsons (*yaas*)' of the clan. The death of a senior elder or of the holder of a politico-ritual office brings 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' from a wide range to the funeral. They are present at all stages of the funeral, but the largest number usually come on the day of the burial, on the day the funeral proper (as opposed to the burial rites) commences, and on the two occasions when a diviner is consulted to ascertain the mystical author of the death. These are all occasions when animals are slaughtered as offerings and tributes to the dead, or else food or beer is used in the rites and shared amongst all present. The meat and the drink form a big attraction to all who have kinship ties with the lineage celebrating the funeral. It is no mean attraction either, considering that at a big funeral, such as that of the head of a section (*yizug*) of a clan or of a maximal lineage, two or three big beasts (cows and donkeys) and from twenty to forty small stock (sheep and goats) will be slaughtered, not to speak of innumerable fowls. In addition there will be great quantities of porridge and other cooked food. And *ahəs* have prescribed shares of all these items. Similar prodigality is shown in the brewing of beer for a big funeral.

But greed is far from being the chief motive that brings matrilateral and sororal kin to an important funeral. The profusion of food and beer—both of which are distributed only on specific ritual occasions—serves chiefly to create and maintain the right atmosphere of pride and kinship amity. For it must be remembered that most of the 'sisters' sons' will bring a gift, if it is only a meagre chicken and a small basket of grain; and if there are twenty or thirty 'sisters' sons' present the share of meat and beer each will receive is of less value than the things 604 he brings. 764

A 'sister's son' or a 'grandson', like everybody else who attends such 571

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[1] As these ceremonies are almost always conducted by men and belong to the ritual and jural spheres of activity dominated by the men, the *ahəs* who come are principally males; but often one or two female *ahəs* come as well. The neck of the animal sacrificed belongs in theory to the *ahəs* of both sexes, but I have never seen it given to a woman.

604 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The
764 funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public
571 interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally
571 taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage
602 head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of
782 the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls, but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly
793 appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan
602 kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'
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and 'grandsons'. There is another, and in some ways more important, 604
aspect. Every man sacrifices to both his agnatic ancestors and his
maternal ancestors, as we have seen. He has shrines consecrated to 769
ancestors of both lines in his homestead. The ancestors who constitute
his *Yin* are very often matrilateral or include matrilateral ancestors. 778
Indeed this is so common that a *Yin* that has no matrilateral ancestors is somewhat unusual. Knowing the significance of the *Yin* shrine as a symbol of a man's individuality, we can see why his connexion with his mother's side is apt to be stressed in it. Again, every man erects a shrine to his mother when she dies, which in the course of time may develop into a very important shrine for him. There are other shrines, too, which are consecrated to matrilateral ancestors. The most important of these are divining shrines (*bakologo*) and *bɔɣar* shrines.

A *bakologo* shrine is, by definition, a 'female (*bumpɔk*)' shrine. That 778
is to say, the ancestors associated with it come, by definition, from a
matrilateral lineage of the diviner; and the dominant figure among them 781
is usually a woman, a 'mother'. It is a point of striking significance in
the social psychology of the Tallensi that the spirits through whom a 769
diviner makes contact with the ancestors of his clients should constitute a 'feminine' group,[1] the more so when the character of the *bakologo* complex is understood. The *bakologo*[2] is the very incarnation of the vindictive and jealous aspect of the ancestors. It persecutes the man in whose life it has intervened relentlessly, until he finally submits and 'accepts (*die*)' it—that is, until he undertakes to set up a shrine to the *bakologo* spirits in his own home so that he can sacrifice to them regularly. He then promises, also, to use the shrine for divining. But not every man has a talent for divining, so most men simply have the shrine and do not use it for divination. It is interesting to note that nine out of ten men over 40 have *bakologo* shrines. Every man, and not only those who have suffered exceptional misfortunes, is directed by the religious system of the Tallensi to project his deeper feelings of guilt and insecurity largely on to the mother image embodied in the *bakologo* complex. Usually, also, a man does not immediately yield to the demands of the *bakologo* ancestors. He temporizes, evades, and resists, perhaps for years, until he is at last forced to submit and accept the *bakologo*. This 'cools (*maa*)' or subdues the *bakologo*. By giving the spirits a home in his own house, where they can be cared for, their victim transforms their hate into love. They may still inflict misfortunes on him, but he has a means of placating them since he can sacrifice to the shrine. In return for the sacrifices they

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[1] Cf. what was said on p. 235 above about the cruelty attributed to female ancestor spirits.

[2] As with all religious terms of this class among the Tallensi, *bakologo* is used both for the shrine (*baɣər*)—the tall, conical object built of mud and smeared with the dried blood and feathers of sacrifices—and for the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated. It signifies also the whole configuration of ideas and beliefs associated with the shrine.

778 will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And
787 if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his bene-
769 factress. The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing menace.

613 As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the domi-
769 nant ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo*
778 ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather, and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the
791 group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔɣar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahəŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔɣar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔɣar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔɣar* is tangibly symbolized.

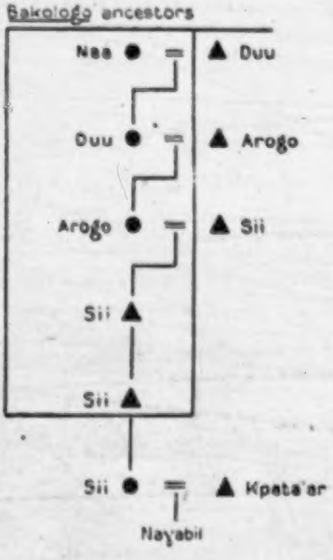
Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahəŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahəs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

769 The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's
602 father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

lineage, and thence he was escorted to his maternal grandfather's mother's mother's brother's lineage. At each place he had to sacrifice a fowl and a guinea-fowl to the lineage *bɔγar*. Naγabil's *bakologo* ancestors were his mother's father, *his* father, *his* mother, *her* mother, and *her* mother. Zɔŋ knew of the ancestress who was the dominant figure in his *bakologo*. He had been to Gbambee to attend sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* as an *ahəŋ*, both as a child, accompanying his father, and as an adult by himself. Naabdiya and Naγabil had never heard of the ancestresses who dominated their *bakologo* shrines before they revealed themselves as *bakologo* ancestresses. They had never before been to the natal clan settlements of these women; and once their divining shrines were established would probably never go there again. 769 602

One reason for this difference is spatial proximity. Zɔŋ lives about three miles from the Gbambee Tɛndaana; the matrilateral kinsmen who set up Naabdiya's shrine live about twelve miles from him, and those who set up Naγabil's shrine nearly fifteen miles from his clan settlement. But more important is the genealogical distance involved. Zɔŋ is considered to be a fairly close *ahəŋ* of the Gbambee Tɛndaana, Naabdiya and Naγabil count themselves distant 'grandsons' (*yaas*) of the matrilateral kinsmen who thus almost accidentally became socially relevant for them.[1]

Though matrilateral ancestors are particularly conspicuous in connexion with the *bakologo* complex, they can be associated with many types of ancestor shrines. Hence few men pass through life without having at least one such experience as that of Naabdiya and Naγabil. Tiezien, for instance, had a magnificent baobab tree outside the entrance to his homestead. It was a stalwart sapling when Tiezien was born and 602 769 778



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[1] Naγabil is a Kpata'ar man, and the matrilateral kinsmen who came to set up his *bakologo* were not Tallensi but Mamprusi from beyond the White Volta. This is an interesting illustration of how extra-clan kinship in this part of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast cuts across 'tribal' and political boundaries. As the attached genealogy, showing Naγabil's genealogical connexion with his *bakologo* ancestors and ancestresses, indicates, it is also a beautiful illustration of how matrilateral kinship 'travels' (*kyɛŋ*) through intermarriage between adjacent clans. The result is that genealogical distance by matrilateral ties is closely correlated with socio-geographical distance, as in this instance.

602 could not have been less than 80 years old. This tree was the centre of
769 the communal life of the neighbourhood. It was, as every native would
automatically expect, also an important ancestor shrine. A few years after
778 it sprouted Tiezien's paternal grandfather discovered through a diviner
that his mother's father and *his* mother, a Pusunamoo woman, had
chosen the baobab as their shrine. The Pusunamoo woman's maximal
lineage consecrated it for Tiezien's grandfather. Thereafter sacrifices
were regularly offered on the tree. In due course Tiezien succeeded to
[164] the custody of this shrine. Then came the influenza epidemic of 1918.
Many people died at Kpata'ar, including members of Tiezien's inner
lineage and wives and children of the lineage. A diviner revealed that
these deaths were being inflicted by the Pusunamoo ancestress in retaliation
for long neglect. She demanded that Tiezien should collect a large
number of fowls from all the members of his inner lineage and take them
to Pusunamoo to be sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* of her medial lineage
as an atonement. This was Tiezien's first and last contact with his
matrilateral kin at Pusunamoo up to 1936.

602 It is evident, from these examples, as has been previously suggested,
that the majority of a man's remote matrilateral kin are not socially
relevant for him. All, however, are potentially so and may become
so at some time or another; and when they do enter his field of social
relations it is chiefly in their ritual capacity.

We said that the most important ancestor shrines linking a man to a
602 matrilateral lineage are *bakologo* and *bɔɣar* shrines. Of the two the *bɔɣar*
778 shrine is, in fact, the more important. As we have shown in our earlier
769 book,[1] the ancestor cult of the Tallensi culminates in the conception and
cult of the *bɔɣar*. This notion and the cult that expresses it form the
centre of gravity of the lineage system. Hence it seems strange, at first
sight, to find that every *bɔɣar* must necessarily be derived from a matrilateral
lineage. We can understand this, however, if we consider the
significance of the *bɔɣar* in the lineage system.

A *bɔɣar* is the shrine consecrated to the founding ancestor of a lineage
602 and his mother. It symbolizes the identity of that lineage and its differentiation
778 from other lineages of the same order within a more inclusive
769 lineage or within a clan. A lineage expands by a process of internal
segmentation and differentiation that follows the lines of cleavage inherent
613 in the structure of the joint family.[2] The component segments
of a lineage are differentiated from one another primarily by reference
to their descent from different 'mothers'—that is different wives of their
common founding ancestor. But a woman does not sever her ties with
her lineage when she marries and becomes a mother; and in kinship
questions Tale thought is dominated by the lineage concept. Hence
Tallensi think of a lineage progenitrix not only as such-and-such a

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 137.

[2] Ibid. ch. xii.

named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such 602
a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a 778
maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of 769
the several 'mothers' of its segments.

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it re- 613
quires a *bɔɣar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔɣar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔɣar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔɣar* symbolizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔɣar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the signi- 602
ficance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. 613
According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by
divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The 766
physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person [761]
may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ninvoo*)'—that is a full social being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

602 he does not join his forefathers, he does not become an ancestor spirit.
613 This shows that it is not the fact of death that turns a person into an
766 ancestor spirit but the fact that, as Tallensi believe, he is summoned
(*buol*) by his ancestors and goes to join them.

Thus when a lineage progenitrix becomes an ancestor spirit, she does
769 so as the bearer of mystical powers and attributes that reside in the
613 collective body of her lineage ancestors, symbolized and made accessible
to man in their lineage *bɔyar*. Looked at in this way, too, the *bɔyar*
consecrated to her and her son must be an offshoot of her lineage *bɔyar*.[1]

In addition, there is the obvious point that a segment of a lineage
778 cannot symbolize its distinctness by means of a *bɔyar* derived from their
613 own lineage *bɔyar*, which is the symbol of the genealogical and social
unity of the lineage, not of its internal differentiation. The lineage *bɔyar*, as is evident, is the most esoteric symbol of the principle that runs right through Tale social structure, that social differentiation within the lineage framework springs from maternal origin. This principle operates in lineage structure;[2] and we have seen how, at the other end of the scale, it constitutes the springboard of individual differentiation in the structure of the joint family.[3] This is a further instance of the consistency of Tale social structure at all levels conferred upon it by the kinship system.

A new segment of a lineage begins to crystallize out as a recognized corporate unit in the time of its founding ancestor's grandsons. For it is not until then that the process of fission in the lineage has gone far enough to separate his grandchildren and his brothers' grandchildren into distinct nuclear lineages. Thus it is a man's grandson or great-grandson who sets up a *bɔyar* consecrated to him and his mother. According to the idiom of Tale religious thought, the ancestor demands that a *bɔyar* be set up for him and his mother. [illegible]ay is appointed for the ceremony, and all the descendants of the progenitrix, through both males and females, are informed. In the morning or early afternoon the head of the new segment takes a fowl, a goat or sheep, and a pot of beer to the head of his grandmother's inner lineage, or in some clans, medial lineage. The men of that lineage assemble so that all of its branches are represented and the animals are sacrificed to the lineage *bɔyar* on behalf of the *ahəŋ*. Then the *bɔyar* is 'scooped' for him, in the same way as was described in the case of the diviner's shrine. The *ahəŋ* goes straight

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[1] In theory, obviously, the only lineage *bɔyar* that need not be derived from another *bɔyar* is the *bɔyar* of a maximal lineage. Actually most maximal lineage *bɔya* conform to the pattern we have described. The only truly sovereign *bɔya*—i.e. *bɔya* not derived from other *bɔya*—are the External *Bɔya* of the Talis and their congeners. And it is significant that the component maximal lineages of these clans generally have two *bɔya*, one the domestic representative of the External *Bɔyar*, the other a distinctive *bɔyar* derived from their founder's mother's lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

[2] Ibid., ch. xii.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. III.

home, where in the meantime the other members, both men and women, of the new segment and the 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the segment who have been able to come have gathered. The head of the new segment arrives, followed, as the Tallensi think, by the spirits of his grandmother's ancestors. He now performs the sacrifices by which the new *bɔɣar* is consecrated. He himself offers a sheep. All the other male members of the new segment bring a fowl each to be sacrificed on their behalf and *ahɔs* and *yaas* all do so too. A large pot or earthenware dish, inside which the small pot containing the sediment 'scooped' from the grandmother's lineage *bɔɣar* pot is placed, forms the altar. Henceforth this will be the *bɔɣar* of the new lineage segment; and there will be a similar communion rite embracing all the descendants of the founding ancestor and his mother whenever the *bɔɣar* is inherited by a new lineage head.[1] 778 613

We have now considered the most important ritual services matrilateral kin render to their sororal kin. The ritual services rendered by sororal kin to matrilateral kin are, as might be expected, of far less consequence. In funeral ceremonies, for example, there are a number of rites in which it is necessary to have the participation of an *ahɔŋ* of the deceased. The rite of cooking 'the porridge of sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', which has been previously mentioned, is typical of these rites; and it is typical of them, also, that anybody who can, by any stretch of the term, be described as *ahɔŋ* can serve in them. All these rites express the fact that a person's death is of concern to his or her sororal kin as well as to his or her patrilineal kin, and affects the field of social relations of the former as well as that of the latter. Hence in all funeral rites a special portion of the meat, cooked food, and beer used is allocated to the 'sisters' children', whether few or many are present. Matrilateral and sororal kin do not, however, undergo mourning rites. 602 764

Apart from funerals, there are one or two other special ceremonies in which the services of an *ahɔŋ* are needed. Thus in the ceremony of exorcising an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) an *ahɔŋ* is required to perform the final act of sympathetic magic. This consists in collecting the magical paraphernalia used in the ceremony—all of which symbolize the wish that the evil Predestiny may depart and conceal itself for ever—and throwing them away in some barren spot. A 'sister's son' is called upon 602 789

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[1] There is a point of religious doctrine that cannot be fully discussed here but must be mentioned to avoid confusion. Every important ancestor shrine is a means of making a whole line of ancestors accessible to its possessor. Now the collective mystical power of a patrilineal line of ancestors reposes in the lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence every important shrine has to be linked up with the lineage *bɔɣar* of the dominant spirit to which it is consecrated. That is why when a *bakologo* is set up, the *bɔɣar* of the matrilateral lineage from which it is derived is 'scooped' for inclusion in the new shrine. Broadly speaking, the ritual validity of every ancestor shrine goes back to a *bɔɣar*. But the setting up of a new lineage *bɔɣar* is a very special ritual landmark.

602 to do this service because, as a kinsman of the sufferer, he naturally wishes to see him free of his evil fate. He is held to desire this the more
789 strongly because his *ahəb* sacrifices on his behalf. Hence his welfare depends on the continued life and the perpetuation of the lineage of the *ahəb*, both of which are threatened by the evil Predestiny. Lastly, he is specially suitable because a complete stranger might use the opportunity to do the sufferer magical harm, while a patrilineal kinsman of his might be contaminated by the evil Predestiny. Again, anybody who can be identified as an *ahəŋ*, in however remote a classificatory sense, may be asked to perform this service.

The Father's Sister

604 We have left the discussion of the relationship of father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) and brother's child (*bii*) for this chapter, although it is not a relationship of extra-clan kinship. Father's sister and brother's child are members of the same clan and lineage. But Tallensi associate the father's sister with relatives outside the clan. This is due to her marrying out of the
[428] clan, to her having no significant public voice in the affairs of the lineage, and to her being unable to inherit lineage property or ancestor shrines.[1] Thus a native usually compares his relationship with his father's sister to his relationship with his mother's brother, not to his relationship with his parents. It is thought of more as the opposite of the relationship between sister's son and mother's brother than as an item in the scheme of intra-familial or intra-lineage relationships.

As in the case of mother's brother and sister's child, the bond between father's sister and brother's child tends to be more effective for brother's sons than for brother's daughters. In the case of the brother's sons it is reinforced by the ties a woman has with her paternal lineage and by the ties her children have with their mother's brother and his sons. In the case of brother's daughters, it is attenuated because the daughters tend to be dispersed by marriage and their relationship with their father's sister is much more a purely personal affair.

Compared with the mother's brother, the father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) counts for little in the web of extra-clan kinship. Tallensi say this is because she is a woman. 'It is not she who sacrifices for you but you (her brother's son) may one day sacrifice on her behalf.' At the same time they declare that 'she is your father'. I have several times had an old woman introduced to me by a man or a woman as 'my father'. Eŋwala, explaining her affection for her full brother's son, Anaaho, said in the stock phraseology, 'Is he not my child? If you and your brother together have a child, is he not also your child [as much as your brother's]?

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[1] Except, as has been mentioned before if she is the last surviving member of the lineage. Even then she does not inherit the ancestor shrines but merely sacrifices to them, as if she were acting on behalf of her deceased father. She can never inherit lineage land.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604
will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked
why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each
other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577
when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head 302
shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, 789]
Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power
of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely,
withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having
done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage.
But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to
his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the
jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency
is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother
and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604
rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574
principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a 764
woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party
of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws.
The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman
calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these
young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young
men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the
girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the
young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the
visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl [431]
who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit.
Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers
of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in
the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is
giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this
declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody
knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604
her father without having previously arranged to go to another man,
she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, 586
under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587
She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any
case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that
she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for
some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though
courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of
another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself
with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

604 586 587 which a father would never do. In theory, this means that the *ba-pɔk* consents to the new marriage. In practice, her action has no binding force on her brother. This rule applies also to an unmarried girl who is given in marriage by her *ba-pɔk*. A woman might have one of her brother's daughters living with her as a nursemaid for her baby. She might promise the girl as a wife to one of her husband's brothers. But her brother need not consider himself bound by this promise if he has objections to the marriage.

604 571 A father's sister is, in short, a kind of female 'father', but without the jural and ritual attributes of fatherhood. A father's sister must be treated with respect. It would be grossly improper, for example, to joke with her as one jokes with a wife's sister; and to strike or abuse her, even if she were much younger than oneself, would be a sin. But the respect accorded to her is only a pale reflection of the attitude implicit in filial piety. It is much more a matter of etiquette than of emotion, as if it were merely conventional and not evoked by a feeling of moral obligation.

604 A marked characteristic of a person's relations with his or her father's sister is the absence of specific mutual obligations. Just as a *ba-pɔk* has in reality no rights over her brother's children, so she has no specific duties of either a ritual or a secular kind towards them, or they to her. This is the chief contrast between this relationship and that of parent and child or that of mother's brother and sister's child. Only a shadow of a ritual sanction comes into the relationship, in the form of the belief that the curse of a *ba-pɔk* can harm her brother's child, and in the notion that she stands under the protection of the same ancestors as the latter. Hence, though she cannot demand services from her brother's child, it is felt that a request for help from her should be met, even at the cost of
[789] some inconvenience. If a person offends his father's sister and she reproaches him saying, 'I bore you (identifying herself with her brother) and this is how you treat me. My ancestors have seen it, my fathers have seen it (*Man dɔyi la k-i ɛŋəm là ŋwala; n-yaanam nyeya, m-banam nyeya*)', this has the force of a curse because she is invoking her ancestors who are also his ancestors. Such a curse would disturb a native, but not nearly so deeply as a father's curse or if a mother's brother refused to sacrifice on his behalf.

Because their relationship is devoid of a definite jural coefficient and is not subject to organized ritual sanctions; because, also, a father's sister stands outside the scheme of economic and domestic associations in which the relationship of parent and child is set, the relations of father's sister and brother's child are free of the undercurrent of tension found in those of father and child. A woman's bonds with her brother's children are fundamentally bonds of sentiment. That is why they seldom endure beyond one generation, or extend beyond the nuclear lineage.

The personal relations of father's sister and brother's child have much

in common with those of mother's brother and sister's child. They are similarly influenced by the closeness of the sibling tie between the brother and the sister, as is to be expected. There is this difference, however, that the contacts between *ba-pɔk* and brother's child are chiefly maintained by the *ba-pɔk*'s visits to her parental home, and not by the brother's child's being taken, or going on visits to her. They are largely a by-product of the woman's contacts with her parental home, and they diminish as she grows older. A man has no occasion to visit his *ba-pɔk* regularly, and a woman is apt to do so only if she lives near her. Opportunity and disposition count for more than in the personal relations of true mother's brother and sister's child. Thus a *ba-pɔk* sometimes has a brother's child to live with her, but this is rarer than for children to stay with an *ahɔb*, and there is usually a utilitarian motive on the side of the *ba-pɔk*. Ɔmara's sister had their late brother's two sons staying with her for two or three years each, in succession. She had them to stay with her so that they could look after her son's horse, and they went home again as soon as they were big enough to farm. If a girl stays with a *ba-pɔk* it is almost always as a nursemaid to her baby. A boy does not go to live with a *ba-pɔk* and grow up in her household, as he might with an *ahɔb*. There is an obvious reason for all this. A *ba-pɔk* does not 'own' her household as an *ahɔb* does. She cannot have her brother's child living with her except with her husband's consent; and though he would, out of consideration for her, not withhold his consent, he might demur against the burden of supporting another man's child, who is no kin of his, for a long time. A woman cannot give her brother's son a place in the household economy as an *ahɔb* can to his sister's son. 604

With these limitations, the personal relations of father's sister and brother's child are often extremely cordial. Anaaho was a constant visitor to his father's sister's house when he was working near where she lived. He often went there for meals and sought her advice about his affairs. Da'amo'o was welcomed with open arms by his *ba-pɔk* when he travelled with me to her husband's clan settlement. She gave him some presents for his wife who had just had a baby and got permission from her husband for him to take away a large log of a tree that had fallen down near their homestead. A *ba-pɔk* shows her interest in her brother's children by giving or sending them gifts. A person visiting his or her *ba-pɔk* seldom leaves without some such token of her interest and affection. It may be a chicken or a few pence for a nephew, or a basket of shea nuts, a dish of dried vegetables, or a new back-flap to wear at the next festival dance for a niece. The death of her brother's child, especially of a young adult son or daughter, is often a great shock to a *ba-pɔk*. A *ba-pɔk*'s death, on the other hand, seldom grieves her brother's children as much as the death of a favourite *ahɔb*, and they have no formal obligations to attend the funeral with prescribed gifts, or to undergo mourning rites other than the head-shaving of the eldest son. 604 431

604 Our discussion has been concerned with the relationship of a person to his or her own father's sister, and we have noted that the bonds of sentiment between father's sister and brother's child seldom extend beyond the nuclear lineage of the latter. A person recognizes the sister of any man in the inner lineage or medial lineage whom he calls 'father' as his *ba-pɔk.* But whereas a woman has a strong personal interest in and often affection for her full or half-brother's children, and generally also takes a personal interest in her father's brothers' sons' children, the tendency is for the relationship to become more formal beyond that range. This is largely due to the fact that contacts between a woman and the children of her distant brothers of the same inner or medial lineage are usually rare, as compared with her contacts with children of her own nuclear lineage. But the appropriate norms of behaviour hold to the limits of the range of recognized generation differences and may be evoked in suitable circumstances. Beyond the range of the inner, or at most medial lineage, a woman of a person's father's generation is not recognized as a *ba-pɔk*, but is described as a 'sister' (*tau*) and thus classed with all the non-specifically related clanswomen.

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604 A woman calls her brothers' children's children her grandchildren (*yaas*), and she may be very fond of them, if she has opportunities of seeing them often. Gɛlima, a childless old widow who had come to live out the last few years of her life at her oldest brother's house, was often teased good-humouredly by her brothers and brothers' sons because of her attachment to the latter's small children. In theory the joking relationship holds for grandchild and grandfather's sister. In practice it is modified by the tendency to class together father's sisters and agnatic grandfather's sisters, who are usually described by the term *ba-pɔk* or its equivalent *pugərəba*. A person identifies himself (or herself) with his father in relation to the latter's father's sister, not only on account of the dominance of the lineage principle, but also, and mainly, because he does so in relation to the woman's husband and children. He thinks of the woman's husband as an 'in-law (*deema*)' and of her children as *ahəs*. And this is facilitated by residential separation and the identification of an old woman with the affairs and interests of her husband's lineage and clan. Thus cases like that of Gɛlima are the exception. The majority of old women see so little of their brothers' grandchildren that their relationship with them is purely formal and perfunctory.

CHAPTER XII

THE FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

OUR study has made it clear that the recognition of genealogical relationships in the ordering of social life has an extremely wide range of application among the Tallensi. To be sure, some classes of social relations in which individuals or organized groups normally participate do not necessarily imply cognizance of genealogical connexions. There are the activities of buyers and sellers in the market-place, for example. These are transactions in which kinship may, but for the most part does not, play a critical part. If it comes into the picture it does so as an adventitious factor, not as an intrinsic constitutive element. Even between kinsfolk transactions in the market are ruled by considerations of price, costs, profits, supply, and demand. A man who goes to market to buy a cap will not patronize a kinsman who has caps for sale if he can get one cheaper from a stranger. But it may happen that a seller of caps will be satisfied with a slightly smaller margin of profit if the buyer is his kinsman than if he is a stranger. 601

Apart from such ephemeral inter-personal relations, there are lasting social ties, such as those of friendship (*zoot*), which do not necessarily presuppose genealogical connexions. It is a common thing for Tallensi, especially for men, to have friends (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) in other clans than their own, and nowadays in neighbouring tribes. Friends visit one another occasionally, help one another sometimes, and give one another gifts. A man may also have a woman friend (*sɔm*), usually the wife of one of his clansmen. The man takes small gifts to his *sɔm* from time to time and she reciprocates by cooking a meal for him. She may assist him to find a wife from among her clan sisters. But if friends are not necessarily kinsmen, they very often have common kin. In fact friendships between unrelated Tallensi are most often formed through one of the parties visiting a kinsman of the other party and so making his acquaintance. Many friendships arise from contacts at funeral ceremonies or when hoeing or building parties come to help a father- or brother-in-law. In any case, the commonest and most prized form of friendship is friendship with a clansman or a neighbour of a related clan. Many such friendships go back to childhood and are the more highly prized because they are voluntary, personal, and not subject to hard-and-fast rules. 572

In the same way, though the Tallensi do not have institutionalized age-grades, men or women of about the same degree of social maturity are often grouped together in situations in which many people of all ages play a part. One sees this very clearly on ceremonial occasions. At funeral ceremonies, for example, there is first of all the usual separation 561 462

561 462 of the spheres of the two sexes. The sphere of the women is within the homestead. There they stay most of the time and there they carry out the duties that fall to them. The sphere of the men is outside, in front of the gateway, in the cattle yard and the *zɔŋ* (cf. p. 53). All the public rites take place outside. But in addition there is a distribution of tasks, duties, and privileges in accordance with a broad stratification by seniority. The oldest people in both spheres are spoken of as the elders (*kpɛm*). They have the seats of honour. For the most part they merely advise, and if hitches arise exercise a somewhat distant supervision over the activities. If they take an active part it is only in the most important of the rites. But they have the highest privileges. When food or meat or beer is distributed it is the elders who receive the portions due to the lineage units they represent and take the largest share of these portions. It is the old women, too, who take the lion's share of the gifts and obligatory contributions of foodstuffs handed over to the womenfolk. The burden of managing the ceremonies, performing the complicated series of rites, and attending to the many practical tasks involved, such as digging the grave, slaughtering sacrificial animals, and preparing food and beer, falls on the men who 'come after the elders (*kpɛm taɣalis*)' and their female counterparts. The *kpɛm taɣalis* are the men of mature experience but still able-bodied, men in the late forties and early fifties, the corresponding stratum among the women being those who have adolescent children. The young men and women, assisted by the adolescent boys and girls, do the fetching and carrying and give any casual help that may be required. The boys have the privilege of plucking and roasting any fowls that are slaughtered and keep some of the titbits for themselves. The girls surfeit themselves with frequent tasting of porridge and oily bean stew while they are cooking. This pattern can be observed in any collective activity.

601 Such arrangements, informal products though they are of the pragmatic requirements of the situation, are so stereotyped that they can be called customary. They arise without reference to genealogical connexions. But it is characteristic of Tale social life that they do so in situations whose structure is determined by kinship and clanship institutions. In fact the ideology of kinship is so dominant in Tale society, and the web of genealogical connexions so extensive, that no social relationships or events fall completely outside the orbit of kinship. In this respect the Tallensi resemble very many other primitive societies among whom, as Firth puts it,[1] kinship is the articulating principle of social organization. Just because kinship acts as a major determinant of social behaviour in every aspect and department of social life, it is the basis of the machinery of social integration in societies of this type, as many studies in Africa, Oceania, and America have shown. The result, as we have seen, both in this book and in the first part of our study, is that

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[1] Raymond Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, 1936, p. 577.

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the concept of kinship is the primary category of Tale thought about the social relations of individuals and the structure of the society.

Firth has stated (op. cit., p. 575) that kinship institutions can be studied from many different angles. But clearly, all kinship institutions have only two major facets or, if we like, functions. They serve as a mechanism of organizing social activities and co-ordinating social relations, either in a limited sector of the social life or in relation to all social interests; and they at the same time constitute the primary mould of the individual's psycho-social development. To assert, as Malinowski virtually does,[1] that the latter aspect gives the master-key to the understanding of primitive kinship institutions is as one-sided as to deny its relevance for their sociological study altogether. Much futile controversy has turned on a confusion of these two aspects of social relations. It is true that the affective relations of parents and children during the latters' infancy, the sentiments, habits, and emotional attachments acquired in the setting of the domestic family in childhood, and the deeper-lying factors of personality, all colour the behaviour of kinsfolk of every degree to one another. But it is equally true that the socially effective ties of kinship and the values correlated with them, which exist as a part of the social system at a given time irrespective of the individual, have a powerful selective influence in the shaping of his psychological environment and, consequently, on his eventual personality. We are concerned with two distinct levels of organization and expression in the structure of human social behaviour, and neither can be reduced to the other.

A complete understanding of the significance of its institutions for a particular society calls for an investigation on both levels. That is not what we have attempted in this book. Our study has been focused on the function of kinship as the articulating principle of Tale social structure. We have taken into account the genetic development in the individual of the modal patterns of thought, action, sentiment, and emotion which emerge in kinship relations, only in so far as this development is a dynamic factor in the social structure or can be directly correlated with the operation of kinship in standard and recurrent social relations. We have, for example, given little space to the genetic development of speech habits in the child, though this is relevant for the understanding of how kinship terminology is learnt, because this would shed little light on our main inquiry.

Among the Tallensi kinship relations are a major determinant of the pattern of organization of all activities through which the ruling interests of the people are satisfied. This holds for all departments of Tale social life—for the activities concerned with the production and consumption of food and all other material goods, for those involved in the reproduction and rearing of offspring, for those concerned with maintaining the rights and duties of individuals and corporate units towards one another,

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[1] See his article s.v. 'Kinship', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed.

601 and for religious and ceremonial activities. By abstracting the constant features in the patterns of organization of all the activities in which a particular kinship relation is significant, we arrive at a formulation of that relation as an element of the social structure. Tale kinship relations are embedded in social activities, but they are not coterminous with any one category of social activities. They are not reducible to economic relations either in their technological or in their social aspects; nor can they be derived exclusively from Tale jural concepts, or ritual beliefs, or political institutions. They are expressed and maintained by all these elements of the social system, but they exist in their own right. And the evidence of comparative studies, which show that similar kinship systems are found in different economic, jural, and ritual contexts bears this out. It is as plausible to argue that kinship ideas lie behind the economic or jural or religious customs of the natives as the other way round. Nor can the Tale kinship system be accounted for on the grounds of utility. Kinship relations are useful to the individual and serve the ends of social well-being for the society as a whole. But they are also very often extremely onerous for the individual; and their social utility springs simply from the fact that they play a vital part in the organization of all the activities that make up and maintain the social system.

Kinship, in short, among the Tallensi as among many other primitive peoples, is one of the irreducible principles on which their organized social life depends. Another irreducible factor in their social life is their traditional economy; and a third is their system of ritual beliefs and values. In the Tale social system these three categories of social facts are so closely interdependent that they cannot be satisfactorily understood in isolation from one another. They appear as functions of one another in the structure of society. But kinship taken as a system of values, a body of rules of conduct, and a scheme of social relations, is unique in that it is the master principle of organization both for particular activities and for the social structure as a whole. Thus we find that there cannot, for example, be gross divergence between the rules governing the ownership and use of land or other productive property, and those governing the application of labour to production or the consumption of the products of labour, since both sets of rules are aspects of the jural relations of a specific group of kinsfolk by birth and marriage. Similarly, the religious beliefs of the natives cannot be grossly inconsistent with their actual social behaviour since they have a common context of social organization in relationships determined by kinship. The wrongdoings or aberrations of individuals do not alter this fact; sooner or later the norms are vindicated and their consistency *inter se* is reaffirmed.

We have been speaking of kinship in the broadest sense of all socially recognized genealogical ties. In this sense Tale social structure is, fundamentally, kinship writ large. But we have found that it is essential to distinguish two aspects of kinship relations, that of lineage organization and that of inter-personal kinship ties. We have particularly stressed the major distinction between these two aspects. The lineage system is built up exclusively on the recognition of the agnatic line of descent and provides the framework of corporate groupings upon which Tale political and jural institutions are founded, whereas inter-personal kinship ties are recognized between cognates of all degrees through either or both parents. These two aspects fuse in what we have called the focal field of kinship, the domestic family. All kinship ties, for the individual, are created in the domestic family; and the family is the mechanism by which the genealogical basis of the social system is continually renewed.

Tale society is an organic society. That is to say, social organization is governed by the same principles at all levels and in every sector of the social structure. The different configurations of social relationships characteristic of different sectors of the social structure are the result of different ways of combining and elaborating the basic principles. The focal field of kinship shows us the basic principles of social structure at work in their simplest and prototypical form.

The structure of this field is determined by the interaction of two categories of social ties, those of parentage and those of marriage. Their interaction gives rise to two concepts of descent that operate as polar principles in the structure of this field.[1] The concept of paternal origin is counterpoised by the concept of maternal origin in every aspect of family life. The structural equilibrium of the domestic organization depends on their complementary functions. At the level of corporate social relations we find a similar structural equilibrium in the lineage system and also in the politico-ritual system that embraces the whole society.[2] At every level the structural equilibrium depends on the mechanism of polarity. It is the play of polar social forces organized round institutions like the chiefship and the tendaanaship, conceptualized in the ancestor cult and the Earth cult, and crystallized in the segmentary structure of the lineage, that gives the equilibrium of Tale society its dynamic character.

The polarity of patrilateral and matrilateral kinship regulates the development of kinship relations in time, as well as their configuration at a given time. If we consider the polarity of patrilateral and matrilateral descent as it works over a stretch of time—e.g. in relation to the cycle of development of the domestic family—a significant generalization emerges. We see, then, that the patrilineal principle is the primary factor of stability and continuity in the organization of the family and

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[1] Malinowski brought this out in his writings on kinship theory (e.g. in his essay on *The Father in Primitive Psychology*, Psyche Miniatures, 1926) though he stated it in different terms.

[2] This is described in the *Dynamics of Clanship*.

601 hence of the entire social structure. Conversely, the recognition of kinship ties through the mother is the primary factor of dispersion and segmentation in the family and the social structure. The values symbolized in the concept of patrilineal descent constitute the chief centripetal force, those summed up in the concept of matrilateral kinship the chief centrifugal force in the structure both of the family and of the society at large.

If we visualize the social structure as a sum of processes in time, then the lineage system, which embodies the patrilineal principle, emerges as the source of the enduring pattern, the relatively fixed form of Tale social organization, and matrilateral kinship is seen to be the source of the variability and flexibility in the groups or in the standard interpersonal relations that make up the social structure. The lineage system unites the ancestors, the living, and the yet unborn in a uniform integrated sequence actualized at a given time in determinate corporate groups.[1] The emphasis of matrilateral kinship is on the peculiar social ties of individuals with individuals, living or dead; and every generation brings a shift in the web of matrilateral kinship bonds for the members of a particular lineage. Thus it is the polarity of these two basic concepts of kinship that brings about the striking balance between stability and continuity on the one hand, and segmentary differentiation with its tendencies towards the splitting up and dispersion of social units on the other.

We have spoken of the lineage *system* and the kinship *system* of the Tallensi. The hypothesis that the various features of any particular people's kinship institutions have a 'complex relation of interdependence' and constitute 'an organized whole' has been specially stressed by Radcliffe-Brown.[2] Our study has brought forward ample evidence in support of this hypothesis, as far as the Tallensi are concerned. What it means for the practical life of the individual is that there are no irreconcilable contradictions between the different institutions in which any one category of kinship bonds is effective, and no insoluble conflicts of loyalties arising out of incompatible rights, obligations, or sentiments, based on kinship ties.

This is partly a question of the kind of kinship ties recognized for particular social purposes and partly of the accepted order of differentiation (both as to quality and as to degree) among these ties. We have seen, for example, how the Tale notion of incest is related to the segmentation of the lineage, and how a sister's son never acquires true filial rights in his mother's brother's lineage.

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[1] This has frequently been stressed by Radcliffe-Brown in (unpublished) lectures. See also his papers, 'The Study of Kinship Systems', *J.R.A.I.*, vol. lxxi, 1941, and 'Religion and Society' (Henry Myers Lecture, 1945), ibid., vol. lxxiii, 1943.

[2] Cf., for example, his previously cited paper, *J.R.A.I.*, vol. lxxi, 1941, from which the above quotations are taken.

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The pivot of the system is the dominance of the patrilineal line in Tale thought and custom. We thus get a systematic interdependence of all recognized kinship ties, with the bond between father and son as the focal point.

The interrelation of all Tale kinship institutions in a coherent system is shown in another way. Our study has shown that the lineage is the basis of a widespread and close-knit network of clanship and politico-ritual ties that embraces the whole socio-geographic region we have called Taleland[1] and even spreads over the frontiers of the region. There is nothing fortuitous about this system of social and political relationships. It is precisely organized in accordance with what we *have called the field principle*. In the same way we have found that the extra-clan kinship ties of a given Tale community form a close-knit web the pattern of which follows the field principle. In any defined sector of the society the network of clanship and politico-ritual ties is congruent with the web of extra-clan kinship ties. The two systems reinforce each other as unifying media in the social structure, on the level of corporate group organization, and on the level of inter-personal ties of amity, respectively. Simultaneously, they also counterbalance each other in the total flow of social life and so strengthen the general social equilibrium.

Taking Tale social structure as a whole, it can be visualized as a complex structure of different categories of social relations, correlated to different kinds of social and individual interests, rights, duties, sentiments, and values. The lineage system primarily serves jural, ritual, and political interests. The rights and duties of individuals appear as elements of corporate rights and duties. The solidarity of the unit is stressed at the expense of the individual's private interests and loyalties. The submergence of the individual's interests in those of the corporate unit is even more noticeable in the clan organization. Corporate rights, duties, and interests, however, serve not only to unite maximal lineages but also to differentiate them sharply. The cleavages between corporate units loom as large as their ties. At a higher level of the system the network of ritual collaboration and interdependence between corporate units serves as the most powerful control on the autarchic tendencies of the lineage and the resulting danger of the cleavages between lineages becoming too strong for the common good. The politico-ritual system takes care of the common good of the whole society. The interests of the individual are entirely subordinate to those of the community.

Ties of cognatic kinship, both within and across lineage boundaries, form the lowest level of social relations in the hierarchy. They differ from the social relations that exist between corporate groups in one important respect. They are ties of amity and mutual interest between individuals. Private rights and duties and personal loyalties prevail as against corporate rights, duties, and interests. Ties of cognatic kinship

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

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breach the barriers between individuals erected by the lineage system. They represent the recognition by the society that the direct social bonds of individual with individual are as vital for the well-being of the society as the fixed framework of corporate groupings. The intricate, ever-changing web of inter-personal kinship creates a diffused sense of mutual interest and dependence among the people of neighbouring communities. This sense of the interdependence of men as individuals in the hard struggle of ordinary living, thus canalized by kinship, not only transcends the more rigid solidarities of family, lineage, and local clan, but also counteracts the frictions and disturbances that constantly spring up in the relations of individuals with one another. Inter-personal kinship ties thus act both as a diffuse force of social cohesion in opposition to the sectional bias of the lineage structure, and as a moral sanction of conformity to custom. The concept of kinship amity as a basic premiss of the relations of kinsfolk of every degree reflects this aspect of kinship.

Consideration of the significance of kinship for the individual brings up the most difficult problem in the study of primitive kinship systems. In psychological terms kinship for the individual means a system of habits, sentiments, and affective ties gradually acquired in childhood. In sociological terms it means a system of rights and obligations, privileges, and duties of various degrees of definiteness, in relation to other people, a code of conduct also varying in precision from item to item and geared to a body of moral values and religious beliefs, and embracing all this, in a sense, a concept of the person himself as occupying a definite status and position in society.

What lies behind all this? What makes kinship an irreducible principle of Tale social organization? The economic and cultural homogeneity of the Tallensi to which we have frequently referred does not account for this quality of their kinship institutions. It is true that their society exists on one plane, so to speak—that is to say it exists solely in the living contemporaneity of their social life; for as we have shown in the first part of this study the Tallensi have no conscious historical perspective stretching beyond living memory. In such a society only those principles of social organization can remain valid which require no historical foundations or sanctions but are carried in the day-to-day life of the people. Again, the exiguous range of material goods, productive skills, means of communication, and empirical knowledge, all serve to keep the social division of labour down to a minimum and the range of social relations within correspondingly narrow limits. This, too, puts a premium on principles of social organization that can be maintained in action by direct inter-personal relationships. These factors undoubtedly form essential prerequisites for the existence of an all-embracing scheme of genealogical relationships as the articulating principle of social organization. But comparative research shows that they do not wholly account for the irreducible character of the norms of social organization based on the recognition of kinship, in any human society. We know from comparative studies that kinship bears a similar stress (though its scope is often more limited) in the social organization of peoples with far more highly differentiated social systems than that of the Tallensi.[1]

The usual solution to this question, explicitly stated by Malinowski, Firth, and others,[2] and implicit in the descriptive work of most social scientists who write on kinship, puts the emphasis on the facts of sex, procreation, and the rearing of offspring. There is obvious truth in this view. But like all attempts to explain one order of organic events by invoking a simpler order of events necessarily involved in the first, it borders on over-simplification. It is like trying to explain human thinking by the anatomy of the brain, or modern capitalist economy by the need for food and shelter. Such explanations, which indicate the necessary pre-conditions of phenomena, are apt to short-circuit the real work of science, which is the elucidation of the sufficient causal or functional determinants involved in the observed data of behaviour. They are particularly specious in social science. It is easy and tempting to jump from one level of organization to another in the continuum of body, mind, and society when analysis at one level seems to lead no farther. As regards primitive kinship institutions, the facts of sex, procreation, and the rearing of offspring constitute only the universal raw material of kinship systems. Our study has shown that economic techniques and religious values have as close a connexion with the Tale lineage system, for example, as the reproductive needs of the society. Indeed, comparative and historical research leaves no doubt that radical changes in the economic organization or the religious values of a society like that of the Tallensi might rapidly undermine the lineage structure; but some form of family organization will persist and take care of the reproductive needs of the society. The postulate we have cited overlooks the fact that kinship covers a greater field of social relations than the family.

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[1] Including, of course, our own social system. As is well known to students of Roman Law, the Romans had a kinship system comparable in many respects with those found amongst primitive peoples to-day (cf. Sir Henry Maine, *Ancient Law*). Similar kinship systems were found among the tribes of central and northern Europe in antiquity. The patrilineal joint family system, in fact, survived in parts of eastern Europe until the latter half of the nineteenth century (cf. Vinogradoff, op. cit., vol. i). A lineage system having many analogies to that of the Tallensi is found amongst Arab villages of to-day (cf. Hilma Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village*, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Helsingfors, 1931), among the Chinese (cf. Hsiao-Tung Fei, *Peasant Life in China*), and amongst the Hindu (cf. H. S. Gour, *The Hindu Code*, ch. viii).

[2] Cf. Malinowski's article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *cit. supra*, and Firth, op. cit., p. 577. Historically this view owes much to Westermarck's *History of Human Marriage*, and has been strongly reinforced in recent years by psychological theory as expressed, for example, in J. C. Flugel's book, *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Family*. It is the current view amongst most sociologists. (Cf. for a clear and succinct recent statement of it, R. MacIver, *Society*, ch. xi.

The problem we have raised cannot be solved in the context of an analytical study of one society; it requires a great deal of comparative research. We can, however, justifiably suggest an hypothesis on the basis of our limited inquiry. One of the striking things about Tale kinship institutions is the socially acknowledged sanctions behind them. When we ask why the natives so seldom, on the whole, transgress the norms of conduct attached to kinship ties, we inevitably come back either to the ancestor cult or to moral axioms regarded as self-evident by the Tallensi. To study Tale kinship institutions apart from the religious and moral ideas and values of the natives would be as one-sided as to leave out the facts of sex and procreation. On the other hand, our analysis has shown that it is equally impossible to understand Tale religious beliefs and moral norms apart from the context of kinship. A very close functional interdependence exists between these two categories of social facts. The relevant connecting link, for our present problem, is the axiom, implicit in all Tale kinship institutions, that kinship relations are essentially moral relations, binding in their own right. Every social system presupposes such basic moral axioms. They are implicit in the categories of values and of behaviour which we sum up in concepts such as rights, duties, justice, amity, respect, wrong, sin. Such concepts occur in every known human society, though the kind of behaviour and the content of the values covered by them vary enormously. Modern research in psychology and sociology makes it clear that these axioms are rooted in the direct experience of the inevitability of interdependence between men in society. Utter moral isolation for the individual is not only the negation of society but the negation of humanity itself.[1] Our suggestion is that the essence of a highly elaborated kinship system like that of the Tallensi lies in its function as the primary mechanism through which the basic moral axioms of a society of the type represented by the Tallensi are translated into the concrete give and take of social life. This is perhaps more obvious if we remember that the experience of the inevitability of human interdependence is implanted in the individual in the initial situation of kinship (as Malinowski called it), the dependence of the child on its parents. The focal field of kinship is also the focal field of moral experience; and the psychological and social factors that generate it are symbolically projected in religious beliefs. The hypothesis that all kinship institutions derive from the facts of sex, procreation, and child-rearing is acceptable if the emphasis is laid not on their biological

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[1] Vide Fromm, E., *The Fear of Freedom*, London, 1941, for a recent exposition, on the basis of modern psychological and sociological findings, of this ancient thesis of moral philosophers.

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utilitarian value but on the moral values attached by society to these facts, and perpetuated through the social relationships brought into being by their conjunction.

This inference is strengthened when we consider the evidence of comparative studies. Patrilineal societies, for example, are found in many parts of the world, including our own culture area. Lineage systems similar to that of the Tallensi occur in a large number of patrilineal societies in Africa, Asia Minor, and the Far East. There is wide variation in the conventions and customs governing sex relations, procreation, and child-rearing in these societies. But there appear to be certain basic features common to all patrilineal societies in the form of the moral values attached to social relationships within the focal field of kinship. Incest taboos; the stress on sexual fidelity in marriage; the supremacy of the husband-father; filial piety counteracting the suppressed antagonism between father and son and mother and daughter—these are some of the main features common to the schemes of moral values found in all patrilineal societies.

These values embody the fundamental moral axioms of the society; and it is this that makes kinship, regarded as a mechanism for the ordering of social relationships within a given society, one of the irreducible principles of social structure in such a society.

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AFRICA

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

JOURNAL DE L'INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DES
LANGUES ET CIVILISATIONS AFRICAINES

ZEITSCHRIFT DES INTERNATIONALEN INSTITUTS
FÜR AFRIKANISCHE SPRACHEN UND KULTUREN

Editor
DIEDRICH WESTERMANN

Assistant Editor
D. G. BRACKETT

VOLUME IX
1936

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON : HUMPHREY MILFORD

[Title Page]

FOOD IN THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY OF THE TALLENSI

M. AND S. L. FORTES

12/ THE hinterland of the Gold Coast north of the 10th parallel N. Latitude is a land of sparse forestation lying within the Sudanese Zone.[1] The continuous plains, the monotony of which is, in the dry season, broken only by scattered trees, occasional patches of low bush or a low range of hills, have been described as belonging to an 'Orchard bush' type of country. The Tale settlements occupy an area of some 200 square miles, immediately north of the White Volta river, and have a population density of over 170 to the square mile in the settled parts. Agriculture is the basic industry of the Tallensi and their neighbours, but their farms yield only a bare living to the majority of the populace. Unduly late rains or a visitation of locusts spells food deficiency bordering on famine for thousands.

Food, therefore, is a major practical issue in Tale social life. It is also, as in all primitive societies, a fundamental constituent of innumerable social situations not directly connected with nutrition, e.g. sacrifices to ancestral spirits or funeral ceremonies. How diverse are the functions of food in a primitive society may be gathered from Dr. A. I. Richards's *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe*. The comprehensive approach adopted by her is impossible in this short paper; nor shall we be able to take up all the questions enumerated in Dr. Raymond Firth's paper[2] on native diet. We shall confine ourselves to an ethnographical description of the place of food in the domestic economy of the Tale.[3] It must be regarded as merely a tentative account.

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[1] See A. W. Cardinall, *The Gold Coast* 1931, Government printer, Accra, p. 6.

[2] 'The Sociological Study of Native Diet', *Africa*, vii. 4.

[3] In addition to our observations we have made use of statistical and other information from an unpublished report of Mr. C. W. Lynn, the Assistant Superintendent of Agriculture in the Zuarungu district, of which Tale land forms a part. We wish here to acknowledge our indebtedness to Mr. Lynn, not only for permission to use his report, but also for the direct assistance he gave us in our efforts to study Tale agriculture in the field.

105 THE DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION. Tale domestic institutions are very elaborate, and the organization of domestic life is subject to a considerable range of variation due to such factors as the economic position, size and age of the unit, the temperament and character of individuals, the social status of the senior male members, the distribution of economic and ritual specialization (craftsmen, diviners &c.), and so forth. To evaluate the full influence of these factors requires a mass of statistical information which we have not been able to obtain as yet; we must be content with merely indicating its range.

Tale society is essentially democratic; but differences of wealth are prominent. Chiefs and headmen, in virtue of the services they command, cultivate greater areas than any commoner, own much more live stock and have twice and three times as many wives. Both in its structure and in the organization of its domestic life, a chief's compound conforms to the same cultural pattern as the compound of the poorest plebeian; but it is economically entirely atypical. In every settlement, also, there are a few men of wealth considerably above the average. They always have a sufficiency of food, even in the leanest years. Chiefs, headmen, and wealthy men have therefore been excluded from the discussion in this paper.

592 596 341 Tale social organization has a well-defined spatial basis. The unit of residence is a mud compound (*yir*—house) inhabited by a joint family consisting of a group of men of close patrilineal kinship, their wives and children. Its architecture is significantly correlated to the structure and organization of the joint family at the particular phase it has reached in its development. One compound in three—14 out of 40, to be exact—has two or more entrance gateways (*zanɔr*),[1] each corresponding to a completely self-contained dwelling, and independent social unit consisting of one or more households. The plural entrance compound represents a stage in the process of segmentation through which the joint family passes in the course of about three generations, and which ends in complete fission and the setting up of several independent compounds.

592 596 The main gate is always owned by the head of the joint family (*yirdaan*, owner of the house) the most senior (*kpeem*) of the group of

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[1] Statistics quoted here and in subsequent paragraphs are derived from a sample of 40 compounds selected at random from a sociological census we made at Tongo.

male agnates. He is *yirdaan* by virtue of indisputable succession which 592 carries with it ritual responsibilities for the whole joint family, legal 596 and moral duties and rights and valuable economic privileges. His younger brothers and his sons share his dwelling as a rule, ortho-cousins or nephews occasionally. Everything depends on factors such as those previously enumerated when it comes to the constitution of a particular compound. But in general, genealogical distance imposes corresponding spatial and social arrangements. Thus, the secondary gate of a plural gate compound[1] is usually owned by an ortho-cousin or nephew (classificatory brother or son) of the *yirdaan*, except for the special case of a man's first-born son.[2]

The single dwelling or the single-gate compound is the habitation of one or more households, each consisting of an adult male, his wife (or wives), and his children. A householder may have younger unmarried brothers or sisters or an old mother dependent on him. Every married man is a householder, but households vary greatly in status according to their degree of social and economic differentiation within the joint family. This is determined not only by the stage of development it has reached, but also by kinship factors and by those individual social and psychological characteristics which we have referred to before. A newly married man, for example, is to all intents and purposes part of the household to which he was attached prior to his marriage, but he has a small degree of autonomy which increases from year to year.

A newly married wife has a room in the quarters of her husband's 596 mother, if she is alive, or of his senior wife. In due course, however, 342 whether it be a man's first or later wife, he must build her separate quarters. Hence, in a well-differentiated household every wife has her own quarters (*dug*) partitioned off from those of her co-wives or her mother-in-law. Here she and her children—the primary family—live, and here she is supreme mistress. A woman's quarters consists

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[1] Two gates are usual, three gates infrequent, and more than three gates found only in exceptional circumstances.

[2] It is taboo for the head of a compound and his first-born son to continue to use a single entrance after the latter has married and founded a family, though this taboo is never enforced until the younger man's children approach adolescence. But few men live long enough to see their first-born sons make their own gateways. [784]

596 of sleeping-rooms and kitchens (to be described later) distributed
342 roughly in a semicircle round an open space, 10 to 15 feet across, bounded on one side by a co-wife's quarters or a low partitioning wall. This little close (*dendɔŋo*) is the central place in the life of the family. Here it takes its meals in the dry season; here friends are received;
[778] here most of the routine of family life goes on. A man's principal ancestor shrines are kept in his mother's or senior wife's *dendɔŋo*; and there he performs many of the frequently recurring rites of the ancestor cult. The women of a single household have adjacent quarters. Their husband's mother or the senior wife occupies the central quarters; junior wives or son's wives are on either side of her, forming altogether a rough circle or segment of a circle. A householder who is not also head of the compound has no room of his own. He keeps his private possessions in his senior wife's sleeping-room. Apart from this, it is the cardinal principle of family life that a man must divide his time, his affection, and his supplies of food with absolute impartiality between his wives.

Within the compound two other kinds of rooms are of special
343 importance for our theme, the granaries and the grinding-rooms.
778 Every independent agricultural unit has its own granaries which are
784 said to belong to the head of the unit. His granary (*boor*) is a man's most private and personal possession. No woman may enter it, nor any man not directly authorized by the owner. Ritual prohibitions associated with it closely identify a man's granary with his social personality. As one informant put it, with a flash of insight, 'Your granary is like your soul'.

343 One or more grinding-rooms (*neer*) belongs to every well-differentiated household. These are discussed later.

The family structure thus outlined is the basis of a domestic
596 economy and of a configuration of moral, legal, religious, and personal
182 relationships which can best be described as a compromise between strong centralizing or integrating tendencies and powerful differentiating tendencies. In the domestic economy of food, our sole concern in this paper, every unit in the system is completely autonomous in some respects and dependent upon a more comprehensive unit in others. It is a fluctuating compromise, slowly changing. Births, deaths, marriages, and their social consequences, even the mere lapse

of time reflected in the growing up of children and the aging of 596
parents, bring about changes which materially affect the food economy. 182

THE UNIT OF FOOD ECONOMY. Food is produced and consumed by 596 what we shall call the unit of food economy. The following table, derived from the data for the 40 randomly selected compounds mentioned previously, shows the relation between this unit and those we have already described.

	Compounds	*Gateways*	*Units of food economy*	*Households*	*Primary families*	*Productive men*	*Women*
Total .	40	56	58	77	114	107	124
Ratio .		1	1	1·4	2·0	1·9	2·2
							Children
Total .							132
Ratio .							2·4

A unit of food economy thus corresponds, generally, to a single gateway,[1] and comprises more than one household. The man at the head of this unit holds the land from which it derives the major part of its sustenance and organizes the exploitation of this land. The productive men (i.e. those capable of agricultural labour, including boys over 15) jointly cultivate this land; the women and children jointly assist in sowing it and in such duties as scaring birds from the standing crops. At harvest time the men and boys cut the grain, women and girls carry it home in baskets. The head of the unit supervises the sorting of the grain, and is responsible for the selection and preservation of seed. He sees to the storage of the grain—the seed separately and specially carefully, the grain for consumption in
the granary. The ground-nut crop is similarly handled by co-operative [476]
labour. It is a maxim that those who work together share the products of their labour. This applies not only to joint labour in the fields, but
to the division of labour between the sexes and generations. Upon 596
the men falls the most arduous agricultural labour, but the women
have equally exacting duties connected with the preparation of food 462

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[1] The two units of food economy in excess of the number of gateways represent pairs of full brothers who were economically independent of each other, but continued to occupy the same compound for kinship reasons. Four other units of food economy were in process of splitting up at the time the census was taken.

596 462 for consumption. This division of labour runs through the whole of Tale domestic economy and is equally well evinced, e.g. in the organization of house-building and repairing. Boys and girls, too, have their duties in connexion with the care of the live stock and in the house.

596 The head of such a self-supporting unit has his own granary or granaries. Just as he is the final arbiter in agricultural matters, so he alone controls the distribution to the women of the grain jointly produced. In theory he could even sell the grain if he wished without consulting the men dependent on him; in practice, he dare not do so, for they would leave the compound at the first opportunity.

596 422 The entire unit of food economy thus draws its main supply of grain, the staple foodstuff, from a common source. But every household, every primary family, and indeed every individual other than young children has a degree of economic independence which is limited only by the obligations to the bigger unit. An industrious householder usually possesses some poultry and perhaps sheep and goats of his own, supplies a good deal of the minor crops consumed by his own wives and children, and even some grain to augment his wives' rations from the main store. Every woman, again, adds to the food supply of her primary family by her own efforts. If she is a market trader or a potteress, for example, she will have money of her own, will sometimes purchase extra foodstuffs and may invest in live stock which will eventually go to her sons. Her husband has no powers of disposal over her property. If he uses any of it, by her permission, it is a debt which must be repaid.

243 DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION IN RELATION TO AGRICULTURE AND CROPS. This system can best be understood in relation to Tale agriculture. The staple crop is millet (generically, *ki*) of which there are three kinds, early millet (*naara: pennisetum typhoideum*); guinea-corn (*ki* specifically, each variety being known by a special term, e.g. *kutɔk*, *kazii* &c.: *sorghum vulgare*); and late millet (*za: pennisetum spicatum*). These with a small amount of rice (*mui: oryza sativa*) occupy 92 per cent. of the area cultivated in the Zuarungu district.[1] The seasonal

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[1] According to Mr. Lynn, who reports observations on 29 compounds in Zuarungu district, five being in Tale settlements. Four were somewhat larger and

variations in the ripening of crops makes it essential, as will be clear 243
later, for a self-supporting unit to have a supply of every type of cereal, or face starvation at certain times of the year. Early millet is grown only on the compound farms (*saman*), land immediately surrounding the compounds and kept fertile by human and animal manure and by spreading the detritus of the kitchen midden. The 243
compound farms at the disposal of a joint family consist of irregular 311
patches of greatly varying size scattered throughout the area of settlement of their lineage. 425
They are acquired by inheritance, succession, or gift from the head of one's joint family or lineage. How much of it a man has depends, thus, upon his seniority within the joint family and the lineage. The head of a joint family may cultivate 6 or 8 acres of compound farm; his younger brother and prospective heir, as head of an independent unit of food economy, may have only two acres or less allotted to him.[1] The compound farm is so precious that it is regarded as sacrilege to sell or abandon it.

Guinea-corn or late millet, which ripen several months after 243
the early millet, are grown both on compound farms and on bush 311
farms (*poog*) from one to four miles distant from the settlements of 425
those who cultivate them. Bush farms also descend in the line of 596
inheritance; but they can be bought or borrowed for a term of years. If the bush land belonging to his own joint family is limited, a man can always borrow as much as he requires. A head of a joint family may require no bush farm at all if he has a large compound farm; junior men, on the other hand, depend the more upon their bush farms the less compound land they have.[2] Compound land is the most fertile and most easily worked owing to its proximity. Those who have large compound farms (e.g. elders) are less liable to food shortage than those who have mainly bush farms (i.e. younger men).

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richer than the average Tale compound, as they belonged to headmen or elders. Botanical names are taken from Mr. Lynn's report.

[1] Rough calculations based on a survey of farms made for us by Mr. D. S. Commey. Mr. Lynn's records show that the Tale compound farms he measured vary from nearly 7 acres to under an acre; the average being 3·36 acres.

[2] Mr. Lynn found bush farms to vary from about 5 to 10 acres in extent. How much bush farm is cultivated depends, of course, upon the number of men cooperating and upon the food requirements of the unit, as well as upon the amount of *saman* they have.

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table[2] given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalaŋ*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

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[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

[2] [See cat. 116, p241 — Analyst.]

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not required at the time, and always borrowed specifically for this purpose from kinsmen and friends. Women rarely obtain their ground-nut fields from their husbands. They prefer to beg land from their own cognatic kinsmen, thus emphasizing their absolute independence of their husbands as regards this crop.

For this reason they never receive assistance from their husbands with the hoeing and planting of their ground-nut fields. A son often assists his mother; or young women 'invite' (*pooh*) a couple of young kinsmen of their husband to hoe their ground-nut fields in return for a very good meal, the grain for which the woman generally provides from her own resources. Many, again, have simply to rely upon their own skill with the hoe. The ground-nut crop thus gained is the woman's to consume or sell, as she pleases.

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Of the remaining subsidiary crops, the most important—though less important than ground-nuts—are the legumes, Bambara beans (*suma: voandzeia subterranea*), cow-peas (*tia: vigna sinensis*) and geocarpa beans (*sulempie: kerstingiella geocarpa*); and the root crops, frafra potatoes (*pesha: coleus dysentericus*) and sweet potatoes (*yumhma'ala: ipomea batatas*). Bambara beans and frafra potatoes are grown by the more energetic younger men on borrowed strips of compound farm after the millet is cut. Cow-peas are planted along the edges of compound farm by the head when he sows his early millet.

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Vegetables are the concern and the property of women. The head of a unit of food economy every year allots a small patch of land, some 100 square yards or less, immediately beside the compound wall to each woman with a kitchen of her own. Here she sows her *nayyena* (*gynandropsis pentaphylla*), some ocro (*ma'ana: hibiscus esculentus*), *bet* (*h. sabdariffa*), *beris* (*h. cannabinus*). The latter three vegetable plants are also grown like cow-peas and *neri* (*cucumis melo*), alongside the paths which border the compound farm. Thus as they grow and ripen the women can get at them easily without injuring the millet. A woman's vegetable patch is always hoed for her by her husband as the produce is for their common use. The leaves of the cow-pea plant (*tia: vide supra*) are used as a vegetable known as *beyit*, and are plucked for this purpose by the wives of the man who planted the *tia*; and the same rule applies to the use of the *neri* seed as a soup ingredient.

437 OTHER SOURCES OF FOOD SUPPLY. A particular household at a particular time may have quite a number of sources of food supply besides the fields of the unit of food economy to which it belongs. Next to their farms the most important source of food supply for the Tallensi is the market, especially in the lean months. A completely empty granary imposes upon the head of the self-supporting unit the duty of finding grain. This is when he falls back on his live stock and sells or barters them for grain.[1] As long as he has some grain to ration out, however frugally, he will not buy for common consumption. Each household and each primary family must exert itself to make up the deficient grain supply. The junior householders and the women—the keenest and most inveterate market traders—exploit the resources [439] of the grain market. Those who have a little money go as far as Nabte or Mampuru land, countries rich in grain two or three days' march away, to buy guinea-corn, late millet, or maize. They bring back the grain in bags of roughly 20 to 40 lb. weight. The usual procedure is for the purchaser to bring home his or her grain, set aside a small portion—perhaps 5 to 10 lb.—for his or her own consumption and retail the rest at the local market so as to realize the original outlay or a few pence more. The principal profit consists in the small quantity eaten. Many women turn the grain or pulse they buy into cooked food, a small proportion of which goes to feed their husbands and children, but most of which is sold in the market at a profit and the proceeds re-invested in grain. But very many people have to be content with purchasing small quantities in the local markets. A man may sell a few chickens or guinea-fowl or a goat or something he has made, like an adze-shaft or a bow; a woman sells some ground-nuts, dried vegetables, shea nuts, shea butter or some dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlag*) to buy the grain. In this way does the market help to eke out the domestic supply of grain.

596 This source of grain supply is wholly subject to the principle of differentiation of subordinate units within the unit of food economy. A woman's market-purchases, like her ground-nuts, go to feed her

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[435] [1] A bull is usually reckoned as worth about 30*s.*, a heifer £2, a sheep from 3*s.* to 6*s.*, a goat from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* Prices depend on the season, and the age and condition of the animal. A bull exchanges for about 40 large baskets of unthreshed grain, sheep, and goats in proportion.

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own family. She may, as an act of grace, give some of this food to her husband or to a co-wife with whom she is on friendly terms; but she is not compelled to do so. A junior householder thus augments the food supply for his own wives and children. If he comes into possession [431] of a large amount of grain by his own exertions he will generally make a present of a small quantity to the head of the unit to which he belongs; but, again, this is an act of goodwill, not an obligation. A kind-hearted head of a compound may occasionally present a meagre dish of grain to the wife of a younger head of a self-supporting unit, if they are obviously on the verge of starvation; otherwise, self-supporting units in the same compound never assist one another with grain, in the ordinary course of events.

There are other more incalculable means by which food is brought 602
into the household and family. Cereals are sometimes obtained during 431
the hunger months by women from their paternal kinsmen. A 222
marriageable daughter, again, means a succession of suitors bringing 262
gifts of money, guinea-fowls, and various other comestibles to her mother. Wild sources of food are fully exploited. Fruits of the shea-tree (*ta'aŋ: butyrospermum parkii*) save many a family from the worst straits of hunger, as does the pulp of the dawa-dawa (*doo: parkia filicordea*) pods. These trees have an enormous economic value, as will be evident later. The baobab-tree (*to'o: adansonia digitata*) has a fruit with a floury, sweetish pulp which is relished much as sweetmeats are by ourselves, and its leaves are used to make soup. It is generally found as a shade-tree outside a compound, and women readily get permission from the head of the compound to pluck the leaves. Leaves of the local elm (*nuom: celtis integrifolia*) are also used for soup.[1] Some grasses and fungi serve this purpose too, and small children, who are adepts at foraging for themselves, can often be seen out in groups collecting them.

From the table[2] quoted above it will be seen that one man, on the 592
average, supports himself, 1·2 women, and 1·2 children, over the age of infancy—roughly 3·4 people; but it is clear from the sociological outline given above that any such estimates hold only very approximately in view of the many supplementary sources of grain supply,

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[1] We have seen elm-trees in *toŋhena* (sacred groves) and in the bush (where of course, any one can pluck the leaves) but not as shade trees in front of compounds.

[2] [See cat. 116, p. 241 —Analyst]

592 and also, as we shall see, the many unpredictable modes of consumption of the grain (e.g. in recompensing collective labour, *vide infra*).[1]

MEAT AND FISH. Meat (*numit*) is subject to even greater fluctuations
231 of supply than grain owing to uncontrollable sources. Every com-
235 pound possesses some live stock, if it be only a few fowls and guinea-
262 fowls. A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely, to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never slaughtered specifically for food[2] by the average man. We heard of two donkeys being slaughtered in order to sell the meat by a couple of young men out for profit. This was vigorously denounced by the Chief, and was not repeated. As a rule beef is obtained from sacrifices
[782] to the ancestor spirits, always made by men of senior status, and from animals offered during funeral ceremonies, donkey-meat only from the latter offerings. The carcase is usually divided up among a large number of people in accordance with kinship status. An elder may obtain a whole leg of a bull, but he will sub-divide it among the compounds or households subordinate to him. Thus, in the long run, the share of a single household comes to a very small quantity, often only a few ounces. But nothing is wasted; the whole carcase, including all the viscera, is consumed.

Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again,
231 no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food. In addition
782 to sacrifices and funerals, there is a number of formal occasions on
262 which one of these animals must be killed, e.g. as an act of hospitality to a mother-in-law or a very great friend. Corresponding to their lesser value and much greater abundance, sheep and goats are sacrificed in larger numbers than cows, often by men of junior status. The

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[1] Mr. Lynn, *op. cit.* finds that 1 man supports 3·7 people on the average, on 2·03 acres of farmed land. In addition to the sources of error mentioned in the text, it should be noted that the simplicity of Tale agricultural technology makes it possible for quite small boys to be of occasional, if somewhat casual, assistance in the fields.

[2] The Chief of Tongo slaughtered a cow for his wives and elders at the New Year (*Daa*) Festival in 1934, the only case of the kind we came across.

consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus considerably 231
greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782
leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of 262
junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by
professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which
we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign
settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there
along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief
customers of the butchers. But a Taleŋa occasionally buys a little [435]
meat—from a few ounces for *3d.*, to a leg for *9d.* to *1s.* He may do this
when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is
courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her
some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial 231
animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occasions 262
such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great 224
delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs
throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the
majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush
on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost [554]
entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though
regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride
in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once
observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth,
among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal
as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*ziŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small 262
supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and 226
part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially
dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success,
as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought
in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some 262
of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

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[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable 262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The 235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, 422 cannot replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore, the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and individuals within the unit of food economy come to marked expression. [231] An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls [782 431] never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacrifice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred. At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

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[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

The meat, already putrescent, is nevertheless enjoyed despite its stench. 262
Fresh eggs, being potential chickens, are never eaten; but addled eggs are much appreciated by children, who bake them in ashes. Children also eat field and domestic mice, a species of toad, and harmless snakes, all of which they shoot with miniature bows and arrows [224
in the later months of the dry season. These things are despised by 857]
adolescents and adults who, however, appreciate bigger rodents like moles and water voles. In short, meat supplies are a matter of chance, vary greatly with the season, as will be clearer later, and though much desired, form but a small part of the bulk of food consumed.

FATS AND SEASONINGS. Fats and seasonings have a very important 262
place in Tale cookery, and, like vegetables, are the woman's respon- 263
sibility. But they are mainly market commodities and a man will 252
frequently give his wife money to purchase them. The only fat used is shea butter (*kpaam*). It is obtainable all the year round. It is made of the nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) which are carefully preserved after the fruits have been eaten.

Dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) are made by boiling the seeds of the dawa-dawa fruits. The balls are sold at prices varying from a tenth of a penny for one the size of a large marble to threepence for one the size of a cricket ball.

The laborious processes of manufacture involved prevent many women from making their own shea-butter and dawa-dawa seed balls. Others, who can command the assistance, e.g. of daughters, often prepare enough to have a surplus for sale.

Red pepper (*nanzuuh*) is grown in small quantities by a few men for sale in the market, and much is imported. It is sold at about a halfpenny for a handful.

Rock salt (*yaarem*) is sold in the market by regular traders who fetch it from the south, a small heap (about ½lb.) for a halfpenny.

Ziem, the ash of valley grasses, and *bakaa*, the ash of early millet stalks, are prepared by the women and are stored in large baskets or calabashes for their own use and for sale. They are used as salt substitutes.

THE PRODUCTIVE CYCLE AND THE FOOD CYCLE. We have seen how 596
the domestic organization of the Tallensi works in relation to the supply of grain and the other main raw materials of their diet. We

596 must now consider how these raw materials are consumed by the unit of food economy. It will be impossible in the scope of this paper to discuss every social situation affecting the domestic economy of food, since there is hardly a social act in which something edible or masticable does not participate, be it only a piece of kola-nut or a plug of tobacco. We shall refer briefly, therefore, to the most conspicuous types of situations in which food plays a part, and discuss more fully the domestic consumption of food in the ordinary routine of family life. We emphasize again that our purpose is to give an ethnographic account of these facts, as we have been able to observe them in a single year. We have not the quantitative information to allow us to venture upon a deeper sociological analysis.

262 433 241 Tale food economy has a marked seasonal periodicity, as is to be expected in an agricultural society. It is this seasonal rhythm which links the supply of foodstuffs with their distribution and consumption. This correlation emerges readily from a calendrical tabulation in which the agricultural and other productive activities are set down side by side with the facts pertaining to the utilization of the food supply. Agriculture in Tale-land is a hazardous enterprise, chiefly because of the uncontrollable natural phenomena upon which a successful crop depends, above all, the correct distribution of rainfall. Good harvests and bad harvests succeed one another erratically and the natives can never predict from one year to the next. Their primitive methods of farming, too, mean that they extract only half as much out of the land as it is capable of producing. 'Nevertheless,' says Mr. Lynn,[1] 'in a good season . . . nobody is short of food. The area of land cultivated is adequate and the system of farming is successful.' But the margin of security for the average householder is extremely small, at any time. We have no means of estimating how representative the observations made by us in 1934 may be; the natives considered it to be a fair year. For our purpose, however, it chanced fortunately, since we were able to observe more easily the relations between supply and consumption of foodstuffs in the average household than might have been possible in either a very good or a very bad year.

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[1] *Op. cit.* Mr. Lynn records that in both 1930 and 1931 the harvest was bad owing to locusts and adverse rains. In 1934 the neighbouring areas were worse off than Tale-land.

The climate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast has two 132
well-marked seasons, a rainy season (*seug*) and a dry season (*uum*). The 221
rainy season is the period of intense agricultural activity and lasts from April to October; the dry season, when agriculture sinks into the background of social interest, from November to March. We shall set out the cycle of agricultural and food economy month by month, beginning with April, the first month of the rains.[1]

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
APRIL: First planting-rain fell on March 26, and early millet (*naara*) with some cow-peas and *seri* was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, &c. Women sowed their vegetable patches; *naŋgena*, *hibiscus* (*ma'ana*, *bet* and *beris*), marrow (*wɔk*—planted by only a few women) and other vegetables. Hoeing begun; but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.	Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. 221 262 Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts.[2] Wild fruits—shea (*taamr*), *ximenia americana* (*liɛŋ*) and especially dawa-dawa powder (*dɔbugm*)—being consumed to stave off hunger.[3]

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[1] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, but we are following the European calendar [805]
to simplify the exposition. All dates given refer to 1934.

[2] Ground-nut gleaning (*ŋyeeh*) is a regular pursuit of children, adolescents, and 222
even adults of households with small supplies of ground-nuts. After the ground-nuts have been lifted any one may come and scratch with a hoe for those left in the ground. Thus little groups of boys and girls, from infancy to adolescence, wander about in the fields near their homes scratching with old hoes for the ground-nuts, which they collect and eat. Early in the dry season these ground-nuts are regarded as snacks. When the dry season reaches its end, however, they become scarcer but are searched for more eagerly as a measure to stop the pangs of hunger between one meal and the next, often twenty-four hours later.

[3] Shea fruits are collected by the women throughout this season, mainly from 222
trees on bush farms belonging to their compound. Dawa-dawa powder is more difficult to come by as the trees are jealously watched by the owners, who are in some areas the chiefs *ex-officio* and in others heads of lineages. Dawa-dawa pods are thus often obtained by gift, purchase, or exchange from the owners, or in the market. Every part of the fruit is of great value—the floury powder is eaten, the
seeds collected and turned into *kpoliŋ*, the husks of the pod used to prepare *am*, [356]
the liquid with which the walls and floors of compounds are waterproofed.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
MAY: Rains continue erratically. Early millet planted in the stony and hilly areas. Others interplanting guinea-corn and late millet on compound farms and some ground-nuts. Work on bush farms preparatory to planting commenced. Tempo of agricultural activity increasing rapidly.	Food stores deplenished and severe rationing. 'Hunger' (*kɔm*) commences. Poorer households suffer two or three days' hunger a week, living on vegetable soup, ground-nuts and wild fruits. Householders send their wives to purchase grain abroad for consumption and re-sale if they have money. Many selling live stock bit by bit to buy grain in market. Prices of all commodities rising. Visits being paid to relations in more fortunate areas to get some grain.[1]
JUNE: Height of agricultural season. Men completely absorbed in hoeing	Peak of 'hunger' reached. Granaries empty among poorer households.

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[1] The following case-record will illustrate more vividly than explanations the state of affairs in May: Baripeta and his adolescent brother had dependent upon them their mother, the former's two wives, and one infant. Baripeta was known as one of the best young farmers in the settlement. His ortho-cousin, head of the compound, farmed independently. At the end of April Baripeta's supplies were so low that he had to purchase small quantities of grain and send his brother to a relative living in the richer Mampuru country to beg some grain. By May 9 the household was living on shea fruit and vegetable soup, with a meal of porridge every third day, scraped together by the women. Baripeta obtained *2s.* and sent his brother and senior wife to Mampurugu to buy grain, he himself being unable to abandon his fields just then. They returned (May 15) bringing about 60 lbs. of guinea-corn. After 2 days of complete starvation the household fed adequately though frugally for over a week. As he had to give some of the grain to the head of the compound, Baripeta was left with about 30 lb. of it. A small quantity dribbled away in gifts to other kinsfolk who came to 'beg'. Thus the five adults and the infant used, say, 40 lb. of grain in about 8 to 10 days. Baripeta sent his brother to 'greet' their brother-in-law in the Nabte country and obtain some grain from him. Thus, alternately starving for a couple of days and having enough for a few days, the household carried on until the harvest in July. This case is typical of dozens; but many households were not reduced to such straits, especially those of heads of compounds or elders with large compound farms and several younger men assisting them.

Ground-nuts are chewed all the year round, if available, to stave off hunger, but are never regarded as a substitute for porridge, the real food. But a family with a good ground-nut harvest never starves. There is always a sale for ground-nuts, which figure as contributions in all funeral ceremonies when large groups of people gather and sit about for a whole day and chew them to keep off hunger.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
and weeding, planting guinea-corn and late millet on bush farms, rice, ground-nuts and minor crops. Hiring labour for help in hoeing and weeding.[2] Women plucking *naŋgena*.	Much live stock sold or bartered for grain very cheaply; grain scarce and dear. Much ground-nuts for sale.[1] Small groups of children wander about hungry, feeding on wild fruits and small animals they find near the settlements. Towards the end of the month many people are staunching their hunger by cutting the ripe or half ripe heads of early millet which they roast on the embers and nibble at.
JULY: Early millet harvested by those who planted first on valley land.[3]	Early millet eaten by those who harvest. Relatives from the later-

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[1] People tend to hoard their ground-nuts until about June, when the price rises to 1*s.* a small basketful, as many require seed then. The proceeds are invested in grain. Grain prices at this time are about twice the average price of roughly ½*d.* a lb.

[2] In June even those whose grain supplies have lasted well begin to feel the 464 pinch. One reason for this is that a considerable amount of grain is expended in feeding and recompensing hired *kpaarip* (lit. hoe-men). These are Nankansi and 241 Builsa who come to Tale-land to seek a few days' work, since their settlements are in a worse plight than those of the Tale. They insist on being paid in grain or ground-nuts which they can take home. As they have to be given flour-water (*zomkwom*) in the middle of the day and a good meal at night besides a calabash of 4 or 5 lb. of grain per day to carry home, they make considerable inroads on grain supplies. At this time of the year only those with grain to spare engage *kpaarip*, later even poorer men do so. It may mean economizing on one's own food at the time, but in this way, say the Tale farmers, one can get a large bush farm hoed or weeded expeditiously, and thus make up the grain expended twice over.

[3] Early millet is a catch-crop and the Tallensi realize this. Its function is to tide over the period of waiting until the main crops of guinea-corn and late millet are harvested. Hence the necessity for a piece of compound farm if a unit is to be fully independent.

The Tallensi say that early millet normally lasts for two months, and our observations prove this to be the case. When the millet is brought in by the women, the heads are spread out to dry and sorted into two lots, the good heads (*naarsɔmr*) and the bad heads (*naarbiɛt*). The best of the former are selected for seed, threshed and stored in pots. This is the first task, as it is considered shameful to be without seed at planting time. The bad heads are eaten first, the good millet stored in the granary and eaten later. For a few days there is no restraint. Small children run about all day, nibbling at heads of millet which have been quickly roasted in hot embers. But as soon as the head of the unit of food economy has carried out the thanksgiving sacrifices which permit him, too, to eat of the new crop, he takes control.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
231 262 Hoeing and weeding of compound and bush farms in full swing. Some still planting subsidiary crops. Poultry breeding begins.	planting areas come to beg grain.[1] Wild fruits still eaten and hunger prevalent in late-planting areas. Ground-nuts, beginning to ripen, plucked and chewed as snacks.
AUGUST: Late planters harvest early millet. Invited collective labour (*kpaarip*) for hoeing and weeding coming to fore, but hired labour still in evidence.[2] Fresh hibiscus leaves used in soup.	Almost everybody has early millet; hunger appeased for a time.

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241 431 [1] The different settlements harvest at such different times corresponding to their times of planting that more than a month elapses between the beginning of the harvest at one end of Tale-land, and its conclusion at the other end. This gives rise to a system of reciprocities the effect of which is to cancel out the lag to some extent. People from the late-planting settlements visit their relatives in the early-planting settlements as soon as these begin to harvest and receive gifts of early millet from them. Women, especially, go thus to visit their parental homes, and no man would send his daughter or sister away empty-handed. Later, when the early-harvesting settlements begin to reach the end of their early millet stores, the process is reversed. The Tallensi never think of this in terms of economic interchange or reciprocal payments. They insist that *A* gives to *B* freely and without expectation of return because *B* is *A*'s daughter. Later, when *B*'s husband harvests his millet he will send some to *A* freely—because *A* is his father-in-law. It is significant that these mutual ' good turns ' always occur between people of different settlements, not between patrilineal kin of the same settlement.

241 476 [2] Soon after early millet has been brought in, the elders and others who have had a good crop begin to ' invite hoemen ' (*pɔɔh kpaarip*). An elder sends round to all the compounds of his section (a sub-division of a clan settlement) requesting the young men to come out and weed his farms, compound or bush, for him on the following day. As no one would be so ill-mannered or so negligent of a kinsman's duties as to refuse, some 20 or 30 young men turn out next day. The one who issued the invitation recompenses them with two meals, flour-water (*zɔmkuɔm*) at noon and a lavish cooked meal at night. Thus commences a round of collective weeding, as every farmer who can afford the 20 or 30 lb. of grain and the meat for feeding them in turn invites his kinsmen and neighbours to come and weed for him. Others have to hire foreign labour to the best of their capacity. The Tallensi account for this institution firstly on the ground that it is only by such a mass attack that the rapidly growing weeds can be kept under, and secondly on the ground that it relieves the strain of unremitting toil in the fields and increases the crops.

Gifts to relatives and feeding collective labour are a considerable strain on a man's granary at this time, though, in the long run, much of it comes back. Reliable informants told us that half of their total crop was expended thus, leaving them short of millet in September.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakas*.[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely.
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakas* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but the *bakas* is their own property. [263-422]

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying and stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s*. or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly. 584

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls, 796

	PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
221 262	DECEMBER: Agricultural work over.	Height of ritual season: funeral ceremonies, children's dedication ceremonies, many marriages; all involving consumption of live stock and grain, in sacrifices, as cooked food, and beer.[1]
	JANUARY: Period of secondary activities such as housebuilding, cut-	Grain rationing again begins. Grain and other foodstuffs, including im-

796 guinea-fowls, sheep, goats, and dogs are slaughtered in profusion as sacrifices to ancestral and magical shrines. Beer (*daam*) made of malted grain is boiled, though in small quantities; much food is cooked to receive kinsfolk who call upon and greet each other. Recently married men send baskets of sweet potatoes, frafra potatoes, and yams to greet their parents-in-law. The Festivals last only a few days, but the tubers and animals are consumed over a period of some weeks.

796 764 431 [1] In this period, too, are celebrated all those clan and family religious ceremonies in which animal sacrifices and cooked food and beer play a great part. Indeed, these rites are often postponed for several years until a sufficiently good harvest enables enough supplies to be accumulated. We have seen a cow, a donkey, about 15 sheep and goats, and a large number of fowls and guinea-fowls slaughtered at the funeral ceremonies for a very venerable elder. We were assured ~~by his sons~~ who were responsible for these ceremonies, that they had used up the whole of a large supply of guinea-corn in the preparation of ritual beer and food and in providing hospitality for throngs of guests. At such a funeral the deceased's cognatic and affinal kin bring obligatory food-contributions of cooked porridge, sheep, goats, and birds. So great were these contributions at one funeral that two or three basketfuls of porridge had to be thrown away as it turned sour. Funerals are extreme cases of the lavish utilization of food at this time of the year; and only three or four big funerals take place in any settlement in one season. Most funerals require a much smaller expenditure of live stock and grain than that made at an elder's funeral.

273 This is not the place to discuss the types of ritual and ceremonial situations in which 'things' (*bon*)—the Tale concept which covers every type of property—are consumed. In a good season there will be a tremendous spate of them; in a poor season only urgent rites will be performed. A word, however, must be said about beer, the most important ritual substance apart from the animals and flour used in sacrifices. Beer is cooked (*doy-*) by women, malted grain (*kpeyu*) of guinea-corn or millet being issued to them by the man at whose request it is made. In the average compound beer is never cooked except for ritual purposes which may be twice or thrice a year. Chiefs and headmen, who always have a surplus of grain often, and elders occasionally keep a supply of beer on hand for guests. Tale women never make beer for sale in the markets; indeed, any man would be horrified at the suggestion that his hard-won grain should be used in this way. The Tallensi are a sober people on the whole.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
ting grass and timber for roofing, handicraft work. Young men begin to go abroad temporarily.[1]	ported maize, plentiful and cheap at market.
FEBRUARY: As in January.	Grain issued for only one meal a day. Many purchasing grain rather than use up their own supplies. Ground-nuts and cow-peas regular and important supplements to cereal food. Women finding grain to augment supplies, by trading, etc. Market supplies still plentiful, prices average.
MARCH: As in February. Sporadic cleaning of fields and hoeing.	Grain supplies sinking and more carefully rationed. Children and women gleaning ground-nuts to stop hunger. People going to Mampuru and Nabte countries to purchase grain for re-sale. Grain still plentiful in market, also other products, e.g. yams (imported).[2]

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[1] This month of plenitude marks the peak of the food cycle. Soon supplies diminish again; men who are setting up compounds of their own commence building operations; but almost every compound requires some repairs. House-building and thatching are crafts in which a great many men have no skill. They therefore have to invite (*pooh*) neighbours or relatives who have the skill to carry out the repairs for them; and these have to be generously fed in recompense. A new house, again, is built co-operatively with the aid of kinsmen, relatives and friends, who also have to be generously fed. [476 356]

With this further drain on his grain stores, the head of a unit of food economy has to go warily. Hence in spite of the ample and cheap grain available in the market, he begins to reduce the ration of grain he distributes to his dependants. In February the rationing gets stricter, for it is essential to keep a reserve against the first month of the rains 'to strengthen one' against the greater demands upon one's energy made by agricultural labour. They say this explains why those who can afford it buy grain for immediate consumption. Finally, just before the rains, supplies are sinking to the minimum which will be reached in the month preceeding the early millet harvest, with the usual effect of causing visits to neighbouring areas in search of grain to purchase.

The temporary migration of young men is more fully dealt with in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Culture Contact as a Dynamic Process', *Africa*, ix. 1, 1936.

[2] We have, in the above table, emphasized the place of cereals in the cycle because they constitute the staple food of the Tallensi; and as we are concerned with the domestic economy of food, we have referred to the market only in order 443

221 262 A striking correlation emerges from the above synopsis of the cycle of food economy. It will be seen that domestic food-supplies are at their lowest at the time—recognized as such by the natives—of the most strenuous output of physical labour, i.e. in May–June, and highest when there is least agricultural work. In other words, it would seem that food consumption is inversely correlated with food requirements, if we may assume that more food is needed to sustain the arduous agricultural labour of the rainy season than the leisure months of the dry season. How this affects the working capacity of the natives must be left to the social biologist to determine; it is a type of problem beyond the competence of an ethnographer. 251 261 The Tallensi have both excellent receptacles and adequate techniques for storing all kinds of food. We have seen grain and ground-nuts produced from granaries or storage baskets (*kusɔk*) twelve months after they had been packed, and in perfect condition. Even root crops and legumes, which appear to be more susceptible to damp and weevils, can be stored for a year. Nor, in our estimation, are the Tallensi

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443 to bring out more clearly the fluctuations in domestic supplies. The market is a fundamental economic institution in Tale society, but we have space here only for a cursory comment on its function in relation to our main theme. Every kind of raw foodstuff, from grain to wild fruits and many varieties of cooked food can be purchased in the market. A visit to the market shows at once what the state of the domestic larder is; high prices indicate empty granaries, low prices, plentiful domestic supplies. The cooked food offered in the market illustrates the seasonal variation in supplementary diet very well. As soon as Bambara beans or frafra potatoes are lifted they appear, both raw and cooked, in the market. The food most commonly sold in the market is porridge (*sayabo*), the staple cereal food; but other cereal and pulse confections can be bought there, many kinds being especially prepared for sale, and rarely, if ever, cooked for home consumption. Such are *maasa*—fried millet-cake, *guor* and *kameka*, both made of flour cow-pea. A number of women carry on a regular trade in these luxury foods and thus reap a steady income. Beer is always on sale in the Tale markets, manufactured and sold by a few regular women traders, all Nankansi as far as we know. Only in the markets have we seen intoxicated men; never at ritual gatherings. The market is also the main supplier of tobacco, which most mature men and many old women chew or smoke, but which only a minority are able to grow for themselves, and of kola nuts, imported from Ashanti by foreign traders, and universally chewed as a stimulant by men, women, and even older children. Curdled milk (*bigbihir*), a luxury food, is generally obtained there, too. The market represents the point of contact between the basic subsistence economy of the natives and the money economy which exists side by side with it.

improvident or reckless in the utilization of their supplies. The lavish 251
expenditure of live stock and grain prescribed, according to Tale 261
cultural values, for certain ritual and ceremonial occasions merely emphasizes their normal frugality. 'They rebuke you, saying, will you not listen? The time will come when you will wish for cow-peas and there won't be any. Don't you know that hunger is coming? Truly you behave like infants.' These were the words in which an adolescent boy described how the head of a household restrains his children when, at the time the cow-peas are harvested, they snatch handfuls to cook and eat. It is typical of the same attitude that a man should sometimes store part of his ground-nut crop with a friend or relative in order to remove from his household the temptation to fritter it away in unnecessary sporadic eating.

Why then do the Tallensi not preserve their major crop till the rainy season, which they know well enough to be the time of most exacting labour, and live sparingly during the leisure of the dry season? An explanation would require an analysis of the whole of Tale cultural and social life, a task we cannot pursue here. If the correlation observed above is also found with other African peoples, as is not unlikely, it would indicate that a purely physiological or biochemical approach to the study of a native food economy rests upon questionable assumptions. An instinct of self preservation, 'survival value', or a direct correspondence between their biochemical requirements and the system of food economy would presumably have been reflected in a more adequate seasonal organization of the latter. Culturally determined motives seem, however, to be as significant as physiological factors in this regard.[1]

Conversion of the Raw Materials. We have seen how the raw 000
materials were produced and otherwise brought into the compound by the joint efforts of man, woman, and child. We have studied the fluctuations in the food supply from season to season. We will now

[1] A neat illustration of how cultural and psychological factors affect the food values and economy of the natives is shown in the exceptional care they devote to their tobacco patches. The same care expended on their farms would go a long way towards raising the subsistence level; yet recurrent food shortages have apparently not brought this home to them. [249]

800 deal with the conversion of these raw materials into cooked food for the maintenance of all by the almost exclusive efforts of the woman.

The preparation of food is a woman's task. Though cooking is 462 done by both sexes, men cook only on ritual and special occasions 252 and, as a rule, out of doors. Women always cook in the kitchen, as it 343 is a taboo to prepare food for everyday consumption outside the compound. As we have already mentioned, every woman other than a young wife has her own quarters (*dug*) consisting of several rooms. Of these, the most important for the present paper are the grinding room (*neer*) and the kitchens (*da'aŋ*). Not every woman possesses her own grinding-room, but she may use that of any other woman in her husband's compound, or of a related neighbouring compound, and no one may refuse her. The owner's permission is never asked, but a woman will not enter a grinding-room if she observes another's grain lying on the grinding-platform.

343 The grinding-room is the source of much friction within the compound. It is the cause or pretext of women's quarrels which often 578 involve their husbands as well. Disputes arise mainly over the question of priority, or about the misuse of the grinding stones, e.g. leaving the *baarig* soiled with soup ingredients. Hence, a man will try to build a grinding-room for each wife in order to maintain the peace.

Inside the grinding-room is a low, semicircular platform (*neer*) the 343 surface of which has two or three shallow depressions with their 412 appropriate grindstones (*neekaŋ*). These vary in weight, shape, and 252 texture according to the purpose for which they are intended. There is a heavy and rough grindstone—*ŋmaarig*—used for crushing the whole grain; a smaller and flatter one—*baarig*—which crushes the rough corn into fine flour (*zɔm*); and a small, round stone—*ziba'axneer*—used only for grinding soup ingredients such as dried vegetables, red pepper, rock-salt, dawa-dawa-seed balls, dried meat, &c. If a grinding-room lacks the latter stone the soup ingredients are mixed with a little flour and ground with the *baarig*. The flour is added so that the stone should be left clean and dry.

343 The kitchen consists of two adjoining rooms, a covered one (*da'ambɔk*) used during the wet season, which serves also as the storeroom for the owner's produce, her firewood, and cooking-pots, and an open one (*da'aŋ*) used during the dry season. However, it happens

not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat
stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking;
the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace,
and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it;
this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect
enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements
becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to
care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may
therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her
and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in
marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other
firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother
and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate
her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her.
He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only
time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the
harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks
from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room
or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kʊmɔɔr*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch
and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem.
The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the waterholes
collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it
seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and
drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely,
but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption, but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes, but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a radius of not more than 300 yards.

262 A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not in the lean months.

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264 The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, preferably unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism. Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual household and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman carefully considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

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252 However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncertainty of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over (three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home, and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to. Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

PLATE III

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1. Bringing home firewood: Mother and daughter

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2. A woman in her kitchen (posed)

[facing p. 264]

PLATE IV

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3. At Breakfast: Father and Children
(The man is eating with his 'youngest' child)

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4. The host provides a meal for collective labour invited to help build his house

[facing p. 265]

for firewood. A woman with a small child never omits to cook a little 562
for it, whatever the circumstances. The cooking routine also becomes 264
upset under the stress of seasonal activities. When a whole family 252
goes to work at a bush farm or to a fishing expedition, some groundnuts
or dry guinea-corn is taken along to chew, and no cooking will
be done until evening.

Each woman is responsible for the provision of meals for her 596
husband and family. In certain situations co-wives co-operate for the 476
common good. Thus when building operations take place, or a man 264
has hired or 'invited' labour the co-wives cook in turn to provide
food for the men. On such occasions the owner of the granary allots a
special share of grain for the labourers' porridge to the woman whose
turn it is to cook for them.

Mutual assistance between co-wives occurs only when a woman is 596
confined or ill. Then her co-wife (a wife of her husband or his 252
brother) cooks for her and her family. The confined woman provides
her own produce and firewood and the cooking is done in her kitchen.
This is the duty and prerogative of co-wives. Only as a last resort
would the husband's mother or sister cook for her in those circumstances.
When a young wife shares her mother-in-law's quarters she
does all the household tasks; but when she shares those of a senior
wife, they assist each other and cook in turn.

The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and 262
soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season
and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea-corn
or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or
cow-peas or rice is used. When root crops are in season they are cooked
instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous
to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is
done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it
makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the
Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things
they spoil your belly'.[1]

The preparation of porridge is very simple. Flour is not preserved 252

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[1] A Tale friend enquired what kind of food he would be given in our country, and when told that he would eat meat, fish, bread, and eggs, he exclaimed, 'What, no porridge? I call that starvation.'

252 from day to day, but is usually ground fresh whenever required. When her flour is ready, the woman puts some water on to boil in the porridge pot (*sayarok*). Sitting on the flat stone in front of the fireplace she then mixes some flour with cold water, stirring it to a thin paste with her hand, in an old calabash kept for this purpose. When the water boils she pours the paste in, stirring all the while with the stirring-stick. It is left to boil for a few minutes until it thickens and assumes a gluey appearance. With a ladle she pours off about a third of the contents into the old calabash, and puts it aside. She sprinkles a few handfuls of flour into the porridge in the pot, stirring it swiftly with her stick until it becomes quite thick. Every now and again she dips her hand into cold water and with a brisk movement sweeps the porridge adhering to the stick into the pot. The half-cooked contents of the calabash is then added to the porridge and stirred again. When it is thick enough for the stick to stand in it the porridge is ready. The time taken to cook a potful of porridge sufficient for 10 people is only about 10 minutes. The same technique is employed by all the women; the only difference introduced in cooking large quantities is the mixing of the flour with warm water instead of cold.

262 Porridge is never eaten by itself, but is always accompanied by
soup, the main variant in Tale diet. This is made chiefly of fresh or
252 dried vegetables, cultivated or found wild, and there is never a shortage of these. When reduced to its last resources a family subsists almost entirely on soup.

The natives classify soups into two types: *zisaalɔg* and *zizaayɔg*—'slippery' soup and 'coarse' soup. The first is smooth and viscous: 'It slides down as soon as you put it into your mouth, before the porridge.' Ocro soup is the most representative of this kind. The coarse variety is made of crushed ground-nuts, marrow leaves, hibiscus or similar vegetables. 'It sticks in your mouth after the porridge and you have to swallow it down.'

Porridge is the substance, soup is the relish. A woman tries to vary the latter 'so that they do not tire of eating the same'; when a visitor from afar comes she prepares the most tasty soup she knows, and if she wishes to please her husband she observes which soup he prefers and cooks it frequently for him. Seasonal factors, however, count for much, and women cook mainly what is most easily obtainable at

the time. From a series of menus which we collected over a period 262
of two months (November–January), it would appear that ocro is 252
the favourite soup, while *bet* (*hibiscus sabdariffa*) is the least liked.
Neri-seed[1] soup is rarely cooked for ordinary consumption, but is
prepared on a special occasion such as a visit of an in-law relation.

Though the number of different vegetables planted is few, the 251 ✓
women are able to achieve a considerable range of variation by using 262
every part of the plant and by combining them in different ways.
Every woman has a well-stocked larder of dried vegetable-leaves and
fruits which she keeps in pots (e.g. ocro) or onion-shaped receptacles
made of dried guinea-corn leaves (*kiŋkarog*) and suspended from the
rafters to keep them dry (e.g. *bet* or *naŋgena*).

The process of preparation is the same in the main for most soups, 252
and is described in the Appendix. Vegetables and other ingredients 515
are never washed or cleaned before use: Tale women are very casual
in their cooking hygiene; the cooking-pots are left unwashed from
one meal till the next and the soup dishes always have stale food
adhering to them.[2]

Meat is a very important ingredient in the soup. It is most commonly 252
consumed in this way, though it is sometimes eaten by itself 262
by men after sacrifices. It is a great delicacy and men will often spend
long hours at a ceremony in order to obtain a morsel of meat or a tiny
piece of the viscera. Any scrap of meat or fat which falls to the ground
is picked up and swallowed raw. But meat is not 'food', they say, as
porridge is, it is *valeg*, i.e. gluttony. While a little of it is strengthening, [753]
too much causes diarrhoea.

The only meat directly killed for cooking is the guinea-fowl. The

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[1] *Neri* (*cucumis melo*) when ripe is buried and covered with guinea-corn stalks and allowed to rot. The seeds are then extracted, dried, and stored for making soups.

[2] The chief reason would seem to be the scarcity of water at certain times of the year, and the labour involved in carrying it, as well as the ingrained indifference of the Tallensi to cleanliness. Yet they take great pleasure in polishing their calabashes at the water-holes to make them yellow and shiny, and treat the new calabashes in a special way to attain the gloss. We have seen women carrying gravel home with them when visiting a neighbouring settlement some 4 miles away because their own clayey soil was not satisfactory for cleaning calabashes. We could not obtain an adequate explanation of this attitude from the women themselves, beyond that 'they like it so'.

252 262 initiative in this matter is never taken by the woman herself. If she has no meat she cooks without it, but the husband, tasting the soup, will observe that her meat is finished and will catch a guinea-fowl for her or give her money to buy one at the market. A woman may not catch one of her husband's guinea-fowls herself or she would be branded a thief, but she could catch one of her own, if she has any. This is the reason why she tells her husband 'So-and-so gave me a guinea-fowl and I had it killed to-day', if she slaughters one [576] she received as a gift. A woman never kills or plucks a guinea-fowl herself because it is unbecoming. She will ask a young boy in the compound to do it for her. We have frequently observed women carrying home live guinea-fowls already plucked for them in the market [251] by some man, so as to avoid delay in the cooking. The freshly killed guinea-fowl is hung up directly over the fireplace where it becomes gradually dried. When it is used the first day it is called *num-mahar*, i.e. fresh meat; after two or three days it is dry on the surface but still soft inside and is known as *num-gahar* or *num-ɔɔra*, i.e. smoked meat; after three days it is dry all through. It is now *num-kpee*, dried meat. There is no preference shown for meat at any particular stage; the Tallensi are an economical people and have a matter-of-fact attitude in this regard. Meat is added to the soup in very small quantities. Used fresh or smoked, it is added as a whole portion, e.g. the head, the neck, a wing, a leg or the breast. Dried meat is ground and stirred into the soup in the same way as the other seasonings. A medium sized guinea-fowl thus lasts a family of seven about a week. Dried meat can be kept any length of time, and if a piece of fresh meat is obtained in the meantime it is used up first. In such a case one guinea-fowl might last a housewife as much as a fortnight.

262 251 Beef or donkey-meat is much appreciated. We have seen a woman produce about two square inches of dried beef which was a year old. Such meat is carefully preserved in a pot or calabash among a woman's more valued possessions; but dried guinea-fowl is kept with her other soup ingredients in the kitchen.

Fish is used in the same way as meat, though less frequently, and mainly in dried form. This is due to the fact that it is seasonal and has generally to be purchased. But it is appreciated as much as meat.

262 263 Vegetables are the foundation of every soup; meat and fish make

a good soup; but no soup is complete without seasonings (*zikuot*). 262
Red pepper (*nanzuuh*), the most important, is never omitted from 263
any soup, is added to other dishes too, and even to native beer to give it more punch. Salt (*yaarem*), though very highly valued, is not as indispensable as red pepper. *Ziem* (the ash of valley grasses) or *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is sometimes substituted for salt or used in addition to it. A much-favoured seasoning is the dawa-dawa seed ball (*kpɔlug*) which is sometimes even used as the foundation of a soup. Usually the seasoning ingredients are all used together; the more pungent the soup the better it is liked. Most women do not keep large supplies of seasonings, but consider it worth while to walk several miles to the nearest market to buy them.

Thus, though the native considers soup merely as a relish for his 262
porridge, it really provides the vegetable and animal food (the latter 146
in very small quantities) which balances a purely cereal diet.

The soup is always put on to cook first. While it is boiling, the 252
woman sweeps out the close (*dendɔŋo*) where the meal is to be eaten, and prepares the vessels for serving it. The preparation and cooking of the soup takes 30–40 minutes. When it is ready she makes the porridge. In all these tasks a woman is assisted by her young daughters. Small boys, too, sometimes give a hand with the fire, but never with the cooking.

As soon as the porridge is ready it is dished up in several calabashes. 252
The housewife takes much trouble in arranging her husband's portion 264
in neat slices—she is less fastidious about the other portions. Each portion of porridge is rubbed over with shea butter; that of the husband's very liberally. This is the most common way in which fat is consumed. After the porridge has been shared out the soup is poured into an equal number of dishes, or sometimes over the porridge. The actual cooking and serving of food, unlike the fetching of wood and water, does not absorb a great deal of the housewife's time. One hour is sufficient to prepare a meal for ten people.

The amount of food consumed per meal differs according to the 262
seasons. When food is scarce, whatever quantity of grain a woman has she will cook, and it will have to suffice; but a Taleŋa never feels satisfied unless he has had about 1½ lb. of porridge at a sitting.

There is no specially appointed eating-place in the compound. 264

264 Each family eats in its own close, while the man usually eats in that of his senior wife, and his other wives each send him in a dish of food.

252 595 As we have already mentioned, each woman in a polygynous household cooks for the husband and her own family. Their cooking is not synchronized, but as the evening meal is always made at sunset, there is no considerable discrepancy in the time of eating by the different families.

264 The man eats with his 'youngest' child, that is, the last one to have stopped suckling. If he has unmarried brothers dependent upon him they, too, eat with him. A few yards further off his sons—young men and boys—form another group, while the woman herself and the young girls eat apart at the kitchen door. Two women sharing a kitchen eat together. Men and women do not eat together except in circumstances which will be noted later.

A calabash of porridge, a dish of soup, a calabash of drinking-water and another for washing the hands are set down for each group. When the senior member of each group has taken his place the others settle in a circle round the food. In order of seniority each one washes his or her right hand perfunctorily. The eldest member is the first to begin eating, but he is also the first to stop. The youngest member finishes last and is usually encouraged to clear the dish; for an older member to continue eating with the youngest is to invite the ridicule of the others. The food is eaten with the right hand. A piece of porridge is broken off and dipped into the soup with cupped fingers. If meat is present each member breaks off a tiny morsel of it to taste. During the meal the water is passed round for every one to drink. Though each group seated round a dish of food acts independently, those sitting in the same close with the head of the household do not begin before him. Eating is a serious business; there is no conversation at meal-times, and as soon as a group has finished they disperse.

264 595 In addition to sending in food to her husband, a woman sends a dish of porridge with soup to her husband's mother, and a dish to each of her co[illegible]ves belonging to her own food economy unit. Thus, each woman has to cook enough for her husband and family and to exchange with every kitchen supplied from the same grain store. This rule, naturally, does not hold for food provided by a woman's

own efforts in time of scarcity. Each woman cares for her own 264
children only. She keeps food for an absent child, but will offer some 575
to a co-wife's child only if it asks her for it. But the man will give
food to all his children. As a rule, he eats the portion sent in by his
senior wife and tastes a little from each dish brought in by the others.
When he has had his fill he calls his children to come and eat the rest,
always remembering those who have not had enough. Thus the
discrepancy in the distribution of grain, where each woman gets the
same share irrespective of the number of mouths she has to feed, is
adjusted by the man in his fair re-distribution of the cooked food.

This general pattern is not a rigid one, but is adapted to the structure
of every household and to its special circumstances, e.g. a man would [576]
eat with his wife and small children from a common dish if they
happened to be alone in the compound. To do so if another wife were
present would cause envy and quarrelling between the women; these
arrangements are a matter of etiquette and not of taboo.

The natives account for the custom of a man's eating with his 264
'youngest' child on the grounds that a child must eat properly in order
to grow and must be taught to do so. They say, also, that it thus
learns to know its father, and not only its mother whom it is always
following about. We have not sufficient material to judge the validity
of this interpretation; it is quoted here to indicate the native valuation
of the sharing of food in the family.

Infants are given morsels of porridge as soon as they can swallow 853
solid food, and by the age of 18 months can feed themselves dexterously.
They are weaned by the age of three not by a forcible or harsh 862
separation from the breast, but by gradual habituation to adult food. 264
The emphasis on the adequate feeding of children is shown, also,
in the manner in which *sayakɔrɔt*, left-over porridge, is reserved for
them. Porridge remaining after the noon meal is stirred into the
porridge cooked at sunset; if it is left after the evening meal it is given
to children cold for breakfast next day. Only after they have eaten
their fill will adults have some. In the months of plenty children
often have a morning meal of *sayakɔrɔt*; at other times a handful of
ground-nuts, or a dish of flour-water or of dawa-dawa powder must
suffice.

Flour-water (*zɔmkuom*) deserves a note to itself. There are two ways 272

272 of preparing it. The usual way is to mix the flour with water into a stiff dough, then knead it into a smooth, flat cake (*zɔmgar*), and place it in a calabash which is filled with water. A hasty method consists in merely pouring water over a handful of flour and stirring it up with the hand. This is *zɔmsaka*. As porridge is the ideal food so *zɔmkuom* is the ideal everyday beverage. It is the drink offered to guests, and the regular libation given to the ancestors. It is also food. When the water has been drunk the flour is eaten by adults and children. *Zɔmkuom*, unlike ground-nuts, forms a hasty meal and is resorted to when cooking is inconvenient.

264 Sporadic eating is a universal habit. It goes on in time of plenty because food abounds, and in time of scarcity because one dare not
262 forego an opportunity of eating anything. When the ground-nuts are nearly ripe people pluck a plant from anybody's field and chew the nuts. When grain is abundant a handful is roasted over a fire and eaten at any time of the day. Nevertheless, the Tallensi are capable of going without food for long stretches at a time.

At the ritual and ceremonial gatherings which take place preponderantly in the dry season but intermittently throughout the year, ritual flour-water or cooked food is often passed round, or ground-nuts distributed to the elders present. At the markets, too, particularly in the months of plenty, both porridge and especially the luxury confections such as *kameka* (fried cakes of cow-pea flour) *maasa* (fried millet cakes) and so on are bought in quantities. The small animals and birds, which children hunt and eat, as well as the ground-nuts they glean, belong to this category of food consumption.

Sporadic eating does not, however, in any way affect the domestic organization of the food economy. The housewife never omits to cook a meal because her children found some titbit for themselves, nor will she even question them about it. The Tallensi do not consider such eating as 'food'; not even in the time of scarcity when meals at home become uncertain.

262 Food taboos, on the other hand, react upon the arrangements for the cooking and distributing of the food. Women never cook fowls or dogs, since they avoid eating them. Men therefore cook these animals for themselves. If a woman observes a totemic taboo, her husband cannot compel her to cook the animal she avoids for him, though he

may do so for himself. She, again, may eat an animal he avoids, but 262
would hardly find it feasible to cook it in her own kitchen.

The occasions for which special foods are customary are few. A woman in her first pregnancy must eat food 'which is good for her', [843] such as meat and highly seasoned soup and avoid unsuitable foods such as thinly mixed flour-water (*zɔmsaka*), left-over porridge, or too many sweet potatoes or frafra potatoes. Nor may she eat cold food or drink too much cold water. 'Sweet' food (i.e. luxury foods such as sold in the market) is not encouraged, while honey is prohibited for magical reasons. A woman found eating the latter is severely reprimanded and a special rite has to be carried out on the birth of the child or it will have a blocked nose. During confinement a woman is given porridge with highly seasoned soups and a generous allowance of fish or meat to make her strong.

There is no specific food for sick people, except that fresh porridge 262 758 and pungent soup are considered strengthening. The prognosis is very grave if a sick person refuses food. In the prostration of grief, too, people refuse food and their relatives try to tempt their palate with delicacies.

Old and toothless people in time of food shortage are given crushed 262 888 ground-nuts (*sukpabugra*) to drink down with water.

We have attempted, in this paper, to give an outline of the domestic 000 commissariat of the Tallensi. Our interest has been focussed on the principles according to which the domestic groupings of Tale society organize and sustain the social activities customary for the production of raw foodstuffs, their preservation, and their conversion into and consumption as edible food. We have observed how the ever-changing, developing structure of the joint family determines these activities; how Tale culture defines the values and norms by which these activities are regulated and directed; how these values and norms, on the one hand, and seasonal conditions, on the other, control the annual cycle of food production and consumption; and finally, how the convergent influence of family structure, cultural norms and values, and seasonal exigencies determine the crucial situation of the series, the translation of the product of natural resources and culturally organized labour into the edible food in the kitchen.

000 We have been unable to explore the economic context of food in Tale society (e.g. as exhibited in the market); or to discuss the emotional values associated with it; or to describe its functions as a technique for expressing, defining, and imposing social obligations. These problems must be left for consideration at a future date.

M. and S. L. FORTES.

APPENDIX

252 262 We give below a few examples of soups and their method of preparation; a brief description of foods used as substitutes for porridge; of occasional foods which are obtained mainly in the market; and of the preparation of shea-butter.

Soups (*ziet*)

Zisaaləg—smooth, viscous soup; best example of this is *ma'ana ziet*—ocro soup.

A small handful of ground, dried fish or meat is thrown into a potful of boiling water. A handful of red peppers, a few lumps of salt and a piece of dawa-dawa-seed ball, ground up together and mixed into a paste with a little water is added next. The seasonings are made into a paste so that the pepper should not float on the surface. While this is cooking the ocros are prepared. They are used either fresh or dried; but frequently the two varieties are mixed in equal proportions. They are crushed into a pulp on the grindstone and added to the boiling soup. The contents are stirred with the stirring-stick (*vugr*) every now and again. The soup takes about 30 minutes to cook.

In soups of this type the vegetables used are always crushed to a pulp or cut up very fine. Other viscous soups are made from the leaf of the local elm (*nuom*) and from a common weed (*saalem*), but mainly by the addition of ocro to other vegetables, as, e.g., *vaat ni ma'anar*—leaves and ocro—where the leaves of the ocro or vegetable marrow or baobab tree are used; or *bermihim*, a soup made of the white hibiscus flower with the addition of ocros.

Zizaayəg—coarse soup. To this group belong all the soups made of the hibiscus and other leaves, and also soups made of ground-nuts and cow-peas. The leaves are sliced and thrown into boiling water. While they are cooking, a small calabashful of ground-nuts is crushed fine, also a handful of peppers, a piece of dawa-dawa-seed ball and a few lumps of salt. These are all mixed together and stirred into the boiling vegetables. If there is meat or fish it is also ground and added at this stage. This soup takes 30 minutes to cook. The thickening, which is always added to this kind of soup, may be made of coarsely ground grain, or of cow-pea flour.

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The Tale women show great ingenuity in the number of appellations they give to soups of this group, which often do not differ from each other in the main ingredients.

Cooked Foods Eaten as Porridge Substitutes

1. *Tubers*:

Frafra potatoes (*peeha*) boiled in the skins and eaten plain. This is called *peefita*.

Cooked without the skins and eaten with soup. The potatoes are put on the ground and trodden with the feet in a circular movement. This removes the skins. They are then washed and put to boil. The water in which they have been cooked is not utilized.

Yam (*nuya*) boiled in plain water. Is served in small chunks and eaten with soup.

Sweet potatoes (*nunhma'ala*) boiled and eaten plain. Sometimes cooked together with frafra potatoes.

2. *Legumes*:

These are boiled in plain water and are eaten with shea-butter and a seasoning of pepper and salt.

3. *Rice*:

Boiled with pepper and salt. Shea-butter is added to it when dished up. Is eaten with soup.

Ground cow-peas or ground rice is occasionally made into porridge.

Occasional Foods

Kameha—fried dumplings made of cow-pea flour. The process of preparing the cow-pea flour (*tia zom*) is rather laborious.

The cow-peas are crushed and washed in several changes of water in order to remove the skin which, if left, would make the flour black. It is then spread out in the sun to dry and later ground to flour. The flour is made into a thick batter to which salt is added. The batter is dropped into boiling shea-butter, handful by handful, and fried a golden brown. This is a much appreciated food and is only cooked for the market. So also is *maasa*—fried cakes made of millet or maize flour. These are much larger than the *kameha* and are fried in the same way.

Gaar—steamed cakes made of cow-pea flour, bean flour, or ground rice. The flour is prepared as for *kameha*. Instead of salt, an infusion of *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is added to the water which is used for making a thick batter. A pot is half-filled with dry grass and a little water added. It is then put on to boil. Small portions of the batter are in the meantime placed in between broad folded leaves of the *bayana* tree, or, if larger cakes are

252 desired, between two overlapping leaves. As soon as the water boils the
262 cakes are arranged one on top of the other inside the pot, which is then
closed tightly with a lid or calabash. The cakes are thus cooked by the steam, and are ready in 15 minutes. They are like baked porridge in appearance and are eaten with melted shea-butter spread over them and a sprinkling of salt and red pepper. *Guor* is principally cooked for market sale, but is occasionally cooked by the housewife to vary the menu.

Milk (*bihim*)

262 Milk is obtained only from cows and is eaten as curds (*bigbihir*) mixed
234 with flour. Herdboys, however, when out on the pasture sometimes milk
the cows for a drink.

Shea-Butter (*kpaam*)

252 There are five stages in the making of shea-butter:

262 1. The nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) are crushed with a stone to a brown pulp.

2. The pulp is placed in a large open pot (*sar*) over a fire, and stirred with a stick for a considerable time till it is a thick, sticky mass.

3. This is then ground quite fine. The grinding releases the oil.

4. It is now washed in several changes of water, being stirred continually with the hand, until the oil rises to the surface.

5. The oil is skimmed off the water, melted over a fire, and again skimmed till pure white oil is obtained. This is put into calabashes or small pots.
[278] The dark oil-scum (*kpabut*) is kept for medicinal purposes. It is only used externally. The brown fibrous residue left after the washing process is made
[372] into small balls and dried. This is *burum* and is used for making fires.

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AFRICA

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

JOURNAL DE L'INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DES
LANGUES ET CIVILISATIONS AFRICAINES

ZEITSCHRIFT DES INTERNATIONALEN INSTITUTS
FÜR AFRIKANISCHE SPRACHEN UND KULTUREN

Editor
DIEDRICH WESTERMANN

Assistant Editor
D. G. BRACKETT

VOLUME XI
1938

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON : HUMPHREY MILFORD

[title page]

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN
LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

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SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATION IN TALELAND

By M. FORTES

Supplement to 'Africa'
Volume XI, *No.* 4

Published by the OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS *for the*
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN
LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
SEYMOUR HOUSE, WATERLOO PLACE
LONDON S.W. 1
1938

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I. Introduction

121 THERE is no lack of disquisitions on the role of education in the simpler societies. Africa, in particular, has received enormous attention in this connexion. Commissions and congresses have delivered judgment on education in one or another African society. Missionaries, anthropologists, itinerant journalists, travellers, Government officials, and innumerable others have vouchsafed opinions on the subject until it has become smothered in platitudes and generalizations. But empirical studies of a sociological or psychological kind in field or school are far from numerous. In this paper I shall attempt, in outline, such a study.[1]

II. The Sociological Approach

We can commence from two axioms which must be regarded as firmly established both in sociological and in educational theory. It is agreed that education in the widest sense is the process by which the cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation, and that schooling is therefore only a part of it. It is agreed, correlatively, that the 'moulding of individuals to the social norm is the function of education such as we find it among these simpler peoples',[2] and, it may be added, among ourselves.

870 Starting from these axioms, anthropologists have explored the conditions and the social framework of education in pre-literate societies. It has been shown that the training of the young is seldom regularized or systematized, but occurs as a 'by-product'[3] of the cultural routine; that the kinsfolk, and particularly the family, are mainly responsible for it; that it is conducted in a practical way in relation to the 'actual

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[1] An outline of this paper was first presented in a lecture on 'Play Activities of Primitive African Children' which I gave in March 1936 at the invitation of Paul and Marjorie Abbatt. Dr. Lucy Mair and Dr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard have assisted me greatly with their comments and criticism.

[2] A. W. Hoernlé, 'An Outline of the Native Conception of Education in Africa', *Africa*, iv, 1931. But this axiom has been formulated by many writers, e.g. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, ch. i.

[3] *Vide* Hoernlé, loc. cit.; B. Malinowski, 'Native Education and Culture Contact', *International Review of Missions*, 1936.

000 situations of daily life '.[1] It has been observed that manners and ethical and moral attitudes are first inculcated within the family circle in association with food and eating and with the control of bodily functions. A good deal of discussion has been devoted, also, to what appear to be overtly educational institutions, such as initiation schools and ceremonies, age grades, or secret societies.[2] It has been proved that direct instruction in tribal history, sexual knowledge, and ritual esoterica is promoted by these institutions.

In this way a good deal of information has been accumulated about *what* is transmitted from one generation to the next in pre-literate societies, about the circumstances of this transmission, and the institutional and structural framework within which it occurs. Of the process of education—*how* one generation is ' moulded ' by the superior generation, *how* it assimilates and perpetuates its cultural heritage—much less is known. The problem has, indeed, never been precisely formulated,[3] with the result that alleged discussions of primitive education not infrequently prove to be merely descriptions of social structure slightly disguised.

121 *The problem formulated.* Education is a social process, a temporal concatenation of events in which the significant factor is time and the significant phenomenon is change. Between birth and social maturity the individual is transformed from a relatively peripheral into a relatively central link in the social structure; from an economically passive burden into a producer; from a biological unit into a social personality irretrievably cast in the habits, dispositions and notions characteristic of his culture. The problem presented by this function of society is of an entirely different order from that presented by the religious or economic or political system of a people. The

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[1] R. Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, pp. 147 ff. This is the most valuable empirical and theoretical contribution to the subject of recent years. There have been various attempts to utilize this principle in planning curricula of schooling in Africa. Cf. W. B. Mumford, ' Malangali Experiments ', *Africa*, iii, 1930 and A. D. Helser, *Education of Primitive People*, 1934.

[2] Cf., *inter alia*, E. W. Smith, ' Indigenous Education in Africa ', in *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman*, for a useful commentary on this and other general points referred to in this paper; and J. H. Driberg, *At Home with the Savage*, pp. 232 ff.

[3] I refer to Africa here. Margaret Mead in *Coming of Age in Samoa* and *Growing Up in New Guinea* and Firth, op. cit., have done much to clarify it for Oceania. Attention is drawn to the problem in Rev. E. W. Smith's essay, cited above.

former is primarily a problem of genetic psychology, the latter of 121 cultural and sociological analysis. In studying education in a particular society we ought, ideally, to be able to take its cultural idiom for granted, whereas the first task of sociological analysis is to discover the cultural idiom. Thus, in Taleland one often finds a pair of small boys disputing with childish earnestness as to who is senior. Unless one has observed the scope of the principle of seniority in the social structure one is liable to dismiss this as mere childish play of no importance.

Education, from this point of view,[1] is an active process of learning and teaching by which individuals gradually acquire the full outfit of culturally defined and adapted behaviour. In this paper I shall try to delineate briefly how it occurs in one African society, that of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. As it will be impossible to compass the whole process of social maturation within the limits of this paper, some of the more conspicuous changes and activities only will be examined.

The sampling problem. My observations were made in the course 114 of a field study of the Tallensi the object of which, in accordance with the usual ethnographical method, was the entire society and its culture. It is impossible in such a case—as other anthropologists have found—to follow up a special psychological problem in a manner commensurate with the criteria of experimental research in England. That will only be achieved when specialists can be induced to take over these investigations.

Such material as I am able to present consequently suffers most from 128 sampling deficiencies. Social behaviour among primitive people appears to be more standardized than among ourselves. Yet variations occur, distributed perhaps in accordance with the normal curve of error as among ourselves but perhaps not. The problem has still to be investigated. Ethnographers are principally interested in

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[1] An excursus into genetic psychology would be out of place in this paper, but the reader will observe how much it owes, *inter alia*, to F. C. Bartlett, *Remembering*; K. Koffka, *Growth of the Mind*; S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth of Young Children*; *Social Development of Young Children*; C. E. Spearman, *Nature of Intelligence*; and to the writings of Jean Piaget (*Language and Thought of the Young Child*, &c.). I have borrowed also from the anthropological writings already cited and from those of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, particularly from their writings on kinship.

128 'patterns of behaviour', hence they neglect or slur over variations, and sometimes indeed build whole theories on a single occurrence. For most problems of social anthropology variations are of minor importance as compared with the 'typical', and an all-round knowledge of a culture is a sufficient check of typicality. For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost
158 importance. For example, the first case of thumb-sucking I observed was that of a girl infant 3–4 years old whose mother had recently died. Could it be assumed that this was a clear-cut instance of the thumb being substituted for the nipple? Some time later I came across another little girl, about the same age, thumb-sucking, but her mother was alive and she was not yet fully weaned. Further observation brought a few more cases of this habit to light, but it is so infrequent among Tale children that a single year's observation does not yield sufficient instances to suggest any correlation.

Generally speaking, therefore, small samples form the basis of the observations recorded in this paper. Where norms of development are implied it will be understood that an appreciable, though indeterminable, variability exists.

III. Social Sphere of the Tale Child

184
155 The process of education among the Tallensi, as among a great many other African peoples of analogous culture, is intelligible when it is recognized that the social sphere of adult and child[1] is unitary and undivided. In our own society the child's feeling and thinking and acting takes place largely in relation to a reality—to aims, responsibilities, compulsions, material objects and persons, and so forth—which differs completely from that of the adult, though sometimes overlapping it. This dichotomy is not only expressed in our customs, it comes out also in the psychological reactions which mark the indivi-

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[1] I am aware that the unqualified manner in which this proposition is formulated here invites the immediate objection that it cannot possibly hold for the new-born infant, or even for the child who is inarticulate and does not yet walk or crawl. I would suggest in answer that it is impossible empirically to observe the point at which the child's affective orientation to its cultural environment first receives its bias; and also, that recent psychology and anthropology would support me in attaching basic importance to the earliest infantile responses of a child as determinants of later interests.

dual's transition from the child's world to the adult's—e.g. the so- 184
called negative phase or adolescent instability which has been alleged 155
to be universal in our society.[1] It is unknown in Tale society.[2] As between adults and children, in Tale society, the social sphere is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. All participate in the same culture, the same round of life, but in varying degrees, corresponding to the stage of physical and mental development. Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system. Psychological effects of fundamental importance for Tale education follow from this. For it means that the child is from the beginning oriented towards the same reality as its parents and has the same physical and social material upon which to direct its cognitive and instinctual endowment. The interests, motives, and purposes of children are identical with those of adults, but at a simpler level of organization. Hence the children need not be coerced to take a share in economic and social activities. They are eager to do so. This does not mean that Tale children are altogether passive in the hands of their parents. Temperamental idiosyncrasies in children strike the observer at a glance. Tantrums, disobedience, destructiveness, and other aggressive outbursts occur sometimes. Among youths and adults misfits and incompetents can be found. But even they live for the same ends and have the same objective values and interests as the majority.

The unity of the social sphere is the more marked in Tale society 184
since they have almost no social stratification within a genealogical 565
or local community. There are no class or rank cleavages, nor highly organized and exclusive economic, political, or ritual associations cutting across the local, genealogical segmentation; and the social division of labour is rudimentary. The pattern of existence is the same for all members of a given community, varying only in texture
or tone from individual to individual. The social sphere is differen- 184
tiated only as between communities which are generally localized clans 565
or lineages. Thus, the blacksmith lineage of Sakpee is unique, as 326
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[1] See G. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 429–32, for a critical discussion of this question.

[2] Cf. also Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[744] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

867 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]
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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run aw[redacted]eir
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pɔkg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother-child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

871 [186] 181 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descendants. Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system, and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a significant motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from their ancestor cult. Every Taləŋa desires sons so that there may be some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son, a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious duty to their ancestors.

781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children. It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation. Last year, for instance, Kuwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

869 861 828 The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors (*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,' he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?' When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

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[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

shrine they accompany us and listen to what we say. Will they not 869
[thus] get to know it?' His own small son Badiwona (6–7 years) is 861
extremely devoted to him. One day, affectionately patting the child, 828
he said: 'When we come out in the morning, and if he doesn't see [593]
me, he seeks about for me. If he doesn't find me he won't rest. That is why I had him initiated last year. Whatever I do he also sits and listens. Will he not get to know it thus? And when I am gone will he not say that when he was a child he used to go about with his father and used to see how his father did this and that? This is my child and I am teaching him uprightness. If he is about to do anything that is not seemly I tell him, so that when he grows up he will know upright ways.'[1]

Education, it is clear, is regarded as a joint enterprise in which 861
parents are as eager to lead as children to follow. In consequence of 856
this attitude adults are very tolerant of children's ways and especially about their learning. A child is never forced beyond its capacity. This is seen most clearly in relation to the pivotal economic activity, agriculture. However skilful a boy may be with his hoe, he will not be forced to do as much work as an adult. Men often restrain their sons of 12–14 from joining the adults in hoeing on the grounds that over-exertion is harmful. Again, women do not take daughters of 9–10 on firewood expeditions to the bush.

That skill comes with practice is realized by all. When adults are 868
asked about children's mimetic play they reply: 'That is how they learn.' Thus when a boy is 7 or 8 his father buys him a small bow so that he can go and learn marksmanship in play with his comrades. Yet the existence of individual differences in ability, both amongst children and amongst adults, is recognized and cited with reference to the acquisition of skill. Rapid learning or the acquisition of a new skill is explained by *ɔ mar nini pam*, 'he has eyes remarkably', that is, he is very sharp. A friend of mine who was a cap-maker told me how he had learnt his craft, as a youth, from a Dagban by carefully watching him at work. When he was young, he explained, he had 'very good eyes'. This conception of cleverness is intelligible in a society where learning by looking and copying is the commonest manner of achieving dexterity both in crafts and in the everyday manual activities.

[1] He learns—*ɔ bamhera*, cognate with *baŋ*, to know; I teach him—*mpaasami*.

861 At the same time, no one hesitates to punish when it seems to be merited. A child who neglects a task entrusted to him or her may expect to be rebuked or even chastised. Incidents such as the following occur frequently. Strolling through Puhug one morning in June when the early millet was ripening, I stopped to chat with Tampɔyar, a young man of 25 or so. Suddenly there came the sound of furious railing from his father's house-top. 'Your ears don't listen. Can't you look after your cattle properly, you good-for-nothings, you things-with-sunken-eyes. . . .' A voice from a neighbouring house-top joined in to the same effect, adding: 'I'll come down and thrash you.' The objects of these fulminations were two small boys, about 9–10 years, who were driving some cattle out to pasture. They were dawdling and their beasts stopped to munch at the millet. The rebuke had the desired effect. Tampɔyar's comment was to point to a scar on his body where for the same crime he had been so severely whipped, as a small boy, that a suppurating wound resulted.

Disciplinary punishment is also administered at times. A small boy is told to go and scare the birds from the fields. He refuses. A hard smack on the haunches sends him scampering.

Nevertheless, I have never observed vindictive punishment or malicious bullying, either of children by adults or of young children by older ones. Indeed, punishment appeared to me to be extremely rare among the Tallensi, as compared with ourselves. It is thought to be necessary sometimes to use rough measures in teaching morals and manners, but not in teaching skills. A very intelligent elder once declared *nyɛn pu mugx ibii la u ku ŋɔya yam*, 'If you don't harass your child, he will not gain sense.' This view is held by many. But, as the context of conversation showed, what he meant was not so much corporal punishment as that constant supervision is necessary in the training of children for life.

577 *The concept of 'yam'.* Tallensi often use the concept *yam* when discussing social behaviour. It corresponds to our notion of 'sense' when we refer to a 'sensible man', or 'sound common sense'. As the Tallensi use the term it suggests the quality of 'insight'. Its range of usage is wide. If it is said of some one *u mar yam pam*, 'he has a great deal of sense', the implication is that he is a man of wisdom, or is intelligent, or experienced in affairs, or resourceful. If some one

commits a *faux pas*, or shows lack of understanding, or misbehaves 577
morally the comment is *u ka yam*, 'he has no sense'. The concept
is used to refer both to qualities of personality and to attributes of
behaviour. It is applied also in a genetic sense to describe the social
development of the child. A normal child between the ages of about 856
6 and 9 years is said to 'have sense at length'. It knows how to 577
behave in the social situations which confront it, whereas an infant of
3 or 4 years old does not. Yet a 4-year-old having learned bladder and
bowel control is said to 'have sense' as compared with a 2-year-old.
Similarly Nindɔyat, (17–18 years) telling me of his sweethearting,
waxed scornful about his own boyish friendship with girls two years
before. 'I still had no sense then', he explained. The concept, it
will be seen, is generally used relatively to a particular situation.

Children's attitude to education. In Tale society every pupil becomes 861
in some situations a teacher. At the one extreme there are specialized
ritual performances which some men do not learn till they are grey,
and at the other, the toddler leaning over to play with his nursling
brother is teaching the latter something about his environment. This
holds right through the age-scale. Considering also the unity of the
social sphere, one is not surprised to find that children have the same
attitudes about education as their elders. Hence children are rarely
unwilling to learn. As a rule, too, they are not ashamed of confessing
failure, ignorance, or inability to do or make something. Conversely,
children laugh good-humouredly at one another's deficiencies in skill
or knowledge, they never jeer. Ridicule is reserved for the correction [626]
of uncouth manners, disgraceful morals, or aberrant interests.

Fundamental educational relationships. It will be evident from the 861
preceding analysis that Tale children receive their education not only 571
from the adults but also from older children and adolescents who are
always transmitting what they know of the cultural heritage to their
younger brothers and sisters and cousins. From the age of 5 or 6 years
until they become fully absorbed into the economic system children
often go about in small groups. These groups[1] usually consist of

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King*, 1936, for ancillary information about these groups. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix, 1936, for an outline of their structural context.

571 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship
861 from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 *Age and mobility*. Infants still requiring care are often carried about
857 by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate groups.

571 *Sex*. Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently
857 go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely,
462 accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 *The social situation*. Yet none of these children's groups resemble
857 gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is,
861 however, not that of children to children but of children to parents.
858 It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

Plate I

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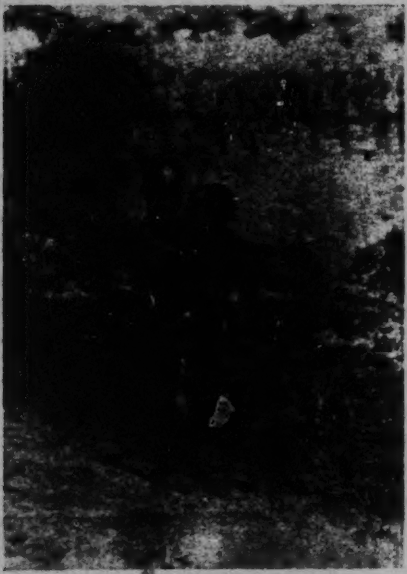

A young nursemaid, amusing herself and the baby with a *Kinkayax* rattle

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Housekeeping Play. One of the girls combines the duty of looking after an infant with her play. Note the small boy in the party, and the 'utensils'

[facing p.16]

economic and social activities there is co-operation, friendliness and 593
tolerance, almost equality. This is more marked between father and 861
child than between mother and child. A father is always addressed 858
by his personal name, a mother is always called *mma*, my mother.
Affectively, however, a powerful tension exists between parent and
child. A parent's authority may not be flouted, though he or she is
expected to be affectionate and indulgent. Sin, in Tale ideology, is [673]
primarily an offence against the person, status, or rights of the living
parents, or the parent-images—the ancestor spirits.

The structure of this relationship makes it possible for children 593
to acquiesce immediately in the commands and teachings of their 865
parents or parent-substitutes. Children are, as a rule, very obedient. If they refuse to carry out an order there is usually some very valid reason—acknowledged as such by both parents and children—such as that it is some one else's turn. But the parent-child relationship is educationally fundamental in another sense—it is the paradigm of all moral relationships.

It is worth noting, by contrast, that the relationship between grand- 603
parent and grandchild is the reverse of that between parent and child. In this case equality, compatibility and partisanship, as if in league against the generation between them, are emphasized, more particularly by the joking relationship—mutual ragging among the Tallensi—permitted between grandparent and grandchild.

The social space. How these relationships function in the educational 000
development of a Tale child is determined by its social space.[1] An individual's social space is a product of that segment of the social structure and that segment of the habitat with which he or she is in effective contact. To put it in another way, the social space is the society in its ecological setting seen from the individual's point of view. The individual creates his social space but is himself in turn formed by it. On the one hand, his range of experiences and behaviour are controlled by his social space, and on the other, everything he learns causes it to expand and become more differentiated. In the lifetime of the individual it changes *pari passu* with his psycho-physical and social development.

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[1] This term is employed here for want of an apter one. It has been used in a different sense by Simmel and others.

Plate II

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A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

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Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

867 In Taleland an infant remains confined to the house for the first three to six months or even longer. During this period its social space is extremely restricted. It has effective social relationships with its mother, sometimes its grandmother or a co-wife of its mother, or an older sibling or half-sibling, and its father—in this order of frequency
[856] and intensity. At the age of 3 to 4, when it is beginning to talk fluently and can run about, its effective range of contacts includes all the members of the joint family and probably those of closely neighbouring related joint families. It is beginning to associate with groups of other related children belonging to its immediate milieu and to know the topography of its parental homestead and its immediate
[574] surroundings. By the age of 6 or 7 it is being taken on visits to its mother's brother's house (*ahəb yir*) and begins to incorporate into the texture of its life its relationships with its mother's people and their settlement. A little later it commences to take a share in very simple economic duties. In this way the child's social space is continuously expanding as it grows older. The educational agencies to which it is subjected become more numerous and more diverse and its experiences more variegated as it participates in an ever-increasing range of social situations. With adolescence a great increase in mobility ensues and a new interest emerges—the opposite sex as potential spouses. This coincides with the beginning of real economic responsibility. When
[182] he reaches adulthood, the individual's social space is a function of the entire social structure in its complete ecological setting.[1] He should be capable of appropriate behaviour in any social situation which may confront the normal Taləŋa. He is a full citizen—which means that he is actually or potentially subject to the whole gamut of constraints inherent in Tale society.

861 In the evolution of an individual's social space we have a measure of his educational development. In Taleland this is brought about not only by accretion to, but also by differentiation of, his or her field of social activity. Sex, for example, is a differentiating factor of great

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[1] A person's social space is not equivalent to the entire social structure since it is included in the latter, which is never fully known to or acted on by the individual. Take, for instance, the Tale joint family. As a structural unit it can be easily distinguished and described by the anthropologist; but each member's view of the whole is unique—that of the head of the joint family is different from that of his wife or son—yet all derived from the same single unit of structure.

significance. From childhood on a person's relation to the economic 861 system is chiefly determined by sex. In the kinship system sex operates as a differentiating factor from an equally early age, from the time, in fact, when a child learns to designate like-sex siblings by different terms from opposite-sex siblings. Local, lineage, or family institutions also act as differentiating factors, though not in the same way. This is a consequence in part of the peculiarities of Tale political structure. Local groupings, clans and lineages are asymmetrically linked *inter se* 621 and with communities outside the Tale area proper by political, genea- 648 logical, territorial, or ritual ties. The most striking case of this sort is presented by the Hill Talis who have immemorial ritual links with villages and genealogical groups among Dagomba, Mamprussi, Bulisi (Builsa), Woolisi (Kassena), Mossi, and other neighbouring peoples. Each of the Hill communities has its exclusive associates in these foreign areas. The people of Sii were traditionally associated with the Bulisi, the people of Gorogo with the Woolisi, the Kpata'ar clan with certain villages of Black Dagomba, and so forth. There was in former times, and is even more so now, a constant traffic between the Tong Hills and the outside areas linked with the clans dwelling there—pilgrims coming to the Fertility Shrines in the Hills and Talis paying ceremonial visits to their associates. But the economic and political by-products of this traffic were most important. In this way a range of geographical and social contacts was, and is, available to a member of the Hill clans which no Namoos had, and among the Hill clans themselves the actual contacts varied from clan to clan. The Namoos again have their traditional political associates among the Mamprussi. It is especially interesting to note that the Mamprussi associates of the Hill Talis and the Mamprussi associates of the Namoos belonged to a single political structure; yet the latter would not, a generation ago, have hesitated to overpower and enslave any Hill Talis they encountered defenceless.

Factors of this sort become significant only after adolescence and 574 more so in the life of men than of women; but they are operative even 191 in childhood. The Black Dagomba guests at a Kpata'ar elder's homestead are familiar figures to his children; and one sign of the interest taken in them by the children is the fact that most Kpata'ar youths understand and easily speak the dialect of the Black Dagomba, whereas other Tallensi do not.

184 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In
867 the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of
463 Puvaləmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tale lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvaləmra.

592 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period
622 of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members
861 of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them —may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

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867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

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or passed adolescence, have a wider range of direct contacts with the social structure and their culture than their less privileged contemporaries. In Taleland, it is true, these differences tend to get smoothed out in the course of a person's lifetime owing to the uniformity of the culture and the homogeneity and cohesion of the social structure. Every lineage or clan member is at home in the house of the head, and important affairs are never discussed unless every branch of the grouping is represented. Again, eldership and office circulate from sublineage to sublineage, and the classificatory kinship system spreads the range of identification between the units of the structure widely. Nevertheless, the differential influence of this factor is significant from the educational point of view since our emphasis is on the stage of an individual's life-history at which it operates. The effects are strikingly observable both at the time it is operating and especially in the character of the mature man or woman. An amusing instance of the former is the following: Deɔmzeet of Puhug was elected elder under somewhat dramatic circumstances. Next morning, near his homestead I met his small grandsons of about 6–7 years old. Quite spontaneously they started telling me the story of the exciting events of the past two or three days, obviously repeating the talk that they had heard and only half understood in the family circle. They told me what the other elders had said and what the chief had said and how Deɔmzeet had summoned a diviner to consult. 'Deɔmzeet is the father of all of us,' said one of them, 'and he has a big farm.' They ran off to show me the boundaries of the farm he had recently inherited as head of the sublineage. As we passed the family graves they pointed out, solemnly, the tomb of Deɔmzeet's predecessor, who had no doubt been frequently referred to in the last few days. These were all matters which would normally not have occurred within the purview of children of their age.

Instances of the effect on his adult character of such an expansion of an individual's social space during his youth were so numerous as to suggest a general rule. I always found that, allowing for variation in ability and personality, men whose fathers had been elders or office-holders at a time when they themselves were old enough to take an interest in public affairs as spectators or participants were better informed than the average person, and tended to assume the lead in

184 867 social and ritual activities. The natives themselves recognize this: it often happens that a man who has not had the advantage of such a training succeeds to eldership or office and has to depend upon the advice and assistance of younger men who have been more fortunate in this respect

IV. The Dynamic Characters of Tale Education

121 Learning and teaching proceeds within the structural framework and subject to the cultural conceptions outlined in the preceding pages. We must now investigate its dynamic characters. The educational development of a Tale child may be regarded as the gradual acquisition of an ensemble of *interests*, *observances* and *skills*. What these are and how they are acquired constitutes our next inquiry. It is basically a psychological problem, tantamount, up to a point, to analysing the observations already recorded at a different level of behaviour.

An exhaustive investigation will not be attempted in this paper. The detailed exposition of Tale child psychology which should be the foundation of such an investigation cannot be undertaken here, nor would it be practicable to try to follow out the complex pattern of Tale education in all its ramifications in a limited space. I propose, therefore, to discuss only a few of the major trends and significant processes. Learning and teaching is a composite process, a network of interacting factors. For the purpose of analysis it will be necessary to isolate some of the variables, but it will have to be borne in mind that in the actual life-history of a Tale man or woman they occur only in interaction with one another and with numerous others.

The determinants of social behaviour. From the genetic point of view social behaviour is determined by four groups of factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural. If we observe a child learning to walk, we can easily distinguish these factors. It cannot start walking until it has reached a certain degree of physiological maturity. As it practises it learns to plan its efforts so as to avoid falls or trying to accomplish too much at a time—a psychological achievement, depending partly on its level of intelligence. Again, a child learns to walk in response, partly, to stimulation, encouragement and even training given by some or all of the people who come

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121 mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145 correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884 of physiological and psychological development and that of social and 182 cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of which social development lags behind psycho-physical development. A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856] age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582] they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827 ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881 growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812 The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls, which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma*, *mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

mothers are busy with some household task. A healthy infant will 868
remain sitting thus, almost motionless, playing with a fragment of cala- 854
bash, a stick, or the sand—for the idea of giving an infant a toy or some
attractive trinket to occupy it when it is left alone does not occur to
the Tallensi. On the other hand, when an infant clamours for attention
there is always some one of its kinsfolk near at hand to render it.

The native point of view about physical growth was well illustrated 827
in the case of two infants belonging to a single extended family which 856
I knew well. The younger infant was a lively, healthy, inquisitive girl
of about 2½–3 years old already toddling about and exploring the
world. The other infant, a boy about 3 months older, had been puny
and ailing from birth and, though obviously intelligent, was chronically
fretful and dependent and had not yet begun to walk. In Taleland [801]
the number three is symbolical of maleness, four of femaleness. Hence
it is said in their folk-lore that boys begin to walk and talk in their
third year, girls in their fourth. Yet the glaring discrepancy in development
between these two infants caused no anxiety to the parents of
the boy, except about his health. They realized clearly the connexion
between his retardation and his health, but were entirely complacent
about the former. That he would walk and talk in due course was
taken for granted.

The expectation of normal behaviour. It will be evident from these 856
examples that in the cultural idiom of the Tallensi age is not conceived
as a significant factor in psycho-physical or social development. Yet
relative seniority determines status and rights even in children's
groups and their notion of time is explicit and clear. They think of
genetic development primarily in terms of maturity, which is a synthetic
concept embracing both physiological and behavioural signs.
Growing up, in other words, is the evolution of one's social personality
as it approximates closer and closer to the fully grown, mature
adult. Just as this point of view precludes deliberate and standardized
methods of training children in the rudimentary bodily skills such as
walking, talking, and eye-hand co-ordination in eating, so it would
be incompatible with a didactic attitude about bowel and bladder
control or about sexual habits and knowledge.

This point of view gives rise to a factor of great importance in Tale 828
education, the *expectation of normal behaviour*. In any given social

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another [183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact 876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?' 868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of 198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules [576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete 514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

understand or to be eager to understand the language of adults, and 868
no one would think of using ‘baby talk’ to them. 198

As normal behaviour is always expected, no one hesitates to correct 828
a child or adult who behaves inappropriately through ignorance, and 861
the correction is generally accepted with alacrity and ease. If children
are allowed to be present at the activities of adults, they are assumed
to be interested in and to understand what is being said and done.
No one would inhibit his conversation or actions because children
are present, or withhold information upon which adequate social
adjustment depends from a child because it is thought to be too young.
Tallensi, therefore, are not surprised at the comprehensive and
accurate sexual knowledge of a 6-year-old, though direct instruction
in these matters is never given. As with the ordinary skills and
interests of daily life, they expect children to want to know such
things. *Naawun mpaan ba*, ‘Heaven teaches them’, they say, or, as
we should put it, it is perfectly natural.

It is known that some people learn more quickly and accurately
than others, that variations in skill and ability exist. But the idea of [856]
precocity or retardation as a quality of a child's character has no place
in Tale thought. A child may intrude on a situation where some one
of his or her degree of maturity has no business to be and will be
categorically dismissed then; but it would never be rated for being
‘old-fashioned’. Every child is expected to be eager to know and
to do as much as its social space and its stage of psycho-physical
development permits. Hence, though it is clearly recognized that
knowledge, skill, and capacity for social adjustment grow cumulatively, the Tallensi have no technique of isolating a skill or observance
from the total reality and training a child in it according to a syllabus,
as, for instance, we train children in dancing, the multiplication table,
or the catechism. Tale educational method does not include drill as [876]
a fundamental technique. It works through the situation, which is a
bit of the social reality shared by adult and child alike.

The conceptions and practices we have been considering constitute 861
the significant factors in education by participation in practical tasks
which is often described as the distinctive method of primitive
societies and is as conspicuous in Taleland as in every other preliterate country. It may be observed that even in Western society the

861 principal method of education is by participation. A child repeating the multiplication table is participating in the practical activity appropriate to and defined by the school; but measured by the total social reality it is a factitious activity, a training situation constructed for that purpose. The Tallensi do not make systematic use of training situations. They teach through real situations which children are drawn to participate in because it is expected that they are capable and desirous of mastering the necessary skills.

000 Corresponding to this contrast in method we can observe a contrast in psychological emphasis. The training situation demands atomic modes of response; the real situation requires organic modes of response. In constructing a training situation we envisage a skill or observance as an end-product at the perfection of which we aim and therefore arrange it so as to evoke only motor or perceptual practice. Affective or motivational factors are eliminated or ignored. In the real situation behaviour is compounded of affect, interest and motive, as well as perceptual and motor functions. Learning becomes purposive. Every advance in knowledge or skill is pragmatic, directed to achieve a result there and then, as well as adding to a previous level of adequacy.

861 The expectation of normal behaviour and organic response operate
828 also in the education of a Western child, e.g. when it is learning speech or manners. In Taleland it is the most effective factor in the inculcation of a wide range of social behaviour from bowel and bladder control to ritual notions, and from economic skills to sexual habits.

Interests, skills, and observances. We have seen, now, that a Tale child acquires the interests, skills and observances which comprise the repertoire of adult social behaviour not in discrete categories but in a synthetic combination. But it is necessary, for analytical purposes, to define such categories of behaviour. They refer to forms of overt behaviour and not to the psychological functions or mechanisms subsumed therein.

181 *Interests.* By *interest* I mean simply the observable fact that, according to their level of maturity, Tale children and adults spontaneously show preference for some activities rather than others; that they have a selective orientation in their social space, e.g. reacting to some people more readily than to others; that they obviously seek to satisfy

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Talaŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adult- 857
hood children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational develop- 82
ment of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

82 861 9 or 10 the children are thoroughly familiar with the ecological environment of their clan settlements. They know the economically important trees, grasses, and herbs, e.g., a girl of about 9 once named and showed me nine varieties of herbs used for making soup. They have a fair idea of the gross anatomy of the fowl, small field animals, and larger live stock. But apart from these achievements which lead one to infer the existence of an interest in the natural environment, I was able to obtain some direct evidence thereof. The natives say that small children frequently ask questions about people and things they see around them. However, listening to children's talk for 'why' questions,[1] I was surprised to note how rarely they occurred; and the few instances I recorded refer to objects or persons foreign to the normal routine of Tale life. It would seem that Tale children rarely have to ask 'why' in regard to the people and things of their normal environment because so much of their learning occurs in real situations where explanation is generally coupled with instruction, and because they hear so much adult discussion, in terms of cause and effect, as these are understood by the Tallensi, of the things they are interested in. Yet two examples will prove that even quite small children react with exploratory interest to what is new and unusual. I gave some tiny tin figures of animals to a group of small children to play with. A little boy of about 5 looked intently at the figure of a horse. 'Why does he stoop like that?' he asked, speaking to himself rather than to his companions. But immediately he answered his own question, 'He is eating grass.' On another occasion I observed the 3-year-old son of our cook, pointing to the garbage tin, ask the horseboy: 'Why has that got a lid?'

857 177 532 Again, making clay figures is a favourite diversion of small boys and adolescents. The standard figures are men and women, cows and horses. But a youngster of about 9 or 10 once produced a motorcycle, explaining that he had recently seen the Agricultural Officer arrive on one. Another boy, a little older, once made a roan antelope, explaining that some two years previously he had seen one of these animals which, fleeing from a hunting party, had entered the settlement and been surrounded and killed there.

128 I have not attempted to give an exhaustive account of the interests

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[1] See N. Isaacs in *Intellectual Growth of Young Children.*

which Tale children develop in the course of their education. I have 128
tried to indicate only some typical interests and their relation to the educational process.

Skills. The acquisition of skills also commences in early infancy, 868
with the child's first experiments in motor co-ordination and speech. 858
Bodily dexterity provides merely the foundation upon which are 857
subsequently built up the socially important skills of adult life. They include not only the predominantly manual skills, such as are connected with farming and care of live stock, with hunting, fishing, building, thatching, cooking, housekeeping and gardening, and the technology of specialists, but also non-manual skills, such as a knowledge of the kinship system, of ritual and ceremonial, of economically useful herbs and roots and of others used as drugs to cure illness, of buying and selling, of law and custom—in short, of the whole body of cultural definitions which guide the Taləŋa in his daily existence. Such skills are the end-results of education; and it will be obvious that they represent merely the cognitive and motor aspects of activities rooted in developing interests and fostered by the expectation of normal behaviour. Typical skills will be referred to as we proceed, but one general feature must be noted here. Children in Taleland are remarkably free from over-solicitious supervision. They have the maximum freedom and responsibility commensurate with their skill and maturity. On the one hand they can go where they like and do what they like, on the other they are held fully responsible for tasks entrusted to them. Thus, a 6-year-old is quite often charged with the care of an infant for several hours at a stretch. Girls of 9 or 10 can be seen in large numbers in every market, selling or buying things for their mothers or themselves. Boys of this age and even younger swarm in the markets. One market day I discovered a boy of about 10–11 selling a basketful of leaves used as a food for animals which he had himself collected in the bush near his settlement. He hoped to earn a penny or twopence to buy arrow-heads for himself. Another day a boy of about the same age offered his services to the butcher. He earned a tenth of a penny which he spent on a feed of
locust-bean flour for himself and a friend. Similarly, when there is 868
dancing at a homestead, the children of about 6 years and upwards 858
from the whole neighbourhood congregate there and remain till 535

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868 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would
859 not be sent for to come home.

858 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom
857 allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: 'Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.' 'You'd better run,' one of the others advised, as he
[231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with
882 their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindɔl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindɔl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindɔl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—'The boy has justice on his side'—he said, when he told me the story.

857 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk
858 for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s.* 6*d.* a month
234 is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to
[435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why? His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234
longer drive the cow out to graze.

Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsi- 183
bilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Talɔŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and how they are maintained. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale*.

183 867 ing the correct observances has many points in common with learning skills, but there is a significant difference. When a child is learning a skill he has the test of objective achievement to evaluate his progress and to stimulate him to further effort; when he is learning how to behave properly the only test of attainment is the reaction of other people and his own sense of the adequacy or inadequacy of his conduct. [626] One can observe, in consequence, that both children and adults are very sensitive to ridicule of a lapse in manners or morals but are fairly indifferent to ridicule of poor skill. The contrast between observances and skills is evident when we compare the way in which a child learns to model clay figures, gradually perfecting his technique, with the 'all or none' way, associated sometimes with corporal punishment, in which he is taught to respect other people's property, or the way he is taught his totemic taboos.

867 Among the Tallensi, as in many other primitive societies, manners and morals are acquired almost as a by-product of the normal social relations between the growing child and the people who constitute his or her social space. The unity of the social sphere and the expectation of normal behaviour have a correspondingly greater influence than in the acquisition of skills and interests. But the critical factor is the tension inherent in the fundamental educational relationships, the authority of parent over child and of senior over junior.

861 593 In Tale ideology this is epitomized in the danger attributed to a parent's resentment. If any one who has reached years of discretion behaves in such a way as to incur the resentment and hostility of a parent, some calamity will certainly befall him or her unless he comes formally to beg forgiveness and the injured parent ritually abjures his or her anger.[1] It very often happens that two children of about the same age and members of a single joint family are related as parent and child. They can be seen playing together amicably, squabbling at times, and working together. But when the 'child' is questioned about his playmate, he will say: *nzorumi, on ndɔyam la zugu*, 'I fear (respect) him, because he begot me.' This is not merely a formula. Sinkawɔl (aged 23–5) used to order his 'father', Kyekambe (aged

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[1] The connexion between one particular aspect of Tale morality, their notion of incest, and the background of kinship has been discussed in my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

12–13) about when the lad was helping with the housebuilding and 861 even scold him if he bungled a task. This was legitimate technical 593 instruction. But he declared emphatically that he dare not strike the boy, *ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*. From the authority of parent over child is derived that of elder sibling over younger. It is equally absolute. A youth or girl has no hesitation in restraining or correcting a younger sibling with a cuff which often sends the latter off howling at the top of his voice. The authority of seniors in general over juniors is accepted by custom (e.g., among herdboys), though not so absolutely and unquestioningly. It is often maintained by force, or in virtue of superior skill. It is intelligible, therefore, why the Tallensi usually say *ti banam yɛl nla*, 'our forefathers' matter is this' when they are asked to account for an observance, and why their children say, *bunkɔra la yɛl ti la ŋwala*, 'the grown-ups have told us so'.

Just as all Tallensi, children or adults, recognize the force of 867 authority, even though they sometimes flout it, so they accept the 857 principle of equal rights for equals. One can see this, not only in standardized patterns of behaviour, but, e.g., in the spontaneity with which children share things and activities. When a small boy snares a bird or kills a mouse or lizard he will always share his catch with friends or siblings, apportioning it according to sex and age. A [526] favourite pastime of boys of all ages, from 5 upwards, is wrestling. Sometimes bigger youths stand by to supervise, but always scrupulous fairness is insisted upon, and thus instilled. It is as correct and even praiseworthy to demand what one is entitled to as it is reprehensible to take what one has no right to. A nice illustration, showing incidentally how such principles are sometimes taught, came to my notice during an evening ceremony which had been unduly dragged out. A dozen or more small boys aged from 5 upwards had gathered at the ceremony to wait for a share of the feast which would follow the religious rites. The food was sent out and distributed by an adult, one or two boys of equal size to a dish. Suddenly an elder called out, 'Where is Zuur?' (a small boy of about 5) and rose to look for him. Zuur lay fast asleep in a corner. The old man shook the child roughly to awaken him, and dragged him towards a dish of food upbraiding him, 'Where do you think you will find food after it has all been eaten? You can't control yourself at all.' Zuur, still

867 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented 857 that if you want your sh[illegible] of food you must be there to receive it.

183 The principle of [illegible] which is thus early learnt in association 764 with siblings and age [illegible] is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man [illegible] come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a [illegible] hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to [illegible] former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, ' because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed '. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: ' Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly [966] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends [839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. ' I will slaughter you if you do so and so ', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4-5 years, suspiciously

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them. Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them. It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for example.

Many rules of conduct are observed ' because it is befitting ' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is ' unbecoming ' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves, bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly ' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think, still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, 'is embarrassing' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a
loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and
his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of
shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of
which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult,
the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose
the genitals with the word 'boy' or 'girl'. An infant's excretory
processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
[863] regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a
nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would
dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all
matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions
as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the
expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
'Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said
Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, 'he's a thief. He stole
his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied
him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast,
is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance
and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child
for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours,
nevertheless, go beyond what is merely 'unbecoming'. They are not
nice, *a-pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience
rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have
a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical
notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from
infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with
mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

which children of 9 or 10 are fully familiar with and the compulsion 183
of which they experience to the same degree as the adults; and there is the whole body of implicit moral norms which regulate the day-to-day life of the family and emerge in the duties of children to one another and to their parents.

I have already mentioned the prohibition in some clans against the 784
eating of fowl by first-born children. By contrast with the voluntary 688
abstention from fowl meat practised by women, this is a taboo of 869
supreme mystical value for these clans and is exactly parallel to the totemic avoidances of other clans. The Hill Tallis, for instance, may not eat tortoise, some may not eat crocodile or python, and others taboo dog. A 5-year-old knows his or her personal or clan taboo, and can state it emphatically. The remedy for a chance infringement of such a taboo is extremely simple—e.g., in the case of the fowl, crushing some fowl droppings in water and giving the child the fluid to drink. Again the supernatural penalty for a breach is of a vague and general kind. In some cases it is thought that it would lead merely to an eruption of scabies on the head; in others it is said that the offender would slowly lose health and strength. These sanctions, however, are not the effective agencies maintaining the observances. Breaches of these rules are exceptional, both among children and among adults. A Talɔŋa submits to a food taboo in virtue of a configuration of positive habits and dispositions built up in childhood, not through fear of the sanctions. From the time that it is a babe in arms a child is prevented from tasting or even touching any food which it is prohibited from eating. Later it will be called away from where its companions are sitting over a fire roasting titbits of food forbidden to it—'Come here, you mustn't eat that; it is forbidden.' I once observed a child of about 5 standing aloof while a group of his brothers and sisters were consuming a dish of python meat—a prized delicacy. 'I don't eat python, it is my taboo,' he explained, with an expression of complete aversion.

A vivid example of how food taboos are inculcated was provided 262
by a biographical reminiscence of the chief of Tongo who, as a first- 869
born, may not eat fowl. There was talk in his court-room of crops and famine in the old days, when an elder wondered if a man would eat a forbidden animal if he were starving. The chief, holding with

262 some of his elders that it would be too repugnant even for a starving
869 man to do so, told this story of how he had himself, on two occasions, violated his taboo. When he was a child of perhaps 5 or 6 he was the favourite of his grandfather, as often happens. Some one brought the old man a gift of eggs which he promptly had roasted. He had to go outside to attend to some matter and he left his small grandson to see that no one purloined the eggs. Now an egg is a potential fowl, and is therefore equally taboo with the latter. The chief described how there was a brief struggle between his conscience and his desire, and how he succumbed and ate the eggs. His grandfather was furious when he returned and the child in trepidation lied, accusing a girl who was in the next room. The girl denied the accusation and the small boy's father was called in to adjudicate. He at once suspected his son, but the grandfather angrily defended the boy, who was now too terrified even to speak. The matter was dropped; but the small boy, afraid of his father, remained with his grandfather till nightfall. Then he slunk out, only to be caught at once by his father, who had been waiting for him. His father said nothing, but grimly called for a feather and a large gourd of water. 'Drink,' he commanded, and compelled the child, now sobbing with terror, to swallow the whole gourdful of water. 'Open your mouth,' said the father, and began to tickle the child's throat with the feather until he vomited. 'And now,' said the father, grasping the child's arms tightly and striking him right and left, on buttocks, back and head, 'I'll teach you to eat fowl and steal and tell lies.' 'That was how I learnt not to eat fowl,' the chief concluded amid general laughter. But, he continued, many years later, at the time of the great famine, he with two companions was on his way to a neighbouring district and stopped for the night *en route*. They were extremely hungry, not having had a proper meal for days, and when they were offered porridge and a cooked fowl ate ravenously. Now two of them tabooed the fowl, but they were too hungry to resist. The meal finished, they rose, when suddenly the other man who was not allowed to eat fowl was overcome with nausea and began to vomit. Immediately he himself also began to vomit. They had not, after all, been able to stomach the fowl.

183 How strongly quite young children feel the compulsion of a ritual
764 obligation was brought home to me when a boy of about 10–11 was

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183
her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764
shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783]
mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181
and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867
and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856
moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861
that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

867 amused. When the child's mother tried to soothe her she first
856 struggled and struck at her, venting her chagrin on her mother. It was
861 fully ten minutes before her mother was able to quieten her by playing with her and distracting her by making her a toy of wet clay. 'They will laugh at him (or her)' or 'His comrades will laugh at him' is the commonest motive alleged for correct behaviour. If you ask a boy of 6 or 7 why he no longer plays with the little girls he says, 'If I do my comrades will laugh at me'; and little girls say the same. Adolescents, talking about their sweethearts, who are usually clan
[626] 'sisters', explain why they avoid the girls of their own section—'because our comrades will find out and laugh at us'; and the adult is equally sensitive to public opinion.

183 *The total pattern and its genetic development.* We have seen that these categories of social behaviour are not learnt in isolation one from the other but as patterns in which interests, elements of skill, and observances are combined. The Tale housewife, going several miles into the bush to collect firewood, is using knowledge of the bush tracks and of the best places for firewood acquired over a period of years; but she is impelled also by the sense of duty to her family and her own self-esteem. The Tale farmer's devotion to his agricultural pursuits is due to a passionate interest in land and crops and to a sense of moral responsibility towards his family and his ancestor spirits. His skill is but one of the factors that affect his general efficiency.

183 These total patterns which constitute the texture of Tale cultural
867 behaviour are not built up bit by bit, by addition, during the course
155 of a child's life. They are present as *schemas*[1] from the beginning. My observations suggest that the course of development is somewhat as follows: at first the child acquires a well-defined interest associated with a postural diagram of the total pattern. The postural diagram is, as it were, a contour map, extremely simplified and crude but comprehending the essential elements and relations of the full pattern. Further experience strengthens and amplifies the interest at the same time as it causes the details of the postural diagram to be filled out, making it more and more adaptable and controllable, producing more

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[1] I have taken this concept from Prof. F. C. Bartlett's *Remembering*, pp. 199 ff., though its bald application here hardly does justice to the significance given to it by Prof. Bartlett, and to its value for an understanding of primitive education.

discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form. 867 155

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously. 868 535

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected in the 3–4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non-kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a 867 601 602

867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the
601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and
602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge
accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations
856 in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accutate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning—mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an
828 almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

actions or words of older children or adults with whom they happen 153
to be without rhyme or reason and merely for the sake of ' imitation '. 828
For hours at a stretch mimetic behaviour may be unnecessary, but in certain types of situation it is the child's readiest form of cognitive adaptation.

Mimesis occurs (*a*) as a response to direct stimulation; (*b*) as an 868
adaptation to a situation the child does not know how to deal with 153
on the basis of its attainments at the time; (*c*) in play, when it is rehearsing in fantasy its interests and the life of the world about it. The Tale boy who learns the leatherworkers' or blacksmiths' craft by closely studying his father at his work and listening to his explanations, tentatively repeating the procedure with scraps of leather or iron and gradually perfecting his skill, is no more learning by imitation than our own children do when they learn arithmetic by copying procedures demonstrated on the blackboard. If he does not understand the craftsman's procedure the lad will never learn it.

We have already had examples of mimesis in response to direct stimulation—e.g. when an infant begins to learn to dance. A child's first efforts at talking are constantly stimulated in this way. At the babbling stage its mother or grandmother, or whoever is looking after it, will frequently in playful mockery mimic its babblings, ' What are you muttering there? ' says the woman, ' gba-gba-gba-ma-ma . . .', and the infant is thus stimulated to repeat these sounds again and again. I have often observed incidents such as the following: Duun was playing with his little daughter of about 2. He called her, ' Kologo-o-o ee! ' and she replied ' m! '; and again he called, and she replied; and so on for about five minutes. Then he said, ' Call the dog, wo-ho, wo-ho! ' The infant repeated, ' Wo-wo! ' Again he called the dog and the infant repeated the call, and so on several times. Some one spoke to him, and turning his attention from the child, he answered. The infant, still influenced by the set of the game, repeated, as well as she could, a word or two, much to his amusement. As we have seen, the expectation of normal behaviour influences parents to talk to infants as if they understand everything.

When there is a pair or a group of children together, the oldest or 861
most self-possessed generally gives the cues to behaviour which the 153
others follow. This is logical, since collective action must be common

861 153 or co-operative. Tale adults behave in exactly the same way. In an unfamiliar or difficult situation the best adaptation is to copy the actions and words of any one who understands the situation. Small children, whose schemas are still very rudimentary, are peculiarly apt to encounter unfamiliar elements in situations, and therefore readily resort to mimesis. Between the ages of 3 and 6 years, when the child is eagerly exploring its social space, this happens so often that it seems to develop a habit of mimicking older children in whose activities it is trying to participate. Thus, whenever I encountered little groups of children at play, pegging out goats, gleaning ground-nuts, or doing anything else, and asked the youngest, 'What are you doing?', one of the older children would reply, and the youngest repeat this reply in the same words. One evening I met four or five children from a neighbouring compound idling on a path. One was a girl of about 8 who had her brother of about 5 in tow. She noticed another child some way off and called out a message to him. The little brother, equally interested in the other child, called out and repeated the message in the same words and intonation. He was obviously not merely repeating automatically what he had heard, but endeavouring to draw the attention of the distant child and using the same method as his sister. A great deal of language learning goes on in this way.

Mimesis in play will be considered later.

153 155 *Identification.* A striking feature of social development among the Tallensi is the degree to which children overtly identify themselves with older siblings and parents. It is noticeable in children of 5 and 6 and becomes more marked as they grow older. The parent of the same sex is the model according to which the child regulates its conduct and from which it derives its aspirations and values. Though unwitting, the process is unmistakable. Character appears to run in families. An aggressive, loud-spoken man's children tend to become aggressive and pushing; an industrious man's sons apply themselves to work from early childhood; the dishonesty and unreliability of shifty parents tend to be reproduced in their children; and so forth. The social structure of the Tallensi with its emphasis on family and lineage solidarity, and the unity of the social sphere, encourage such identification. If one asks a child, 'Who are you?' the answer is invariably, 'I'm so-and-so's child', or 'of so-and-so's family', accom-

panied by a manner or posture which leaves no doubt in one's mind 153
as to who is his father or her mother. Nindɔyat of Zubiung, for 155
instance, was notorious for his selfishness, his arrogance, and his insincerity. His son Sapak, aged 6, was his father in miniature—self-assertive, greedy, combative and refractory. Lɔyani, clansman and near neighbour of Nindɔyat, was a complete contrast to him and the most popular man in the clan. His children were among the quietest, most respectful, and most good-tempered I knew. Once they were visiting me when Sapak thrust himself upon us. Within ten minutes he had managed to offend one of the other boys and but for my presence they would have come to blows. A similar contrast in character existed between Nenaab's small daughters and Saandi's. Indeed, it would be possible to cite a dozen examples of the way parental character reappeared in children, if space permitted.

A child says, 'This is *our* dog, *our* sheep, *our* land, *our* child, 153
our wife', identifying himself completely with his family. Some 867
of the examples given in our discussion of the unity of the social 155
sphere show how identification operates to constitute that unity. It is, obviously, the mechanism mainly responsible for the child's acquisition of interests, and therefore generates powerful motives for following out these interests derived from the world of adult activity. Hence Tale children all want to grow up. I often asked boys of 10 to 12 why they were so keen on hoeing though it was far more arduous than herding or playing about with their friends. The question puzzled many, though they were always emphatic about preferring work on the farm to herding or play. But discussion generally resolved their motives into this: 'We want to hoe because we want to be among the men and help to bring in more food'; and girls have the same attitude about domestic work and child-bearing. One day I found a small boy of about 5 struggling with a large goat. 'Where's your father?' I asked. 'Hoeing his bush farm,' he said. 'What about you,' I said, 'can you hoe?' 'Of course I can,' he replied proudly, 'didn't I hoe the whole compound farm?' I teased him a bit, asking him about the details of farming, and eventually he said, 'No, I can't hoe. I'm still too small.' Similarly, a little girl of about 8 told me that she had accompanied some older girls to the bush for firewood the previous day. Her mother burst out

153 laughing and called to me: 'Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

861 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's
co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activi-
153 ties in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish[1] for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Taləŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its cooperation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

153 *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrəme*,
524 'they are playing') is well defined and clearly recognized by the
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[1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

1 [A Kind of mud mortar --Analyst]

Plate III

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Recreational Play: *Kuolun* (posed)

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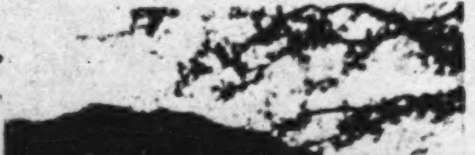

A wrestling match—with an eye on the goat lest it wander into the growing crops

[facing p.48]

[828] Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges
153 partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in
524 itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play
524 of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 On a morning in June I found Gomna, aged about 7, his half-sister
867 Zoŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

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857 [1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

Plate IV

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Building Play. In the background a newly built room. On the right of the group a big boy demonstrating to a small boy. Behind them part of a 'house' they have finished. On the left, girls making the swish and explaining the process to the ethnographer's wife.

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Learning Marksmanship. Note how intently the two smaller boys, who have only recently acquired real bows, are watching the technique of their older companion

[Facing p. 49]

524 scaring birds on the home farm. They sat astride the trailing branch
867 of a baobab tree on the boundary of Gɔmna's father's farm and Zoo's
868 father's farm. They slid down to talk to me, and a bigger lad, Tɔŋ,
aged about 10, joined us. Gɔmna had wandered off a few yards and
857 now came running up with three locusts. He called to his sister and
Zoo. Eagerly they squatted round the locusts. 'These are our cows,'
said Gɔmna, 'let's build a yard for them.' Zoo and the little girl
foraged around and produced a few pieces of decayed bark. The
children, Gɔmna dominant, giving orders and keeping up a running
commentary, set about building a 'cattle-yard' of the pieces of bark.
Tɔŋ, the older boy, also squatted down to help. He and Gɔmna
constructed an irregular rectangle with one side open of the pieces
of bark. Zoo fetched some more pieces of bark which Tɔŋ used to
roof the yard. The little girl stood looking on. Gɔmna carefully
pushed the locusts in, one by one, and declared, 'We must make a
gateway.' Rummaging about, the boys found two pebbles which
they set up as gate-posts, with much argument as to how they ought
to stand. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and Tɔŋ started
putting it up again. The little girl meanwhile had found a pair of
stones and a potsherd and was on her knees, 'grinding grain'.
Suddenly the two small boys dashed off into the growing grain,
shouting to scare the birds. In a minute or two they returned to squat
by the collapsed 'cattle-yard'. They appeared to have forgotten all
about the 'cows', for they were engrossed in a conversation about
'wrestling'. Some one called Tɔŋ, who departed. Zɔŋ, finishing her
'grinding', came up to the boys with the 'flour' on a potsherd and
said, 'Let's sacrifice to our shrine.' Gɔmna said indifferently, 'Let
Zoo do it.' Zoo declared that Gɔmna was senior to him, and an
argument ensued as to who was senior. Eventually Gɔmna asserted,
'I'm the senior.' Zɔŋ meanwhile had put down her 'flour' which
[526] was quite forgotten; for Zoo challenged Gɔmna's assertion. Gɔmna
retorted that he was undoubtedly senior since he could throw Zoo in
wrestling. Zoo denied this, and in a few minutes they were grappling
each other. Gɔmna managed to throw Zoo and rolled over him; but
they stood up in perfectly good temper, panting and proud. Suddenly
with a shout Gɔmna began to scramble up the baobab branch,
followed by Zoo, calling out, 'Let's swing.' For a minute or two

they rocked back and forth on the branch and then descended. Now 524
Gomna remembered his cows. Vehemently he accused his sister of 867
having taken them, and when she denied this challenged her to 868
'swear'. 'All right,' she said placidly. Gomna took a pinch of sand 857
in his left hand and put his right thumb on it. Zoŋ licked her thumb and pressed down with it on Gomna's thumb-nail. He stood still a moment, then suddenly withdrew his thumb. (This is a children's play ordeal.) Gomna examined his sister's thumb and found sand adhering. 'There you are,' he said, rapping her on the head with a crooked finger. The 'cows' were completely forgotten though, for now they turned their attention to me, asking me various questions. After a while Gomna, who had been observing my shoes, said, 'Let's make shoes,' and took a couple of pieces of the decayed bark previously used to build the cattle-yard to make shoes. He and Zoŋ found some grass and old string lying about and tried to tie the pieces of bark to the soles of their feet. Gomna now noticed his 'cows' and picked them up, but he was still trying to make 'shoes'. The 'shoes' refused to hold together so he abandoned them and squatted over his 'cows' for a moment, moving them hither and thither. 'I'm going to let them copulate,' he burst out with a grin, and tried to put one locust on top of another. Looking up, he noticed a flutter of birds' wings. 'Zoŋ,' he cried, jumping to his feet, 'scare the birds!' and he raced into the grain, followed by his companions, shouting and stooping to pick up handfuls of gravel to fling at the birds. For the next five minutes they were engrossed in bird-scaring. The entire episode lasted over half an hour.

The developmental phases of play. Infant play. Up to the age of 6 or 7 524
a good deal of play, especially that of boys, consists in sheer motor 534
exuberance. Small boys run about, leap and prance for the pleasure 857
of it, frequently in a totally unorganized way. But even 3-year-old boys often introduce mimetic themes, spontaneously or in response to suggestions from older children. They 'ride horses', using a long stick as a horse, with a wisp of grass attached as bridle. In the Festival season they love 'playing drums'. Cylindrical tins discarded by our cook and useless as receptacles were in great demand for this purpose. A remnant of goatskin tied over one end with a strip of bark or grass makes a satisfactory diaphragm, and a hooked twig

524 534 857 serves as a drumstick. Often an older boy of 8 or 9 manufactures a toy drum for himself or an infant brother. A small discarded calabash is covered with a piece of skin—a remnant of goatskin or the skin of a rat caught by the boy himself and prepared by himself. The skin is cleverly attached to the calabash with strong thorns. Small boys delight in walking round, tapping out a rhythm on a toy drum, sometimes executing a few dance steps. Another instrument they like to copy is the *kolog*, a single-string fiddle. I once saw a boy of about 6 singing to a ' fiddle ' which consisted of a large bow made of a green stick and a thread of grass—the ' fiddle '—and a smaller bow of the same materials—the ' bow '. A bow of the very same sort with a short piece of thick reed as arrow is the 4- to 6-year-old's introduction to the handling of bow and arrow. They very soon develop an accurate aim at a dozen yards or so. Play of this kind is generally very egocentric. I have watched groups of children playing side by side—a boy with a ' drum ' absorbed in his banging, another lying on his back absorbed in fantasy, a couple of little girls playing at housekeeping—all indifferent to one another's activities.

857 864 The little girl of 3 to 6 plays in much the same way at times; but she is already being drawn into the family play of slightly older children, and, like the small boy with the toy bow, she tends to mimic simpler features of older girls' play when she is playing alone. Hence one often sees a little girl of this age sitting and playing at ' grinding millet '—one stone as metate, a smaller stone as muller, and a handful of sand or a potsherd as the grain.

Play in early childhood. Between the ages of about 6 and 10 the play of both sexes becomes more social and more complex. This is the period when the child is beginning to co-operate in real economic activities, subject to real responsibility, and is acquiring a knowledge of his social space. His or her play reflects these experiences and reflects also the interests and activities characteristic of the stage of maturity just ahead of it. There is, in all Tale children's play, this feature of looking ahead, as it were, experimenting tentatively with what lies just beyond the present psychological horizon.

During this period the younger children, both boys and girls, have charge of the goats, scare the birds from the newly planted fields and the crops, run errands, nurse the infants, and so forth. The boys help

in sacrifices to domestic shrines; the girls assist in household tasks 857 such as sweeping and carrying water. Towards the end of this period 868 boys whose fathers own cattle go out with the cattle-herds and girls are beginning to help in the preparation of food. A 10-year-old girl can prepare the majority of usual dishes. At the age of 6 or 7 brothers and sisters often play together; at 9 or 10 the sexual dichotomy has become firmly established.[1]

At this stage the play of infancy develops in three directions. The 857 sporadic motor exuberance is transformed into recreational play—organized group games and dances; the rudimentary mimetic play becomes elaborate and protracted imaginative and constructive play; and the rude toy-making of infancy grows into children's arts and crafts.

Tale children have a great many organized games, passed on from one generation of children to the next by drawing younger ones into the games played by those who already know them. The games are traditional, and often built round themes derived from the cultural idiom—farming, hunting, marriage, chiefs, &c. But their value is predominantly recreational. Children play them for the pleasure of collective singing, rhythmical physical activity, and sensory and bodily stimulation. The ordinary dances of moonlight nights in which both adults and children participate are regarded as 'play' of this kind.

Kuobon is a game of this sort. Both boys and girls from 7–8 to 857 about 15 years play it on moonlight nights in single-sex groups. A 526 group of about the same size forms a ring, clasping each other and standing on one leg. The other leg is extended towards the centre of the ring, and the children arrange themselves so that their extended legs cross one another. The group then commences to revolve, singing as they go round and round, *kuobon, yee-e-e la ŋaah*, 'fruits of farming, yee, how nice'. The game goes on until they are tired and the extended legs begin to drop. It breaks up with much laughter, only to start again after a rest. Similar games are played by boys 857 only and others by girls only; but for both sexes dancing is the 535 supreme recreation. In both the mixed dances and the single-sex

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[1] Nevertheless, this sexual dichotomy is not so absolute as to prohibit a girl or a woman from stepping into a breach if there is no male available for a man's task; [462] and men often undertake women's work in an emergency.

857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

On any day in the dry season or the first half of the rainy season 857
one can find a group of girls playing at housekeeping. Most com- 524
monly they consist of a group of sisters and ortho-cousins—two to 868
four active participants with, perhaps, a couple of infants attached. Often one or two small boys of about 5 or 6 are in their company, sharing in their play or absorbed in their own separate play. In play, as in the simple economic duties, there is as yet no marked sex dichotomy at this age; and small boys are not ridiculed for ' grinding grain ' and ' cooking porridge ', or small girls for ' building houses ' in play. The girls generally constitute a mixed age group, varying from 6 to 10–11 years, for even those who are already capable of real cooking enjoy playing at it. When they are of about equal maturity their play tends to be loosely organized. Each cooks for herself, but they help one another, lending one another ' utensils ', ' grain ', ' firewood ', and exchanging ' dishes of porridge ' like co-wives. When one girl is older than the others she tends to take the lead, and the smaller girls assist her on the pattern of daughter helping mother in real cooking. Infants are ' our children '; and reliable informants have told me that small boys are said to be the ' husbands '—but I have never observed boys being addressed thus, though I have watched housekeeping play very frequently. According to my observation, it is merely implied in the manner of distributing the ' cooked porridge ', which follows the pattern of family feeding. Older girls sometimes introduce dolls as the ' children '—clay figures of people made by themselves or, more usually, for them by their brothers.

The essentials of the play consist in ' grinding flour ', ' cooking sauce ' and ' porridge ', and ' sharing out ' the ' food '. Every feature of the real processes is mimicked, but with the most ingenious imaginative adaptations. A pair of flattish stones or a boulder and a large pebble serve as ' grindstones '. For pots, dishes, calabashes, and ladles various things are used—old sherds chipped into roughly circular pieces the size of a half-crown or crown, fragments of old
calabashes, the husks, whole or bisected, of *mɔlɔmɔk* or *kalɔmpoo*, [824
spherical fruits of common trees varying in size from that of a large 137]
marble to that of a cricket ball, and even old tins or bits of tins, while
some girls make little pots of clay. Pebbles make a fire-place, a thin [177]
piece of millet-stalk is the stirring-stick, some dried grass the firewood.

857 Sometimes a real fire is lit, but usually it is merely imagined. Real
524 grain is never used in such play—it is too valuable to waste thus, as
868 the children themselves would be the first to insist. A piece of potsherd
pounded up or a handful of sand serves as grain; but a much more realistic effect is sometimes achieved by using dry baobab stamens. These can be 'winnowed' and the 'grain' ground. Green weeds and leaves are vegetables.

The children play with great zest and earnestness, yet never forget that it is but play. As they grind they hum in a low voice a grinding song they have heard from mother or elder sister. They examine the 'flour' to see that it is fine enough, try to get the right proportion of water, stir the 'porridge' thoroughly, 'dish' it out with scrupulous fairness. There is a constant interchange of conversation and commands to the smaller children: 'Bring me that dish', 'Lend me your broom', 'That's my firewood', 'Don't stir so fast', 'Come and fetch your porridge', and so on. As a rule they play together most amicably. I have observed arguments in such groups about who should do some task or another, but never quarrels. There is real co-operation, based on a distribution of tasks in play.

Such play is occasionally associated with a 'house' built of mud by a brother who often does not share the play, or actually uses the 'house' for his cattle play while his sisters are 'cooking' nearby.
[864] It is said, also, that housekeeping play sometimes branches into sexual play, little boys and girls pretending to be husband and wife and trying to copulate. Detailed inquiry shows that this is not common.
[836] The usual method of sexual experimentation at this stage of development follows the pattern of adolescence. Small boys 'woo sweethearts' with little gifts, and sexual experiments occur in connexion with dancing or by chance opportunities.[1]

Girls' housekeeping play ceases with the beginning of pubescence. Not only are they by then already taking a full share in real housekeeping but their interests are turning to youths and marriage. Housekeeping play, in which the child rehearses the interests which it has as yet neither the skill nor the degree of social development to satisfy, and expresses the wishes which pubescence brings near to realization, has served its purpose.

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[1] See my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

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The corresponding play of boys at this stage is 'cattle-keeping'. 868
It occurs more sporadically than the girls' play, particularly with older boys; but as much fantasy and invention go into it. Sometimes, 524
indeed, it seems like an overt day-dream of leisure hours. One boy alone, or two, usually play. When the group is bigger more boisterous 526
or recreational play ousts it—they wrestle, shoot arrows, gamble with 857
ground-nuts, or at certain seasons pitch bangles and hoops of plaited reed. Boys of all ages are far less placid than girls.

The 'cattle' play involves constructing a 'house' in which the 857
'gateway' and the 'stable' are prominently indicated and finding 524
something to serve as 'cattle'—sheep and goats never seem to enter. 868
These activities, and moving the cattle about in and out of the 'stable', with murmured remarks in monologue or addressed to a companion, constitutes the play. I have never been able to record this accompanying speech as I have always had to watch cattle play from a distance. Boys say that it is 'about bulls and cows'.

'Cattle' play has more of pure fantasy and less reproduction of real activities than 'housekeeping' play. Sometimes the 'house' and 'stable' are built of mud—a circular 'wall', 9 or 10 inches in diameter and 2 inches high, with a space left for the 'gateway', and a smaller circle of mud adjoining it as the 'stable'—to last for a whole dry season. Often it is constructed *ad hoc*—two circles drawn in the sand or made of heaped-up sand may be enough. A great variety of objects serve as 'cattle'. Boys who like modelling may make clay figures of cows and bulls for their play; bits of sticks, leaves of a common shrub which can be opened so as to stand up on their edges, pebbles, and other things are used. Yet despite the meagre materials and the paucity of mimetic content the play fascinates boys from the age of 5 or 6, when they are still too young to go out with the herds, to about 12, when they may be full-blown herd-boys. Even if their families have no cattle and they have never followed a herd regularly, they play at it. The interest and identification are active nevertheless.

At this stage, too, domestic ritual begins to be reflected in the play 857
of boys. A boy's or girl's schema of ritual and religious ideology at 524
the age of 9 or 10 includes the main structural principles of the system. 869
As his knowledge has been acquired by attending at sacrifices, he knows most about the ritual acts and conventional formulas connected

857 with sacrifice and least about the beliefs and theories. He is familiar
524 with all the concepts of Tale religion and magic but cannot assign
869 them accurately to their relevant contexts. He knows that ancestor spirits and medicines are different, and can even describe some of the latter by their functions, but cannot elucidate these differences. He knows also and believes that health, prosperity and success depend on mystical agencies, that sickness, death, and misfortune are caused by them, and that sacrifices must be made to placate them or to expiate offences. He has heard talk of all this and seen consultations of diviners. As an infant, perhaps, he has been called by his mother to get off a partition wall ' lest the spirits push you off ', or has seen food put out ' for the spirits ' during the ritual festivals. He knows what different types of shrines look like and what are their appurtenances. But it is surface knowledge, confused in details and full of gaps.

857 Ritual is men's business, though women are well versed in it.
524 Hence it emerges mostly in the play of boys and not of girls. Signifi-
869 cantly, it is permitted till pubescence, that is, as long as a boy is not likely to take a responsible part in real ritual. After that he is liable to
781 have to accept an ancestor spirit demanding real sacrifices and may no
788 longer play at it. At 13 or 14 years of age, when a boy's ritual schemas approximate those of an adult, he fully understands and acquiesces in this prohibition. It suggests, however, that playing at ritual has a different value for children than actual ritual has for adults. Children share the adults' interest in ritual and accept its prescriptions, but not the adults' emotional relationship to ritual. In their play they express this interest and their identifications, rehearse their knowledge, and integrate it with the rest of their educational achievements.

857 Small boys build shrines a few inches high for themselves in a corner
524 of the cattle-yard. They take great pains to achieve verisimilitude and
869 neatness, and their inventiveness is remarkable. *Kalampoo* husks are turned into medicine-pots; fragments of calabash or potsherd represent the hoe-blade which is essential to many ancestor shrines; a pronged twig is a shrine's ' tree '; the tail of a stillborn kid or lamb, tied with string and feathers in the same way as adults do, is a shrine's ' tail ', another object commonly dedicated to real shrines. There are ' roots ' —of grass—as in adult medicine-pots, and other appurtenances.

Whenever they build miniature houses, during the building season, 857
'shrines' are added and, as in real life, each has his own. 524

Play with these shrines is woven into other play activities, and it 869
revolves around sacrifice. When a small boy goes out hunting for fieldmice or birds, if he happens to have a 'shrine' he will 'give it water', i.e. pour a libation to it. Ashes represent flour, which is stirred up in water as in a real sacrifice. He invokes the shrine, 'My father' (but never mentioning names as in real sacrifice since his own father is probably still alive), 'accept this water and grant that I have successful hunting. If I kill an animal, I will give you a dog.' Some time later he may catch a live mouse, and when he has played with it to satiety he 'sacrifices' it on his shrine—this is the promised 'dog'. A nestling bird found alive is 'sacrificed' as a 'fowl' or 'guinea-fowl'. If he finds a live mouse or bird by chance it will always be taken home and 'sacrificed' thus before it is cut up and eaten. Taboos like those of adults are invented for his shrines. Fetishes, like those of adults, accept only red and black 'fowls'; other shrines
only white ones. Siikaɔni, a small boy of about 7 or 8, built him- [778
self a *loo* fetish, which can be dispatched to 'tie up' any one 789]
who might interfere with one's enterprises. Siikaɔni pretended to use his *loo* to keep the parents of his 'sweetheart' out of the way when he went to see her—a frequent use of a real *loo* by young men.

Of the imaginative and constructive play produced as a response 857
to current social activities in which children co-operate, I shall 524
instance only building. During the building season a favourite pre- 868
occupation of the children is to build miniature rooms or houses. It is a co-operative group enterprise, boys and girls frequently working together, led by a boy of about 12–13. It is carried on in the intervals between helping the men. Sometimes they are content to build only walls, a few inches high, but when the leader is keen they undertake a complete replica of a house—walls a foot or more high, several rooms properly arranged, a roof, a beaten inner court, and shrines. The work goes on for days on end and needs planning and organization. The girls and smaller boys make the swish and roll it into pellets, the older boys do the actual building, often with extraordinary skill. When the 'house' is built and roofed and the walls have dried, if the

857
524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers
with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
301 ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
283 and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses.
Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls
524 sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such
delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

system and his or her gradual acquisition of a responsible status in 883
the social structure. By the age of 14 or 15 most girls are already 868
married or being courted in marriage. They take their household
duties more lightly perhaps than older women with children, but 866
their childhood education is complete. Their education in the duties and responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood lies outside the scope of this paper. ' To play ' now means to join in the dance or to dress up and go to market, there to gossip and flirt. These are recreations merely, like conversation in the evening after a good meal, when the whole family sits or sprawls about in one of the inner courts or in front of the gateway. Such ' play ' is educative in quite a different sense to that of childhood.

Boys, too, between the ages of 12 or 13 and 16 to 18 are at the stage of transition from childhood to young manhood. The imaginative play still prominent at the beginning of this period is given up by degrees and usually altogether abandoned when puberty is established. Like the adolescent girl, the boy of 16 or so finds his principal recreation in the dance at certain seasons. He, too, begins to frequent markets [584]
when time permits, for he is greatly preoccupied with the opposite sex, with courtship and flirtations and even transient love affairs, and there is no place like the market for pretty girls. An adolescent youth is already applying the deftness and skill acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. A 16-year-old takes an active part in building and thatching and in the manufacture of bows and arrows, or in the practice of crafts like leatherwork or the forging of tools and implements.

The transition from boyhood to manhood can readily be observed in the development of farming interests and skill during this period. The boy of 10 to 12 is extremely keen to plant, hoe and weed. Helping his father, he sows ground-nuts for himself amongst his father's early millet. Frequently he has a small plot of cereals, a few yards square, in a useless corner of one of his father's fields. He hoes and plants and weeds his plot with great energy and zest, though somewhat crudely, borrowing one of his father's discarded hoes for this purpose. He assists his mother to farm her ground-nuts and beans. But his efforts make no difference to the family commissariat or to the care and sustenance given him by his parents. He is still

883 experimenting without responsibility, though with great earnestness.
868 Two or three years later the play element has vanished. If he culti-
866 vates a personal plot he makes an effort to beg land which is agriculturally good, and works with the avowed purpose of obtaining a crop which, though minute compared with the needs of the family, suffices to buy himself a cap or a loin-cloth. The time he can now devote to his own plot or to his own ground-nuts must be adjusted in accordance with his responsibilities as a contributor to the family economy.

With boys, therefore, as with girls, the completion of their childhood education marks the end of childhood play. Mimetic and imaginative experimentation becomes redundant when the individual attains social responsibility and maturity. The play of Tale children changes, as we have seen, *pari passu* with their advancing maturity, contributing at each stage to the elaboration and integration of those interests, skills, and observances the mastery and acceptance of which is the final result of their education.

VI. Synoptic Chart of Educational Development

In conclusion, and in order to bring the preceding analysis of the education of Tale children to a focus, I append a synoptic chart setting out the main trends of the development of their interests and skills as these are reflected in their economic duties and activities, on the one hand, and in their play on the other. The reader will realize that these norms are necessarily crude and approximate. I have not ventured to include observances in the chart, since the trend of their acquisition cannot easily be analysed into approximate stages.

CHART OF DEVELOPMENT

BOYS

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Economic Duties and Activities	*Play*
3–6 years	
None at first. Towards end of this period begin to assist in pegging out goats; scaring birds from newly sown fields and from crops; accompany family sowing and harvesting parties; using hoe in quasi-play to glean ground-nuts in company of older siblings.	Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Use mimetic toys (bow, drum, &c.) in egocentric play. Towards end of period social and imaginative play with 'cattle' and 'house-building' commences, often in company of older children of either sex, as well as recreational games and dancing.

	6–9 years	857
These duties now fully established. Help in house-building by carrying swish. Assist in sowing and harvesting. Towards end of period begin to go out with the herd-boys, and to care for poultry.	Imaginative 'cattle' and 'house-building' play common, the latter often reflecting current economic activity of adults. Practice with bow and arrow in marksmanship competitions, and 'hunting' with groups of comrades begun. Recreational games and dancing established. Modelling clay figures and plaiting begun. Ritual play begun.	
	9–12 years	
Fully responsible cattle-herding. Care for poultry. Assisting parents in hoeing and care of crops, but without responsibility. Farming own small plots and ground-nuts but in quasi-play. Sons of specialist craftsmen assist fathers in subsidiary capacity—'learning by looking'.	Further development of preceding forms of play, especially of ritual play. Clay-modelling and plaiting established. Recreational games and dancing more skilful. Quasi-play farming.	

Sexual dichotomy in work and play established.

	12–15 years	
Duties as in preceding period but more responsible. Responsible care of poultry, sometimes own property. Leaders of herd-boys. Real farming of own plots and in co-operation with older members of family established by end of period. Sons of specialists experimentally making things.	Imaginative play abandoned. Dancing the principal recreation. Ritual play abandoned. Modelling gradually abandoned. Plaiting for personal decoration mainly. Regular sweet-hearting commences.	883

GIRLS

Economic Duties and Activities	*Play*	
	3–6 years	
None at first. Towards end of period the same duties as small boys. Frequent nursing of infants. Accompany mothers to water-hole and begin to carry tiny water-pots. Help in simple domestic tasks such as sweeping.	Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Attached to older sisters and drawn into their 'housekeeping' play. Towards end of period begin to take active social part in the latter and begin recreational play and dancing. Often found in mixed sex groups.	857
	6–9 years	
Duties of previous period established. Responsible co-operation in water-carrying and simpler domestic duties. Help in cooking and in activities associated with food-preparation, such as searching for wild edible herbs. Accompany family parties at sowing and harvesting, giving quasi-playful help. Carry swish at building operations and assist women in plastering and floor-beating, but still with a play element.	'Housekeeping' play usual. Recreational play and dancing established. Begin to learn plaiting. Participate in 'building' play of boys, mimicking current women's activities, e.g. plastering.	

9–12 years

857 All domestic duties can be entrusted to them by end of this period—water-carrying, cooking, care of infants, &c. Assisting in building and plastering, &c., more responsibly. Often sent to market to buy and sell. Help in women's part of the work at sowing and harvest times.

'Housekeeping' play continues, gradually fading out at end of this period. Dancing becomes principal recreation. Plaiting both for decoration and use established. Begin to have sweethearts but not yet with serious intent.

Sexual dichotomy in work and play established.

12–15 years

883 Responsible part in all domestic duties of everyday life, and of those associated with ceremonial occasions. Go for firewood and collect shea-fruits in the bush, and help to prepare shea butter. (Marriage a very near prospect.)

Note. Care of infants and children is a duty of girls at all ages. Boys also are frequently entrusted with this task.

Imaginative play abandoned. Dancing the main recreation. Courtship and hetero-sexual interests occupy a great deal of time and attention. Actively participate in the social side of funeral ceremonies, &c., in the role of marriageable girls.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, OXFORD
BY JOHN JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

6: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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THE JOURNAL

OF THE

ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

R

VOL. LXVII

3

PUBLISHED BY THE
Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland
21, BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

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[title page]

COMMUNAL FISHING AND FISHING MAGIC IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES OF THE GOLD COAST.

By M. Fortes.

121 Social Anthropology, like every science, deals with abstractions. Religion, magic, social organization, law, etc., are not directly accessible to field observation *in toto* and in their conceptual purity. What the anthropologist sees in the field are social situations—the particular experiments, as it were, of a culture. These are composite events, patterns in which several aspects of culture and a variety of institutions and techniques are represented. When two friends stop to greet each other, we have a very simple situation of brief duration representing merely an instance of etiquette. But when we consider the social processes which lead up to and culminate in the relationship of marriage, we are faced with a whole series of situations linked in a temporal sequence, involving etiquette, economic techniques (gift exchanges), legal institutions (bride wealth), religious institutions (sacrifice to ancestor spirits), moral and social norms, and so forth. Such configurations, varying as these examples indicate from simple and momentary situations which represent a single phase of an institution to complex series of events which epitomize the whole culture in all its aspects, form the raw material of anthropological field work. To establish the characteristics of an institution like bride-wealth we abstract the relevant components of many " marriage configurations "—*i.e.*, configurations of a single type—and regard the other components as of subordinate or even negligible significance. To consider a system like religion, magic, or social organization we require to abstract the relevant components of a wide range of configurations of different types : births, marriages, funerals, economic situations, ritual festivals, etc.

These abstractions, essential for the generalized descriptions of institutions or aspects of culture, have been the main concern of anthropologists. In its extreme form, *e.g.*, in the comparative work of Tylor or Frazer, this has led writers to strip what they consider relevant facts completely of all cultural context. In the best functional studies interest has been focussed primarily upon the correlation of institutions with one another, and upon plotting the relationship of particular institutions to the whole of a culture. The fact that the social situations susceptible of direct observation in the field, besides providing the raw materials for sociological generalization, also constitute a problem for investigation has been largely overlooked.

Every type of social situation exhibits a definite structure. The component institutions, techniques, and norms of behaviour manifested in it are inter-related in a manner specific to that situation. In functional terminology, the " proximate function " of

121 each within the context of the particular type of social situation is specific to it and can be determined only from the analysis of the situation itself. It may differ considerably from its "institutional function" in relation to the culture as a whole. Thus the rules of exogamy viewed in relation to the entire social organization of a people may demonstrably serve to emphasize and preserve the integrity of an unilateral kinship group. But in a particular situation, a man barred from marriage with a woman he desires may enter into an illicit sexual intrigue with her, which may lead to dissension within the kinship group. In such a case the "proximate function" of the rules of exogamy appears to be the very contrary of their "institutional function." This is an hypothetical instance; but it will suffice to illustrate what we mean when we say that the components of any type of social situation are inter-related in a manner specific to it or that it exhibits a definite structure. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the structure of a situation which recurs with some frequency in the life of a tribe recently visited by the writer.

226 221 [805] Among the Tallensi, a tribe of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the communal fishing expeditions which take place every year are events of this kind. They extend over a period of about a month, between the close of the dry season and the commencement of the heavy rains. During this month which coincides with most of the native lunar month *Sigkpɛ̀ɔŋ* ("Dry rains"), and the European month of April, rain falls sporadically (five times, at varying intervals, in 1934, a dry year) but sufficiently for the sowing of early millet and some of the minor crops. Sowing demands the concentration of all energies of the family for a day or two after a fall of rain; then it is discontinued until the next fall of rain. Besides sowing, other technological and economic activities compete with fishing during this month. House repairs and rebuilding are still in progress and of course the markets, which take place on two days out of three within the tribal area, are in full swing. All these activities are equally shared by men and women, assisted by the children of both sexes.

226 262 Fishing therefore is not an activity of an economic off-season. Its calendrical incidence depends primarily on the technique employed, which is suitable only for shallow pools; and the pools are shallowest at the end of the dry season. It is, also, only indirectly correlated with the diminution in food supplies which becomes general during the "dry rains", since fish, like meat, is valued as a delicacy and never as a substitute for the staple cereal foods. In any case, the catch is usually too small to influence the economy of food supplies materially. Nevertheless, the luxury value of fish furnishes one of the main inducements to join the fishing expeditions.

226 But the greatest attraction of these fishing expeditions to young and old, men and women, is the excitement and thrill they provide, the immediate pleasure of participation in a communal enterprise with the possibility, however remote, of some gain.

133 226 The pools fished lie in the bed of the White Volta River. When the rains cease the water level gradually sinks till eventually only a series of pools divided from one another

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔγar*, 133
"river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226
river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 786
social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226
clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789]
and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226
expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226
customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203
falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market. Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋrana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622]
country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226
day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush. The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [441]
partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482]
But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 515 562 834 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit. The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation: the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 578 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

461 322 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bɔlgraana*, who had only recently been installed. To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place "where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences. 226 423 535 [292]

The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements. The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights. 226 423

Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the performance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features— 226 789 782

226 typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also
789 many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance.
782 Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the
[778] apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*).
The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*.
Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a
large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's
tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices
and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious
symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous
creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical
performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced
earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool
[787] and of the magical specialist. A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted
by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his
ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn
also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist.
Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bɔlgraana's*
first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish.
The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark
or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the
fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display
of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near
[424] pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of
Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

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[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of 226
his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated 789
with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a
little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus 782
symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in
closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its 226
highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but
he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and
chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who
conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—
sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding
the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round
him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. [533]
On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets
aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the
afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the
outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious
fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are
able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool
magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can
go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was taken of sending four good swimmers
in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognized. Members 602
of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no
motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger
but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

226 227 The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wɔk*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*sɔγar*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

226 571 The manual skill involved is however of secondary significance. Sociologically, the essential fact is that fishing is a group activity. Everybody fishes with and against his neighbour, his motor alertness and competitive cupidity at the highest. The excitement is indescribable. The glint of a fin through the water, brown with the mud churned up by the slow moving mass of men, causes a scrimmage. Pushing and shouting, a dozen men plunge their nets after the fish. In a well stocked pool the terrified fish leap out of the water, a fantastic and beautiful sight. Hands and nets swing out after the leaping fish, and the older men who remain on the bank watching call out with eager delight at the sight. The first catch of the day is greeted with a shout of pleasure, not very welcome to the fortunate fisherman, however, for the fish thus noticed cannot escape confiscation by the owner of the pool, as it is the ritual perquisite of the fetish.

226 578 579 Disputes are inevitable and may become violent. The rule is that a fish belongs to the person who nets or traps it. But a fish may be netted by one man, escape, and be at once netted by another, or a leaping fish may be pinned between two nets. Such incidents lead to an angry altercation in which the one who has the fish generally gets the better. Once a quarrel over a fish occurred between a man of the *Namoos* group and one of the *Tallis* group. The latter ran ashore with his fish followed by the *Namoos* claimant. In a few minutes a small riot had broken out. *Namoos* and *Tallis* rushed out, snatched sticks, branches of trees, fishing nets, and flew at each other. Only the intervention of a brother of the Chief of Tongo stopped what might have become a serious fight. The dispute over the fish in this case was the signal for an outburst of political hostility. Words quickly lead to blows in such an atmosphere of heightened muscular and emotional tension.

The principal disputes, however, concern the tribute due to the owner of the pool. 226
Morally his rights are beyond question and are never denied. But except for members 578
of the owner's immediate family, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute, 651
a moral obligation of this sort counts for nothing in practice without effective sanctions. 602
Hence the owner sees to it that members of his family are dispersed amongst the crowd in the water. These young men keep a sharp watch and do not hesitate to take by force the fish which they regard as their rightful tribute. The owner himself often enters the pool to assist in the police work. Those who contest the confiscation of their fish do so in vain. Not only will public opinion not support them, but the owner's "policemen" would not hesitate to give them a drubbing. A maternal kinsman, sister's son, or in-law relation of the owner is, however, allowed to keep his first fish, unless his catch is large, in virtue of kinship. This is a concession which the owner might also make to his personal friends, and not a right.

One obligation, by contrast, is never evaded. Young crocodiles are sometimes caught, 651
and the owner of the fetish is entitled to the hind legs and tail of every crocodile caught. 226
This is the perquisite of his *bayar* one part of which, the hoe shaft, will be covered with
the skin of a crocodile tail thus delivered to him. Not only is it very difficult to conceal 626
the capture of a crocodile, but the supernatural penalties of evasion—certain injury from a crocodile in a future fishing expedition being the least of them—dare not be risked.

Fishing continues thus from about 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m., or in a well stocked pool, 226
to 5 p.m. The exodus commences sporadically. People who had earlier in the day been cutting hoe shafts or rafters, collecting firewood, or medicinal herbs, come out first to complete these tasks. Finally, when only a few remain in the pool, the owner of the fetish goes down to pull up his *bayar*. As he does this, he shouts to those remaining to come out. The removal of the axe shaft is the signal that the fishing is over.

The catch in such expeditions varies greatly. The tribute received by the owner of the pool may be taken as a rough index of the catch. In the three expeditions in which I participated the owner's tribute varied from six to fifteen medium and large fish. The last pool was exceptionally prolific and was fished on two successive days. I estimated the number of men—men only fished on the first day—at about four hundred; on this occasion the catch was declared to be enormous, surpassing all expectations. Few people left empty handed. But on the other hand, nobody had more than four medium or large fish, which would be taken home and divided up within each man's immediate family. The best proof of the paucity of the catch relative to the population fishing and of the valuation of fish as a delicacy rather than as an addition to the food supply, was that throughout the fishing month fish caught on these expeditions never appeared for sale at the market.

Clearly too, communal fishing does not benefit the owner of the pool much materially. 226
However large his tribute, the net gain to himself is small since he distributes much of 651
it to others—men of rank and elders who attend the fishing as an expression of clan loyalty

226 651 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 [622] Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. [685] Besides, such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[554] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practice and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

The nodal factor in the situation is the magic. On one of the expeditions I attended the owner had his own fishing magic and made the sacrifices himself; but I do not know how general this is. Otherwise, the magician's office has its traditional warranty. It is an ancient privilege and even duty of his lineage to perform the rites for the lineage of the particular holder of the chieftainship. The association, like every relationship of this sort, is accounted for on the grounds of ancestral kinship. Thus a community of interest, such as could never arise in a purely commercial relationship, is presupposed. Functionally, whether the owner or the magician are united in one personage or not, magic enters into the fishing configuration as the owner's principal instrument of organization, helping to assert his status and rights in the fishing situation. This inference receives confirmation from the following observations: If a chief owns several pools, once the complete series of rites have been performed at the first pool to be fished, it is sufficient, subsequently, if the riverside rites alone are performed. Again, if, as sometimes happens, two adjacent pools are fished on the same day, the second will not be entered until it has been sprayed and the signal given. Thus the final and public rite, the actual organizing act, is emphasized. But the clinching evidence for this is the fact that the magical act proclaims the owner's responsibility for the satisfactory outcome of the expedition which he has organized. The behaviour of the people, more so, the ideology associated with situations of this type (full documentation of which must await later publication) and the purpose expressed in the magic prove this. Magic is, therefore, the binding factor in the fishing configuration, linking together the principal constituents—the objective facts of place and economic purpose, the owner, the people who come to fish and the relevant ideological principles. 226 789

The magic is able to achieve this in virtue of its content; that is, the control it ostensibly exercises over the psychologically critical factor in the situation, the dangers which might be encountered in the water. It is towards these dangers that the magic is *prima facie* directed. Its efficacy is never questioned; for even if, as sometimes happens, someone should be injured by a crocodile or fish, the ready explanation lies to hand that he has offended an ancestor spirit who took this occasion to punish him. An injury to an individual is his own affair. Nevertheless, nobody carries out private magic for his own protection. Again, fear of injury is not a deterrent to poaching either by individuals or, as in the case of the Yinduri expedition, by a group.[1] [685]

It is obvious, therefore, that the magic is valid only within the context of the organized fishing expedition, promoted by the rightful owner. The psychological facts upon which the magic is built have relevance only within this context. The real danger, or the correlative fear of injury, does not precipitate a magical rite whenever an individual or group is liable to it, but only within the appropriate social situation.

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[1] Indeed fishing expeditions are sometimes made to distant unowned pools and then no magic is performed, as I discovered during my second field trip in 1936. This is because these expeditions are informal, not organized by a responsible personage, and comparable to poaching.

226 789 There the psychological facts are, one might say, re-created, socially transformed by the magic into a collective risk against which protection is provided by the very act which affirms its existence. The magic is concerned not with the safety of individuals but with the security of the group. Above all, responsiblity for the security of the group rests, in the last resort, upon the owner of the pool, the one who brings the group into being. Through the magic this responsibility is affirmed as a privilege associated with the ownership rather than a burden. Individual magical precautions would be as incongruous with this communal situation as a particular individual's chances of injury are unpredictable. In brief, the magical organization of the situation depends upon the exploitation of psychological factors latent in it; but these psychological factors cannot be regarded as the source of the magic. Ownership, magic, and organization of the expedition constitute a unitary structure the disruption of which would entirely alter the significance of any of the constituents.

121 At the outset of this paper the view was expressed that every type of social situation exhibits a definite structure. An analysis was then made of a typical social situation met with among the Tallensi. Various institutions (chieftainship) techniques (magic) and norms of behaviour (disposal of the catch) each determined in part by a context lying beyond the boundaries of the fishing expedition, were shown to enter into the situation. It was suggested, also, that the fishing magic is the factor which binds the different components into a definite pattern. The question arises why is it that situations such as this exhibit a specific structure? Is it due to the peculiar ensemble of institutions, etc., represented? Is it due to the nuclear interest—*viz.*, the catching of fish—of the situation? Or is it due to the fact that what we differentiate as institutions, etc., appear in such situations, as the concrete responses of individuals and groups to one another in terms of social definitions and psychological impulses arising solely from the situation itself? This is a problem which requires the examination of many types of situations comprising similar combinations of institutions, techniques, and norms of behaviour.[1]

[114] [1] This paper was written after my first expedition to the field, in 1934-5, as a Fellow of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

BULLETIN No. 34.

Department of Agriculture,
Gold Coast.

AGRICULTURE
IN
NORTH MAMPRUSI

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Issued by the Director of Agriculture.
Accra.
1937.

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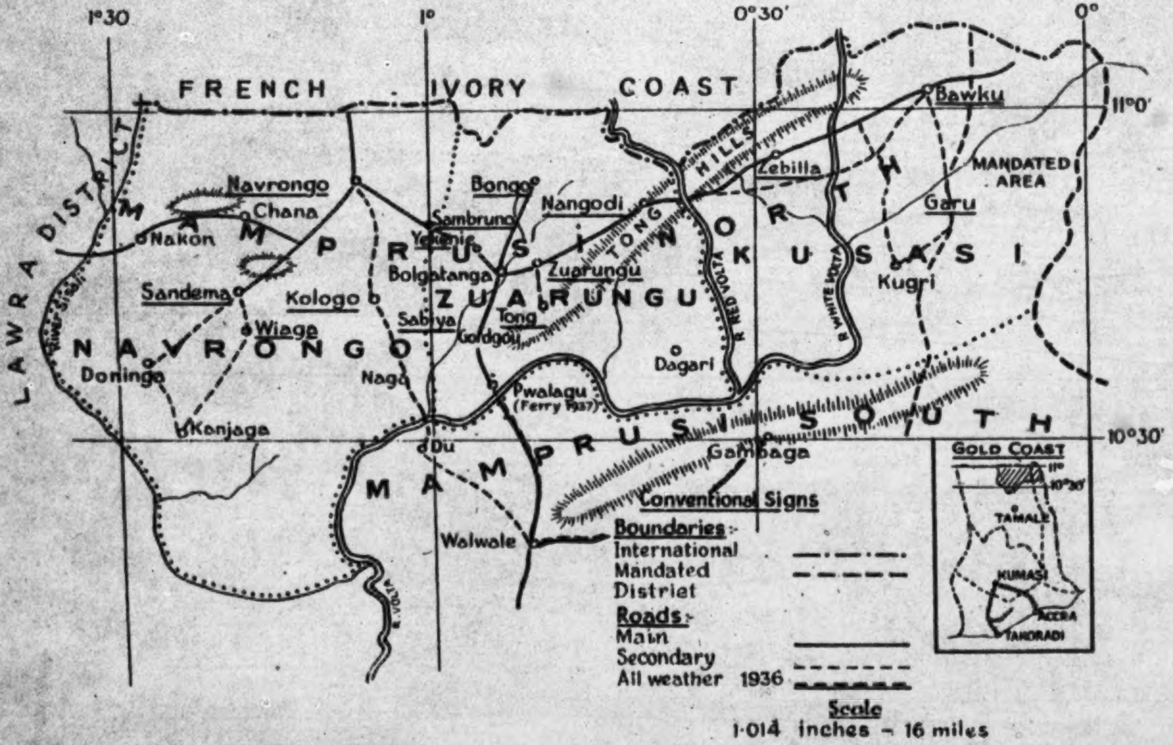
NORTH MAMPRUSI, GOLD COAST.


1°30
1°
0°30'
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11°0'
10°30'
FRENCH IVORY COAST
LAWRA DISTRICT
MAMPRUSI
NORTH
KUSASI
NAVRONGO
ZUARUNGU
TONG HILLS
MANDATED AREA
SOUTH MAMPRUSI
Navrongo
Chana
Nakon
Sandema
Kologo
Wiaga
Doninga
Konjaga
Bongo
Sambruno
Yekene
Bolgatanga
Nangodi
Zuarungu
Tong
Sabiya
Gologu
Nago
Du
Pwalagu
(Ferry 1937)
Dagari
Zebilla
Bawku
Garu
Kugri
Gambaga
Walwale
R. RED VOLTA
R. WHITE VOLTA
R. VOLTA
River Sisili
Conventional Signs
Boundaries:-
International
Mandated
District
Roads:-
Main
Secondary
All weather 1936
Scale
1·014 inches = 16 miles
GOLD COAST
11°
10°30'
TAMALE
KUMASI
ACCRA
TAKORADI

[p. III]

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INTRODUCTION

This bulletin records the work of the Department of Agriculture in North Mamprusi during the years 1932 to 1936. It is divided into two parts: the first contains a description of the indigenous system of agriculture and the survey methods followed in studying it; and the second gives the results of preliminary trials, as an introduction to future experimental work. 128

North Mamprusi comprises three political sub-districts, Navrongo Area, Zuarungu Area, and Kusasi (Bawku) Area. These areas have a number of features in common, the most important from our point of view, being a dense population, and a primitive system of "fixed" agriculture. The most densely populated area is Zuarungu, where a shortage of cultivated foods is a fairly common experience. It was mainly to find the causes of this food shortage and to suggest ameliorative measures that the Department of Agriculture commenced preliminary survey work in this area in 1932. Unfortunately, owing to shortage of staff, the work had to be suspended in 1933, with a consequent loss of continuity. It was recommenced in 1934, however, and the scope was enlarged to admit of a certain amount of experimental work at Zuarungu and Navrongo, and survey work in the Navrongo Area. Some of the survey work was also repeated in Zuarungu Area to supply confirmatory information upon 1932 data, particularly yield data, since it was known that 1932 was an exceptionally favourable season. In 1935 the experimental side of the work received more attention; similarly in 1936. And in 1936 survey work was extended to Zebilla, in Kusasi Area. Zuarungu has been the headquarters throughout. 634 121

We have now obtained a fairly detailed knowledge of local agriculture and a certain amount of experimental evidence upon the best way in which it can be improved. All our experience points to some form of "mixed farming" (1) as a solution of the problem. Mr. F. A. Stockdale, C.M.G., C.B.E. (now Sir Frank Stockdale), Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State, visited Zuarungu and Navrongo in December, 1935, and recommended (2) the expansion of our work to enable us to investigate more 121

121 fully a system of mixed farming suitable for the peculiar conditions obtaining locally. In 1936, the writer visited Northern Nigeria to study the progress made in mixed farming there. A report upon this visit has been published as Bulletin No. 33 of the Department (3).

It is realized that Nigerian experience can serve only as a guide to us here, for whilst environmental conditions are similar, economic conditions differ considerably. The object of this bulletin is to record the results of observations, surveys, and experimental work, as an introduction to the study of mixed farming locally. The survey methods followed have been recorded in the hope that they may be of value when similar work is contemplated in other districts.

Our method of approach to the improvement of local agriculture is by surveys and observations, followed by experiment, demonstration, and extension, in that order. So far, in North Mamprusi, we have reached the stage of experiment and quiet demonstration.

Part I.—STUDY OF INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE.

Section I.—Introductory Notes upon the District.

128 The farming methods of the primitive tribes inhabiting North Mamprusi are practically unique in the Gold Coast. Before discussing the results of surveys and experimental work it is proposed to outline in this section some of the main features of the district which have a bearing upon local agriculture and which are likely to affect its future development. It is necessary to state that most remarks are based upon experience gained in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; although most of what is said will apply to Kusasi Area, it is probable that greater experience will reveal some differences.

Situation.

131 North Mamprusi is situated in the extreme North East corner of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast; it lies roughly between 10° 30" and 11° North latitude and 0° and 1° 30" West longitude and covers an area of 3,559 square miles. It is bounded on the South by South Mamprusi (Gambaga District), on the West by Lawra-Tumu District, and on the North and East by French West Africa.

Isolation.

An important economic feature of the district is its distance from the coast, 500 miles, and from rail head, 350 miles. This means expensive road transport precluding the possibility of all but local exports with the present prices ruling on the world's markets. The isolation is further emphasised by the fact that the main road to the South is not yet all-weather. Motor traffic is cut off from the end of May until the end of November, when the Volta rivers wash away the temporary dry season drifts. 131 491

European Contact.

Contact with Europeans has taken place only comparatively recently, *i.e.*, within about the last forty years, and for some time, soldiers, police, and political officers were the only "white men" known to the people; these were followed by medical and veterinary officers. It was not until 1930 that an agricultural officer visited the district in the growing season, and then only temporarily upon locust control duty. Observations made during this visit are recorded in the Department's Year Book for 1930 (4). In 1932 practically new ground had to be broken, and a natural suspicion, increased by not altogether unfounded rumours of direct taxation, had to be overcome before the people's confidence was obtained. The importance of this confidence for the success of our work requires no stressing. 177

Climate.

The main climatic feature of the district is a well defined rainy season, lasting from the beginning of April until the middle of November, alternating with an intensely dry season. The mean annual rainfall at Zuarungu is 43.92", at Navrongo 47.83", and at Bawku 41.20". Monthly means are given in Appendix I. The whole of North Mamprusi is included in the Sudanese Climatic Zone (5). Rainbearing winds come from the South East, but tornadoes from the East and North East mark the beginning and the end of the rainy season; then precipitations are very localised. From November until February or March the "harmattan" (5) wind blows with varying severity. 132

Vegetation—Trees.

The natural vegetation of North Mamprusi is "tree savannah" (6) with fringing forest along the banks of the larger rivers. In the populated parts of the district only trees of economic value, 137

137 either as food or medicine, have been allowed to remain. The most important of these are:—

Adansonia digitata
Butyrospermum parkii
Parkia filicoidea
Diospyros mespiliformis
Sterculia tomentosa
Ficus gnaphalocarpa
Tamarindus indica
Celtis integrifolia

Acacia albida
Acacia sieberriana
Acacia arabica
Cieba pentandra
Bombax buonopozense
Lannea acida
Sclerocarya birrea
Vitex cienkowskii

Other trees of less economic value, which have been removed to make way for farming, or to provide firewood and building timbers, can be seen well represented in "ju-ju groves", "tengani" (Nankani), and on the margins of cultivation. The most important of these are:

Combretum spp.
Terminalia spp.
Anogeissus leiocarpus
Bauhinia spp.

Acacia seyal
Acacia senegal
Sarcocephalus russegeri

Grasses.

All land which is not under cultivation carries a covering of grasses which is usually burnt-over annually, in the dry season. The composition of grass land varies according to soil, situation, and conditions of burning and grazing. Large areas of exposed land carry only a thin cover of Heteropogon contortus. On better soils Pennisetum polystachyon, "chima" (Nankani), is found on roadsides and between farms; it is valued highly as a fodder grass. Other grasses commonly occurring on waste places in cultivated areas are: Dactyloctenium aegyptium, Chloris spp., Aristida ascensionis, and Eragrostis spp. In "bush areas" Adropogon gayanus and Cymbopogon proximus are common.

Topography.

133
241 North and South Mamprusi are separated by a steep escarpment. This is an important dividing line for it marks the change from the standstone and shale rock formations in the South, to granite, quartz, and greenstone formations in the North; it is also roughly the Northern limit of yam cultivation, associated with methods of "shifting" cultivation; and the Southern limit of early

millet and "fixed" cultivation. The Red and White Volta Rivers rise in French Territory and flow south through North Mamprusi until they reach the foot of the scarp; here they join, and flow westward. With their tributaries the Voltas drain the whole district; they are fed mainly by surface water and from being practically dry in the dry season, they become deep, swift-moving rivers in the rains, flooding their banks and doing considerable damage to road communications. 133 241

The surface of the country is gently undulating and outcrops of granitic rocks are common. Small stony hills occur sporadically and a definite range, the Tong Hills, runs north-east through the district from Shia in Zuarungu Area, almost to Bawku in Kusasi Area. The average height of the district is between 600′ and 700′ above sea level.

Soil.

134 The soils of North Mamprusi are mainly derived from granodiorite. They are greyish-brown in colour and contain a high proportion of sand and gravel which makes them course in texture. Ridges of quartz occur in some places and in their vicinity the soil is very stony. In valley lands the soil is heavier, due to an accumulation of finer particles washed down from the surrounding slopes; this soil becomes very wet in the rainy season and is seldom cultivated, although it is capable of growing excellent crops of rice. Odd patches of laterite stone are found but they are not common. Parts of the Tong Hills are composed of greenstone, a rock which weathers to a rich red colour and gives rise to a fertile but exceedingly stony soil. In cultivating, the people shift the stones into contoured heaps against which the soil packs forming terraces; examples of these can be seen around Dutsi, Zanlerigu, and Nangodi. In the middle of the rainy season—July, August, and September—the water-table rises rapidly and large portions of the district become water-logged.

Soil Erosion.

Close arable farming with no enclosure of fields, together with the undulating surface of the country, the open nature of the soil, and the practice of burning almost every particle of vegetal ground cover during the dry season, result in very serious sheet erosion of the soil, particularly at the beginning of the rains; streams and rivers are darkly coloured by the matter carried away in suspension. The resulting loss of fertility is considerable and the stony nature of the soil is accentuated, making cultivation more

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space in-
[231] side is divided into compartments by low walls. Livestock are kept
in an open compartment near the entrance. The land lying
[241] between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a
definite part of the farming system.

Fixed Cultivation.

[161] The high density of population necessitates a system of
"fixed" cultivation. It is difficult to say whether the need for
241 "fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

scattered compounds, or whether closer building between compounds, on land previously available for farming, enforced the system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation, as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously. 241

Land Tenure.

The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana" (Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs command people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs' and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide. 793 622 425

To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. The question of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agricultural land has no value in the economic sense; there are a number of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the land, through the tindana. [427]

In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been conveyed through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the requirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible, either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land 428 423

428 423 allotted by the father. On the death of the head of the family the male survivors inherit the land in varying proportions as tenants in common with benefits of survivorship. The eldest son assumes the responsibilities of his father and may elect to live either in his father's compound, or to remain in his own. In either case he will receive a large share of his father's farm and retain also an interest in his own. After a number of generations the distribution and ownership of land becomes very complicated in congested areas and considerable fragmentation of holdings takes place. Land not in use may be lent to another for farming, but often with a stipulation to plant non-exhausting crops.

Distribution of Population.

162 The distribution of population is very variable both from one political area to another and within each area. If one takes the the district as a whole, 3,559 square miles, the population by the 1931 census (7) is shown to be 406,566 persons; this gives a density of population of 114 per square mile (c.f. South Mamprusi 23 per square mile, and Western Dagomba 15). It is estimated that at least one-third of the total area is uninhabited, and much of this is fertile alluvial land near to rivers, where tse-tse flies abound. In other areas ruins are found for which slave raiding, sleeping sickness, and yellow fever, are variously held responsible. Table I below gives the distribution of tribes and population.

Table 1.—Distribution of Population in North Mamprusi.

Political Area	Area, square miles	Total Population	Density of Population per sq. ml.	Tribes
Navrongo ...	1,551	120,870	78	Nankani, Kassena, and Builsa.
Zuarungu ...	781	133,981	172	Nankani, Tallensi, and Nabdam.
Kusasi and Br. Togoland ...	807 420	110,614 41,101	137 98	Kusasi, Busanga, Bemoba and strangers.
Total ...	3,559	406,566	114	—

Political Organisation.

631 History shows that North Mamprusi was continually harrassed from outside (8) until comparatively recent times. The Mamprusis in the South, who were at one time a powerful and organised tribe,

631 conquered many of the small tribes in North Mamprusi and superimposed their rule upon the indigenous clan system. Thus many of the Chiefs in the district to-day are of Mamprusi descent and pay tribute to the Nayiri, the paramount Mamprusi Chief at Nalerigu, near Gambaga. There is little tribal cohesion amongst the family sections, or clans, and it is upon their federation into a political unit, the Mamprusi State, that political officers have been engaged recently, following Government's policy of Indirect Rule through native Administration. The clans in Zuarungu and Kusasi now come into the Mamprusi Native Administration; those of Navrongo have formed Administrations of their own. Direct [651] taxation was introduced in 1936 and marked an important step forward. A large proportion of the money collected is to be spent upon social services in the areas of collection, and agriculture is not being neglected.

Recent Slave Raids.

721 In addition to conquest from the South, the district was continually invaded by mounted slave-raiders from the North. There is no doubt that the unsettled conditions produced by these raids 241 have had a profound effect upon the economic and social life of the people. The importance of this from our point of view is that now, with settled conditions, the people may be expected to adjust themselves, in time, to the new order of things, and to be prepared to modify their system of farming where necessary. It is probable that these invasions, together with tse-tse fly in heavy bush, tended to concentrate the population around the rocky hills characteristic of the district, where the horsemen would be at a disadvantage. The attention of the people appears to have been concentrated more upon weapons—bows and arrows, or spears, still used to-day for ceremony and hunting—than upon agricultural implements. It is also a significant fact that the indigenous system of agriculture requires no operation to be performed on the farm during the dry season, which is the season of the year when invasion would take place. The burning of the grass in the dry season may have been done to reduce the chance of surprise attack.

Agriculture a Custom, not a Business.

241 As might be expected from tribes consisting of small units having continually to defend themselves and losing many of their strongest men in fighting or taken as slaves, the people in North Mamprusi remained, economically, very primitive. Although the system of agriculture is "fixed", which is generally regarded as an advance upon "shifting cultivation", it leaves much to be desired. Farming methods have not been adjusted sufficiently quickly to

241 keep pace with the growth in intensity of conditions. Farming is regarded as a custom and not as a business, with the result that in crop production and in animal husbandry the maximum is left to Nature. It is custom based upon an unsettled past which underlies the economic system.

Diet.

262 The diet of the people is largely vegetarian; only after religious
264 sacrifice, or upon a very special occasion, is the flesh of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys or dogs, eaten, subject to certain taboos. Fowls are not eaten by women, or, in some sections, by first-born male children; they are therefore not generally found in a normal diet; guinea-fowls are eaten, however, by all who can afford them. The big meal of the day is consumed in the evening and consists of cereal flour, cowpeas, or Bambarra beans, prepared as a dough or porridge, over which soup made with or without meat, is poured. In the mornings a light meal is taken off anything left-over from the previous evening; similarly at mid-day. When working in the farms at the beginning of the season cereal flour is taken mixed with drinking water. The results of a study of the diet of the Tallensi—a tribe around Tongo in Zuarungu Area—in relation to domestic economy, has been dealt with very fully by Dr. M. and Mrs. S. L. Fortes (9).

Recurrent Food Shortage.

262 It is not surprising that with a precarious rainfall and almost
251 complete dependence upon cereals, crop yields are very variable and recurrent food shortage is a common experience. Soil erosion,
241 and a system of continuous cultivation with inadequate manuring, have reduced the bulk of farmed land to a basic minimum of fertility, except in the immediate vicinity of compounds. The food problem is further complicated by a natural improvidence of the people whereby all crops are consumed in the year they are produced. In good years a surplus of grain is used lavishly in performing religious customs; it is seldom stored against the possibility of a bad season. A rise in the market value of crops at planting time suggests that many people are so improvident as not even to save sufficient seed for planting.

Famine Foods.

222 A reduced supply of cultivated foods in a poor season is eked
261 out by food from wild sources. There is scarcely a single tree in populated areas which has not some value in this respect; and the seed of an indigenous grass, "Gonongo" (Nankani) (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), is laboriously collected and used as grain.

Nevertheless, although a shortage of cultivated foods does not 222 necessarily mean starvation, it lowers resistance to disease and 261 saps the energy of the people at the end of the dry season when they need strength to prepare their farms; thus setting up a "vicious circle". It is not the shortage of food in itself which is so arresting, however, as the apathy of the people to the shortage. Ancestor worship causes them to dwell in the past and to think insufficiently of the present and the future. This, too, is probably symptomatic of the unsettled conditions when only the past was certain. It will take some time for the people, the older people who control affairs especially, to adjust themselves to the swift developments going on around them. An unfortunate result is [167 that during the period of adjustment, many of the young men are attracted away from the district to work for wages in Ashanti 464] and the Colony, where there is a big demand for unskilled labour in the mines and in handling the cocoa crop. These young men do not as a rule stay away from home for long at a time, and usually return with a little money; but they do not take readily to farming again, and represent a floating population which is the source of considerable concern to their elders.

Economic Awakening.

An adequate food supply alone does not appear to be suffi- 177 cient incentive for the adoption of better farming methods; and it is unlikely that changes will come until farming ceases to be regarded mainly as a custom, and becomes a business. There are many signs of an economic awakening, fostered by such factors as a growing desire of the people for imported commodities, and an increase in money consciousness; the completion of an all-weather road to the South; the opening of a gold mine at Nangodi; the developing trade in all classes of livestock with Ashanti and the Colony; the new trade in groundnuts from Bawku for the Kumasi market; together with the work of Government Departments in the improvement of human health, the health of livestock, and not least, the scope of the recently introduced Native Administrations. These are some of the factors helping to bring about a change which can be met only by better farming. Government must anticipate agricultural expansion to be in a position to control its development.

The first problem, obviously, is to ensure a sufficiency of food 000 for everyone in every year. Then, when local requirements have been satisfied, it must be shown how a surplus can be disposed of profitably, to satisfy growing demands. Upon this the Department of Agriculture is working in North Mamprusi, and the results of the last four years' work form the basis of this bulletin.

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Section II.—AGRICULTURAL SURVEY.

121

In this section it is proposed to record the methods adopted in studying local agriculture as well as to give the results of the survey.

Nature of the Problem.

As already mentioned in the introduction, our main object in coming to North Mamprusi was to investigate the causes of recurrent food shortage and to suggest and to implement ameliorative measures. It had been generally accepted that the shortage was due to the congestion of population; but it could not be said that more land was the solution of the problem until details of local methods of crop production were known; for the amount of food available depended as much upon the intensity of cultivation as upon the area cultivated. Efforts made in the past to encourage migration to the South had met with little success. Table I on page 8 shows that the density of population in Navrongo Area is only half that of Zuarungu Area, and yet the people in Navrongo Area suffer from food shortage. This suggests that simply to provide more land by encouraging emigration could at best afford only temporary relief, and that the problem is agricultural as well as political.

SURVEY METHODS.

Information Required.

The information we set out to obtain before we could express an opinion upon the situation was as follows:—

1. Size of farms, man power expended and population supported per unit area.
2. The system of farming followed, with details of methods of cultivation, crop mixtures, rotations, areas under different crops, yields, and methods of maintaining fertility.
3. Economy of crops after production—storage, utilisation, disposal of surplus, market prices.
4. Position of livestock in the farm economy.
5. Natural vegetation and environmental factors in relation to food supply.

The scope of our work was limited by the staff available. Accuracy was considered to be of first importance, and quantitative data were collected wherever possible.

Approach to Problem.

Two methods of approach to the study suggested themselves. 121 The first, an intensive method, was to select an area and to take records from every compound within it and to survey all the land farmed by these compounds. The second, an eclectic method, was to select centres in different parts of the district and at each centre to select a number of compounds for detailed record. There were advantages in favour of each method but it was considered that, if care was taken in the selection of compounds, the second had more to recommend it for our purpose; this was the method adopted.

Selection of Centres for Record.

After discussion with the Political Officer for the district, centres of operation were considered, bearing in mind typicalness, accessibility, and the amenability of the Chief. The last is important for no matter how desirable a place might be for other reasons, no useful work could be done if the Chief was antagonistic. The centres finally selected were decided upon after touring the district. In all, records have been taken at ten centres distributed as follows:—

In Zuarungu Area in 1932 at Bongo, Nangodi, Sambruno, Tongo and Zuarungu.

In Navrongo Area in 1934 at Chana, Kologo, Wiaga, and in 1935 at Navrongo.

In Kusasi Area at Zebilla in 1936.

Selection of Compounds for Record.

At each centre a large number of compounds was visited with 124 a representative of the Chief, and from amongst these, six compounds were selected for record. Care was taken to choose compounds as typical of the district as possible. Thus the compounds of Chiefs, headmen, and strangers, were avoided if possible, and also the compounds of pensioners. Care had to be taken not to record the compound of a man pushed forward by the Chief simply to humour the white man. As with the Chief, so with the farmer, he must be amenable to our intrusion. The compounds we selected were probably rather above the average, and at Tongo we unwittingly included the farms of three headmen. At this early

124 stage in the survey, time spent in reconnaissance is certainly not wasted, for once records are started in a compound they must go on or be discarded; there is no time to change later.

Details Collected.

126 A junior officer of the Department was stationed at each centre and generally received the hospitality of the Chief. He was therefore in touch with the centre of local affairs. The number of compounds which can be recorded by one man depends upon many factors, but keeping strict accuracy in mind, rather than the maximum number of records possible, six was found to be a reasonable number for a man previously unacquainted with the work. Each compound was given a serial number, which was entered into a record book together with the place name, the name of the section and the name of the compound owner; these details were entered as a heading. Beneath this the following details were entered :—

Compound. a. Number of men farming in the compound (including boys big enough to farm).

b. Details of persons supported by the produce from the farm.

c. Livestock owned by the compound.

d. Notes upon the food supply from the previous season.

e. Remarks. (Any details affecting the economics of the household, *i.e.*, trades followed, like smithing; money from sale of livestock; and so on.)

Farms. f. Total area farmed (entered after survey).

g. Area, and a brief description of each farm.

h. Area of land manured in the current season (after survey).

i. Mean yields of major crops in current season (after harvest).

Measuring Farms.

The total area of land farmed by each compound was then chain surveyed with the 100′ chain by the usual cadastral methods followed in agricultural survey (well described by Haines in "Surveying for Agricultural Students, Land Agents, and Farmers" (10)). The areas were then computed, and a plan to the scale of 1″=100′, was made of each "farm" (the word "farm" is used for each detached area or field). The farms were given serial numbers for each compound, and the plans were entered into the record book with notes upon situation, soil, and trees. All this is work which can be done during the dry season.

Measuring Crop Mixtures.

The next step was to make traced plans from the originals, on a separate sheet of paper for each farm. When dealing with a number of compounds it is essential to write the name of the place, the number of the compound, the owner's name, and the number of the farm, upon each sheet of paper, and to make certain that the staff recognise the same numbering. To avoid confusion the "compound farm" was always "Farm 1", and the others were numbered in order of the distance away from the compound. The traced plans were given to the assistant responsible for the centre concerned, and he entered-in the cropping when planting was finished. Where a number of different crops, or mixtures of crops, were planted in the same farm—as frequently happened, particularly in compound farms—the boundaries of each were marked in on the traced plans with dotted lines. The area of land manured was marked-in by shading. The position of these boundaries was found by running intersection lines from the original survey pillars (marked by stakes in the ground). This work has to be done and checked before the crops have grown so high as to be damaged by chaining.

Computation of Crop Areas.

The areas of each mixture of crops were then calculated. Where a whole farm was planted with a single mixture the area of the farm was the area of the crop, less any land occupied by buildings, etc. In farms which contained a number of mixtures, where only the total area was known, the area of each mixture was found, accurate to the first place of decimals, by graphical methods (10) from the traced plans. Hence the need for scale plans of farms. (To compute the area of a piece of land from a scale plan, proceed as follows: Draw parallel lines 1" (=100') apart in ink upon a piece of tracing cloth, or tracing paper. Place the lined tracing cloth over the plan, the area of which is required, so that one boundary touches a parallel line. With a transparent set-square, lay off "give and take" lines at right angles to the lines on the tracing cloth, to equalise the boundaries on the plan. Measure the distances between opposite equalising lines, add, and multiply by 100; this gives the area in square feet. If "give and take" lines are entered lightly in pencil they can be erased and the tracing cloth can be used almost indefinitely.)

Collection of Yield Data.

It was not feasible to weigh all the produce from the farms in order to obtain yield data since crops were harvested irregularly. Neither was it desirable, provided a sufficient number of sample plots could be laid down at random in average parts of the fields. The method adopted was to demarcate at least two square plots of one-fortieth acre (33' x 33') in every acre of the farm; the corners of each plot were marked with stakes and the boundaries with a shallow hoed line. The position of these plots was marked roughly on the cropping plans, and each plot was given a serial number for the farm, in order, radiating out from the compound. By reference to the place, compound number, and plot number any matter relating to single plot could be checked immediately

Cropping Schedules.

Cropping schedules were next prepared for each compound, into which the yields were entered at harvest. The schedules were made on lined foolscap paper and contained as a heading the place name and compound number, and columns from left to right giving—Farm No., Plot No., Cropping, Date of Planting, Date of Harvesting, Yield per Plot, Manuring, Remarks. Considerable importance was attached to the "Remarks" column into which was entered anything to explain why the yield from the particular plot in question should be high or low.

Method of Recording Yields.

Yields were weighed to the nearest quarter of a pound upon a "family" type of spring balance. Cereal crops were recorded as dry head weights, and a sample was set aside to give the threshing percentage. Groundnuts were recorded "dry in shell", and

sweet potatoes and Coleus potatoes as fresh tubers. Harvesting 126
and weighing had to be left to the junior staff, but visits were paid as often as possible to each centre of record during the harvest season and check weights were taken. It is essential that the staff fully understand what is required of them before the rush of harvest comes on. Any doubtful yields must not be recorded. Nearly half the records in 1932 had to be discarded because a "literate helper" thought it better to put down fictitious yields than to report mistakes. At first some farmers thought we intended to confiscate the produce from the sample plots; but they all readily co-operated with us when disillusioned.

RESULTS OF SURVEY.

Distribution of Recorded Compounds.

The farms of 54 compounds have been surveyed and it is upon 128
the data from these that the following statistics are based. The variation from one compound to another, in almost every detail recorded, makes it necessary to emphasise that, whilst the figures are reasonably accurate in themselves, they are based upon a very small proportion of the population, and the means are reliable as district means, only as our compounds are typical of the centres from which they have been selected. The compounds were distributed at the ten centres of record as follows:—

Zuarungu Area.	Bongo	6
	Nangodi	5
	Sambruno ...	5
	Tongo	5
	Zuarungu ...	8
Navrongo Area.	Chana	6
	Kologo	6
	Navrongo ...	2
	Wiaga	6
Kusasi Area.	Zebilla	5
	Total	54

In discussing the results of the survey work it is proposed to reduce figures in the text to means and percentages as far as possible; details are given in tables in Appendix II.

Types of Farm.

Farms are of three types :—

24
311

1. Compound Farm. This is the original farm and the most important. It is dressed with any manure which may be available and invariably receives attention first. Size and shape is very variable; average size, 4.89 acres.

2. Farms separate from compound farm but not "bush". These are generally small areas between compound farms, very irregular in outline and farmed less intensely than the compound farm; average size 1.35 acres.

3. "Bush" Farms. These are extensively cultivated farms, away from compounds, often upon stony hillsides. They receive the minimum of attention. The average size of bush farms is 1.74 acres.

Analysis of Areas Cultivated.

Of the land cultivated by 54 recorded compounds, 61% of the total area cultivated was compound farm; 17% farm away from the compound but not in bush; and 22% was bush farm (see Appendix II, Table 4). Not every compound had each kind of farm, however :—

10 compounds (18%) had compound farms only, with an average of 7.47 acres.

22 compounds (41%) had compound farms with an average area of 4.51 acres and in addition farms away from the compound (but not "bush" farms) average area 2.07 acres.

14 compounds (26%) had compound farms of an average area of 4.36 acres and "bush" farms of 4.56 acres.

8 compounds (15%) had compound farms with an average area of 5.89 acres; farms away from the compound but not bush—2.35 acres—and bush farms—5.75 acres.

Bush farms were found at Nangodi, Tongo, Kologo, and Zebilla; none at Bongo, Chana, Sambruno, Navrongo and Wiaga. Two compounds at Zuarungu, on the Nangodi road, had bush farms in the hills. The treatment of different types of farms will be discussed below under the headings for crops and yields.

Man Power and Persons Supported.

Two figures of primary importance to the study of agriculture in its particular relationship to food-supply and density of population are, (i), the area of land cultivated per man working; and (ii), the area of land cultivated to support a unit of population. These figures, when taken into consideration with the system of farming followed, and the agricultural potentialities of the district, form the basis and starting point for ameliorative measures. Statistics are given for every compound surveyed, in Appendix II, Tables 1—3. These are summarised in Appendix II, Table 4, from which the following data have been extracted. 241 311

1. The total area of land cultivated by 54 compounds was 431.08 acres. This gives an average area cultivated per compound of 7.98 acres.

2. The number of men farming 431.08 acres was 173; average area cultivated per man farming—*2.49 acres.*

   (Note. Boys big enough to hoe are included as "men farming". Women and children also assist, particularly with planting and harvesting.)

3. Total number of persons supported on 431.08 acres was 650 (this figure includes children, but not babes in arms); average area cultivated per person—*.66 acres.*

4. 173 men supported 650 persons; 1 man supported 3.7 persons.

5. An average compound farmed 7.98 acres, of which 61% may be compound farm, 17% away from the compound but not bush, and 22% bush farm. This area is farmed by 3.2 men and supports 12 persons.

It is interesting to observe that if these figures are taken as being representative of the whole of North Mamprusi, about one-eighth of the district is under cultivation.

CROP HUSBANDRY.

Crops Grown and Methods of Cropping.

All crops grown in the district are annuals of which the cereals, early millet, late millet, and guinea corn, occupying over 90% of the cultivated land (see Table 2, below), are by far the most important. A list of the crops more commonly grown is given in 241

Appendix III with their Nankani, Kassena, and Builsa names. Mixed cropping is the general practice with all except root crops and tobacco. Proximity to the compound, and the nature and fertility of the soil, determine the crops to be planted on any given area. The cropping most commonly found upon the three types of farm is as follows :—

(i) *Compound Farm.*

The standard cropping upon fertile land—land sometimes manured—is early millet mixed with guinea corn, alternated with early millet and late millet. Further from the compound where land is seldom manured, guinea corn alternated with late millet is planted without early millet. This alternation of the late cereals is the only rotation followed. Under guinea corn and millet, whether planted in a mixture or alone, cowpeas and "neri" (Cucumis melo) are invariably planted as ground crops. Minor crops planted in small quantities in compound farms are: maize, intercropped upon old midden sites near the compound; Hibiscus cannabinus in small beds, a soup plant "Nangina", Nankani (Gynandropsis pentaphylla), and sometimes tobacco, near to the compound wall; groundnuts upon sandy soil away from the compound and Bambarra beans on gravel; rice in small patches, sweet potatoes and Fura-fura potatoes (Coleus dysentericus) in ridges or beds, in wet parts of the farm. Odd plants of pumpkin (Curcubita pepo), sesamum, and cassava, are sometimes intercropped around the compound; whilst over the compound itself, calabashes (Lagenaria vulgaris) are trained. Small beds of the earth bean, Kerstingiella geocarpa, and tiger nuts (Cyperus esculentus), are sometimes planted on the margin of the farm. Along the sides of all paths and farm boundaries Hibiscus sabdariffa is planted.

During the rains, as can perhaps be imagined from the above description, the compound farm presents an amazing scene of heterogeneous crop growth, in marked contrast to the bareness of the dry season. There is no part of the farm, other than that occupied by buildings, paths, and occasional grazing areas, which has not something planted upon it. The method of planting is very haphazard, and this, and the filling of blanks in a mixture with some other crop, greatly complicates the cropping plans. A compound farm may have as many as a dozen different mixtures of crops upon it, planted on areas from as small as .01 of an acre, upwards.

(ii) *Farms Separate from the Compound Farm, but not in "Bush".* 241

These farms are seldom manured and only rarely are they sufficiently fertile to grow a crop of early millet as well as another cereal; they are treated in the same way, therefore, as those parts of the compound farm which lie outside the sphere of manuring. If there is no land in the compound farm suitable for groundnuts, the farm may have been specially selected for this crop. The general treatment of these farms is the same as that described for the compound farm; but since no early millet is planted, there is no great hurry at the beginning of the season and the farm receives attention when work on the compound farm is well in hand.

Under this heading should be mentioned the dry season tobacco cultivation on the river flats between Bolgatanga and Winkogo and, to lesser extent, at Sambruno and elsewhere. This is a specialised cultivation of importance in these places. The land is fertile because it receives some of the goodness leached out from the surrounding country. In a season when rains fall early, a crop of early millet may be taken off before the land becomes water-logged. In August and September tobacco seed-beds are prepared; the seedlings are transplanted in October and November as the water-table recedes. The tobacco is harvested in January, February, and March. 249

(iii) *Bush Farms.*

Bush farms are found only in areas where unoccupied land is not more than a mile or two away from the compound. They are frequently made on hill-sides where the soil is shallow and weed growth is not very vigorous. Little is done beyond planting the seed and giving a single hoeing. Guinea corn and cowpeas alternated with late millet and cowpeas is the usual cropping until yields fall off; the farm is then left to recuperate for a few years. In a lucky season fair yields may be reaped, and any yield is considered a good return for the small amount of labour expended. It is necessary to mention that in the south of Kusasi Area, and in the south-east of Zuarungu Area, yams are grown in bush farms, and the system of farming followed is typical of South, and not North, Mamprusi. 241

An analysis of the distribution of crops at the ten centres of record is given in Appendix II, Table 5. From this table the following summary (Table 2) has been taken. It shows the crops, and mixtures of crops, and the proportion of the total area cultivated under each, expressed as a percentage for the total area cultivated by 54 recorded compounds. The area manured, as a percentage of the total area cultivated, is also shown.

Table 2.—Summary of analysis of cropping and manuring on 431.08 acres farmed by 54 recorded compounds in North Mamprusi.

Crops or Mixture of Crops	% of total area cultivated (approx.)	% manured	Type of farm
Cereals—			
Early millet Late millet Ground crops*	16%	4.7%	Compound
Early millet Guinea corn Ground crops	16%	3.7%	Compound
Early millet Late millet Guinea corn Ground crops	18%	3.8%	Compound
Late millet Ground crops	16%	—	Bush and compound
Guinea corn Ground crops	16%	.45%	Bush and compound
Late millet Guinea corn Ground crops	4%	—	Bush and compound
Rice	1%	—	Compound
Maize	.04%	.02%	Compound
Late millet** Groundnuts	4%	—	Compound
Total Cereals	91%	12%	
Legumes—			
Groundnuts	5%	—	Compound
Bambarra beans ...	.2%	—	Compound
Groundnuts ... Bambarra beans	3%	—	Compound
Kerstingiella geocarpa	.1%	—	Compound
Total legumes ...	8%	—	
Root crops—			
Coleus (Fura-fura) potatoes	.5%	—	Compound
Sweet potatoes ...	.1%	—	Compound
Total Root crops	.6%	—	
Miscellaneous—			
Tobacco Okro Hibiscus cannabinus	.1%	—	Compound

*Ground crops—Cowpeas and 'neri.'

**Could also be included under 'Legumes.'

Manuring.

It has already been mentioned that manuring forms a definite part of the farming system; there is scarcely a single compound which has not a compost heap of some kind in front of it, and everyone is familiar with the value, and the use, of manure. It is surprising, therefore, to find no great attention paid to either quality or quantity. Table 2, column 3, shows that 12% only of the total area cultivated received a dressing of manure in the year of survey. The manure (compost) consists of household sweepings, that is, the dung from livestock mixed with vegetable waste; but the amount of manure which is accumulated in this way is very small by comparison with the amount which could be made if a little more care was exercised in its preparation. Women and children carry the manure from the midden in baskets and put it on to the land in small heaps, just before, or just after, early millet is planted. From these heaps it is spread around at the next hoeing. The baskets hold from 4 to 15 lbs. and the heaps are made from 6' to 8' apart; this gives an average dressing of from 2 to 5 tons per acre. The yield figures (see Tables 3 and 4 below) leave no doubt as to the value of these small dressings of manure. Undesirable as it may be from a sanitation point of view, the vigorous growth of crops around compounds and near to markets, suggests that nightsoil plays no small part in the maintenance of soil fertility (a point which should be remembered when considering the provision of latrines: a septic tank used to compost vegetable waste is much to be preferred, where practicable, to pit latrines and incineration). 241

Implements.

The agricultural implements used by a people are generally a good index to the standard of their agriculture. This is certainly true of the implements used by the people in North Mamprusi: they are very rudimentary and the standard of cultivation is low. The hoe, with which most of the work is done, consists of simple oblong-shaped iron blade, 7" long and 5" wide, slightly concave on its inner face. The middle of the top of the blade is drawn up into a ring, this is forced on to the tapered end of a short hooked stick which serves as a handle; the whole weighs under 2 lbs. The blade is set on to the handle at an angle of about 85°, and the hoe is used by working it towards the body. The handle is about 1½'-2' long, made generally from "ginga" (Nankani) (Diospyros mespiliformis), or "gopelaga" (Acacia sieberriana). For chopping, or cultivation in particularly hard ground, an adze is used; this is made of heavier iron than the hoe, 1½"-3" wide and 4"-6" long, 412

412 [177] [326] mounted on a similar handle. Hoe-blades are now made from scrap iron, mainly parts of old motor cars and old railway sleepers; a hoe is sold in the market for 2d. or 3d., which is well within the purchasing power of everyone. It is not many years, however, since hoes were made from locally smelted iron; they were then not so easy to come by and some of the poorer farmers used hoes of hard wood.

241 134 The coarse nature of the soil enables a shallow cultivation to be given effectively with these light implements after a fall of rain. When the ground is dry and hard, cultivation is very laborious and it is frequently neglected at a time when needed most. This is often the case early in the season when precarious rains make a soil-mulch desirable.

Preparation for Planting.

243 Two of the most important crops, early millet and guinea corn, are sown after the second big rain of the year, this is generally in the first week of April. The soil, which has been left untilled since the burn-over after the previous year's harvest, is very hard until humidity rises with the approaching rain, and there is very little time to do any preliminary cultivation. On the majority of farms the only preparation for sowing is to collect the remains of the previous season's crops into heaps and to burn, and sometimes to carry-out manure; very occasionally a little hoeing is done.

Planting Major Crops.

412 241 On the morning following the big planting rain the whole countryside turns out to do one of its few really full day's work on the farm for the year. Men walk over the farm with stout sticks about 6' long, cut from "tcheea" (Nankani) (Anoegeissus leiocarpus), or "gopelaga" (Nankani) (Acacia sieberriana), sharpened at the end to a flat point, resembling a narrow-bladed oar; or sometimes fitted with a worn hoe blade. With these sticks, holes are prodded at random 2' 6" to 3' apart in the moist earth; the soil being ejected with a twist of the wrists. 241 Women and children follow the men with the seed of early millet and cowpeas mixed in a calabash. The calabash is held in the hand between the third and fourth fingers, and three to six seeds of early millet,

and occasionally one or two of cowpeas, are deftly ejected into each 241 hole with the thumb and first fingers; both early millet and cowpeas are sown in the same hole. The seed is then lightly covered with soil and made firm by treading as planting proceeds. It generally takes two or three days to finish sowing early millet, and if the ground is still soft enough, guinea corn, mixed with "neri", is sown immediately, in exactly the same way as early millet and cowpeas, in the spaces between. When the sowing of guinea corn is finished in the compound farm, late millet is sown; it is also used for filling blanks in guinea corn. Attention is next given to the farms away from the compound. All cereals, except rice, are planted by the beginning of May, in a normal season.

Planting Minor Crops.

At the end of April or early in May women plant "bersi" 241 (Nankani) (Hibiscus cannabinus), okra, and "nangina" (Gynan- 244 dropsis pentaphylla), in beds close to the compound, and "bito" (Hibiscus sabdariffa) at intervals of 2' beside paths and along farm boundaries. Towards the end of May, groundnuts are planted 6" to 18" apart in a manner similar to cereals, except that frequently the land is hoed first. Bambarra beans are planted next, either on the flat, or if the land is wet, on wide ridges. Coleus potatoes and sweet potatoes are planted on ridges in June. Rice is sown at the end of June, alone, or occasionally between guinea corn on wet land; when the water-table rises in late July, rice is thinned and transplanted as opportunity permits. This is also the time for thinning and transplanting late millet; a common practice is to transplant it into groundnut farms. Tobacco seed beds are [249] prepared and sown in August, and the seedlings are transplanted in September and October for the dry season crop.

Crop Varieties.

A number of crop varieties are recognised and although many 241 of the names distinguish only colour factors, other factors, such as earliness of maturity, particular uses, predilection for certain kinds of soil and manure, are known and utilised. With guinea corn, for instance, over a dozen varieties exist.

Cultivation.

Intercultivation starts as soon as crops have germinated, and any manure which was not carried before planting, is applied at this time. Cultivation consists of scraping the top three or four

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great
care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The
work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are
[461] at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more
than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated
in a day is about $\frac{1}{10}$th acre. Hoeing is started near to the com-
pound and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached
the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they
receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never
[476] recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of
grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange
[273] for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or
farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In
a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages.

243 On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice; or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

241 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of
June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about
243 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this
stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and ground-
crops are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a
few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is
allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period
birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them
and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery
threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short
knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to
[242] dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads
are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and
Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—
"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots;
this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet
252 heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants
and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly
to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash

is used in preparing tobacco for chewing, and also, by percolation, 252
"coom missom" (Nankani), literally "sour water", which is used
in cooking cereal foods. The salts in the ash probably supply [146]
important minerals to the diet (11), but the process by which they
are obtained, robs the soil of much of the manurial value in the
residue of the early millet crop.

The leaves of cowpeas are picked by women throughout the 241
growing season and used in making soup. Maize is harvested 251
towards the end of July, followed by "neri". The fruits of neri
are buried in the ground for about ten days to rot the pericarp;
they are then dug up, washed by women in a stream, and the seeds
are dried and stored in pots for future use. Early guinea corn is
reaped at the end of August and in September, by which time late
millet and the main guinea corn crop are coming into flower. At
this season, women and children strip all the leaves and sepals
from Hibiscus sabdariffa and, after careful drying, store them in
pots for making soup during the dry season. The leaves of
Hibiscus cannabinus are similarly treated, and the end of the
branches, bearing fruits, are cut off and later the seeds are removed
for soup making. The bast fibres of both Hibiscus sabdariffa 248
and Hibiscus cannabinus are drawn after retting in streams for
10 to 12 days: they are made into rope of good quality; this work
is generally performed by men. Women also draw the fibres of
Hibiscus cannabinus, and scrub them white for making the "tails"
they sometimes wear as alternative dress to leaves.

The main harvest season starts during the middle of September with groundnuts, and is carried on through October, and into 241
early November, with guinea corn and late millet. During this period, from a peak in August, the rainfall decreases and the water-table falls; with the onset of the harmattan in November, the whole countryside dries rapidly. The groundnut plants are lifted with a hoe, and carried to the shade of a tree, where the nuts are picked off; the hay is carefully conserved as a dry season fodder. The day previous to reaping the late cereal, cowpeas are collected and carried to the compound; the leaves and stems are also conserved for fodder. The heads of late millet and guinea corn are cut off in the same way as those of early millet, and the stems are trampled to the ground. For about three weeks after harvesting, livestock are given open range in the farms and they feed readily upon the still succulent leaves of guinea corn and, to a less extent, millet. But as soon as the material is dry enough, fire is put through the farm to burn off the trash from the resistant cereal stalks, leaving them slightly charred, and clean: in this way much valuable dry season fodder is destroyed. The stalks are chopped from their

The stalks are chopped from their roots with an old hoe, collected into bundles, and stacked near the compound for use as fuel in the dry season, and for building purposes. Throughout the dry season the ground is hard and bare, except for the roots of cereals lying about; it remains in this condition until the farming cycle starts again with the approach of rain in the following year.

Yields of Crops.

The methods by which yield data were collected have already been described on page 16. The yields from nearly a thousand sample plots have been recorded at the ten centres in North Mamprusi during the years 1932, 1934, 1935, and 1936. These yields have been analysed according to district, year of record, and whether or not the plots were manured in that year, and the analysis is given as Tables 5 and 6 of Appendix II. The number of sample plots from which each mean was obtained is given in brackets, as an index of reliability. (Unfortunately it is not possible to give standard errors of the means since the first recorded individual plot yields have been mislaid and only the mean yields and the numbers of plots were placed on record.) It will be seen from this table that wide fluctuations in yield occur from year to year and from one district to another in the same year. 1932 and 1936 were generally recognised to be good years and it is interesting to note that in both these years the rainfall curves were very similar. They show: showers of rain in February; good planting rains in early April, with curves rising to peaks in May, and then falling slightly at the end of June for the ripening of early millet; after that a steady rise to second peaks at the end of September, instead of August, which do not fall quickly until the end of October. The year 1934 was considered to be rather below the average due to shortage of rain, both early and late in the season, and an excess at the time early millet was ripening. From Table 5 in Appendix II the mean yields for the more important mixtures of crops have been taken and these are given in Table 3 opposite to the nearest 5 lbs. per acre; this table should be considered in conjunction with Table 2 (text). Yields from plots which were manured in the year of record are classified as such; it was not possible to consider either the quality or the quantity of manure applied in relation to yield. The remarkable effect of quite small dressings of native compost (see page 23) upon yields is noteworthy.

Table 3.—Summary of the mean yields for the more important mixtures of crops in North Mamprusi. Records taken over a four year period 1932-1936.

(From Appendix II, Table 6.)

Crops	Mean Yields per acre		
	Unmanured	Manured	
Early millet	320	455	lbs. grain
Late millet	405	420	lbs. grain
Cowpeas*	60	80	lbs. seed
Neri	40	30	lbs. seed
Early millet	295	555	lbs. grain
Guinea corn	370	525	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	80	lbs. seed
Neri	40	30	lbs. seed
Early millet	280	505	lbs. grain
Late millet	150	95	lbs. grain
Guinea corn	260	460	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	80	lbs. seed
Neri	40	30	lbs. seed
Late millet	240	—	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	—	lbs. seed
Neri	40	—	lbs. seed
Guinea corn	355	—	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	—	lbs. seed
Neri	40	—	lbs. seed
Late millet	120	—	lbs. grain
Guinea corn	110	—	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	—	lbs. seed
Neri	40	—	lbs. seed
Late millet	145	—	lbs. grain
Groundnuts...	690	—	lbs. dry in shell
Rice	690	—	lbs. paddy
Groundnuts...	635	—	lbs. dry in shell
Bambarra beans	490	—	lbs. dry in shell
Groundnuts...	565	—	lbs. dry in shell
Bambarra beans	150	—	lbs. dry in shell
Coleus potatoes	3,361	—	lbs. fresh tubers
Sweet potatoes	5,313	—	lbs. fresh tubers

*The weights of 'ground crops', cowpeas and 'neri', were calculated irrespective of mixture.

241 In order to demonstrate the annual variation in yields more clearly and the performance of individual crops, the yield of each of the more important crops has been calculated from Table 6, Appendix II, irrespective of the mixture in which it was grown; these yields are given in Appendix II, Table 7. Provided that the proportions of crops in the mixtures were fairly constant from year to year, the figures have a comparative value. From Appendix II, Table 7, the district means obtained in each year have been calculated to the nearest 5 lbs. per acre, and these are set out below in Table 4:—

Table 4.—Summary of mean yields of each of the more important crops, irrespective of mixture, for the years 1932, 1934, 1935 and 1936. Figures in lbs. per acre.

(From Appendix II, Table 7.)

Crop		1932	1934	1935	1936	Summary for all years
Early millet ...	Unmanured	355	230	365	300	270
	Manured	525	385	605	505	505
Late millet ...	Unmanured	350	195	175	255	235
	Manured	430	205	60	220	225
Guinea corn ...	Unmanured	395	230	320	495	325
	Manured	530	400	415	680	485
Groundnuts ...	Unmanured	490	630	725	685	595

The mean yields for 1936 given in the above table are lower than the means for Zuarungu and Navrongo since they include those from Zebilla in Kusasi Area. Zebilla suffered badly from a shortage of rain early in the season, which depressed the yield of the early crops; the guinea corn recovered well, however.

Methods of Storing Crops.

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Cereals in bulk are generally stored unthreshed, in conical shaped granaries; the day's allowance is given to the women each morning by the head of the compound, and threshed as required. These granaries ("bari", Nankani) are made of "swish" proofed with cowdung and an infusion of the empty pods of Parkia filicoidea ("aam", Nankani); they are built inside the compound in Navrongo and Zuarungu Areas, and generally outside the door of the compound in Kusasi Area. In size they vary from 4′ to 6′ in diameter at the base, and from 6′ to 10′ high. A diagram of a section through a granary is given in Muir and Williams' paper (14).

(4). Small quantities of seed and soup ingredients are stored in earthenware pots and calabashes of different shapes and sizes, which can be sealed with mud and cowdung. Ashes are mixed with cowpeas to discourage attacks from weevils. Groundnuts are generally stored in big baskets, plastered on the outside with mud and cowdung. 251

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.

The importance of livestock in maintaining a system of fixed cultivation, under the conditions described, is patent. Furthermore the importation from French territory of large quantities of cattle, sheep, goats, and fowls, is a good indication of the size of the market for meat in Ashanti and the Colony; there is no reason why a greater proportion of this market should not be satisfied from local sources than is at present supplied, with benefit to the local farmer. In recognition of this, Government has pursued a policy of general immunisation against cattle plague, which is now practically complete. As a result, the cattle in North Mamprusi are shown to be increasing very satisfactorily (12) since the initial immunisation in 1931-32. From a census taken in 1936 they were found to number over 64,000 head. Thus over one-third of the cattle in the Northern Territories (64,293 head out of 160,000) are being maintained upon less than one-tenth of its area (3,559 sq. miles out of 41,940 sq. miles). The growth of the cattle population, taken into account with the numbers of other livestock, and the shortage of water and of human food in some years, gives some idea of the magnitude of the animal husbandry problems which lie ahead. 231 744

Uneconomic Position of Livestock.

Livestock occupy a peculiar position in local farm economy. Although they are sold in order to get money when necessary, nevertheless, they are not reared for economic purposes, but primarily for religious sacrifice and the payment of marriage dowries. In North Mamprusi, wealth and position are associated, not with money, but with the number of wives and children, and livestock, that a man has. Four cows would enable a man to acquire another wife, but ten pounds would not do so (by custom). As with crop husbandry, so with animal husbandry, economic conditions are changing more rapidly than custom is adjusting itself; unless the adjustment receives careful assistance there is a grave risk of loss of soil fertility and human stamina, on the one hand, and the constitution of the livestock upon the other. 231 182

Numbers of Livestock Owned per Compound.

The numbers of livestock owned by recorded compounds are set out in Table 8, of Appendix II, in detail. From this table text Table 5 below has been extracted. 231

Table 5.—Livestock owned by 54 recorded compounds in North Mamprusi.

(From Appendix II, Table 8.)

Stock	Total owned by 54 compounds	Compounds owning each class of stock		Mean per compound assuming all owned stock equally (approx.)
		No.	% (approx.)	
Horses	2*	2	—	—
Cattle	105	29	54%	2
Donkeys	26	18	34%	1
Sheep	183	31	58%	3
Goats	235	42	78%	6
Fowls	567	47	87%	11
Guinea Fowls ...	359	36	67%	7
Nil	—	2	4%	—

*Owned only by Chiefs, or members of the chiefs' families.

It will be noted that 4% of compounds had no livestock at all at the time of record. Records were taken in March and April at a time when stocking was low, following a poor season; more stock than usual had been sold in order to purchase food. As might be expected, the amount of livestock owned by a compound is very closely correlated with the supply of foodstuffs; all compounds short of food in the year of record had livestock in numbers below the average. The area of land manured and the number of livestock owned did not show such a close correlation as was expected, but the close connection between the two is obvious.

Cattle.

The cattle are humpless, and well named "West African Shorthorn" (13), for, except that they are much smaller—adult bullocks averaging little more than 5 cwts. in weight—they resemble a Shorthorn very closely. In size, good bullocks measure from 44 to 46 inches in height at the withers, 41 to 45 inches in length, taken from the top of the shoulder blade to the root of the tail, and have a minimum girth behind the shoulders of from 61 to 65 inches. A variety of colour factors suggests great heterogeneity. Very pleasing animals are occasionally seen; they are stocky, with straight back-lines, and of good conformation. That such animals can be found in the unimproved environmental conditions obtaining locally, augurs well for the future. The Animal

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The Animal

Health Department have done much good by castrating scrub bulls, but unfortunately the farmers themselves have carried the matter further, to a dangerous degree, by castrating many of the remaining bulls in order to sell them to itinerant butchers' agents. This trade has developed rapidly during recent years and the services of any bull at all, let alone a good bull, are not always readily obtainable. The difficulty is that the cattle are owned one or two head at a time and rarely in herds, and a farmer who wants money, and has a bull he can sell to obtain it, does not see why he should keep a bull to serve his neighbours' cows, and is prepared to risk his own cow, or cows, not finding a mate. The supply of bulls is a matter receiving the attention of the Animal Health Department, through the Native Administrations. 232 231

Tending of Livestock.

The farmers' attitude to livestock is typified by the fact that herding is the responsibility of small boys. The stock are housed at night in an open compartment within the compound. No bedding is supplied and the unbeaten floor of the standing is only irregularly cleaned out; the result is a very unhealthy mess in the rains. Except to save groundnut and cowpea hay for feeding to horses and donkeys, no provision is made for dry season fodder. The stock are turned out to browse where they will over the stubble and upon recognised grazing grounds between farms; but since these are generally burnt over, the fodder supply is sparse in quantity and poor in quality, and all stock show considerable loss of condition as the dry season advances, particularly in years when rains are late. The supply of water also presents a problem in many areas. In the rains, sheep and goats are generally tethered to short stakes along farm boundaries, and cattle are herded on the grazing grounds. 231

Fowls.

Of all classes of livestock probably fowls receive most attention. They are able to pick up a fair living by gleaning around threshing floors, and the protein constituent of their diet is obtained largely from white ants. These are collected with cowdung placed in an old pot inverted over an ant run in the soil. There is scarcely a single compound in North Mamprusi that does not engage in the export trade in fowls to Kumasi. In the dry season a man will collect together about twenty-five fowls at a time and head-load them in a long crate to some market on the road, usually Bolgatanga, or Savelugu, and either sell them to a middleman there, or join a lorry and sell them in Kumasi. With the proceeds from the sale of fowls, it is common to purchase grain in Dagomba or South Mamprusi, to re-sell in Navrongo or Zuarungu Area, and thus to show a profit upon both the journey down, and the journey up. 235 [439]

Section III.—DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS IN PARTICULAR RELATION TO FOOD SHORTAGE.

262 The remarks made in this section apply more particularly to the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas than to Kusasi, because, generally speaking, the Kusasis seldom suffer from food shortage and, indeed, they frequently have a surplus for disposal. For this reason the agricultural problem is more acute in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; an adequate and reliable food supply is a prerequisite of all development.

Nature of Food Shortage.

262
251 Enquiry showed that, as far back as memory goes, a shortage of cultivated foods is experienced in about two years out of every five; the problem, therefore, is by no means a new one. Hungry years follow seasons of poor crops, since practically nothing is stored for more than eight months, *i.e.*, from the time of the main harvest in October and November, until early millet is harvested in the following July. A surplus in a good season is not stored against the possibility of a bad one, but is used lavishly in the performance of religious customs, or it is sold or bartered for livestock. Livestock may be regarded as a kind of bank; the sale of stock is the usual means of obtaining money. In years of food shortage, livestock are sold in order to buy grain from Kusasi, Mamprusi, or Dagomba; and because a number of people are selling at the same time, livestock values fall very considerably in these years.

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222 Although bad seasons result in food shortage for many, they do not necessarily mean starvation, for there are a number of wild sources of food which can be used to eke out a reduced supply of cultivated foods. The most common causes of poor crops are abnormal rains and the ravages of locusts. In good seasons, such as 1932 and 1936, very few people suffer from a shortage: the area of land cultivated is adequate, presumably, and the system of farming is successful. But even in bad seasons it is not everyone who is short. Thus out of the twenty-nine recorded compounds in the Zuarungu Area, ten had sufficient home-grown food remaining from the bad harvest of 1931 (due to shortage of rain after September) until early millet was reaped in 1932. The other nineteen compounds sold livestock and bought grain, and gathered "wild" food. A comparison of statistics from these compounds is given in Table 6 below:—

Table 6.—Comparison of statistics from ten compounds in Zuarungu Area which suffered no food shortage in 1931-32, and nineteen compounds which suffered from a shortage. 262 241

	Means from 10 compounds with no food shortage.	Means from 19 compounds short of food.
Area of land farmed per compound	8.16 acres.	5.66 acres.
Men farming	3.4	3.4
Area farmed per man	2.4 acres.	1.68 acres.
Persons living in compound ...	14.7	11.5
Area cultivated per person ...	.55 acres.	.49 acres.
Persons supported per man farming	4.3	3.4
Units of livestock (March, 1932) ... (Fowl=1 unit.)	399	136

From Table 6 it will be seen that compounds which suffered from no shortage were bigger in almost every particular than compounds which suffered (c.f. district means, Appendix II, Table 4). Observation throughout the 1932 season showed that the farms of the ten successful compounds were better cultivated, and the owners had the reputation for being good farmers. A study of yields, however, showed no appreciable difference in favour of the successful farms; but as already mentioned, 1932 was a very good season for crops in Zuarungu Area, and none of our compounds suffered from a shortage of food during the following dry season. This suggests that under the present system of farming, the major factors determining yield are those lying outside the farmers' control; the most important of these are the amount and distribution of rainfall. The effects of better farming are more marked, therefore, in a bad season than in a good one. It is probably this fact, together with a knowledge of "wild" sources of food, which has resulted in a system of farming which demands the minimum amount of labour from the farmer, and leaves the maximum to Nature; for Nature, in the shape of a "fetish", can be placated by the simple expedient of sacrifice.

Causes of Food Shortage.

Indirect Causes.

Food shortage has been ascribed to a lack of land resulting from a concentration of population, and land settlement schemes have been suggested as the solution of the problem. But the concentration of the population is responsible only indirectly, and only for as long as the system of farming remains unchanged. It 262 178

262 178 is doubtful whether, given unlimited land, the local farmer would be prepared to devote any more time to cultivation. The inherent fertility of virgin land would be quickly dissipated if existing farming methods were followed upon it. Therefore, to provide more land without giving attention to the system of farming to be followed would merely postpone solution of the problem. The maximum distance to "bush" land from any point in North Mamprusi is about 8 miles, and it would not appear unreasonable to expect a man to move this distance voluntarily, if an adequate food supply were his greatest consideration and the acquisition of more land would ensure it. Changing economic and social conditions are bringing about the necessity for changed methods of farming. There is little doubt that development will stimulate expansion into unpopulated areas; then will be the time to foster migration, not before.

Direct Causes.

241 262 Density of population is therefore only indirectly a cause of recurrent food shortage; some of the more direct causes are:—

1. Farming practices which are not sufficiently intensive for conditons. A system of "fixed" cropping is followed and manuring is quite inadequate.

[461] 2. The innate distaste of the people for consistent labour, especially when there is a chance that it may not be essential. That is, a farmer would rather sacrifice to his ancestors for more rain—and perhaps spend the rest of the day at market (not marketing)—than to give his farm a surface cultivation to conserve the moisture already in the ground.

3. The lack of sufficient incentive, and a conservatism which makes a man prefer to cultivate a small area of impoverished land, cultivated by his ancestors, to going eight miles, or less, and having the labour of breaking up bush land (predial larceny is often offered as an excuse when bush farms are suggested).

4. Too great a reliance upon cereal crops. A bad season for cereals, or, as in recent years, depredations by locusts, means food shortage; that the season might have been a good one for root crops or legumes, does not affect the situation very much.

5. A "vicious circle" has been created. Years of living on the margin of subsistence, have sapped the energy of the people and predisposed them to disease; at the present time, many are physically incapable of the hard work which is necessary to bring about an improvement in their conditions. 241 146 164 262

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL AGRICULTURE. 000

From our study of the causes of food shortage it is possible to suggest ameliorative measures. The two main forms which these measures must take are:—

1. By increasing the area of land in cultivation.

2. By improving the existing system of farming.

But as we have seen above (Indirect Causes of Food Shortage) the effectiveness of the first measure depends upon the second. It is therefore upon measures for improving the existing farming system with which we are concerned at present. Some of the more important of these are considered, in tabular form, below. It should be mentioned that the improvement in water supplies, which is shortly to receive attention (14), will play an important part in the general improvement of conditions, towards which the following suggestions are made:—

1. *Growth of a greater diversity of crops.*

   Too much reliance is placed upon cereals. The planting of more groundnuts and sweet potatoes; the introduction of pigeon peas, "sanzi" (an early maturing Dagomba bean), cassava, and, in some areas, yams and sesamum, would make useful additions to the present range of crops.

2. *The introduction of a rotation of crops.*

   This would require study over a period of years, but if, as seems desirable, the area of legumes and roots is to be increased, some form of rotation will be essential.

3. *Attention to the increase and maintenance of soil fertility.*

   Just as farmyard manure is the basis of arable farming in most other countries in the world, so might it usefully become the basis of arable farming here. "Mixed farming" provides the solution. The livestock of the country have a greater potential value as the producers of

000 increased crops through their manure, than they have in any other way at the present time. If instead of burning all waste vegetable matter, it was carefully conserved for livestock use, either as fodder, or as litter, it would be possible to ensure :

(i) By stall feeding as much as possible, the maximum amount of dung and urine would be dropped where it could be used, instead of on waste places.

(ii) By the supply, as bedding, of all vegetable waste which is too coarse for fodder, the manufacture of farmyard manure of high quality by trampling and accumulation under the feet of stock. Manuring would form an essential part of the crop rotation mentioned in (2) above.

4. *Greater attention to soil management.*

This is a very big subject for it implies consideration, not merely of the depth to which a man can hoe and the area he can cover in a given time, but the management of the soil as an environmental factor in crop production. Some of the improvements which could be effected locally are :—

(i) Cultivation of the soil preliminary to planting, with the production of a tilth. In this way crops would be given a better start in life than they receive at present.

(ii) The growing of crops on ridges, instead of on the flat, would be a great advantage on much of the land at present cultivated, where waterlogging at some seasons, and soil wash (contoured ridges), are serious. Furthermore, with a system of surface drains, ridging could bring many fertile valley lands at present uncultivated, into a state of high productivity.

(iii) The planting of crops in lines, instead of anyhow, would greatly facilitate the work of intercultivation, which is a race against weed growth from the month of May onwards.

(iv) The practice of measures to check soil erosion. The first and most important measure is the control of burning on grazing lands and along paths and roadsides. The unburnt material, if cut and stacked, would provide the fodder and bedding required for item 3, above. Contoured ridging has already been mentioned. Rough cultivation of the soil before it dries out after harvest, together with non-burning and contoured ridging, would leave the soil in a condition to absorb the early rains instead of causing them to run off.

The introduction of simple animal drawn implements, another aspect of "mixed farming", is the obvious answer to questions of improved soil management.

5. *The extension of rice cultivation.*

Rice has very much to recommend it and although the people give as their reason for not growing more—"We don't care for it", the true explanation lies probably in the difficulty of hoeing suitable rice land with the implements available. This difficulty would no longer obtain with the introduction of suitable animal-drawn implements. Many areas in the district become water-logged in June and July and they are then unsuitable for other crops or grazing, but they will grow excellent crops of rice. Rice stores well, and is therefore a good famine reserve crop, and the straw is a valuable cattle fodder.

6. *The encouragement of thrift with surplus food.*

Under a system of Native Administration, with the curtailment of tributes to headmen and Chiefs, there is no reason why individuals should not now set aside a reserve, from one season to the next, in the knowledge that they will be free to enjoy it. Or the machinery of the Native Administration might be used to lay down communal famine reserves, as in parts of East Africa. The family section would appear to be the best unit for this purpose.

7. *The introduction of methods of animal husbandry.*

The control of disease, the castration of scrub bulls, the supply of improved bulls, and the organisation of water supplies, are matters which have received, or are receiving, the attention of Government. Attention should also be given to other classes of stock besides cattle. If these measures are to take full effect, the whole environment of

600 livestock must be improved—using the term "environment' in its widest sense. Such simple improvements as the provision of roofs for protection against rain and sun, the supply of fodder for the dry season, and bedding, are well within the capacity of the people to adopt. Other improvements, not so easy to introduce but equally desirable, are the control of mating, and the control of grazing: little advance can be made with these until grazing land is enclosed. Just as enclosure has had to be adopted in other countries as their agriculture progressed from the pastoral to the "fixed" state, so will it have to come here ultimately.

8. *Selection and distribution of improved varieties of seed.*

A vast field for improvement lies in plant breeding, but it will be non-effective until some of the other measures have received attention, and for practical purposes it can be neglected at present.

Summary. Nearly all the measures suggested above may be summed up in the words "good husbandry"; and "mixed farming" is undoubtedly the key to the situation. Marked improvement in general economic conditions is unlikely to come from concentration upon any single aspect of local agriculture, but from attention to every aspect of the industry as a whole. Having diagnosed the disease, the next step is to carry out experiments to test our ideas upon treatment, before trying to work a cure. Upon this second phase of the work—experimentation—we are engaged at the present time. Our methods of approach to the problem, and the progress we have made so far, are discussed in Part II below.

Part II.

Section I.—EXPERIMENTAL WORK.

654 The detailed study of local farming methods described in Part I enabled suggestions for improvement to be made with reasonable certainty. But the form which these improvements should take and their details could be decided only after careful research. The nearest agricultural experiment station to North Mamprusi is at Tamal in Dagomba, where, as we have seen, conditions differ in practically every respect. It was obvious that very few results from Tamale would apply in the North and that experiments would have to be carried out locally.

This work was started in 1934 with a few observation plots and minor statistically planned experiments, and each year since then this side of the work has been increased. The aim has been to keep the trials as close to the farmer as possible, that is, simple trials with single issues. Small areas of land were acquired at Zuarungu, Yekeni, Sabiya, and Dagari, in Zuarungu Area, and at Navrongo, in Navrongo Area. In addition simple cultivation trials were laid-down in the farms of the Headmen of Goragu and Yekeni. The location of these places may be seen by reference to the map at the beginning. The method of experimenting in natives' farms has much to recommend it, particularly in a country where vacant land is difficult to obtain; it is possible only with such simple experiments as we have envisaged. It has a demonstration value as a link between the experiment centre and the native farm after preliminary trial, and is useful when a practice is known to be good and it is desired to find out how good.

The general results of the experimental work will be discussed below in Section I. It is necessary to emphasise that this work is exploratory in nature; in many cases conclusions have been based upon an insufficient number of replications for complete statistical reliability. This is not to say that our results are necessarily untrustworthy, but that they should be treated critically in subsequent stages, before extension. It is useful to have a stock-taking of the information we have gained during the last three years, because we have now arrived at a stage in our experiments when it is necessary to combine the results of individual experiments and to study them together in their place in a complete farming system. All our experience has been leading up to some system of "mixed farming" as a natural corollary (1); what is recorded here is a review of the situation as an introduction to the subject. A general summary and discussion in particular relation to mixed farming is given in Section II. Section I will be discussed under the following headings:—

I. Rotation Experiments.

II. Cultivation Experiments.

III. Manurial Experiments,
    a. manufacture,
    b. utilisation.

IV. Root Crops Experiments.

V. Miscellaneous Trials.

General conclusions are discussed in the text and tables are given in the Appendix IV.

1. Rotation Experiments.

657 Our survey suggested the desirability of increasing the area planted with root crops and legumes, to serve as famine reserves, supplementary foods for livestock, and to give the land a rest from continuous cereals. Our aim in these trials is to see how far this increase can be effected and at the same time to ensure for the farmer not a less quantity of grain than he was getting before. By the use of animal drawn implements and farmyard manure our experiments seem to show that this will be possible, but it is too early yet to draw definite conclusions.

Sabiya.

Two rotation experiments are being conducted. The first was started in 1934 at Sabiya in "bush" land. The aim was to obtain information upon the best manner in which land not previously cultivated could be exploited. A four-course rotation was followed :—

1st year.	Yams and interplanted late millet	Unmanured.
2nd year.	Early millet guinea corn cowpeas and neri	Manured with farmyard manure 2 tons per acre.
3rd year.	Early millet late millet cowpeas and neri	Unmanured.
4th year.	Early millet groundnuts	Unmanured.

Mean yields per acre are given in Appendix *IV, Table I, from* which it will be seen that yields so far are most unsatisfactory. This is due mainly to the ravages of pests—locusts, rats, wild guinea fowl, birds, and white ants in yam seeds. At least we are learning some of the troubles which beset the farmer in the bush.

Navrongo.

The second rotation experiment is being carried out at Navrongo upon a piece of long farmed land acquired by Government some years ago as a possible terminus for the projected extension of the railway to the Northern Territories. The rotation here is similar to the one at Sabiya, except that sweet potatoes, cassava, and Coleus potatoes are included in the root area, and the experiment is being run as a unit farm of 8 acres by a man and his family with 2 bullocks as a mixed farming experiment. The mean yields obtained in 1935 and 1936 are given in Appendix IV, Table 2. It is interesting to observe that in 1936 early millet and guinea corn following a previous yam crop gave nearly a 100% better yield than where they followed sweet potatoes.

It is too early to express any opinion upon these rotations at present.

II. *Cultivation Experiments.*

As already described in Part I (Preparation for Planting), the native practice is to plant the main crops of cereals upon the previous season's stubble without giving any preliminary cultivation. With hand cultivation alone it is not possible to cultivate a very big area during the time between the first and second rain of the year, and we know that to miss the planting rain with early millet is serious. The introduction of animal drawn implements has completely altered the situation. It is possible with a cultivator or a plough to loosen the soil over a large area before the land dries out after the previous harvest, and we have found that each year that land is ploughed makes it easier to work. The local West African Shorthorn cattle stand up quite well to work. The questions we set ourselves to answer in our experiments were: "what is the best kind of cultivation under average local conditions, *i.e.*, ridge or flat?", and "what implement, or implements, can do this most economically?".

Implements used.

So far we have experimented with the following :—

Ransomes "DY" ridging plough,
,, "*M.S.N.*"*single furrow plough,*
,, "Punjab" ,, ,, ,,
,, "Victory" ,, ,, ,,
,, BTSL cultivator,
Nigerian 5 tine iron cultivator from Kano,
Nigerian pattern 3 tine cultivator made locally upon a log frame.

Ridge Cultivation v. Flat.

So far experiments suggest that under the light soil conditions here, the combination of Ransomes DY ridging plough and the Nigerian pattern wooden cultivator will prove the most economical

654 combination. Experiments over the last three years show a definite advantage in favour of ridging (see Appendix IV, Tables 3-7) as against flat cultivation; although, as might be expected, the effect upon yield varies in different places and in different seasons. Some of the advantages in favour of ridging are:—

1. Planting in straight lines is simplified and subsequent inter-cultivation is made more easy.

2. Contoured ridging is particularly useful as a measure to check soil erosion.

3. Cultivation can be extended to fertile valley lands too wet to grow crops on the flat.

4. Manure is concentrated in the middle of the ridge where feeding roots can make most use of it.

It has been found that with a DY plough an acre or more can be ridged in a day by a pair of bullocks working in the morning and in the evening. Excellent ridges are being made in Tamale by the Officer-in-Charge using the single furrow "Victory" plough, but since this involves going over the land twice we may find here in the Northern Province, with precarious early rains and a large area of early millet to plant, that the more quickly made, though possibly less efficient, ridges of the DY plough will suit us better. This matter will receive attention in the future.

III. *Manuring.*

a. *Manufacture of Manure.*

In the improvement of local agriculture attention to cultivation and manuring must be given together, for the one cannot take full effect without the other. The effects of quite small dressings (2 to 5 tons per acre) of native compost upon crop yields (see Appendix II, Tables 6 and 7) leave no doubt as to the order of improvement which we may expect from attention to this subject. The amazing growth of crops in the immediate vicinity of compounds tells its own story. But as we have seen, only 12% of the total area of land cultivated upon native farms receives a dressing of manure, and this is quite inadequate to maintain fertility under a system of continuous cultivation. We set ourselves to find out, therefore, how, with a reasonable head of stock, we could make manure in the biggest quantity and of the best quality. 'Green' manuring could not be considered locally for obvious reasons; some form of compost or pen manure was envisaged, or a combination of the two.

Compost.

Since the native manure is a compost, inefficiently prepared from vegetable waste and the sweepings of animal manure from the compounds, we turned our attention first to the manufacture of compost on the lines advocated by Sir Albert Howard at Indore (15). A battery of pits was laid down at Zuarungu in 1935 and "Indore" compost of excellent quality was prepared. (For analysis see Appendix IV, Table 8). But as Sir Frank Stockdale pointed out during his visit to Zuarungu in 1935, the process was far too complicated for the local native to adopt at present; and the shortage of water in the dry season would make it impracticable during half the year. The experience we gained of the decomposition of organic matter was valuable however. The method has now been discarded in favour of the manufacture of farmyard manure.

Farmyard Manure.

By farmyard manure is understood the material which results from the decomposition of cellulosic wastes—mainly cereal stalks and grasses—supplied as bedding to livestock; it receives the dung and urine from the stock and is trampled and allowed to accumulate under foot. Farmyard manure forms the basis of most systems of arable farming in the world; it has been adopted in Nigeria (3), Tanganyika (16), and elsewhere, in mixed farming; and we have adopted it here with most satisfactory results. It has been found that a pair of bullocks will produce about 5 tons of manure of good quality in a year, and a donkey, just over two tons.

The stock are housed in a pen, part of which is open, and part covered. The manure is allowed to accumulate in the covered part where clean grass bedding is added every morning. In the open part resistant material, like guinea corn stalks, is trampled and soaked with rain in the wet season; as it gets broken up it is thrown into the covered part together with any dung dropped outside. The junction of the walls and floor of the pen is rounded, and the floor is made saucer-shaped to reduce air pockets. Very little fly breeding has been found to take place and, if sufficient bedding is supplied, the pen keeps "sweet" and clean. So far only working bullocks and a donkey have been kept in this way. It has been suggested that the method may not be satisfactory with smaller stock and calves.

Human Health.

From the standpoint of human health we have convinced the local Health Authorities that so far from being insanitary, our method of manufacturing farmyard manure actually represents an

654 advance in domestic sanitation over the present native practice. We are agreed, however, that it is desirable to keep stock separated from the peoples' living quarters; that a roof is essential in the rainy season; and that clean bedding must be put down regularly and in adequate quantities. (It will be remembered, see page 33, that the present native practice is to keep livestock at night within the compound with no litter, upon an unbeaten floor, which is only irregularly cleaned out, and there is no roof protection; this dirty yard has to be crossed in passing from the entrance of the compound, to the living quarters.)

b. *Utilisation of Manure.*

Manurial experiments have been carried out at Zuarungu and Navrongo since 1934 using small dressings, 2 tons or 4 tons, of farmyard manure, "Indore" compost, and native compost. (The manure used in the 1934 experiments was leached cattle dung of doubtful value.) Mean yields obtained in these experiments are given in Appendix IV, Tables 9 to 13. It will be seen that these small dressings of manure resulted in yield increases of up to 80% over the yields from controls, unmanured. It should be noted, however, that nearly all our yields compare very unfavourably with yields upon native farms. The reason for this is that our experiment centres, in every case, are situated upon land completely out of condition. Nevertheless our results are valid within the limitations of the trials.

Residual Values.

Residual manurial trials at Navrongo showed statistically significant values remaining after the application of 2 tons and 4 tons of dung to sweet potatoes, coleus potatoes, and mixed cereals, in 1934, upon subsequent cereal crops in 1935 and 1936. The residual effect of manure in these trials in 1936 was more marked upon the vegetative growth early in the season, than was reflected in the yields.

Optimum Dressing.

Our experiments so far suggest that the optimum dressing of manure under local conditions is probably from 2 to 4 tons per acre, and that such a dressing is desirable at least once in four years. It should be mentioned here that this is the optimum under present conditions; with an increase in livestock, and the introduction of stall feeding, the amount of manure available will be increased and heavier dressings may be practicable. So far we have refrained from experimenting with anything outside the capacity of the better farmers in the district to adopt; it would be of little value to us to know, for instance, that ten tons of manure per acre are desirable, when the maximum amount available is say three or four tons. And if these small dressings were not satisfactory we should have to consider other measures for maintaining fertility. 654

IV. *Root Crops.*

The desirability of increasing the proportion of land planted with root crops has already been stated. Experiments have been conducted with the following crops: yams (Dioscorea spp.), sweet potatoes (Ipomoea batatas), cassava (Manihot utilissima), and Coleus potatoes (Coleus dysentericus). The conclusions reached with regard to each are discussed below.

Yams.

[244] Yams are the staple crop of the Mamprusis and Dagombas further South, and except for one or two special areas near the Volta Rivers—South Kusasi and South East Zuarungu—where conditions resemble those in Mamprusi, they are practically not grown at all in North Mamprusi. Yams are imported, however, and sell for very good prices in local markets. Ill considered attempts to introduce yams in the past had not met with much success (a notable exception being Chana, in Navrongo Area), and it was considered desirable to explore the situation by experiment.

Our experiments have taken the form of variety trials and two Dagomba varieties, Kuki and Puno, have proved outstandingly the best yielders in every trial, see Appendix IV, Tables 14 and 15. But even the best yield from these does not compare with an indifferent yield in Dagomba. Nevertheless, a low yield of saleable tubers might prove profitable for sale locally as a luxury crop. In a season when rains come early and keep on late, yams yield fairly well; but since the early and the late rains are notoriously variable in North Mamprusi, yams must always be regarded as a gamble and only small scale planting is recommended. A point in favour of yams, which was brought out in the Unit Holding Rotation Experiment at Navrongo in 1936, is the remarkably high residual value of the heavy yam cultivation by comparison with the cultivation for sweet potatoes; this was shown by the yields of a subsequent mixed cereal crop. (The difference was nearly 100%.) A small area of yams would appear to be worth including in unit holding trials.

Sweet Potatoes.

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Three local varieties of sweet potatoes have been tested at Zuarungu and Navrongo—NANURI-SUNGA, NANURI-PUNGA, and NANURI-YADAGA. Of these, the last two have proved the easiest to establish and the most consistent yielders. The first has therefore been discarded. Results of these trials are given in Appendix IV, Table 16. Our yields so far have not been very satisfactory (between 2 and 3 tons per acre of tubers), but the reason for this has been due largely to the difficulty of obtaining sufficient planting material. There can be no doubt as to the value of this crop in a system of mixed farming locally. The tubers and tops provide very palatable fodder for livestock in the early part of the dry season when grazing becomes of poor value. The importance of the crop as a famine reserve for the people in years of locust invasions requires no stressing. Our practice is to plough up a ridge of sweet potatoes a day, as required for feeding. The tubers keep quite well in the ground until the end of February. Sun-dried, sliced tubers were found to keep very well for the whole of the dry season. There is undoubtedly a big future for this crop, and we are including a large proportion of it in the root area on unit holdings.

Cassava.

We have not very much information upon this crop in North Mamprusi. Observation plots at Zuarungu and Navrongo were planted in May and June, 1935, and yielded at the rate of from 2 to 6 tons of tubers per acre in February and March of 1937, having occupied the ground for about twenty months. Cassava is of particular value upon the mixed farm as a succulent food for livestock during the period from mid-February, when sweet potatoes start to rot in the ground, until the fresh grass is ready for grazing in mid-April. And as a famine reserve crop it is *renowned the world over. But whilst cassava is obviously* a desirable crop to grow, it is quite impracticable upon native farms at present because of damage by livestock, principally goats, during the dry season. Under different conditions, *i.e.*, with enclosure, or attention to the control of livestock, cassava could come into its own. The difficulty might be solved if everybody planted it; for individuals to do so without fencing would be a waste of time.

Coleus Potatoes.

This small tuber is of no great importance, but a small quantity is included in Unit Holding experiments since the people normally devote a small area to it. Coleus potatoes do not store well and yield between 1 ton and 1½ tons of tubers per acre under favourable conditions. As a stock food they cannot compare in value with sweet potatoes or cassava.

V. *Miscellaneous Trials.*

Under this heading experiments with groundnuts and rice will be discussed and observation plots of Sesamum indicum, "acha" grass (Digitaria exilis), Bengal beans (Mucuna spp.), Dolichos lab-lab, Dolichos biflorus, Calopogonium mucunoides.

Groundnuts.

Groundnuts are next to cereals in importance in North Mamprusi. They grow very well upon the sand drifts and their value as a potential export crop, as well as an important stock food, gives them a high place in cropping on a mixed farm. Experiments have been confined to testing the merits of selections from "bunch" type Nigerian groundnuts, imported for the groundnut scheme at Ejura in 1933, against the local procumbent variety. In three years of trial the Nigerian variety has proved itself to yield rather better than local and its habit of growth enabled a saving in labour at harvest of 30% to be effected—an important consideration upon a mixed farm. Mean yields obtained in these trials are given in Appendix IV, Table 17.

Rice.

Trials over three years proves conclusively the value of rice locally. It yields a bigger weight of food for man and for beast from a given area, than any crop we have tried so far. Variety yield trials have been carried out to test Local rice, Tamale selections—black husk, and yellow, and Essiama selections, NZ2 and NZ4. Of these, Tamale Yellow has proved itself to be the *best; in 1936 it yield*ed nearly 1,500 lbs. of paddy to the acre and 5,900 lbs. of straw. The working bullocks eat the straw very readily during the dry season. Mean yields from rice trials are given in Appendix I[illegible], Table 18.

Sesamum Indicum.

Odd plants of this crop are occasionally found in North Mamprusi, and following a visit of Dr. W. E. McCulloch, Dietetics Research Officer, Nigeria, in 1931 (17), great hopes were entertained from its extension. Trials have not given satisfactory results however. The plants were severely attacked by caterpillars and growth was not uniform. Planting in the third week of May upon ridges 3' apart was found to be most satisfactory. Early thinning was found to be essential. Trials have now been discontinued in favour of other crops.

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"Acha" Grass (Digitaria exilis).

Observation plots of this small grain plant have been found easy to establish. Yields of up to 470 lbs. of grain per acre have been obtained and 22 cwts. of hay. It is considered however that time and space can be more profitably devoted to other crops, and trials have not been continued. Acha grass has a possible value as a trap crop for the parasite Striga, sometimes a serious pest locally on guinea corn.

Pigeon Peas (Cajanus cajan).

Pigeon peas are not grown locally. Observation plots show that in a long rainy season the crop will grow quite well, but, since it ripens in the dry season, it suffers from damage from livestock in the same way as cassava. Trials are being made with early maturing strains from Pusa, India.

Green Manure and Fodder Crops.

Observation plots of Bengal bean (Mucuna spp.), Dolichos biflorus, Dolichos lab-lab, and Calopogonium mucunoides, have been planted at Zuarungu and Navrongo, and of these, Bengal beans have proved to be outstandingly the best. But all ideas of green manuring have now been given up in favour of farmyard manure; Bengal beans have a value, however, as a fodder crop and small areas are grown for this purpose.

Gum Arabic.

Hopes were entertained at one time of finding in the gum from Acacia Senegal an export crop from North Mamprusi. The tree is found in large numbers in a belt running through the district. Repeated tappings produced very poor results and it is considered that the "harmattan" is not sufficiently severe to cause the tree to respond. Trials have been discontinued.

Section II.—DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS IN PARTICULAR RELATION TO "MIXED FARMING".

In West Africa the term "mixed farming" is used to describe a system of agriculture in which livestock and land are complementary (1). With a pair of bullocks and a plough, from 8 to 12 acres of land can be cultivated instead of the usual 2 to 4 acres by hand methods; and by the use of the farmyard manure made by the working bullocks and other stock a farmer might have, this area of land can be maintained at a reasonable level of fertility, and the wasteful practice of "shifting cultivation" can be eliminated. Depending upon circumstances, the extensive use of the plough is important and a high yield per man farming is the aim; or alternatively, the intensive use of manure is important and a high yield per acre is the aim. Observations made during a visit to Nigeria in 1936 to study mixed farming are recorded in Bulletin No. 33 of the Department (3). We are starting to-day where Nigeria started ten years ago and Nigerian experience is valuable to us here as a guide. The best mixed farming system for North Mamprusi, however, must be worked out to suit our particular conditions. These conditions are discussed below. 654

Intensive System Required.

That conditions are ripe for the introduction of mixed farming has already been shown. The cultivators of the soil own livestock and practice a system of fixed cultivation relying, in part, upon regular manuring to maintain the level of crop production. But the system is not nearly so intensive as conditions demand. It is therefore the intensive use of manure with a high yield per acre which is important here.

Animal drawn implements, though necessary to enable the manure to take full effect, come second. In passing, it may be mentioned that herein lies the main difference between a system for North Mamprusi and one for South Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the South, where land is abundant, the extensive use of the plough will be important, with possibly a combination of green manuring and farmyard manure. North Mamprusi resembles the Kano "suburban areas" in Nigeria.

Conservation of Organic Matter.

"Non-burning".

The first step, which it is within the power of every farmer to adopt without the expenditure of capital, is to conserve all the waste vegetable products from the farm and from waste land (grazing areas, roadsides, fallow) for use as fodder, or if too coarse, as litter, for livestock. This implies control of the wasteful practice of burning. A good start was made in Zuarungu Area in 1936-37 season through the Native Administration: during this period practically no wide scale burning took place. This measure alone is likely to have far reaching effects for the welfare of the district, quite apart from its essential relationship with mixed farming. These effects will be cumulative and will not be appreciable in a single year; some of the more important advantages which may be expected are:—

1. Organic matter, in which local soils are particularly deficient, will be conserved for use as the basis of farmyard manure.

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2. Livestock fodder can be obtained for the dry season by cutting grass for hay before the onset of harmattan, and by the conservation of cereal and legume leaves.

3. Grazing lands will be improved, both in the stock carrying capacity and in the length of the grazing period.

4. Soil erosion will be considerably reduced (and less damage to roads). Control of vegetation must always be the first anti-erosion measure.

5. Tree growth will be assisted, both timber—notably deficient—and fruit. (Figures from Yendi Shea Reserve, in Dagomba, show this.)

6. Tree population will increase due to more successful regeneration.

7. Water-table of district will have a higher average height throughout the year, due to a slower rate of percolation, less run-off, and decreased evaporation.

8. Less danger from shortage of roofing grass. (This is likely to become increasingly important as flat roofs must give way to thatch, due, in part, to a growing shortage of strong timbers.) It might also be mentioned that there is a small market for grass, used as fuel in the producer gas engine, at Nangodi Mine.

Against "non-burning" very little can be said in North Mamprusi, In a few swamp areas burning might be desirable to check the development of acid conditions, and on the edges of bush land, as around Pwalagu on the Volta River, tall grass—tall because there is not sufficient population to cut all that is available—might encourage lions to come unpleasantly close to the houses. The control of cattle ticks has been suggested, but regular "dipping" is the remedy for these. Care must be taken to see that grass in waste places and on grazing lands is cut before the middle of December, for a late burn is more serious than the usual burn in November and December, and the risk will be ever present. It must be stressed here that it is not sufficient merely "not to burn": if the grass cannot be kept close by grazing, coarse, dead grass must be cut down during the dry season, to enable the fresh grass to come through at the beginning of the following rains. (This is one of the reasons why "non-burning" is applicable at present only to areas where the system of cultivation is "fixed" and grass and grass-land is scarce and valuable because the proportion of arable to grass is high. In South Mamprusi and Dagomba, "shifting" cultivation is the practice and the proportion of arable to grass ("bush") is infinitesimal; the comparatively small population cannot possibly use all the grass available, and cannot, and need not, try to prevent burning; although they can ensure an early burn in many places with advantage. The difference between the two sets of conditions has been frequently ignored in discussions on the subject in the Northern Territories.) It is interesting to observe that burning of the veld is condemned in South Africa and parts of East Africa, and controlled by strict legislation.

Manufacture of Manure.

If the material conserved in the way described above is supplied as bedding to livestock, manure of excellent quality can be made by the method explained on page 45. It is desirable to feed stock on the farm as much as possible so that the loss of the dung and urine is reduced to a minimum. At least three times as much manure can be made in this way with a given head of stock than the native makes at present; and furthermore, farmyard manure is richer in plant food than native compost (see Appendix IV, Table 8). The output of manure from a mixed farm with an average stocking of say 2 working bullocks, 1 cow and calf, 1 donkey, 3 sheep and 6 goats (c.f. average stocking per compound, text Table 5, page 32) would be at least 8 tons per annum. Yields from native farms, see text Table 4, page 30, and from our experiments, page 46, show an average crop yield increase of up to 80% from the use of such small dressings of manure as 2 to 4 tons per acre; and residual trials show a value remaining in the third season after application. The average area of land farmed by a compound is nearly 8 acres; thus, with the stocking we have assumed, about 25% of the whole farm could be dressed with manure at the rate of 4 tons per acre in each year, instead of a smaller average dressing upon 12% of the area.

It will be seen that by the extension of this aspect of mixed farming alone—the means for which already exist and involve no more than the time of the farmer, of which he has an abundance, and the trouble of collecting and utilising the waste materials already everywhere in the district—much can be done towards ensuring an adequate food supply for the people, and better conditions for their livestock.

Animal Cultivation.

But whilst to increase soil fertility by the use of manure is a big step forward, not to improve methods of cultivation at the same time would be to lose much of the potential value of that fertility; manuring and cultivation must go hand in hand. Animal cultivation provides the solution. Admittedly more than half the farms

654 in North Mamprusi are too small in area, too irregular in shape, too stony, or too hilly, to allow of economic animal cultivation, but there is also a large number of farms—more than we can hope to affect for many years to come—which are suitable, and it is upon these that we must concentrate. With expansion in the future, it is probable that land will be specially selected because of its suitability for animal cultivation, but this time is sufficiently far ahead not to concern us at the moment, although it would be well to keep it in mind. Local West African Shorthorn bullocks have been found to be easy to train and to handle, and to be sufficiently heavy for ploughing the light soils of the district; although an increase in size would be helpful. Experiments have shown that the type of cultivation best suited to our conditions is to plant crops on ridges, and that by using a light scuffling and ridging plough, and a simple cultivator, one man and a boy, with his wife to assist in planting, can farm an 8 acre holding with the work of two bullocks. Not only is this area three times the size of the area a man cultivates by hand at present (see page 18) but the cultivation is more efficiently performed. These factors, taken into consideration with manuring, already discussed, give some idea of the scope of the improvement at which we are aiming.

Economics of the Plough.

What we have yet to prove, however, is that within a reasonable period, say four years, a farmer will receive a return from the use of bullocks and bullock drawn implements to cover the original cost of the implements, and to provide reasonable interest on the extra farming capital invested, and for his enterprise. Unless we can prove conclusively that mixed farming is profitable no amount of demonstration can extend the use of the plough upon any great scale; neither can we put up a case to Government or the Native Authority for loans to supply the initial farming capital. The proof lies in the actual returns obtained from experimental unit holdings. The free distribution of implements to Chiefs and Headmen will not demonstrate the economic value of these implements; we know that a plough can work locally, but can it work profitably? Let us examine the matter more closely.

Export Essential.

Since the plough is an imported article it follows that for every one which comes into the country, something of an equivalent value must go out, directly or indirectly. It has been shown that the high cost of road transport rules out the possibility of an export crop for an overseas market (1 and 18). It is in this respect that we are at such a disadvantage by comparison with Northern Nigeria, where cheap rail transport enables cotton and groundnuts to be profitably exported from distances more than 600 miles from the coast. The alternative is a local export to some part of the country with money to spend; the obvious solution lies in the export of livestock to Ashanti and the Colony. 654

Livestock Industry.

The conditions under which livestock are kept in North Mamprusi have been fully discussed under the heading "Animal Husbandry", pages 31 to 33. It has been shown that whilst livestock are used mainly for uneconomic purposes, marriage dowries and sacrifice, they are becoming increasingly regarded as a source of money; and with the rapid development in money consciousness which is proceeding to-day, there is no doubt that the value of livestock will become to be recognised more and more. Survey showed that 54% of compounds (probably rather less over the whole district) owned cattle of the West African Shorthorn type. Bullocks find a ready sale to butchers' agents at prices varying from £1 10s. to £3 15s.; and milk, in the form of curds, is sold in local markets. Nearly all compounds own sheep, goats, fowls, and guinea fowls, and the trade in fowls is already very well established. The market for livestock in Ashanti and the Colony is practically unlimited; only a very small proportion of the meat slaughtered is locally grown. But if this proportion is to be increased, local methods of animal husbandry must be improved. Attention to breeding alone is not enough, as the Director of Veterinary Services pointed out in his Annual Report for 1935-36 (12). And because the bulk of the livestock in the Gold Coast belong to the cultivators of the soil, it will be seen, that the development of mixed farming is just as necessary for the future of the livestock industry, as the development of the livestock industry is for the future of mixed farming. Thus the ultimate justification for the investment of capital in working bullocks and cattle-drawn implements must be in the export of livestock. Work with livestock is necessarily slow, but if good feeding and good breeding produce an improvement in the local stock equivalent to the improvement effected in Northern Nigeria, by attention to these matters with Zebu cattle (13)—and there would seem to be no reason why it should not—we shall have little difficulty in justifying the cost of a plough, when local unimproved bullocks are worth nearly £4 a head to butchers' agents at the present time. 231 [178] [435]

Sale of Surplus Foodstuffs.

But before livestock receive better treatment the people themselves must have sufficient food, and it is by the sale, as food upon local markets, of a surplus of production over individual requirements that the first mixed farmers are likely to receive a return. At the present time, large quantities of grain are imported from 439

439 Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Kusasi, during the dry season, and much of this is stored at such places as Bolgatanga, and sold during the time of greatest shortage, that is before early millet is reaped at the end of June. A sack of corn weighs approximately 439 180 lbs. and sells at from 14s. to 18s. a sack. This trade enables 435 us to give a money value to the produce from our farms. It is interesting to examine the yields from the cultivation experiment in the Headman of Goragu's compound farm (see Appendix IV, Table 3). From this it will be seen that during a three-year period the total mean yield of grain per acre from "native" plots was 2,370 lbs., and from "ridged" plots (cultivation by hand in 1934 and 1935 and by plough in 1936), 4,384 lbs.; a mean increase per acre for three years of 2,014 lbs. If this increase had been sold in Bolgatanga market at 13s. for 180 lbs. (*i.e.*, 14s. less 1s. for the bag) it would have realised nearly £7 10s. It would not require many acres yielding at this rate to justify the expenditure of £4 upon implements and £6-£8 upon working bullocks, that is assuming the farmer had no bullocks of his own already. Furthermore, very much less labour was expended upon the "ridged" plots than "native". Admittedly other cultivation experiments have not given such spectacular results, but the indication is the same in all.

000 It is difficult to say how much grain it would take to saturate the local market, but by the time it becomes saturated the Department of Agriculture should have acquired sufficient information to advise farmers how a surplus can most profitably be fed to livestock. For this reason an experimental stock farm is an essential part of the machinery for mixed farming research. In passing it might be mentioned that foodstuff prices will fall, as saturation point is approached: whilst this will not be popular with fixed farmers, it will assist the poor man to get food more easily. In this way we shall be accomplishing one of our primary objects in working in North Mamprusi; for it is the poor man who creates the food shortage problem, not the would-be mixed farmer.

Kusasi Groundnut Trade.

439 435 A consideration of sources of farming capital would not be complete without reference to a newly developed trade in decorticated groundnuts and groundnut oil from Kusasi, for the Kumasi market. From a start of 200 bags in 1933 the export has developed to 9,000 bags in 1937 (weight per bag approximately 160 lbs.). The trade is almost entirely in the hands of Messrs. Chedid, who centralise the nuts in Bawku and send them on their lorries to Kumasi when the supply of sheep and goats will not give them a full load. The lorries come North with cola, salt, cloths, etc. The price paid to the producer for decorticated groundnuts is 8s.

Kusasi

to 8s. 6d. a bag (about £4 18s. per ton); and the cost of transport on a bag to Kumasi, a distance of 380 miles, is from 4s. to 5s., which works out at about 2d. per ton mile. The trade is of particular interest in that it shows the people in Kusasi are prepared to grow a crop to sell for cash, and that transport will follow production, even at so great a distance from the market. 439 435

CONCLUSIONS.

000 The time is ripe for the introduction of mixed farming. That is to utilise livestock, firstly, to provide an adequate food supply for the people; and secondly, to produce a surplus for sale, either directly, as in the case of groundnuts in Kusasi, or metabolized and sold in the form of livestock, for which we have seen there is a large market in the South. In cases where labour has to be hired for farm work, as upon school farms, and possibly upon the farms of salaried Chiefs, when tribute and tribute labour is commuted, mixed farming can be recommended immediately as a profitable investment. It is possible that the production of such money crops as groundnuts, cotton, ginger, and sesamum, which are not profitable to grow by hand methods of cultivation for an external market, might become profitable with animal cultivation.

The control of burning and the use of the material so protected, as dry season fodder or bedding for livestock and the manufacture of farmyard manure, is within the power of everyone to adopt with advantage. But animal cultivation has a limited application in North Mamprusi for two main reasons :—

1. Lack of farming capital. Some form of loan scheme similar to the one in Nigeria will have to be devised to overcome this difficulty. We must first prove that it will be possible for a farmer to repay his loan before we can prepare details.

2. Density of population, and the shortage of land. The average area of land cultivated by a man at present is 2½ acres but the average area farmed by a compound is 8 acres. The compound must therefore be the unit owning a plough and bullocks. The time so saved can be devoted to the rearing of livestock, making enclosures round farms and grazing lands, and so on.

It is probable that, ultimately, expansion will take place into areas at present unoccupied. This must be attended with careful control.

000 The limiting factor for the rapid extension of mixed farming is likely to be the people themselves. But at least we must prove and demonstrate our system before we can say that the people will not follow. Chiefs and Headmen must lead the way. The best means of extending our results is through the machinery of the Native Administration, a section of which will have to be adapted and organised for the purpose. It is considered that the extension of proved agricultural results is as much a political problem, if not more so, than an agricultural problem.

Much careful research work requires to be done before a system suitable for general adoption can be recommended. But we have sufficient information to proceed quietly with extension work in the case of school farms, Chiefs, etc. Undue haste at the present time might seriously jeopardize future chances of success. That there will be difficulties in the future is certain; it would be well to bear in mind, however, that it is only the good farmers we can help, farmers above the average; and the number we can effect in the early stages will be very small.

Most of the requirements for mixed farming already exist in the district; organisation and farming capital are lacking. That the local farmers already own cattle and practice fixed cultivation and regular manuring, are points in our favour by comparison with Nigeria where very few peasant cultivators owned cattle. There will be no return to the tedious hoe system of farming once the advantages of the new system have been appreciated. The introduction of mixed farming offers undoubtedly the best basis for the introduction of all other measures designed for the welfare of the natives in North Mamprusi.

School Farms.

654 A start with demonstration has been made in 1937 by establishing mixed farming units attached to the Native Administration Schools at Sandema and Bawku. These farms consist of 8 acre units run by two paid labourers using a pair of bullocks, a plough, and a locally made cultivator. The boys assist with planting, and light operations such as thinning. The purpose of school farm is a dual one: they are intended, firstly, to produce food as economically as possible to reduce the schools' messing expenses; and secondly, as ocular demonstrations of improved methods of farming for the pupils. Many of the boys at these schools will become chiefs of the district: for them to see and assist with our methods of farming through a number of consecutive seasons, makes the time we devote to school farms a valuable investment; the dividends we shall reap in future extension work. The size of

these farms is limited at present by the amount of manure available; it is hoped in the future to increase the stocking by the addition of a cow, or cows.

N.A. Demonstration Farms.

In addition to the school farms, we are starting two demonstration farms in 1937. One is at Bongo, ten miles North of Zuarungu, the other, at Garu, South of Bawku; both are being paid for entirely by the Native Authority. At Bongo, in the centre of a thickly populated area, we are demonstrating the intensive use of manure upon a six acre holding, with food crops, and later, fowls, as saleable produce. At Garu the farm is eight acres in area, with room for expansion; groundnuts, and later, cattle, are intended to be the saleable produce here. The dry season feeding of stock and the manufacture of farmyard manure are the features most stressed at present. A point in connection with these mixed holdings which is sometimes forgotten is that it takes at least three years to get one working as a self-contained unit, that is, the fodder and bedding which is grown in 1937, is used in 1938, and forms the basis of the manure for the 1939 season. We are coming up against a number of practical difficulties in the first year, the chief of these being: inexperienced staff and labour, newly trained cattle, stumps and outcrops of stones in the farms. Very late rains in 1937 season have not been in our favour.

We have made a start and before going any further it behoves us to consolidate this start during the next two seasons. It is unlikely that we have found the best system for local conditions from the beginning, and we shall learn much from the experience of the next two years.

Training of Staff.

There is an immediate need for a small experimental stock farm, and for facilities for instructing the staff in some of the principles of animal husbandry if mixed farming is to make steady progress. The curriculum of the farm school run by the Nigerian Agricultural Department at Samaru, near Zaria, would be a valuable guide to what is required in this respect.

Summary.

1. A brief description of the climate, vegetation, soil, population, and economic and social conditions in North Mamprusi, is given in Section I of Part 1, as an introduction to the study of local agriculture.

000 2. In Section II of Part I, the methods and results of agricultural surveys, 1932-36, are recorded. The salient points arising out of these are: That the primitive system of "fixed" cultivation is not so intensive as conditions demand. Inadequate manuring, too great a reliance upon cereal crops and a natural improvidence, result in shortage of cultivated foods in about two or three years in five. Insufficient food at certain seasons, predisposes the people to disease, and reduces their energy; thus setting-up a "vicious circle". The average area of land cultivated by a man is 2.49 acres and per unit of population, .66 acres. The average area farmed by a compound is 7.88 acres. Crop yields vary considerably from year to year. Small quantities of manure result in very great increases in yield. 54% of compounds own cattle and other livestock. 4% had no livestock.

3. Section III, Part I, gives a discussion of findings in particular relation to local food supplies and contains suggestion for improvements. It is shown that wild sources of food play a big part in preventing starvation in years of poor crops. Some compounds never suffer from shortage; these are bigger than the average and own more livestock. The growing of a bigger diversity of crops, notably root crops, legumes, and rice; greater attention to soil management; the protection of vegetation from fire and its use as dry season fodder and litter for livestock, with the consequent manufacture of manure, are suggested as improvements within the capacity of the people to adopt. These improvements may be summarized in the term "mixed farming".

4. Part II contains a discussion of our observations and experiments up to the end of 1936, as an introduction to the study of mixed farming. Experiments are discussed under the headings—rotations, cultivation, manuring, root crops, and miscellaneous trials.

5. Section II, Part II, gives a summary of experimental results in relation to mixed farming. It is shown that an intensive system is required having, at first, the sale of surplus food as its aim, but later, as the local market becomes saturated, livestock appear to offer the only possible export crop; surplus crops must be metabolized and sent to the Ashanti and Colony markets on the hoof. The manufacture and use of manure is an aspect of mixed farming which could be adopted immediately with advantage. The cost of animal drawn implements, except where hired labour would otherwise be employed as for instance on school farms, has yet to be justified by experiment. There are indications that this will be possible.

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APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.—Mean monthly rainfall at Zuarungu, Navrongo and Bawku.

APPENDIX II.—Details of North Mamprusi Survey. (8 tables.)

APPENDIX III.—List of crops more commonly grown in North Mamprusi with local native names.

APPENDIX IV.—Mean yields from experiments. (18 tables.)

APPENDIX I.

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Mean monthly rainfall recorded at Zuarungu, Navrongo and Bawku.

Month	Zuarungu (19 years)	Navrongo (11 years	Bawku (10 years)
January	.06	nil	nil
February	.66*	.39**	.29
March	.72	.34	1.02
April	2.78	3.15	2.16
May	4.27	5.14	3.10
June	6.43	6.68	5.80
July	7.22	8.04	7.56
August	9.93	11.85	8.90
September	8.73	8.85	8.71
October	2.42	2.85	2.85
November	.68	.37	.70
December	.02	nil	.11
Means	43.92	47.83	41.20

*8.93″ recorded in 1919. **3.12″ in February, 1932.

APPENDIX II.

DETAILS OF NORTH MAMPRUSI SURVEY.

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Table 1.—Details of areas farmed (in acres) men farming and persons supported for 29 compounds recorded at 5 centres in Zuarungu Area in 1932.

Table 2.—Details of areas farmed (in acres), men farming and persons supported upon 20 recorded compounds at four centres in the Navrongo Area. Surveyed 1934 and 1935.

Table 3.—Details of areas, men farming, and persons supported at Zebilla. Surveyed 1936.

Table 4.—Summary of Tables 1-3 giving totals and means for 54 compounds surveyed at ten centres in North Mamprusi.

Table 5.—Summary of Cropping at 10 Centres of Record in North Mamprusi.

Table 6.—Analysis of Yield Data in North Mamprusi, 1932-1936.

Table 7.—Analysis of yield data for the more important crops grown in North Mamprusi showing yield per crop irrespective of mixture.

Table 8.—Giving an analysis of the livestock owned by 54 compounds at 10 centres in North Mamprusi.

APPENDIX II—TABLE 1.

ZUARUNGU AREA.

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Details of areas farmed (in acres), men farming and persons supported for 29 compounds recorded at 5 centres in Zuarungu Area in 1932.

(Note.—The area of land occupied by buildings and waste land is not included.)

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Bongo— I. Ayanbiri...	.53	2.00 1.65 .37 .14 .47	–	* 5.16	1	5.16	10	.51
II. Akani ...	2.89	.67 2.00 .42	– –	* 5.98	1	5.98	4	1.49
III. Inyaba ...	1.04	1.89	–	2.93	2	1.46	5	.58
IV. Aganda ...	6.71	.57	–	7.28	7	1.04	20	.36
V. Akawiboku	1.32	.54	–	1.86	3	**.62	8	.23
VI. Afulki ...	2.98	1.00 .50 1.45 2.03	–	7.96	4	1.99	13	.61
Totals ... Means ...	15.47 2.58	15.70 2.61	– –	31.17 5.19	18 3	– 1.73	60 10	– .51
Nangodi— I. Doliba ...	1.62	1.57 .09	–	3.28	3	1.09	7	.47
II. Tobiga ...	13.25	.09	2.67	16.01	5	3.20	36	.44
III. Bugari ...	5.27	–	2.62	7.89	4	1.97	15	.51
IV. Banitami	3.54	–	2.36	5.90	2	2.95	7	.84
V. Babila ...	3.88	–	3.04	6.92	6	1.15	19	.36
Totals ... Means ...	27.56 5.51	1.75 .35	10.69 2.14	40.00 8.00	20 4	– 2.00	84 16.8	– .48

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 1 (continued).

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate "not bush"	Bush Farm	Total				
Sambruno— I. Kasalaga	5.59	.99 .90 .26 .45	–	8.19	8	1.02	15	.61
II. Alori ...	2.78	.65 .20 .32 1.00 .51	–	5.46	5	1.09	13	.42
III. Asoro ...	5.50	1.07 .53 .68	–	7.78	3	2.59	11	.73
IV. Ayarina	8.57	.34	–	***8.91	2	4.45	7	1.27
V. Kolgo ...	4.01	1.34	–	5.35	2	2.67	6	.89
Totals ... Means ...	26.45 5.29	9.24 1.85	– –	35.69 7.14	20 4	– 1.78	52 10.4	– .65
Tongo— I. Yembila ...	2.48	2.74	–	5.22	1	5.22	4	1.30
II. Zukori ...	3.62	.45 .59	5.96 4.83 5.65	21.30	7	3.04	36	.59
III. Omara ...	1.68	.61 .65	5.25	8.19	6	1.36	23	.35
IV. Dagbana...	6.43	.46 .51 .68	–	8.08	3	2.69	13	.62
V. Goloma ...	5.98	2.50	–	8.48	6	1.41	19	.44
Totals ... Means ...	20.39 4.08	9.19 1.84	21.69 4.34	51.27 10.25	23 4.6	– 2.23	95 19	– .54
Zuarungu— I. Adachama	9.25	3.89 .86	–	14.00	4	3.5	23	.60
II. Abagna ...	5.61	–	–	5.61	2	2.8	10	.56
III. Azogadugu	2.37	–	–	2.37	1	2.37	6	.39
IV. Awuni ...	3.22	–	–	3.22	2	1.61	10	.32
V. Atia ...	2.75	–	–	2.75	1	2.78	3	.92
VI. Asoro ...	7.56	–	–	7.56	4	1.98	8	.99
VII. Abugbiri	2.04	–	1.01	3.05	2	1.52	9	.34
VIII. Ayenpam	1.44	–	1.04	2.48	1	2.48	6	.41
Totals ... Means ...	34.24 4.28	4.75 .59	2.05 .26	41.04 5.13	17 2.1	– 2.44	75 9.4	– .55
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 29 COMPOUNDS IN ZUARUNGU AREA								
Totals ... Means ...	124.11 4.28	40.63 1.40	34.45 1.19	199.17 6.87	98 3.7	– 2.03	366 12.6	– .54

*Receive assistance. **Two men very old. ***Poor, eroded land.

APPENDIX II—TABLE 2.

NAVRONGO AREA.

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Details of areas farmed (in acres), men farming and persons supported upon 20 recorded compounds at four centres in the Navrongo Area. Surveyed 1934 and 1935.

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate "not bush"	Bush Farm	Total				
Chaua— I. Kaba ...	9.75	–	–	9.75	4	2.44	13	.75
II. Awesoga...	7.73	–	–	7.73	3	2.58	9	.86
III. Sotia ...	5.78	–	–	5.78	3	1.93	5	1.16
IV. Bagani ...	12.00	1.41	–	13.41	3	4.47	12	1.12
V. Agulun ...	9.29	–	–	9.29	1	9.29*	5	1.86
VI. Ajenyima	9.78	–	–	9.78	2	4.89	5	1.96
Totals ... Means ...	54.33 –	1.41 –	– –	55.74 9.29	16 2.6	– 3.48	49 8.1	– 1.14
Kologo— I. Atinga ...	6.55	–	2.39	8.94	4	2.24	10	.89
II. Ayamaga	1.64	3.27	3.64	8.95	2	4.48	15	.59
III. Agbona ...	4.69	–	14.83	19.52	4	4.88	19	1.03
IV. Adawuni...	5.39	.67 .51 .64	1.91	9.12	2	4.56	11	.83
V. Brema ...	2.87	–	–	2.87	2**	1.44	17	.17
VI. Abonga ...	8.41	–	7.00	15.41	2	7.71	11	.70
Totals ... Means ...	29.75 –	5.09 –	29.97 –	64.81 10.80	16 2.6	– 4.05	83 12.9	– .78
Navrongo— I. Abolga ...	3.71	1.55 1.66	–	6.92	3	2.34	7	1.00
II. Kajuga ...	5.19	3.35	–	8.54	6	1.44	26	.33
Totals ... Means ...	8.90 4.45	6.56 3.28	– –	15.46 7.73	9 4.5	– 1.72	33 16.5	– .47

APPENDIX II—TABLE 2 (continued).

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Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Wiaga—								
I. Abasu ...	3.12	.76 .46	–	4.34	3	1.45	10	.43
II. Akulbalmni	4.62	.89 .77 .57	–	6.85	2	3.43	8	. 86
III. Anisedi ...	1.07	3.20	–	4.27	1	4.27	4	1.07
IV. Amanyadi	3.99	2.03	–	6.02	4	1.51	9	.67
V. Azurumi	2.86	1.01	–	3.87	2	1.94	12	.32
VI. Ansodi ...	1.87	.37	–	2.24	1	2.24	9	.25
Totals ... Means ...	17.53 –	10.06 –	– –	27.59 4.59	13 2.1	– 2.12	52 8.6	– .53
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 20 COMPOUNDS IN NAVRONGO AREA								
Totals ... Means ...	110.51 * 5.52	23.12 1.16	29.97 1.49	163.60 8.19	54 2.7	– 3.03	217 10.8	– .75

*Farmed very extensively. **One man a tailor.

APPENDIX II—TABLE 3.

KUSASI AREA.

Details of areas, men farming, and persons supported at Zebilla. Surveyed 1936.

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Compound No. and Name of Owner	Areas farmed, in acres				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Zebilla—								
I. Mbila ...	1.58	–	6.37	7.95	1	8.18	4	2.04
II. Abila ...	4.62	–	9.62	14.24	6	2.4	22	.65
III. Agbanbila	4.26	–	4.30	8.56	4	2.16	9	.96
IV. Akobari ...	14.70	5.94	3.76	24.40	6	4.31	17	1.52
V. Aroko ...	4.22	3.23	5.71	13.16	4	3.30	15	.88
Totals ... Means ...	29.38 5.88	9.17 1.83	29.76 5.95	68.31 13.66	21 4.2	– 3.25	67 13.4	– 1.02

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 4.

Summary of Tables 1—3 giving totals and means for 54 compounds surveyed at ten centres in North Mamprusi. (Allowance has been made in areas for land occupied by buildings or waste land. "Persons supported" includes adults and children, except babes in arms.)

District and Centre of Record	No. of Compound	Area farmed in acres				Total Number men farming	Area per man	Total Number persons supported	Area per person	Compound Means			Persons supported per man
		Compound Farm	Farm away *not* bush	Bush Farms	Total Area					Area farmed	Men farming	Persons supported	
Zuarungu Area—													
Bongo ...	6	15.47	15.70	—	31.17	18	1.73	60	.51	5.19	3	10	3.3
Nangodi ...	5	27.56	1.75	10.69	40.00	20	2.00	84	.48	8.00	4	16.8	4.2
Sambruno ...	5	26.45	9.24	—	35.69	20	1.78	52	.65	7.14	4	10.4	2.6
Tongo ...	5	20.39	9.19	21.69	51.27	23	2.23	95	.54	10.25	4.6	19	4.1
Zuarungu ...	8	34.24	4.75	2.05	41.04	17	2.44	75	.55	5.13	2.1	9.4	4.4
Navrongo Area—													
Chana ...	6	54.33	1.41	—	55.74	16	3.48	49	1.14	9.29	2.6	8.1	3.1
Kologo ...	6	29.75	5.09	29.97	64.81	16	4.05	83	.78	10.80	2.6	12.9	4.9
Navrongo ...	2	8.90	6.56	—	15.46	9	1.74	33	.47	7.73	4.5	16.5	3.6
Wiaga ...	6	17.53	10.06	—	27.59	13	2.12	52	.53	4.59	2.1	8.6	4.1
Kusasi Area—													
Zebilla ...	5	29.38	9.17	29.76	68.31	21	3.25	67	1.02	13.66	4.2	13.4	3.2
Totals ...	54	264.00	72.92	94.16	431.08	173	—	650	—	—	—	—	—
Means ...	—	4.89	1.35	1.74	7.98	3.2	2.49	12	.66	7.98	3.2	12	3.7
		61%	17%	22%									

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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Summary of Cropping at 10 Centres of Record in

District :	Zuarungu Area (1932)					
Centre of Record :	Bongo	Nangodi	Sambruno	Tongo	Zuarungu	Tots 29 comp
No. of compounds recorded :	6	5	5	5	8	acres
Cereals— Early millet Late millet Groundcrops*	6.90 (1.71)	7.44 (1.28)	1.04 (.62)	11.91 (6.79)	18.99 (4.19)	46.28 (14.59)
Early millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	9.79 (2.47)	9.80 (1.46)	6.35 (.81)	4.44 (2.89)	5.90 (.72)	36.28 (8.35)
Early millet Late millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	2.98 (1.06)	–	13.15 (6.68)	–	5.32 (1.90)	21.45 (9.64)
Late millet Groundnuts	2.04	5.42	3.81	2.53	2.25	16.05
Late millet Groundcrops	–	.84	.63	19.03	3.23	23.73
Guinea corn Groundcrops	5.69 (1.10)	15.41	1.15 (.83)	11.98	1.22	35.45 (1.93)
Late millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	–	–	2.05	.98	.65	3.68
Rice	–	–	.58	–	.01	.59
Maize	–	–	–	.08 (.02)	.02	.10 (.02)
Legumes— Groundnuts	3.70	.75	3.35	–	2.17	9.97
Bambarra beans	–	.14	.14	–	–	.28
Groundnuts Bambarra beans	–	–	3.17	–	.74	3.91
Kirstingrella geocarpa	–	.09	.09	.11	–	.29
Root Crops— Coleus potatoes	–	–	–	–	.32	.32
Sweet potatoes	–	–	.02	.21	.22	.45
Miscellaneous— Tobacco	–	.11	.02	–	–	.13
Okra	.07	–	–	–	–	.07
Hibiscus cannabinus	–	–	.14	–	–	.14
Total Cereals Percentage	27.40 (6.24) 88	38.91 (2.74) 97	28.76 (8.94) 80	50.95 (9.70) 99	37.59 (6.81) 91	183.61 (34.53) –
Total Legumes Percentage	3.70 12	.98 2	6.75 19	.11 –	2.91 7	14.45 –
Total Roots Percentage	– –	– –	.02 –	.21 –	.54 1	.77 –
Total Miscellaneous... Percentage	.07 –	.11 1	.16 –	– –	– –	.34 –
Total Area cultivated	31.17	40.00	35.69	51.27	41.04	199.17

*Ground crops — neri and cowpeas.

[p. 70A-i]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 6.

tres of Record in North Mamprusi. (All areas are given in acres. Figur

(1932)			Navrongo Area (1934 and 1935)						1
Zuarungu	Total 29 compounds		Chana	Kologo	Navrongo	Wiaga	Total 20 compounds		
8	acres	%	6	6	2	6	acres	%	
18.99 (4.19)	46.28 (14.59)	23	1.62	5.01	–	.31	6.94	4.2	
5.90 (.72)	36.28 (8.35)	18	4.27 (3.29)	9.93	.73	4.40	19.33 (3.29)	11.8	
5.32 (1.90)	21.45 (9.64)	10	16.83	12.17 (2.93)	7.08 (4.05)	19.20	55.28 (6.98)	33.8	
2.25	16.05	8	1.93	1.31	–	–	3.24	1.9	
3.23	23.73	11	5.27	16.63	3.26	.26	25.42	15.3	
1.22	35.45 (1.93)	17	7.11	5.20	1.74	–	14.05	8.6	
.65	3.66	1.8	6.82	7.04	.53	.31	14.70	9	
.01	.50	.24	1.25	2.96	.26	–	4.47	2.7	
.02	.10 (.02)	.05	–	–	.05	–	.05	.03	
2.17	9.97	5	1.99	2.91	1.66	1.17	7.73	4.7	
–	.28	.14	–	.56	–	–	.56	.3	
.74	3.91	1.95	8.57	1.09	–	1.78	11.44	7	
–	.29	.14	–	–	–	.16	.16	.09	
.32	.32	.16	.05	–	.15	–	.20	.01	
.22	.45	.22	–	–	–	–	–	–	
–	.13	.06	–	–	–	–	–	–	
–	.07	.03	.03	–	–	–	.03	–	
–	.14	.07	–	–	–	–	–	–	
37.59 (6.81) 91	183.61 (34.53) –	– 93	45.10 (3.29) 81	60.25 (2.93) 93	13.65 (4.05) 88	24.48 89	143.18 (10.27) –	– 87.5	
2.91 7	14.45 –	– 7	10.56 19	4.56 7	1.66 11	3.11 11	19.89 –	12.1 –	
.54 1	.77 –	– .40	.05 –	– –	.15 1	– –	.20 –	.12 –	
– –	.34 –	– .1	.03 –	– –	– –	– –	.03 –	– –	
41.04	199.17	–	55.74	64.81	15.46	27.59	163.60	–	

[p. 70A-ii]

are given in acres. Figures in brackets denote area manured.)

934 and 1935)			Kusasi Area (1936)		Total, 34 compounds at 10 centres		Type of farm where commonly planted : Compound : Type (I) and Type (II) Bush : Type (III)
Wiaga	Total 20 compounds		Zebilla				
6	acres	%	6 acres	%	acres	%	
.31	6.94	4.2	14.21 (5.97)	20 (9)	67.43 (20.56)	15.6 (4.7)	Compound
4.40	19.33 (3.29)	11.8	12.47 (4.36)	18.2 (6)	68.08 (16.00)	15.8 (3.7)	Compound
19.20	55.28 (6.98)	33.8	–	–	76.73 (16.62)	17.9 (3.8)	Compound
–	3.24	1.9	–	–	19.29	4.6	Compound
.26	25.42	15.3	18.28	26.7	67.43	15.6	Bush and compound
–	14.05	8.6	19.73	28.8	69.23 (1.93)	16 (.45)	Bush and compound
.31	14.70	9	–	–	18.38	4.2	Bush and compound
–	4.47	2.7	.06	–	5.12	1.2	Compound
–	.05	.03	.05 (.05)	– (.06)	.20 (.07)	.04	Compound
1.17	7.73	4.7	2.17	3.1	19.87	4.6	Compound
–	.56	.3	–	–	.84	.2	Compound
1.78	11.44	7	–	–	15.35	3.5	Compound
.16	.16	.09	–	–	.45	.1	Compound
–	.20	.01	1.29	1.8	1.81	.4	Compound
–	–	–	–	–	.45	.1	Compound
–	–	–	–	–	.13	.03	Compound
–	.03	–	–	–	.10	.02	Compound
–	–	–	.05	.07	.19	.04	Compound
24.48 89	143.18 (10.27) –	– 87.5	64.80 (10.38) –	– (15) 94	391.89 (55.18) –	– (12) 91	
3.11 11	19.69 –	12.1 –	2.17 –	– 3.1	36.51 –	– 8.4	
– –	.20 –	.12 –	1.29 –	– 1.8	2.26 –	.5 –	
– –	.03 –	– –	.05 –	.1 –	.42 –	.1 –	
27.59	163.60	–	68.31	–	431.06	–	

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Analysis of Yield Data in North Mamprusi, 19

Mixtures of Crops	ZUARUNGA					
	1932		1934*		1935*	
	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	1
Early millet ... ... late millet and groundcrops (neri and cowpeas)	397 (4[illegible]) 535	625 (9) 762	254 (4) 480 (4)	344 (7) 444 (7)	355 (14) 291	
Early millet guinea corn and groundcrops	286 (40) 422	528 (14) 574	204 (20) 507	270 (4) 653	517 (10) 339	5 5
Early millet late millet guinea corn and groundcrops	384 (29) 125 350 —	406 (9) 100 461 —	203 (4) 175 320	—	—	
Late millet and groundcrops	282 (9)	—	246 (1)	—	—	
Guinea corn and groundcrops	413 (4)	—	—	—	210 (2)	
Late millet guinea corn and groundcrops	186 (2) 82 (2)	—	—	—	—	
Rice	350 (1)	—	—	—	—	
Late millet groundnuts	159 (13) 582	—	156 (4) 1140	—	—	
Legumes— groundnuts	560 (35)	—	820 (3)	—	860 (15)	
Bambarra beans	487 (5)	—	—	—	—	
Groundnuts Bambarra beans	247 (7) 132		885 (2) 78	—	—	
Cowpeas	78 (123)	102 (49)	64 (29)	77 (13)	106 (24)	
Coleus potatoes	357 (10)	—	—	—	—	
Sweet potatoes	4284 (6)	—	—	—	—	
neri (Cucumis melo)	23 (123)	28 (48)	19 (23)	11 (27)	56 (24)	

*Compound farms only.

**Records from two compounds at Chana and two a

[p. 708-i]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 6.

North Mamprusi, 1932-1936. (All yields in lbs. per acre. Figures in bra

	ZUARUNGA AREA							
	1934*	1935*		1936*		Summary		193
d	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured
))	344 (7) 444 (7)	355 (14) 291	— —	337 (11) 411	— —	370 (69) 462	502 (16) 623	203 (11) 329 (11)
)	270 (4) 663	517 (10) 329	560 (6) 588	410 (6) 501	550 (3) 744	304 (76) 450	500 (27) 608	268 (36) 272
)	—	—	—	—	—	362 (33) 133 346	406 (9) 100 461	233 (62) 184 182
)	—	—	—	—	—	278 (10)	—	207 (38)
	—	210 (2)	—	—	—	345 (6)	—	126 (27)
	—	—	—	—	—	186 (2) 82	—	118 (22) 91
	—	—	—	—	—	360 (1)	—	632 (11)
)	—	—	—	—	—	158 (17) 725	—	106 (4) 623
)	—	860 (15)	—	—	—	660 (53)	—	631 (12)
	—	—	—	—	—	487 (5)	—	—
)	—	—	—	—	—	388 (9) 120	— —	409 (25) 83
)	77 (13)	106 (24)	81 (16)	93 (11)	—	80 (187)	95 (68)	49 (191)
	—	—	—	—	—	3572 (10)	—	1062 (6)
	—	—	—	—	—	4294 (6)	—	8400 (2)
)	11 (27)	56 (24)	45 (16)	—	—	27 (170)	26 (91)	51 (196)

pounds at Chana and two at Navrongo.

[p. 7CB-ii]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

NDIX II—TABLE 6.

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cre. Figures in brackets denote number of sample plots from which each m

	NAVRONGO AREA						
mary	1934		1935		1936**		Summ
Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured
502 (16) 623	203 (11) 329 (11)	— —	146 (3) 403	985 (1) 280	—	—	191 (14) 330
500 (27) 606	268 (36) 272	395 (13) 395	377 (16) 352	821 (16) 458	497 (1) 240	—	305 (53) 295
406 (9) 100 461	233 (62) 184 182	445 (13) 117 300	281 (13) 78 275	572 (15) 72 436	388 (9) 168 483	586 (8) 87 779	252 (84) 166 228
—	207 (38)	—	284 (9)	—	—	—	222 (47)
—	126 (27)	—	292 (5)	—	—	—	152 (32)
—	118 (22) 91	— —	82 (1) 620	— —	— —	— —	116 (23) 113
—	632 (11)	—	746 (7)	—	[illegible]50 (2)	—	703 (20)
—	106 (4) 623	— —	110 (2) 606	— —	— —	— —	107 (6) 617
—	631 (12)	—	540 (3)	—	—	—	613 (15)
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
— —	469 (25) 83	—	759 (12) 96	—	687 (12) 362	—	597 (50) 153
95 (68)	49 (191)	58 (26)	59 (19)	49 (23)	—	—	50 (210)
—	1662 (6)	—	—	—	—	—	1662 (6)
—	8400 (2)	—	—	—	—	—	8400 (2)
96 (91)	51 (198)	58 (20)	11 (13)	11 (10)	—	—	48 (209)

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7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

241 s from which each mean was obtained.)

			ZEBILLA			
36**	Summary		1936		Summary for all data	
Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured
—	191 (14) 330	965 (1) 280	145 (10) 119	378 (17) 241	319 (93) 406	455 (34) 422
—	305 (53) 295	630 (29) 430	160 (11) 257	489 (12) 568	293 (140) 376	553 (68) 525
586 (8) 87 779	252 (84) 166 228	529 (36) 91 463	— —	— —	282 (117) 156 261	505 (45) 93 462
—	222 (47)	—	253 (22)	—	238 (79)	—
—	152 (32)	—	539 (36)	—	356 (74)	—
— —	116 (23) 113	— —	— —	— —	122 (25) 111	— —
—	703 (20)	—	—	—	687 (21)	—
— —	107 (6) 617	—	— —	—	145 (23) 686	— —
—	613 (15)	—	389 (4)	—	635 (72)	—
—	—	—	—	—	487 (5)	—
—	597 (50) 153	—	— —	— —	565 (59) 148	
—	50 (210)	54 (49)	42 (79)	85 (29)	62 (366)	79 (146)
—	1662 (6)	—	6057 (3)	—	3456 (19)	—
—	8400 (2)	—	—	—	5313 (8)	—
—	48 (209)	45 (36)	—	—	39 (379)	31 (127)

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 7.

Analysis of yield data for the more important crops grown in North Mamprusi showing yield per crop, irrespective of mixture.

(Figures in brackets denote number of sample plots from which each mean was obtained.)

Crop	Unmanured or Manured	Zuarungu Area				Navrongo Area			Zebilla	Weighted Mean for all data
		1932	1934	1935	1936	1934	1935	1936	1936	
Early millet ...	Unmanured Manured	353(109) 523 (52)	193 (32) 317 (11)	422 (24) 560 (6)	362 (17) 550 (3)	242(109) 419 (26)	323 (13) 618 (26)	438 (15) 867 (6)	153 (21) 425 (29)	271(358) 506(159)
Late millet... ...	Unmanured Manured	349 (80) 431 (18)	248 (25) 306 (11)	258 (19) —	411 (10) —	185(147) 117 (13)	123 (28) 59 (18)	176 (1) 107 (3)	211 (32) 241 (17)	236(342) 227 (80)
Guinea corn ...	Unmanured Manured	395 (75) 530 (23)	464 (26) 539 (8)	317 (12) 588 (6)	510 (6) 744 (3)	193(154) 360 (26)	322 (35) 378 (26)	535 (20) 870 (6)	473 (47) 568 (12)	326(375) 486(110)
Rice	Unmanured	350 (1)	—	—	—	632 (11)	746 (7)	950 (2)	—	687 (21)
Groundnuts ...	Unmanured	489 (67)	757 (13)	800 (5)	—	595 (47)	—	776 (13)	389 (4)	594(169)
Bambarra beans ...	Unmanured	251 (12)	78 (2)	—	—	95 (31)	—	441 (3)	—	155 (48)
Cowpeas	Unmanured Manured	78(123) 102 (49)	64 (29) 77 (13)	106 (24) 81 (6)	93 (11) —	49(191) 58 (26)	59 (19) 49 (23)	— —	42 (79) 85 (29)	62(306) 79(146)
" Neri "	Unmanured Manured	23(123) 28 (48)	19 (23) 11 (27)	56 (24) 45 (6)	— —	51(196) 58 (26)	11 (13) 11 (10)	— —	— —	38(379) 31(127)
Coleus potatoes ...	Unmanured	3,752 (10)	—	—	—	1,662 (6)	—	—	6,057 (3)	3,456 (19)
Sweet potatoes ...	Unmanured	4,284 (6)	—	—	—	8,400 (2)	—	—	—	5,313 (8)

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7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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APP

Giving an analysis of the livestock o

Livestock	† Value in Units	Bongo						Nangodi				
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI*	I	II*	III	IV	V*
Cattle	60	8	–	–	1	–	3	–	4	8	1	2
Donkeys	30	1	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	2	–	–
Sheep	10	–	–	1	2	–	6	–	15	4	1	8
Goats	8	10	–	1	6	–	7	–	25	4	1	5
Fowls	1	15	–	–	10	1	10	–	16	15	5	20
Guinea fowls ...	1	–	–	–	–	–	8	–	25	14	3	16
Horses	160	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total Units ...		605	nil	18	168	1	374	–	631	641	86	276

NAVRONGO

Livestock	Value in Units	Chana						Kologo				
		I*	II	III	IV*	V	VI	I	II	III*	IV	V
Cattle	60	3	–	–	1	–	3	3	–	6	–	–
Donkeys	30	–	–	–	3	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
Sheep	10	–	–	–	5	2	2	1	2	7	3	7
Goats	8	8	–	–	5	2	2	–	–	1	4	2
Fowls	1	23	9	2	24	10	–	17	8	10	15	20
Guinea fowls ...	1	21	2	2	10	7	–	–	–	5	9	6
Horses	160	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total Units ...		288	11	4	274	53	246	207	28	453	86	142

*Compounds suffering no shortage of cultivated foods during the previous year.

† The unit is taken to be the fowl and all other classes of stock are related to it at roughly thei
since it does not take into account the age of the stock. The unit is useful for comparing the stocl

[p. 72A-i]
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7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 8.

the livestock owned by 54 compounds at 10 centres in North Mamprusi.

ZUARUNGU AREA (April, 1933)

gudi			Sambruno					Tongo					Zuarungu				
Compound No.																	
I	IV	V*	I	II	III	IV	V	I*	II	III	IV*	V	I*	II*	III	IV	V
8	1	2	3	–	2	1	–	3	–	1	6	–	3	3	–	–	–
2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	2	–
4	1	8	8	8	3	10	–	–	6	8	–	4	9	–	–	3	–
4	1	5	2	5	6	6	2	–	4	4	6	4	5	10	10	1	3
5	5	20	25	6	26	10	7	–	12	26	7	20	20	7	6	1	4
4	3	16	6	5	8	11	–	27	4	5	11	40	12	3	–	–	6
	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	
1	96	276	207	131	230	245	23	267	108	213	586	122	342	300	86	96	34

NAVRONGO AREA (April, 1934)

Kelogo				Navrongo		Wiaga						Total 20 compounds	Mean	K Z	
I*	IV	V	VI	I*	II*	I	II	III	IV*	V	VI*			I	II
6	–	–	–	6	–	7	3	–	8	5	3	49	2.4	–	–
-	–	1	–	1	–	1	1	–	1	–	1	10	.5	–	–
7	3	7	3	5	11	–	–	–	6	3	5	62	3.1	–	–
1	4	3	4	4	7	8	4	–	4	8	7	70	3.5	–	12
10	16	20	15	–	20	17	6	8	20	8	6	238	11.9	4	10
8	9	6	9	–	7	7	10	–	10	8	5	118	5.9	4	10
-	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
28	86	142	86	472	198	538	258	8	623	410	337	4,716	236	8	276

t at roughly their exchangeable value. It is purely arbitrary
mparing the stocking on different compounds.

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Zuarungu						Total 29 compounds	Mean
III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII		
–	–	–	3	3	–	55	1.9
–	2	–	1	–	–	12	.4
–	3	–	13	–	–	109	3.7
10	1	3	15	–	1	145	5
6	1	4	–	9	3	289	10
–	–	6	14	–	–	218	7.5
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
86	99	34	474	169	11	6,577	226

	KUSASI AREA (1936)						
ean	Zebilla					Total 5 compounds	Mean
	I	II	III	IV	V		
2.4	–	–	–	2	–	2	.4
.5	–	–	–	2	2	4	.8
.1	–	–	–	10	2	12	2.4
.5	–	12	–	4	4	20	4
.9	4	10	6	5	15	40	8
.9	4	10	–	–	9	23	4.75
	–	–	–	–	1	1	.2
36	8	276	6	317	136	743	148

LIVESTOCK OWNED BY 54 COMPOUNDS IN NORTH MAMPRUSI

	Total	Mean
Horses	2	–
Cattle	105	1.9
Donkeys	26	.5
Sheep	183	3.4
Goats	235	6.2
Fowls	567	10.5
Guinea fowls ...	359	6.6
Units ...	12,036	223

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APPENDIX III.

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List of crops more commonly grown in North Mamprusi with their botanic and local native names.

Crop	Nankani	Kassena	Builsa
Early millet (Pennisetum typhoides, var.)	Nara	Chara	Nara
Late millet (Pennisetum typhoides, var.)	Zia	Mumpuana	Zia
Guinea corn (Sorghum vulgare) ...	Tchee*	Yara	Zamonta
Maize (Zea mays)	Kañana	Kamana	Tumbena
Rice (Oryza sativa)	Mui	Mumulinga	Mua
Groundnuts (Arachis hypogea) ...	Sunkpam	Sunoga	Sunkpa
Bambarra beans (Voandzeia subterranea)	Suma	Sisonu	Suma
Geocarpa beans (Kerstingiella geocarpa)	Sumperga	—	Sulumperg
Cowpeas (Vigna spp.)	Tia	Suona	Tua
Yams (Dioscorea spp.)	Nyuya	Pia	Nyuya
Sweet potatoes (Ipomoea batatus) ...	Nyimbemto	Nanuri	Nambanura
Coleus potatoes (Coleus dysentericus) ...	Pearsa	Yia	Pisa
Cassava (Manihot utilissima)	Banchi	Manchi	Banchib
Okra (Hibiscus esculentus)	Ma-ana	Ma-ana	Ma-ana
Hibiscus (short) (Hibiscus sabdariffa)...	Bito	Puora	Suri
Hibiscus (long) (Hibiscus cannabinus)...	Bersi	Kasoga	Kasoga
Soup plant (Gynandropsis pentaphylla)	Nangina	Kalema	Karabacho
Neri (Cucumis melo)	Sama	Yakoro	Bura
Calabash (Lagenaria vulgaris)	Tungu	Zonga	Chin
Calabash (bottle shaped) (Lagenaria vulgaris)	Linka	Konkolu	—
Pumpkin (Curcubita pepo)	Yogari	—	—
Bungu (Ceratotheca sesamoides) ...	Suri	Suru	Boarta
Sesame (Sesamum indicum)	Sasam	Buum	Bunsiug

*Note.—Tchea is also used as a general term for cereals, rather in the same way that we use the word "corn."

[p. 74 is blank]

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APPENDIX IV.

MEAN YIELDS FROM EXPERIMENTS.

ROTATIONS.

Table *1.*—Rotation Experiment, Sabiya.

,, *2.*—8 acre Unit Holding Experiment, Navrongo.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENTS.

Table *3.*—Ridge cultivation v. Native method at Goragu.

,, *4.*—Ridge cultivation v. Flat cultivation v. Native method at Yekeni.

,, *5.*—Ridge v. Flat v. Native at Zuarungu.

,, *6.*—Ransomes M.S.N. plough v. Native method at Zuarungu.

,, *7.*—Ransomes "Victory" plough v. Native method at Zuarungu.

MANURING EXPERIMENTS.

Table *8.*—Analysis of Manures used at Zuarungu in 1936—Native compost, "Indore" compost, and farmyard manure.

,, *9.*—Manurial Trial on sweet potatoes and residual values, Navrongo.

,, *10.*—Manurial Trial on Coleus potatoes, Navrongo.

,, *11.*—Manurial Trial on Cereals, Navrongo.

,, *12.*—"Indore" compost v. "Native", Zuarungu.

,, *13.*—"Indore" compost v. Farmyard manure, Zuarungu.

ROOT CROPS.

Table *14.*—Yam Variety Trials, Navrongo.

,, *15.*—Yam Variety Trials, Yekeni.

,, *16.*—Sweet Potato Variety Trials.

MISCELLANEOUS TRIALS.

Table *17.*—Groundnut Variety Trials, Zuarungu.

,, *18.*—Rice Variety Trials, Zuarungu.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 1.

ROTATION EXPERIMENT, SABIYA.

(Exp.: No. 1/34, 1/35, and 1/36.)

654 An experiment started in 1934 to test the best means of developing "bush" land.

Layout.—Latin Square.

Replications.—5.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in lbs. per acre for years 1934, 1935 and 1936.

Cropping	1934	1935	1936
A—Yams	3,124 lbs. tubers	860 lbs.	failed
A—millet	(not planted)	—	306 lbs. grain
B*—Early millet	failed	123 lbs.	240
B*—guinea corn	87 lbs. grain	122	failed (locusts)
C—Early millet	failed	100 lbs.	78
C—late millet	257 lbs.	178 lbs.	238
D—Early millet	failed	99 lbs.	36
D—groundnuts	164 lbs.	307 lbs.	323
N**—(Native method)			
Early millet	—	42	—
late millet	—	131	—
alternated with			
Early millet	failed		16
guinea corn	54	—	failed (locusts)

*Manured at rate of 2 tons per acre in 1935 and 1936. No manure applied in 1934.

**Native method. This is not exactly what a native would do since no early millet is planted in 'bush' farms.

Note.—Failures are due mainly to the ravages of pests. So far yields do not give a true picture of the condition of this experiment. It is too early to draw any conclusions from this experiment.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 2.

8 ACRE UNIT HOLDING EXPERIMENT, NAVRONGO.

(Exp.: No. 2/35, and 2/36.)

Mean yields per acre from 4 fields each of two acres, worked by one man, his wife and a boy, as a mixed farm unit, with two working bullocks, a ridging plough and cultivator.

Cropping	1935		1936	
	Field	Yield	Field	Yield
Yams (½ acre)	C	17.6 cwts.	B	31 cwts.
Sweet potatoes (1 acre)		49.7 ,,		20.3 ,,
Coleus potatoes (¼ acre)...		26.5 ,,		10.8 ,,
Cassava (¼ acre)		—		120 ,,
Early millet*	D	36 lbs.	C	86 lbs.
guinea corn		215 ,,		331 ,,
cowpeas		20 ,,		103 ,,
Early millet	A	45 lbs.	D	42 lbs.
late millet		288 ,,		73 ,,
cowpeas		12 ,,		52 ,,
Early millet (½ acre)	B	107 lbs.	A	failed
groundnuts		115 ,,		442 lbs.
Early millet		failed		failed
Bengal beans		no weights		12½ cwts. hay

*Manured 2 tons dung per acre. Farmyard manure available for 1937 season.

Conclusion.

A man and his wife with the assistance of a small boy can farm fairly easily 8 acres cropped as above. Experience may suggest desirable modifications.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 3.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN THE HEADMAN OF GORAGU'S COMPOUND FARM.

(Exp. : Nos. 7/34, 5/35, and 4/36.)

Treatments.—2. To test cultivation before planting on 3′ ridges against native practice.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—11.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields per acre of grain.

Season	Cropping	Native	Ridged
1934	Early millet	535	980
	guinea corn	66	108
1935	Early millet	660	1,048
	guinea corn	29	472
1936	Early millet	897	1,276
	guinea corn	183	500
Combined grain yield from 1 acre in three years ...		2,370 lbs.	4,384 lbs.

Note.—Cultivations in 1934 and 1935 were done by hand. In 1936 with DY ridging plough. Differences definitely statistically significant in each year.

Conclusion.

There can be no doubt whatever as to the value of ridging under the conditions of this trial. Goragu lies at the foot of the Tong Hills on the North side between Tongo and Shia.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 4.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN THE COMPOUND FARM OF THE HEADMAN OF YEKENI.

(Exp.: Nos. 8/34, 6/35, and 5/36.)

Treatments.—3. To test cultivation before planting on 3′ ridges, in rows 3′ apart on the flat, against control, native practice.

Mean yields in lbs. of grain per acre.

Year	Cropping	Native	Ridged	Flat
1934	Early millet	17	87	—
	guinea corn	321	270	—
1935	Early millet	219	271	214
	guinea corn	100	145	198
1936	Early millet	305	420	376
	late millet	133	140	144

Note.—Cultivations in 1934 and 1935 done by hand. In 1936 with animal cultivation.

Conclusion.

Definite advantage in favour of cultivation before planting. No difference between ridge and flat. Manuring would probably have an effect. All yields are poor.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 5.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT ON THE EXPERIMENT AREA AT ZUARUNGU.

(Exp.: Nos. 6/34, 7/35, and 6/36.)

Treatments.—3. To test cultivation before planting on 3′ ridges, in rows 3′ apart on flat against native method.

Layout.—Chessboard.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Replications.—9.

Mean yields per acre.

Year	Cropping	Control Native	Ridged	Flat
1934	Early millet	63	87	149
	guinea corn	267	241	581
1935	Early millet	150	332	256
	guinea corn	15	36	29
1936	Early millet	156	189	248
	late millet	178	231	292

Conclusion.

Yields are very low and can be accepted only with caution. The balance appears to be in favour of ridging if all factors are taken into consideration—ease of planting and intercultivation, etc.

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 6.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN COMPOUND FARM OF ADACHAMA, ZUARUNGU (1936).

(Exp. : No. 7/36.)

Treatments.—2. To test cultivation with Ransomes M.S.N. single furrow plough before planting, against Native practice.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—5.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in grain per acre.

Cropping	Control Native	Ploughed
Early millet	268 lbs.	286 lbs.
late millet	586 „	682 „
cowpeas	49 „	44 „

Conclusion.

Taking the small number of replications into consideration the difference in yield is only barely significant $\left(\frac{\text{Md}}{\text{s.e.}} = 2.5\right)$. The value of the work was in the ease of cultivation and the cleanliness of the ground in the early stages.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 7.

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CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN COMPOUND FARM OF ABAGNA, ZUARUNGU (1936).

(Exp. : No. 8/36.)

Treatments.—2. To test cultivation with Ransomes "Victory" plough (single furrow) before planting, against native method.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—5.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in grain per acre.

Cropping	Control Native	Ploughed
Early millet	321 lbs.	401 lbs.
late millet	283 ,,	336 ,,
cowpeas	137 ,,	132 ,,
neri	59 ,,	64 ,,

Conclusion.

These differences did not prove statistically significant but as in Experiment 7/36, ploughing effected a great saving of labour at a critical season.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 8.

ANALYSES OF MANURES USED AT ZUARUNGU IN 1936.

(Analyses carried out by the Agricultural Chemist, Mr. M. Greenwood.)

(Analyses on air dried, fine samples.)

	Native Compost	Zuarungu-made	
		" Indore " Compost	Farmyard Manure
Moisture	3.8	6.2	6.6
Insol. ash	78.8	77.2	67.9
Sol. ash	6.1	6.4	7.4
Loss on ignition	11.3	10.2	18.1
Nitrogen (including nitrates)	.47	.61	.68
P O...	.36	.32	.71
K O	.79	.34	1.13

Note.—The analyses show values on the low side. Those for " Indore " compost and farmyard manure are comparable with published Indian figures.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 9.

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MANURIAL TRIAL UPON SWEET POTATOES AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, AND THE RESIDUAL MANURIAL EFFECT UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 9/34, 9/35, 12/36.)

To test 4 tons of manure (leached-out cattle dung from Native Administration kraal) against control, "no manure".

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields per acre in lbs.

Year	Crop	Control no manure	Manured 1934 4 tons per acre
1934	Sweet potatoes	2,308 lbs. tubers	3,491 lbs
1935	Early millet ... ... guinea corn	28 lbs. grain 357 „ „	60 lbs. 494 „
1936	Early millet ... ... late millet	47 lbs. grain 173 „ „	68 lbs. 191 „

Conclusion.

Although yields are low, all differences proved statistically significant. There is a definite residual manurial value remaining in the third season after application. Some other factor, other than manuring, requires attention—probably cultivation. The land is badly out of condition.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 10.

MANURIAL TRIAL UPON COLEUS POTATOES AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, AND THE RESIDUAL MANURIAL EFFECT UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp. : Nos. 10/34, 10/35, and 13/36.)

To test 4 tons of manure per acre (leached-out cattle dung from Native Administration kraal) against control, no manure.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in lbs. per acre.

Year	Crop	Control no manure	Manured 1934 4 tons per acre
1934	Coleus potatoes	500 lbs. tubers	784 lbs. tubers
1935	Early millet ... ... guinea corn	21 lbs. grain 192 ,, ,,	115 lbs. grain 465 ,, ,,
1936	Early millet ... ... late millet	44 lbs. grain 133 ,, ,,	64 lbs. grain 248 ,, ,,

Conclusion.

Although yields are low all differences proved statistically significant. See remarks, Table 9.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 11.

654

MANURIAL TRIALS UPON MIXED CEREALS AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, AND THE RESIDUAL MANURIAL EFFECTS UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 11/34, 11/35, and 14/36.)

To test the effects of 4 tons of manure per acre and 2 tons of manure per acre (leached-out cattle dung from the Native Administration kraal at Navrongo) against control, no manure.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—4.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields of grain in lbs. per acre.

Year	Cropping	Control no manure	2 tons manure 1934	4 tons manure 1934
1934	Early millet	14	71	91
	guinea corn	83	211	296
1935	Early millet	10	23	26
	late millet	189	211	336
1936	Early millet	63	93	104
	guinea corn	140	145	227

Conclusion.

The initial level of fertility was too low and the number of replications was insufficient to give us more than an indication of response to manure and residual manurial values. See note, Table 9.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 12.

MANURIAL TRIAL AT ZUARUNGU IN 1936 TO TEST "INDORE" COMPOST, AND NATIVE COMPOST AGAINST NO MANURE.

654

(Exp.: No. 10/36.)

Treatments.—3. 2 tons of "Indore" compost,
2 tons of Native compost,
no manure, control.

Layout.—Strip method.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Replications.—7.

Mean yield of grain per acre.

Crops planted	No manure	"Indore" compost 2 tons per acre	Native compost 2 tons per acre
Early millet	165	292	373
guinea corn	75	132	108

Conclusion.

All differences proved to be statistically significant. Under the conditions of the trial—typical of some of the poorest land around Zuarungu—the value of such small dressings of manure as 2 tons per acre is definite. It should be noted that whilst weight for weight native compost proved significantly better than Indore compost, a very much greater bulk of manure can be produced by the Indore process from a given head of stock than by the native method. This is important, since it is the gross yield which counts in practice.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 13.

MANURIAL EXPERIMENT AT ZUARUNGU IN 1936 TO TEST THE EFFECTS OF "INDORE" COMPOST AND FARMYARD MANURE UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1936, AND THE RESIDUAL EFFECTS UPON SWEET POTATOES IN 1937.

Treatments.—3. "Indore" compost 2 tons per acre.
Farmyard manure 2 tons per acre.
Control, no manure.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yield in lbs. of grain per acre.

Crop	Control No manure	"Indore" compost 2 tons per acre	Farmyard manure 2 tons per acre
Early millet	104 lbs.	207 lbs.	185 lbs.
guinea corn	92 ,,	138 ,,	150 ,,

Conclusion.

The increase in favour of manure over no manure proved to be definitely significant, but not the difference between manures. Again it must be emphasised how much lower these yields are than district means. The site of the experiment was newly acquired. Neighbouring farmers expressed surprise not at the lowness of the yields but that we got a yield at all. It is doubtful whether any residual value remains.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 14.

YAM VARIETY TRIALS AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, 1935, AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 3/34, 3/35, and 15/36.)

To test nine Dagomba varieties of yam. Yams were planted in mounds made 5′ x 5′, a row with each variety in series. Individual mound weights were taken at harvest and the following table shows the mean weight per bearing mound for the three years of trial.

Variety	Mean weight of tubers per bearing mound		
	1934	1935	1936
Kuki	2.3 lbs.	1.55 lbs.	4.20 lbs.
Dapam	2.8 „	1.53 „	2.05 „
Labaco	2.3 „	1.04 „	2.75 „
Puno	1.9 „	1.70 „	2.97 „
Fugra	1.9 „	1.68 „	2.50 „
Zilambo	1.8 „	1.68 „	2.36 „
Peringa	1.6 „	1.14 „	1.81 „
Lili	1.4 „	1.07 „	2.24 „
Chenchito	1.2 „	—	—
Mean for all varieties ...	1.9 „	1.64 „	2.67 „
Bearing mounds	335	1,022	652
Percentage bearing ...	83%	67%	78%

Conclusion.

Kuki appears to be the best variety we have found up to date.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 15.

YAM VARIETY TRIALS AT YEKENI IN 1934, 1935, AND 1936.

(Exp. : Nos. 4/34, 4/35, and 16/36.)

To test nine Dagomba varieties of yam. Yam were planted in mounds 5′ x 5′, a row with each variety. Individual mound weights were taken at harvest. The following table shows the mean yields per bearing mound obtained for each year of trial.

Variety	Mean weight of fresh tubers per bearing mound		
	1934	1935	1936
Kuki	4.3 lbs.	3.30 lbs.	2.57 lbs.
Dapam	2.6 „	—	2.30 „
Labaco	2.4 „	—	—
Puno	3.1 „	3.90 „	2.13 „
Fugra	3.2 „	1.15 „	—
Zilambo	2.9 „	2.80 „	2.11 „
Peringa	2.8 „	—	—
Lili	3.0 „	2.60 „	2.09 „
Chinchito	1.9 „	—	—
Mean weight for all varieties	2.9 „	3.02 „	2.23 „
No. bearing mounds ...	301	141	116
Percentage bearing ...	71%	70%	46%*

*32% of seed yams were stolen two weeks after planting.

Conclusion.

The varieties Kuki, Puno, and Dapam appear to be the best. Yields are too low to warrant extensive extension.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 16.

VARIETY YIELD TRIALS OF SWEET POTATOES AT ZUARUNGU AND NAVRONGO IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 17/35, 19/35, 19/36, 20/36.)

To test three local varieties of sweet potatoes:—

Nanuri-sunga, entire leaves, red stem, red tuber.
Nanuri-punga, entire leaves, white tuber.
Nanuri-yadaga, indented leaves, white tuber.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre at Zuarungu.
1/20th acre at Navrongo.

Summary of mean yields in cwts. per acre.

Variety	Zuarungu		Navrongo	
	1935	1936	1935	1936
Nanuri-sunga	30 cwts.	14 cwts.	63¼ cwts.	7½ cwts.
Nanuri-punga	40 „	32½ „	42¾ „	24 „
Nanuri-yadaga	43 „	34½ „	40½ „	34 „

Conclusion.

Difficulty has been experienced in each year in obtaining sufficient planting material. Nanuri-sunga is the least vigorous of the three varieties and suffered most, except in 1935 at Navrongo. The reason for the comparatively high yield in that year is not understood.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 17.

GROUNDNUT VARIETY TRIALS AT ZUARUNGU IN 1934, 1935, AND 1936.

(Exp. : Nos. 13/34, 20/35, and 21/36.)

To test the relative merits of an upright (bunch) type of groundnut from Nigeria against the local procumbent variety. It was considered that a bunch variety would prove more suitable for work with animal drawn implements.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—11 (only 6 in 1934).

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Mean yields in lbs. per acre (dry in shell.)

Year	Method of Planting	Local Procumbent	Nigerian Bunch
1934	Flat 9"×9"	784	1,043
	Flat 18"×18"	936	744
1935	Flat 2'×1'	810	998
	Ridge 2'×1'	788	835
1936	Flat 1'×9"	1,075	1,174

Conclusion.

Although the differences are not statistically significant, the balance goes in favour of the bunch variety if for no other reason than the ease of harvesting. In 1936 the labour required to harvest the Nigerian groundnut was 30% less than for the local.

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 18. 654

RICE VARIETY TRIALS AT ZUARUNGU.

To test the following varieties:—

Tamale Black Selection.
Tamale Yellow ,,
Essiama NZ2 ,,
Essiama NZ4 ,,

1934. Single observation plots of ½ acre were put down in 1934.

1935. Statistical layout was adopted.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—5.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

1936. Tamale Yellow, which had proved most satisfactory was tested against Local.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—10.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Mean yields of paddy per acre are given below.

Variety	1934	1935	1936	Straw 1936
Tamale Black	1,463	1,605	—	—
Tamale Yellow	1,747	1,589	1,411	5,900 lbs.
Essiama NZ2	1,822	1,067	—	—
Essiama NZ4	1,742	912	—	—
Local	—	—	1,089	5,856 ,,

Conclusion.

The high return of grain and straw from rice locally and the comparative ease of cultivation with bullock drawn implements, makes rice a particularly desirable crop for the mixed farmer to grow.

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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VOLUME 38

MENASHA, WISCONSIN, U. S. A.

PUBLISHED BY

THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

1936

[title page]

RITUAL FESTIVALS AND SOCIAL COHESION IN THE HINTERLAND OF THE GOLD COAST

By M. FORTES

SOCIAL cohesion, or some equivalent concept, has gained an honorable place in anthropological literature as a labor saving-device. To an ethnographer working with an Australian horde, a nomadic Beduin tribe, or even a people with a strong centralized government, it may seem a self-evident concept; a first law of social life like Newton's first law of motion, by which everything else can be explained. In the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, however, there is nothing self-evident about it. In the limited area north of the White Volta and east of 1° W. long. we find a congeries of peoples speaking different dialects of the Mossi-Dagomba language family with an ostensibly uniform culture, but lacking a centralized political organization. There are no villages in this country, but for miles and miles, continuously, one mud compound follows on another. There is often nothing to mark the boundary between one settlement and another, nor can exact frontiers between dialect areas be established. A short ethnographic residence in the country shows that a notion of a fixed and demarcated tribal unit, either as a linguistic grouping or as a political grouping owing a common allegiance, does not exist. There seems, in fact, to be no structural unit larger than the clan-settlement capable of exhibiting social cohesion.

The observations presented here[1] refer to the small corner of this area occupied by the Tale settlements. The Tallensi are well-known to their neighbors for the ritual festivals which they celebrate. These festivals occur between the cessation of the rainy season in September and the commencement of the next rainy season in April. In this paper I shall deal only with a single facet of the festivals, their significance as a mechanism of social cohesion. To appreciate this, some knowledge, however over-simplified, of Tale social and political structure is necessary.

The Tallensi, being anciently settled agriculturalists, are inexorably bound to place. Local group and kinship group tend to be coterminous, hence the social classification of people is primarily in terms of the settlements. Intra-clan social relationships are of a uniform type all over the country. Relations between settlements, that is political relations, however, are of a different order. In keeping with the dominant trend of Tale social life towards decentralization and divergence, rather than centralization and convergence, every clan puts an egocentric interpretation upon its relations with other clans. These interpretations are compounded of prejudice, conventional opinions, traditional attitudes, and personal values; but they conform to a pattern nevertheless. Lacking a central machinery of government and a common allegiance, the Tale settlements have no permanent political relations with one another. Even the Administration has been able to impose only a limited and superficial degree of coördination. Traditionally and to this day the heads of clans coöperate in certain contingencies or in certain periodically recurrent ritual situations only. For the rest local autonomy is absolute. The upshot is that the political relations of the Tallensi are a sum of the political relations of each settlement with its neighbors. This means first, that geography is an important factor in their politics, and second, that rigid political frontiers do not exist. 621

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[1] The present paper is based on material collected during a field expedition carried out in 1934–35 under the auspices of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

A glance at the political geography of the clans with which the present paper is mainly concerned is therefore essential. 618

These Tale settlements fall into two major groups. On the one hand are the clans known as the Namoos, on the other the Tallis clans. The principal settlement of the Namoos is at Tongo, which was founded, according to the tradition stereotyped throughout Taleland, by Mosur, who fled thither from the Mampuru country in the south, probably over two centuries ago. Mosur was the ancestor of all the people of Tongo and of several settlements colonized from there. Later immigrants from Mampuru established co-clans of Tongo.

The Tallis (i.e. the "real Tallensi") can be subdivided into two groups, those living north of Tongo, the principal settlement of whom is at Baari; and those living on and around the Tong Hills, whom I call the Hill Tallis. The Gbizug lineage is in a special category, as we shall see. Tallis traditions attribute diverse origins to their clans. Four clans, including Baari, Gbizug, and Wakyi, claim primacy of rank in virtue of the fact that their ancestors emerged from the earth or descended from heaven, and were there when Mosur arrived. The other clans are offshoots of these, or of immigrant origin. The Tallis have an ingenious system of clan concatenation, based on a fiction of kinship. Broadly speaking, every lineage of every clan is linked to a lineage of every neighboring Tallis clan by a fiction of half-brotherhood which binds them to reciprocity of certain privileges and obligations, prohibits intermarriage, and especially unites them in a common religious cult. The Namoos clans conform in all respects to the classical definition of a clan; the others must be designated thus for brevity's sake and for want of a term which will convey how they deviate from the prototype.

184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

621 622 793 Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

784 184 Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784
agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again 184
may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth
is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are
traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the
Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance
of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective commu-
nities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425]
over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows,
dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious
practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778]
(tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a
group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186
political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and
Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764
vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every
funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at
the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism
is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group supercili-
ously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are
his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793
barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunc-
tion. The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. 622
Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

793 622 [789] the prosperity of the land. Though it is housed in his compound, neither the Chief nor any of his clansmen may set eyes on it; only the Gbizug Tendaana and his lineage may. The Chief speaks of it with an awe which is almost terror. The balance is adjusted by the Chief's rainmaking powers. Only Namoos may own rain medicine, which was brought to Taleland by their ancestor. When drought is prolonged, all the Tendaanas, led by the Gbizug Tendaana, formally call upon and implore the Chief to see to it that rain falls. So great is his rainmaking power that rain will fall at once if he merely declares, in the name of his ancestors, that their wishes will be satisfied. Such, in fact, proved to be the case in 1934.

Again, this ritual polarity is paralleled in social and personal attitudes. The Chief and the Gbizug Tendaana, in private conversation, comment with a mixture of pride, scorn, and fear each upon his opposite number.

796 Among the most striking mechanisms of this equilibrium are the ritual festivals. The various settlements are always classified in terms of them, and the natives never tire of dilating enthusiastically upon them.

Ritual and dance are the two components of every festival; the former usually esoteric, the latter public though exclusive. During the rainy season, which lasts roughly from April to September, ritual and group activities are almost completely ousted by agriculture. In July-August the early millet is harvested, but the major crops, the guinea corn and late millet, [805] still stand.[2] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, and the last month of the rains is called the "Moon of Waters" (Kuom ŋmarig). An ethnologist cannot, alas, be in two places at the same time. I was living among the Namoos in September, 1934, and shall therefore describe the events of this and the next month from their point of view.

Weeks in advance the approaching festivals are the dominant theme of conversation for man, woman, and child. The ceremonial cycle is inaugurated by the Baari Tendaana, who ritually "throws away the water," i.e. abolishes the rains on the first day of the new month. This is announced by a burst of hallooing, which commences at Baari and sweeps across the country, the signal that the festivals have come round again.

That night the people of Baari begin their celebrations. At Tongo, on the next day, the youths and maidens are putting finishing touches to their festive costumes. On the fourth day of the moon a deputation of elders waits on the Chief, to remind him of his traditional obligation to summon a diviner on the following day.

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[2] The calendrical incidence of the ritual festivals and their relation to the annual productive cycle are more fully set out in M. and S. L. Fortes, Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi (Africa, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1936).

From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have 787 selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival 796 is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: [778 a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. 534] Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into 796 abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest, 535 until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." 796 It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effervescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which [578] threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement, planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo [784] against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. 796 Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festival, 535 and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ mɛŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

796 535 tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingauŋ incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

[533 578] A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like [292] masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

796 [784] And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingauŋ, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Gɔlib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

Daa (the supreme bɔɣ[illegible] [illegible]ari people) and Mosur will jointly prosper the land. 796 Then he [illegible]. That day Baari celebrates Daa.

That same evening the large Gingauŋ drum is escorted to Baari by the 796 Gbizug Tendaana and the Wakyi Tendaana, following a ritual path. All Tongo flocks to Baari to dance with great enthusiasm on a traditional spot 535 outside the grove of Baat Daa. Near the dance, but silently aloof, wait the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas. A few hundred yards away, as if indifferent to the dance, young men of Baari assemble, wearing their ritual garb, a goatskin. When the Baari Tendaana and his ritual coadjutors arrive to join them, the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas are summoned. Greetings are exchanged, and then led by the Baari Tendaana, the whole company files away in a most solemn and silent procession, brought up by the youngest members carrying pots of consecrated beer. With utter gravity this procession thrice encircles the dancers who continue to dance as if oblivious to this. Anyone who dares to break through the encircling procession [784] is doomed to a supernatural death. The procession files away again, into the sacred grove. There the Tendaanas pour libations of beer to Baat Daa, calling down the very same blessings as had been invoked by the Chief earlier in the day. They drink the beer and send a small pot out to the representative of the Chief, who is among the dancers. Now the Tendaanas' procession emerges, again solemnly encircles the dancers, and files away. At a tree which marks the path to Tongo they stop, and marching round it in a circle, chant a song the burden of which is Mosur boot kuliga ("Mosur wants to go home"). Upon this signal the allusion of which is obvious to all, the dance breaks up, the ritual is over.

That finishes the Gingauŋ dance for a year. The next three days at 796 Tongo are given over to the gayest festivities of the season, the celebration of Daa. This is a New Year's festival, a fitting conclusion to the dancing season. Dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, the whole of Tongo assembles at the Chief's compound on the day after the rites at Baari. From far and near, Tongo women who have married away return to their [574] homes, many bearing gifts of special food from their husbands. The Chief's house throngs with his people and strangers. His elders bring him presents of guinea fowls and he, sitting in state, has a bullock slaughtered, part of which he shares amongst them. The Chief, it is true, gets the better part of this exchange of gifts, but good form is satisfied. The afternoon is devoted to light-hearted dancing in praise of the Chief.

The Gbizug Tendaana has also celebrated Daa, but very quietly. That 796 evening, however, Chief and Tendaana meet in ceremonial. The scene is 778 the dancing ground. This is a dedicated area which may not be cultivated.

796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 514 782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos [784] have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

182 518 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate 182
and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of 578
the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the 796
following moon, Bɔɣaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival
of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival 778
translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. 769
Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔɣar, after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔɣar may be a grove of trees, a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders. It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔɣar's communicants generally comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔɣar cult is built up on the notion of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔɣar. The bɔɣar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral, like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I 778
had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The
Namoos know the dates of Bɔɣaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they 881
had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted by the bɔɣar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔɣaraam ritual is at the same time communion, initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔɣar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔɣaraam on 796

796 successive days, starting from the first day of the moon. The order of entry is fixed by tradition, and claims to precedence in rank are based in part on this. But preliminary sacrifices, consultations of diviners, collection of the chickens and guinea fowls which will be required, and finally ritual preparation of beer, usher in the festival. From the "Moon of Waters" on, every head of a joint family must eat out of special vessels, lest his food or water be contaminated by the newly harvested guinea corn flour, ground beans, or ocra. None of these foods are prohibited to women and younger members of the family. The taboo depends not upon some notions of the magical danger of eating unconsecrated first fruits, but upon the relationship of the communicants to the bɔɣar, who has the prerogative of tasting them first.

796 881 I can not describe the esoteric rites of Bɔɣaraam in detail. The main events take place during one night and the next day. The initiand youths, selected simply by the fact that their fathers can afford the numerous fowls and guinea fowls and the beer necessary for the rites, are pounced upon at night, undressed, and segregated throughout the rites. The communicants wear skins, the ritual garb of the Tallis. Women and uninitiated boys are rigorously excluded from earshot. Each elder brings fowls, guinea fowls, guinea corn flour, and cooked ground beans, and sacrifices are made in great numbers both at the houses of the Tendaanas and inside the bɔɣar. The ancestors are called upon and the bɔɣar is invoked. "Your day has come round again. We are about to eat the new guinea corn. Hence we bring you this offering of guinea corn and beans and these, your bɔɣaraam chickens. Grant us untroubled sleeping. May our wives bear children, and may we sow early millet successfully and meet again next year." This is the theme of the sacrificial invocations. Every chicken thus slaughtered is observed with concentrated anxiety. It must come to rest on its back, else the doner has sinned in some way and must at once go to a diviner to discover how. For the initiands long life, success in marriage and in farming, and safety from enemies is begged. It is a very serious thing if an initiand's fowl is rejected by the ancestors; and all proceedings are suspended until the sin is traced and atonement made.

The ritual is sensationally dramatic, and entirely different in style and emphasis from Namoos ritual. There is a constant interweaving of the three motifs, of communion, initiation, and first fruit offerings. The tone fluctuates between intense and almost terrified ritual participation and casual conviviality, when the beer is being divided.

The bɔɣar is first entered mysteriously in pitch darkness; but the "high spot" is what might be called the administration of the sacrament to the

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, 796
like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to
the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881
initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar.
Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of
one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough
stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If [784]
I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of
the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796
home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who
have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574
follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535
Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social
interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may
not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171
with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its
calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and 796
elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of responsibility 182
for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of
lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of
jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion
in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual
of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special
emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182
festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand
it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by
the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

182 even to the date of its festival, each community celebrates its release from the hazards of the past year and especially of the food-growing season, and fortifies itself by magical and religious techniques for another year. Nothing could more strikingly demonstrate the factors of dichotomy and antagonism in the polarity which we saw previously to be fundamental to Tale political structure than the difference between the rites of the Hill Tallis and those of the Namoos. It is true that every Tale ceremonial activity expresses the exclusiveness of the group performing it; but in these festivals the expression of difference has a political validity because it is reciprocal. The difference is published in the dance and dramatized in esoteric ritual.

But Namoos and Tallis are culturally equivalent communities, dwelling in close juxtaposition, having intimate economic and social relationships with each other. This, it seems to me, sets a limit to the degree of antagonistic differentiation tolerable; and thus the other factor in the polarity of Tale society comes into existence—the equilibrium between the two communities. The very opposition, as it were, engenders dependence. This aspect of Namoos-Tallis relations comes out clearly in the ceremony at Baari, in the visits of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief, and in the ritual reenacting of the Chief's induction at Tongo. It is notable how these rituals vividly insulate each group from the other, while at the same time uniting them in common responsibility for the welfare of the country.

182 796 The same compulsion to coöperate in the magical safeguarding of the land and the people obtains between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis. It is expressed in the Gɔlib festival, which unfortunately space does not permit me to describe fully. The purpose of this festival, which occurs in the last month of the dry season, is to ensure a successful sowing and harvesting of early millet and to call down the blessing of fertility in general. In it all the clans of the Hill Tallis collaborate ritually and unite to dance together. In their ritual collaboration the distribution of offices and sacred apparatus among the several clans is so remarkably equal that each one of them can claim with ostensibly full justification to be more important than [578] the others. It so happens that a bitter personal feud is at present raging between one of these officiants, on the one hand, and the Chief of Tongo and another of the Gɔlib officiants, on the other. But none of them could escape his obligation to coöperate with his enemy in the appropriate ceremonial situations. Here, perhaps, is a clue to the problem of why ritual forms and religious situations should be the institutional media selected for the expression of the equilibrium in Tale society. They have a compulsive power which a pragmatic institution orientated to the demands of the objective world could never have.

Gɔlib is a dangerous month, during which both Namoos and Tallis are 182
subject to numerous taboos, mainly aimed at averting quarrels and strife 796
at the dances and in everyday relations between the groups. It is forbidden
to shed blood on the earth, lest supernatural death overtake one, to take 784
a wife, to carry out the final ceremonies connected with delayed funeral
rites, to wear cloth garments in any of the Hill Tallis settlements, and so
forth. Marriages are the cause of most inter-group litigation, and funeral [578]
ceremonies represent social situations in which large numbers of people from different settlements congregate and often give rise to disputes. Throughout, the Namoos are spectators of the dancing and excluded from the ritual. But on two occasions they meet the Hill Tallis in ceremonial interaction. In the inaugural rites the Hill Tallis, led by their Tendaanas, march to all their sacred groves in succession blowing sacred whistles in honor of them. When they reach the sacred groves which lie in Tongo, every Namoo man, woman, and child hides indoors. A Namoo who sees these rites of the Hill Tallis risks the destruction of his entire home and family by the outraged sacred groves. Once again, therefore, are the Namoos and Tallis mutually insulated or segregated by the symbolism of unchallengeable ritual, the living affirmation of tradition. But there is a ritual reintegration of the groups. The final rite of Gɔlib requires the coöperation of the Chief of Tongo. Again led by their Tendaanas, the Hill Tallis come down to the Chief's house to dance; and there Tendaanas and Chief join together to beg for blessings upon the land, for the safety of the people and the abundance of crops.

To revert to the harvest festivals, the magical and religious value of the 182
ceremonial to the group performing it must not blind us to its socially in-
tegrative functions. The former is mainly determined by the seasonal con- 796
text of the festivals and is evidenced preeminently in commonplace techniques, such as the sacrifice. The latter, which is determined primarily by the context of the social structure, is evidenced in the ceremonies peculiar to the occasion. These differ completely in content, as between Namoos and Tallis, a fact which the natives would explain by citing the historically different origins of the two groups. This suggests the principle common to all the integrative ceremonies. It is the dramatization of the nodal, hence traditionally sanctioned, relationship in the social structure of each group —the Chieftainship at Tongo, the right of access to the bɔɣar among the Tallis. This fundamental bond is resuscitated in both the symbolical and the direct phases of the ceremonies. The Chief and the Gbizug or Baari Tendaana thus reimpose on each other those responsibilities which bind them to a common task; and, by the very same rites, the Chief and his

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

people redefine each the place of the other in a social system the essence of which is the Chieftainship. The Hill Tallis, again, reestablish the responsibility of each initiated man for the preservation of their traditional cult, by imposing it upon the next generation, and thus reaffirm the loyalty of each to the other, and of sons to fathers.

To sum up, social cohesion as I understand this concept, both within and between the major communities which constitute Tale society, is no ultimate attribute of that society, but is achieved by specific social mechanisms such as those I have described. To me its most significant feature appears to be the fact that this integration is engendered as an equilibrium between opposed groups, over-riding, it seems, the tendencies to conflict inherent in the system. It is worthy of note that this principle of a balance of powers is exploited also within each community to overcome the competitive autonomy of its constituent groupings.

Whether only a single general process is involved, accomodation to an immigrant group, is beyond my power to determine. One could presumably envisage the entire pattern of ritual and political values as a "reaction" to the "foreign body" represented by the Namoos clans. It seems not unlikely also that the equilibrium thus achieved is itself the barrier that prevents the diffusion of the esoteric rites of one community to the other.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
LONDON, ENGLAND

MAN

A MONTHLY RECORD OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE

ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

XXIV.

1924

Nos. 1—187.

WITH PLATES A–M.

PUBLISHED BY
THE ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE,
50, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.
General Agent: FRANCIS EDWARDS, 83, High Street, Marylebone, W.1.
New York Agents: Messrs. G. E. STECHERT & Co.

[title page]

Africa, West: Calendar. **Cardinall.**

The Division of the Year among the Talansi of the Gold Coast.

47

By A. W. Cardinall.

805 192 Among the Talansi, a hill tribe of mixed origin living in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, close to the 11th parallel North, the following divisions in the year are recognised. They do not actually correspond to months or moons, but are periods of time or seasons recognisable by all. They depend on the fall of the rain, which is far from being regular :—

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
1. Kodo	December to end January	The cold season—no particular meaning to the word, which is a proper name.

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890 * Beri. The Kanuri-speaking inhabitants of Bornu are called Beriberi by Hausa and other peoples, indicating a former and very ancient connection with the Berber.

805

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
192 2. Gunfuku [174]	February	Gun', gunga—kapok tree. fuku—blowing of the wind. The period when the kapok pods ripen. This is evidence of the Dagomba extraction of this people, since kapok is, undoubtedly, a southern production. Their own tradition says they came from the south as a result of interfamily wars.
3. Gologu [527]	March	This is the name of a festival which takes place shortly after full moon. In 1921 the ceremonial dancing and symbolic planting of corn, which I witnessed by good luck, took place on March 1st. In 1922 about March 13th.
4. Sionbeo	End of March or early April	Time of early planting. Sion—making holes in which to drop the grains. beo—poor. At this time it is not certain if the dry season will not return for a period and so dry up the first shoots.
5. Sionsongo	April and May	The time of good planting. songo—good. This is the proper planting time.
6. Sionyio	Late May and early June	The time of late planting. yio—conveys an idea of doubt. Planting at this time may or may not have a result.
7. Narechag	Late June and early July	Early millet harvest. Nare—early millet. chag'—cut.
8. Nabiri	Late July, mid August	Na'—early millet. biri—small. The time for eating the small ears of early millet, which are not put in the granary owing to their smallness.
9. Komwanrega	August–September	Kom—water. wanreg'—month or moon. The period of heavy rain.

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782]

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

A. W. CARDINALL.

[p. 63]

DEUTSCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN ZU BERLIN
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VERÖFFENTLICHUNG NR. 26

000

AFRIKANISTISCHE STUDIEN

HERAUSGEGEBEN

VON

J. LUKAS

1955

AKADEMIE-VERLAG · BERLIN

[title page]

Names among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast

FORTES, M. MEYER, Cambridge

African languages are still, for the most part, living languages in a unique sense. 000 They exist only in the activity of speech. Everyone who has lived with an African community that lacks the art of writing and has experienced the thrill of learning their language in the daily give-and-take of work and friendship, knows how fresh and spontaneous, one might almost say poetical, such a language seems. One is always being surprised by the discovery of some new aspect or implication of the most commonplace utterance. The contrast with European languages, weighed down as they are by the accumulated deposits of thirty centuries of literacy, can be startling. By endowing language with a separate existence in its own right, literacy can be a barrier between it and the general body of custom. I suppose that is why so much of the vocabulary of a European language is like a hoard of ancient coins, still circulating though defaced and debased in worth beyond recognition. For a primitive African society its language is the very essence of its total body of custom, its breath of life. That is why the language of an African people always seems so graphic and alive for it is daily and hourly nourished by the activities and thoughts, the feelings and beliefs of the people. It is in an African people's language that its culture is most faithfully and fully pictured. This, it seems to me, is the outstanding lesson which we owe to Professor WESTERMANN's deep and devoted scholarship in African languages, history and cultures. It is certainly the lesson his inspired teaching imparted to those who were able, as I fortunately was, to spend a little time with him before going out to the field. And there is one other lesson we owe in no small degree to his studies. It is that African languages are exceedingly rich and subtle.

Nowhere does this appear so vividly as in the proverbs, songs, stories, myths and legends of African peoples, their oral literature, as it has sometimes been called; and here Professor WESTERMANN is surely the arch-connoisseur. A minor element in this aspect of African culture is the theme of my essay.

How one addresses or refers to a person is a matter of great importance in all 121 societies. We know only too well what subtle distinctions lie in the nomenclature of reference and address we use in our own culture. We do not, for example, normally use a person's given name in speaking to or of him unless he is an intimate of ours in some degree. In most African societies the niceties of nomenclature are even more important. As is well known, the terminologies used to distinguish kinsfolk, persons of rank, holders of religious office, and such like, serve not only to designate these persons but also to determine conduct towards them. It must be noted, however, that what these designations do is to put individuals into categories and classes. The individuals themselves are, so to speak, hidden behind the

[p. 337]

mask of chief or priest, or even simply father, uncle, or spouse, for purposes of the situation and the relationship. Yet the individual himself, the common basis of the several offices and ranks and kinship statuses he may exercise, is not thus extinguished. His very existence as an individual, let alone his personality and idiosyncrasies, affects everything in which he plays a part and must therefore receive social recognition. That, no doubt, is the basic reason why every individual, in all human societies, has a name of his own, a given name or names — though not necessarily the same given name all his life. Names may change in accordance with stages in the life cycle as among the Andamanese, or as among some tribes of Sarawak on the birth of the first child and on the death of children[1]). At least, this is how these well known instances are usually represented. But we must be careful. For a teknonym or initiation name may have the function of classifying a person rather than of specifying him individually. It might just as well be called a title as a name. The point is that naming, as a means of identifying the unique individual, shades over into naming as a means of pointing out where and how the individual fits into society; and this is not surprising for the paradox of the individual is that he is unique simply by reason of the specific combination, in his life-space, of experiences in social relationships and situations shared by others and falling on him as a consequence of where he fits into society.

But in Africa names are not just a verbal notation for the different phases or aspects of a person's status and life history. They are symbols deeply charged with meaning derived from the whole culture. We know this also from other cultures both of the past and of contemporary ethnological interest. It has been reported of certain South American tribes that knowledge of a person's secret name may give the knower magical power over him[2]), and similar magical power through names is believed to be possible among many other peoples. Sir James Frazer explained taboos on names by the argument that savages regard their names as a vital part of themselves and therefore to be kept secret lest knowledge of the name give power over the person to some ill-wisher[3]). We remember how, in the Biblical story of the Creation, God brings His creatures to Adam for him to name them, so that their names are coeval with their beginnings, and throughout the Old Testament, as Pedersen shows, "the name is the very peculiarity and power of the soul"[4]).

This notion, though perhaps not quite so metaphysically formulated, would meet with understanding among many African peoples. When, in Ashanti, a man names his son after a beloved friend or after a renowned ancestor, he is tacitly hoping that his son may be like the friend or the ancestor in character and deeds,

as if the name could have a character moulding, — a soul shaping, as he might put it, — effect. Such names, moreover, make up a living record of notable events or persons or achievements in the father's life. 121

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[1]) The most valuable comparative survey of the subject of names and naming in ethnology is still that of Thurnwald, in Max Eberts *Reallexikon d. Vorgeschichte*, 1927, article s. v. Name, Namengebung. On the Sarawak (Kayan-Kenyah-Kelantan) customs referred to, see F. H. Pollard and E. Banks, "Teknonymy and other customs among Kayan, etc." in *Sarawak Museum Journal*, iv, pt. 4, no. 15, 1937. Similar customs are described among Australian aborigines in Dr. Donald F. Thomsons excellent paper on "Names and Naming in the Wik Mongkan Tribe", *J. Royal Anthrop. Inst.* LXXVI, pt. 2, 1946.

[2]) References are in Thurnwald, loc. cit.

[3]) *See The Golden Bough*, abridged edn. ch. 22.

[4]) Johs. Pedersen, *Israel*, I—II, pp. 245. sqq.

It is in this sense, mainly because of what they symbolise and record, that names and naming customs can be said to be part of a people's oral literature. There is no better testimony to this than in one of Professor WESTERMANN's own linguistic explorations, the enchanting life story which he recorded of the Ewe Bonifatius Foli[5]). It will be remembered that the story opens with Foli's explanation of how he came by his name. Had he been born a commoner, he says, he would have been called Kofi, the day name for a male born on Friday. But he was of chiefly descent and so received the corresponding aristocratic name, a name which no commoner would normally bear.

The ethnographical and linguistic writings on Africa abound with examples 551
pertinent to my theme, but I want to illustrate it from my own field work among the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast[6]). All Tallensi are curious and alert in the matter of personal names. Early in my stay among them I once asked a young man what was the point of name giving. This is what he answered: "(The reason) why they give names is that you may know so-and-so and the other one, and know what he looks like; for if they did not confer names on you they would not know you." The name stands for the individual, is part of what marks him out from others. This feeling about the individuality of a name is shown in the delight with which Tallensi meet someone bearing the same name [609]
as themselves. Two persons with the same name call each other "*n-wu'uri*", (my name-sake) and exchange friendly banter.

The Tallensi have a technical term for the giving of a name, *pit wu'uri*, to confer 553
a name; and this term has a cognate which, we shall see, is very revealing, *pɔt wu'uri* to utter or announce a name. Let us consider, first, the giving of names. This is quite a complex matter. I realised this shortly after arriving among the Tallensi, on the occasion of Ma'an-ɔb's funeral. Just before any burial, an elder offers a red cock to the dead with an invocation that he may depart and join his ancestors. I was struck by the fact that the elder, in this case, addressed the dead man as Yin, not as Ma'an-ɔb; and this led to a train of enquiries.

I thus discovered that a person can have, and very commonly does have two 551
given names. One is his *wu'ur-zoo*, his open or everyday name; the other is his *sɛyrɛɛm wu'uri*, his spirit-guardian name. It is the latter name that is invoked at death and on other ritual occasion[illegible] which a person's well being is at issue. It is the name used, for instance, when a person's evil Pre-destiny is exorcised[7]). It is not a secret name. Though it is not usually known outside the circle of his close kin, those who normally share with him in sacrifices to common ancestors of

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[5]) D. WESTERMANN, "Kindheitserinnerung des Togonegers Bonifatius Foli". *Mitt. d. Sem. f. Orient. Sprachen*, XXXIV, iii, 1931.

[6]) I have described much of the life and social organisation of the Tallensi in my two books *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (1945) and *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, (1949).

[7]) For a fuller account of this notion and of the notion of the *sɛyɛr* see op. cit., *The Web of Kinship*, passim. See also R. S. RATTRAY, *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, vol. II. passim.

551 his immediate household, it is willingly told to a *bona fide* enquirer. Nor is it a sacred name to be used, perhaps, only in religious contexts; for, as I have implied, the spirit-guardian name can, and often does serve also as the mundane name. It is, rather, a private name, symbolising a unique relationship of religious dependence and reciprocity between the ward and his ancestors. 551 776 A person's *sɛγər* is the ancestor or ancestress (or sometimes group of ancestors) who keeps spiritual watch over the person's life, as the Tallensi put it. The *sɛγər* is an ancestor mystically located at a particular shrine whose status as an ancestor spirit is quite independent of his relationship with his namesake. Any ancestral shrine can be a *sɛγər* shrine to one or other descendant of the ancestor commemorated. As the guardian of the ward's life the *sɛγər* spirit has to receive sacrifices for and from the ward at certain crises, such as childbirth in the case of a woman, or whenever the spirit demands it; and, as follows logically, the *sɛγər* has to be informed and placated when the ward dies.

553 776 This is an over-simplified outline of what the notion of spirit-guardianship means to the Tallensi but it must suffice. What we are here interested in is how a person comes by his *sɛγəraan* name and what such a name is likely to be. My friend Saγəbazaa summed the matter up. Your *wu'ur-zoo*, he said, is just "thought up" — *i tiih i pooni*; but your *sɛγər* name is a "command from a shrine" — *baγər n-yɛl* — given through a diviner. In conformity with the strong patriarchal character of Tale social organisation it is the right and duty of the father (or of the patrilineal head of his family such as his father or someone in that position if he is still alive) to name his children. It is he — sometimes following a suggestion from a son or brother — who thinks up the everyday name; and it is he, as head of the house, who consults the diviner to find which of the ancestors demands a child as spiritual ward. This demand may come before the child is born, incidentally to a consultation on other matters; or, if the prospective father is anxious, for instance, as often happens with his wife's first born, it may come out in a consultation held some time before the baby is due, mainly in order to find out which ancestors to appeal to for help for the woman in her condition. With later children it may be left for days or even a week or two after the birth of the child. At all events, it is in this consultation that an ancestor (or ancestress) "declares himself" as the new babe's spirit-guardian. It is, on the face of it, not a voluntary choice by the infant's father but a behest which he cannot reject.

Anyhow, having ascertained his child's *sɛγər*, the father now returns home and makes a small offering to the shrine at which the ancestor has declared himself to reside in his role of spirit-guardian. The father may offer no more than a libation of flour stirred up in water (*zəm-koom*) or he may offer a chicken as well. He prays that the ancestor may take good care of his new ward so that he may live long and prosper.

551 776 The child may henceforth be called by his *sɛγəraan* name; but if he also has an open name, he will be known by that. In fact he is in a transitional state, as regards his spirit-guardian. It is a tentative relationship, as yet. The Hill Talis[8]) show this by calling every infant, at this stage, SAMPANA, a term used in no other context

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[8]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

and probably best translated as "Baby". Proper guardianship is later fixed by a 551
special ritual of dedicating the child to its spirit-guardian with a larger sacrifice
of a sheep or a goat or other animal of that standing, which takes place at the first 776
head-shaving of the child, generally when it is two or three years old. By then the child may have a successor in birth order and he will have proved himself to be under good guardianship by virtue of his survival.

But our concern is with the names themselves. What sort of names are these 551
private ones? Some are immediately obvious to anyone who knows the language
and culture of the Tallensi. These are names of particular kinds of ancestor shrines 777
which all men have, or owe homage to, through their family or lineage head. Thus, one of the commonest Tale names is YIN[9]) or some compound of this root. It is the root of the word NAAYIN, literally Chief-God, that is the heavenly god. But more pertinently for the subject of names, it is the name for the shrine and the associated ancestors, powers, and votive objects that together make up the cult focus of what is thought of as the individual's Destiny. The best fortune a *Taləŋa* can have is to have many children; and if he is lucky in this respect it is attributed to the benevolence of his YIN. Thus it happens that some of a man's children are almost always claimed as wards by his YIN ancestors; and a census soon shows that there are few families in which one or more children are not called by the name YIN or a compound of this word. Like all Tale names, it can be borne by both males and females, and is, of course, both the *səyəraan* name and the open name.

Since having children is so often interpreted as a sign of the benevolence of a 551
person's YIN, it is not surprising to find that often a number of a man's children
are the wards of his YIN. If they are all under the guardianship of the YIN "as 776
such" they may all bear the name YIN but with affixes that help to distinguish one child from another. The following is a list of some of the commonest YIN names. They are taken from a list of names found among the children and grandchildren of one old man.

YIN: YIN-DOOG (lit. male Yin); YIM-PƆK (lit. female Yin); YIM-BIL (lit. little Yin); YIN-ZIE (lit. red Yin — because the child was light skinned); YIN-TEE (lit. Yin's tree — referring to one of the votive objects on the shrine); YIN-TEEBIL (lit. little Yintee).

Similar devices are used with other names that may be repeated among several children and grandchildren of one family; for a man's children may be successively given as wards to other ancestor figures than the YIN. Thus another common name that is both a private name and an open name is BƆƔAR and its compounds. Children so named may be the wards of the distant lineage ancestors mystically assembled at the central shrine of the lineage, the *bɔyar*[10]), as it is called. But they are also so named because they are the spiritual wards of one of the Hill Talis "external"

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[9]) Cognate forms, in other dialects, are WUN, WENDE. I have given some account of the YIN concept in my previously mentioned books. YIN is also the name given to the first-born of a pair of twins, "because he is the first to see the heavens above". The second-born is called ZUUR, tail, "because he comes behind the first".

[10]) This is the supreme ancestral shrine of a clan or a lineage. See op. cit. *Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

551 *bɔɣar* centres. This happens when a woman is taken to the "external" *bɔɣar*
because she has no child, in order to supplicate for offspring. When, later, she
776 bears a child, this child is dedicated to the *bɔɣar* as a ward. The name shows this.
In addition, however, each of the Talis "external" *bɔɣar* centres has its own set of names for its wards. These names are used in exactly the same way as the general name Bɔɣar. Both this general name and the particular names are modifiable in the same way as Yin is to distinguish several wards of the same shrine in one family or lineage. So we find the names Bɔɣa-Bil, Bɔɣa-Zie, etc.; or to take a particular name, Tɔŋ, Tan-Doog, Tɔŋ-Pɔk, Tan-Zoo, etc. which are given to children who are wards of the Bunkyiug "external" *bɔɣar*.

This procedure is followed for children who come under the spiritual tutelage of any shrine. For example, Kologo is the name given to a child who is the ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine and Tɔbɔga is the name for a child whose spirit guardian is an ancestor connected with a magical medicine often owned by senior elders; and there are many others. But this mode of naming does not account for all persons who are wards of *yin* or *bɔɣar* or other shrines. Thus, in addition to the Yins, there were, among Tinta'Aləm's children and sons' children, Mɔrbu and Mɔrbil, Bantaŋ and Bantambill, and all of these were the wards of the same *yin* shrine as the Yins.

551 The reason for this is typical. The most important ancestor spirit associated with
Tinta'Aləm's Destiny (*yin*) shrine was that of his own father Mɔrbu. While some
553 of the children were the wards of the *yin* "as such", the two Mɔrbus were speci-
fically claimed as wards by their dead grandfather "sitting at" Tinta'Aləm's *yin*
776 as the Tallensi state it. They were his particular wards, but under his spiritual
oversight through the medium of the *yin*. So they were given his name. Thus many people who have names other than Yin are the wards of ancestors associated with *yin* shrines and their names may be both private and open. The interesting point here is that the name thus given is that of an ancestor who received it not as a private name but as a *wu'ur-zoo*. The original Mɔrbu's *sɛyɔraan* name was Yidaan; but when he in turn became an ancestor it was his open name that was commemorated. This is the common practice, and the reason is obvious. Like the equivalent in European languages, the Tale word *wu'uri* means both "appellation" and "repute" or "renown". Now a person's repute is not a private matter. It is the public esteem in which he is held. He is remembered by his descendants — invariably with pride, whatever his true character might have been — by the public name he was known by. So we have the apparent paradox that it is the private name that carries some element of ritual value but when a person achieves the high status of an ancestor spirit he is commemorated in the shrines dedicated to him and in the names given to his descendants by his open — in this context perhaps we might say his profane —— name. Neighbours, friends and acquaintances of Tinta'Aləm's family, hearing one of the children addressed as Mɔrbu, at once recollect who is being commemorated. They would not associate the name Yidaan with the man who was known to them and their fathers as Mɔrbu.

Again, what applies to a Yin holds for other groupings of ancestors linked to specific ritual vehicles. A person whose spirit guardian is a *bɔɣar* or a *bakologo* may be claimed by one of the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated and

may be given his name; and the same rule applies to all cult groupings of ancestors, 551
for example at *ga'an*, at *təbəga*, at *səya-dok* and other shrines. 553

What about BANTAŊ and BANTAMBIL? This name literally translated means 776
crocodile. It is one of very many animal names given to people and these again are part of the larger class of names taken from natural objects in general. Other names that fall into this class are NAAHO, cow or bull, BAA, dog, WAAFO, snake. They are very common either in their root forms or in the usual derivative forms. So are names like KURUG, iron, KUGƏR, stone, TEE, tree, and their compounds. There is nothing totemistic about such names. How they arise can best be made clear by an example. When TINTA'ALƏM was a youth he went on a communal fishing expedition and had the good fortune to catch a young crocodile. This is regarded as both a feat of skill and a sign of great good fortune. Not only is it difficult to catch crocodiles on these battues but it often happens that anybody who tries to catch one he has sighted gets bitten, and the consequences may be very serious. Men have lost limbs thus and some have even died as a result of such bites. So when TINTA'ALƏM got home his father at once took him off to consult a diviner. It emerged that the episode with the crocodile was a manifestation of TINTA'ALƏM's *yin*, specifically of his grandfather's wish to be recognised as one of his *yin* ancestors; and in due course, after the necessary rites had been done, the skull of the animal was placed on the *yin* shrine to commemorate and symbolise the event. The spirit of the crocodile caught on this expedition thus becomes one of the votive elements of the *yin*, and if the ancestor associated with the occasion claims a child as a ward it will be given the name BANTAŊ.

This is the standard pattern of belief and observance when a votive element is 551
part of an ancestor shrine. Thus, to continue with TINTA'ALƏM's Yin, among its
votive objects are a much worn hoe blade and the skull of a cow. The explanation 776
is that TINTA'ALƏM was a hard working farmer. He prospered and was able, by 778
occasional sales of surplus grain, gradually to acquire some livestock. In middle age his *yin* ancestors demanded a cow from him as a thank-offering — symbolically, the first cow he was able to acquire as the fruits of his good fortune. After the sacrifice, the cow's skull was placed on the *yin* shrine. But long before that, when TINTA'ALƏM had saved enough only to buy his first sheep, his *yin* had directed him to dedicate to it his hoe, the implement with which the good farmer gains his living. When his first hoe, the hoe he had bought for himself to cultivate his own land, wore out he placed it on his *yin* shrine in dedication.

What happens in the case of a child of this family whose private name is NAAHO, 553
cow, or KUUR, hoe, or KURUG, iron, is that one (or more) of the ancestors who have
manifested themselves as watching over TINTA'ALƏM's Destiny — that is, as his 776
yin — on demanding this child as a ward has declared the cow or the hoe have 778
been his special vehicle. Sacrifices offered on behalf of the ward will be given to all the ancestors manifested in the *yin*, but the cow or the hoe blade will be particularly cited.

Similar ideas and beliefs are associated with other ritual vehicles of the ancestors. Thus one KURUG I knew was the spiritual ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine. His father had fallen ill shortly after shooting a python and this proved to be the manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor demanding recognition. Both the arrow

553 head and the python skull were placed on the shrine that was eventually conse-
776 crated to the *bakologo* spirit and my informant's name was a reference to the arrow
778 head. One of *his* sons taken in guardianship by the same shrine was named WAAFO, snake.

[775] This case is interesting from another angle, too. The Tallensi have no belief in reincarnation. There is no special bond between a person and his ancestral namesake. He is not supposed to resemble or expected to emulate his ancestor. His name is a display of pride in ancestry, on the one hand, and a sign of submission to the religious supremacy of the ancestors, on the other. Thus he has no special ritual observances, on account of his name, if he is the ward of a patrilineal ancestor.
[614] But if his *sɛyər* is a matrilateral ancestor, this person might have belonged to a clan different from his own. In that case he is often obliged to keep the totemic taboos of the clan of this ancestor. Thus in the above case it is not altogether an accident that the slain python turned out to be a manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor whose clan have a taboo against killing and eating this animal. Children taken in spirit-guardianship by this ancestor have therefore to observe the same taboo, whether or not it is followed by other members of their family and clan.

553 I do not want to follow further the complex ramifications of this aspect of Tale naming customs. One more detail must suffice. The greatest renown, that is the
776 most respected *wu'uri*, comes from election to an office. A chief (*Na'ab*) or Custodian of the Earth (*Tɛndaana*) is always addressed and referred to by his title. After his death he is certain to have descendants through his sons, grandsons, and daughters, placed under his spiritual guardianship. They will be named either by the name he took to himself on election to his office, which I shall describe presently, or by his title. NA'AB, NA'ABPƆK, TƐNDAANA, etc. are common names among descendants of such dignitaries.

And here it is pertinent to add that certain forms of disgrace which are associated with ritual danger result in the suppression of ancestral names. Thus if a man dies of smallpox, or is killed in war, his name is never given to a descendant. He will be remembered in sacrifices if he has descendants but not in their names.

551 I want to turn now to the open names. Their variety is extraordinary. A few refer to accidental or conventional circumstances connected with the birth of the
553 bearer and are therefore fairly frequent. ZIBA, knows not father, is the name always given to a posthumous child. SAMANE, the home farm, is a common name. It is given to a child whose mother was overcome by labour pains while engaged on some task on the home farm. SUOR, path, has the same origin. TAMPƆƔAR, the garbage heap, may be the name given to a child born after the onset of labour pains at the ash heap. But it also arises in this way. A woman has had several children all of whom have died soon after birth. This is failure or malevolence on the part of the various ancestors who claimed these children as wards. When her next child is born the father says: "I give this child's life to be watched over by the garbage heap. My ancestors have failed me, for all that my children are good for is to be buried (as babies that die are so buried) in the garbage heap." This is a well tried magical idea, found also elsewhere in West Africa and in many other parts of the world.

But the majority of open names refer to personal, local, family, historical and 551
such like circumstances at the time of the person's birth. Sometimes a proverb
or maxim is aptly turned into a name to suit the event. More usually the father 553
or grandfather invents the name and the allusion may be so personal and obscure that only the family members see it. It is among these names that one finds what corresponds to the literary imagination of the Tallensi wisely, wittily, and often movingly expressed.

So luxuriant is the variety of these names that it is possible to quote only a few from amongst the many hundreds in my notebooks. A rare name is GɔMNA. It was borne by the son of a chief's headman. He was born on what was, for the chief and his headmen, a red-letter occasion that came around only once in two or three years, the day on which the Governor paid a visit to the area. So he was named GɔMNA, the Tale corruption of "Governor". By contrast, take such a name as NɔŋDEM-ZUOYA, literally, poor people abound. This is a proverbial saying used to console someone for a loss, particularly of livestock — as by disease — or other property. The father, in this case, had just suffered such a loss. A similar name is WU'UR-BEMI, literally, the name or renown remains. When the child was born, the father said he and his brothers were poor and insignificant people. But they had their renown as the descendants of chiefs and as men of good character. Their day would come, he said to himself, quoting the proverbial saying that whatever else might be lacking "the name remains". NA'AB-DIYA, the chief has taken office, was born immediately after his grandfather's election as chief and his name commemorates this event. As he explained to me: "I was born when Kunduzoor had just got his chiefship. He said: '*Na'ab diya*, the chief has taken office. If he is a good chief, he stays in office; if he is a bad chief, he stays in office. Nobody can now deprive him of the chiefship.' " This name, therefore, sums up one of the essential laws of Tale chiefship, the law of the inviolability of chiefship. Once installed a chief cannot be unseated. Na'abdiya had a son called SUH-PUDUMəRA, the heart does not ache. The death of a child had greatly distressed him; but the birth soon afterwards of this son came as a consolation; hence the name.

A very respectable elder had a son of about 25 who bore the name BA-DI-DATA, 551
let them not pull (my ear). When I asked for an explanation there was a burst
of hilarity. The youth's father, grinning reminiscently, told the following story. 553
As a young man, being the son of a chief he was a gay spark. Though already 684
married he had an affair with the young wife of a senior chief. At that time the Administration took a serious view of adultery and treated it as a crime. So our friend found himself summoned to answer the charge of adultery and before the very chief whom he had wronged. The penalty was a heavy fine. Now a euphemistic
way of talking about a court fine is to call it "tugging" or "twisting the ear" — [861]
darəg tɔbər, an allusion to a practice sometimes resorted to by irate parents in correcting young children. As it happened, the culprit's wife had just born a son. The fine was announced in court but the wronged chief declared that it was not heavy enough, and demanded that it be increased by a sheep and a pot of beer. At this the culprit protested and begged "let them not twist my ear further". This episode is commemorated in the son's name.

551 It is entertaining to run through a list of Tale open names if one knows the allusions contained in them. Let me quote a few that are derived from proverbs and are known to everybody, though, of course, only the parents and very close kin of the person know what the exact circumstances were that made the saying apposite.

551 538 The name YAM-PU-YIIT is the first phrase of the proverb "*Yam pu yiit yeŋha, ka bɛ la pooni*". The concept *yam* has a wide ambit of meaning. It means wisdom, prudence, commonsense, intelligence, etc. Here it can be translated "counsel" in the sense we give to this word when we speak of "keeping one's own counsel". The proverb can be rendered "Counsel (i. e. judgments about persons and events) does not come out on the surface; it remains in the heart". In other words, a prudent person keeps his own counsel. The man who gave his daughter this name was feeling aggrieved over the intrigues of a rival, but prudence dictated doing nothing other than obliquely giving out his feelings in the naming of his child. The sentiment is very characteristic of Tale values. Tallensi are anything but submissive in the face of rivalry or scorn; but to be carried away by resentment and to act rashly are thought to be foolish, in such circumstances.

"*Nigəm n-di*" is another characteristic Tale proverb that I came across in a name. It is a good example of the puritan streak in Tale values. It means, more or less literally, "persevere and (you will have enough) to eat", perseverance here carrying the implication of hard work and frugality. It was the name given to his son by a man who was proud of having begun life as a very poor man but of having prospered by hard work and frugality.

A saying reminiscent of our maxim that hard words do not break bones is "*yel pu kura*", literally: "a telling (off) doesn't kill". I knew a youth called YEL-PU-KURA, but did not ascertain why he was so called.

A final example is the name ZAŊ, to seize, take, grasp. This monosyllabic name was the abbreviation of a proverb "*Salənsaa yie, gum zaŋ pu tɔ*", that is, "The ant says, gather together and take hold of it, that is not hard". In other words, a task that is too hard for the individual to accomplish if he is alone can be done with the co-operation of many. This is an exhortation for kin and friends to help one another.

551 And now a few more instances of names that document events in family history and incidents of a personal nature.

DIM-BɔRəGYA, enmity has vanished, commemorates a reconciliation between the child's father and his father-in-law.

BA-KYEL-MARIB, let them stop being responsible for me, was the name Saandi gave to his first born daughter after he left his father's brother and started to farm for himself.

YAAN-BɔRəGYA, honour has departed, was the name given to a man after the tendaanaship which his father had held passed, on the latter's death, to another branch of the lineage.

SABAALUG, iron peg, DOK, pot, BAƔANA, a species of tree, are names that refer to different kinds of medicine shrines acquired by the fathers at the time the children were born.

551 As to the following, their meanings are known but the context of circumstances can only be guessed.

N-Nye-Fara, I have seen sorrow; ɔn-Ti-Wari, who gives something for nothing? Saγa-Ti-Ba, submit to them; ɔn-Die-Sɔ, he who accepts (humbly) is better; Zi-Kihib, men who know no taboos; Ku-ŋaaŋ-Ba, will not overwhelm them; Ba-Eŋ-Ka-Mi, let them do it and find out.

As I have already noted, the same names are used for both males and females, occasionally with a suffix to indicate the sex of the person. But there is one respect in which women's names differ from men's. When they marry they are known in their husband's home only by a nominal form of the name of their natal settlement or clan, never by their given name. The given name is used only when they are at home among their own family and clan. This is one of the ways in which the strict separation of a woman's role in life as wife and mother, on the one hand, and as daughter and sister, on the other, is symbolised. I have described these ideas more fully in *The Dynamics of Clanship*, CH. IX, and in *The Web of Kinship*, CH. IV, and therefore say no more about them here.

553 One more topic must be briefly discussed. The naming customs I have described all belong to what Tallensi call "conferring names" — *pit wu'uri*. It is clear that names so given do serve very precisely to distinguish individuals. What about the other naming process, the uttering or announcing of names — *pɔt wu'uri*?

553 622 793 This takes place whenever a man is elected to a politico-ritual office as a chief (*na'ab*) among Namoo clans or as a tendaana or *bɔγar* officiant among the Talis[11]). The installation ceremonies include a short period of seclusion in a room where the clan and Earth shrines are housed. Then, following the common pattern of such *rites de passage*, the new chief or priest announces the names by which he wishes to be henceforth known. He has put aside his former social personality and the new one he assumes must be symbolised by an appropriate name. From his chamber of seclusion he announces his new names through the elder whose traditional duty it is to proclaim them. As a rule, three names are proclaimed, and as the last is given out the people assembled for the ceremonies shout in acclamation. The new chief or priest then comes out himself. Hereafter it is a taboo for his given name to be mentioned and he goes down to posterity by his new name, or rather by that one of them for which he shows most preference. I might add that it is impressive to see what a profound change a man seems to undergo when he is elected to a politico-ritual office. It is the supreme honour to which a man and all his kin can aspire, the greatest renown that can come to a name. Yet it is also a heavy burden. The new name stands for constant watchfulness and responsibility. Among the Tallensi, these duties are largely expressed in religious concepts and observances, though they are related to vital necessities such as the regularity of rainfall, peace and the absence of disease. To ensure this, chiefs and tendaanas have to keep ritual taboos, make sacrifices to the ancestors, arbitrate honestly in disputes, in short, watch over the welfare of the land and the people. The new names stand for this.

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[11]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship*, passim, for details.

553 551 The Tallensi call these accession names *na'am wu'uri*, chiefship name, or *tɛndaan wu'uri*, tɛndaana name, or more generally *saam-wu'uri*, a term colloquially used for what we call nick-names, but meaning the name by which a person is publicly acclaimed. Accession names are, of course, "thought up" by the office-holder elect and so resemble the ordinary open names, which indeed they parallel in function. But they are interesting because they reflect not only the circumstances of the individual's achieving the honour of office, but his ideas about himself, his political role, and his historical position. In the legendary history of Tale clans the names of leaders often sum up the significance of the clan in the total social organisation. Thus an early Gbizug Tɛndaana is said to have been named GERIBAZAA, to mix all together, a name that well represents the present social and ritual functions of this tɛndaana as the intermediary between the Namoos and the Talis[18]).

553 551 A few examples only are needed to illustrate what I have said. I take, first, some well known chiefs' accession names.

622 One of the famous chiefs of Tongo was NAMBƆƔADA, still crawling. This name was taken by a young chief who announced that he was, as yet, but an infant in chiefship, "still a crawler", but would soon grow up as a chief and do great things. A more recent chief called himself DEŊ-TIES, short for *Deŋ-ties-kunkɔŋ-na'am*, first to think of what to do will not lack a chiefship. He had acted quickly to seek election, before anybody else had thought of it, and implied that this was a promise of how he would act in the future. KU-NDU-ZOOR, cannot climb a hill, was the proud name taken by a chief whom I have previously mentioned. The reference was to the fact that water cannot run up-hill. Had he not excelled his competitors he would have been like water, unable to rise superior to the rest. Alas, his short chiefship was saddened by famine and his successor took to himself the name of NA-LEB-SEUG, it will turn to the rainy season. However long and hard a dry season may seem, he declared, it must give way to the rains at length. Coming after a famine — a long dry season, as it were — he proclaimed himself as the bringer of rain and so of food. The list can be extended but I will give only one more example. The Chief of Tongo, when I was there in 1935—37, had the given name of KPA'AMA, and this is how he is named, in breach of native ideas of propriety, in some Administrative records of the time[19]). His chiefly name was NA-NAAM-BIUŊ, will change into a lake. This is short for *Bul-sɔŋ-na-naam-biuŋ*, a good spring (rising in a small pool) will change into a lake. He meant that he was as yet only a small pool, an inexperienced and young chief, but given time to grow he would change into a lake, a great and beneficent chief —— beneficent, because water, being scarce in Taleland, is thought of as a very valuable thing.

551 553 793 The accession names of tɛndaanas and other holders of priestly offices follow the same pattern. One tɛndaana I saw installed proclaimed his new name as DOƔ-BAZAA, begetter of all. He wished everybody to know that he regarded himself in his new role as the father of all his people, watching over their welfare as a father watches over that of his children.

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[18]) See my previously cited books for details of this division.

[19]) Cf. also RATTRAY, op. cit. vol. II, ch. 33.

Another tendaana called himself NA-DEŊ-BUGƏLUG, will drop manure. He was 557
comparing himself to a herd of cattle whose coming would bring fertility to the 553
impoverished soil of his clan and so give them more food and well-being. A well 793
known tendaana of former days was called MAAL-BAZAA, he who puts everything
right by the proper religious acts.

Naming customs of the kind I have described are found among all the tribes 553
and peoples of Africa. They show with particular clarity, just because the data seem so simple, how fundamental a really good knowledge of a people's language is for a proper understanding of their culture. How deep can the understanding of the culture be if the ethnographer who is studying it does not immediately understand the meaning of the names of the people he is in daily contact with? It can be seen, also, that a name is a document epitomising personal experiences, historical happenings, attitudes to life, and cultural ideas and values.

XXXIII

THE TALENSE

History; Tribal, Clan, and Soog' *Organization*

101 161 ● 121 INTRODUCTORY: The Talense occupy the area shown on the map. According to the 1921 census report they number 29,972 persons of both sexes. Specimens of the language, called Talene or Talen', have been given in Chapter III. Their appearance, their houses, customs, religion, and organization all seem to me to be very similar to those of their neighbours, the Nankanse. Their languages, too, are very much alike. Had the Talense not been labelled with a separate appellation, I doubt if the anthropologist—save after, perhaps, a very minute investigation—would have considered it necessary to deal with them as a group distinct from the Namnam and the Nankanse. Nevertheless, in accordance with the plan which I mapped out, I have done so. Rites and customs, already investigated, discussed, and described, are here approached from a different angle. Results so obtained are always valuable, even where there is a certain inevitable repetition. The process serves also to fill gaps in the work which has gone before, to which the information obtained later may be considered as supplementary.

128 In dealing with this and the remainder of the tribes, I have endeavoured to group my facts, as far as possible, under the chapter headings already adopted. This arrangement will enable my readers the more readily to piece together the sum total of the data available concerning any one particular subject, and I hope will mitigate somewhat the defects in presentation for which I have already apologized.

173 167 The history of the tribal wanderings of this people follows the same lines as that with which we are now familiar. This history is the record of the migrations, not of the tribe *qua* tribe, but of every clan, the composite of which now forms the group called the Talense (s. Taleŋa; language Talene.) The tribal histories, specimens of which are about to be related, tell of the migrations (within comparatively narrow limits of time and space) of the groups which have for some hundreds of years supplied the Territorial Rulers. Of the wanderings of the original people themselves, who are now largely merged with this foreign element, nothing is really known, except that they were undoubtedly of the stock which I have termed the 'Mole group', who seem to

000 There were extraneous difficulties too. In 1938, to quote Lord Hailey,[1] there was 'no systematic demand for research workers' in anthropology in Great Britain. Then came the war, bringing with it issues of far greater moment than the study of the social structure of a remote and unimportant African people.

128 114 The requirements of war-time publication have made it necessary to publish separately the two parts of which this study of Tale social structure consists. Though each part is self-contained, I had hoped that they could appear together in one volume. A considerable amount of compression has been necessary in order to fit the book to the Procrustean bed of austerity printing. As my concern in this book is with Tale social structure, I have preferred to leave the descriptive data pertaining to my central theme fairly full, and to compress material that can be more fully dealt with in later studies. This applies particularly to what I have written about Tale religion. It is sometimes said that anthropological monographs tend to be too long. Unfortunately, in descriptive work of this kind brevity is not always reconcilable with accuracy, however attractive it may be from the literary angle. As it is, anthropologists have to exercise rigorous selection in presenting the small fraction of their field material that it is physically possible to publish. One of the objects of any descriptive monograph must be to record material that can be used for comparative and theoretical studies. Excessive brevity (which easily lapses into facile generalization) has often proved a more serious defect, from this point of view, than an inelegant multiplicity of detail. Failing statistical devices, there is no alternative for the anthropologist who wishes to support his general statements with the evidence of observed fact, but adequate descriptive detail. I fear that I have not obeyed this rule as strictly as I should have liked to, owing to lack of space.

121 My object, however, has been a limited one. I have not attempted to give an 'outline' of 'the whole culture'. I consider that a work of that kind is best done in the traditional ethnographic manner of such classics as Junod's *Life of a South African Tribe* or Smith and Dale's *Ila Speaking Peoples*. It is a different thing to study those attributes of a social system that pertain to it *as a whole*, by contrast with those attributes that pertain to a limited sector of the society or a single institutional complex. Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* and Evans-Pritchard's *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic of the Azande* are examples of the latter type of study. But all studies in social structure or political organization or economic structure, being concerned with the factors of social integration, are necessarily concerned with attributes of the whole society. It is chiefly because these categories of social relations are the constant elements in all social activities and constitute the common medium through which social activities are articulated with one another that we can speak of a society as a unit, or of its different aspects as being functionally interrelated or mutually consistent. What I have tried to do in this book is to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure at the level of corporate

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[1] Lord Hailey, 'The Role of Anthropology in Colonial Development', *Man*, xliv, 1944, No. 5; cf. also A. I. Richards, 'Practical Anthropology in the Lifetime of the International African Institute', *Africa*, xiv. 6, 1944.

group organization. This is the framework of the political system of the 121
Tallensi, which I have described briefly elsewhere[1] and hope to write about more fully later; and it is in its turn built up on the system of interpersonal social relations which I have called kinship in the narrow sense and describe in the second part of this study.[2]

As I am analysing Tale social structure in this book I treat Tale culture primarily as the content of social relations and not in its own right. I discuss customs, beliefs, conventional usages, religious values, and so forth, principally as indices of social relations. That is why I have not been able to make use of the concepts and methods of the students of culture history and of the psychology of culture. The recent work of Benedict, Mead, Bateson, Linton, and others in the United States promises to revolutionize the study of the psychology of culture; but as Bateson argues,[3] with admirable cogency, both the approach and the aims of that study differ from those of the study of social structure.

Except for one or two topics where they seemed apposite, I have made no use of comparative data, because my aim is entirely different from that of a comparative study. Actually, there is extremely little in the literature on the Voltaic region, apart from Rattray's and Labouret's works,[4] that is relevant, and the mere citation of information from other parts of West Africa would have no value in an analytical study. Africanists will see, however, that many features of Tale social organization are typical of patrilineal societies in West Africa and some Tale institutions have parallels in South, East, and Central Africa.

I have also kept general theoretical discussions out of this book as far 128
as possible. It was Poincaré, I believe, who remarked that whereas physical scientists have a subject-matter, sociologists, for lack of a subject-matter, spend most of their time discussing methodology. I have tried to stick to my subject-matter, using whatever theoretical guidance I could find to make it clear and to interpret it to the best of my knowledge of the Tallensi.

Observation in the field showed that every significant social activity 121
among the Tallensi is tied up with the lineage system. I set out, therefore, to investigate the function of the lineage in Tale social organization, and the result is this book. I consider that it should be the first task of every field-worker to give an account of the social structure of the people he has studied. On this foundation he can subsequently build his studies of separate functional systems, such as law or economics or religion, of particular institutional complexes or social mechanisms, or of the culture as a whole. As regards the Tallensi, I have no hesitation in saying that it is impossible fully to understand their economic, jural, or ritual institutions without a grasp of their lineage system.

While avoiding theoretical discussions I have drawn attention to characteristics of Tale society that have a wider theoretical interest. I was impressed, in the field, with the apparent stability of Tale society over

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[1] In *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard.
[2] Forthcoming under the title of *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*.
[3] Gregory Bateson, *Naven*.
[4] Cit. *infra*.

121 the historical time span consciously recognized by the natives, that is, five or six generations, and probably for a much longer period. I have tried to show how this is associated with the lineage system.

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121 At the same time it was clear that stability did not mean stagnation in Tale social life. Nothing could be farther from the way of life of the Tallensi than a rigid regimentation of social behaviour. Observation of the lineage system in action suggested that its distinguishing characteristic, as a regulating factor in the social structure, was its tendency towards equilibrium. This operated in such a way as to leave room for continual internal adjustments in the social organization without endangering its long-term stability.

The tendency towards equilibrium is marked in every sector of Tale society and in the society as a whole; and it is clearly a result of the dominance of the lineage principle in the social structure. Looking at Tale society in this way has helped me to see how the social structure is built up and how its parts are integrated with one another. The factors that determine this equilibrium require further study. But for this a full analysis, firstly, of the economic organization, and secondly, of the religious system of the Tallensi is necessary.

It seems to me that the equilibrium in the social structure is made possible by the conditions of Tale economic life. The almost complete absence of economic differentiation, by occupation or by ownership of resources, and, in particular, the absence of both material and institutional possibilities for capital accumulation or for technical advance, mean that economic interests do not play the part of dynamic factors in the social structure. We do not find permanent social groupings or classes organized solely on the basis of common economic interests, nor do economic differences decisively influence the incidence of political power or of leadership in public affairs. This is one of the major distinctions between Tale society and more highly differentiated West African societies such as the Nupe[1] or European peasant societies. There are no rich peasants and poor peasants, no landlords and tenants, no craft specialists, public officials or money-lenders, among the Tallensi. Economic factors are neutral, so to speak, in relation to the social structure, the primary constitutive factors of which are genealogical, local, and ritual relations.

But if the equilibrium of Tale society is made possible by the economic structure, and if the lineage system is the chief mechanism of social organization by which it is maintained, the system of religious values is undoubtedly the supreme sanction of its existence. I have been able to give only an indication of this as there has not been space in this book for an extensive treatment of Tale religion. Ritual activities are so conspicuous and so frequent in Tale social life that I was bound to give a great deal of attention to them in the field. One cannot understand the springs of conduct among the Tallensi without a good knowledge of their religious values.

121 The structural equilibrium of Tale society is associated with its segmentary form, which I regard as a particularly important characteristic of the social structure as a whole. Elsewhere[2] Evans-Pritchard and I have

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[1] Cf. S. F. Nadel, *A Black Byzantium.*

[2] *African Political Systems,* Introduction.

tentatively described two main types of political organization found in Africa, a segmentary type and a pyramidal or centralized type. Among the Tallensi, who belong to the first type, it can be seen that the segmentary principle operates right through the social system as a dynamic factor of social organization. From one point of view it can be regarded as simply the obverse of the principle of equilibrium. It is connected, also, with the idea of polarity which plays a very big part in all Tale institutions.

These characteristics of Tale society are perhaps merely aspects of a common principle of social organization. I do not think there is anything novel or abstruse about them. Every anthropologist knows that kinship systems are built up on the complementary relationships of the two sexes in marriage and parenthood. The concept of segmentation derives from Durkheim.[1] So also does the concept of social equilibrium, via Radcliffe-Brown's and Malinowski's theories of structure and function. These or analogous concepts are common currency in contemporary social anthropology, and their virtue lies not in their explanatory but in their exploratory value. It is in this sense that I have used them.

There are other subjects of general theoretical interest for the study of which Tale society affords useful data. There is the problem of the range of social relations, in space and in time, consciously recognized in a primitive society without a centralized form of government and without permanent records of the past. I have touched on one side of this problem in discussing what I have called the field of social relations. The function of time in a segmentary social structure has recently been investigated by Evans-Pritchard,[2] and I have referred to it in this book. People like the Tallensi do not have the idea of historical time as a specific dimension of their social life. They do not think of the lapse of time as being associated with cumulative changes in their culture or social structure but rather as a periodical or cyclical rhythm of eternal repetition. They do not think of their history as something separate from, and leading up to, their contemporary way of life. They seem to live wholly in the present and immediately recollected past. But social life is a pattern of processes, and the time dimension is a significant factor in social structure everywhere. Among the Tallensi the time factor is, as it were, embedded in the social structure and, as with the Nuer, there is a direct correlation between the time perspective recognized by the society and the social structure. This suggests that the absence of a consciousness of history in primitive societies like the Tallensi is not due solely to lack of permanent records. There are primitive societies, especially those that have royal dynasties, in which a sense of history exists and is kept alive through folk-tales, ritual chants and heirlooms, royal ceremonies and praise songs, and so forth.[3] The political and social structure, including the principal political values of a people, directly shapes the notions of time and of history that prevail among them. Traditions of migration and of origins fall into place

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[1] Durkheim, E., *La Division du travail sociale*.

[2] Evans-Pritchard, E. E., *The Nuer*, ch. 3. Cf. also my paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', cit. *infra*.

[3] The large West African kingdoms—Ashanti, Yoruba, Dahomey, Mossi, and others—are good examples of such societies.

● 121 as myths that sanction or reflect contemporary social relationships and usages.[1]

In short, my chief aim has been to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure; but I hope that the material will also be useful for comparative and theoretical studies.

II

114 My wife and I spent nearly two and a half years in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, between January 1934 and April 1937. For most of that time we were amongst the Tallensi.[2] Our head-quarters were at Tongo, which proved to be an ideal base for our work. There we were at the hub of Taleland and within a few hours' march or ride of any part of the country we might wish to visit. We trekked over most of Taleland and also visited the chief centres of the neighbouring tribes, in particular the Mamprusi. As there is no linguistic literature for the Tallensi, we had to learn their dialect from scratch, with the assistance of a semi-literate interpreter and the scanty literature on Mole and Dagbane. It took us about six months to learn enough Talni for workaday communication with the people. By the end of our first tour we became proficient enough to dispense with an interpreter. Nevertheless, I know only too well that we reached but a moderate standard in our vocabulary and in our appreciation of the finer shades of thought and feeling that can be expressed in Talni.

We were the only white people who had ever lived among the Tallensi for any length of time and the first to speak their dialect. After their initial suspicions had been allayed, we were quickly accepted and soon had many friends. Our first informants soon got to understand our aims and entered into the spirit of our work with sincerity and zeal. They were mostly men and women who assisted us out of friendship and trust in our good faith. I wish to thank them for their confidence in us and for the devotion with which they instructed us in the way of life of their people. We remember with gratitude the patience, tolerance, tact, and friendliness of many dozens of Tale men, women, and children. They welcomed us to their homes, their domestic occasions, and their esoteric and public religious gatherings. We learnt more from them about humanity than I have the skill to write of. Tɔŋ-Yikpɛmdaan, my first friend and mentor and one of nature's gentlemen, was a fount of wisdom. The late Chief of Tongo, Na Naam Bioŋ, was a proud, intelligent, and forthright man whose support stood us in good stead and whose great store of knowledge was freely opened to us. Many others, too numerous to mention, were our faithful friends and zealous helpers.

122 My field-work among the Tallensi was made possible by the grant of a fellowship from the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. I appreciate the privilege of having held this fellowship and record with gratitude the unfailing interest which the Directors (Dr. J. H.

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[1] As Radcliffe-Brown showed in *The Andaman Islands*, and Malinowski in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

[2] In 1943, in the course of other duties, I had occasion to spend some time in the Northern Territories. I found that no social changes of significance had taken place among the Tallensi since 1937.

Oldham and later Professor Sir Reginald Coupland) and the Secretary-General (Sir Hanns Vischer) took in the work of the Institute's fellows. I appreciate, in particular, the freedom they allowed us in carrying out the research entrusted to us and the encouragement they gave us to aim at high scientific standards. I am greatly indebted to Professor D. Westermann, who was one of the Institute's research directors. His great scholarship in West African languages and cultures made his counsel of exceptional value. The success my wife and I were able to achieve in learning Talni owed much to a short course we were fortunate enough to have with him. This, like my preliminary training at the London School of Economics, was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. 122

I chose the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for my field-work on the advice of the late Captain R. S. Rattray. His name is written in indelible letters in the annals of West African ethnology and I was proud to follow in his footsteps. His pioneer ethnographical survey of the Northern Territories saved me months of labour. 121

I made Tongo our head-quarters on the advice of Administrative and other Government officers working in the Northern Territories. My wife and I owe a special debt of gratitude to the then Chief Commissioner Mr. W. J. A. (now Sir Andrew) Jones for the keen interest he took in our work and for many helpful arrangements he made to facilitate it. We have also to thank Sir Andrew and Lady Jones for many personal kindnesses. I owe my understanding of the spirit and methods of colonial administration chiefly to Sir Andrew and his officers. 000

My wife and I also remember gratefully the unfailing kindness and hospitality of Colonel G. H. Gibbs, M.C., Sir Andrew's successor as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories, who was District Commissioner, Mamprusi, in 1934–7, and of Mrs. Gibbs. A visit to them was a heaven-sent rest from the strenuous routine of field-work. Many discussions with Colonel Gibbs helped to broaden my understanding of the problems of government and social development in the Northern Territories.

Captain J. L. Mothersill, Mr. E. W. Ellison, and Mr. A. F. Kerr, who were in charge of the Zuarungu district at various times during our stay there, put us greatly in their debt by their readiness to help us.

Our nearest European neighbour was Mr. [illegible] W. Lynn, M.B.E., Superintendent of Agriculture at Zuarungu. Mr. Lynn's friendship was a great stand-by to us at all times. He was at that time engaged on his now well-known survey of native agriculture in the Zuarungu district and we had many long talks on this subject. Farming is a subject of supreme interest to the natives; and though it does not come into this book very much, I should have made little progress in the field without some knowledge of Tale agriculture. I received great help from Mr. Lynn on this side of my field-work. 114

I have, in this study, stuck to my last and dealt with an anthropological problem from an anthropological point of view. But I hope that what I have written will also be of service to Government officers in the Northern territories. 121

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

161 The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Taləŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*buləg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*koləg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

It emerges when certain social processes and activities are in play; it is 128
potential when they are not in play. Difficult as it is to convey this to a reader, it is something which the observer is constantly aware of. A maximal lineage emerges only in relation to other maximal lineages, and a clan in relation to other clans. When we speak of lineages being segmentarily related to one another and to the composite clan embracing them, we mean that their relations are mutual, symmetrical, and summative. A is related to B in the same way as B is related to A and the sum of their interrelations gives us a set of relations of the same kind but of higher order.

Putting it thus abstractly, however, leaves out a point of the utmost importance. The relations between individuals and between groups in which corporate units like the maximal lineage emerge are social relations. They are subject to jural, moral, and ritual norms; they are the means of achieving human purposes, of getting a livelihood, of marrying and procreating, of expressing emotional attitudes, organizing the intercourse of people, and so forth. A maximal lineage emerges in terms of jurally, morally, and ritually defined ties and cleavages that exist between it and other specified maximal lineages. A segmentary relationship between lineages or any other social units implies the existence of specific ties and cleavages which have the effect of making each unit a determining factor in the emergence of the other units. This is the basis of the concept of a field of social relations which we have used to describe the way in which lineages are differentiated from and articulated with one another.

The concept of a field of social relations has enabled us to see how 121 ●
clanship acts as a factor of social integration. Through the overlapping of the fields of clanship of adjacent maximal lineages chains of clanship ties interlinking a whole group of lineages are established. Thus each lineage can be regarded as the centre of a series of zones of clanship of increasing amplitude and diminishing integration. The clan is the central region of such a system, a wider community like that of the Hill Talis constitutes the next region, and beyond that lie still wider regions of diminishing importance for the members of the lineage that is taken as the starting-point.

We have seen that there are three major sub-regions within the socio- 621
geographic region we have called Taleland, within each of which there is a greater degree of interarticulation of lineages and clans, and therefore closer integration, than there is between them. But the three sub-regions overlap with each other and with adjacent non-Tale regions. They have a particularly important connecting system in the chain of sub-clans of Mosuor biis.

This system of regions or communities constituted primarily by the 621
operation of the ties and cleavages of clanship is the foundation of a 182
scheme of ritual values and relationships which serves to reinforce the clanship organization by means of mystical sanctions and by co-ordinating the interrelations of lineages and clans at a higher level. Among the Tallensi the web of clanship and the web of ritual relationships take the place, as mechanisms of social integration, of a constituted governmental

POSTSCRIPT

This book has dealt with the constitution and interrelations of the 613
corporate groupings found in Tale society. But this is only one major 621
aspect of Tale social structure. There is another major aspect of no less 182
importance, the system of interpersonal social bonds that constitutes the Kinship System in the strict sense. The lineage and clan organization forms the permanent framework of social relations in Taleland. But it is based on certain fundamental categories of thought and axioms of conduct that derive from a different cross-section of Tale social life, the domestic organization. The well-worn simile of the warp and the woof is apposite here. We can think of the lineage and clan organization as the warp of the social fabric of the Tallensi. Interwoven with it, sustaining it, and in turn shaped and regulated by it, is the intricate web of interpersonal relations we have described as the Kinship System in the strict sense. Kinship ties grow directly out of the biological, psychological, and social relations of men, women, and children in the domestic nucleus of Tale social life, the agnatic joint family. Unlike lineage ties, they involve the equal and parallel recognition of descent through both parents; and because of this bilateral criterion of social identification in kinship relations, they cut across the lineage structure.[1]

This second major aspect of Tale social structure, the Kinship System, 121
is the subject of our next volume, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*. Our aim will be not a detailed analysis of all Tale interpersonal relationships through all the levels of social behaviour, but an investigation of their place in the social structure in relation to the lineage and clan organization.

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[1] Cf. my previously cited paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure'.

[p. 259]

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FOREWORD

121 THIS book concludes the investigation of Tale social structure begun in *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, 1945. It carries the analysis into the domain of family life and the social ties that grow directly out of marriage and parenthood. This is the domain of kinship, in the current usage of social anthropology.

000 No subject in the whole range of anthropological studies has been so voluminously investigated and debated as kinship. It is no exaggeration to say that every anthropologist of repute has, at some time or another, written about kinship. Nor has this interest been confined to anthropologists. The marriage customs of primitive peoples, their modes of domestic organization, their rules of inheritance and descent, the laws, morals, and religious beliefs associated with family life among them, have furnished material for scholars of many kinds. It is nearly a hundred years since Bachofen's reconstruction of primordial mother-right and McLennan's theory of exogamy and endogamy upset long-standing beliefs about the nature of the human family. It is exactly a century since Lewis Morgan, who may justly be regarded as the father of the scientific study of kinship in primitive society, first wrote about the Iroquois clan. Since then psychologists and philosophers, sociologists, jurists, historians, and others have drawn constantly on the mounting quantity of data concerning primitive kinship to support their theories or confute their opponents.

121 Fortunately for the anthropologist who ventures to write about kinship, the vast mass of literature on the subject contains only a small amount of generalization that has stood the test of modern field research. But this alone would not excuse the omission of reference to the work of other students of the subject in a book on kinship. The chief reason why I have, in this book, referred only to those authorities whose writings have direct bearing on my material is because the general problems of kinship lie outside the scope of a descriptive monograph.

At the same time the truism that facts only acquire meaning for science in the light of an adequate theory is specially relevant to the study of kinship. 'No systematic thought has made progress apart from some adequately general working hypothesis, adapted to its special topic', says Whitehead.[1] Kinship studies, right up to

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[1] Whitehead, A. N., *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 286.

[p. vii]

121 the present time, have suffered from working hypotheses not adapted to the topic. I was fortunate in that both my chief teachers on this subject, the late Professor Bronislaw Malinowski and Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, approached it with working hypotheses founded on the realities of field observation. Their theories have the merit of being adapted to the methods of observation available to the anthropologist in the field and to the kind of data within his reach. They can be tested in the field, as is most cogently shown in Raymond Firth's book *We, the Tikopia* (1937), which appeared while I was among the Tallensi. I found this book a mine of ideas and a most valuable stimulus to observation.

I have not, however, attempted to give a comprehensive account of family life and kinship among the Tallensi in this book. I am concerned only with kinship in relation to the social structure—that is, in my view, with the fundamental principles of Tale kinship relations as they enter into the organization of collective life. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi the common denominators of thought, feeling, and action stand out very clearly and the principles governing social behaviour are not so difficult to discern as might be supposed.

178 It is of interest to add that I was able to pay a very short visit to the Tallensi in 1945, after this book was finished. I found that as far as their social structure was concerned there had been no appreciable change since my wife and I first went to Taleland in 1934. But there are many signs that they are on the threshold of a period of rapid change. The war has opened up wider horizons to many of the young men who saw active service. Native Administration has developed greatly; schools are being established; missionaries have started work inside Taleland. The social structure I have described may well undergo many modifications in the next few years, though I do not believe it will alter much in fundamentals for decades.

M. F.

OXFORD 1948

which utilize the lineage principle in social organization. In contexts 613
where the emphasis is on the lineage considered as a segment of a more inclusive lineage, it is commonly described as a 'room' (*dug*) of the more inclusive 'house' (*yir*). But when Tallensi speak of a *dug* without further specification they generally mean a segment of the order of an inner or medial lineage.

As this nomenclature shows, the internal constitution of the lineage is modelled on that of the polygynous joint family. The standard pattern is that the segments of a lineage trace their descent from the sons by different wives of their common founding ancestor. We shall consider this subject more fully in this book. In consequence, co-ordinate segments of a lineage are referred to as 'brother' (*sunzɔ*) lineages, and their reciprocal rights and obligations, as well as the conventional patterns of sentiments holding between them, are modelled on the mutual relations of brothers.

At the end of our previous book we pointed out that our study of the 121
structure of corporate groups and their interrelations in Tale society covered only one aspect of the total social structure. We spoke of the first part of this study as an analysis of the warp of the social fabric. Our task now is to examine what might be called the woof of the social fabric. Our starting-point, this time, is not the organized corporate group or the framework of continuity and stability in the social structure, but the individual. Our main interest will be in the standard forms and processes of person-to-person relationships and their connexion with the large-scale framework of the society. Our subject, in other words, is Tale kinship in the narrow sense, viewed in relation to the lineage system.

CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

128 THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

613 The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and
ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural
601 basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow
121 sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

602 The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

FOOD IN THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY OF THE TALLENSI

M. AND S. L. FORTES

121 THE hinterland of the Gold Coast north of the 10th parallel N. Latitude is a land of sparse forestation lying within the Sudanese Zone.[1] The continuous plains, the monotony of which is, in the dry season, broken only by scattered trees, occasional patches of low bush or a low range of hills, have been described as belonging to an 'Orchard bush' type of country. The Tale settlements occupy an area of some 200 square miles, immediately north of the White Volta river, and have a population density of over 170 to the square mile in the settled parts. Agriculture is the basic industry of the Tallensi and their neighbours, but their farms yield only a bare living to the majority of the populace. Unduly late rains or a visitation of locusts spells food deficiency bordering on famine for thousands.

Food, therefore, is a major practical issue in Tale social life. It is also, as in all primitive societies, a fundamental constituent of innumerable social situations not directly connected with nutrition, e.g. sacrifices to ancestral spirits or funeral ceremonies. How diverse are the functions of food in a primitive society may be gathered from Dr. A. I. Richards's *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe*. The comprehensive approach adopted by her is impossible in this short paper; nor shall we be able to take up all the questions enumerated in Dr. Raymond Firth's paper[2] on native diet. We shall confine ourselves to an ethnographical description of the place of food in the domestic economy of the Tale.[3] It must be regarded as merely a tentative account.

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[1] See A. W. Cardinall, *The Gold Coast* 1931, Government printer, Accra, p. 6.

[2] 'The Sociological Study of Native Diet', *Africa*, vii. 4.

[3] In addition to our observations we have made use of statistical and other information from an unpublished report of Mr. C. W. Lynn, the Assistant Superintendent of Agriculture in the Zuarungu district, of which Tale land forms a part. We wish here to acknowledge our indebtedness to Mr. Lynn, not only for permission to use his report, but also for the direct assistance he gave us in our efforts to study Tale agriculture in the field.

I. Introduction

121 THERE is no lack of disquisitions on the role of education in the simpler societies. Africa, in particular, has received enormous attention in this connexion. Commissions and congresses have delivered judgment on education in one or another African society. Missionaries, anthropologists, itinerant journalists, travellers, Government officials, and innumerable others have vouchsafed opinions on the subject until it has become smothered in platitudes and generalizations. But empirical studies of a sociological or psychological kind in field or school are far from numerous. In this paper I shall attempt, in outline, such a study.[1]

II. The Sociological Approach

We can commence from two axioms which must be regarded as firmly established both in sociological and in educational theory. It is agreed that education in the widest sense is the process by which the cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation, and that schooling is therefore only a part of it. It is agreed, correlatively, that the 'moulding of individuals to the social norm is the function of education such as we find it among these simpler peoples',[2] and, it may be added, among ourselves.

000 Starting from these axioms, anthropologists have explored the conditions and the social framework of education in pre-literate societies. It has been shown that the training of the young is seldom regularized or systematized, but occurs as a 'by-product'[3] of the cultural routine; that the kinsfolk, and particularly the family, are mainly responsible for it; that it is conducted in a practical way in relation to the 'actual

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[1] An outline of this paper was first presented in a lecture on 'Play Activities of Primitive African Children' which I gave in March 1936 at the invitation of Paul and Marjorie Abbatt. Dr. Lucy Mair and Dr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard have assisted me greatly with their comments and criticism.

[2] A. W. Hoernlé, 'An Outline of the Native Conception of Education in Africa', *Africa*, iv, 1931. But this axiom has been formulated by many writers, e.g. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, ch. i.

[3] *Vide* Hoernlé, loc. cit.; B. Malinowski, 'Native Education and Culture Contact', *International Review of Missions*, 1936.

000 situations of daily life'.[1] It has been observed that manners and ethical and moral attitudes are first inculcated within the family circle in association with food and eating and with the control of bodily functions. A good deal of discussion has been devoted, also, to what appear to be overtly educational institutions, such as initiation schools and ceremonies, age grades, or secret societies.[2] It has been proved that direct instruction in tribal history, sexual knowledge, and ritual esoterica is promoted by these institutions.

In this way a good deal of information has been accumulated about *what* is transmitted from one generation to the next in pre-literate societies, about the circumstances of this transmission, and the institutional and structural framework within which it occurs. Of the process of education—*how* one generation is 'moulded' by the superior generation, *how* it assimilates and perpetuates its cultural heritage—much less is known. The problem has, indeed, never been precisely formulated,[3] with the result that alleged discussions of primitive education not infrequently prove to be merely descriptions of social structure slightly disguised.

●121 *The problem formulated.* Education is a social process, a temporal concatenation of events in which the significant factor is time and the significant phenomenon is change. Between birth and social maturity the individual is transformed from a relatively peripheral into a relatively central link in the social structure; from an economically passive burden into a producer; from a biological unit into a social personality irretrievably cast in the habits, dispositions and notions characteristic of his culture. The problem presented by this function of society is of an entirely different order from that presented by the religious or economic or political system of a people. The

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[1] R. Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, pp. 147 ff. This is the most valuable empirical and theoretical contribution to the subject of recent years. There have been various attempts to utilize this principle in planning curricula of schooling in Africa. Cf. W. B. Mumford, 'Malangali Experiments', *Africa*, iii, 1930 and A. D. Helser, *Education of Primitive People*, 1934.

[2] Cf., *inter alia*, E. W. Smith, 'Indigenous Education in Africa', in *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman*, for a useful commentary on this and other general points referred to in this paper; and J. H. Driberg, *At Home with the Savage*, pp. 232 ff.

[3] I refer to Africa here. Margaret Mead in *Coming of Age in Samoa* and *Growing Up in New Guinea* and Firth, op. cit., have done much to clarify it for Oceania. Attention is drawn to the problem in Rev. E. W. Smith's essay, cited above.

121 former is primarily a problem of genetic psychology, the latter of cultural and sociological analysis. In studying education in a particular society we ought, ideally, to be able to take its cultural idiom for granted, whereas the first task of sociological analysis is to discover the cultural idiom. Thus, in Taleland one often finds a pair of small boys disputing with childish earnestness as to who is senior. Unless one has observed the scope of the principle of seniority in the social structure one is liable to dismiss this as mere childish play of no importance.

Education, from this point of view,[1] is an active process of learning and teaching by which individuals gradually acquire the full outfit of culturally defined and adapted behaviour. In this paper I shall try to delineate briefly how it occurs in one African society, that of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. As it will be impossible to compass the whole process of social maturation within the limits of this paper, some of the more conspicuous changes and activities only will be examined.

114 *The sampling problem.* My observations were made in the course of a field study of the Tallensi the object of which, in accordance with the usual ethnographical method, was the entire society and its culture. It is impossible in such a case—as other anthropologists have found—to follow up a special psychological problem in a manner commensurate with the criteria of experimental research in England. That will only be achieved when specialists can be induced to take over these investigations.

128 Such material as I am able to present consequently suffers most from sampling deficiencies. Social behaviour among primitive people appears to be more standardized than among ourselves. Yet variations occur, distributed perhaps in accordance with the normal curve of error as among ourselves but perhaps not. The problem has still to be investigated. Ethnographers are principally interested in

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[1] An excursus into genetic psychology would be out of place in this paper, but the reader will observe how much it owes, *inter alia*, to F. C. Bartlett, *Remembering*; K. Koffka, *Growth of the Mind*; S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth of Young Children*; *Social Development of Young Children*; C. E. Spearman, *Nature of Intelligence*; and to the writings of Jean Piaget (*Language and Thought of the Young Child*, &c.). I have borrowed also from the anthropological writings already cited and from those of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, particularly from their writings on kinship.

184 867 social and ritual activities. The natives themselves recognize this. It often happens that a man who has not had the advantage of such a training succeeds to eldership or office and has to depend upon the advice and assistance of younger men who have been more fortunate in this respect

IV. The Dynamic Characters of Tale Education

● 121 Learning and teaching proceeds within the structural framework and subject to the cultural conceptions outlined in the preceding pages. We must now investigate its dynamic characters. The educational development of a Tale child may be regarded as the gradual acquisition of an ensemble of *interests*, *observances* and *skills*. What these are and how they are acquired constitutes our next inquiry. It is basically a psychological problem, tantamount, up to a point, to analysing the observations already recorded at a different level of behaviour.

An exhaustive investigation will not be attempted in this paper. The detailed exposition of Tale child psychology which should be the foundation of such an investigation cannot be undertaken here, nor would it be practicable to try to follow out the complex pattern of Tale education in all its ramifications in a limited space. I propose, therefore, to discuss only a few of the major trends and significant processes. Learning and teaching is a composite process, a network of interacting factors. For the purpose of analysis it will be necessary to isolate some of the variables, but it will have to be borne in mind that in the actual life-history of a Tale man or woman they occur only in interaction with one another and with numerous others.

The determinants of social behaviour. From the genetic point of view social behaviour is determined by four groups of factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural. If we observe a child learning to walk, we can easily distinguish these factors. It cannot start walking until it has reached a certain degree of physiological maturity. As it practises it learns to plan its efforts so as to avoid falls or trying to accomplish too much at a time—a psychological achievement, depending partly on its level of intelligence. Again, a child learns to walk in response, partly, to stimulation, encouragement and even training given by some or all of the people who come

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121 mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably intercorrelated. 145 In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884 of physiological and psychological development and that of social and cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of 182 which social development lags behind psycho-physical development. A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856] age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582] they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social development 827 is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881 growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812 The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls, which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

COMMUNAL FISHING AND FISHING MAGIC IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES OF THE GOLD COAST.

By M. Fortes.

121 Social Anthropology, like every science, deals with abstractions. Religion, magic, social organization, law, etc., are not directly accessible to field observation *in toto* and in their conceptual purity. What the anthropologist sees in the field are social situations—the particular experiments, as it were, of a culture. These are composite events, patterns in which several aspects of culture and a variety of institutions and techniques are represented. When two friends stop to greet each other, we have a very simple situation of brief duration representing merely an instance of etiquette. But when we consider the social processes which lead up to and culminate in the relationship of marriage, we are faced with a whole series of situations linked in a temporal sequence, involving etiquette, economic techniques (gift exchanges), legal institutions (bride wealth), religious institutions (sacrifice to ancestor spirits), moral and social norms, and so forth. Such configurations, varying as these examples indicate from simple and momentary situations which represent a single phase of an institution to complex series of events which epitomize the whole culture in all its aspects, form the raw material of anthropological field work. To establish the characteristics of an institution like bride-wealth we abstract the relevant components of many " marriage configurations "—*i.e.*, configurations of a single type—and regard the other components as of subordinate or even negligible significance. To consider a system like religion, magic, or social organization we require to abstract the relevant components of a wide range of configurations of different types : births, marriages, funerals, economic situations, ritual festivals, etc.

These abstractions, essential for the generalized descriptions of institutions or aspects of culture, have been the main concern of anthropologists. In its extreme form, *e.g.*, in the comparative work of Tylor or Frazer, this has led writers to strip what they consider relevant facts completely of all cultural context. In the best functional studies interest has been focussed primarily upon the correlation of institutions with one another, and upon plotting the relationship of particular institutions to the whole of a culture. The fact that the social situations susceptible of direct observation in the field, besides providing the raw materials for sociological generalization, also constitute a problem for investigation has been largely overlooked.

Every type of social situation exhibits a definite structure. The component institutions, techniques, and norms of behaviour manifested in it are inter-related in a manner specific to that situation. In functional terminology, the " proximate function " of

121 each within the context of the particular type of social situation is specific to it and can be determined only from the analysis of the situation itself. It may differ considerably from its "institutional function" in relation to the culture as a whole. Thus the rules of exogamy viewed in relation to the entire social organization of a people may demonstrably serve to emphasize and preserve the integrity of an unilateral kinship group. But in a particular situation, a man barred from marriage with a woman he desires may enter into an illicit sexual intrigue with her, which may lead to dissension within the kinship group. In such a case the "proximate function" of the rules of exogamy appears to be the very contrary of their "institutional function." This is an hypothetical instance; but it will suffice to illustrate what we mean when we say that the components of any type of social situation are inter-related in a manner specific to it or that it exhibits a definite structure. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the structure of a situation which recurs with some frequency in the life of a tribe recently visited by the writer.

226 221 [805] Among the Tallensi, a tribe of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the communal fishing expeditions which take place every year are events of this kind. They extend over a period of about a month, between the close of the dry season and the commencement of the heavy rains. During this month which coincides with most of the native lunar month *Sigkpéoŋ* ("Dry rains"), and the European month of April, rain falls sporadically (five times, at varying intervals, in 1934, a dry year) but sufficiently for the sowing of early millet and some of the minor crops. Sowing demands the concentration of all energies of the family for a day or two after a fall of rain; then it is discontinued until the next fall of rain. Besides sowing, other technological and economic activities compete with fishing during this month. House repairs and rebuilding are still in progress and of course the markets, which take place on two days out of three within the tribal area, are in full swing. All these activities are equally shared by men and women, assisted by the children of both sexes.

226 262 Fishing therefore is not an activity of an economic off-season. Its calendrical incidence depends primarily on the technique employed, which is suitable only for shallow pools; and the pools are shallowest at the end of the dry season. It is, also, only indirectly correlated with the diminution in food supplies which becomes general during the "dry rains", since fish, like meat, is valued as a delicacy and never as a substitute for the staple cereal foods. In any case, the catch is usually too small to influence the economy of food supplies materially. Nevertheless, the luxury value of fish furnishes one of the main inducements to join the fishing expeditions.

226 But the greatest attraction of these fishing expeditions to young and old, men and women, is the excitement and thrill they provide, the immediate pleasure of participation in a communal enterprise with the possibility, however remote, of some gain.

133 226 The pools fished lie in the bed of the White Volta River. When the rains cease the water level gradually sinks till eventually only a series of pools divided from one another

226 789 There the psychological facts are, one might say, re-created, socially transformed by the magic into a collective risk against which protection is provided by the very act which affirms its existence. The magic is concerned not with the safety of individuals but with the security of the group. Above all, responsiblity for the security of the group rests, in the last resort, upon the owner of the pool, the one who brings the group into being. Through the magic this responsibility is affirmed as a privilege associated with the ownership rather than a burden. Individual magical precautions would be as incongruous with this communal situation as a particular individual's chances of injury are unpredictable. In brief, the magical organization of the situation depends upon the exploitation of psychological factors latent in it; but these psychological factors cannot be regarded as the source of the magic. Ownership, magic, and organization of the expedition constitute a unitary structure the disruption of which would entirely alter the significance of any of the constituents.

●121 At the outset of this paper the view was expressed that every type of social situation exhibits a definite structure. An analysis was then made of a typical social situation met with among the Tallensi. Various institutions (chieftainship) techniques (magic) and norms of behaviour (disposal of the catch) each determined in part by a context lying beyond the boundaries of the fishing expedition, were shown to enter into the situation. It was suggested, also, that the fishing magic is the factor which binds the different components into a definite pattern. The question arises why is it that situations such as this exhibit a specific structure? Is it due to the peculiar ensemble of institutions, etc., represented? Is it due to the nuclear interest—viz., the catching of fish—of the situation? Or is it due to the fact that what we differentiate as institutions, etc., appear in such situations, as the concrete responses of individuals and groups to one another in terms of social definitions and psychological impulses arising solely from the situation itself? This is a problem which requires the examination of many types of situations comprising similar combinations of institutions, techniques, and norms of behaviour.[1]

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[114] [1] This paper was written after my first expedition to the field, in 1934-5, as a Fellow of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

INTRODUCTION

This bulletin records the work of the Department of Agriculture in North Mamprusi during the years 1932 to 1936. It is divided into two parts: the first contains a description of the indigenous system of agriculture and the survey methods followed in studying it; and the second gives the results of preliminary trials, as an introduction to future experimental work. 128

North Mamprusi comprises three political sub-districts, 634
Navrongo Area, Zuarungu Area, and Kusasi (Bawku) Area. These areas have a number of features in common, the most important 121
from our point of view, being a dense population, and a primitive system of "fixed" agriculture. The most densely populated area is Zuarungu, where a shortage of cultivated foods is a fairly common experience. It was mainly to find the causes of this food shortage and to suggest ameliorative measures that the Department of Agriculture commenced preliminary survey work in this area in 1932. Unfortunately, owing to shortage of staff, the work had to be suspended in 1933, with a consequent loss of continuity. It was recommenced in 1934, however, and the scope was enlarged to admit of a certain amount of experimental work at Zuarungu and Navrongo, and survey work in the Navrongo Area. Some of the survey work was also repeated in Zuarungu Area to supply confirmatory information upon 1932 data, particularly yield data, since it was known that 1932 was an exceptionally favourable season. In 1935 the experimental side of the work received more attention; similarly in 1936. And in 1936 survey work was extended to Zebilla, in Kusasi Area. Zuarungu has been the headquarters throughout.

We have now obtained a fairly detailed knowledge of local agriculture and a certain amount of experimental evidence upon the best way in which it can be improved. All our experience points to some form of "mixed farming" (1) as a solution of the problem. Mr. F. A. Stockdale, C.M.G., C.B.E. (now Sir Frank Stockdale), Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State, visited Zuarungu and Navrongo in December, 1935, and recommended (2) the expansion of our work to enable us to investigate more 121

121 fully a system of mixed farming suitable for the peculiar conditions obtaining locally. In 1936, the writer visited Northern Nigeria to study the progress made in mixed farming there. A report upon this visit has been published as Bulletin No. 33 of the Department (3).

It is realized that Nigerian experience can serve only as a guide to us here, for whilst environmental conditions are similar, economic conditions differ considerably. The object of this bulletin is to record the results of observations, surveys, and experimental work, as an introduction to the study of mixed farming locally. The survey methods followed have been recorded in the hope that they may be of value when similar work is contemplated in other districts.

Our method of approach to the improvement of local agriculture is by surveys and observations, followed by experiment, demonstration, and extension, in that order. So far, in North Mamprusi, we have reached the stage of experiment and quiet demonstration.

Part I.—STUDY OF INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE.

Section I.—Introductory Notes upon the District.

128 The farming methods of the primitive tribes inhabiting North Mamprusi are practically unique in the Gold Coast. Before discussing the results of surveys and experimental work it is proposed to outline in this section some of the main features of the district which have a bearing upon local agriculture and which are likely to affect its future development. It is necessary to state that most remarks are based upon experience gained in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; although most of what is said will apply to Kusasi Area, it is probable that greater experience will reveal some differences.

Situation.

131 North Mamprusi is situated in the extreme North East corner of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast; it lies roughly between 10° 30" and 11° North latitude and 0° and 1° 30" West longitude and covers an area of 3,559 square miles. It is bounded on the South by South Mamprusi (Gambaga District), on the West by Lawra-Tumu District, and on the North and East by French West Africa.

Section II.—AGRICULTURAL SURVEY.

In this section it is proposed to record the methods adopted in studying local agriculture as well as to give the results of the survey.

Nature of the Problem.

As already mentioned in the introduction, our main object in coming to North Mamprusi was to investigate the causes of recurrent food shortage and to suggest and to implement ameliorative measures. It had been generally accepted that the shortage was due to the congestion of population; but it could not be said that more land was the solution of the problem until details of local methods of crop production were known; for the amount of food available depended as much upon the intensity of cultivation as upon the area cultivated. Efforts made in the past to encourage migration to the South had met with little success. Table I on page 8 shows that the density of population in Navrongo Area is only half that of Zuarungu Area, and yet the people in Navrongo Area suffer from food shortage. This suggests that simply to provide more land by encouraging emigration could at best afford only temporary relief, and that the problem is agricultural as well as political.

SURVEY METHODS.

Information Required.

The information we set out to obtain before we could express an opinion upon the situation was as follows :—

1. Size of farms, man power expended and population supported per unit area.
2. The system of farming followed, with details of methods of cultivation, crop mixtures, rotations, areas under different crops, yields, and methods of maintaining fertility.
3. Economy of crops after production—storage, utilisation, disposal of surplus, market prices.
4. Position of livestock in the farm economy.
5. Natural vegetation and environmental factors in relation to food supply.

The scope of our work was limited by the staff available. Accuracy was considered to be of first importance, and quantitative data were collected wherever possible.

Approach to Problem.

Two methods of approach to the study suggested themselves. The first, an intensive method, was to select an area and to take records from every compound within it and to survey all the land farmed by these compounds. The second, an eclectic method, was to select centres in different parts of the district and at each centre to select a number of compounds for detailed record. There were advantages in favour of each method but it was considered that, if care was taken in the selection of compounds, the second had more to recommend it for our purpose; this was the method adopted. 121

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After discussion with the Political Officer for the district, centres of operation were considered, bearing in mind typicalness, accessibility, and the amenability of the Chief. The last is important for no matter how desirable a place might be for other reasons, no useful work could be done if the Chief was antagonistic. The centres finally selected were decided upon after touring the district. In all, records have been taken at ten centres distributed as follows:—

In Zuarungu Area in 1932 at Bongo, Nangodi, Sambruno, Tongo and Zuarungu.

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At each centre a large number of compounds was visited with a representative of the Chief, and from amongst these, six compounds were selected for record. Care was taken to choose compounds as typical of the district as possible. Thus the compounds of Chiefs, headmen, and strangers, were avoided if possible, and also the compounds of pensioners. Care had to be taken not to record the compound of a man pushed forward by the Chief simply to humour the white man. As with the Chief, so with the farmer, he must be amenable to our intrusion. The compounds we selected were probably rather above the average, and at Tongo we unwittingly included the farms of three headmen. At this early 124

Names among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast

FORTES, M. MEYER, Cambridge

African languages are still, for the most part, living languages in a unique sense. 000 They exist only in the activity of speech. Everyone who has lived with an African community that lacks the art of writing and has experienced the thrill of learning their language in the daily give-and-take of work and friendship, knows how fresh and spontaneous, one might almost say poetical, such a language seems. One is always being surprised by the discovery of some new aspect or implication of the most commonplace utterance. The contrast with European languages, weighed down as they are by the accumulated deposits of thirty centuries of literacy, can be startling. By endowing language with a separate existence in its own right, literacy can be a barrier between it and the general body of custom. I suppose that is why so much of the vocabulary of a European language is like a hoard of ancient coins, still circulating though defaced and debased in worth beyond recognition. For a primitive African society its language is the very essence of its total body of custom, its breath of life. That is why the language of an African people always seems so graphic and alive for it is daily and hourly nourished by the activities and thoughts, the feelings and beliefs of the people. It is in an African people's language that its culture is most faithfully and fully pictured. This, it seems to me, is the outstanding lesson which we owe to Professor WESTERMANN's deep and devoted scholarship in African languages, history and cultures. It is certainly the lesson his inspired teaching imparted to those who were able, as I fortunately was, to spend a little time with him before going out to the field. And there is one other lesson we owe in no small degree to his studies. It is that African languages are exceedingly rich and subtle.

Nowhere does this appear so vividly as in the proverbs, songs, stories, myths and legends of African peoples, their oral literature, as it has sometimes been called; and here Professor WESTERMANN is surely the arch-connoisseur. A minor element in this aspect of African culture is the theme of my essay.

How one addresses or refers to a person is a matter of great importance in all 121 ● societies. We know only too well what subtle distinctions lie in the nomenclature of reference and address we use in our own culture. We do not, for example, normally use a person's given name in speaking to or of him unless he is an intimate of ours in some degree. In most African societies the niceties of nomenclature are even more important. As is well known, the terminologies used to distinguish kinsfolk, persons of rank, holders of religious office, and such like, serve not only to designate these persons but also to determine conduct towards them. It must be noted, however, that what these designations do is to put individuals into categories and classes. The individuals themselves are, so to speak, hidden behind the

[p. 337]

mask of chief or priest, or even simply father, uncle, or spouse, for purposes of the situation and the relationship. Yet the individual himself, the common basis of the several offices and ranks and kinship statuses he may exercise, is not thus extinguished. His very existence as an individual, let alone his personality and idiosyncrasies, affects everything in which he plays a part and must therefore receive social recognition. That, no doubt, is the basic reason why every individual, in all human societies, has a name of his own, a given name or names — though not necessarily the same given name all his life. Names may change in accordance with stages in the life cycle as among the Andamanese, or as among some tribes of Sarawak on the birth of the first child and on the death of children[1]. At least, this is how these well known instances are usually represented. But we must be careful. For a teknonym or initiation name may have the function of classifying a person rather than of specifying him individually. It might just as well be called a title as a name. The point is that naming, as a means of identifying the unique individual, shades over into naming as a means of pointing out where and how the individual fits into society; and this is not surprising for the paradox of the individual is that he is unique simply by reason of the specific combination, in his life-space, of experiences in social relationships and situations shared by others and falling on him as a consequence of where he fits into society.

But in Africa names are not just a verbal notation for the different phases or aspects of a person's status and life history. They are symbols deeply charged with meaning derived from the whole culture. We know this also from other cultures both of the past and of contemporary ethnological interest. It has been reported of certain South American tribes that knowledge of a person's secret name may give the knower magical power over him[2], and similar magical power through names is believed to be possible among many other peoples. Sir JAMES FRAZER explained taboos on names by the argument that savages regard their names as a vital part of themselves and therefore to be kept secret lest knowledge of the name give power over the person to some ill-wisher[3]. We remember how, in the Biblical story of the Creation, God brings His creatures to Adam for him to name them, so that their names are coeval with their beginnings, and throughout the Old Testament, as PEDERSEN shows, "the name is the very peculiarity and power of the soul"[4].

This notion, though perhaps not quite so metaphysically formulated, would meet with understanding among many African peoples. When, in Ashanti, a man names his son after a beloved friend or after a renowned ancestor, he is tacitly hoping that his son may be like the friend or the ancestor in character and deeds,

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[1] The most valuable comparative survey of the subject of names and naming in ethnology is still that of THURNWALD, in MAX EBERTS *Reallexikon d. Vorgeschichte*, 1927, article s. v. Name, Namengebung. On the Sarawak (Kayan-Kenyah-Kelantan) customs referred to, see F. H. POLLARD and E. BANKS, "Teknonymy and other customs among Kayan, etc." in *Sarawak Museum Journal*, iv, pt. 4, no. 15, 1937. Similar customs are described among Australian aborigines in Dr. DONALD F. THOMSONS excellent paper on "Names and Naming in the Wik Mogkan Tribe", *J. Royal Anthrop. Inst.* LXXVI, pt. 2, 1946.

[2] References are in THURNWALD, loc. cit.

[3] See *The Golden Bough*, abridged edn. ch. 22.

[4] JOHS. PEDERSEN, *Israel*, I—II, pp. 245. sqq.

121 as if the name could have a character moulding, — a soul shaping, as he might put it, — effect. Such names, moreover, make up a living record of notable events or persons or achievements in the father's life.

It is in this sense, mainly because of what they symbolise and record, that names and naming customs can be said to be part of a people's oral literature. There is no better testimony to this than in one of Professor WESTERMANN's own linguistic explorations, the enchanting life story which he recorded of the Ewe Bonifatius Foli[5]). It will be remembered that the story opens with Foli's explanation of how he came by his name. Had he been born a commoner, he says, he would have been called Kofi, the day name for a male born on Friday. But he was of chiefly descent and so received the corresponding aristocratic name, a name which no commoner would normally bear.

551 The ethnographical and linguistic writings on Africa abound with examples pertinent to my theme, but I want to illustrate it from my own field work among the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast[6]). All Tallensi are curious and alert in the matter of personal names. Early in my stay among them I once asked a young man what was the point of name giving. This is what he answered: "(The reason) why they give names is that you may know so-and-so and the other one, and know what he looks like; for if they did not confer names on you they would not know you." The name stands for the individual, is part of what marks him out from others. This feeling about the individuality of a name is shown in the delight with which Tallensi meet someone bearing the same name as themselves. Two persons with the same name call each other "*n-wu'uri*", [609] (my name-sake) and exchange friendly banter.

553 The Tallensi have a technical term for the giving of a name, *pit wu'uri*, to confer a name; and this term has a cognate which, we shall see, is very revealing, *pɔt wu'uri* to utter or announce a name. Let us consider, first, the giving of names. This is quite a complex matter. I realised this shortly after arriving among the Tallensi, on the occasion of Ma'an-ɔb's funeral. Just before any burial, an elder offers a red cock to the dead with an invocation that he may depart and join his ancestors. I was struck by the fact that the elder, in this case, addressed the dead man as Yin, not as Ma'an-ɔb; and this led to a train of enquiries.

551 I thus discovered that a person can have, and very commonly does have two given names. One is his *wu'ur-zoo*, his open or everyday name; the other is his *sɛyɔrɔŋ wu'uri*, his spirit-guardian name. It is the latter name that is invoked at death and on other ritual occasions in which a person's well being is at issue. It is the name used, for instance, when a person's evil Pre-destiny is exorcised[7]). It is not a secret name. Though it is not usually known outside the circle of his close kin, those who normally share with him in sacrifices to common ancestors of

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[5]) D. WESTERMANN, "Kindheitserinnerung des Togonegers Bonifatius Foli". *Mitt. d. Sem. f. Orient. Sprachen*, XXXIV, iii, 1931.

[6]) I have described much of the life and social organisation of the Tallensi in my two books *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (1945) and *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, (1949).

[7]) For a fuller account of this notion and of the notion of the *sɛyɔr* see op. cit., *The Web of Kinship*, passim. See also R. S. RATTRAY, *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, vol. II. passim.

121 as myths that sanction or reflect contemporary social relationships and usages.[1]

In short, my chief aim has been to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure; but I hope that the material will also be useful for comparative and theoretical studies.

II

114 My wife and I spent nearly two and a half years in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, between January 1934 and April 1937. For most of that time we were amongst the Tallensi.[2] Our head-quarters were at Tongo, which proved to be an ideal base for our work. There we were at the hub of Taleland and within a few hours' march or ride of any part of the country we might wish to visit. We trekked over most of Taleland and also visited the chief centres of the neighbouring tribes, in particular the Mamprusi. As there is no linguistic literature for the Tallensi, we had to learn their dialect from scratch, with the assistance of a semi-literate interpreter and the scanty literature on Mole and Dagbane. It took us about six months to learn enough Talni for workaday communication with the people. By the end of our first tour we became proficient enough to dispense with an interpreter. Nevertheless, I know only too well that we reached but a moderate standard in our vocabulary and in our appreciation of the finer shades of thought and feeling that can be expressed in Talni.

We were the only white people who had ever lived among the Tallensi for any length of time and the first to speak their dialect. After their initial suspicions had been allayed, we were quickly accepted and soon had many friends. Our first informants soon got to understand our aims and entered into the spirit of our work with sincerity and zeal. They were mostly men and women who assisted us out of friendship and trust in our good faith. I wish to thank them for their confidence in us and for the devotion with which they instructed us in the way of life of their people. We remember with gratitude the patience, tolerance, tact, and friendliness of many dozens of Tale men, women, and children. They welcomed us to their homes, their domestic occasions, and their esoteric and public religious gatherings. We learnt more from them about humanity than I have the skill to write of. Təŋ-Yikpemdaan, my first friend and mentor and one of nature's gentlemen, was a fount of wisdom. The late Chief of Tongo, Na Naam Bioŋ, was a proud, intelligent, and forthright man whose support stood us in good stead and whose great store of knowledge was freely opened to us. Many others, too numerous to mention, were our faithful friends and zealous helpers.

● 122 My field-work among the Tallensi was made possible by the grant of a fellowship from the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. I appreciate the privilege of having held this fellowship and record with gratitude the unfailing interest which the Directors (Dr. J. H.

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[1] As Radcliffe-Brown showed in *The Andaman Islands*, and Malinowski in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

[2] In 1943, in the course of other duties, I had occasion to spend some time in the Northern Territories. I found that no social changes of significance had taken place among the Tallensi since 1937.

Oldham and later Professor Sir Reginald Coupland) and the Secretary-General (Sir Hanns Vischer) took in the work of the Institute's fellows. I appreciate, in particular, the freedom they allowed us in carrying out the research entrusted to us and the encouragement they gave us to aim at high scientific standards. I am greatly indebted to Professor D. Westermann, who was one of the Institute's research directors. His great scholarship in West African languages and cultures made his counsel of exceptional value. The success my wife and I were able to achieve in learning Talni owed much to a short course we were fortunate enough to have with him. This, like my preliminary training at the London School of Economics, was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. 122

I chose the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for my field-work on the advice of the late Captain R. S. Rattray. His name is written in indelible letters in the annals of West African ethnology and I was proud to follow in his footsteps. His pioneer ethnographical survey of the Northern Territories saved me months of labour. 121

I made Tongo our head-quarters on the advice of Administrative and other Government officers working in the Northern Territories. My wife and I owe a special debt of gratitude to the then Chief Commissioner Mr. W. J. A. (now Sir Andrew) Jones for the keen interest he took in our work and for many helpful arrangements he made to facilitate it. We have also to thank Sir Andrew and Lady Jones for many personal kindnesses. I owe my understanding of the spirit and methods of colonial administration chiefly to Sir Andrew and his officers. 000

My wife and I also remember gratefully the unfailing kindness and hospitality of Colonel G. H. Gibbs, M.C., Sir Andrew's successor as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories, who was District Commissioner, Mamprusi, in 1934–7, and of Mrs. Gibbs. A visit to them was a heaven-sent rest from the strenuous routine of field-work. Many discussions with Colonel Gibbs helped to broaden my understanding of the problems of government and social development in the Northern Territories.

Captain J. L. Mothersill, Mr. E. W. Ellison, and Mr. A. F. Kerr, who were in charge of the Zuarungu district at various times during our stay there, put us greatly in their debt by their readiness to help us.

Our nearest European neighbour was Mr. C. W. Lynn, M.B.E., Superintendent of Agriculture at Zuarungu. Mr. Lynn's friendship was a great stand-by to us at all times. He was at that time engaged on his now well-known survey of native agriculture in the Zuarungu district and we had many long talks on this subject. Farming is a subject of supreme interest to the natives; and though it does not come into this book very much, I should have made little progress in the field without some knowledge of Tale agriculture. I received great help from Mr. Lynn on this side of my field-work. 114

I have, in this study, stuck to my last and dealt with an anthropological problem from an anthropological point of view. But I hope that what I have written will also be of service to Government officers in the Northern territories. 121

184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the
764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger
of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have
[579] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group
of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound
of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-
Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting them-
selves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of
the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the
true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same
time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those
of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration
● [123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my
field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial
association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as
796 composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region
of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent
to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris,
796 Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take
648 the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring
Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

PLATE III

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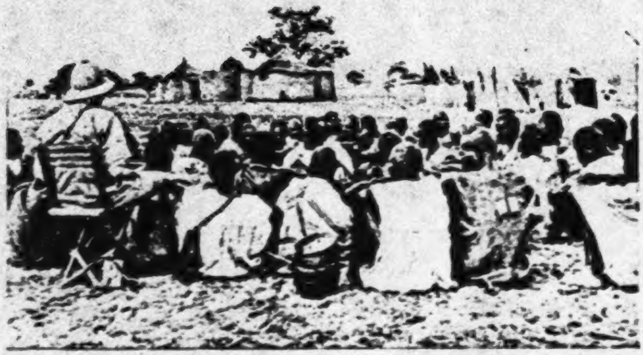

(*a*) Elders of a Maximal Lineage assemble to sacrifice to their Founder.

The Maximal Lineage is a corporate unit: The elders of a maximal lineage, representing all its component segments, assemble to perform a sacrifice on the grave of one of their founding ancestors. Note that (a) only men are present; (b) the members of each segment sit together; (c) the close-packed form of the group, an index of the strong sense of lineage solidarity in such situations.

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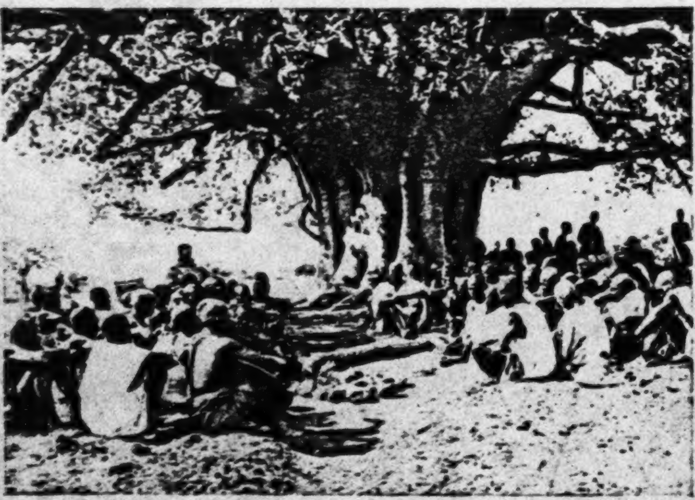

(*b*) Prayer preceding Sacrifice to Clan Founder.

An episode in the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other founding ancestors, at Tongo, in 1936. Men of the sub-clan assembled at Mosuor's grave (stones in foreground) and tree shrine (baobab tree). The photograph was taken as the prayer preceding the sacrifice was being offered.

[facing p. 56]

people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, 828 they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships. 156 People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experiences, his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew 123 intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees in families like those of Kutɔbis of Tɔŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of Tɔŋ-Puhug.

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but 596 there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevitable, some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the 156 structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain 578 dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas an erratic man like Kutɔbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor in the cycle of changes that a family passes through.

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life 602 of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance, and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common

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Details Collected.

126 A junior officer of the Department was stationed at each centre and generally received the hospitality of the Chief. He was therefore *in touch with the centre of local affairs.* The number of compounds which can be recorded by one man depends upon many factors, but keeping strict accuracy in mind, rather than the maximum number of records possible, six was found to be a reasonable number for a man previously unacquainted with the work. Each compound was given a serial number, which was entered into a record book together with the place name, the name of the section and the name of the compound owner; these details were entered as a heading. Beneath this the following details were entered :—

Compound. a. Number of men farming in the compound (including boys big enough to farm).

b. Details of persons supported by the produce from the farm.

c. Livestock owned by the compound.

d. Notes upon the food supply from the previous season.

e. Remarks. (Any details affecting the economics of the household, *i.e.*, trades followed, like smithing; money from sale of livestock; and so on.)

Farms. f. Total area farmed (entered after survey).

g. Area, and a brief description of each farm.

h. Area of land manured in the current season (after survey).

i. Mean yields of major crops in current season (after harvest).

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Measuring Farms.

The total area of land farmed by each compound was then chain surveyed with the 100′ chain by the usual cadastral methods followed in agricultural survey (well described by Haines in "Surveying for Agricultural Students, Land Agents, and Farmers" (10)). The areas were then computed, and a plan to the scale of 1″=100′, was made of each "farm" (the word "farm" is used for each detached area or field). The farms were given serial numbers for each compound, and the plans were entered into the record book with notes upon situation, soil, and trees. All this is work which can be done during the dry season.

Measuring Crop Mixtures.

The next step was to make traced plans from the originals, on a separate sheet of paper for each farm. When dealing with a number of compounds it is essential to write the name of the place, the number of the compound, the owner's name, and the number of the farm, upon each sheet of paper, and to make certain that the staff recognise the same numbering. To avoid confusion the "compound farm" was always "Farm 1", and the others were numbered in order of the distance away from the compound. The traced plans were given to the assistant responsible for the centre concerned, and he entered-in the cropping when planting was finished. Where a number of different crops, or mixtures of crops, were planted in the same farm—as frequently happened, particularly in compound farms—the boundaries of each were marked in on the traced plans with dotted lines. The area of land manured was marked-in by shading. The position of these boundaries was found by running intersection lines from the original survey pillars (marked by stakes in the ground). This work has to be done and checked before the crops have grown so high as to be damaged by chaining.

Computation of Crop Areas.

The areas of each mixture of crops were then calculated. Where a whole farm was planted with a single mixture the area of the farm was the area of the crop, less any land occupied by buildings, etc. In farms which contained a number of mixtures, where only the total area was known, the area of each mixture was found, accurate to the first place of decimals, by graphical methods (10) from the traced plans. Hence the need for scale plans of farms. (To compute the area of a piece of land from a scale plan, proceed as follows: Draw parallel lines 1" (=100') apart in ink upon a piece of tracing cloth, or tracing paper. Place the lined tracing cloth over the plan, the area of which is required, so that one boundary touches a parallel line. With a transparent set-square, lay off "give and take" line at right angles to the lines on the tracing cloth, to equalise the boundaries on the plan. Measure the distances between opposite equalising lines, add, and multiply by 100; this gives the area in square feet. If "give and take" lines are entered lightly in pencil they can be erased and the tracing cloth can be used almost indefinitely.)

Collection of Yield Data.

It was not feasible to weigh all the produce from the farms in order to obtain yield data since crops were harvested irregularly. Neither was it desirable, provided a sufficient number of sample plots could be laid down at random in average parts of the fields. The method adopted was to demarcate at least two square plots of one-fortieth acre (33' x 33') in every acre of the farm; the corners of each plot were marked with stakes and the boundaries with a shallow hoed line. The position of these plots was marked roughly on the cropping plans, and each plot was given a serial number for the farm, in order, radiating out from the compound. By reference to the place, compound number, and plot number any matter relating to single plot could be checked immediately

Cropping Schedules.

Cropping schedules were next prepared for each compound, into which the yields were entered at harvest. The schedules were made on lined foolscap paper and contained as a heading the place name and compound number, and columns from left to right giving—Farm No., Plot No., Cropping, Date of Planting, Date of Harvesting, Yield per Plot, Manuring, Remarks. Considerable importance was attached to the "Remarks" column into which was entered anything to explain why the yield from the particular plot in question should be high or low.

Method of Recording Yields.

Yields were weighed to the nearest quarter of a pound upon a "family" type of spring balance. Cereal crops were recorded as dry head weights, and a sample was set aside to give the threshing percentage. Groundnuts were recorded "dry in shell", and sweet potatoes and Coleus potatoes as fresh tubers. Harvesting 126 and weighing had to be left to the junior staff, but visits were paid as often as possible to each centre of record during the harvest season and check weights were taken. It is essential that the staff fully understand what is required of them before the rush of harvest comes on. Any doubtful yields must not be recorded. Nearly half the records in 1932 had to be discarded because a "literate helper" thought it better to put down fictitious yields than to report mistakes. At first some farmers thought we intended to confiscate the produce from the sample plots; but they all readily co-operated with us when disillusioned.

RESULTS OF SURVEY.

Distribution of Recorded Compounds.

The farms of 54 compounds have been surveyed and it is upon 128 the data from these that the following statistics are based. The variation from one compound to another, in almost every detail recorded, makes it necessary to emphasise that, whilst the figures are reasonably accurate in themselves, they are based upon a very small proportion of the population, and the means are reliable as district means, only as our compounds are typical of the centres from which they have been selected. The compounds were distributed at the ten centres of record as follows :—

Zuarungu Area.	Bongo	6
	Nangodi	5
	Sambruno ...	5
	Tongo	5
	Zuarungu ...	8
Navrongo Area.	Chana	6
	Kologo	6
	Navrongo ...	2
	Wiaga	6
Kusasi Area.	Zebilla	5
	Total	54

In discussing the results of the survey work it is proposed to reduce figures in the text to means and percentages as far as possible; details are given in tables in Appendix II.

maintaining, amity and solidarity in the clan, and no less efficacious in 618x promoting their increase and prosperity than the ancestral cult of Mosuor biis. Such mystical interpretations are, in fact, a reflex of the social structure. They throw no light on the problem of the numbers of Mosuor's posterity. Without historical documents we must accept it as one of the given facts of Tale society.

Here a point of particular interest may be noted. Though they are held, 127 ● in common with other Namoo clans in Taleland, to be an intrusive 173 group by origin, the clan of Mosuor biis forms the backbone of Tale political organization. They place their founding ancestor some eight to ten generations back counting from the heads of existing minimal lineages. But the clans which claim to be autochthonous and to have antedated all the Namoos of Taleland in their occupation of the country give pedigrees of about the same chronological extension. It is obvious therefore that no means of estimating the relative lengths of time during which Namoos and non-Namoos have been settled in Taleland are provided by their genealogies. Like their myths of origin, the chronological retrospect implied in Tale clan or lineage genealogies has no historical value. The chronological depth of their genealogies and the fact that they preserve the graves of significant ancestors seem to justify the inference that the Tale Namoos have occupied their present settlements for not less than two and possibly for three centuries. The Tallensi, however, do not evaluate their genealogies in this way. Genealogies are significant to them as one of the principal instruments for organizing their present social relations. They are kept alive only in so far as they serve this end, and have no value, therefore, as a measure of the time during which a clan or lineage has been in existence. The uniform genealogical retrospect of Namoo and non-Namoo clans in Taleland is a reflex of the stability and coherence of their social and political relations. The only historical inference one can justifiably make is that their present social order has been in existence for a greater length of time than the memories of the oldest living natives can compass. This is the essence of the statement 'It has been thus since the days of our fathers and forefathers', which the natives regard as a sufficient explanation of the origin of most of their institutions.

XXXIII

THE TALENSE

History; Tribal, Clan, and Soog' *Organization*

101 161 121 INTRODUCTORY: The Talense occupy the area shown on the map. According to the 1921 census report they number 29,972 persons of both sexes. Specimens of the language, called Talene or Talen', have been given in Chapter III. Their appearance, their houses, customs, religion, and organization all seem to me to be very similar to those of their neighbours, the Nankanse. Their languages, too, are very much alike. Had the Talense not been labelled with a separate appellation, I doubt if the anthropologist—save after, perhaps, a very minute investigation—would have considered it necessary to deal with them as a group distinct from the Namnam and the Nankanse. Nevertheless, in accordance with the plan which I mapped out, I have done so. Rites and customs, already investigated, discussed, and described, are here approached from a different angle. Results so obtained are always valuable, even where there is a certain inevitable repetition. The process serves also to fill gaps in the work which has gone before, to which the information obtained later may be considered as supplementary.

128 In dealing with this and the remainder of the tribes, I have endeavoured to group my facts, as far as possible, under the chapter headings already adopted. This arrangement will enable my readers the more readily to piece together the sum total of the data available concerning any one particular subject, and I hope will mitigate somewhat the defects in presentation for which I have already apologized.

173 167 The history of the tribal wanderings of this people follows the same lines as that with which we are now familiar. This history is the record of the migrations, not of the tribe *qua* tribe, but of every clan, the composite of which now forms the group called the Talense (s. Taleŋa; language Talene.) The tribal histories, specimens of which are about to be related, tell of the migrations (within comparatively narrow limits of time and space) of the groups which have for some hundreds of years supplied the Territorial Rulers. Of the wanderings of the original people themselves, who are now largely merged with this foreign element, nothing is really known, except that they were undoubtedly of the stock which I have termed the 'Mole group', who seem to

Lebzure, *Kunwase* (You-do-not-stroke-a-snake), son of *Lebkura*. In 173 his time we fired arrows at the people on the Tɔng hills; there was a famine and we used to rob them. 622 All the people, except Winkoŋo and Sia, rose against us, saying we were too proud. *Kunwase* was succeeded by *Kundizore* (Water-cannot-pull-down-a-hill), a son of *Sapelega*. There was also a war in his time which arose out of a quarrel during a hunting expedition, in which Bade and Yazore had taken part. Small-pox (called *Naba*, the Chief) also broke out in his time. *Kundizore* was succeeded by *Nalebseyo* (It-will-change-to-the-wet-season), son of *Kabu*. He was succeeded by *Pilibazaa* (Cover-them-all), son of *Bupaa*. During his time the Europeans came. *Pilibazaa* was taken by the [177] white men to Gambaga and asked to pay two hundred cows because the Tɔng people had fired arrows at them (the Europeans). He died at Gambaga and was succeeded by *Kunbanbeo* (Cannot-know-to-morrow), a son of *Kundizore*. He was succeeded by *Ƴirisano* (Destroyer-of-compounds), alias *Dentele*, a son of *Lebenwana*. In his time the Europeans came and asked the Hill-people (Teŋ-zugu) to come and see them, but they refused. He was succeeded by myself, *Kpama*, son of *Pilibazaa*. I brought my father's bones from Gambaga, and they were buried outside his compound.'

The above list comprises twenty-eight names, and, with other 551 similar genealogies, supplies us with an approximate estimate of the 173 time when the foreigners from Mampurugu first extended their in- 622 fluence to embrace this area. The names of these Chiefs as here given are their titles only; it is forbidden to mention their real names. Such nicknames are called *sam-wur* in Talene, *saan-yure* in Nankane.

The ruling house at Tɔngo belongs to the *gwegmere* (lion) clan. 128 ● When I recorded the above and the other histories which follow I had 622 not as yet grasped the full significance of what I came to discover later, 565 namely, that in recording the history of these migrations as supplied by the Chiefs, I was really only tracing the origins of a minute section of the population, i.e. of those who formed the upper ruling class, and not of their subjects, who formed the mass of the people. In consequence I am unable, in the present instance, to specify the clans to which the majority of the inhabitants of the 'towns', already given, really belong. In my notebooks I find these clans, in nearly every case, recorded as 'the lion clan'. This is only due, however, to my having fallen into the error of failing to distinguish between rulers and ruled, and imagining the histories told me by Chiefs and their following to be applicable also to their subjects. I do not make any apology, however,

128 for the inclusion here of such records, as, once their limitations and
622 significance are realized, they, equally with other information recorded,
565 go to form part of the composite picture which I am attempting to draw of the traditions of these people.

173 *History of Siega* (as told me by the Chief Zoaga): 'We came from
622 Mampurugu at the same time as *Misore* (see previous history). The Winkoŋo people are related to us (he refers, I believe, to the Chief of that place). My clan is lion; I am the seventeenth Chief of Siega. The Chieftainship is under (the patronage of) Kurugu and can descend to any one of the lion clan. My first-born also taboos a fowl. We have had a Chief, distinct from *Ten'dan'*, since ancient times. The first Chief of Siega was *Kukye*.'

History of Datoko (as told me by the present Chief, Borezina): 'We came from Mampurugu, but not with *Misore*. We travelled by way of Nuŋ (Nungo); from Nuŋ to Tula; from Tula to Kumbule; from Kumbule to Datoko. We met the Kusase people in the land, but drove them across the river (Volta). We marry the Kusase. We are of the lion clan. Chiefs of Datoko are appointed by Kurugu. The man who gives most presents becomes the new Chief, and on obtaining the Chieftainship will try to recover what he has paid. Now Chiefs are made by Government, but still go to Kurugu to receive the *muŋ'* (red fez). I am the son of the late Chief, and am ninth of my line. Datoko has six sections (*Yi-zug'*); each section, since Europeans came, is in charge of a *kambon-nab* (head gunman). Since ancient times we have had *Ten'dan'*. Their work and the Chiefs' work are separate. I settle all cases. The *Ten'dan'* performs the ceremonies when the rain does not fall, unless it is at my own *tengzan* (Nankane, *tingane*), when I perform the sacrifices.' (Here, it will be noticed, the *kambon-nab*, appointed by the Chief (who, when a vacancy occurs, bids with the
[624] other applicants for the post), are ousting the old time section-heads, called in Talene, *yi-zug-kpaem*, who have been forced into the background. The *Ten'dan'* (Nankane, *Ten'dana*) has also become more or less a nonentity.)

History of Ten'zugu (as told me by Ten'goli): 'My ancestor came from Nasia; he was called *Sumni* and was a son of the Chief of Mampurugu. When his father died he wished to succeed him, but was driven away and came to Bulbi. His enemies followed him there, and again he fled and came to Daa, at the foot of the Tong hills. Later he went on top of the hill and settled there. He found some people called Dagali. They were Talense. We married with them. The Dagali people

173 622 304 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief performs sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 565 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 ●128 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 784 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan), but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tampeŋpeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

FOREWORD

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THE writing of this book has been a harder task than I anticipated when I began it in 1938. It has taught me that the hardest part of an anthropologist's work begins after he leaves the field. In the field he is engrossed in concrete human activities. It is true that he can never feel himself completely at one with the people he is studying, however gifted he may be, linguistically or psychologically. He may make some real friends among his hosts; but he can never adopt their cultural values. If he did, he would lose that detachment without which anything he wrote would be of no scientific value. All the same, he is carried by the living stream of social life. He hardly has to stop and think. Thus the crucial scientific task begins when he starts to write up his field material. It is not merely a question of putting his observations on record. Writing an anthropological monograph is itself an instrument of research, and perhaps the most significant instrument of research in the anthropologist's armoury. It involves breaking up the vivid, kaleidoscopic reality of human action, thought, and emotion which lives in the anthropologist's note-books and memory, and creating out of the pieces a coherent representation of a society, in terms of the general principles of organization and motivation that regulate behaviour in it. It is a task that cannot be done without the help of theory.

The task would be easier if social anthropology had a well-founded body of principles to which every new observation in the field could be related. This is not so; and though we all build on the shoulders of our predecessors, working out our problems with their hypotheses and findings implicitly or explicitly in mind, yet every new piece of field-work is unique in some respects, and every new monograph raises unique problems of analysis and exposition. There is inevitably, therefore, a large personal element in an anthropological monograph.

One of my difficulties lay in the complexity of the material I have tried to present. It is commonly accepted that primitive societies are much simpler than ours, both in their cultural make-up and in their social and economic structure. But even a very simple cultural heritage or social organization may be composed of a large number of strands and elements whose interrelations make up a very elaborate pattern. Simplicity in this context is much more a value concept than a scientific category. In social science it is partly a question of how closely and with what discipline one examines the data. I should have found it much easier to write this book at the end of my first tour among the Tallensi, but it would have been inaccurate in some points and defective in many. I did not know enough about the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Hill Talis, for example, at the end of my first tour, to understand its significance in the social structure. Indeed, this and many other matters only became clear to me in the course of writing this book.

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000 There were extraneous difficulties too. In 1938, to quote Lord Hailey,[1] there was 'no systematic demand for research workers' in anthropology in Great Britain. Then came the war, bringing with it issues of far greater moment than the study of the social structure of a remote and unimportant African people.

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114 The requirements of war-time publication have made it necessary to publish separately the two parts of which this study of Tale social structure consists. Though each part is self-contained, I had hoped that they could appear together in one volume. A considerable amount of compression has been necessary in order to fit the book to the Procrustean bed of austerity printing. As my concern in this book is with Tale social structure, I have preferred to leave the descriptive data pertaining to my central theme fairly full, and to compress material that can be more fully dealt with in later studies. This applies particularly to what I have written about Tale religion. It is sometimes said that anthropological monographs tend to be too long. Unfortunately, in descriptive work of this kind brevity is not always reconcilable with accuracy, however attractive it may be from the literary angle. As it is, anthropologists have to exercise rigorous selection in presenting the small fraction of their field material that it is physically possible to publish. One of the objects of any descriptive monograph must be to record material that can be used for comparative and theoretical studies. Excessive brevity (which easily lapses into facile generalization) has often proved a more serious defect, from this point of view, than an inelegant multiplicity of detail. Failing statistical devices, there is no alternative for the anthropologist who wishes to support his general statements with the evidence of observed fact, but adequate descriptive detail. I fear that I have not obeyed this rule as strictly as I should have liked to, owing to lack of space.

121 My object, however, has been a limited one. I have not attempted to give an 'outline' of 'the whole culture'. I consider that a work of that kind is best done in the traditional ethnographic manner of such classics as Junod's *Life of a South African Tribe* or Smith and Dale's *Ila Speaking Peoples*. It is a different thing to study those attributes of a social system that pertain to it *as a whole*, by contrast with those attributes that pertain to a limited sector of the society or a single institutional complex. Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* and Evans-Pritchard's *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic of the Azande* are examples of the latter type of study. But all studies in social structure or political organization or economic structure, being concerned with the factors of social integration, are necessarily concerned with attributes of the whole society. It is chiefly because these categories of social relations are the constant elements in all social activities and constitute the common medium through which social activities are articulated with one another that we can speak of a society as a unit, or of its different aspects as being functionally interrelated or mutually consistent. What I have tried to do in this book is to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure at the level of corporate

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[1] Lord Hailey, 'The Role of Anthropology in Colonial Development', *Man*, xliv, 1944, No. 5; cf. also A. I. Richards, 'Practical Anthropology in the Lifetime of the International African Institute', *Africa*, xiv. 6, 1944.

group organization. This is the framework of the political system of the 121 Tallensi, which I have described briefly elsewhere[1] and hope to write about more fully later; and it is in its turn built up on the system of interpersonal social relations which I have called kinship in the narrow sense and describe in the second part of this study.[2]

As I am analysing Tale social structure in this book I treat Tale culture primarily as the content of social relations and not in its own right. I discuss customs, beliefs, conventional usages, religious values, and so forth, principally as indices of social relations. That is why I have not been able to make use of the concepts and methods of the students of culture history and of the psychology of culture. The recent work of Benedict, Mead, Bateson, Linton, and others in the United States promises to revolutionize the study of the psychology of culture; but as Bateson argues,[3] with admirable cogency, both the approach and the aims of that study differ from those of the study of social structure.

Except for one or two topics where they seemed apposite, I have made no use of comparative data, because my aim is entirely different from that of a comparative study. Actually, there is extremely little in the literature on the Voltaic region, apart from Rattray's and Labouret's works,[4] that is relevant, and the mere citation of information from other parts of West Africa would have no value in an analytical study. Africanists will see, however, that many features of Tale social organization are typical of patrilineal societies in West Africa and some Tale institutions have parallels in South, East, and Central Africa.

I have also kept general theoretical discussions out of this book as far 128 as possible. It was Poincaré, I believe, who remarked that whereas physical scientists have a subject-matter, sociologists, for lack of a subject-matter, spend most of their time discussing methodology. I have tried to stick to my subject-matter, using whatever theoretical guidance I could find to make it clear and to interpret it to the best of my knowledge of the Tallensi.

Observation in the field showed that every significant social activity 121 among the Tallensi is tied up with the lineage system. I set out, therefore, to investigate the function of the lineage in Tale social organization, and the result is this book. I consider that it should be the first task of every field-worker to give an account of the social structure of the people he has studied. On this foundation he can subsequently build his studies of separate functional systems, such as law or economics or religion, of particular institutional complexes or social mechanisms, or of the culture as a whole. As regards the Tallensi, I have no hesitation in saying that it is impossible fully to understand their economic, jural, or ritual institutions without a grasp of their lineage system.

While avoiding theoretical discussions I have drawn attention to characteristics of Tale society that have a wider theoretical interest. I was impressed, in the field, with the apparent stability of Tale society over work of this kind. I consider it futile to debate this question and can think of no more apposite answer to him than the Chinese philosopher's retort to a similar doubt.

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[1] In *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard.
[2] Forthcoming under the title of *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*.
[3] Gregory Bateson, *Naven*.
[4] Cit. *infra*.

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

I have kept vernacular terms and phrases down to a minimum using English equivalents, however approximate, for preference. But I have had to retain a few native words as special terms for lack of satisfactory equivalents. I have used the orthography recommended by the International African Institute, with one exception. I have used the symbol *h* medially and finally to represent a very open velar fricative. This consonant is interchangeable with *s* in Talni. Initially, this consonant is pronounced as in English, and is not interchangeable with *s*. Talni has neither semantic nor grammatical tone.

The Tallensi often drop a final vowel if it is not semantically significant and I have automatically followed this habit. Thus Tallensi, say *Gɔris* or *Gɔrisi*, *tɛndaan* or *tɛndaana*, *Yinduur* or *Yinduuri*, *yir* or *yiri*, *biis* or *biisi*, *na'ab* or *na'aba*, *Tɔŋ* or *Tɔŋo* according to the context.

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December 1944

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of the Tong Hills; yet 'we and the Talis are one' they maintain. In proof 101
of this they point out that their *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət* Festival belongs to the same 186
cycle as *Da'a* and *Bɔyaraam*, though they have but the vaguest hearsay 184
knowledge of the esoteric ritual of these festivals. Their neighbours at Sie and Datɔk they call Namoos.

Note: For convenience of exposition we shall adopt the following con- 128
vention in this book. Whenever we speak of all the inhabitants of Taleland, irrespective of their internal subdivisions, we shall use the name given to them by other outsiders and speak of them as *Tallensi*. When we wish to refer to that section of the Tallensi whom they themselves describe as the 'real Talis', we shall refer to them as *Talis*, distinguishing among them, when necessary, between the *Hill Talis*, who live on and around the Tong Hills, and the Talis of the Plain, who live nearer Tongo (i.e. Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Ba'ari, Yaɣazuor).

Nomenclature and the Structural Scheme

This nomenclature reflects a structural scheme of considerable com- 184
plexity. It points to institutional allegiances which segregate adjacent social units from each other and group together spatially dispersed units. The major cleavage it reveals is that between the Namoo communities, on the one hand, and the settlements of the real Talis and of those who claim to be akin to them, on the other. But it indicates, also, that there are other lines of division and bonds of union both within each major grouping and cutting across the cleavage. It is a cardinal principle of Tale social structure that every social grouping defined as a unit in one situation, or according to one principle, dissolves into an association of lesser and differentiated units in another situation or according to another principle. Variation in custom or in ideological emphasis is regarded by the natives as one of the most significant indices of group differentiation. It is also, as we shall see, an important factor of social integration.

It is therefore a topic of perennial interest to the natives to observe and comment on variations of usage and doctrine. The idea that identity of custom and belief is desirable or natural is inconceivable. Everybody adheres staunchly to the forms of social behaviour accepted in his own group without desiring to impose them on others. 'Look at the Namoos,' observed Ta'aŋ one day, 'don't they (i.e. different sections of the same clan) do different things at funeral ceremonies? But their use of a goat (in mortuary rites), that is all one. We Talis, again, using our sheep (in mortuary rites)—this is the same for all of us. But as for our ritual, we split up and do different things.' Each one with his father's ways, everyone with his ancestor's ways (*Sɔ ni u ba yɛl, sɔ ni u yaab yɛl*)—that is, every group has its distinctive ancestral customs—is a characteristic Tale aphorism. This attitude, emphasizing simultaneously community and differentiation, similarity of pattern, and divergence of detail, permeates Tale thought.

Myths of Origin

Whenever Tallensi discuss the cleavages in their society they trace 173

CHAPTER III

PARADIGM OF THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

613 182 TALE society is built up round the lineage system. It is no exaggeration to say that every sociological problem presented by the Tallensi hinges on the lineage system. It is the skeleton of their social structure, the bony framework which shapes their body politic; it guides their economic life and moulds their ritual ideas and values. The social life of the Tallensi cannot be understood without a knowledge of the principles that govern their lineage organization.

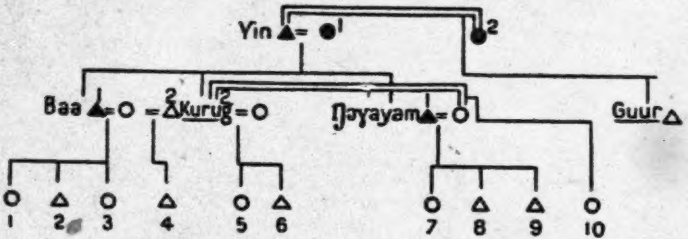
128 These principles will be briefly and formally stated in the present chapter. This will give us a paradigm by which to orient our analysis. Something of this sort, though less systematic and abstract, is in the mind's eye of every well-informed native when he discusses the structure of his society or takes his part in public affairs. The schematic analysis given here will be amplified in later chapters and some repetition is therefore unavoidable. In studying a society of this type we cannot avoid traversing the same ground repeatedly from different directions. For the same basic units, relations, and principles of structure lie behind all forms of association and all organized social activities.

A preliminary bird's-eye view of the lineage system is important, also, in another respect. A lineage always functions as a whole. Whenever a lineage emerges in social action it does so as a product of its component parts and of the relations between them; when a part of a lineage emerges in social action it does so relatively to other parts of it and to the whole. Anyone wishing to understand the way a Tale lineage functions must think of it as a field system, in which the behaviour of the part is regulated by its relation to the whole and the behaviour of the whole is a product of the relations of the parts.

613 From the Tale point of view a lineage is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the known descendants by a known genealogy of a single known and named ancestor in an unbroken male line. From the sociologist's point of view it is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the recognized descendants by an accepted genealogy of a single named ancestor in a putatively continuous male line. It is, in other words, a strictly unilineal, agnatic descent group.

Lineages vary in *span* proportionately to the number of generations accepted as having intervened between their living members and the founding ancestor from whom they trace their descent. The lineage of minimum span, which we shall call the minimal lineage, consists of the children of one father. The lineage of maximum span, which we shall call the maximal lineage, is the lineage of widest span to which any of its members belongs. It consists of all the descendants in the male line of the remotest common patrilineal ancestor known to the members of the lineage. Whenever we speak of a lineage without qualification to indicate its span, we use the term in the generalized sense of a lineage of any span

613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody [142] else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the [487] rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of [177] some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*) and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayəlis*). But one would have to know [515] the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body-[577] cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map at end of book.)



[*NB: Double lines (=) show marriages*]

[128] *in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed*

- Living men △
- Living women ○
- Dead men ▲
- Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Dɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

631 171 Rhodesia,[1] or the Ashanti of the Gold Coast.[2] These peoples have a pyramidal social structure corresponding to their pyramidal form of government. From the village to the tribal unit we find a hierarchy of territorial-political units, the greater made up of a collection of the lesser, and culminating in the whole tribal unit. This is associated with a corresponding hierarchy of political offices, from the village headman to the paramount chief at the apex. Among the Tallensi[3] there is no single person or body of persons vested with supreme executive and administrative authority over the whole of Taleland. Government is laterally distributed amongst all the corporate units that make up the society, instead of being vertically distributed as in pyramidal societies. All the corporate units are, broadly speaking, politically equal; all are segments of the same structural order.

621 This is one aspect of what is meant by describing Tale society as segmentary in form. But the concept has further implications. The corporate units that compose Tale society are not a casual agglomerate of discrete bodies, but are socially articulated and interconnected with one another; and they are thus interrelated in a segmentary series. This principle of association between defined social units runs right through the structure of Tale society. It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system. This rule holds whether the associations are temporary, for a particular end, or form permanent groupings. Furthermore, the principles according to which the associations occur are either uniform for a whole series of segments of increasing dimension or are so related to one another that principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.

128 This is an architectural way of looking at the structure of Tale society. It is the line we have largely followed in the preceding chapters, where we have been concerned with the largest corporate units into which the Tallensi are organized. Our attention has been fixed mainly on the permanent edifice in which social relations and activities are congealed rather than on their emergence in process. We have been analysing the product of social segmentation rather than the process itself. To distinguish between product and process is, however, merely an analytic convenience in dealing with social facts. In reality what we denote as a product is a set of regularities and recurrences of process. A corporate unit is really the sum total of corporate relations and activities occurring amongst a defined group of individuals. We can think of a maximal lineage as an architectural segment of a composite clan in the same way as we can picture one storey of a modern building as a lateral segment of the whole. A maximal lineage, however, differs from a part of a building of brick and wood in that it is not always 'there', tactually and visibly.

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[1] Cf. Richards, Audrey I., 'The Political System of the Bemba Tribe', in *African Political Systems*, and *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, 1939.

[2] Cf. Rattray, R. S., *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, 1929.

[3] A fuller analysis will be found in the 'Introduction' and in my article on 'The Political System of the Tallensi' in *African Political Systems*.

It emerges when certain social processes and activities are in play; it is 128
potential when they are not in play. Difficult as it is to convey this to a reader, it is something which the observer is constantly aware of. A maximal lineage emerges only in relation to other maximal lineages, and a clan in relation to other clans. When we speak of lineages being segmentarily related to one another and to the composite clan embracing them, we mean that their relations are mutual, symmetrical, and summative. A is related to B in the same way as B is related to A and the sum of their interrelations gives us a set of relations of the same kind but of higher order.

Putting it thus abstractly, however, leaves out a point of the utmost importance. The relations between individuals and between groups in which corporate units like the maximal lineage emerge are social relations. They are subject to jural, moral, and ritual norms; they are the means of achieving human purposes, of getting a livelihood, of marrying and procreating, of expressing emotional attitudes, organizing the intercourse of people, and so forth. A maximal lineage emerges in terms of jurally, morally, and ritually defined ties and cleavages that exist between it and other specified maximal lineages. A segmentary relationship between lineages or any other social units implies the existence of specific ties and cleavages which have the effect of making each unit a determining factor in the emergence of the other units. This is the basis of the concept of a field of social relations which we have used to describe the way in which lineages are differentiated from and articulated with one another.

The concept of a field of social relations has enabled us to see how 121
clanship acts as a factor of social integration. Through the overlapping of the fields of clanship of adjacent maximal lineages chains of clanship ties interlinking a whole group of lineages are established. Thus each lineage can be regarded as the centre of a series of zones of clanship of increasing amplitude and diminishing integration. The clan is the central region of such a system, a wider community like that of the Hill Talis constitutes the next region, and beyond that lie still wider regions of diminishing importance for the members of the lineage that is taken as the starting-point.

We have seen that there are three major sub-regions within the socio- 621
geographic region we have called Taleland, within each of which there is a greater degree of interarticulation of lineages and clans, and therefore closer integration, than there is between them. But the three sub-regions overlap with each other and with adjacent non-Tale regions. They have a particularly important connecting system in the chain of sub-clans of Mosuor biis.

This system of regions or communities constituted primarily by the 621
operation of the ties and cleavages of clanship is the foundation of a 182
scheme of ritual values and relationships which serves to reinforce the clanship organization by means of mystical sanctions and by co-ordinating the interrelations of lineages and clans at a higher level. Among the Tallensi the web of clanship and the web of ritual relationships take the place, as mechanisms of social integration, of a constituted governmental

CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

●128 THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

613 The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and
ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural
601 basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow
121 sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

602 The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[p. 12]

porate political life. This is one of the chief functions of the *pɔγasama* 602 (see p. 318) in marriage affairs, for example. However the lineage system separates individuals and corporate groups from one another, or sets them against one another, this underlying network of extra-clan bonds knits them together; and this is a very powerful factor in maintaining the equilibrium of Tale society. In the social structure as a whole it has a complementary function to that of clanship. In the old days it acted as an unseen brake on the tendency of clans to resort to fighting as a means of settling their differences; and if fighting did break out it gave an extra stimulus to any efforts directed towards making peace. For, as likely as not, every man on either side had relatives among the enemy and was swayed by divided loyalties. These bonds probably helped to keep down the number of casualties in inter-clan fighting. For it is a sin to slay a kinsman in war. 'If you saw a kinsman on the other side', said Tiezien, 'you shouted to him to get away lest your arrows hit him by mistake; or else, you yourself moved away to another place.' One could not shoot off one's arrows at random but had to pick out an enemy, making certain that he was not a kinsman.

These extra-clan kinship ties are not indiscriminately distributed. They fall into an order in accordance with the field principle which our investigation of clanship brought to light.[1] That is why they reinforce the forces of social integration in the society at large rather than the forces that encourage clan isolation. Though every member of a clan has his own particular bonds of extra-clan kinship, the tendency is for most members to have extra-clan kinship ties with the same clans. Thus members of one clan tend to have a common field of extra-clan kinship ties; and as the lineage principle encourages the attachment to a whole lineage or clan of sentiments and interests directed towards one of its members, the result is that members of one clan all tend to have personal sentiments of amity and loyalty for the same neighbouring clans. In accordance with the field principle this means that members of any particular clan will have more and closer extra-clan kinship ties with adjacent clans than with more distant clans, and with clans linked to theirs by special ties rather than with clans with which theirs has no political or ritual ties.

This appears quite plainly if a distribution map is made for a sample 602 of the wives of men of a clan, showing the natal clans of these women. Since it is through marriages that extra-clan kinship ties are woven 128 into the lineage fabric, such a map shows the distribution of the most important ties of matrilateral kinship for a particular clan, the ties they have with their mothers' brothers.

We reproduce here a diagram (Fig. 7) constructed for a sample of wives of Tongo men. Similar diagrams for a sample of Kpata'ar wives

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

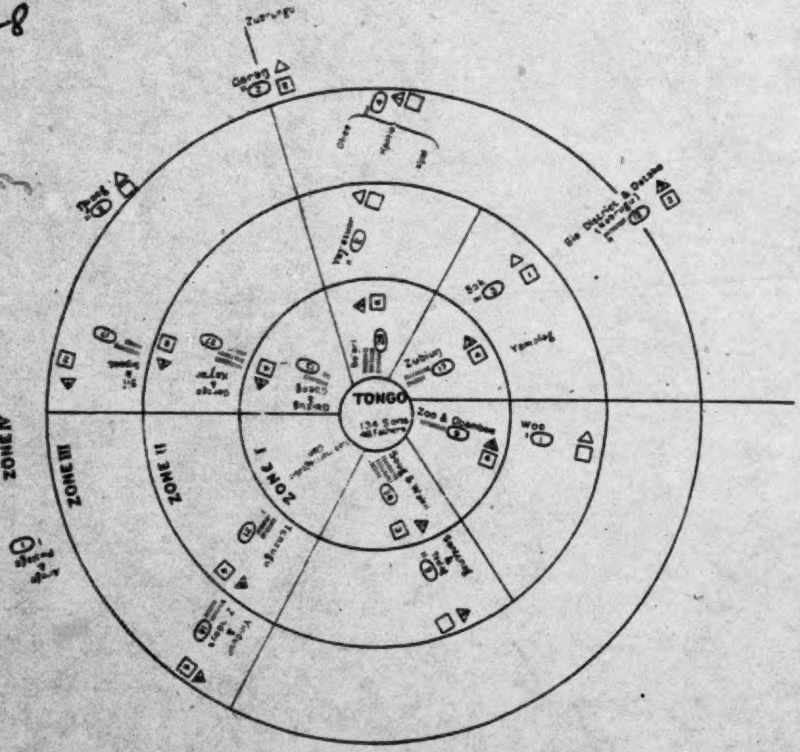

FIG. 7. Distribution of matrilateral kinship ties of Tongo men.

The diagram shows the geographical distribution of wives and mothers of a sample of Tongo men and hence their field of matrilateral kinship.

Wives of men shown thus (25).
Mothers of men shown thus △11.
Mothers of men's fathers shown thus ▢5.

The diagram divides the socio-spatial field of matrilateral kinship into four zones: Zone I, immediately adjacent clans; Zone II, clans immediately adjacent to clans of Zone I; Zone III, clans beyond Zone II clans; Zone IV, non-Tale clans.

The location of clans or groups of clans on the diagram corresponds to their territorial relations to one another; but the zones are socio-spatial not territorial regions. Most clans of Zone I are within 2 miles of Tongo; most clans in Zone II are between 2 and 5 miles of Tongo; most clans of Zone III between 4 and 7 miles of Tongo. But some clans in Zone III are spatially nearer to Tongo than some clans in Zone II, and vice versa, and one or two non-Tale clans are spatially nearer than some clans in Zone III. Though there is a high positive correlation between social distance and territorial distance, the correspondence is not perfect. The emphasis of the diagram is on the social distance from Tongo of the clans included.

[p. 288]

602 and a sample of Sie wives have exactly the same form and show that the same principles operate throughout Taleland.[1]

128 A sample of 134 men from all four sections of Tongo, who were living at Tongo at the beginning of 1934, was chosen for this test. The distribution according to their natal clans of all their wives—living, dead, or separated—who had borne children to them was marked on a map. The distribution by clan of origin of the mothers of these men was plotted on the same map. As a number of the men were brothers and some were polygynous the total number of mothers recorded is smaller than the number of wives. Lastly, the distribution by clan of origin of these men's fathers' mothers was plotted on the same map; and as their fathers were fewer than they are and some were polygynous, the total number of their paternal grandmothers recorded is less than the number of their mothers and much less than the number of their wives. The diagram therefore shows the socio-geographic distribution of (*a*) these men's fathers' mothers' brothers' (*ba ahəbnam*) clans; (*b*) of their own mothers' brothers' (*ahəbnam*) clans; (*c*) of their children's mothers' brothers clans.

Table showing the Field of Extra-clan Kinship Ties

Total number of men, all sections of Tongo	134
Total number of their wives	205
Total number of their mothers	64
Total number of their father's mothers	46

Zonal Distribution of Kinship Ties

	Incidence		
	Mothers' brothers of		
Zone	*Men's children*	*Men themselves*	*Men's fathers*
Zone I . .	93	33	21
Zone II .	56	12	13
Zone III .	47 } 56	18 } 19	9 } 12
Zone IV .	9	1	3
	205	64	46

It will be seen that the total field of extra-clan kinship ties for Tongo is directly complementary to the total field of clanship ties, and largely congruent with the field of politico-ritual ties we have previously established for this clan.[2] Within this field there are four zones of density graded in accordance with spatial and social distance from Tongo. Thus

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[1] They also operate among the Gorisi, as a sample of marriages collected in one of the sections of Bolaga showed.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv and v.

602 •128 Tongo people, individually, have closer and more numerous kinship ties with the immediately adjacent clans of Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Wakii, and Zoo than with clans in the next zone, such as the Tenzugu clans. On the other hand the incidence of such relationships with Yinduuri is markedly greater than with any other clans of Zone III, because Tongo and Yinduuri have a bond of friendship through the chiefship of Sii, as has been explained in our previous book.[1]

602 It will be seen, moreover, that the field of extra-clan kinship is relatively constant for a particular clan through several generations. For its form is approximately the same for children, fathers, and grandfathers. This suggests a regular tendency in the social structure rather than a chance result of the random choices of individuals. As we have previously stated, men seek for wives preferably amongst the nearest eligible women—that is amongst the women of clans that are spatially or socially nearest to their clan. The whole weight of the social structure lies behind this tendency. The restrictions on mobility in the past encouraged it. But the most important factor was, and is, the circular relationship that exists between marriage and extra-clan kinship ties. Marriages create extra-clan kinship ties; social contacts between members of different clans are largely canalized by extra-clan kinship ties; and these ties lead to contacts that in turn bring about new marriages. The modifications that are coming into this sequence nowadays are proof of this argument. The freedom of movement now possible has led to a great expansion of the social space of the younger men. They are beginning to take wives from distant parts, very often outside Taleland, in increasing numbers.

As every Tale clan has a similar field of extra-clan kinship ties, the fields of adjacent clans overlap. The bonds of extra-clan kinship between any two adjacent clans are not only reciprocal but bilateral. Just as many Tongo people, for example, have mothers' brothers at Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, and Wakii, so many Wakii, Ba'ari, and Zubiuŋ people have mothers' brothers at Tongo. Lɔɣani of Zubiuŋ Yakɔra provides a good instance of multiple bilateral ties between men of adjacent clans. His mother was a woman of one segment of Tɔŋ-Puhug; one of his sisters married into another segment of Puhug; one of his daughters married a member of yet a third segment of Puhug. If we multiply such cases by the total population of Taleland we can get some impression of the intricacy of the web of extra-clan kinship ties. I have never yet been in a situation where a group of natives have gathered for some activity, whether secular or ceremonial, in which it was impossible for any person present to establish some genealogical (or, if it came to the worst, affinal) link with the lineage principally concerned. Merely being sisters' sons—actual or classificatory—of the same clan can become an effective bond of amity in certain circumstances. The following is a trivial illustration of this.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 89 and 121.

121 former is primarily a problem of genetic psychology, the latter of cultural and sociological analysis. In studying education in a particular society we ought, ideally, to be able to take its cultural idiom for granted, whereas the first task of sociological analysis is to discover the cultural idiom. Thus, in Taleland one often finds a pair of small boys disputing with childish earnestness as to who is senior. Unless one has observed the scope of the principle of seniority in the social structure one is liable to dismiss this as mere childish play of no importance.

Education, from this point of view,[1] is an active process of learning and teaching by which individuals gradually acquire the full outfit of culturally defined and adapted behaviour. In this paper I shall try to delineate briefly how it occurs in one African society, that of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. As it will be impossible to compass the whole process of social maturation within the limits of this paper, some of the more conspicuous changes and activities only will be examined.

114 *The sampling problem.* My observations were made in the course of a field study of the Tallensi the object of which, in accordance with the usual ethnographical method, was the entire society and its culture. It is impossible in such a case—as other anthropologists have found—to follow up a special psychological problem in a manner commensurate with the criteria of experimental research in England. That will only be achieved when specialists can be induced to take over these investigations.

128 Such material as I am able to present consequently suffers most from sampling deficiencies. Social behaviour among primitive people appears to be more standardized than among ourselves. Yet variations occur, distributed perhaps in accordance with the normal curve of error as among ourselves but perhaps not. The problem has still to be investigated. Ethnographers are principally interested in

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[1] An excursus into genetic psychology would be out of place in this paper, but the reader will observe how much it owes, *inter alia*, to F. C. Bartlett, *Remembering*; K. Koffka, *Growth of the Mind*; S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth of Young Children*; *Social Development of Young Children*; C. E. Spearman, *Nature of Intelligence*; and to the writings of Jean Piaget (*Language and Thought of the Young Child*, &c.). I have borrowed also from the anthropological writings already cited and from those of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, particularly from their writings on kinship.

●128 'patterns of behaviour', hence they neglect or slur over variations,
and sometimes indeed build whole theories on a single occurrence.
For most problems of social anthropology variations are of minor
importance as compared with the 'typical', and an all-round know-
ledge of a culture is a sufficient check of typicality. For problems
of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost
158 importance. For example, the first case of thumb-sucking I observed
was that of a girl infant 3–4 years old whose mother had recently
died. Could it be assumed that this was a clear-cut instance of the
thumb being substituted for the nipple? Some time later I came
across another little girl, about the same age, thumb-sucking, but her
mother was alive and she was not yet fully weaned. Further observa-
tion brought a few more cases of this habit to light, but it is so in-
frequent among Tale children that a single year's observation does
not yield sufficient instances to suggest any correlation.

Generally speaking, therefore, small samples form the basis of the observations recorded in this paper. Where norms of development are implied it will be understood that an appreciable, though indeterminable, variability exists.

III. Social Sphere of the Tale Child

184 The process of education among the Tallensi, as among a great
155 many other African peoples of analogous culture, is intelligible when
it is recognized that the social sphere of adult and child[1] is unitary and
undivided. In our own society the child's feeling and thinking and
acting takes place largely in relation to a reality—to aims, responsi-
bilities, compulsions, material objects and persons, and so forth—
which differs completely from that of the adult, though sometimes
overlapping it. This dichotomy is not only expressed in our customs,
it comes out also in the psychological reactions which mark the indivi-

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[1] I am aware that the unqualified manner in which this proposition is formulated here invites the immediate objection that it cannot possibly hold for the new-born infant, or even for the child who is inarticulate and does not yet walk or crawl. I would suggest in answer that it is impossible empirically to observe the point at which the child's affective orientation to its cultural environment first receives its bias; and also, that recent psychology and anthropology would support me in attaching basic importance to the earliest infantile responses of a child as determinants of later interests.

82 861 9 or 10 the children are thoroughly familiar with the ecological environment of their clan settlements. They know the economically important trees, grasses, and herbs, e.g., a girl of about 9 once named and showed me nine varieties of herbs used for making soup. They have a fair idea of the gross anatomy of the fowl, small field animals, and larger live stock. But apart from these achievements which lead one to infer the existence of an interest in the natural environment, I was able to obtain some direct evidence thereof. The natives say that small children frequently ask questions about people and things they see around them. However, listening to children's talk for 'why' questions,[1] I was surprised to note how rarely they occurred; and the few instances I recorded refer to objects or persons foreign to the normal routine of Tale life. It would seem that Tale children rarely have to ask 'why' in regard to the people and things of their normal environment because so much of their learning occurs in real situations where explanation is generally coupled with instruction, and because they hear so much adult discussion, in terms of cause and effect, as these are understood by the Tallensi, of the things they are interested in. Yet two examples will prove that even quite small children react with exploratory interest to what is new and unusual. I gave some tiny tin figures of animals to a group of small children to play with. A little boy of about 5 looked intently at the figure of a horse. 'Why does he stoop like that?' he asked, speaking to himself rather than to his companions. But immediately he answered his own question, 'He is eating grass.' On another occasion I observed the 3-year-old son of our cook, pointing to the garbage tin, ask the horseboy: 'Why has that got a lid?'

857 177 532 Again, making clay figures is a favourite diversion of small boys and adolescents. The standard figures are men and women, cows and horses. But a youngster of about 9 or 10 once produced a motor-cycle, explaining that he had recently seen the Agricultural Officer arrive on one. Another boy, a little older, once made a roan antelope, explaining that some two years previously he had seen one of these animals which, fleeing from a hunting party, had entered the settlement and been surrounded and killed there.

128 I have not attempted to give an exhaustive account of the interests

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[1] See N. Isaacs in *Intellectual Growth of Young Children.*

which Tale children develop in the course of their education. I have 128
tried to indicate only some typical interests and their relation to the educational process.

Skills. The acquisition of skills also commences in early infancy, 868
with the child's first experiments in motor co-ordination and speech. 858
Bodily dexterity provides merely the foundation upon which are 857
subsequently built up the socially important skills of adult life. They include not only the predominantly manual skills, such as are connected with farming and care of live stock, with hunting, fishing, building, thatching, cooking, housekeeping and gardening, and the technology of specialists, but also non-manual skills, such as a knowledge of the kinship system, of ritual and ceremonial, of economically useful herbs and roots and of others used as drugs to cure illness, of buying and selling, of law and custom—in short, of the whole body of cultural definitions which guide the Taləŋa in his daily existence. Such skills are the end-results of education; and it will be obvious that they represent merely the cognitive and motor aspects of activities rooted in developing interests and fostered by the expectation of normal behaviour. Typical skills will be referred to as we proceed, but one general feature must be noted here. Children in Taleland are remarkably free from over-solicitious supervision. They have the maximum freedom and responsibility commensurate with their skill and maturity. On the one hand they can go where they like and do what they like, on the other they are held fully responsible for tasks entrusted to them. Thus, a 6-year-old is quite often charged with the care of an infant for several hours at a stretch. Girls of 9 or 10 can be seen in large numbers in every market, selling or buying things for their mothers or themselves. Boys of this age and even younger swarm in the markets. One market day I discovered a boy of about 10–11 selling a basketful of leaves used as a food for animals which he had himself collected in the bush near his settlement. He hoped to earn a penny or twopence to buy arrow-heads for himself. Another day a boy of about the same age offered his services to the butcher. He earned a tenth of a penny which he spent on a feed of
locust-bean flour for himself and a friend. Similarly, when there is 868
dancing at a homestead, the children of about 6 years and upwards 853
from the whole neighbourhood congregate there and remain till 535

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234
longer drive the cow out to graze.

Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsi- 183
bilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Taləŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and *how they are maintained*. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale*.

[828] 153 524 Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 524 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 867 On a morning in June I found Gomna, aged about 7, his half-sister Zoŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

868 857

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[1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

INTRODUCTION

This bulletin records the work of the Department of Agriculture in North Mamprusi during the years 1932 to 1936. It is divided into two parts: the first contains a description of the indigenous system of agriculture and the survey methods followed in studying it; and the second gives the results of preliminary trials, as an introduction to future experimental work. 128

North Mamprusi comprises three political sub-districts, Navrongo Area, Zuarungu Area, and Kusasi (Bawku) Area. These areas have a number of features in common, the most important from our point of view, being a dense population, and a primitive system of "fixed" agriculture. The most densely populated area is Zuarungu, where a shortage of cultivated foods is a fairly common experience. It was mainly to find the causes of this food shortage and to suggest ameliorative measures that the Department of Agriculture commenced preliminary survey work in this area in 1932. Unfortunately, owing to shortage of staff, the work had to be suspended in 1933, with a consequent loss of continuity. It was recommenced in 1934, however, and the scope was enlarged to admit of a certain amount of experimental work at Zuarungu and Navrongo, and survey work in the Navrongo Area. Some of the survey work was also repeated in Zuarungu Area to supply confirmatory information upon 1932 data, particularly yield data, since it was known that 1932 was an exceptionally favourable season. In 1935 the experimental side of the work received more attention; similarly in 1936. And in 1936 survey work was extended to Zebilla, in Kusasi Area. Zuarungu has been the headquarters throughout. 634 121

We have now obtained a fairly detailed knowledge of local agriculture and a certain amount of experimental evidence upon the best way in which it can be improved. All our experience points to some form of "mixed farming" (1) as a solution of the problem. Mr. F. A. Stockdale, C.M.G., C.B.E. (now Sir Frank Stockdale), Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State, visited Zuarungu and Navrongo in December, 1935, and recommended (2) the expansion of our work to enable us to investigate more 121

121 fully a system of mixed farming suitable for the peculiar conditions obtaining locally. In 1936, the writer visited Northern Nigeria to study the progress made in mixed farming there. A report upon this visit has been published as Bulletin No. 33 of the Department (3).

It is realized that Nigerian experience can serve only as a guide to us here, for whilst environmental conditions are similar, economic conditions differ considerably. The object of this bulletin is to record the results of observations, surveys, and experimental work, as an introduction to the study of mixed farming locally. The survey methods followed have been recorded in the hope that they may be of value when similar work is contemplated in other districts.

Our method of approach to the improvement of local agriculture is by surveys and observations, followed by experiment, demonstration, and extension, in that order. So far, in North Mamprusi, we have reached the stage of experiment and quiet demonstration.

Part I.—STUDY OF INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE.

Section I.—Introductory Notes upon the District.

• 128 The farming methods of the primitive tribes inhabiting North Mamprusi are practically unique in the Gold Coast. Before discussing the results of surveys and experimental work it is proposed to outline in this section some of the main features of the district which have a bearing upon local agriculture and which are likely to affect its future development. It is necessary to state that most remarks are based upon experience gained in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; although most of what is said will apply to Kusasi Area, it is probable that greater experience will reveal some differences.

Situation.

131 North Mamprusi is situated in the extreme North East corner of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast; it lies roughly between 10° 30″ and 11° North latitude and 0° and 1° 30″ West longitude and covers an area of 3,559 square miles. It is bounded on the South by South Mamprusi (Gambaga District), on the West by Lawra-Tumu District, and on the North and East by French West Africa.

sweet potatoes and Coleus potatoes as fresh tubers. Harvesting and weighing had to be left to the junior staff, but visits were paid as often as possible to each centre of record during the harvest season and check weights were taken. It is essential that the staff fully understand what is required of them before the rush of harvest comes on. Any doubtful yields must not be recorded. Nearly half the records in 1932 had to be discarded because a "literate helper" thought it better to put down fictitious yields than to report mistakes. At first some farmers thought we intended to confiscate the produce from the sample plots; but they all readily co-operated with us when disillusioned. 126

RESULTS OF SURVEY.

Distribution of Recorded Compounds.

The farms of 54 compounds have been surveyed and it is upon the data from these that the following statistics are based. The variation from one compound to another, in almost every detail recorded, makes it necessary to emphasise that, whilst the figures are reasonably accurate in themselves, they are based upon a very small proportion of the population, and the means are reliable as district means, only as our compounds are typical of the centres from which they have been selected. The compounds were distributed at the ten centres of record as follows :— 128

Zuarungu Area.	Bongo	6
	Nangodi	5
	Sambruno ...	5
	Tongo	5
	Zuarungu ...	8
Navrongo Area.	Chana	6
	Kologo	6
	Navrongo ...	2
	Wiaga	6
Kusasi Area.	Zebilla	5
	Total	54

In discussing the results of the survey work it is proposed to reduce figures in the text to means and percentages as far as possible; details are given in tables in Appendix II.

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
431 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes.
The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language
Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls,
and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse
and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have
been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teŋa*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
167 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
563 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
622 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
793 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the
Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came
here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a
people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They
spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and
Zan became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people
whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The
Ten'dan' makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European
doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but
it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones).
A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded
by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men
(Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We
met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 131 161 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 171 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later
632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement' rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following table illustrates the above.

103 614

Town.	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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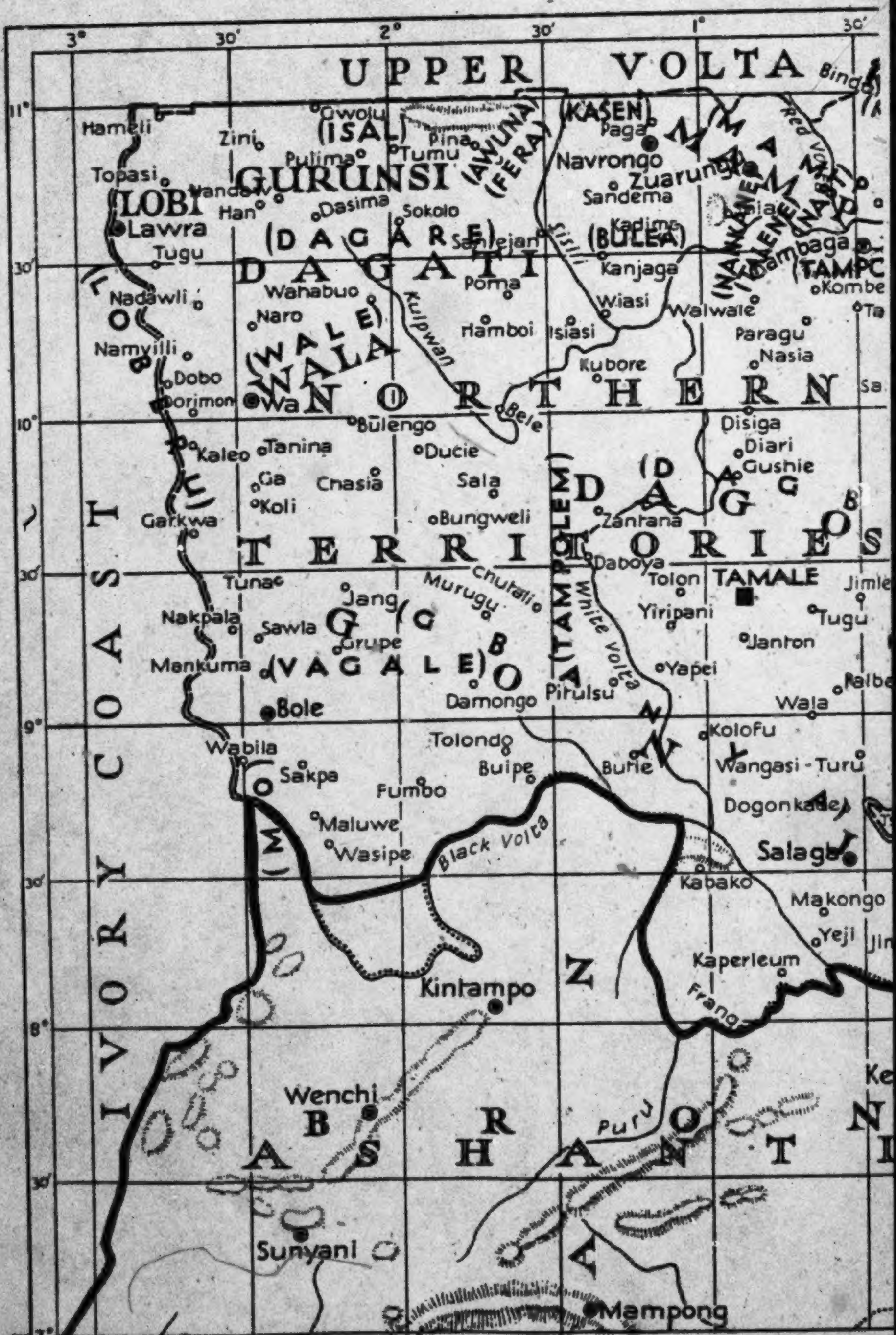

3°
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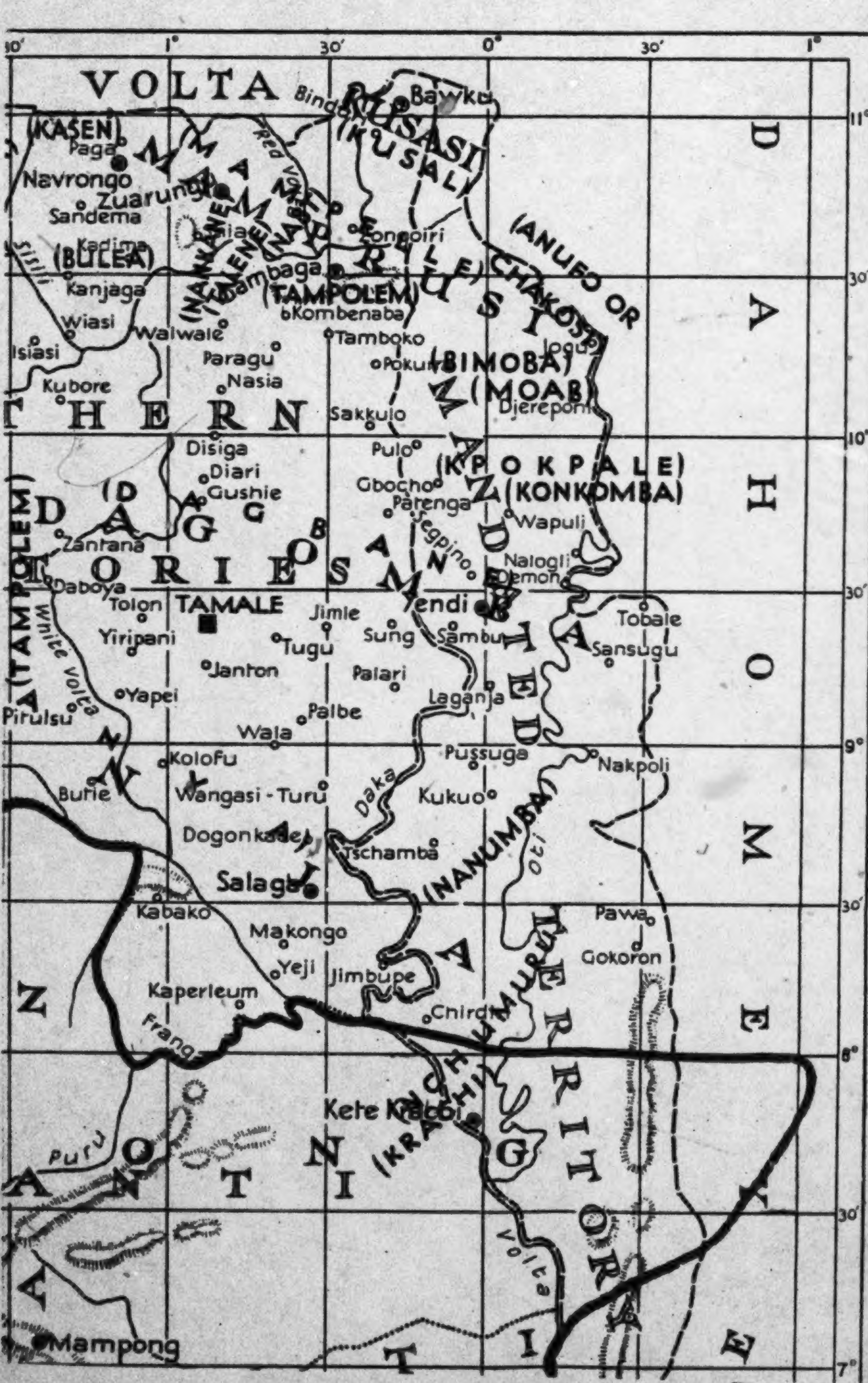
UPPER VOLTA
Bingo
Red Volta
Gwolu
(ISAL)
Pina
(AWUNA)
(FERA)
KASEN
Paga
Navrongo
Zuarungu
Sandema
Kadima
(BULEA)
Kanjaga
Wiasi
Walwale
MAMPRUSI
(NANKANSE)
(TALENSI)
NABDAM
Gambaga
TAMPC
Kombe
Ta
Hameli
Zini
Pulima
Tumu
Topasi
GURUNSI
Nandom
LOBI
Han
Dasima
Sokolo
Lawra
(DAGARE)
Sanlejan
Sisili
Tugu
DAGATI
Poma
Wahabuo
Kulpawn
Nadawli
Naro
(WALE)
Hamboi
Isiasi
Paragu
Nasia
Namvilli
WALA
Kubore
Dobo
Dorimon
Wa
NORTHERN
Sa
Bulengo
Bele
Disiga
Kaleo
Tanina
Ducie
Diari
Gushie
Ga
Chasia
Sala
(DAGOMBA)
Koli
Bungweli
Zanrana
Garkwa
TERRITORIES
Daboya
Tolon
TAMALE
Jimle
Tuna
Jang
Murugu
Chutali
(TAMPOLEM)
White Volta
Yiripani
Tugu
Nakpala
Sawla
(G
Grupe
GONJA
Janton
Mankuma
(VAGALE)
Yapei
Bole
Damongo
Pirulsu
Palba
Wala
IVORY COAST
Kolofu
Wabila
Tolondo
Sakpa
Buipe
Bulie
Wangasi-Turu
Fumbo
Dogonkade
Maluwe
Wasipe
Black Volta
Salaga
(M
Kabako
Makongo
Yeji
Jin
Kaperleum
Kintampo
Frang
Ke
Wenchi
BRONG
Puru
ASHANTI
N
Sunyani
Mampong

[End map (A)] [Upper half]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

131
197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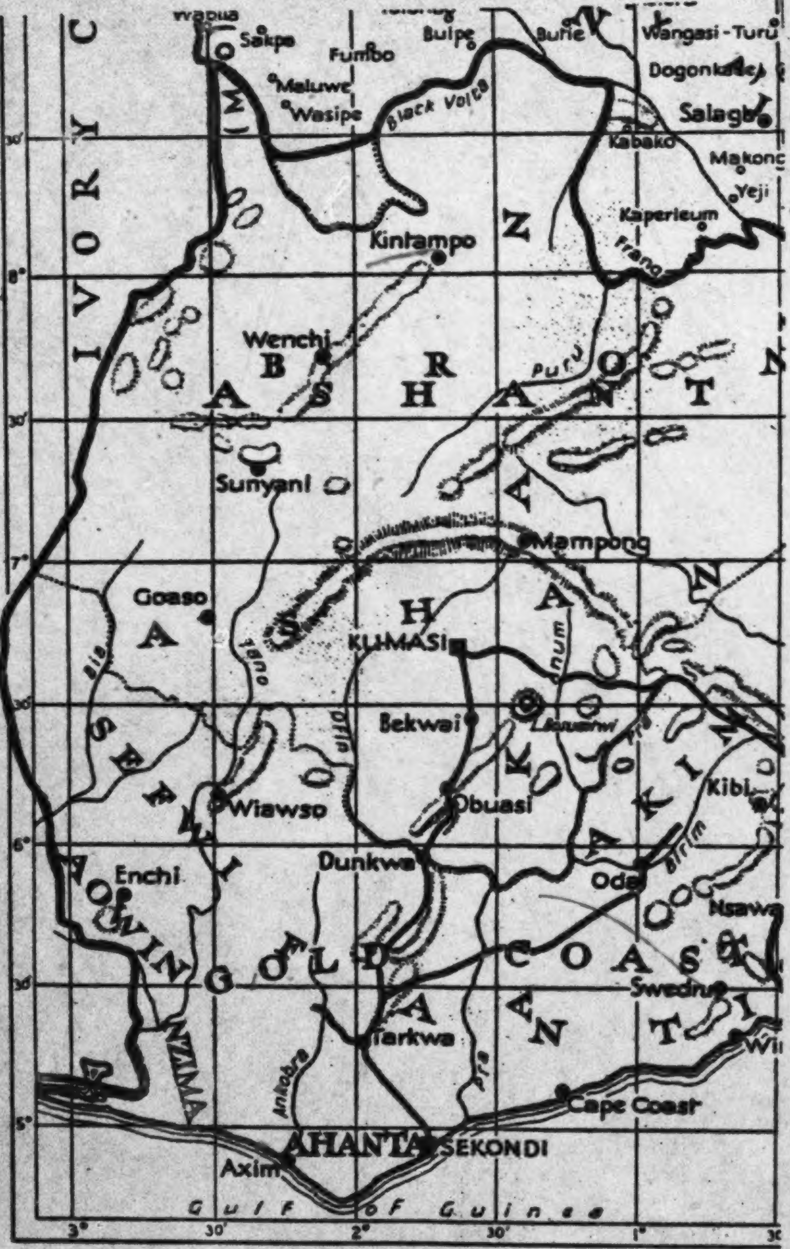
VOLTA
Bawku
KUSASI
(KUSAL)
(KASEN)
Paga
Navrongo
Zuarungu
Sandema
Kadima
(BULEA)
Sisili
Kanjaga
Wiasi
Walwale
Isiasi
Kubore
Red Volta
MAMPRUSI
(NANKANE)
Gambaga
(TAMPOLEM)
Kombenaba
Tamboko
Pokum
Zongoiri
Paragu
Nasia
(ANUFO OR CHAKOSI)
(BIMOBA)
(MOAB)
Djereponi
THERN
Sakkulo
Pulo
Gbocho
Parenga
(KPOKPALE)
(KONKOMBA)
Wapuli
Nalogli
Demon
DAGOMBA
Disiga
Diari
Gushie
Zantana
Daboya
TORIES
Tolon
TAMALE
Jimle
Yendi
Sung
Sambu
Tobale
Sansugu
Segpino
Yiripani
Tugu
Janton
Palari
Laganja
White Volta
Yapei
Pirulsu
Palbe
Wala
Pussuga
Nakpoli
Kolofu
Wangasi - Turu
Kukuo
Burie
Dogonkade
Tschamba
Daka
(NANUMBA)
Oti
Salaga
Kabako
Makongo
Pawa
Gokoron
Yeji
Jimbupe
Kaperleum
Chirdi
Frang
(NCHUMURU)
Kete Kratchi
(KRACHI)
Puru
ASHANTI
Volta
Mampong
TOGOLAND
TERRITORY
DAHOMEY

[End map (B)] [Upper half]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

●131
197



Wapua
Sakpe
Bulpe
Burie
Wangasi-Turu
Funibo
Maluwe
Wasipe
Dogonkade
Black Volta
Salaga
Kabako
Makong
Yeji
Kaperieum
Kintampo
Frano
IVORY C
Wenchi
ABRON
ASHANTI
Purj
Sunyani
Mampong
Goaso
ASHANTI
KUMASI
Bia
Tano
Offin
Anum
Bekwai
Lake Bosumtwi
Pra
SEFWI
AKIM
Kibi
Wiawso
Obuasi
Birim
Dunkwa
Oda
Enchi
Nsawa
AOWIN
GOLD COAST
Swedru
FANTI
Tarkwa
NZIMA
Ankobra
Pra
Cape Coast
AHANTA
SEKONDI
Axim
Gulf of Guinea
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Wi

TRIBAL AND LINGUISTIC MAP OF THE GO

The names within brackets, thus, (BULEA), are those by which the langu
them. They have been superimposed upon the official map published by the
indicating 'AKAN and RELATED DIALECTS', is here reproduced as shown on the orig
our fuller knowledge, be extended to embrace GRANY

[End Map
(C)]
[Lower half]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

131
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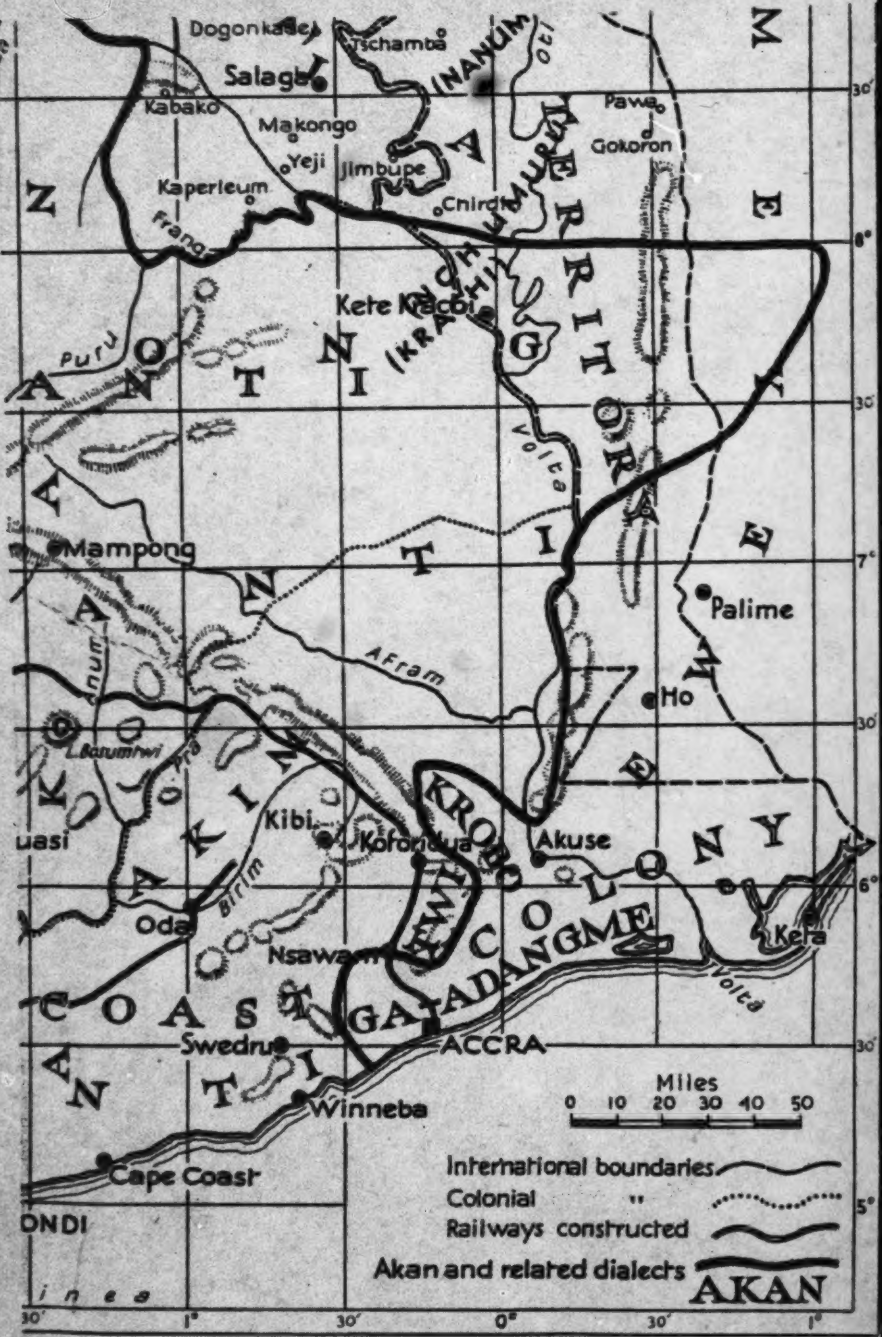

Dogonkade
Tschamba
Salaga
NANUM
Oti
Kabako
Makongo
Pawa
Gokoron
Yeji
Jimbupe
Kaperleum
Cnirdi
Frango
Kete Kracbi
KRACHI
NCHUMURU
TOGO
TERRITORY
EWE
Puru
ASHANTI
Volta
Mampong
Palime
Afram
Anum
Ho
L. Bosumtwi
Pra
AKIM
KROBO
Kibi
Koforidua
Akuse
uasi
Birim
Oda
EWE
COLONY
ADANGME
Nsawam
GA
Kefa
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FANTI
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30′
1°
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30′
1°

ISTIC MAP OF THE GOLD COAST COLONY

A), are those by which the languages are known to the tribes which speak
the official map published by the Survey H. Q. Accra 1927. The red line,
re reproduced as shown on the original map, but it might now, in the light of
, be extended to embrace GBANYA and CHAKOSI.

[End MAP (D) Lower Half]

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Natural Environment of the Tallensi

131 137 THE Northern Territories of the Gold Coast lie entirely within the Sudanese Zone.[1] It has been variously described as 'parkland', 'savannah', or 'orchard bush' country, terms which indicate the sparse and uniform forestation characteristic of this zone. Stretching irregularly and almost right across Africa, between the eighth and the sixteenth parallels N. latitude, it merges into the Sahara on the north and is bounded by the tropical rain forest on the south.

137 132 The traveller in West Africa who enters this region from the south is impressed by the contrast with the forest belt. According to his predilections he will view it with pleasure or dismay after the massive and gigantic gloom of the forest. Here are no great trees a hundred or two hundred feet high rooted amid thick undergrowth and enveloped in tenacious creepers. The orchard bush country is a vast plain, in some parts monotonously flat, in others gently undulating and diversified by an occasional range of hills or a steep scarp. The tracts of bush, sometimes fairly extensive, which may be encountered in the less populated areas, resemble the secondary forestation of abandoned cultivations in the rain forest. Scattered trees, no larger than our oaks and beeches, man-high grass, and scrub constitute these patches of standing bush. In the dry season the landscape appears harsh and bare, and its general drab hue is hardly relieved by the shade trees in front of the native homesteads or the remnants of vegetation along the dry watercourses. The mud walls and thatched roofs of the homesteads seem to blend indistinguishably with the dusty country-side. In the middle of the wet season, when every footpath becomes a rivulet and every depression a bog, the homesteads are hidden behind ramparts of luxuriant grain, and the whole country-side is resplendent with the green of flourishing vegetation.

132 The climate of the Sudanese Zone exhibits two clearly defined seasons, a dry season lasting about half the year (October to March) and a wet season lasting the remaining six or seven months (April to October). Not only are there marked variations in the mean rainfall from one area

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[1] For a short account of the principal ecological and climatic features of the part of the Sudanese Zone that concerns us in this book, see Lynn, C. W., *Agriculture in North Mamprussi*, Bulletin No. 34 of the Gold Coast Department of Agriculture, 1937. Climate and vegetation are more fully discussed in Bégué, L., *Contribution à l'Étude de la Végétation Forestière de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire*, Publications du Comité d'Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française, 1937. These writers give lists of the common trees of economic value found in our area, of which the following are the best known and most frequently seen in inhabited places: Shea (*Butyrospermum parkii*); locust bean (*Parkia filicoidea*); baobab (*Adansonia digitata*); various species of acacia; the silk cotton (*Ceiba pentendra*); the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*). [132 137]

132a to another, ranging from 25 inches to 45 inches per annum, but fluctuations occur from year to year in the same area. Erratic or abnormal rains may so disturb the cycle of food production as to subject a majority of the population to severe privation. The temperature in the vicinity of 10° 30′ N. latitude and 0° 30′ W. longitude varies from a minimum of about 70° F. to a maximum of about 93° F. A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing, so much so that the natives squat shivering round fires or remain indoors until the sun is high; from the forenoon until about 4 p.m. the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature. Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive. The peak of the rains comes in August–September. It rains so heavily then that many social activities are impeded. These conditions of vegetation and climate fundamentally influence the economy and the social life of the inhabitants of the Sudanese Zone.

[101] 131 133 This book is concerned with the population of a very small section of the Sudanese Zone, a part of the region drained by the Volta river system. The head-waters of this system lie in French West Africa. About 20 miles south of the international boundary between the Gold Coast and French Ivory Coast, which has been arbitrarily fixed to coincide approximately with the eleventh parallel N. latitude, the Red Volta flows into the White Volta. Between these two rivers, on the east and south respectively, and the Sissili river on the west lies an area, arbitrarily truncated on the north by the international boundary, comprising two of the most heavily populated administrative districts of the Gold Coast. The eastern third of this area constitutes the administrative district of Zuarungu, the remaining two-thirds the district of Navrongo. The Red Volta separates Zuarungu district from another administrative unit, Kusasi, and the White Volta forms a natural boundary between it and the Mamprusi district, to the south of which lies the territory of the Dagomba.

161 134 137 As the following table[1] from the census of 1931 shows, the Zuarungu district is the most densely populated part of this area; and as the population tends to be concentrated in the centre and north, the actual density of settlement exceeds the figures given. In some localities this is reflected

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[1] See *Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census*, Gold Coast, 1932, p. 3; and Cardinall, A. W., *The Gold Coast*, 1931, Population Map, p. 156. Mr. Cardinall remarks (p. 123) that 'A majority of the census officers were of opinion that the figures collected by them are lower than they should have been by from 2 per cent. to 10 per cent.'—a contingency inevitable in a country which is for the most part still pre-literate.

in serious soil erosion due to over-cultivation and in the diminution of 161
uncultivated bush land, so that firewood and other sylvan products 134
cannot be found within six or more miles of the settlements. 137

161

District	*Area*	*Population*	*Density per sq. mile*
Navrongo . .	1,551	120,870	77·96
Zuarungu . .	781	133,981	171·55
Kusaasi* . .	1,227	151,715	123·64
Mamprusi* .	2,719	61,520	22·62
Dagomba*. .	12,257	191,956	15·66

* Partly in Mandated Territory of Togoland.

In spite of the general similarity of climate and vegetation in the 241
Sudanese Zone, local variations produce significant ecological differences. 133
This is shown in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by the
differences in agriculture north and south of the Gambaga scarp. The 134
steep scarp marks both a geological and an ecological line of division. South of it the rock formations are of sandstone and shale, north of it granite, quartz, and greenstone predominate. South of the scarp a form of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.), guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams will not grow easily and cereal crops form the staple food supply.[1]

The relative scarcity of population in the yam-growing districts com- 164
pared with the congested areas north of the White Volta may be due to 161
unknown historical and cultural factors, but endemic diseases have undoubtedly impeded population growth. While malaria, yaws, and leprosy, to mention only the commonest enemies of native health, are widespread throughout the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, sleeping-sickness is also endemic throughout the Mamprusi and Dagomba districts. In the central sectors north of the scarp sleeping-sickness occurs only sporadically near the rivers.

Topographical differences also appear to influence the distribution of 161
population. The high plateau which stretches from the White Volta 132
northwards is more suited for permanent habitation than the low-lying 133
flats which make up the greater part of Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the wet season they turn into quagmires, in the dry season they are arid tracts seriously short of water-supplies. North of the White Volta numerous streams and small rivers combine with the relatively greater elevation to drain the plateau effectively during the heavy rains; and though surface water becomes scarce in the dry season, shallow pits generally provide sufficient water for normal needs.

The district of Zuarungu is a typical portion of the Trans-Volta plateau. 133
A number of bouldery hills from 100 to 500 feet high are scattered over 131
its undulating surface. The most conspicuous are the Tong Hills, a small range stretching for about four miles just north of the river. It adds an

---

[1] Cf. Fortes, M. and S. L., 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1936; and Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course
of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and
perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
136 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161 periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and
densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective
Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts
491 were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of
reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of
161 the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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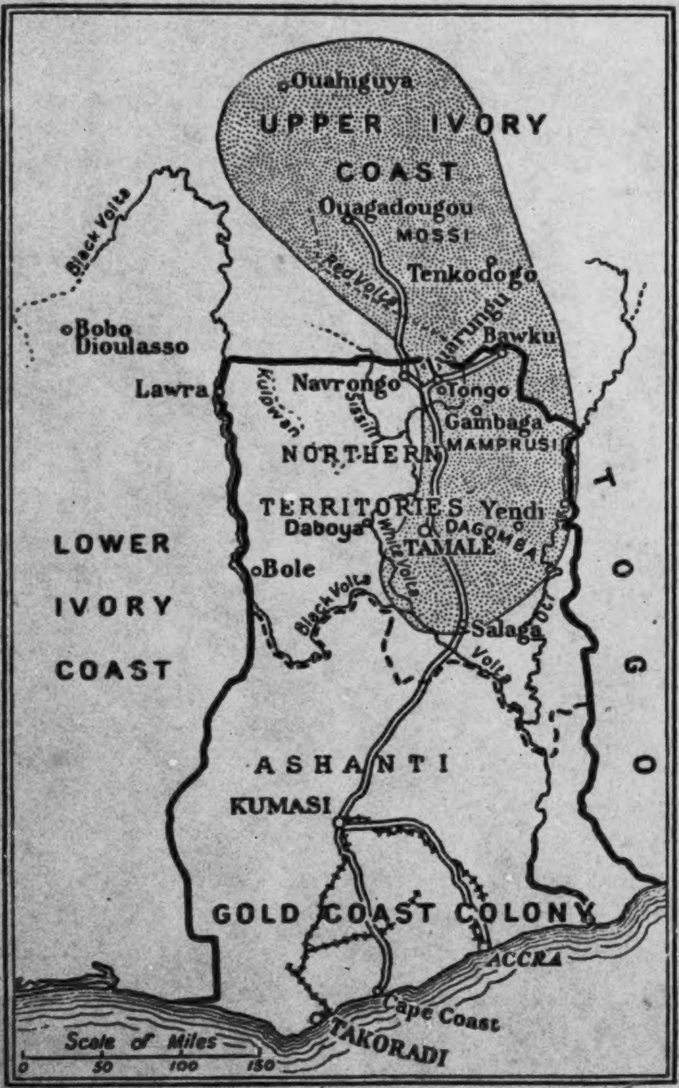
[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

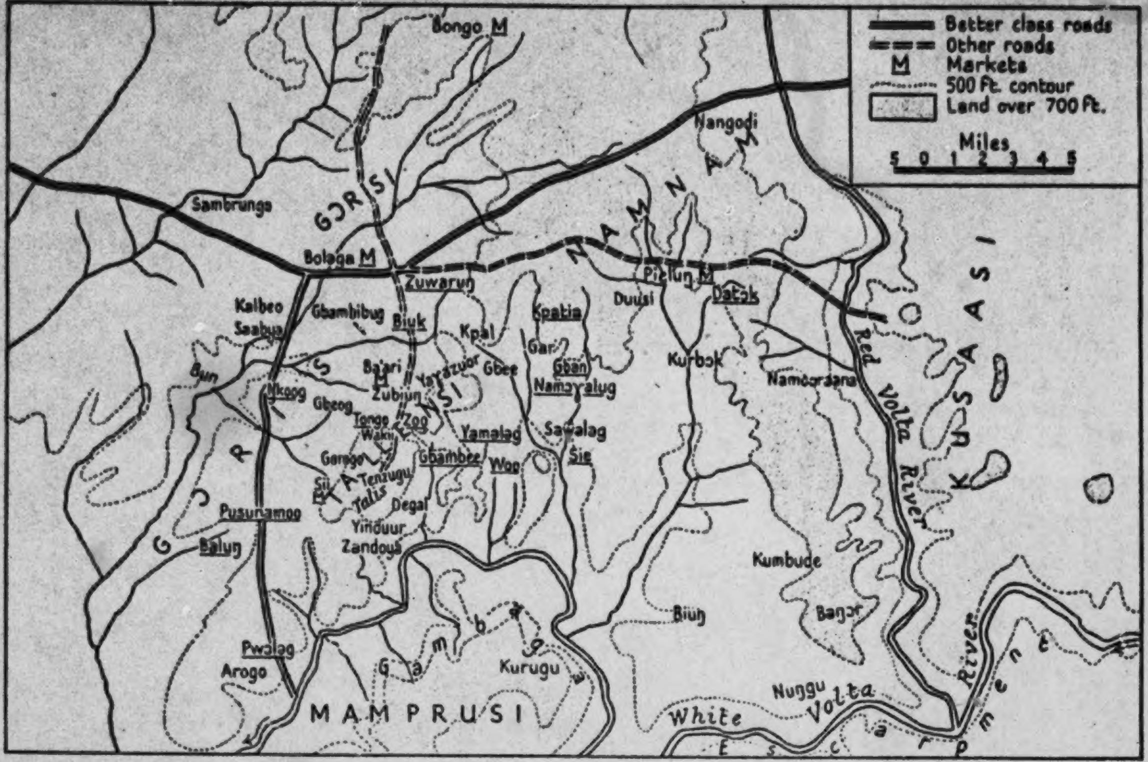
101
131●
197
491


Ouahiguya
UPPER IVORY COAST
Ouagadougou
MOSSI
Red Volta
Tenkodogo
Black Volta
Bobo Dioulasso
Kusarungu
Bawku
Lawra
Kulpawn
Navrongo
Sisili
Tongo
Gambaga
MAMPRUSI
NORTHERN TERRITORIES
Yendi
Daboya
White Volta
DAGOMBA
TAMALE
LOWER IVORY COAST
Bole
Black Volta
Oti
Salaga
Volta
TOGO
ASHANTI
KUMASI
GOLD COAST COLONY
ACCRA
Cape Coast
TAKORADI
Scale of Miles
0
50
100
150

BOUNDARIES OF THE GOLD COAST
The dotted portion shows the area occupied by Mole-Dagbane speaking peoples

[p. 5]

[p.15]


Better class roads
Other roads
M Markets
500 ft. contour
Land over 700 ft.
Miles
5 0 1 2 3 4 5
Bongo M
Sambrungo
GORISI
Bolaga M
Nangodi
NAMNAM
Zuwarun
Pi'elun M
Duusi
Datok
Kalbeo
Saabua
Gbambibug
Biuk
Kpal
Kpatia
Gar
Gban
Namooralug
Kurbok
Namooraana
Bun
Nkoog
Gbeog
Ba'ari M
Yarazuor
Gbee
Zubiun
TALLENSI
Tongo
Wakii
Zoq
Yamalag
Sawalag
Sie
Gorogo
Tenzugu
Gbambee
Woo
Sii
Talis
Degal
Yinduur
Zandoya
Pusunamoo
Balun
GARISI
Kumbude
Biun
Bangot
KUSAASI
Red Volta River
Pwolag
Arogo
Gambaga
Kurugu
MAMPRUSI
Nunggu
White Volta
River
Escarpment

SKETCH-MAP OF TALELAND

Note: All place-names are spelt phonetically according to their Talni form.

2: Fortes / E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11
131
101

621 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here [778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔyar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔyar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field [608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

2: Fortes
131, 133, 361, 487, 778, 764, 621

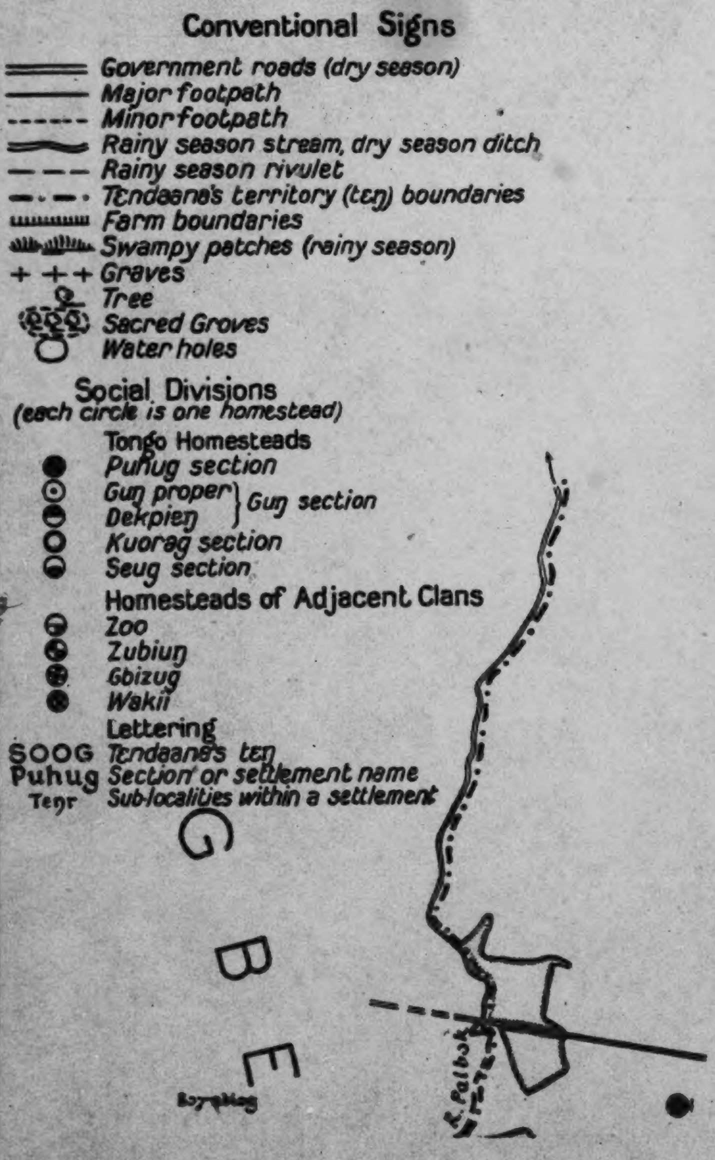
[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

]

621
487
778
●131
764
133
361

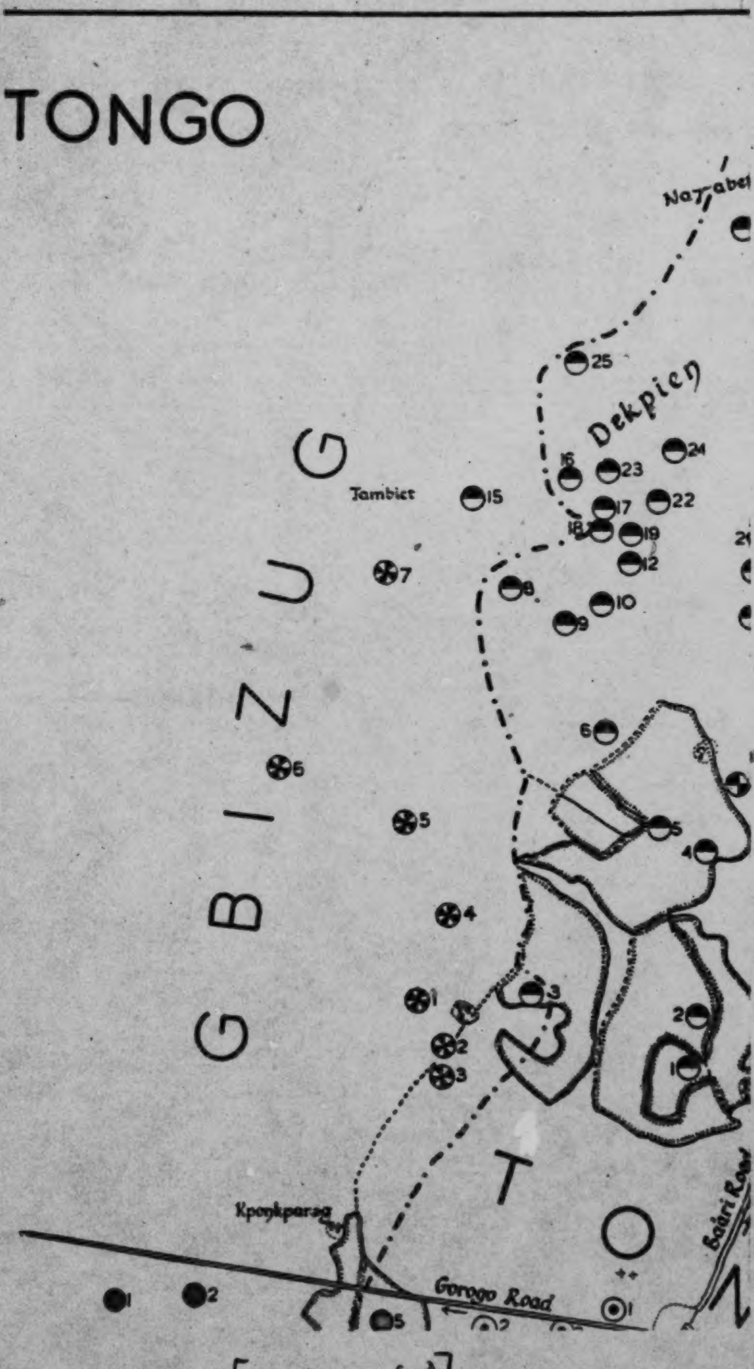
MAP OF PART OF TON


Conventional Signs
Government roads (dry season)
Major footpath
Minor footpath
Rainy season stream, dry season ditch
Rainy season rivulet
Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries
Farm boundaries
Swampy patches (rainy season)
+ + + Graves
Tree
Sacred Groves
Water holes
Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)
Tongo Homesteads
● Puhug section
Guŋ proper
Dekpieŋ
Guŋ section
Kuorag section
Seug section
Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
Zoo
Zubiuŋ
Gbizug
Wakii
Lettering
SOOG Tɛndaana's tɛŋ
Puhug Section or settlement name
Tɛŋr Sub-localities within a settlement
G
B
E
Bɔyaleog
R. Pɔlbok

[End-map (A)]

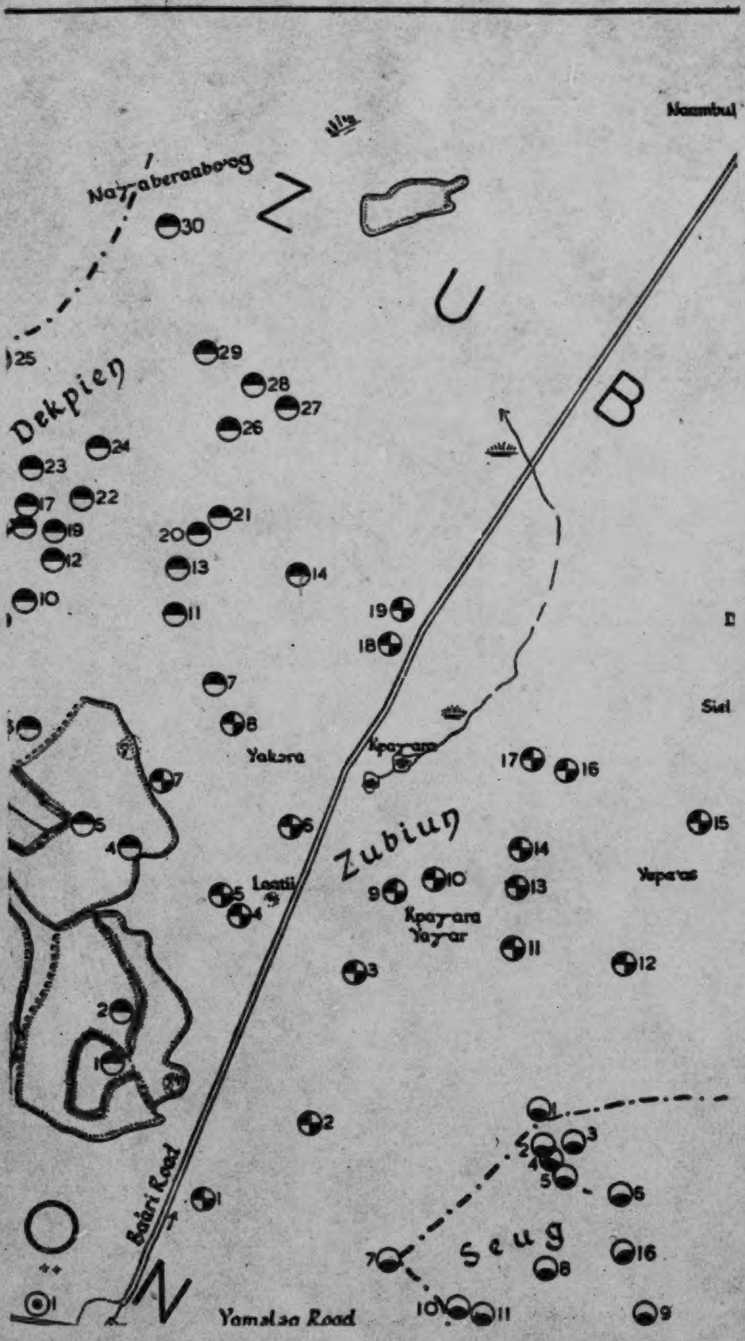
2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

621
487
778
●131
764
133
361


TONGO
Naɣabei
Dekpieŋ
Tambiet
GBIZUG
Kpeŋkparag
Gorogo Road
Badri Road
TON
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
12
15
16
17
18
19
22
23
24
25

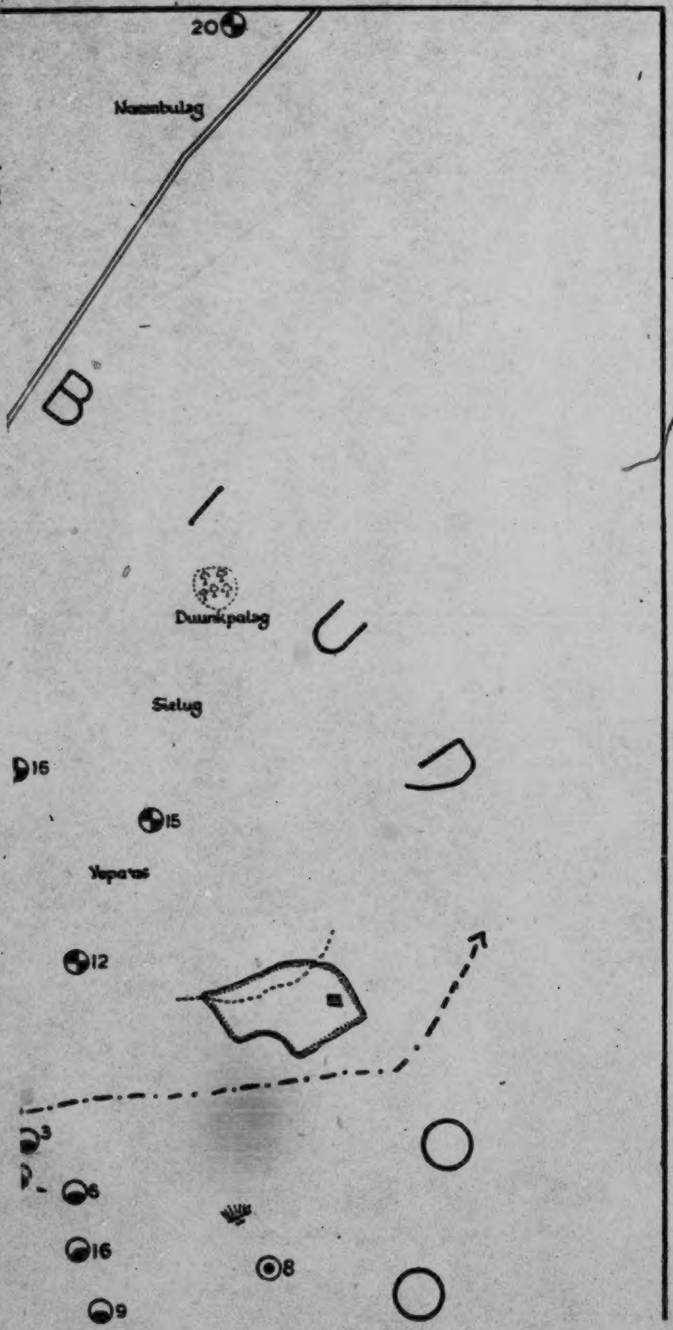
[End-MAP (B)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


Naambul
Na'yaberaaboog
Z
U
B
30
25
Dekpieŋ
29
28
27
26
24
23
22
17
19
21
20
12
13
14
10
11
19
18
7
8
Yakɔra
Kpaɣara
Siel
17
16
7
5
4
6
15
Zubiuŋ
14
10
13
9
Laatii
5
4
Yeparas
Kpaɣara
Yaɣar
11
12
3
2
1
2
1
1
3
2
4
5
6
Baari Road
O
Seug
7
8
16
1
N
Yamɔlɛa Road
10
11
9

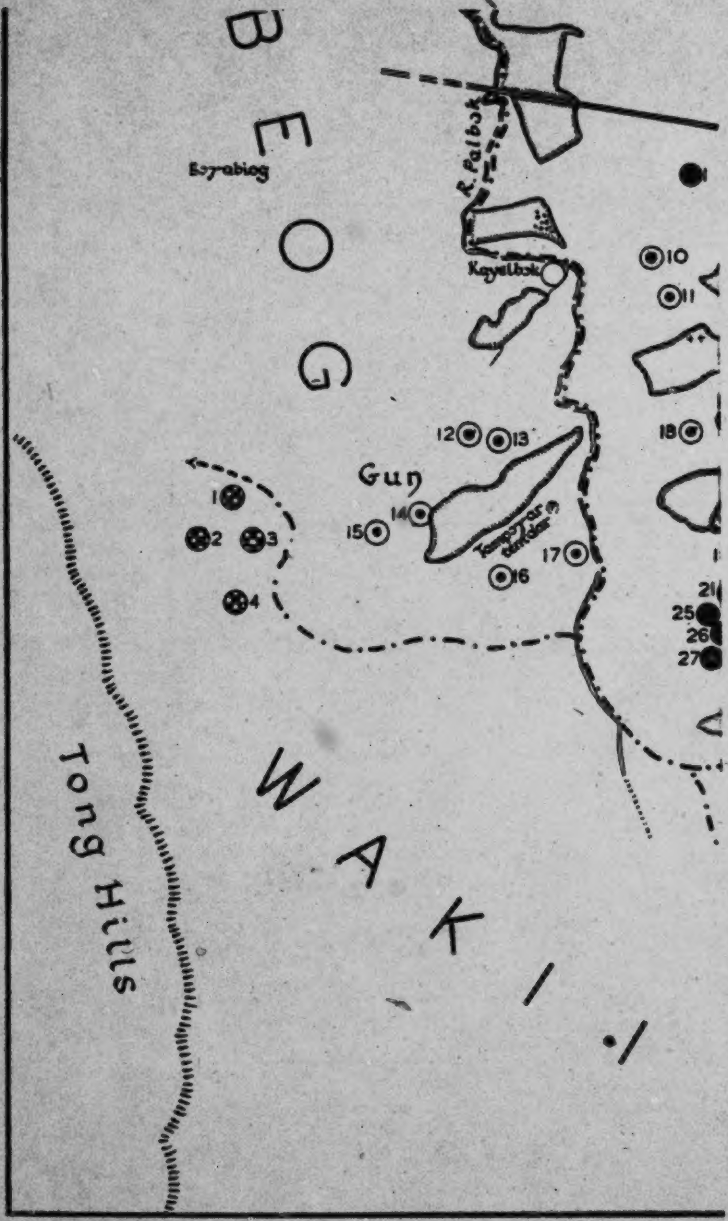
[End-MAP (C)]

621
487
778
●131
764
133
361


20
Naambulag
B
I
Duunkpalag
U
Sielug
D
16
15
Yeparas
12
3
6
16
8
9

[End-MAP (D)]

621
487
778
●131
764
133
361

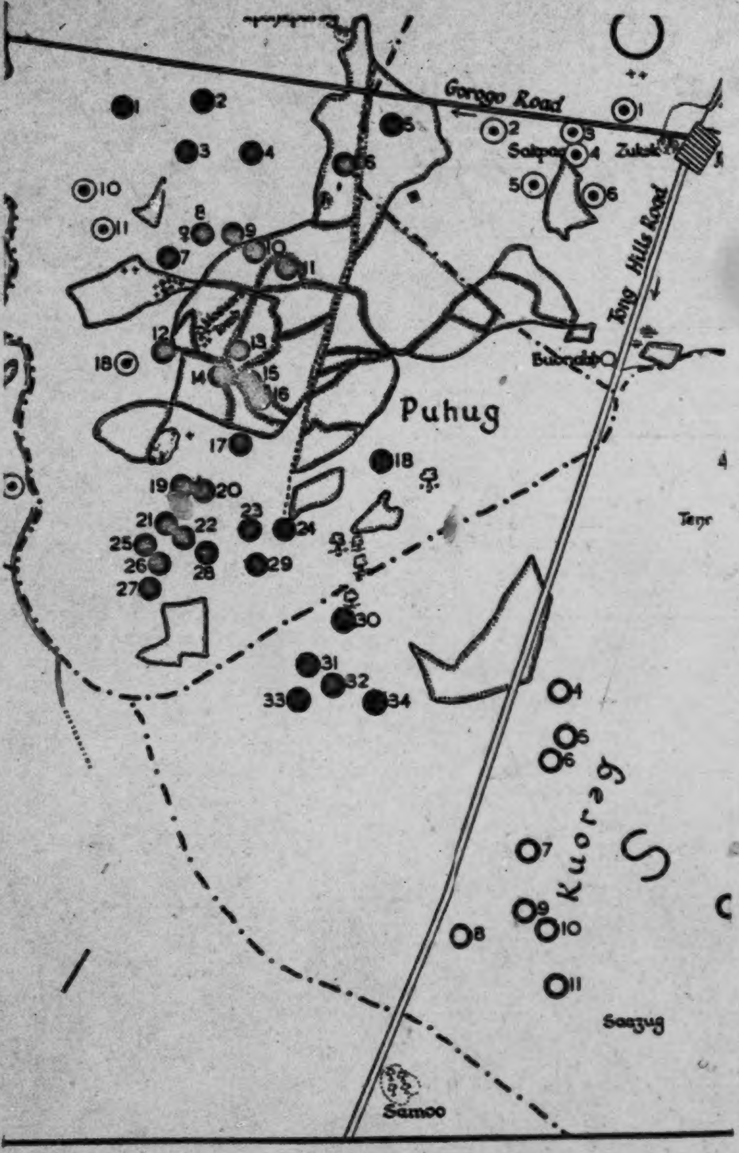

BEOG
Bɔŋ-abiog
R. Palbɔk
Kayalbɔk
10
11
18
12
13
Gun
14
15
16
17
1
2
3
4
21
25
26
27
WAKII
Tong Hills

S

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Na*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakora se

[End-Map(E)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


Gorogo Road
Zubiuŋ
Tong Hills Road
Puhug
Kuorəg
Samoo

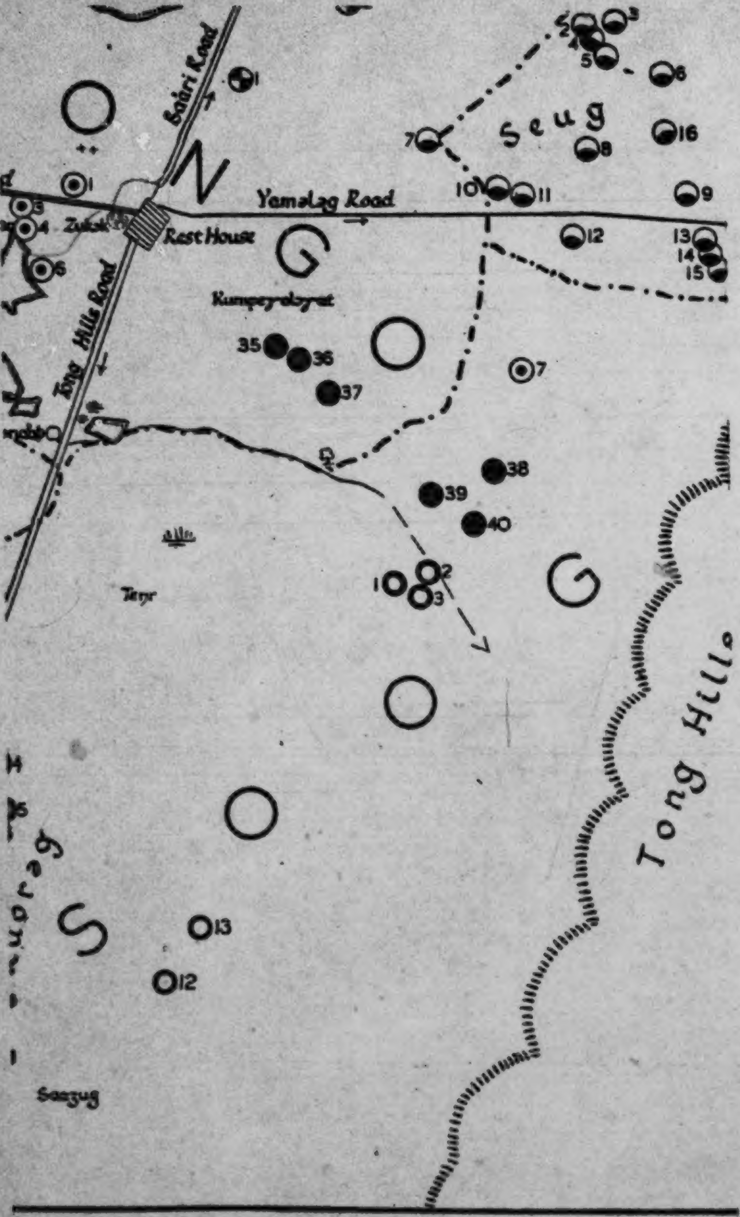
SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Təŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social
n and Guŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen
Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).
d of the Yakora section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpayan
few Wal
The
covering

[End-MAP (F)]

621
487
778
●131
764
133
361

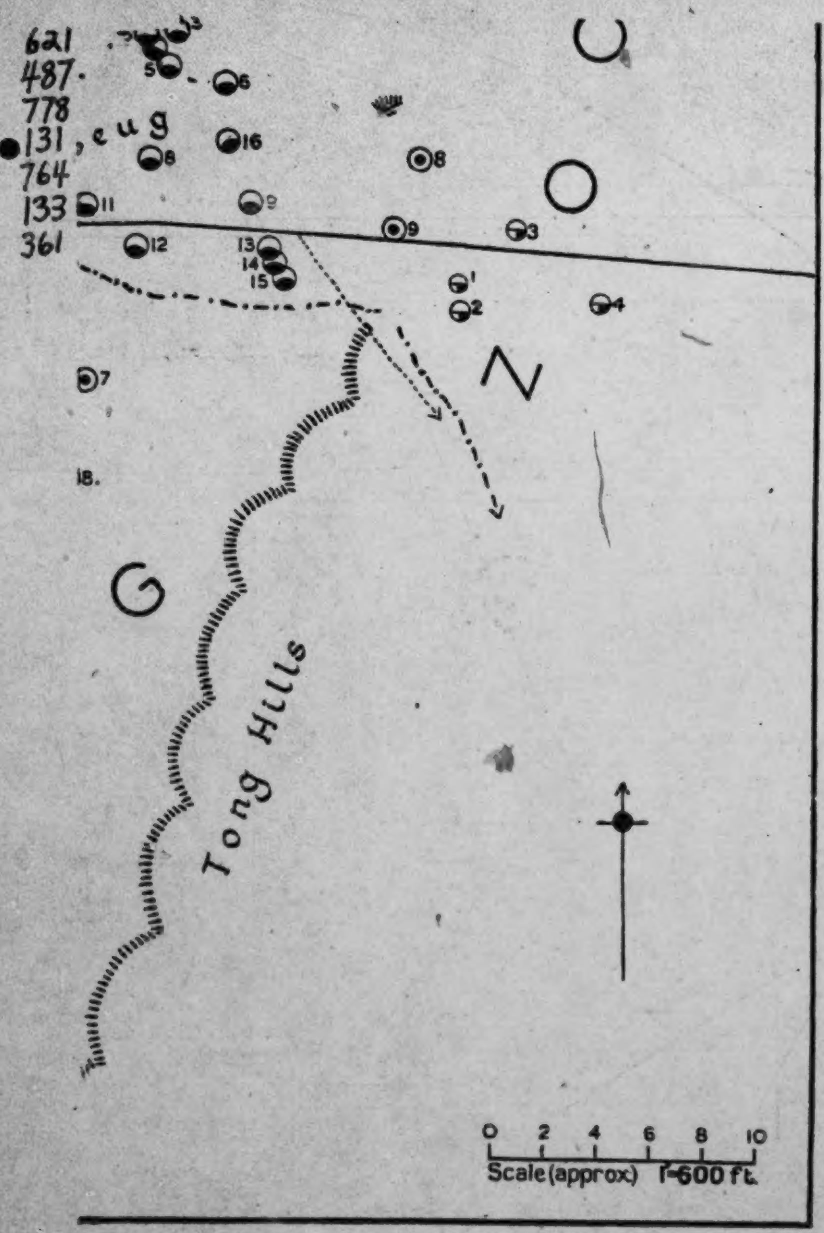

Bakri Road
1
N
Seug
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
Yamalag Road
1
3
4
5
Zubiuk
Rest House
G
Kumpeyalbyet
Tong Hills Road
35
36
37
7
38
39
40
1
2
3
G
Tenyr
Tong Hills
14
15
Gbeog
S
13
12
Sanzug

PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

nal Kpayara yayar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
en few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
ŋ- covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' gı

[End-MAP (6)]


621
487
778
131, eug
764
133
361
3
5
6
16
8
8
11
9
9
3
12
13
14
15
1
2
4
7
N
18.
G
Tong Hills
0
2
4
6
8
10
Scale (approx) 1=600 ft.

NTS

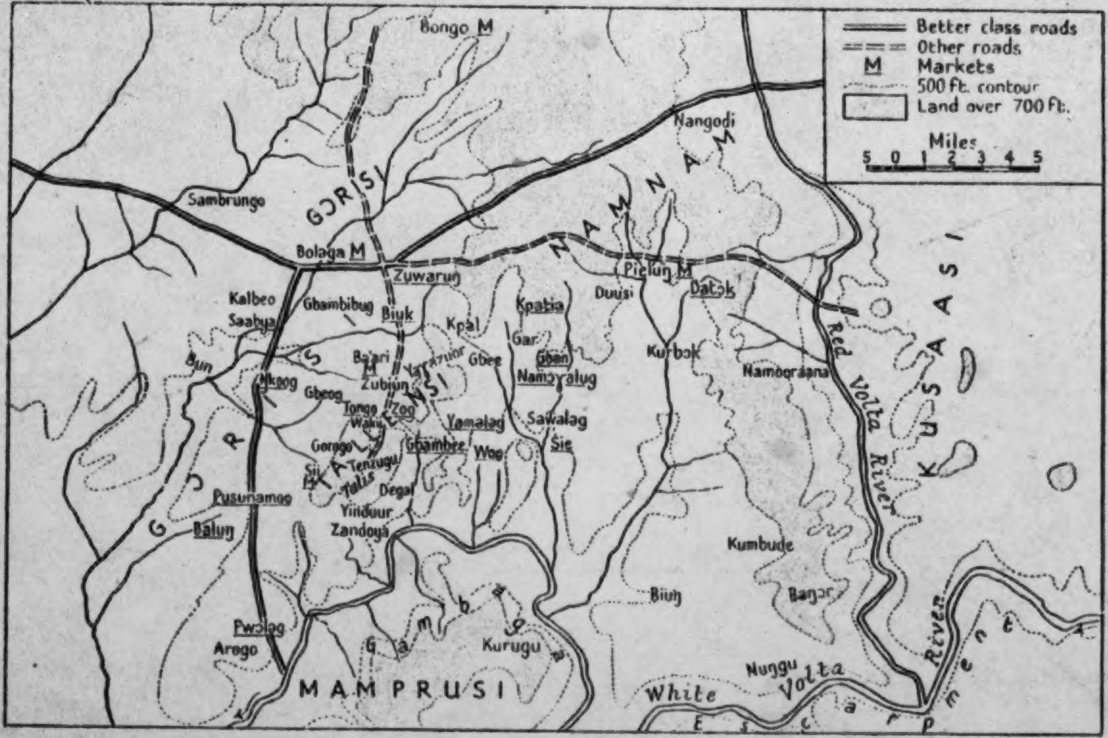
three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a

situation of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid
he founding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-map (H)]

131
1949
101

[p 282]


Better class roads
Other roads
M Markets
500 ft. contour
Land over 700 ft.
Miles
5 0 1 2 3 4 5
Bongo M
Sambrungo
GORISI
Bolaga M
Zuwarun
Nangodi
NAMNAM
Pielun M
Datok
Duusi
Kpatia
Gar
Gban
Kalbeo
Saabya
Gbambibug
Biuk
Kpal
Ba'ari M
Yarazuor
Gbee
Namoralug
Kurbok
Namooraana
KUSASI
Red Volta River
Bun
Nkoog
Gbeog
Zubiun
Tongo
Zoo
Wakii
TALLENSI
Yamalag
Sawalag
Gorogo
Gbambee
Woo
Sie
Sii
Tenzugu
Tallis
Degal
Pusunamoo
Yiiduur
Zandoya
Balun
Kumbude
Biun
Bagor
Pwolag
Arogo
Gambaga
Kurugu
MAMPRUSI
Nuggu
White Volta
River
Escarpment

121 fully a system of mixed farming suitable for the peculiar conditions obtaining locally. In 1936, the writer visited Northern Nigeria to study the progress made in mixed farming there. A report upon this visit has been published as Bulletin No. 33 of the Department (3).

It is realized that Nigerian experience can serve only as a guide to us here, for whilst environmental conditions are similar, economic conditions differ considerably. The object of this bulletin is to record the results of observations, surveys, and experimental work, as an introduction to the study of mixed farming locally. The survey methods followed have been recorded in the hope that they may be of value when similar work is contemplated in other districts.

Our method of approach to the improvement of local agriculture is by surveys and observations, followed by experiment, demonstration, and extension, in that order. So far, in North Mamprusi, we have reached the stage of experiment and quiet demonstration.

Part I.—STUDY OF INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE.

Section I.—Introductory Notes upon the District.

128 The farming methods of the primitive tribes inhabiting North Mamprusi are practically unique in the Gold Coast. Before discussing the results of surveys and experimental work it is proposed to outline in this section some of the main features of the district which have a bearing upon local agriculture and which are likely to affect its future development. It is necessary to state that most remarks are based upon experience gained in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; although most of what is said will apply to Kusasi Area, it is probable that greater experience will reveal some differences.

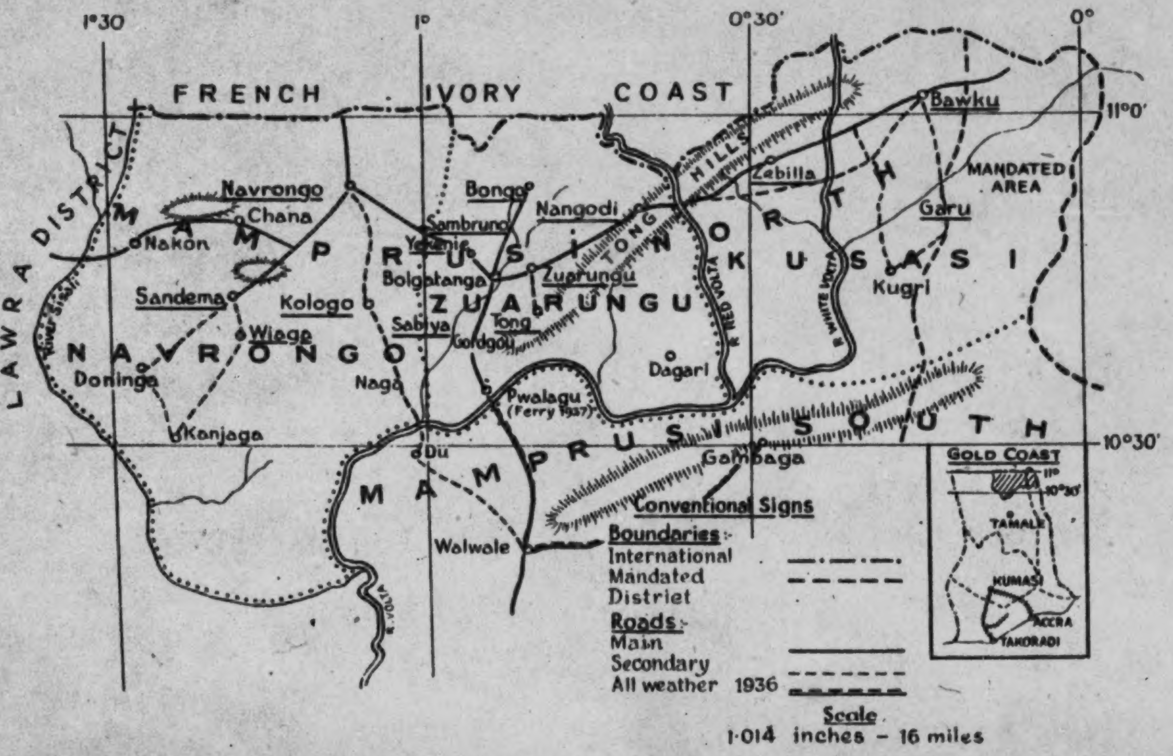
Situation.

131 North Mamprusi is situated in the extreme North East corner of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast; it lies roughly between 10° 30″ and 11° North latitude and 0° and 1° 30″ West longitude and covers an area of 3,559 square miles. It is bounded on the South by South Mamprusi (Gambaga District), on the West by Lawra-Tumu District, and on the North and East by French West Africa.

[p. III]

[p. IV is blank]

NORTH MAMPRUSI, GOLD COAST.


1°30
1°
0°30'
0°
11°0'
10°30'
FRENCH IVORY COAST
LAWRA DISTRICT
River Sisili
MAMPRUSI NORTH
NAVRONGO
ZUARUNGU
KUSASI
MANDATED AREA
TONG HILLS
MAMPRUSI SOUTH
Navrongo
Chana
Nakon
Sandema
Kologo
Wiaga
Doninga
Kanjaga
Nago
Sambruno
Yekene
Bolgatanga
Sabiya
Gorogo
Bongo
Nangodi
Zuarungu
Tong
Zabilla
Bawku
Garu
Kugri
Dagari
Pwalagu
(Ferry 1937)
Du
Gambaga
Walwale
R. RED VOLTA
R. WHITE VOLTA
R. VOLTA
GOLD COAST
11°
10°30'
TAMALE
KUMASI
ACCRA
TAKORADI
Conventional Signs
Boundaries:-
International
Mandated
District
Roads:-
Main
Secondary
All weather 1936
Scale
1·014 inches - 16 miles

131
487
133

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

Isolation.

An important economic feature of the district is its distance from the coast, 500 miles, and from rail head, 350 miles. This means expensive road transport precluding the possibility of all but local exports with the present prices ruling on the world's markets. The isolation is further emphasised by the fact that the main road to the South is not yet all-weather. Motor traffic is cut off from the end of May until the end of November, when the Volta rivers wash away the temporary dry season drifts. 131 491

European Contact.

Contact with Europeans has taken place only comparatively recently, *i.e.*, within about the last forty years, and for some time, soldiers, police, and political officers were the only "white men" known to the people; these were followed by medical and veterinary officers. It was not until 1930 that an agricultural officer visited the district in the growing season, and then only temporarily upon locust control duty. Observations made during this visit are recorded in the Department's Year Book for 1930 (4). In 1932 practically new ground had to be broken, and a natural suspicion, increased by not altogether unfounded rumours of direct taxation, had to be overcome before the people's confidence was obtained. The importance of this confidence for the success of our work requires no stressing. 177

Climate.

The main climatic feature of the district is a well defined rainy season, lasting from the beginning of April until the middle of November, alternating with an intensely dry season. The mean annual rainfall at Zuarungu is 43.92", at Navrongo 47.83", and at Bawku 41.20". Monthly means are given in Appendix I. The whole of North Mamprusi is included in the Sudanese Climatic Zone (5). Rainbearing winds come from the South East, but tornadoes from the East and North East mark the beginning and the end of the rainy season; then precipitations are very localised. From November until February or March the "harmattan" (5) wind blows with varying severity. 132

Vegetation—Trees.

The natural vegetation of North Mamprusi is "tree savannah" (5) with fringing forest along the banks of the larger rivers. In the populated parts of the district only trees of economic value, 137

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Natural Environment of the Tallensi

THE Northern Territories of the Gold Coast lie entirely within the 131
Sudanese Zone.[1] It has been variously described as 'parkland', 137
'savannah', or 'orchard bush' country, terms which indicate the sparse and uniform forestation characteristic of this zone. Stretching irregularly and almost right across Africa, between the eighth and the sixteenth parallels N. latitude, it merges into the Sahara on the north and is bounded by the tropical rain forest on the south.

The traveller in West Africa who enters this region from the south is 137
impressed by the contrast with the forest belt. According to his pre-
dilections he will view it with pleasure or dismay after the massive and 132
gigantic gloom of the forest. Here are no great trees a hundred or two hundred feet high rooted amid thick undergrowth and enveloped in tenacious creepers. The orchard bush country is a vast plain, in some parts monotonously flat, in others gently undulating and diversified by an occasional range of hills or a steep scarp. The tracts of bush, sometimes fairly extensive, which may be encountered in the less populated areas, resemble the secondary forestation of abandoned cultivations in the rain forest. Scattered trees, no larger than our oaks and beeches, man-high grass, and scrub constitute these patches of standing bush. In the dry season the landscape appears harsh and bare, and its general drab hue is hardly relieved by the shade trees in front of the native homesteads or the remnants of vegetation along the dry watercourses. The mud walls and thatched roofs of the homesteads seem to blend indistinguishably with the dusty country-side. In the middle of the wet season, when every footpath becomes a rivulet and every depression a bog, the homesteads are hidden behind ramparts of luxuriant grain, and the whole country-side is resplendent with the green of flourishing vegetation.

The climate of the Sudanese Zone exhibits two clearly defined seasons, 132
a dry season lasting about half the year (October to March) and a wet season lasting the remaining six or seven months (April to October). Not only are there marked variations in the mean rainfall from one area

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[1] For a short account of the principal ecological and climatic features of the [132
part of the Sudanese Zone that concerns us in this book, see Lynn, C. W., *Agriculture in North Mamprussi*, Bulletin No. 34 of the Gold Coast Department 137]
of Agriculture, 1937. Climate and vegetation are more fully discussed in Bégué, L., *Contribution à l'Étude de la Végétation Forestière de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire*, Publications du Comité d'Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française, 1937. These writers give lists of the common trees of economic value found in our area, of which the following are the best known and most frequently seen in inhabited places: Shea (*Butyrospermum parkii*); locust bean (*Parkia filicoidea*); baobab (*Adansonia digitata*); various species of acacia; the silk cotton (*Ceiba pentendra*); the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*).

[p. 1]

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[101] 131 133 This book is concerned with the population of a very small section of the Sudanese Zone, a part of the region drained by the Volta river system. The head-waters of this system lie in French West Africa. About 20 miles south of the international boundary between the Gold Coast and French Ivory Coast, which has been arbitrarily fixed to coincide approximately with the eleventh parallel N. latitude, the Red Volta flows into the White Volta. Between these two rivers, on the east and south respectively, and the Sissili river on the west lies an area, arbitrarily truncated on the north by the international boundary, comprising two of the most heavily populated administrative districts of the Gold Coast. The eastern third of this area constitutes the administrative district of Zuarungu, the remaining two-thirds the district of Navrongo. The Red Volta separates Zuarungu district from another administrative unit, Kusaasi, and the White Volta forms a natural boundary between it and the Mamprusi district, to the south of which lies the territory of the Dagomba.

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District	Area	Population	Density per sq. mile
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Kusasi* . .	1,227	151,715	123·64
Mamprusi* .	2,719	61,520	22·62
Dagomba*. .	12,257	191,956	15·66

* Partly in Mandated Territory of Togoland.

In spite of the general similarity of climate and vegetation in the 241
Sudanese Zone, local variations produce significant ecological differences. 133
This is shown in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by the
differences in agriculture north and south of the Gambaga scarp. The 134
steep scarp marks both a geological and an ecological line of division.
South of it the rock formations are of sandstone and shale, north of it
granite, quartz, and greenstone predominate. South of the scarp a form
of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown
on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.),
guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams
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The relative scarcity of population in the yam-growing districts com- 164
pared with the congested areas north of the White Volta may be due to 161
unknown historical and cultural factors, but endemic diseases have undoubtedly impeded population growth. While malaria, yaws, and leprosy, to mention only the commonest enemies of native health, are widespread throughout the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, sleeping-sickness is also endemic throughout the Mamprusi and Dagomba districts. In the central sectors north of the scarp sleeping-sickness occurs only sporadically near the rivers.

Topographical differences also appear to influence the distribution of 161
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flats which make up the greater part of Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the 133
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The district of Zuarungu is a typical portion of the Trans-Volta plateau. 133
A number of bouldery hills from 100 to 500 feet high are scattered over 131
its undulating surface. The most conspicuous are the Tong Hills, a small
range stretching for about four miles just north of the river. It adds an

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the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, 361
is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 621
600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one 361
part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north 161
side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse population.[1]

Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During 361
the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for 132
cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live 166
there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view 361
of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are [342]
identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settle- 361
ments, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements 161
nearer to the periphery. I cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 [162]
(*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwɔlɔg (Kpɔlɔg), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Volta—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

If the head of the house is still junior in status in the lineage hierarchy, 592
as Ɔndieso is, it will be the shrine dedicated to his father's Destiny 351
(*yin*), or it may be his father's divining (*bakologo*) shrine. The house is
still under the spiritual jurisdiction of Ɔndieso's dead father, though he 778
himself now owns it in the temporal sense. A man of greater social maturity, with grown children and higher lineage status, would very likely have his own *yin* or *bakologo* shrine at his gateway. His house is established; it is no longer the fulfilment of his father's destiny, as is the house of a young man, though it may still be known by his father's or grandfather's name. For as long as a homestead remains standing it is known by the name of the man who first built it.

A bird's-eye view would show a homestead as covering a roughly 592
circular or oval area (Figs. 2*a* and 2*b*). The space in front of the gateway
(*zanɔne*—at the gateway) belongs pre-eminently to the menfolk. The 593
public phases of funeral and mortuary ceremonies, which are corporate concerns of the lineage and are conducted by the men, take place there. When anything touching the rights, duties, or interests of the head of the family in his capacity as a member of a particular lineage calls for consultation with fellow members of the lineage, the *zanɔne* is the gathering place. It is the proper place for him to receive greetings, condolences, or congratulations, and to conduct formal negotiations in a matter such as the payment of bride-price owed to him or by him. In the dry season he often rests there, beneath the shade tree, during the sweltering afternoon, chatting with a friend or fondling an infant left in his charge while its mother is busy indoors. Women of the house come and go freely, and often sit or lounge about in front of the gateway; but when 'an affair of the men (*buraas yɛl*)' is in progress they keep away.

The gateway (*zanɔr*) always faces west to south-west, 'where the sun 351
sets (*nintaŋ nluut*)'. This is a convention never broken by the Tallensi, though they have neither a naturalistic explanation nor a mystical rationalization for it, and it is not subject to mystical sanctions.[1]

The gateway is a V-shaped opening, about a foot wide at the base and 3 to 4 feet wide on top, between two round pillars (*meelaŋ*) forming part of the wall of the house. Large irregularly spaced holes are made in these pillars for short logs to be inserted at night as cross-bars against which a heavy, hollow board (*beluŋ*), cut from a tree-trunk, or a bundle of poles can be leaned to close the gateway. Tallensi say that they build the gateway thus in order to bar it the more securely against the ^

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[1] As the rain-bearing winds blow from the south-east, and the tornadoes that begin and end the rainy season come from an easterly direction, it is possible that the placing of the doorway on the western side of the house is an adaptation to this feature of the climate. Anyone who has experienced the discomfort of a tornado whirling straight into a room, or of a heavy rain, in this region will appreciate the usefulness of placing the only entrance into a homestead on the lee side. But no native has ever given me this obvious explanation, though this may be due to inadequate inquiries on my part. [132]

^ [Text is continued on p. 54.—Analyst]

The climate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast has two 132
well-marked seasons, a rainy season (*seug*) and a dry season (*uum*). The 221
rainy season is the period of intense agricultural activity and lasts from April to October; the dry season, when agriculture sinks into the background of social interest, from November to March. We shall set out the cycle of agricultural and food economy month by month, beginning with April, the first month of the rains.[1]

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
APRIL: First planting-rain fell on March 26, and early millet (*naara*) with some cow-peas and *neri* was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, &c. Women sowed their vegetable patches; *naŋgena*, *hibiscus* (*ma'ana*, *bet* and *beris*), marrow (*wɔk*—planted by only a few women) and other vegetables. Hoeing begun; but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.	Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts.[2] Wild fruits—shea (*taamr*), *ximenia americana* (*lieŋ*) and especially dawa-dawa powder (*dɔbugm*)—being consumed to stave off hunger.[3] 221 262

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[1] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, but we are following the European calendar [805]
to simplify the exposition. All dates given refer to 1934.

[2] Ground-nut gleaning (*ŋweh*) is a regular pursuit of children, adolescents, and 222
even adults of households with small supplies of ground-nuts. After the ground-nuts have been lifted any one may come and scratch with a hoe for those left in the ground. Thus little groups of boys and girls, from infancy to adolescence, wander about in the fields near their homes scratching with old hoes for the ground-nuts, which they collect and eat. Early in the dry season these ground-nuts are regarded as snacks. When the dry season reaches its end, however, they become scarcer but are searched for more eagerly as a measure to stop the pangs of hunger between one meal and the next, often twenty-four hours later.

[3] Shea fruits are collected by the women throughout this season, mainly from 222
trees on bush farms belonging to their compound. Dawa-dawa powder is more difficult to come by as the trees are jealously watched by the owners, who are in some areas the chiefs *ex-officio* and in others heads of lineages. Dawa-dawa pods are thus often obtained by gift, purchase, or exchange from the owners, or in the market. Every part of the fruit is of great value—the floury powder is eaten, the seeds collected and turned into *kpoliŋ*, the husks of the pod used to prepare *ani*, [356]
the liquid with which the walls and floors of compounds are waterproofed.

Isolation.

An important economic feature of the district is its distance from the coast, 500 miles, and from rail head, 350 miles. This means expensive road transport precluding the possibility of all but local exports with the present prices ruling on the world's markets. The isolation is further emphasised by the fact that the main road to the South is not yet all-weather. Motor traffic is cut off from the end of May until the end of November, when the Volta rivers wash away the temporary dry season drifts. 131 491

European Contact.

Contact with Europeans has taken place only comparatively recently, *i.e.*, within about the last forty years, and for some time, soldiers, police, and political officers were the only "white men" known to the people; these were followed by medical and veterinary officers. It was not until 1930 that an agricultural officer visited the district in the growing season, and then only temporarily upon locust control duty. Observations made during this visit are recorded in the Department's Year Book for 1930 (4). In 1932 practically new ground had to be broken, and a natural suspicion, increased by not altogether unfounded rumours of direct taxation, had to be overcome before the people's confidence was obtained. The importance of this confidence for the success of our work requires no stressing. 177

Climate.

The main climatic feature of the district is a well defined rainy season, lasting from the beginning of April until the middle of November, alternating with an intensely dry season. The mean annual rainfall at Zuarungu is 43.92", at Navrongo 47.83", and at Bawku 41.20". Monthly means are given in Appendix I. The whole of North Mamprusi is included in the Sudanese Climatic Zone (5). Rainbearing winds come from the South East, but tornadoes from the East and North East mark the beginning and the end of the rainy season; then precipitations are very localised. From November until February or March the "harmattan" (5) wind blows with varying severity. 132

Vegetation—Trees.

The natural vegetation of North Mamprusi is "tree savannah" (6) with fringing forest along the banks of the larger rivers. In the populated parts of the district only trees of economic value, 137

APPENDIX I.

●132

Mean monthly rainfall recorded at Zuarungu, Navrongo and Bawku.

Month	Zuarungu (19 years)	Navrongo (11 years	Bawku (10 years)
January	.06	nil	nil
February	.66*	.39**	.29
March	.72	.34	1.02
April	2.78	3.15	2.16
May	4.27	5.14	3.10
June	6.43	6.68	5.80
July	7.22	8.04	7.56
August	9.93	11.85	8.90
September	8.73	8.85	8.71
October	2.42	2.85	2.85
November	.68	.37	.70
December	.02	nil	.11
Means	43.92	47.83	41.20

*8.93" recorded in 1919. **3.12" in February, 1932.

132 to another, ranging from 25 inches to 45 inches per annum, but fluctuations occur from year to year in the same area. Erratic or abnormal rains may so disturb the cycle of food production as to subject a majority of the population to severe privation. The temperature in the vicinity of 10° 30′ N. latitude and 0° 30′ W. longitude varies from a minimum of about 70° F. to a maximum of about 93° F. A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing, so much so that the natives squat shivering round fires or remain indoors until the sun is high; from the forenoon until about 4 p.m. the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature. Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive. The peak of the rains comes in August–September. It rains so heavily then that many social activities are impeded. These conditions of vegetation and climate fundamentally influence the economy and the social life of the inhabitants of the Sudanese Zone.

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131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course
of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and
perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
[361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161] periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and
densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective
Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts
491 were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a
main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of
reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of
161 the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the
north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria.
His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

101 in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

101 Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Talɔŋ
304 in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Gɔris (*Tam Talis pu ɛt lan—Gɔris tuomər ŋla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

361 To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale
103 settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial
133 relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a
621 mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map, p. 15), one of the most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gɔre neighbours, on the other is Yaɣazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sɔk and Yamələg, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tɛnzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Ŋkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santɛŋ, Teelɔg, Syɛk, and Wɔɣar, separated from Tɛnzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawalɔg. Between Zoo and Yamələg lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yamələg occupies a shallow depression between hillocks.
361 Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before
103 the homesteads of Sawalɔg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can
621

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

161 The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta
161 plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
●133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Taləŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*buləg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*koləg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

pression liable to flooding in the rainy season. The people of the Tong 361 Hills consider themselves to be particularly fortunate in this respect. 133 Their homesteads stretch densely across the slopes of the hills, and amid the great boulders and rocky piles of the summit. Singing the praises of their tiny fastness, they contrast it with the plain, where one is always ankle-deep in mud and slush during the rains and scorched by the sun in the dry season. On the hills, they say, a sheltered nook can always be found among the rocks, shady when the sun is most cruel, dry in the severest storm, where the children can play or the grown-ups sit and talk.

The Stability and Continuity of a Settlement

Stability and continuity are essential characteristics of a settlement. 621 They are implied in the native concept of a *tɛŋ* (settlement) as both a 361 definite locality and a fixed community. The ancient settlements have attained a very high degree of stability and continuity. The peripheral settlements are rapidly ceasing to be mere economic apanages to the older centres of habitation, and are taking on the form of permanent and stable units. Being still in process of organization, their structure is fluid compared with that of the ancient settlements, and the dynamic factors of Tale social structure sometimes appear more conspicuously in them than in the latter.

But the older settlements are by no means static. The bounds, the layout, and the internal constitution of a settlement alter continuously, if very slowly. Even in a single year one can see how processes of expansion and contraction, of segmentation and incorporation, are at work all the time. Whenever land changes hands by inheritance, or an office passes by succession, or a man achieves economic independence, a minor reshuffle in the collocation of homesteads takes place. The cumulative effects of these processes of slow but progressive readjustment are clearly exhibited in the contemporary structure of a settlement. They are documented in its constitution and layout, in the location of ancestral graves, the ownership of farm plots, and in ceremonial and political relations. Fixity of location and of the structural plan ensure the stability and continuity of a Tale settlement.

Topographical Distinctions and the Natives' Knowledge of Natural History

Precise local orientation is essential in the economic activities and 823 social relations of the Tallensi. Place-names are often derived from 103 prominent topographical or geographical features. Thus, Tɛnzugu means the head (*zug*) or highest part of the country (*tɛŋ*), Yayazuor means 'perched on a hill', and many other place-names are popularly believed to be corruptions of topographical or spatial metaphors. Within a settlement topographical variations are distinguished by terms like *tɛŋr*, the lower part (the locative of *tɛŋ*, here in the sense of 'ground'), and *saazugu*, the higher part (lit. head-high, or high up). Conspicuous patches of low-lying land, hillocks, rock piles, ditches, water-holes, streams, &c., are named, and are very often sacred spots. The name may indicate peculiar qualities of the soil, prominent trees, or other landmarks formerly or still

PLATE IX

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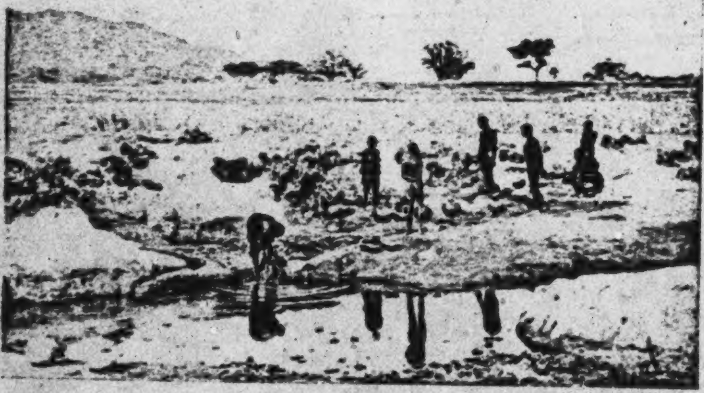
291
415
133

(*a*) A large boulder in the middle of a settlement forms a natural mortar where young girls go to stamp guinea corn.

312
415
133
291



(*b*) Women at a waterhole in the early rainy season. This waterhole serves homesteads within a radius of over a quarter of a mile.

[facing p. 176]

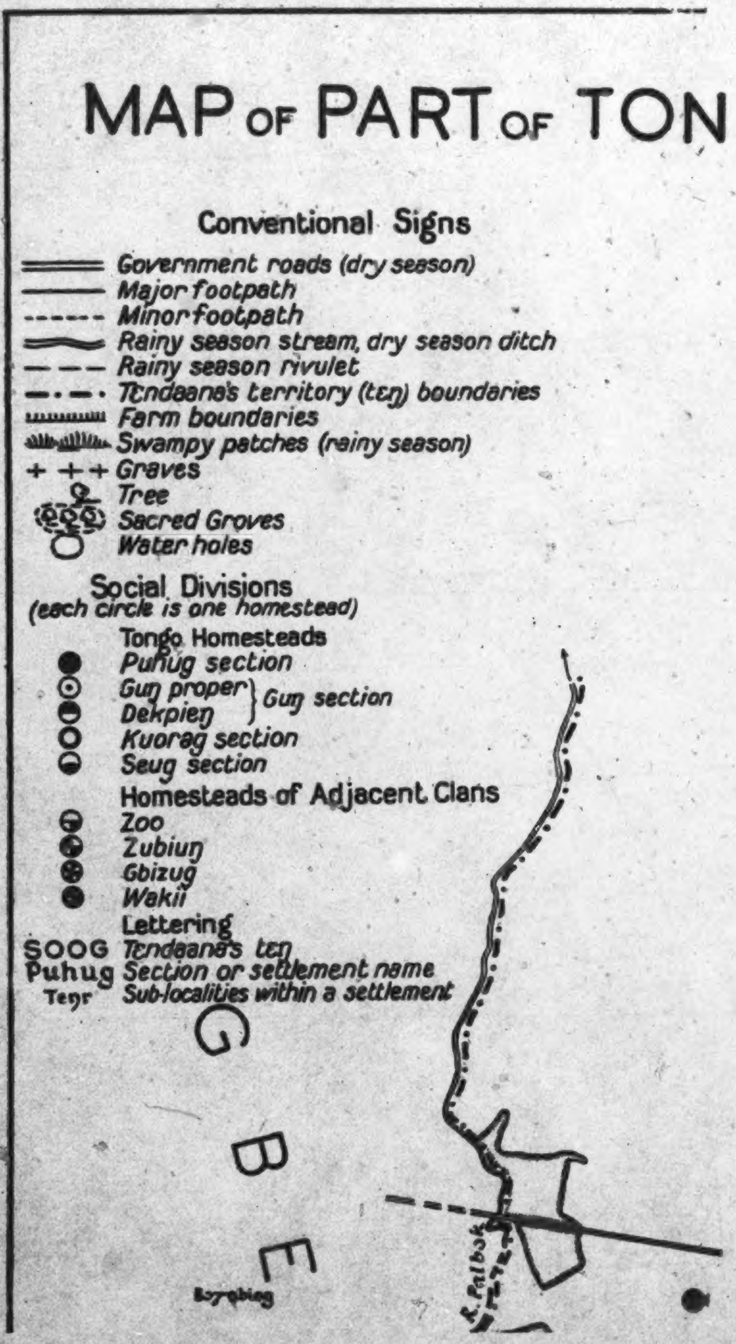
2: Fortes
131, 133, 361, 487, 778, 764, 621

[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

]

621
487
778
131
764
● 133
361



MAP OF PART OF TON

Conventional Signs

═══ *Government roads (dry season)*
──── *Major footpath*
------ *Minor footpath*
〰〰 *Rainy season stream, dry season ditch*
— — — *Rainy season rivulet*
—·—· *Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries*
ıııııııııı *Farm boundaries*
Swampy patches (rainy season)
+ + + *Graves*
Tree
Sacred Groves
○ *Water holes*

Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)

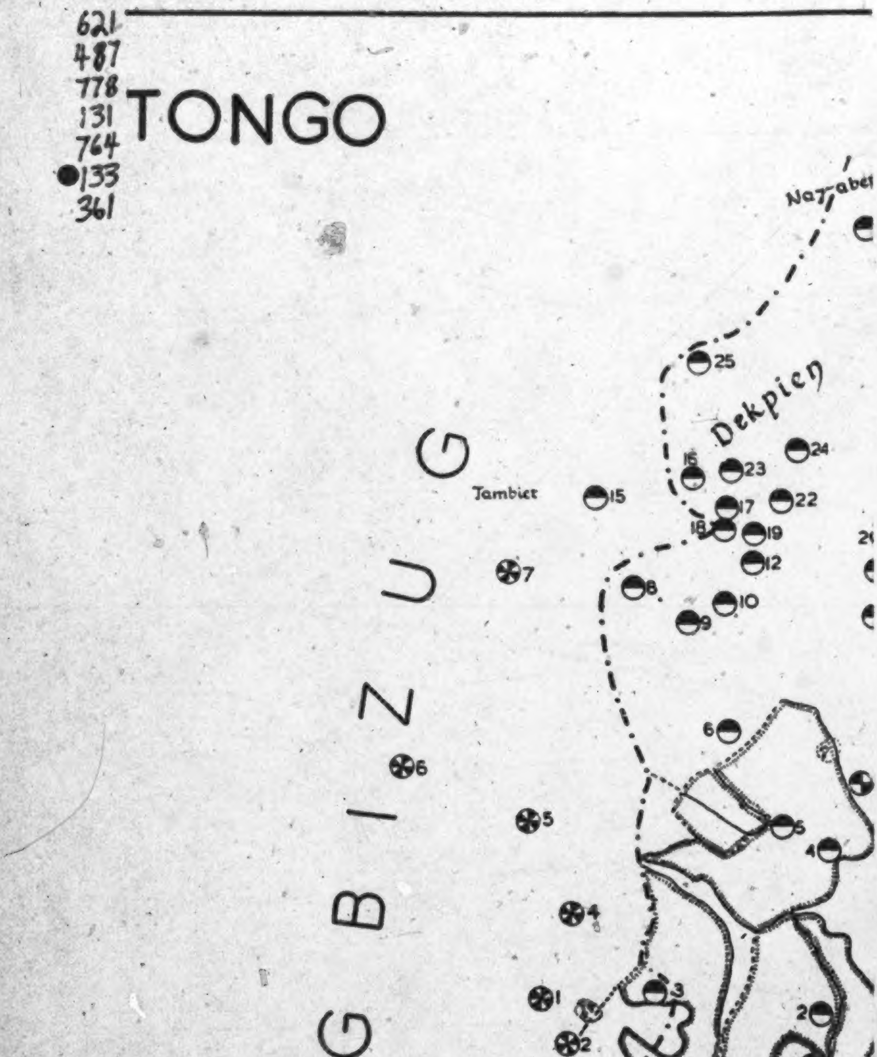
Tongo Homesteads
● *Puhug section*
⊙ *Guŋ proper* } *Guŋ section*
◒ *Dekpieŋ* } *Guŋ section*
○ *Kuorag section*
◓ *Seug section*

Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
⊖ *Zoo*
◕ *Zubiuŋ*
⊕ *Gbizug*
◉ *Wakii*

Lettering
SOOG *Tɛndaana's tɛŋ*
Puhug *Section or settlement name*
Teŋr *Sub-localities within a settlement*

[End-map (A)]

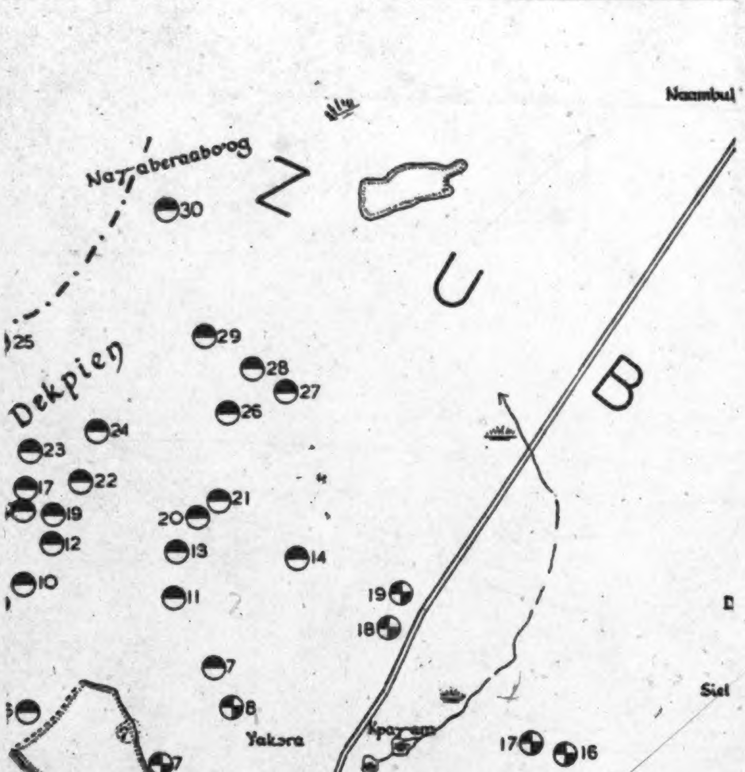
621
487
778
131
764
●133
361


TONGO
Na'abet
25
Dekpien
24
16
23
Tambiet
15
17
22
18
19
20
7
12
8
10
9
G
U
Z
I
B
G
6
6
5
5
4
4
3
1
2
2
3
1
T
O
Kpoŋkparag
Bɔ̃ari Road
Gorogo Road
1
2
5
1
2
N

[End-MAP (B)]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

621
487
778
131
764
● 133
361


Naambul
Naɣaberaabo·og
Z
U
B
Dekpieŋ
Yakɔra
Kpaɣam
Zubiuŋ
Laatil
Kpaɣara
Yaɣar
Siel
Yaparas
Seug
Bakri Road
Yamɔlɔɔ Road
O
N
30
29
28
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[End-map (C)]

621
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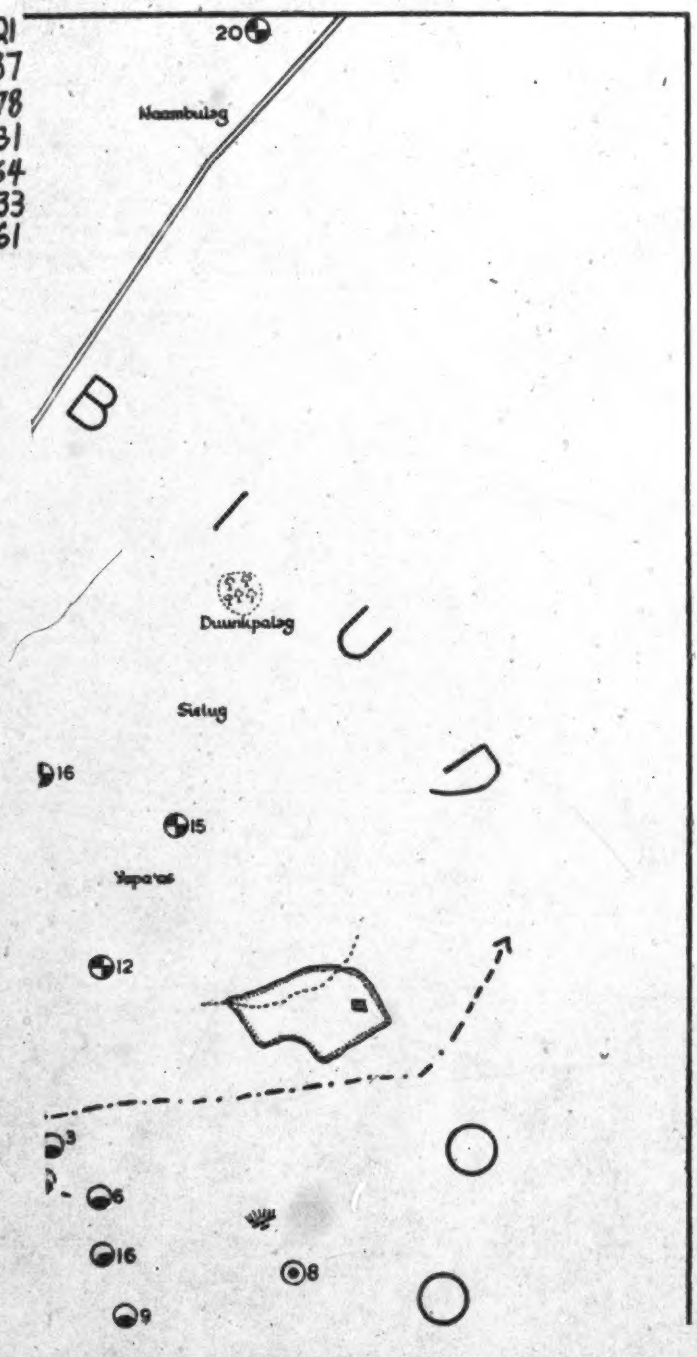
778
131
764
● 133
361


20
Naambulag
B
I
U
D
Duunkpalag
Sielug
16
15
Yaparas
12
3
6
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8
9

[End-MAP (D)]

621
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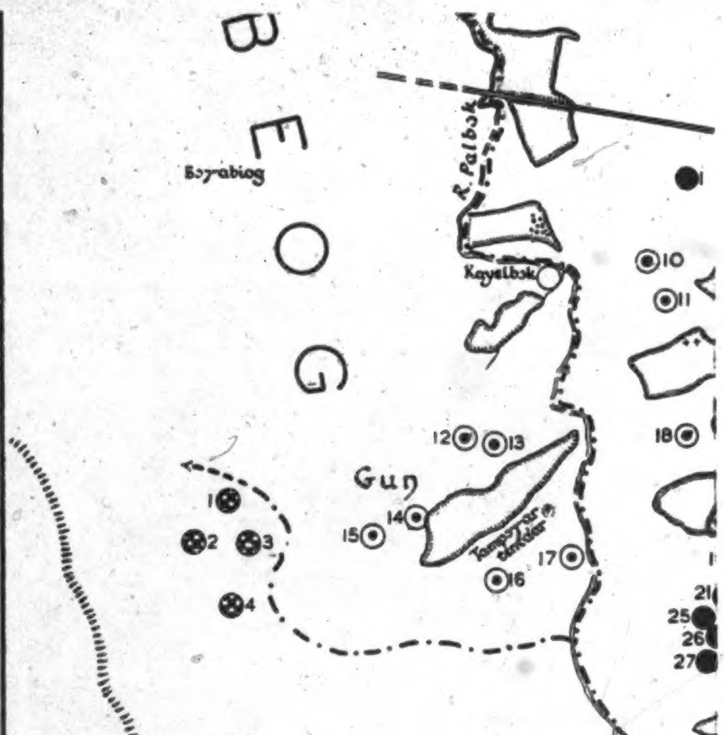
778
131
764
●133
361


B
E
O
G
Bɔɣ-abiog
R. Palbɔk
Kɔɣalbɔk
10
11
12
13
18
Guŋ
1
2
3
4
14
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16
17
21
25
26
27
Tong Hills
W
A
K
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I

SK

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Naŋ*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakɔra sec

[End-Map(E)]

621
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764
●133
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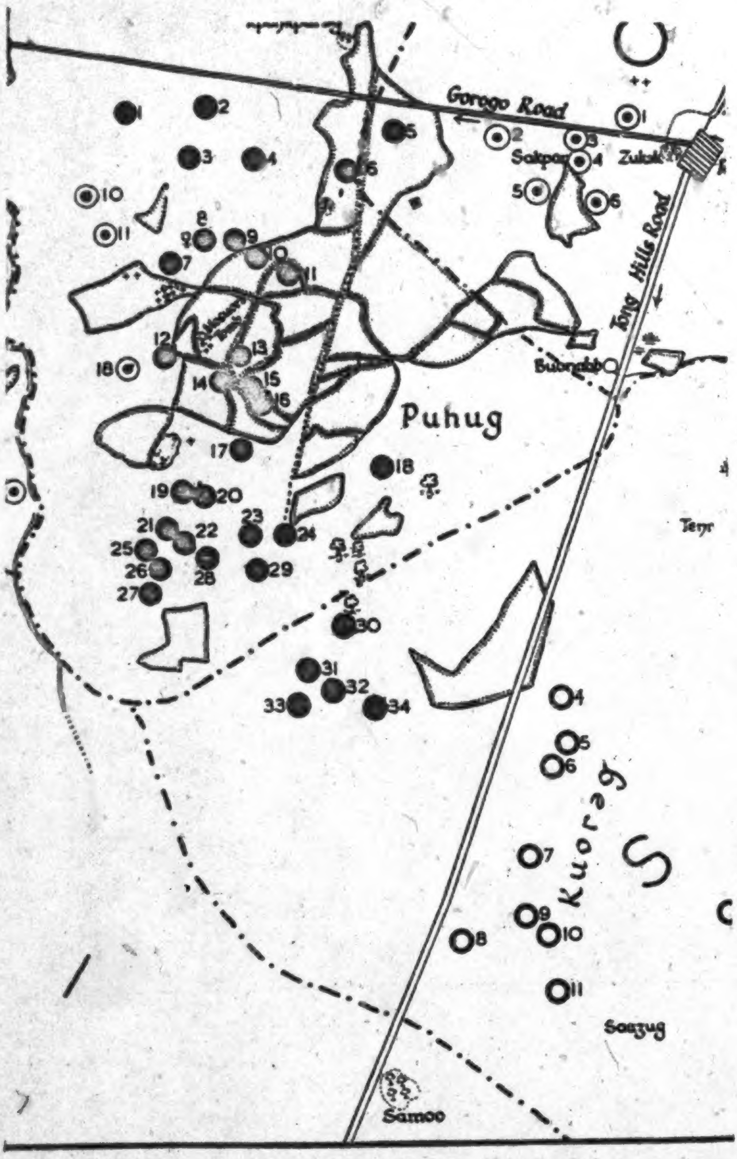

Gorogo Road
Sakpar
Zuluk
Tong Hills Road
Puhug
Teŋr
Kuorəg
Soazug
Samoo

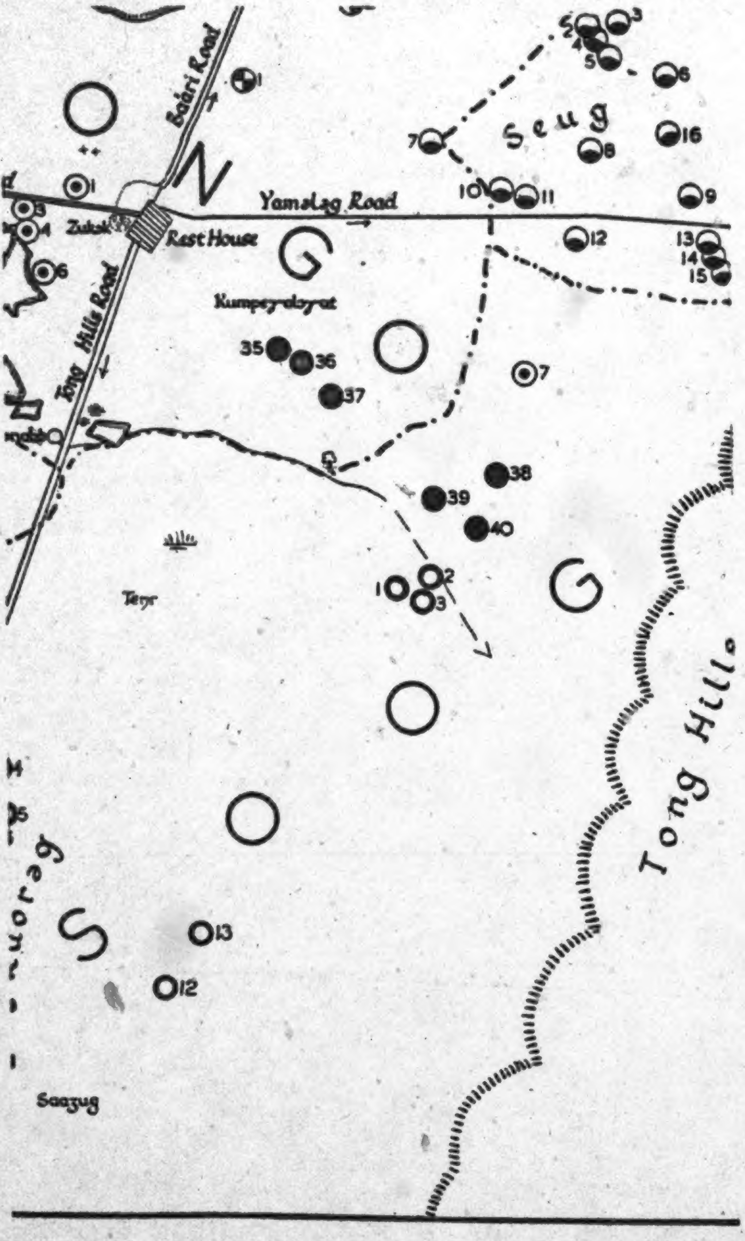
SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Tɔŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social
n and Guŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen
Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).
d of the Yakɔra section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpayar
few Wal
The l
covering

[End-MAP (F)]

621
487
778
131
764
●133
361


Bobiri Road
N
Yamǝlag Road
Rest House
Zubok
Tong Hills Road
Seug
Kumpeγǝlayat
Teŋr
Saazug
Tong Hills
Gorogo
G
S
1
3
4
6
7
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39
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16

PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

ʒal
en
ŋ-

Kpaɣara ɣaɣar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' g

[End-MAP (G)]

621
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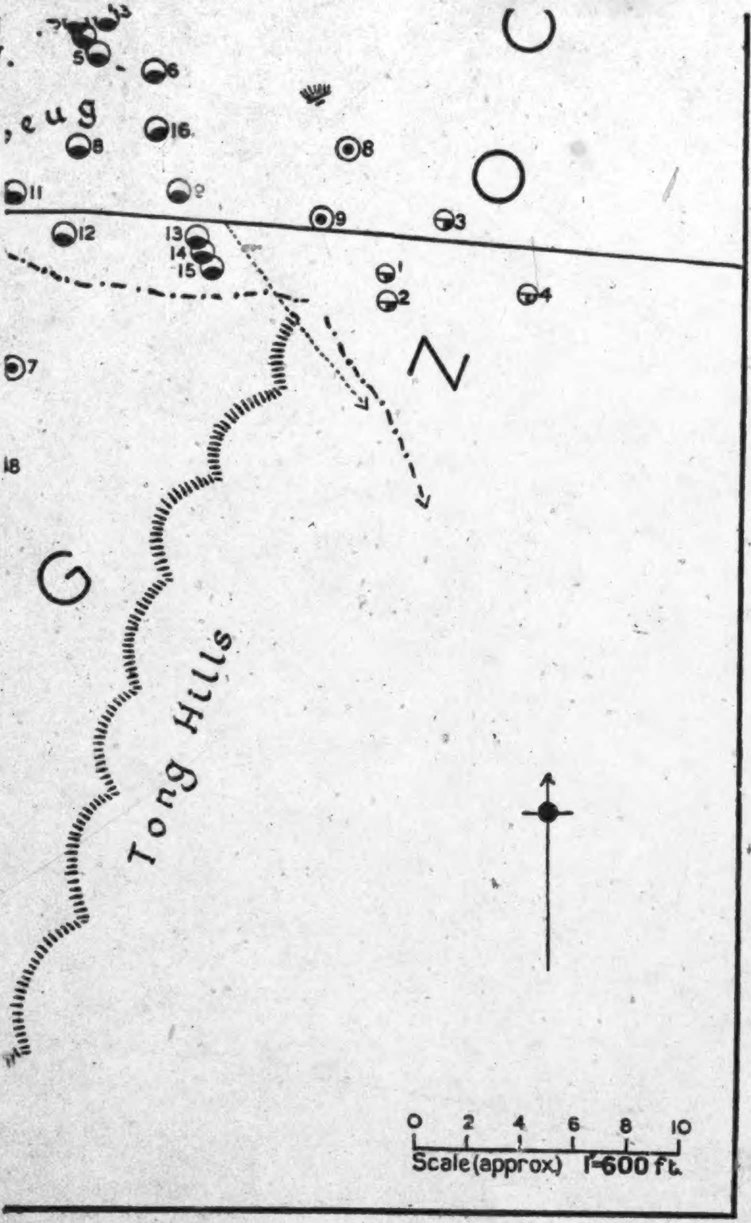
778
131, eug
764
133
361


5
6
16
8
11
12
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14
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1
2
3
4
7
8
9
18
N
G
Tong Hills
0 2 4 6 8 10
Scale (approx) 1"=600 ft.

NTS

r three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a

situation of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid
he founding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-MAP (H)]

121 each within the context of the particular type of social situation is specific to it and can be determined only from the analysis of the situation itself. It may differ considerably from its "institutional function" in relation to the culture as a whole. Thus the rules of exogamy viewed in relation to the entire social organization of a people may demonstrably serve to emphasize and preserve the integrity of an unilateral kinship group. But in a particular situation, a man barred from marriage with a woman he desires may enter into an illicit sexual intrigue with her, which may lead to dissension within the kinship group. In such a case the "proximate function" of the rules of exogamy appears to be the very contrary of their "institutional function." This is an hypothetical instance; but it will suffice to illustrate what we mean when we say that the components of any type of social situation are inter-related in a manner specific to it or that it exhibits a definite structure. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the structure of a situation which recurs with some frequency in the life of a tribe recently visited by the writer.

226 221 [805] Among the Tallensi, a tribe of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the communal fishing expeditions which take place every year are events of this kind. They extend over a period of about a month, between the close of the dry season and the commencement of the heavy rains. During this month which coincides with most of the native lunar month *Sigkpɛ̀ɔŋ* ("Dry rains"), and the European month of April, rain falls sporadically (five times, at varying intervals, in 1934, a dry year) but sufficiently for the sowing of early millet and some of the minor crops. Sowing demands the concentration of all energies of the family for a day or two after a fall of rain; then it is discontinued until the next fall of rain. Besides sowing, other technological and economic activities compete with fishing during this month. House repairs and rebuilding are still in progress and of course the markets, which take place on two days out of three within the tribal area, are in full swing. All these activities are equally shared by men and women, assisted by the children of both sexes.

226 262 Fishing therefore is not an activity of an economic off-season. Its calendrical incidence depends primarily on the technique employed, which is suitable only for shallow pools; and the pools are shallowest at the end of the dry season. It is, also, only indirectly correlated with the diminution in food supplies which becomes general during the "dry rains", since fish, like meat, is valued as a delicacy and never as a substitute for the staple cereal foods. In any case, the catch is usually too small to influence the economy of food supplies materially. Nevertheless, the luxury value of fish furnishes one of the main inducements to join the fishing expeditions.

226 But the greatest attraction of these fishing expeditions to young and old, men and women, is the excitement and thrill they provide, the immediate pleasure of participation in a communal enterprise with the possibility, however remote, of some gain.

133 226 The pools fished lie in the bed of the White Volta River. When the rains cease the water level gradually sinks till eventually only a series of pools divided from one another

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔyar*, 133 "river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226 river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 196 social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226 clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789] and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226 expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226 customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203 falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market. Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622] country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226 day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush. The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [441] partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482] But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

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7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

[p. III]

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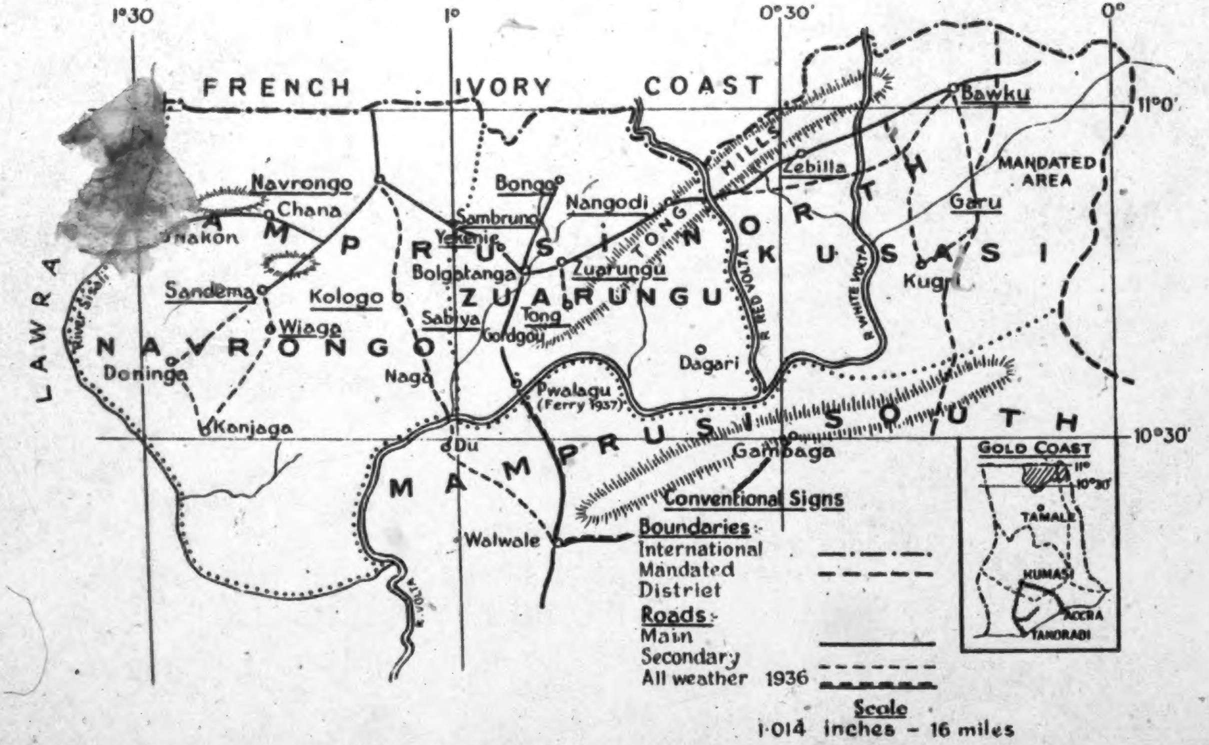
NORTH MAMPRUSI, GOLD COAST.



1°30
1°
0°30'
0°
11°0'
10°30'
FRENCH IVORY COAST
LAWRA
NAVRONGO
MAMPRUSI
ZUARUNGU
NORTH
KUSASI
SOUTH
MAMPRUSI
MANDATED AREA
TONG HILLS
Navrongo
Chana
Nakon
Sandema
Kologo
Wiaga
Doninga
Kanjaga
Bongo
Sambruno
Yekenie
Bolgatanga
Nangodi
Zuarungu
Sabiya
Tong
Gorogou
Naga
Pwalagu
(Ferry 1937)
Du
Walwale
Dagari
Zebilla
Bawku
Garu
Kugri
Gambaga
River Sisili
R. RED VOLTA
R. WHITE VOLTA
R. VOLTA
GOLD COAST
11°
10°30'
TAMALE
KUMASI
ACCRA
TAKORADI
Conventional Signs
Boundaries:-
International
Mandated
District
Roads:-
Main
Secondary
All weather 1936
Scale
1·014 inches - 16 miles

137 either as food or medicine, have been allowed to remain. The most important of these are :—

Adansonia digitata
Butyrospermum parkii
Parkia filicoidea
Diospyros mespiliformis
Sterculia tomentosa
Ficus gnaphalocarpa
Tamarindus indica
Celtis integrifolia
Acacia albida
Acacia sieberriana
Acacia arabica
Cieba pentandra
Bombax buonopozense
Lannea acida
Sclerocarya birrea
Vitex cienkowskii

Other trees of less economic value, which have been removed to make way for farming, or to provide firewood and building timbers, can be seen well represented in "ju-ju groves", "tengani" (Nankani), and on the margins of cultivation. The most important of these are:

Combretum spp.
Terminalia spp.
Anogeissus leiocarpus
Bauhinia spp.
Acacia seyal
Acacia senegal
Sarcocephalus russegeri

Grasses.

All land which is not under cultivation carries a covering of grasses which is usually burnt-over annually, in the dry season. The composition of grass land varies according to soil, situation, and conditions of burning and grazing. Large areas of exposed land carry only a thin cover of Heteropogon contortus. On better soils Pennisetum polystachyon, "chima" (Nankani), is found on roadsides and between farms; it is valued highly as a fodder grass. Other grasses commonly occurring on waste places in cultivated areas are: Dactyloctenium aegyptium, Chloris spp., Aristida ascensionis, and Eragrostis spp. In "bush areas" Adropogon gayanus and Cymbopogon proximus are common.

Topography.

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North and South Mamprusi are separated by a steep escarpment. This is an important dividing line for it marks the change from the standstone and shale rock formations in the South, to granite, quartz, and greenstone formations in the North; it is also roughly the Northern limit of yam cultivation, associated with methods of "shifting" cultivation; and the Southern limit of early

millet and "fixed" cultivation. The Red and White Volta Rivers 133
rise in French Territory and flow south through North Mamprusi
until they reach the foot of the scarp; here they join, and flow 241
westward. With their tributaries the Voltas drain the whole district; they are fed mainly by surface water and from being practically dry in the dry season, they become deep, swift-moving rivers in the rains, flooding their banks and doing considerable damage to road communications.

The surface of the country is gently undulating and outcrops of granitic rocks are common. Small stony hills occur sporadically and a definite range, the Tong Hills, runs north-east through the district from Shia in Zuarungu Area, almost to Bawku in Kusasi Area. The average height of the district is between 600′ and 700′ above sea level.

Soil.

The soils of North Mamprusi are mainly derived from grano- 134
diorite. They are greyish-brown in colour and contain a high proportion of sand and gravel which makes them course in texture. Ridges of quartz occur in some places and in their vicinity the soil is very stony. In valley lands the soil is heavier, due to an accumulation of finer particles washed down from the surrounding slopes; this soil becomes very wet in the rainy season and is seldom cultivated, although it is capable of growing excellent crops of rice. Odd patches of laterite stone are found but they are not common. Parts of the Tong Hills are composed of greenstone, a rock which weathers to a rich red colour and gives rise to a fertile but exceedingly stony soil. In cultivating, the people shift the stones into contoured heaps against which the soil packs forming terraces; examples of these can be seen around Dutsi, Zanlerigu, and Nangodi. In the middle of the rainy season—July, August, and September—the water-table rises rapidly and large portions of the district become water-logged.

Soil Erosion.

Close arable farming with no enclosure of fields, together with the undulating surface of the country, the open nature of the soil, and the practice of burning almost every particle of vegetal ground cover during the dry season, result in very serious sheet erosion of the soil, particularly at the beginning of the rains; streams and rivers are darkly coloured by the matter carried away in suspension. The resulting loss of fertility is considerable and the stony nature of the soil is accentuated, making cultivation more

132 to another, ranging from 25 inches to 45 inches per annum, but fluctuations occur from year to year in the same area. Erratic or abnormal rains may so disturb the cycle of food production as to subject a majority of the population to severe privation. The temperature in the vicinity of 10° 30′ N. latitude and 0° 30′ W. longitude varies from a minimum of about 70° F. to a maximum of about 93° F. A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing, so much so that the natives squat shivering round fires or remain indoors until the sun is high; from the forenoon until about 4 p.m. the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature. Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive. The peak of the rains comes in August–September. It rains so heavily then that many social activities are impeded. These conditions of vegetation and climate fundamentally influence the economy and the social life of the inhabitants of the Sudanese Zone.

[101] This book is concerned with the population of a very small section of
131 the Sudanese Zone, a part of the region drained by the Volta river system.
The head-waters of this system lie in French West Africa. About 20 miles
133 south of the international boundary between the Gold Coast and French Ivory Coast, which has been arbitrarily fixed to coincide approximately with the eleventh parallel N. latitude, the Red Volta flows into the White Volta. Between these two rivers, on the east and south respectively, and the Sissili river on the west lies an area, arbitrarily truncated on the north by the international boundary, comprising two of the most heavily populated administrative districts of the Gold Coast. The eastern third of this area constitutes the administrative district of Zuarungu, the remaining two-thirds the district of Navrongo. The Red Volta separates Zuarungu district from another administrative unit, Kusaasi, and the White Volta forms a natural boundary between it and the Mamprusi district, to the south of which lies the territory of the Dagomba.

161 As the following table[1] from the census of 1931 shows, the Zuarungu
134 district is the most densely populated part of this area; and as the population tends to be concentrated in the centre and north, the actual density
137 of settlement exceeds the figures given. In some localities this is reflected

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[1] See *Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census*, Gold Coast, 1932, p. 3; and Cardinall, A. W., *The Gold Coast*, 1931, Population Map, p. 156. Mr. Cardinall remarks (p. 123) that 'A majority of the census officers were of opinion that the figures collected by them are lower than they should have been by from 2 per cent. to 10 per cent.'—a contingency inevitable in a country which is for the most part still pre-literate.

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District	Area	Population	Density per sq. mile
Navrongo . .	1,551	120,870	77·96
Zuarungu . .	781	133,981	171·55
Kusasi* . .	1,227	151,715	123·64
Mamprusi* .	2,719	61,520	22·62
Dagomba*. .	12,257	191,956	15·66

* Partly in Mandated Territory of Togoland.

In spite of the general similarity of climate and vegetation in the 241
Sudanese Zone, local variations produce significant ecological differences. 133
This is shown in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by the
differences in agriculture north and south of the Gambaga scarp. The 134
steep scarp marks both a geological and an ecological line of division. South of it the rock formations are of sandstone and shale, north of it granite, quartz, and greenstone predominate. South of the scarp a form of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.), guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams will not grow easily and cereal crops form the staple food supply.[1]

The relative scarcity of population in the yam-growing districts com- 164
pared with the congested areas north of the White Volta may be due to 161
unknown historical and cultural factors, but endemic diseases have undoubtedly impeded population growth. While malaria, yaws, and leprosy, to mention only the commonest enemies of native health, are widespread throughout the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, sleeping-sickness is also endemic throughout the Mamprusi and Dagomba districts. In the central sectors north of the scarp sleeping-sickness occurs only sporadically near the rivers.

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The district of Zuarungu is a typical portion of the Trans-Volta plateau. 133
A number of bouldery hills from 100 to 500 feet high are scattered over 131
its undulating surface. The most conspicuous are the Tong Hills, a small range stretching for about four miles just north of the river. It adds an

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M. and S. L., 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1936; and Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

millet and "fixed" cultivation. The Red and White Volta Rivers 133 rise in French Territory and flow south through North Mamprusi until they reach the foot of the scarp; here they join, and flow 241 westward. With their tributaries the Voltas drain the whole district; they are fed mainly by surface water and from being practically dry in the dry season, they become deep, swift-moving rivers in the rains, flooding their banks and doing considerable damage to road communications.

The surface of the country is gently undulating and outcrops of granitic rocks are common. Small stony hills occur sporadically and a definite range, the Tong Hills, runs north-east through the district from Shia in Zuarungu Area, almost to Bawku in Kusasi Area. The average height of the district is between 600′ and 700′ above sea level.

Soil.

The soils of North Mamprusi are mainly derived from granodiorite. 134 They are greyish-brown in colour and contain a high proportion of sand and gravel which makes them course in texture. Ridges of quartz occur in some places and in their vicinity the soil is very stony. In valley lands the soil is heavier, due to an accumulation of finer particles washed down from the surrounding slopes; this soil becomes very wet in the rainy season and is seldom cultivated, although it is capable of growing excellent crops of rice. Odd patches of laterite stone are found but they are not common. Parts of the Tong Hills are composed of greenstone, a rock which weathers to a rich red colour and gives rise to a fertile but exceedingly stony soil. In cultivating, the people shift the stones into contoured heaps against which the soil packs forming terraces; examples of these can be seen around Dutsi, Zanlerigu, and Nangodi. In the middle of the rainy season—July, August, and September—the water-table rises rapidly and large portions of the district become water-logged.

Soil Erosion.

Close arable farming with no enclosure of fields, together with the undulating surface of the country, the open nature of the soil, and the practice of burning almost every particle of vegetal ground cover during the dry season, result in very serious sheet erosion of the soil, particularly at the beginning of the rains; streams and rivers are darkly coloured by the matter carried away in suspension. The resulting loss of fertility is considerable and the stony nature of the soil is accentuated, making cultivation more

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space inside is divided into compartments by low walls. Livestock are kept [231] in an open compartment near the entrance. The land lying [241] between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a definite part of the farming system.

Fixed Cultivation.

[161] The high density of population necessitates a system of "fixed" cultivation. It is difficult to say whether the need for
241 "fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

412 [177] [326] mounted on a similar handle. Hoe-blades are now made from scrap iron, mainly parts of old motor cars and old railway sleepers; a hoe is sold in the market for 2d. or 3d., which is well within the purchasing power of everyone. It is not many years, however, since hoes were made from locally smelted iron; they were then not so easy to come by and some of the poorer farmers used hoes of hard wood.

241 •134 The coarse nature of the soil enables a shallow cultivation to be given effectively with these light implements after a fall of rain. When the ground is dry and hard, cultivation is very laborious and it is frequently neglected at a time when needed most. This is often the case early in the season when precarious rains make a soil-mulch desirable.

Preparation for Planting.

243 Two of the most important crops, early millet and guinea corn, are sown after the second big rain of the year, this is generally in the first week of April. The soil, which has been left untilled since the burn-over after the previous year's harvest, is very hard until humidity rises with the approaching rain, and there is very little time to do any preliminary cultivation. On the majority of farms the only preparation for sowing is to collect the remains of the previous season's crops into heaps and to burn, and sometimes to carry-out manure; very occasionally a little hoeing is done.

Planting Major Crops.

412 241 On the morning following the big planting rain the whole countryside turns out to do one of its few really full day's work on the farm for the year. Men walk over the farm with stout sticks about 6' long, cut from "tcheea" (Nankani) (Anoegeissus leiocarpus), or "gopelaga" (Nankani) (Acacia sieberriana), sharpened at the end to a flat point, resembling a narrow-bladed oar; or sometimes fitted with a worn hoe blade. With these sticks, holes are prodded at random 2' 6" to 3' apart in the moist earth; 241 the soil being ejected with a twist of the wrists. Women and children follow the men with the seed of early millet and cowpeas mixed in a calabash. The calabash is held in the hand between the third and fourth fingers, and three to six seeds of early millet,

speak only of the Voltaic area, the animal species referred to above occur 171
among the totemic avoidances of people as remote from the Tallensi, 784
both spatially and linguistically, as the Isala and the Lobi,[1] as well as among all the other 'tribes' of the area.

Confining ourselves to Taleland and to the settlements of Gɔrisi 171
fringing this area, we find that the totemic avoidances include birds like 784
the canary (*wurəg*), the turtle-dove (*daŋman*), the domestic fowl (*noo*), and 136
several other species; reptiles, like the snake, the tortoise, the water- 262
tortoise, and the crocodile; fish, like the *tunəg*; insects, like the large grasshopper (*saŋkaan*); rodents, like the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) and the hare (*suoŋ*); ruminants, like the goat (*buu*) and the sheep (*pɛhug*); carnivores, such as the cat (*sakoo*), the dog (*baa*), and the leopard (*yeogbaa*); and a variety of other animals, such as the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*) and the bush-pig (*dee*).[2]

It is impossible to find any common trait amongst this variety of 171
creatures. Some play an important part in the economic life and the 784
food-supply of the natives, but the majority are negligible in this respect.
Many are prized as delicacies by those who are permitted to eat them; 231
and, on the other hand, some are despised as food. No adult would 262
willingly eat grasshoppers, canaries, or small edible snakes, though little children, who eat almost any small animals they can lay their hands on, quite often do so. Several of these animal species are regarded as always potentially dangerous in the magical as well as the physical sense. Such are the crocodile, snakes, the leopard, and other wild carnivores. But many, on the contrary, are entirely innocent both in the magical and the physical sense. Some have a place in the meagre folk-lore of the Tallensi, including such diverse creatures as the monkey, the turtle-dove, and the cat. Cats, for instance, are considered to be pre-eminently the domestic companions of women, but with a streak of the wild animal in them. Women treat them with a mixture of solicitude, appropriate to a valued pet, and of pseudo-ritual respect that meets with good-humoured ridicule from the men. Incidentally, clans that have the cat as a totem show no particular respect towards household cats, nor are household dogs treated differently by people who may and people who may not eat the dog.

The totemic animals of the Tallensi thus comprise neither a zoological 171
nor a utilitarian nor a magical class. All that can be said of them is that 784

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[1] For the Isala and other 'tribes' of the Voltaic area, see Rattray, op. cit. 182
His report on the Isala is in vol. ii, pp. 465 ff. For the Lobi, see ib., vol. ii, pp. 425 ff., and Labouret, op. cit., pp. 227 ff. Rattray does not distinguish clearly between the different kinds of ritual prohibitions and injunctions coupled with patrilineal descent, some of which are not totemic in the sense we have given to this term. But his observations and those of Labouret confirm the conclusion that there is no precise correlation between these avoidances and clanship ties. Labouret's account of the attitudes and values associated with totemic avoidances among the Lobi shows them to resemble closely those of the Tallensi.

[2] Rattray's list for this area, op. cit., vol. i, p. 236, includes also several big-game animals, such as the roan (*koo*), hartebeest (*sɛbəg*), bush-cow (*yeognaaf*), and elephant (*wɔbəg*), as well as the lion (*gbiaymɔr*), the hyena (*gbiŋgbɛr*), and the hippo (*ɛmɔr*). But here, as elsewhere in the book, Rattray appears to have lumped together ritual observances that are similar in form though not in function, and he does not state clearly what clans or settlements hold particular taboos.

PLATE VII

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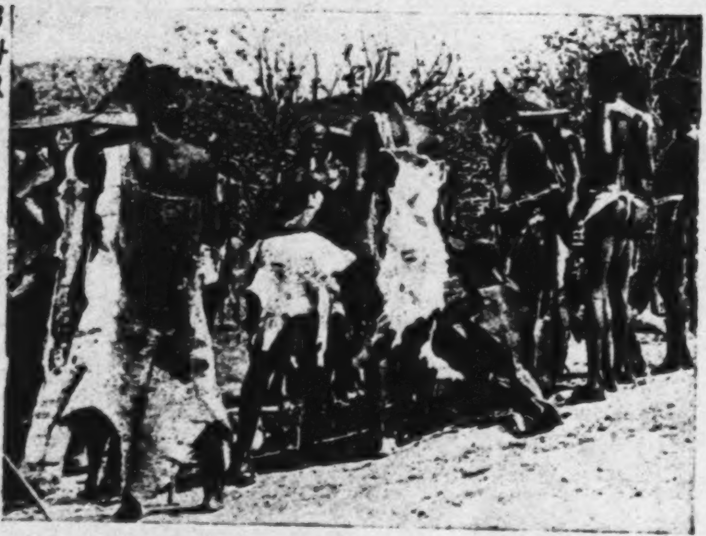

(*a*) The Unity of all the Talis: The chief tendaanas of all the Talis settlements assemble to perform the rite of 'blowing the whistles' to inaugurate the Gəlib Festival.

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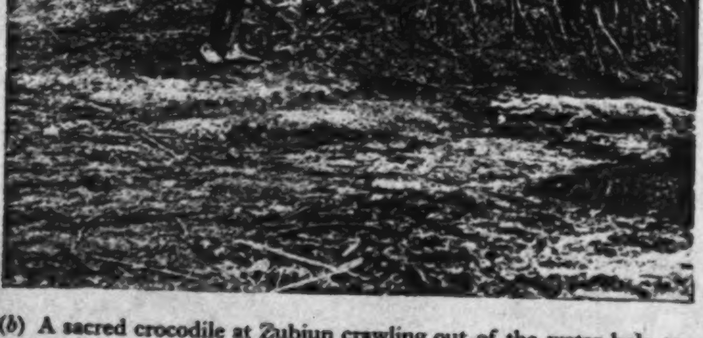

(*b*) A sacred crocodile at Zubiuŋ crawling out of the water-hole to take a live frog offered to him by a youth of the clan. Note the latter's fearlessness.

[facing p. 160]

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Natural Environment of the Tallensi

131 137 THE Northern Territories of the Gold Coast lie entirely within the Sudanese Zone.[1] It has been variously described as 'parkland', 'savannah', or 'orchard bush' country, terms which indicate the sparse and uniform forestation characteristic of this zone. Stretching irregularly and almost right across Africa, between the eighth and the sixteenth parallels N. latitude, it merges into the Sahara on the north and is bounded by the tropical rain forest on the south.

137 132 The traveller in West Africa who enters this region from the south is impressed by the contrast with the forest belt. According to his predilections he will view it with pleasure or dismay after the massive and gigantic gloom of the forest. Here are no great trees a hundred or two hundred feet high rooted amid thick undergrowth and enveloped in tenacious creepers. The orchard bush country is a vast plain, in some parts monotonously flat, in others gently undulating and diversified by an occasional range of hills or a steep scarp. The tracts of bush, sometimes fairly extensive, which may be encountered in the less populated areas, resemble the secondary forestation of abandoned cultivations in the rain forest. Scattered trees, no larger than our oaks and beeches, man-high grass, and scrub constitute these patches of standing bush. In the dry season the landscape appears harsh and bare, and its general drab hue is hardly relieved by the shade trees in front of the native homesteads or the remnants of vegetation along the dry watercourses. The mud walls and thatched roofs of the homesteads seem to blend indistinguishably with the dusty country-side. In the middle of the wet season, when every footpath becomes a rivulet and every depression a bog, the homesteads are hidden behind ramparts of luxuriant grain, and the whole countryside is resplendent with the green of flourishing vegetation.

132 The climate of the Sudanese Zone exhibits two clearly defined seasons, a dry season lasting about half the year (October to March) and a wet season lasting the remaining six or seven months (April to October). Not only are there marked variations in the mean rainfall from one area

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[1] For a short account of the principal ecological and climatic features of the part of the Sudanese Zone that concerns us in this book, see Lynn, C. W., *Agriculture in North Mamprusi*, Bulletin No. 34 of the Gold Coast Department of Agriculture, 1937. Climate and vegetation are more fully discussed in Bégué, L., *Contribution à l'Étude de la Végétation Forestière de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire*, Publications du Comité d'Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française, 1937. These writers give lists of the common trees of economic value found in our area, of which the following are the best known and most frequently seen in inhabited places: Shea (*Butyrospermum parkii*); locust bean (*Parkia filicoidea*); baobab (*Adansonia digitata*); various species of acacia; the silk cotton (*Ceiba pentendra*); the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*). [132 137]

132 to another, ranging from 25 inches to 45 inches per annum, but fluctuations occur from year to year in the same area. Erratic or abnormal rains may so disturb the cycle of food production as to subject a majority of the population to severe privation. The temperature in the vicinity of 10° 30′ N. latitude and 0° 30′ W. longitude varies from a minimum of about 70° F. to a maximum of about 93° F. A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing, so much so that the natives squat shivering round fires or remain indoors until the sun is high; from the forenoon until about 4 p.m. the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature. Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive. The peak of the rains comes in August–September. It rains so heavily then that many social activities are impeded. These conditions of vegetation and climate fundamentally influence the economy and the social life of the inhabitants of the Sudanese Zone.

[101] 131 133 This book is concerned with the population of a very small section of the Sudanese Zone, a part of the region drained by the Volta river system. The head-waters of this system lie in French West Africa. About 20 miles south of the international boundary between the Gold Coast and French Ivory Coast, which has been arbitrarily fixed to coincide approximately with the eleventh parallel N. latitude, the Red Volta flows into the White Volta. Between these two rivers, on the east and south respectively, and the Sissili river on the west lies an area, arbitrarily truncated on the north by the international boundary, comprising two of the most heavily populated administrative districts of the Gold Coast. The eastern third of this area constitutes the administrative district of Zuarungu, the remaining two-thirds the district of Navrongo. The Red Volta separates Zuarungu district from another administrative unit, Kusaasi, and the White Volta forms a natural boundary between it and the Mamprusi district, to the south of which lies the territory of the Dagomba.

161 134 137 As the following table[1] from the census of 1931 shows, the Zuarungu district is the most densely populated part of this area; and as the population tends to be concentrated in the centre and north, the actual density of settlement exceeds the figures given. In some localities this is reflected

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[1] See *Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census*, Gold Coast, 1932, p. 3; and Cardinall, A. W., *The Gold Coast*, 1931, Population Map, p. 156. Mr. Cardinall remarks (p. 123) that 'A majority of the census officers were of opinion that the figures collected by them are lower than they should have been by from 2 per cent. to 10 per cent.'—a contingency inevitable in a country which is for the most part still pre-literate.

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M. and S. L., 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1936; and Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

and the Earth when representatives of the various clans gather to perform 621
one of the great annual ceremonies, as their ritual obligations compel
them to, even though they are nowadays divided into two hostile camps.
For these are the occasions when the essential unity of Tɛnzugu—a unity
in relation to which the six clans rank merely as *yizugət*—can rightly be
insisted upon, when frank reproaches verging on warnings of spiritual
retribution can be directed against the destroyers of this unity.

Yet in other situations the component maximal lineages of a particular Tɛnzugu clan are referred to as its *yizugət*. Thus, in connexion with their distinct ritual offices in the cult of the External *Bɔyar* or their divergent clanship linkages, the three maximal lineages of Bunkiuk are always described as *yizugət*. For, like the clan in relation to its neighbour clans, the maximal lineage forms a distinct genealogical and residential unity within the clan settlement. Looked at from within, each maximal lineage is a relatively autonomous integral unit, the majority of whose members live close together inside its social boundaries, which are defined in relation to the other lineages of the clan in the same way as those of the clan settlement are defined in relation to neighbouring clans. The difference is one of degree only, the social boundaries of a lineage within a clan being more fluid than those of a clan. The stability of a settlement rests on the equilibrium of its sections with one another, and this depends upon their being precisely differentiated from one another.

The Sections of Tongo

Tongo proper (Tɔŋ-Nayiri) has four *yizugət*—Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and [491]
Kuorəg. Two roads, laid down some years ago by the Administration, 621
which intersect almost at right angles where the Resthouse stands (see
map at end of book), by chance afford a convenient set of co-ordinates for 101
describing its layout. Puhug occupies most of the south-western quadrant and a corner of the south-eastern quadrant, most of which is Kuorəg. Seug is an irregular block in the north-eastern quadrant. Guŋ is divided: part of it, Guŋ proper, lies across the watercourse to the west of Puhug; but the majority of its members live in the north-western quadrant, in a broad wedge between Zubiuŋ and Gbizug known as Dekpieŋ. A few Guŋ homesteads also lie on the border between Seug and Zoo. Nevertheless, scattered as it is, [illegible]ŋ constitutes a single *yizug* in all corporate affairs except those connected with modern administrative demands. In the latter the local criterion prevails, Dekpieŋ having its own headman and the Guŋ homesteads at Seug coming under the supervision of the Seug headman. Members of all four sections live at Zoo and at Gbambee, but they always act with their respective sections in matters of common concern.

The names of these sections are typical of section and settlement names 621
all over the country. Puhug gets its name from an ancient *puhug* or *pusəga* 101
(*Tamarindus Indica*) tree, which is said to have stood at the edge of the 137
sacred dancing-ground in the centre of the section from time immemorial.
It died long ago, but old men still remember seeing its stump. Guŋ is
called after the silk-cotton tree (*Ceiba Pentendra*; Talni, *guŋ*) so common
in the country. Trees of all kinds, and especially those as tall as the

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silk-cotton, are prominent landmarks in a country of monotonous plains; hence settlements and sections often bear the names of species of trees found there.

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Kuorəg was thus named, according to popular etymology, because the Soog Yikpɛndaana, who holds the ritual jurisdiction over the land on which the homesteads of Kuorəg stand, ritually allocated or 'cut' (*kuo*) the sites for all these homesteads when Tongo men first settled there. In the same way popular etymology explains the name Dekpieŋ ('it is hard') as derived from the hardness (*kpeoŋ*) of the soil in that part of the settlement as compared with that of Puhug or Seug. Seug literally means 'the rainy season', but no one in Tongo was ever able to suggest how this section acquired its name; and this is characteristic of very many settlement and section names in Taleland.

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To the people of Tongo their present residential constellation is the visible deposit, as it were, of the continuous expansion of the sub-clan through many generations within the limits of its geographical environment and social boundaries. They read the spatial disposition of the four sections as a record of their structural evolution, as a map of the contemporary constitution, and as proof of the chronological retrospect of the sub-clan. Mosuor came to settle at Puhug, where his grave still marks the site of his homestead. As his posterity increased in numbers, they began to move outwards in the same way as young men migrate to Zoo, Gbambee, and farther, nowadays, and for the same reason, shortage of farm-land. Thus Guŋ, Kuorəg, and Seug were occupied. Later, the descendants of those who founded Guŋ became too numerous for the land available there, and, prevented from expanding into Wakii by the social barriers between Tongo and that clan, filtered gradually into the area that is now Dekpieŋ. Arguing from what may be observed nowadays, they say that this was largely a process of occupying hitherto vacant land at a time when the population was very small. But it was partly, also, a process of dispossessing and pushing out to their present location the people of Zubiuŋ and of Gbizug, who claim to have lived at Puhug originally. In proof of this they cite their myths of origin, the fact that the dancing-ground in Puhug is sacred because it is the site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət's homestead, and the ritual jurisdiction exercised over part of the land of Puhug by Gbizug and over the remainder by Zubiuŋ. Indeed, there are Zubiuŋ graves on land now occupied by Dekpieŋ men which are said to date back only three to five generations. This proves that the people of Zubiuŋ were still yielding ground to the Təndɛm, as they themselves admit, when elders alive to-day were 'already born'.

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There is nothing derogatory in such a retreat. On the contrary, Gbizug and Zubiuŋ elders boast of it as additional evidence of the dependence of the people of Tongo on their ritual benevolence and bounty. It is a cardinal rule of Tale ethics that a request for land to build on and farm—especially if it comes from a kinsman, friend, or neighbour—may not be refused if it can be granted without hardship. There was formerly, and there still is to a small extent, land to spare at Gbizug and at Zubiuŋ. Tongo people have innumerable ties of kinship and neighbourhood with Gbizug and Zubiuŋ, which are the more effective on account of the ties

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(a) The grave of Tendaan Genət and the space believed to have been occupied by his homestead and Mosuor's, now the sacred dancing ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, at Tongo. Note that it is not cultivated.

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(b) A miniature homestead symbolizing the ancestral home of a maximal lineage or clan. Note the lineage *bɔγar* against the outside wall.

[FACING p. 224]

On any day in the dry season or the first half of the rainy season 857
one can find a group of girls playing at housekeeping. Most commonly 524
they consist of a group of sisters and ortho-cousins—two to 868
four active participants with, perhaps, a couple of infants attached. Often one or two small boys of about 5 or 6 are in their company, sharing in their play or absorbed in their own separate play. In play, as in the simple economic duties, there is as yet no marked sex dichotomy at this age; and small boys are not ridiculed for 'grinding grain' and 'cooking porridge', or small girls for 'building houses' in play. The girls generally constitute a mixed age group, varying from 6 to 10–11 years, for even those who are already capable of real cooking enjoy playing at it. When they are of about equal maturity their play tends to be loosely organized. Each cooks for herself, but they help one another, lending one another 'utensils', 'grain', 'firewood', and exchanging 'dishes of porridge' like co-wives. When one girl is older than the others she tends to take the lead, and the smaller girls assist her on the pattern of daughter helping mother in real cooking. Infants are 'our children'; and reliable informants have told me that small boys are said to be the 'husbands'—but I have never observed boys being addressed thus, though I have watched housekeeping play very frequently. According to my observation, it is merely implied in the manner of distributing the 'cooked porridge', which follows the pattern of family feeding. Older girls sometimes introduce dolls as the 'children'—clay figures of people made by themselves or, more usually, for them by their brothers.

The essentials of the play consist in 'grinding flour', 'cooking sauce' and 'porridge', and 'sharing out' the 'food'. Every feature of the real processes is mimicked, but with the most ingenious imaginative adaptations. A pair of flattish stones or a boulder and a large pebble serve as 'grindstones'. For pots, dishes, calabashes, and ladles various things are used—old sherds chipped into roughly circular pieces the size of a half-crown or crown, fragments of old
calabashes, the husks, whole or bisected, of *mɔləmɔk* or *kaləmpoo*, [824
spherical fruits of common trees varying in size from that of a large
marble to that of a cricket ball, and even old tins or bits of tins, while 137] ●
some girls make little pots of clay. Pebbles make a fire-place, a thin [177]
piece of millet-stalk is the stirring-stick, some dried grass the firewood.

Isolation.

An important economic feature of the district is its distance 131 from the coast, 500 miles, and from rail head, 350 miles. This 491 means expensive road transport precluding the possibility of all but local exports with the present prices ruling on the world's markets. The isolation is further emphasised by the fact that the main road to the South is not yet all-weather. Motor traffic is cut off from the end of May until the end of November, when the Volta rivers wash away the temporary dry season drifts.

European Contact.

Contact with Europeans has taken place only comparatively 177 recently, *i.e.*, within about the last forty years, and for some time, soldiers, police, and political officers were the only "white men" known to the people; these were followed by medical and veterinary officers. It was not until 1930 that an agricultural officer visited the district in the growing season, and then only temporarily upon locust control duty. Observations made during this visit are recorded in the Department's Year Book for 1930 (4). In 1932 practically new ground had to be broken, and a natural suspicion, increased by not altogether unfounded rumours of direct taxation, had to be overcome before the people's confidence was obtained. The importance of this confidence for the success of our work requires no stressing.

Climate.

The main climatic feature of the district is a well defined rainy 132 season, lasting from the beginning of April until the middle of November, alternating with an intensely dry season. The mean annual rainfall at Zuarungu is 43.92", at Navrongo 47.83", and at Bawku 41.20". Monthly means are given in Appendix I. The whole of North Mamprusi is included in the Sudanese Climatic Zone (5). Rainbearing winds come from the South East, but tornadoes from the East and North East mark the beginning and the end of the rainy season; then precipitations are very localised. From November until February or March the "harmattan" (5) wind blows with varying severity.

Vegetation—Trees.

The natural vegetation of North Mamprusi is "tree savannah" 137 (6) with fringing forest along the banks of the larger rivers. In the populated parts of the district only trees of economic value,

●137 either as food or medicine, have been allowed to remain. The most important of these are:—

Adansonia digitata
Butyrospermum parkii
Parkia filicoidea
Diospyros mespiliformis
Sterculia tomentosa
Ficus gnaphalocarpa
Tamarindus indica
Celtis integrifolia

Acacia albida
Acacia sieberriana
Acacia arabica
Cieba pentandra
Bombax buonopozense
Lannea acida
Sclerocarya birrea
Vitex cienkowskii

Other trees of less economic value, which have been removed to make way for farming, or to provide firewood and building timbers, can be seen well represented in "ju-ju groves", "tengani" (Nankani), and on the margins of cultivation. The most important of these are:

Combretum spp.
Terminalia spp.
Anogeissus leiocarpus
Bauhinia spp.

Acacia seyal
Acacia senegal
Sarcocephalus russegeri

Grasses.

All land which is not under cultivation carries a covering of grasses which is usually burnt-over annually, in the dry season. The composition of grass land varies according to soil, situation, and conditions of burning and grazing. Large areas of exposed land carry only a thin cover of Heteropogon contortus. On better soils Pennisetum polystachyon, "chima" (Nankani), is found on roadsides and between farms; it is valued highly as a fodder grass. Other grasses commonly occurring on waste places in cultivated areas are: Dactyloctenium aegyptium, Chloris spp., Aristida ascensionis, and Eragrostis spp. In "bush areas" Adropogon gayanus and Cymbopogon proximus are common.

Topography.

133
241
North and South Mamprusi are separated by a steep escarpment. This is an important dividing line for it marks the change from the standstone and shale rock formations in the South, to granite, quartz, and greenstone formations in the North; it is also roughly the Northern limit of yam cultivation, associated with methods of "shifting" cultivation; and the Southern limit of early

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The ethnographic picture of to-day suggests that the population of the 174
Voltaic region was, in the past, constantly being redistributed by migrations of small groups. In the absence of written records that is all we can say. The fact that such migrations have gone on in the recent past, and are still going on in the central area, suggests that these migrations were (as they are) the result rather of ecological pressures and social forces than of large-scale conquests. But marauding slave-raiders may have been a cause of migrations in some areas. Two of the most notorious, Samory and Babatu, were spreading devastation in the north-western parts of the region at the time when the French and the British were partitioning the country during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Physically, culturally, in their economic organization, and their social 171
and political structure, the people of Taleland are typical in every respect of the tribes of the central Volta region.

General Characteristics of the Tallensi

The people of the central Volta region are of negroid stock. They are 144
not a notably fine physical type, but the best of them are attractive physical 141
specimens, as may be seen from the photographs in this book. Head
measurements of thirteen Tale men gave an average C.I. of 74·7. The 142
predominant head type appears to be dolichocephalic. In skin colour they 146
vary from black through chocolate brown to bronze, which the natives call 'red' (*bon-ze'e*) and regard as the most attractive bodily hue. Their hair is of the usual negroid peppercorn type. They have also the typical negroid nasal and lip forms, but the very broad, flat nose and markedly everted lips are not so common as in the tropical forest belt. Both men and women are of medium stature, the men being slightly the taller. Anybody over 5 ft. 7 or 8 in. is considered tall. Though they are mostly slight in build, all the somatic types with which we are familiar may be seen among these people: the stocky pyknic, the slim asthenic, the stalwart athletic, to use Kretschmer's terminology, are all common. Fat men or women, however, are very rare. Climatic conditions, density of population, and a primitive agricultural technique[1] all conspire to keep the average standard of nutrition low. In the best seasons the natives grow only enough cereals for their needs.[2] Their animal husbandry provides little surplus to exchange for cereals, and they have no crafts worth speaking of. The labour they supply to richer parts of the Gold Coast contributes very little return by way of foodstuffs to the home community. Like most subsistence farmers in Africa, their diet is notably deficient in animal protein.

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[1] *Vide* Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

[2] This aspect of Tale economics is more fully discussed in Lynn, op. cit., and in Fortes, M. and S. L., loc. cit.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

142

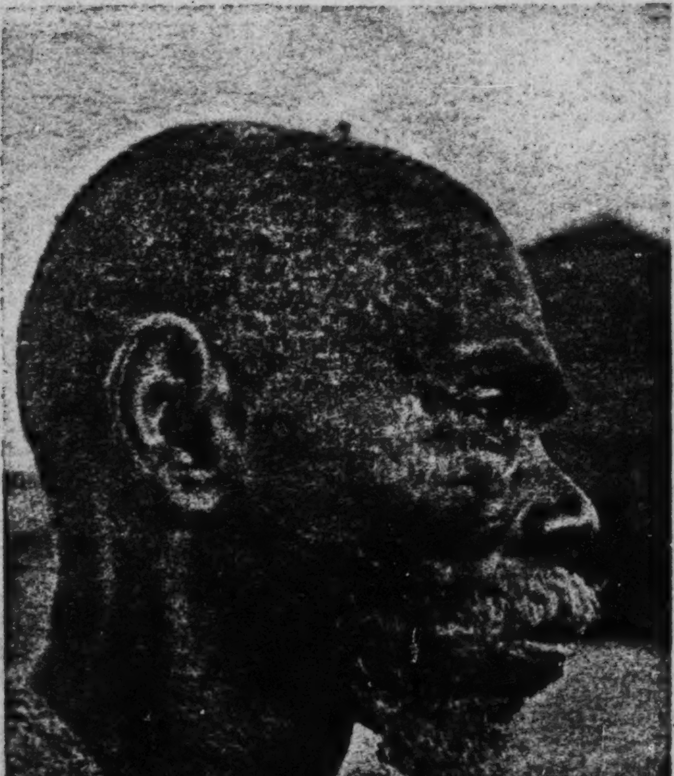

FIG. 63. Sayezaa—a section-head

[facing p. 346]

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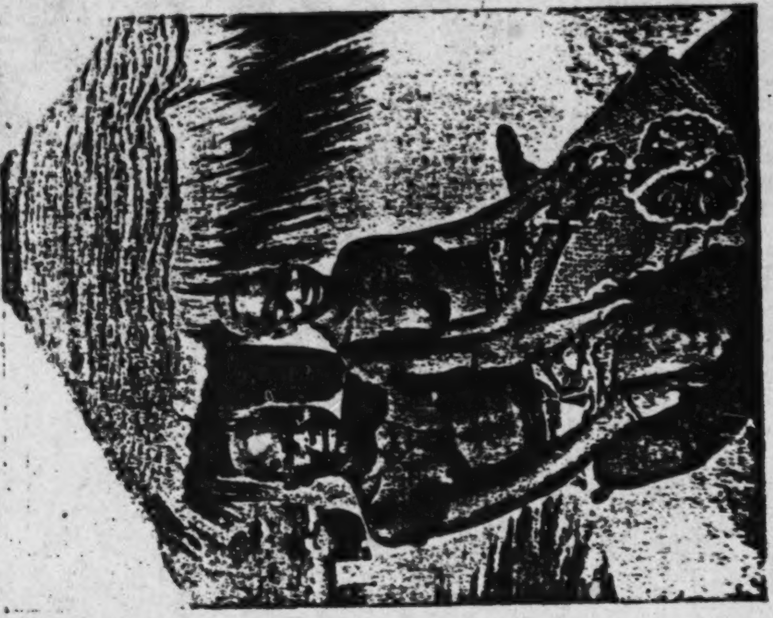
[facing p. 17]

PLATE II

177
342
142



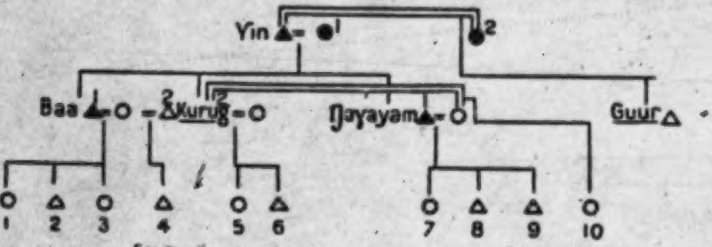
(*b*) A pair of marriageable maidens dressed up for a visit to the market.

142

(*a*) A Tale grandmother.

613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*) and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayɔlis*). But one would have to know the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body-cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map at end of book.)

● [142]
[487]
[177]
[515]
[577]



[NB: Double lines (=) show marriages]

[128]

in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed
- Living men △
- Living women ○
- Dead men ▲
- Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Dɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

[facing p.240]

291
622
302

(*a*) Yikpemdaana of Tongo, the *kpeem* of Toŋ-Kuorəg.

291
531
142
302

(*b*) Loyani, a highly respected junior elder of Zubiuŋ.

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[1] *Vide* Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

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into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121 mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145 ● correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884 of physiological and psychological development and that of social and cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of 182 which social development lags behind psycho-physical development. A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856] age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582] they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827 ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881 growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812 The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls, which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

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●146 164 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the [657] common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 515 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake [240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 183 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

a good soup; but no soup is complete without seasonings (*zikuot*). 262
Red pepper (*nanzuuh*), the most important, is never omitted from 263
any soup, is added to other dishes too, and even to native beer to give it more punch. Salt (*yaarem*), though very highly valued, is not as indispensable as red pepper. *Ziem* (the ash of valley grasses) or *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is sometimes substituted for salt or used in addition to it. A much-favoured seasoning is the dawa-dawa seed ball (*kpɔlug*) which is sometimes even used as the foundation of a soup. Usually the seasoning ingredients are all used together; the more pungent the soup the better it is liked. Most women do not keep large supplies of seasonings, but consider it worth while to walk several miles to the nearest market to buy them.

Thus, though the native considers soup merely as a relish for his 262
porridge, it really provides the vegetable and animal food (the latter 146●
in very small quantities) which balances a purely cereal diet.

The soup is always put on to cook first. While it is boiling, the 252
woman sweeps out the close (*dendɔŋo*) where the meal is to be eaten, and prepares the vessels for serving it. The preparation and cooking of the soup takes 30–40 minutes. When it is ready she makes the porridge. In all these tasks a woman is assisted by her young daughters. Small boys, too, sometimes give a hand with the fire, but never with the cooking.

As soon as the porridge is ready it is dished up in several calabashes. 252
The housewife takes much trouble in arranging her husband's portion 264
in neat slices—she is less fastidious about the other portions. Each portion of porridge is rubbed over with shea butter; that of the husband's very liberally. This is the most common way in which fat is consumed. After the porridge has been shared out the soup is poured into an equal number of dishes, or sometimes over the porridge. The actual cooking and serving of food, unlike the fetching of wood and water, does not absorb a great deal of the housewife's time. One hour is sufficient to prepare a meal for ten people.

The amount of food consumed per meal differs according to the 262
seasons. When food is scarce, whatever quantity of grain a woman has she will cook, and it will have to suffice; but a Taleŋa never feels satisfied unless he has had about 1½ lb. of porridge at a sitting.

There is no specially appointed eating-place in the compound. 264

is used in preparing tobacco for chewing, and also, by percolation, 252
"coom missom" (Nankani), literally "sour water", which is used
in cooking cereal foods. The salts in the ash probably supply [146]
important minerals to the diet (11), but the process by which they
are obtained, robs the soil of much of the manurial value in the
residue of the early millet crop.

The leaves of cowpeas are picked by women throughout the 241
growing season and used in making soup. Maize is harvested
towards the end of July, followed by "neri". The fruits of neri 251
are buried in the ground for about ten days to rot the pericarp;
they are then dug up, washed by women in a stream, and the seeds
are dried and stored in pots for future use. Early guinea corn is
reaped at the end of August and in September, by which time late
millet and the main guinea corn crop are coming into flower. At
this season, women and children strip all the leaves and sepals
from Hibiscus sabdariffa and, after careful drying, store them in
pots for making soup during the dry season. The leaves of
Hibiscus cannabinus are similarly treated, and the end of the
branches, bearing fruits, are cut off and later the seeds are removed
for soup making. The bast fibres of both Hibiscus sabdariffa 248
and Hibiscus cannabinus are drawn after retting in streams for
10 to 12 days: they are made into rope of good quality; this work
is generally performed by men. Women also draw the fibres of
Hibiscus cannabinus, and scrub them white for making the "tails"
they sometimes wear as alternative dress to leaves.

The main harvest season starts during the middle of September 241
with groundnuts, and is carried on through October, and into
early November, with guinea corn and late millet. During this
period, from a peak in August, the rainfall decreases and the water-table
falls; with the onset of the harmattan in November, the whole
countryside dries rapidly. The groundnut plants are lifted with a
hoe, and carried to the shade of a tree, where the nuts are picked
off; the hay is carefully conserved as a dry season fodder. The
day previous to reaping the late cereal, cowpeas are collected and
carried to the compound; the leaves and stems are also conserved
for fodder. The heads of late millet and guinea corn are cut off
in the same way as those of early millet, and the stems are trampled
to the ground. For about three weeks after harvesting, livestock
are given open range in the farms and they feed readily upon the
still succulent leaves of guinea corn and, to a less extent, millet.
But as soon as the material is dry enough, fire is put through the
farm to burn off the trash from the resistant cereal stalks, leaving
them slightly charred, and clean: in this way much valuable dry
season fodder is destroyed. The stalks are chopped from their

5. A "vicious circle" has been created. Years of living on 241
the margin of subsistence, have sapped the energy of the 146
people and predisposed them to disease; at the present
time, many are physically incapable of the hard work which 164
is necessary to bring about an improvement in their conditions. 262

Suggestions for the Improvement of Local Agriculture. 000

From our study of the causes of food shortage it is possible to suggest ameliorative measures. The two main forms which these measures must take are:—

1. By increasing the area of land in cultivation.

2. By improving the existing system of farming.

But as we have seen above (Indirect Causes of Food Shortage) the effectiveness of the first measure depends upon the second. It is therefore upon measures for improving the existing farming system with which we are concerned at present. Some of the more important of these are considered, in tabular form, below. It should be mentioned that the improvement in water supplies, which is shortly to receive attention (14), will play an important part in the general improvement of conditions, towards which the following suggestions are made:—

1. *Growth of a greater diversity of crops.*

   Too much reliance is placed upon cereals. The planting of more groundnuts and sweet potatoes; the introduction of pigeon peas, "sanzi" (an early maturing Dagomba bean), cassava, and, in some areas, yams and sesamum, would make useful additions to the present range of crops.

2. *The introduction of a rotation of crops.*

   This would require study over a period of years, but if, as seems desirable, the area of legumes and roots is to be increased, some form of rotation will be essential.

3. *Attention to the increase and maintenance of soil fertility.*

   Just as farmyard manure is the basis of arable farming in most other countries in the world, so might it usefully become the basis of arable farming here. "Mixed farming" provides the solution. The livestock of the country have a greater potential value as the producers of

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Taləŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adult- 857
hood children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational develop- 82
ment of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the
601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and
602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge
accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations
856 in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

● 153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning —mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an
828 almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

actions or words of older children or adults with whom they happen 153
to be without rhyme or reason and merely for the sake of 'imitation'. 828
For hours at a stretch mimetic behaviour may be unnecessary, but in certain types of situation it is the child's readiest form of cognitive adaptation.

Mimesis occurs (*a*) as a response to direct stimulation; (*b*) as an 868
adaptation to a situation the child does not know how to deal with 153
on the basis of its attainments at the time; (*c*) in play, when it is rehearsing in fantasy its interests and the life of the world about it. The Tale boy who learns the leatherworkers' or blacksmiths' craft by closely studying his father at his work and listening to his explanations, tentatively repeating the procedure with scraps of leather or iron and gradually perfecting his skill, is no more learning by imitation than our own children do when they learn arithmetic by copying procedures demonstrated on the blackboard. If he does not understand the craftsman's procedure the lad will never learn it.

We have already had examples of mimesis in response to direct stimulation—e.g. when an infant begins to learn to dance. A child's first efforts at talking are constantly stimulated in this way. At the babbling stage its mother or grandmother, or whoever is looking after it, will frequently in playful mockery mimic its babblings, 'What are you muttering there?' says the woman, 'gba-gba-gba-ma-ma . . .', and the infant is thus stimulated to repeat these sounds again and again. I have often observed incidents such as the following: Duun was playing with his little daughter of about 2. He called her, 'Kologo-o-o ee!' and she replied 'm!'; and again he called, and she replied; and so on for about five minutes. Then he said, 'Call the dog, wo-ho, wo-ho!' The infant repeated, 'Wɔ-wo!' Again he called the dog and the infant repeated the call, and so on several times. Some one spoke to him, and turning his attention from the child, he answered. The infant, still influenced by the set of the game, repeated, as well as she could, a word or two, much to his amusement. As we have seen, the expectation of normal behaviour influences parents to talk to infants as if they understand everything.

When there is a pair or a group of children together, the oldest or 861
most self-possessed generally gives the cues to behaviour which the 153
others follow. This is logical, since collective action must be common

861 or co-operative. Tale adults behave in exactly the same way. In an
153 unfamiliar or difficult situation the best adaptation is to copy the actions and words of any one who understands the situation. Small children, whose schemas are still very rudimentary, are peculiarly apt to encounter unfamiliar elements in situations, and therefore readily resort to mimesis. Between the ages of 3 and 6 years, when the child is eagerly exploring its social space, this happens so often that it seems to develop a habit of mimicking older children in whose activities it is trying to participate. Thus, whenever I encountered little groups of children at play, pegging out goats, gleaning ground-nuts, or doing anything else, and asked the youngest, 'What are you doing?', one of the older children would reply, and the youngest repeat this reply in the same words. One evening I met four or five children from a neighbouring compound idling on a path. One was a girl of about 8 who had her brother of about 5 in tow. She noticed another child some way off and called out a message to him. The little brother, equally interested in the other child, called out and repeated the message in the same words and intonation. He was obviously not merely repeating automatically what he had heard, but endeavouring to draw the attention of the distant child and using the same method as his sister. A great deal of language learning goes on in this way.

Mimesis in play will be considered later.

153 *Identification.* A striking feature of social development among the
155 Tallensi is the degree to which children overtly identify themselves with older siblings and parents. It is noticeable in children of 5 and 6 and becomes more marked as they grow older. The parent of the same sex is the model according to which the child regulates its conduct and from which it derives its aspirations and values. Though unwitting, the process is unmistakable: Character appears to run in families. An aggressive, loud-spoken man's children tend to become aggressive and pushing; an industrious man's sons apply themselves to work from early childhood; the dishonesty and unreliability of shifty parents tend to be reproduced in their children; and so forth. The social structure of the Tallensi with its emphasis on family and lineage solidarity, and the unity of the social sphere, encourage such identification. If one asks a child, 'Who are you?' the answer is invariably, 'I'm so-and-so's child', or 'of so-and-so's family', accom-

panied by a manner or posture which leaves no doubt in one's mind 153 as to who is his father or her mother. Nindɔyat of Zubiung, for 155 instance, was notorious for his selfishness, his arrogance, and his insincerity. His son Sapak, aged 6, was his father in miniature—self-assertive, greedy, combative and refractory. Lɔyani, clansman and near neighbour of Nindɔyat, was a complete contrast to him and the most popular man in the clan. His children were among the quietest, most respectful, and most good-tempered I knew. Once they were visiting me when Sapak thrust himself upon us. Within ten minutes he had managed to offend one of the other boys and but for my presence they would have come to blows. A similar contrast in character existed between Nenaab's small daughters and Saandi's. Indeed, it would be possible to cite a dozen examples of the way parental character reappeared in children, if space permitted.

A child says, 'This is *our* dog, *our* sheep, *our* land, *our* child, 153 *our* wife', identifying himself completely with his family. Some 867 of the examples given in our discussion of the unity of the social 155 sphere show how identification operates to constitute that unity. It is, obviously, the mechanism mainly responsible for the child's acquisition of interests, and therefore generates powerful motives for following out these interests derived from the world of adult activity. Hence Tale children all want to grow up. I often asked boys of 10 to 12 why they were so keen on hoeing though it was far more arduous than herding or playing about with their friends. The question puzzled many, though they were always emphatic about preferring work on the farm to herding or play. But discussion generally resolved their motives into this: 'We want to hoe because we want to be among the men and help to bring in more food'; and girls have the same attitude about domestic work and child-bearing. One day I found a small boy of about 5 struggling with a large goat. 'Where's your father?' I asked. 'Hoeing his bush farm,' he said. 'What about you,' I said, 'can you hoe?' 'Of course I can,' he replied proudly, 'didn't I hoe the whole compound farm?' I teased him a bit, asking him about the details of farming, and eventually he said, 'No, I can't hoe. I'm still too small.' Similarly, a little girl of about 8 told me that she had accompanied some older girls to the bush for firewood the previous day. Her mother burst out

153 laughing and called to me: 'Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

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153 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activities in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish[1] for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Taləŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its co-operation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

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[828] *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrəme*, 'they are playing') is well defined and clearly recognized by the

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[1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

1 [A Kind of mud mortar -- Analyst]

[828] ●153 524 Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 524 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 867 868 857 On a morning in June I found Gəmna, aged about 7, his half-sister Zəŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

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[1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
● 153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857
own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home
farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593
chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462
of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of
9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868
plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a housewife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155
their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861
ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it
is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔya yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593
and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and
social maturity permit. Its parents will henceforth assert their authority 867
and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

593 857 [155] Once a smaller boy who was with them hit Maɛŋya. Maɛŋya turned furiously on the small boy; but it was somewhat comical to see Tɛndaanbon equally angry with the assailant. Like many full or half-siblings of about the same age and the same sex, these two boys were extraordinarily alike in character, modelling themselves obviously on their father. They had his blunt and honest habits of speech, his diligence and readiness to oblige, and a sense of responsibility beyond their years.

Until one of them reaches the age of about 9 or 10, and sometimes even after that age, *soog* siblings are frequently together irrespective of sex. That is why one often sees a little girl with a group of small boys, or a little boy with a group of small girls. Between the ages of about 9 and 12 the sexual dichotomy prevailing in Tale culture begins to have a strong influence on the children, as we have seen. Different economic activities divide boys and girls. One rarely finds girls accompanying the herd boys or boys going for firewood with their mothers and sisters. Boys are beginning to share the interests and activities of the men, girls those of the women. Boys go about with their 'mates' (*taab*, sing. *taraan*) or 'chums' (*dɔlɔntaas*, sing. *dɔlɔntaa*) of about the same age, and girls with their girl chums. Boys of 11 and 12 are apt to be rather scornful of girls, and girls of this age turn up their noses at their boy contemporaries. Overtly, their attitudes to one another remind one of the latency phase in European children. Children round about 11 to 13 do not play together much in groups except on special occasions. Girls, in particular, are at home a good deal.

593 572 This is the time, therefore, when the sex factor begins to exercise a strong influence on the relations of siblings; age differences also become significant; and with this emerges a distinction between the social aspect of siblingship and the affective, personal aspect. A boy of 11 to 13 may make a boon companion of a half-brother or a classificatory brother from a neighbouring homestead of about his own age, leaving his younger *soog* brother or sister to his or her own devices if the difference between them is considerable. When Kɔyatee came to see me it was always with one of his chums who belonged to a different branch of his medial lineage, never with his younger *soog* brother or sister.

It is the same with girls at this stage. Ba'anzee's best friend was her classificatory 'daughter' of about her own age from the next homestead. They used to come up to the camp to call on my wife, as they generally announced to me, their arms affectionately round each other's neck. Maanyeya's daily playmate was her classificatory sister of about the same age from a neighbouring homestead—until her mother had a baby who wholly absorbed Maanyeya's delighted attention.

This tendency to seek outside friendships, though still chiefly among siblings of the same inner lineage, increases with the approach of adolescence. From the age of about 14 to 16 up to about 18 to 20 many

128 'patterns of behaviour', hence they neglect or slur over variations, and sometimes indeed build whole theories on a single occurrence. For most problems of social anthropology variations are of minor importance as compared with the 'typical', and an all-round knowledge of a culture is a sufficient check of typicality. For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost 158 importance. For example, the first case of thumb-sucking I observed was that of a girl infant 3–4 years old whose mother had recently died. Could it be assumed that this was a clear-cut instance of the thumb being substituted for the nipple? Some time later I came across another little girl, about the same age, thumb-sucking, but her mother was alive and she was not yet fully weaned. Further observation brought a few more cases of this habit to light, but it is so infrequent among Tale children that a single year's observation does not yield sufficient instances to suggest any correlation.

Generally speaking, therefore, small samples form the basis of the observations recorded in this paper. Where norms of development are implied it will be understood that an appreciable, though indeterminable, variability exists.

III. Social Sphere of the Tale Child

184 ● 155 The process of education among the Tallensi, as among a great many other African peoples of analogous culture, is intelligible when it is recognized that the social sphere of adult and child[1] is unitary and undivided. In our own society the child's feeling and thinking and acting takes place largely in relation to a reality—to aims, responsibilities, compulsions, material objects and persons, and so forth—which differs completely from that of the adult, though sometimes overlapping it. This dichotomy is not only expressed in our customs, it comes out also in the psychological reactions which mark the indivi-

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[1] I am aware that the unqualified manner in which this proposition is formulated here invites the immediate objection that it cannot possibly hold for the new-born infant, or even for the child who is inarticulate and does not yet walk or crawl. I would suggest in answer that it is impossible empirically to observe the point at which the child's affective orientation to its cultural environment first receives its bias; and also, that recent psychology and anthropology would support me in attaching basic importance to the earliest infantile responses of a child as determinants of later interests.

dual's transition from the child's world to the adult's—e.g. the so-called 184 negative phase or adolescent instability which has been alleged 155 to be universal in our society.[1] It is unknown in Tale society.[2] As between adults and children, in Tale society, the social sphere is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. All participate in the same culture, the same round of life, but in varying degrees, corresponding to the stage of physical and mental development. Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system. Psychological effects of fundamental importance for Tale education follow from this. For it means that the child is from the beginning oriented towards the same reality as its parents and has the same physical and social material upon which to direct its cognitive and instinctual endowment. The interests, motives, and purposes of children are identical with those of adults, but at a simpler level of organization. Hence the children need not be coerced to take a share in economic and social activities. They are eager to do so. This does not mean that Tale children are altogether passive in the hands of their parents. Temperamental idiosyncrasies in children strike the observer at a glance. Tantrums, disobedience, destructiveness, and other aggressive outbursts occur sometimes. Among youths and adults misfits and incompetents can be found. But even they live for the same ends and have the same objective values and interests as the majority.

The unity of the social sphere is the more marked in Tale society 184 since they have almost no social stratification within a genealogical 565 or local community. There are no class or rank cleavages, nor highly organized and exclusive economic, political, or ritual associations cutting across the local, genealogical segmentation; and the social division of labour is rudimentary. The pattern of existence is the same for all members of a given community, varying only in texture or tone from individual to individual. The social sphere is differentiated 184 only as between communities which are generally localized clans 565 or lineages. Thus, the blacksmith lineage of Sakpee is unique, as 326 463

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[1] See G. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 429–32, for a critical discussion of this question.

[2] Cf. also Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

867 amused. When the child's mother tried to soothe her she first
856 struggled and struck at her, venting her chagrin on her mother. It was
861 fully ten minutes before her mother was able to quieten her by playing
with her and distracting her by making her a toy of wet clay. 'They will laugh at him (or her)' or 'His comrades will laugh at him' is the commonest motive alleged for correct behaviour. If you ask a boy of 6 or 7 why he no longer plays with the little girls he says, 'If I do my comrades will laugh at me'; and little girls say the same. Adolescents, talking about their sweethearts, who are usually clan
[626] 'sisters', explain why they avoid the girls of their own section—
'because our comrades will find out and laugh at us'; and the adult is equally sensitive to public opinion.

183 *The total pattern and its genetic development.* We have seen that these categories of social behaviour are not learnt in isolation one from the other but as patterns in which interests, elements of skill, and observances are combined. The Tale housewife, going several miles into the bush to collect firewood, is using knowledge of the bush tracks and of the best places for firewood acquired over a period of years; but she is impelled also by the sense of duty to her family and her own self-esteem. The Tale farmer's devotion to his agricultural pursuits is due to a passionate interest in land and crops and to a sense of moral responsibility towards his family and his ancestor spirits. His skill is but one of the factors that affect his general efficiency.

183 These total patterns which constitute the texture of Tale cultural
867 behaviour are not built up bit by bit, by addition, during the course
155 of a child's life. They are present as *schemas*[1] from the beginning.
My observations suggest that the course of development is somewhat as follows: at first the child acquires a well-defined interest associated with a postural diagram of the total pattern. The postural diagram is, as it were, a contour map, extremely simplified and crude but comprehending the essential elements and relations of the full pattern. Further experience strengthens and amplifies the interest at the same time as it causes the details of the postural diagram to be filled out, making it more and more adaptable and controllable, producing more

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[1] I have taken this concept from Prof. F. C. Bartlett's *Remembering*, pp. 199 ff., though its bald application here hardly does justice to the significance given to it by Prof. Bartlett, and to its value for an understanding of primitive education.

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discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with 867
other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total 155
pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from
the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's 868
learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants 535
just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same 867
way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected 601
in the 3–4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non- 602
kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

861 or co-operative. Tale adults behave in exactly the same way. In an
153 unfamiliar or difficult situation the best adaptation is to copy the actions and words of any one who understands the situation. Small children, whose schemas are still very rudimentary, are peculiarly apt to encounter unfamiliar elements in situations, and therefore readily resort to mimesis. Between the ages of 3 and 6 years, when the child is eagerly exploring its social space, this happens so often that it seems to develop a habit of mimicking older children in whose activities it is trying to participate. Thus, whenever I encountered little groups of children at play, pegging out goats, gleaning ground-nuts, or doing anything else, and asked the youngest, 'What are you doing?', one of the older children would reply, and the youngest repeat this reply in the same words. One evening I met four or five children from a neighbouring compound idling on a path. One was a girl of about 8 who had her brother of about 5 in tow. She noticed another child some way off and called out a message to him. The little brother, equally interested in the other child, called out and repeated the message in the same words and intonation. He was obviously not merely repeating automatically what he had heard, but endeavouring to draw the attention of the distant child and using the same method as his sister. A great deal of language learning goes on in this way.

Mimesis in play will be considered later.

153 *Identification.* A striking feature of social development among the
155 Tallensi is the degree to which children overtly identify themselves with older siblings and parents. It is noticeable in children of 5 and 6 and becomes more marked as they grow older. The parent of the same sex is the model according to which the child regulates its conduct and from which it derives its aspirations and values. Though unwitting, the process is unmistakable. Character appears to run in families. An aggressive, loud-spoken man's children tend to become aggressive and pushing; an industrious man's sons apply themselves to work from early childhood; the dishonesty and unreliability of shifty parents tend to be reproduced in their children; and so forth. The social structure of the Tallensi with its emphasis on family and lineage solidarity, and the unity of the social sphere, encourage such identification. If one asks a child, 'Who are you?' the answer is invariably, 'I'm so-and-so's child', or 'of so-and-so's family', accom-

panied by a manner or posture which leaves no doubt in one's mind 153
as to who is his father or her mother. Nindɔyat of Zubiung, for 155
instance, was notorious for his selfishness, his arrogance, and his insincerity. His son Sapak, aged 6, was his father in miniature—self-assertive, greedy, combative and refractory. Lɔyani, clansman and near neighbour of Nindɔyat, was a complete contrast to him and the most popular man in the clan. His children were among the quietest, most respectful, and most good-tempered I knew. Once they were visiting me when Sapak thrust himself upon us. Within ten minutes he had managed to offend one of the other boys and but for my presence they would have come to blows. A similar contrast in character existed between Nenaab's small daughters and Saandi's. Indeed, it would be possible to cite a dozen examples of the way parental character reappeared in children, if space permitted.

A child says, 'This is *our* dog, *our* sheep, *our* land, *our* child, 153
our wife', identifying himself completely with his family. Some 867
of the examples given in our discussion of the unity of the social 155
sphere show how identification operates to constitute that unity. It is, obviously, the mechanism mainly responsible for the child's acquisition of interests, and therefore generates powerful motives for following out these interests derived from the world of adult activity. Hence Tale children all want to grow up. I often asked boys of 10 to 12 why they were so keen on hoeing though it was far more arduous than herding or playing about with their friends. The question puzzled many, though they were always emphatic about preferring work on the farm to herding or play. But discussion generally resolved their motives into this: 'We want to hoe because we want to be among the men and help to bring in more food'; and girls have the same attitude about domestic work and child-bearing. One day I found a small boy of about 5 struggling with a large goat. 'Where's your father?' I asked. 'Hoeing his bush farm,' he said. 'What about you,' I said, 'can you hoe?' 'Of course I can,' he replied proudly, 'didn't I hoe the whole compound farm?' I teased him a bit, asking him about the details of farming, and eventually he said, 'No, I can't hoe. I'm still too small.' Similarly, a little girl of about 8 told me that she had accompanied some older girls to the bush for firewood the previous day. Her mother burst out

153 laughing and called to me: ' Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

861 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's
co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activi-
153 ties in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish[1] for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Talaŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its co-operation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

153 *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrəme,*
524 ' they are playing ') is well defined and clearly recognized by the
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[1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

1 [A Kind of mud mortar --Analyst]

CHAPTER IV

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE FAMILY

The General and the Particular in the Pattern of Domestic Relations

611 IT is clear from Chapter II that *dɔɣam*, the fact of birth, the event that fixes one's descent immutably, takes precedence over all other conditions governing the social relations and the social roles of a Talɔŋ. This principle comes out in all departments of Tale social life, and nowhere so plainly as in the organization of domestic life. We turn, therefore, to examine the working of kinship in the domestic family, which we have called the focal field of kinship.

593 It is important to bear in mind that kinship relations in the family group are inter-articulated in a single configuration, dominated by the *patria potestas* of the male head of the family. The relations of father and child are coloured by the relations of mother and child that coexist with them, and the relations of mother and child acquire a special accent in the context of the relations between co-wives. Particular domestic relationships appear in their true light only when they are considered as part of the total pattern. The polarity of *dug* and *yir* moulds them all; all play a part in the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces in the structure of the family. All, moreover, are subject to the pull and pressure of genealogical connexions and groupings outside the family circle.

593 606 The natives are very conscious of this, and take it into account in the management of their lives. They say, for instance, that a woman's parents continue to have great influence over her for some years after her marriage and that is why her husband must keep on the good side of his parents-in-law. 'Don't you know what in-lawship means?' said Bayankura, somewhat lugubriously, when I found him hard at work helping to rebuild his father-in-law's homestead. Again, Tiezien's family believed that he was much under the influence of his senior wife, Tanzoo. So when by various pretexts he caused both of his late brother's sons to lose the young wives they had recently taken, they ascribed it morosely to Tanzoo's jealousy of their mother, Tiezien's second wife.

181 We shall not attempt a full-dress study of Tale family life; here we are concerned only with the structurally significant norms. In a society as homogeneous and economically undifferentiated as that of the Tallensi, people of the same sex, age, and social standing tend to have the same life history; and organized units such as the lineage and the family tend to have a stereotyped structure and development. The common denominators of action stand out.

828 •156 Yet it is a constantly reiterated assumption of the natives that no two

people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, 828
they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships.
People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experi- 156
ences, his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the
life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew 123
intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees in families like those of Kutɔbis of Tɔŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of Tɔŋ-Puhug.

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but 596
there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevi-
table, some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the 156
structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain 578
dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas an erratic man like Kutɔbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor in the cycle of changes that a family passes through.

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life 602
of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance, and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog *until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they* were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[784] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

867 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]
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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room. 596 362 576

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Taləŋa can keep his own counsel if need be. 593 596

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another. 593 581

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was 581 589 [158]

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father. 586 684

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage. 158 827 586

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pen tiu*)', my men friends told me. 578 833

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan. 684

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other. 581 613 618

128 'patterns of behaviour', hence they neglect or slur over variations, and sometimes indeed build whole theories on a single occurrence. For most problems of social anthropology variations are of minor importance as compared with the 'typical', and an all-round knowledge of a culture is a sufficient check of typicality. For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost ● 158 importance. For example, the first case of thumb-sucking I observed was that of a girl infant 3–4 years old whose mother had recently died. Could it be assumed that this was a clear-cut instance of the thumb being substituted for the nipple? Some time later I came across another little girl, about the same age, thumb-sucking, but her mother was alive and she was not yet fully weaned. Further observation brought a few more cases of this habit to light, but it is so infrequent among Tale children that a single year's observation does not yield sufficient instances to suggest any correlation.

Generally speaking, therefore, small samples form the basis of the observations recorded in this paper. Where norms of development are implied it will be understood that an appreciable, though indeterminable, variability exists.

III. SOCIAL SPHERE OF THE TALE CHILD

184
155 The process of education among the Tallensi, as among a great many other African peoples of analogous culture, is intelligible when it is recognized that the social sphere of adult and child[1] is unitary and undivided. In our own society the child's feeling and thinking and acting takes place largely in relation to a reality—to aims, responsibilities, compulsions, material objects and persons, and so forth—which differs completely from that of the adult, though sometimes overlapping it. This dichotomy is not only expressed in our customs, it comes out also in the psychological reactions which mark the indivi-

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[1] I am aware that the unqualified manner in which this proposition is formulated here invites the immediate objection that it cannot possibly hold for the new-born infant, or even for the child who is inarticulate and does not yet walk or crawl. I would suggest in answer that it is impossible empirically to observe the point at which the child's affective orientation to its cultural environment first receives its bias; and also, that recent psychology and anthropology would support me in attaching basic importance to the earliest infantile responses of a child as determinants of later interests.

XXXIII

THE TALENSE

History; Tribal, Clan, and Soog' *Organization*

101 ●161 121 INTRODUCTORY: The Talense occupy the area shown on the map. According to the 1921 census report they number 29,972 persons of both sexes. Specimens of the language, called Talene or Talen', have been given in Chapter III. Their appearance, their houses, customs, religion, and organization all seem to me to be very similar to those of their neighbours, the Nankanse. Their languages, too, are very much alike. Had the Talense not been labelled with a separate appellation, I doubt if the anthropologist—save after, perhaps, a very minute investigation—would have considered it necessary to deal with them as a group distinct from the Namnam and the Nankanse. Nevertheless, in accordance with the plan which I mapped out, I have done so. Rites and customs, already investigated, discussed, and described, are here approached from a different angle. Results so obtained are always valuable, even where there is a certain inevitable repetition. The process serves also to fill gaps in the work which has gone before, to which the information obtained later may be considered as supplementary.

128 In dealing with this and the remainder of the tribes, I have endeavoured to group my facts, as far as possible, under the chapter headings already adopted. This arrangement will enable my readers the more readily to piece together the sum total of the data available concerning any one particular subject, and I hope will mitigate somewhat the defects in presentation for which I have already apologized.

173 167 The history of the tribal wanderings of this people follows the same lines as that with which we are now familiar. This history is the record of the migrations, not of the tribe *qua* tribe, but of every clan, the composite of which now forms the group called the Talense (s. Taleŋa; language Talene.) The tribal histories, specimens of which are about to be related, tell of the migrations (within comparatively narrow limits of time and space) of the groups which have for some hundreds of years supplied the Territorial Rulers. Of the wanderings of the original people themselves, who are now largely merged with this foreign element, nothing is really known, except that they were undoubtedly of the stock which I have termed the 'Mole group', who seem to

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but
it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 131 161 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 171 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later 632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement' rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following table illustrates the above.

103 614

Town.	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

132a to another, ranging from 25 inches to 45 inches per annum, but fluctuations occur from year to year in the same area. Erratic or abnormal rains may so disturb the cycle of food production as to subject a majority of the population to severe privation. The temperature in the vicinity of 10° 30′ N. latitude and 0° 30′ W. longitude varies from a minimum of about 70° F. to a maximum of about 93° F. A characteristic feature of the dry season is the harmattan, a hot parching wind laden with fine dust which blows from the Sahara, so strongly at times as to obscure the landscape in a haze which limits visibility to a few hundred yards. Heavy dew and mists cause the mornings to be chilly and bracing, so much so that the natives squat shivering round fires or remain indoors until the sun is high; from the forenoon until about 4 p.m. the sun blazes relentlessly through the faint haze; sunset ushers in a cool and balmy evening; and night brings a relatively marked drop in temperature. Violent nocturnal tornadoes from the east and north-east, accompanied by lightning and thunder, introduce the rainy season, during which the prevailing wind blows from the direction of the Gulf of Guinea, to the south and south-east. During this season the temperature remains fairly stable throughout the day. Though it is never as hot as in the hottest days of the dry season, the humidity makes it at times excessively oppressive. The peak of the rains comes in August–September. It rains so heavily then that many social activities are impeded. These conditions of vegetation and climate fundamentally influence the economy and the social life of the inhabitants of the Sudanese Zone.

[101] 131 133 This book is concerned with the population of a very small section of the Sudanese Zone, a part of the region drained by the Volta river system. The head-waters of this system lie in French West Africa. About 20 miles south of the international boundary between the Gold Coast and French Ivory Coast, which has been arbitrarily fixed to coincide approximately with the eleventh parallel N. latitude, the Red Volta flows into the White Volta. Between these two rivers, on the east and south respectively, and the Sissili river on the west lies an area, arbitrarily truncated on the north by the international boundary, comprising two of the most heavily populated administrative districts of the Gold Coast. The eastern third of this area constitutes the administrative district of Zuarungu, the remaining two-thirds the district of Navrongo. The Red Volta separates Zuarungu district from another administrative unit, Kusaasi, and the White Volta forms a natural boundary between it and the Mamprusi district, to the south of which lies the territory of the Dagomba.

161 134 137 As the following table[1] from the census of 1931 shows, the Zuarungu district is the most densely populated part of this area; and as the population tends to be concentrated in the centre and north, the actual density of settlement exceeds the figures given. In some localities this is reflected

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[1] See *Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census*, Gold Coast, 1932, p. 3; and Cardinall, A. W., *The Gold Coast*, 1931, Population Map, p. 156. Mr. Cardinall remarks (p. 123) that 'A majority of the census officers were of opinion that the figures collected by them are lower than they should have been by from 2 per cent. to 10 per cent.'—a contingency inevitable in a country which is for the most part still pre-literate.

in serious soil erosion due to over-cultivation and in the diminution of 161
uncultivated bush land, so that firewood and other sylvan products 134
cannot be found within six or more miles of the settlements. 137

161

District	*Area*	*Population*	*Density per sq. mile*
Navrongo . .	1,551	120,870	77·96
Zuarungu . .	781	133,981	171·55
Kussasi* . .	1,227	151,715	123·64
Mamprusi* .	2,719	61,520	22·62
Dagomba*. .	12,257	191,956	15·66

* Partly in Mandated Territory of Togoland.

In spite of the general similarity of climate and vegetation in the 241
Sudanese Zone, local variations produce significant ecological differences. 133
This is shown in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by the
differences in agriculture north and south of the Gambaga scarp. The 134
steep scarp marks both a geological and an ecological line of division.
South of it the rock formations are of sandstone and shale, north of it
granite, quartz, and greenstone predominate. South of the scarp a form
of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown
on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.),
guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams
will not grow easily and cereal crops form the staple food supply.[1]

The relative scarcity of population in the yam-growing districts com- 164
pared with the congested areas north of the White Volta may be due to 161
unknown historical and cultural factors, but endemic diseases have
undoubtedly impeded population growth. While malaria, yaws, and
leprosy, to mention only the commonest enemies of native health, are
widespread throughout the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast,
sleeping-sickness is also endemic throughout the Mamprusi and Dagomba
districts. In the central sectors north of the scarp sleeping-sickness occurs
only sporadically near the rivers.

Topographical differences also appear to influence the distribution of 161
population. The high plateau which stretches from the White Volta 132
northwards is more suited for permanent habitation than the low-lying 133
flats which make up the greater part of Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the
wet season they turn into quagmires, in the dry season they are arid tracts
seriously short of water-supplies. North of the White Volta numerous
streams and small rivers combine with the relatively greater elevation
to drain the plateau effectively during the heavy rains; and though surface
water becomes scarce in the dry season, shallow pits generally provide
sufficient water for normal needs.

The district of Zuarungu is a typical portion of the Trans-Volta plateau. 133
A number of bouldery hills from 100 to 500 feet high are scattered over 131
its undulating surface. The most conspicuous are the Tong Hills, a small
range stretching for about four miles just north of the river. It adds an

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M. and S. L., 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1936; and Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161 periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts
491 were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of
161 the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔɣalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361
or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nańgodi with 103
scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a popula- 161 ●
tion of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174
habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrəg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101
sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186
the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tɛnzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tɛnzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔmәra Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔɣaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔɣaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamɔlɔg and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yayazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔmәra namoorәt*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalɔg, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbәra Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋәn-lɛbәgәt*.)[1]

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[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, 361
is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 621
600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of
Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it
takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one 361
part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north 161
side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain
stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse
population.[1]

Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During 361
the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for 132
cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live 166
there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view 361
of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and
studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are [342]
identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil
itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settle- 361
ments, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements 161
nearer to the periphery. I cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 [162]
(*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwalog (Kpaləg), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Voltas—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due
to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta
161 plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Taləŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*buləg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*koləg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

In marked contrast is the average person's ignorance of settlements, 823
even near at hand, with which his clan has no close social bonds or with
which he has no personal links of kinship or friendship. Tallensi acquire
their knowledge of geography and natural history gradually in childhood,
by direct experience. It is already well established by the age of 9 or 10,
and grows *pari passu* with the expansion of the child's social space. The
basis of this is the child's natal settlement, where, except for occasional
visits to kinsfolk elsewhere, it spends its entire childhood. But even
adults had little liberty of movement in the past, since they could hardly
go unmolested in settlements unrelated to theirs by clanship or political
ties or where they had no kinsfolk. Most of the older people have never [484]
been outside Taleland, and many of them have never, or only rarely,
visited some of the settlements within an hour's walk of their own.

A Taləŋ inevitably has a profound emotional attachment to his native 186
settlement. It is striking how many Tale emigrants return home eventually after years of absence, casting aside the flesh-pots of Ashanti or the rich fields of Mampurugu. '*Kpala m-mah*—Here it is pleasant', they say, in spite of the penury of existence; for here are your kith and kin, here is the scene of your childhood joys and sorrows, and above all, the abode of your forefathers. The Taləŋ's empirical knowledge of his habitat is the precipitate in his thought and experience of the economic and structural facts that determine the local fixity of his native settlement. His affective attachment to it finds an institutionalized expression and support in the ancestor cult.

Settlement Boundaries

The hub of Taleland is Tongo (see map on p. 15). This ancient 621
settlement, geographically central and politically nodal in the network of interclan relations, provides a very good model of the structure of a typical Tale settlement.

As we know, the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis live in such close spatial 101
and social propinquity with Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and Zoo that these clans are 621
often spoken of collectively as 'the people of Tongo (Tɔŋdɛm)'. For
precision, Tongo proper is referred to as Tɔŋ-Nayiri—the Chief's House
of Tongo—all over Taleland. Throughout the Mole-Dagbane-speaking
region clans which hold a chiefship are thus identified by reference to
it. Those which have tɛndaanas are sometimes called Tɛndaaŋ, on the
same principle. Thus outsiders distinguish between Sie-Nayiri and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ.

Tɔŋ-Nayiri, Tongo proper, forms an irregular block of homesteads, 101
somewhat less than three square miles in area and is one of the largest 161
settlements in Taleland. It comprised, in 1934, 192 homesteads and a 621
total population of about 2,400.[1] This does not include Tongo people

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[1] Calculations, based on my own census samples and on figures kindly supplied to me by the A.D.C. Zuarungu, show that in Taleland the average number of people of both sexes and all ages occupying a homestead is 12 to 14. Owing to the variation in the constitution of homesteads this figure must be accepted with reserve; but it is sufficient for a rough estimate of population in a country where accurate statistics do not exist.

621 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here [778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔyar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔyar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of [608] influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them 613
in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in 621
the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, 613
though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal 621
lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and 161
children), including members of the section and their families who live at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the 613
effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments 621
of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare 182
it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things. When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or cere- [782]
monially slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section, as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides.
Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and [787]
Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*, that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and 613
solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range 621
of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space inside is divided into compartments by low walls. [231] Livestock are kept in an open compartment near the entrance. [241] The land lying between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a definite part of the farming system.

Fixed Cultivation.

●[161] The high density of population necessitates a system of "fixed" cultivation. 241 It is difficult to say whether the need for "fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

618 dimensions. The clan is also the region where a lineage's clanship ties have the maximum force; for, as we have seen, there are differences in the range and precision of the rights, obligations, and participation in the secular and ceremonial matters of common interest implied by the ties of clanship which a lineage has with other lineages.

A lineage's field of clanship is not homogeneous. As will become clearer when we have analysed one or two more chains of linked lineages, spatial distance and genealogical distance are the main factors upon which the incidence and variation of the rights and duties of clanship depend. The farther away a lineage lives from another with which it has ties of clanship, the less intercourse is there between their members and the less likely are they to co-operate in those situations and events which mobilize these ties. Again, the closer the genealogical links, actual, putative, or fictional, between two linked lineages the more regularly will they co-operate and the more effectively assert the rights and perform the duties of clanship.

The principles so far elicited have a general application throughout Taleland. But the clan of Mosuor biis is unique. The typical clan in Taleland is a single local unit of the composite kind. Mosuor biis are certainly the most numerous patrilineal descent group in Taleland.[1] It must not be forgotten that in addition to the four localized branches of the clan which form its recognized major subdivisions, there are the minor colonial offshoots.

618 811 The natives see no difficulty in explaining the numerical preponderance of Mosuor biis. It is, in their eyes, due simply to a fecundity greater than that of other lineages. Members of Mosuor biis themselves give this a mystical rationalization. They say that they are prolific because they all have but one religious cult, that of their ancestors, which binds them to one another in mutual amity and solidarity. In their cult of their ancestors each branch of Mosuor biis seeks not only its own increase and prosperity but the increase and prosperity of all its clan brethren as well. To do otherwise would be a sin inviting the wrath of the common ancestors of the whole clan. But in composite clans, they say, each component lineage has its own independent ancestral and other ritual cults. It is jealously concerned with its own increase and prosperity, even regarding it as an advantage if other maximal lineages of the same clan are diminished. Such an attitude brings down mystical retribution; for those who seek the ill of their fellow men are bound to suffer ill themselves.

618 These views are not accepted among members of composite clans, who consider their own cults to be no less founded on, and instrumental in

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● [162] [1] To take a complete census of the members of Mosuor biis, even of the male members only, would be impossibly laborious and time-consuming for an anthropological field-worker limited to a short stay in the country. Sample censuses were made at Tongo and Sie. Going by these and by recent counts made throughout Taleland by the Administration of the taxable male population, I should estimate the male members of Mosuor biis (including accessory lineages) as not less than 2,000. The women are so scattered, owing to patrilocal marriage, that it is impossible to estimate their numbers. No other clan in Taleland can, I should judge, reckon more than half this number of male members.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUCTURAL RELATIONS OF THE TALIS

A General Point

●162 A NUMERICAL estimate of the Namoos in Taleland cannot be made from the published census figures. In the Tongo district alone they would include, on a rough reckoning, over a third of the population; the rest are the Talis.

184 The Talis, as we have seen, are distinguished by name and by myths of origin from the Namoos. Close neighbours though they are, Talis and Namoos are distinctly segregated from one another by locality, and this is associated with clear-cut structural cleavages. It is necessary, however, to emphasize that Talis and Namoos are also inseparably bound to one another by ceremonial and politico-ritual ties. In addition, all Talis and all Namoos are connected with one another as individuals by an elaborate network of cognatic and affinal ties. In the present chapter we are concerned with the constituted social relations of the Talis amongst themselves, treated in isolation from the background of their social relations with the Namoos, but this background must be borne in mind.

The Clan Structure of Zubiuŋ

X618 The clans and lineages of the Talis form corporate units of the same kind as those of the Namoos. They are connected with one another by a network of constituted ties of the same type as those that link Namoo clans and lineages in a chain system, but more elaborately distributed and articulated. Again, the paradigm applies generally, but the perspective of each clan and lineage is peculiar to itself. To keep the parallel with the Namoos we shall take as our starting-point the group of Talis most intimately associated with Tongo, the people of Zubiuŋ (Zubiuŋdem).[1]

621 As we have previously mentioned, the people of Zubiuŋ live in such close contiguity with the Tongo Namoos that anyone ignorant of the structure of the community would be unable to draw a line between the homesteads of one group and those of the other. Investigation shows that Zubiuŋ homesteads form an irregular but continuous aggregate, quite distinct, spatially, from Tongo. The nearest Tongo neighbours of Zubiuŋ are the accessory Tongo lineage of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm. Consistently with the basic principles of Tale clanship, Nɔŋsuur yidɛm have an intercalary status between Tongo and Zubiuŋ. The legend which relates that the ancestor of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm was a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of Zubiuŋ is the rationalization of their intercalary role. But though they mediate between Tongo and Zubiuŋ in political matters, for example, they have no ties of clanship with the latter, as we have previously seen.

X618 Zubiuŋ consists of three maximal lineages, residentially distributed in a way that exactly parallels their structural relations. The homesteads of

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[1] Total male members, at home and abroad, about 250.

361 621 the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

361 161 The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse population.[1]

361 132 166 Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

361 [342] From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

361 161 The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settlements, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements nearer to the periphery. I cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] [162] ● I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 (*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwɔlag (Kpolag), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Volta—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

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The characteristic domestic family of the Tallensi is the agnatic joint family, and other forms of domestic group appear as phases in the growth cycle of a joint family. In a random sample of sixty-one domestic families from Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it, recorded in 1934, forty-one, or about two-thirds of these, were joint families.[1] A joint family consists of two or more close agnates, members of a single effective minimal lineage in all but exceptional cases, and often comprising all the members of a particular effective minimal lineage, together with their wives, children, and other dependants, if any,

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[1] This sample of 61 domestic families which is cited throughout this chapter, includes domestic families from 5 clans, but the majority are from Tongo. A similar sample taken in the Sie district gave approximately the same results. As has been mentioned, about two-thirds of these families were joint families. The remainder were either elementary families (i.e. consisting of a man, his wife or wives, and his young children) which had been parts of joint families 5 or 10 years previously and would probably become joint families again in a decade or so; or they were joint families augmented by one or two close agnates of the family head and their dependants, or by other kinsmen. Such an augmented joint family functions in the same way as a joint family in the narrow sense. Thus if the time factor is taken into account all Tale domestic families can be described as joint families.

The composition of the joint family can be regarded from a slightly different angle, which supplements what has just been said. Considering the family from the point of view of the relationship of the head to the other male members, our sample breaks up as follows:

11 elementary families (1 man, wife or wives, occasionally his mother, and his young children).
22 families in which the head was the father of the other adult male(s).
25 families in which the head was the older brother of one or more of the other adult males.
3 families in which the head was the grandfather of one or all the other adult males.

The commonest type, it will be seen, is the joint family presided over by either a 'father' or the senior amongst a group of brothers.

[162] The mean number of persons (men, women, and children) per domestic family of our sample is 10·4, distributed as follows:

Number of persons per family

	1–5	*6–10*	*11–15*	*16–20*	*21–5*	*Total*
Frequency	8	28	17	4	4	61

The mean number of adult males (i.e. over 18, approximately) per family is 2·6; of wives, including widows of deceased members, 3·4; of minors, including adolescent daughters, 4·4. The frequency distributions are as follows:

Number per family

Frequency of	*0*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*Total*
Adult males .	0	10	25	13	7	4	0	2	..	..	..	..	..	61
Wives . .	0	6	16	14	13	4	3	3	0	2	..	..	..	61
Minors . .	2	4	11	9	11	8	4	4	1	3	2	1	1	61

occupying a single homestead. All the men of a joint family are therefore related to one another through a common father or grandfather or, infrequently, great-grandfather. A joint family may consist of two or more brothers (full or half-brothers or paternal cousins), with their wives and children, and perhaps an old mother; or a man and some or all of his married sons with their wives and children, together with unmarried sons and other dependants; or an old man, some or all of his married sons and grandsons, with their wives and children and other dependants —'sons' and 'grandsons' in the last two classes being understood in the native classificatory sense as including both own and deceased brothers' sons and grandsons. Joint families of the last-mentioned class are not very common. Here and there one meets a joint family combining features of two classes or having a rather wider range of agnates or other male kin; but these are unusual.

A joint family is obviously a composite unit. If the subordinate 596
families constituting it are taken separately, some or all may be monogynous, elementary families; but one or more of the male members may 595
have more than one wife, and there will thus be subordinate polygynous families within the joint family. For though a Talɔŋ starts his career as a family man with only one wife, his aim and ideal, throughout his life, is to have as many wives as he can afford. Actually, judging by the previously quoted sample,[1] the incidence of polygyny among the

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[1] The following table sets out the relevant figures:

Table showing the Distribution of Wives of 146 Men over 18 Years of Age, belonging to 61 Domestic Families 162

Estimated age of men	Married men: Number of wives 1	2	3	4	5	Total men	Single men: Un-married	Widowers or deserted
18–30 . .	32	3	..	..	..	35	18 (most under 30)	17 (most over 30)
31–45 . .	21	13	3	2	..	39		
46 and over .	14	14	3	5	1	37		
Totals .	67	30	6	7	1	111	18	17
							35	
Percentages						*Total 146 men*		
Of whole sample	[illegible]	20·5	4·1	4·8	0·7	76% married	24% single	
Of married men	[illegible]	27	5·4	6·3	0·9			

The table shows the distribution of effective wives, i.e. wives who fulfil both the sexual and the economic duties due from a wife, or, in a few cases, at least the economic duties. There were 9 non-effective wives, in addition, in this group: 3 incapacitated by leprosy or other chronic disease; 1 senile; 3 elderly women nominally inherited by their late husbands' younger brothers but

596 Tallensi is only about 40 per 100 married men and two out of three
595 polygynists have only two wives. The modal number of wives is one.

Moreover, plurality of wives is mainly the privilege of older men, because they have both more resources and a longer marital history than the young men. Three-quarters of the married men under 45 have only one wife each.

596 A joint family is an organized economic and jural unit forming a single household under the authority of the oldest by age or generation of the group of agnates upon which it is based. Its component families are its segments, ordered and articulated in conformity with the lineage relations binding this group of men to one another. This appears in the layout of the homestead. The head of the joint family is the hub of the whole house, as we have seen, and each wife has her own quarters. It is shown, for example, in the fact that a young married son with no children, or only one or two infant children, generally occupies one of the rooms in his mother's *dug*, or, if his mother is dead, in the senior *dugdaana*'s *dug*; for his conjugal family counts, as yet, only as a segment of this *dug* in the social and economic organization of the house.

Taken over a long enough period, the joint family is seen to be a transitory unit. As the younger male members grow up, marry, and have children of their own, inner tensions begin to assert themselves and a tendency to split up appears. If fission does not occur in the lifetime of the head of the joint family, it is almost invariably precipitated by his death. Some or all of the component families then set up in their own independent homesteads, though it may be some years before complete dispersion supervenes. Thus it happens that an elementary family, which was at one time a part of a joint family, comes to occupy its own

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162 residing with grown-up sons; 2 inherited wives who had not yet joined the menage of their new husbands and were unlikely to do so for a considerable time, if at all. Seven of these non-effective wives were the wives of men in the 46 *plus* group. If these are reckoned as well, the distribution is altered somewhat in favour of the polygynists. There would then, for instance, be 3 men with 5 wives each.

In addition to the 111 married men, this sample of domestic families includes 35 single men, 18 of whom, mostly young men, had never been properly married, and 17 of whom were single at the time of the census, owing to the death or desertion of their wives.

Estimates of age given here and elsewhere in this book are very approximate. The difficulties of guessing the age of Africans in societies where chronological age is taken no notice of are well known. In making the above estimates I took the Tong Hills Expedition of 1911 as a base-line. From what I was told of the appearance, size, and activities of a person at the time of that well-remembered event, a guess could be made at his or her probable age in 1934. If one person's approximate age was established in this way, others who were agreed to be his or her contemporaries could be put into the same age-group. For example, the age-group 18–30 includes a number of men who said they were babes in arms in 1911, and the age-group 46 *plus* includes all those who were young married men in 1911.

592 A domestic unit is most clearly identified by the fact that it has a single common gateway. Though the three domains of domestic organization are not absolutely congruent, the commonest residential unit is the single household, which is also a single though not necessarily completely independent jural and ceremonial unit.[1]

596 We have been considering the typical development of the joint family as a process of successive fission and dispersion. But the contrary process of reintegration also plays an important part in this development. The changes in the composition of the joint or expanded family that lead to changes in the status and social roles of its senior male members cause it to split up in the circumstances that have been indicated, but they lead to a fusion of independent units in other circumstances. The decisive factors are jural status in the lineage, with which go rights over patrimonial land, and economic capacity.

Let us take a sample case. When Katiŋoo died (see genealogy, p. 68) his eldest son Duun became head of the effective minimal lineage and joint family and inherited the patrimonial farm-land. Duun and his full brother Baa continued to occupy their father's homestead, using only one gateway. After a while—four or five years, perhaps—Baa asked to be allowed to farm for himself as his children were growing up. He still occupied the same homestead as Duun, but his quarters were separated from those of Duun by a high party wall (*bɛŋər*), he had his own granary, farmed for himself, and was solely responsible for supplying the food and other wants of his wives and children. The domestic family now consisted of two households.

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[1] The following table shows this clearly:

162 *Table showing the Distribution of Domestic Families (= Gateways) and Households (= Units of Food Economy) in relation to Homesteads*

Domestic families per homestead	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	34	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	44
No. of domestic families	34	10	12	0	5	0	0	0	61
Households per homestead	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	25	11	4	2	0	1	0	1	44
No. of households	25	22	12	8	0	6	0	8	81

(Mean number of persons: per homestead, 14·5; per domestic family, 10·4.)

The 61 domestic families of our sample occupy 44 homesteads. On the average there are 1·4 gateways (i.e. 1·4 domestic families) per homestead; but more than half of the 61 families occupy their own homesteads, with one gateway apiece. There are 81 households in the sample group, an average of 1·9 households per homestead and 1·3 households per domestic family. But nearly a third of these households are single domestic families dwelling in their own homesteads.

428 allotted by the father. On the death of the head of the family the male survivors inherit the land in varying proportions as tenants in
423 common with benefits of survivorship. The eldest son assumes the responsibilities of his father and may elect to live either in his father's compound, or to remain in his own. In either case he will receive a large share of his father's farm and retain also an interest in his own. After a number of generations the distribution and ownership of land becomes very complicated in congested areas and considerable fragmentation of holdings takes place. Land not in use may be lent to another for farming, but often with a stipulation to plant non-exhausting crops.

Distribution of Population.

•162 The distribution of population is very variable both from one political area to another and within each area. If one takes the the district as a whole, 3,559 square miles, the population by the 1931 census (7) is shown to be 406,566 persons; this gives a density of population of 114 per square mile (c.f. South Mamprusi 23 per square mile, and Western Dagomba 15). It is estimated that at least one-third of the total area is uninhabited, and much of this is fertile alluvial land near to rivers, where tse-tse flies abound. In other areas ruins are found for which slave raiding, sleeping sickness, and yellow fever, are variously held responsible. Table I below gives the distribution of tribes and population.

Table 1.—Distribution of Population in North Mamprusi.

Political Area	Area, square miles	Total Population	Density of Population per sq. ml.	Tribes
Navrongo ...	1,551	120,870	78	Nankani, Kassena, and Builsa.
Zuarungu ...	781	133,981	172	Nankani, Tallensi, and Nabdam.
Kusasi and	807	110,614	137	Kusasi, Busanga, Bemoba and strangers.
Br. Togoland ...	420	41,101	98	
Total ...	3,559	406,566	114	—

Political Organisation.

631 History shows that North Mamprusi was continually harrassed from outside (8) until comparatively recent times. The Mamprusis in the South, who were at one time a powerful and organised tribe,

APPENDIX II—TABLE 1.

ZUARUNGU AREA.

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Details of areas farmed (in acres), men farming and persons supported for 29 compounds recorded at 5 centres in Zuarungu Area in 1932.

(Note.—The area of land occupied by buildings and waste land is not included.)

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Bongo—								
I. Ayanbiri...	.53	2.00 1.65 .37 .14 .47	–	* 5.16	1	5.16	10	.51
II. Akani ...	2.89	.67 2.00 .42	– –	* 5.98	1	5.98	4	1.49
III. Inyaba ...	1.04	1.89	–	2.93	2	1.46	5	.58
IV. Aganda ...	6.71	.57	–	7.28	7	1.04	20	.36
V. Akawiboku	1.32	.54	–	1.86	3	**.62	8	.23
VI. Afuki ...	2.98	1.00 .50 1.45 2.03	–	7.96	4	1.99	13	.61
Totals ...	15.47	15.70	–	31.17	18	–	60	–
Means ...	2.58	2.61	–	5.19	3	1.73	10	.51
Nangodi—								
I. Doliba ...	1.62	1.57 .09	–	3.28	3	1.09	7	.47
II. Tobiga ...	13.25	.09	2.67	16.01	5	3.20	36	.44
III. Bugari ...	5.27	–	2.62	7.89	4	1.97	15	.51
IV. Banitami	3.54	–	2.36	5.90	2	2.95	7	.84
V. Babila ...	3.88	–	3.04	6.92	6	1.15	19	.36
Totals ...	27.56	1.75	10.69	40.00	20	–	84	–
Means ...	5.51	.35	2.14	8.00	4	2.00	16.8	.48

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 1 (continued).

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate "not bush"	Bush Farm	Total				
Sambruno—								
I. Kasalaga	5.59	.99 .90 .26 .45	–	8.19	8	1.02	15	.61
II. Alori ...	2.78	.65 .20 .32 1.00 .51	–	5.46	5	1.09	13	.42
III. Asoro ...	5.50	1.07 .53 .68	–	7.78	3	2.59	11	.73
IV. Ayarina	8.57	.34	–	***8.91	2	4.45	7	1.27
V. Kolgo ...	4.01	1.34	–	5.35	2	2.67	6	.89
Totals ...	26.45	9.24	–	35.69	20	–	52	–
Means ...	5.29	1.85	–	7.14	4	1.78	10.4	.65
Tongo—								
I. Yembila ...	2.48	2.74	–	5.22	1	5.22	4	1.30
II. Zukori ...	3.82	.45 .59	5.96 4.83 5.65	21.30	7	3.04	36	.59
III. Omara ...	1.68	.61 .65	5.25	8.19	6	1.36	23	.35
IV. Dagbana...	6.43	.46 .51 .68	–	8.08	3	2.69	13	.62
V. Goloma ...	5.98	2.50	–	8.48	6	1.41	19	.44
Totals ...	20.39	9.19	21.69	51.27	23	–	95	–
Means ...	4.08	1.84	4.34	10.25	4.6	2.23	19	.54
Zuarungu—								
I. Adachama	9.25	3.89 .86	–	14.00	4	[illegible]	23	.60
II. Abagna ...	5.61	–	–	5.61	2	2.8	10	.56
III. Azogadugu	2.37	–	–	2.37	1	2.37	6	.39
IV. Awuni ...	3.22	–	–	3.22	2	1.61	10	.32
V. Atia ...	2.75	–	–	2.75	1	2.78	3	.92
VI. Asoro ...	7.56	–	–	7.56	4	1.98	8	.99
VII. Abugbiri	2.04	–	1.01	3.05	2	1.52	9	.34
VIII. Ayenpam	1.44	–	1.04	2.48	1	2.48	6	.41
Totals ...	34.24	4.75	2.05	41.04	17	–	75	–
Means ...	4.28	.59	.26	5.13	2.1	2.44	9.4	.55
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 29 COMPOUNDS IN ZUARUNGU AREA								
Totals ...	124.11	40.63	34.45	199.17	98	–	366	–
Means ...	4.28	1.40	1.19	6.87	3.7	2.03	12.6	.54

*Receive assistance. **Two men very old. ***Poor, eroded land.

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 2 (continued).

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Wiaga— I. Abasu ...	3.12	.76 .46	–	4.34	3	1.45	10	.43
II. Akulbalmni	4.62	.89 .77 .57	–	6.85	2	3.43	8	.86
III. Anisedi ...	1.07	3.20	–	4.27	1	4.27	4	1.07
IV. Amanyadi	3.99	2.03	–	6.02	4	1.51	9	.67
V. Azurumi	2.86	1.01	–	3.87	2	1.94	12	.32
VI. Ansodi ...	1.87	.37	–	2.24	1	2.24	9	.25
Totals ... Means ...	17.53 –	10.06 –	– –	27.59 4.59	13 2.1	– 2.12	52 8.6	– .53
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 20 COMPOUNDS IN NAVRONGO AREA								
Totals ... Means ...	110.51 5.52	23.12 1.16	29.97 1.49	163.60 8.19	54 2.7	– 3.03	217 10.8	– .75

*Farmed very extensively. **One man a tailor.

APPENDIX II—TABLE 3.

KUSASI AREA.

Details of areas, men farming, and persons supported at Zebilla. Surveyed 1936.

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Compound No. and Name of Owner	Areas farmed, in acres				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Zebilla— I. Mbila ...	1.58	–	6.37	7.95	1	8.18	4	2.04
II. Abila ...	4.62	–	9.62	14.24	6	2.4	22	.65
III. Agbanbila	4.26	–	4.30	8.56	4	2.16	9	.96
IV. Akobari ...	14.70	5.94	3.76	24.40	6	4.31	17	1.52
V. Aroko ...	4.22	3.23	5.71	13.16	4	3.30	15	.88
Totals ... Means ...	29.38 5.88	9.17 1.83	29.76 5.95	68.31 13.66	21 4.2	– 3.25	67 13.4	– 1.02

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 4.

Summary of Tables 1—3 giving totals and means for 54 compounds surveyed at ten centres in North Mamprusi. (Allowance has been made in areas for land occupied by buildings or waste land. "Persons supported" includes adults and children, except babes in arms.)

District and Centre of Record	No. of Compound	Area farmed in acres				Total Number men farming	Area per man	Total Number persons supported	Area per person	Compound Means			Persons supported per man
		Compound Farm	Farm away *not* bush	Bush Farms	Total Area					Area farmed	Men farming	Persons supported	
Zuarungu Area—													
Bongo ...	6	15.47	15.70	—	31.17	18	1.73	60	.51	5.19	3	10	3.3
Nangodi ...	5	27.56	1.75	10.69	40.00	20	2.00	84	.48	8.00	4	16.8	4.2
Sambruno ...	5	26.45	9.24	—	35.69	20	1.78	52	.65	7.14	4	10.4	2.6
Tongo ...	5	20.39	9.19	21.69	51.27	23	2.23	95	.54	10.25	4.6	19	4.1
Zuarungu ...	8	34.24	4.75	2.05	41.04	17	2.44	75	.55	5.13	2.1	9.4	4.4
Navrongo Area—													
Chana ...	6	54.33	1.41	—	55.74	16	3.48	49	1.14	9.29	2.6	8.1	3.1
Kologo ...	6	29.75	5.09	29.97	64.81	16	4.05	83	.78	10.80	2.6	12.9	4.9
Navrongo ...	2	8.90	6.56	—	15.46	9	1.74	33	.47	7.73	4.5	16.5	3.6
Wiaga ...	6	17.53	10.06	—	27.59	13	2.12	52	.53	4.59	2.1	8.6	4.1
Kusasi Area—													
Zebilla ...	5	29.38	9.17	29.76	68.31	21	3.25	67	1.02	13.66	4.2	13.4	3.2
Totals ...	54	264.00	72.92	94.16	431.08	173	—	650	—	—	—	—	—
Means ...	—	4.89 61%	1.35 17%	1.74 22%	7.98	3.2	2.49	12	.66	7.98	3.2	12	3.7

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

in serious soil erosion due to over-cultivation and in the diminution of 161
uncultivated bush land, so that firewood and other sylvan products 134
cannot be found within six or more miles of the settlements. 137

161

District	*Area*	*Population*	*Density per sq. mile*
Navrongo . .	1,551	120,870	77·96
Zuarungu . .	781	133,981	171·55
Kusaasi* . .	1,227	151,715	123·64
Mamprusi* .	2,719	61,520	22·62
Dagomba* . .	12,257	191,956	15·66

* Partly in Mandated Territory of Togoland.

In spite of the general similarity of climate and vegetation in the 241
Sudanese Zone, local variations produce significant ecological differences. 133
This is shown in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by the
differences in agriculture north and south of the Gambaga scarp. The 134
steep scarp marks both a geological and an ecological line of division. South of it the rock formations are of sandstone and shale, north of it granite, quartz, and greenstone predominate. South of the scarp a form of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.), guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams will not grow easily and cereal crops form the staple food supply.[1]

The relative scarcity of population in the yam-growing districts com- 164
pared with the congested areas north of the White Volta may be due to 161
unknown historical and cultural factors, but endemic diseases have undoubtedly impeded population growth. While malaria, yaws, and leprosy, to mention only the commonest enemies of native health, are widespread throughout the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, sleeping-sickness is also endemic throughout the Mamprusi and Dagomba districts. In the central sectors north of the scarp sleeping-sickness occurs only sporadically near the rivers.

Topographical differences also appear to influence the distribution of 161
population. The high plateau which stretches from the White Volta 132
northwards is more suited for permanent habitation than the low-lying 133
flats which make up the greater part of Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the wet season they turn into quagmires, in the dry season they are arid tracts seriously short of water-supplies. North of the White Volta numerous streams and small rivers combine with the relatively greater elevation to drain the plateau effectively during the heavy rains; and though surface water becomes scarce in the dry season, shallow pits generally provide sufficient water for normal needs.

The district of Zuarungu is a typical portion of the Trans-Volta plateau. 133
A number of bouldery hills from 100 to 500 feet high are scattered over 131
its undulating surface. The most conspicuous are the Tong Hills, a small range stretching for about four miles just north of the river. It adds an

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M. and S. L., 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1936; and Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

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164 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. [657] The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

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515 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake [240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

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183 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

731 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the
241 majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

● 164 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-
165 being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

778 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent
771 state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When
782 things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

602 769 778 could not have been less than 80 years old. This tree was the centre of the communal life of the neighbourhood. It was, as every native would automatically expect, also an important ancestor shrine. A few years after it sprouted Tiezien's paternal grandfather discovered through a diviner that his mother's father and *his* mother, a Pusunamoo woman, had chosen the baobab as their shrine. The Pusunamoo woman's maximal lineage consecrated it for Tiezien's grandfather. Thereafter sacrifices were regularly offered on the tree. In due course Tiezien succeeded to ●[164] the custody of this shrine. Then came the influenza epidemic of 1918. Many people died at Kpata'ar, including members of Tiezien's inner lineage and wives and children of the lineage. A diviner revealed that these deaths were being inflicted by the Pusunamoo ancestress in retaliation for long neglect. She demanded that Tiezien should collect a large number of fowls from all the members of his inner lineage and take them to Pusunamoo to be sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* of her medial lineage as an atonement. This was Tiezien's first and last contact with his matrilateral kin at Pusunamoo up to 1936.

602 It is evident, from these examples, as has been previously suggested, that the majority of a man's remote matrilateral kin are not socially relevant for him. All, however, are potentially so and may become so at some time or another; and when they do enter his field of social relations it is chiefly in their ritual capacity.

602 778 769 We said that the most important ancestor shrines linking a man to a matrilateral lineage are *bakologo* and *bɔɣar* shrines. Of the two the *bɔɣar* shrine is, in fact, the more important. As we have shown in our earlier book,[1] the ancestor cult of the Tallensi culminates in the conception and cult of the *bɔɣar*. This notion and the cult that expresses it form the centre of gravity of the lineage system. Hence it seems strange, at first sight, to find that every *bɔɣar* must necessarily be derived from a matrilateral lineage. We can understand this, however, if we consider the significance of the *bɔɣar* in the lineage system.

602 778 769 613 A *bɔɣar* is the shrine consecrated to the founding ancestor of a lineage and his mother. It symbolizes the identity of that lineage and its differentiation from other lineages of the same order within a more inclusive lineage or within a clan. A lineage expands by a process of internal segmentation and differentiation that follows the lines of cleavage inherent in the structure of the joint family.[2] The component segments of a lineage are differentiated from one another primarily by reference to their descent from different 'mothers'—that is different wives of their common founding ancestor. But a woman does not sever her ties with her lineage when she marries and becomes a mother; and in kinship questions Tale thought is dominated by the lineage concept. Hence Tallensi think of a lineage progenitrix not only as such-and-such a

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 137.

[2] Ibid. ch. xii.

5. A "vicious circle" has been created. Years of living on 241
the margin of subsistence, have sapped the energy of the 146
people and predisposed them to disease; at the present
time, many are physically incapable of the hard work which 164
is necessary to bring about an improvement in their con- 262
ditions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL AGRICULTURE. 000

From our study of the causes of food shortage it is possible to suggest ameliorative measures. The two main forms which these measures must take are:—

1. By increasing the area of land in cultivation.

2. By improving the existing system of farming.

But as we have seen above (Indirect Causes of Food Shortage) the effectiveness of the first measure depends upon the second. It is therefore upon measures for improving the existing farming system with which we are concerned at present. Some of the more important of these are considered, in tabular form, below. It should be mentioned that the improvement in water supplies, which is shortly to receive attention (14), will play an important part in the general improvement of conditions, towards which the following suggestions are made:—

1. *Growth of a greater diversity of crops.*

   Too much reliance is placed upon cereals. The planting of more groundnuts and sweet potatoes; the introduction of pigeon peas, "sanzi" (an early maturing Dagomba bean), cassava, and, in some areas, yams and sesamum, would make useful additions to the present range of crops.

2. *The introduction of a rotation of crops.*

   This would require study over a period of years, but if, as seems desirable, the area of legumes and roots is to be increased, some form of rotation will be essential.

3. *Attention to the increase and maintenance of soil fertility.*

   Just as farmyard manure is the basis of arable farming in most other countries in the world, so might it usefully become the basis of arable farming here. "Mixed farming" provides the solution. The livestock of the country have a greater potential value as the producers of

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the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846
wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are
near, might give some help too.[1] The younger women fetch water and 602
cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593
begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of
a father's tribulations. Talking with men immediately after the birth 854
of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some
days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family [787
visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as 176]
a spiritual ward (*sɛɣəraan*) to guard its life (*gur u ŋɔvɔr*) and watch over its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabələg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper
'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, [165]
vol. XXXV, nos. 3 and 4, 1943.

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*),
or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite
ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops
is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of
twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have
seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine
charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and
treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still
prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarɔg*, when the cause of its death is sought
by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it
will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal
child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the
age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)]
and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is
a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba*')'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth
851 regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive, the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their
[783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which
593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are
593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults
571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should
591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her
571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins)
165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

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[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

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[787]
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No one was surprised when Tinta'alɔm gained the verdict. Thus the ancestors themselves vouched for the legitimate status of Yidaan biis.

Other Namoo Clans

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The most important of the Namoo clans that come within the political orbit of Tongo, though not related to it by ties of clanship, is the contiguous clan of Zoo. A number of Tongo families live on Zoo land, which was not so densely populated as Tongo 50 or 60 years ago and could therefore accommodate some of its overflow population. In the same way, a number of Zoo families have overflowed into the neighbouring locality of Gbambee, where they live among Tongo people. These ecological adjustments are facilitated, though not solely determined, by the structural ties between Zoo and Tongo, and by the fact that both are Namoo settlements. Ten out of the thirty-nine homesteads at Zoo belong to Tongo people, and they are members of all but one of the major segments of Tongo. By contrast, Tongo people are reluctant to move out to vacant parts of Zubiuŋ, where the people, though their neighbours and cognatic kinsfolk, are Talis in their ritual beliefs and practices. In recent years only one Tongo man has done this as a temporary measure.

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The people of Zoo (Zoodɛm) comprise two maximal lineages. One of these, Zoo proper, is a maximal lineage of three segments, to one of which is attached a 'sister's son's' lineage. Their founding ancestor, Yikpɛmdaan, is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*) of Mosuor, whom he accompanied from Mampurugu. As Zoodɛm marry any of the descendants of Mosuor, the fiction of original kinship (*mabiirət*) here emphasizes the cultural and political solidarity of the two groups, not a genealogical connexion.

Living side by side with Zoodɛm proper (Yikpɛmdaan biis) is another maximal lineage known as Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm. These two maximal lineages exclude one another from the cults of their respective founding ancestors and from the ritual observances connected with them. Indeed, Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are affiliated to the Talis by ritual observance and cult. Nevertheless, Zoodɛm proper and Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm have all the ties of clanship that hold between constituent lineages of the same clan who consider themselves to be *sunzɔp*. The explanation they give is that 'it is because we live together side by side (*tin kab ziin ni taaba la zugu*)'. Here clanship is attributed to local coalescence. These clanship ties are shown in all ceremonial matters that concern either of the lineages as well as in their co-operative enterprises. Though they do not take part in the esoteric ritual of one another's funeral ceremonies, they act as *sunzɔp* to one another in the public and exoteric phases of the ceremonies. If a party of Zoodɛm proper set out to pay their respects to a deceased relative-in-law, they will always be supported by some young men from Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm; and if a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is summoned to take a working party to help his father-in-law, he will always be accompanied by a few young men of the other lineage.

Zoo-Yiraaŋ is linked by ties of clanship to one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ.[1] Zoodɛm proper have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ or with any other clan. Yet they are often described as 'our

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[1] See ch. VI.

the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, 361
is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 621
600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one 361
part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north 161
side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse population.[1]

Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During 361
the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for 132
cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live 166
there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view 361
of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are [342]
identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settle- 361
ments, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements 161
nearer to the periphery. I cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 [162]
(*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwələg (Kpoləg), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Volta—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

161 The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Taləŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*buləg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*koləg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

*618 [608] one another in funerals and similar ceremonial events. These ceremonial reciprocities do not prevail between Tongo or Zoo and any of the Hill Talis clans adjacent to them.

621 184 Nevertheless, a palpable social boundary still prevails between Tongo and Zubiuŋ, but one far less determinate than that between Tongo and its other Talis neighbours. No Zubiuŋ homesteads are so situated as to be surrounded on all sides by Tongo homesteads, and vice versa; there is no indiscriminate mingling of the homesteads of the two clans. Looked at from within, both Zubiuŋ and Tongo are self-contained spatial units within their respective social circumferences. This is correlated with their contrasting totemic observances, clan cults, and politico-ritual offices; their mutual exclusiveness by the canon of agnatic descent and the liberty to intermarry that goes with this; and their consequent divergent jural interests as distinct corporate units; the people of Tongo are Namoos, the Zubiuŋdem Talis. The observer is constantly apprised of this in the attitudes and opinions of individuals, in economic activities, and in jural and ritual events, the very activities and events which reveal the close bonds of the two groups. Tongo people never scrupled to raid their weaker Zubiuŋ neighbours for cattle owed to them, as many old men relate from personal experience. On the other hand, responsible elders and chiefs of Tongo, in those days, disapproved strongly of resort to violent self-help against Zubiuŋ by their people, though they could not always prevent it—an attitude they would never adopt in regard to the other Talis. To-day Tongo and Zubiuŋ people regard one another with a certain amount of suspicion and good-natured superiority, tempered with a tolerance which the former never show towards the other Talis.

621 184 166 A similar, but more elastic, social boundary exists between Tongo and Zoo. There are no Zoo people living inside Tongo, but no less than 11 of the 39 homesteads situated on the land under the ritual jurisdiction of Zoo-Yiraaŋ, within the social circumference of Zoo, are the homes of permanent immigrants from Tongo. The bond of common stock (*buurət*) between these two locally allied and politically associated Namoo clans blurs the cleavages between them. Tongo people find it the more congenial to live amongst Zoo people in considerable numbers because they have the same ritual observances, mortuary and funeral customs, and politico-ritual offices and values. It is mainly cultural differences of this kind that deter them from settling amongst the people of Zubiuŋ.

The one-sided filtration of Tongo people into Zoo, and the absence of the reverse process, are due mainly to the density of habitation—which is so great as to preclude immigration—and the obvious excess of population at Tongo. Zoo people who wish to emigrate, temporarily or permanently, move farther afield, to Gbambee or Biuŋ. In any case, the flow of migration from Tongo to Zoo has apparently reached saturation, for it has now practically stopped. But this movement, though at bottom an ecological readjustment, has been canalized by the social structure; and while it brings out the affinities of Tongo with Zoo, it also emphasizes their separateness. Because they are structurally independent of each other, Tongo people only migrate to Zoo if they have matrilateral kin there who will grant them land to build on and farm. By contrast,

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ, which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us, and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo. This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of
Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time;
but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their
families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be
living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

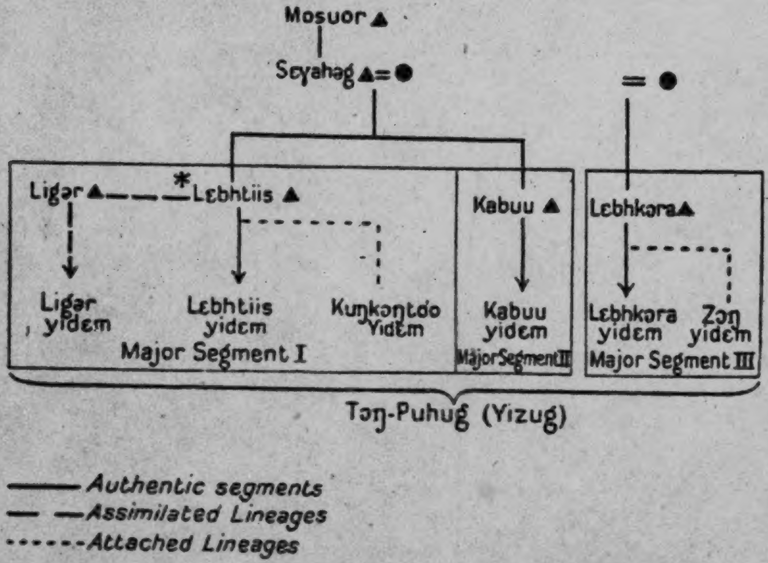
We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription
of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that
boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential
distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this
rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to
those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *tɛŋ* is not a *tɛŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the con- [578]
tradiction between the conception of a defined territorial boundary
fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the
native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking
of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties,
ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused
solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually
supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries
divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both
spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations.
But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo
and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same
extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tɛnzugu, in
particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit sub-communities
within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Gɔlibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Adminis- 578
tration as headman of Tɛnzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source
of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially
defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tɛnzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Gɔlibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for
arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Gɔlibdaana,
crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding
temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong,
took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such
disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

613 621 it forms a segment, is the structure of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm writ large. Discounting the accessory lineages, Puhug comprises three major segments. It has two more lineages of the same order of segmentation as Lɛbhtiis yidɛm: Kabuu yidɛm and Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm. One segment of the former occupies the south-west or topmost (*zugni*) corner of Puhug (homesteads Nos. 25, 26, 27), abutting on the mass of great boulders that lies between Puhug and the watercourse that separates it from Wakii. The other ● [166] segment occupies the group of homesteads at Kumpɛyalɔyat. A minor branch, including the head of this segment, migrated to Yamələg some twenty years ago, and other members of it are settled at Gbambee, Woo, and in the outlying parts of Taleland, while some are abroad. Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm, together with their attached lineage, Zɔŋ yidɛm, live in the group of homesteads—Nos. 30, 31, 32, 34—adjacent to Kuorəg. These three major segments of Puhug (reckoned as *dugət*, medial lineages, in this context) are agnatically related as follows:


Mosuor ▲
Sɛyahəg ▲ = ●
= ●
Ligər ▲
*
Lɛbhtiis ▲
Kabuu ▲
Lɛbhkɔra ▲
Ligər yidɛm
Lɛbhtiis yidɛm
Kuŋkɔŋtɔo Yidɛm
Kabuu yidɛm
Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm
Zɔŋ yidɛm
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
Major Segment III
Tɔŋ-Puhug (Yizug)
Authentic segments
Assimilated Lineages
Attached Lineages

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm and Kabuu yidɛm are *soog* (full brother) segments, it will be noted, and though they are not considered to form a single *dug* within Puhug, they have somewhat closer ties than either has with their *sunzɔ* segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis, while Ligər yidɛm have closer ties with Lɛbhtiis yidɛm than with the others, on account of their special connexion with the former. In the economic, ritual, and jural concerns of the section all the segments have the same status and the same degree of relative autonomy. But Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are recognized as the senior branch, and so rank above the others. The head (*kpeem*) of Lɛbhtiis yir is *ipso facto* the *kpeem* of Puhug.

The lineage structure of the other three *yizugət* of Tongo follows the same

plan; and the architecture of the sub-clan as a whole is that of the *yizug* 613 on a larger scale. A skeleton genealogy (see p. 214) will suffice to show this. 621

Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg are constituted according to the same general plan as Puhug. But each section has features peculiar to itself, specializations of the general principles of *yizug* structure due to the particular genealogical constitution of each, and to the demographic and structural relations with one another of the four sections. This is characteristic of Tale social organization. Like the maximal lineages of a composite clan, co-ordinate segments of a maximal lineage are homologous with one another in structure, but frequently different in genealogical composition.

Viewed in terms of its own diachronic and local constitution, each is unique, its present form the precipitate of its own peculiar history. Thus Guŋ, as we have seen, is not a single local aggregate like Puhug. But the principle that lineage proximity and residential proximity go together prevails. Leaving aside those who have settled permanently or temporarily in outlying places, the Guŋdɛm at Guŋ proper are almost all Kɔbər yidɛm. The centre of settlement of Siiyɛŋ biis is Dekpieŋ. Bɔyayiedət yidɛm are most scattered; but each of its segments tends to be a small local aggregate, and wherever in outlying places a cluster of homesteads belonging to Guŋ men is formed—at Zoo, at Gbambee, and at Woo—these men are almost invariably members of a single minor segment of the lineage.

The three segments of Guŋ (excluding Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, the assimilated lineage) are considered to be more closely united than the segments of Puhug because they have a single common progenitrix. They speak of themselves as 'members of one *dug* (*dug yɛni dɛm*)' in contraposition to the other sections of Tongo. Seug is the most homogeneous section of Tongo, both residentially and genealogically, for it consists of only one segment, of the same order as the component segments of the other *yizugət*. The members of Seug, too, speak of themselves as members of one *dug* in contraposition to the other three sections. Kuorəg is the most heterogeneous, genealogically, of the four sections. Its members are also more widely dispersed, most of them having moved to Gbambee in the past [166] thirty or forty years.

Puhug and Kuorəg both show clearly how local association is a factor of section organization in a maximal lineage in the same way as it is a factor of clanship in composite clans. Genealogically, Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm of Puhug are a lineage of the same order of segmentation as Seugdɛm; yet they do not, like the latter, constitute a separate *yizug*. Close local association with Puhug makes them a part of that section. Similarly, Yikpɛmdaan yir of Kuorəg on genealogical reckoning alone should rank as a section. Its founding ancestor is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*), possibly a 'brother' but certainly not a son, of Mosuor, who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu. The head of this lineage, who has the hereditary title of Yikpɛmdaan, has a position of special dignity at Tongo. He is in one sense the senior elder (*kpeem*) among all the elders of the sub-clan. Yikpɛmdaan's high status is due to his hereditary ownership of a special shrine (*bɔyar*), Zoonkpaləg, which is both his lineage *bɔyar* (*banam bɔyar*) and a clan *bɔyar*, analogous to the External *Bɔɣar* of the Talis, for the whole of Tongo. It is the shrine

Structure of Peripheral Settlements

In the newer settlements there are no lineages of large span. Where 613
segments of maximal lineages, whose homes are in the old settlements, 621
have been settled for more than a generation, those of their members
remaining in the peripheral settlements do not always live in close 166
proximity to one another. People shift readily to take up new land, and spread widely so as to have a large area for cultivation immediately around the homestead, as we have learnt. But the tendency for a lineage to become locally stabilized on the land of its ancestors, near their graves and original home, operates strongly too, and has been strengthened in recent years.

Many men at Woo, Biuŋ, and Datɔk now live on land originally broken for cultivation by their fathers, grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers. A powerful incentive to remain there is the fact that they now hold this land by right of inheritance. An irresistible sanction binding them to these new settlements is the fact that their fathers and grandfathers lie buried there. Born and bred in these settlements, they look upon them as their homes, while maintaining strong ties with their original clan settlements, which they regard as the clan homes.

The effect is to establish new, permanent, local nuclei for minor branches of lineages anchored in the old settlement. Around these nuclei we sometimes find a small cluster of homesteads, the heads of which are all members of a lineage segment of two, three, or at the most four generations. But this is far from common. As we have mentioned before, these settlements have been, and are being, occupied by people of very diverse genealogical origin from all parts of Taleland and neighbouring areas. This is particularly marked in the case of Datɔk. Biuŋ and Woo have been settled chiefly by people from Tongo and the places immediately adjacent to or socially connected with Tongo. In addition to the bonds of local cohesion the inhabitants of these places have also the ties of political and ritual interdependence which they bring with them from their original clan settlements. At Datɔk no such bonds are carried over into the new community. A Gban man may have as his nearest neighbours a man from Ba'ari, a man from Bɔlɔga, a man from Yamɔlɔg, and a man from Bongo. The basis of political unity is locality rather than lineage. The sections of Datɔk, for example, are local units, wards, or quarters, not genealogical-cum-local units.

But it is characteristic of Tale social organization that the bonds of local association never stand alone and are never sufficient in themselves to generate bonds of solidarity. Mere contiguity requires some degree of mutual accommodation. It does not, in a society without a constituted legal system or territorially organized political units, create mutual legal obligations, or provide a basis for corporate relations between individuals. Hence it must be reinforced by, and indeed founded on, more fundamental ties which are morally and jurally binding in their own right. In
the older settlements lineage ties have this function; in new settlements [602]
kinship ties take their place.

The following excerpt from a census of a part of Datɔk illustrates this.

613 It will be seen that both affinal and cognatic kinship ties regulate the collocation of homesteads.

621 *Section: Zalɔmwuuri.* (A local subdivision of Datɔk, named after the

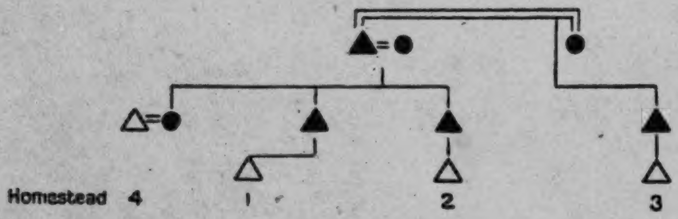
166 stream forming one of its boundaries.)

Homestead 1. This belongs to Latammi, a man of about 55, whose father, a Gar man, came to build his house and to farm here about fifty years ago. He died and was buried at his new home. Latammi, his eldest son, then inherited the homestead and the surrounding farm-land, and remained living there.

Homestead 2. About 200 yards away, is owned by Latammi's father's younger brother's (*pit soog*) son. This young man formerly shared Latammi's homestead but recently moved out to set up in his own.

Homestead 3. About 250 yards away from 1. Latammi's father's half-brother (*sunzɔ*) built this homestead, having come to settle here shortly after Latammi's father. This man died recently and the homestead and surrounding farm-land now belong to his son.

The following genealogy shows how the heads of these three homesteads are related:



Together they constitute a lineage of small span, a segment of a greater lineage whose home is at Gar. Their residential collocation is exactly the same as it would be if they were living at Gar or in any of the older settlements.

Homestead 4. About 200 yards from 1. This is the homestead of a Ba'ari man who migrated to Datɔk about three years ago. He is a brother-in-law (sister's husband) (*dakii*) of Latammi's late father (see genealogy above), and was, on this account, given land on which to build and settle by the latter's half-brother's son of Homestead 3.

Homestead 5. About a quarter of a mile from 1. This belongs to Naambɔn, whose father, a man from Bɔlɔga, came to build and settle here some forty years ago. This man had first migrated from Bɔlɔga to Kosabɔlɔg, on the outskirts of Duusi. While he was living there Teroog (now an old man), a member of the same maximal lineage as Latammi's father, who lives in another section of Datɔk, married one of the Bɔlɔga man's daughters. The land he held at Duusi proved to be unsatisfactory, so Naambɔn's father decided to move to Datɔk. Through the good offices [606] of his son-in-law, Teroog, he was introduced to Latammi's father, who (as a son-in-law (*deem*) in the classificatory sense) gave him land to settle on near the fringe of the huge area he had marked out as a farm for himself.

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are 166
linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at 602
Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settle- 571
ments. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔyaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

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is usually land that has come to him by inheritance from his father.[1] It is hallowed land because it has come to him thus. This land is the basis of his local and economic ties with his lineage and clan. In psychological terms it stands for the most significant aspects of his own development and of his relationship with his father. It was here that he learnt to farm, working side by side with his father and thus coming to know every inch of it. His father's social personality is for him closely associated with this land, with the homestead which stands on it somewhere, and with the family graves including, in time, those of his parents, that lie there. When he inherits this land it is the principal sign that he has at length stepped into his father's shoes.

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The cycle of development through which the nuclear lineage regularly passes shows the working of filial piety very clearly. A typical history is that of Ba'ahug's house. When Ba'ahug inherited the homestead and the home farms of his nuclear lineage, at Tɔŋ-Kuorəg, about thirty years ago, he had living with him his son Saŋgbɔŋ and his full brother Zɔŋ. Then Ba'ahug died and his brother Zɔŋ inherited the homestead and the patrimony. In due course Saŋgbɔŋ moved out to build his homestead on his own father's part of the patrimonial bush farm at Gbambee, and there he brought up his family. In 1934 Zɔŋ died and Saŋgbɔŋ inherited the homestead and patrimony. He remained at Gbambee, however, until 1936. There had been illness and other mishaps in his family, and the diviners declared that his father, who was buried beside the original homestead at Kuorəg, was demanding that he (Saŋgbɔŋ) should go back there. So in 1936 he handed over the homestead at Gbambee and some of the land there to his oldest son and returned to take up his abode in the ancestral homestead. For him the cycle of development from the domestically unitary joint family through the phase of its dispersion and back to a phase of unity was completed. The unity would have been more obvious still if he had made his oldest son accompany him to the old homestead, and if his late 'father' Zɔŋ's children had remained with him. Actually Zɔŋ's sons, finding that the land that would now be available for their use was insufficient, decided to move to Biuŋ; and there was no need for Saŋgbɔŋ to summon his own oldest son to come and live with him as the homestead at Gbambee is regarded merely as an outpost of the ancestral home. There is this advantage, also, about keeping up the Gbambee outpost, that when Saŋgbɔŋ dies Zɔŋ's oldest son will be the heir and will return to resume the ancestral home and lands. This will mean that Saŋgbɔŋ's sons will probably have to move out to their father's land at Gbambee, so the homestead might as well be kept up. If Saŋgbɔŋ had died at Gbambee before inheriting the ancestral home he would have been brought home to Kuorəg for burial beside his father and forefathers.

In the next generation there will be a new development. For Saŋgbɔŋ's

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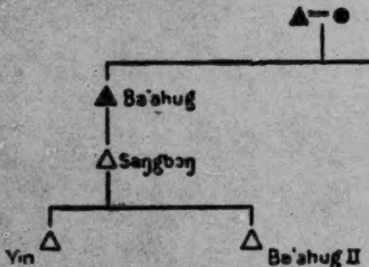
[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

sons their father's home and land has a double location. In terms of 577
their own experience and immediate attachments it is the home and land 613
at Gbambee; in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage it
is the home and land at Kuorəg. The oldest of them may go back to /166
Kuorəg when he inherits the patrimony. The younger may prefer to stay at Gbambee when he becomes head of the lineage and leave the Kuorəg homestead and land to the other branch of the lineage. He will be living in what is to him his father's homestead and on what is to him his father's land in the most intimate and personal sense. And when he dies his kinsmen will probably be informed by the diviner consulted on the day he is buried that he desires to be buried at Gbambee and not at Kuorəg. Thenceforth a new home is established for one of the lines of agnatic descent sprung from Saŋgbɔŋ. This branch will still maintain close jural, economic, and religious ties with the other branches of the same segment established at Kuorəg and will act together with those branches in all corporate affairs, but it will be independently localized. Thus filial piety which has drawn Saŋgbɔŋ back into the local orbit of his ancestral lineage, and will keep him there even after death, will be the ostensible incentive that will make one of his sons establish a new home for his posterity at Gbambee.

The following genealogy shows the agnatic relationship of the individuals that have been mentioned:



And the table on p. 184 shows the cycle of development of this nuclear lineage as we have sketched it.

The natives are well aware, of course, that these processes of dispersion and reintegration in the nuclear lineage arise directly out of the genealogical cleavages and economic needs of its component segments. But the chief sanction for each defined stage in the process is, in their eyes, filial piety. Objectively, it appears to the anthropologist as a socially accepted rationalization or pretext covering a rearrangement of property and jural relations made necessary by economic needs and the logic of the social structure; subjectively, it is felt by those concerned as an irresistible ritual sanction, crystallized as a command from the father's spirit. It works consistently in the direction of keeping the lineage intact $\frac{1}{1}$

$\frac{1}{1}$ [Text continued on p. 185.—Analyst]

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Date	*At Kuorəg*	*At Gbambee*	*Elsewhere*
c. 1920	**Ba'ahug** **Zɔŋ** **Saŋgbɔŋ** **Booryii**		
1933	**Zɔŋ** **Booryii** **Yidaan**	**Saŋgbɔŋ** **Yin** **Ba'ahug II**	
1936	**Saŋgbɔŋ** **Ba'ahug II (and other sons)**	**Yin**	**Booryii** **Yidaan** **(At Biuŋ)**
19—?	**Booryii** **Yidaan** **and their children**	**Yin** **Ba'ahug II** **and their children**	
19—?	**Yin** **[Yidaan and/or Zɔŋ's grandsons in separate homestead?]**	**Ba'ahug II** **(Ba'ahug II establishes new home at Gbambee)**	**[Zɔŋ's surviving sons and/or grandsons may have a homestead of their own at *Kuorəg*, or at *Gbambee* or at *Biuŋ*]**

in relation to its local and spiritual focus. Economic necessity is undoubtedly the chief incentive to fission in the joint family, but the process of reintegration is as much or more the result of ritual and affective forces. 577 613 166●

This is the essence of the pull exercised on every Taləŋ by his father's original home (*daboog* pl. *dabaar*), and on lineages in their corporate existence by the *daboog* of their founding ancestor. We have already recorded several cases of men who returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads after many years of absence. As these instances show, it often involves an economic loss when a man gives up fertile land in a peripheral settlement to return to one of the ancient settlements where the soil is less productive. There are many men who in their young days farmed at Biuŋ or Gbambee or Datɔk and had many cattle, sheep, and goats then but now have no more than their neighbours. Their explanation is that they had to give up their farms in the peripheral settlements to come and rebuild their fathers' original homesteads, thus exchanging plenty for poverty. This was the story of Saɣəbazaa and Na'ampaahya, of Saandi, Loobuol-Kugər, and of Saɣawuob, and of many more than need be mentioned here, in addition to those already referred to. It was the religious and affective associations of their ancestral homes that drew the Hill Talis back to the hills in 1936 after twenty-five years of exile, in spite of the economic sacrifice this meant for a great many of them. Down on the plains most of them had all the land they needed immediately around their homesteads. It was fertile land, too, won from the uncultivated bush. They were better off for food than they had been on the hills. But they gladly gave up their temporary homes and farms to return to their exiguous stony patches and strips on their hilltops, the crops of which have to be supplemented by farming bush farms three or four miles away. For all their rationalizations about the better climate and pleasanter surroundings of the hills, the truth was that it was a matter of faith. On the hills they were back among their fathers and forefathers, and this gave them a sense of religious security they had lacked on the plains. It meant, also, that they were back in the right local setting of their clan and lineage relationships.

The return of the Hill Talis to their ancestral homes is a striking case because it involved the building of between 250 and 300 homesteads[1] in two dry seasons and the movement of over 2,000 people. But every dry season, within a settlement, one finds men rebuilding homesteads on the long-deserted sites of their fathers' homesteads. This happens when a man at length succeeds to the position his father held in the lineage structure. So Deemzeet built a new homestead on the site of his own father's homestead when he became head of the section of Puhug at Tongo. Or it may be simply that a man has a series of

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[1] A minimum estimate. The total number of homesteads built or rebuilt was probably nearer 500, but I was not able to check this.

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misfortunes and learns from a diviner that this is due to his dead father who is angry with him for leaving his *daboog* site derelict. That was the case with Pa'anbɔbis and Mambaŋya.

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We have said previously that the sentiments, the rights, and the duties of parent and child to one another are traced back by the natives to the fact of birth; but in actual social usage they are fortified by strong ritual sanctions. Tallensi have these in mind when they say that a father's authority is irresistible because 'he sacrifices for you (to your ancestors)'. Your father 'owns (*so*)' you because he begot (*dɔɣa*) you; and he sacrifices (*kaab*) on your behalf because he begot you; you can only approach your ancestors through your father while he is alive, and if you do so after his death it is always through the intermediation of his spirit. It all goes back to the fact of birth, but the ritual sanctions are the most important instrument by which a father's authority is maintained, as our discussion has several times shown, particularly in the case of a proxy or classificatory father. Siŋ cannot defy his proxy father Na'abzɔ 'because', as he says, 'he sacrifices for me'; Da'amo'o chafes under the vexations Kutɔbis and his sons frequently put upon him, but he cannot, for the same reason, disregard Kutɔbis's authority over him as his late father's brother. It is very rarely indeed that a man in a paternal position will refuse to sacrifice on behalf of another who is in the position of a 'son' to him; but the fear of this sanction has a restraining influence in cases such as those of Siŋ and Da'amo'o. The whole hierarchy of authori[illegible] in the lineage rests on this ritual office. Most of the men of Yinyɛla's inner lineage were opposed to his cutting himself off from the rest of Puhug, but they had to 'follow (*dɔl*)' him because he had custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* and 'sacrificed for them'.

XXXIII

THE TALENSE

History; Tribal, Clan, and Soog' *Organization*

101 INTRODUCTORY: The Talense occupy the area shown on the
161 map. According to the 1921 census report they number 29,972
121 persons of both sexes. Specimens of the language, called Talene or Talen', have been given in Chapter III. Their appearance, their houses, customs, religion, and organization all seem to me to be very similar to those of their neighbours, the Nankanse. Their languages, too, are very much alike. Had the Talense not been labelled with a separate appellation, I doubt if the anthropologist—save after, perhaps, a very minute investigation—would have considered it necessary to deal with them as a group distinct from the Namnam and the Nankanse. Nevertheless, in accordance with the plan which I mapped out, I have done so. Rites and customs, already investigated, discussed, and described, are here approached from a different angle. Results so obtained are always valuable, even where there is a certain inevitable repetition. The process serves also to fill gaps in the work which has gone before, to which the information obtained later may be considered as supplementary.

128 In dealing with this and the remainder of the tribes, I have endeavoured to group my facts, as far as possible, under the chapter headings already adopted. This arrangement will enable my readers the more readily to piece together the sum total of the data available concerning any one particular subject, and I hope will mitigate somewhat the defects in presentation for which I have already apologized.

173 The history of the tribal wanderings of this people follows the same
lines as that with which we are now familiar. This history is the record
167 of the migrations, not of the tribe *qua* tribe, but of every clan, the composite of which now forms the group called the Talense (s. Taleŋa; language Talene.) The tribal histories, specimens of which are about to be related, tell of the migrations (within comparatively narrow limits of time and space) of the groups which have for some hundreds of years supplied the Territorial Rulers. Of the wanderings of the original people themselves, who are now largely merged with this foreign element, nothing is really known, except that they were undoubtedly of the stock which I have termed the 'Mole group', who seem to

173 have been the original inhabitants of these parts for a much longer
167 period than can be claimed for their aristocracy.

The chief Talense 'towns', in the sense with which we are now
103 familiar, are as follows: Tɔngo, Bade, Gorogo, Si, Winduri, Ten'zugu,
101 Tilega, Yamdiga, Biuŋ, Siega, Duse, Datoko, Gbee, Kpantia, Kpale,
Wakyiga, Gbeogo, Zandoya, and Gbea. These settlements, including
the subjects of the Chief of Kurugu, now constitute the Talense tribe.

History of Tɔngo (as told me by the present Chief, Kpama): 'We
173 (i.e. his ancestors) came from Mampurugu, which we left owing to a
622 quarrel between *Misore* and his younger brother—whose name we do not know—about the Chieftainship. *Misore* left Mampurugu in consequence and came first to Boŋo, thence to Saamere; from there he passed through a dense bush and came to the hills. (The Tong hills.) At the foot of these hills we found a people whom our ancestors called Gundugo or Talense. We intermarried with these people and have all become Talense. *Misore* died here; his grave is marked by a big baobab tree. He was succeeded by his son, *Seyene*, who, now that his father was dead, returned to Mampurugu[1] and received from the Chief the Chieftainship of Tɔngo. *Seyene* died, and was succeeded by his brother, *Nambogeda*, who also returned to Mampurugu to ask for the Chieftainship. He died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, *Bɔyayeret*, a son of *Seyene*. About this time, the Chief of Mampurugu made one of his son's Chief of Kurugu, and placed Tɔngo under Kurugu. *Bɔyayeret* was succeeded by his "brother" *Sayepele*, a son of *Seyene*, who reported to Kurugu and held his Chieftainship from that ruler. *Sayepele* was succeeded by his brother *Nodeyene* (lit. Short-fowl). *Nodeyene* was succeeded by his younger brother, *Lebsekora* (Old-things-change). He, in turn, was succeeded by *Kusii* (Worn-out-hoe), a son of *Bɔyayaret*. He was succeeded by *Bileu*, who was succeeded by *Lobsaab* (Throw-away-food), his brother, who, in turn, was succeeded by *Belemsale*, his half-brother, who was succeeded by *Belemboo*, a son of *Kusii*. In his time a great famine came, and many people were sold (to the Dagomba). He was succeeded by *Kabu*, a son of *Lobsaab*. *Lobsaab* was succeeded by *Sapelega* (White-clouds), a half-brother of *Kabu*. *Sapelega* was succeeded by *Kakora*, a son of *Bileu*. He was followed by *Nekaŋ*, a son of *Kusii*; followed by *Pabeban*, son of *Belemsale*; *Sagbon* (Dark-cloud), *Lebenwana*, *Bupaa*, son of *Kusii*;

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[1] Mampurugu, as we shall see later, was the seat of the Head of the foreign element, who, coming somewhere from the eastward, had founded the empires of Mampruse, Moshi, and Dagomba.

NAMNAM

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 161 131 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063. They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

103 173 167 563 622 793 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice* Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief: 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs. [421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'* is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but [778] it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

101 619 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

● 167 619 648 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes comprise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[113] [1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

181 241 463 [326] in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement—and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops, baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale [465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner, and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 177 168 167 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale, Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years, a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 464 [435] Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*, and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity, and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

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relatives may impel a young man to run away to 'Kumasi', the symbol for everything south of the Black Volta. 167

177 167 Thus one finds that about one man in three has at some time or other in the past two decades visited these, to the Tallensi, still foreign parts. In the settlements near the main roads the dry-season migration of young men may, according to rough estimates made in 1936–7, reach over 10 per cent. of the adult male population. Administrative officers estimate that in 1938–9 about 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were working abroad with the apparent intention of staying away for a lengthy period. These men bring back small sums of money, ranging from a few shillings to four or five pounds, as well as clothes and other miscellaneous trade goods. Money and clothes[1] are eagerly desired by the Tallensi. These are the most important new wants that have grown up recently as a result of culture contact. Foreign utensils, implements, or tools have hardly entered the productive system of the natives. The foreign ideas and exotic information brought back by the young men arouse curiosity but have made no appreciable impression on the native scheme of values and beliefs, or on their practical knowledge. Labour migrants remain strongly attached to their families and natal settlements, and it is always assumed that they will eventually return. Hitherto, among the Tallensi, very few have been lost to their natal communities; and when they do return, they resume the traditional way of life. Though they are one of the influences modifying the strict letter of custom in minor respects, they are not a disintegrating ferment

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[1] Tallensi maintain that there has been a tremendous increase in the amount of clothes worn since the white man opened up the country, and especially since the last war. They point out that nowadays every small boy has a loin-cloth for festive occasions, whereas even twenty years ago a youth only obtained one when he began courting, at the age of 18 or 19. In those days the ordinary man rarely had a cloth or tunic. His only garb was an animal skin. Nowadays every man has at least one cloth to cover himself at night and to wear during the day when he is not working, and many have two or three garments—a cloth and a tunic, for instance—while well-to-do men have considerable wardrobes. All cotton goods are imported. The Mossi cloth used in former days is still a favourite, especially for loin-cloths and caps, and tunics for special wear. The bulk of it is still imported from French territory, but there are some Mossi weavers at Bolɔga and Zuarungu who add to the supply. However, quite half if not more of the cotton goods worn by Tallensi is of European origin and the demand is increasing. I once listed all the clothes worn by a number of men and women from one of the most prosperous communities of Taleland as they passed my rest house on the way to the market. The figures are instructive as an indication both of the standard of living of the Tallensi and of the degree to which acculturation in this sphere has progressed. The sample consisted of 62 men and 64 women. Of the men, 35 (56 per cent.) wore cover-cloths of European cotton print; 18 (29 per cent.) wore Mossi cloths; 9 (15 per cent.) wore skins; 8 (13 per cent.) wore khaki shorts, several of them on top of native loin-cloths; the remainder wore native loin-cloths; 19 (30 per cent.) wore some form of European head-gear; 30 (48 per cent.) wore native-made caps. Thus 85 per cent. of these men were clothed, but none of them wholly. Of the women 12 (15 per cent.) wore a piece of cotton print and one wore a Mossi cloth—a very large incidence such as would not be found in most other Tale communities. The rest were nude, except for the perineal band and back-flap. As people dress up specially for market day, these figures are not indicative of everyday habits. The greater conservatism of women suggested by these figures is due in great part to their lack of opportunities for obtaining cash incomes for personal use.

177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
648 factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ, which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us, and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo. This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of
Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time;
but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their
families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be
living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that
boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential
distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this
rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to
those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *tɛŋ* is not a *tɛŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the contradiction between the conception of a defined territorial boundary [578]
fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the
native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties,
ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused
solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually
supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries
divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both
spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations.
But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo
and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same
extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tenzugu, in
particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit subcommunities within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Golibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Adminis- 578
tration as headman of Tenzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source
of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially
defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tenzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Golibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for
arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Golibdaana,
crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong,
took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such
disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621 not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471 loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182 the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends. There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity, and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farm- 577 land. It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a ground- 471 nut plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them. And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167] twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days. Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621 use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471 is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands 182 of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious. This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of. For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *tɛŋ* at its widest extent, symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure, of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependants, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tɛndaanaship

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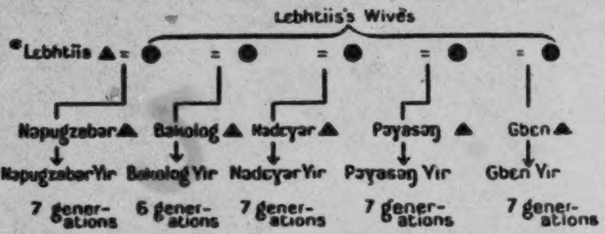
The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico- 793 ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages.

Diagrammatically, the agnatic filiation of the branches of Lɛbhtiis yir 613 (or biis) can be represented as follows:



These five segments form a set of co-ordinate segments, all except Bakolog yidɛm reckoning seven generations inclusively between their present lineage heads and their common ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. Their corporate unity and common interests are symbolized by the ancestor shrine dedicated to the 'fathers' (*banam*) of the lineage, culminating in Lɛbhtiis. This is the *bɔyar* of Lɛbhtiis, the *banam bɔyar* (shrine of the forefathers) held by the head (*kpeem*) of the whole lineage, who may be a member of any of the five *dugət*. In 1934 the head of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, Naandɔmər, who was also head of his own segment of Nɔpugzabər yiri died, and as his final funeral rites were not immediately performed, the *banam bɔyar* remained in the custody of his son, who carried out the duties of head of the whole lineage in his late father's name. Naandɔmər's prospective successor as *kpeem* of Lɛbhtiis yir was Yinyɛla, the *kpeem* of Bakolog yir.

Each segment also has its particular *dugni bɔyar* (shrine of the 'room'). 613 This, as will be explained presently, is known as its 'mothers'' *bɔyar* 778 (*manam bɔyar*)—the shrine of its eponymous founding ancestor among the sons of Lɛbhtiis, and his mother—the symbol of its differentiation, by reference to maternal origin, from its brother (*sunzɔ*) segments of the same descent, and of its specific corporate unity and identity in contraposition to those other segments.

Each segment tends to form a coherent residential cluster, situated on 613 land which has been owned by its members for several generations, and in 361 close proximity to the graves of their ancestors. The lineage as a whole 167 tends to form a local aggregate, though a somewhat looser one than any of its segments. But not all the members of the lineage reside in Puhug, or at Tongo, at a given time. There are its married *pɔyayabəlis* (women members) and absent male members. In Nɔpugzabər yiri two young men were away in 1934, one farming in Mampurugu, another working somewhere in the colony; three of the younger 'sons' of Bakolog yir were away at Kumasi, where they had been for several years. One sub-segment of Pɔyasəŋ yidɛm has been established at Yamələg for a generation or so; and several members of the other two segments were away in Mampurugu and Ashanti.

Numerically Nɔdeyər yir is exceptionally small, for it has only eleven 613 male members. The other segments have between twenty and thirty male members each, counting infants as well. Numbers, we must again emphasize, do not in any way affect the status of a lineage or the rights

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nephews but more distant cognatic and even affinal kin frequently live with a kinsman until they can set up in their own homesteads.

Sometimes, too, an unmarried sister's child (*tau-bii*) may grow up and live in its uncle's family. It may be an illegitimate child (*yi yeem bii*—a maiden's child), or one whose mother's bride-price was not paid, and who therefore belongs to her father unless or until it is redeemed (*pɔhag*) by the payment of a cow by its genitor or his heir. A sister's child is to all intents and purposes a child of the family. But not being of the true agnatic line, it is subject to certain jural disabilities which have no consequence for a girl but handicap a boy, as we have previously seen.

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The domestic families of chiefs and headmen are unusual only in respect of size. Their newly won riches enable chiefs and headmen to acquire numerous wives and to maintain households that appear enormous in the eyes of the ordinary man. A petty headman may have ten or more wives. The late Chief of Tongo, a chief of modest means compared with some of his peers in Taleland, had more than thirty. The Golibdaana of Tenzugu has at least eighty. The Chief of Datɔko is reputed to have a hundred, but he denies this and claims to have only a modest fifty. Except that their domestic economy and organization is more complex and that there is at times more friction between the womenfolk, these hypertrophied joint families have the same pattern of organization as those of ordinary folk.

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It is noteworthy that this pattern has not been disturbed by the social changes which have, in recent years, followed the subjection of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast to European political, economic, and cultural influences. Family disorganization has barely begun to appear in Taleland. There is hardly a domestic family in the country—not one in our sample—which has wholly escaped the effects of these contact influences. One or more of their members is or has been abroad in Mampurugu, Ashanti, or the Colony, for longer or shorter periods of time, farming, working for wages, or trading. But the number of men abroad, at any given time, for very long periods is relatively small[1] compared with other parts of West and Southern Africa, and their absence has little effect on the structure of the residual family. Their labour is lost to the family, but as they are no longer a drain on its resources this does not upset its internal economy. Similarly, as they are mostly young men[2] with little or no responsibility for the management of family

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[1] Estimates based on my own census material and on Nominal Rolls drawn up by Administrative Officers for tax collection show that an average of just under 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were away from home and not likely to return in the immediate future, in the years 1936 to 1939. This estimate may be compared with the 60–80 per cent. of able-bodied adult males absent from tribal reserves in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland quoted by Lord Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 701.

[2] Reliable information on the ages of these absentees cannot be obtained. But from personal contact with many of them, both on their return home and

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affairs, their absence does not disturb jural or ritual relations centred 177
in the family. It is like a tree which remains a tree morphologically and 167
physiologically even if some of its minor branches have been lopped off.

The foregoing is true of the great majority of Tale families. The 596
structure of the normal family can still be accurately described without 177
reference to contact influence, in spite of the fact that a few families can 183
be found in every settlement which have been badly mutilated by the prolonged absence abroad of their male members. Admittedly the norms of family relations have not remained completely insulated from these influences. With the ease of modern communications and the openings for work abroad, young people have incentives and opportunities which their fathers never had for resisting the authority of their elders and for breaking away from the family for a longer or shorter time. But as yet these new incentives and opportunities appear only as modifying factors in the play of the culturally defined family relations. They do not represent a conflicting set of norms, creating divisions within Tale society. For instance, a young man who is still jurally a minor cannot at will leave the domestic family to which he belongs by birth and set up an independent household. He can do so only in compliance with the moral rules and social conventions that regulate the fission of families. In fact, the motive to break away will only arise when certain standard changes take place in the composition of the domestic unit to which he belongs, or when he reaches a stage of social maturity which precipitates certain standard tensions between him and the head of the unit. The alternative for a young man who, in these days, hankers after independence is to leave the community until such time as he is prepared to settle down. He has to seek work abroad, in Ashanti or the Colony, or in the service of the white man nearer home. He is assured of a cordial welcome home whenever he decides to return, whether it be for a few weeks only or permanently. But if he makes up his mind to settle down at home it can only be within the existing social framework, and this means complying with the norms of family organization. There is no other way by which he can get married or acquire a house site or farm-land in his natal settlement, let alone play his part in community affairs. Hitherto these norms have been so well maintained that no returned emigrant has been known to flout them.

Summing up, we see that the Tale domestic system has three morphological strata. It consists of a segmentary economic formation—households of different dimensions and degrees of economic self-sufficiency—embraced within a segmentary jural and ceremonial formation—domestic units not necessarily congruent with households grouped under family heads—and this again contained within a system of residential grouping in which the changes of phase in domestic structure are crystallized. 592

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in places like Kumasi, I can say with certainty that the great majority are under 30.

593 in illness. She is mainly responsible for their training in habits of cleanliness. She also has to teach her daughters housekeeping skills.

This formal summary is interposed here as a means of orientating our analysis. The reality, we shall find, is not so simple.

Classificatory Parents and Own Parents

593 855 736 Tallensi affirm that no one can wholly take the place of a person's own parents. A child may be brought up by its dead father's brother or dead mother's co-wife. Outwardly there is nothing to distinguish the relationship of such a child, during its pre-adolescent years, to its proxy parent from that of a child living with its natural parent. Men or women point with pride and affection to orphans in their custody as 'my children'. They claim to care for them as conscientiously and devotedly as for their own children. But, the natives say, there is always something lacking; and observation shows that the affective ties of proxy parent and child are much weaker than those of natural parent and child. Sometimes, indeed, there is an acknowledged emotional barrier between them.

One can see this in young children like Gundaat, whose story is told in a previous chapter (p. 130). A young child is more restrained, more formal, with a proxy parent than with a natural parent. Boys seem to be less amenable to proxy parents than to own parents, especially as they approach adulthood. When young men who have been abroad, [107] working in Ashanti or the Colony for a period of years, are questioned about their motives for leaving home, the commonest reason they give is the death of a parent. 'My father (*ba*) died, and my junior father (*ba-pit*) took over the house (*die yir*) and so I went away', is the usual formula. One soon discovers that there was always some tension and often friction between the youth and his father's brother. The youth says that his *ba-pit* did not treat him properly; and when one questions his *ba-pit*, he usually says 'the boy did not respect (*nan*) me'. This is a modern development of what is a deeply ingrained feature of Tale social organization. A man will often continue to live and farm with his own father until the latter's death. I know men of 40 and over who are still living with their own fathers. But very rarely does this happen with a father's brother. A dead man's sons break away from the parental home when a father's brother inherits it as soon as they are able to. In such a case there is usually a convergence of different factors of segmentary differentiation in the lineage. The emotional cleavage serves as the catalyst that directs and accelerates the normal processes of splitting along economic and structural lines of cleavage.

This is the negative aspect of the idea that one's natural parents should be one's social parents, as it appears in the classificatory extension of the parent-child relationship. On the positive side it follows from this conception that all those who are socially identifiable with

even mother and daughter, and hence, perhaps, Tallensi do not have 573
such a definite conventional rationalization of their attitudes towards the
mother. They say you respect your mother and cherish her in old age 577
because she bore and fed you. In childhood you were more attached to her than to your father; you ran to her whenever you were tired or hungry or ill and she comforted and fed you; as an adult you realize the importance of 'father's begetting' (*ba-dɔyam*) in jural, ritual, and economic matters such as marriage or landowning, and in crises like sickness or death; but your mother is still honoured as the centre of your domestic arrangements if you are a man, and if you are a woman, she is the one person you can always come to in sickness or trouble, in the certainty of loving attention. Comfort, emotional security, and food—these are the distinguishing qualities of a mother in Tale thought. It corresponds to the more personal character of the bonds between mother and child, by contrast with the jurally and ritually weighted ties with the father.

Tallensi say that one must respect one's living parents; but to one's 769
dead parents one owes reverence and submission in surpassing degree.
That is what the proverb 'Fear the dead and do not fear the living' 577
means to them.[1] One can defy a living parent sometimes and rely on being forgiven; one cannot defy a dead parent. One can live without the help of a living parent, if necessary, but not without the mystical protection of one's dead parents.

In the religious practice of the Tallensi the ancestors exercise their 769
powers without compunction. They punish and slay as arbitrarily as
they bless. Every dry season men return to rebuild their parental homes 577
which have been allowed to lie in decay for many years. They come
from Mampurugu, from outlying parts of Taleland, or from Ashanti 167●
and the Colony. Some have been away for years. Pal of Zubiuŋ had a prosperous farm in Mampurugu, where he had gone to settle on being discharged from the regiment after the war of 1914–18. During his fifteen years in Mampurugu he had become fairly wealthy, with five wives, a horse, several head of cattle, and a quantity of good clothes. Dema of Tenzugu, who joined the regiment as far back as 1912 and had lived in Ashanti as a trader since his discharge after the war, was obviously a man of considerable wealth by Tale standards. Both returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads in 1935–6. They told the same story. Wives and children had died; there had been repeated bouts of sickness in the family; other misfortunes had piled up over the years; and all, as the diviners declared, because they had 'rejected (*zayah*) their fathers (*banam*)' by remaining in foreign parts. It did not matter much while there were older brothers at home to 'give water (*zaŋ kuom ti*)', that is, make sacrifices, to the ancestral shrines. But

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[1] The verb *zo*, to fear, has a wide range of meaning and here it means to show respect towards, to revere, to stand in awe of. [192]

769 when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come
577 home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not
done so. Dema is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own
•167 people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his
living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to
abandon in Mamprugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there
is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his
dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the
same with Na'abzɔ, Kayar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many
others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad
in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

769 While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety
towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the
577 observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every
751 native owns some 'roots (*ŋaya*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the
therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties
as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to
mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative
rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors
for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call
you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you
(to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na
mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔyam la zug, nyɛn dɔyəm
la zugu*).'

Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for
577 a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities
593 and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan,
with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other
769 patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is
important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A
woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛyəraan*) of one of her paternal forbears
and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her
life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations
with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her
father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit
when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance
[782] to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female
survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she
can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers. A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

593 pronounced the ominous words, 'You will see'. In an hour or two Mosuor's temper cooled off and he began to feel uneasy over the enormity of his offence. His father had uttered what amounted to a curse; and before the day was out he had called on one of his father's oldest friends to ask him to go and beg Naabdiya's forgiveness for him.

593 421 We have seen in a previous chapter that as a son grows older and his conjugal family increases, his desire for independence grows stronger, owing to the increasing wants of his wife and children. But it is not easy for a son to obtain his father's permission to set up on his own. It may take five or six years of pressure on the son's part before the old man gives way. A son only desires to go out on his own if he has younger brothers who will remain at home to work for his father—there would be no motive if he were the only son. When these younger brothers marry the pressure on the common resources of the household grows and it becomes expedient to disperse temporarily. Economic separation does not remove a son from his father's authority. He can be and often is called upon to help with the work on his father's land; his property still belongs formally to his father. Indeed, any sheep, goats, and cattle he may acquire by his industry or receive for a daughter's bride-price are housed in his father's homestead and not in his.

593 ●167 Nowadays a common form of independent labour and enterprise by young men is to go south for a season or longer. The chief economic stimulus for this is the desire for money to buy clothes or to make certain of the payment of bride-price for a wife. A father is not bound to provide his sons—or any other dependant—with clothes. These young men go in the dry season carrying crates of fowls to sell or seeking 'white man's work'. The youths who go at other times of the year are often stealing away without permission. But in the dry season, when farm work is at a standstill, a man will often give his sons permission to go south until the rains commence. Some men do so very readily in the hope that the boys will bring back money and 'things'. Others are still reluctant to let their sons go off, even for a short while, lest they should be tempted to stay away for a long time. Tallensi say that the freedom of movement of to-day is undermining parental authority. They say that if a man is severe with his sons, as he has every right to be, they simply run away and go south. Hence the men who think that working abroad spoils a youth or who cherish the ideal of keeping the family together all through their life, and therefore try to restrain their sons from going south, have to be tactful in handling them. Observation shows that it is usually the wise and considerate father, the man who manages his family well, who succeeds in restraining his sons from making long sojourns abroad. Where there is much friction between father and son, the son is apt to find a way out by going south; and, as we have mentioned, the likelihood of a son's leaving home is increased if one or both of his own parents are dead and he is living with

a proxy parent. As is natural, fathers and sons take different views of 593
this situation. Sons do not think that they are showing a lack of filial
loyalty when they go abroad. For, they argue, it is only a temporary 167
absence and the money they earn will eventually accrue, in part at least, to the family exchequer. As has been mentioned previously, no man ever turns away a son who comes home from abroad, whether he brings any goods and money or not; and a son who does bring back 'things' and money is doubly welcome.

We said earlier that a father owns all his son's property. This might 593
seem to contradict what was said about the independent ownership by
a son of the livestock he acquires by breeding from a gift hen or by other 421
means. The Tallensi themselves do not admit a contradiction in this. They see it as an instance of the gradation of rights and duties that is distinctive of their whole social organization. A father's over-right entitles him to veto his son's using his own property in ways that seem extravagant; but it would be an injustice rightfully resented by the son if he were stopped from using his fowl or goat or sheep for purposes that public opinion considers legitimate. Thus everybody would agree that a father who forbade a son from using his own fowls and guinea-fowls in his courtship, or from selling his own ground-nuts in order to buy a cloth, would be acting unfairly. The case of Kpana-Tee's grandson (p. 195) illustrates this principle.

The rights of a father and the rights of a son in the son's property are reconciled by the principle of reciprocity. If a man makes use of his son's goat or sheep he should, in due course, make an equivalent return; for example, by using one of his own sheep or goats to do something for the son. This object is immediately achieved if the son's property is used for the son's benefit, as in the payment of bride-price. There is no book-keeping, but in the long run the son should feel that the gains he has received are commensurate with the amount of his own property that has been used up. A proxy father should be more careful in this regard than a man's own father. A proxy father is less concerned about the future of his 'son' than the latter's own father would be and is therefore sometimes inclined to take selfish advantage of his paternal authority. Though they have no alternative but to submit, young men deeply resent unfairness of this sort, whether on the part of their own father or on that of a proxy father; and this may be the first stimulus to their determination to set up on their own.

This is epitomized in one of the reasons Tallensi regularly produce 593
when they are asked why young men secede from their paternal house- 596
holds. They say: 'It is because of hens and eggs.' Every man has at
least a hen or two, even if he has nothing else, and, as we know, his hen 422
symbolizes the starting-point of his accumulation of property. But hens lay their eggs anywhere and this gives rise to petty quarrels. Anybody who finds an egg claims it and another member of the family may dispute

888 support an old father economically. They assume support of an old
577 father to follow automatically from the economic and jural relations of
593 parents and children and from the moral obligations of filial piety. It
is simply an aspect of co-operative production and joint consumption in the household under the household head's management, and a result of the principle of reciprocity. If a man's only son, for example, were living in his native settlement and refused to have his father or proxy father in his homestead, it would be a monstrous breach of ethics. He would lay himself open to immediate punishment by the ancestors; he would, indeed, be unable to participate in the life of the community since he could not act for himself in ritual or jural affairs.

888 This is an hypothetical instance, for I know of no such case. But
nowadays the question of supporting an aged parent does occasionally
593 arise when men emigrate from their native settlements to seek work
577 abroad or to farm outside Taleland. Cases are occurring of men who
stay away abroad and postpone their return home from year to year,
•167 leaving an aged parent to struggle on alone. They are far from numerous —I knew of some six or seven only, counting two cases where the sons had genuine grounds for their absence.

Native opinion about these absentees is illuminating. They are not criticized for neglecting to send money home regularly. Tallensi do not expect regular remittances from relatives working abroad and still tend to regard the occasional remittances that are sent home as windfalls. Absentee sons are censured rather for deserting their parents, for leaving them without the companionship and the social support of a son. Tendaan Teroog's son used to send baskets of guinea corn and maize to his father from Mampurugu. Nevertheless, the old man kept pressing him to return home; and when the son died suddenly people said it was because he had 'rejected' (*zayah*) his father. He should have come home long ago to be his father's companion (*kɔyal*, vb.), to act for him in jural matters, assist him in ritual activities, and manage the household for him. The same sentiment was uppermost in Maantiya's mind when he explained why he could not leave his proxy father Saantarəba, though the latter was able to support himself and his wife with occasional assistance from kinsmen. Maantiya went down to the coast every dry season carrying fowls to sell and usually stayed away three or four months. He was always home again before the rains began. He said: 'I cannot abandon my father. He has no one else.' When I was going home in 1937 a number of men asked me to find their absent sons in Kumasi or Accra or elsewhere in the south, and to try to persuade them to return home. 'Tell them', said one old man, 'that we do not care about the money or things, but we want them to come home.'

888 We have said that there is a more definite emphasis on the duty of
593 a son to provide for his mother. There was an old woman at Kpata'ar
577 whose only son had been abroad for some years. She sent him many

Nevertheless, although a shortage of cultivated foods does not 222
necessarily mean starvation, it lowers resistance to disease and 261
saps the energy of the people at the end of the dry season when they need strength to prepare their farms; thus setting up a "vicious circle". It is not the shortage of food in itself which is so arresting, however, as the apathy of the people to the shortage. Ancestor worship causes them to dwell in the past and to think insufficiently of the present and the future. This, too, is probably symptomatic of the unsettled conditions when only the past was certain. It will take some time for the people, the older people who control affairs especially, to adjust themselves to the swift
developments going on around them. An unfortunate result is [167 •
that during the period of adjustment, many of the young men 464]
are attracted away from the district to work for wages in Ashanti and the Colony, where there is a big demand for unskilled labour in the mines and in handling the cocoa crop. These young men do not as a rule stay away from home for long at a time, and usually return with a little money; but they do not take readily to farming again, and represent a floating population which is the source of considerable concern to their elders.

Economic Awakening.

177 An adequate food supply alone does not appear to be sufficient incentive for the adoption of better farming methods; and it is unlikely that changes will come until farming ceases to be regarded mainly as a custom, and becomes a business. There are many signs of an economic awakening, fostered by such factors as a growing desire of the people for imported commodities, and an increase in money consciousness; the completion of an all-weather road to the South; the opening of a gold mine at Nangodi; the developing trade in all classes of livestock with Ashanti and the Colony; the new trade in groundnuts from Bawku for the Kumasi market; together with the work of Government Departments in the improvement of human health, the health of livestock, and not least, the scope of the recently introduced Native Administrations. These are some of the factors helping to bring about a change which can be met only by better farming. Government must anticipate agricultural expansion to be in a position to control its development.

000 The first problem, obviously, is to ensure a sufficiency of food for everyone in every year. Then, when local requirements have been satisfied, it must be shown how a surplus can be disposed of profitably, to satisfy growing demands. Upon this the Department of Agriculture is working in North Mamprusi, and the results of the last four years' work form the basis of this bulletin.

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
241 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland
are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tɛnzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A
leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a
popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may
farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There
may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or
two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
●168 so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland
to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than
was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it
impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from
their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even
women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale,
Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some
carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to
work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the
Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of
labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The
experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration
from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked
up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years,
a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on
account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often
goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural
activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get
away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny
in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity,
and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who
return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate
many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother,
or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and 171
mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782]
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo: 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

764 793 white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the grave-side. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

764 622 Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

778 ● [171] 782 121 *Shrines*: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan'* of Tongo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

778 cine' or 'roots') is 'to prevent war'; it is called *mweley* (compare Nankane *mweleya*[1]). 'When the war cry is raised I will first sacrifice a fowl 782 on the stone, saying: "They want to shoot arrows, and I wish to stop 721 it; receive a fowl, and compel them not to shoot; let the women and children sleep." The stone on top of the head-rest signifies that we compel people to sit down. After I sacrifice the fowl, cow dung

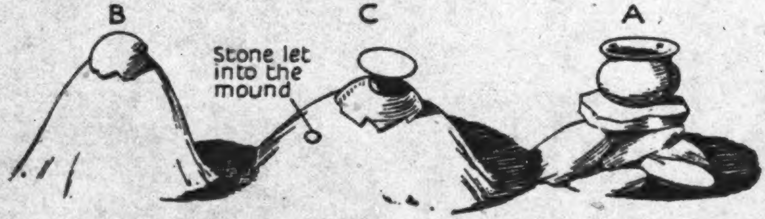
B
C
A
Stone let into the mound

Fig. 66

and corn-cobs are placed round the pot and set on fire, while I say: "My father, call your father; let women and children sleep; they wish to shoot arrows; fire wants to burn the land, but I wish it to be cool." When the fire which I have lit goes out, the war is also burning out. The roots inside the pot are from a shea butter tree; when you eat shea butter your heart will become cool. This *tim bagere* (medicine shrine) is related to the one I wear round my neck which is also called *mweley*. I take it off and place it on top of the stone when the fire is burning. Some *mweley* are now used by Chiefs to encourage disputes in order that they may be able to fine people.'

778 ●[171] The above account was written nearly two years before my note on the same subject among the Nankanse.[2] I had, indeed, forgotten the latter, until I came to go over my notes in writing these volumes. It affords a good example, coupled with other evidence, of the close resemblance between the religion and customs of these two tribes, and also of the accuracy of the information imparted by two wholly independent informants. Unfortunately, the photograph I took of this shrine was not successful, but Fig. 66 A, is a rough diagram illustrating it and other shrines standing beside it. On the left of the *mweley* fetish stand two conical mounds, B and C. B is, Sayebere informed me, that of his *yab-pɔk la o bi* (grandmother and her son). The clay mound had a flat piece of iron on top covered by a potsherd and stone. C is a *Yini zug-bagere* (God-above shrine). On the apex of the mound was a piece of iron let into the clay which was covered

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[1] See p. 303.

[2] See p. 304.

778 with congealed blood and fowls' feathers. The top was protected with the usual broken pot.

'Into the first, B, come the spirits of three persons to receive flour-water and fowls; they help me to find wives and children. The second, C, is my *Yini* who sent me down and gave me life and my Ten'dan'ship.

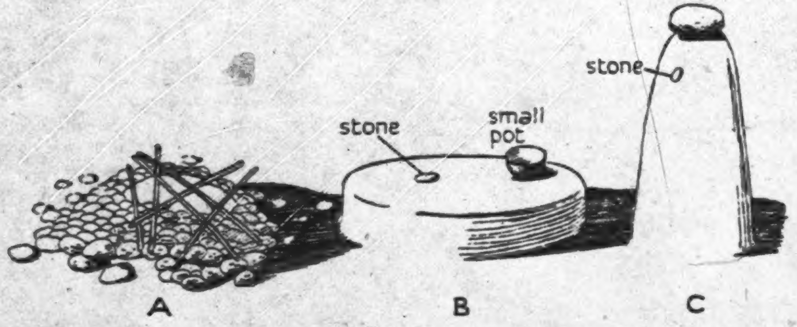

FIG. 67

It helps me to get life, women and children. God kept me formerly, afterwards he sent me.'

Facing these two shrines, and close to the wall of the *zoyo* hut, were three more shrines, see Fig. 67.

B is the *Yini* of Sayebere's father, Pirun. A he called a *Tobog'*. A consisted of a heap of round stones with sticks laid on top, surrounding a larger stone sunk in the ground. 'The small round stones are there for the *tobog'* to throw at anything bad coming into the compound. The *tobog'* is *tim* (medicine) to protect me and give me life,' he said, 'It belonged to my father'. I think there is little doubt but that this shrine was for the spirit of a man whom Sayebere's father had [769] killed. (Compare the Nankanse *tobega.*) C was a tall conical shrine, with a stone let into the mud surface, called *duŋ-kpaleg*; 'It was my father's *bogere*,' said Sayebere. 'The power of my hat and skin are in it. When I sacrifice to it, I call all the spirits of the old *Ten'dan'* and of my father to assemble and drink water, striking the stone let into the side with the stone which rests on top.'

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769
● [171] *Shrines Inside the Compound*: Inside the compound in the yard, called in Talene *dendɔŋ* (in Nankane *zinzaka*), is a large grain-store (*bur*; Nankane *bare*) with a chameleon (*nangan*; Nankane *ngana*) in bas-relief on the side (see Fig. 68; Sayebere's hand is resting on the chameleon[1]). This is the shrine of his father's father's wife, a certain

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[1] Compare Fig. 30, which shows a similar shrine among the Nankanse.

Bama. At the foot of this grain-store were other shrines, seen 778 rather indistinctly in the photograph. 769

One is the shrine for the spirit of a woman called Tapur, who was a co-wife to Bama, both being wives of Saүebere's paternal grandfather. Another is a shrine of Bama. There was also a large stone. 'Bama asked for this through a soothsayer.'

Moving further round the grain-store we come to another series of shrines which are illustrated in the photographs, Figs. 69–70.

In Fig. 69 A is the shrine of the *Ten'dan's* own mother, Kurug; the actual spirit is in the head of a hoe let into the clay; B, a log of wood with a stone on top. I seem to have omitted to record what this was; C is a pot out of which an infant which has become ward of a spirit is given to drink.

Fig. 70 Saүebere called a *tim bagere*, 'But,' he added, 'it is also 778 called *anoa-dok* (a mouth pot).'[1] He was in a state of great trepidation lest I should uncover it, saying, holding his nostrils as he spoke, 'It is my life. When I sacrifice to it I say, "Mouth pot receive and protect me from mouths".' It had, he said, many avoidances; these included: Passing behind its owner when he was eating; carrying a flaming faggot past it; mention of the word moon (*mwarega*) while its owner was eating.

The fetish consisted of a pot, covered with another broken pot, a bow, bundle of arrows, and a quiver. The bow, arrows, and quiver had, he said, been added to the pot after consultation with a soothsayer.

Bogere* and *Bagere: There seems a distinction between these shrines [776] ● so named, which hardly appears to exist among the Nankanse.

'A *bogere*,' said my Taleŋa informant, 'you fetch from your mother's 778 country after she is dead. You go to your mother's father's compound, 769 and take some earth from the *bagere* of your mother's father and put this in a calabash, which your wife will carry home. She must not 775 speak to any one except her husband on the return journey. This soil will be put in a horn and is called my mother's *bogere*. Your mother's spirit may have become an iron bangle, that is a *bagere*; a *bogere* is like a shade to a *bagere*. A man's house may become 'bitter'; he consults and is told that it is his mother who wants a room. He makes one; that is a *bagere*. After that, he will go to his mother's home and bring earth from the mound which has been made there for his mother's father's spirit, and bring it home, and build a new mound with the

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[1] See p. 301.

778 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere*
769 comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he
will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's spirit wants to punish (*eŋ*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband, "Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

● 171 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in con-
778 nexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but
791 when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's
769 mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's
town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives the power to the *bakologo*.'

A Seance attended at Tɔngo: A woman had died from snake-bite, and
787 after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's
761 compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family
769 of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The
ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with both hands and saying, '*N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor*' (I hold your sides, but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig. 71), and said, '*N ba Yin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n be, te te*'. (My father's *Yin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is; give us).

He then began to sing:

'*Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Yi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam zeret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.*' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole [1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash,

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

XXXVI

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Ceremonies in Connexion with Sowing and Harvest. The Talense Calendar

527 THERE appear to be at least three great festivals which are held by the Talense in connexion with the crops and harvest. These are:

(*a*) *Gologo*, held in the month of February by the whole of the Talense.

b) *Bugram Waa* (lit. the *Bugram* dance) held in October by the following towns: Sia, Winduri, Gorogo, Wakyi, Teŋ'zugu, and Gbeo.

(*c*) *Da koom*, *Da meŋ* or simply *Waa*, (the dance) held by Bade and Tongo, in the months of August and September.

● [171] Among the Nankanse we have seen that the October festival is called *Tingana* (the Groves), or simply *Waa* (the Dance), a festival which is held by Winkoŋo, Orogo, Kologo, and Na, in rotation.

(*a*) *The Gologo Ceremony*: It was my intention to have attended this ceremony in person; hence I omitted to obtain a full description of it. I am informed, however, that during the time when the festival is being held 'every one is permitted to abuse his neighbour and even to laugh at any physical deformity, and that no one is allowed to quarrel'. [171] All this seems most reminiscent of the *Apo* ceremony, which has been described in another volume.[1] Circumstances, however, prevented me ever carrying out my intention, and a full description of this ceremony must be left to some other historian to record. I hope an account of it will be obtained before the extraordinarily rapid changes in conditions in these parts have interfered with or altered its characteristic observances.

527 793 796 535 *The Da koom and Da meŋ Ceremonies*: 'When we dance these, all our ancestors sleep. When the time approaches for the ceremonies, the *Ten'dan'* of Bade takes a calabash (*zu-gur*, lit. a head-calabash), puts it in a net, and hangs it outside the entrance to the *zoŋo* hut. When the rain falls, it is filled. Before dawn, early in the morning after the appearance of the new moon, the Bat (*Anglice* Bade) *Ten'dan'* pours out

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[1] See *Ashanti*, Chapter XV.

793

kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423 not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan'*, also 793 lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425 or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my kraal. 622 If any one found these things and kept them, his home would break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan'*. A lost child belongs to the Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan'* to take such a one, she may not eat anything with hairs (i.e. a person).'

793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan'* must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304 called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527 given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793 may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan'* has to be so careful not to eat new crops before the groves have done so, 173 that, when the corn is ripening, his water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba* and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur* (land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our mother's children are the *Ten'dan'* of Pals (near Zuarono). They went there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784] plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171 ● revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which 131 inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern 161 Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal.*[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure 171 from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later 632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement' rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following table illustrates the above.

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Town.	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

[p. 374]

173 die. He would tap the land with his fingers and say, "*Teŋ ya be,*
622 *zagala saam ka neés teŋ la okom*" (If such a thing as the land really is,
793 (here is) So-and-so who has offended and treated you as of no account, may you kill him).[1] The land will break his compound; his fowls, goats, sheep, children, wives will die. The offender would approach an Elder and "beat his hands" and ask him to intercede with the *Tenedan'* on his behalf. Chiefs now own the people, but *Tenedan'* still own the land. The first Chief of Kagbiri was my father. He was *Tenedan'* at the time when the Germans made him Chief. The present Chief is Ati, he is my father's child (i.e. son of the speaker's father's brother). My father, after the Germans made him Chief, used to delegate the work of *Tenedan'* to me, so when he died and Ati was made Chief we continued to do the same.'

177 At this place (Kagbiri) so far as I could see, we find the Territorial
793 Ruler (who is not a foreigner, but one of the family of the former
622 *Tenedan'*), and the *Tenedan'*, 'his brother', working in complete harmony. The Germans, it will be noted, whether by accident or design,
● 171 had made the *Tenedan'* also the Territorial Ruler. The significance of the rather curious and suggestive procedure—which I have also noted elsewhere—whereby a *Tenedan'* who, by chance, has become Chief, delegates the religious part of his duties to another, should not be overlooked. The multifarious administrative and executive duties, which the Territorial Ruler is asked by us to undertake, cannot be wholly responsible for this. This may be proved by an examination of the position of a Chief in Ashanti, where these two functions—religious and secular—are combined in one person. Perhaps the bad example set by the majority of foreign Chiefs in these parts, who were always unconcerned with local land-gods, may partly account for this. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked, that by far the most important religious duties performed by Ashanti Chiefs for their people are the ceremonies in connexion with their own ancestral spirits, in which their subjects now join, and not those rites in connexion with the land, which has tended to become alienated, although theoretically they still belong to the Stool. Many Northern Territory Rulers, while ignoring land gods, would, nevertheless, lay claim to the land. The following are some further notes on the duties and privileges of the *Tenedan'* among the Kusase.

793 'When the rain does not fall, the Elders consult the soothsayer and
[781] report to the *Tenedan'* what the *baa* (soothsayer) has told them. The

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[1] Compare p. 370 (i.e. different practice among Namnam)

XL

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

The Family Compound (Yir) *and the Shrines* (Bagr) *which it contains*

351 KUSASE compounds (*Ya*, s. *Yir*) are roughly circular in shape, as
171 are the huts which they contain, and are widely scattered like those of the Nankanse, Namnam, Talense, and Kasena, but there is one marked difference which immediately strikes the eye between the Kusase house and those already described. The former are not flat-roofed, but are neatly thatched (see Fig. 86). I now propose to describe a typical Kusase compound in detail. The main entrance which faces west is known as *zan pak nore* (compare Nankane *zenore*). It leads directly into the main yard which is also the cattle-kraal. The hut immediately on the left of the main entrance (it is sometimes on the right) is called *zɔŋ*, pl. *zon*. This hut is nominally where goats and fowls are shut up at night, but it is also used in the wet season as the place where the senior males in the compound sit and talk. When the head of a compound dies, his body is passed through a back doorway in the *zɔŋ* hut, instead of being taken through the main entrance. The *zɔŋ* (or *zɔŋo*) hut seems to figure largely on many such ceremonial occasions. Immediately outside the entrance of the compound is a grass-roofed hut without any walls, known as *suk* in Kusal (*Paka* in
[776] Nankane). It contains a shrine called a *Wen bagr* (God's shrine), a circular mound like that seen in Fig. 142 at Tumu among the Isala. Let into the top of this mound is a sheep's horn and a stone. The stone is called *bagr bugr* (the *bugr* of the *baga*). The head of the compound and others sit or recline on this flat top, and in the very hot weather the compound head may sleep on it. It is sacrificed to at the sowing season, at the harvest, and when new beer is made from the first of the crops. 'The *Tenedan*' sacrifices to the land, I, the Chief, sacrifice on this *bagr*.'

751 Above the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut, through which the corpse of the head of the house is carried to burial, is a black cross (see Fig. 87) to guard against lightning.[1] The same symbol is put on trees in Kusase farms under which the farmer shelters, and for the same reason. At

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[1] The same symbol is used among the Isala to protect crops from menstruating women.

[p. 380]

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath
[195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those who have lost their fathers.

764 'When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and
765 after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then
[314] given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is
765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He
769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[171] [1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita*.

[535 831] [2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

837 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood 783 drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the 765 woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs off to the house [illegible] senior wife of the section-head, followed by a man with a [illegible] likes her, he will not flog her too severely'. There she is [illegible] waist-strings.

765 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow 768 out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother. The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother, 602 and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives, my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos (*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[302 171] [1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764
or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602
When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya*
(sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the
left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man,
he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it,
may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept,
as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also
gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back
from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and
roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to
bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-
fowl they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the
body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's
mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing
the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave.
It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl
over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut
their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your
fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*)
for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one,
even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given
to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561
ku-kweem just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834
his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765
'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768
would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171]
custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a
calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my
wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom
of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem* funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will
take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's
porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane
kaleŋa), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*),
and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there
one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those
carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

● 171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

101 619 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

167 619 648 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes comprise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

The institution distinctive of the autochthonous communities is the 171
office of 'Custodian of the Earth'. This ritual office, involving priestly 793
functions in connexion with the cult of the Earth, is found among many West African peoples from the Senegal to the mouth of the Niger. In the Voltaic region it is the exclusive prerogative of the autochthonous communities.

The ethnographic picture of to-day suggests that the population of the 174
Voltaic region was, in the past, constantly being redistributed by migrations of small groups. In the absence of written records that is all we can say. The fact that such migrations have gone on in the recent past, and are still going on in the central area, suggests that these migrations were (as they are) the result rather of ecological pressures and social forces than of large-scale conquests. But marauding slave-raiders may have been a cause of migrations in some areas. Two of the most notorious, Samory and Babatu, were spreading devastation in the north-western parts of the region at the time when the French and the British were partitioning the country during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Physically, culturally, in their economic organization, and their social 171
and political structure, the people of Taleland are typical in every respect of the tribes of the central Volta region.

General Characteristics of the Tallensi

The people of the central Volta region are of negroid stock. They are 144
not a notably fine physical type, but the best of them are attractive physical 141
specimens, as may be seen from the photographs in this book. Head
measurements of thirteen Tale men gave an average C.I. of 74·7. The 142
predominant head type appears to be dolichocephalic. In skin colour they 146
vary from black through chocolate brown to bronze, which the natives call 'red' (*bon-ze'e*) and regard as the most attractive bodily hue. Their hair is of the usual negroid peppercorn type. They have also the typical negroid nasal and lip forms, but the very broad, flat nose and markedly everted lips are not so common as in the tropical forest belt. Both men and women are of medium stature, the men being slightly the taller. Anybody over 5 ft. 7 or 8 in. is considered tall. Though they are mostly slight in build, all the somatic types with which we are familiar may be seen among these people: the stocky pyknic, the slim asthenic, the stalwart athletic, to use Kretschmer's terminology, are all common. Fat men or women, however, are very rare. Climatic conditions, density of population, and a primitive agricultural technique[1] all conspire to keep the average standard of nutrition low. In the best seasons the natives grow only enough cereals for their needs.[2] Their animal husbandry provides little surplus to exchange for cereals, and they have no crafts worth speaking of. The labour they supply to richer parts of the Gold Coast contributes very little return by way of foodstuffs to the home community. Like most subsistence farmers in Africa, their diet is notably deficient in animal protein.

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[1] *Vide* Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

[2] This aspect of Tale economics is more fully discussed in Lynn, op. cit., and in Fortes, M. and S. L., loc. cit.

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves, in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people. Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters, and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient 636
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 175
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared, but some of the values connected with it remain. The other institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of economic development was started, and social services were multiplied. The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

197 Administration) of Navrongo or the Bulisi (Builsa) of Kanjaga district,
101 whose tongues are not intelligible to Mole or Dagbane speakers.

In the same way it is well known that the Kusaasi, Namnam, Gorənsi,
171 and Tallensi are more closely allied in culture *inter se* than they are with
101 other neighbouring 'tribes'. In this part of West Africa one can often tell
[304] where a person comes from by his facial cicatrizations.[1] People of these four groups all have the same facial marks, a slashed scar (*ben*) running diagonally downwards from the bridge of the nose across one or both cheeks, which are, in addition, often embellished with a neat tracery of tiny incisions (*yiis*) spreading in herring-bone lines over the forehead and down to the neck. These markings are an emblem of their cultural uniformity, as compared with neighbouring groups. Mamprusi and Mossi, frankly contemptuous of their nakedness and poverty, lump them all together under the sobriquet 'Gorənsi'. Since the coming of the white man they have been called 'the Farafaras' and they are beginning to accept this appellation, which is said to be derived from one of their customary expressions of greeting, *ni i fara-fara-fara*.

107 There are, in short, no precise linguistic or cultural boundaries between
these four groups. Nor are there precise political or structural boundaries
101 between them. They overlap with one another in every way; and further
171 research would, I am certain, show that the Kusaasi, Namnam, and
619 Gorənsi also overlap to some extent with their neighbours other than the Tallensi. At the same time, each of these four groups is considered by members of the other three and by its own members to be in some way a distinct territorial, linguistic, and cultural group. It is, however, a distinction of degree, not of kind. Each group comprises a cluster of communities which have more in common among themselves, linguistically and in the details and nuances of custom, belief, and values, than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. They have closer social ties among themselves than any of them have with their other neighbours, though they have no apparent political unity and never, in the past, combined for war against external enemies or for common defence.

619 This largely implicit feeling of their difference from neighbouring
101 dialect areas which prevails amongst such a cluster of communities is not
based on a conception of tribal unity. Sharp distinctions of custom,
621 belief, and values, as well as of structural relationships, are recognized within the cluster. They are, indeed, of fundamental importance for the social interrelations of the communities making up the cluster. On the same principle as before, the cluster is subdivided into smaller constellations of communities which have more in common, closer bonds, *inter se*, than any of them have with other communities. Culturally, and structurally, as we shall discover in the course of our study, society in the Volta region is built up on a segmentary principle. The degree of unity, coherence, autonomy, or singularity of a socio-geographic segment of

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[1] These distinguishing facial marks were noted by the first European traveller who visited the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the Frenchman Binger. Cf. Binger, Capitaine, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, 1893, vol. ii, pp. 34-7. For diagrams of these markings see Armitage, C. H., *The Tribal Markings and Marks of Adornment of the Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1924, especially figs. 4, 6, 26.

173 ideological significance as a counterweight to the Mosuor legend and
811 as a dogma of prior habitation.

[171] In the Sie district the Sawaləg people, whose political and ceremonial relations with the Sie Namoos are exactly parallel to those of Gbizug with Tongo, also declare that their ancestor came into being miraculously, self-generated. In the identical phraseology of the people of Gbizug and Wakii, they say, 'Our ancestor descended from Heaven', or 'Our ancestor sprouted from the earth'. I once challenged the clan-head of Sawaləg to prove how this was possible. His answer, shrewdly rationalistic, deserves to be recorded. 'We have not heard that our ancestor came from any other land. We have no other land to return to as the Sie people (immigrant Namoos) have. If they desecrate (*saγəm*, lit. spoil) the land here, they return to their (original) land yonder (at Tongo). That is why we say that we have descended from Heaven'—an interpretation which coincides with that of Saγəbazaa, the Namoo.

173 The covenant between Mosuor and Tɛndaan Gɛnət, again, accords
177 well with a myth which is but a projection into the unchallengeable past
622 of the present-day relationships between Gbizug and Tongo. The
amorphous and unstandardized myths of origin with which the Hill Talis are satisfied symbolize the remarkable social integration they had achieved before their subjugation by the British in 1911. For nowadays the Hill Talis are rent by factions and by an intestine struggle for power amongst the various ritual office-holders. Rival claims are validated by citing established custom, by appealing to the memories of men, or, in the last resort, by the fabrication or distortion of myths of origin. The Administration recognizes as chiefs only those clan heads whose title is derived directly or indirectly from the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi. Hence we find the Gəlibdaana of Tɛnzugu justifying his pretensions to recognized chiefship by concocting, for the benefit of a white inquirer, a story of how the founder of his lineage migrated thither from Mampurugu—a story which his enemies scoff at. The Sii Bɔγaraan, on the other hand, tries to strengthen his claim to precedence by alleging not only a Mampuru origin for his ancestors, but also that they were the very first to come and settle on the Hills.

173 These new myths are part of the defensive ideologies engendered by social conflict, but they follow the axioms of Tale thought. The Tallensi have no conception of a mythological or historical past of their society when people lived and behaved differently from to-day. The past is but an extension into the days of their forefathers of the life of to-day on the same rational plane of existence. Their history is to them not a sequence of events or a progression but a continuity. All that matters of the past, which lies beyond the span of man's recollection, lives on in the social structure, the ideology, the morality, and institutions of to-day. These are the palpable proofs of things that happened '*oh ho, ti banam ni ti yaanam ni*—in the days of our forefathers and ancestors'; one can infer from them what must have been the state of society in those far-off times. Conversely, the social arrangements which prevail to-day are valid, sensible, and appropriate not only because they achieve desired ends but also because *banam ni yaanam ndaa piil na*—the forefathers and ancestors

CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gɔrisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Ŋkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*baŋ*) by one major segment of Baɣana yidɛm at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

[p.66]

We have noted that Tale culture is homogeneous. Thus the totemic 184 taboos of the Tale Namoos and their characteristic funeral rites, distinctive as they are, are homologous in form and function with the totemic observances and funeral rites of non-Namoos. We shall see the evidence for this when we examine the more elaborate differentiation of Talis and other non-Namoo clans and lineages by totemic and other ritual observances. Tallensi know this and take it for granted, as they also take for granted variations in the ritual observances of different communities which are presumed to have identical ritual forms. They attribute such variations to the influence of neighbouring communities. In fact the homologous usages of neighbouring communities have features in common which do not occur among more widely separated clans with the same practices.

But the taboos of the first-born and the goatskin loin-cover of the dead 171 are fixed and unalterable. All Tallensi know that these are the distin- 784 guishing *kiha* (sing. *kihər*)—literally, forbidden things, but meaning ritual injunctions as well as prohibitions—of all Namoos, 'from Dagbɔŋ to Mooga', as the natives say.

Namoos say that they observe these *kiha* 'because it is the custom of our ancestors (*ti yaab yɛl nia*)'. They require no other explanation, but accept such ritual observances as facts of immemorial antiquity and part of the fixed order of society. The taboo of the fowl is the only one of these observances for which a myth of origin exists, and this is typical of the Tale myths purporting to account for the origins of totemic avoidances, being apparently trivial in content and neutral in emotional tone. Considering the fluid form and content of such myths and the fact that they are never deliberately taught, this myth is remarkably consistent in outline among Namoo clans in Taleland.[1] Tallensi display no interest in the private myths of any social group other than their own, and therefore make no secret of these myths. Knowledge of them is not deemed to be a necessary condition of adherence to the tenets they enshrine. Most young Namoos and many older men, even those who have themselves to observe the fowl taboo—an onerous enough restriction in a society whose chief sacrificial animal is the fowl—are ignorant of or but hazily acquainted with the myth. The men who know it tell it without reticence.

Significance of the Totemic Taboos of the Namoos

The fowl taboo, Namoos say, came about because 'a fowl did a great 773 service to our ancestor'. He had a wife, and people came to her with slander of her husband, trying thus to persuade her to leave him. This made her very unhappy. But one day a broody hen sitting in the woman's grinding room told her not to weep. When her husband returns from the farm she must prepare a drink of flour-water for him, said the fowl, and it would fly up and dash the calabash from his hand. If he then killed the fowl in anger the woman would know that he was a wicked man, and if he spared it she would know that people were slandering him maliciously. When the man came home, the plan was carried out. Far from injuring

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[1] Different versions of the myth are found among Namoos outside Taleland, but the central theme is the same. All versions stress the point that the intervention of a fowl was responsible for the birth of the clan.

'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔɣa* 782 of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of 794 the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual 619 community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of 794 every Taləŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔɣar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔɣar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔɣar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) 794 are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social 171 groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔɣar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔɣar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔɣar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkəra*)'.

Bɔɣar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage 182 associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious 794 conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of 613 loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔɣar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

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[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

829 men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no
602 one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so,
x 618 let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used
601 here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana ɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

648 The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the
x 618 Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the
● 171 country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔlɔga, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔlɔga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which

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[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deen*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

among the Talis would be linked by clanship as well. There is therefore 648
greater variation in the degree of overlapping between the fields of clanship 618x
of contiguous lineages than among the Talis.

Some clans in this area are closed units forming by themselves a 171
miniature replica of the whole system. Thus, Duusi proper consists of three maximal lineages, bound together by ties of clanship, but none having clanship ties with any other lineages or clans. These three lineages are said to be 'consanguineous kin with one another (*dɔɣam ni taaba*)'. But there is no myth to account for their coalescence, nor is it rationalized by genealogical fictions. They are structurally differentiated in a similar way to the maximal lineages of Zoo. Thus, one lineage has the exclusive right to the chiefship, another to the tɛndaanaship, and the third to the ritual office of Yiraan, which holds the balance between chiefship and tɛndaanaship. The ritual observances of the three maximal lineages differ from one another and they have no common ancestral *bɔɣar*. One focus of integration for the whole of Duusi is the supreme *tɔŋgban*, Ziug, whose custody is vested in the lineage that holds the tɛndaanaship, but whose cult requires the co-operation of the other lineages as well. The other focus of integration is the chiefship, which demands both political co-operation and ritual collaboration among all three maximal lineages.

The loose articulation of this set of clans as compared with the Talis is reflected in their lack of a common appellation. One reason for this, no doubt, is that the line of cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in terms of structural relations, ritual observances, and politico-ritual roles and offices, is not so clear cut as in the Tongo district. At Sie, where it is most precise, the Namoos are identified as *naditib*, those who hold (lit. eat) the chiefship, in contraposition to the *tɛndaanditib*, those who hold the office of tɛndaana, namely the people of Sawalɔg and Tɛndaaŋ; and this cleavage runs parallel to their clanship relations and ritual observances. (Throughout the area, as among the Gɔrisi and Namnam, a settlement or part of a settlement occupied by *tɛndaanditib* is usually referred to as Tɛndaaŋ, and *tɛndaanditib* lineages are often described as Tɛndaaŋdɛm.) But in several other clans *naditib* and *tɛndaanditib* are constituent maximal lineages of the same clan. This is similar to the distribution of ritual offices amongst the maximal lineages of a Talis clan; but in this case the *naditib* lineages are usually Namoos, whereas the *tɛndaanditib* lineages fall into line with non-Namoo clans like Sawalɔg and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ in their ritual observances and social alliances. Among these clans, therefore, the ties of clanship often cut across the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos; the social and political alinements of clans or maximal lineages in accordance with their ritual observances cut across their alinements by clanship ties. The general effect is to link Namoos and non-Namoos more closely together than in the Tongo district, but in a looser system than is found among the Hill Talis.[1]

The *tɛndaanditib* clans and maximal lineages of the Sie district declare 618x

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[1] *Naditib* is compounded of *na'am*, chiefship and *di* to eat—here in its metaphorical meaning of 'to have the prerogative of an office'—and the plural suffix *-b* (< *ba*), people; *tɛndaanditib* comes in the same way from *tɛndaan*, *di*, and *-b*.

Funeral rites have a twofold symbolic value for the Tallensi. They 764
symbolize the corporate unity and identity of the lineage and clan and 182
its ties with other clans; but they also symbolize the group's dependence on and moral responsibility to their ancestors, collectively and individually. This is shown very well in the custom of each clan's using a particular kind of loin cover for the dead and in the associated custom of swearing an oath by the father's loin cover. They show that ritual symbols of social differentiation and association among the Tallensi are not mere emblems of intergroup differences. They are emotionally charged symbols of the fact that the corporate unity and identity of the group is created by the moral bonds of its members among themselves and of each member with the ancestors of the group. We shall return to this presently.

In spite of their deviant mortuary customs, the people of Gorogo, 619
Ka'ar, and Teelɔg consider themselves to be, and are considered to be, as 171
much a part of the Talis aggregate as any other Talis clans. Conversely 184
it is known among the Talis that some clans of Gɔrisi and Namnam, as well as many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, dress their dead in a sheepskin loin cover. The Talis do not on this account acknowledge any of these groups as Talis or as being kin to them. Again, some clans in the Sie district gird their dead with an oribi skin. But they deny having any ties with Ka'ar. Indeed, their elders are quite unaware that they have this custom in common with Ka'ar, and are not in the least interested in hearing of it. This is a significant difference between the Namoos, all of whom have the same mortuary observances, and the Talis and their congeners. This difference extends to other manifest ritual usages that serve to differentiate corporate units from one another.

Certain other funeral rites are also stressed as rigorously distinctive 764
of the Talis and as common to all of them. All Talis, it is said, conclude 184
a funeral by the rite of *ŋma ma'ala*. Members of the deceased's maximal lineage, and the heads of the other lineages of the clan, contribute a large number of fowls, which are slaughtered as a sacrifice to mark the final departure of the dead person from the social sphere of the living and his aggregation to the ancestors. In reality, almost every clan has its own modifications in the details of the rite. In some clans it is performed for all males who have begotten children, in others for lineage heads only, in others for both men and women; and the people of Kpata'ar omit the rite altogether. The rite is found also among many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, with diverse local variations.

Similar local variations from clan to clan appear in the other parts of the funeral ceremonies where the usages of the Talis contrast with those of the Namoos, and many, if not most, of these distinct customs are found among the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie district.

These variations in ritual observances, and their correlation with structural ties and cleavages, are constantly brought to an observer's attention. They form a common topic of discussion and comment at funeral ceremonies. One is often reminded of them by the behaviour of women at these ceremonies. A woman's husband's clan very often has different ritual practices from those of her father's clan. Now, married

184 182 extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more distinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

619 It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Talɔŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tendaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔɣar* cult, which extends as far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

182 771 But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos, funeral rites, and *Bɔɣar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

784 171 The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

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[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134–5.

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speak only of the Voltaic area, the animal species referred to above occur 171
among the totemic avoidances of people as remote from the Tallensi, 784
both spatially and linguistically, as the Isala and the Lobi,[1] as well as
among all the other 'tribes' of the area.

Confining ourselves to Taleland and to the settlements of Gɔrisi 171
fringing this area, we find that the totemic avoidances include birds like 784
the canary (*wurəg*), the turtle-dove (*daŋman*), the domestic fowl (*noo*), and 136
several other species; reptiles, like the snake, the tortoise, the water-tortoise, 262
and the crocodile; fish, like the *tunəg*; insects, like the large grasshopper (*saŋkaan*); rodents, like the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) and the hare (*suoŋ*); ruminants, like the goat (*buu*) and the sheep (*pɛhug*); carnivores, such as the cat (*sakoo*), the dog (*baa*), and the leopard (*yeogbaa*); and a variety of other animals, such as the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*) and the bush-pig (*dee*).[2]

It is impossible to find any common trait amongst this variety of 171
creatures. Some play an important part in the economic life and the 784
food-supply of the natives, but the majority are negligible in this respect.
Many are prized as delicacies by those who are permitted to eat them; 231
and, on the other hand, some are despised as food. No adult would 262
willingly eat grasshoppers, canaries, or small edible snakes, though little children, who eat almost any small animals they can lay their hands on, quite often do so. Several of these animal species are regarded as always potentially dangerous in the magical as well as the physical sense. Such are the crocodile, snakes, the leopard, and other wild carnivores. But many, on the contrary, are entirely innocent both in the magical and the physical sense. Some have a place in the meagre folk-lore of the Tallensi, including such diverse creatures as the monkey, the turtle-dove, and the cat. Cats, for instance, are considered to be pre-eminently the domestic companions of women, but with a streak of the wild animal in them. Women treat them with a mixture of solicitude, appropriate to a valued pet, and of pseudo-ritual respect that meets with good-humoured ridicule from the men. Incidentally, clans that have the cat as a totem show no particular respect towards household cats, nor are household dogs treated differently by people who may and people who may not eat the dog.

The totemic animals of the Tallensi thus comprise neither a zoological 171
nor a utilitarian nor a magical class. All that can be said of them is that 784

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[1] For the Isala and other 'tribes' of the Voltaic area, see Rattray, op. cit. 182
His report on the Isala is in vol. ii, pp. 465 ff. For the Lobi, see ib., vol. ii, pp. 425 ff., and Labouret, op. cit., pp. 227 ff. Rattray does not distinguish clearly between the different kinds of ritual prohibitions and injunctions coupled with patrilineal descent, some of which are not totemic in the sense we have given to this term. But his observations and those of Labouret confirm the conclusion that there is no precise correlation between these avoidances and clanship ties. Labouret's account of the attitudes and values associated with totemic avoidances among the Lobi shows them to resemble closely those of the Tallensi.

[2] Rattray's list for this area, op. cit., vol. i, p. 236, includes also several big-game animals, such as the roan (*hoo*), hartebeest (*sɛbɔg*), bush-cow (*yeognaaf*), and elephant (*wɔbɔg*), as well as the lion (*gbiaŋmɔr*), the hyena (*gbiŋgbɛr*), and the hippo (*ɛmɔr*). But here, as elsewhere in the book, Rattray appears to have lumped together ritual observances that are similar in form though not in function, and he does not state clearly what clans or settlements hold particular taboos.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

171 784 182 they are generally fairly common domestic or wild creatures. We have shown that the totemic avoidances of the Tallensi have a symbolic value in relation to their social organization. They are not, however, explicable simply as a function of the social structure. We cannot dismiss the choice of animal symbolism for this function as an accident of history or as mere coincidence. To understand it we should have to probe more deeply into the religious beliefs not only of the Tallensi but of all the peoples of this culture area. Animal and food taboos play a very important part in the ritual symbolism of Voltaic culture and indeed of West African cultures in general. We have repeatedly emphasized the intrinsic relation of the religious system of the Tallensi to their social structure. In a social system such as theirs, ritual ideas and values and the morphology of the society are interrelated as mind and body in the higher primates. But these two aspects of Tale society are not merely the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Though Tale religion springs directly out of the social structure, it is fed by streams whose sources lie beneath and beyond the social structure. We cannot pursue this theme here in detail, for it leads to problems of Tale psychology, and indeed of human psychology, that lie outside the scope of this study. We can only give an indication of the line such an enquiry would take. To do this we must consider some other forms of animal symbolism that appear in Tale religious beliefs.

Taboos of the Earth

778 Animals of all kinds can be endowed with ritual significance for individuals or groups among the Tallensi. They become sacred objects (*baɣa*, sing. *baɣər*) forming part of shrines (*baɣa*, sing. *baɣər*) dedicated to named ancestor spirits, on which sacrifices are offered. A *baɣər* animal is an individual animal or a species found in a particular place. Totem animals are not *baɣa*, since they are whole species respected everywhere and not associated with particular shrines.

784 171 Certain 'taboos of the Earth' (*tɛŋən kiha*) form a class of animal taboos standing between *baɣa* in the narrow sense and totems. Some Earth taboos are universal. Thus, throughout the Voltaic region it is a taboo to appropriate any unclaimed object of iron found lying on the ground. Other Earth taboos are specific to localities coming under the ritual jurisdiction of particular clans or lineages. All over Taleland large reptiles such as the crocodile (*baŋ*), the python (*waɣakpɛm*), the tree- and water-lizards (*uuk* and *wuu*) are taboos of the Earth. They may not be killed within the precincts of any important Earth shrine. In the bush, where men have no social bonds with the land, and therefore no ritual bonds with the Earth at specific places, they are not sacred. Binding on everybody, these taboos hold with extra force for members of lineages that have tɛndaanas (see also pp. 187–8 below).

784 778 Tallensi say these animals are 'the people of the Earth (*tɛŋən nirəba*)' as men are people of such and such a settlement. They symbolize the mystical power of the Earth as it acts on human life, sometimes beneficently, sometimes punitively. This is what the natives mean when they say 'The Earth is a living thing (*tɛŋ la a bonvor*)'.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FORM OF TALE SOCIETY

The Socio-geographic Region

OUR survey of the macroscopic structure of Tale society has led us 181
from the consideration of the natives' habits of grouping themselves by name, through an analysis of Tale clanship, to the ritual institutions that form the crowning mechanism of co-ordination in the system, and finally to the internal structure of the settlement and the lineage. An ethnographer accustomed to think of a native society as a unit of social organization marked off by precise territorial, political, or cultural boundaries might protest against our frequent references to 'Tale society'. But this habit of thought, appropriate enough in dealing with island communities, nomadic tribes, or territorially organized states, must be discarded if we wish to understand the structure of societies like that of the Tallensi. For the concept of a society as a closed unit, a sort of thing distinguishable from like things in the same way as one house is distinguishable from another or one animal from another, we must substitute the concept of society as a socio-geographic region, the social elements of which are more closely knit together among themselves than any of them are knit together with social elements of the same kind outside that region. We must substitute a relative and dynamic concept for an absolute and static one. If we look at the area of Voltaic culture as a whole, we can imagine innumerable currents of social life flowing through it in all directions. There are major currents and tributary currents. They intersect in all sorts of ways. But at particular places the forces of which the currents are an expression act in such a way as to draw together a large number, if not all, of the major currents. These regions of maximum confluence would correspond to what we have called a socio-geographic region, or a society. If we follow any single current from a region of maximum confluence it leads us right out of that region into another region. It is only if we look at the region from within that we see the coherence it has as a result of the confluence of many social currents.

But metaphors are proverbially treacherous and we must return to our proper subject-matter. The concept of society we have formulated enables us to see clearly the most characteristic feature of Tale society. It is a segmentary[1] system. At bottom this is a consequence of the fact 631
that the Tallensi have not got a centralized, unified, political organization. 171
This is clear if we compare the Tallensi with some other African peoples such as the Tswana of Bechuanaland Protectorate,[2] the Bemba of Northern

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M., and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (editors), *African Political Systems*, 1940, 'Introduction', and Evans-Pritchard, E. E., *The Nuer*, 1940.

[2] Cf. Schapera, I., *Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, 1938, and 'The Political Organization of the Ngwato', in *African Political Systems*, cited above.

631 171 Rhodesia,[1] or the Ashanti of the Gold Coast.[2] These peoples have a pyramidal social structure corresponding to their pyramidal form of government. From the village to the tribal unit we find a hierarchy of territorial-political units, the greater made up of a collection of the lesser, and culminating in the whole tribal unit. This is associated with a corresponding hierarchy of political offices, from the village headman to the paramount chief at the apex. Among the Tallensi[3] there is no single person or body of persons vested with supreme executive and administrative authority over the whole of Taleland. Government is laterally distributed amongst all the corporate units that make up the society, instead of being vertically distributed as in pyramidal societies. All the corporate units are, broadly speaking, politically equal; all are segments of the same structural order.

621 This is one aspect of what is meant by describing Tale society as segmentary in form. But the concept has further implications. The corporate units that compose Tale society are not a casual agglomerate of discrete bodies, but are socially articulated and interconnected with one another; and they are thus interrelated in a segmentary series. This principle of association between defined social units runs right through the structure of Tale society. It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system. This rule holds whether the associations are temporary, for a particular end, or form permanent groupings. Furthermore, the principles according to which the associations occur are either uniform for a whole series of segments of increasing dimension or are so related to one another that principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.

128 This is an architectural way of looking at the structure of Tale society. It is the line we have largely followed in the preceding chapters, where we have been concerned with the largest corporate units into which the Tallensi are organized. Our attention has been fixed mainly on the permanent edifice in which social relations and activities are congealed rather than on their emergence in process. We have been analysing the product of social segmentation rather than the process itself. To distinguish between product and process is, however, merely an analytic convenience in deal[illegible] with social facts. In reality what we denote as a product is a set of regularities and recurrences of process. A corporate unit is really the sum total of corporate relations and activities occurring amongst a defined group of individuals. We can think of a maximal lineage as an architectural segment of a composite clan in the same way as we can picture one storey of a modern building as a lateral segment of the whole. A maximal lineage, however, differs from a part of a building of brick and wood in that it is not always 'there', tactually and visibly.

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[1] Cf. Richards, Audrey I., 'The Political System of the Bemba Tribe', in *African Political Systems*, and *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, 1939.

[2] Cf. Rattray, R. S., *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, 1929.

[3] A fuller analysis will be found in the 'Introduction' and in my article on 'The Political System of the Tallensi' in *African Political Systems*.

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been 471
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and
economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered
by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and
unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar 794
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as
they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among
the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim
traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it.
The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but
smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the
profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same
lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional
arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the
accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system.
Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client
communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations
between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the
Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu
people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since
1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these
matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana
nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the
Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of
them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, 796
like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to
the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881
initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar.
Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of
one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough
stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If [784]
I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of
the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796
home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who
have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574
follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535
Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social
interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may
not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171 ●
with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its
calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and 796
elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of responsibility 182
for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of
lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of
jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion
in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual
of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special
emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182
festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand
it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by
the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

XXXIII

THE TALENSE

History; Tribal, Clan, and Soog' *Organization*

101 161 121 INTRODUCTORY: The Talense occupy the area shown on the map. According to the 1921 census report they number 29,972 persons of both sexes. Specimens of the language, called Talene or Talen', have been given in Chapter III. Their appearance, their houses, customs, religion, and organization all seem to me to be very similar to those of their neighbours, the Nankanse. Their languages, too, are very much alike. Had the Talense not been labelled with a separate appellation, I doubt if the anthropologist—save after, perhaps, a very minute investigation—would have considered it necessary to deal with them as a group distinct from the Namnam and the Nankanse. Nevertheless, in accordance with the plan which I mapped out, I have done so. Rites and customs, already investigated, discussed, and described, are here approached from a different angle. Results so obtained are always valuable, even where there is a certain inevitable repetition. The process serves also to fill gaps in the work which has gone before, to which the information obtained later may be considered as supplementary.

128 In dealing with this and the remainder of the tribes, I have endeavoured to group my facts, as far as possible, under the chapter headings already adopted. This arrangement will enable my readers the more readily to piece together the sum total of the data available concerning any one particular subject, and I hope will mitigate somewhat the defects in presentation for which I have already apologized.

173 167 The history of the tribal wanderings of this people follows the same lines as that with which we are now familiar. This history is the record of the migrations, not of the tribe *qua* tribe, but of every clan, the composite of which now forms the group called the Talense (s. Taleŋa; language Talene.) The tribal histories, specimens of which are about to be related, tell of the migrations (within comparatively narrow limits of time and space) of the groups which have for some hundreds of years supplied the Territorial Rulers. Of the wanderings of the original people themselves, who are now largely merged with this foreign element, nothing is really known, except that they were undoubtedly of the stock which I have termed the 'Mole-group', who seem to

173 have been the original inhabitants of these parts for a much longer
167 period than can be claimed for their aristocracy.

The chief Talense 'towns', in the sense with which we are now
103 familiar, are as follows: Tɔngo, Bade, Gorogo, Si, Winduri, Ten'zugu,
101 Tilega, Yamdiga, Biuŋ, Siega, Duse, Datoko, Gbee, Kpantia, Kpale,
Wakyiga, Gbeogo, Zandoya, and Gbea. These settlements, including
the subjects of the Chief of Kurugu, now constitute the Talense tribe.

173 *History of Tɔngo* (as told me by the present Chief, Kpama): 'We
(i.e. his ancestors) came from Mampurugu, which we left owing to a
622 quarrel between *Misore* and his younger brother—whose name we do
not know—about the Chieftainship. *Misore* left Mampurugu in consequence and came first to Boŋo, thence to Saamere; from there he passed through a dense bush and came to the hills. (The Tɔng hills.) At the foot of these hills we found a people whom our ancestors called Gundugo or Talense. We intermarried with these people and have all become Talense. *Misore* died here; his grave is marked by a big baobab tree. He was succeeded by his son, *Seyene*, who, now that his father was dead, returned to Mampurugu[1] and received from the Chief the Chieftainship of Tɔngo. *Seyene* died, and was succeeded by his brother, *Nambogeda*, who also returned to Mampurugu to ask for the Chieftainship. He died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, *Bɔyayeret*, a son of *Seyene*. About this time, the Chief of Mampurugu made one of his son's Chief of Kurugu, and placed Tɔngo under Kurugu. *Bɔyayeret* was succeeded by his "brother" *Sayepele*, a son of *Seyene*, who reported to Kurugu and held his Chieftainship from that ruler. *Sayepele* was succeeded by his brother *Nodeyene* (lit. Short-fowl). *Nodeyene* was succeeded by his younger brother, *Lebsekora* (Old-things-change). He, in turn, was succeeded by *Kusii* (Worn-out-hoe), a son of *Bɔyayaret*. He was succeeded by *Bileu*, who was succeeded by *Lobsaab* (Throw-away-food), his brother, who, in turn, was succeeded by *Belemsale*, his half-brother, who was succeeded by *Belemboo*, a son of *Kusii*. In his time a great famine came, and many people were sold (to the Dagomba). He was succeeded by *Kabu*, a son of *Lobsaab*. *Lobsaab* was succeeded by *Sapelega* (White-clouds), a half-brother of *Kabu*. *Sapelega* was succeeded by *Kakora*, a son of *Bileu*. He was followed by *Nekaŋ*, a son of *Kusii*; followed by *Paheban*, son of *Belemsale*; *Sagbon* (Dark-cloud), *Lebenwana*, *Bupaa*, son of *Kusii*;

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[1] Mampurugu, as we shall see later, was the seat of the Head of the foreign element, who, coming somewhere from the eastward, had founded the empires of Mampruse, Moshi, and Dagomba.

Lebzure, *Kunwase* (You-do-not-stroke-a-snake), son of *Lebkura*. In his time we fired arrows at the people on the Tɔng hills; there was a famine and we used to rob them. All the people, except Winkoŋo and Sia, rose against us, saying we were too proud. *Kunwase* was succeeded by *Kundizore* (Water-cannot-pull-down-a-hill), a son of *Sapelega*. There was also a war in his time which arose out of a quarrel during a hunting expedition, in which Bade and Yazore had taken part. Small-pox (called *Naba*, the Chief) also broke out in his time. *Kundizore* was succeeded by *Nalebseyo* (It-will-change-to-the-wet-season), son of *Kabu*. He was succeeded by *Pilibazaa* (Cover-them-all), son of *Bupaa*. During his time the Europeans came. *Pilibazaa* was taken by the white men to Gambaga and asked to pay two hundred cows because the Tɔng people had fired arrows at them (the Europeans). He died at Gambaga and was succeeded by *Kunbanbeo* (Cannot-know-to-morrow), a son of *Kundizore*. He was succeeded by *Yirisanɔ* (Destroyer-of-compounds), alias *Dentele*, a son of *Lebenwana*. In his time the Europeans came and asked the Hill-people (Teŋ-zugu) to come and see them, but they refused. He was succeeded by myself, *Kpama*, son of *Pilibazaa*. I brought my father's bones from Gambaga, and they were buried outside his compound.'

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The above list comprises twenty-eight names, and, with other similar genealogies, supplies us with an approximate estimate of the time when the foreigners from Mampurugu first extended their influence to embrace this area. The names of these Chiefs as here given are their titles only; it is forbidden to mention their real names. Such nicknames are called *sam-wur* in Talene, *saan-yure* in Nankane.

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The ruling house at Tɔngo belongs to the *gwegmere* (lion) clan. When I recorded the above and the other histories which follow I had not as yet grasped the full significance of what I came to discover later, namely, that in recording the history of these migrations as supplied by the Chiefs, I was really only tracing the origins of a minute section of the population, i.e. of those who formed the upper ruling class, and not of their subjects, who formed the mass of the people. In consequence I am unable, in the present instance, to specify the clans to which the majority of the inhabitants of the 'towns', already given, really belong. In my notebooks I find these clans, in nearly every case, recorded as 'the lion clan'. This is only due, however, to my having fallen into the error of failing to distinguish between rulers and ruled, and imagining the histories told me by Chiefs and their following to be applicable also to their subjects. I do not make any apology however,

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128 for the inclusion here of such records, as, once their limitations and
622 significance are realized, they, equally with other information recorded,
565 go to form part of the composite picture which I am attempting to
draw of the traditions of these people.

•17B *History of Siega* (as told me by the Chief Zoaga): 'We came from
Mampurugu at the same time as *Misore* (see previous history). The
622 Winkoŋo people are related to us (he refers, I believe, to the Chief of
that place). My clan is lion; I am the seventeenth Chief of Siega. The Chieftainship is under (the patronage of) Kurugu and can descend to any one of the lion clan. My first-born also taboos a fowl. We have had a Chief, distinct from *Ten'dan'*, since ancient times. The first Chief of Siega was *Kukye*.'

History of Datoko (as told me by the present Chief, Borezina): 'We came from Mampurugu, but not with *Misore*. We travelled by way of Nuŋ (Nungo); from Nuŋ to Tula; from Tula to Kumbule; from Kumbule to Datoko. We met the Kusase people in the land, but drove them across the river (Volta). We marry the Kusase. We are of the lion clan. Chiefs of Datoko are appointed by Kurugu. The man who gives most presents becomes the new Chief, and on obtaining the Chieftainship will try to recover what he has paid. Now Chiefs are made by Government, but still go to Kurugu to receive the *muŋ'* (red fez). I am the son of the late Chief, and am ninth of my line. Datoko has six sections (*Yi-zug'*); each section, since Europeans came, is in charge of a *kambon-nab* (head gunman). Since ancient times we have had *Ten'dan'*. Their work and the Chiefs' work are separate. I settle all cases. The *Ten'dan'* performs the ceremonies when the rain does not fall, unless it is at my own *tengzan* (Nankane, *tingane*), when I perform the sacrifices.' (Here, it will be noticed, the *kambon-nab*, appointed by the Chief (who, when a vacancy occurs, bids with the
[624] other applicants for the post), are ousting the old time section-heads, called in Talene, *yi-zug-kpwem*, who have been forced into the background. The *Ten'dan'* (Nankane, *Ten'dana*) has also become more or less a nonentity.)

History of Ten'zugu (as told me by Ten'goli): 'My ancestor came from Nasia; he was called *Sumri* and was a son of the Chief of Mampurugu. When his father died he wished to succeed him, but was driven away and came to Bulbi. His enemies followed him there, and again he fled and came to Daa, at the foot of the Tong hills. Later he went on top of the hill and settled there. He found some people called Dagali. They were Talense. We married with them. The Dagali people

belong to the *Sensereg* (squirrel) clan. We were told by them that the 173
hill did not permit "arrows on the arms," i.e. war. We, too, said we 622
did not want bloodshed. When the *gologo* festival came, we all met on top of the hill and danced. At this festival, the *Ten'dan'* of Dagoli and myself made beer and sacrificed to the land. A month later we sowed.' (I had purposely allowed the Chief to digress from the subject; he now continued.) 'When we came from Nasia we did not see any one here, except the Dagoli people. The Tongo people (see history) had not yet arrived from Mampurugu (near Gambaga). The Dagali had no Chiefs, only *Ten'dan'*; they wore skins. *Sumri* did not become a *Na* (Chief), because he never went back to receive his Chieftainship from Mampurugu. He became *golog'dana* (owner of the drums). The first of my ancestors to go to Mampurugu to get the Chieftainship was *Kumalbeo*; he went to *Na Paya*, the "grandfather" of the present Chief of Mampurugu. He was succeeded by *Atabea*, called after the Chief of Mampurugu, who was his *seyr'* (guardian spirit); Nankane, *segere*.) He was afraid to go to Gambaga because the Europeans were there; he fought with the Europeans because he was told that they had come to take away our land. I am Atabea's son. I was made Chief by the Europeans, but have not yet been confirmed by *Naleregu* (i.e. by the Chief of Mampruse).'

With reference to the title 'owner of the drums', I asked this in- 622
formant if a man could not become a Chief in a new country independently of Mampurugu. He replied he could not do so unless 'he went to Mampurugu (near the present town of Naleregu, the former capital of the Mampruse State) whence spread all the black race.'

History of Yamdiga (as told me by the Chief): 'We came from 173
Mampurugu; my *Yaba* (ancestor) was *Misore*, as was that of Tongo, 622
Beug, and Siega. My ancestor was *Kamuni*, the eldest son of *Misore*; he was of the lion clan. The Chiefs of Yamdiga have been the following: *Gyenkaret*, *Nantog*, *Nakpeleg*, *Gingano*, *Mwampark*, *Nabsobug*, *Lebbaba*, *Na-kaba*, *Kungazur*, *Kunzerpuk*, *Kunoyokurt*, *Kosom*, *Lebdo*,
and *Yinsagbeg* (lit. God's food, the present Chief). We have now [304]
become Talense; we no longer circumcise, because the local people would not marry us. The Chief of Kurugu, our "father," still speaks Mampelle, but we no longer do so.'

History of Biun: 'We came from Naleregu (Mampruse), with *Misore*. Our clan is the lion clan; we also taboo goat, and our first-born do not
eat a fowl, and women, after reaching puberty, do not eat fowls. We [262]
eat goat's flesh, but do not wear its skin until death, when we are

●173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
304 forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez
from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows
565 these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—
128 is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan),
784 but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tampeŋpeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

ashes) was blind, when a *sakur* and *mey* came and asked him what was 173
the matter. He replied, "Sickness." They said, "Open your eyes," and 784
he could see.'

In one of the tribal histories recorded above we again have an 784
example of the violation of a taboo after death—dressing the dead 766
body in a goat-skin. With regard to what we may call the 'royal clan',
i.e. lion clan, I was told: 'In olden times, if any one killed a lion, the
skin was sent to the Chief of Kurugu, who then sent it on to the Chief
of Mampurugu. There a funeral ceremony was held for it.'

Blood Relationship: Relationship, transmitted through the female 611
line, is called *soog'* (compare the Nankanse *sōō*). The *soog'* groups are
well known, but, as far as I could discover, do not bear any special
names. The *soog'* exhibits all the characteristics already noted with
regard to the Nankanse *sōō*.[1] A male cannot transmit a taint of
witchcraft, inherited from his mother. 'If your mother can fly (*ak*)
(that is, is a witch), you can fly.' (*Soe* is a witch in Talene).

'My sister's child is my *soog'*, my brother's child is not; he is my son.'
Again, *ziim* (blood) and *soog'* are synonymous terms.

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[1] See Chapter XVIII.

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes.
The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language
Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls,
and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse
and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have
been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
●173 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the
Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came
here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a
people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They
spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and
Zan became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people
whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengban*) is known as Dakyirig. The
Ten'dan' makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European
doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but
it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones).
A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded
by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men
(Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We
met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

NAMNAM

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by
Konteem (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-
not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*,
Yelazoo (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time,
the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed.
Nwena was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his
time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and
Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they
thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*,
ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim
(Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which
peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was
cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called
ta velim (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and
round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son,
Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga,
Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab*
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine 624

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under the Chief of Nangode.

793

kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan*', also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan*'. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan*' to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).'

793
Tattooing: A *Ten'dan*' must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan*' has to be so careful not to eat new crops
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his 173
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan*' of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

103 614 Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa).

614 My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

611 154 The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

173 622 793 *Traditions of the Kusase*: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe tey*) and that person would

●173 622 793 die. He would tap the land with his fingers and say, "*Teŋ ya be, zagala saam ka nees teŋ la okom*" (If such a thing as the land really is, (here is) So-and-so who has offended and treated you as of no account, may you kill him).[1] The land will break his compound; his fowls, goats, sheep, children, wives will die. The offender would approach an Elder and "beat his hands" and ask him to intercede with the *Tenedan'* on his behalf. Chiefs now own the people, but *Tenedan'* still own the land. The first Chief of Kagbiri was my father. He was *Tenedan'* at the time when the Germans made him Chief. The present Chief is Ati, he is my father's child (i.e. son of the speaker's father's brother). My father, after the Germans made him Chief, used to delegate the work of *Tenedan'* to me, so when he died and Ati was made Chief we continued to do the same.'

177 793 622 171 At this place (Kagbiri) so far as I could see, we find the Territorial Ruler (who is not a foreigner, but one of the family of the former *Tenedan'*), and the *Tenedan'*, 'his brother', working in complete harmony. The Germans, it will be noted, whether by accident or design, had made the *Tenedan'* also the Territorial Ruler. The significance of the rather curious and suggestive procedure—which I have also noted elsewhere—whereby a *Tenedan'* who, by chance, has become Chief, delegates the religious part of his duties to another, should not be overlooked. The multifarious administrative and executive duties, which the Territorial Ruler is asked by us to undertake, cannot be wholly responsible for this. This may be proved by an examination of the position of a Chief in Ashanti, where these two functions—religious and secular—are combined in one person. Perhaps the bad example set by the majority of foreign Chiefs in these parts, who were always unconcerned with local land-gods, may partly account for this. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked, that by far the most important religious duties performed by Ashanti Chiefs for their people are the ceremonies in connexion with their own ancestral spirits, in which their subjects now join, and not those rites in connexion with the land, which has tended to become alienated, although theoretically they still belong to the Stool. Many Northern Territory Rulers, while ignoring land gods, would, nevertheless, lay claim to the land. The following are some further notes on the duties and privileges of the *Tenedan'* among the Kusase.

793 [787] 'When the rain does not fall, the Elders consult the soothsayer and report to the *Tenedan'* what the *baa* (soothsayer) has told them. The

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[1] Compare p. 370. (i.e., different practice among Namnam)

of the Tong Hills; yet 'we and the Talis are one' they maintain. In proof 101
of this they point out that their *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət* Festival belongs to the same 186
cycle as *Da'a* and *Bɔɣaraam*, though they have but the vaguest hearsay 184
knowledge of the esoteric ritual of these festivals. Their neighbours at
Sie and Datɔk they call Namoos.

Note: For convenience of exposition we shall adopt the following con- 128
vention in this book. Whenever we speak of all the inhabitants of Taleland, irrespective of their internal subdivisions, we shall use the name given to them by other outsiders and speak of them as *Tallensi*. When we wish to refer to that section of the Tallensi whom they themselves describe as the 'real Talis', we shall refer to them as *Talis*, distinguishing among them, when necessary, between the *Hill Talis*, who live on and around the Tong Hills, and the Talis of the Plain, who live nearer Tongo (i.e. Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Ba'ari, Yaɣazuor).

Nomenclature and the Structural Scheme

This nomenclature reflects a structural scheme of considerable com- 184
plexity. It points to institutional allegiances which segregate adjacent social units from each other and group together spatially dispersed units. The major cleavage it reveals is that between the Namoo communities, on the one hand, and the settlements of the real Talis and of those who claim to be akin to them, on the other. But it indicates, also, that there are other lines of division and bonds of union both within each major grouping and cutting across the cleavage. It is a cardinal principle of Tale social structure that every social grouping defined as a unit in one situation, or according to one principle, dissolves into an association of lesser and differentiated units in another situation or according to another principle. Variation in custom or in ideological emphasis is regarded by the natives as one of the most significant indices of group differentiation. It is also, as we shall see, an important factor of social integration.

It is therefore a topic of perennial interest to the natives to observe and comment on variations of usage and doctrine. The idea that identity of custom and belief is desirable or natural is inconceivable. Everybody adheres staunchly to the forms of social behaviour accepted in his own group without desiring to impose them on others. 'Look at the Namoos,' observed Ta'aŋ one day, 'don't they (i.e. different sections of the same clan) do different things at funeral ceremonies? But their use of a goat (in mortuary rites), that is all one. We Talis, again, using our sheep (in mortuary rites)—this is the same for all of us. But as for our ritual, we split up and do different things.' Each one with his father's ways, everyone with his ancestor's ways (*Sɔ ni u ba yɛl, sɔ ni u yaab yɛl*)—that is, every group has its distinctive ancestral customs—is a characteristic Tale aphorism. This attitude, emphasizing simultaneously community and differentiation, similarity of pattern, and divergence of detail, permeates Tale thought.

Myths of Origin

Whenever Tallensi discuss the cleavages in their society they trace 173

173 them back to differences of origin. Everyone knows that all Namoos came originally from Mampurugu, how long ago nobody can tell. The tradition of Tongo, as it was related to me on many occasions, is as follows: The ancestor who founded Tongo was Mosuor. He was the Paramount Chief (*na'ab*) of Mampurugu, but had to flee the country after being vanquished in a fight for the chiefship. When he reached Tongo the Gbizug tɛndaana, Gɛnɔt, was living there. Mosuor came to the house but found nobody there; for Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt had seen him coming and had sought refuge in the nearby hills. Now, there is a watercourse a little distance off and there he found a shallow pit beside which stood a *kiŋkaŋ* (*Ficus*) tree which was shedding its leaves. A path led from this water-hole towards the Hills and someone had been carrying water which had spilled over on to this path. 'Thereupon', to quote the version of one of my Tongo informants, 'our ancestor said, "There is someone in these hills who comes to fetch water here". So he caused the dry fig leaves to be scattered on the path and went to hide quietly. In due course he saw Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt stepping along the path, while the leaves crunched *kaya, kaya*, coming to fetch water. Thereupon our ancestor Mosuor, having seen him, caught him and asked him what he was afraid of. Why did he run away and hide? Gɛnɔt replied that he had seen him wearing a gown and that there was something on his head all red, and fear took hold of him.[1] So Mosuor brought him back and asked, "Who owns this house?" He said that it was his house, and Mosuor brought him home thither and said that he himself would settle down here and Gɛnɔt as well. He said that Gɛnɔt would be his tɛndaana to carry out the sacrifices on his behalf.'

Gbizug elders told the story of Mosuor in much the same way but omitting the trick by which Mosuor caught their ancestor, adding that it was the horses and guns of Mosuor that inspired fear in Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt.
173 They say, also, that having accepted Mosuor as a settler and having
608 allotted land to him close beside his own homestead, he told Mosuor what were the taboos of the country (*tɛŋɔn-kiha*), and entered into a solemn pact of blood-brotherhood with him. They *ŋma pɔlɔŋ*, cut wrists. A cut was made on the wrist of each, and each licked the blood of the other. Thus '*ba leeba mabiih, ba leeba soog*, they became brethren, they became uterine brothers' and pledged themselves and their descendants to perpetual peace. This was a unique instance of blood-brotherhood, which is not practised in Taleland to-day.

773 According to this tradition, Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt told Mosuor of his kinsmen, the Ba'at-Sakpar Tɛndaana, the Wakii Tɛndaana, the Degal tɛndaana, and the Ka'ar tɛndaana. These five were the original inhabitants of the country. They sprang from the Earth itself, say their descendants. At Gbizug they declare that Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's ancestor Bumbiogta'adug sprouted from the earth (*u bulme na*), he had no father or mother (*u ka ba u ka ma*). Pressed further they say, '*u yi Naawun zug sig na*—he descended from Heaven'. Heaven and Earth are one, they contend; they have the same mystical value. At Wakii they call their first

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[292] [1] A red fez and a cloth tunic are the distinctive costume of chiefs of Mampuru origin. Tɛndaanas may not wear garments of cloth. They are ritually obliged to wear skins only. Chiefs and their clansmen may ride horses, tɛndaanas not.

ancestor Teŋənbuləg—Earth-begotten—and give the same myth of his origin. The people of Degal and of Ka'ar attribute a similar origin to their first ancestors. Tendaan Genət is said to have begotten Dagbeog (Bearded man) whose descendants are the Gbeog people, who are therefore a 'brother' lineage to Gbizug (=*Gbeog zug*, the upper part of Gbeog). 773

One of Genət's 'brothers'—the exact genealogical relationship is regarded as of no consequence, some describing him as *soog* (uterine kinsman), others as *pit* (younger brother)—was Da[illegible]ug (Red man), a hunter who founded the Ba'at-Sakpar line; and another 'brother' of his founded one of the Zubiuŋ lineages. Indeed all the primordial tendaanas were 'brothers' in a more general sense, the concepts of kinship serving here consciously to identify them with one another.

These myths, meagre as they appear, are laid down with a finality of conviction that makes any question of their historical truthfulness irrelevant.

Most of the Hill Talis are also alleged to have been immigrants originally 173 who arrived to find the Degal Tendaana living on top of the hills. But their myths of origin are as deficient in circumstantial detail as those of the primordial tendaanas. Thus candid people at Yinduuri said complacently: 'We don't know, it is said that our ancestor came from Tampələŋ in Mampurugu, but now we have all become Talis.' People of other clans told a vague story of an ancestor wandering about the uninhabited hills, sheltering in caves, until one day he observed the smoke of a fire. Going towards it he discovered the Degal tendaana, and later settled on the Hills. Gorogo is said to have been founded thus by Woolisi immigrants, Sii by Bulisi and Mamprusi, and some of the Tenzugu lineages by Mamprusi, Kusaasi, or Gorisi. The origins thus attributed to any community symbolize special ritual relationships with the areas they are alleged to have migrated from, which are still maintained.

All these myths of origin become intelligible when it is realized that 173 they are nothing more than formulations of the contemporary scheme of 811 political and ceremonial relationships. The Tallensi themselves are philosophers enough to appreciate this. Many Namoos, for example, privately view the myth of the primordial tendaanas with unaffected scorn. 'They lie', declared Saɣəbazaa, a shrewd and respected elder of Tongo, himself a kinsman of the present[1] Gbizug tendaana. 'A human being can't emerge sprouting out of the e[illegible]. The rain falls, and the millet comes up, trees come up, grass comes [illegible]; but we have never seen a human being sprout up.' When I tried t[illegible] defend the tendaanas, he countered triumphantly: 'And if their ancestor really sprouted up, why don't they let a person sprout again?' Then, with a sudden inspiration he proposed an explanation: 'Suppose you come and settle here and your children succeed you, and their children, and their children succeed, and so on, and so on. Then, one day strangers come and ask your descendants whence they have sprung. Will they not say that their ancestor was begotten of the earth? We Namoos', he concluded, 'are immigrants (*kpeeha*) here.' This acute estimation of the myths gives a clue to their

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[1] The present time throughout this book refers to the years 1934–7.

173 ideological significance as a counterweight to the Mosuor legend and
811 as a dogma of prior habitation.

[171] In the Sie district the Sawaləg people, whose political and ceremonial relations with the Sie Namoos are exactly parallel to those of Gbizug with Tongo, also declare that their ancestor came into being miraculously, self-generated. In the identical phraseology of the people of Gbizug and Wakii, they say, 'Our ancestor descended from Heaven', or 'Our ancestor sprouted from the earth'. I once challenged the clan-head of Sawaləg to prove how this was possible. His answer, shrewdly rationalistic, deserves to be recorded. 'We have not heard that our ancestor came from any other land. We have no other land to return to as the Sie people (immigrant Namoos) have. If they desecrate (*saɣəm*, lit. spoil) the land here, they return to their (original) land yonder (at Tongo). That is why we say that we have descended from Heaven'—an interpretation which coincides with that of Saɣəbazaa, the Namoo.

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622 The covenant between Mosuor and Tɛndaan Gɛnət, again, accords well with a myth which is but a projection into the unchallengeable past of the present-day relationships between Gbizug and Tongo. The amorphous and unstandardized myths of origin with which the Hill Talis are satisfied symbolize the remarkable social integration they had achieved before their subjugation by the British in 1911. For nowadays the Hill Talis are rent by factions and by an intestine struggle for power amongst the various ritual office-holders. Rival claims are validated by citing established custom, by appealing to the memories of men, or, in the last resort, by the fabrication or distortion of myths of origin. The Administration recognizes as chiefs only those clan heads whose title is derived directly or indirectly from the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi. Hence we find the Gəlibdaana of Tɛnzugu justifying his pretensions to recognized chiefship by concocting, for the benefit of a white inquirer, a story of how the founder of his lineage migrated thither from Mampurugu—a story which his enemies scoff at. The Sii Bəɣaraan, on the other hand, tries to strengthen his claim to precedence by alleging not only a Mampuru origin for his ancestors, but also that they were the very first to come and settle on the Hills.

173 These new myths are part of the defensive ideologies engendered by social conflict, but they follow the axioms of Tale thought. The Tallensi have no conception of a mythological or historical past of their society when people lived and behaved differently from to-day. The past is but an extension into the days of their forefathers of the life of to-day on the same rational plane of existence. Their history is to them not a sequence of events or a progression but a continuity. All that matters of the past, which lies beyond the span of man's recollection, lives on in the social structure, the ideology, the morality, and institutions of to-day. These are the palpable proofs of things that happened '*oh ho, ti banam ni ti yaanam ni*—in the days of our forefathers and ancestors'; one can infer from them what must have been the state of society in those far-off times. Conversely, the social arrangements which prevail to-day are valid, sensible, and appropriate not only because they achieve desired ends but also because *banam ni yaanam ndaa piil na*—the forefathers and ancestors

started and transmitted them. Custom is not inviolable in its own right. 173
It is compelling because it is the legacy of the ancestors.

These notions are perfectly explicit in the behaviour and thought of 178
the natives, for whom they have a profound moral value. *Banam ndaa ɛŋ de, yaanam ndaa ɛŋ de*—our forefathers used to do it, our ancestors used to do it, is a recurrent formula in every ceremonial speech or ritual invocation during the Great Festivals. So the Samiitna'ab protesting his loyalty to traditional values and to the Kpata'arna'ab, in the latter's feud with the Gɔlibdaana, exclaimed: 'It is the young men who are causing the trouble. They desire their cloths and their caps; but I know only what my ancestors did (*man mi la n-yaanam ndaa ɛŋ siem*). My ancestor (*n-yaab*) wore a skin and I, too, wear a skin; my ancestor knew nothing of cloth. I know only my forefathers' path and I adhere to that (*man mi la mbanam suor, man dɔla dɛni*).'

In the same way, and because their social system engenders so strong 181
a sense of the continuity and stability of their culture and social organiza- 867
tion, Tallensi always stress the importance of passing on to their descendants the way of life bequeathed to them by their forefathers. At ceremonies or when disputes are argued out before a chief or a lineage head, it is not uncommon to hear the old men praise the young men who attend. 'Thus,' the old men say, 'they (the young men) will learn the customs (*yɛla*) of our ancestors.' Tallensi place an extremely high value on their social order. An individual or a particular corporate group might desire to alter his or its position in the society. A man might desire to have greater prestige or more power than his neighbours. A clan might strive to assert its supremacy over other clans, whether or not it is entitled to do so. No one would dream of trying to overthrow the whole social order or of agitating against the existing customs and values.

This does not mean that Tale customs never change, or that the Tallensi 178
believe this to be the case, or invariably resist cultural changes. There 184
have been many shifts in custom and usage during the past two decades. The imposition of peace and an embryonic judicial system have diminished the tensions that kept unrelated clans apart and so have made it unnecessary for them to over-emphasize the emblems and symbols of their separateness. Fifteen years ago men of a tɛndaana's clan used to observe strictly the taboo against wearing gowns and trousers, the distinctive garments of chiefs and men of chiefly (i.e. Namoo) clans. To-day the young men of tɛndaanas' clans all wear such clothes outside the territory with which they have direct ritual ties. By this simple compromise they make the best of both worlds, the old world of strictly defined local, genealogical, and politico-ritual exclusiveness and the new world of free movement, unrestricted social intercourse with all and sundry, and cheaper clothes. They wear the ancient prescribed garb of a skin and a loin-cloth on ritual occasions, especially during the Great Festivals, when they take a pride in advertising their politico-ritual status. This change of custom does not cut athwart the basic values and principles of Tale social organization. It has arisen because the young men of tɛndaanas' clans are as eager to display themselves in fine clothes as the young men of other clans, and because the wearing of clothes is economically easier to attain than

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Golibdaana, in his overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo, with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Golibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
576 building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

of the group to which it refers. Owing to the balanced distribution of 173 political and ceremonial functions between units of structure, the members 773 of a group always overrate their own relative significance while nonmembers 578 underrate its importance. These, sometimes contradictory, valuations find expression, also, in the way myths are presented. It is the technique of contraposition coming to the surface again. When, therefore, in these days new tensions develop, erupting sometimes into open conflict, they are inevitably reflected in the cast given to their myths of origin by interested parties.

The Major Cleavage in Tale Society

Our reconnaissance of the cultural landscape of the Tallensi has left us 000 with a tangle of facts which do not fall into an obvious pattern. The reader may rest assured that his perplexity bears no comparison to that of an ethnographer seeking, for the first time, to understand Tale culture and social organization. The perspective changes as the investigator shifts his vantage point. The greatest puzzle of all is why there is so little apparent unity and coherence in an area of such dense and close habitation, carrying a population that has been sedentary for a long time, has a more or less homogeneous culture, and a strong sense of the continuity and stability of its social order. Leaving aside this puzzle, for the present, let us see what are the positive conclusions to which our survey leads.

The point of primary importance is that a major cleavage runs through 184 the whole of Tale society. On the one side stand communities or parts of communities the members of which are generally agreed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi. These are the Namoos. On the other side stand similar social groups who claim to be and are accepted as the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and earlier immigrants whom they absorbed. This cleavage is given a symbolic formulation in myths of origin the historicity of which need not concern us.

This cleavage is so fundamental that it permeates the whole social out- 184 look of the people. One sees it most vividly in the martial choruses chanted 764 at important funerals. One of the high lights at the opening ceremonies of the funeral of an important person is a grand mimic war march (*dee*) of the men of the clan. In their finest clothes, weapons in hand, plumed helms on their heads, blowing whistles and accompanied by drummers, the men gather in lineage squadrons to march round the settlement, and eventually mass at the house of the funeral. They march irregularly in an unorganized mob with excited children trailing behind and women dancing on the flanks trilling the shrill *kpɛlɔmət* cry of elation. And as they march, especially as they approach the funeral house, they chant defiant challenges against their traditional enemies in the wars of former days. 'Yo ho!' they chant, 'we might rise one day at break of dawn to sally forth against certain people.' 'Is it not because of us', the Namoos chant taunting the Talis, 'that you have water to drink?' And again, 'Do you not mock at them, do you not laugh at them?' And now and then a man leaps forward, crouches scowling, pretends to shoot off an arrow, and cries scornfully, 'If it were not for the white man, by now we would be meeting them in battle'. It is all play-acting, but there is an

CHAPTER IV

CLANSHIP: THE NAMOOS

The Dispersion of Mosuor biis

For the Namoos of Tongo[1] history begins with Mosuor. Of his Mampuru forbears nothing is known. When a Namoo piously invokes the names of Toohug and Gbamwaa, the mythical founders of the Mampuru State, these are to him mystical words. Dominated in his moral and mystical thought by the ancestor cult, he is ready to infer that they were probably remote ancestors of the Mampuru stock; but no one in Taleland knows the myths which the Mamprusi relate about them. There is at the present time constant intercourse between the Tallensi and the Mamprusi, especially between the Tale chiefs and the court of the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu (*Mampurugna'ab*); but the myth of Toohug and Gbamwaa has not diffused to the Tallensi, for it has no relevance to their internal social structure, and the names alone suffice to symbolize the bond of common stock with the Mamprusi.

Mosuor died at Tongo. His grave indicates where his homestead stood, a stone's throw from the sacred dancing-ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, which was the site of Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's homestead. After Mosuor's death, it is related, his eldest son, Naŋkamuŋ, wished to assume the chiefship at once; but a younger son, Sɛyahɔg, insisted that his father's death should be ceremonially reported to the Mampurugna'ab, the fountain-head of their chiefship (na'am). He went secretly to do so, and was invested with his father's chiefship by the Chief of the Mamprusi in return for a payment of 100 cattle. Naŋkamuŋ, resenting his younger brother's guile in robbing him of his patrimony, thereupon seceded and settled at Yamɔlɔg beside the people of Sɔk and their tɛndaana. This place, it is related, came to be called so because Naŋkamuŋ declared that he would go and settle just nearby (*yama yama*), where he could keep in touch with his kinsfolk at Tongo.

Sie, which the Namoos say means beside (*sie*, side) Yamɔlɔg, was founded by another 'son' of Mosuor, Kuŋkye. Sie people claim to have been the first settlers in the area. On the other hand, with characteristic emphasis on their own priority, Sawalɔg people assert that Kuŋkye was received by their ancestor the Sawalɔg tɛndaana, who had 'sprouted from the earth'. The tɛndaana allowed him to settle there beside (*sie*) himself, after having presented him ritually to the Earth shrines. This myth is a replica of that told by the Gbizug people, and symbolizes a structural and ideological relationship of the same order as that which exists between Gbizug and Tongo.

Yet another 'son' of Mosuor—the exact genealogy is obscure, since *bii*, child, can be used to refer to any descendant—migrated to Biuk, where his descendants adopted the speech and customs of the Gɔris.

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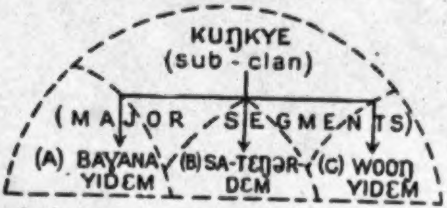
[1] The correct vernacular form is Tɔŋo, but we shall keep the more familiar English form throughout this book.

x618



But Sie also includes a pair of accessory lineages, (D) Daaŋ yidem and (E) Kaləŋkaa yidem, which are locally and structurally combined to form a single section known as Sie-datɔk.

SIE—the settlement

Sie proper	Sie-datɔk
Kuŋkye biis true sub-clan of Mosuor biis	Two accessory lineages: Daaŋ yidem and Kaləŋkaa yidem

SIEDEM
'The people of Sie'

x618 Their original patrilineal ancestors are said to have come from Kurugu in
●173 Mampurugu, long after the foundation of the settlement by Mosuor's 'son' Kuŋkye. As in very many of these traditions of an ancestor who migrated from elsewhere, the motives attributed to him are the same as those which frequently prompt young men to move out to the periphery of settlement nowadays—the temptation of ample land when there is a shortage of farmland at home, or the desire for independence. The Sie-datɔk lineages are, therefore, considered to be of the same Mampuru stock (*buurət*) as the other Namoos. They have the same funeral ritual and totemic observances as all Namoos—a fact which is the most palpable proof to the natives that they are Namoos.

As with the myth of Mosuor, there is no means of verifying this tradition. The Sie-datɔkdem advance as evidence the fact that they still maintain political and social contacts with Kurugu; but other Namoo clans and lineages have similar relations with the people of Kurugu and do not, on those grounds, claim kinship (*mabiirət*) with them, except in so far as all Namoos speak of themselves as the kin (*mabiis*), in the widest sense, of the Mamprusi. The Tallensi, as we have already observed, do not make these critical comparisons. Their tradition accounts satisfactorily, in their view, to the Sie-datɔk lineages—and also to the people of Sie proper—for their being Namoos, and for their relations with the authentic lineage of Mosuor biis at Sie.

x618 In relation to each other the two lineages of Sie-datɔk act as the major segments of an inclusive maximal lineage, though they do not claim to have a single common ancestor. This assimilation is rationalized by the dogma that their ancestors were kinsmen (*mabiis*), though of what degree they do not profess to know, nor do they consider it relevant. This dogma, like their tradition of origin, is validated by the existing structural maintaining, amity and solidarity in the clan, and no less efficacious in 618x promoting their increase and prosperity than the ancestral cult of Mosuor biis. Such mystical interpretations are, in fact, a reflex of the social structure. They throw no light on the problem of the numbers of Mosuor's posterity. Without historical documents we must accept it as one of the given facts of Tale society.

Here a point of particular interest may be noted. Though they are held, 127 in common with other Namoo clans in Taleland, to be an intrusive 173 group by origin, the clan of Mosuor biis forms the backbone of Tale ● political organization. They place their founding ancestor some eight to ten generations back counting from the heads of existing minimal lineages. But the clans which claim to be autochthonous and to have antedated all the Namoos of Taleland in their occupation of the country give pedigrees of about the same chronological extension. It is obvious therefore that no means of estimating the relative lengths of time during which Namoos and non-Namoos have been settled in Taleland are provided by their genealogies. Like their myths of origin, the chronological retrospect implied in Tale clan or lineage genealogies has no historical value. The chronological depth of their genealogies and the fact that they preserve the graves of significant ancestors seem to justify the inference that the Tale Namoos have occupied their present settlements for not less than two and possibly for three centuries. The Tallensi, however, do not evaluate their genealogies in this way. Genealogies are significant to them as one of the principal instruments for organizing their present social relations. They are kept alive only in so far as they serve this end, and have no value, therefore, as a measure of the time during which a clan or lineage has been in existence. The uniform genealogical retrospect of Namoo and non-Namoo clans in Taleland is a reflex of the stability and coherence of their social and political relations. The only historical inference one can justifiably make is that their present social order has been in existence for a greater length of time than the memories of the oldest living natives can compass. This is the essence of the statement 'It has been thus since the days of our fathers and forefathers', which the natives regard as a sufficient explanation of the origin of most of their institutions.

619 gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pɛhug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tendaana.

764 Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have
[884] begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*waləg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teeləg lineages, use only a piece of string
619 . The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin
184 has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

● 173 Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Wooləga country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teeləg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

577 The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the
764 lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihər*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihər*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due
to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

161 The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta
161 plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
●173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and
domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no
difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the
domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Taləŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*buləg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*koləg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

621

101 silk-cotton, are prominent landmarks in a country of monotonous plains;
137 hence settlements and sections often bear the names of species of trees found there.

621 101 Kuorəg was thus named, according to popular etymology, because the Soog Yikpɛmdaana, who holds the ritual jurisdiction over the land on which the homesteads of Kuorəg stand, ritually allocated or 'cut' (*kuo*) the sites for all these homesteads when Tongo men first settled there. In the same way popular etymology explains the name Dekpieŋ ('it is hard') as derived from the hardness (*kpeoŋ*) of the soil in that part of the settlement as compared with that of Puhug or Seug. Seug literally means 'the rainy season', but no one in Tongo was ever able to suggest how this section acquired its name; and this is characteristic of very many settlement and section names in Taleland.

621 173 To the people of Tongo their present residential constellation is the visible deposit, as it were, of the continuous expansion of the sub-clan through many generations within the limits of its geographical environment and social boundaries. They read the spatial disposition of the four sections as a record of their structural evolution, as a map of the contemporary constitution, and as proof of the chronological retrospect of the sub-clan. Mosuor came to settle at Puhug, where his grave still marks the site of his homestead. As his posterity increased in numbers, they began to move outwards in the same way as young men migrate to Zoo, Gbambee, and farther, nowadays, and for the same reason, shortage of farm-land. Thus Guŋ, Kuorəg, and Seug were occupied. Later, the descendants of those who founded Guŋ became too numerous for the land available there, and, prevented from expanding into Wakii by the social barriers between Tongo and that clan, filtered gradually into the area that is now Dekpieŋ. Arguing from what may be observed nowadays, they say that this was largely a process of occupying hitherto vacant land at a time when the population was very small. But it was partly, also, a process of dispossessing and pushing out to their present location the people of Zubiuŋ and of Gbizug, who claim to have lived at Puhug originally. In proof of this they cite their myths of origin, the fact that the dancing-ground in Puhug is sacred because it is the site of Tɛndaan Genət's homestead, and the ritual jurisdiction exercised over part of the land of Puhug by Gbizug and over the remainder by Zubiuŋ. Indeed, there are Zubiuŋ graves on land now occupied by Dekpieŋ men which are said to date back only three to five generations. This proves that the people of Zubiuŋ were still yielding ground to the Tɔndɛm, as they themselves admit, when elders alive to-day were 'already born'.

621 577 There is nothing derogatory in such a retreat. On the contrary, Gbizug and Zubiuŋ elders boast of it as additional evidence of the dependence of the people of Tongo on their ritual benevolence and bounty. It is a cardinal rule of Tale ethics that a request for land to build on and farm—especially if it comes from a kinsman, friend, or neighbour—may not be refused if it can be granted without hardship. There was formerly, and there still is to a small extent, land to spare at Gbizug and at Zubiuŋ. Tongo people have innumerable ties of kinship and neighbourhood with Gbizug and Zubiuŋ, which are the more effective on account of the ties

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔγar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔγar* and Sɛγahəg's grave and *bɔγar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Gɛnət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛγahəg, and Bɔγada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are 461
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour-water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bayar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

778 The graves of Sɛɣahəg and Bɔɣada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔɣada's grave is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbər, and Bɔɣayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpiɛŋ, lie buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority of their descendants live at Dekpiɛŋ.

● 173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakɔradɛm, Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔɣada's grave is proof to the natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo clans living in the vicinity of Yamələg and Sie—the group of clans which the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos —a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔɣar* takes the place of the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and
by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

● 173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-
aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[535] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of
funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who
wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the
warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577
ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721
reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life.
There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173
kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives. At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one. Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime, about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛlɔg*)' him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worth-while life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682
the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577
the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721
in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In 1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury, lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards. And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721
matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673
for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might 682
follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628
neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578
of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations, in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

The institution distinctive of the autochthonous communities is the 171
office of 'Custodian of the Earth'. This ritual office, involving priestly 793
functions in connexion with the cult of the Earth, is found among many West African peoples from the Senegal to the mouth of the Niger. In the Voltaic region it is the exclusive prerogative of the autochthonous communities.

The ethnographic picture of to-day suggests that the population of the 174
Voltaic region was, in the past, constantly being redistributed by migrations of small groups. In the absence of written records that is all we can say. The fact that such migrations have gone on in the recent past, and are still going on in the central area, suggests that these migrations were (as they are) the result rather of ecological pressures and social forces than of large-scale conquests. But marauding slave-raiders may have been a cause of migrations in some areas. Two of the most notorious, Samory and Babatu, were spreading devastation in the north-western parts of the region at the time when the French and the British were partitioning the country during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Physically, culturally, in their economic organization, and their social 171
and political structure, the people of Taleland are typical in every respect of the tribes of the central Volta region.

General Characteristics of the Tallensi

The people of the central Volta region are of negroid stock. They are 144
not a notably fine physical type, but the best of them are attractive physical 141
specimens, as may be seen from the photographs in this book. Head
measurements of thirteen Tale men gave an average C.I. of 74·7. The 142
predominant head type appears to be dolichocephalic. In skin colour they 146
vary from black through chocolate brown to bronze, which the natives call 'red' (*bon-ze'e*) and regard as the most attractive bodily hue. Their hair is of the usual negroid peppercorn type. They have also the typical negroid nasal and lip forms, but the very broad, flat nose and markedly everted lips are not so common as in the tropical forest belt. Both men and women are of medium stature, the men being slightly the taller. Anybody over 5 ft. 7 or 8 in. is considered tall. Though they are mostly slight in build, all the somatic types with which we are familiar may be seen among these people: the stocky pyknic, the slim asthenic, the stalwart athletic, to use Kretschmer's terminology, are all common. Fat men or women, however, are very rare. Climatic conditions, density of population, and a primitive agricultural technique[1] all conspire to keep the average standard of nutrition low. In the best seasons the natives grow only enough cereals for their needs.[2] Their animal husbandry provides little surplus to exchange for cereals, and they have no crafts worth speaking of. The labour they supply to richer parts of the Gold Coast contributes very little return by way of foodstuffs to the home community. Like most subsistence farmers in Africa, their diet is notably defici[illegible] in animal protein.

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[1] *Vide* Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

[2] This aspect of Tale economics is more fully discussed in Lynn, op. cit., and in Fortes, M. and S. L., loc. cit.

continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔyalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361
or to Buug, Duusi, Datak, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with 103
scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a popula- 161
tion of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174
habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrəg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101
sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186
the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tɛnzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tɛnzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔmərə Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔyaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔyaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamɔlɔg and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yayazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔmərə namoorət*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalɔg, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbərə Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋan-lɛbagət*.)[1]

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[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

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192
[174]
[527]

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
2. Gunfuku	February	Gun', gunga—kapok tree. fuku—blowing of the wind. The period when the kapok pods ripen. This is evidence of the Dagomba extraction of this people, since kapok is, undoubtedly, a southern production. Their own tradition says they came from the south as a result of interfamily wars.
3. Gologu	March	This is the name of a festival which takes place shortly after full moon. In 1921 the ceremonial dancing and symbolic planting of corn, which I witnessed by good luck, took place on March 1st. In 1922 about March 13th.
4. Sionbeo	End of March or early April	Time of early planting. Sion—making holes in which to drop the grains. beo—poor. At this time it is not certain if the dry season will not return for a period and so dry up the first shoots.
5. Sionsongo	April and May	The time of good planting. songo—good. This is the proper planting time.
6. Sionyio	Late May and early June	The time of late planting. yio—conveys an idea of doubt. Planting at this time may or may not have a result.
7. Narechag	Late June and early July	Early millet harvest. Nare—early millet. chag'—cut.
8. Nabiri	Late July, mid August	Na'—early millet. biri—small. The time for eating the small ears of early millet, which are not put in the granary owing to their smallness.
9. Komwanrega	August–September	Kom—water. wanreg'—month or moon. The period of heavy rain.

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves, in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people. Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters, and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 636
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the 175
embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared, but some of the values connected with it remain. The other institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of economic development was started, and social services were multiplied. The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and
613 lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political
182 circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British
175 rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the
578 substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of
622 the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of
578 the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-
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Lebzure, *Kunwase* (You-do-not-stroke-a-snake), son of *Lebkura*. In 173
his time we fired arrows at the people on the Tɔng hills; there was a
famine and we used to rob them. All the people, except Winkoŋo 622
and Sia, rose against us, saying we were too proud. *Kunwase* was
succeeded by *Kundizore* (Water-cannot-pull-down-a-hill), a son of
Sapelega. There was also a war in his time which arose out of a quarrel
during a hunting expedition, in which Bade and Yazore had taken part.
Small-pox (called *Naba*, the Chief) also broke out in his time. *Kundizore*
was succeeded by *Nalebseyo* (It-will-change-to-the-wet-season), son of
Kabu. He was succeeded by *Pilibazaa* (Cover-them-all), son of *Bupaa*.
During his time the Europeans came. *Pilibazaa* was taken by the [177] ●
white men to Gambaga and asked to pay two hundred cows because
the Tɔng people had fired arrows at them (the Europeans). He died
at Gambaga and was succeeded by *Kunbanbeo* (Cannot-know-to-morrow),
a son of *Kundizore*. He was succeeded by *Yirisano* (Destroyer-of-compounds),
alias *Dentele*, a son of *Lebenwana*. In his time
the Europeans came and asked the Hill-people (Teŋ-zugu) to come
and see them, but they refused. He was succeeded by myself, *Kpama*,
son of *Pilibazaa*. I brought my father's bones from Gambaga, and
they were buried outside his compound.'

The above list comprises twenty-eight names, and, with other 551
similar genealogies, supplies us with an approximate estimate of the 173
time when the foreigners from Mampurugu first extended their influence
to embrace this area. The names of these Chiefs as here given 622
are their titles only; it is forbidden to mention their real names. Such
nicknames are called *sam-wur* in Talene, *saan-yure* in Nankane.

The ruling house at Tongo belongs to the *gwegmere* (lion) clan. 128
When I recorded the above and the other histories which follow I had
not as yet grasped the full significance of what I came to discover later, 622
namely, that in recording the history of these migrations as supplied 565
by the Chiefs, I was really only tracing the origins of a minute section
of the population, i.e. of those who formed the upper ruling class, and
not of their subjects, who formed the mass of the people. In consequence
I am unable, in the present instance, to specify the clans to
which the majority of the inhabitants of the 'towns', already given,
really belong. In my notebooks I find these clans, in nearly every case,
recorded as 'the lion clan'. This is only due, however, to my having
fallen into the error of failing to distinguish between rulers and ruled,
and imagining the histories told me by Chiefs and their following to be
applicable also to their subjects. I do not make any apology however,

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed 177
on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and 796
extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to 776
attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work.
Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it
so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of
the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which
are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of
cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity,
but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which
must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally [778]
the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country
about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the
boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to
the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

'Its power is from God (*Na Yin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan'*; its 784
taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the follow- 776
ing avoidances:

(*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
(*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
(*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
(*d*) *Meya* (water turtle).
(*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
(*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
(*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: ***M'po Tɔŋ nab la*** [195]
a zia koom (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range 788
which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There 776
seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who 778
come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this
shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

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[1] It is also known as *Ya ni* and *Ya pwiga*.

Look to my sickness that it may cease. If any one is doing this to me, catch him for me, or kill him and let me get health and strength.' 796

Another: 'I was in my town when I heard of this god, that he is strong, so I came to lean on him that he may help me. I am a person who drinks gin always and I am become a drunkard. Help me to stop drinking. Again, whatever work I do, I get in debt. If some one is doing all this to me, let *nana* catch him or kill him for me.' 782

When I state that these supplicants were educated men and women, some of whom owned large businesses, well-furnished European houses, and not a few of them their own cars, in which they had come hundreds of miles to visit this pagan god, the power and influence of the old beliefs may readily be imagined. I need not multiply examples. All the petitions were based on the same formula—the god was *nana*, the supplicants had come to lean upon him (*dan nebo*). They were promised nothing. If their prayers were answered, they would bring back an offering. Nearly every one asked for 'money' or 'profit'. 796 177 771

When the service was ended, we all backed out again into the sunlight and were led, complete silence being enjoined upon us, to the entrance of the second cave. Here the offerings were sacrificed over a mound so smothered in congealed blood and feathers as to hide its surface completely. 796

The *Ten'dan'* lifted up a round stone and tapped it against this altar. Each person then handed him the offering he or she had brought. Its throat was cut, the blood flowed on the altar, and the sacrifice was cast down. My sheep was sacrificed last of all. The photograph, Fig. 77, shows the old *Ten'dan'* about to cut its throat. All this was carried out in complete silence. We all then returned to where every one had undressed, and each person was smeared with a line of red clay on the side of each cheek, between the breasts, on each forearm, on the legs and back. This ended the ceremony. [302]

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku* ‡ have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

‡ [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

173 622 793 die. He would tap the land with his fingers and say, "*Teŋ ya be, zagala saam ka nees teŋ la okom*" (If such a thing as the land really is, (here is) So-and-so who has offended and treated you as of no account, may you kill him).[1] The land will break his compound; his fowls, goats, sheep, children, wives will die. The offender would approach an Elder and "beat his hands" and ask him to intercede with the *Tenedan'* on his behalf. Chiefs now own the people, but *Tenedan'* still own the land. The first Chief of Kagbiri was my father. He was *Tenedan'* at the time when the Germans made him Chief. The present Chief is Ati, he is my father's child (i.e. son of the speaker's father's brother). My father, after the Germans made him Chief, used to delegate the work of *Tenedan'* to me, so when he died and Ati was made Chief we continued to do the same.'

● 177 793 622 171 At this place (Kagbiri) so far as I could see, we find the Territorial Ruler (who is not a foreigner, but one of the family of the former *Tenedan'*), and the *Tenedan'*, 'his brother', working in complete harmony. The Germans, it will be noted, whether by accident or design, had made the *Tenedan'* also the Territorial Ruler. The significance of the rather curious and suggestive procedure—which I have also noted elsewhere—whereby a *Tenedan'* who, by chance, has become Chief, delegates the religious part of his duties to another, should not be overlooked. The multifarious administrative and executive duties, which the Territorial Ruler is asked by us to undertake, cannot be wholly responsible for this. This may be proved by an examination of the position of a Chief in Ashanti, where these two functions—religious and secular—are combined in one person. Perhaps the bad example set by the majority of foreign Chiefs in these parts, who were always unconcerned with local land-gods, may partly account for this. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked, that by far the most important religious duties performed by Ashanti Chiefs for their people are the ceremonies in connexion with their own ancestral spirits, in which their subjects now join, and not those rites in connexion with the land, which has tended to become alienated, although theoretically they still belong to the Stool. Many Northern Territory Rulers, while ignoring land gods, would, nevertheless, lay claim to the land. The following are some further notes on the duties and privileges of the *Tenedan'* among the Kusase.

793 [787] 'When the rain does not fall, the Elders consult the soothsayer and report to the *Tenedan'* what the *baa* (soothsayer) has told them. The

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[1] Compare p. 370. (i.e., different practice among Namnam)

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
244 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tɛnzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops, baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner, and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale, Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years, a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*, and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity, and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

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relatives may impel a young man to run away to 'Kumasi', the symbol for everything south of the Black Volta. 167

Thus one finds that about one man in three has at some time or other in the past two decades visited these, to the Tallensi, still foreign parts. 177 ● In the settlements near the main roads the dry-season migration of young men may, according to rough estimates made in 1936–7, reach over 10 per cent. of the adult male population. 167 Administrative officers estimate that in 1938–9 about 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were working abroad with the apparent intention of staying away for a lengthy period. These men bring back small sums of money, ranging from a few shillings to four or five pounds, as well as clothes and other miscellaneous trade goods. Money and clothes[1] are eagerly desired by the Tallensi. These are the most important new wants that have grown up recently as a result of culture contact. Foreign utensils, implements, or tools have hardly entered the productive system of the natives. The foreign ideas and exotic information brought back by the young men arouse curiosity but have made no appreciable impression on the native scheme of values and beliefs, or on their practical knowledge. Labour migrants remain strongly attached to their families and natal settlements, and it is always assumed that they will eventually return. Hitherto, among the Tallensi, very few have been lost to their natal communities; and when they do return, they resume the traditional way of life. Though they are one of the influences modifying the strict letter of custom in minor respects, they are not a disintegrating ferment

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[1] Tallensi maintain that there has been a tremendous increase in the amount of clothes worn since the white man opened up the country, and especially since the last war. [291] 177 They point out that nowadays every small boy has a loin-cloth for festive occasions, whereas even twenty years ago a youth only obtained one when he began courting, at the age of 18 or 19. In those days the ordinary man rarely had a cloth or tunic. His only garb was an animal skin. Nowadays every man has at least one cloth to cover himself at night and to wear during the day when he is not working, and many have two or three garments—a cloth and a tunic, for instance—while well-to-do men have considerable wardrobes. All cotton goods are imported. The Mossi cloth used in former days is still a favourite, especially for loin-cloths and caps, and tunics for special wear. The bulk of it is still imported from French territory, but there are some Mossi weavers at Bolɔga and Zuarungu who add to the supply. However, quite half if not more of the cotton goods worn by Tallensi is of European origin and the demand is increasing. I once listed all the clothes worn by a number of men and women from one of the most prosperous communities of Taleland as they passed my rest house on the way to the market. The figures are instructive as an indication both of the standard of living of the Tallensi and of the degree to which acculturation in this sphere has progressed. The sample consisted of 62 men and 64 women. Of the men, 35 (56 per cent.) wore cover-cloths of European cotton print; 18 (29 per cent.) wore Mossi cloths; 9 (15 per cent.) wore skins; 8 (13 per cent.) wore khaki shorts, several of them on top of native loin-cloths; the remainder wore native loin-cloths; 19 (30 per cent.) wore some form of European head-gear; 30 (48 per cent.) wore native-made caps. Thus 85 per cent. of these men were clothed, but none of them wholly. Of the women 12 (15 per cent.) wore a piece of cotton print and one wore a Mossi cloth—a very large incidence such as would not be found in most other Tale communities. The rest were nude, except for the perineal band and back-flap. As people dress up specially for market day, these figures are not indicative of everyday habits. The greater conservatism of women suggested by these figures is due in great part to their lack of opportunities for obtaining cash incomes for personal use.

177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these
648 parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177 ●
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves, in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people. Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters, and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient 636
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 636
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the 175
embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared, but some of the values connected with it remain. The other institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of economic development was started, and social services were multiplied. The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

PLATE II

[facing p. 17]

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(*a*) A Tale grandmother.

(*b*) A pair of marriageable maidens dressed up for a visit to the market.

173 ideological significance as a counterweight to the Mosuor legend and
811 as a dogma of prior habitation.

[171] In the Sie district the Sawalɔg people, whose political and ceremonial relations with the Sie Namoos are exactly parallel to those of Gbizug with Tongo, also declare that their ancestor came into being miraculously, self-generated. In the identical phraseology of the people of Gbizug and Wakii, they say, 'Our ancestor descended from Heaven', or 'Our ancestor sprouted from the earth'. I once challenged the clan-head of Sawalɔg to prove how this was possible. His answer, shrewdly rationalistic, deserves to be recorded. 'We have not heard that our ancestor came from any other land. We have no other land to return to as the Sie people (immigrant Namoos) have. If they desecrate (*sayɔm*, lit. spoil) the land here, they return to their (original) land yonder (at Tongo). That is why we say that we have descended from Heaven'—an interpretation which coincides with that of Sayɔbazaa, the Namoo.

173 The covenant between Mosuor and Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, again, accords
●177 well with a myth which is but a projection into the unchallengeable past
622 of the present-day relationships between Gbizug and Tongo. The amorphous and unstandardized myths of origin with which the Hill Talis are satisfied symbolize the remarkable social integration they had achieved before their subjugation by the British in 1911. For nowadays the Hill Talis are rent by factions and by an intestine struggle for power amongst the various ritual office-holders. Rival claims are validated by citing established custom, by appealing to the memories of men, or, in the last resort, by the fabrication or distortion of myths of origin. The Administration recognizes as chiefs only those clan heads whose title is derived directly or indirectly from the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi. Hence we find the Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu justifying his pretensions to recognized chiefship by concocting, for the benefit of a white inquirer, a story of how the founder of his lineage migrated thither from Mampurugu—a story which his enemies scoff at. The Sii Bɔyaraan, on the other hand, tries to strengthen his claim to precedence by alleging not only a Mampuru origin for his ancestors, but also that they were the very first to come and settle on the Hills.

173 These new myths are part of the defensive ideologies engendered by social conflict, but they follow the axioms of Tale thought. The Tallensi have no conception of a mythological or historical past of their society when people lived and behaved differently from to-day. The past is but an extension into the days of their forefathers of the life of to-day on the same rational plane of existence. Their history is to them not a sequence of events or a progression but a continuity. All that matters of the past, which lies beyond the span of man's recollection, lives on in the social structure, the ideology, the morality, and institutions of to-day. These are the palpable proofs of things that happened '*oh ho, ti banam ni ti yaanam ni*—in the days of our forefathers and ancestors'; one can infer from them what must have been the state of society in those far-off times. Conversely, the social arrangements which prevail to-day are valid, sensible, and appropriate not only because they achieve desired ends but also because *banam ni yaanam ndaa piil na*—the forefathers and ancestors

622 793 [184] These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External *Bɔyar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

622 793 554 Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*) ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

622 793 As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔyar* cult function as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

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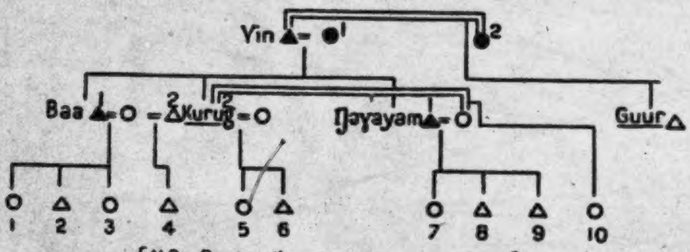
[177] [1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody [142] else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the [487] rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of ● [177] some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*) and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayəlis*). But one would have to know [515] the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body- [577] cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map at end of book.)



[NB: Double lines (=) show marriages]

[128]

in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed
Living men △
Living women ○
Dead men ▲
Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Dɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, [illegible] and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are 166
linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at 602
Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settle- 571
ments. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔɣaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

621 loyal to the interests of these clan settlements. But the political structure
613 of the newer settlements is rapidly crystallizing out, on the basis of a
● 177 territorial unity reinforced by inter-individual kinship ties. This process
has been greatly accelerated under the influence of British rule, with its
stress on the territorial definition of political units and the support it gives
to chiefs and headmen in the exercise of administrative and judicial
functions.

Seniority and Authority in the Lineage

613 182 In the course of our morphological analysis of the lineage system from within, we have made many references to the corporate activities in which this system emerges. As in our study of clanship, it has been convenient to speak as if the lineage structure exists and persists apart from the activities in which it emerges. But this is only an analytical device which we shall consider more fully presently. The implied distinction between the structure of the lineage and its functions does, however, bring out the important fact that the lineage structure is more than any of its functions. It is the integral of what is common to all Tale institutions in which the patrilineal line operates as an organizing principle. It is the general factor of consistency, coherence, and continuity in the social structure.

613 The concept of social structure essentially implies ordered extension *in time* as well as ordered articulation *at a given time*. This is often overlooked in the study of primitive society. Among the Tallensi the lineage system enables us to see the operation of the time factor in social structure in a very concrete way.[1] We see how the lineage structure at a given time incapsulates[2] all that is structurally relevant of its past phases and at the same time continually thrusts its growing-points forward. The dynamic equilibrium of a lineage is an equilibrium in time.

The key position, whenever a lineage emerges in function—and this applies to lineages of any span and all orders of segmentation—is that of the lineage head (*kpeem*). He is, to revert to an analogy previously used, the keystone of the arch. He does not stand above the lineage; he is part of it. *Kpeem* literally means 'senior': a *kpeem* is a senior, an elder. The head of the lineage is the most senior male of the group. The head of a lineage and his age or generation equals in the lineage are collectively designated 'the elders (*kpem*)'. They are for the most part the heads of the component segments of the lineage.

613 888 The rule of seniority, as might be expected in so homogeneous and equalitarian a society, plays an important part in all Tale social relations. When a group of boys are out herding cattle the oldest among them are in charge. The women of a household defer to the most senior by generation, age, or marital status among them. In all collective activities of men the places of honour are taken by the most senior men, the *kpem*. Seniority commands deference at all times.

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[1] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *cit. supra*; also Forde, op. cit. and his previous papers cited there; and a brilliant discussion of this point in E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, ch. 3.

[2] I owe this valuable concept to R. G. Collingwood's *Autobiography*.

628 578 to enforcement by explicit or implicit sanctions—it prevailed only within the clan or a cluster of closely interrelated clans, or between individual kinsfolk of different clans. Even so, every line of social cleavage was a source of weakness to the sanctions of right. It needed very little temptation or provocation for men of different clans or maximal lineages, however close the links between their respective groups, to lay violent hands on one another's property, person, or dependants. There was a general atmosphere of non-cognizance of rights *as such*. Times of crisis, such as famine, brought about a relapse into lawlessness.

691 628 720 In consequence the ultimate sanction of jural rights outside the clan was self-help. If a man could not recover a wife who had been abducted or a bride-price debt owing to him through the intermediation of the elders of his clan and those of the abductor's or debtor's clan, he had the right to use self-help and make a raid on the cattle of the offender's clan. This was legitimate and reprisals were not allowed. If the offender were to attempt any, his clansmen would not support him. But these raids might result in an armed clash with the cattle herds. Men might be killed; and then war flared up.

721 628 578 [177] But raiding (*gɔk*), as a measure of self-help, in itself was not an act of war. It led to war if men were killed, but not if there were no bloodshed. Sometimes, even if a raid ended in an affray and men were killed, a reconciliation was made before an interclan fight could develop. The Tallensi distinguished precisely between raiding, as a method of self-help which they considered a legitimate jural device for redressing a wrong, and warfare. The custom of raiding reinforced warfare because it provided occasions for armed clashes and because of the habit of mind that lay behind it. Though this habit ran counter to the moral repugnance of the Tallensi to shedding human blood, it tolerated the use of violence as the proper ultimate means of asserting one's rights. This attitude still survives, to some extent. Men still carry their weapons when they go on a journey. Disputes over wives or unpaid debts sometimes bring the parties to the brink of a sanguinary fight. One reason why these fights are suppressed by the natives themselves before they become serious is the fear of the white man with his armed police in the background. Another and more powerful reason is the system of chiefs' tribunals and District Commissioners' courts imposed by the British. This judicial system has become an established part of native life. It has provided an effectively sanctioned alternative to self-help and made the latter obsolete (cf. p. 13). But in the past the attitude of mind we have described led the natives to think of warfare in its corporate aspect as a mechanism for redressing wrongs that could not otherwise be put right. Considering their lack of a single, all-embracing government and their segmentary social structure, it was inevitable that conflicts should often arise that could only be settled by fighting.[1]

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[1] In this connexion it is worth noting that the Tallensi have only one term, *zabər*, for every kind of fighting, from a quarrel between co-wives to a war. But, in addition, war was distinguished by referring to it euphemistically as 'arrows' (*peema*). Thus a war is identified as 'the arrows of so-and-so', after its chief instigator.

ritual collaboration in a series of complementary relations the proper 578 maintenance of which they believe to be indispensable for their common 182 welfare. This is the basis of the ritual sanctions against instigating war and shedding blood and of the moral repugnance associated with them. A war temporarily upset the equilibrium of Tale society; it could not destroy it.

The social system of the Tallensi, in its widest extent, is held together 182 by its religious superstructure. Its unity is none the less real because it appears only on the highest plane of common religious values known to the natives. As we have noted, the complementary politico-ritual offices of the chiefship, which is typically a Namoo office, and the tendaanaship, typically an office found amongst non-Namoos, constitute the focus of the institutions that maintain this unity; and the annual cycle of the Great Festivals are at once the chief sanction and the supreme expression of it. The coming of the white man has made very little difference to the way [177] these institutions operate in relation to the fundamental structure of Tale society. They continue to be the crowning mechanism of equilibrium in Tale society, because its segmentary social structure has kept its traditional form and vitality. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that only a strong and universally accepted religious sanction could hold such a society together. In practice the equilibrium is achieved by the distribution of mutually complementary offices among the segments of the society, all of which are essential for the performance of definite ritual duties.

It is a significant index of the type of social system presented by [728] the Tallensi that the widest range of social solidarity found among 796 them is evoked by their Great Festivals. Great stress is laid on the ritually sanctioned truce to all fighting or discord between clans or maximal [582] lineages during the Festivals. That is why marriages are forbidden during 182 the *Gɔlib* Festival. The Festival Cycle begins with the Harvest Festivals. These are celebrated by single clans or groups of linked maximal lineages independently of one another and serve to enhance the sense of clan and lineage solidarity. The climax is the *Gɔlib* Festival, immediately before the rains. This gives ritual sanction and dramatic expression to the idea of the close-knit interdependence of all the Tallensi with one another. Its reiterated themes are the common interests of all the Tallensi—food, peace, and fecundity—which must be achieved if they are to survive, and the supreme common values—the cult of the ancestors and of the Earth—by which the whole of Tale social life is steered. The lesson of *Gɔlib*, to the Tallensi, is that men cannot realize their greatest common interests or pursue their greatest common purposes in mutual enmity. *Gɔlib* is the most powerful counterweight to war and to the tendency of each clan and maximal lineage to set its own corporate interests above the common interest of the whole society. It is noteworthy that the Great Festivals do not presuppose the suspension of the primary loyalties of the segments that make up Tale society. They represent a synthesis, for the time being, of these primary loyalties—a synthesis that is possible only by giving full scope to the feeling of clan and maximal lineage unity and singularity in each group. *Gɔlib* emphasizes the mutual dependence of Namoos and Talis, but it does this by simultaneously enhancing the

578 618x

husband. In both types of case conflicts reflect the importance of wives as a common interest of the lineage and clan.

But the chief source of intra-clan discord is rival claims to priority in the exercise of rights of a politico-ritual nature, which are generally vested in lineages and are associated with the dominant values of the society. The conflict may be precipitated by a clash of personalities. But very often the underlying pressure comes from a change in the internal constitution of the lineage that has been taking place gradually with the passage of the generations and is not yet recognized. In the course of two or three generations an inner lineage may ramify so widely that its members claim the status of a medial lineage when it comes to succeeding to the headship of a more inclusive lineage, and this claim may be resisted by the other branches of the more inclusive lineage. It is such conflicts that eventually get resolved by the setting up of a new equilibrium in which the change is recognized by the redistribution of reciprocal rights and obligations. Intra-clan discord is often due to the universal human propensity to resist infringements of one's recognized social rights or one's self-regard; or to the complementary tendency for individuals to assert themselves by aggressive action. But it is probably more often a phase in the structural development of a lineage or clan, a symptom of a hitherto unrecognized internal change in its structure. This does not make the conflict less acute or disturbing while it lasts; but it does mean that there are always social forces at work that counteract the conflict even while it is going on and will prevent it from disrupting the corporate group entirely.

These processes are so characteristic of the social system of the Tallensi that they could be illustrated from the contemporary history of any clan or maximal lineage. Tallensi say that intra-clan conflicts have increased since the coming of the white man. They maintain that the suppression of warfare and of self-help, and the new freedom of movement, have greatly diminished lineage and clan solidarity. People no longer need the help of their kinsmen as much as they used to. But careful inquiry shows that intra-clan discord was as common forty or fifty years ago as to-day and sometimes more violent. Many of the most deep-seated and intractable antagonisms within and between lineages or clans to-day go back to conflicts that began fifty or sixty years ago. 578 618x 177 ●

A typical instance is the dispute between the Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana which began with the immediate predecessors of the present tɛndaanas. The dispute concerns the degree of autonomy to which the Gbeog tɛndaana is entitled in his ritual jurisdiction over the *tɛŋ* of Gbeog (see p. 87). He claims full autonomy. The Gbizug tɛndaana as 'elder brother' (*bier*) in ritual status of the Gbeog tɛndaana, and head of the senior maximal lineage of the clan, citing ancient custom, claims to have an over-right over the Gbeog tɛndaana. He says that the Gbeog tɛndaana is simply his deputy and should therefore render to him the perquisites that a tɛndaana receives for the performance of such ritual services as marking out graves. The men of Gbizug are unreservedly on the side of their lineage head. The men of Gbeog are torn between their loyalty to their maximal lineage and the greater solidarity 793 578

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and
613 lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political
182 circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British
175 rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the
578 substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of
the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system
622 of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of
578 the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-
622

pensation sink into the background, the sanctions inherent in the native 177
social structure prevail, and the traditional ties of politico-ritual collabora- 578
tion come into force. 622
But when the new interests brought into being by the influence of the British Administration come to the fore, the traditional social ties and the sanctions associated with them no longer prevail. For among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, such ties and sanctions do not function at all times and in all circumstances. They work in the context of the scheme of social relationships of which they form a part and not in other contexts. These new interests mobilize the existing corporate units of Tale society. Thus they tend to deepen some of the cleavages that exist, and to weaken the countervailing ties, between lineages and clans. It is noteworthy that rivalry for the rewards of political power under the British Administration is most acute between clans that have close ties in the native social system. As was the case with war in former days, clans and maximal lineages that are widely separated from one another, either locally or in terms of their fields of social relations, cannot come into conflict or competition with one another. Thus political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and his 'younger brother' the Chief of Yamalɔg is severe and has led to estrangement between these two branches of Mosuor biis. But there is no political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and the Chief of Datɔk. Competition for politico-ritual office within clans is fiercer than it was in the past and less scrupulous, though it still follows the lines of cleavage in the lineage structure.

At the same time some chiefs have used their new powers to weld their clans into closer unity on the political plane than existed in the old days. This has happened at Tongo and at Sie. But it has not been to the benefit of the social balance in the greater society. By strengthening the autocratic ambitions of these chiefs, the closer unity of their clans has tended to aggravate the antagonisms between clans.

B. *Pecuniary Competition among the Hill Talis*

A new factor of disequilibrium that has had a very disturbing influ- 177
ence among the Hill Talis is pecuniary competition which has become 434
associated with certain traditional institutions. Many families nowadays 438
obtain driblets of money through members of the family working abroad, 578
or by petty trade. But the pecuniary competition we are referring to concerns money on a scale unprecedented in Tale history; and its disruptive influence is due to its association with a traffic in ritual benefits comparable to that of the notorious Southern Nigerian oracles.

The centre of this traffic is the Tong Hills, and its disruptive influence 178
has been greatest among the Hill Talis, where it has brought violent 438
competition into the sphere of the common ritual interests and values 578
which form the bulwark of their cohesion. The integration of the Hill Talis in the native social structure depends, as we have seen, on a meticulous balance of local, clanship, and ritual ties and cleavages focused in the politico-ritual offices vested in the heads of maximal lineages. So nicely calculated is the distribution of these politico-ritual functions amongst the various maximal lineages that none can claim

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice.
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal 431
lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation-
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from 486
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth 471
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately 794
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

621 lineages inherent in the native social structure. The majority of the
622 Gɔlibdaana's own maximal lineage share in the profits of his monopoly
and are solidly behind him; the maximal lineages of the leaders of the
177 opposition are solidly against him; but many of the maximal lineages that
578 have clanship or ritual links with both sides are split. Many of the young men of these lineages side with the Gɔlibdaana—enticed, their elders say bitterly, by his lavish gifts. The older men are uneasily neutral or tacitly opposed to the Gɔlibdaana because he has brought dissension to the Hills and has flouted some of the ancient ritual customs. Both parties try to manœuvre the opposition into a position which will set the Administration in motion against them; the leaders of both parties say that the white man's authority is the only force that will help them to victory. And they feel particularly bitter because the vigilance of Administrative officers has frustrated all their efforts to exploit this potent sanction.

At the same time they try to use the sanctions of their own social structure to gain their aims. For outside the struggle for control of the pilgrim traffic, the ties of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration remain valid as before. During the Great Festivals the feud sinks into temporary abeyance. The Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab speak with hatred of each other when it is a question of political power or the pilgrim traffic; they continue to perform those rites of the Great Festivals and of the Earth cult in which they are ritually obliged to collaborate, with apparent cordiality. This is a 'separate thing' they declare. It would be an appalling sin bringing catastrophe on the whole country, they say, if they threw over these bonds.

But the new alinements in the pecuniary struggle and the traditional social structure cannot be kept apart in watertight compartments. The Kpata'arna'ab and the Gɔlibdaana try to coerce each other through their mutual ritual obligations. They try to put pressure on each other through maximal lineages that are intercalary between their lineages; and to win over the other maximal lineages with which they have clanship or ritual ties.

Experienced elders maintain, with the sceptical candour that is one of the few charms Tallensi have for an ethnographer, that this can never decide the issue. Putting it at its highest, the bonds of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration are a double-edged weapon. If Kpata'ar tries to coerce Samiit to side with it by refusing to collaborate with Samiit in the rites of their common External *Bɔyar*, the ancestors might well blame Kpata'ar and punish them. Tallensi are not—so the old men say—restrained from doing something to their personal advantage by the fear of mystical penalties. 'Who fears death before death comes upon you?' It is only after a death occurs that the survivors see in it signs and omens referring to their social relations with one another.

578 Whenever a death occurs in any of the Hill clans, especially if it is the
764 death of an important person, the chronic discord between them is openly recollected. It is both a symptom of the general feeling of uneasiness and a move in the game of attempted mutual coercion by mystical sanctions. A funeral almost inevitably causes this feeling to be ventilated. For people of all the Tɛnzugu and many other clans are present, as kinsfolk, affines,

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and
their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate
units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the
ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors, for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which
they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tenzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been
regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar* as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high
status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[77] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of
Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly. Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through
the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals.
The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

596 736 nephews but more distant cognatic and even affinal kin frequently live with a kinsman until they can set up in their own homesteads.

Sometimes, too, an unmarried sister's child (*tau-bii*) may grow up and live in its uncle's family. It may be an illegitimate child (*yi yeem bii*—a maiden's child), or one whose mother's bride-price was not paid, and who therefore belongs to her father unless or until it is redeemed (*pɔhəg*) by the payment of a cow by its genitor or his heir. A sister's child is to all intents and purposes a child of the family. But not being of the true agnatic line, it is subject to certain jural disabilities which have no consequence for a girl but handicap a boy, as we have previously seen.

596 622 The domestic families of chiefs and headmen are unusual only in respect of size. Their newly won riches enable chiefs and headmen to acquire numerous wives and to maintain households that appear enormous in the eyes of the ordinary man. A petty headman may have ten or more wives. The late Chief of Tongo, a chief of modest means compared with some of his peers in Taleland, had more than thirty. The Golibdaana of Tɛnzugu has at least eighty. The Chief of Datɔko is reputed to have a hundred, but he denies this and claims to have only a modest fifty. Except that their domestic economy and organization is more complex and that there is at times more friction between the womenfolk, these hypertrophied joint families have the same pattern of organization as those of ordinary folk.

596 ●177 167 It is noteworthy that this pattern has not been disturbed by the social changes which have, in recent years, followed the subjection of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast to European political, economic, and cultural influences. Family disorganization has barely begun to appear in Taleland. There is hardly a domestic family in the country—not one in our sample—which has wholly escaped the effects of these contact influences. One or more of their members is or has been abroad in Mampurugu, Ashanti, or the Colony, for longer or shorter periods of time, farming, working for wages, or trading. But the number of men abroad, at any given time, for very long periods is relatively small[1] compared with other parts of West and Southern Africa, and their absence has little effect on the structure of the residual family. Their labour is lost to the family, but as they are no longer a drain on its resources this does not upset its internal economy. Similarly, as they are mostly young men[2] with little or no responsibility for the management of family

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[1] Estimates based on my own census material and on Nominal Rolls drawn up by Administrative Officers for tax collection show that an average of just under 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were away from home and not likely to return in the immediate future, in the years 1936 to 1939. This estimate may be compared with the 60–80 per cent. of able-bodied adult males absent from tribal reserves in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland quoted by Lord Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 701.

[2] Reliable information on the ages of these absentees cannot be obtained. But from personal contact with many of them, both on their return home and

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affairs, their absence does not disturb jural or ritual relations centred 177 in the family. It is like a tree which remains a tree morphologically and 167 physiologically even if some of its minor branches have been lopped off.

The foregoing is true of the great majority of Tale families. The 596 structure of the normal family can still be accurately described without 177 reference to contact influence, in spite of the fact that a few families can be found in every settlement which have been badly mutilated by the 183 prolonged absence abroad of their male members. Admittedly the norms of family relations have not remained completely insulated from these influences. With the ease of modern communications and the openings for work abroad, young people have incentives and opportunities which their fathers never had for resisting the authority of their elders and for breaking away from the family for a longer or shorter time. But as yet these new incentives and opportunities appear only as modifying factors in the play of the culturally defined family relations. They do not represent a conflicting set of norms, creating divisions within Tale society. For instance, a young man who is still jurally a minor cannot at will leave the domestic family to which he belongs by birth and set up an independent household. He can do so only in compliance with the moral rules and social conventions that regulate the fission of families. In fact, the motive to break away will only arise when certain standard changes take place in the composition of the domestic unit to which he belongs, or when he reaches a stage of social maturity which precipitates certain standard tensions between him and the head of the unit. The alternative for a young man who, in these days, hankers after independence is to leave the community until such time as he is prepared to settle down. He has to seek work abroad, in Ashanti or the Colony, or in the service of the white man nearer home. He is assured of a cordial welcome home whenever he decides to return, whether it be for a few weeks only or permanently. But if he makes up his mind to settle down at home it can only be within the existing social framework, and this means complying with the norms of family organization. There is no other way by which he can get married or acquire a house site or farm-land in his natal settlement, let alone play his part in community affairs. Hitherto these norms have been so well maintained that no returned emigrant has been known to flout them.

Summing up, we see that the Tale domestic system has three morphological strata. It consists of a segmentary economic formation—households of different dimensions and degrees of economic self-sufficiency—embraced within a segmentary jural and ceremonial formation—domestic units not necessarily congruent with households grouped under family heads—and this again contained within a system of residential grouping in which the changes of phase in domestic structure are crystallized. 592

in places like Kumasi, I can say with certainty that the great majority are under 30.

82 861 9 or 10 the children are thoroughly familiar with the ecological environment of their clan settlements. They know the economically important trees, grasses, and herbs, e.g., a girl of about 9 once named and showed me nine varieties of herbs used for making soup. They have a fair idea of the gross anatomy of the fowl, small field animals, and larger live stock. But apart from these achievements which lead one to infer the existence of an interest in the natural environment, I was able to obtain some direct evidence thereof. The natives say that small children frequently ask questions about people and things they see around them. However, listening to children's talk for 'why' questions,[1] I was surprised to note how rarely they occurred; and the few instances I recorded refer to objects or persons foreign to the normal routine of Tale life. It would seem that Tale children rarely have to ask 'why' in regard to the people and things of their normal environment because so much of their learning occurs in real situations where explanation is generally coupled with instruction, and because they hear so much adult discussion, in terms of cause and effect, as these are understood by the Tallensi, of the things they are interested in. Yet two examples will prove that even quite small children react with exploratory interest to what is new and unusual. I gave some tiny tin figures of animals to a group of small children to play with. A little boy of about 5 looked intently at the figure of a horse. 'Why does he stoop like that?' he asked, speaking to himself rather than to his companions. But immediately he answered his own question, 'He is eating grass.' On another occasion I observed the 3-year-old son of our cook, pointing to the garbage tin, ask the horseboy: 'Why has that got a lid?'

857 ● 177 532 Again, making clay figures is a favourite diversion of small boys and adolescents. The standard figures are men and women, cows and horses. But a youngster of about 9 or 10 once produced a motorcycle, explaining that he had recently seen the Agricultural Officer arrive on one. Another boy, a little older, once made a roan antelope, explaining that some two years previously he had seen one of these animals which, fleeing from a hunting party, had entered the settlement and been surrounded and killed there.

128 I have not attempted to give an exhaustive account of the interests

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[1] See N. Isaacs in *Intellectual Growth of Young Children.*

On any day in the dry season or the first half of the rainy season 857
one can find a group of girls playing at housekeeping. Most com- 524
monly they consist of a group of sisters and ortho-cousins—two to 868
four active participants with, perhaps, a couple of infants attached. Often one or two small boys of about 5 or 6 are in their company, sharing in their play or absorbed in their own separate play. In play, as in the simple economic duties, there is as yet no marked sex dichotomy at this age; and small boys are not ridiculed for ' grinding grain ' and ' cooking porridge ', or small girls for ' building houses ' in play. The girls generally constitute a mixed age group, varying from 6 to 10–11 years, for even those who are already capable of real cooking enjoy playing at it. When they are of about equal maturity their play tends to be loosely organized. Each cooks for herself, but they help one another, lending one another ' utensils ', ' grain ', ' firewood ', and exchanging ' dishes of porridge ' like co-wives. When one girl is older than the others she tends to take the lead, and the smaller girls assist her on the pattern of daughter helping mother in real cooking. Infants are ' our children '; and reliable informants have told me that small boys are said to be the ' husbands '—but I have never observed boys being addressed thus, though I have watched housekeeping play very frequently. According to my observation, it is merely implied in the manner of distributing the ' cooked porridge ', which follows the pattern of family feeding. Older girls sometimes introduce dolls as the ' children '—clay figures of people made by themselves or, more usually, for them by their brothers.

The essentials of the play consist in ' grinding flour ', ' cooking sauce ' and ' porridge ', and ' sharing out ' the ' food '. Every feature of the real processes is mimicked, but with the most ingenious imaginative adaptations. A pair of flattish stones or a boulder and a large pebble serve as ' grindstones '. For pots, dishes, calabashes, and ladles various things are used—old sherds chipped into roughly circular pieces the size of a half-crown or crown, fragments of old
calabashes, the husks, whole or bisected, of *mɔlɔmɔk* or *kalampoo*, [824
spherical fruits of common trees varying in size from that of a large 137]
marble to that of a cricket ball, and even old tins or bits of tins, while
some girls make little pots of clay. Pebbles make a fire-place, a thin [177]
piece of millet-stalk is the stirring-stick, some dried grass the firewood.

Isolation.

An important economic feature of the district is its distance from the coast, 500 miles, and from rail head, 350 miles. This means expensive road transport precluding the possibility of all but local exports with the present prices ruling on the world's markets. The isolation is further emphasised by the fact that the main road to the South is not yet all-weather. Motor traffic is cut off from the end of May until the end of November, when the Volta rivers wash away the temporary dry season drifts. 131 491

European Contact.

Contact with Europeans has taken place only comparatively recently, *i.e.*, within about the last forty years, and for some time, soldiers, police, and political officers were the only "white men" known to the people; these were followed by medical and veterinary officers. It was not until 1930 that an agricultural officer visited the district in the growing season, and then only temporarily upon locust control duty. Observations made during this visit are recorded in the Department's Year Book for 1930 (4). In 1932 practically new ground had to be broken, and a natural suspicion, increased by not altogether unfounded rumours of direct taxation, had to be overcome before the people's confidence was obtained. The importance of this confidence for the success of our work requires no stressing. 177

Climate.

The main climatic feature of the district is a well defined rainy season, lasting from the beginning of April until the middle of November, alternating with an intensely dry season. The mean annual rainfall at Zuarungu is 43.92", at Navrongo 47.83", and at Bawku 41.20". Monthly means are given in Appendix I. The whole of North Mamprusi is included in the Sudanese Climatic Zone (5). Rainbearing winds come from the South East, but tornadoes from the East and North East mark the beginning and the end of the rainy season; then precipitations are very localised. From November until February or March the "harmattan" (5) wind blows with varying severity. 132

Vegetation—Trees.

The natural vegetation of North Mamprusi is "tree savannah" (6) with fringing forest along the banks of the larger rivers. In the populated parts of the district only trees of economic value, 137

Nevertheless, although a shortage of cultivated foods does not 222
necessarily mean starvation, it lowers resistance to disease and 261
saps the energy of the people at the end of the dry season when they need strength to prepare their farms; thus setting up a "vicious circle". It is not the shortage of food in itself which is so arresting, however, as the apathy of the people to the shortage. Ancestor worship causes them to dwell in the past and to think insufficiently of the present and the future. This, too, is probably symptomatic of the unsettled conditions when only the past was certain. It will take some time for the people, the older people who control affairs especially, to adjust themselves to the swift
developments going on around them. An unfortunate result is [1[illegible]7
that during the period of adjustment, many of the young men 464]
are attracted away from the district to work for wages in Ashanti and the Colony, where there is a big demand for unskilled labour in the mines and in handling the cocoa crop. These young men do not as a rule stay away from home for long at a time, and usually return with a little money; but they do not take readily to farming again, and represent a floating population which is the source of considerable concern to their elders.

Economic Awakening.

An adequate food supply alone does not appear to be sufficient 177●
incentive for the adoption of better farming methods; and it is unlikely that changes will come until farming ceases to be regarded mainly as a custom, and becomes a business. There are many signs of an economic awakening, fostered by such factors as a growing desire of the people for imported commodities, and an increase in money consciousness; the completion of an all-weather road to the South; the opening of a gold mine at Nangodi; the developing trade in all classes of livestock with Ashanti and the Colony; the new trade in groundnuts from Bawku for the Kumasi market; together with the work of Government Departments in the improvement of human health, the health of livestock, and not least, the scope of the recently introduced Native Administrations. These are some of the factors helping to bring about a change which can be met only by better farming. Government must anticipate agricultural expansion to be in a position to control its development.

The first problem, obviously, is to ensure a sufficiency of food 000
for everyone in every year. Then, when local requirements have been satisfied, it must be shown how a surplus can be disposed of profitably, to satisfy growing demands. Upon this the Department of Agriculture is working in North Mamprusi, and the results of the last four years' work form the basis of this bulletin.

412 [177] [326] mounted on a similar handle. Hoe-blades are now made from scrap iron, mainly parts of old motor cars and old railway sleepers; a hoe is sold in the market for 2d. or 3d., which is well within the purchasing power of everyone. It is not many years, however, since hoes were made from locally smelted iron; they were then not so easy to come by and some of the poorer farmers used hoes of hard wood.

241 134 The coarse nature of the soil enables a shallow cultivation to be given effectively with these light implements after a fall of rain. When the ground is dry and hard, cultivation is very laborious and it is frequently neglected at a time when needed most. This is often the case early in the season when precarious rains make a soil-mulch desirable.

Preparation for Planting.

243 Two of the most important crops, early millet and guinea corn, are sown after the second big rain of the year, this is generally in the first week of April. The soil, which has been left untilled since the burn-over after the previous year's harvest, is very hard until humidity rises with the approaching rain, and there is very little time to do any preliminary cultivation. On the majority of farms the only preparation for sowing is to collect the remains of the previous season's crops into heaps and to burn, and sometimes to carry-out manure; very occasionally a little hoeing is done.

Planting Major Crops.

412 241 On the morning following the big planting rain the whole countryside turns out to do one of its few really full day's work on the farm for the year. Men walk over the farm with stout sticks about 6' long, cut from "tcheea" (Nankani) (Anoegeissus leiocarpus), or "gopelaga" (Nankani) (Acacia sieberriana), sharpened at the end to a flat point, resembling a narrow-bladed oar; or sometimes fitted with a worn hoe blade. With these sticks, holes are prodded at random 2' 6" to 3' apart in the moist earth; the soil being ejected with a twist of the wrists. 241 Women and children follow the men with the seed of early millet and cowpeas mixed in a calabash. The calabash is held in the hand between the third and fourth fingers, and three to six seeds of early millet,

173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
[304] forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows
565 these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

● 178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—
128 is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 'I rise (after death) a *sako'*, said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan),
784 but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tamperŋpeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

XXXIV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

The Clan Settlement. The Family Compound. The Section-head (Yi-zut-kyɛma). *The* Ten'dan'. *The Territorial Ruler*

621 613 THE constitution of a Talense *tey* is identical with that of the Nankanse. The *tey* (Nankane *teya*) is divided into sections, all the inhabitants of which trace descent from a common ancestor, but each, again, has, as its own more intimate ancestral spirit, a less remote ancestor, from which that particular section takes its name and to whom 'section-', as opposed to '*tey-*', sacrifices, are offered. A section is *yi-zug* (Nankane *yi-zuo*). A section-head is *Yi-zug-kpwem* (Nankane *yi-zuo kyɛma*).

At Tongo there are four sections, known as (*a*) Pusega, (*b*) Guŋa, (*c*) Korega, (*d*) Seug. The post of section-head of Pusega was vacant; as 'the funeral custom of the late *yi-zut-kpwem* had not yet been held, his successor could not be appointed'.

The section-head of Guŋa is *Sayezaa* (my informant, see Fig. 63); of Korega, a certain *Basego*; of Seug, vacant, for the same reason as (*a*).

613 [761] *Election of New Section-head*: Heads of other sections met and consulted the *bay* (Nankane *baga*) to find out why the late head of the section had died. The soothsayer might say, 'It was because he did not give one of the cows, *sull* (Nankane, *sulle*), which he received for his eldest daughter, to his ancestor.' After the funeral custom his successor was appointed. 'The man who had the right to take the deceased's *bagere* (here ancestral shrine) was the one to succeed. This man was already known; the *bay* was only consulted about the funeral.'

The successor to the section-head was the 'senior' man in that section, but he was not necessarily the oldest: e.g. *A* marries a wife, *C*, by whom he has three sons, *D*, *E*, *F*, and three grandsons *G*, *H*, *I*, sons of *D*, *E*, and *F*; *A*, in his old age, marries a young wife, *B*, by whom he has a son, *J*. This son may be twenty years or more younger than *G*, *H*, *I*, but if *A*'s brothers are all dead and also *D*, *E*, and *F*, then *J* will become section head before *G*, *H*, or *I*, 'because *G*, *H*, and *I* call *J* father.'[1]

613 ● 178 The tendency here, as almost everywhere in the Northern Territories, is for these hereditary section-leaders, who were really the back-

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[1] See p. 279 [i.e. reference to similar [p. 346] practice among the Nankanse — A]

513 178 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

793 *The Ten'dan'*: Among the Talense an investigation into the former status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 783 627 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs; this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die, except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*tey*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man tey*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

782 783 If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person, he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

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[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

● 178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
648 factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

started and transmitted them. Custom is not inviolable in its own right. 173
It is compelling because it is the legacy of the ancestors.

These notions are perfectly explicit in the behaviour and thought of 178
the natives, for whom they have a profound moral value. *Banam ndaa ɛŋ de, yaanam ndaa ɛŋ de*—our forefathers used to do it, our ancestors used to do it, is a recurrent formula in every ceremonial speech or ritual invocation during the Great Festivals. So the Samiitna'ab protesting his loyalty to traditional values and to the Kpata'arna'ab, in the latter's feud with the Gɔlibdaana, exclaimed: 'It is the young men who are causing the trouble. They desire their cloths and their caps; but I know only what my ancestors did (*man mi la n-yaanam ndaa ɛŋ siem*). My ancestor (*n-yaab*) wore a skin and I, too, wear a skin; my ancestor knew nothing of cloth. I know only my forefathers' path and I adhere to that (*man mi la mbanam suor, man dɔla dɛni*).'

In the same way, and because their social system engenders so strong 181
a sense of the continuity and stability of their culture and social organiza- 867
tion, Tallensi always stress the importance of passing on to their descendants the way of life bequeathed to them by their forefathers. At ceremonies or when disputes are argued out before a chief or a lineage head, it is not uncommon to hear the old men praise the young men who attend. 'Thus,' the old men say, 'they (the young men) will learn the customs (*yɛla*) of our ancestors.' Tallensi place an extremely high value on their social order. An individual or a particular corporate group might desire to alter his or its position in the society. A man might desire to have greater prestige or more power than his neighbours. A clan might strive to assert its supremacy over other clans, whether or not it is entitled to do so. No one would dream of trying to overthrow the whole social order or of agitating against the existing customs and values.

This does not mean that Tale customs never change, or that the Tallensi 178
believe this to be the case, or invariably resist cultural changes. There 184
have been many shifts in custom and usage during the past two decades. The imposition of peace and an embryonic judicial system have diminished the tensions that kept unrelated clans apart and so have made it unnecessary for them to over-emphasize the emblems and symbols of their separateness. Fifteen years ago men of a tɛndaana's clan used to observe strictly the taboo against wearing gowns and trousers, the distinctive garments of chiefs and men of chiefly (i.e. Namoo) clans. To-day the young men of tɛndaanas' clans all wear such clothes outside the territory with which they have direct ritual ties. By this simple compromise they make the best of both worlds, the old world of strictly defined local, genealogical, and politico-ritual exclusiveness and the new world of free movement, unrestricted social intercourse with all and sundry, and cheaper clothes. They wear the ancient prescribed garb of a skin and a loin-cloth on ritual occasions, especially during the Great Festivals, when they take a pride in advertising their politico-ritual status. This change of custom does not cut athwart the basic values and principles of Tale social organization. It has arisen because the young men of tɛndaanas' clans are as eager to display themselves in fine clothes as the young men of other clans, and because the wearing of clothes is economically easier to attain than

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Gɔlibdaana, in his
overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Gɔlibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power
failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense,
because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He
would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or,
for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the
arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are
still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
576 building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and
legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

x618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tɛndaana, both receive sacrifices.
182 But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a
771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

774 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both
769 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve
182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages.
613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar* (*dugni bɔyar*), the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpaləg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tɛndaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tɛndaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tɛndaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

x618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of
182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[793] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one
178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar
182 tɛndaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders
578 to Duunkpaləg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdɛm did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tɛndaana-elect to Duunkpaləg. The Yapaasdɛm, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

178 forefathers in that way (*ti ku saŋ ti banam bah ywala*)'. Some of the
182 younger men of Yapaas were merely being tiresome. 'You'll see',
578 countered the man who had spoken earlier, sceptically, 'some day there will be a quarrel over something, the division of meat at a sacrifice, or the inheritance of a widow, or something of that sort, and then you people of Zubiuŋ will split up.'

578 Meanwhile, we continued to wait for the Yapaasdɛm, for the ritual could not be performed without the presence of their representatives. In due course they arrived. Far from expressing contrition, they excused themselves by accusing the others of having bungled the sequence of the rites. A violent argument followed, but one of the elders cut it short. No doubt, he said, the Yapaasdɛm preferred a different order of the rites. That was their affair. The senior lineages had no intention of copying them. To-day the ceremonies were *their* concern, and now that all the lineages were properly assembled they might as well get on with the business.

Linked Maximal Lineages and the Field of Clanship

x618 Corresponding to this structural differentiation within the clan, each maximal lineage has its distinct field of clanship. One segment of
Yakɔradɛm, known as Pulien biis, is an attached lineage descended from a
[567] 'sister's son' of the authentic lineage. Another segment (Zaŋgɔbɔg'yidɛm) is an assimilated lineage, said to be of slave descent. Members of this segment are debarred from holding the tɛndaana-ship. Pulien biis have the right to hold the office, but mainly in a titular capacity, for they are barred from its most essential responsibilities. In other respects these accessory lineages have been fully absorbed by the authentic line of Yakɔradɛm, and participate in all the corporate activities of the latter.

The Yakɔradɛm have ties of clanship with Gbizug, which counts as the senior segment of Gbeog, and is bound to Gbeog proper by the usual ties of clanship. But there are no ties of clanship between Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Gbeog proper. They may not marry a daughter of Gbizug; they may and do marry Gbeog women, who would of course be barred by the rule of exogamy from marrying into Gbizug. Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra also have ties of clanship with Ba'at-Sakpar, one of the major segments of the clan of Ba'ari; but they have no ties of clanship with any of the other Ba'ari maximal lineages. Similarly, they have ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ, but not with the Namoo lineage of Zoodɛm proper. The other two component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ are excluded from this field of clanship. For instance, they can and do marry Gbizug, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zoo-Yiraaŋ women.

x618 These extra-clan ties of clanship are rationalized in various ways.
811 Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar claim to be the consanguineous kin (*dɔyam*) of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, because, as the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas relate, the founding ancestors of all three lineages were 'brothers'. The Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are claimed as kin (*dɔyam*) of the latter because their founding ancestor is said to have been a 'sister's son' of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. It should be noted that such a remote cognatic link does not in every case establish ties of clanship. The same fiction is used to account for the existence of

618x

with Sakpee. The innovation made by one couple was not regarded as a precedent. Their transgression was at length accepted with equanimity (the Tallensi are a practical-minded people), but not allowed to undermine the established norms. Then, four or five years ago, a young man of Pulien biis wanted to marry a Sakpee girl. When the elders of both lineages forbade it, he invoked this precedent, but to no avail. Taking advantage of the liberty of movement which people now have, the young couple eloped to Kumasi. The girl's father was faced with a *fait accompli*. He had no alternative but to accept the placation gifts and part of the bride-price necessary to make it a legitimate marriage, though he did so very reluctantly. Soon afterwards came the funeral of the late Yakɔra tɛndaana, who had been a member of Pulien biis. And for the first time in living memory their linked lineage at Sakpee omitted to send their contribution of porridge or to attend even the public phases of the ceremonies. When the beer was being distributed to all the *sunzɔp* lineages, someone remarked that the name of Sakpee had not been formally called. This provoked a discussion about the relationship of Sakpee to Pulien biis. 'You are no longer *sunzɔp*', one Zubiuŋ elder maintained, 'you have intermarried and become relatives-in-law.' The elders of Pulien biis unanimously denied this, and tried to find excuses for the Sakpeedɛm. They claimed that people can be *sunzɔp* to one another and yet marry, as is done in Tongo and Zoo. This quibble was debated with vociferous good humour. Eventually one of the elders settled the matter in a typical spirit of compromise. 'Listen,' he said, 'we and Sakpee have now become *sunzɔp*; but we used to be *yidɛm* (that is, branches of the same lineage). Marriages have caused that.'

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178

The process[1] is incomplete; but it looks as if there is sure to be a realinement of the structural ties between Zubiuŋ-Pulien biis and Sakpee in the course of time. This change is a response to a conflict of loyalties—*those arising from the* ties of clanship, and those of opposite value arising out of the divergent ties of locality and of politico-ritual dependence between Zubiuŋ and Tongo, and between Sakpee and the other clans of Tɛnzugu. The other two Zubiuŋ maximal lineages have ties of clanship with two other major segments of Ba'ari, but with no other clans. Kpaɣara yaɣar have clanship ties with the section of Lakum yidɛm, and Yapaas with the section Guŋdɛm at Ba'ari. These ties operate in the same way as the extra-clan ties of Yakɔra with Gbizug, though less regularly. Thus Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari are interlinked by three mutually independent sets of ties of the same order, each Zubiuŋ maximal lineage having clanship ties with one Ba'ari lineage and not with the others.

The Pattern of Clanship among the Talis

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This is the common pattern of clanship among the Talis. The clan is a local unit comprising two or more relatively autonomous maximal lineages, which regard themselves and are regarded by others as together forming a single unit. It is not a closed unit, but its constituent maximal lineages look upon one another as the closest clan *sunzɔp* in their entire

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[1] A similar process in the distant past may explain the absence of exogamic ties between Tongo and D-Koog and other instances of this sort.

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ, which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us, and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
+167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo. This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

793 Like the tɛndaanas all the *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, and even beyond Tale-
779 land, are described as 'kin' (*mabiis*) to one another. In principle, *tɛŋ*,
the Earth, cannot be divided up; it is the tɛndaanaship which is distributed.

471 This explains the diversity and lack of precision one finds in the
793 boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs*. Like settlement boundaries they are deter-
mined by social rather than physical facts, though here and there con-
spicuous topographical features may be fixed upon as landmarks from
which to take a bearing. Doo *tɛŋ*, the area immediately surrounding and
including the supreme *tɔŋgban* Doo of Tɛnzugu, is an example of a
[341] tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* that can easily be distinguished. Homesteads on Doo *tɛŋ*
may not have roofs of thatch (*mopin*) but must have flat roofs (*bɛa*, vb.) of mud. This is a quasi-totemic taboo of this *tɛŋ* (cf. p. 142). Standing on the wall of granite boulders that overlooks this part of Tɛnzugu one can see where the mud roofs end and the thatched roofs begin. I was very reluctantly told about, and later shown, what purported to be the fixed physical boundaries of Doo *tɛŋ* by men of Kpata'ar, the clan which has ritual jurisdiction over it. A ditch, a line of large boulders, a prominent tree, a path, such were the landmarks by which they went. But the striking thing about this boundary was that, almost all the way, it followed the social boundaries between Kpata'ar and Gundaat on the one side, and between Bunkiuk and Samiit on the other. In the closely settled parts of the country, wherever *tɛndaanditib* clans are in occupation of the areas under their ritual jurisdiction, there is a noticeable tendency for the alleged physical boundaries of *tɛs* to coincide with social boundaries between clans or maximal lineages.

621 Settlements like Tongo, where people believed to be of immigrant
471 descent occupy land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans, are
793 instructive. Tongo, like many other Tale settlements, stretches over the
ritual territories of several tɛndaanas (cf. p. 169). The alleged boundaries between the *tɛs* of the Gbizug, Soog, and Zubiuŋ tɛndaanas run through Tongo. As the people of Tongo put it, these clans at various times allotted portions of their own land for Tongo people to build and farm on. Physical landmarks are pointed out as indicating these boundaries. But if they are examined it will be seen that they tend to coincide with the social boundaries between sections (*yizugɔt*) or between segments of sections (*dugɔt*). (See map at end of book.) Wherever part of a tɛndaana's boundary runs between homesteads of men of the same segment (*dug*), the homesteads (rarely more than one or two) on the wrong side of the boundary have not been sited there for more than a generation. The continual slow shifting about of homestead sites in a settlement through the course of generations is paralleled by a shifting of the boundaries between farm plots; for they pass through alternate phases of being divided up, wholly or in part, among the segments of a nuclear lineage that has reached a phase of fission, and of being reconstituted, wholly or in part, at a later stage of lineage integration. These internal adjustments often result in a spilling over of one section of a clan into what was till then regarded as the area of a neighbouring unit of like sort.

178 We lack historical documents; but we can infer from the contemporary
dynamics of Tale social life that the boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* shift

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of
Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men
who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg
is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors
was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his
ahəb (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of
Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most
of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Ɗkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases
the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one
living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as
at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been
carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they
undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he
constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in
order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build
a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)'
ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed
portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the
dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead
is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is
fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual
and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Ɗkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

pensation sink into the background, the sanctions inherent in the native 177
social structure prevail, and the traditional ties of politico-ritual collabora- 578
tion come into force. But when the new interests brought into being 622
by the influence of the British Administration come to the fore, the traditional social ties and the sanctions associated with them no longer prevail. For among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, such ties and sanctions do not function at all times and in all circumstances. They work in the context of the scheme of social relationships of which they form a part and not in other contexts. These new interests mobilize the existing corporate units of Tale society. Thus they tend to deepen some of the cleavages that exist, and to weaken the countervailing ties, between lineages and clans. It is noteworthy that rivalry for the rewards of political power under the British Administration is most acute between clans that have close ties in the native social system. As was the case with war in former days, clans and maximal lineages that are widely separated from one another, either locally or in terms of their fields of social relations, cannot come into conflict or competition with one another. Thus political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and his 'younger brother' the Chief of Yamalɔg is severe and has led to estrangement between these two branches of Mosuor biis. But there is no political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and the Chief of Datɔk. Competition for politico-ritual office within clans is fiercer than it was in the past and less scrupulous, though it still follows the lines of cleavage in the lineage structure.

At the same time some chiefs have used their new powers to weld their clans into closer unity on the political plane than existed in the old days. This has happened at Tongo and at Sie. But it has not been to the benefit of the social balance in the greater society. By strengthening the autocratic ambitions of these chiefs, the closer unity of their clans has tended to aggravate the antagonisms between clans.

B. *Pecuniary Competition among the Hill Talis*

A new factor of disequilibrium that has had a very disturbing influ- 177
ence among the Hill Talis is pecuniary competition which has become 434
associated with certain traditional institutions. Many families nowadays 438
obtain driblets of money through members of the family working abroad, 578
or by petty trade. But the pecuniary competition we are referring to concerns money on a scale unprecedented in Tale history; and its disruptive influence is due to its association with a traffic in ritual benefits comparable to that of the notorious Southern Nigerian oracles.

The centre of this traffic is the Tong Hills, and its disruptive influence 178
has been greatest among the Hill Talis, where it has brought violent 438
competition into the sphere of the common ritual interests and values 578
which form the bulwark of their cohesion. The integration of the Hill Talis in the native social structure depends, as we have seen, on a meticulous balance of local, clanship, and ritual ties and cleavages focused in the politico-ritual offices vested in the heads of maximal lineages. So nicely calculated is the distribution of these politico-ritual functions amongst the various maximal lineages that none can claim

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external
[556] sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gɔrisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere sideline. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

121 the present time, have suffered from working hypotheses not adapted to the topic. I was fortunate in that both my chief teachers on this subject, the late Professor Bronislaw Malinowski and Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, approached it with working hypotheses founded on the realities of field observation. Their theories have the merit of being adapted to the methods of observation available to the anthropologist in the field and to the kind of data within his reach. They can be tested in the field, as is most cogently shown in Raymond Firth's book *We, the Tikopia* (1937), which appeared while I was among the Tallensi. I found this book a mine of ideas and a most valuable stimulus to observation.

I have not, however, attempted to give a comprehensive account of family life and kinship among the Tallensi in this book. I am concerned only with kinship in relation to the social structure—that is, in my view, with the fundamental principles of Tale kinship relations as they enter into the organization of collective life. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi the common denominators of thought, feeling, and action stand out very clearly and the principles governing social behaviour are not so difficult to discern as might be supposed.

● 178 It is of interest to add that I was able to pay a very short visit to the Tallensi in 1945, after this book was finished. I found that as far as their social structure was concerned there had been no appreciable change since my wife and I first went to Taleland in 1934. But there are many signs that they are on the threshold of a period of rapid change. The war has opened up wider horizons to many of the young men who saw active service. Native Administration has developed greatly; schools are being established; missionaries have started work inside Taleland. The social structure I have described may well undergo many modifications in the next few years, though I do not believe it will alter much in fundamentals for decades.

M. F.

OXFORD 1948

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest 736
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had
their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside
extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get
the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her children 602
from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for
the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to
co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives.
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her 595
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost
anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who
resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite
common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's
child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between
co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out
of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave
carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife
of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and
therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the
women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past.
So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*)
and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations
of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most
of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or
death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association
between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft
brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the
male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been compelled 627
to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

595 paternal kin and more strongly by her uterine kin (*saarət*), insist on
627 doing so. If she survived, she and her children and other *soog* kin would never forgive her accuser. There would be chronic friction in the family.
●178 If she died, her children and other *soog* kin would still resent the imputa-
578 tion against them and would have a lifelong grievance against her accuser and her children. The accuser would in any case bear the ritual blame, and would be in danger of mystical retribution. Nowadays, to judge by one case that came to my notice, the accused woman and her kin insist on an oath by the *bɔɣar*, usually the *bɔɣar* of the husband's medial lineage. Both women swear to the justice of their case before the *bɔɣar*, and the one who suffers a serious misfortune soonest—a misfortune such as grave sickness or death in her own *dug* of the house—is deemed to be in the wrong. Whatever the outcome, it amounts to one member of the family invoking the *bɔɣar* which watches over the welfare of the whole group to injure another member of the unit; and this is a sacrilege, even if it is done in the name of justice. It must be atoned for by sacrifices to which both women and their husband (or husbands) have to contribute. But the *bɔɣar* is never wholly appeased; it may still bring misfortune on the family for the sacrilege. And, of course, both women and their *soog* kin might continue to harbour resentment. An accusation of witchcraft, itself the symptom of the conflicts latent in the structure of the polygamous family, breeds endless discord.

595 But it must be emphasized that such cases are rare. For the most part women rub along pretty well with their co-wives. In this the senior wife (*pɔɣakpeem*)—seniority being reckoned according to order of marriage—may exercise a great deal of influence, especially if, as is likely, she is older than the others. Though she has no disciplinary authority over her younger co-wives, she has considerable moral authority over them. As her husband's closest confidante among his wives she knows all the affairs of the family and has its interests close at heart. She stands for the common allegiance of the wives to their husband and the family. A wise and tactful senior wife will keep an eye on the household economy and on the children without seeming to interfere with the liberty of her younger co-wives. Looking up to her with respect and affection, her younger co-wives will accept advice and guidance from her that does much to make the routine of family life smooth and pleasant. The fiction that she is the real mistress of the house (*dugdaana*) and that all the children 'belong' to her in a special sense gives her a formal status that makes this easier. If a suitor calls to see a girl of the family he must pay his respects to the senior wife before he goes to greet the girl's own
[431] mother. If a woman's son-in-law sends her gifts of sweet potatoes, yams, and guinea-fowls at the time of the Harvest Festival, she will call all her co-wives proudly to see the gifts, and will distribute some of the tubers among them; but in addition the senior wife will receive a guinea-fowl as a mark of special honour. In such ways is the mistress of the

fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without 613
first obtaining Kutɔbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his 554
own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutɔbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only.

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. 613
Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutɔbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10*s*. He showed it to Kutɔbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutɔbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bɔyayiedɔt yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutɔbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30*s*. to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutɔbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutɔbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutɔbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutɔbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutɔbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutɔbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutɔbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them.

Our discussion of what it means to a Talɔŋ to have a father alive or 613
not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross
the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken 178
of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly 601
changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them.

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

601 613 •178 the lineage often leads to conflict and it is in these conflicts that the process of fission is often completed. They arise chiefly in connexion with the inheritance of widows and the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar* (that is, to the headship of the lineage)—the two situations in which consistency between the corporate unity of the inner lineage and the recognition of generation differences is most severely tested. What happens is that the heads of what were previously regarded as the component segments of an inner lineage advance contradictory claims to the custody of the lineage *bɔɣar*. One may claim it on the grounds of seniority of generation—being the classificatory father of the other—while his opponent refuses to admit this and claims seniority by age. It is a conflict between 'seniority of begetting (*dɔɣam kpɛmət*)' (i.e. by generation) and 'seniority of predestiny' or, as we might say, chance (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*) (i.e. by age). The long-drawn-out quarrel between Yinyɛla and the other elders of Tɔŋ-Puhug turned on a point of this kind. Yinyɛla claimed to be a generation superior to the heads of all the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri,[1] but the other elders would not admit the validity of this claim. The genealogical evidence supported Yinyɛla, and the precedents he quoted from the days of his father and grandfather were probably accurate. But that was not the question; the relations of the segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri had changed in the last two generations and, as the elders put it, 'begetting has died out (*dɔɣam kpiya*)'.

An earlier stage in the fading out of classificatory kinship appeared in the controversy over Baroog's widows. Nindɔɣat's eldest son was discovered to be secretly courting one of the women and Baroog's father immediately raised an outcry. Nindɔɣat, he protested, was his 'son' and Baroog's 'brother', hence Nindɔɣat's son would be committing incest if he married Baroog's widow, his classificatory mother. But Nindɔɣat stood by his son, arguing that they were no longer members of a single inner lineage but of two separate inner lineages. 'We are each our own *dug* (*ti a ti dug ti dug*),' he said. The weight of public opinion in the clan was against him, however, and the woman in the case took fright. But a split in the lineage is inevitable, though it may take a generation to complete.

Change of Status Due to Death of 'Father' Shown in Property Relations

613 885 There is more to be said about the social consequences of having or not having a father alive, and we shall revert to the subject later from another point of view. What is so far clear is that a man's social status, particularly in jural and ritual matters, but also in economic affairs, advances step by step with the dying off of his fathers. Strictly speaking, he is not altogether autonomous until he has no more fathers within the range of the inner lineage, but in practice he is free of effective

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 196.

Table 6.—Comparison of statistics from ten compounds in 262
Zuarungu Area which suffered no food shortage in
1931-32, and nineteen compounds which suffered from 241
a shortage.

	Means from 10 compounds with no food shortage.	Means from 19 compounds short of food.
Area of land farmed per compound	8.16 acres.	5.66 acres.
Men farming	3.4	3.4
Area farmed per man	2.4 acres.	1.68 acres.
Persons living in compound ...	14.7	11.5
Area cultivated per person ...	.55 acres.	.49 acres.
Persons supported per man farming	4.3	3.4
Units of livestock (March, 1932) ... (Fowl=1 unit.)	399	136

From Table 6 it will be seen that compounds which suffered from no shortage were bigger in almost every particular than compounds which suffered (c.f. district means, Appendix II, Table 4). Observation throughout the 1932 season showed that the farms of the ten successful compounds were better cultivated, and the owners had the reputation for being good farmers. A study of yields, however, showed no appreciable difference in favour of the successful farms; but as already mentioned, 1932 was a very good season for crops in Zuarungu Area, and none of our compounds suffered from a shortage of food during the following dry season. This suggests that under the present system of farming, the major factors determining yield are those lying outside the farmers' control; the most important of these are the amount and distribution of rainfall. The effects of better farming are more marked, therefore, in a bad season than in a good one. It is probably this fact, together with a knowledge of "wild" sources of food, which has resulted in a system of farming which demands the minimum amount of labour from the farmer, and leaves the maximum to Nature; for Nature, in the shape of a "fetish", can be placated by the simple expedient of sacrifice.

CAUSES OF FOOD SHORTAGE.

Indirect Causes.

Food shortage has been ascribed to a lack of land resulting from a concentration of population, and land settlement schemes have been suggested as the solution of the problem. But the concentration of the population is responsible only indirectly, and only for as long as the system of farming remains unchanged. It

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178

262 ●178 is doubtful whether, given unlimited land, the local farmer would be prepared to devote any more time to cultivation. The inherent fertility of virgin land would be quickly dissipated if existing farming methods were followed upon it. Therefore, to provide more land without giving attention to the system of farming to be followed would merely postpone solution of the problem. The maximum distance to "bush" land from any point in North Mamprusi is about 8 miles, and it would not appear unreasonable to expect a man to move this distance voluntarily, if an adequate food supply were his greatest consideration and the acquisition of more land would ensure it. Changing economic and social conditions are bringing about the necessity for changed methods of farming. There is little doubt that development will stimulate expansion into unpopulated areas; then will be the time to foster migration, not before.

Direct Causes.

241 262 Density of population is therefore only indirectly a cause of recurrent food shortage; some of the more direct causes are:—

1. Farming practices which are not sufficiently intensive for conditons. A system of "fixed" cropping is followed and manuring is quite inadequate.

[461] 2. The innate distaste of the people for consistent labour, especially when there is a chance that it may not be essential. That is, a farmer would rather sacrifice to his ancestors for more rain—and perhaps spend the rest of the day at market (not marketing)—than to give his farm a surface cultivation to conserve the moisture already in the ground.

3. The lack of sufficient incentive, and a conservatism which makes a man prefer to cultivate a small area of impoverished land, cultivated by his ancestors, to going eight miles, or less, and having the labour of breaking up bush land (predial larceny is often offered as an excuse when bush farms are suggested).

4. Too great a reliance upon cereal crops. A bad season for cereals, or, as in recent years, depredations by locusts, means food shortage; that the season might have been a good one for root crops or legumes, does not affect the situation very much.

to be profitably exported from distances more than 600 miles from 654 the coast. The alternative is a local export to some part of the country with money to spend; the obvious solution lies in the export of livestock to Ashanti and the Colony.

Livestock Industry.

The conditions under which livestock are kept in North 231 Mamprusi have been fully discussed under the heading "Animal [178] Husbandry", pages 31 to 33. It has been shown that whilst livestock are used mainly for uneconomic purposes, marriage dowries and sacrifice, they are becoming increasingly regarded as a source of money; and with the rapid development in money consciousness which is proceeding to-day, there is no doubt that the value of livestock will become to be recognised more and more. Survey showed that 54% of compounds (probably rather less over the whole district) owned cattle of the West African Shorthorn type. Bullocks find a ready sale to butchers' agents at prices varying [435] from £1 10s. to £3 15s.; and milk, in the form of curds, is sold in local markets. Nearly all compounds own sheep, goats, fowls, and guinea fowls, and the trade in fowls is already very well established. The market for livestock in Ashanti and the Colony is practically unlimited; only a very small proportion of the meat slaughtered is locally grown. But if this proportion is to be increased, local methods of animal husbandry must be improved. Attention to breeding alone is not enough, as the Director of Veterinary Services pointed out in his Annual Report for 1935-36 (12). And because the bulk of the livestock in the Gold Coast belong to the cultivators of the soil, it will be seen, that the development of mixed farming is just as necessary for the future of the livestock industry, as the development of the livestock industry is for the future of mixed farming. Thus the ultimate justification for the investment of capital in working bullocks and cattle-drawn implements must be in the export of livestock. Work with livestock is necessarily slow, but if good feeding and good breeding produce an improvement in the local stock equivalent to the improvement effected in Northern Nigeria, by attention to these matters with Zebu cattle (13)—and there would seem to be no reason why it should not—we shall have little difficulty in justifying the cost of a plough, when local unimproved bullocks are worth nearly £4 a head to butchers' agents at the present time.

Sale of Surplus Foodstuffs.

But before livestock receive better treatment the people them- 439 selves must have sufficient food, and it is by the sale, as food upon local markets, of a surplus of production over individual requirements that the first mixed farmers are likely to receive a return. At the present time, large quantities of grain are imported from

~~146~~ No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among 164 the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the [657] common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from 515 the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake [240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

● 181 183 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

obsequious among themselves. With all their respect for custom they are 181
not its slaves. Individual initiative, ambition and independence of action, 183
within the limits imposed by their social and material order, are common.

Tallensi do not question their traditional ritual values, but there is an element of what we should call rationalism in their religious attitudes. Their ancestor cult, an elaborate body of beliefs, rites, and ceremonies, is minutely woven into their everyday existence, but it does not pursue them with phantom terrors. On the contrary, it is the principal means provided by Tale culture for keeping the individual and the group on an even keel.

Stability; tolerance of physical hardship and discomfort as well as of human frailty and idiosyncrasy; a reasonable degree of conformity; a tenacious attachment to life fortified by an elaborate ancestor cult—these characteristics of Tale culture strike the observer at the outset. On the surface the Tale ideal is to have enough to eat, to be a successful parent, and to live at peace with one's fellows. Closer acquaintance, however, reveals hidden undercurrents. Beneath the overt stability and integration of the social order lie continuous tensions. Indeed the stability of Tale society can only be understood as a product of these tensions, created and maintained by the social processes that resolve them. Again, the natives' keen sense of the importance of social obligations hides a tendency to aggressive self-assertion. Tallensi are quick to anger if they feel themselves wronged, and are good haters. Their usual spirit of good-natured tolerance masks a proneness to suspicious watchfulness, and their frugality covers a spendthrift streak. These contradictions are subtly revealed in their religious practices. The strength of their ancestor cult rests not only on its predominant role as an integrating force in their social structure, but also on its profound psychological value for the individual. Tallensi react to misfortune with strong anxiety and guilt feelings from which they find a refuge in their ancestor cult.

This sketch of how the Tallensi strike a European calls for qualifications. It is couched in terms of our cultural values in order to help us to visualize these people in terms of a familiar vocabulary and automatic mental images. Objectively, from the standpoint of the people themselves, the value judgements implicit in our description lose their meaning. What we see as their poverty, dirtiness, poor health, and rudeness of culture they accept with equanimity as the normal conditions of their life. They have no grievance or shame about them. Being common to everybody, these conditions do not create rifts in their society or maladjustments in the individual as they do with us. They are in one respect simply part of the atmosphere within which the culture of the Tallensi (and their neighbours) develops its own richness and amplitude; in another, the material of significant themes in that culture.

Every aspect of Tale social life is conditioned by the fact that they are 181
a primitive peasantry. There is no division of labour apart from that of 241
the sexes. Censuses taken in various parts of the country show that not
less than 95 per cent. of the adult males are wholly dependent on agri- 463
culture for their livelihood, and all of the odd 5 per cent. are partially
dependent on the same source. Craft specialists work at their crafts only

● 181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
244 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland
are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops, baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale, Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years, a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity, and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

started and transmitted them. Custom is not inviolable in its own right. 173 It is compelling because it is the legacy of the ancestors.

These notions are perfectly explicit in the behaviour and thought of 178 the natives, for whom they have a profound moral value. *Banam ndaa ɛŋ de, yaanam ndaa ɛŋ de*—our forefathers used to do it, our ancestors used to do it, is a recurrent formula in every ceremonial speech or ritual invocation during the Great Festivals. So the Samiitna'ab protesting his loyalty to traditional values and to the Kpata'arna'ab, in the latter's feud with the Gɔlibdaana, exclaimed: 'It is the young men who are causing the trouble. They desire their cloths and their caps; but I know only what my ancestors did (*man mi la n-yaanam ndaa ɛŋ siem*). My ancestor (*n-yaab*) wore a skin and I, too, wear a skin; my ancestor knew nothing of cloth. I know only my forefathers' path and I adhere to that (*man mi la mbanam suor, man dɔla dɛni*).'

In the same way, and because their social system engenders so strong 181 a sense of the continuity and stability of their culture and social organiza- 867 tion, Tallensi always stress the importance of passing on to their descendants the way of life bequeathed to them by their forefathers. At ceremonies or when disputes are argued out before a chief or a lineage head, it is not uncommon to hear the old men praise the young men who attend. 'Thus,' the old men say, 'they (the young men) will learn the customs (*yɛla*) of our ancestors.' Tallensi place an extremely high value on their social order. An individual or a particular corporate group might desire to alter his or its position in the society. A man might desire to have greater prestige or more power than his neighbours. A clan might strive to assert its supremacy over other clans, whether or not it is entitled to do so. No one would dream of trying to overthrow the whole social order or of agitating against the existing customs and values.

This does not mean that Tale customs never change, or that the Tallensi 178 believe this to be the case, or invariably resist cultural changes. There 184 have been many shifts in custom and usage during the past two decades. The imposition of peace and an embryonic judicial system have diminished the tensions that kept unrelated clans apart and so have made it unnecessary for them to over-emphasize the emblems and symbols of their separateness. Fifteen years ago men of a tendaana's clan used to observe strictly the taboo against wearing gowns and trousers, the distinctive garments of chiefs and men of chiefly (i.e. Namoo) clans. To-day the young men of tendaanas' clans all wear such clothes outside the territory with which they have direct ritual ties. By this simple compromise they make the best of both worlds, the old world of strictly defined local, genealogical, and politico-ritual exclusiveness and the new world of free movement, unrestricted social intercourse with all and sundry, and cheaper clothes. They wear the ancient prescribed garb of a skin and a loin-cloth on ritual occasions, especially during the Great Festivals, when they take a pride in advertising their politico-ritual status. This change of custom does not cut athwart the basic values and principles of Tale social organization. It has arisen because the young men of tendaanas' clans are as eager to display themselves in fine clothes as the young men of other clans, and because the wearing of clothes is economically easier to attain than

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
●181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At
the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them
as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They
owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the
Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galɔm kihɔr*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

774 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances.
Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

This mystical power is focused for a particular social group in the Earth 778
shrines of their own settlement—that is why the Earth animals are not 188
sacred in the bush. And the ritual efficacy of the Earth at a particular place depends on its connexion with a particular social group holding the office of tendaana for that place. The animals therefore symbolize the moral relations of men, as these are determined by their social ties with particular tracts of the earth. They symbolize the function of locality in Tale social organization.

One logical element in this symbolism is obvious. The mystical 'livingness' of the Earth is symbolized in the living creatures it harbours. But this is not all, for otherwise other earth-dwelling creatures might have been selected as well.

The special relationship of the sacred Earth animals with the clan 778
holding the tendaanaship for the area is focused in one species, as a rule. 184
Thus the python is specially sacred at Gbizug, the crocodile at Zubiuŋ. To kill one of these animals at home is almost as bad as murder. For they are more than Earth taboos; they are 'ancestors' (*yaab*, pl. *yaanam*) to the group concerned. If found dead in the settlement, they are given a token funeral. The sacred crocodiles living in the Zubiuŋ water-hole are treated with an almost human familiarity. 'They are our ancestors, they would not injure us', the people say. In some clans carnivores like the leopard or the lion have this function, but are not considered Earth taboos. The natives say that their ancestors who have held politico-ritual office 'rise up again (*ihigərəme*)' after death as these animals. Tallensi deny that this is a belief in reincarnation or in the transmigration of souls. These taboos have attributes of totems, of Earth taboos, and of personal ancestor symbols; and the common thread is the notion of the ancestors as a living mystical force, symbolized in living creatures. The animals symbolize the immortality of the ancestors, that is, their efficacy and power in the life of their descendants. The ancestors are where their descendants are. One reason why the lineage is tied to its locality is because the ancestors are tied to it. They are spiritually present in the social life of their descendants in the same way as the sacred animals are present in sacred pools or in the locality with which the group is identified.

Functional Differentiation and its Symbolism

An important inference emerges from our argument. Lineage and 182
locality are interwoven and interdependent factors of Tale social structure. But they are functionally discrete factors. We have previously seen how their interdependence is reflected in Tale religious ideology. We see now that their functional discreteness within the pattern of interdependence is also expressed in ritual symbols. The formally similar and associated but functionally distinct symbols we have discussed bring this out.

Tale society is highly homogeneous and integrated. But this is a [181]
resultant of the balanced interplay of a number of functionally discrete 182
factors and of the inter-articulation of many clearly defined social units. Tale religion gives ritual expression and sanction to these principles.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FORM OF TALE SOCIETY

The Socio-geographic Region

OUR survey of the macroscopic structure of Tale society has led us 181 from the consideration of the natives' habits of grouping themselves by name, through an analysis of Tale clanship, to the ritual institutions that form the crowning mechanism of co-ordination in the system, and finally to the internal structure of the settlement and the lineage. An ethnographer accustomed to think of a native society as a unit of social organization marked off by precise territorial, political, or cultural boundaries might protest against our frequent references to 'Tale society'. But this habit of thought, appropriate enough in dealing with island communities, nomadic tribes, or territorially organized states, must be discarded if we wish to understand the structure of societies like that of the Tallensi. For the concept of a society as a closed unit, a sort of thing distinguishable from like things in the same way as one house is distinguishable from another or one animal from another, we must substitute the concept of society as a socio-geographic region, the social elements of which are more closely knit together among themselves than any of them are knit together with social elements of the same kind outside that region. We must substitute a relative and dynamic concept for an absolute and static one. If we look at the area of Voltaic culture as a whole, we can imagine innumerable currents of social life flowing through it in all directions. There are major currents and tributary currents. They intersect in all sorts of ways. But at particular places the forces of which the currents are an expression act in such a way as to draw together a large number, if not all, of the major currents. These regions of maximum confluence would correspond to what we have called a socio-geographic region, or a society. If we follow any single current from a region of maximum confluence it leads us right out of that region into another region. It is only if we look at the region from within that we see the coherence it has as a result of the confluence of many social currents.

But metaphors are proverbially treacherous and we must return to our proper subject-matter. The concept of society we have formulated enables us to see clearly the most characteristic feature of Tale society. It is a segmentary[1] system. At bottom this is a consequence of the fact 631 that the Tallensi have not got a centralized, unified, political organization. 171 This is clear if we compare the Tallensi with some other African peoples such as the Tswana of Bechuanaland Protectorate,[2] the Bemba of Northern

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M., and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (editors), *African Political Systems*, 1940, 'Introduction', and Evans-Pritchard, E. E., *The Nuer*, 1940.

[2] Cf. Schapera, I., *Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, 1938, and 'The Political Organization of the Ngwato', in *African Political Systems*, cited above.

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over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities 769
in their lifetime.

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's 592
father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is conse-
crated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, 783
and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who 778
formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tɛndaanə under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebees*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them.

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the 592
elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has
three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They 181 ●
represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another.

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two 592
3 planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic
descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and 571
the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Talɔŋ than of the modern Englishman to say 592
that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall
imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their home- 361
steads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

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[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

no foundation in fact. The climate, the kind of raw material which is 592 plentifully at hand, the economic system, and the social organization 361 of the natives rather than the alleged lawlessness of former times, determine their mode of house-building. In any case, homesteads very often stand closer than fifty paces together, the distance at which a mediocre shot can hit a tree—though I have seen an arrow carry four times that distance.

A Taləŋ's home is his castle in the psychological rather than the 592 material sense. It is the centre and fount of his major interests, his • 181 dominant purposes, his deepest emotional attachments, and his whole scheme of values; it is his shelter, his storehouse, the stage of his life's drama. The Tallensi, unlike many African peoples, have no age sets or initiation schools. A person grows up and receives his entire education at home. If he practises a craft, such as leatherwork, or is a diviner, his home is his workshop or consulting place.

As an adult, all his economic enterprise issues from his home and is devoted primarily to its upkeep. Unless he is one of the few *nouveaux riches* of to-day he keeps all his material possessions there, and houses all his livestock within its walls. His sex life, in maturity, is centred there. His children, the supreme object of his aspirations, are born and grow up in his home under his care and control. He worships his immediate forbears there. His personal destiny, past, present, and future, revolves about his home, its stages perpetuated in the many shrines and other ritual objects that are housed in it. He receives his friends and relatives at home, and dispenses hospitality there; and if he [461] has nothing to do would as lief recline under the shade tree at his own gateway as go making calls on others. Even the young men who like gallivanting about the markets spend much of their leisure at home.

592 The quintessence of his home, to a Taləŋ, resides in his children, and above all his sons, the vehicles of his immortality. That is the 181 essential meaning of *mar yiri*, 'to have a house'. Ask any native what 626 happens to a man who does not adequately expiate a sacrilege such as murder. '*U yiri ŋmaarəme*—his house will fall to pieces,' is the answer, given with emphatic and solemn conviction, and often with circumstantial illustrations from experience or hearsay. A parent curses an insubordinate child, a chief or tendaana curses a clansman who has grossly insulted him, '*u ku nye yiri*—he will not see (i.e. have) a house', that is, he will die without offspring to perpetuate his line and to sacrifice to his spirit; and this is an extremely serious matter. It never fails to bring the culprit to heel with humble apologies. On the other hand, '*i na nye yiri*—you will have a house', is the most propitious blessing a diviner can convey to a man from his ancestor spirits.

592 Patrilocal residence and the tendency for the lineage to be localized 593 give a man's domestic life greater continuity than a woman's. His natal family and his conjugal family are both strung on the same

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes 778 his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the *zɔŋ* of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors, is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr* of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11 and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for [782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins 837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and 627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say, transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely 778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*. She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

342 Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to 343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the *sapak*. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and 6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental [351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly ●181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that 592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this, life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

volume.[1] The granary symbolizes all the sentiments and ideas, the 343
apprehensions and joys which the struggle for food evokes in Taleland. 181
It stands for the security of the domestic unit in this struggle. In the
organization of the household its importance comes from the fact that 592
it is the focus of the economic cohesion and stability of the domestic group. Into it goes the product of the joint labour of the household, from it comes their sustenance. In filling the granary and in the consumption of its contents, the labour of men, women, and children is [578]
equally essential, and the rights of all equally valid. When a joint family splits up, the commonest pretext is friction over grain supplies. The family which hives off does so on the ground that it needs its own, independent food-supply. 'They have each his own granary (*ba mana ba buur ba buur*)', is the formula summing up the economic relations of brothers occupying a single homestead but having separate households.

The granary belongs to the head of the house, the *yirdaana*. No one 592
may enter it without his authorization, least of all his wife. A devoted 343
and trusted wife may be allowed to descend (*sig*) into it to issue the grain (*loo ki*) for cooking if there is no suitable male within reach—Tale conventions are not rigidly complied with if doing so involves excessive and absurd inconvenience. But it would be scandalous if she did so on her own initiative. The contents of the granary are formally the property of the head of the household, to be distributed at his discretion. There is no other place in the homestead which is so rigorously private to him. Besides the grain for current consumption, he stores the seed for next year's crop there. He hides a particularly cherished object, or money which he wants to conceal from other members of the family, in his granary, secure in the knowledge that no one will dare to tamper with it there.

The *zɔŋ* enshrines—in both the physical and the ideal sense of this 343
concept—the notion of the continuity of the lineage; the *buur* stands for 181
the social personality of the *yirdaana*, as the centre of an independent domestic family, its economic fulcrum, its jural and ritual head, controller and representative. The position of the granary in the architectural pattern of the homestead corresponds to that of the head of the house in the structure of the family, as the unique link between its parts and the source of its unity.

Tallensi say that a man's soul (*sii*) is in his granary. Using the same phrase one says of a person, '*n siig mbe u ni*—my soul is in [drawn towards] him', meaning that one feels a special affinity with him. Among the Namoos the identification of a man with his granary is symbolized explicitly in the taboos that his first-born children have to observe.[2] A man's granary, his cap and tunic, his bow and quiver,

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1937.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. v.

343 are the emblems of his individuality. They participate in it, for they
181 are imbued with his body 'dirt (*daɣət*)'—a concept which has a physiological facet, meaning the exuviae adhering to a man's garments, quiver, or other objects constantly handled by him, and a mystical facet implying the quintessence of his individuality. The Talis also acknowledge this complex association between a man and his granary and other intimate possessions, expressing it in analogous customs, in the routine of family life and in their ideals of family relations.

351 To enter the living-quarters of a homestead one climbs over the low dividing wall (*yɛbəg*) at the back of the *sapak* by means of a step (*bimbimər*) and descends, by a similar step on the other side, into an irregular courtyard (*dɛndɔŋo*, pl. *dɛndɔna*) of beaten gravel, which is surrounded by a number of rooms. According to the wealth, rank, or status of the *yirdaana* this *dɛndɔŋo* varies in size from about 20 to about 6 square yards.

592 This *dɛndɔŋo* belongs to the principal woman (*dugdaana*) of the house.
The *dɛndɔna* of junior wives are smaller. In Ɔndieso's house the senior
593 woman is his mother's surviving co-wife, whom he calls his 'younger
342 mother' (*mapit*, lit. 'mother's younger sister'), and who has remained
351 with him since the death of his father. Her rooms occupy roughly the left half of the homestead, facing inwards from the *sapak*. From this *dɛndɔŋo*, turning right between a small room beside the granary and a larger room straight ahead, one enters a similar *dɛndɔŋo* in the middle of another set of rooms, those of Ɔndieso's wife. These take up roughly the right half of the homestead, facing inwards. The *yirdaana*'s mother's (own mother, or proxy-mother) rooms always occupy the position of honour in the centre of the arc; his senior wife's (*poɣakpeem*) rooms lie on the right-hand side of these; his second wife's, or his younger brother's senior wife's rooms lie on the left, looking inwards. The rooms of the other wives of the head of the family or of his brothers are distributed as convenience dictates. For example, wives who are clan sisters will usually have adjoining quarters; wives who get on badly will be put in well-separated rooms. If none of a man's father's widows is living with him, and he has more than one wife, his senior wife occupies the central group of rooms, his second wife those on her right, and so forth. Generally the women's apartments all communicate with one another. But if a woman has a quarrelsome disposition or gets on badly with her co-wives for any other reason, her quarters will be separated from those of the next-door wife by a low party wall, to prevent undue trespassing by her co-wives or their children.

342 A woman's apartments make up a self-contained section in the home-
593 stead. This is her *dug* (pl. *dugət*). Basically *dug* means a single room, but it is extended to mean the single set of rooms belonging to one wife. In the Tale family every woman with children is entitled to her own *dug*. Women guard this right jealously, and if a man has not built separate quarters for his wife by the time that she has had her first child,

CHAPTER IV

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE FAMILY

The General and the Particular in the Pattern of Domestic Relations

611 It is clear from Chapter II that *dɔyam*, the fact of birth, the event that fixes one's descent immutably, takes precedence over all other conditions governing the social relations and the social roles of a Talɔŋ. This principle comes out in all departments of Tale social life, and nowhere so plainly as in the organization of domestic life. We turn, therefore, to examine the working of kinship in the domestic family, which we have called the focal field of kinship.

593 It is important to bear in mind that kinship relations in the family group are inter-articulated in a single configuration, dominated by the *patria potestas* of the male head of the family. The relations of father and child are coloured by the relations of mother and child that coexist with them, and the relations of mother and child acquire a special accent in the context of the relations between co-wives. Particular domestic relationships appear in their true light only when they are considered as part of the total pattern. The polarity of *dug* and *yir* moulds them all; all play a part in the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces in the structure of the family. All, moreover, are subject to the pull and pressure of genealogical connexions and groupings outside the family circle.

593 606 The natives are very conscious of this, and take it into account in the management of their lives. They say, for instance, that a woman's parents continue to have great influence over her for some years after her marriage and that is why her husband must keep on the good side of his parents-in-law. 'Don't you know what in-lawship means?' said Bayankura, somewhat lugubriously, when I found him hard at work helping to rebuild his father-in-law's homestead. Again, Tiezien's family believed that he was much under the influence of his senior wife, Tanzoo. So when by various pretexts he caused both of his late brother's sons to lose the young wives they had recently taken, they ascribed it morosely to Tanzoo's jealousy of their mother, Tiezien's second wife.

● 181 We shall not attempt a full-dress study of Tale family life; here we are concerned only with the structurally significant norms. In a society as homogeneous and economically undifferentiated as that of the Tallensi, people of the same sex, age, and social standing tend to have the same life history; and organized units such as the lineage and the family tend to have a stereotyped structure and development. The common denominators of action stand out.

828 156 Yet it is a constantly reiterated assumption of the natives that no two

581 said, had never had the enterprise to find a wife. I heard of no woman
589 who had never married. Deformities which do not wholly incapacitate a person or arouse repulsion are not a bar to marriage. The blind, the deaf, and the lame find spouses if they are otherwise able-bodied and presentable.

Tallensi attach immense importance to marriage, not only because it is the sole means to the most ardently desired of all ends, the procreation of legitimate children, but also because no man or woman can adequately satisfy all his or her wants or lead a normal social life, after reaching maturity, without a spouse. Sooner or later a man must have a wife and a woman a husband. Hence 'finding a wife (*pɔɣa booga*)' is the most urgent preoccupation of unmarried men, apart from getting a living. Among unmarried young men it is an obsession, the most absorbing pursuit of their leisure and an interminable topic of conversation. A girl's life is entirely directed towards marriage from childhood onwards.

581 It is a common thing to find a group of men discussing the relative importance of farms and wives, the two basic practical interests of the
•181 natives. They seldom fail to come down to the fundamentals. I have heard an elder sum it up somewhat in this fashion: 'If you don't farm you will have no food; and if you have no food you die. Then what is the use of a wife without food? But if you have no wife you will have no children and your life is wasted.' In the end, however, it is usually agreed that farming is the more important, for the man who lives long enough will not lack a wife and without food one cannot support a family.

Land and wives have many features in common, as their juxtaposition
556 in native thought shows. Both stand for the fulfilment of fundamental social needs. Both come under the jurisdiction of the lineage, though they are of direct service to individuals. But there are certain differences which show the special importance of wives. There is no intense competition for the possession of land. Owing to technical and economic limitations there is no inducement to accumulate land. Wealth—that is, property acquired by saving, or in exchange for surplus grain or cash—consists pre-eminently of livestock; and the use to which livestock is principally put is in acquiring wives, performing sacrifices, celebrating funerals, and, to a much lesser extent, competing for certain politico-ritual offices. Such wealth is, therefore, really equivalent to provision for delayed consumption or special forms of consumption arising out of ritual obligations or differences in status.[1] It has no durable productive value. Compared with livestock, the purchase of farm-land is insignificant

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[1] But Tale standards of wealth are extremely low. Except for a handful of chiefs and headmen—who have herds of cattle numbering from 20 to 50, and, in at least one case, apparently, over 100, as well as numbers of small stock—a man with a dozen sheep, a few goats, and three or four head of cattle is considered to be wealthy (*bondaan*).

593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

● 181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

861 [538] [431] Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of parenthood as *dɔyam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb, 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔyam*)', often quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a 'cow of rearing (*ughu*[illegible]*na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian, and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure, only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it. It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and that is the hardest part.

593 855 In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly 78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 861 828 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

888 Təŋ to stay with him. Banərəg furnished another instance. One afternoon he looked in on his way home from the market and found two 593 elders with me. He told us he was having some trouble with Ziba, a 517 young man of his inner lineage. Ziba had an old woman, whom he called 'mother', living with him; but he had suddenly decided to get rid of her. Banərəg told us how he had expostulated with the heartless young man. 'It is an evil thing to do', he concluded, amid murmurs of assent from the two elders. 'A man who drives out an old woman to starve becomes blameworthy before Heaven (*u kpera Naawun taale*); it is *dulɔm*.' Banərəg's efforts, in this case, were in vain since he had no paternal authority over Ziba. The intervention of an older kinsman does not always check disgraceful treatment of domestic relatives, and public opinion only takes notice of it after the event and then often has no power to make the culprit remedy it.

A Methodological Point

593 The cases we have quoted in the preceding pages are précis of state- 181 ments, opinions, and explanations given to me by Tallensi themselves. If space allowed, a score of cases could be quoted for each one I have recorded. I mention this because it might seem incredible, to anyone who has not lived amongst the Tallensi, that a people so primitive in their mode of livelihood should balance up rights and obligations in the most commonplace activities of their lives in so calculating a fashion. But the picture I have sketched is not a distortion. Description and analysis inevitably reduce human action to slow motion and men's motives to a seemingly mechanical pattern. In reality Tale parents commonly act as spontaneously and generously as parents in any other country and their children respond as spontaneously and sincerely. But even the most spontaneous actions and feelings of the natives occur within the framework of their social organization and subject to the values postulated in their culture. Social organization and cultural values allow of alternative forms of action and affect in any particular situation, but not of infinitely numerous alternatives. Where the relations of parents and children are involved these alternatives are not unlimited; and allowing for differences of personality and character, as the natives themselves do, we can say that the alternative that will be selected in a particular situation is determined by the structural relations of the individuals concerned. Men's motives and their social relations are closely integrated with one another among the Tallensi, as we have emphasized before. In their actual social behaviour Tallensi do not have to stop and think out every situation before they act. The individual's ideas and attitudes have been shaped by the social structure and the cultural norms. The framework of his social relations is as much a part of him as he is a part of it. He automatically evaluates every situation in terms of his social relations. To put it crudely, every Taləŋ carries a set of

labels bestowed upon him by the social system and a set of ideas and attitudes implanted in him by his culture. In every situation he responds to the relevant labels borne by the other people who enter into it with action springing from his ideas and attitudes. What we have tried to do is to examine this process of response in slow motion and to show how the ideas and attitudes evoked by certain labels can be traced back to the structural relations of the people concerned.

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across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things' (*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father] and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it [*pohg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

871 [186] 181 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descendants. Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system, and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a significant motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from their ancestor cult. Every Talɔŋa desires sons so that there may be some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son, a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious duty to their ancestors.

781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children. It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation. Last year, for instance, Kʋwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also 869 861 828 frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors (*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,' he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?' When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

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[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

861 principal method of education is by participation. A child repeating the multiplication table is participating in the practical activity appropriate to and defined by the school; but measured by the total social reality it is a factitious activity, a training situation constructed for that purpose. The Tallensi do not make systematic use of training situations. They teach through real situations which children are drawn to participate in because it is expected that they are capable and desirous of mastering the necessary skills.

000 Corresponding to this contrast in method we can observe a contrast in psychological emphasis. The training situation demands atomic modes of response; the real situation requires organic modes of response. In constructing a training situation we envisage a skill or observance as an end-product at the perfection of which we aim and therefore arrange it so as to evoke only motor or perceptual practice. Affective or motivational factors are eliminated or ignored. In the real situation behaviour is compounded of affect, interest and motive, as well as perceptual and motor functions. Learning becomes purposive. Every advance in knowledge or skill is pragmatic, directed to achieve a result there and then, as well as adding to a previous level of adequacy.

861
828 The expectation of normal behaviour and organic response operate also in the education of a Western child, e.g. when it is learning speech or manners. In Taleland it is the most effective factor in the inculcation of a wide range of social behaviour from bowel and bladder control to ritual notions, and from economic skills to sexual habits.

Interests, skills, and observances. We have seen, now, that a Tale child acquires the interests, skills and observances which comprise the repertoire of adult social behaviour not in discrete categories but in a synthetic combination. But it is necessary, for analytical purposes, to define such categories of behaviour. They refer to forms of overt behaviour and not to the psychological functions or mechanisms subsumed therein.

181 *Interests.* By *interest* I mean simply the observable fact that, according to their level of maturity, Tale children and adults spontaneously show preference for some activities rather than others; that they have a selective orientation in their social space, e.g. reacting to some people more readily than to others; that they obviously seek to satisfy

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Talɔŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adult- 857
hood children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational develop- 82
ment of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183
her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764
shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783]
mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual
uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181
and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867
and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856
moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861
that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

CHAPTER III

PARADIGM OF THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

613 182 TALE society is built up round the lineage system. It is no exaggeration to say that every sociological problem presented by the Tallensi hinges on the lineage system. It is the skeleton of their social structure, the bony framework which shapes their body politic; it guides their economic life and moulds their ritual ideas and values. The social life of the Tallensi cannot be understood without a knowledge of the principles that govern their lineage organization.

128 These principles will be briefly and formally stated in the present chapter. This will give us a paradigm by which to orient our analysis. Something of this sort, though less systematic and abstract, is in the mind's eye of every well-informed native when he discusses the structure of his society or takes his part in public affairs. The schematic analysis given here will be amplified in later chapters and some repetition is therefore unavoidable. In studying a society of this type we cannot avoid traversing the same ground repeatedly from different directions. For the same basic units, relations, and principles of structure lie behind all forms of association and all organized social activities.

A preliminary bird's-eye view of the lineage system is important, also, in another respect. A lineage always functions as a whole. Whenever a lineage emerges in social action it does so as a product of its component parts and of the relations between them; when a part of a lineage emerges in social action it does so relatively to other parts of it and to the whole. Anyone wishing to understand the way a Tale lineage functions must think of it as a field system, in which the behaviour of the part is regulated by its relation to the whole and the behaviour of the whole is a product of the relations of the parts.

613 From the Tale point of view a lineage is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the known descendants by a known genealogy of a single known and named ancestor in an unbroken male line. From the sociologist's point of view it is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the recognized descendants by an accepted genealogy of a single named ancestor in a putatively continuous male line. It is, in other words, a strictly unilineal, agnatic descent group.

Lineages vary in *span* proportionately to the number of generations accepted as having intervened between their living members and the founding ancestor from whom they trace their descent. The lineage of minimum span, which we shall call the minimal lineage, consists of the children of one father. The lineage of maximum span, which we shall call the maximal lineage, is the lineage of widest span to which any of its members belongs. It consists of all the descendants in the male line of the remotest common patrilineal ancestor known to the members of the lineage. Whenever we speak of a lineage without qualification to indicate its span, we use the term in the generalized sense of a lineage of any span

x618 Duunkpaləg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the
778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child
placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a
[551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages
x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a
764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives
of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously
778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is
794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master,
or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of
782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint
custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these
● 182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say
771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpaləg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the
Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

x618 182 771 ing the installation or the funeral of a tendaana, both receive sacrifices. But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

774 769 182 613 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages. Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar (dugni bɔyar)*, the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpalɔg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tendaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tendaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tendaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

x618 182 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[793] 178 182 578 Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar tendaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders to Duunkpalɔg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdem did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tendaana-elect to Duunkpalɔg. The Yapaasdem, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

178 forefathers in that way (*ti ku zaŋ ti banam bah ŋwala*)'. Some of the
● 182 younger men of Yapaas were merely being tiresome. 'You'll see',
578 countered the man who had spoken earlier, sceptically, 'some day there will be a quarrel over something, the division of meat at a sacrifice, or the inheritance of a widow, or something of that sort, and then you people of Zubiuŋ will split up.'

578 Meanwhile, we continued to wait for the Yapaasdεm, for the ritual could not be performed without the presence of their representatives. In due course they arrived. Far from expressing contrition, they excused themselves by accusing the others of having bungled the sequence of the rites. A violent argument followed, but one of the elders cut it short. No doubt, he said, the Yapaasdεm preferred a different order of the rites. That was their affair. The senior lineages had no intention of copying them. To-day the ceremonies were *their* concern, and now that all the lineages were properly assembled they might as well get on with the business.

Linked Maximal Lineages and the Field of Clanship

x618 Corresponding to this structural differentiation within the clan, each maximal lineage has its distinct field of clanship. One segment of Yakɔradεm, known as Pulien biis, is an attached lineage descended from a
[567] 'sister's son' of the authentic lineage. Another segment (Zaŋgɔbəg yidεm) is an assimilated lineage, said to be of slave descent. Members of this segment are debarred from holding the tεndaana-ship. Pulien biis have the right to hold the office, but mainly in a titular capacity, for they are barred from its most essential responsibilities. In other respects these accessory lineages have been fully absorbed by the authentic line of Yakɔradεm, and participate in all the corporate activities of the latter.

The Yakɔradεm have ties of clanship with Gbizug, which counts as the senior segment of Gbeog, and is bound to Gbeog proper by the usual ties of clanship. But there are no ties of clanship between Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Gbeog proper. They may not marry a daughter of Gbizug; they may and do marry Gbeog women, who would of course be barred by the rule of exogamy from marrying into Gbizug. Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra also have ties of clanship with Ba'at-Sakpar, one of the major segments of the clan of Ba'ari; but they have no ties of clanship with any of the other Ba'ari maximal lineages. Similarly, they have ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ, but not with the Namoo lineage of Zoodεm proper. The other two component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ are excluded from this field of clanship. For instance, they can and do marry Gbizug, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zoo-Yiraaŋ women.

x618 These extra-clan ties of clanship are rationalized in various ways.
811 Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar claim to be the consanguineous kin (*dɔyam*) of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, because, as the myth of the primordial tεndaanas relate, the founding ancestors of all three lineages were 'brothers'. The Zoo-Yiraaŋdεm are claimed as kin (*dɔyam*) of the latter because their founding ancestor is said to have been a 'sister's son' of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. It should be noted that such a remote cognatic link does not in every case establish ties of clanship. The same fiction is used to account for the existence of

CHAPTER VII

CLANSHIP AND RITUAL COLLABORATION

782 *The Significance of Sacrificing Together*

182 SOCIAL ties and cleavages are most conspicuously affirmed in Tale ritual. Ritual collaboration and common ritual allegiances are indices of common interests and mechanisms of solidarity. The core of Tale ritual thought, doctrine, and performance is the sacrifice (*kaab*). In some situations a libation of water into which a handful of flour has been stirred (*zɔm kuom*, flour-water) is a sufficient sacrifice. In others, and more characteristically, domestic animals (fowls, guinea-fowls, goats, sheep, cattle, and dogs), with or without the addition of beer, are sacrificed. The selection of the animal depends on a multiplicity of factors, such as the relative importance of the shrine at which it is offered, the importance of the occasion, the status of the suppliant, or the group offering the sacrifice. No other situation evokes so vividly and so directly, both for the native and for the onlooker, the sense of the significance, for the Tallensi, of their continuity with their ancestors, and the strength and reality of the moral cohesion of such corporate units as lineages and clans.

To sacrifice together (*kab kaabɔra*) is the most binding form of ritual collaboration. According to the ethical and religious ideas of the Tallensi, it is totally incompatible with a state of hostility—that is, with an open breach of good relations. Personal feelings are of secondary importance in this connexion. One can sacrifice with a person whom one despises or dislikes, as long as these feelings do not lead to an infringement of the ties of mutual obligation. But one cannot sacrifice propitiously with someone who is an enemy. This, according to native theory, would cause the ancestors to become angry, for 'as you are towards each other so are the spirits of your ancestors towards one another'. Therefore, if avowed enemies sacrifice together, mystical retribution will follow. To sacrifice together means not only to acknowledge a common spiritual tutelage, but also to eat together of the sacrifice; in short, to unite in a sacrament. Thus it is both an expression and a pledge of mutual amity and dependence.

x 618 *Ritual Relations in Namoo Clans*

782 As our analysis of the clan structure of Mosuor biis has shown, the final barrier to the complete absorption of an accessory lineage into one of the sub-clans is its exclusion from sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the sub-clan. This is the disability that excludes accessory lineages from the right to hold the chiefship of the sub-clan. But accessory lineages participate in sacrifices to the shrine of the ancestor who is regarded as the founder of that segment of the sub-clan to which they are attached or assimilated. The shrine (*bɔyar*) of the founding ancestor of the sub-clan is usually in the custody of one of its segments, whose head (*kpeem*)

has, by right of succession, the duty of sacrificing to it on behalf of the whole sub-clan. Whenever sacrifice is made, all the segments of the authentic lineage must be represented. Accessory lineages are not represented, but they regard the representatives of the authentic segments to which they are linked as representing them also. 618x 782

Thus, Nɔŋsuur yidem, of Tongo, are assimilated to the authentic segment of Siiyɛŋ yiri, and are present at sacrifices made to the founding ancestor of Siiyɛŋ yiri. But no member of Nɔŋsuur yidem could ever succeed to the custody of Siiyɛŋ's *bɔyar*. Now when sacrifice is made to Mosuor's *bɔyar* on behalf of the whole sub-clan, representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri must be present; and Nɔŋsuur yidem, who cannot be present, regard these representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri as representing them as well. This view is justified, for when the portion of the sacrificial animal which falls to the share of Siiyɛŋ yiri is divided out, some will be given to Nɔŋsuur yidem also 'to cook and set out for their ancestor spirits (*kpiinam*).' As it is expressly forbidden for anyone not a member of the clan or the wife of a member to eat of this meat, this obviously signifies an acknowledgement of the indirect religious dependence of Nɔŋsuur yidem on the ancestors of the authentic lineage to which they are structurally linked. Though formally barred from the sacrament by the dogma of agnatic descent, accessory lineages are in practice indirectly admitted to it.

This arrangement is thoroughly in keeping with Tale ideas of the representation of corporate units. But where the centripetal forces of co-operation and solidarity within the local community are as great as at Tongo, it is an unstable compromise. In all secular affairs, and in other ceremonial and ritual events, the accessory lineages exercise all the duties and privileges that spring from solidarity and fellowship. They cannot be rigidly barred from the crowning ritual act that witnesses to the solidarity of the sub-clan, and most categorically pledges its constituent units to amity and co-operation. We have seen how this results in pressure to admit the accessory lineages to the cult of Mosuor's *bɔyar*, exerted indirectly by them but supported vigorously also by the most powerful agent of cohesion in the sub-clan, the chief. The unity of the sub-clan in practical affairs is evidently felt to be negatived by the ritual discrimination against some of its elements. 618x 182

In other Namoo clans the correlation of ritual collaboration with the jural and material aspects of clanship is even closer. At Ŋkoog, for instance, the attached lineage, Alaa biis, participate in all sacrifices to the shrine of the clan's founding ancestor, but they are prohibited from holding the chiefship. Politically and locally Alaa biis form an integral part of Ŋkoog, even though they intermarry with the two segments to which they are not attached. But their strongest bond of unity with the authentic branches of the clan is their right to take part in the cult of the clan *bɔyar*. This has been made easier by the fact that the custody of this *bɔyar* is vested in Abɔkrə biis, the segment to whose 'sister's son' Alaa biis trace their origin. It can be interpreted as an extension of the right to participate in the cult of the founding ancestor of Abɔkrə biis. One sign of the close social affiliation of Alaa biis to Ŋkoog is that they do not participate in the sacrifices of the Wakii lineage with which they are linked by ties of x618 182 clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be made at the External *Bɔyar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

x618 182 184 778 769 Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External *Bɔyar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔyar* among the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔyar* of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔyar* is kept at the house of the segment head in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔyar* of one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔyar* itself consists of one or two small pots (*kpatarɔg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

182 As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔyar and the Earth

x618 182 778 782 769 A. *Zubiuŋ*. We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔyar*, Duunkpalɔg, the common shrine of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the cults of the *Bɔyar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration with the clan structure is relatively simple, and is analogous to what is found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpalɔg *Bɔyar*. It is described as an External *Bɔyar* (*yeŋha bɔyar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

x618 778 769 But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔyar*, 'the *bɔyar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni* x618 778 782 general ritual bond in the tendaanaship and the special ritual relationship with the Earth which this office imposes on a group that has the prerogative of it, and they have a specific ritual bond that comes into action during the Great Festivals.

x618 608 At the level of these ritual relations, Ba'ari, Gbizug, Wakii, and Yayazuor are brethren (*mabiis*) to one another. Gbizug, it will be remembered, is also linked to Ba'ari by clanship ties; through it, therefore, the scheme of linkage by clanship ties is interlocked with the scheme of linkage through ritual ties; and the myth in which the social relations of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are symbolically pictured expresses this double-sided interdependence. As will be clearer presently, the organization of ritual ties between corporate units, like that of clanship ties, follows the field principle. Working at different levels of the social structure in the service of different interests, the two systems are interlocked but not congruent. They reinforce each other by counterbalancing each other; and both kinds of ties are translated into the basic idiom of Tale social relations, the idiom of genealogical connexion.

C. *Gbizug*. We shall see this more clearly if we consider the role of Gbizug in this configuration. As we have noted before, linked maximal lineages have the right to participate in exoteric ceremonies (such as funeral ceremonies) in which the corporate identity of the particular Ba'ari lineage with which they have clanship ties emerges; but clanship ties do not give them the right to take part in the religious cults in which the corporate unity and identity of the whole clan emerges. They have no bonds with the clan as a whole, but only with the relatively autonomous segments of the clan. Gbizug, however, is bound to a segment of the clan by clanship ties and to the whole clan by ritual ties, and the bridge between these two sets of ties is Ba'at-Sakpar. Gbizug has no loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari, other than Ba'at-Sakpar, on the level of clanship; in this respect Gbizug is a threat to the stability of Ba'at-Sakpar's field of clanship. The latter's loyalties to Gbizug might in certain circumstances clash with its loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari. Compromise and adjustment are made possible by the scheme of ritual ties. The partly independent fields of clanship of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are adjusted to one another at a different level of social organization. In the frame of ritual relations, Gbizug is, as it were, assimilated to the whole clan of Ba'ari, drawn into the field of clanship of Ba'at-Sakpar.

It follows that on this plane of ritual relations Gbeog and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra are indirectly bound to the whole of Ba'ari, for Gbizug represents its whole field of clanship in its corporate ritual relationship with Ba'ari. At a further remove Zubiuŋ Yakɔra is the bridge between the whole of Zubiuŋ and the whole of Ba'ari through Gbizug; and this rule extends, by a series of removes, to all the Talis.

The Underlying Principles of Ritual Collaboration

x618 183 We must try to see clearly the principles underlying this bewildering hierarchy of social ties between corporate units in Taleland. It is as difficult to state this principle simply and precisely as it was for the writer to elicit it from the confusing and, at first sight, inconsistent welter of

facts with which he was faced in the field. Maximal lineages are the 618x
smallest corporate units that emerge in political action. The social and 182
political relations between maximal lineages are regulated by ties of clanship. These ties constitute fields of social relations in which larger corporate units, which we have called clans, emerge. These are the largest corporate units that act in political matters. At the level of social and political relations between clans—that is to say, where the fields of social relations, constituted by clanship ties, overlap one another—clanship ties no longer suffice as the organizing mechanism. Here we meet with the interaction of more complex units and regions of Tale social structure than the maximal lineage. The social interests in response to which these interactions occur are more complex and more diffuse than those that are served by clanship. Consequently, an organizing mechanism of a different order comes into play, the mechanism of ritual.

Ritual is the appropriate mechanism of social organization at this level because the interests involved are not of a practical or utilitarian kind but of a moral kind—in fact, the most general moral interests of the natives, the maintenance of their existing institutions and norms of social behaviour. We must emphasize that we are dealing here with levels of organization correlated with different grades of social interests, and not with hard-and-fast forms of social grouping. We are dealing with different expressions of the same underlying forces. The same categories of ritual values and forms of association serve as a differentiating and integrating mechanism both at the level of social relations between maximal lineages and at the level of interclan relations. And clanship forms the bridge between the two levels as well as the organizing factor at the lower level. Both factors operate at both levels but with inverse dominance. That this is so can be seen from the natives' habit of conceptually assimilating all their social ties to the pattern of genealogical relationship and evaluating them all by the touchstone of kinship. The basic pattern of organization is that which we have described in our analysis of the clan system.

The ritual configurations and connexions at the higher level are obviously modelled on clanship configurations and connexions. The reason for this is simply that the ritual relations we are here concerned with exist between corporate units, maximal lineages or clans, defined by the canon of agnatic descent and by their place in the whole system of clanship.

We can say then that a Talis clan has a field of ritual relations overlapping but not congruent with its field of clanship ties. The fields of ritual relations of adjacent clans are articulated with one another so as to form a connected system linking all Talis to one another. It is through this system that the major cleavage between the Talis and their congeners on the one hand, and the Namoos on the other, is transcended; and the cycle of the Great Festivals is the medium through which this ritual system is regularly, obligatorily, and conspicuously brought into action. Let us see how the system extends to the Hill Talis.

The Scheme of Ritual Collaboration among the Hill Talis 794

The ritual relations of clans and lineages among the Hill Talis, though 618x
based on the same principles as those of Ba'ari, have a much more complex 182

x618 elaboration. Among them the cult of the External *Bɔyar*,[1] homologous
182 though it is in function and doctrine with its Zubiuŋ counterpart, includes
774 peculiar esoteric elements lacking in the latter. This cult is the pivot of their Harvest Festival, *Bɔyaraam*, which takes its name from the External *Bɔyar*, of which it is essentially a sacrament. The sacrament includes an initiation cult, by which the males are brought into the *Bɔyar* sodality and bound to its obligations and observances.

Each *Bɔyar* has a number of ritual functionaries who hold office by virtue of being the heads of the maximal lineages in which these ritual offices are vested. As a rule a particular maximal lineage has the exclusive ownership of one office, and the ritual offices connected with a particular *Bɔyar* are distributed among all or most of the corporate units (maximal lineages) that owe allegiance to that *Bɔyar*. They usually include maximal lineages of a single clan, maximal lineages of other clans linked to them by ties of clanship, and territorially adjacent maximal lineages not related to them by clanship.

The cult of the Earth (*Tɛŋ*), again, is localized at a number of sacred spots, the most exalted of which are the foci of ritual association and collaboration between groups of clans and maximal lineages *not* connected by clanship. As in the *Bɔyar* cult, the ritual roles are distributed among the heads of the corporate units owing allegiance to a particular Earth
[778] shrine. Each maximal lineage has, in addition, its private lineage *bɔyar*, the symbolic seat of its own ancestors, as well as the special shrine that symbolizes and is bound up with the ritual office vested in that lineage.

Though each ritual office of a particular *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is vested in one maximal lineage, the other member-units of the congregation have an interest in that office. There are certain occasions when all the ritual functionaries must be present in order that the rites of worship may be performed. This is the case during the Great Festivals, and the concrete manifestation of this principle is the common sacrament partaken of in the rites at the *Bɔyar* and the *Tɛŋ*.

793 Again, there is an order of seniority among the ritual functionaries of a
794 *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ*. The most senior is the chief custodian of that shrine.
182 Members of his lineage have a private relationship with the shrine, in
x618 addition to their public duties in connexion with it. They may, through him, bring private sacrifices to it in misfortune, or out of gratitude. But this functionary is also the direct intermediary between the congregation and the shrine. The priestly duties of its cult fall mainly on him. He is obliged to preside at all rites in which the whole congregation takes part, and the lineages of the other functionaries are dependent on him for the proper performance of the rites. This does not give him political power over them, for he is only *primus inter pares*, but it enhances the prestige of his office and makes it the pivot of the whole constellation. Thus all the functionaries and their respective lineages have a particular interest in the senior, pivotal office.

Furthermore, the installation of a ritual functionary in his office is

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[1] For the sake of clarity whenever reference is made to an external *Bɔyar*, a capital *B* will be used; when any other kind of *bɔyar* is referred to a lower-case *b* will be used.

always the privilege of another functionary of the same congregation, or 793
of a neighbouring congregation. The effect of this is to maintain particu- 794
larly close bonds of interdependence and mutual amity between pairs of 182
clans or maximal lineages and thus to strengthen the force of ritual 618x
collaboration as a sanction of mutual loyalty and cohesion. If the *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is coterminous with a clan (as at Zubiuŋ), the relationship tends to be mutual or circular—A installs B and B installs A, or A installs B and B installs C who in turn installs A. The arrangement is then plausibly subsumed under the relations of clanship. In a congregation of unrelated maximal lineages the relationship may be mutual between some pairs of lineages and circular between other sets of lineages, which will often include lineages belonging to mutually installing pairs. Thus, A installs B and B installs A; but A also installs C, C installs D, and D installs E.

It often happens, also, that the ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage belonging to one *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is installed by a ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage of a neighbouring congregation. The two lineages may be connected by clanship ties and the arrangement explained by invoking these. Or they may be adjacent to each other; or they may belong to the same *Bɔɣar* congregation but different *Tɛŋ* congregations (or vice versa), so that it is only with respect to one context that the parties can be said to belong to different ritual groupings.

In every case it comes to this: that maximal lineages bound to each other 794
by one set of ritual ties, with respect to one focus of ritual cohesion, are 182
divided from each other, and bound to maximal lineages of other con- 618x
gregations constituted with reference to the same category of ritual relations, by another set of ritual ties. Thus the division between adjacent *Bɔɣar* congregations (or *Tɛŋ* congregations), mutually exclusive by reference to the particular *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ* at which each worships, is bridged by the ritual interdependence, in terms of another ritual category, of some of their respective member lineages. And the system extends chainwise throughout all the clans of the Hill Talis.

We have here a more elaborate reproduction of the pattern of ritual relations that was observed to hold between Ba'ari and its neighbours. Indeed, the schematic formulation attempted above gives only an inkling of the labyrinthine intricacies of these ritual relations among the Hill Talis. In this pattern the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* and the cult of the Earth have a very significant relationship, as we have previously indicated. It can be seen more explicitly than at Zubiuŋ or Ba'ari that they form polar principles in the total system of public ritual values and relations.

This appears quite clearly in the doctrines and ritual practices of the 182
Hill Talis. *Bɔɣar* and *Tɛŋ* are always coupled together in ritual activities. 794
Together they exercise a mystical rule over the life and health, the fertility 796
and prosperity of man. The differences in the way in which they are concerned with these fundamentals of human existence are like a complementary division of labour. This is well shown in the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. Thus *Gɔlib*, the Sowing Festival just before the first rains, is centred on the Earth cult. It dramatizes man's dependence on the fertility of the soil and on the rain for his livelihood, and the dependence

182 794 796 of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme, through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔyaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔyar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔyar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔyar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔyar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔyar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔyar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔya* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

782 794 [552] So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔyar*, the officiant in his invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔya*, enumerating them by name, to 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔyar* has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔya* of all the Talis clans are

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[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔyar* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔya* 782
of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of 794
the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual 619
community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of 794
every Talaŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔyar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔyar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔyar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) 794
are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social 171
groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔyar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔyar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔyar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkəra*)'.

Bɔyar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage 182
associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious 794
conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of 613
loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔyar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

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[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

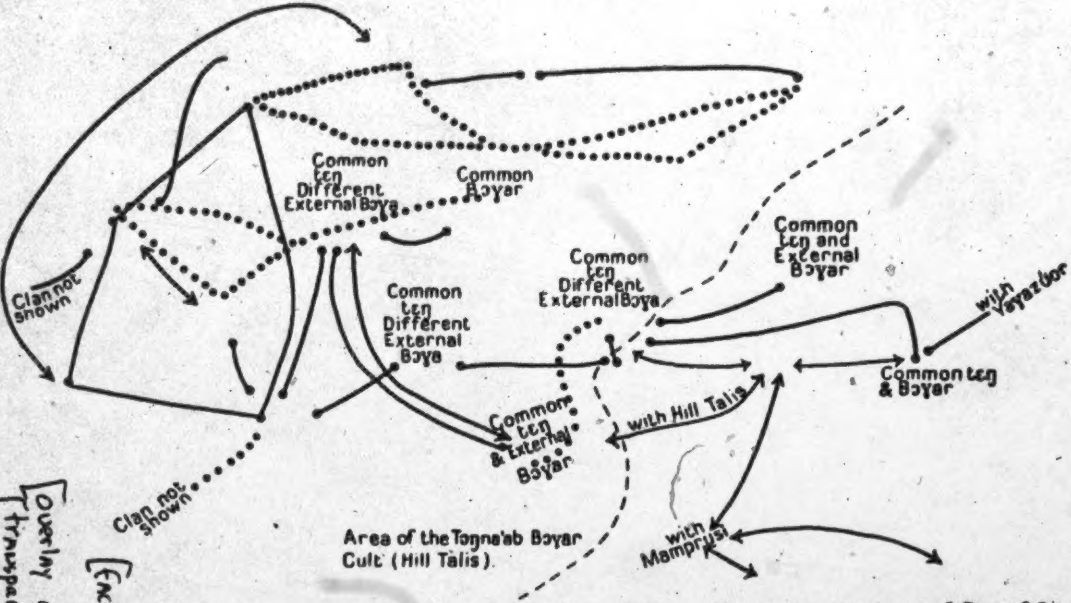
Common
tɛŋ
Different
External Bɔya
Common
Bɔyar
Clan not shown
Common
tɛŋ
Different
External
Bɔya
Common
tɛŋ
Different
External Bɔya
Common
tɛŋ and
External
Bɔyar
with
Yayazbor
Common tɛŋ
& Bɔyar
Common
tɛŋ
& External
Bɔyar
with Hill Talis
Clan not
shown
Area of the Tɔŋna'ab Bɔyar
Cult (Hill Talis).
with
Mamprusi

Diagram illustrating the Nexus of Ties of Ritual Collaboration
(only a small selection of these ties shown)

Clans or Maximal lineages connected by lines thus •—• collaborate in the Cult of the Earth (tɛŋ) and/or in rites of the Festival Cycle associated with that cult. Clans connected by continuous line or figure collaborate jointly in Cult of the Earth.

Clans or Maximal lineages connected by lines thus ←→ have reciprocal or complementary ritual relationships associated with politico-ritual offices mainly chiefship (na'am) or Tɛndaanaship.

Clans or Maximal lineages connected thus • • • collaborate in cult of External Bɔyar (Tɔŋna'ab); those connected by continuous dotted lines do so jointly.

[Facing p. 108]
[overlay on p. 109]
[transparent in original]

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field.
Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔɣar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔɣar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔɣar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
184 Tenzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
769 single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine
(*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the
[793] Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a
Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[778] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
769

182 778 794 x618 769 of the people of Gbizug is the grave of their primordial ancestor, Tɛndaan Gɛnət. This grave, situated on the reputed house-site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, is in the sole custody of Gbizug, and is associated with the tɛndaanaship, therefore with the Earth cult. But whenever a new Gbizug tɛndaana is installed, representatives of Gbeog, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra must be present at the rites performed at Gɛnət's grave. This is a matter of right and duty, subsumed under the rights and duties of their clanship ties and validated by the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas. But one segment of Wakii must also be represented at these rites, not in virtue of clanship ties but of the kinship (*mabiirət*) in the figurative sense that is held to prevail between all tɛndaana clans. It is effective in this case because of the proximity and the ritual collaboration in the Great Festivals of Wakii and Gbizug.

x618 It is significant that the people of Soog, despite their clanship ties with Gbizug, do not come into the field of its ritual relations. On the surface this appears to be correlated with their spatial separation from Gbizug. It is only by their attendance at the exoteric ceremonies that accompany the installation or funeral of a Gbizug tɛndaana, and by the rights to special portions of meat and beer that they can exercise on these occasions, that the clanship ties between Soog and Gbizug impinge on the latter's field of ritual relations.

x618 794 769 On the other hand, the clanship ties of Soog with Gbeog have a ritual embodiment in the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. All the segments of Gbeog practise this cult; but some of them owe allegiance to the *Bɔɣar* of which the people of Soog are the senior custodians, and the others have a separate *Bɔɣar* of their own. Soog and Gbeog do not have a common Earth shrine. In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog forms one united community and Soog another.

182 x618 In this intricate tissue of ritual relations we see again, as at Ba'ari, the interweaving of clanship ties, neighbourhood ties, and ties of ritual interdependence *per se*, forming syntheses of politico-ritual relations at a higher level than those that are possible in terms of any one of these categories. This interweaving can be seen at any of the ceremonies in which a particular field of ritual relations is actualized. It is particularly clear among the Tɛnzugu clans, where we can see, more plainly than at Gbizug or Ba'ari, how it is produced by the counterbalancing of ritual ties against clanship and local cleavages, and of ritual ties of one sort against those of another sort.

x618 769 Soog has a specific ritual tie with one major segment of Sakpee, the head of which installs the senior ritual functionary of the Soog External *Bɔɣar*. This segment of Sakpee, Sakpee I, has its own *Bɔɣar*. But it unites with the other major segment, Sakpee II, in the worship of a common Earth shrine, the custody of which is vested in Sakpee II; and Sakpee II owes allegiance to the External *Bɔɣar* Bona'ab, the senior custodian of which is the head of Kpata'ar. Soog, though linked by clanship ties with Kpata'ar, has no direct ritual connexions with it. Their fields of ritual relations overlap at Sakpee, which forms the bridge between them at this level.

Kpata'ar provides a typical instance of the structure of the ritual fields

of any of the Hill Talis clans. Each of the two maximal lineages that 618 X
constitute Kpata'ar, Kpata'arna'ab yiri and Nakyeet yiri, has its own 769
private lineage *bɔyar*. Though bound by all the reciprocal duties and privileges that make them the closest clan *sunzɔp* of each other, the genealogical cleavage between them is somewhat more strongly emphasized than it is between the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ, for example. The head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is the head of the clan, and *eo ipso* the senior ritual functionary and principal custodian of the Bona'ab *Bɔyar*. The head of Nakyeet yiri has a complementary role in relation to him in political, ritual, and jural affairs that concern the whole clan.

The politico-ritual office held by the head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is symbolized in a shrine that is ancillary to the External *Bɔyar*. It is in the sole custody of Kpata'arna'ab yiri. But when sacrifice is offered at it on prescribed occasions Nakyeet yiri must also be represented; and in addition Dakuor yiri, the component maximal lineage of Bunkiuk with which Kpata'arna'ab yiri has ties of clanship, must be represented and share in the sacrament. Thus, both Nakyeet yiri and Dakuor yiri, though they themselves have no ties of clanship, take part in a common sacrifice with Kpata'arna'ab yiri because of their clanship ties with the latter. In this case the central region of the field of clanship of Kpata'arna'ab yiri becomes actualized in a sacrament that symbolizes the exclusive rights to a particular politico-ritual office held by that maximal lineage.

But what about the worship of the External *Bɔyar*, Bona'ab? As its senior custodians, the men of Kpata'arna'ab yiri can sacrifice there alone or accompanied by Nakyeet yiri, if they desire the intercession of the *Bɔyar* in matters that concern them only. When the Great Festivals come round, however, it is obligatory for the whole congregation of the *Bɔyar* to join together in the performance of the ceremonies. The other communicants, beside the two segments of Kpata'ar, are Gundaat, Samiit and two of its linked lineages, together counting as a single unit, and Sakpee II.

The cult of the *Bɔyar* Bona'ab is the central force uniting this group 122
of maximal lineages. It is, we must emphasize, not a permanent bond of 618 X
union that operates at all times and under all conditions, but a synthesis 769
that emerges chiefly in the context of the Great Festivals. During the [796]
festivals their interdependence in the cult of the *Bɔyar* imposes mutual
amity and solidarity on this group of maximal lineages. At other times this is not always an effective sanction of amity and goodwill. For these ties of ritual collaboration are not homogeneous. Underneath them run other ties which reinforce them in the context of the *Bɔyar* cult but might act against them outside of this context. There are first the ties of clanship linking Kpata'arna'ab yiri with Nakyeet yiri, Nakyeet yiri with Sakpee, Sakpee with Gundaat, in a chain, as it were. Then there are the [608]
ties of clanship-by-courtesy which link all these lineages with one another. Samiit and Sakpee have bonds of local contiguity because they 'sit together on the same land' under the ritual jurisdiction of the Sakpee *tendaana*. Gundaat and Samiit are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, bound by a covenant of mutual amity which they trace back to the alleged kinship ties of their mythological founding ancestors. Gundaat and Kpata'ar

182 x618 769 have not only bonds of local contiguity, but an additional tie of ritual interdependence in that their heads install each other in their respective ritual offices. Similarly, Sakpee and Samiit have an added ritual tie in that their heads each have a special role in the ceremonial installation of the other. Finally, the head of Samiit exercises a special politico-ritual function in relation to the head of Kpata'ar. It is his task, in times of great social emergency, formally to adjure the head of Kpata'ar to initiate the ritual procedures necessary to avert disaster.

Thus, underneath the general collaboration of the communicants of Bona'ab with one another in the *Bɔyar* cult, and interweaving with it, spread these particular, divergent ties between different pairs of maximal lineages. In many situations these subordinate ties hold fast where the superordinate ties of ritual collaboration between all the communicants are not strong enough to override the cleavages between them. It is a [578] striking thing, for instance, that whereas Nakyeet yiri and Sakpee have tended to side with the Gɔlibdaana of Bunkiuk in the struggle for power that has been going on between him and the head of Kpata'ar during the last few years, Gundaat has stood staunchly by the latter. The general bond of ritual collaboration in the *Bɔyar* cult has not ensured the support of the whole Bona'ab congregation for Kpata'arna'ab yidem in this struggle, and even the specific ties of clanship between them and Nakyeet yidem have not been proof against the lure of the Gɔlibdaana's fleshpots.

It is characteristic of Tale society that the structure of a community, whether it be a permanent community or a temporary community such as emerges in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, is directly mirrored in every situation and every institution in which this structure becomes manifest. To take a very simple example: when the congregation of Bona'ab assembles there for a sacrifice, the representatives of the different maximal lineages sit in a fixed order. Kpata'arna'ab yidem sit in the place of greatest honour, since they are the senior custodians, and the other lineages are distributed as shown in the diagram opposite. It will be seen that this diagram gives a picture also of the structural relations between the different lineages, and incidentally of their local relations to one another. It shows in a nutshell how local, structural, and politico-ritual relations are interlocked with one another and converge to create and maintain interclan co-operation and solidarity. The diagram shows also how the ritual roles in any of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship at the *Bɔyar* are distributed amongst the different maximal lineages.

182 x618 794 796 Kpata'arna'ab yidem are the senior custodians also of the supreme Earth shrine of Tenzugu, Doo; but in the cult of Doo they have a completely different set of ritual collaborators from those associated with them in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. They have a different field of ritual relations counterpoised to that of which the External *Bɔyar* is the focus. The units associated with Kpata'arna'ab yidem in the cult of Doo are Degal (linked by clanship ties to them, but having its own External *Bɔyar*), Gɔlibdaan yidem of Bunkiuk (who have no clanship ties with Kpata'arna'ab yidem, and are the senior custodians of a different External

Bɔyar from theirs), and Tamboog (who also have no clanship ties with 182.
Kpata'ar, and have an independent External *Bɔyar*). These four units 769
must be represented at all rites performed at Doo during the Great 794
618x

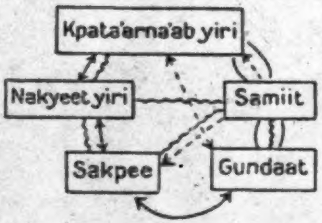

Diagram showing the seating arrangements at ceremonies in the sacred grove of the External Bɔyar BONA'AB, as reflecting the structural relations underlying ritual collaboration in the Bɔyar cult.

⟷ = Clanship ties
〰 = Ties of local contiguity
‑‑‑▸ = Specific ties of politico-ritual interdependence
⬭ = Other social ties.

Festivals. Each one has also a private Earth shrine, with which the other three groups have no connexion, but their common allegiance to Doo binds them to one another in mutual ritual dependence. This should mean also, and by all accounts formerly did mean, a bond of mutual amity and cohesion; for there is nothing, according to Tale belief, which the Earth abhors so greatly as strife between those who worship it together at the same shrine.

To-day the cult of Doo furnishes an outstanding instance of the rela- 182.
tivity of such ritual sanctions to the structural relations of the corporate 618x
units amongst which they are effective. During the Great Festivals, the 794
four maximal lineages meet as of old to perform the prescribed rites at
Doo. For this limited period and this objective they are obliged to set
aside their antagonisms and collaborate amicably. At other times how- [578]
ever, they are divided by the struggle for power that has been going on
between the Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab. Both Degal (in spite of
their clanship ties with Kpata'ar) and the majority of the Tamboog people
have been seduced by the wealth and power of the Gɔlibdaana.

The pull of loyalty to Kpata'ar sustained by the common cult of Doo 578
has not, however, remained altogether ineffective. In order to make their religious relations with Kpata'ar consistent with their newly arisen political hostility to them, the supporters of the Gɔlibdaana have tried to oust Kpata'arna'ab yidem from their traditional status in relation to Doo. They would thus, if they succeeded, have put Kpata'ar in the position of a faction opposed to the rightful principals in the cult of Doo.

578 On the other hand, there are dissidents in the Gɔlibdaana's camp who rationalize their opposition to him and find a rallying motive for it in the traditional loyalty which they owe to Kpata'ar in virtue of their reciprocal ties of ritual collaboration.

182 For Kpata'arna'ab yidem, Degal, Bunkiuk, Gɔlibdaan yidem, and Tamboog, their common allegiance to Doo counteracts their divergent loyalties to their respective *Bɔyar* congregations. Doo, however, does more than merely bind these four units to one another. It is the focus of integration of the four *Bɔyar* communities they represent; and it is the point of confluence of the distinctive fields of clanship and of local ties of these four units. The ritual of the Gɔlib Festival when closely analysed shows that Doo is the palladium of all the Talis, the centre about which the equilibrium of all their corporate relations with one another swings.

Thus, to be specific, Tamboog is regarded as representing Wakii, and therefore, in virtue of the latter's ties with Gbizug, Zubiuŋ, and Ba'ari, these clans as well. Tamboog also represents Wɔyar and the other members of its *Bɔyar* congregation. Kpata'ar represents the other units constituting its *Bɔyar* congregation, and through them Soog and Gbeog. Degal represents the Talis on the east slope of the hills and the adjacent plain. Bunkiuk represents its *Bɔyar* congregation, which includes segments of Zandoya, Yinduuri, Sii, and Gorogo. And intersecting these groupings run the numerous ties of clanship, joking partnership, clanship-by-courtesy, privileged coercion, and local contiguity, that link up particular members of different groups.

We have considered only the two major ritual institutions through the medium of which the clans of the Talis are articulated into interdependent sets, and these again serially interlocked in a single system. There are also a number of other religious institutions ancillary to the cults of the *Bɔyar* and the *Tɛŋ* in which more localized forms of ritual collaboration unite maximal lineages and clans, not otherwise ritually related, on certain occasions. It would be tedious to deal with them at length. It is enough to say that their effect is to interweave more closely the numerous threads which form the amazing web of politico-ritual relations among the Talis. They make the system complete to its last detail.

182
796 The all-embracing range of this web of politico-ritual relations comes out most plainly in the Great Festivals. The cycle requires the ritual co-operation not only of all the Talis but of the Namoos as well. The distribution of ritual roles and responsibilities amongst the clans is such that every corporate unit has a specific role associated with a particular phase of the cycle and with particular ritual emblems. Thus the cycle of the Great Festivals unites all the Tallensi in the performance of one connected series of ritual acts, and this is a bond of profound importance for all their social relations with one another.

The Great Festivals are dramatizations on the plane of ritual symbolism of the most vital and universal values of the Tallensi. They express the idea that the common good of all the Tallensi is founded on the inescapable interdependence of their elaborately differentiated clans and lineages. This common good, the ritual of the Great Festivals might be interpreted

to declare, is not a matter of expediency or calculation but the essence of 122.
life for the individual and the community. It is a sacred necessity; and 796
men must be in harmony amongst themselves and with the mystical powers that control their lives if they desire to gain the beneficence of these powers for this end. The ritual, the sacrifices, and the prayers to the ancestors and to the Earth, pleading for the fruitfulness of the land, of women, and of the flocks and herds, for health, prosperity, and peace, and offering thanks at the end of the agricultural year for these boons, eloquently express the Tale conception of the common good. In the rites of the Great Festivals the widest community that has social relevance for any Taləŋ emerges, not as a hard-and-fast political unit, but as a temporary synthesis of all the forces of social integration operative in Tale society. This is an expression of the fact that, though they have no centralized government, the Tallensi do form a single body politic, albeit one without defined territorial boundaries. This unit is built up on the widely ramifying structural ties which knit the independent corporate units together. But its ultimate basis is a body of moral and jural norms and values accepted as binding by all Tallensi, and defended from the disruptive action of conflicting sectional interests by the most solemn ritual sanctions of Tale religion. The function of ritual collaboration between clans and lineages is to maintain the unchallengeable validity of these norms and values; for upon their observance the attainment of the common good ultimately depends.[1]

Native Thought and the Realities of Social Structure

We have digressed to survey the scope and function of ritual collabora- 582
tion among the Talis in order to see what truth there is in the maxim that 'those who sacrifice together do not intermarry'. As a generalization it is obviously inaccurate; but it is valid for particular instances of linkage by clanship ties, though only as an *a posteriori* inference.

Tale elders do not fall into this error of deduction through lack of 829
intelligence or ignorance of their social organization. Among the Tallensi, as among most primitive peoples, what appears to us to be defective logic usually proves to be a product of the social organization as it is apprehended by native thought. When an individual Taləŋ applies the maxim we have criticized to his own particular field of social relations—not to that of his lineage or clan—it is perfectly apposite. For an individual in his personal capacity can only sacrifice together with other individuals if they are his kinsfolk or clansfolk; and this implies automatically that he cannot marry their daughters or sisters.

In the social philosophy of the Tallensi, as will be shown in the next 829
volume of this study, kinship is the model of all social ties between 602
individuals and groups. The ties of clanship, ritual collaboration, or local contiguity are visualized as so many different extensions and transformations of the fundamental patterns of kinship. For the individual this is accurate to a very large extent. There is a kinship element in all his social

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[1] This aspect of Tale political organization and its wider sociological implications are discussed in *African Political Systems*, cit. supra.

Funeral rites have a twofold symbolic value for the Tallensi. They 764
symbolize the corporate unity and identity of the lineage and clan and 182
its ties with other clans; but they also symbolize the group's dependence on and moral responsibility to their ancestors, collectively and individually. This is shown very well in the custom of each clan's using a particular kind of loin cover for the dead and in the associated custom of swearing an oath by the father's loin cover. They show that ritual symbols of social differentiation and association among the Tallensi are not mere emblems of intergroup differences. They are emotionally charged symbols of the fact that the corporate unity and identity of the group is created by the moral bonds of its members among themselves and of each member with the ancestors of the group. We shall return to this presently.

In spite of their deviant mortuary customs, the people of Gorogo, 619
Ka'ar, and Teelɔg consider themselves to be, and are considered to be, as 171
much a part of the Talis aggregate as any other Talis clans. Conversely 184
it is known among the Talis that some clans of Gɔrisi and Namnam, as well as many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, dress their dead in a sheepskin loin cover. The Talis do not on this account acknowledge any of these groups as Talis or as being kin to them. Again, some clans in the Sie district gird their dead with an oribi skin. But they deny having any ties with Ka'ar. Indeed, their elders are quite unaware that they have this custom in common with Ka'ar, and are not in the least interested in hearing of it. This is a significant difference between the Namoos, all of whom have the same mortuary observances, and the Talis and their congeners. This difference extends to other manifest ritual usages that serve to differentiate corporate units from one another.

Certain other funeral rites are also stressed as rigorously distinctive 764
of the Talis and as common to all of them. All Talis, it is said, conclude 184
a funeral by the rite of *ŋma ma'ala*. Members of the deceased's maximal lineage, and the heads of the other lineages of the clan, contribute a large number of fowls, which are slaughtered as a sacrifice to mark the final departure of the dead person from the social sphere of the living and his aggregation to the ancestors. In reality, almost every clan has its own modifications in the details of the rite. In some clans it is performed for all males who have begotten children, in others for lineage heads only, in others for both men and women; and the people of Kpata'ar omit the rite altogether. The rite is found also among many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, with diverse local variations.

Similar local variations from clan to clan appear in the other parts of the funeral ceremonies where the usages of the Talis contrast with those of the Namoos, and many, if not most, of these distinct customs are found among the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie district.

These variations in ritual observances, and their correlation with structural ties and cleavages, are constantly brought to an observer's attention. They form a common topic of discussion and comment at funeral ceremonies. One is often reminded of them by the behaviour of women at these ceremonies. A woman's husband's clan very often has different ritual practices from those of her father's clan. Now, married

764 daughters always come to funerals in their paternal family. They have
184 special ritual duties, some specific to that clan, some more general. They
are apt, then, to follow the procedures to which they have become accustomed in their husband's home and have, therefore, to be closely supervised.

In all these mortuary and funeral rites there is a tendency for the plainsmen to have one type of variant, while the Hill clans favour another. There is less variation in the details of rites among the clans of either group than between the two groups, and the clans at the foot of the Hills show variants of ritual usage intermediate between those of the plains Talis and of the Hill clans. Thus, one of the most solemn and sacred of the rites which transform the brute fact of death into the mystical fact of spiritual status is the rite of *kpe kpiintaŋ*. It is usually regarded as distinctive of the Namoos, but it occurs also in the funeral ceremonies of tɛndaanas and elders at Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Gbizug, and Wakii (the Talis clans contiguous with the Namoos) as well as among some of the non-Namoo clans of the Sie area. The Hill Talis attribute this to contamination by the customs of the Namoos. There are one or two rites which the plains Talis have and the Hill Talis lack altogether. There is, therefore, a broad distinction corresponding to the division between the clans that celebrate *Da'a* and those that celebrate *Bɔyaraam* as their Harvest Festival. But the two clusters overlap, as they do structurally, and the Talis overlap with the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie area by the criterion of funeral customs as they do by those of locality and structure.

● 182 The funeral customs of the Talis, it is clear, are directly correlated with
184 the structure of the society. The broad patterns of doctrine and ritual
764 practice are the same for all Tallensi, and are an indication of their
uniform culture and of a social structure which embraces all the Tallensi in a single system. More specific patterns of doctrine and practice are followed exclusively by the Talis and their congeners elsewhere in Taleland. They are an index of the structural differentiation of these clans from the Namoos. Some of these patterns are common to all or most of the Talis clans, and correspond therefore to the network of clanship and other structural ties linking them all to one another. Other specific patterns of funeral customs mark off lesser regions within the whole cluster of Talis clans. And finally, variations in detail correspond to the genealogical differentiation of clan from clan and lineage from lineage, and to the fact that each unit has a specific field of social relations not wholly congruent with that of any other unit of a like sort. The natives understand this. As we have noted before, they see variant ritual beliefs and practices of all kinds, and especially variant mortuary and funeral customs, as ways in which the corporate identity and the continuity of lineage and clan are expressed. They consider such variations within the limits of common patterns as belonging to the very fabric of their social organization.

Totemic Avoidances and Clanship Ties

784 The connexion between ritual observances and the social structure can
184 be even more plainly seen in the totemic avoidances of the Talis and the

leopard taboo of Ŋkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of 776
the Talis. 784

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems 184
is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛyər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛyər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔyar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛyər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔyar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔyar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔyar* and the *Bɔyar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that 608
sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be 776
called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔyar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔyar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔyar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔyar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with 608
lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when 769
the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔya* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔyar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding 182
pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

been discussing have a deeper meaning to the natives than merely as convenient indices of social differentiation. It is on account of their deeper meaning that they serve also, in certain contexts, to identify corporate units. The very casualness with which Tallensi speak of their totemic taboos; the unquestioning way in which they take their funeral customs for granted; and at the other extreme, the connexion of these ritual observances with the supreme religious institution of the Hill Talis, whose influence pervades their whole social life, all show that we are dealing with something that goes down to the axiomatic ideas and values that underpin the social structure.

182
611
These ritual institutions, with their common pattern of injunction, oath, and determination by descent or quasi-descent, form part of an interlocked system of religious values that springs directly out of the social structure. Their common focus is the notion of dependence on the ancestors determined by the fact of descent. But it is not descent in its physiological sense that they refer to. They symbolize the fact that descent, to the Tallensi, axiomatically creates bonds of moral and ritual interdependence and obligation. It is because, as we have previously seen, Tallensi tend to read into all ritual relations, whatever their derivation, corresponding genealogical relationships; because the relations of mutual amity and co-operation, even though only in a limited sphere of conduct, imposed by ritual ties are of the same type as those imposed by ties of kinship; because all the rights and duties determined by descent are kept in force by the sanction of the ancestor spirits, that the values appropriate to the sphere of kinship and descent merge with those expressed in religious cult and doctrine. There is a syncretism in the Tale system of ideas and values that images their syncretic social structure. Lineage system and ancestor cult interfuse and at the same time mirror each other.

613 Our analysis can be carried farther if we consider what lineage membership means. It is created by the bare physiological fact of patrilineal descent. But the physiological links between the individual and his ancestors and between all the living members of the lineage have no social significance except as the kernel of the social relations and bonds that come out in economic affairs such as the ownership and use of land; in the exercise of moral and jural rights and duties, as in marriage or parenthood; in ritual belief and practice, as in the ancestor cult. This is the stuff of individual and collective life for the native wherever—and this applies to almost everything he does—the fact of descent is relevant. Membership of his lineage, or his clan, or of a religious community means, to the individual, a particular collection of people taken severally in some situations, collectively in others, with whom he has certain kinds of known and regular social relations reflecting their common interests, and based on the continuity and integrity of the group; and he submits to a number of restraints on word and deed in order to maintain his relations with them. A man experiences this in a multitude of particular actions and events, day after day.

As a member of a particular lineage a man has definite rights and duties and enters into a stream of social relations from which all who do not

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618x
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔɣar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618x
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔɣar*.

The External *Bɔɣar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔɣar*, parallel to 618x
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and 778
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794
each External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182 ●
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Taləŋ (*u pana baŋ Taləŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Taləŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔɣar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔɣar*, and often invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔɣar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

769 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most
778 solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order be-
881 queathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends
the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 That this is so can be seen [illegible] the fact that the most solemn oath of
794 the Hill Talis is the oath [illegible] External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor
Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet [illegible]ter (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm*
881 *kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidd[illegible]te-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The clim[illegible]tiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novice[illegible]he *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when
627 he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going
into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial)
881 fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with
771 the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole 182
social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line. 771

One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' 182
with the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔɣar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔɣar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔɣar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔɣar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔɣar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔɣar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔɣar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔɣar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔɣar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔɣar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest.

It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic 794
taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the 611
External *Bɔɣar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔɣar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot.

In sum, then, the totem stands for the relative autonomy of the maximal 182
lineage, the External *Bɔɣar* for the interdependence of lineages in a single 184
religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔɣar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have

184 182 extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more distinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

619 It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Talɔŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tendaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔyar* cult, which extends as far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

182 771 But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos, funeral rites, and *Bɔyar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

784 171 The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

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[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134–5.

speak only of the Voltaic area, the animal species referred to above occur 171
among the totemic avoidances of people as remote from the Tallensi, 784
both spatially and linguistically, as the Isala and the Lobi,[1] as well as among all the other 'tribes' of the area.

Confining ourselves to Taleland and to the settlements of Gorisi 171
fringing this area, we find that the totemic avoidances include birds like 784
the canary (*wurəg*), the turtle-dove (*daŋman*), the domestic fowl (*noo*), and 136
several other species; reptiles, like the snake, the tortoise, the water- 262
tortoise, and the crocodile; fish, like the *tunəg*; insects, like the large grasshopper (*saŋkaan*); rodents, like the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) and the hare (*suoŋ*); ruminants, like the goat (*buu*) and the sheep (*pɛhug*); carnivores, such as the cat (*sakoo*), the dog (*baa*), and the leopard (*yeogbaa*); and a variety of other animals, such as the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*) and the bush-pig (*dee*).[2]

It is impossible to find any common trait amongst this variety of 171
creatures. Some play an important part in the economic life and the 784
food-supply of the natives, but the majority are negligible in this respect.
Many are prized as delicacies by those who are permitted to eat them; 231
and, on the other hand, some are despised as food. No adult would 262
willingly eat grasshoppers, canaries, or small edible snakes, though little children, who eat almost any small animals they can lay their hands on, quite often do so. Several of these animal species are regarded as always potentially dangerous in the magical as well as the physical sense. Such are the crocodile, snakes, the leopard, and other wild carnivores. But many, on the contrary, are entirely innocent both in the magical and the physical sense. Some have a place in the meagre folk-lore of the Tallensi, including such diverse creatures as the monkey, the turtle-dove, and the cat. Cats, for instance, are considered to be pre-eminently the domestic companions of women, but with a streak of the wild animal in them. Women treat them with a mixture of solicitude, appropriate to a valued pet, and of pseudo-ritual respect that meets with good-humoured ridicule from the men. Incidentally, clans that have the cat as a totem show no particular respect towards household cats, nor are household dogs treated differently by people who may and people who may not eat the dog.

The totemic animals of the Tallensi thus comprise neither a zoological 171
nor a utilitarian nor a magical class. All that can be said of them is that 784

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[1] For the Isala and other 'tribes' of the Voltaic area, see Rattray, op. cit. 182
His report on the Isala is in vol. ii, pp. 465 ff. For the Lobi, see ib., vol. ii, pp. 425 ff., and Labouret, op. cit., pp. 227 ff. Rattray does not distinguish clearly between the different kinds of ritual prohibitions and injunctions coupled with patrilineal descent, some of which are not totemic in the sense we have given to this term. But his observations and those of Labouret confirm the conclusion that there is no precise correlation between these avoidances and clanship ties. Labouret's account of the attitudes and values associated with totemic avoidances among the Lobi shows them to resemble closely those of the Tallensi.

[2] Rattray's list for this area, op. cit., vol. i, p. 236, includes also several big-game animals, such as the roan (*koo*), hartebeest (*sɛbəg*), bush-cow (*yeognaaf*), and elephant (*wɔbəg*), as well as the lion (*gbiaŋmər*), the hyena (*gbiŋgbɛr*), and the hippo (*ɛmər*). But here, as elsewhere in the book, Rattray appears to have lumped together ritual observances that are similar in form though not in function, and he does not state clearly what clans or settlements hold particular taboos.

171 they are generally fairly common domestic or wild creatures. We have
784 shown that the totemic avoidances of the Tallensi have a symbolic value
182 in relation to their social organization. They are not, however, explicable
simply as a function of the social structure. We cannot dismiss the choice of animal symbolism for this function as an accident of history or as mere coincidence. To understand it we should have to probe more deeply into the religious beliefs not only of the Tallensi but of all the peoples of this culture area. Animal and food taboos play a very important part in the ritual symbolism of Voltaic culture and indeed of West African cultures in general. We have repeatedly emphasized the intrinsic relation of the religious system of the Tallensi to their social structure. In a social system such as theirs, ritual ideas and values and the morphology of the society are interrelated as mind and body in the higher primates. But these two aspects of Tale society are not merely the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Though Tale religion springs directly out of the social structure, it is fed by streams whose sources lie beneath and beyond the social structure. We cannot pursue this theme here in detail, for it leads to problems of Tale psychology, and indeed of human psychology, that lie outside the scope of this study. We can only give an indication of the line such an enquiry would take. To do this we must consider some other forms of animal symbolism that appear in Tale religious beliefs.

Taboos of the Earth

778 Animals of all kinds can be endowed with ritual significance for individuals or groups among the Tallensi. They become sacred objects (*baɣa*, sing. *baɣər*) forming part of shrines (*baɣa*, sing. *baɣər*) dedicated to named ancestor spirits, on which sacrifices are offered. A *baɣər* animal is an individual animal or a species found in a particular place. Totem animals are not *baɣa*, since they are whole species respected everywhere and not associated with particular shrines.

784 Certain 'taboos of the Earth' (*tɛŋən kiha*) form a class of animal taboos
171 standing between *baɣa* in the narrow sense and totems. Some Earth taboos are universal. Thus, throughout the Voltaic region it is a taboo to appropriate any unclaimed object of iron found lying on the ground. Other Earth taboos are specific to localities coming under the ritual jurisdiction of particular clans or lineages. All over Taleland large reptiles such as the crocodile (*baŋ*), the python (*waɣakpɛm*), the tree- and water-lizards (*uuk* and *wuu*) are taboos of the Earth. They may not be killed within the precincts of any important Earth shrine. In the bush, where men have no social bonds with the land, and therefore no ritual bonds with the Earth at specific places, they are not sacred. Binding on everybody, these taboos hold with extra force for members of lineages that have tɛndaanas (see also pp. 187–8 below).

784 Tallensi say these animals are 'the people of the Earth (*tɛŋən nirəba*)'
778 as men are people of such and such a settlement. They symbolize the mystical power of the Earth as it acts on human life, sometimes beneficently, sometimes punitively. This is what the natives mean when they say 'The Earth is a living thing (*tɛŋ la a bonvor*)'.

This mystical power is focused for a particular social group in the Earth 778
shrines of their own settlement—that is why the Earth animals are not 182
sacred in the bush. And the ritual efficacy of the Earth at a particular place depends on its connexion with a particular social group holding the office of tɛndaana for that place. The animals therefore symbolize the moral relations of men, as these are determined by their social ties with particular tracts of the earth. They symbolize the function of locality in Tale social organization.

One logical element in this symbolism is obvious. The mystical 'livingness' of the Earth is symbolized in the living creatures it harbours. But this is not all, for otherwise other earth-dwelling creatures might have been selected as well.

The special relationship of the sacred Earth animals with the clan 778
holding the tɛndaanaship for the area is focused in one species, as a rule. 184
Thus the python is specially sacred at Gbizug, the crocodile at Zubiuŋ. To kill one of these animals at home is almost as bad as murder. For they are more than Earth taboos; they are 'ancestors' (*yaab*, pl. *yaanam*) to the group concerned. If found dead in the settlement, they are given a token funeral. The sacred crocodiles living in the Zubiuŋ water-hole are treated with an almost human familiarity. 'They are our ancestors, they would not injure us', the people say. In some clans carnivores like the leopard or the lion have this function, but are not considered Earth taboos. The natives say that their ancestors who have held politico-ritual office 'rise up again (*ihigərəme*)' after death as these animals. Tallensi deny that this is a belief in reincarnation or in the transmigration of souls. These taboos have attributes of totems, of Earth taboos, and of personal ancestor symbols; and the common thread is the notion of the ancestors as a living mystical force, symbolized in living creatures. The animals symbolize the immortality of the ancestors, that is, their efficacy and power in the life of their descendants. The ancestors are where their descendants are. One reason why the lineage is tied to its locality is because the ancestors are tied to it. They are spiritually present in the social life of their descendants in the same way as the sacred animals are present in sacred pools or in the locality with which the group is identified.

Functional Differentiation and its Symbolism

An important inference emerges from our argument. Lineage and 182
locality are interwoven and interdependent factors of Tale social structure. But they are functionally discrete factors. We have previously seen how their interdependence is reflected in Tale religious ideology. We see now that their functional discreteness within the pattern of interdependence is also expressed in ritual symbols. The formally similar and associated but functionally distinct symbols we have discussed bring this out.

Tale society is highly homogeneous and integrated. But this is a [181]
resultant of the balanced interplay of a number of functionally discrete 182
factors and of the inter-articulation of many clearly defined social units. Tale religion gives ritual expression and sanction to these principles.

182 Every functionally differentiated aspect of the social life carries specific norms of conduct. It implies specific social obligations, jural rights, and, very often, economic relationships. It usually has a morphological correlate, as offices are vested in particular lineages, localities are associated with lineages, and social roles are transmitted by descent or determined by kinship. Hence every functionally differentiated aspect of social life tends to be subject to specific ritual sanctions within the general frame of the ancestor cult and to be identified by particular ritual symbols. In terms of the individual's place in the social system, this means that Tale religious ideology recognizes the fact that a man's social personality is compounded of many roles corresponding to the different functional aspects of social life in which he takes part. But this multiplicity of social roles does not obliterate the individual. Though he is a microcosm of his society he is always, also, uniquely himself. At times this is the prime determinant of his behaviour, at others a particular social role or membership of a corporate group is decisive. Totemic and other ritual symbols are the ideological landmarks that keep the individual on his course.

622 We see this very well in the case of a chief or other politico-ritual
182 functionary. The man himself with his personal qualities, his career, his good or ill fortune is one thing. He also belongs to his lineage, and is subject to the code of lineage rights and duties. His title to his office rests on this. Then he is also a chief, with the special ritual and secular privileges and responsibilities of his office. Each facet of his social personality corresponds to a different functional aspect of social life—the aspect of private relationships, of lineage membership, of politico-ritual office representing common or corporate interests. Each aspect has its ritual imprimatur, made explicit largely in the form of symbolic actions or taboos, especially animal taboos. Chiefs, for instance, may not eat the bush-pig (*dee*) and the dog (*baa*); the natives say that is because they are scavengers and therefore unclean in both the physical and the mystical sense.

182 The use of ritual symbolism in this context is not fortuitous. It reflects the supremacy of the ancestors as the sanction of the social order. Men cannot visualize their ancestors, but they experience their intervention in human affairs; and this gives a clue to the importance of animal symbolism in Tale religion.

182 As a member of a corporate group, a man comes under the spiritual
776 jurisdiction of the common ancestors of the group, focused in the lineage *bɔɣar*. This relationship is symbolized, *inter alia*, by his totemic taboos. As a unique individual his immediate ancestors have most relevance for him. The pattern of his life is broadly the same as that of his contemporaries. But particular events such as an illness, or the birth of a child, have a personal significance in his own biography. The Tallensi sum this up in the notion of Personal Destiny (*Yin*). Certain ancestors of his become a man's *Yin*. They are revealed to him gradually in the course of years. The process begins with some stroke of good or, more usually, ill fortune that singles him out. He builds a shrine to his *Yin* ancestors in which are incorporated material symbols of the occasions on which they were revealed to him. And animals play a big part in these

symbols. It may be a domestic animal peculiarly associated with the man 182
because he reared it. But far more significance is attached to a bush 776
animal killed in the hunt, or an aquatic animal caught in a fish drive. Encountering such an animal is a matter of luck. Overcoming it demands skill and has an element of danger; and this singles out the successful hunter or fisherman from his fellows. It is a sign of the intervention of his *Yin* ancestors in his life and the animal is an obvious choice as a symbol for them. It should be stressed that the question of economic value does not come in at all. Bush and aquatic animals have very little economic value. It is as symbols of personal achievement and luck that they have meaning.

But what is the common psychological theme in these different categories of animal symbolism? The relations between men and their ancestors among the Tallensi are a never-ceasing struggle. Men try to coerce and placate their ancestors by means of sacrifices. But the ancestors are unpredictable. It is their power to injure and their sudden attacks on routine well-being that make men aware of them rather than their beneficent guardianship. It is by aggressive intervention in human affairs that they safeguard the social order. Do what they will, men can never control the ancestors. Like the animals of the bush and the river, they are restless, elusive, ubiquitous, unpredictable, aggressive. The relations of men with animals in the world of common-sense experience are an apt symbolism of the relations of men with their ancestors in the sphere of mystical causation.

It is an interesting point that the commonest and most widely respected 182
totem or quasi-totem animals are what Tallensi call 'teeth-bearers' 613
(*nyindem*)—reptiles and carnivores, whose weapons are their teeth and who live and defend themselves by attacking other animals or even men. The symbolical link with the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors is patent.[1] This is, no doubt, the chief reason why other species of earth-dwelling animals are not selected as Earth taboos.

To sum up, animals are peculiarly apt symbols for the livingness—the immortality—of the ancestors as this emerges in the various functionally differentiated aspects of the social life. They symbolize, in particular, the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors as the supreme sanction of Tale cultural values. They serve to crystallize in simple, concrete, unequivocal imperatives and images the notion of the binding force of the moral code which is not clearly apparent in the diffused and particularized imperatives that make up the day-to-day experience of it. Different animal symbols stand for different aspects of the moral code, but they all form a connected series corresponding to the unitary basis of that code and the all-embracing sanctions of the ancestor cult. The principles of right and wrong, of duty and justice, of what is permissible and what is prohibited in social life fall into a consistent scheme among the Tallensi. And as the existence of the society depends on the maintenance of this code, its ultimate sanctions are necessarily of mystical form.

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[1] Teeth are a common symbol of aggression among many peoples. The association is familiar to psychologists. We have it ourselves—witness our expression 'to show one's teeth'.

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔyar*, the married *pɔyayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔyayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔyayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔyayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔyar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
● [182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his succes-
[787] sor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔyayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination. Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔyar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔyar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
● 182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ, which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us, and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo. This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage 621
customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. 619
They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to 829
themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one
another. Tɛnzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and
close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized;
but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated
as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on [578]
between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of
both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*',
but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right
and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to
native custom.

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as 621
a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a
lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the
width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of
corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the
Tɛnzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them
might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of
local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted,
is the keel of Tale social organization.

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual 621
significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in 182●
the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and 771
its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but
often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects
to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the
sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy
of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one
aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes
both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu
sayat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive
reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of
another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty
of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of
the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement
farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native
beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari
to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character).

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we 621
may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settlement 618*
name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages
whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that 551
of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most
often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name
of a well-known *tɔŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are
called Saŋiiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a
name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years
ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine
is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing
this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and
forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black
man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy
grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on
the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among
distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567]
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke
down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535
end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend
the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good
year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young
mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders
fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There
is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ
kpɛŋŋa*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of
ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale
ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence. For the individual the physical well-being of himself and
his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of
offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual
symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep
it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go
back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this:
'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul
guul, ka dɔyam dɔya, ka guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241
natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and
talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and
industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency
between a *pukpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious
hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption. One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 788
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the
individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tɛndaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred
to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. [193]
To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

471 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the
426 process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the
602 household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit
471 of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

621 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is
471 security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage
182 security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of the *tey* as a community. The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

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[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621
not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471
loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182
the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends.
There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral
norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity,
and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the
Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farm-land. 577
It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a ground-nut 471
plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of
it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them.
And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's
land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred
in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167]
twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again
of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there
was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled
the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge
of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days.
Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries
of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it
is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621
use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471
is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands
of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership 182
over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious.
This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing
on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of.
For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural
ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent
clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at
its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *tey* at its widest extent,
symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent
politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different
maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure,
of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power
acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependants, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tendaanaship 622

The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico-
ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages. 793

term still prevails. Their function is 'to prosper the community (*maal tɛŋ*)'. 622
Overtly and most conspicuously this is a ritual function. By their con- 793
scientious observance of the ritual rules of conduct that symbolize their respective offices, their responsibilities for the community to the mystical powers, and their mutual relationships, as well as by taking the lead in ritual acts calculated to preserve or restore the goodwill of these mystical powers, they maintain the well-being of the community. Actually, these ritual attributes symbolize the fact that chief or tɛndaana is the hub of clan unity and solidarity, the representative of the common interests and of the common values that enable men to visualize and to hold fast to this common interest.

The polar conjunction of chiefship and tɛndaanaship is expressed in 622
the obligatory ritual collaboration, with complementary roles, of chiefs 793
and tɛndaanas. It mirrors the fusion of the two principles that shape 182
the total social field which ultimately determines the prosperity of the individual. One is the principle that the fate of the individual and of the community is determined by the practical and utilitarian concerns and needs that bind man to the earth and put him at the mercy of natural phenomena. The other is the principle that the attainment of prosperity and security, both for the individual and the community, depends upon the integration of the community. The two principles fuse in the notion that the prosperity of the land (*tɛŋ*)—that is, of the community dwelling on its territory—depends on the united strength of the chiefship and the tɛndaanaship, in the last resort. When drought or an epidemic threatens, chiefs and tɛndaanas meet together to decide on ritual measures to be undertaken to avert it. When war temporarily cuts through the tissue of structural ties that holds the clans of Taleland together, the social equilibrium is finally restored by the ritual collaboration, according to
ancient custom, of chief and tɛndaana. The death of a chief or tɛndaana [787]
leaves 'the land empty (*tɛŋvoog*)', as if its sentinel has departed, until his successor is installed. The death of a chief, Tallensi say, portends want—at best a scarcity of food in his own clan, at the worst a famine throughout the whole country. 'The land dies (*tɛŋ la kpiirəme*)', the people starve, and social life breaks up. This always happens when a Chief of Tongo dies. It is the one disaster, Tallensi declare, which even the white man's rule cannot avert. The death of an important tɛndaana is also ominous, but not likely to be so disastrous, since there is usually at least one other tɛndaana in the same clan and there are a great many tɛndaanas in the country.

The principles underlying the structure of a society are never embodied in a perfectly unambiguous way in its social institutions. Social life, even in the most stable and unprogressive of societies, demands continual reshufflings, readjustments, and revaluations of social relationships. Though the distant past has no record among the Tallensi, their society exists in time like every human society. Events leave a deposit in its structure, though they themselves vanish into the limbo of oblivion. Thus, in some clans the two principles we have been examining are very clearly brought out in the precise separation by office, ritual observances, and genealogical limitation of the functions of chiefship and tɛndaanaship.

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
776 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
471 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

425 of his own sub-clan. This is the central field of integrated social relations
471 pivoting on this chiefship. But his ritual status also affects the prosperity
× 618 and welfare of Zubiuŋ and Zoo directly and that of the Hill Talis in-
directly. In fact, in the last resort, it affects all the clans of Taleland that
622 have a place in the cycle of the Great Festivals. 'The community (*tɛŋ*)
784 cannot be subdivided (*bɔk*)', the Chief of Tongo once told me in explana-
793 tion of the ritual significance of his office. Famine, pestilence, war cannot
be dammed and confined to one place. And so if the Chief of Tongo dies
the whole country suffers, though his own clan will perhaps suffer most
and the remoter zones of his politico-ritual influence least.

● 182 The bonds between man and land, community and locality that are so fundamental in the structure of Tale society cannot be understood apart from this context of ritual values and moral norms. Difficult as they are to grasp and pin down in exact language, they are as ever present to the native's mind as his sentiment of attachment to his native soil. They cause men who have been away from home for many years to give up splendid farms in Mampurugu or good jobs in Kumasi to return to take up their patrimonial land.

comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to 613
their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with 621
the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant 571
agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round
her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the
range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, 182
religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties 613
with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and 621
the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's
central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of
spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others
is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to
intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation
of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted,
most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has
often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face
communication and association in the organization of their collective life.
Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by
their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the [212
absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, 401
communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of 371]
Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular
the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of
political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system
and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are
the most important factors in the situation.

The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo. 613
Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster 621
of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligar yidɛm (see above, p. 57),
homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic
lineage with which Ligar yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as
segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another
cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm,
the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son
(*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number
of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them 613
in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in 621
the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, 613
though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal 621
lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and 161
children), including members of the section and their families who live at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the 613
effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments 621
of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare 182
it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things. When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or cere- [782]
monially slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section, as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides. Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and [787]
Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*, that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and 613
solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range 621
of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

621 loyal to the interests of these clan settlements. But the political structure
613 of the newer settlements is rapidly crystallizing out, on the basis of a
177 territorial unity reinforced by inter-individual kinship ties. This process has been greatly accelerated under the influence of British rule, with its stress on the territorial definition of political units and the support it gives to chiefs and headmen in the exercise of administrative and judicial functions.

Seniority and Authority in the Lineage

613 In the course of our morphological analysis of the lineage system from
●182 within, we have made many references to the corporate activities in which this system emerges. As in our study of clanship, it has been convenient to speak as if the lineage structure exists and persists apart from the activities in which it emerges. But this is only an analytical device which we shall consider more fully presently. The implied distinction between the structure of the lineage and its functions does, however, bring out the important fact that the lineage structure is more than any of its functions. It is the integral of what is common to all Tale institutions in which the patrilineal line operates as an organizing principle. It is the general factor of consistency, coherence, and continuity in the social structure.

613 The concept of social structure essentially implies ordered extension *in time* as well as ordered articulation *at a given time*. This is often overlooked in the study of primitive society. Among the Tallensi the lineage system enables us to see the operation of the time factor in social structure in a very concrete way.[1] We see how the lineage structure at a given time incapsulates[2] all that is structurally relevant of its past phases and at the same time continually thrusts its growing-points forward. The dynamic equilibrium of a lineage is an equilibrium in time.

The key position, whenever a lineage emerges in function—and this applies to lineages of any span and all orders of segmentation—is that of the lineage head (*kpeem*). He is, to revert to an analogy previously used, the keystone of the arch. He does not stand above the lineage; he is part of it. *Kpeem* literally means 'senior': a *kpeem* is a senior, an elder. The head of the lineage is the most senior male of the group. The head of a lineage and his age or generation equals in the lineage are collectively designated 'the elders (*kpɛm*)'. They are for the most part the heads of the component segments of the lineage.

613 The rule of seniority, as might be expected in so homogeneous and
888 equalitarian a society, plays an important part in all Tale social relations. When a group of boys are out herding cattle the oldest among them are in charge. The women of a household defer to the most senior by generation, age, or marital status among them. In all collective activities of men the places of honour are taken by the most senior men, the *kpɛm*. Seniority commands deference at all times.

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[1] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *cit. supra*; also Forde, op. cit. and his previous papers cited there; and a brilliant discussion of this point in E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, ch. 3.

[2] I owe this valuable concept to R. G. Collingwood's *Autobiography*.

of Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied,
often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the 769
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 182
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage 182
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is 782
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
● 182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, but all who participate feel them to be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage), and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔyar* of his medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of a sacrifice to the *bɔyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's* duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
627

183 It emerges when certain social processes and activities are in play; it is potential when they are not in play. Difficult as it is to convey this to a reader, it is something which the observer is constantly aware of. A maximal lineage emerges only in relation to other maximal lineages, and a clan in relation to other clans. When we speak of lineages being segmentarily related to one another and to the composite clan embracing them, we mean that their relations are mutual, symmetrical, and summative. A is related to B in the same way as B is related to A and the sum of their interrelations gives us a set of relations of the same kind but of higher order.

Putting it thus abstractly, however, leaves out a point of the utmost importance. The relations between individuals and between groups in which corporate units like the maximal lineage emerge are social relations. They are subject to jural, moral, and ritual norms; they are the means of achieving human purposes, of getting a livelihood, of marrying and procreating, of expressing emotional attitudes, organizing the intercourse of people, and so forth. A maximal lineage emerges in terms of jurally, morally, and ritually defined ties and cleavages that exist between it and other specified maximal lineages. A segmentary relationship between lineages or any other social units implies the existence of specific ties and cleavages which have the effect of making each unit a determining factor in the emergence of the other units. This is the basis of the concept of a field of social relations which we have used to describe the way in which lineages are differentiated from and articulated with one another.

121 The concept of a field of social relations has enabled us to see how clanship acts as a factor of social integration. Through the overlapping of the fields of clanship of adjacent maximal lineages chains of clanship ties interlinking a whole group of lineages are established. Thus each lineage can be regarded as the centre of a series of zones of clanship of increasing amplitude and diminishing integration. The clan is the central region of such a system, a wider community like that of the Hill Talis constitutes the next region, and beyond that lie still wider regions of diminishing importance for the members of the lineage that is taken as the starting-point.

621 We have seen that there are three major sub-regions within the socio-geographic region we have called Taleland, within each of which there is a greater degree of interarticulation of lineages and clans, and therefore closer integration, than there is between them. But the three sub-regions overlap with each other and with adjacent non-Tale regions. They have a particularly important connecting system in the chain of sub-clans of Mosuor biis.

621 182 This system of regions or communities constituted primarily by the operation of the ties and cleavages of clanship is the foundation of a scheme of ritual values and relationships which serves to reinforce the clanship organization by means of mystical sanctions and by co-ordinating the interrelations of lineages and clans at a higher level. Among the Tallensi the web of clanship and the web of ritual relationships take the place, as mechanisms of social integration, of a constituted governmental

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and
● by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-aged
men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[535] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of
funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who
wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

728 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire when its allied clan made peace.

727 721 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 721 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

[621] [182] 726 411 [701] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows, their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

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[1] A clan-head could initiate a just war of revenge, with the consent of all the clan elders, and after consulting a diviner, in theory without incurring mystical blood-guilt. And yet, in after years, misfortunes falling on his descendants might be ascribed to this act.

621 511 291 [465] and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 311 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land; but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 433 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 721 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances
that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
282 a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

× 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
508 contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed
during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

578 acts as peacemaker. But in principle they go back to the same facts as general wars, the structural differentiation of maximal lineages and clans.

We can see that Tale wars were in fact a kind of intestine feud within a single homogeneous social region, rather than wars in our sense. We have refrained from calling them feuds because they were usually short and sharp and never led to a long series of mutual reprisals. If one war was followed a year later by a war of revenge, as in the instance given in this chapter, that was the end of it. One might even describe them as a [669] kind of civil war, since they sprang from the cleavages inherent in the social structure, particularly the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos. They served to keep these cleavages alive, to defend the corporate unity of the maximal lineage and clan and the corporate rights associated with it, against other like units. They were, at bottom, a mechanism for resolving tensions within the society[1] and not an instrument of political action against outsiders. The ever-present possibility of war was a potent factor in maintaining the segmentary structure of the society. It achieved this by enhancing to the utmost both aspects of the social differentiation of maximal lineages and clans—the demarcation of unit from unit by genealogical and local criteria, and the corporate solidarity of each unit in its own right. However much the Tallensi 578 deplored bloodshed among them, as in civilized nations, in warfare all 186 personal interests were subordinated to the common interest of the clan or maximal lineage, whether its cause was just or not. All normal activities were suspended and every man, woman, and adolescent child took some part in the fighting or in caring for the wants of the fighters. Clan patriotism reached a pitch of fervour which no other occasion could evoke. It was felt as passionately by the women and girls carrying water to the fighters and dragging the wounded away, and by the old men at home who tended the wounded and went around from shrine to shrine making sacrifices to the ancestors, as by the fighting men. Something of this spirit comes out to-day in the inaugural ceremonies of an important elder's funeral, when the whole clan turns out for a pageant mimicking the activities of war.

578 Yet there was never any danger of wars or smaller fights breaking the 182 society up into a number of anarchic fragments. They were inhibited from doing so by the countervailing influence of the strong social ties between traditionally hostile groups. Indeed their very occurrence [728] stimulated the reassertion of the overriding common interests of the society and the reaffirmation of the bonds of unity between the factions. In a war between Namoos and non-Namoos peace had to be made quickly and the *status quo ante* restored because the two groups are so closely interconnected by ties of marriage and kinship that the majority of members of one group have bonds of duty, affection, and mutual interest with members of the other; because they are such close neighbours; above all, because they are bound together by ties of politico-

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[1] These tensions persist, though they are kept well in check by fear of the British Administration. The new judicial system provides a safety valve to some extent; but they break through, chiefly in the form of political intrigue, as we shall see in the next section.

ritual collaboration in a series of complementary relations the proper 578
maintenance of which they believe to be indispensable for their common 182
welfare. This is the basis of the ritual sanctions against instigating war
and shedding blood and of the moral repugnance associated with them.
A war temporarily upset the equilibrium of Tale society; it could not
destroy it.

The social system of the Tallensi, in its widest extent, is held together 182
by its religious superstructure. Its unity is none the less real because it
appears only on the highest plane of common religious values known to
the natives. As we have noted, the complementary politico-ritual offices
of the chiefship, which is typically a Namoo office, and the tendaanaship,
typically an office found amongst non-Namoos, constitute the focus of
the institutions that maintain this unity; and the annual cycle of the Great
Festivals are at once the chief sanction and the supreme expression of it.
The coming of the white man has made very little difference to the way [177]
these institutions operate in relation to the fundamental structure of Tale
society. They continue to be the crowning mechanism of equilibrium in
Tale society, because its segmentary social structure has kept its traditional
form and vitality. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that
only a strong and universally accepted religious sanction could hold such a
society together. In practice the equilibrium is achieved by the distribution
of mutually complementary offices among the segments of the society,
all of which are essential for the performance of definite ritual duties.

It is a significant index of the type of social system presented by [728]
the Tallensi that the widest range of social solidarity found among 796
them is evoked by their Great Festivals. Great stress is laid on the ritually
sanctioned truce to all fighting or discord between clans or maximal [582]
lineages during the Festivals. That is why marriages are forbidden during 182
the *Gɔlib* Festival. The Festival Cycle begins with the Harvest Festivals.
These are celebrated by single clans or groups of linked maximal lineages
independently of one another and serve to enhance the sense of clan and
lineage solidarity. The climax is the *Gɔlib* Festival, immediately before
the rains. This gives ritual sanction and dramatic expression to the idea
of the close-knit interdependence of all the Tallensi with one another.
Its reiterated themes are the common interests of all the Tallensi—food,
peace, and fecundity—which must be achieved if they are to survive,
and the supreme common values—the cult of the ancestors and of the
Earth—by which the whole of Tale social life is steered. The lesson of
Gɔlib, to the Tallensi, is that men cannot realize their greatest common
interests or pursue their greatest common purposes in mutual enmity.
Gɔlib is the most powerful counterweight to war and to the tendency of
each clan and maximal lineage to set its own corporate interests above the
common interest of the whole society. It is noteworthy that the Great
Festivals do not presuppose the suspension of the primary loyalties of the
segments that make up Tale society. They represent a synthesis, for the
time being, of these primary loyalties—a synthesis that is possible only
by giving full scope to the feeling of clan and maximal lineage unity and
singularity in each group. *Gɔlib* emphasizes the mutual dependence of
Namoos and Talis, but it does this by simultaneously enhancing the

796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within 182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they [625] always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare 681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments; on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of 721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels 182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in 769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

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adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182
of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769
bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182
principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182
constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618 X
evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Talaŋ identifies himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidem*)' and of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔγaba*)' and 'our children (*ti biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions to-day, a Talaŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182
for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426
groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman of his debtor, but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman,
the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567]
into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations. It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt. Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583
unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426
man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'. Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled. The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the
abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682
clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618 X

793 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as 578 their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as the Gbizug tendaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tendaana. For a short while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two tendaanas together again, when the Gbeog tendaana had to perform the principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tendaana. But soon afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tendaanas are right, they say. The Gbizug tendaana is going by 'what used to be (*den daa a siem*)', the Gbeog tendaana by 'what is now (*den a siem zinala*)'. It is a problem of adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be a Gbizug tendaana who will accept the present position. Then the two tendaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co- x618 operation and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of conduct. Yinyela's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members of Yinyela's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solida- 208 rity as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment. The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors, concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means 769 of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in 182 which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

576 We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago 781 Gbalɔg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbalɔg went to settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father, stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo. Yet Gbalɔg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man, boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But 787 the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578 demanded that Gbaləg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787] among his forefathers. This meant that Gbaləg's sons should beg the Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors. But Gbaləg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578 At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783] behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation. Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbaləg's defection was thus erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613 solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577] of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen, the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a consideration 182 ● of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage membership 183. There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife. Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan. These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms. This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife, the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and
613 lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to
time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity
prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region
of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political
● 182 circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their
social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy
of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British
175 rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the
578 substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of
the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system
622 of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the
Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of
578 the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-
622

622 Chiefship of Tongo, to which the Gɔlibdaana's office has a politico-ritual
578 relationship.

621 The point that must be stressed, however, is that the Gɔlibdaana's
●182 monopoly has not yet thrown the existing scheme of structural alinements
621 into complete disorder. It is a factor of disequilibrium and may, in the
578 course of a few more years, make serious rents in the complex fabric of the social and politico-ritual relationships of the Hill Talis. Up to the present the native social structure, and in particular the web of ritual collaboration, has resisted the corruption and kept in check, to a very considerable extent, the dissensions due to this new force. This might well go on as long as the Administration keeps the ring impartially, and as long as the Gɔlibdaana and his maximal lineage accept the politico-ritual values on which the integration of the Hill Talis rests, and abide by the principal jural and moral norms of the society. So far the struggle has not given rise to new corporate associations running counter to those of the existing social structure. In fact, it has on the whole been canalized along the lines of cleavage laid down in that structure. It has deepened some of the existing cleavages and sharpened some of the inherent tensions of the system; but it has also accentuated some of the ties and enhanced the dominant values of the system. Thus the only section of Kpata'ar that has vacillated, at times, in its loyalty is Nak-y-eet yidem, the assimilated lineage. They have been influenced by their lineage differentiation from Kpata'ar proper, their consequent subsidiary interest in the politico-ritual status of the head of Kpata'ar proper, their clanship ties with the Sakpee section that has gone over to the Gɔlibdaana, and the greed of their lineage head. But their intercalary structural position between the two factions is shown in their divided counsels. Some of the older men are whole-heartedly for Kpata'ar, one or two adhere publicly to the Gɔlibdaana, several try to keep on good terms with both parties. When they have to take a stand as a corporate unit, their bias is towards the Kpata'arna'ab in ritual and intra-clan affairs, and towards the Gɔlibdaana in matters of law and government coming within his purview as a headman under the Administration. On the other hand, the ancient ties between Kpata'ar and Gundaat have been greatly strengthened, the bond of goodwill between Kpata'ar and Tongo, based on their politico-ritual interdependence, given a new meaning, and moves to defend the traditional social order stimulated.

POSTSCRIPT

THIS book has dealt with the constitution and interrelations of the 613
corporate groupings found in Tale society. But this is only one major 627
aspect of Tale social structure. There is another major aspect of no less 182
importance, the system of interpersonal social bonds that constitutes the Kinship System in the strict sense. The lineage and clan organization forms the permanent framework of social relations in Taleland. But it is based on certain fundamental categories of thought and axioms of conduct that derive from a different cross-section of Tale social life, the domestic organization. The well-worn simile of the warp and the woof is apposite here. We can think of the lineage and clan organization as the warp of the social fabric of the Tallensi. Interwoven with it, sustaining it, and in turn shaped and regulated by it, is the intricate web of interpersonal relations we have described as the Kinship System in the strict sense. Kinship ties grow directly out of the biological, psychological, and social relations of men, women, and children in the domestic nucleus of Tale social life, the agnatic joint family. Unlike lineage ties, they involve the equal and parallel recognition of descent through both parents; and because of this bilateral criterion of social identification in kinship relations, they cut across the lineage structure.[1]

This second major aspect of Tale social structure, the Kinship System, 121
is the subject of our next volume, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi.* Our aim will be not a detailed analysis of all Tale interpersonal relationships through all the levels of social behaviour, but an investigation of their place in the social structure in relation to the lineage and clan organization.

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[1] Cf. my previously cited paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure'.

[p. 259]

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of his lineage or clan, other than those whom he describes as his 'fathers' 587
or 'sons'.

Every Tale clan is anchored to a particular locality from which it 361 takes its name. In the central area of Taleland, around the Tong Hills, 621 the present clan settlements appear to date back not less than eight to ten generations. But they have not been and are not territorially static. There are no strict territorial boundaries between adjacent settlements. The homesteads of a settlement merge with those of the adjacent settlements, and the boundaries between them are definable only in social terms, as a function of their ecological and politico-ritual relations at a given time. In the same way every segment of a clan—that is, each of its component maximal lineages—is anchored to a local subdivision of the clan settlement, though many of its members may be dispersed elsewhere.

A striking feature of Tale social organization is the system of inter- 621 clan linkages which constitutes one of the principal forces of cohesion 619 in the society. The genealogically and socially autonomous maximal 182 lineage or clan is not a closed group. The component maximal lineages that form the segments of adjacent clans have ties of clanship identical with those that unite them to one another within their respective clans. Thus if two adjacent clans have segments A, B, C, and D, E, F, G, respectively, then A (but not B or C) may have clanship ties with D (but not with E, F, or G); B may have clanship ties only with E, and C with F. Each of these maximal lineages also has clanship ties with segments of other neighbouring clans. Thus each component maximal lineage of a clan has a field of clanship that includes the other segments of the clan as well as segments of other clans. This results in a network of interlocking clanship ties that embraces all the separate clans of Taleland. All the Talis clans and the main block of Namoo clans are interlocked in this way in two clusters which are in turn similarly connected at certain points. Moreover, this system of linkages ties the Tale aggregate on to adjacent clans of other neighbouring 'tribes'. Thus we observe that at this level of social structure—the skeletal level, so to speak—as in its territorial and cultural relationship to neighbouring 'tribes', Tale society is a segment of a greater society. The network of inter-clan linkages is one of the principal factors by which the socio-geographic region we have called Taleland is differentiated as a distinct segment of this greater society.

It is also one of the main factors of social equilibrium in Tale society. 626 Dissension between neighbouring clans is kept in check by the mediation of maximal lineages linked by identical ties to both; and warfare is inhibited from disrupting the entire social order by the intervention of social and ritual obligations arising *inter alia* out of the fact that enemies are related directly or indirectly by clanship ties. It is this, in part, that gives Tale wars the complexion of acute family quarrels.

613 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also
ipso facto an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differen-
769 tiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as
well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult
778 of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine
(*bɔ̀γar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the
most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a
composite clan has its lineage *bɔγar*, distinguishing it from the other
segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages
belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se*
by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors.
The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔγar* known as an
External *Bɔγar*. An External *Bɔγar* is usually a sacred grove, or a
shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual
of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the
Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young
men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

771 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor
of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult
794 of the External *Bɔγar* is another important factor of cohesion and
● 182 equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of
the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It repre-
769 sents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those
of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of
religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of
maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not
associated in the cult of the External *Bɔγar*, collaborate in the rites of
the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally
[778] in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of
a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social
relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social
relations in terms of the External *Bɔγar* cult, and yet a third field of
corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a
whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of
social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity.
Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by
similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system
as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of
Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all,
moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition
of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and
the tendãana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

596 342 of sleeping-rooms and kitchens (to be described later) distributed roughly in a semicircle round an open space, 10 to 15 feet across, bounded on one side by a co-wife's quarters or a low partitioning wall. This little close (*dendɔŋo*) is the central place in the life of the family. Here it takes its meals in the dry season; here friends are received; [778] here most of the routine of family life goes on. A man's principal ancestor shrines are kept in his mother's or senior wife's *dendɔŋo*; and there he performs many of the frequently recurring rites of the ancestor cult. The women of a single household have adjacent quarters. Their husband's mother or the senior wife occupies the central quarters; junior wives or son's wives are on either side of her, forming altogether a rough circle or segment of a circle. A householder who is not also head of the compound has no room of his own. He keeps his private possessions in his senior wife's sleeping-room. Apart from this, it is the cardinal principle of family life that a man must divide his time, his affection, and his supplies of food with absolute impartiality between his wives.

343 778 784 Within the compound two other kinds of rooms are of special importance for our theme, the granaries and the grinding-rooms. Every independent agricultural unit has its own granaries which are said to belong to the head of the unit. His granary (*boor*) is a man's most private and personal possession. No woman may enter it, nor any man not directly authorized by the owner. Ritual prohibitions associated with it closely identify a man's granary with his social personality. As one informant put it, with a flash of insight, 'Your granary is like your soul'.

343 One or more grinding-rooms (*neer*) belongs to every well-differentiated household. These are discussed later.

596 ● 182 The family structure thus outlined is the basis of a domestic economy and of a configuration of moral, legal, religious, and personal relationships which can best be described as a compromise between strong centralizing or integrating tendencies and powerful differentiating tendencies. In the domestic economy of food, our sole concern in this paper, every unit in the system is completely autonomous in some respects and dependent upon a more comprehensive unit in others. It is a fluctuating compromise, slowly changing. Births, deaths, marriages, and their social consequences, even the mere lapse

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of time reflected in the growing up of children and the aging of parents, bring about changes which materially affect the food economy. 182

THE UNIT OF FOOD ECONOMY. Food is produced and consumed by 596 what we shall call the unit of food economy. The following table, derived from the data for the 40 randomly selected compounds mentioned previously, shows the relation between this unit and those we have already described.

	Compounds	*Gateways*	*Units of food economy*	*Households*	*Primary families*	*Productive men*	*Women*
Total .	40	56	58	77	114	107	124
Ratio .		1	1	1·4	2·0	1·9	2·2
							Children
Total .							132
Ratio .							2·4

A unit of food economy thus corresponds, generally, to a single gateway,[1] and comprises more than one household. The man at the head of this unit holds the land from which it derives the major part of its sustenance and organizes the exploitation of this land. The productive men (i.e. those capable of agricultural labour, including boys over 15) jointly cultivate this land; the women and children jointly assist in sowing it and in such duties as scaring birds from the standing crops. At harvest time the men and boys cut the grain, women and girls carry it home in baskets. The head of the unit supervises the sorting of the grain, and is responsible for the selection and preservation of seed. He sees to the storage of the grain—the seed separately and specially carefully, the grain for consumption in the granary. The ground-nut crop is similarly handled by co-operative [476] labour. It is a maxim that those who work together share the products of their labour. This applies not only to joint labour in the fields, but to the division of labour between the sexes and generations. Upon 596 the men falls the most arduous agricultural labour, but the women 462 have equally exacting duties connected with the preparation of food

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[1] The two units of food economy in excess of the number of gateways represent pairs of full brothers who were economically independent of each other, but continued to occupy the same compound for kinship reasons. Four other units of food economy were in process of splitting up at the time the census was taken.

867 In Taleland an infant remains confined to the house for the first
three to six months or even longer. During this period its social space
is extremely restricted. It has effective social relationships with its
mother, sometimes its grandmother or a co-wife of its mother, or an
older sibling or half-sibling, and its father—in this order of frequency
[856] and intensity. At the age of 3 to 4, when it is beginning to talk
fluently and can run about, its effective range of contacts includes all
the members of the joint family and probably those of closely neighbouring
related joint families. It is beginning to associate with groups
of other related children belonging to its immediate milieu and to
know the topography of its parental homestead and its immediate
[574] surroundings. By the age of 6 or 7 it is being taken on visits to its
mother's brother's house (*ahəb yir*) and begins to incorporate into the
texture of its life its relationships with its mother's people and their
settlement. A little later it commences to take a share in very simple
economic duties. In this way the child's social space is continuously
expanding as it grows older. The educational agencies to which it is
subjected become more numerous and more diverse and its experiences
more variegated as it participates in an ever-increasing range of social
situations. With adolescence a great increase in mobility ensues and
a new interest emerges—the opposite sex as potential spouses. This
coincides with the beginning of real economic responsibility. When
[182] he reaches adulthood, the individual's social space is a function of the
entire social structure in its complete ecological setting.[1] He should
be capable of appropriate behaviour in any social situation which may
confront the normal Taləŋa. He is a full citizen—which means that
he is actually or potentially subject to the whole gamut of constraints
inherent in Tale society.

861 In the evolution of an individual's social space we have a measure of his educational development. In Taleland this is brought about not only by accretion to, but also by differentiation of, his or her field of social activity. Sex, for example, is a differentiating factor of great

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[1] A person's social space is not equivalent to the entire social structure since it is included in the latter, which is never fully known to or acted on by the individual. Take, for instance, the Tale joint family. As a structural unit it can be easily distinguished and described by the anthropologist; but each member's view of the whole is unique—that of the head of the joint family is different from that of his wife or son—yet all derived from the same single unit of structure.

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121
mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145
correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884
of physiological and psychological development and that of social and 182
cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of which social development lags behind psycho-physical development. A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily
be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856]
age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as
a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582]
they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827
ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881
growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812
The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls, which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

(4). Small quantities of seed and soup ingredients are stored in earthenware pots and calabashes of different shapes and sizes, which can be sealed with mud and cowdung. Ashes are mixed with cowpeas to discourage attacks from weevils. Groundnuts are generally stored in big baskets, plastered on the outside with mud and cowdung. 251

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.

The importance of livestock in maintaining a system of fixed cultivation, under the conditions described, is patent. Furthermore the importation from French territory of large quantities of cattle, sheep, goats, and fowls, is a good indication of the size of the market for meat in Ashanti and the Colony; there is no reason why a greater proportion of this market should not be satisfied from local sources than is at present supplied, with benefit to the local farmer. In recognition of this, Government has pursued a policy of general immunisation against cattle plague, which is now practically complete. As a result, the cattle in North Mamprusi are shown to be increasing very satisfactorily (12) since the initial immunisation in 1931-32. From a census taken in 1936 they were found to number over 64,000 head. Thus over one-third of the cattle in the Northern Territories (64,293 head out of 160,000) are being maintained upon less than one-tenth of its area (3,559 sq. miles out of 41,940 sq. miles). The growth of the cattle population, taken into account with the numbers of other livestock, and the shortage of water and of human food in some years, gives some idea of the magnitude of the animal husbandry problems which lie ahead. 231 744

Uneconomic Position of Livestock.

Livestock occupy a peculiar position in local farm economy. Although they are sold in order to get money when necessary, nevertheless, they are not reared for economic purposes, but primarily for religious sacrifice and the payment of marriage dowries. In North Mamprusi, wealth and position are associated, not with money, but with the number of wives and children, and livestock, that a man has. Four cows would enable a man to acquire another wife, but ten pounds would not do so (by custom). As with crop husbandry, so with animal husbandry, economic conditions are changing more rapidly than custom is adjusting itself; unless the adjustment receives careful assistance there is a grave risk of loss of soil fertility and human stamina, on the one hand, and the constitution of the livestock upon the other. 231 182 ●

Numbers of Livestock Owned per Compound.

The numbers of livestock owned by recorded compounds are set out in Table 8, of Appendix II, in detail. From this table text Table 5 below has been extracted. 231

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796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 574 782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos
[784] have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

● 182 578 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate 182
and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of 578
the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the 796
following moon, Bɔγaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival
of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival 778
translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. 769
Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔγar, after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔγar may be a grove of trees, a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders. It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔγar's communicants generally comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔγar cult is built up on the notion of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔγar. The bɔγar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral, like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I 778
had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The
Namoos know the dates of Bɔγaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they 881
had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted by the bɔγar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔγaraam ritual is at the same time communion, initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔγar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔγaraam on 796

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled con- 796 tumely, like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881 initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar. Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If [784] I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796 home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574 follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535 Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171 with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and 796 elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of re- 182 sponsibility for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182 festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

182 even to the date of its festival, each community celebrates its release from the hazards of the past year and especially of the food-growing season, and fortifies itself by magical and religious techniques for another year. Nothing could more strikingly demonstrate the factors of dichotomy and antagonism in the polarity which we saw previously to be fundamental to Tale political structure than the difference between the rites of the Hill Tallis and those of the Namoos. It is true that every Tale ceremonial activity expresses the exclusiveness of the group performing it; but in these festivals the expression of difference has a political validity because it is reciprocal. The difference is published in the dance and dramatized in esoteric ritual.

But Namoos and Tallis are culturally equivalent communities, dwelling in close juxtaposition, having intimate economic and social relationships with each other. This, it seems to me, sets a limit to the degree of antagonistic differentiation tolerable; and thus the other factor in the polarity of Tale society comes into existence—the equilibrium between the two communities. The very opposition, as it were, engenders dependence. This aspect of Namoos-Tallis relations comes out clearly in the ceremony at Baari, in the visits of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief, and in the ritual reenacting of the Chief's induction at Tongo. It is notable how these rituals vividly insulate each group from the other, while at the same time uniting them in common responsibility for the welfare of the country.

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The same compulsion to coöperate in the magical safeguarding of the land and the people obtains between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis. It is expressed in the Gɔlib festival, which unfortunately space does not permit me to describe fully. The purpose of this festival, which occurs in the last month of the dry season, is to ensure a successful sowing and harvesting of early millet and to call down the blessing of fertility in general. In it all the clans of the Hill Tallis collaborate ritually and unite to dance together. In their ritual collaboration the distribution of offices and sacred apparatus among the several clans is so remarkably equal that each one of them can claim with ostensibly full justification to be more important than [578] the others. It so happens that a bitter personal feud is at present raging between one of these officiants, on the one hand, and the Chief of Tongo and another of the Gɔlib officiants, on the other. But none of them could escape his obligation to coöperate with his enemy in the appropriate ceremonial situations. Here, perhaps, is a clue to the problem of why ritual forms and religious situations should be the institutional media selected for the expression of the equilibrium in Tale society. They have a compulsive power which a pragmatic institution orientated to the demands of the objective world could never have.

Gɔlib is a dangerous month, during which both Namoos and Tallis are subject to numerous taboos, mainly aimed at averting quarrels and strife at the dances and in everyday relations between the groups. It is forbidden to shed blood on the earth, lest supernatural death overtake one, to take a wife, to carry out the final ceremonies connected with delayed funeral rites, to wear cloth garments in any of the Hill Tallis settlements, and so forth. Marriages are the cause of most inter-group litigation, and funeral ceremonies represent social situations in which large numbers of people from different settlements congregate and often give rise to disputes. Throughout, the Namoos are spectators of the dancing and excluded from the ritual. But on two occasions they meet the Hill Tallis in ceremonial interaction. In the inaugural rites the Hill Tallis, led by their Tendaanas, march to all their sacred groves in succession blowing sacred whistles in honor of them. When they reach the sacred groves which lie in Tongo, every Namoo man, woman, and child hides indoors. A Namoo who sees these rites of the Hill Tallis risks the destruction of his entire home and family by the outraged sacred groves. Once again, therefore, are the Namoos and Tallis mutually insulated or segregated by the symbolism of unchallengable ritual, the living affirmation of tradition. But there is a ritual reintegration of the groups. The final rite of Gɔlib requires the coöperation of the Chief of Tongo. Again led by their Tendaanas, the Hill Tallis come down to the Chief's house to dance; and there Tendaanas and Chief join together to beg for blessings upon the land, for the safety of the people and the abundance of crops. 182 796 784 [578]

To revert to the harvest festivals, the magical and religious value of the ceremonial to the group performing it must not blind us to its socially integrative functions. The former is mainly determined by the seasonal context of the festivals and is evidenced preeminently in commonplace techniques, such as the sacrifice. The latter, which is determined primarily by the context of the social structure, is evidenced in the ceremonies peculiar to the occasion. These differ completely in content, as between Namoos and Tallis, a fact which the natives would explain by citing the historically different origins of the two groups. This suggests the principle common to all the integrative ceremonies. It is the dramatization of the nodal, hence traditionally sanctioned, relationship in the social structure of each group —the Chieftainship at Tongo, the right of access to the bɔɣar among the Tallis. This fundamental bond is resuscitated in both the symbolical and the direct phases of the ceremonies. The Chief and the Gbizug or Baari Tendaana thus reimpose on each other those responsibilities which bind them to a common task; and, by the very same rites, the Chief and his 182 796

182 people redefine each the place of the other in a social system the essence of which is the Chieftainship. The Hill Tallis, again, reestablish the respon- 796 sibility of each initiated man for the preservation of their traditional cult, by imposing it upon the next generation, and thus reaffirm the loyalty of each to the other, and of sons to fathers.

To sum up, social cohesion as I understand this concept, both within and between the major communities which constitute Tale society, is no ultimate attribute of that society, but is achieved by specific social mechanisms such as those I have described. To me its most significant feature appears to be the fact that this integration is engendered as an equilibrium between opposed groups, over-riding, it seems, the tendencies to conflict inherent in the system. It is worthy of note that this principle of a balance of powers is exploited also within each community to overcome the competitive autonomy of its constituent groupings.

Whether only a single general process is involved, accomodation to an immigrant group, is beyond my power to determine. One could presumably envisage the entire pattern of ritual and political values as a "reaction" to the "foreign body" represented by the Namoos clans. It seems not unlikely also that the equilibrium thus achieved is itself the barrier that prevents the diffusion of the esoteric rites of one community to the other.

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146 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among 164 the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. [657] The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from 515 the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake [240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an 183 impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

obsequious among themselves. With all their respect for custom they are 181
not its slaves. Individual initiative, ambition and independence of action, 183
within the limits imposed by their social and material order, are common.

Tallensi do not question their traditional ritual values, but there is an element of what we should call rationalism in their religious attitudes. Their ancestor cult, an elaborate body of beliefs, rites, and ceremonies, is minutely woven into their everyday existence, but it does not pursue them with phantom terrors. On the contrary, it is the principal means provided by Tale culture for keeping the individual and the group on an even keel.

Stability; tolerance of physical hardship and discomfort as well as of human frailty and idiosyncrasy; a reasonable degree of conformity; a tenacious attachment to life fortified by an elaborate ancestor cult—these characteristics of Tale culture strike the observer at the outset. On the surface the Tale ideal is to have enough to eat, to be a successful parent, and to live at peace with one's fellows. Closer acquaintance, however, reveals hidden undercurrents. Beneath the overt stability and integration of the social order lie continuous tensions. Indeed the stability of Tale society can only be understood as a product of these tensions, created and maintained by the social processes that resolve them. Again, the natives' keen sense of the importance of social obligations hides a tendency to aggressive self-assertion. Tallensi are quick to anger if they feel themselves wronged, and are good haters. Their usual spirit of good-natured tolerance masks a proneness to suspicious watchfulness, and their frugality covers a spendthrift streak. These contradictions are subtly revealed in their religious practices. The strength of their ancestor cult rests not only on its predominant role as an integrating force in their social structure, but also on its profound psychological value for the individual. Tallensi react to misfortune with strong anxiety and guilt feelings from which they find a refuge in their ancestor cult.

This sketch of how the Tallensi strike a European calls for qualifications. It is couched in terms of our cultural values in order to help us to visualize these people in terms of a familiar vocabulary and automatic mental images. Objectively, from the standpoint of the people themselves, the value judgements implicit in our description lose their meaning. What we see as their poverty, dirtiness, poor health, and rudeness of culture they accept with equanimity as the normal conditions of their life. They have no grievance or shame about them. Being common to everybody, these conditions do not create rifts in their society or maladjustments in the individual as they do with us. They are in one respect simply part of the atmosphere within which the culture of the Tallensi (and their neighbours) develops its own richness and amplitude; in another, the material of significant themes in that culture.

Every aspect of Tale social life is conditioned by the fact that they are 181
a primitive peasantry. There is no division of labour apart from that of 241
the sexes. Censuses taken in various parts of the country show that not
less than 95 per cent. of the adult males are wholly dependent on agri- 463
culture for their livelihood, and all of the odd 5 per cent. are partially
dependent on the same source. Craft specialists work at their crafts only

x618 621 Kpɔləg (Pwɔləg), Sipaat has no ties of clanship with either of these places. Yinduuri, a clan whose inner constitution is a miniature replica of the whole system of interlacing clanship ties which we have been describing, is contiguous with Zandoya but has no ties of clanship with it. Zandoya's clanship ties link it with Gorogo, which in turn is linked with a group of Gɔrisi, who live in the Bɔləga district.

This is but one series of concatenated clan linkages running from end to end of the Tɔngo district and even, like those of the Namoos, extending across to the Gɔrisi. Similar chains of clanship ties link the other Talis clans to one another and to this series; and the whole forms an elaborately reticulated system which stretches beyond the linguistic and cultural frontiers of Taleland. By these chains of clanship ties the Talis are linked on to peoples outside Taleland who live quite beyond the boundaries of their regular interests and concerns.

x618 We have been discussing clanship in the narrow sense—that is, ties implying the prohibition of marriage, joint leviratic rites, the reciprocal privileges and duties of *sunzɔp*, and such things as the liability in former times to be raided for one another's debts. As a rule, every constituent maximal lineage of every clan has such ties with one or more territorially contiguous lineages of neighbouring clans. Most of them also have clanship ties with some lineages of clans not adjacent to them, but not very far away, reckoning the distance in terms of the number of unrelated clans intervening and not by geographical criteria. There is no fixed rule; but within this cluster of settlements it is always a safe prediction that the greater the distance separating two clans the less likely are they to be linked by clanship.

x618 608 In addition, every clan recognizes one or more clans in its vicinity as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. Soog and Wakii; Gundaat, Kpata'ar, and Bunkiuk; Yinduur and Zandoya; Sii and Gorogo: these consider one another to be *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, and they generally appear at one another's funerals in this capacity.

x618 [183] As with Zubiuŋ and the clans adjacent to it, so among the Hill Talis, the ties which make up the field of clanship of any maximal lineage are not all of equal strength. The critical norms have an absolute value. Clanship prohibits intermarriage, vests defined rights and obligations in each lineage, and implies a solidarity which is incompatible with hostile acts like war or abducting one another's wives, or raiding one another's cattle. If these norms are infringed, as inevitably happens now and then, they are not thereby invalidated. The infringement tends to provoke processes which cancel out its effects and either re-establish the invulnerability of the norms or bring about a new alinement of structural ties, which neutralizes the breach. At the same time spatial distribution has a selective influence on the extent and frequency of the intercourse between lineages linked by ties of clanship. Proximity encourages more frequent and regular co-operation in situations which mobilize ties of clanship. Other factors, too, influence the gradation of clanship ties, the most important of these being the fact that solidarity, co-operation, and mutual dependence are greater within the clan than between linked lineages of different clans. Besides having a specific field of clanship, each maximal

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578
demanded that Gbalɔg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787]
among his forefathers. This meant that Gbalɔg's sons should beg the
Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors.
But Gbalɔg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to
do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother
Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There
was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be
done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by
custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear
to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578
At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x
of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was
sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the
recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783]
behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and
several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his
father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be
present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation.
Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and
brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects
he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of
whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbalɔg's defection was thus
erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613
solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x
source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral
premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of
Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display
of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577]
of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own
right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen,
the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a con- 182
sideration of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage member- 183
ship. There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions
centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the
identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their
common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the
correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife.
Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings
and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan.
These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms.
This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife,
the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband
if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

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affairs, their absence does not disturb jural or ritual relations centred 177
in the family. It is like a tree which remains a tree morphologically and 167
physiologically even if some of its minor branches have been lopped off.

The foregoing is true of the great majority of Tale families. The 596
structure of the normal family can still be accurately described without
reference to contact influence, in spite of the fact that a few families can 177
be found in every settlement which have been badly mutilated by the 183
prolonged absence abroad of their male members. Admittedly the norms of family relations have not remained completely insulated from these influences. With the ease of modern communications and the openings for work abroad, young people have incentives and opportunities which their fathers never had for resisting the authority of their elders and for breaking away from the family for a longer or shorter time. But as yet these new incentives and opportunities appear only as modifying factors in the play of the culturally defined family relations. They do not represent a conflicting set of norms, creating divisions within Tale society. For instance, a young man who is still jurally a minor cannot at will leave the domestic family to which he belongs by birth and set up an independent household. He can do so only in compliance with the moral rules and social conventions that regulate the fission of families. In fact, the motive to break away will only arise when certain standard changes take place in the composition of the domestic unit to which he belongs, or when he reaches a stage of social maturity which precipitates certain standard tensions between him and the head of the unit. The alternative for a young man who, in these days, hankers after independence is to leave the community until such time as he is prepared to settle down. He has to seek work abroad, in Ashanti or the Colony, or in the service of the white man nearer home. He is assured of a cordial welcome home whenever he decides to return, whether it be for a few weeks only or permanently. But if he makes up his mind to settle down at home it can only be within the existing social framework, and this means complying with the norms of family organization. There is no other way by which he can get married or acquire a house site or farm-land in his natal settlement, let alone play his part in community affairs. Hitherto these norms have been so well maintained that no returned emigrant has been known to flout them.

Summing up, we see that the Tale domestic system has three morphological strata. 592 It consists of a segmentary economic formation—households of different dimensions and degrees of economic self-sufficiency—embraced within a segmentary jural and ceremonial formation—domestic units not necessarily congruent with households grouped under family heads—and this again contained within a system of residential grouping in which the changes of phase in domestic structure are crystallized.

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in places like Kumasi, I can say with certainty that the great majority are under 30.

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

TO complete our analysis of the norms governing the relations of parents and children we must now glance at their development in the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at successive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differentiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the surface. 593 183

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother. 854 593 [751/ 515]

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has 853 854

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[1] Tallensi distinguish different stages of infancy according to the feeding-habits and level of physical skill reached by the infant. They never count months or years, but a parent is often able to state roughly how many months or years have elapsed since the birth of the child, working it out, most commonly, by reference to harvest and sowing times or to the Great Festivals. A babe in arms is *bilie*; until it is weaned it is described as 'still suckling (*u na mɔɣarme*)'. If it is said to be still suckling but 'eating a little porridge (*u diit saɣabo biel-biel*)' one can infer that it is at least 2. The unweaned infant's stage of development is further specified by stating whether it is crawling (*u bɔɣarme*) or walking (*u kyɛnme*) or already talking (*u vɔlɔnvɔrme*). When the child is weaned it is said to 'have left off milk (*u tuk biihim*)'. Lastly comes the stage, at between 3 and 4 years, when it is said to be old enough to have another immediately following sibling (*u saɣa nyɛer marəga*)—an idea we shall explain in a later chapter. The subject-matter of this chapter is supplemented by my paper, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, cit. supra. [856]

[p. 187]

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise. This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
183 would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly, they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great 622
lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tɛndaana. In 183
addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahəŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office.

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an 425
ahəŋ or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a par-
ticular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in 622
former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yɛa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tɛnzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahəŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman.

Certain powers normally held by tɛndaanas only are sometimes vested 793
in lineages that do not have tɛndaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of 604
Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyɛbəg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahəŋ* of the tɛndaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tɛndaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors.

The Ahəŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahəŋ* forms a link between his father's 604
lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to
every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahəŋ* is always chosen 584
as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another
[183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact
876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?'
868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of
198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules
[576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete
514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234
longer drive the cow out to graze.

Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsi- 183
bilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Taləŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and how they are maintained. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale.*

183 867 ing the correct observances has many points in common with learning skills, but there is a significant difference. When a child is learning a skill he has the test of objective achievement to evaluate his progress and to stimulate him to further effort; when he is learning how to behave properly the only test of attainment is the reaction of other people and his own sense of the adequacy or inadequacy of his conduct. [626] One can observe, in consequence, that both children and adults are very sensitive to ridicule of a lapse in manners or morals but are fairly indifferent to ridicule of poor skill. The contrast between observances and skills is evident when we compare the way in which a child learns to model clay figures, gradually perfecting his technique, with the 'all or none' way, associated sometimes with corporal punishment, in which he is taught to respect other people's property, or the way he is taught his totemic taboos.

867 Among the Tallensi, as in many other primitive societies, manners and morals are acquired almost as a by-product of the normal social relations between the growing child and the people who constitute his or her social space. The unity of the social sphere and the expectation of normal behaviour have a correspondingly greater influence than in the acquisition of skills and interests. But the critical factor is the tension inherent in the fundamental educational relationships, the authority of parent over child and of senior over junior.

861 593 In Tale ideology this is epitomized in the danger attributed to a parent's resentment. If any one who has reached years of discretion behaves in such a way as to incur the resentment and hostility of a parent, some calamity will certainly befall him or her unless he comes formally to beg forgiveness and the injured parent ritually abjures his or her anger.[1] It very often happens that two children of about the same age and members of a single joint family are related as parent and child. They can be seen playing together amicably, squabbling at times, and working together. But when the 'child' is questioned about his playmate, he will say: *nzorumi, ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*, 'I fear (respect) him, because he begot me.' This is not merely a formula. Sinkawol (aged 23–5) used to order his 'father', Kyekambe (aged

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[1] The connexion between one particular aspect of Tale morality, their notion of incest, and the background of kinship has been discussed in my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

867 857 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

● 183 764 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly [866] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends [839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4-5 years, suspiciously

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them. Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them. It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem; and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves, bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think, still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, 'is embarrassing' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a
loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and
his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of
shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of
which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult,
the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose
the genitals with the word 'boy' or 'girl'. An infant's excretory
processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
[863] regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a
nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would
dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all
matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions
as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the
expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
'Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said
Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, 'he's a thief. He stole
his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied
him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast,
is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance
and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child
for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours,
nevertheless, go beyond what is merely 'unbecoming'. They are not
nice, *a pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

which children of 9 or 10 are fully familiar with and the compulsion 183
of which they experience to the same degree as the adults; and there is the whole body of implicit moral norms which regulate the day-to-day life of the family and emerge in the duties of children to one another and to their parents.

I have already mentioned the prohibition in some clans against the 784
eating of fowl by first-born children. By contrast with the voluntary 688
abstention from fowl meat practised by women, this is a taboo of 869
supreme mystical value for these clans and is exactly parallel to the totemic avoidances of other clans. The Hill Tallis, for instance, may not eat tortoise, some may not eat crocodile or python, and others taboo dog. A 5-year-old knows his or her personal or clan taboo, and can state it emphatically. The remedy for a chance infringement of such a taboo is extremely simple—e.g., in the case of the fowl, crushing some fowl droppings in water and giving the child the fluid to drink. Again the supernatural penalty for a breach is of a vague and general kind. In some cases it is thought that it would lead merely to an eruption of scabies on the head; in others it is said that the offender would slowly lose health and strength. These sanctions, however, are not the effective agencies maintaining the observances. Breaches of these rules are exceptional, both among children and among adults. A Talɔŋa submits to a food taboo in virtue of a configuration of positive habits and dispositions built up in childhood, not through fear of the sanctions. From the time that it is a babe in arms a child is prevented from tasting or even touching any food which it is prohibited from eating. Later it will be called away from where its companions are sitting over a fire roasting titbits of food forbidden to it—'Come here, you mustn't eat that; it is forbidden.' I once observed a child of about 5 standing aloof while a group of his brothers and sisters were consuming a dish of python meat—a prized delicacy. 'I don't eat python, it is my taboo,' he explained, with an expression of complete aversion.

A vivid example of how food taboos are inculcated was provided 262
by a biographical reminiscence of the chief of Tongo who, as a first- 869
born, may not eat fowl. There was talk in his court-room of crops and famine in the old days, when an elder wondered if a man would eat a forbidden animal if he were starving. The chief, holding with

262 869 some of his elders that it would be too repugnant even for a starving man to do so, told this story of how he had himself, on two occasions, violated his taboo. When he was a child of perhaps 5 or 6 he was the favourite of his grandfather, as often happens. Some one brought the old man a gift of eggs which he promptly had roasted. He had to go outside to attend to some matter and he left his small grandson to see that no one purloined the eggs. Now an egg is a potential fowl, and is therefore equally taboo with the latter. The chief described how there was a brief struggle between his conscience and his desire, and how he succumbed and ate the eggs. His grandfather was furious when he returned and the child in trepidation lied, accusing a girl who was in the next room. The girl denied the accusation and the small boy's father was called in to adjudicate. He at once suspected his son, but the grandfather angrily defended the boy, who was now too terrified even to speak. The matter was dropped; but the small boy, afraid of his father, remained with his grandfather till nightfall. Then he slunk out, only to be caught at once by his father, who had been waiting for him. His father said nothing, but grimly called for a feather and a large gourd of water. 'Drink,' he commanded, and compelled the child, now sobbing with terror, to swallow the whole gourdful of water. 'Open your mouth,' said the father, and began to tickle the child's throat with the feather until he vomited. 'And now,' said the father, grasping the child's arms tightly and striking him right and left, on buttocks, back and head, 'I'll teach you to eat fowl and steal and tell lies.' 'That was how I learnt not to eat fowl,' the chief concluded amid general laughter. But, he continued, many years later, at the time of the great famine, he with two companions was on his way to a neighbouring district and stopped for the night *en route*. They were extremely hungry, not having had a proper meal for days, and when they were offered porridge and a cooked fowl ate ravenously. Now two of them tabooed the fowl, but they were too hungry to resist. The meal finished, they rose, when suddenly the other man who was not allowed to eat fowl was overcome with nausea and began to vomit. Immediately he himself also began to vomit. They had not, after all, been able to stomach the fowl.

183 764 How strongly quite young children feel the compulsion of a ritual obligation was brought home to me when a boy of about 10–11 was

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183 her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764 shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783] mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181 and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867 and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856 moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861 that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

867 amused. When the child's mother tried to soothe her she first
856 struggled and struck at her, venting her chagrin on her mother. It was
861 fully ten minutes before her mother was able to quieten her by playing
with her and distracting her by making her a toy of wet clay. 'They will laugh at him (or her)' or 'His comrades will laugh at him' is the commonest motive alleged for correct behaviour. If you ask a boy of 6 or 7 why he no longer plays with the little girls he says, 'If I do my comrades will laugh at me'; and little girls say the same. Adolescents, talking about their sweethearts, who are usually clan
[626] 'sisters', explain why they avoid the girls of their own section—
'because our comrades will find out and laugh at us'; and the adult is equally sensitive to public opinion.

183 *The total pattern and its genetic development.* We have seen that these categories of social behaviour are not learnt in isolation one from the other but as patterns in which interests, elements of skill, and observances are combined. The Tale housewife, going several miles into the bush to collect firewood, is using knowledge of the bush tracks and of the best places for firewood acquired over a period of years; but she is impelled also by the sense of duty to her family and her own self-esteem. The Tale farmer's devotion to his agricultural pursuits is due to a passionate interest in land and crops and to a sense of moral responsibility towards his family and his ancestor spirits. His skill is but one of the factors that affect his general efficiency.

183 These total patterns which constitute the texture of Tale cultural
867 behaviour are not built up bit by bit, by addition, during the course
155 of a child's life. They are present as *schemas*[1] from the beginning.
My observations suggest that the course of development is somewhat as follows: at first the child acquires a well-defined interest associated with a postural diagram of the total pattern. The postural diagram is, as it were, a contour map, extremely simplified and crude but comprehending the essential elements and relations of the full pattern. Further experience strengthens and amplifies the interest at the same time as it causes the details of the postural diagram to be filled out, making it more and more adaptable and controllable, producing more

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[1] I have taken this concept from Prof. F. C. Bartlett's *Remembering*, pp. 199 ff., though its bald application here hardly does justice to the significance given to it by Prof. Bartlett, and to its value for an understanding of primitive education.

discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with 867
other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total 155
pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's 868
learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants 535
just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same 867
way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected 601
in the 3–4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non- 602
kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the
601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and
602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

● 183 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations
856 in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning —mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an
828 almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

101 The Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari people, however, do not accept this classifica-
134 tion, which expresses the orientation of Tɛnzugu, without qualifications.
136 The former admit their close territorial and political assimilation to Tongo, but they insist on their cultural distinctness, associating themselves, in this respect, with the Hill Talis. They quote in support other discriminatory indices than the Great Festivals. Firstly, like all the Talis, they do not have the avoidances of the first-born children distinctive of all Namoos (see below, Chap. V). On the contrary, all people of Zubiuŋ descent avoid eating tortoise (*pakur*), turtle (*mieŋ*), and cat (*sakoo*), the first two of which are also taboo to most of the Hill Talis. Secondly, they cite their mortuary and funeral ritual, the two points of crucial divergence being that they, like most of the Talis, dress the dead in a loin cover of sheepskin (*suona pɛhug*), whereas the Namoos use a goatskin (*suona buu*); and that to conclude a funeral they *ŋma ma'ala* with the sacrifice of many fowls, whereas the Namoos *ŋma wɔyar*—a totally different rite in which weapons and household utensils are offered to the departed spirit. Finally, Zubiuŋ people say: '*Tam dira tɛndaan, ti pu diit naam la*—We (like all Talis) have (lit. eat) the tɛndaanaship (i.e. the ritual office of Custodian of the Earth), we do not have the chiefship (like the Namoos).'

The Ba'ari people, with the added self-assurance due to their political independence of Tongo, declare themselves to be Talis on the same grounds, though their totemic avoidances differ from those of the hill folk. As a clinching argument they point out that the Great Festivals celebrated by the Talis form part of a cycle inaugurated by the senior Ba'ari tɛndaana.

Tongo shares the views of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari about their relationship to the Talis. Very often at a Zubiuŋ funeral I could not help being amused at the behaviour of Tongo visitors. Close neighbours though they are of Zubiuŋ with which they have, individually, innumerable ties of cognatic and affinal kinship, they always adopted a posture in keeping with this structural cleavage. They would sit all together, at a little distance from the spot where the rites were in progress, punctiliously preserving an appearance of indifference, as befits outsiders. At the same time, Tongo people emphasize their specially close local and political ties with their immediate neighbours which mark the latter off from the Hill Talis in certain respects. Similar distinctions are made in the Sie district. A Tongo, Ba'ari, or Tɛnzugu man bound for Sie or Datɔk says, 'I am going to Nabrug (the country of the Namnam)', unless it is necessary to be more precise. The people of Sie and a number of the neighbouring settlements are Namoos; yet talking about farming they say: 'The Talis always sow first and then we follow'—referring thus to all the settlements south-west of Zoo. But when they are discussing war or marriage, ritual or chiefship, they distinguish between Tongo and Zoo on the one hand—*ti mabiis*, our brethren—and the real Talis on the other. At Duusi and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ dwell the senior tɛndaanas of the district, whose social and ritual status is identical with that of the tɛndaanas of the Tongo district. 'Talɔŋ' in contraposition to themselves means essentially someone from the vicinity

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[illegible] Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, No. 4.

of the Tong Hills; yet 'we and the Talis are one' they maintain. In proof 101
of this they point out that their *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət* Festival belongs to the same 186
cycle as *Da'a* and *Bɔyaraam*, though they have but the vaguest hearsay 184 ●
knowledge of the esoteric ritual of these festivals. Their neighbours at Sie and Datɔk they call Namoos.

Note: For convenience of exposition we shall adopt the following con- 128
vention in this book. Whenever we speak of all the inhabitants of Taleland, irrespective of their internal subdivisions, we shall use the name given to them by other outsiders and speak of them as *Tallensi*. When we wish to refer to that section of the Tallensi whom they themselves describe as the 'real Talis', we shall refer to them as *Talis*, distinguishing among them, when necessary, between the *Hill Talis*, who live on and around the Tong Hills, and the Talis of the Plain, who live nearer Tongo (i.e. Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Ba'ari, Yaɣazuor).

Nomenclature and the Structural Scheme

This nomenclature reflects a structural scheme of considerable com- 184
plexity. It points to institutional allegiances which segregate adjacent social units from each other and group together spatially dispersed units. The major cleavage it reveals is that between the Namoo communities, on the one hand, and the settlements of the real Talis and of those who claim to be akin to them, on the other. But it indicates, also, that there are other lines of division and bonds of union both within each major grouping and cutting across the cleavage. It is a cardinal principle of Tale social structure that every social grouping defined as a unit in one situation, or according to one principle, dissolves into an association of lesser and differentiated units in another situation or according to another principle. Variation in custom or in ideological emphasis is regarded by the natives as one of the most significant indices of group differentiation. It is also, as we shall see, an important factor of social integration.

It is therefore a topic of perennial interest to the natives to observe and comment on variations of usage and doctrine. The idea that identity of custom and belief is desirable or natural is inconceivable. Everybody adheres staunchly to the forms of social behaviour accepted in his own group without desiring to impose them on others. 'Look at the Namoos,' observed Ta'aŋ one day, 'don't they (i.e. different sections of the same clan) do different things at funeral ceremonies? But their use of a goat (in mortuary rites), that is all one. We Talis, again, using our sheep (in mortuary rites)—this is the same for all of us. But as for our ritual, we split up and do different things.' Each one with his father's ways, everyone with his ancestor's ways (*Sɔ mi u ba yɛl, sɔ mi u yaab yɛl*)—that is, every group has its distinctive ancestral customs—is a characteristic Tale aphorism. This attitude, emphasizing simultaneously community and differentiation, similarity of pattern, and divergence of detail, permeates Tale thought.

Myths of Origin

Whenever Tallensi discuss the cleavages in their society they trace 173

started and transmitted them. Custom is not inviolable in its own right. 173 It is compelling because it is the legacy of the ancestors.

These notions are perfectly explicit in the behaviour and thought of 178 the natives, for whom they have a profound moral value. *Banam ndaa ɛŋ de, yaanam ndaa ɛŋ de*—our forefathers used to do it, our ancestors used to do it, is a recurrent formula in every ceremonial speech or ritual invocation during the Great Festivals. So the Samiitna'ab protesting his loyalty to traditional values and to the Kpata'arna'ab, in the latter's feud with the Golibdaana, exclaimed: 'It is the young men who are causing the trouble. They desire their cloths and their caps; but I know only what my ancestors did (*man mi la n-yaanam ndaa ɛŋ siem*). My ancestor (*n-yaab*) wore a skin and I, too, wear a skin; my ancestor knew nothing of cloth. I know only my forefathers' path and I adhere to that (*man mi la mbanam suor, man dɔla dɛni*).'

In the same way, and because their social system engenders so strong 181 a sense of the continuity and stability of their culture and social organization, 867 Tallensi always stress the importance of passing on to their descendants the way of life bequeathed to them by their forefathers. At ceremonies or when disputes are argued out before a chief or a lineage head, it is not uncommon to hear the old men praise the young men who attend. 'Thus,' the old men say, 'they (the young men) will learn the customs (*yɛla*) of our ancestors.' Tallensi place an extremely high value on their social order. An individual or a particular corporate group might desire to alter his or its position in the society. A man might desire to have greater prestige or more power than his neighbours. A clan might strive to assert its supremacy over other clans, whether or not it is entitled to do so. No one would dream of trying to overthrow the whole social order or of agitating against the existing customs and values.

This does not mean that Tale customs never change, or that the Tallensi 178 believe this to be the case, or invariably resist cultural changes. There 184 have been many shifts in custom and usage during the past two decades. The imposition of peace and an embryonic judicial system have diminished the tensions that kept unrelated clans apart and so have made it unnecessary for them to over-emphasize the emblems and symbols of their separateness. Fifteen years ago men of a tendaana's clan used to observe strictly the taboo against wearing gowns and trousers, the distinctive garments of chiefs and men of chiefly (i.e. Namoo) clans. To-day the young men of tendaanas' clans all wear such clothes outside the territory with which they have direct ritual ties. By this simple compromise they make the best of both worlds, the old world of strictly defined local, genealogical, and politico-ritual exclusiveness and the new world of free movement, unrestricted social intercourse with all and sundry, and cheaper clothes. They wear the ancient prescribed garb of a skin and a loin-cloth on ritual occasions, especially during the Great Festivals, when they take a pride in advertising their politico-ritual status. This change of custom does not cut athwart the basic values and principles of Tale social organization. It has arisen because the young men of tendaanas' clans are as eager to display themselves in fine clothes as the young men of other clans, and because the wearing of clothes is economically easier to attain than

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Gɔlibdaana, in his
overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Gɔlibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
576 building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

of the group to which it refers. Owing to the balanced distribution of 173
political and ceremonial functions between units of structure, the members 773
of a group always overrate their own relative significance while non-
members underrate its importance. These, sometimes contradictory, 578
valuations find expression, also, in the way myths are presented. It is the technique of contraposition coming to the surface again. When, therefore, in these days new tensions develop, erupting sometimes into open conflict, they are inevitably reflected in the cast given to their myths of origin by interested parties.

The Major Cleavage in Tale Society

Our reconnaissance of the cultural landscape of the Tallensi has left us 000
with a tangle of facts which do not fall into an obvious pattern. The reader may rest assured that his perplexity bears no comparison to that of an ethnographer seeking, for the first time, to understand Tale culture and social organization. The perspective changes as the investigator shifts his vantage point. The greatest puzzle of all is why there is so little apparent unity and coherence in an area of such dense and close habitation, carrying a population that has been sedentary for a long time, has a more or less homogeneous culture, and a strong sense of the continuity and stability of its social order. Leaving aside this puzzle, for the present, let us see what are the positive conclusions to which our survey leads.

The point of primary importance is that a major cleavage runs through 184
the whole of Tale society. On the one side stand communities or parts of communities the members of which are generally agreed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi. These are the Namoos. On the other side stand similar social groups who claim to be and are accepted as the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and earlier immigrants whom they absorbed. This cleavage is given a symbolic formulation in myths of origin the historicity of which need not concern us.

This cleavage is so fundamental that it permeates the whole social out- 184
look of the people. One sees it most vividly in the martial choruses chanted 764
at important funerals. One of the high lights at the opening ceremonies of the funeral of an important person is a grand mimic war march (*dee*) of the men of the clan. In their finest clothes, weapons in hand, plumed helms on their heads, blowing whistles and accompanied by drummers, the men gather in lineage squadrons to march round the settlement, and eventually mass at the house of the funeral. They march irregularly in an unorganized mob with excited children trailing behind and women dancing on the flanks trilling the shrill *kpɛlɔmat* cry of elation. And as they march, especially as they approach the funeral house, they chant defiant challenges against their traditional enemies in the wars of former days. 'Yo ho!' they chant, 'we might rise one day at break of dawn to sally forth against certain people.' 'Is it not because of us', the Namoos chant taunting the Talis, 'that you have water to drink?' And again, 'Do you not mock at them, do you not laugh at them?' And now and then a man leaps forward, crouches scowling, pretends to shoot off an arrow, and cries scornfully, 'If it were not for the white man, by now we would be meeting them in battle'. It is all play-acting, but there is an

184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the 764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have [579] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration [123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 796 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 796 648 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris, Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

holds an important ritual office connected with the paramount chiefship 184
of Mampurugu. But, as befits their interstitial socio-geographic position 796
between the Mamprusi and the Tallensi, their Harvest Festival belongs 648
to the Tale cycle and is, in fact, the last of one of the series constituting
the cycle.

The differentiation of Taleland into lesser regions follows the same 184
general principle as the differentiation of the Mole-Dagbane-speaking 796
peoples into 'tribes'. A region is a socio-geographic segment of the society in which the communities that constitute it have a greater degree of interdependence and cohesion with one another than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. And this interdependence and cohesion is a function of the common interests symbolized in the Great Festivals. The regions overlap in so far as the communities belonging to one region have other interests in common with and other loyalties towards communities belonging to a neighbouring region.

This is the façade of Tale society. Behind it lie the bricks and mortar 000
of the social structure. It is at that level of Tale social life that we must look for the foundations of the principles of social organization whose superficial action we have met with in this chapter.

all of us (i.e. those of alleged slave descent as well). Who are you to 618x
decide who is or is not to be allowed to take part in sacrifices to him?' 769

Crest-fallen, the supporters of the *status quo ante* begged the chief's pardon. It was a victory for the forces of community integration and a personal triumph for the chief over the cleavages due to the strict application of the canon of agnatic descent.

One of the chief's most intimate and influential elders commented to 618x me afterwards, cautiously but with a hint of regret, that soon it would become impossible to withhold the chiefship from the accessory lineages now that they had practically won the right to participate in the most esoteric ritual cult of the true agnatic sodality. But the battle for consolidation is not yet over. The presence of some members of accessory lineages at the sacrifices was not part of a deliberate scheme to gain equality of status but was an unthinking reaction to the whole situation—the unusual publicity of the ceremony, its emphasis on an all-embracing solidarity of the whole sub-clan, and the chief's insistence on interpreting this to mean all the people of Tongo and not only those of true agnatic descent from Mosuor. Some elders of the accessory lineages were as dubious about the affair as some of the elders of authentic lineages. To take part in sacrifices from which one's fathers and grandfathers (*baŋam ni yaanam*) had been rigidly excluded might well be an offence against one's own ancestors, even though the chief had taken the responsibility on himself. Members of accessory lineages do not resent their disfranchisement as a disability to be fought against, but accept it as part of the fixed order of society validated by the whole religious system.

Thus these elders of the accessory lineages will not take it for granted that they now have the same rights as the authentic lineages. They are aware, also, that the occurrence has left behind a good deal of hidden resentment which may, at some future crisis, precipitate a violent reaction against the inclusion of accessory lineages in the ritual brotherhood of Mosuor biis. The forces of integration are strong at Tongo; but the genealogical cleavages in its lineage structure are so fundamental that this historic sacrifice may yet prove to be a warning against their abrogation rather than a precedent for it.

This episode brought out more vividly than anything I had previously 618x
encountered the significance of the ancestral graves and shrines, in 778
particular of Mosuor's *bɔyar*, as the focus of the sub-clan's unity and the symbol of its corporate identity; for it was obvious that until they were able to participate on equal terms in sacrifices to this *bɔyar*, the accessory lineages would not be regarded as, or feel themselves to be, completely absorbed by the authentic lineages.

Tongo, we may conclude, though it is more closely knit than Sie, is 618x
also an open system in its lineage structure; and this is equally true of 184●
Yamalɔg and Biuk. This peculiarity of the clan organization is more precisely apparent in the asymmetrical linkages of the component lineages of the different sub-clans of Mosuor biis. It is evident from our analysis that the ties of clanship summarily posited by the natives as linking *all* of Tongo with *all* of Sie, *all* of Yamalɔg, and *all* of Biuk, measured by the strict canon of agnatic descent as well as by the critical norms of clanship,

x618 184 really hold only for the authentic lineages and, through them, for the assimilated lineages. The natives ignore this qualification when they make general statements about their clan organization—not because they reason obliquely, but on sound sociological grounds; for in their corporate relations with one another the four sub-clans treat one another as units irrespective of what the internal structure of each may be. Members of accessory lineages can represent the whole sub-clan in relation to one of the other sub-clans.

The Nexus of Clanship Ties

x618 Let us go back to Sie. The two lineages of Sie-datɔk have no ties of clanship with the distant *sunzɔp* of the Sie proper lineages to which they are attached by ties of clanship—that is, with Tongo, Yamələg, or Biuk. But to balance this they are linked by ties of clanship to other units with which the authentic lineages of Sie have no such ties.

Gban is a Namoo community adjacent to Sie. The people of Gban (Gbandem) comprise three maximal lineages: (F) Dabierugyaɣardem; (G) Gbandaan yidem; and (H) Buŋwari yidem. Taken together these three units form a local clan; they are linked by all the ties of clanship, but they do not claim to have a single common ancestor or postulate the convergence of their lines of ascent as do the Sie-datɔkdem. (F) Dabierugyaɣardem claim to have been the first to settle there, as their ancestor came there from Kurugu—like the ancestors of Sie-datɔkdem, it will be remembered—before the founders of the other two maximal lineages arrived. But now they have all become *dɔyam bukɔ'la*—one consanguineous kin.

Sie-datɔk and Gban are linked by ties of clanship exactly in the same way as the component lineages of each are linked *inter se*, and as the two lineages of Sie-datɔk are linked to the authentic lineages of Sie to which they are attached, or as Sie and Tongo are related to each other.

Just as Sie proper has a closer bond with the segment of Kabuu yidem at Tongo than with the other Tongo lineages, so the senior lineage of Sie-datɔk, (D) Daaŋ yidem, has a special tie with the senior segment (Tasoo yidem) of (F) Dabierugyaɣardem at Gban. Their respective ancestors are said to have been kin (*mabiis*) whose common home was Kurugu. Hence these two lineages attend each others' sacrifices to their respective founding ancestors and are entitled to the portion of the sacrificial animal due to close *sunzɔp*, a hind leg (*gber*). If there is a funeral among (D) Daaŋ yidem, representatives of (F) Dabierugyaɣardem will be sure to attend and assist as a matter both of loyalty and of duty; representatives of the other two Gban lineages may or may not turn up, as they please. It is not an obligation to do so, though they have clanship ties with Sie-datɔk. It is as if the primary tie of clanship between Gban and Sie-datɔk is that which links (F) Dabierugyaɣardem to (D) Daaŋ yidem and that this tie is merely extended to the other component lineages of the two units, through the effect of their bonds with the two lineages primarily interlinked. The relation is similar to that which obtains between any of the assimilated lineages of Tongo and the authentic

CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gorisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Ŋkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*baŋ*) by one major segment of Bayana yidɛm at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

We have noted that Tale culture is homogeneous. Thus the totemic 184
taboos of the Tale Namoos and their characteristic funeral rites, distinctive
as they are, are homologous in form and function with the totemic
observances and funeral rites of non-Namoos. We shall see the evidence
for this when we examine the more elaborate differentiation of Talis and
other non-Namoo clans and lineages by totemic and other ritual observances.
Tallensi know this and take it for granted, as they also take for
granted variations in the ritual observances of different communities which
are presumed to have identical ritual forms. They attribute such variations
to the influence of neighbouring communities. In fact the homologous
usages of neighbouring communities have features in common which do
not occur among more widely separated clans with the same practices.

But the taboos of the first-born and the goatskin loin-cover of the dead 171
are fixed and unalterable. All Tallensi know that these are the distinguishing 784
kiha (sing. *kihər*)—literally, forbidden things, but meaning
ritual injunctions as well as prohibitions—of all Namoos, 'from Dagbɔŋ
to Mooga', as the natives say.

Namoos say that they observe these *kiha* 'because it is the custom of our ancestors (*ti yaab yɛl nla*)'. They require no other explanation, but accept such ritual observances as facts of immemorial antiquity and part of the fixed order of society. The taboo of the fowl is the only one of these observances for which a myth of origin exists, and this is typical of the Tale myths purporting to account for the origins of totemic avoidances, being apparently trivial in content and neutral in emotional tone. Considering the fluid form and content of such myths and the fact that they are never deliberately taught, this myth is remarkably consistent in outline among Namoo clans in Taleland.[1] Tallensi display no interest in the private myths of any social group other than their own, and therefore make no secret of these myths. Knowledge of them is not deemed to be a necessary condition of adherence to the tenets they enshrine. Most young Namoos and many older men, even those who have themselves to observe the fowl taboo—an onerous enough restriction in a society whose chief sacrificial animal is the fowl—are ignorant of or but hazily acquainted with the myth. The men who know it tell it without reticence.

Significance of the Totemic Taboos of the Namoos

The fowl taboo, Namoos say, came about because 'a fowl did a great 773
service to our ancestor'. He had a wife, and people came to her with
slander of her husband, trying thus to persuade her to leave him. This
made her very unhappy. But one day a broody hen sitting in the women's
grinding room told her not to weep. When her husband returns from the
farm she must prepare a drink of flour-water for him, said the fowl, and
it would fly up and dash the calabash from his hand. If he then killed the
fowl in anger the woman would know that he was a wicked man, and if he
spared it she would know that people were slandering him maliciously.
When the man came home, the plan was carried out. Far from injuring

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[1] Different versions of the myth are found among Namoos outside Taleland, but the central theme is the same. All versions stress the point that the intervention of a fowl was responsible for the birth of the clan.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUCTURAL RELATIONS OF THE TALIS

A General Point

162 A NUMERICAL estimate of the Namoos in Taleland cannot be made from the published census figures. In the Tongo district alone they would include, on a rough reckoning, over a third of the population; the rest are the Talis.

184 The Talis, as we have seen, are distinguished by name and by myths of origin from the Namoos. Close neighbours though they are, Talis and Namoos are distinctly segregated from one another by locality, and this is associated with clear-cut structural cleavages. It is necessary, however, to emphasize that Talis and Namoos are also inseparably bound to one another by ceremonial and politico-ritual ties. In addition, all Talis and all Namoos are connected with one another as individuals by an elaborate network of cognatic and affinal ties. In the present chapter we are concerned with the constituted social relations of the Talis amongst themselves, treated in isolation from the background of their social relations with the Namoos, but this background must be borne in mind.

The Clan Structure of Zubiuŋ

x618 The clans and lineages of the Talis form corporate units of the same kind as those of the Namoos. They are connected with one another by a network of constituted ties of the same type as those that link Namoo clans and lineages in a chain system, but more elaborately distributed and articulated. Again, the paradigm applies generally, but the perspective of each clan and lineage is peculiar to itself. To keep the parallel with the Namoos we shall take as our starting-point the group of Talis most intimately associated with Tongo, the people of Zubiuŋ (Zubiuŋdɛm).[1]

621 As we have previously mentioned, the people of Zubiuŋ live in such close contiguity with the Tongo Namoos that anyone ignorant of the structure of the community would be unable to draw a line between the homesteads of one group and those of the other. Investigation shows that Zubiuŋ homesteads form an irregular but continuous aggregate, quite distinct, spatially, from Tongo. The nearest Tongo neighbours of Zubiuŋ are the accessory Tongo lineage of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm. Consistently with the basic principles of Tale clanship, Nɔŋsuur yidɛm have an intercalary status between Tongo and Zubiuŋ. The legend which relates that the ancestor of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm was a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of Zubiuŋ is the rationalization of their intercalary role. But though they mediate between Tongo and Zubiuŋ in political matters, for example, they have no ties of clanship with the latter, as we have previously seen.

x618 Zubiuŋ consists of three maximal lineages, residentially distributed in a way that exactly parallels their structural relations. The homesteads of

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[1] Total male members, at home and abroad, about 250.

seizing it by violence, almost as if they were hostile intruders. *Sunzɔp* 606
have *a priori* no need of force to assert their privileges; if they did resort 618x
to it the affront would be so grave as to rupture the ties of clanship with 602
them. Unrelated strangers could only get one of the shares due to *sunzɔp* if they had the temerity to seize it—but they would be fortunate if they escaped with their lives, even in these days of curbed passions. The mock aggression of a joking partner is a caricature blending these contradictory ways of behaviour.

Joking partners are not obliged to tease one another. They do so spontaneously when the situation seems appropriate. People who are greatly unequal in years or status, or personally related by cognatic kinship, will not act in this way. The joking partnership merely fixes the group with whose members such behaviour is appropriate in appropriate circumstances; a casual encounter, for instance, where anybody but a joking partner or a close kinsman would be met with the customary greeting—'*ni i tooma*', lit. 'with your work'. It is also appropriate, as we have seen, in situations such as funeral ceremonies, where there is a very strict determination of attendance and behaviour by clearly defined social ties. But even there joking partners turn up largely by chance. They happen to be passing, or a few young men, hearing of the funeral and knowing that there will be dancing and girls, go for the lark of it. For distant *sunzɔp*, too, attendance at funeral ceremonies is very often a matter of chance, but it is also very often the result of a decision by responsible elders.

Such institutionalized joking partnerships do not appear to exist among 602
the Namoos. This may be correlated with the less elaborate interlocking 618x
of constituted ties and cleavages among them than among the Talis. An
analogous practice which throws light on the ideas implicit in standardized 184 ●
joking partnership was, however, in vogue among the several branches of 602
Mosuor biis until recently. When there was a funeral at Yamələg a party of relatives-in-law (*deenam*) would sometimes pass through Tongo from Wakii or Tenzugu carrying the obligatory food contributions consisting of a basket of porridge and a whole sheep or goat cut up and cooked. Tongo youths would then, if they had a chance, intercept them and compel them to give up most of the food, leaving only a small portion to prove to the Yamələg people that their relatives-in-law had discharged their obligations. The Yamələg people would naturally be indignant; they would denounce the Tongo youths as thieves and rascals, and upbraid their relatives-in-law for yielding so timorously. Then they would wait for an opportunity to recoup themselves in kind. Next time a similar party of relatives-in-law bound for Tongo from Nabərug passed through Yamələg they would be waylaid and robbed in the same way. It was thought of as a practical joke, and accepted as such by the victims. The annoyance it caused soon blew over and did not leave a lasting grudge, for it was understood to be an exaggerated enforcement of the rights of *sunzɔp* to a prescribed share of such contributions if they happened to turn up at the funeral.

In the same way, twenty years ago, a Tongo man who chanced to be 606
passing through Yamələg when the guinea corn was ripening or the 602
618x

602 ground-nuts ready for harvesting, might pluck a few twigs of guinea corn
608 or pull up a bunch of ground-nuts to stay his hunger. He would shout
x618 out, 'Whose corn is this, yo-o-o? I am going to pluck some.' The
owner, standing on his flat roof, would probably remonstrate and swear,
but he would not raise a hue and cry, for this was not theft but an
exaggerated assertion of clanship ties. Nowadays, since the political
[578] jealousies between the chiefs of Tongo and of Yamələg have brought
about a state of chronic hostility between the two places, this pleasant
custom has fallen into disuse. It is impossible to tease people with whom
one has open or suppressed enmity; it would certainly provoke a fight.

x618 Such liberties, it is of interest to note, could never be taken with the people of Sie or Biuk, though they, too, are the clan *sunzɔp* of Tongo. For, as my informants explained, 'they are too far away, and therefore they would resent it'. On the other hand, while any Tongo man can pluck a handful of guinea corn or a bunch of ground-nuts from a clansman's field at Tongo if the two men are on good terms, no one would dare to intercept the food contribution of another Tongo section's relatives-in-law. A serious quarrel would inevitably result. 'We are too near each other, we are like the members of a single family', explained my informants. Every segment of Tongo is likely to be represented at the funeral ceremony at which these contributions from relatives-in-law are shared, to claim the share due to it. For any segment to anticipate this by violence would be a gratuitous insult implying that the other segments do not respect its rights. The people of Yamələg and of Sie used to act in the same way towards each other before the political jealousies that to-day poison their relationship arose.

●184 All Tallensi think alike on matters of this sort, which fall within the
x618 ambit of their common culture, whatever their particular structural affiliations may be. This Namoo custom and its recent obsolescence fit the pattern we have established for the more conventionalized joking partnerships of the Talis.

x618 Yet another kind of joking which I have several times witnessed
602 adds confirmation to our analysis, the more so because it is entirely
578 informal. This occurs between the members of two maximal lineages which are bound to one another by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence. They are usually maximal lineages which have complementary politico-ritual offices, such as a chiefship and the tɛndaanaship complementary to it. A large element of tension is necessarily involved in these relationships. Mutual loyalty and solidarity in situations involving common interests are counterbalanced by mutual suspicion in matters concerning the private interests and possessions of each lineage. Behind a strong sense of amity and interdependence lurks a jealous vigilance in regard to reciprocal rights and duties.

When, therefore, representatives of the two groups meet in a ceremonial or jural situation, the more aggressive among the elders often taunt one another playfully at moments when ceremonial formality is relaxed. Gbizug and Tongo men, for example, have a habit of doing this. The Chief of Tongo and the Gbizug tɛndaana, on the rare occasions when they meet in public, will interrupt a long and ceremonious discussion with a

jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual 602
coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tɛndaana's brother, who often deputizes for 618x
him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of 578
the tɛndaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true,
but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's [789]
ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohəg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiirət*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations 184
which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also 571
confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of 571
clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, 577
but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihər*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*ba yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

x618 clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an
182 offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be made at the External *Bɔɣar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

x618 Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in
182 form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will
184 be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External
778 *Bɔɣar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are
769 built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔɣar* among the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔɣar* of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔɣar* is kept at the house of the segment head in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔɣar* of one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔɣar* itself consists of one or two small pots (*kpatarəg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

182 As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔɣar and the Earth

x618 A. *Zubiuŋ*. We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ
182 becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg, the common shrine
778 of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of
782 the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the
769 cults of the *Bɔɣar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration with the clan structure is relatively simple, and is analogous to what is found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpaləg *Bɔɣar*. It is described as an External *Bɔɣar* (*yɛŋha bɔɣar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

x618 But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔɣar*,
778 'the *bɔɣar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal
769 lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni*

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field.
Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔyar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔyar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔyar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
184 Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
184 single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine
769 (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to
assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the
[793] Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a
Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔyar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[778] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
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619 gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pɛhug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tendaana.

764 [884] Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*waləg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teeləg lineages, use only a piece of string

619 184 The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

173 Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Wooləga country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teeləg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

577 764 The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihər*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihər*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

764 182 Funeral rites have a twofold symbolic value for the Tallensi. They symbolize the corporate unity and identity of the lineage and clan and its ties with other clans; but they also symbolize the group's dependence on and moral responsibility to their ancestors, collectively and individually. This is shown very well in the custom of each clan's using a particular kind of loin cover for the dead and in the associated custom of swearing an oath by the father's loin cover. They show that ritual symbols of social differentiation and association among the Tallensi are not mere emblems of intergroup differences. They are emotionally charged symbols of the fact that the corporate unity and identity of the group is created by the moral bonds of its members among themselves and of each member with the ancestors of the group. We shall return to this presently.

619 171 184 In spite of their deviant mortuary customs, the people of Gorogo, Ka'ar, and Teelɔg consider themselves to be, and are considered to be, as much a part of the Talis aggregate as any other Talis clans. Conversely it is known among the Talis that some clans of Gɔrisi and Namnam, as well as many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, dress their dead in a sheepskin loin cover. The Talis do not on this account acknowledge any of these groups as Talis or as being kin to them. Again, some clans in the Sie district gird their dead with an oribi skin. But they deny having any ties with Ka'ar. Indeed, their elders are quite unaware that they have this custom in common with Ka'ar, and are not in the least interested in hearing of it. This is a significant difference between the Namoos, all of whom have the same mortuary observances, and the Talis and their congeners. This difference extends to other manifest ritual usages that serve to differentiate corporate units from one another.

764 184 Certain other funeral rites are also stressed as rigorously distinctive of the Talis and as common to all of them. All Talis, it is said, conclude a funeral by the rite of *ŋma ma'ala*. Members of the deceased's maximal lineage, and the heads of the other lineages of the clan, contribute a large number of fowls, which are slaughtered as a sacrifice to mark the final departure of the dead person from the social sphere of the living and his aggregation to the ancestors. In reality, almost every clan has its own modifications in the details of the rite. In some clans it is performed for all males who have begotten children, in others for lineage heads only, in others for both men and women; and the people of Kpata'ar omit the rite altogether. The rite is found also among many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, with diverse local variations.

Similar local variations from clan to clan appear in the other parts of the funeral ceremonies where the usages of the Talis contrast with those of the Namoos, and many, if not most, of these distinct customs are found among the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie district.

These variations in ritual observances, and their correlation with structural ties and cleavages, are constantly brought to an observer's attention. They form a common topic of discussion and comment at funeral ceremonies. One is often reminded of them by the behaviour of women at these ceremonies. A woman's husband's clan very often has different ritual practices from those of her father's clan. Now, married

764 daughters always come to funerals in their paternal family. They have
184 special ritual duties, some specific to that clan, some more general. They are apt, then, to follow the procedures to which they have become accustomed in their husband's home and have, therefore, to be closely supervised.

In all these mortuary and funeral rites there is a tendency for the plainsmen to have one type of variant, while the Hill clans favour another. There is less variation in the details of rites among the clans of either group than between the two groups, and the clans at the foot of the Hills show variants of ritual usage intermediate between those of the plains Talis and of the Hill clans. Thus, one of the most solemn and sacred of the rites which transform the brute fact of death into the mystical fact of spiritual status is the rite of *kpe kpiintaŋ*. It is usually regarded as distinctive of the Namoos, but it occurs also in the funeral ceremonies of tendaanas and elders at Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Gbizug, and Wakii (the Talis clans contiguous with the Namoos) as well as among some of the non-Namoo clans of the Sie area. The Hill Talis attribute this to contamination by the customs of the Namoos. There are one or two rites which the plains Talis have and the Hill Talis lack altogether. There is, therefore, a broad distinction corresponding to the division between the clans that celebrate *Da'a* and those that celebrate *Bɔyaraam* as their Harvest Festival. But the two clusters overlap, as they do structurally, and the Talis overlap with the *tendaanditib* of the Sie area by the criterion of funeral customs as they do by those of locality and structure.

182 The funeral customs of the Talis, it is clear, are directly correlated with
184 the structure of the society. The broad patterns of doctrine and ritual
764 practice are the same for all Tallensi, and are an indication of their uniform culture and of a social structure which embraces all the Tallensi in a single system. More specific patterns of doctrine and practice are followed exclusively by the Talis and their congeners elsewhere in Taleland. They are an index of the structural differentiation of these clans from the Namoos. Some of these patterns are common to all or most of the Talis clans, and correspond therefore to the network of clanship and other structural ties linking them all to one another. Other specific patterns of funeral customs mark off lesser regions within the whole cluster of Talis clans. And finally, variations in detail correspond to the genealogical differentiation of clan from clan and lineage from lineage, and to the fact that each unit has a specific field of social relations not wholly congruent with that of any other unit of a like sort. The natives understand this. As we have noted before, they see variant ritual beliefs and practices of all kinds, and especially variant mortuary and funeral customs, as ways in which the corporate identity and the continuity of lineage and clan are expressed. They consider such variations within the limits of common patterns as belonging to the very fabric of their social organization.

Totemic Avoidances and Clanship Ties

784 The connexion between ritual observances and the social structure can
184 be even more plainly seen in the totemic avoidances of the Talis and the

other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos 784 are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in 184 many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans, no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to violate (*galəm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence. It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu ɔbət*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals [262 prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages, 853] when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness, not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners 784 in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But 771 like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage 184 totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example, call a totem a sacred object (*bayər*). The emphasis is on the avoidance, the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, 784 though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch 184 these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them; for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their 627 congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear 184 an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in 618x this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath, uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence, 627 184 I was told. I have never heard it used by anybody, and this itself shows how seriously it is taken.

x618 The oath by the totem is not quite so serious a matter, though it could not be uttered with impunity. The formula is: '*Pakur ni nnuoni*—the tortoise and inside my mouth', if the totemic animal is the tortoise, or, in free translation: 'By the tortoise which I may not eat.' This oath might be used in trivial circumstances. Thus, if a man were wrongly accused of adultery he might swear by his father. But if he were accused of having appropriated something belonging to a friend or relative without permission, though admittedly without intending to steal it, he would swear to his innocence with an oath by his totem. It is the sort of oath, too, informants said, that one might use to assert one's truthfulness in an argument. A person who swears falsely by his totem would decline in health and begin to waste away (*burəm*), but he could probably be saved by atoning sacrifices. A person who swears one of the greater oaths, including the oath by one's father, falsely, will probably die. That is how the natives distinguish the degrees of sacredness they attach to these oaths. Again, I have never heard a totemic oath used, but I have discussed the matter with many people, both young and old, and their views are unanimous. Tallensi are reluctant to swear an oath except in an issue of real importance, and then they resort to the most solemn oath that is appropriate in the situation.

784 There is nothing secret about these totemic avoidances. Knowledge of them is public and widespread, though not always accurate where the totems of other clans than one's own are concerned. People become acquainted with the totemic avoidances of other clans through their ties of extra-clan kinship, and women spread the knowledge of the totemic avoidances of their paternal clans among the clans into which they marry. An amusing instance of the way in which this knowledge spreads occurred with one of my own boys. He was a Namoo, and one day bought a live water-tortoise from a Tɛnzugu youth. This is a great delicacy, but, as he told me afterwards, the cooking of it cost him almost more trouble than it was worth. For he had to cook it himself, out of doors in a borrowed pot, because his wife, a Tɛnzugu woman, was prohibited from eating this animal and refused to let him contaminate her kitchen or her cooking utensils with it.

It is never necessary for Tallensi to ask one another what their totemic avoidances are. When a person is required, for ritual reasons, to observe the taboos of another clan, the people of that clan who come to perform the rites that impose these taboos on him tell him about them. But one can ask a person, 'What do you (i.e. such and such a clan or lineage) taboo? (*ya kiha lani*)', or, 'What do you swear by? (*ya pɔta lani*)', in order to ascertain a group's totemic avoidances.

784 184 x618 The animals most widely avoided among the Talis are the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water tortoise (*mieŋ*). Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and most of the Hill clans taboo both these animals. But there are several exceptions. None of the clans on the Degal side of the Hills keep these avoidances, nor do the people of Tamboog, and only the senior maximal lineage of the three constituent lineages of Soog has them. The people of Degal,

for example, avoid the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*); the Tamboog people do not 784
eat the dog (*baa*), the leopard (*yeogbaa*), the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*), and the 184
hare (*suoŋ*). 618x

The majority of the clans which observe the two characteristic avoidances of the Talis have additional discriminatory totems. Zubiuŋ has the cat (*sakoo*); at Wakii it is the snake (*waaf*), and this includes all species of snake, even the innocent little green *bɛnɔrəg* which children of other clans kill and eat. A whole group of clans, including all that part of the network of linked lineages that connects Bunkiuk, Yinduur, Sii, and Gorogo, taboo the snake and the crocodile (*baŋ*) in addition to the land and water tortoises. Among these clans a snake that injures a domestic animal or a person is killed without hesitation, and if it is of an edible species, such as the python (*wayakpɛm*), it will be given to a friend or kinsman of a neighbouring clan which does not taboo snakes. This rule applies to all species of dangerous animals that serve as totems to a clan. If they injure mankind, or man's property, they are transgressing (*galəm*) and deserve to be killed. This does not mean, however, that the Tallensi conceive of a special tie of friendship or kinship between a clan and its totem animals. But we shall come back to this point later.

Ba'ari and Yayazuor, with the exception of one accessory lineage, do not fall into the same circle of totemic avoidances. Their taboos vary from one maximal lineage to another. Thus, Ba'at-Sakpar taboos the dog and the hare; but Lakum yiri has no totemic avoidances.

When a clan or lineage has several totemic avoidances they are all considered to be of equal importance. In some situations the totems common to several clans are stressed, in others the natives draw attention to those which differentiate units among a number that have some common totems. There is no precise correlation between the ties of clanship and the distribution of totemic avoidances. Tamboog and Gundaat, closely allied as they are by ties of clanship, have different totemic avoidances. The constituent maximal lineages of clans like Soog and Ba'ari have no common totems, nor have the linked lineages of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari, or Soog and Sakpee. Conversely, common totemic avoidances do not by themselves indicate the existence of clanship ties. Ba'at-Sakpar has no clanship ties with Tamboog, though both taboo the dog and the hare, and the avoidance of the Degal people is found also among some clans of the Sie area which have no ties of clanship with Degal. It follows [582]
from this that (as among the Namoos) common totemic prohibitions are not a bar to marriage; lineage and clan exogamy operate in terms of clanship ties only.

On the other hand, clanship ties are in some instances associated with 618x
totemic avoidances. Dun biis of Ba'ari are said to observe the same 784
avoidances as the Hill Talis, because they have clanship ties with Samiit. Alaa biis of Dkoog have the totemic taboos of Wakii, as well as those of Dkoog proper (a Namoo clan), because of their clanship ties with Wakii. Both these are attached lineages, whose descent is attributed to a son of a clan sister who had been married to a Samiit and a Wakii man respectively and had subsequently been divorced and sent back home with her children. The two lineages thus preserve the avoidances of what would

x618 784 have been their founding ancestors' paternal clans. In other cases the correlation is not so clear, since the attached lineages concerned are intercalary between clans that have the same avoidances. But it is not a general rule that attached lineages preserve the avoidances of the clan of the alleged father of their founding ancestor, as can be seen from the case of Ba'at-Lakum yidem, who do not keep the Zubiuŋ taboos.

Thus Talis sometimes cite common totemic and other ritual observances as a sign of clanship ties, and at other times deny any necessary connexion between ritual observances and clanship ties. When they want to emphasize the close interdependence, or the sense of community of a particular group of clans, by contrast with other Talis or non-Talis clans, they tend to pick on common ritual observances in proof of this. But on the other hand, they are equally ready to quote peculiar totemic taboos as signs of the genealogical or social singularity of a clan or lineage. The apparent inconsistency does not worry them. For, as we have seen, Tallensi cannot visualize precisely the structure of their society in its entirety, and there is good evidence for both views in the ritual observances of the Talis. There is a tendency for some clans that are closely interconnected to have some totems in common, and for others to have different totems.

x618 784 ● 184 The totemic avoidances found among the clans of the Sie district in general follow the pattern found at Ba'ari; but in this area there is no close-knit nuclear aggregate of clans like the Hill Talis. The relative autonomy of the maximal lineage stands out more markedly, and there is consequently a greater diversity of totemic avoidances.

Totemic Myths

773 We have previously remarked that Namoos show little interest in the mythology of their totemic taboos. This attitude is characteristic of all Tallensi. Talis elders, whose authority and wisdom in ritual matters were widely respected, and who willingly gave me information of the most secret kind, were content to dismiss the question of the origin of their totemic taboos with some trite remark such as, 'We grew up to find it thus'. But here and there one comes across a myth accounting for the origin of a totemic taboo, especially in the Sie area. They are all expansions of the text 'The animal conferred a benefit on our ancestor (*u daa maal ti yaab la*)'. Though they all have the same moral, they vary greatly in substance.

773 539 Thus, according to one version, the avoidance of the tortoise and water-tortoise among the Hill Talis began in this way: 'Our (anonymous) ancestor' was suffering severely from thirst once and could find no water. He saw a tortoise crawling along and followed it. The animal reached a heap of dry leaves, which it scratched aside revealing a spring. Thereupon 'our ancestor' vowed that never again would he or his descendants eat the tortoise; and as the water-tortoise is merely another species of the same family, this taboo naturally extends to it as well.

According to another version, which is worth quoting as an example of the variations in these myths, 'our ancestor' was on a journey and was

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

●184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galɔm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (yɔ) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

784 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so
a supplicant coming to the *Bɔɣar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also
from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔɣar* in the
Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the
snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence,
children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔɣar* must avoid
all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have
independent External *Bɔɣa*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔɣar* congregation. This means that the clans and
lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the
ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It
implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of
redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation,
or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife,
though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member
lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling
of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another,
among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of
to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious
community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔɣar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794
sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the
rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them
over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing
Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔɣar* or the coercion of an
adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult to 776
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔɣar can become the spirit-guardian (*sεɣər*) of an individual. An
ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native
religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist
(*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbε*)', and the ward (*sεɣəraan*) must keep the totemic
avoidances of the *Bɔɣar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims
to the *Bɔɣar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual
dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born,
as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards
of the *Bɔɣar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual
guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into com-
[551] munion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
[582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-
Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi;
and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of
the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts
and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the
benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace,
and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the
totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured
kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe con-
duct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client
lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛyɔraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic
avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's
lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because *he will*
have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and
as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between
the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of
sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus
he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to
inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the
agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of
maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes
have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who
observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the
totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo
of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that
it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl
in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer
remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary
totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

leopard taboo of Ŋkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of 776 the Talis. 784

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems 184 is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛyər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛyər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔyar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛyər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔyar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔyar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔyar* and the *Bɔyar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that 608 sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be 776 called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔyar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔyar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔyar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔyar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with 608 lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when 769 the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔya* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔyar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding 182 pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line. 182 771

One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' with the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔyar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔyar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔyar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔyar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔyar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔyar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔyar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔyar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔyar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest. 182

It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔyar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔyar* is the pivot. 794 611

In sum, then, the totem stands for the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage, the External *Bɔyar* for the interdependence of lineages in a single religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔyar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have 182 184

184 extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more dis-
182 tinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

619 It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Talɔŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tendaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔyar* cult, which extends as far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

182 But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos,
771 funeral rites, and *Bɔyar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

784 The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may
171 well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

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[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134–5.

This mystical power is focused for a particular social group in the Earth 778
shrines of their own settlement—that is why the Earth animals are not 788
sacred in the bush. And the ritual efficacy of the Earth at a particular place depends on its connexion with a particular social group holding the office of tɛndaana for that place. The animals therefore symbolize the moral relations of men, as these are determined by their social ties with particular tracts of the earth. They symbolize the function of locality in Tale social organization.

One logical element in this symbolism is obvious. The mystical 'livingness' of the Earth is symbolized in the living creatures it harbours. But this is not all, for otherwise other earth-dwelling creatures might have been selected as well.

The special relationship of the sacred Earth animals with the clan 778
holding the tɛndaanaship for the area is focused in one species, as a rule. 184
Thus the python is specially sacred at Gbizug, the crocodile at Zubiuŋ. To kill one of these animals at home is almost as bad as murder. For they are more than Earth taboos; they are 'ancestors' (*yaab*, pl. *yaanam*) to the group concerned. If found dead in the settlement, they are given a token funeral. The sacred crocodiles living in the Zubiuŋ water-hole are treated with an almost human familiarity. 'They are our ancestors, they would not injure us', the people say. In some clans carnivores like the leopard or the lion have this function, but are not considered Earth taboos. The natives say that their ancestors who have held politico-ritual office 'rise up again (*ihigərəme*)' after death as these animals. Tallensi deny that this is a belief in reincarnation or in the transmigration of souls. These taboos have attributes of totems, of Earth taboos, and of personal ancestor symbols; and the common thread is the notion of the ancestors as a living mystical force, symbolized in living creatures. The animals symbolize the immortality of the ancestors, that is, their efficacy and power in the life of their descendants. The ancestors are where their descendants are. One reason why the lineage is tied to its locality is because the ancestors are tied to it. They are spiritually present in the social life of their descendants in the same way as the sacred animals are present in sacred pools or in the locality with which the group is identified.

Functional Differentiation and its Symbolism

An important inference emerges from our argument. Lineage and 182
locality are interwoven and interdependent factors of Tale social structure. But they are functionally discrete factors. We have previously seen how their interdependence is reflected in Tale religious ideology. We see now that their functional discreteness within the pattern of interdependence is also expressed in ritual symbols. The formally similar and associated but functionally distinct symbols we have discussed bring this out.

Tale society is highly homogeneous and integrated. But this is a [181]
resultant of the balanced interplay of a number of functionally discrete 182
factors and of the inter-articulation of many clearly defined social units. Tale religion gives ritual expression and sanction to these principles.

618 one another in funerals and similar ceremonial events. These ceremonial
[608] reciprocities do not prevail between Tongo or Zoo and any of the Hill
Talis clans adjacent to them.

621 Nevertheless, a palpable social boundary still prevails between Tongo
and Zubiuŋ, but one far less determinate than that between Tongo and
184 its other Talis neighbours. No Zubiuŋ homesteads are so situated as to be surrounded on all sides by Tongo homesteads, and vice versa; there is no indiscriminate mingling of the homesteads of the two clans. Looked at from within, both Zubiuŋ and Tongo are self-contained spatial units within their respective social circumferences. This is correlated with their contrasting totemic observances, clan cults, and politico-ritual offices; their mutual exclusiveness by the canon of agnatic descent and the liberty to intermarry that goes with this; and their consequent divergent jural interests as distinct corporate units; the people of Tongo are Namoos, the Zubiuŋdɛm Talis. The observer is constantly apprised of this in the attitudes and opinions of individuals, in economic activities, and in jural and ritual events, the very activities and events which reveal the close bonds of the two groups. Tongo people never scrupled to raid their weaker Zubiuŋ neighbours for cattle owed to them, as many old men relate from personal experience. On the other hand, responsible elders and chiefs of Tongo, in those days, disapproved strongly of resort to violent self-help against Zubiuŋ by their people, though they could not always prevent it—an attitude they would never adopt in regard to the other Talis. To-day Tongo and Zubiuŋ people regard one another with a certain amount of suspicion and good-natured superiority, tempered with a tolerance which the former never show towards the other Talis.

621 A similar, but more elastic, social boundary exists between Tongo and
184 Zoo. There are no Zoo people living inside Tongo, but no less than 11
166 of the 39 homesteads situated on the land under the ritual jurisdiction of
Zoo-Yiraaŋ, within the social circumference of Zoo, are the homes of permanent immigrants from Tongo. The bond of common stock (*buurət*) between these two locally allied and politically associated Namoo clans blurs the cleavages between them. Tongo people find it the more congenial to live amongst Zoo people in considerable numbers because they have the same ritual observances, mortuary and funeral customs, and politico-ritual offices and values. It is mainly cultural differences of this kind that deter them from settling amongst the people of Zubiuŋ.

The one-sided filtration of Tongo people into Zoo, and the absence of the reverse process, are due mainly to the density of habitation—which is so great as to preclude immigration—and the obvious excess of population at Tongo. Zoo people who wish to emigrate, temporarily or permanently, move farther afield, to Gbambee or Biuŋ. In any case, the flow of migration from Tongo to Zoo has apparently reached saturation, for it has now practically stopped. But this movement, though at bottom an ecological readjustment, has been canalized by the social structure; and while it brings out the affinities of Tongo with Zoo, it also emphasizes their separateness. Because they are structurally independent of each other, Tongo people only migrate to Zoo if they have matrilateral kin there who will grant them land to build on and farm. By contrast,

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
152 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ, which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us, and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo. This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

622 793 [184] These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External *Bɔyar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

622 793 554 Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*) ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

622 793 As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔyar* cult function as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

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[177] [1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tendaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tendaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tendaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tendaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves
of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tendaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tendaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tendaana's Tey

779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
778 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
471 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect
bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

613 621 778 [557]

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

[423]

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

[1014] ●

613 621 602

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'. [191]

778 769 The graves of Sɛyahəg and Bɔyada lie within a couple of minutes' walk of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔyada's grave is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbər, and Bɔyayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 764 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakɔradɛm, Genət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔyada's grave is proof to the natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 621 764 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo clans living in the vicinity of Yamələg and Sie—the group of clans which the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually ●[184 778] having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔyar* takes the place of the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 793 621 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and
by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
● 184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-
aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[535] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of
funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who
wring a bare subsistence/from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

CHAPTER VIII

TENSIONS IN THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Rivalry between Parents and Children

593 578 PERHAPS the most extraordinary feature of Tale parents' relations with their children is the recognition, in custom and belief, of the latent antagonism behind their mutual identification and comradeship, their devotion and co-operation. We have already had some glimpses of this. A psycho-analyst might say that the Oedipus complex is apparently openly recognized in Tale culture. He would have to add that it is built into their social organization in such a way as to enable them to control it. The mystical ideas and ritual symbols in which the rivalry between successive generations is clothed form the cultural mechanism by which it is neutralized and made to serve socially useful ends.

784 [184] 578 593 We have discussed the taboos observed by first-born children among the Namoos in our previous book. We showed there[1] that the distinguishing mark of all Namoo clans as opposed to non-Namoo clans is the observance of these taboos. Among all Namoos a man's first-born son and daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, may not wear any of their father's garments or his quiver, or look into his granary during his lifetime. The latter taboos are connected with the fact that a man's clothes and quiver and granary are intimately identified with his social personality. As the natives put it, a man's clothes and quiver are imbued with his bodily exuviae from constant contact with his body, while his granary is associated with his unique status in the patricentral family. It is easy to see that these possessions are peculiarly apt symbols of a man's social self. It is not surprising, therefore, that though these taboos are not formally observed by non-Namoos analogous usages with the same symbolic significance occur among them.

In our previous book we studied the significance of these taboos as quasi-totemic symbols in the system of inter-clan relations; but they have other dimensions of meaning as well, like all Tale customs and ideas that give expression to fundamental elements in their social organization. For they go back to deep and universal tendencies in human psychology. These taboos have a particular meaning in the contemporary structure of Tale society as symbols of corporate units; but underlying this is the deeper meaning they have in the relations of successive generations and for the individual himself in the conduct of his life.

We are concerned here with these latter aspects of their meaning. We cannot attempt to unravel all that lies behind them, but their super-

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. v and viii.

593 777 578 crowning achievement of his life, the most significant sign that his *Yin* has prospered him (*maal*) well. The relations of father and son are a balance between their ties of solidarity and mutual identification, which form the central link of the lineage system, and the cleavage due to their belonging to successive generations. Once more we encounter the fundamental principle of Tale social organization, that every constellation of social relationships is made up of a polar balance of ties and cleavages.

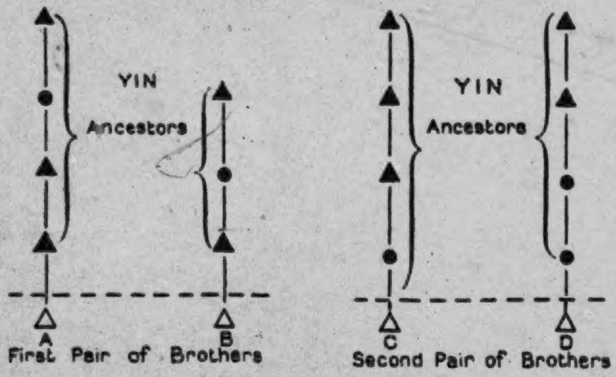

FIG. 5. *Yin* Ancestors.

The Discrimination between Oldest Children and Youngest Children

593 578 The cleavage between father and first son obviously plays an important part in the cycle of development of the joint family and lineage. The oldest son's breakaway from the parental home is the first phase of fission of the joint family, and it is not until after his father's death that he and his brothers are likely to become reunited into a single domestic unit.

We have spoken sometimes as if the cleavage between successive generations lay solely between parents and their first-born children, at other times as if it were a gulf between parents and all their children. In practice, tension crops up between a parent and any of his or her adolescent or adult children, but one reason why it is always likely to be sharpest with oldest children is simply because they have gone farthest along the road of social and economic maturity and so symbolize the filial generation most effectively of all the children. Among 593 578 ● 184 non-Namoos it does not seem to matter whether the oldest children are first-born or merely the oldest surviving children. Among the Namoos, however, there is the striking peculiarity of their fixing the ritual and affective bar between the generations on the first-born children. If a man's first-born son is dead, and even if he died in infancy, the oldest living son does not assume the taboos of the first-born. The

tension that develops between a father and his oldest surviving son is 593
never as great as that which occurs between a man and his first-born 578
son. An oldest surviving son may in time begin to farm on his own, but
he will very often stay in his father's homestead, for his *Yin* is not a 184
danger to his father's.

Tallensi have no explanation for this. Their only comment is to point 593
to the fact, which can often be observed, that parents discriminate 578
between their older children and their younger children, especially between the oldest and the youngest. Youngest children are the favourites, upon whom they lavish all their tenderness when they have long ceased to make a show of affection for the older children. A man's or a woman's last child (*bikpa'ar*) is the apple of its parent's eye. Tallensi say that a last child is always spoiled and pampered, and therefore grows up to be vain, lazy, and extravagant. Guna'ab was a man of this stamp, and his older brothers explained contemptuously that he had been their mother's *bikpa'ar* and they had been unable to discipline him after their father's death.

Tallensi say that a person's younger children, and in particular the youngest child, feel their dependence on their parents till the last. There is, as in so many aspects of the relations of parents and children, an element of reciprocity in this. For a man's youngest son, for instance, is still farming with him when his oldest son is farming either wholly or partly for himself—'thinking of how to feed his wife and children rather than of his parents', they often say. 'If I die to-day', men have said to me, 'do you think my oldest son will weep? Oh no; but my youngest son, he will shed bitter tears.' There is much truth in this. I have more than once seen a man's youngest son being harshly rated by an older brother for abandoning himself to grief over his father's death. Because older children no longer need their parents' care they do not inspire the same affection as young children. In the eyes of the natives, therefore, the discrimination between youngest and oldest children is a natural result of the process of upbringing. But I have heard women say, also, that a woman's love for her *bikpa'ar* is due to her seeing in him the sign of the end of her reproductive powers.

It is, however, not merely a matter of the vagaries of parental psycho- 593
logy. This discrimination runs deeply into the social structure of the 787
Tallensi. A curious but enlightening indication of this occurs with
divining (*bakologo*) shrines. When a diviner dies, the clairvoyant power
associated with his shrine sometimes passes on to one of his sons by a
process which the Tallensi think of as a kind of mystical contagion (*lɔŋ*).
The son who is selected for this privilege is always a younger son. There 593
is more sympathy between father and younger son than between father 765
and oldest son. But the best indication of this is found at funeral cere-
monies, where the oldest and the youngest children of the deceased 578
have distinctive mourning duties. The oldest son and oldest daughter,

128 'patterns of behaviour', hence they neglect or slur over variations, and sometimes indeed build whole theories on a single occurrence. For most problems of social anthropology variations are of minor importance as compared with the 'typical', and an all-round knowledge of a culture is a sufficient check of typicality. For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost 158 importance. For example, the first case of thumb-sucking I observed was that of a girl infant 3–4 years old whose mother had recently died. Could it be assumed that this was a clear-cut instance of the thumb being substituted for the nipple? Some time later I came across another little girl, about the same age, thumb-sucking, but her mother was alive and she was not yet fully weaned. Further observation brought a few more cases of this habit to light, but it is so infrequent among Tale children that a single year's observation does not yield sufficient instances to suggest any correlation.

Generally speaking, therefore, small samples form the basis of the observations recorded in this paper. Where norms of development are implied it will be understood that an appreciable, though indeterminable, variability exists.

III. Social Sphere of the Tale Child

● 184 155 The process of education among the Tallensi, as among a great many other African peoples of analogous culture, is intelligible when it is recognized that the social sphere of adult and child[1] is unitary and undivided. In our own society the child's feeling and thinking and acting takes place largely in relation to a reality—to aims, responsibilities, compulsions, material objects and persons, and so forth—which differs completely from that of the adult, though sometimes overlapping it. This dichotomy is not only expressed in our customs, it comes out also in the psychological reactions which mark the indivi-

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[1] I am aware that the unqualified manner in which this proposition is formulated here invites the immediate objection that it cannot possibly hold for the new-born infant, or even for the child who is inarticulate and does not yet walk or crawl. I would suggest in answer that it is impossible empirically to observe the point at which the child's affective orientation to its cultural environment first receives its bias; and also, that recent psychology and anthropology would support me in attaching basic importance to the earliest infantile responses of a child as determinants of later interests.

dual's transition from the child's world to the adult's—e.g. the so-called 184
negative phase or adolescent instability which has been alleged 155
to be universal in our society.[1] It is unknown in Tale society.[2] As
between adults and children, in Tale society, the social sphere is
differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. All participate in the
same culture, the same round of life, but in varying degrees, corresponding
to the stage of physical and mental development. Nothing
in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children or barred
to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure,
of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system. Psychological
effects of fundamental importance for Tale education follow
from this. For it means that the child is from the beginning oriented
towards the same reality as its parents and has the same physical and
social material upon which to direct its cognitive and instinctual
endowment. The interests, motives, and purposes of children are
identical with those of adults, but at a simpler level of organization.
Hence the children need not be coerced to take a share in economic
and social activities. They are eager to do so. This does not mean
that Tale children are altogether passive in the hands of their parents.
Temperamental idiosyncrasies in children strike the observer at a
glance. Tantrums, disobedience, destructiveness, and other aggressive
outbursts occur sometimes. Among youths and adults misfits and
incompetents can be found. But even they live for the same ends and
have the same objective values and interests as the majority.

The unity of the social sphere is the more marked in Tale society 184
since they have almost no social stratification within a genealogical 565
or local community. There are no class or rank cleavages, nor highly
organized and exclusive economic, political, or ritual associations
cutting across the local, genealogical segmentation; and the social
division of labour is rudimentary. The pattern of existence is the
same for all members of a given community, varying only in texture
or tone from individual to individual. The social sphere is differentiated 184
only as between communities which are generally localized clans 565
or lineages. Thus, the blacksmith lineage of Sakpee is unique, as 326
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[1] See G. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 429-32, for a critical discussion of this question.

[2] Cf. also Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[784] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

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243 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

● 184 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In
867 the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of
463 Puvələmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tale lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvələmra.

592 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period
622 of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members
861 of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them —may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

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867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

or passed adolescence, have a wider range of direct contacts with the social structure and their culture than their less privileged contemporaries. In Taleland, it is true, these differences tend to get smoothed out in the course of a person's lifetime owing to the uniformity of the culture and the homogeneity and cohesion of the social structure. Every lineage or clan member is at home in the house of the head, and important affairs are never discussed unless every branch of the grouping is represented. Again, eldership and office circulate from sublineage to sublineage, and the classificatory kinship system spreads the range of identification between the units of the structure widely. Nevertheless, the differential influence of this factor is significant from the educational point of view since our emphasis is on the stage of an individual's life-history at which it operates. The effects are strikingly observable both at the time it is operating and especially in the character of the mature man or woman. An amusing instance of the former is the following: Deɔmzeet of Puhug was elected elder under somewhat dramatic circumstances. Next morning, near his homestead I met his small grandsons of about 6–7 years old. Quite spontaneously they started telling me the story of the exciting events of the past two or three days, obviously repeating the talk that they had heard and only half understood in the family circle. They told me what the other elders had said and what the chief had said and how Deɔmzeet had summoned a diviner to consult. 'Deɔmzeet is the father of all of us,' said one of them, 'and he has a big farm.' They ran off to show me the boundaries of the farm he had recently inherited as head of the sublineage. As we passed the family graves they pointed out, solemnly, the tomb of Deɔmzeet's predecessor, who had no doubt been frequently referred to in the last few days. These were all matters which would normally not have occurred within the purview of children of their age. 184- 867

Instances of the effect on his adult character of such an expansion of an individual's social space during his youth were so numerous as to suggest a general rule. I always found that, allowing for variation in ability and personality, men whose fathers had been elders or office-holders at a time when they themselves were old enough to take an interest in public affairs as spectators or participants were better informed than the average person, and tended to assume the lead in

184 social and ritual activities. The natives themselves recognize this.
867 It often happens that a man who has not had the advantage of such a training succeeds to eldership or office and has to depend upon the advice and assistance of younger men who have been more fortunate in this respect

IV. THE DYNAMIC CHARACTERS OF TALE EDUCATION

121 Learning and teaching proceeds within the structural framework and subject to the cultural conceptions outlined in the preceding pages. We must now investigate its dynamic characters. The educational development of a Tale child may be regarded as the gradual acquisition of an ensemble of *interests*, *observances* and *skills*. What these are and how they are acquired constitutes our next inquiry. It is basically a psychological problem, tantamount, up to a point, to analysing the observations already recorded at a different level of behaviour.

An exhaustive investigation will not be attempted in this paper. The detailed exposition of Tale child psychology which should be the foundation of such an investigation cannot be undertaken here, nor would it be practicable to try to follow out the complex pattern of Tale education in all its ramifications in a limited space. I propose, therefore, to discuss only a few of the major trends and significant processes. Learning and teaching is a composite process, a network of interacting factors. For the purpose of analysis it will be necessary to isolate some of the variables, but it will have to be borne in mind that in the actual life-history of a Tale man or woman they occur only in interaction with one another and with numerous others.

The determinants of social behaviour. From the genetic point of view social behaviour is determined by four groups of factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural. If we observe a child learning to walk, we can easily distinguish these factors. It cannot start walking until it has reached a certain degree of physiological maturity. As it practises it learns to plan its efforts so as to avoid falls or trying to accomplish too much at a time—a psychological achievement, depending partly on its level of intelligence. Again, a child learns to walk in response, partly, to stimulation, encouragement and even training given by some or all of the people who come

184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

621 622 793 Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

784 184 Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784
agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again
may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth 184
is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are
traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the
Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance
of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective
communities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425]
over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows,
dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious
practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778]
(tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a
group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186
political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and
Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764
vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every
funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at
the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism
is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group
superciliously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are
his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793
barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable
disjunction. The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. 622
Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual
and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can
directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis
or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug
Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the
traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension
exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of
the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own
aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who
received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos.
The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is
inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the
Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of
making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo
Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of [432]
Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1]
Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by [578]
inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and
are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels
over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance
that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he
was deprived of.

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of 578
competition both between individuals and between corporate groups.
This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction 583
of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition
against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman,
kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that
such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days,
to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable,
to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is
an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically
unconnected clans have no direct common interests.

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict 691
between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per
cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with 185 ●
wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing 578
for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude
about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive
or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is
not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole
means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation
and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common
interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common
interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only
their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all
of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent
importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the
levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering
in this chapter.

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much 581
scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, 595
whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus
robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally 622
prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually
and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they
may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.
[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔɣalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361 or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with 103 scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a population 161 of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174 habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrəg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101 sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186 the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tenzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tenzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔməra Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔɣaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔɣaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamɔləg and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔməra ŋamoorət*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalɔg, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbəra Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət*.)[1]

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[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

101 The Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari people, however, do not accept this classifica-
184 tion, which expresses the orientation of Tɛnzugu, without qualifications.
186 The former admit their close territorial and political assimilation to
Tongo, but they insist on their cultural distinctness, associating themselves, in this respect, with the Hill Talis. They quote in support other discriminatory indices than the Great Festivals. Firstly, like all the Talis, they do not have the avoidances of the first-born children distinctive of all Namoos (see below, Chap. V). On the contrary, all people of Zubiuŋ descent avoid eating tortoise (*pakur*), turtle (*mieŋ*), and cat (*sakoo*), the first two of which are also taboo to most of the Hill Talis. Secondly, they cite their mortuary and funeral ritual, the two points of crucial divergence being that they, like most of the Talis, dress the dead in a loin cover of sheepskin (*suona pɛhug*), whereas the Namoos use a goatskin (*suona buu*); and that to conclude a funeral they *ŋma ma'ala* with the sacrifice of many fowls, whereas the Namoos *ŋma wɔɣar*—a totally different rite in which weapons and household utensils are offered to the departed spirit. Finally, Zubiuŋ people say: '*Tam dira tɛndaan, ti pu diit naam la*—We (like all Talis) have (lit. eat) the tɛndaanaship (i.e. the ritual office of Custodian of the Earth), we do not have the chiefship (like the Namoos).'

The Ba'ari people, with the added self-assurance due to their political independence of Tongo, declare themselves to be Talis on the same grounds, though their totemic avoidances differ from those of the hill folk. As a clinching argument they point out that the Great Festivals celebrated by the Talis form part of a cycle inaugurated by the senior Ba'ari tɛndaana.

Tongo shares the views of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari about their relationship to the Talis. Very often at a Zubiuŋ funeral I could not help being amused at the behaviour of Tongo visitors. Close neighbours though they are of Zubiuŋ with which they have, individually, innumerable ties of cognatic and affinal kinship, they always adopted a posture in keeping with this structural cleavage. They would sit all together, at a little distance from the spot where the rites were in progress, punctiliously preserving an appearance of indifference, as befits outsiders. At the same time, Tongo people emphasize their specially close local and political ties with their immediate neighbours which mark the latter off from the Hill Talis in certain respects. Similar distinctions are made in the Sie district. A Tongo, Ba'ari, or Tɛnzugu man bound for Sie or Datɔk says, 'I am going to Nabrug (the country of the Namnam)', unless it is necessary to be more precise. The people of Sie and a number of the neighbouring settlements are Namoos; yet talking about farming they say: 'The Talis always sow first and then we follow'—referring thus to all the settlements south-west of Zoo. But when they are discussing war or marriage, ritual or chiefship, they distinguish between Tongo and Zoo on the one hand—*ti mabiis*, our brethren—and the real Talis on the other. At Duusi and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ dwell the senior tɛndaanas of the district, whose social and ritual status is identical with that of the tɛndaanas of the Tongo district. 'Taləŋ' in contraposition to themselves means essentially someone from the vicinity

[000] Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, No. 4.

of the Tong Hills; yet 'we and the Talis are one' they maintain. In proof 101
of this they point out that their *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət* Festival belongs to the same 186
cycle as *Da'a* and *Bɔyaraam*, though they have but the vaguest hearsay 184
knowledge of the esoteric ritual of these festivals. Their neighbours at Sie and Datɔk they call Namoos.

Note: For convenience of exposition we shall adopt the following con- 128
vention in this book. Whenever we speak of all the inhabitants of Taleland, irrespective of their internal subdivisions, we shall use the name given to them by other outsiders and speak of them as *Tallensi*. When we wish to refer to that section of the Tallensi whom they themselves describe as the 'real Talis', we shall refer to them as *Talis*, distinguishing among them, when necessary, between the *Hill Talis*, who live on and around the Tong Hills, and the Talis of the Plain, who live nearer Tongo (i.e. Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Ba'ari, Yaɣazuor).

Nomenclature and the Structural Scheme

This nomenclature reflects a structural scheme of considerable com- 184
plexity. It points to institutional allegiances which segregate adjacent social units from each other and group together spatially dispersed units. The major cleavage it reveals is that between the Namoo communities, on the one hand, and the settlements of the real Talis and of those who claim to be akin to them, on the other. But it indicates, also, that there are other lines of division and bonds of union both within each major grouping and cutting across the cleavage. It is a cardinal principle of Tale social structure that every social grouping defined as a unit in one situation, or according to one principle, dissolves into an association of lesser and differentiated units in another situation or according to another principle. Variation in custom or in ideological emphasis is regarded by the natives as one of the most significant indices of group differentiation. It is also, as we shall see, an important factor of social integration.

It is therefore a topic of perennial interest to the natives to observe and comment on variations of usage and doctrine. The idea that identity of custom and belief is desirable or natural is inconceivable. Everybody adheres staunchly to the forms of social behaviour accepted in his own group without desiring to impose them on others. 'Look at the Namoos,' observed Ta'aŋ one day, 'don't they (i.e. different sections of the same clan) do different things at funeral ceremonies? But their use of a goat (in mortuary rites), that is all one. We Talis, again, using our sheep (in mortuary rites)—this is the same for all of us. But as for our ritual, we split up and do different things.' Each one with his father's ways, everyone with his ancestor's ways (*Sɔ mi u ba yɛl, sɔ mi u yaab yɛl*)—that is, every group has its distinctive ancestral customs—is a characteristic Tale aphorism. This attitude, emphasizing simultaneously community and differentiation, similarity of pattern, and divergence of detail, permeates Tale thought.

Myths of Origin

Whenever Tallensi discuss the cleavages in their society they trace 173

773 the fowl, the man merely said, 'The fowl is thirsty'. Thus his wife knew that people had been deceiving her and she remained with him. Afterwards she bore a daughter, and vowed solemnly that her child should never eat fowl. Later a son followed, and the man declared that the boy too must refrain from eating fowl. That is why the first-born son and first-born daughter of all Namoos have the fowl avoidance; but later children may eat it, for if they, too, were prohibited, who would consume the fowls which men sacrifice to their ancestors?

771 If we bear in mind the enormous importance Tallensi attach to marriage and progeny, we can sympathize with the respect they pay to the common domestic fowl in return for this apparently trivial benefit conferred on their ancestor. Of course nobody knows or cares who this ancestor was, but it would not occur to anybody to doubt the truth of this tale. Every day some animal, domestic or wild, becomes a shrine (*bayər*), the symbol and medium of contact with the ancestor spirits, to some person or another in every Tale settlement; and the occasion of this ritual transformation of a commonplace creature is always a piece of good or ill fortune associated with it. Nor would the fact, admittedly contrary to ordinary experience, that a fowl broke into speech, disconcert the natives. They see no need for explaining away such incongruities, either by invoking the supernatural or by referring it to a fabulous age when animals possessed the power of speech. 'That is the story', they declare, and that is enough for them; as we might say, it fits in with the logic of the myth.

● 186 This casual attitude to the myth is due to the fact that the natives attach little importance to it in comparison with the observance it seeks to explain. For the myth is simply a formulation of the idea that the fowl taboo is the fundamental symbol of the social definition of Namoos. Everywhere within the social ambit of the Tallensi, and at all times, Namoos are those who are subject to distinctive ritual and moral restrictions in virtue of their agnatic descent; and amongst these the fowl taboo is crucial. That is how others think of Namoos, and that is how they themselves visualize their social identity. Through these observances the individual identifies himself in thought and feeling with the fraternity of clans of which his own is a part and, what is of equal significance, with the dead but still regnant forebears.

The anonymity of the ancestor in the myth shows that he stands for the prototype of all the ancestors who must necessarily have gone before in order that the present generation of men should exist, and to whom the living owe their whole social order. It is a notion entirely in keeping with the ideas underlying the kinship system of the Tallensi. But for the intervention of the fowl, says the myth, the Namoo stock might never have come into existence; and the taboo which commemorates that event came into being with the birth of their stock, which was at the same time the birth of their role in society. All Namoos, it must be remembered, are concerned with their totemic observances; for those who are themselves exempt from them have this privilege only because they are the brothers or sisters of individuals who are compelled to observe them.

577 The fowl taboo and the ritual observances associated with it symbolize

In marked contrast is the average person's ignorance of settlements, 823 even near at hand, with which his clan has no close social bonds or with which he has no personal links of kinship or friendship. Tallensi acquire their knowledge of geography and natural history gradually in childhood, by direct experience. It is already well established by the age of 9 or 10, and grows *pari passu* with the expansion of the child's social space. The basis of this is the child's natal settlement, where, except for occasional visits to kinsfolk elsewhere, it spends its entire childhood. But even adults had little liberty of movement in the past, since they could hardly go unmolested in settlements unrelated to theirs by clanship or political ties or where they had no kinsfolk. Most of the older people have never [484] been outside Taleland, and many of them have never, or only rarely, visited some of the settlements within an hour's walk of their own.

A Talɔŋ inevitably has a profound emotional attachment to his native 186 settlement. It is striking how many Tale emigrants return home eventually after years of absence, casting aside the flesh-pots of Ashanti or the rich fields of Mampurugu. '*Kpala m-mah*—Here it is pleasant', they say, in spite of the penury of existence; for here are your kith and kin, here is the scene of your childhood joys and sorrows, and above all, the abode of your forefathers. The Talɔŋ's empirical knowledge of his habitat is the precipitate in his thought and experience of the economic and structural facts that determine the local fixity of his native settlement. His affective attachment to it finds an institutionalized expression and support in the ancestor cult.

Settlement Boundaries

The hub of Taleland is Tongo (see map on p. 15). This ancient 621 settlement, geographically central and politically nodal in the network of interclan relations, provides a very good model of the structure of a typical Tale settlement.

As we know, the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis live in such close spatial 101 and social propinquity with Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and Zoo that these clans are 621 often spoken of collectively as 'the people of Tongo (Tɔŋdɛm)'. For precision, Tongo proper is referred to as Tɔŋ-Nayiri—the Chief's House of Tongo—all over Taleland. Throughout the Mole-Dagbane-speaking region clans which hold a chiefship are thus identified by reference to it. Those which have tɛndaanas are sometimes called Tɛndaaŋ, on the same principle. Thus outsiders distinguish between Sie-Nayiri and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ.

Tɔŋ-Nayiri, Tongo proper, forms an irregular block of homesteads, 101 somewhat less than three square miles in area and is one of the largest 161 settlements in Taleland. It comprised, in 1934, 192 homesteads and a 621 total population of about 2,400.[1] This does not include Tongo people

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[1] Calculations, based on my own census samples and on figures kindly supplied to me by the A.D.C. Zuarungu, show that in Taleland the average number of people of both sexes and all ages occupying a homestead is 12 to 14. Owing to the variation in the constitution of homesteads this figure must be accepted with reserve; but it is sufficient for a rough estimate of population in a country where accurate statistics do not exist.

578 acts as peacemaker. But in principle they go back to the same facts as
general wars, the structural differentiation of maximal lineages and clans.

We can see that Tale wars were in fact a kind of intestine feud within
a single homogeneous social region, rather than wars in our sense. We
have refrained from calling them feuds because they were usually short
and sharp and never led to a long series of mutual reprisals. If one war
was followed a year later by a war of revenge, as in the instance given
[669] in this chapter, that was the end of it. One might even describe them as a
kind of civil war, since they sprang from the cleavages inherent in the
social structure, particularly the cleavage between Namoos and non-
Namoos. They served to keep these cleavages alive, to defend the
corporate unity of the maximal lineage and clan and the corporate rights
associated with it, against other like units. They were, at bottom, a
mechanism for resolving tensions within the society[1] and not an instrument
of political action against outsiders. The ever-present possibility
of war was a potent factor in maintaining the segmentary structure of the
society. It achieved this by enhancing to the utmost both aspects of the
social differentiation of maximal lineages and clans—the demarcation of
unit from unit by genealogical and local criteria, and the corporate
solidarity of each unit in its own right. However much the Tallensi
578 deplored bloodshed among them, as in civilized nations, in warfare all
186 personal interests were subordinated to the common interest of the clan
or maximal lineage, whether its cause was just or not. All normal
activities were suspended and every man, woman, and adolescent child
took some part in the fighting or in caring for the wants of the fighters.
Clan patriotism reached a pitch of fervour which no other occasion could
evoke. It was felt as passionately by the women and girls carrying water
to the fighters and dragging the wounded away, and by the old men at
home who tended the wounded and went around from shrine to shrine
making sacrifices to the ancestors, as by the fighting men. Something of
this spirit comes out to-day in the inaugural ceremonies of an important
elder's funeral, when the whole clan turns out for a pageant mimicking
the activities of war.

578 Yet there was never any danger of wars or smaller fights breaking the
182 society up into a number of anarchic fragments. They were inhibited
from doing so by the countervailing influence of the strong social ties
between traditionally hostile groups. Indeed their very occurrence
[728] stimulated the reassertion of the overriding common interests of the
society and the reaffirmation of the bonds of unity between the factions.
In a war between Namoos and non-Namoos peace had to be made
quickly and the *status quo ante* restored because the two groups are so
closely interconnected by ties of marriage and kinship that the majority
of members of one group have bonds of duty, affection, and mutual
interest with members of the other; because they are such close neighbours;
above all, because they are bound together by ties of politico-

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[1] These tensions persist, though they are kept well in check by fear of the British Administration. The new judicial system provides a safety valve to some extent; but they break through, chiefly in the form of political intrigue, as we shall see in the next section.

Early one morning I met Baripɛta. His hoe on one shoulder, and a chicken coop suspended from the other, showed that he was bound for his bush farm. But he was not taking the path that led there. I asked him where he was going. 'Oh', he said, 'I am going to congratulate Tinta'alɔm on his succession to their lineage *bɔyar*. He and I are both Yinduuri *ahɔs* and so his good fortune naturally makes me happy.' 602

The result of this overlapping of the fields of extra-clan kinship of adjacent clans is that these ties are interwoven to form an elaborate mesh, parallel, on the level of individual relationships, to the mesh of clanship on the level of corporate group relationships.[1] Hence the native thinks of his matrilateral kinship bonds as linking him to such-and-such a person of a different clan, who is himself linked similarly to someone in yet another clan, and so on to the limits of his social horizon. Nor are these connexions confined to Taleland. [186] Tallensi often emphasize their cultural and social distinction from Gɔrisi, Builsa, Namnam, and other neighbouring peoples. But they are quite likely to end a discourse on this theme by saying, 'However, our kinsfolk are among them (*ka ti dɔyam le bɛ nɛŋha*)'.

It must be remembered, though, that most of these ties are only potential for a person for most of his life. He does not, as a rule, know of his more remote extra-clan kinsfolk until they become relevant for him on some special ritual occasion. This may happen once or twice in a lifetime. But when the need arises he can always trace them by following out (*tumh*) his kinship ties step by step, as we shall see presently. On account of this, and of the complex interweaving of these kinship ties, it is a common thing for individuals to be connected by more than one route, or to be distant kin without knowing it. Thus when I asked Puɛŋyii why he had formerly attached himself to the Gɔlibdaana, whom he now professed to regard as the arch-enemy, his answer was 'because we are kin (*ti a dɔyam la zugu*)'. He went on to explain that, firstly, the Gɔlibdaana was a distant 'sister's son' of his (Puɛŋyii's) inner lineage, and, secondly, he and the Gɔlibdaana 'both come from Gorogo' on the maternal side. Puɛŋyii's mother's mother and the Gɔlibdaana's mother were both daughters of the same inner lineage of Gorogo. 'If my mother's mother's brother's (*ma ahɔb*) people make a sacrifice to their lineage *bɔyar*, the Gɔlibdaana and I both go to it', he said. This is a simple instance. More complicated multiple relationships are very common, cases in which, as the natives put it, 'they have begotten each other (*ba dɔya taaba*)'. That is to say, two persons may be related in such a way that by one route A calls himself a 'sister's son' of B and by another reckoning the relationship is reversed. The relationship of Puɛŋyii and the Gɔlibdaana can, in fact, be interpreted in this way. Identifying himself with his inner lineage, Puɛŋyii can say, 'I have begotten the Gɔlibdaana'—since the Gɔlibdaana looks upon

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. iv, v, vi.

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 942
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pɔkg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

871 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descendants.
[186] Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system,
and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a significant
181 motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from
their ancestor cult. Every Talaŋa desires sons so that there may be
some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his
death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every
man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both
physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and
their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass
on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son,
a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on
a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not
merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious
duty to their ancestors.

781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of
the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children.
It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be
visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation.
Last year, for instance, Kuwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to
expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations
ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also
869 frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once
861 observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors
828 (*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor
shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these
conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing
some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of
about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,'
he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any
one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will
take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?'
When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about
religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

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[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784
agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again 184
may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth
is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are
traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the
Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance
of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities.
So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425]
over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows,
dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious
practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778]
(tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a
group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186
political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and
Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764
vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every
funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at
the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism
is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously
or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are
his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793
barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction.
The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. 622
Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual
and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can
directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis
or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug
Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional
enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension
exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of
the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own
aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received
and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos.
The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is
inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the
Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of
making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship,
that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF 'TALLENSI'

Tribal Divisions

101 TALELAND is, as we have seen, merely a portion of a far greater, ecologically uniform region, marked off only by an artificial boundary. The same kind of subsistence farming is practised throughout the whole region of which Taleland forms a part. The culture of its inhabitants likewise represents a far more widely spread type. Before we embark on our sociological analysis we must know what sort of a unit we are dealing with. Have the people of Taleland any form of cultural or structural unity and singularity that differentiates them from neighbouring sociogeographical areas? Or are they a fraction of a greater society arbitrarily circumscribed to suit the convenience of the field worker?

101 619 The question is not so easy to answer as might be expected. For the natives of Taleland, like the other so-called 'tribes' north of the Gambaga scarp, have no obvious political unity distinguishing them from like political units. In terms of their own political and social organization there is no single government exercising authority over all the people of Taleland, and only over them, within their own defined territory. This has been the most serious obstacle confronting British administration in this area.[1] We must approach the problem from a different angle.

197 101 In the literature and in administrative practice the inhabitants of Taleland are called the Tallensi[2] and are distinguished as a 'tribe' from neighbouring 'tribes', the Kusaasi on the east, the Namnam or Nabdam on the north, the Nankansi or Gorənsi (in Talni, *Gɔrisi*) on the west, the Mamprusi on the south of them. All these groups speak dialects of Mole-Dagbane. But Kusal, Nabte, and Gɔrni are closely akin to Mole, whereas Talni and Mampurule have closer affinities with Dagbane. These dialect areas have no strict boundaries. At the frontiers one passes through [191] intermediate zones where the people speak intermediate dialects or are equally familiar with two contiguous dialects. But it is clearly recognized, both by the natives and by outside observers, that the tribes enumerated above have more in common with one another linguistically than any of them have with the peoples of the same cultural type farther away, such as the Woolisi (usually called the Kassena in the literature and by the

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[1] For an outline of Tale political organization and a discussion of some of the theoretical problems raised by it, see *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Oxford, 1940.

[2] *Sc.* Talense (Rattray), Talansi (Cardinall), sing. Talenga, Talanga. This form, correctly Talɔnsi, sing. Talɔŋa, is taken from the dialect of the Zuarungu district (Gorəni, or in the dialect of the Tallensi, Gɔrni). The artificial spelling I use has been adopted to show that the Tallensi regard this phonetic form as a foreigners' version of the name by which they designate themselves. In their own dialect (Talni) they call themselves Talis, sing. Talɔŋa. Talni forms will henceforth be used for all vernacular words in the text.

[p. 14]

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619
to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101
reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are
identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621
This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101
the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648
is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be
quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101
settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gɔrni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common.
The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191]
Gɔrni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with
Gɔris. Gɔrni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197]
them and their Gɔre neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101
The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609
Gɔrəŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, pro-
pinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101
is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613
and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621
on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778
tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding
ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes [557]
possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But
many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive
the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members
stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors,
Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabər. When Deemzeet formally became
the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other
shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage
zanɔr. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [423]
by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership
of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding
the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the
hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie
there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social
purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head
actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of
the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the
lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [104]
organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits 613
on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 621
life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 602
and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day,
and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies [191] ●
are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*,
house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be
translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

significance. From childhood on a person's relation to the economic 861
system is chiefly determined by sex. In the kinship system sex operates as a differentiating factor from an equally early age, from the time, in fact, when a child learns to designate like-sex siblings by different terms from opposite-sex siblings. Local, lineage, or family institutions also act as differentiating factors, though not in the same way. This is a consequence in part of the peculiarities of Tale political structure. Local groupings, clans and lineages are asymmetrically linked *inter se* 621
and with communities outside the Tale area proper by political, genealogical, 648
territorial, or ritual ties. The most striking case of this sort is presented by the Hill Talis who have immemorial ritual links with villages and genealogical groups among Dagomba, Mamprussi, Bulisi (Builsa), Woolisi (Kassena), Mossi, and other neighbouring peoples. Each of the Hill communities has its exclusive associates in these foreign areas. The people of Sii were traditionally associated with the Bulisi, the people of Gorogo with the Woolisi, the Kpata'ar clan with certain villages of Black Dagomba, and so forth. There was in former times, and is even more so now, a constant traffic between the Tong Hills and the outside areas linked with the clans dwelling there—pilgrims coming to the Fertility Shrines in the Hills and Talis paying ceremonial visits to their associates. But the economic and political by-products of this traffic were most important. In this way a range of geographical and social contacts was, and is, available to a member of the Hill clans which no Namoos had, and among the Hill clans themselves the actual contacts varied from clan to clan. The Namoos again have their traditional political associates among the Mamprussi. It is especially interesting to note that the Mamprussi associates of the Hill Talis and the Mamprussi associates of the Namoos belonged to a single political structure; yet the latter would not, a generation ago, have hesitated to overpower and enslave any Hill Talis they encountered defenceless.

Factors of this sort become significant only after adolescence and 574
more so in the life of men than of women; but they are operative even 191
in childhood. The Black Dagomba guests at a Kpata'ar elder's homestead are familiar figures to his children; and one sign of the interest taken in them by the children is the fact that most Kpata'ar youths understand and easily speak the dialect of the Black Dagomba, whereas other Tallensi do not.

sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When 592
his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every 341
morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for
stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or [778
two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in
the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the 192] •
alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something
untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is
needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the 341
cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihɔr*) of the
Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore 778
obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu
all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth
shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout.
This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many
details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and 341
condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and 554
experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gɔlibdaana of
Tɛnzugu and the Yikpɛmdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular 592
room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White
Fathers' Mission at Bolɔga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom,
and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious,
upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly
dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate
and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became
established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious
innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance.
The Tɔŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy
men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration,
but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not
require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are
built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door
fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very
hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with
one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad
a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been
in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. 592
A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or
lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense 356
relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing
like Yɛlnaar of Tɔŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his
neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

573 577 even mother and daughter, and hence, perhaps, Tallensi do not have such a definite conventional rationalization of their attitudes towards the mother. They say you respect your mother and cherish her in old age because she bore and fed you. In childhood you were more attached to her than to your father; you ran to her whenever you were tired or hungry or ill and she comforted and fed you; as an adult you realize the importance of 'father's begetting' (*ba-dɔyam*) in jural, ritual, and economic matters such as marriage or landowning, and in crises like sickness or death; but your mother is still honoured as the centre of your domestic arrangements if you are a man, and if you are a woman, she is the one person you can always come to in sickness or trouble, in the certainty of loving attention. Comfort, emotional security, and food—these are the distinguishing qualities of a mother in Tale thought. It corresponds to the more personal character of the bonds between mother and child, by contrast with the jurally and ritually weighted ties with the father.

769 577 Tallensi say that one must respect one's living parents; but to one's dead parents one owes reverence and submission in surpassing degree. That is what the proverb 'Fear the dead and do not fear the living' means to them.[1] One can defy a living parent sometimes and rely on being forgiven; one cannot defy a dead parent. One can live without the help of a living parent, if necessary, but not without the mystical protection of one's dead parents.

769 577 167 In the religious practice of the Tallensi the ancestors exercise their powers without compunction. They punish and slay as arbitrarily as they bless. Every dry season men return to rebuild their parental homes which have been allowed to lie in decay for many years. They come from Mampurugu, from outlying parts of Taleland, or from Ashanti and the Colony. Some have been away for years. Pal of Zubiuŋ had a prosperous farm in Mampurugu, where he had gone to settle on being discharged from the regiment after the war of 1914–18. During his fifteen years in Mampurugu he had become fairly wealthy, with five wives, a horse, several head of cattle, and a quantity of good clothes. Dema of Tɛnzugu, who joined the regiment as far back as 1912 and had lived in Ashanti as a trader since his discharge after the war, was obviously a man of considerable wealth by Tale standards. Both returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads in 1935–6. They told the same story. Wives and children had died; there had been repeated bouts of sickness in the family; other misfortunes had piled up over the years; and all, as the diviners declared, because they had 'rejected (*zayah*) their fathers (*banam*)' by remaining in foreign parts. It did not matter much while there were older brothers at home to 'give water (*zaŋ kuom ti*)', that is, make sacrifices, to the ancestral shrines. But

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[1] The verb *zo*, to fear, has a wide range of meaning and here it means to show respect towards, to revere, to stand in awe of. [192]

Africa, West: Calendar. **Cardinall.**

The Division of the Year among the Talansi of the Gold Coast.

47

By A. W. Cardinall.

805 Among the Talansi, a hill tribe of mixed origin living in the Northern Territories
of the Gold Coast, close to the 11th parallel North, the following divisions in the
192 year are recognised. They do not actually correspond to months or moons, but
are periods of time or seasons recognisable by all. They depend on the fall of the
rain, which is far from being regular:—

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
1. Kodo	- December to end January	- The cold season—no particular meaning to the word, which is a proper name.

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090 * Beri. The Kanuri-speaking inhabitants of Bornu are called Beriberi by Hausa and other peoples, indicating a former and very ancient connection with the Berber.

		Approximate Period.	Explanation.
805 192 [174]	2. Gunfuku	February	Gun', gunga—kapok tree. fuku—blowing of the wind. The period when the kapok pods ripen. This is evidence of the Dagomba extraction of this people, since kapok is, undoubtedly, a southern production. Their own tradition says they came from the south as a result of interfamily wars.
[527]	3. Gologu	March	This is the name of a festival which takes place shortly after full moon. In 1921 the ceremonial dancing and symbolic planting of corn, which I witnessed by good luck, took place on March 1st. In 1922 about March 13th.
	4. Sionbeo	End of March or early April	Time of early planting. Sion—making holes in which to drop the grains. beo—poor. At this time it is not certain if the dry season will not return for a period and so dry up the first shoots.
	5. Sionsongo	April and May	The time of good planting. songo—good. This is the proper planting time.
	6. Sionyio	Late May and early June	The time of late planting. yio—conveys an idea of doubt. Planting at this time may or may not have a result.
	7. Narechag	Late June and early July	Early millet harvest. Nare—early millet. chag'—cut.
	8. Nabiri	Late July, mid August	Na'—early millet. biri—small. The time for eating the small ears of early millet, which are not put in the granary owing to their smallness.
	9. Komwanrega	August–September	Kom—water. wanreg'—month or moon. The period of heavy rain.

805
192
[527
782]

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

A. W. CARDINALL.

[p.63]

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tɛndaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 778
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *teŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. [193] ●
To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed 177
on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and 796
extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to 776
attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work.
Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it
so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of
the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which
are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of
cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity,
but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which
must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally [778]
the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country
about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the
boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to
the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

'Its power is from God (*Na Yin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan*'; its 784
taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the follow- 776
ing avoidances:

(*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
(*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
(*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
(*d*) *Meya* (water turtle).
(*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
(*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
(*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la* [195]
a zia koom (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range 788
which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There 776
seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who 778
come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this
shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

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[1] It is also known as *Ya ni* and *Ya pwiga*.

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front
and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath
[195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the
back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are
cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those
who have lost their fathers.

764 'When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are
boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and
765 after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his
[314] wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then
given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of
the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its
place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which
they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit
and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is
called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge
of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral
is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is
765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He
769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is
fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the
setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the
deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of
the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[171] [1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita.*

[535 831] [2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

Kusase

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which
131 inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern
161 Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated
territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular
Kusa, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been
given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to
themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the
clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure
171 from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate
the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its
totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen
trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan
taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later
632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in
certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement'
rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following
table illustrates the above.

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614

Town.	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

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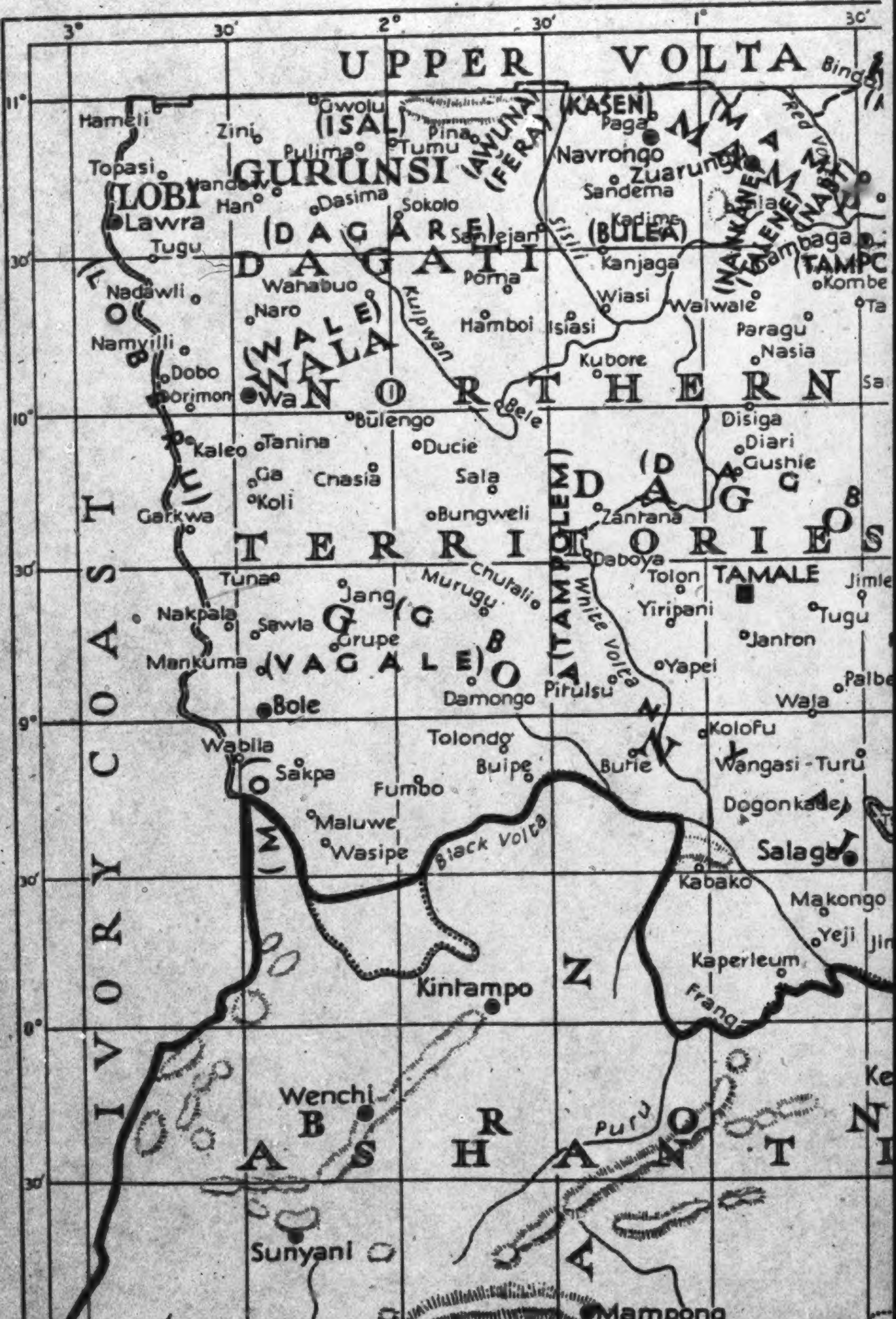
3°
30'
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10°
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9°
30'
8°
30'
7°
UPPER VOLTA
Binga
Hameli
Zini
Gwolu
(ISAL)
Pina
(AWUNA)
(FERA)
(KASEN)
Paga
Pulima
Tumu
GURUNSI
Navrongo
Topasi
Zuarungu
(LOBI)
Wandow
Han
Dasima
Sokolo
Sandema
Lawra
(DAGARE)
Kadime
Tugu
Sanfejan
(BULEA)
DAGATI
Sisili
Kanjaga
Poma
(NANKANE)
(TALENSI)
(NABT)
Bombaga
TAMPC
Kombe
Nadawli
Wahabuo
Wiasi
Walwale
Ta
Naro
Kulpwan
Hamboi
Isiasi
Paragu
Namyilli
(WALE)
WALA
Kubore
Nasia
Dobo
Dorimon
Wa
NORTHERN
Sa
Bele
Bulengo
Disiga
Kaleo
Tanina
Ducie
Diari
Ga
Cnasia
Sala
(D
Gushie
Koli
DAG
Garkwa
Bungweli
(TAMPOLEM)
Zantana
TERRITORIES
Daboya
Tuna
Chutali
Murugu
Tolon
TAMALE
Jimle
Jang
White Volta
Yiripani
Tugu
Nakpala
Sawla
(G
Janton
Grupe
Mankuma
(VAGALE)
Yapei
Palbe
Bole
Damongo
Pirulsu
Wala
Wabila
Tolondo
Kolofu
Sakpa
Buipe
Burie
Wangasi-Turu
Fumbo
Dogonkade
Maluwe
Black Volta
(M
Salaga
Wasipe
Kabako
Makongo
Yeji
Jin
Kaperleum
Kintampo
Frang
IVORY COAST
Wenchi
Ke
BRONG
ASHANTI
Puru
Sunyani
Mampong

[End map (A)] [Upper half]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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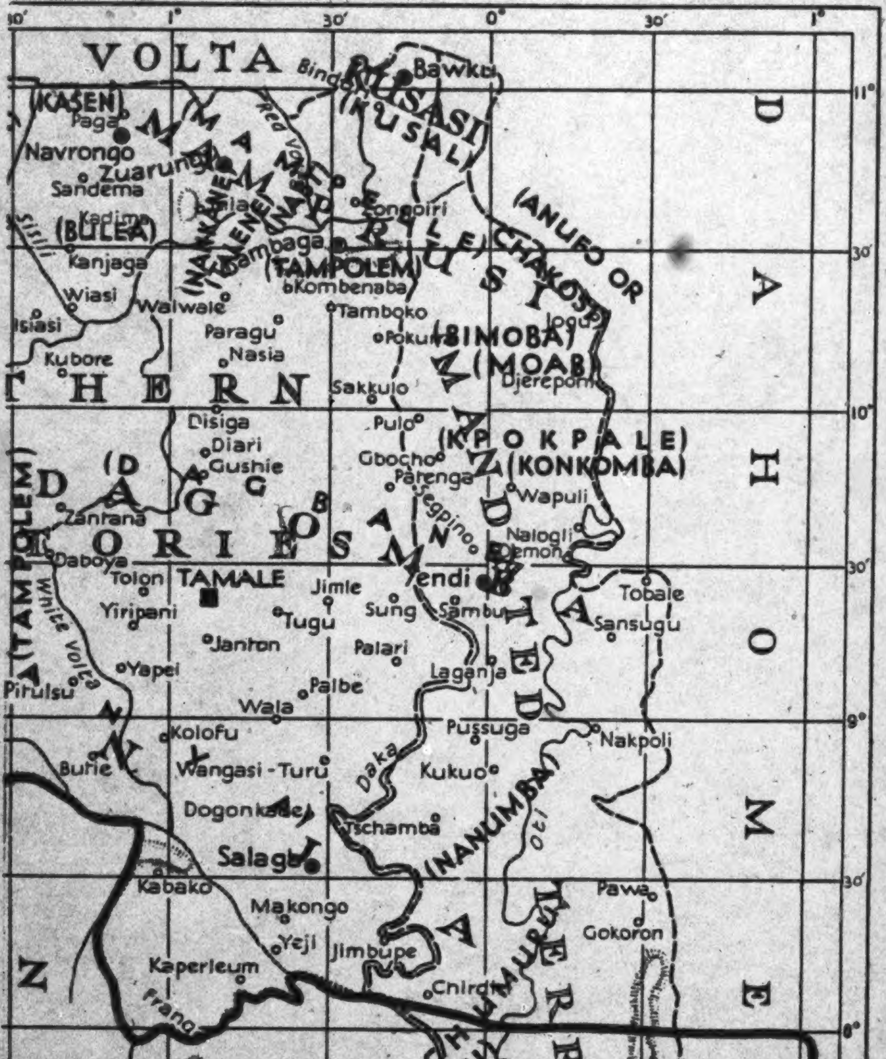

VOLTA
NORTHERN
TERRITORIES
DAHOMEY
ASHANTI
MAMPRUSI
DAGOMBA
NANUMBA
GONJA
(KASEN)
(BULEA)
(NANKANE)
(TALENE)
(TAMPOLEM)
(KUSASI)
(KUSAL)
(ANUFO OR CHAKOSI)
(BIMOBA)
(MOAB)
(KPOKPALE)
(KONKOMBA)
(DAGBANE)
(NANUMBA)
(KRACHI)
(CHUMURU)
Paga
Navrongo
Zuarungu
Sandema
Kadima
Kanjaga
Wiasi
Walwale
Isiasi
Kubore
Tongo
Bolgatanga
Zongoiri
Gambaga
Kombenaba
Tamboko
Paragu
Nasia
Pokuri
Sakkulo
Bawku
Bindori
Jogu
Djereponi
Disiga
Diari
Gushie
Pulo
Gbocho
Parenga
Wapuli
Nalogli
Demon
Zantana
Daboya
Tolon
TAMALE
Yiripani
Jimle
Tugu
Janton
Sung
Sambu
Yendi
Tobale
Sansugu
Yapei
Pirulsu
Palari
Palbe
Laganja
Wala
Pussuga
Nakpoli
Kolofu
Burie
Wangasi-Turu
Kukuo
Dogonkade
Tschamba
Salaga
Kabako
Makongo
Yeji
Jimbupe
Pawa
Gokoron
Kaperleum
Chirdi
Kete Krachi
Mampong
White Volta
Red Volta
Sisili
Daka
Oti
Volta
Frang
Puru
Tegpino
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30'
0°
30'
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11°
30'
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9°
30'
8°
30'
7°

[End map (B)] [Upper half]

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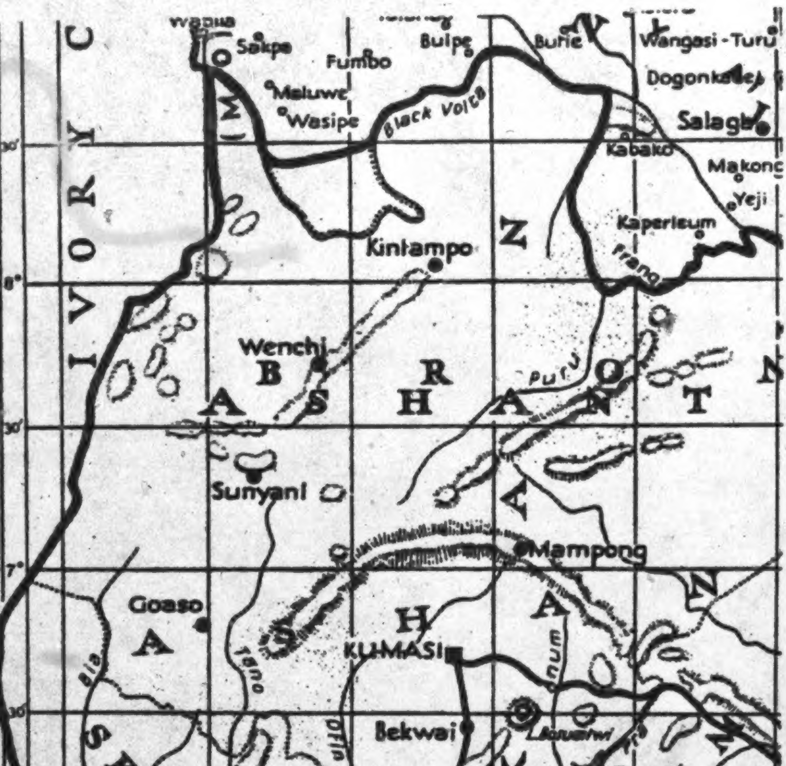
Sakpe
Fumbo
Bulpe
Burie
Wangasi-Turu
Dogonkadey
Maluwe
Wasipe
Black Volta
Salaga
Kabako
Makong
Yeji
Kaperleum
Kintampo
I V O R Y C
M O
N
Wenchi
Puru
A B R O N
A S H A N T I
Sunyani
Mampong
Goaso
A H A
KUMASI
Bia
Tano
Ofin
Anum
Bekwai
L. Bosumtwi
Obuasi
Kibi
A K I M
S E F W I
Wiawso
Dunkwa
Oda
Birim
Enchi
Nsawa
A O W I N
G O L D   C O A S T
Swedru
F A N T I
Tarkwa
N Z I M A
Ankobra
Pra
Cape Coast
AHANTA
SEKONDI
Axim
Gulf of Guinea
30'
8°
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7°
30'
6°
30'
5°
3°
30'
2°
30'
1°

TRIBAL AND LINGUISTIC MAP OF THE GO

The names within brackets, thus, (BULEA), are those by which the langu
them. They have been superimposed upon the official map published by the
indicating 'AKAN AND RELATED DIALECTS', is here reproduced as shown on the orig
our fuller knowledge, be extended to embrace GBANY

[End Map
(C)]
[Lower half]

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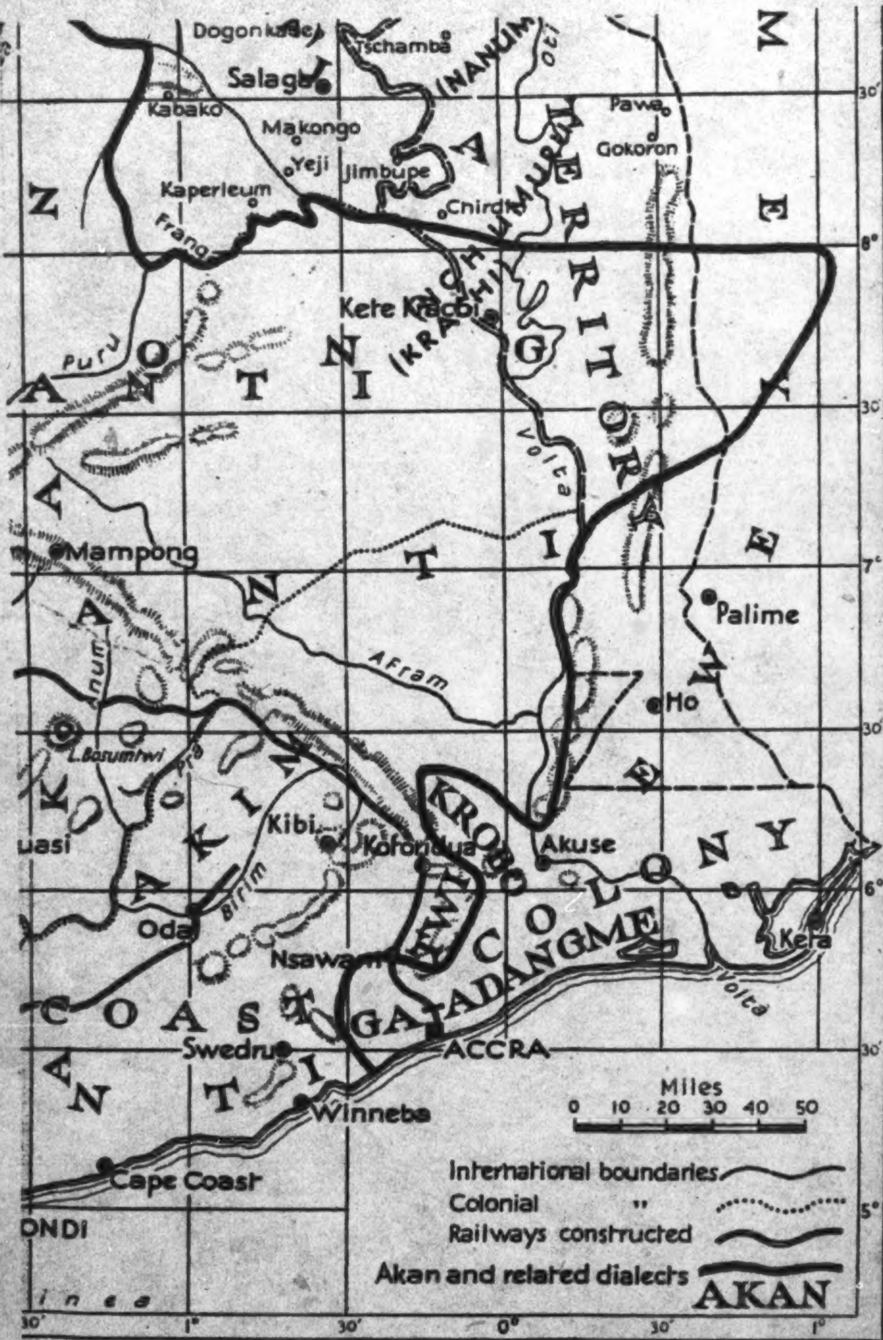
Dogonkade
Tschamba
Salaga
NANUM
Oti
Kabako
Makongo
Pawa
Gokoron
Yeji
Jimbupe
Kaperleum
Chirdi
Frang
Kete Kracbi
KRACHI
NZ
NTI
ASANTI
Puru
TERRITORY
Volta
Mampong
Palime
Afram
Ho
Anum
L. Bosumtwi
Pra
AKIM
KROBO
Kibi
Koforidua
Akuse
uasi
Birim
Oda
EWE
COLONY
GADANGME
GA
Nsawam
COAST
Kete
Swedru
ACCRA
ANTI
Winneba
Cape Coast
ONDI
inea
Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50
International boundaries
Colonial "
Railways constructed
Akan and related dialects
AKAN
30'
8°
7°
6°
5°
1°
0°

ISTIC MAP OF THE GOLD COAST COLONY

A), are those by which the languages are known to the tribes which speak
the official map published by the Survey H. Q. Accra 1927. The red line,
ere reproduced as shown on the original map, but it might now, in the light of
, be extended to embrace GBANYA and CHAKOSI.

[End MAP (D) Lower Half]

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course
of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and
perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
[361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161] periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and
densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective
491 Government control for about twenty-f[illegible] years. From the first efforts
were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a
main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district,
the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the
Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there
to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the
principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road
system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the
wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale
works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head
carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and
communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the
Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at
Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of
161 reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of
the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the
north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends
in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of
the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which
harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total
population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly
a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the
Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles,
which would imply an average population density of approximately 100
to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited
areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly
populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria.
His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting
the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2]
Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which,
the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou
in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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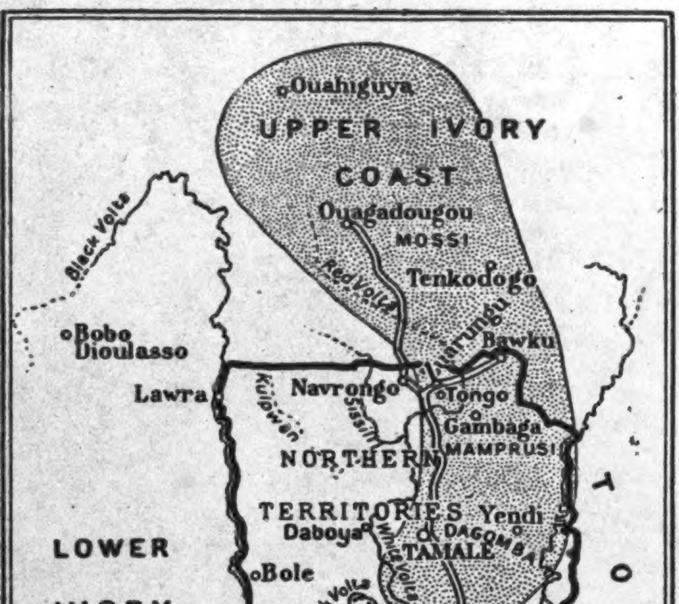

Ouahiguya
UPPER IVORY COAST
Ouagadougou
MOSSI
Red Volta
Tenkodogo
Nangodi
Black Volta
Bobo Dioulasso
Bawku
Lawra
Kulpawn
Navrongo
Sissili
Tongo
Gambaga
MAMPRUSI
NORTHERN TERRITORIES
Yendi
Daboya
White Volta
DAGOMBA
TAMALE
TOGO
LOWER IVORY COAST
Bole
Black Volta
Salaga
Volta
Oti
ASHANTI
KUMASI
GOLD COAST COLONY
ACCRA
Cape Coast
TAKORADI
Scale of Miles
0
50
100
150

BOUNDARIES OF THE GOLD COAST

The dotted portion shows the area occupied by Mole-Dagbane speaking peoples

[p. 5]

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

101 619 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

167 619 648 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes comprise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF 'TALLENSI'

Tribal Divisions

101 TALELAND is, as we have seen, merely a portion of a far greater, ecologically uniform region, marked off only by an artificial boundary. The same kind of subsistence farming is practised throughout the whole region of which Taleland forms a part. The culture of its inhabitants likewise represents a far more widely spread type. Before we embark on our sociological analysis we must know what sort of a unit we are dealing with. Have the people of Taleland any form of cultural or structural unity and singularity that differentiates them from neighbouring socio-geographical areas? Or are they a fraction of a greater society arbitrarily circumscribed to suit the convenience of the field worker?

101 619 The question is not so easy to answer as might be expected. For the natives of Taleland, like the other so-called 'tribes' north of the Gambaga scarp, have no obvious political unity distinguishing them from like political units. In terms of their own political and social organization there is no single government exercising authority over all the people of Taleland, and only over them, within their own defined territory. This has been the most serious obstacle confronting British administration in this area.[1] We must approach the problem from a different angle.

197 101 In the literature and in administrative practice the inhabitants of Taleland are called the Tallensi[2] and are distinguished as a 'tribe' from neighbouring 'tribes', the Kusaasi on the east, the Namnam or Nabdam on the north, the Nankansi or Gorɔnsi (in Talni, *Gɔrisi*) on the west, the Mamprusi on the south of them. All these groups speak dialects of Mole-Dagbane. But Kusal, Nabte, and Gɔrni are closely akin to Mole, whereas Talni and Mampurule have closer affinities with Dagbane. These dialect areas have no strict boundaries. At the frontiers one passes through [191] intermediate zones where the people speak intermediate dialects or are equally familiar with two contiguous dialects. But it is clearly recognized, both by the natives and by outside observers, that the tribes enumerated above have more in common with one another linguistically than any of them have with the peoples of the same cultural type farther away, such as the Woolisi (usually called the Kassena in the literature and by the

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[1] For an outline of Tale political organization and a discussion of some of the theoretical problems raised by it, see *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Oxford, 1940.

[2] *Sc.* Talense (Rattray), Talansi (Cardinall), sing. Talenga, Talanga. This form, correctly Talɔnsi, sing. Talɔŋa, is taken from the dialect of the Zuarungu district (Gorɔni, or in the dialect of the Tallensi, Gɔrni). The artificial spelling I use has been adopted to show that the Tallensi regard this phonetic form as a foreigners' version of the name by which they designate themselves. In their own dialect (Talni) they call themselves Talis, sing. Talɔŋa. Talni forms will henceforth be used for all vernacular words in the text.

[p. 14]

197 101 Administration) of Navrongo or the Bulisi (Builsa) of Kanjaga district, whose tongues are not intelligible to Mole or Dagbane speakers.

171 101 [304] In the same way it is well known that the Kusaasi, Namnam, Gorənsi, and Tallensi are more closely allied in culture *inter se* than they are with other neighbouring 'tribes'. In this part of West Africa one can often tell where a person comes from by his facial cicatrizations.[1] People of these four groups all have the same facial marks, a slashed scar (*bcn*) running diagonally downwards from the bridge of the nose across one or both cheeks, which are, in addition, often embellished with a neat tracery of tiny incisions (*yiis*) spreading in herring-bone lines over the forehead and down to the neck. These markings are an emblem of their cultural uniformity, as compared with neighbouring groups. Mamprusi and Mossi, frankly contemptuous of their nakedness and poverty, lump them all together under the sobriquet 'Gorənsi'. Since the coming of the white man they have been called 'the Farafaras' and they are beginning to accept this appellation, which is said to be derived from one of their customary expressions of greeting, *ni i fara-fara-fara*.

197 101 171 619 There are, in short, no precise linguistic or cultural boundaries between these four groups. Nor are there precise political or structural boundaries between them. They overlap with one another in every way; and further research would, I am certain, show that the Kusaasi, Namnam, and Gorənsi also overlap to some extent with their neighbours other than the Tallensi. At the same time, each of these four groups is considered by members of the other three and by its own members to be in some way a distinct territorial, linguistic, and cultural group. It is, however, a distinction of degree, not of kind. Each group comprises a cluster of communities which have more in common among themselves, linguistically and in the details and nuances of custom, belief, and values, than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. They have closer social ties among themselves than any of them have with their other neighbours, though they have no apparent political unity and never, in the past, combined for war against external enemies or for common defence.

619 101 621 This largely implicit feeling of their difference from neighbouring dialect areas which prevails amongst such a cluster of communities is not based on a conception of tribal unity. Sharp distinctions of custom, belief, and values, as well as of structural relationships, are recognized within the cluster. They are, indeed, of fundamental importance for the social interrelations of the communities making up the cluster. On the same principle as before, the cluster is subdivided into smaller constellations of communities which have more in common, closer bonds, *inter se*, than any of them have with other communities. Culturally, and structurally, as we shall discover in the course of our study, society in the Volta region is built up on a segmentary principle. The degree of unity, coherence, autonomy, or singularity of a socio-geographic segment of

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[1] These distinguishing facial marks were noted by the first European traveller who visited the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the Frenchman Binger. Cf. Binger, Capitaine, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, 1893, vol. ii, pp. 34–7. For diagrams of these markings see Armitage, C. H., *The Tribal Markings and Marks of Adornment of the Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1924, especially figs. 4, 6, 26.

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619
to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101
reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are
identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621
This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101
the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648
is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101
settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gɔrni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common.
The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191]
Gɔrni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with
Gɔris. Gɔrni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197]
them and their Gɔre neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101
The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609
Gɔrəŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, propinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101
is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another [183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact 876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?' 868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of 198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules [576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete 514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

understand or to be eager to understand the language of adults, and 868
no one would think of using ' baby talk ' to them. 178 ●

As normal behaviour is always expected, no one hesitates to correct 828
a child or adult who behaves inappropriately through ignorance, and 861
the correction is generally accepted with alacrity and ease. If children are allowed to be present at the activities of adults, they are assumed to be interested in and to understand what is being said and done. No one would inhibit his conversation or actions because children are present, or withhold information upon which adequate social adjustment depends from a child because it is thought to be too young. Tallensi, therefore, are not surprised at the comprehensive and accurate sexual knowledge of a 6-year-old, though direct instruction in these matters is never given. As with the ordinary skills and interests of daily life, they expect children to want to know such things. *Naawun mpaan ba*, ' Heaven teaches them ', they say, or, as we should put it, it is perfectly natural.

It is known that some people learn more quickly and accurately
than others, that variations in skill and ability exist. But the idea of [856]
precocity or retardation as a quality of a child's character has no place in Tale thought. A child may intrude on a situation where some one of his or her degree of maturity has no business to be and will be categorically dismissed then; but it would never be rated for being ' old-fashioned '. Every child is expected to be eager to know and to do as much as its social space and its stage of psycho-physical development permits. Hence, though it is clearly recognized that knowledge, skill, and capacity for social adjustment grow cumulatively, the Tallensi have no technique of isolating a skill or observance from the total reality and training a child in it according to a syllabus, as, for instance, we train children in dancing, the multiplication table,
or the catechism. Tale educational method does not include drill as [876]
a fundamental technique. It works through the situation, which is a bit of the social reality shared by adult and child alike.

The conceptions and practices we have been considering constitute 861
the significant factors in education by participation in practical tasks which is often described as the distinctive method of primitive societies and is as conspicuous in Taleland as in every other preliterate country. It may be observed that even in Western society the

Kusase

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the flocks before him', said my informant. 765 769

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies. It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years, later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters' children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations, assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302] are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765 who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768 they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out. After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765 main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837 the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle. She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783 sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness. He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan'* will come and [793] sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201] in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it. The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

621 representative capacity; they attend funerals elsewhere in Tongo only in
×618 a personal capacity as kin or affines of the bereaved family. Similarly,
when the Gbizug tɛndaana invited the men of Tongo to a collective
hoeing—an invitation to which his politico-ritual relations with Tongo
gave the weight of a command—it was to Puhug mainly that he directed
the invitation, and the elders of Puhug saw to it that their sons turned out
in full force. For, as they explained: 'We stand in awe of the Gbizug
tɛndaana, he sacrifices (to the Earth) on our behalf.' From Dekpieŋ, the
● [202] neighbours of Gbizug, came only three young men, and the other sections
merely sent messengers to convey their good wishes for a fruitful day's
work. Such ties, however, are only effective as long as amicable relationships prevail between Tongo as a whole and the particular tɛndaana's clan.

This brings us back to our starting-point: the social boundaries of Tongo. It is evident that they are largely a function of the social and political relations which each section has with its immediate neighbours, and which differ slightly from section to section.

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔyar*, 133
"river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226
river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 796
social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226
clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a
pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual per-
formance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates
the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing
of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789]
and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and
death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor
spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general
blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226
expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes
to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different
parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence
of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied
three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226
customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203
falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The
news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alter-
natively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market.
Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and
acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people
throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622]
country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed princi-
pally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief
of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226
day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children
of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or
nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush.
The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [441]
partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out
of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482]
But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

793 578 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as the Gbizug tɛndaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tɛndaana. For a short while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two tɛndaanas together again, when the Gbeog tɛndaana had to perform the principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tɛndaana. But soon afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tɛndaanas are right, they say. The Gbizug tɛndaana is going by 'what used to be (*dɛn daa a siem*)', the Gbeog tɛndaana by 'what is now (*dɛn a siem zinala*)'. It is a problem of adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be a Gbizug tɛndaana who will accept the present position. Then the two tɛndaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 x618 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co-operation and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of conduct. Yinyɛla's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members of Yinyɛla's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solidarity ● [208] as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment. The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors, concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means [769 of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in 182] which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

578 We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago [780] Gbalɔg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbalɔg went to settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father, stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo. Yet Gbalɔg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man, boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But [787] the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to 613
their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with 621
the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant 571
agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, 182
religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties 613
with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and 621
the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted, most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face communication and association in the organization of their collective life. Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by
their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the [212 ●
absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, 401
communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of 371]
Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are the most important factors in the situation.

The Section

We can return ~~now~~ to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo. 613
Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster 621
of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligər yidɛm (see above, p. 57), homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic lineage with which Ligər yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkəŋto'o yidɛm, the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son (*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A SETTLEMENT

Introduction

621 A TALE settlement is a miniature of the whole society, and reveals all the basic principles of the social structure. No two settlements are identical in topography, shape, size, or social composition; but all have the same social form, based on the same principles. Yet it is no easy task to describe a settlement as the natives see it. It cannot be isolated from neighbouring units of the same kind by inspection; for though it is locally fixed it is not territorially circumscribed. Its structure is unintelligible without reference to the lineage system, but ecological exigencies and political and ritual ties and cleavages play an important part in it as well.

361 The anatomy of a settlement appears in fullest relief during the dry
221 season. Then the homesteads stand out starkly against the dun background of bare earth or the glare of rocks and boulders piled up in red-grey masses in the hilly areas. The foot-paths winding between the homesteads scar the land as if etched into it by generations of feet. Every shade tree in front of a homestead is an inviting landmark. Sacred groves, looking temptingly cool when the sun is high, are unmistakable. The water-holes, pits, and ditches, flooded beyond recognition in the latter part of the rainy season, can easily be distinguished. The boundaries of farm-plots, overgrown with crops and weeds during the rains, are now clearly visible. The landscape is a map of the social relations of the people. This is the season, too, when life goes on largely in the open. There is leisure for gossip and conversation; for paying visits, strolling in the market, going a-courting, making long journeys, dancing in the moonlight; for hunting and fishing drives; there is time also, and the necessary supplies, for the performance of funeral ceremonies and other ritual activities. It is in such events that the structure of Tale society is most vividly actualized.

Types of Settlement and Distribution of Population

361 Two main types of settlements are found: those of ancient habitation (*tɛŋkɔrəg*, old country), covering all the centre of the country, especially on and around the Tong Hills, and including the majority of the Tallensi; and those of recent foundation (*tɛŋpaaləg*, new country), towards the periphery of this area. Though the basic plan is the same, the principles on which a settlement is built operate with different emphasis in each type.

361 Neither territorial extent nor density of aggregation affects the basic
621 plan of a settlement. The range of variation is very great. Moreover, processes of expansion and contraction continuously alter the extent of a settlement. Thus, Yamələg and Tongo are ancient settlements of the same general structure, though the latter is four or five times the size of

796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within
182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they
[625] always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies throughout the social system.

● 221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare
681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments; on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of
721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels
182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in
769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

The climate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast has two 132
well-marked seasons, a rainy season (*seug*) and a dry season (*uun*). The 221
rainy season is the period of intense agricultural activity and lasts from April to October; the dry season, when agriculture sinks into the background of social interest, from November to March. We shall set out the cycle of agricultural and food economy month by month, beginning with April, the first month of the rains.[1]

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
APRIL: First planting-rain fell on March 26, and early millet (*naara*) with some cow-peas and *seri* was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, &c. Women sowed their vegetable patches; *naŋgena*, *hibiscus* (*ma'ana*, *bet* and *beris*), marrow (*wok*—planted by only a few women) and other vegetables. Hoeing begun; but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.	Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. 221 262 Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts.[2] Wild fruits—shea (*taamr*), *ximenia americana* (*lieŋ*) and especially dawa-dawa powder (*dɔbugm*)—being consumed to stave off hunger.[3]

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[1] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, but we are following the European calendar [805]
to simplify the exposition. All dates given refer to 1934.

[2] Ground-nut gleaning (*nyɔɔh*) is a regular pursuit of children, adolescents, and 222
even adults of households with small supplies of ground-nuts. After the ground-nuts have been lifted any one may come and scratch with a hoe for those left in the ground. Thus little groups of boys and girls, from infancy to adolescence, wander about in the fields near their homes scratching with old hoes for the ground-nuts, which they collect and eat. Early in the dry season these ground-nuts are regarded as snacks. When the dry season reaches its end, however, they become scarcer but are searched for more eagerly as a measure to stop the pangs of hunger between one meal and the next, often twenty-four hours later.

[3] Shea fruits are collected by the women throughout this season, mainly from 222
trees on bush farms belonging to their compound. Dawa-dawa powder is more difficult to come by as the trees are jealously watched by the owners, who are in some areas the chiefs *ex-officio* and in others heads of lineages. Dawa-dawa pods are thus often obtained by gift, purchase, or exchange from the owners, or in the market. Every part of the fruit is of great value—the floury powder is eaten, the seeds collected and turned into *kpoliŋ*, the husks of the pod used to prepare *am*, [356]
the liquid with which the walls and floors of compounds are waterproofed.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
MAY: Rains continue erratically. Early millet planted in the stony and hilly areas. Others interplanting guinea-corn and late millet on compound farms and some ground-nuts. Work on bush farms preparatory to planting commenced. Tempo of agricultural activity increasing rapidly.	Food stores deplenished and severe rationing. 'Hunger' (*kɔm*) commences. Poorer households suffer two or three days' hunger a week, living on vegetable soup, ground-nuts and wild fruits. Householders send their wives to purchase grain abroad for consumption and re-sale if they have money. Many selling live stock bit by bit to buy grain in market. Prices of all commodities rising. Visits being paid to relations in more fortunate areas to get some grain.[1]
JUNE: Height of agricultural season. Men completely absorbed in hoeing	Peak of 'hunger' reached. Granaries empty among poorer households.

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[1] The following case-record will illustrate more vividly than explanations the state of affairs in May: Baripeta and his adolescent brother had dependent upon them their mother, the former's two wives, and one infant. Baripeta was known as one of the best young farmers in the settlement. His ortho-cousin, head of the compound, farmed independently. At the end of April Baripeta's supplies were so low that he had to purchase small quantities of grain and send his brother to a relative living in the richer Mampuru country to beg some grain. By May 9 the household was living on shea fruit and vegetable soup, with a meal of porridge every third day, scraped together by the women. Baripeta obtained 2*s*. and sent his brother and senior wife to Mampurugu to buy grain, he himself being unable to abandon his fields just then. They returned (May 15) bringing about 60 lbs. of guinea-corn. After 2 days of complete starvation the household fed adequately though frugally for over a week. As he had to give some of the grain to the head of the compound, Baripeta was left with about 50 lb. of it. A small quantity dribbled away in gifts to other kinsfolk who came to 'beg'. Thus the five adults and the infant used, say, 40 lb. of grain in about 8 to 10 days. Baripeta sent his brother to 'greet' their brother-in-law in the Nabte country and obtain some grain from him. Thus, alternately starving for a couple of days and having enough for a few days, the household carried on until the harvest in July. This case is typical of dozens; but many households were not reduced to such straits, especially those of heads of compounds or elders with large compound farms and several younger men assisting them.

Ground-nuts are chewed all the year round, if available, to stave off hunger, but are never regarded as a substitute for porridge, the real food. But a family with a good ground-nut harvest never starves. There is always a sale for ground-nuts, which figure as contributions in all funeral ceremonies when large groups of people gather and sit about for a whole day and chew them to keep off hunger.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
and weeding, planting guinea-corn and late millet on bush farms, rice, ground-nuts and minor crops. Hiring labour for help in hoeing and weeding.[2] Women plucking *naggena*.	Much live stock sold or bartered for grain very cheaply; grain scarce and dear. Much ground-nuts for sale.[1] Small groups of children wander about hungry, feeding on wild fruits and small animals they find near the settlements. Towards the end of the month many people are staunching their hunger by cutting the ripe or half ripe heads of early millet which they roast on the embers and nibble at. 221 262
JULY: Early millet harvested by those who planted first on valley land.[3]	Early millet eaten by those who harvest. Relatives from the later-

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[1] People tend to hoard their ground-nuts until about June, when the price rises to 1*s.* a small basketful, as many require seed then. The proceeds are invested in grain. Grain prices at this time are about twice the average price of roughly ½*d.* a lb.

[2] In June even those whose grain supplies have lasted well begin to feel the 464 pinch. One reason for this is that a considerable amount of grain is expended in 241 feeding and recompensing hired *kpaarip* (lit. hoe-men). These are Nankansi and Builsa who come to Tale-land to seek a few days' work, since their settlements are in a worse plight than those of the Tale. They insist on being paid in grain or ground-nuts which they can take home. As they have to be given flour-water (*zomkuom*) in the middle of the day and a good meal at night besides a calabash of 4 or 5 lb. of grain per day to carry home, they make considerable inroads on grain supplies. At this time of the year only those with grain to spare engage *kpaarip*, later even poorer men do so. It may mean economizing on one's own food at the time, but in this way, say the Tale farmers, one can get a large bush farm hoed or weeded expeditiously, and thus make up the grain expended twice over.

[3] Early millet is a catch-crop and the Tallensi realize this. Its function is to tide over the period of waiting until the main crops of guinea-corn and late millet are harvested. Hence the necessity for a piece of compound farm if a unit is to be fully independent.

The Tallensi say that early millet normally lasts for two months, and our observations prove this to be the case. When the millet is brought in by the women, the heads are spread out to dry and sorted into two lots, the good heads (*naarsomr*) and the bad heads (*naarbiist*). The best of the former are selected for seed, threshed and stored in pots. This is the first task, as it is considered shameful to be without seed at planting time. The bad heads are eaten first, the good millet stored in the granary and eaten later. For a few days there is no restraint. Small children run about all day, nibbling at heads of millet which have been quickly roasted in hot embers. But as soon as the head of the unit of food economy has carried out the thanksgiving sacrifices which permit him, too, to eat of the new crop, he takes control.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
Hoeing and weeding of compound and bush farms in full swing. Some still planting subsidiary crops. Poultry breeding begins.	planting areas come to beg grain.[1] Wild fruits still eaten and hunger prevalent in late-planting areas. Ground-nuts, beginning to ripen, plucked and chewed as snacks.
AUGUST: Late planters harvest early millet. Invited collective labour (*kpaarip*) for hoeing and weeding coming to fore, but hired labour still in evidence.[2] Fresh hibiscus leaves used in soup.	Almost everybody has early millet; hunger appeased for a time.

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241 431 [1] The different settlements harvest at such different times corresponding to their times of planting that more than a month elapses between the beginning of the harvest at one end of Tale-land, and its conclusion at the other end. This gives rise to a system of reciprocities the effect of which is to cancel out the lag to some extent. People from the late-planting settlements visit their relatives in the early-planting settlements as soon as these begin to harvest and receive gifts of early millet from them. Women, especially, go thus to visit their parental homes, and no man would send his daughter or sister away empty-handed. Later, when the early-harvesting settlements begin to reach the end of their early millet stores, the process is reversed. The Tallensi never think of this in terms of economic interchange or reciprocal payments. They insist that *A* gives to *B* freely and without expectation of return because *B* is *A*'s daughter. Later, when *B*'s husband harvests his millet he will send some to *A* freely—because *A* is his father-in-law. It is significant that these mutual ' good turns ' always occur between people of different settlements, not between patrilineal kin of the same settlement.

241 476 [2] Soon after early millet has been brought in, the elders and others who have had a good crop begin to ' invite hoemen ' (*pooh kpaarip*). An elder sends round to all the compounds of his section (a sub-division of a clan settlement) requesting the young men to come out and weed his farms, compound or bush, for him on the following day. As no one would be so ill-mannered or so negligent of a kinsman's duties as to refuse, some 20 or 30 young men turn out next day. The one who issued the invitation recompenses them with two meals, flour-water (*zɔmkuom*) at noon and a lavish cooked meal at night. Thus commences a round of collective weeding, as every farmer who can afford the 20 or 30 lb. of grain and the meat for feeding them in turn invites his kinsmen and neighbours to come and weed for him. Others have to hire foreign labour to the best of their capacity. The Tallensi account for this institution firstly on the ground that it is only by such a mass attack that the rapidly growing weeds can be kept under, and secondly on the ground that it relieves the strain of unremitting toil in the fields and increases the crops.

Gifts to relatives and feeding collective labour are a considerable strain on a man's granary at this time, though, in the long run, much of it comes back. Reliable informants told us that half of their total crop was expended thus, leaving them short of millet in September.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakaa*.[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely.
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

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[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakaa* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is [263
always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but 422]
the *bakaa* is their own property.

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying [illegible] stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great 584
expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s*. or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly.

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls, 796

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
DECEMBER: Agricultural work over.	Height of ritual season: funeral ceremonies, children's dedication ceremonies, many marriages; all involving consumption of live stock and grain, in sacrifices, as cooked food, and beer.[1]
JANUARY: Period of secondary activities such as housebuilding, cut-	Grain rationing again begins. Grain and other foodstuffs, including im-

796 guinea-fowls, sheep, goats, and dogs are slaughtered in profusion as sacrifices to ancestral and magical shrines. Beer (*daam*) made of malted grain is boiled, though in small quantities; much food is cooked to receive kinsfolk who call upon and greet each other. Recently married men send baskets of sweet potatoes, frafra potatoes, and yams to greet their parents-in-law. The Festivals last only a few days, but the tubers and animals are consumed over a period of some weeks.

[1] In this period, too, are celebrated all those clan and family religious ceremonies
796 in which animal sacrifices and cooked food and beer play a great part. Indeed,
764 these rites are often postponed for several years until a sufficiently good harvest
431 enables enough supplies to be accumulated. We have seen a cow, a donkey, about 15 sheep and goats, and a large number of fowls and guinea-fowls slaughtered at the funeral ceremonies for a very venerable elder. We were assured by his sons, who were responsible for these ceremonies, that they had used up the whole of a large supply of guinea-corn in the preparation of ritual beer and food and in providing hospitality for throngs of guests. At such a funeral the deceased's cognatic and affinal kin bring obligatory food-contributions of cooked porridge, sheep, goats, and birds. So great were these contributions at one funeral that two or three basketfuls of porridge had to be thrown away as it turned sour. Funerals are extreme cases of the lavish utilization of food at this time of the year; and only three or four big funerals take place in any settlement in one season. Most funerals require a much smaller expenditure of live stock and grain than that made at an elder's funeral.

273 This is not the place to discuss the types of ritual and ceremonial situations in which 'things' (*bon*)—the Tale concept which covers every type of property—are consumed. In a good season there will be a tremendous spate of them; in a poor season only urgent rites will be performed. A word, however, must be said about beer, the most important ritual substance apart from the animals and flour used in sacrifices. Beer is cooked (*doy-*) by women, malted grain (*kpeya*) of guinea-corn or millet being issued to them by the man at whose request it is made. In the average compound beer is never cooked except for ritual purposes which may be twice or thrice a year. Chiefs and headmen, who always have a surplus of grain often, and elders occasionally keep a supply of beer on hand for guests. Tale women never make beer for sale in the markets; indeed, any man would be horrified at the suggestion that his hard-won grain should be used in this way. The Tallensi are a sober people on the whole.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
ting grass and timber for roofing, handicraft work. Young men begin to go abroad temporarily.[1]	ported maize, plentiful and cheap at market.
FEBRUARY: As in January.	Grain issued for only one meal a day. Many purchasing grain rather than use up their own supplies. Ground-nuts and cow-peas regular and important supplements to cereal food. Women finding grain to augment supplies, by trading, etc. Market supplies still plentiful, prices average.
MARCH: As in February. Sporadic cleaning of fields and hoeing.	Grain supplies sinking and more carefully rationed. Children and women gleaning ground-nuts to stop hunger. People going to Mampuru and Nabte countries to purchase grain for re-sale. Grain still plentiful in market, also other products, e.g. yams (imported).[2]

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[1] This month of plenitude marks the peak of the food cycle. Soon supplies diminish again; men who are setting up compounds of their own commence building operations; but almost every compound requires some repairs. House-building and thatching are crafts in which a great many men have no skill. They therefore have to invite (*pooh*) neighbours or relatives who have the skill to carry out the repairs for them; and these have to be generously fed in recompense. A new house, again, is built co-operatively with the aid of kinsmen, relatives and friends, who also have to be generously fed.

With this further drain on his grain stores, the head of a unit of food economy has to go warily. Hence in spite of the ample and cheap grain available in the market, he begins to reduce the ration of grain he distributes to his dependants. In February the rationing gets stricter, for it is essential to keep a reserve against the first month of the rains 'to strengthen one' against the greater demands upon one's energy made by agricultural labour. They say this explains why those who can afford it buy grain for immediate consumption. Finally, just before the rains, supplies are sinking to the minimum which will be reached in the month preceeding the early millet harvest, with the usual effect of causing visits to neighbouring areas in search of grain to purchase.

The temporary migration of young men is more fully dealt with in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Culture Contact as a Dynamic Process', *Africa*, ix. 1, 1936.

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[2] We have, in the above table, emphasized the place of cereals in the cycle because they constitute the staple food of the Tallensi; and as we are concerned with the domestic economy of food, we have referred to the market only in order

221/ 262 A striking correlation emerges from the above synopsis of the cycle of food economy. It will be seen that domestic food-supplies are at their lowest at the time—recognized as such by the natives—of the most strenuous output of physical labour, i.e. in May–June, and highest when there is least agricultural work. In other words, it would seem that food consumption is inversely correlated with food requirements, if we may assume that more food is needed to sustain the arduous agricultural labour of the rainy season than the leisure months of the dry season. How this affects the working capacity of the natives must be left to the social biologist to determine; it is a type of problem beyond the competence of an ethnographer. 251/ 261 The Tallensi have both excellent receptacles and adequate techniques for storing all kinds of food. We have seen grain and ground-nuts produced from granaries or storage baskets (*kusɔk*) twelve months after they had been packed, and in perfect condition. Even root crops and legumes, which appear to be more susceptible to damp and weevils, can be stored for a year. Nor, in our estimation, are the Tallensi

443 to bring out more clearly the fluctuations in domestic supplies. The market is a fundamental economic institution in Tale society, but we have space here only for a cursory comment on its function in relation to our main theme. Every kind of raw foodstuff, from grain to wild fruits and many varieties of cooked food can be purchased in the market. A visit to the market shows at once what the state of the domestic larder is; high prices indicate empty granaries, low prices, plentiful domestic supplies. The cooked food offered in the market illustrates the seasonal variation in supplementary diet very well. As soon as Bambara beans or frafra potatoes are lifted they appear, both raw and cooked, in the market. The food most commonly sold in the market is porridge (*sayabo*), the staple cereal food; but other cereal and pulse confections can be bought there, many kinds being especially prepared for sale, and rarely, if ever, cooked for home consumption. Such are *maasa*—fried millet-cake, *gur* and *kamcha*, both made of flour cow-pea. A number of women carry on a regular trade in these luxury foods and thus reap a steady income. Beer is always on sale in the Tale markets, manufactured and sold by a few regular women traders, all Nankansi as far as we know. Only in the markets have we seen intoxicated men; never at ritual gatherings. The market is also the main supplier of tobacco, which most mature men and many old women chew or smoke, but which only a minority are able to grow for themselves, and of kola nuts, imported from Ashanti by foreign traders, and universally chewed as a stimulant by men, women, and even older children. Curdled milk (*bigbihir*), a luxury food, is generally obtained there, too. The market represents the point of contact between the basic subsistence economy of the natives and the money economy which exists side by side with it.

121 each within the context of the particular type of social situation is specific to it and can be determined only from the analysis of the situation itself. It may differ considerably from its "institutional function" in relation to the culture as a whole. Thus the rules of exogamy viewed in relation to the entire social organization of a people may demonstrably serve to emphasize and preserve the integrity of an unilateral kinship group. But in a particular situation, a man barred from marriage with a woman he desires may enter into an illicit sexual intrigue with her, which may lead to dissension within the kinship group. In such a case the "proximate function" of the rules of exogamy appears to be the very contrary of their "institutional function." This is an hypothetical instance; but it will suffice to illustrate what we mean when we say that the components of any type of social situation are inter-related in a manner specific to it or that it exhibits a definite structure. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the structure of a situation which recurs with some frequency in the life of a tribe recently visited by the writer.

226 221 [805] Among the Tallensi, a tribe of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the communal fishing expeditions which take place every year are events of this kind. They extend over a period of about a month, between the close of the dry season and the commencement of the heavy rains. During this month which coincides with most of the native lunar month *Sigkpéoŋ* ("Dry rains"), and the European month of April, rain falls sporadically (five times, at varying intervals, in 1934, a dry year) but sufficiently for the sowing of early millet and some of the minor crops. Sowing demands the concentration of all energies of the family for a day or two after a fall of rain; then it is discontinued until the next fall of rain. Besides sowing, other technological and economic activities compete with fishing during this month. House repairs and rebuilding are still in progress and of course the markets, which take place on two days out of three within the tribal area, are in full swing. All these activities are equally shared by men and women, assisted by the children of both sexes.

226 262 Fishing therefore is not an activity of an economic off-season. Its calendrical incidence depends primarily on the technique employed, which is suitable only for shallow pools; and the pools are shallowest at the end of the dry season. It is, also, only indirectly correlated with the diminution in food supplies which becomes general during the "dry rains", since fish, like meat, is valued as a delicacy and never as a substitute for the staple cereal foods. In any case, the catch is usually too small to influence the economy of food supplies materially. Nevertheless, the luxury value of fish furnishes one of the main inducements to join the fishing expeditions.

226 But the greatest attraction of these fishing expeditions to young and old, men and women, is the excitement and thrill they provide, the immediate pleasure of participation in a communal enterprise with the possibility, however remote, of some gain.

133 226 The pools fished lie in the bed of the White Volta River. When the rains cease the water level gradually sinks till eventually only a series of pools divided from one another

823 found at that spot. Thus, Sielug is an uninhabited part of Zubiuŋ, where
103 clay (*siela*) is abundant near the surface, making it unsuitable for cultivation and therefore a favourite pasture. Naɣaberaabo'og ('cattle-poison-
[824] grass valley'), the tract of low-lying land renowned as the traditional battle-field of Tongo and Ba'ari, appears to be named after a kind of grass believed to be noxious to cattle. Other such names have a legendary flavour, but the Tallensi, with their characteristic realism, have no myths or legends to account for them. Locality names of this kind are Kumpeɣaləɣat ('Death carries quivers') and Kurbək ('Stooping ditch'). Sacred groves (*tɔŋgbana*) often serve as landmarks to identify a locality; e.g. Dooni (at Doo), means the precincts of that *tɔŋgban*, vaguely defined, as are all such localities, by position and not by definite boundaries.

823 We shall see later how the social structure of a settlement is anchored to a locality. The physical environment is built into the whole edifice of native life. Tale economic pursuits demand an intimate knowledge—unscientific but remarkably efficient at the level of their social organization and technical development—of natural history and topography. Tale leechcraft, on its empirical side, depends on this knowledge; and every prominent and many an inconspicuous feature of the landscape has its meaning and place in native social relations. A great boulder may be the children's playground, or the women's pounding-floor, or a shrine. A hoary baobab tree is not only an amenity and a source of useful products, but also a lineage shrine. A furrow, an outcrop of laterite, or a fringe of grass, may mark the boundary of a farm plot. A shrub, hardly noticeable on the bank of a dry watercourse, is a medicine. In consequence, the natural environment forms a very important aspect of the native's social space. In his own settlement, and especially in his section of the settlement, he knows every rock and tree and almost every tuft of grass, the qualities of the soil, and the ownership of farm plots.

In addition to his own settlement a man usually knows pretty thoroughly the natural environment of neighbouring settlements with which his clan has close social bonds and, more superficially, that of his mother's natal settlement and of settlements in which close extra-clan kin live. The great majority of men, even the younger men who have been abroad for lengthy periods, are all well versed in the geography, the vegetation, and the fauna of the tracts of bush and river-bank on the borders of Taleland, the economic exploitation of which is indispensable for the subsistence of
[824] the natives. Every dry season many men and boys have to go out to the nearest bush to cut grass for thatching, rafters for roofing, shafts for their implements, *baɣana* (*Bauhinia*, spp.) bark for the rope used in house-building, canes for their bows and reeds for their arrows, tree-stumps for their shrines, and many medicinal roots and leaves. They go hunting in near and distant tracts of bush, so that most adult men are familiar with every hunting bush within a day's march of their settlement; and they go fishing in the pools left in the river-beds during the dry season. Women
[222] are as expert as men in these matters. They take part in the big fishing drives, comb the fields for edible herbs, seek out deposits of clay for pottery and gravel for beating floors, explore the neighbouring bush for firewood, for reeds to make sleeping mats, for fruits and edible leaves.

595 than the others, all the women must be allocated more or less equal plots for this purpose. Each woman, with the help of her daughters or a ●[222 263] daughter-in-law, collects and stores wild herbs and edible leaves, buys condiments and seasonings like salt, pepper, and locust bean balls, sometimes with the proceeds of her own petty trading in the markets, and collects shea nuts for the preparation of shea butter, the most important source of fat and the most prized emollient in the native cuisine, for the use of her own *dug*. If a man gives a penny or twopence to one wife for the purchase of seasonings, he must, either immediately or on subsequent market days, give some money to his other wives for this purpose. If he obtains some meat, he must either distribute it amongst all his wives or give all of it to his senior wife to use or preserve for the benefit [846] of the whole family. Only a wife in childbed is entitled to have extra luxuries, which it is the duty of her husband to provide.

595 Though each woman cooks for herself with an eye to the feeding of her own children and her husband, in the first place, co-wives are 25 obliged to share food prepared with grain from the common supply. In times of plenty, if all the wives of a man have cooked a meal, each woman dishes out a portion of porridge and the accompanying relish for her husband, a portion for herself and her child or children eating with her, and a smaller portion for each of her co-wives. The husband should taste all the dishes sent in to him by his wives, and should pass on to the older children who do not eat with their mothers the dishes he does not want for himself. In times of scarcity a man's wives may cook in rotation for the whole family. But if a woman has a private supply of grain, obtained by trade or from her own relatives, she is entitled to use it for feeding her own children and the husband only; she need not give anything to her co-wives or their children.

596 In the production and utilization of food-supplies, as this brief sketch shows, the common interests of the *yir* are distinctly paramount. Co-wives co-operate most harmoniously, both among themselves and with the other women of the household, in this sphere of family life. In the organization of productive labour and of the domestic economy, and in the conventions regulating mutual help in this sphere, the dependence on one another of all the members of a household for their sustenance is constantly emphasized. But the relative autonomy of the *dug* is never wholly submerged. The women do not pool the products of their individual labour and enterprise. They do not pool their utensils, and family quarrels sometimes arise because one woman or one woman's child has borrowed and damaged a utensil belonging to another. They keep their firewood supplies, the accumulation of which is one of their most arduous tasks, jealously separate; and they do the same with vegetables and seasonings. There is sometimes friction between co-wives over the use of the grinding-room. But it is significant of the balance usually maintained between the centrifugal tendencies of the *dug* and the

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own family. She may, as an act of grace, give some of this food to her husband or to a co-wife with whom she is on friendly terms; but she is not compelled to do so. A junior householder thus augments the food supply for his own wives and children. If he comes into possession [431] of a large amount of grain by his own exertions he will generally make a present of a small quantity to the head of the unit to which he belongs; but, again, this is an act of goodwill, not an obligation. A kind-hearted head of a compound may occasionally present a meagre dish of grain to the wife of a younger head of a self-supporting unit, if they are obviously on the verge of starvation; otherwise, self-supporting units in the same compound never assist one another with grain, in the ordinary course of events.

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There are other more incalculable means by which food is brought into the household and family. Cereals are sometimes obtained during the hunger months by women from their paternal kinsmen. A marriageable daughter, again, means a succession of suitors bringing gifts of money, guinea-fowls, and various other comestibles to her mother. Wild sources of food are fully exploited. Fruits of the shea-tree (*ta'ay: butyrospermum parkii*) save many a family from the worst straits of hunger, as does the pulp of the dawa-dawa (*doo: parkia filicordea*) pods. These trees have an enormous economic value, as will be evident later. The baobab-tree (*to'o: adansonia digitata*) has a fruit with a floury, sweetish pulp which is relished much as sweetmeats are by ourselves, and its leaves are used to make soup. It is generally found as a shade-tree outside a compound, and women readily get permission from the head of the compound to pluck the leaves. Leaves of the local elm (*nuom: celtis integrifolia*) are also used for soup.[1] Some grasses and fungi serve this purpose too, and small children, who are adepts at foraging for themselves, can often be seen out in groups collecting them.

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From the table[2] quoted above it will be seen that one man, on the average, supports himself, 1·2 women, and 1·2 children, over the age of infancy—roughly 3·4 people; but it is clear from the sociological outline given above that any such estimates hold only very approximately in view of the many supplementary sources of grain supply,

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[1] We have seen elm-trees in *tɔŋhana* (sacred groves) and in the bush (where of course, any one can pluck the leaves) but not as shade trees in front of compounds.

[2] [See cat. 116, p. 241 —Analyst]

The climate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast has two well-marked seasons, a rainy season (*seug*) and a dry season (*uun*). The rainy season is the period of intense agricultural activity and lasts from April to October; the dry season, when agriculture sinks into the background of social interest, from November to March. We shall set out the cycle of agricultural and food economy month by month, beginning with April, the first month of the rains.[1] 132 221

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
APRIL: First planting-rain fell on March 26, and early millet (*naara*) with some cow-peas and *neri* was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, &c. Women sowed their vegetable patches; *naggena*, *hibiscus* (*ma'ana*, *bet* and *beris*), marrow (*wok*—planted by only a few women) and other vegetables. Hoeing begun; but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.	Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts.[2] Wild fruits—shea (*taamr*), *ximenia americana* (*lieŋ*) and especially dawa-dawa powder (*dɔbugm*)—being consumed to stave off hunger.[3] 221 262

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[1] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, but we are following the European calendar to simplify the exposition. All dates given refer to 1934. [805]

[2] Ground-nut gleaning (*syeek*) is a regular pursuit of children, adolescents, and even adults of households with small supplies of ground-nuts. After the ground-nuts have been lifted any one may come and scratch with a hoe for those left in the ground. Thus little groups of boys and girls, from infancy to adolescence, wander about in the fields near their homes scratching with old hoes for the ground-nuts, which they collect and eat. Early in the dry season these ground-nuts are regarded as snacks. When the dry season reaches its end, however, they become scarcer but are searched for more eagerly as a measure to stop the pangs of hunger between one meal and the next, often twenty-four hours later. 222

[3] Shea fruits are collected by the women throughout this season, mainly from trees on bush farms belonging to their compound. Dawa-dawa powder is more difficult to come by as the trees are jealously watched by the owners, who are in some areas the chiefs *ex-officio* and in others heads of lineages. Dawa-dawa pods are thus often obtained by gift, purchase, or exchange from the owners, or in the market. Every part of the fruit is of great value—the floury powder is eaten, the seeds collected and turned into *kpolug*, the husks of the pod used to prepare *am*, the liquid with which the walls and floors of compounds are waterproofed. 222 [356]

241 keep pace with the growth in intensity of conditions. Farming is regarded as a custom and not as a business, with the result that in crop production and in animal husbandry the maximum is left to Nature. It is custom based upon an unsettled past which underlies the economic system.

Diet.

262 264 The diet of the people is largely vegetarian; only after religious sacrifice, or upon a very special occasion, is the flesh of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys or dogs, eaten, subject to certain taboos. Fowls are not eaten by women, or, in some sections, by first-born male children; they are therefore not generally found in a normal diet; guinea-fowls are eaten, however, by all who can afford them. The big meal of the day is consumed in the evening and consists of cereal flour, cowpeas, or Bambarra beans, prepared as a dough or porridge, over which soup made with or without meat, is poured. In the mornings a light meal is taken off anything left-over from the previous evening; similarly at mid-day. When working in the farms at the beginning of the season cereal flour is taken mixed with drinking water. The results of a study of the diet of the Tallensi—a tribe around Tongo in Zuarungu Area—in relation to domestic economy, has been dealt with very fully by Dr. M. and Mrs. S. L. Fortes (9).

Recurrent Food Shortage.

262 251 241 It is not surprising that with a precarious rainfall and almost complete dependence upon cereals, crop yields are very variable and recurrent food shortage is a common experience. Soil erosion, and a system of continuous cultivation with inadequate manuring, have reduced the bulk of farmed land to a basic minimum of fertility, except in the immediate vicinity of compounds. The food problem is further complicated by a natural improvidence of the people whereby all crops are consumed in the year they are produced. In good years a surplus of grain is used lavishly in performing religious customs; it is seldom stored against the possibility of a bad season. A rise in the market value of crops at planting time suggests that many people are so improvident as not even to save sufficient seed for planting.

Famine Foods.

● 222 261 A reduced supply of cultivated foods in a poor season is eked out by food from wild sources. There is scarcely a single tree in populated areas which has not some value in this respect; and the seed of an indigenous grass, "Gonongo" (Nankani) (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), is laboriously collected and used as grain.

Nevertheless, although a shortage of cultivated foods does not 222
necessarily mean starvation, it lowers resistance to disease and 261
saps the energy of the people at the end of the dry season when they need strength to prepare their farms; thus setting up a "vicious circle". It is not the shortage of food in itself which is so arresting, however, as the apathy of the people to the shortage. Ancestor worship causes them to dwell in the past and to think insufficiently of the present and the future. This, too, is probably symptomatic of the unsettled conditions when only the past was certain. It will take some time for the people, the older people who control affairs especially, to adjust themselves to the swift developments going on around them. An unfortunate result is [167
that during the period of adjustment, many of the young men 464]
are attracted away from the district to work for wages in Ashanti and the Colony, where there is a big demand for unskilled labour in the mines and in handling the cocoa crop. These young men do not as a rule stay away from home for long at a time, and usually return with a little money; but they do not take readily to farming again, and represent a floating population which is the source of considerable concern to their elders.

Economic Awakening.

An adequate food supply alone does not appear to be suffici- 177
cient incentive for the adoption of better farming methods; and it is unlikely that changes will come until farming ceases to be regarded mainly as a custom, and becomes a business. There are many signs of an economic awakening, fostered by such factors as a growing desire of the people for imported commodities, and an increase in money consciousness; the completion of an all-weather road to the South; the opening of a gold mine at Nangodi; the developing trade in all classes of livestock with Ashanti and the Colony; the new trade in groundnuts from Bawku for the Kumasi market; together with the work of Government Departments in the improvement of human health, the health of livestock, and not least, the scope of the recently introduced Native Administrations. These are some of the factors helping to bring about a change which can be met only by better farming. Government must anticipate agricultural expansion to be in a position to control its development.

The first problem, obviously, is to ensure a sufficiency of food 000
for everyone in every year. Then, when local requirements have been satisfied, it must be shown how a surplus can be disposed of profitably, to satisfy growing demands. Upon this the Department of Agriculture is working in North Mamprusi, and the results of the last four years' work form the basis of this bulletin.

Section III.—DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS IN PARTICULAR RELATION TO FOOD SHORTAGE.

262 The remarks made in this section apply more particularly to the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas than to Kusasi, because, generally speaking, the Kusasis seldom suffer from food shortage and, indeed, they frequently have a surplus for disposal. For this reason the agricultural problem is more acute in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; an adequate and reliable food supply is a prerequisite of all development.

Nature of Food Shortage.

262 251 Enquiry showed that, as far back as memory goes, a shortage of cultivated foods is experienced in about two years out of every five; the problem, therefore, is by no means a new one. Hungry years follow seasons of poor crops, since practically nothing is stored for more than eight months, *i.e.*, from the time of the main harvest in October and November, until early millet is harvested in the following July. A surplus in a good season is not stored against the possibility of a bad one, but is used lavishly in the performance of religious customs, or it is sold or bartered for livestock. Livestock may be regarded as a kind of bank; the sale of stock is the usual means of obtaining money. In years of food shortage, livestock are sold in order to buy grain from Kusasi, Mamprusi, or Dagomba; and because a number of people are selling at the same time, livestock values fall very considerably in these years.

262 •222 Although bad seasons result in food shortage for many, they do not necessarily mean starvation, for there are a number of wild sources of food which can be used to eke out a reduced supply of cultivated foods. The most common causes of poor crops are abnormal rains and the ravages of locusts. In good seasons, such as 1932 and 1936, very few people suffer from a shortage: the area of land cultivated is adequate, presumably, and the system of farming is successful. But even in bad seasons it is not everyone who is short. Thus out of the twenty-nine recorded compounds in the Zuarungu Area, ten had sufficient home-grown food remaining from the bad harvest of 1931 (due to shortage of rain after September) until early millet was reaped in 1932. The other nineteen compounds sold livestock and bought grain, and gathered "wild" food. A comparison of statistics from these compounds is given in Table 6 below :—

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days
most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs
recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that
since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know
nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own
bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we
collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not,
like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*;
when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs
ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge
of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1]
report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed,
informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Adminis-
tration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits
in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
[783] lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

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423 '"Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm.
425 Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache
782 and belly-ache."

'When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan'* a large
793 bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a
423 guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his "sons", but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan'* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan'* still "owns" the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'*, even if growing on a man's land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man's own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan'* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.'

793 *Lost Animals*: 'Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tene-*
425 *dan'*. I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries. Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. 'No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.'

'In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are "*Wen*" (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan'*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan'* only received a hind leg.'

224 *Go-dan*: 'We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost
624 a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan'* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

Kusase

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not own the land, but is in charge of the hunting party for the time 624
that they are away in the bush.

'The *Tenedan*' would separate people fighting by spreading ashes 793
on the land between the combatants; no man may shoot an arrow 834
over this line. It is taboo to the land to have sexual intercourse in the
bush. Any one who found people doing so will collect a heap of leaves
and branches at that spot, and every one who passed there must add
more. Such a place is called *pey bok* (vagina hole).

'A woman may not become a *Tenedan*.'[1] *Tenedan*' have not any 793
distinctive dress from that of any Elder. There is no difference 462
between the funeral custom for a *Tenedan*' and that of an Elder.' 764

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[1] But see p. 371. [i.e. The opposite is true among the Nam Nam—Analyst.]

He would set out one day with some of his close agnates, fully armed, and 618x they would try to seize by stealth and drive off as many cattle and sheep 621 belonging to any clansman of their debtor as they could lay their hands on. 628 Thus they could seize live-stock belonging to any Tongo man. Or if the chance presented itself they could seize live-stock belonging to people of Yamələg or Sie, and would answer protests by 'pointing to' (*paal*) their Tongo debtor. This was legitimate, but they could not legitimately seize cattle belonging to a Zoo man in settlement of a debt due to them from a Tongo man. The Zoo people would be entitled to take severe reprisals, for Zoo and Tongo have no ties of clanship. They 'marry one another's children (*ba diit taaba biis*)'. Men who were youths in those days, and who themselves took part in such adventures, usually cite these rules of *yɔk* when they are explaining the nature and ramifications of clanship ties.

The people of Zoo proper have not the same local, political, and ceremonial ties with Yamələg or Sie, and are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of these two communities. But Yamələg and Sie feel more closely akin to Zoo than to their non-Namoo neighbours.

The ties between Tongo and Zoo influence their relations in innumerable ways. 618x A census of Zoo shows that every Zoo family (including Zoo-Yiraaŋ) is related to Tongo either by cognatic or by affinal ties. Zoo men show a preference in marriage for women from Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie, rather than women from other equally near settlements. Thirty-five (29 per cent.) of a large and representative sample (120) of Zoo wives are Tongo women; and if the Yamələg and Sie women are added they make up together 56 (47 per cent.) of Zoo wives. I once heard a group of elders discuss this fact, of which the people of Zoo and Tongo are well aware. A Zoo man said, 'Tongo girls like marrying us because we are such diligent farmers and always have plenty of food'. The Tongo elders denied this, and protested that they gave their daughters to Zoo rather than to men of Wakii or Tenzugu because of the bonds between them. 'Would we not rather', said one of them, 'marry our daughters to you, or even to Zubiuŋ, or the more distant places that used to fight on our side, than to nearer settlements which were our enemies?' Because of these ties, too, it is a grave affront for a Zoo man to abduct a Tongo man's wife or vice versa, or for a member of one clan to marry the former wife of a man of the other.

Again, the people of Zoo proper through their political head, the Chief 618x of Biuŋ, control the great annual hunt in the Kparəg bush. 224 They are less strict in enforcing their rights to animals which fall to the weapon of a Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie man, than to those killed by men from other places. There is greater co-operation and camaraderie between hunting parties from Zoo, Tongo, Yamələg, and Sie than between any of them and parties from other settlements. When the Chief of Biuŋ sends round to announce the hunt, his messengers go to all the other Namoo chiefs in Taleland, who pronounce a blessing on the enterprise and send back fowls as a contribution to the sacrifices that will have to be made. Among them the blessing and contribution of the Chief of Tongo are regarded as the most important.

These relations between Tongo and Zoo are always a matter of degree

*618 and depend on the particular situation. To quote the Kparəg hunt again, ●224 if a man from Zoo proper kills an animal and a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is present, he is entitled to take (*fɔ*, lit. pull out) a foreleg; but if a Tongo man arrives on the scene first he will claim the *sunzɔ*'s foreleg; and if the only people who happen to be near are a Tɛnzugu party they will do the same. But if a number of other hunters are present, then a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man takes precedence over a Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie man, and any of these take precedence over Talis or others. A final example of the influence of the ties and sense of solidarity holding between Zoo proper and the posterity of Mosuor may be mentioned here. Three or four generations ago Biuŋ was colonized by the Zoo family which then held the chiefship of that place. Now reduced to about a dozen homesteads, Biuŋ was a flourishing settlement two or three decades ago, to which people had flocked from all parts of Taleland and even farther afield. But the greatest number of settlers, except those from Zoo, came from Tongo. It was regarded as the natural, temporary outlet for young men who were short of land at Tongo. By contrast Tongo men rarely went to Datək as temporary colonists, though it is reputed to be equally if not more fertile than the lands of Biuŋ, and had much more room for settlers.

*618 The lineage structure of Zoo is analogous to that of Gban. Both are examples of the commonest type of clan found in Taleland, the composite clan consisting of a single local community made up of two or more maximal lineages united by ties of clanship, either or all of which are again, as a rule, linked by similar ties of clanship to component maximal lineages of other clans.

At Sɛk, right among the Hill Talis, is another small Namoo group similar in structure to Zoo and connected with Tongo by the same fiction of kinship (*mabiirət*). Similar ties also connect Tongo with Dkoog (Winkogo), a large and thickly populated settlement comprising one maximal lineage and an attached lineage which is intercalary between it and Wakii. Like Zoo, both these groups marry the descendants of Mosuor; but distance and their separation from Tongo by a belt of Talis impede intercourse between them. Both groups have, in addition, a political tie with Tongo, in that their chiefs are appointed by the Chief of Tongo. In fact the people of Dkoog claim that their founding ancestor was a relative—some say a son—of Mosuor, who migrated to Dkoog from Tongo. Undisturbed by the contradiction between this claim and the absence of a bond of exogamy with Tongo, they explain this by their spatial and social separation from Tongo. For the people of Dkoog speak Gorni and have a greater affinity with their Gorisi neighbours in some of their customs than with the Tallensi. This, however, they regard as irrelevant, and they staunchly uphold their connexion with Tongo as their most important tie of political and social affiliation.

Neither the people of Sɛk nor the people of Dkoog are regarded as *sunzɔp* of Tongo. On account of their political ties with Tongo and the ceremonial relations these entail, they are sometimes figuratively described as the children (*biis*) of the Chief of Tongo. They are not, for example, represented as corporate units at Tongo funerals. On the other hand, in the matter of wives, their quasi-clanship ties with Tongo are strictly

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, but all who participate feel them to be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
● [224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage), and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔɣar* of his medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of a sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's* duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
627

of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head
of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders,
makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit
himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the
head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal
lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage.
It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are
performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of interlineage
jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not,
the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway.
This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is
one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of
the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted
at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—
cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting 224
out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be
faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service
for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every
animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and 587
the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits
adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be
informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage
of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in
theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's
nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right
generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his
medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late
husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that
lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The
right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head
of her nucleur lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔɣadir yɛla*) involve the common interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*) brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son. But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action *vis-à-vis* non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224] ●
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal,
especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days 602
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus considerably 231
greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782
leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of 262
junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by
professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which
we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign
settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there
along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief
customers of the butchers. But a Taleŋa occasionally buys a little [435]
meat—from a few ounces for *3d.*, to a leg for *9d.* to *1s.* He may do this
when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is
courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her
some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial 231
animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occasions 262
such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great 224
delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs
throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the
majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush
on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost [354]
entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though
regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride
in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once
observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth,
among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal
as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*ziŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small 262
supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and 226
part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially
dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success,
as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought
in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some 262
of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

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[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

The meat, already putrescent, is nevertheless enjoyed despite its stench. 262
Fresh eggs, being potential chickens, are never eaten; but addled eggs are much appreciated by children, who bake them in ashes. Children also eat field and domestic mice, a species of toad, and harmless snakes, all of which they shoot with miniature bows and arrows [224 in the later months of the dry season. 857] These things are despised by adolescents and adults who, however, appreciate bigger rodents like moles and water voles. In short, meat supplies are a matter of chance, vary greatly with the season, as will be clearer later, and though much desired, form but a small part of the bulk of food consumed.

FATS AND SEASONINGS. Fats and seasonings have a very important 262 place in Tale cookery, and, like vegetables, are the woman's responsibility. 263 But they are mainly market commodities and a man will 252 frequently give his wife money to purchase them. The only fat used is shea butter (*kpaam*). It is obtainable all the year round. It is made of the nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) which are carefully preserved after the fruits have been eaten.

Dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) are made by boiling the seeds of the dawa-dawa fruits. The balls are sold at prices varying from a tenth of a penny for one the size of a large marble to threepence for one the size of a cricket ball.

The laborious processes of manufacture involved prevent many women from making their own shea-butter and dawa-dawa seed balls. Others, who can command the assistance, e.g. of daughters, often prepare enough to have a surplus for sale.

Red pepper (*nanzuuh*) is grown in small quantities by a few men for sale in the market, and much is imported. It is sold at about a halfpenny for a handful.

Rock salt (*yaarem*) is sold in the market by regular traders who fetch it from the south, a small heap (about ⅓lb.) for a halfpenny.

Ziem, the ash of valley grasses, and *bakaa*, the ash of early millet stalks, are prepared by the women and are stored in large baskets or calabashes for their own use and for sale. They are used as salt substitutes.

THE PRODUCTIVE CYCLE AND THE FOOD CYCLE. We have seen how 596 the domestic organization of the Tallensi works in relation to the supply of grain and the other main raw materials of their diet. We

857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

held up by an impassable river. He noticed a water-tortoise descending 773 the bank, and followed it. Thus he was led to a ford, which enabled him 539 to cross. Thereupon he vowed that he and his descendants would refrain from eating this animal and its brother species, the tortoise.

Similar myths are current among other clans that taboo aquatic animals. Thus one of the segments of Sie have the special avoidance of the crocodile in addition to the usual fowl avoidance of the Namoos. The head of this segment told me the following myth in explanation. There was a communal fish drive, during which their ancestor, Layɛn, dis- [226] appeared. He was given up for lost, and next day a party was dispatched to search for the body. But when they reached the river, they found him sitting on the bank with a crocodile at his feet. He told them that the crocodile had saved his life (*fa u ŋovor bah*) by holding him down and covering him up. Hence he vowed that he and his descendants would never again eat crocodile.

In the same way the elders of Gban narrate that 'their ancestor' was 773 suffering with a swollen hand. He asked friends to lance it, but they 539 thought this was unnecessary. Then one day, as he sat resting his hand 757 on his head because of the pain, a large grasshopper of a species with sharply serrated legs (*saŋkaan*) landed on it. The ancestor scared it away. As it leaped off, it kicked out and ripped the skin of the festering hand with its saw-edged legs. This let out the accumulated pus and cured the hand. Thereupon the ancestor vowed, in the phrase that usually concludes these myths, 'May he grow old with his grandson, but no descendant of his should ever again eat the *saŋkaan* (*ɔn kɔrəgən ni u yaaŋa, ka ɔn bii ku le di saŋkaan*)'.

Other myths of this kind relate how the anonymous ancestor was saved 773 from an enemy about to slay him by the opportune appearance of the 539 totemic animal. Thus, according to one of the elders of Sawaləg: 'Bows were in conflict (*tap ndaa ŋme*)', ('Perhaps', he added, as an afterthought, 'there was a fight with Mamprusi who came to raid for slaves') 'and our ancestor fled, seeking refuge in an animal's burrow. The enemy was about to break open the burrow when a squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) darted past. They turned to pursue it, and left our ancestor. Thereupon, he vowed never to eat the squirrel again, neither he nor his descendants.'

As this sample of totemic myths shows, the pattern is the same as that 773 of the Namoo myth accounting for the fowl avoidance. They are more 787 unstable in content, however. The two versions of the tortoise myth were obtained from two equally authoritative elders of the same clan. There is, indeed, always an element of speculation, or of *ad hoc* construction, in these myths. Listening to them one often has the feeling that they are being elaborated by logical deduction. The starting-point is the premiss that the totemic avoidance was due to a vow made by 'our ancestor' in gratitude for an extraordinary service that saved his life. The process of reasoning is to deduce an action on the part of the animal consistent with its known peculiarities of appearance and of behaviour. Informants are never able to tell one where and when they first heard these myths. They say vaguely: 'We heard them from our fathers.' This method of reasoning, however, is congenial to the Tallensi. It forms the

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greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782
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121 each within the context of the particular type of social situation is specific to it and can be determined only from the analysis of the situation itself. It may differ considerably from its "institutional function" in relation to the culture as a whole. Thus the rules of exogamy viewed in relation to the entire social organization of a people may demonstrably serve to emphasize and preserve the integrity of an unilateral kinship group. But in a particular situation, a man barred from marriage with a woman he desires may enter into an illicit sexual intrigue with her, which may lead to dissension within the kinship group. In such a case the "proximate function" of the rules of exogamy appears to be the very contrary of their "institutional function." This is an hypothetical instance; but it will suffice to illustrate what we mean when we say that the components of any type of social situation are inter-related in a manner specific to it or that it exhibits a definite structure. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the structure of a situation which recurs with some frequency in the life of a tribe recently visited by the writer.

●226 221 [805] Among the Tallensi, a tribe of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the communal fishing expeditions which take place every year are events of this kind. They extend over a period of about a month, between the close of the dry season and the commencement of the heavy rains. During this month which coincides with most of the native lunar month *Sigkpəɔŋ* ("Dry rains"), and the European month of April, rain falls sporadically (five times, at varying intervals, in 1934, a dry year) but sufficiently for the sowing of early millet and some of the minor crops. Sowing demands the concentration of all energies of the family for a day or two after a fall of rain; then it is discontinued until the next fall of rain. Besides sowing, other technological and economic activities compete with fishing during this month. House repairs and rebuilding are still in progress and of course the markets, which take place on two days out of three within the tribal area, are in full swing. All these activities are equally shared by men and women, assisted by the children of both sexes.

226 262 Fishing therefore is not an activity of an economic off-season. Its calendrical incidence depends primarily on the technique employed, which is suitable only for shallow pools; and the pools are shallowest at the end of the dry season. It is, also, only indirectly correlated with the diminution in food supplies which becomes general during the "dry rains", since fish, like meat, is valued as a delicacy and never as a substitute for the staple cereal foods. In any case, the catch is usually too small to influence the economy of food supplies materially. Nevertheless, the luxury value of fish furnishes one of the main inducements to join the fishing expeditions.

226 But the greatest attraction of these fishing expeditions to young and old, men and women, is the excitement and thrill they provide, the immediate pleasure of participation in a communal enterprise with the possibility, however remote, of some gain.

133 226 The pools fished lie in the bed of the White Volta River. When the rains cease the water level gradually sinks till eventually only a series of pools divided from one another

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔɣar*, 133
"river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226
river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 796
social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226
clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a
pool *Golimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates
the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing
of *Golimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789]
and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and
death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor
spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general
blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226
expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes
to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different
parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence
of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied
three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226
customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203
falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The
news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market.
Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and
acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people
throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622]
country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief
of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226
day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children
of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or
nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush.
The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [441]
partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out
of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482]
But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 515 562 834 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit. The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation : the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 578 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group ; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

461 322 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

226 423 535 [292] About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bolgraana*, who had only recently been installed. To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place "where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences.

226 423 The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements. The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights.

226 789 782 Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the performance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features—

226 typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also
789 many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance.
782 Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*).
[778] The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*. Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool
[787] and of the magical specialist. A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist. Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bolgraana's* first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish. The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near
[424] pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

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[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of 226
his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated 789
with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a
little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus 782
symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its 226
highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round [533]
him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was taken of sending four good swimmers in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

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[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognized. Members 602
of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

226 227 The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wɔk*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*sɔyar*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

226 571 The manual skill involved is however of secondary significance. Sociologically, the essential fact is that fishing is a group activity. Everybody fishes with and against his neighbour, his motor alertness and competitive cupidity at the highest. The excitement is indescribable. The glint of a fin through the water, brown with the mud churned up by the slow moving mass of men, causes a scrimmage. Pushing and shouting, a dozen men plunge their nets after the fish. In a well stocked pool the terrified fish leap out of the water, a fantastic and beautiful sight. Hands and nets swing out after the leaping fish, and the older men who remain on the bank watching call out with eager delight at the sight. The first catch of the day is greeted with a shout of pleasure, not very welcome to the fortunate fisherman, however, for the fish thus noticed cannot escape confiscation by the owner of the pool, as it is the ritual perquisite of the fetish.

226 578 579 Disputes are inevitable and may become violent. The rule is that a fish belongs to the person who nets or traps it. But a fish may be netted by one man, escape, and be at once netted by another, or a leaping fish may be pinned between two nets. Such incidents lead to an angry altercation in which the one who has the fish generally gets the better. Once a quarrel over a fish occurred between a man of the *Namoos* group and one of the *Tallis* group. The latter ran ashore with his fish followed by the *Namoos* claimant. In a few minutes a small riot had broken out. *Namoos* and *Tallis* rushed out, snatched sticks, branches of trees, fishing nets, and flew at each other. Only the intervention of a brother of the Chief of Tongo stopped what might have become a serious fight. The dispute over the fish in this case was the signal for an outburst of political hostility. Words quickly lead to blows in such an atmosphere of heightened muscular and emotional tension.

The principal disputes, however, concern the tribute due to the owner of the pool. 226
Morally his rights are beyond question and are never denied. But except for members 578
of the owner's immediate family, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute, 651
a moral obligation of this sort counts for nothing in practice without effective sanctions. 602
Hence the owner sees to it that members of his family are dispersed amongst the crowd in the water. These young men keep a sharp watch and do not hesitate to take by force the fish which they regard as their rightful tribute. The owner himself often enters the pool to assist in the police work. Those who contest the confiscation of their fish do so in vain. Not only will public opinion not support them, but the owner's "policemen" would not hesitate to give them a drubbing. A maternal kinsman, sister's son, or in-law relation of the owner is, however, allowed to keep his first fish, unless his catch is large, in virtue of kinship. This is a concession which the owner might also make to his personal friends, and not a right.

One obligation, by contrast, is never evaded. Young crocodiles are sometimes caught, 651
and the owner of the fetish is entitled to the hind legs and tail of every crocodile caught. 226
This is the perquisite of his *bayar* one part of which, the hoe shaft, will be covered with 626
the skin of a crocodile tail thus delivered to him. Not only is it very difficult to conceal the capture of a crocodile, but the supernatural penalties of evasion—certain injury from a crocodile in a future fishing expedition being the least of them—dare not be risked.

Fishing continues thus from about 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m., or in a well stocked pool, 226
to 5 p.m. The exodus commences sporadically. People who had earlier in the day been cutting hoe shafts or rafters, collecting firewood, or medicinal herbs, come out first to complete these tasks. Finally, when only a few remain in the pool, the owner of the fetish goes down to pull up his *bayar*. As he does this, he shouts to those remaining to come out. The removal of the axe shaft is the signal that the fishing is over.

The catch in such expeditions varies greatly. The tribute received by the owner of the pool may be taken as a rough index of the catch. In the three expeditions in which I participated the owner's tribute varied from six to fifteen medium and large fish. The last pool was exceptionally prolific and was fished on two successive days. I estimated the number of men—men only fished on the first day—at about four hundred; on this occasion the catch was declared to be enormous, surpassing all expectations. Few people left empty handed. But on the other hand, nobody had more than four medium or large fish, which would be taken home and divided up within each man's immediate family. The best proof of the paucity of the catch relative to the population fishing and of the valuation of fish as a delicacy rather than as an addition to the food supply was that throughout the fishing month fish caught on these expeditions never appeared for sale at the market.

Clearly too, communal fishing does not benefit the owner of the pool much materially. 226
However large his tribute, the net gain to himself is small since he distributes much of 651
it to others—men of rank and elders who attend the fishing as an expression of clan loyalty

226 651 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor
[622] of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. Besides,
[685] such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[654] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practice and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

226 789 The nodal factor in the situation is the magic. On one of the expeditions I attended the owner had his own fishing magic and made the sacrifices himself; but I do not know how general this is. Otherwise, the magician's office has its traditional warranty. It is an ancient privilege and even duty of his lineage to perform the rites for the lineage of the particular holder of the chieftainship. The association, like every relationship of this sort, is accounted for on the grounds of ancestral kinship. Thus a community of interest, such as could never arise in a purely commercial relationship, is presupposed. Functionally, whether the owner or the magician are united in one personage or not, magic enters into the fishing configuration as the owner's principal instrument of organization, helping to assert his status and rights in the fishing situation. This inference receives confirmation from the following observations: If a chief owns several pools, once the complete series of rites have been performed at the first pool to be fished, it is sufficient, subsequently, if the riverside rites alone are performed. Again, if, as sometimes happens, two adjacent pools are fished on the same day, the second, will not be entered until it has been sprayed and the signal given. Thus the final and public rite, the actual organizing act, is emphasized. But the clinching evidence for this is the fact that the magical act proclaims the owner's responsibility for the satisfactory outcome of the expedition which he has organized. The behaviour of the people, more so, the ideology associated with situations of this type (full documentation of which must await later publication) and the purpose expressed in the magic prove this. Magic is, therefore, the binding factor in the fishing configuration, linking together the principal constituents—the objective facts of place and economic purpose, the owner, the people who come to fish and the relevant ideological principles.

The magic is able to achieve this in virtue of its content; that is, the control it ostensibly exercises over the psychologically critical factor in the situation, the dangers which might be encountered in the water. It is towards these dangers that the magic is *prima facie* directed. Its efficacy is never questioned; for even if, as sometimes happens, someone should be injured by a crocodile or fish, the ready explanation lies to hand that he has offended an ancestor spirit who took this occasion to punish him. An injury to an individual is his own affair. Nevertheless, nobody carries out private magic for his own protection. Again, fear of injury is not a deterrent to poaching either by individuals [685] or, as in the case of the Yinduri expedition, by a group.[1]

It is obvious, therefore, that the magic is valid only within the context of the organized fishing expedition, promoted by the rightful owner. The psychological facts upon which the magic is built have relevance only within this context. The real danger, or the correlative fear of injury, does not precipitate a magical rite whenever an individual or group is liable to it, but only within the appropriate social situation.

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[1] Indeed fishing expeditions are sometimes made to distant unowned pools and then no magic is performed, as I discovered during my second field trip in 1936. This is because these expeditions are informal, not organized by a responsible personage, and comparable to poaching.

226 789 There the psychological facts are, one might say, re-created, socially transformed by the magic into a collective risk against which protection is provided by the very act which affirms its existence. The magic is concerned not with the safety of individuals but with the security of the group. Above all, responsiblity for the security of the group rests, in the last resort, upon the owner of the pool, the one who brings the group into being. Through the magic this responsibility is affirmed as a privilege associated with the ownership rather than a burden. Individual magical precautions would be as incongruous with this communal situation as a particular individual's chances of injury are unpredictable. In brief, the magical organization of the situation depends upon the exploitation of psychological factors latent in it; but these psychological factors cannot be regarded as the source of the magic. Ownership, magic, and organization of the expedition constitute a unitary structure the disruption of which would entirely alter the significance of any of the constituents.

121 At the outset of this paper the view was expressed that every type of social situation exhibits a definite structure. An analysis was then made of a typical social situation met with among the Tallensi. Various institutions (chieftainship) techniques (magic) and norms of behaviour (disposal of the catch) each determined in part by a context lying beyond the boundaries of the fishing expedition, were shown to enter into the situation. It was suggested, also, that the fishing magic is the factor which binds the different components into a definite pattern. The question arises why is it that situations such as this exhibit a specific structure? Is it due to the peculiar ensemble of institutions, etc., represented? Is it due to the nuclear interest—viz., the catching of fish—of the situation? Or is it due to the fact that what we differentiate as institutions, etc., appear in such situations, as the concrete responses of individuals and groups to one another in terms of social definitions and psychological impulses arising solely from the situation itself? This is a problem which requires the examination of many types of situations comprising similar combinations of institutions, techniques, and norms of behaviour.[1]

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[114] [1] This paper was written after my first expedition to the field, in 1934-5, as a Fellow of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

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The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wɔk*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*sɔɣar*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

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1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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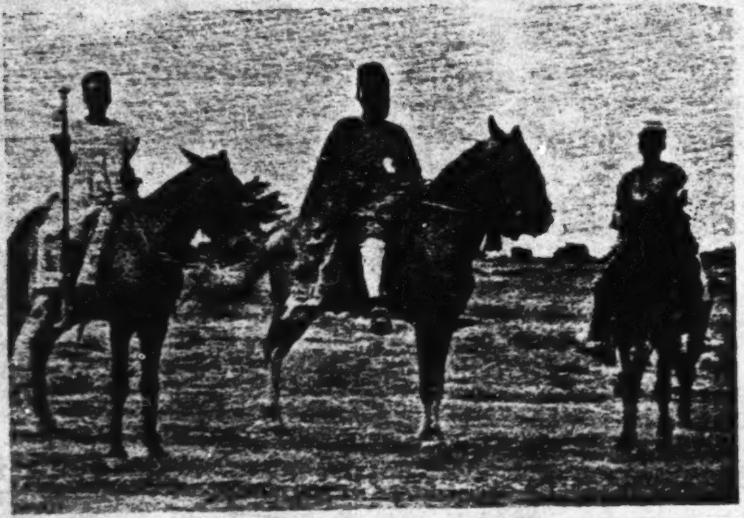

Fig. 79. The Chief of the Namnam

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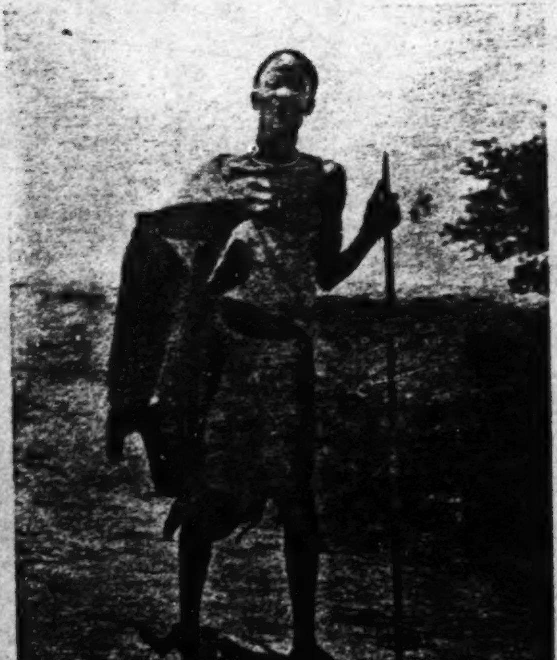

Fig. 80. A Namnam *Ten'dan'* [facing p. 368]

speak only of the Voltaic area, the animal species referred to above occur 171
among the totemic avoidances of people as remote from the Tallensi, 784
both spatially and linguistically, as the Isala and the Lobi,[1] as well as among all the other 'tribes' of the area.

Confining ourselves to Taleland and to the settlements of Gərisi 171
fringing this area, we find that the totemic avoidances include birds like 784
the canary (*wuurəg*), the turtle-dove (*daŋman*), the domestic fowl (*noo*), and 136
several other species; reptiles, like the snake, the tortoise, the water- 262
tortoise, and the crocodile; fish, like the *tunəg*; insects, like the large grasshopper (*saŋkaan*); rodents, like the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) and the hare (*suoŋ*); ruminants, like the goat (*buu*) and the sheep (*pɛhug*); carnivores, such as the cat (*sakoo*), the dog (*baa*), and the leopard (*yeogbaa*); and a variety of other animals, such as the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*) and the bush-pig (*dee*).[2]

It is impossible to find any common trait amongst this variety of 171
creatures. Some play an important part in the economic life and the 784
food-supply of the natives, but the majority are negligible in this respect.
Many are prized as delicacies by those who are permitted to eat them; 231
and, on the other hand, some are despised as food. No adult would 262
willingly eat grasshoppers, canaries, or small edible snakes, though little children, who eat almost any small animals they can lay their hands on, quite often do so. Several of these animal species are regarded as always potentially dangerous in the magical as well as the physical sense. Such are the crocodile, snakes, the leopard, and other wild carnivores. But many, on the contrary, are entirely innocent both in the magical and the physical sense. Some have a place in the meagre folk-lore of the Tallensi, including such diverse creatures as the monkey, the turtle-dove, and the cat. Cats, for instance, are considered to be pre-eminently the domestic companions of women, but with a streak of the wild animal in them. Women treat them with a mixture of solicitude, appropriate to a valued pet, and of pseudo-ritual respect that meets with good-humoured ridicule from the men. Incidentally, clans that have the cat as a totem show no particular respect towards household cats, nor are household dogs treated differently by people who may and people who may not eat the dog.

The totemic animals of the Tallensi thus comprise neither a zoological 171
nor a utilitarian nor a magical class. All that can be said of them is that 784

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[1] For the Isala and other 'tribes' of the Voltaic area, see Rattray, op. cit. 182
His report on the Isala is in vol. ii, pp. 465 ff. For the Lobi, see ib., vol. ii, pp. 425 ff., and Labouret, op. cit., pp. 227 ff. Rattray does not distinguish clearly between the different kinds of ritual prohibitions and injunctions coupled with patrilineal descent, some of which are not totemic in the sense we have given to this term. But his observations and those of Labouret confirm the conclusion that there is no precise correlation between these avoidances and clanship ties. Labouret's account of the attitudes and values associated with totemic avoidances among the Lobi shows them to resemble closely those of the Tallensi.

[2] Rattray's list for this area, op. cit., vol. i, p. 236, includes also several big-game animals, such as the roan (*koo*), hartebeest (*sɛbəg*), bush-cow (*yeognaaf*), and elephant (*wəbəg*), as well as the lion (*gbiaŋmər*), the hyena (*gbiŋgbɛr*), and the hippo (*ɛmər*). But here, as elsewhere in the book, Rattray appears to have lumped together ritual observances that are similar in form though not in function, and he does not state clearly what clans or settlements hold particular taboos.

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish
hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and
unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every
[622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief
of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining
the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the
privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its
members.

Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the
351 *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary
556 spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish
● 231 and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any.
[514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and
sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even
by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his
homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor
goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less
than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug
tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has
cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls
and guinea-fowls.

[361] From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out
and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the
342 homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through
the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*,
and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the
room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed
between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities
are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable posses-
[556] sions, his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth,
the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that
to the Taləŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated
with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which
[782] wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the
principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain
their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers.
In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the
zɔŋ, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to
nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two
chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber
is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber,
communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey,
for the night.

342 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality.
778 It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

604 431 birth his mother might have been an owner of these things. In the past, when people moved about less freely than now, a man passing through the clan settlement of his *ahəb* could seize any guinea-fowl he saw and collect any guinea-fowl eggs he came across[1] irrespective of which member of his mother's brother's clan they belonged to. Nowadays this custom is objected to. Tallensi say that with people moving about so freely and frequently as they do now, it would soon lead to the destruction of all their flocks of guinea-fowl. But an *ahəŋ* is still at liberty to cut himself a few heads of guinea corn or millet from any farm when walking through the settlement of his *ahəb*, if he is feeling hungry.

Women *ahəs* have an analogous privilege of much more practical value. As we have learnt, if a woman has a small baby she often gets a young sister of her own inner lineage or clan to come and live with her and be the infant's nursemaid. If there is no suitable girl in her father's lineage, she is entitled to ask her *ahəb* or her father's *ahəb* to give her a little girl. This is a very common practice.

604 426 Sister's son and mother's brother cannot contract debts towards each other. If a man borrows money or livestock from an *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* repayment cannot be demanded. It rests with the borrower to make an equivalent return in due course. Ɔndieso provided an amusing illustration of this rule. He borrowed three shillings from Naambuləg, a member of the lineage of his paternal grandfather's *ahəb*, and a friend of his. For about a year nothing was said about this loan and the friendship of the two men continued as before. Then a disagreement developed between Kutəbis, head of Ɔndieso's inner lineage, and the head of Naambuləg's clan, for which the latter was in part responsible. As it was a question of a right vested in the inner lineage, Ɔndieso supported and indeed instigated Kutəbis. He was particularly angry with Naambuləg. Thereupon the latter immediately demanded repayment of the loan, thus symbolically relegating Ɔndieso to the class of non-relatives, and Ɔndieso ostentatiously repaid two shillings. Repaying Naambuləg in kind, he had deducted one shilling for two fowls Naambuləg had borrowed from his brother two or three years previously.

604 431 When Bontuya died his son Ba'andoog had to sacrifice a white bull to the dead man's *Yin* shrine before starting the funeral ceremonies. Ba'andoog went to his father's sister's son, who, he knew, had a white bull, and asked for the animal. Very reluctantly the *ahəŋ* parted with his bull. As he explained to me afterwards, it was a very fine young bull. 'But', he said, 'Bontuya begot me and I have no power to refuse him anything.' Several months later the father-in-law of the *ahəŋ* came to him demanding a cow of his daughter's bride-price. The young man promptly went

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[1] Guinea-fowl are only semi-domestic birds. They live out of doors and are very difficult to catch alive. They also lay their eggs out of doors. The privilege of an *ahəŋ* therefore had more of a token value than any practical worth. But I know several men who claim to have used their privilege at least once.

592 and also, as we shall see, the many unpredictable modes of consumption of the grain (e.g. in recompensing collective labour, *vide infra*).[1]

MEAT AND FISH. Meat (*numit*) is subject to even greater fluctuations
231 of supply than grain owing to uncontrollable sources. Every com-
235 pound possesses some live stock, if it be only a few fowls and guinea-
262 fowls. A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely, to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never slaughtered specifically for food[2] by the average man. We heard of two donkeys being slaughtered in order to sell the meat by a couple of young men out for profit. This was vigorously denounced by the Chief, and was not repeated. As a rule beef is obtained from sacrifices
[782] to the ancestor spirits, always made by men of senior status, and from animals offered during funeral ceremonies, donkey-meat only from the latter offerings. The carcase is usually divided up among a large number of people in accordance with kinship status. An elder may obtain a whole leg of a bull, but he will sub-divide it among the compounds or households subordinate to him. Thus, in the long run, the share of a single household comes to a very small quantity, often only a few ounces. But nothing is wasted; the whole carcase, including all the viscera, is consumed.

Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again,
231 no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food. In addition
782 to sacrifices and funerals, there is a number of formal occasions on
262 which one of these animals must be killed, e.g. as an act of hospitality to a mother-in-law or a very great friend. Corresponding to their lesser value and much greater abundance, sheep and goats are sacrificed in larger numbers than cows, often by men of junior status. The

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[1] Mr. Lynn, *op. cit.* finds that 1 man supports 3·7 people on the average, on 2·03 acres of farmed land. In addition to the sources of error mentioned in the text, it should be noted that the simplicity of Tale agricultural technology makes it possible for quite small boys to be of occasional, if somewhat casual, assistance in the fields.

[2] The Chief of Tongo slaughtered a cow for his wives and elders at the New Year (*Daa*) Festival in 1934, the only case of the kind we came across.

consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus consider- 231
ably greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782
leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of 262
junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief customers of the butchers. But a Taleŋa occasionally buys a little [435]
meat—from a few ounces for 3*d.*, to a leg for 9*d.* to 1*s.* He may do this when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial 231
animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occa- 262
sions such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great 224
delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost [354]
entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth, among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*ziŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small 262
supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and 226
part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success, as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some 262
of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

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[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will
be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of
protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable
262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The
235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, can-
422 not replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-
born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its
chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often
do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For
poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may
be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing
friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking
away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore,
the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and indi-
viduals within the unit of food economy come to marked expres-
sion. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry
● [231] freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a
self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before
selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though
nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be
disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of
that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the
cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food
economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own
efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls
[782 never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and
431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of
birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-
meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacri-
fice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of
meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred.
At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left
to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

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[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

868 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would
858 not be sent for to come home.

858 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom
857 allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: ‘ Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.’ ‘You'd better run,’ one of the others advised, as he
[231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with
882 their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindəl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindəl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindəl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—‘ The boy has justice on his side ’—he said, when he told me the story.

857 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk
858 for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s*. 6*d*. a month
234 is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to
[435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why?
His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty
to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them.
Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip
of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them.
It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal
about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds
they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and
the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as
far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused
laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for
example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves,
bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all
fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the
buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up
to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread
out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with
legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social
world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think,
still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination
of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from
these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that
which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

Plate III

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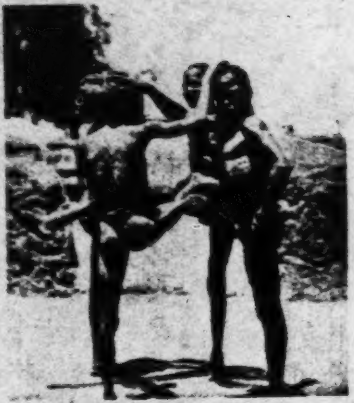

Recreational Play: *Kuobon* (posed)

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● 231
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A wrestling match—with an eye on the goat lest it wander into the growing crops

[facing p.48]

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space inside is divided into compartments by low walls. Livestock are kept [231] in an open compartment near the entrance. The land lying [241] between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a definite part of the farming system.

Fixed Cultivation.

[161] The high density of population necessitates a system of "fixed" cultivation. It is difficult to say whether the need for 241 "fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

(4). Small quantities of seed and soup ingredients are stored in earthenware pots and calabashes of different shapes and sizes, which can be sealed with mud and cowdung. Ashes are mixed with cowpeas to discourage attacks from weevils. Groundnuts are generally stored in big baskets, plastered on the outside with mud and cowdung. 251

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.

The importance of livestock in maintaining a system of fixed cultivation, under the conditions described, is patent. Furthermore the importation from French territory of large quantities of cattle, sheep, goats, and fowls, is a good indication of the size of the market for meat in Ashanti and the Colony; there is no reason why a greater proportion of this market should not be satisfied from local sources than is at present supplied, with benefit to the local farmer. In recognition of this, Government has pursued a policy of general immunisation against cattle plague, which is now practically complete. As a result, the cattle in North Mamprusi are shown to be increasing very satisfactorily (12) since the initial immunisation in 1931-32. From a census taken in 1936 they were found to number over 64,000 head. Thus over one-third of the cattle in the Northern Territories (64,293 head out of 160,000) are being maintained upon less than one-tenth of its area (3,559 sq. miles out of 41,940 sq. miles). The growth of the cattle population, taken into account with the numbers of other livestock, and the shortage of water and of human food in some years, gives some idea of the magnitude of the animal husbandry problems which lie ahead. 231 ● 744

Uneconomic Position of Livestock.

Livestock occupy a peculiar position in local farm economy. Although they are sold in order to get money when necessary, nevertheless, they are not reared for economic purposes, but primarily for religious sacrifice and the payment of marriage dowries. In North Mamprusi, wealth and position are associated, not with money, but with the number of wives and children, and livestock, that a man has. Four cows would enable a man to acquire another wife, but ten pounds would not do so (by custom). As with crop husbandry, so with animal husbandry, economic conditions are changing more rapidly than custom is adjusting itself; unless the adjustment receives careful assistance there is a grave risk of loss of soil fertility and human stamina, on the one hand, and the constitution of the livestock upon the other. 231 182

Numbers of Livestock Owned per Compound.

The numbers of livestock owned by recorded compounds are set out in Table 8, of Appendix II, in detail. From this table text Table 5 below has been extracted. 231

Table 5.—Livestock owned by 54 recorded compounds in North Mamprusi.

(From Appendix II, Table 8.)

Stock	Total owned by 54 compounds	Compounds owning each class of stock		Mean per compound assuming all owned stock equally (approx.)
		No.	% (approx.)	
Horses	2*	2	—	—
Cattle	105	29	54%	2
Donkeys	26	18	34%	1
Sheep	183	31	58%	3
Goats	235	42	78%	6
Fowls	567	47	87%	11
Guinea Fowls ...	359	36	67%	7
Nil	—	2	4%	—

*Owned only by Chiefs, or members of the chiefs' families.

It will be noted that 4% of compounds had no livestock at all at the time of record. Records were taken in March and April at a time when stocking was low, following a poor season; more stock than usual had been sold in order to purchase food. As might be expected, the amount of livestock owned by a compound is very closely correlated with the supply of foodstuffs; all compounds short of food in the year of record had livestock in numbers below the average. The area of land manured and the number of livestock owned did not show such a close correlation as was expected, but the close connection between the two is obvious.

Cattle.

The cattle are humpless, and well named "West African Shorthorn" (13), for, except that they are much smaller—adult bullocks averaging little more than 5 cwts. in weight—they resemble a Shorthorn very closely. In size, good bullocks measure from 44 to 46 inches in height at the withers, 41 to 45 inches in length, taken from the top of the shoulder blade to the root of the tail, and have a minimum girth behind the shoulders of from [illegible] to 65 inches. A variety of colour factors suggests great heterogeneity. Very pleasing animals are occasionally seen; they are stocky, with straight back-lines, and of good conformation. That such animals can be found in the unimproved environmental conditions obtaining locally, augurs well for the future. The Animal

The animal

Health Department have done much good by castrating scrub bulls, but unfortunately the farmers themselves have carried the matter further, to a dangerous degree, by castrating many of the remaining bulls in order to sell them to itinerant butchers' agents. This trade has developed rapidly during recent years and the services of any bull at all, let alone a good bull, are not always readily obtainable. The difficulty is that the cattle are owned one or two head at a time and rarely in herds, and a farmer who wants money, and has a bull he can sell to obtain it, does not see why he should keep a bull to serve his neighbours' cows, and is prepared to risk his own cow, or cows, not finding a mate. The supply of bulls is a matter receiving the attention of the Animal Health Department, through the Native Administrations. 232 231

Tending of Livestock.

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Of all classes of livestock probably fowls receive most attention. They are able to pick up a fair living by gleaning around threshing floors, and the protein constituent of their diet is obtained largely from white ants. These are collected with cowdung placed in an old pot inverted over an ant run in the soil. There is scarcely a single compound in North Mamprusi that does not engage in the export trade in fowls to Kumasi. In the dry season a man will collect together about twenty-five fowls at a time and head-load them in a long crate to some market on the road, usually Bolgatanga, or Savelugu, and either sell them to a middleman there, or join a lorry and sell them in Kumasi. With the proceeds from the sale of fowls, it is common to purchase grain in Dagomba or South Mamprusi, to re-sell in Navrongo or Zuarungu Area, and thus to show a profit upon both the journey down, and the journey up. 235 [439]

654 to be profitably exported from distances more than 600 miles from the coast. The alternative is a local export to some part of the country with money to spend; the obvious solution lies in the export of livestock to Ashanti and the Colony.

Livestock Industry.

231 [178] The conditions under which livestock are kept in North Mamprusi have been fully discussed under the heading "Animal Husbandry", pages 31 to 33. It has been shown that whilst livestock are used mainly for uneconomic purposes, marriage dowries and sacrifice, they are becoming increasingly regarded as a source of money; and with the rapid development in money consciousness which is proceeding to-day, there is no doubt that the value of livestock will become to be recognised more and more. Survey showed that 54% of compounds (probably rather less over the whole district) owned cattle of the West African Shorthorn type. [435] Bullocks find a ready sale to butchers' agents at prices varying from £1 10s. to £3 15s.; and milk, in the form of curds, is sold in local markets. Nearly all compounds own sheep, goats, fowls, and guinea fowls, and the trade in fowls is already very well established. The market for livestock in Ashanti and the Colony is practically unlimited; only a very small proportion of the meat slaughtered is locally grown. But if this proportion is to be increased, local methods of animal husbandry must be improved. Attention to breeding alone is not enough, as the Director of Veterinary Services pointed out in his Annual Report for 1935-36 (12). And because the bulk of the livestock in the Gold Coast belong to the cultivators of the soil, it will be seen, that the development of mixed farming is just as necessary for the future of the livestock industry, as the development of the livestock industry is for the future of mixed farming. Thus the ultimate justification for the investment of capital in working bullocks and cattle-drawn implements must be in the export of livestock. Work with livestock is necessarily slow, but if good feeding and good breeding produce an improvement in the local stock equivalent to the improvement effected in Northern Nigeria, by attention to these matters with Zebu cattle (13)—and there would seem to be no reason why it should not—we shall have little difficulty in justifying the cost of a plough, when local unimproved bullocks are worth nearly £4 a head to butchers' agents at the present time.

Sale of Surplus Foodstuffs.

439 But before livestock receive better treatment the people themselves must have sufficient food, and it is by the sale, as food upon local markets, of a surplus of production over individual requirements that the first mixed farmers are likely to receive a return. At the present time, large quantities of grain are imported from

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APP

Giving an analysis of the livestock o

Livestock	Value in Units†	Bongo						Nangodi				
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI*	I	II*	III	IV	V*
Cattle	60	8	–	–	1	–	3	–	4	8	1	2
Donkeys	30	1	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	2	–	–
Sheep	10	–	–	1	2	–	6	–	15	4	1	8
Goats	8	10	–	1	6	–	7	–	25	4	1	5
Fowls	1	15	–	–	10	1	10	–	16	15	5	20
Guinea fowls ...	1	–	–	–	–	–	8	–	25	14	3	16
Horses	160	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total Units ...		605	nil	18	168	1	374	–	631	641	86	276

NAVRONGO

Livestock	Value in Units	Chana						Kologo				
		I*	II	III	IV*	V	VI	I	II	III*	IV	V
Cattle	60	3	–	–	1	–	3	3	–	6	–	–
Donkeys	30	–	–	–	3	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
Sheep	10	–	–	–	5	2	2	1	2	7	3	7
Goats	8	8	–	–	5	2	2	–	–	1	4	2
Fowls	1	23	9	2	24	10	–	17	8	10	15	20
Guinea fowls ...	1	21	2	2	10	7	–	–	–	5	9	6
Horses	160	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total Units ...		288	11	4	274	53	246	207	28	453	86	142

*Compounds suffering no shortage of cultivated foods during the previous year.

†The unit is taken to be the fowl and all other classes of stock are related to it at roughly the since it does not take into account the age of the stock. The unit is useful for comparing the stocl

[p. 72A-i]

[p. 72 is blank]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11-Tallensi FE11

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 8.

the livestock owned by 54 compounds at 10 centres in North Mamprusi.

ZUARUNGU AREA (April, 1935)

ugoli			Sambruno.					Tongo					Zuarungu				
Compound No.																	
I	IV	V*	I	II	III	IV	V	I*	II	III	IV*	V	I*	II*	III	IV	V
8	1	2	3	–	3	1	–	3	–	1	6	–	3	3	–	–	–
2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	2	–
4	1	8	8	0	3	10	–	–	6	8	–	4	9	–	–	3	–
4	1	8	2	8	6	6	2	–	4	4	6	4	8	10	10	1	2
5	5	20	25	6	26	10	7	–	12	26	7	20	20	7	6	1	4
4	3	16	6	8	8	11	–	27	4	8	11	40	12	3	–	–	6
	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
1	88	276	207	131	230	243	23	267	108	213	288	133	242	200	65	29	34

NAVRONGO AREA (April, 1936)

Kologo				Navrongo		Wiaga						Total 20 compounds	Mean	N I	
I*	IV	V	VI	I*	II*	I	II	III	IV*	V	VI*			I	II
6	–	–	–	6	–	7	3	–	8	5	3	48	2.4	–	–
-	–	1	–	1	–	1	1	–	1	–	1	10	.5	–	–
7	2	7	3	8	11	–	–	–	6	3	5	62	3.1	–	–
1	4	2	4	4	7	8	4	–	4	8	7	70	3.5	–	12
10	15	20	15	–	20	17	6	8	20	8	6	230	11.5	4	26
5	9	6	9	–	7	7	10	–	10	8	5	118	5.9	4	10
-	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
35	80	145	80	473	250	536	238	8	522	420	227	4,716	236	8	276

t at roughly their exchangeable value. It is purely arbitrary
mparing the stocking on different compounds.

[p.72A-ii]

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rusi.

Zuarangu							
III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total 29 compounds	Mean
–	–	–	3	3	–	55	1.9
–	2	–	1	–	–	12	.4
–	3	–	13	–	–	109	3.7
10	1	3	15	–	1	145	5
6	1	4	–	9	3	289	10
–	–	6	14	–	–	218	7.5
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
86	99	34	474	189	11	6,577	226

	KUSASI AREA (1938)						
ean	Zebilla					Total 5 compounds	Mean
	I	II	III	IV	V		
2.4	–	–	–	2	–	2	.4
.5	–	–	–	2	2	4	.8
.1	–	–	–	10	2	12	2.4
.5	–	12	–	4	4	20	4
1.9	4	10	6	5	15	40	8
1.9	4	10	–	–	9	23	4.75
	–	–	–	–	1	1	.2
26	8	276	6	317	136	743	148

LIVESTOCK OWNED BY 54 COMPOUNDS IN NORTH MAMPRUSI

	Total	Mean
Horses	2	–
Cattle	105	1.9
Donkeys	26	.5
Sheep	183	3.4
Goats	335	6.2
Fowls	567	10.5
Guinea fowls ...	359	6.6
Units ...	12,036	223

[p. 72A-iii]

The Animal

Health Department have done much good by castrating scrub bulls, but unfortunately the farmers themselves have carried the matter further, to a dangerous degree, by castrating many of the remaining bulls in order to sell them to itinerant butchers' agents. This trade has developed rapidly during recent years and the services of any bull at all, let alone a good bull, are not always readily obtainable. The difficulty is that the cattle are owned one or two head at a time and rarely in herds, and a farmer who wants money, and has a bull he can sell to obtain it, does not see why he should keep a bull to serve his neighbours' cows, and is prepared to risk his own cow, or cows, not finding a mate. The supply of bulls is a matter receiving the attention of the Animal Health Department, through the Native Administrations. 232 231

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751/ the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top,
778 and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On
[515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr* (lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an
769 ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a *ba' bugr*. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351/ Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we
343 enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge
[347] of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside
342 this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog* (compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other
342 called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the
778 *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God),
755 a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the *baa* (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

252 262 desired, between two overlapping leaves. As soon as the water boils the cakes are arranged one on top of the other inside the pot, which is then closed tightly with a lid or calabash. The cakes are thus cooked by the steam, and are ready in 15 minutes. They are like baked porridge in appearance and are eaten with melted shea-butter spread over them and a sprinkling of salt and red pepper. *Gnor* is principally cooked for market sale, but is occasionally cooked by the housewife to vary the menu.

Milk (*bihim*)

262 ● 234 Milk is obtained only from cows and is eaten as curds (*bigbihir*) mixed with flour. Herdboys, however, when out on the pasture sometimes milk the cows for a drink.

Shea-Butter (*kpaam*)

252 262 There are five stages in the making of shea-butter:

1. The nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) are crushed with a stone to a brown pulp.
2. The pulp is placed in a large open pot (*sar*) over a fire, and stirred with a stick for a considerable time till it is a thick, sticky mass.
3. This is then ground quite fine. The grinding releases the oil.
4. It is now washed in several changes of water, being stirred continually with the hand, until the oil rises to the surface.
5. The oil is skimmed off the water, melted over a fire, and again skimmed till pure white oil is obtained. This is put into calabashes or small pots. [278] The dark oil-scum (*kpabut*) is kept for medicinal purposes. It is only used externally. The brown fibrous residue left after the washing process is made [372] into small balls and dried. This is *burum* and is used for making fires.

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868 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would
851 not be sent for to come home.

858 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom
857 allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: 'Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.' 'You'd better run,' one of the others advised, as he
[231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with
882 their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindəl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindəl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindəl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—'The boy has justice on his side'—he said, when he told me the story.

857 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk
858 for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s.* 6*d.* a month
234 is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to
● [435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why? His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234 ●
longer drive the cow out to graze.

Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsi- 183
bilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Talɔŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and how they are maintained. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale*.

592 and also, as we shall see, the many unpredictable modes of consumption
of the grain (e.g. in recompensing collective labour, *vide infra*).[1]

MEAT AND FISH. Meat (*numit*) is subject to even greater fluctuations
231 of supply than grain owing to uncontrollable sources. Every com-
235 pound possesses some live stock, if it be only a few fowls and guinea-
262 fowls. A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several
cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into
possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which
will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely,
to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never
slaughtered specifically for food[2] by the average man. We heard of
two donkeys being slaughtered in order to sell the meat by a couple of
young men out for profit. This was vigorously denounced by the
Chief, and was not repeated. As a rule beef is obtained from sacrifices
[782] to the ancestor spirits, always made by men of senior status, and from
animals offered during funeral ceremonies, donkey-meat only from
the latter offerings. The carcase is usually divided up among a large
number of people in accordance with kinship status. An elder may
obtain a whole leg of a bull, but he will sub-divide it among the com-
pounds or households subordinate to him. Thus, in the long run, the
share of a single household comes to a very small quantity, often only
a few ounces. But nothing is wasted; the whole carcase, including all
the viscera, is consumed.

Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again,
231 no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food. In addition
782 to sacrifices and funerals, there is a number of formal occasions on
262 which one of these animals must be killed, e.g. as an act of hospitality
to a mother-in-law or a very great friend. Corresponding to their
lesser value and much greater abundance, sheep and goats are sacri-
ficed in larger numbers than cows, often by men of junior status. The

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[1] Mr. Lynn, *op. cit.* finds that 1 man supports 3·7 people on the average, on 2·03 acres of farmed land. In addition to the sources of error mentioned in the text, it should be noted that the simplicity of Tale agricultural technology makes it possible for quite small boys to be of occasional, if somewhat casual, assistance in the fields.

[2] The Chief of Tongo slaughtered a cow for his wives and elders at the New Year (*Daa*) Festival in 1934, the only case of the kind we came across.

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable 262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The 235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, can- 422 not replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore, the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and individuals within the unit of food economy come to marked expression. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry [231] freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls [782 never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and 431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacrifice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred. At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

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[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

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Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten'dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering
to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold
his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere'* (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan'*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become *Ten'dan'*.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusodana*.

some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day 527
is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may
be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, 793
but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* 796
(or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the 535
water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'* of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the words:

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches 527
the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of 793
Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree
used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for 769
you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return 796
the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in
peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices.

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never 534
brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on
the land that it may know all is well.'

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests be- 241●
came ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that 527
the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be
held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant.

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

in serious soil erosion due to over-cultivation and in the diminution of 161
uncultivated bush land, so that firewood and other sylvan products 134
cannot be found within six or more miles of the settlements. 137

161

District	Area	Population	Density per sq. mile
Navrongo . .	1,551	120,870	77·96
Zuarungu . .	781	133,981	171·55
Kusaasi* . .	1,227	151,715	123·64
Mamprusi* .	2,719	61,520	22·62
Dagomba* . .	12,257	191,956	15·66

* Partly in Mandated Territory of Togoland.

In spite of the general similarity of climate and vegetation in the 241
Sudanese Zone, local variations produce significant ecological differences. 133
This is shown in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast by the
differences in agriculture north and south of the Gambaga scarp. The 134
steep scarp marks both a geological and an ecological line of division.
South of it the rock formations are of sandstone and shale, north of it
granite, quartz, and greenstone predominate. South of the scarp a form
of shifting cultivation is customary, and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are grown
on a large scale side by side with millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*, var.),
guinea corn (*Sorghum vulgare*), and maize (*Zea mays*). North of it yams
will not grow easily and cereal crops form the staple food supply.[1]

The relative scarcity of population in the yam-growing districts com- 164
pared with the congested areas north of the White Volta may be due to 161
unknown historical and cultural factors, but endemic diseases have
undoubtedly impeded population growth. While malaria, yaws, and
leprosy, to mention only the commonest enemies of native health, are
widespread throughout the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast,
sleeping-sickness is also endemic throughout the Mamprusi and Dagomba
districts. In the central sectors north of the scarp sleeping-sickness occurs
only sporadically near the rivers.

Topographical differences also appear to influence the distribution of 161
population. The high plateau which stretches from the White Volta 132
northwards is more suited for permanent habitation than the low-lying 133
flats which make up the greater part of Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the
wet season they turn into quagmires, in the dry season they are arid tracts
seriously short of water-supplies. North of the White Volta numerous
streams and small rivers combine with the relatively greater elevation
to drain the pleteau effectively during the heavy rains; and though surface
water becomes scarce in the dry season, shallow pits generally provide
sufficient water for normal needs.

The district of Zuarungu is a typical portion of the Trans-Volta plateau. 133
A number of bouldery hills from 100 to 500 feet high are scattered over 131
its undulating surface. The most conspicuous are the Tong Hills, a small
range stretching for about four miles just north of the river. It adds an

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M. and S. L., 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1936; and Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

146 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among 164 the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. [657] The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from 515 the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake [240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value 183 on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

obsequious among themselves. With all their respect for custom they are 181
not its slaves. Individual initiative, ambition and independence of action, 183
within the limits imposed by their social and material order, are common.

Tallensi do not question their traditional ritual values, but there is an element of what we should call rationalism in their religious attitudes. Their ancestor cult, an elaborate body of beliefs, rites, and ceremonies, is minutely woven into their everyday existence, but it does not pursue them with phantom terrors. On the contrary, it is the principal means provided by Tale culture for keeping the individual and the group on an even keel.

Stability; tolerance of physical hardship and discomfort as well as of human frailty and idiosyncrasy; a reasonable degree of conformity; a tenacious attachment to life fortified by an elaborate ancestor cult—these characteristics of Tale culture strike the observer at the outset. On the surface the Tale ideal is to have enough to eat, to be a successful parent, and to live at peace with one's fellows. Closer acquaintance, however, reveals hidden undercurrents. Beneath the overt stability and integration of the social order lie continuous tensions. Indeed the stability of Tale society can only be understood as a product of these tensions, created and maintained by the social processes that resolve them. Again, the natives' keen sense of the importance of social obligations hides a tendency to aggressive self-assertion. Tallensi are quick to anger if they feel themselves wronged, and are good haters. Their usual spirit of good-natured tolerance masks a proneness to suspicious watchfulness, and their frugality covers a spendthrift streak. These contradictions are subtly revealed in their religious practices. The strength of their ancestor cult rests not only on its predominant role as an integrating force in their social structure, but also on its profound psychological value for the individual. Tallensi react to misfortune with strong anxiety and guilt feelings from which they find a refuge in their ancestor cult.

This sketch of how the Tallensi strike a European calls for qualifications. It is couched in terms of our cultural values in order to help us to visualize these people in terms of a familiar vocabulary and automatic mental images. Objectively, from the standpoint of the people themselves, the value judgements implicit in our description lose their meaning. What we see as their poverty, dirtiness, poor health, and rudeness of culture they accept with equanimity as the normal conditions of their life. They have no grievance or shame about them. Being common to everybody, these conditions do not create rifts in their society or maladjustments in the individual as they do with us. They are in one respect simply part of the atmosphere within which the culture of the Tallensi (and their neighbours) develops its own richness and amplitude; in another, the material of significant themes in that culture.

Every aspect of Tale social life is conditioned by the fact that they are 181
a primitive peasantry. There is no division of labour apart from that of 241
the sexes. Censuses taken in various parts of the country show that not 463
less than 95 per cent. of the adult males are wholly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, and all of the odd 5 per cent. are partially dependent on the same source. Craft specialists work at their crafts only

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
● 241 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland
are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A
leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland
to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale, Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years, a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

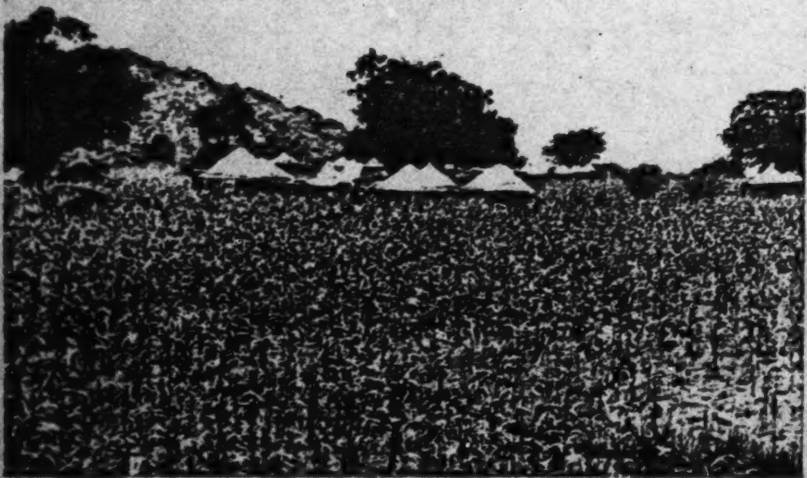
167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity, and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

[facing p. 16]

PLATE I

241
361

(*a*) Outskirts of a Tale settlement in the late dry season. In the distance (right) a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*).



(*b*) View of a Tale settlement about the middle of the rainy season.

621
421 The natives cannot imagine any tract of land or territory being totally unconnected with a human group. Most tracts of uninhabited bush are 'owned' by chiefs, who have ritual jurisdiction over hunting rights. But some tracts of untilled and uninhabited land (e.g. between Biuŋ and the river) appear to have no 'owners', either secular or ritual. The natives say the 'owners' have died out. The land did at one time have a connexion, perhaps only a ritual connexion, with a human group, and this connexion remains mystically effective still. Such areas of *wasak*, as the natives call them, are economically a free good. Anyone can come and build or cultivate there. But a man who does so will try to find some person or some clan to offer sacrifice to the Earth on his behalf, as the residuary legatee of the defunct 'owners', through local or clanship ties with them. If he fails to find anyone, he will consult a diviner to find out for himself where the sacred spots are in this stretch of *wasak* and make the sacrifices himself, thus creating a moral bond with it. Nowhere is the Earth inert; and its mystical powers are a reflex of its relations with human groups.

The three functionally differentiated aspects of man's relations to territory in Taleland are interconnected in Tale thought and custom in a rather complex way, and local differences blur the general principles. The simplest approach will be from the starting-point of land used for agricultural purposes. This is by far the most important economic use of land, but not the only one. There are few products of nature on the earth's surface that the natives do not make some economic use of, or rely on for other practical purposes. It is easy to see, therefore, why the natural environment is built into the social organization and invested with values and meaning in the social philosophy and ritual beliefs of the Tallensi. Our analysis would lead to the same conclusions if we started from uncultivated bush (*moog*), for instance, the source of essential products such as firewood, wild fruits, shea nuts, thatching grass, reeds for mat-making, rafters, medicine roots, and so forth, as well as of game and wild fowl.

Farm-land and Subsistence

311 Land means many things to the Tale farmer. He distinguishes, firstly, between the soil (*tam*) and the arable, or tilled land (*kuob*). He recognizes and takes into account different kinds and qualities of soil. This is something independent of the tillage of the land; and, conversely, cultivation (*kuo*, from *kɔ*, to hoe) turns any kind of soil (*tam*) into arable (*kuob*). Tilled land, again, is classified, without reference to soil qualities, by its location and by the kind of crops grown on it. Thus, every farmer has one or more home farms (*saman*) in the settlement and one or more bush farms (*poog*) in an area free of human habitations. In addition, a particular farm is merely a parcel of land, a bit carved out of a *tɛŋ*. In this context a *tɛŋ* is a stretch of territory in its useful, material aspect. One can speak of such and such a *tɛŋ* as being very fertile, or as having a sandy soil (*tambiihug*).

241
731 Farming is the basis of the Talɔŋ's livelihood. A failure of crops, nowadays, spells widespread privation. Thirty years ago it would have brought famine. Tallensi often talk of this, especially when unpropitious

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241 calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731 speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261] of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567] sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796 joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535 end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ kpɛŋŋa*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241 fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182 order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence. For the individual the physical well-being of himself and his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782] which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this: 'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul guul, ka dɔyam dɔya, ka guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731 physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241 natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency between a *pukpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption. One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

731 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the
●241 majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-
165 being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

788 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent
771 state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When
782 things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ŋmaarəme*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against
682 a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide
577 may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or
682 between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of
471 a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for
[461] a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed
431 or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*) —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

241 471 431 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dispossessed without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut' (*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

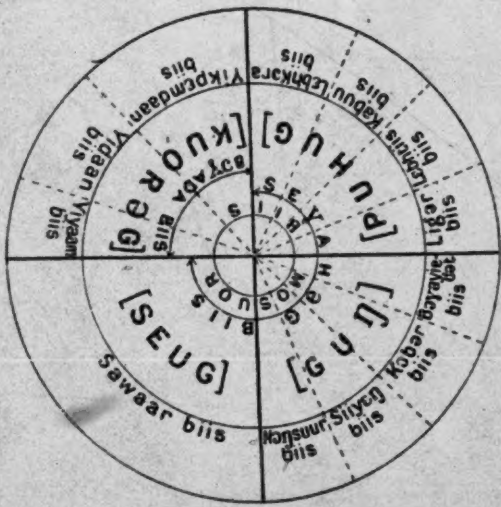
471 613 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 428 613 577 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*) what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the coexisting rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a [886] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 471 432 There is also [illegible] religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

613 sex, station in life, character, and reputation of the deceased all influence the reactions of people to a death and the range of participation
613 in the funeral ceremonies. Every death is the corporate concern of the
621 deceased's medial lineage—his *dug* of the *yizug*. It is less stringently the
764 corporate concern of the whole *yizug*. Funerals of old and important men evoke the participation of the whole clan or sub-clan, but it is clan solidarity and corporate obligation on the level of the section that draw *sunzɔ* sections to the ceremonies. Only the death of a chief, a tendaana, or other politico-ritual functionary, is the obligatory concern of every segment of the clan or maximal lineage. Funerals of women and young people or children impose no obligations on *sunzɔ* sections of the deceased's (or her husband's) section. Whether or not their representatives come to condole with the bereaved household or to take part in the burial and funeral ceremonies rests entirely with the individual members of these sections and depends on individual ties of neighbourhood, kinship, or friendship with the deceased's family and *dug*. A funeral, even that of a politico-ritual officer, is primarily the direct concern of every member of the deceased's segment of the clan or maximal lineage. It concerns *sunzɔ* segments only at the level of corporate relations, because every event that affects the existence and constitution of one part of the clan or maximal lineage impinges on its common interests.

Diagram showing internal segmentation of Tongo.



——Thick lines mark off sections (Yizugət)

----Broken lines mark off major segments of sections, that is medial lineages (dugət)

622 We may contrast with this a corporate activity in a wider sense, such
621 as the sacrifice to Mosuor at Tongo, to which we have several times
613 referred, the Harvest Festival, or the communal hoeing of the chief's
● [241] bush farm, which has become an established custom under British rule. The pivot of these activities is always the chief, who stands for the whole sub-clan and its common interests and values, and whose office transcends the cleavages inherent in its lineage segmentation. In these activities the

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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PLATE XI

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(*a*) The grave of Tendaan Genɔt and the space believed to have been occupied by his homestead and Mosuor's, now the sacred dancing ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, at Tongo. Note that it is not cultivated.

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(*b*) A miniature homestead symbolizing the ancestral home of a maximal lineage or clan. Note the lineage *bɔyar* against the outside wall.

[FACING p.224]

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit are at stake they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was [462
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights. As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of the wound.

PLATE 2

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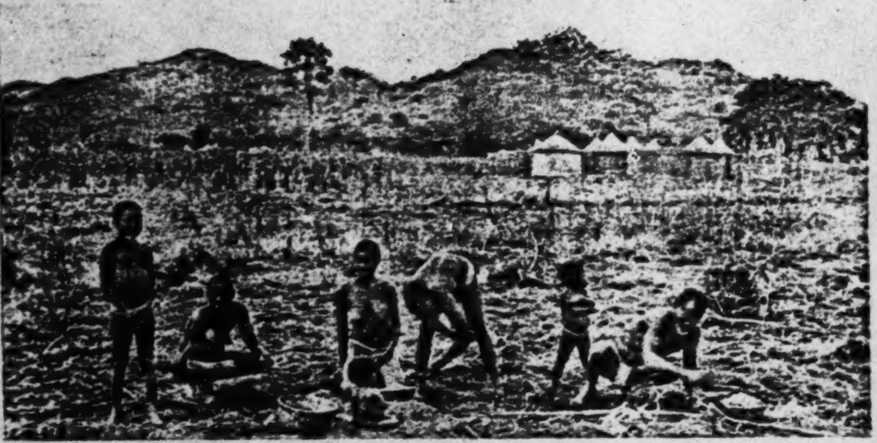

a. The domestic family is the matrix of kinship. A family party out lifting ground-nuts on the home farm. Their homestead is in the background. From right to left: the head of the family, his infant daughter, his adult son, the latter's wife and baby, the family head's wife and daughter

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b. A domestic sacrifice: cleaning and apportioning the meat of the goat at the conclusion of the sacrifice. Baŋan-Teroog, his senior wife, and his junior wife's two children. The old woman is holding a chicken ready for the next sacrifice

[Facing p. 33]

595 578 According to the natives, quarrels between co-wives are often due to one or other of them having an intractable disposition. Men add that women lack self-control and are very prone to petty jealousy; they are apt to quarrel if they think they are being unfairly treated, if, for instance, one wife seems to receive more than a fair share of her husband's attention. But when actual cases of such quarrels are examined they are seen to be an expression of the tensions springing from the cleavages in the structure of the domestic family. They are temporary disturbances of the balance between the relatively autonomous matri-central *dug* and the inclusive patri-central *yir*. That is why they occur so rarely between women who are related by kinship or clanship, and who therefore think of their *dugət* as subdivisions of a single wider *dug*. Co-wives live in harmony as long as they act in the interests of the common *yir*; dissensions arise between them when they do not accept the paramountcy of the *yir*, and assert their relative autonomy in relation to one another. In the normal run of family life the interests of the common *yir* come first, for the sustenance of the family and the general welfare of all its members depend upon proper co-operation between them, resting on mutual loyalty and goodwill.

595 462 •241 The women of the household, both those who are co-wives to one another, and those who are mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or mother and daughter to one another, usually work together harmoniously to perform their share of the productive labour of agriculture. They work under the direction of the head of the house, and the products of their labour accrue to the common food supply. This is a part of the co-operative economic organization of the household. Thus at sowing or harvest time one often sees a whole family working together in the fields. When a sowing party is at work one sees the men striding vigorously ahead, dibbling the holes with their long heavy dibbles cut from saplings, while the women follow behind, chattering and laughing amicably as they sow the grain. And when the harvest is in full swing, one sees similar cheerful family parties out on the field or homeward bound at dusk in Indian file, the men in front, perhaps carrying their pear-shaped wicker coops in which they have collected a brood of chickens that had been allowed to run in the fields during the day, the women sauntering close behind them, the heavy baskets of grain on their heads, and small boys and girls gambolling in the rear blowing [534] their whistles and shaking their rattles (*kiŋkaɣah*) of serrated calabash disks.

595 The independence of the *dug* comes out in the utilization of the food-supply. As the women have to supply the vegetables for cooking the relish which the natives regard as an indispensable accompaniment to their heavy porridge, each woman who has her own *dug* is entitled to a vegetable patch beside the wall of the homestead. Except for the senior woman of the house, who has a slightly larger vegetable patch

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

[facing p.209]

596 must now consider how these raw materials are consumed by the unit of food economy. It will be impossible in the scope of this paper to discuss every social situation affecting the domestic economy of food, since there is hardly a social act in which something edible or masticable does not participate, be it only a piece of kola-nut or a plug of tobacco. We shall refer briefly, therefore, to the most conspicuous types of situations in which food plays a part, and discuss more fully the domestic consumption of food in the ordinary routine of family life. We emphasize again that our purpose is to give an ethnographic account of these facts, as we have been able to observe them in a single year. We have not the quantitative information to allow us to venture upon a deeper sociological analysis.

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Tale food economy has a marked seasonal periodicity, as is to be expected in an agricultural society. It is this seasonal rhythm which links the supply of foodstuffs with their distribution and consumption. This correlation emerges readily from a calendrical tabulation in which the agricultural and other productive activities are set down side by side with the facts pertaining to the utilization of the food supply. Agriculture in Tale-land is a hazardous enterprise, chiefly because of the uncontrollable natural phenomena upon which a successful crop depends, above all, the correct distribution of rainfall. Good harvests and bad harvests succeed one another erratically and the natives can never predict from one year to the next. Their primitive methods of farming, too, mean that they extract only half as much out of the land as it is capable of producing. 'Nevertheless,' says Mr. Lynn,[1] 'in a good season . . . nobody is short of food. The area of land cultivated is adequate and the system of farming is successful.' But the margin of security for the average householder is extremely small, at any time. We have no means of estimating how representative the observations made by us in 1934 may be; the natives considered it to be a fair year. For our purpose, however, it chanced fortunately, since we were able to observe more easily the relations between supply and consumption of foodstuffs in the average household than might have been possible in either a very good or a very bad year.

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[1] *Op. cit.* Mr. Lynn records that in both 1930 and 1931 the harvest was bad owing to locusts and adverse rains. In 1934 the neighbouring areas were worse off than Tale-land.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
and weeding, planting guinea-corn and late millet on bush farms, rice, ground-nuts and minor crops. Hiring labour for help in hoeing and weeding.[2] Women plucking *naŋgena*.	Much live stock sold or bartered for grain very cheaply; grain scarce and dear. Much ground-nuts for sale.[1] Small groups of children wander about hungry, feeding on wild fruits and small animals they find near the settlements. Towards the end of the month many people are staunching their hunger by cutting the ripe or half ripe heads of early millet which they roast on the embers and nibble at.
JULY: Early millet harvested by those who planted first on valley land.[3]	Early millet eaten by those who harvest. Relatives from the later-

The Tallensi say that early millet normally lasts for two months, and our observations prove this to be the case. When the millet is brought in by the women, the heads are spread out to dry and sorted into two lots, the good heads (*naarsomr*) and the bad heads (*naarbiet*). The best of the former are selected for seed, threshed and stored in pots. This is the first task, as it is considered shameful to be without seed at planting time. The bad heads are eaten first, the good millet stored in the granary and eaten later. For a few days there is no restraint. Small children run about all day, nibbling at heads of millet which have been quickly roasted in hot embers. But as soon as the head of the unit of food economy has carried out the thanksgiving sacrifices which permit him, too, to eat of the new crop, he takes control.

[1] People tend to hoard their ground-nuts until about June, when the price rises to 1*s.* a small basketful, as many require seed then. The proceeds are invested in grain. Grain prices at this time are about twice the average price of roughly ½*d.* a lb.

[2] In June even those whose grain supplies have lasted well begin to feel the pinch. One reason for this is that a considerable amount of grain is expended in feeding and recompensing hired *kpaarip* (lit. hoe-men). These are Nankansi and Builsa who come to Tale-land to seek a few days' work, since their settlements are in a worse plight than those of the Tale. They insist on being paid in grain or ground-nuts which they can take home. As they have to be given flour-water (*zomkuom*) in the middle of the day and a good meal at night besides a calabash of 4 or 5 lb. of grain per day to carry home, they make considerable inroads on grain supplies. At this time of the year only those with grain to spare engage *kpaarip*, later even poorer men do so. It may mean economizing on one's own food at the time, but in this way, say the Tale farmers, one can get a large bush farm hoed or weeded expeditiously, and thus make up the grain expended twice over. 464 241

[3] Early millet is a catch-crop and the Tallensi realize this. Its function is to tide over the period of waiting until the main crops of guinea-corn and late millet are harvested. Hence the necessity for a piece of compound farm if a unit is to be fully independent.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
231 262 Hoeing and weeding of compound and bush farms in full swing. Some still planting subsidiary crops. Poultry breeding begins.	planting areas come to beg grain.[1] Wild fruits still eaten and hunger prevalent in late-planting areas. Ground-nuts, beginning to ripen, plucked and chewed as snacks.
AUGUST: Late planters harvest early millet. Invited collective labour (*kpaarip*) for hoeing and weeding coming to fore, but hired labour still in evidence.[2] Fresh hibiscus leaves used in soup.	Almost everybody has early millet; hunger appeased for a time.

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[1] The different settlements harvest at such different times corresponding to their
241 times of planting that more than a month elapses between the beginning of the
431 harvest at one end of Tale-land, and its conclusion at the other end. This gives rise to a system of reciprocities the effect of which is to cancel out the lag to some extent. People from the late-planting settlements visit their relatives in the early-planting settlements as soon as these begin to harvest and receive gifts of early millet from them. Women, especially, go thus to visit their parental homes, and no man would send his daughter or sister away empty-handed. Later, when the early-harvesting settlements begin to reach the end of their early millet stores, the process is reversed. The Tallensi never think of this in terms of economic interchange or reciprocal payments. They insist that *A* gives to *B* freely and without expectation of return because *B* is *A*'s daughter. Later, when *B*'s husband harvests his millet he will send some to *A* freely—because *A* is his father-in-law. It is significant that these mutual 'good turns' always occur between people of different settlements, not between patrilineal kin of the same settlement.

[2] Soon after early millet has been brought in, the elders and others who have had
241 a good crop begin to 'invite hoemen' (*pooh kpaarip*). An elder sends round to all
476 the compounds of his section (a sub-division of a clan settlement) requesting the young men to come out and weed his farms, compound or bush, for him on the following day. As no one would be so ill-mannered or so negligent of a kinsman's duties as to refuse, some 20 or 30 young men turn out next day. The one who issued the invitation recompenses them with two meals, flour-water (*zɔmkɔm*) at noon and a lavish cooked meal at night. Thus commences a round of collective weeding, as every farmer who can afford the 20 or 30 lb. of grain and the meat for feeding them in turn invites his kinsmen and neighbours to come and weed for him. Others have to hire foreign labour to the best of their capacity. The Tallensi account for this institution firstly on the ground that it is only by such a mass attack that the rapidly growing weeds can be kept under, and secondly on the ground that it relieves the strain of unremitting toil in the fields and increases the crops.

Gifts to relatives and feeding collective labour are a considerable strain on a man's granary at this time, though, in the long run, much of it comes back. Reliable informants told us that half of their total crop was expended thus, leaving them short of millet in September.

137 either as food or medicine, have been allowed to remain. The most important of these are :—

Adansonia digitata
Butyrospermum parkii
Parkia filicoidea
Diospyros mespiliformis
Sterculia tomentosa
Ficus gnaphalocarpa
Tamarindus indica
Celtis integrifolia

Acacia albida
Acacia sieberriana
Acacia arabica
Cieba pentandra
Bombax buonopozense
Lannea acida
Sclerocarya birrea
Vitex cienkowskii

Other trees of less economic value, which have been removed to make way for farming, or to provide firewood and building timbers, can be seen well represented in "ju-ju groves", "tengani" (Nankani), and on the margins of cultivation. The most important of these are:

Combretum spp.
Terminalia spp.
Anogeissus leiocarpus
Bauhinia spp.

Acacia seyal
Acacia senegal
Sarcocephalus russegeri

Grasses.

All land which is not under cultivation carries a covering of grasses which is usually burnt-over annually, in the dry season. The composition of grass land varies according to soil, situation, and conditions of burning and grazing. Large areas of exposed land carry only a thin cover of Heteropogon contortus. On better soils Pennisetum polystachyon, "chima" (Nankani), is found on roadsides and between farms; it is valued highly as a fodder grass. Other grasses commonly occurring on waste places in cultivated areas are: Dactyloctenium aegyptium, Chloris spp., Aristida ascensionis, and Eragrostis spp. In "bush areas" Adropogon gayanus and Cymbopogon proximus are common.

Topography.

133 •241 North and South Mamprusi are separated by a steep escarpment. This is an important dividing line for it marks the change from the standstone and shale rock formations in the South, to granite, quartz, and greenstone formations in the North; it is also roughly the Northern limit of yam cultivation, associated with methods of "shifting" cultivation; and the Southern limit of early

millet and "fixed" cultivation. The Red and White Volta Rivers 133
rise in French Territory and flow south through North Mamprusi
until they reach the foot of the scarp; here they join, and flow 241
westward. With their tributaries the Voltas drain the whole district; they are fed mainly by surface water and from being practically dry in the dry season, they become deep, swift-moving rivers in the rains, flooding their banks and doing considerable damage to road communications.

The surface of the country is gently undulating and outcrops of granitic rocks are common. Small stony hills occur sporadically and a definite range, the Tong Hills, runs north-east through the district from Shia in Zuarungu Area, almost to Bawku in Kusasi Area. The average height of the district is between 600′ and 700′ above sea level.

Soil.

The soils of North Mamprusi are mainly derived from granodiorite. 134 They are greyish-brown in colour and contain a high proportion of sand and gravel which makes them course in texture. Ridges of quartz occur in some places and in their vicinity the soil is very stony. In valley lands the soil is heavier, due to an accumulation of finer particles washed down from the surrounding slopes; this soil becomes very wet in the rainy season and is seldom cultivated, although it is capable of growing excellent crops of rice. Odd patches of laterite stone are found but they are not common. Parts of the Tong Hills are composed of greenstone, a rock which weathers to a rich red colour and gives rise to a fertile but exceedingly stony soil. In cultivating, the people shift the stones into contoured heaps against which the soil packs forming terraces; examples of these can be seen around Dutsi, Zanlerigu, and Nangodi. In the middle of the rainy season—July, August, and September—the water-table rises rapidly and large portions of the district become water-logged.

Soil Erosion.

Close arable farming with no enclosure of fields, together with the undulating surface of the country, the open nature of the soil, and the practice of burning almost every particle of vegetal ground cover during the dry season, result in very serious sheet erosion of the soil, particularly at the beginning of the rains; streams and rivers are darkly coloured by the matter carried away in suspension. The resulting loss of fertility is considerable and the stony nature of the soil is accentuated, making cultivation more

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space inside is divided into compartments by low walls. Livestock are kept [231] in an open compartment near the entrance. The land lying [241] between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a definite part of the farming system.

Fixed Cultivation.

[161] 241 The high density of population necessitates a system of "fixed" cultivation. It is difficult to say whether the need for "fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

scattered compounds, or whether closer building between compounds, on land previously available for farming, enforced the system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation, as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously. 241●

Land Tenure.

The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana" (Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs command people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs' and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide. 793 622 425

To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. The question of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agricultural land has no value in the economic sense; there are a number of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the land, through the tindana. [427]

In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been conveyed through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the requirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible, either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land 428 423

conquered many of the small tribes in North Mamprusi and superimposed their rule upon the indigenous clan system. 631 Thus many of the Chiefs in the district to-day are of Mamprusi descent and pay tribute to the Nayiri, the paramount Mamprusi Chief at Nalerigu, near Gambaga. There is little tribal cohesion amongst the family sections, or clans, and it is upon their federation into a political unit, the Mamprusi State, that political officers have been engaged recently, following Government's policy of Indirect Rule through native Administration. The clans in Zuarungu and Kusasi now come into the Mamprusi Native Administration; those of Navrongo have formed Administrations of their own. [651] Direct taxation was introduced in 1936 and marked an important step forward. A large proportion of the money collected is to be spent upon social services in the areas of collection, and agriculture is not being neglected.

Recent Slave Raids.

In addition to conquest from the South, the district was continually invaded by mounted slave-raiders from the North. 721 There is no doubt that the unsettled conditions produced by these raids 241● have had a profound effect upon the economic and social life of the people. The importance of this from our point of view is that now, with settled conditions, the people may be expected to adjust themselves, in time, to the new order of things, and to be prepared to modify their system of farming where necessary. It is probable that these invasions, together with tse-tse fly in heavy bush, tended to concentrate the population around the rocky hills characteristic of the district, where the horsemen would be at a disadvantage. The attention of the people appears to have been concentrated more upon weapons—bows and arrows, or spears, still used to-day for ceremony and hunting—than upon agricultural implements. It is also a significant fact that the indigenous system of agriculture requires no operation to be performed on the farm during the dry season, which is the season of the year when invasion would take place. The burning of the grass in the dry season may have been done to reduce the chance of surprise attack.

Agriculture a Custom, not a Business.

241 As might be expected from tribes consisting of small units having continually to defend themselves and losing many of their strongest men in fighting or taken as slaves, the people in North Mamprusi remained, economically, very primitive. Although the system of agriculture is "fixed", which is generally regarded as an advance upon "shifting cultivation", it leaves much to be desired. Farming methods have not been adjusted sufficiently quickly to

241 keep pace with the growth in intensity of conditions. Farming is regarded as a custom and not as a business, with the result that in crop production and in animal husbandry the maximum is left to Nature. It is custom based upon an unsettled past which underlies the economic system.

Diet.

262 264 The diet of the people is largely vegetarian; only after religious sacrifice, or upon a very special occasion, is the flesh of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys or dogs, eaten, subject to certain taboos. Fowls are not eaten by women, or, in some sections, by first-born male children; they are therefore not generally found in a normal diet; guinea-fowls are eaten, however, by all who can afford them. The big meal of the day is consumed in the evening and consists of cereal flour, cowpeas, or Bambarra beans, prepared as a dough or porridge, over which soup made with or without meat, is poured. In the mornings a light meal is taken off anything left-over from the previous evening; similarly at mid-day. When working in the farms at the beginning of the season cereal flour is taken mixed with drinking water. The results of a study of the diet of the Tallensi—a tribe around Tongo in Zuarungu Area—in relation to domestic economy, has been dealt with very fully by Dr. M. and Mrs. S. L. Fortes (9).

Recurrent Food Shortage.

262 251 241 It is not surprising that with a precarious rainfall and almost complete dependence upon cereals, crop yields are very variable and recurrent food shortage is a common experience. Soil erosion, and a system of continuous cultivation with inadequate manuring, have reduced the bulk of farmed land to a basic minimum of fertility, except in the immediate vicinity of compounds. The food problem is further complicated by a natural improvidence of the people whereby all crops are consumed in the year they are produced. In good years a surplus of grain is used lavishly in performing religious customs; it is seldom stored against the possibility of a bad season. A rise in the market value of crops at planting time suggests that many people are so improvident as not even to save sufficient seed for planting.

Famine Foods.

222 261 A reduced supply of cultivated foods in a poor season is eked out by food from wild sources. There is scarcely a single tree in populated areas which has not some value in this respect; and the seed of an indigenous grass, "Gonongo" (Nankani) (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), is laboriously collected and used as grain.

Types of Farm.

Farms are of three types :—

244
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1. Compound Farm. This is the original farm and the most important. It is dressed with any manure which may be available and invariably receives attention first. Size and shape is very variable; average size, 4.89 acres.

2. Farms separate from compound farm but not "bush". These are generally small areas between compound farms, very irregular in outline and farmed less intensely than the compound farm; average size 1.35 acres.

3. "Bush" Farms. These are extensively cultivated farms, away from compounds, often upon stony hillsides. They receive the minimum of attention. The average size of bush farms is 1.74 acres.

Analysis of Areas Cultivated.

Of the land cultivated by 54 recorded compounds, 61% of the total area cultivated was compound farm; 17% farm away from the compound but not in bush; and 22% was bush farm (see Appendix II, Table 4). Not every compound had each kind of farm, however :—

10 compounds (18%) had compound farms only, with an average of 7.47 acres.

22 compounds (41%) had compound farms with an average area of 4.51 acres and in addition farms away from the compound (but not "bush" farms) average area 2.07 acres.

14 compounds (26%) had compound farms of an average area of 4.36 acres and "bush" farms of 4.56 acres.

8 compounds (15%) had compound farms with an average area of 5.89 acres; farms away from the compound but not bush—2.35 acres—and bush farms—5.75 acres.

Bush farms were found at Nangodi, Tongo, Kologo, and Zebilla; none at Bongo, Chana, Sambruno, Navrongo and Wiaga. Two compounds at Zuarungu, on the Nangodi road, had bush farms in the hills. The treatment of different types of farms will be discussed below under the headings for crops and yields.

Man Power and Persons Supported.

Two figures of primary importance to the study of agriculture in its particular relationship to food-supply and density of population are, (i), the area of land cultivated per man working; and (ii), the area of land cultivated to support a unit of population. These figures, when taken into consideration with the system of farming followed, and the agricultural potentialities of the district, form the basis and starting point for ameliorative measures. Statistics are given for every compound surveyed, in Appendix II, Tables 1—3. These are summarised in Appendix II, Table 4, from which the following data have been extracted. 241● 311

1. The total area of land cultivated by 54 compounds was 431.08 acres. This gives an average area cultivated per compound of 7.98 acres.

2. The number of men farming 431.08 acres was 173; average area cultivated per man farming—*2.49 acres.*

   (Note. Boys big enough to hoe are included as "men farming". Women and children also assist, particularly with planting and harvesting.)

3. Total number of persons supported on 431.08 acres was 650 (this figure includes children, but not babes in arms); average area cultivated per person—*.66 acres.*

4. 173 men supported 650 persons; 1 man supported 3.7 persons.

5. An average compound farmed 7.98 acres, of which 61% may be compound farm, 17% away from the compound but not bush, and 22% bush farm. This area is farmed by 3.2 men and supports 12 persons.

It is interesting to observe that if these figures are taken as being representative of the whole of North Mamprusi, about one-eighth of the district is under cultivation.

CROP HUSBANDRY.

Crops Grown and Methods of Cropping.

All crops grown in the district are annuals of which the cereals, early millet, late millet, and guinea corn, occupying over 90% of the cultivated land (see Table 2, below), are by far the most important. A list of the crops more commonly grown is given in 241

Appendix III with their Nankani, Kassena, and Builsa names. Mixed cropping is the general practice with all except root crops and tobacco. Proximity to the compound, and the nature and fertility of the soil, determine the crops to be planted on any given area. The cropping most commonly found upon the three types of farm is as follows :—

(i) *Compound Farm.*

The standard cropping upon fertile land—land sometimes manured—is early millet mixed with guinea corn, alternated with early millet and late millet. Further from the compound where land is seldom manured, guinea corn alternated with late millet is planted without early millet. This alternation of the late cereals is the only rotation followed. Under guinea corn and millet, whether planted in a mixture or alone, cowpeas and "neri" (Cucumis melo) are invariably planted as ground crops. Minor crops planted in small quantities in compound farms are: maize, intercropped upon old midden sites near the compound; Hibiscus cannabinus in small beds, a soup plant "Nangina", Nankani (Gynandropsis pentaphylla), and sometimes tobacco, near to the compound wall; groundnuts upon sandy soil away from the compound and Bambarra beans on gravel; rice in small patches, sweet potatoes and Fura-fura potatoes (Coleus dysentericus) in ridges or beds, in wet parts of the farm. Odd plants of pumpkin (Curcubita pepo), sesamum, and cassava, are sometimes intercropped around the compound; whilst over the compound itself, calabashes (Lagenaria vulgaris) are trained. Small beds of the earth bean, Kerstingiella geocarpa, and tiger nuts (Cyperus esculentus), are sometimes planted on the margin of the farm. Along the sides of all paths and farm boundaries Hibiscus sabdariffa is planted.

During the rains, as can perhaps be imagined from the above description, the compound farm presents an amazing scene of heterogeneous crop growth, in marked contrast to the bareness of the dry season. There is no part of the farm, other than that occupied by buildings, paths, and occasional grazing areas, which has not something planted upon it. The method of planting is very haphazard, and this, and the filling of blanks in a mixture with some other crop, greatly complicates the cropping plans. A compound farm may have as many as a dozen different mixtures of crops upon it, planted on areas from as small as .01 of an acre, upwards.

(ii) *Farms Separate from the Compound Farm, but not in "Bush".* 241 ●

These farms are seldom manured and only rarely are they sufficiently fertile to grow a crop of early millet as well as another cereal; they are treated in the same way, therefore, as those parts of the compound farm which lie outside the sphere of manuring. If there is no land in the compound farm suitable for groundnuts, the farm may have been specially selected for this crop. The general treatment of these farms is the same as that described for the compound farm; but since no early millet is planted, there is no great hurry at the beginning of the season and the farm receives attention when work on the compound farm is well in hand.

Under this heading should be mentioned the dry season tobacco cultivation on the river flats between Bolgatanga and Winkogo and, to lesser extent, at Sambruno and elsewhere. This is a specialised cultivation of importance in these places. The land is fertile because it receives some of the goodness leached out from the surrounding country. In a season when rains fall early, a crop of early millet may be taken off before the land becomes water-logged. In August and September tobacco seed-beds are prepared; the seedlings are transplanted in October and November as the water-table recedes. The tobacco is harvested in January, February, and March. 249

(iii) *Bush Farms.*

Bush farms are found only in areas where unoccupied land is not more than a mile or two away from the compound. They are frequently made on hill-sides where the soil is shallow and weed growth is not very vigorous. Little is done beyond planting the seed and giving a single hoeing. Guinea corn and cowpeas alternated with late millet and cowpeas is the usual cropping until yields fall off; the farm is then left to recuperate for a few years. In a lucky season fair yields may be reaped, and any yield is considered a good return for the small amount of labour expended. It is necessary to mention that in the south of Kusasi Area, and in the south-east of Zuarungu Area, yams are grown in bush farms, and the system of farming followed is typical of South, and not North, Mamprusi. 241

An analysis of the distribution of crops at the ten centres of record is given in Appendix II, Table 5. From this table the following summary (Table 2) has been taken. It shows the crops, and mixtures of crops, and the proportion of the total area cultivated under each, expressed as a percentage for the total area cultivated by 54 recorded compounds. The area manured, as a percentage of the total area cultivated, is also shown.

Table 2.—Summary of analysis of cropping and manuring on 431.08 acres farmed by 54 recorded compounds in North Mamprusi.

Crops or Mixture of Crops	% of total area cultivated (approx.)	% manured	Type of farm
Cereals—			
Early millet Late millet Ground crops*	16%	4.7%	Compound
Early millet Guinea corn Ground crops	16%	3.7%	Compound
Early millet Late millet Guinea corn Ground crops	18%	3.8%	Compound
Late millet Ground crops	16%	—	Bush and compound
Guinea corn Ground crops	16%	.45%	Bush and compound
Late millet Guinea corn Ground crops	4%	—	Bush and compound
Rice	1%	—	Compound
Maize	.04%	.02%	Compound
Late millet** Groundnuts	4%	—	Compound
Total Cereals	91%	12%	
Legumes—			
Groundnuts	5%	—	Compound
Bambarra beans ...	.2%	—	Compound
Groundnuts ... Bambarra beans	3%	—	Compound
Kerstingiella geocarpa	.1%	—	Compound
Total legumes ...	8%	—	
Root crops—			
Coleus (Fura-fura) potatoes	.5%	—	Compound
Sweet potatoes ...	.1%	—	Compound
Total Root crops	.6%	—	
Miscellaneous—			
Tobacco Okro Hibiscus cannabinus	.1%	—	Compound

*Ground crops—Cowpeas and 'neri.'

**Could also be included under 'Legumes.'

Manuring.

It has already been mentioned that manuring forms a definite part of the farming system; there is scarcely a single compound which has not a compost heap of some kind in front of it, and everyone is familiar with the value, and the use, of manure. It is surprising, therefore, to find no great attention paid to either quality or quantity. Table 2, column 3, shows that 12% only of the total area cultivated received a dressing of manure in the year of survey. The manure (compost) consists of household sweepings, that is, the dung from livestock mixed with vegetable waste; but the amount of manure which is accumulated in this way is very small by comparison with the amount which could be made if a little more care was exercised in its preparation. Women and children carry the manure from the midden in baskets and put it on to the land in small heaps, just before, or just after, early millet is planted. From these heaps it is spread around at the next hoeing. The baskets hold from 4 to 15 lbs. and the heaps are made from 6' to 8' apart; this gives an average dressing of from 2 to 5 tons per acre. The yield figures (see Tables 3 and 4 below) leave no doubt as to the value of these small dressings of manure. Undesirable as it may be from a sanitation point of view, the vigorous growth of crops around compounds and near to markets, suggests that nightsoil plays no small part in the maintenance of soil fertility (a point which should be remembered when considering the provision of latrines: a septic tank used to compost vegetable waste is much to be preferred, where practicable, to pit latrines and incineration). 241

Implements.

The agricultural implements used by a people are generally a good index to the standard of their agriculture. This is certainly true of the implements used by the people in North Mamprusi: they are very rudimentary and the standard of cultivation is low. The hoe, with which most of the work is done, consists of simple oblong-shaped iron blade, 7" long and 5" wide, slightly concave on its inner face. The middle of the top of the blade is drawn up into a ring, this is forced on to the tapered end of a short hooked stick which serves as a handle; the whole weighs under 2 lbs. The blade is set on to the handle at an angle of about 85°, and the hoe is used by working it towards the body. The handle is about 1½'-2' long, made generally from "ginga" (Nankani) (Diospyros mespiliformis), or "gopelaga" (Acacia sieberriana). For chopping, or cultivation in particularly hard ground, an adze is used; this is made of heavier iron than the hoe, 1½"-3" wide and 4"-6" long, 412

412 mounted on a similar handle. Hoe-blades are now made from scrap iron, mainly parts of old motor cars and old railway sleepers; [177] a hoe is sold in the market for 2d. or 3d., which is well within the purchasing power of everyone. It is not many years, however, [326] since hoes were made from locally smelted iron; they were then not so easy to come by and some of the poorer farmers used hoes of hard wood.

●241 134 The coarse nature of the soil enables a shallow cultivation to be given effectively with these light implements after a fall of rain. When the ground is dry and hard, cultivation is very laborious and it is frequently neglected at a time when needed most. This is often the case early in the season when precarious rains make a soil-mulch desirable.

Preparation for Planting.

243 Two of the most important crops, early millet and guinea corn, are sown after the second big rain of the year, this is generally in the first week of April. The soil, which has been left untilled since the burn-over after the previous year's harvest, is very hard until humidity rises with the approaching rain, and there is very little time to do any preliminary cultivation. On the majority of farms the only preparation for sowing is to collect the remains of the previous season's crops into heaps and to burn, and sometimes to carry-out manure; very occasionally a little hoeing is done.

Planting Major Crops.

412 241 On the morning following the big planting rain the whole countryside turns out to do one of its few really full day's work on the farm for the year. Men walk over the farm with stout sticks about 6′ long, cut from "tcheea" (Nankani) (Anoegeissus leiocarpus), or "gopelaga" (Nankani) (Acacia sieberriana), sharpened at the end to a flat point, resembling a narrow-bladed oar; or sometimes fitted with a worn hoe blade. With these sticks, holes are prodded at random 2′ 6″ to 3′ apart in the moist earth; the soil being ejected with a twist of the wrists. 241 Women and children follow the men with the seed of early millet and cowpeas mixed in a calabash. The calabash is held in the hand between the third and fourth fingers, and three to six seeds of early millet;

and occasionally one or two of cowpeas, are deftly ejected into each 241 hole with the thumb and first fingers; both early millet and cowpeas are sown in the same hole. The seed is then lightly covered with soil and made firm by treading as planting proceeds. It generally takes two or three days to finish sowing early millet, and if the ground is still soft enough, guinea corn, mixed with "neri", is sown immediately, in exactly the same way as early millet and cowpeas, in the spaces between. When the sowing of guinea corn is finished in the compound farm, late millet is sown; it is also used for filling blanks in guinea corn. Attention is next given to the farms away from the compound. All cereals, except rice, are planted by the beginning of May, in a normal season.

Planting Minor Crops.

At the end of April or early in May women plant "bersi" 241
(Nankani) (Hibiscus cannabinus), okra, and "nangina" (Gynan- 241
dropsis pentaphylla), in beds close to the compound, and "bito" (Hibiscus sabdariffa) at intervals of 2′ beside paths and along farm boundaries. Towards the end of May, groundnuts are planted 6″ to 18″ apart in a manner similar to cereals, except that frequently the land is hoed first. Bambarra beans are planted next, either on the flat, or if the land is wet, on wide ridges. Coleus potatoes and sweet potatoes are planted on ridges in June. Rice is sown at the end of June, alone, or occasionally between guinea corn on wet land; when the water-table rises in late July, rice is thinned and transplanted as opportunity permits. This is also the time for thinning and transplanting late millet; a common practice is to transplant it into groundnut farms. [249] Tobacco seed beds are prepared and sown in August, and the seedlings are transplanted in September and October for the dry season crop.

Crop Varieties.

A number of crop varieties are recognised and although many 241 of the names distinguish only colour factors, other factors, such as earliness of maturity, particular uses, predilection for certain kinds of soil and manure, are known and utilised. With guinea corn, for instance, over a dozen varieties exist.

Cultivation.

Intercultivation starts as soon as crops have germinated, and any manure which was not carried before planting, is applied at this time. Cultivation consists of scraping the top three or four

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great
care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The
work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are
[461] at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more
than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated
in a day is about $\frac{1}{10}$th acre. Hoeing is started near to the compound
and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached
the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they
receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never
[476] recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of
grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange
[273] for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or
farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In
a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages.

On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three
243 hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to
earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single
cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice;
or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

241 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of
June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about
243 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this
stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and groundcrops
are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a
few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is
allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period
birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them
and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery
threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short
knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to
[242] dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads
are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and
Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—
"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots;
this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet
252 heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants
and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly
to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash

252 [146] is used in preparing tobacco for chewing, and also, by percolation, "coom missom" (Nankani), literally "sour water", which is used in cooking cereal foods. The salts in the ash probably supply important minerals to the diet (11), but the process by which they are obtained, robs the soil of much of the manurial value in the residue of the early millet crop.

241 251 The leaves of cowpeas are picked by women throughout the growing season and used in making soup. Maize is harvested towards the end of July, followed by "neri". The fruits of neri are buried in the ground for about ten days to rot the pericarp; they are then dug up, washed by women in a stream, and the seeds are dried and stored in pots for future use. Early guinea corn is reaped at the end of August and in September, by which time late millet and the main guinea corn crop are coming into flower. At this season, women and children strip all the leaves and sepals from Hibiscus sabdariffa and, after careful drying, store them in pots for making soup during the dry season. The leaves of Hibiscus cannabinus are similarly treated, and the end of the branches, bearing fruits, are cut off and later the seeds are removed for soup making. The bast fibres of both Hibiscus sabdariffa and Hibiscus cannabinus are drawn after retting in streams for 10 to 12 days: they are made into rope of good quality; this work is generally performed by men. Women also draw the fibres of Hibiscus cannabinus, and scrub them white for making the "tails" they sometimes wear as alternative dress to leaves. 248

241 The main harvest season starts during the middle of September with groundnuts, and is carried on through October, and into early November, with guinea corn and late millet. During this period, from a peak in August, the rainfall decreases and the water-table falls; with the onset of the harmattan in November, the whole countryside dries rapidly. The groundnut plants are lifted with a hoe, and carried to the shade of a tree, where the nuts are picked off; the hay is carefully conserved as a dry season fodder. The day previous to reaping the late cereal, cowpeas are collected and carried to the compound; the leaves and stems are also conserved for fodder. The heads of late millet and guinea corn are cut off in the same way as those of early millet, and the stems are trampled to the ground. For about three weeks after harvesting, livestock are given open range in the farms and they feed readily upon the still succulent leaves of guinea corn and, to a less extent, millet. But as soon as the material is dry enough, fire is put through the farm to burn off the trash from the resistant cereal stalks, leaving them slightly charred, and clean: in this way much valuable dry season fodder is destroyed. The stalks are chopped from their

The stalks are chopped from their roots with an old hoe, collected into bundles, and stacked near the compound for use as fuel in the dry season, and for building purposes. Throughout the dry season the ground is hard and bare, except for the roots of cereals lying about; it remains in this condition until the farming cycle starts again with the approach of rain in the following year.

Yields of Crops.

The methods by which yield data were collected have already been described on page 16. The yields from nearly a thousand sample plots have been recorded at the ten centres in North Mamprusi during the years 1932, 1934, 1935, and 1936. These yields have been analysed according to district, year of record, and whether or not the plots were manured in that year, and the analysis is given [illegible] Tables 5 and 6 of Appendix II. The number of sample plots from which each mean was obtained is given in brackets, as an index of reliability. (Unfortunately it is not possible to give standard errors of the means since the first recorded individual plot yields have been mislaid and only the mean yields and the numbers of plots were placed on record.) It will be seen from this table that wide fluctuations in yield occur from year to year and from one district to another in the same year. 1932 and 1936 were generally recognised to be good years and it is interesting to note that in both these years the rainfall curves were very similar. They show: showers of rain in February; good planting rains in early April, with curves rising to peaks in May, and then falling slightly at the end of June for the ripening of early millet; after that a steady rise to second peaks at the end of September, instead of August, which do not fall quickly until the end of October. The year 1934 was considered to be rather below the average due to shortage of rain, both early and late in the season, and an excess at the time early millet was ripening. From Table 5 in Appendix II the mean yields for the more important mixtures of crops have been taken and these are given in Table 3 opposite to the nearest 5 lbs. per acre; this table should be considered in conjunction with Table 2 (text). Yields from plots which were manured in the year of record are classified as such; it was not possible to consider either the quality or the quantity of manure applied in relation to yield. The remarkable effect of quite small dressings of native compost (see page 23) upon yields is noteworthy.

Table 3.—Summary of the mean yields for the more important mixtures of crops in North Mamprusi. Records taken over a four year period 1932-1936.

(From Appendix II, Table 6.)

Crops	Mean Yields per acre		
	Unmanured	Manured	
Early millet	320	455	lbs. grain
Late millet	405	420	lbs. grain
Cowpeas*	60	80	lbs. seed
Neri	40	30	lbs. seed
Early millet	295	555	lbs. grain
Guinea corn	370	525	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	80	lbs. seed
Neri	40	30	lbs. seed
Early millet	280	505	lbs. grain
Late millet	150	95	lbs. grain
Guinea corn	260	460	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	80	lbs. seed
Neri	40	30	lbs. seed
Late millet	240	—	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	—	lbs. seed
Neri	40	—	lbs. seed
Guinea corn	355	—	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	—	lbs. seed
Neri	40	—	lbs. seed
Late millet	120	—	lbs. grain
Guinea corn	110	—	lbs. grain
Cowpeas	60	—	lbs. seed
Neri	40	—	lbs. seed
Late millet	145	—	lbs. grain
Groundnuts	690	—	lbs. dry in shell
Rice	690	—	lbs. paddy
Groundnuts	635	—	lbs. dry in shell
Bambarra beans	490	—	lbs. dry in shell
Groundnuts	565	—	lbs. dry in shell
Bambarra beans	150	—	lbs. dry in shell
Coleus potatoes	3,361	—	lbs. fresh tubers
Sweet potatoes	5,313	—	lbs. fresh tubers

*The weights of 'ground crops', cowpeas and 'neri', were calculated irrespective of mixture.

241 In order to demonstrate the annual variation in yields more clearly and the performance of individual crops, the yield of each of the more important crops has been calculated from Table 6, Appendix II, irrespective of the mixture in which it was grown; these yields are given in Appendix II, Table 7. Provided that the proportions of crops in the mixtures were fairly constant from year to year, the figures have a comparative value. From Appendix II, Table 7, the district means obtained in each year have been calculated to the nearest 5 lbs. per acre, and these are set out below in Table 4 :—

Table 4.—Summary of mean yields of each of the more important crops, irrespective of mixture, for the years 1932, 1934, 1935 and 1936. Figures in lbs. per acre.

(From Appendix II, Table 7.)

Crop		1932	1934	1935	1936	Summary for all years
Early millet ...	Unmanured	355	230	365	300	270
	Manured	525	385	605	505	505
Late millet ...	Unmanured	350	195	175	255	235
	Manured	430	205	60	220	225
Guinea corn ...	Unmanured	395	230	320	495	325
	Manured	530	400	415	680	485
Groundnuts ...	Unmanured	490	6[illegible]0	725	685	595

The mean yields for 1936 given in the above table are lower than the means for Zuarungu and Navrongo since they include those from Zebilla in Kusasi Area. Zebilla suffered badly from a shortage of rain early in the season, which depressed the yield of the early crops; the guinea corn recovered well, however.

Methods of Storing Crops.

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Cereals in bulk are generally stored unthreshed, in conical shaped granaries; the day's allowance is given to the women each morning by the head of the compound, and threshed as required. These granaries ("bari", Nankani) are made of "swish" proofed with cowdung and an infusion of the empty pods of Parkia filicoidea ("aam", Nankani); they are built inside the compound in Navrongo and Zuarungu Areas, and generally outside the door of the compound in Kusasi Area. In size they vary from 4′ to 6′ in diameter at the base, and from 6′ to 10′ high. A diagram of a section through a granary is given in Muir and Williams' paper (4).

Table 6.—Comparison of statistics from ten compounds in Zuarungu Area which suffered no food shortage in 1931-32, and nineteen compounds which suffered from a shortage. 262 241

	Means from 10 compounds with no food shortage.	Means from 19 compounds short of food.
Area of land farmed per compound	8.16 acres.	5.66 acres.
Men farming	3.4	3.4
Area farmed per man	2.4 acres.	1.68 acres.
Persons living in compound ...	14.7	11.5
Area cultivated per person ...	.55 acres.	.49 acres.
Persons supported per man farming	4.3	3.4
Units of livestock (March, 1932) ... (Fowl = 1 unit.)	399	136

From Table 6 it will be seen that compounds which suffered from no shortage were bigger in almost every particular than compounds which suffered (c.f. district means, Appendix II, Table 4). Observation throughout the 1932 season showed that the farms of the ten successful compounds were better cultivated, and the owners had the reputation for being good farmers. A study of yields, however, showed no appreciable difference in favour of the successful farms; but as already mentioned, 1932 was a very good season for crops in Zuarungu Area, and none of our compounds suffered from a shortage of food during the following dry season. This suggests that under the present system of farming, the major factors determining yield are those lying outside the farmers' control; the most important of these are the amount and distribution of rainfall. The effects of better farming are more marked, therefore, in a bad season than in a good one. It is probably this fact, together with a knowledge of "wild" sources of food, which has resulted in a system of farming which demands the minimum amount of labour from the farmer, and leaves the maximum to Nature; for Nature, in the shape of a "fetish", can be placated by the simple expedient of sacrifice.

CAUSES OF FOOD SHORTAGE.

Indirect Causes.

Food shortage has been ascribed to a lack of land resulting from a concentration of population, and land settlement schemes have been suggested as the solution of the problem. But the concentration of the population is responsible only indirectly, and only for as long as the system of farming remains unchanged. It 262 178

262 178 is doubtful whether, given unlimited land, the local farmer would be prepared to devote any more time to cultivation. The inherent fertility of virgin land would be quickly dissipated if existing farming methods were followed upon it. Therefore, to provide more land without giving attention to the system of farming to be followed would merely postpone solution of the problem. The maximum distance to "bush" land from any point in North Mamprusi is about 8 miles, and it would not appear unreasonable to expect a man to move this distance voluntarily, if an adequate food supply were his greatest consideration and the acquisition of more land would ensure it. Changing economic and social conditions are bringing about the necessity for changed methods of farming. There is little doubt that development will stimulate expansion into unpopulated areas; then will be the time to foster migration, not before.

Direct Causes.

●241 262 Density of population is therefore only indirectly a cause of recurrent food shortage; some of the more direct causes are:—

1. Farming practices which are not sufficiently intensive for conditons. A system of "fixed" cropping is followed and manuring is quite inadequate.

[461] 2. The innate distaste of the people for consistent labour, especially when there is a chance that it may not be essential. That is, a farmer would rather sacrifice to his ancestors for more rain—and perhaps spend the rest of the day at market (not marketing)—than to give his farm a surface cultivation to conserve the moisture already in the ground.

3. The lack of sufficient incentive, and a conservatism which makes a man prefer to cultivate a small area of impoverished land, cultivated by his ancestors, to going eight miles, or less, and having the labour of breaking up bush land (predial larceny is often offered as an excuse when bush farms are suggested).

4. Too great a reliance upon cereal crops. A bad season for cereals, or, as in recent years, depredations by locusts, means food shortage; that the season might have been a good one for root crops or legumes, does not affect the situation very much.

5. A "vicious circle" has been created. Years of living on 241
the margin of subsistence, have sapped the energy of the 146
people and predisposed them to disease; at the present 164
time, many are physically incapable of the hard work which is necessary to bring about an improvement in their conditions. 262

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL AGRICULTURE. 000

From our study of the causes of food shortage it is possible to suggest ameliorative measures. The two main forms which these measures must take are :—

1. By increasing the area of land in cultivation.

2. By improving the existing system of farming.

But as we have seen above (Indirect Causes of Food Shortage) the effectiveness of the first measure depends upon the second. It is therefore upon measures for improving the existing farming system with which we are concerned at present. Some of the more important of these are considered, in tabular form, below. It should be mentioned that the improvement in water supplies, which is shortly to receive attention (14), will play an important part in the general improvement of conditions, towards which the following suggestions are made :—

1. *Growth of a greater diversity of crops.*

   Too much reliance is placed upon cereals. The planting of more groundnuts and sweet potatoes; the introduction of pigeon peas, "sanzi" (an early maturing Dagomba bean), cassava, and, in some areas, yams and sesamum, would make useful additions to the present range of crops.

2. *The introduction of a rotation of crops.*

   This would require study over a period of years, but if, as seems desirable, the area of legumes and roots is to be increased, some form of rotation will be essential.

3. *Attention to the increase and maintenance of soil fertility.*

   Just as farmyard manure is the basis of arable farming in most other countries in the world, so might it usefully become the basis of arable farming here. "Mixed farming" provides the solution. The livestock of the country have a greater potential value as the producers of

APPENDIX II—TABLE 1.

ZUARUNGU AREA.

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Details of areas farmed (in acres), men farming and persons supported for 29 compounds recorded at 5 centres in Zuarungu Area in 1932.

(Note.—The area of land occupied by buildings and waste land is not included.)

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Bongo— I. Ayanbiri...	.53	2.00 1.65 .37 .14 .47	–	* 5.16	1	5.16	10	.51
II. Akani ...	2.89	.67 2.00 .42	– –	* 5.98	1	5.98	4	1.49
III. Inyaba ...	1.04	1.89	–	2.93	2	1.46	5	.58
IV. Aganda ...	6.71	.57	–	7.28	7	1.04	20	.36
V. Akawiboku	1.32	.54	–	1.86	3	**.62	8	.23
VI. Afuki ...	2.98	1.00 .50 1.45 2.03	–	7.96	4	1.99	13	.61
Totals ... Means ...	15.47 2.58	15.70 2.61	– –	31.17 5.19	18 3	– 1.73	60 10	– .51
Nangodi— I. Doliba ...	1.62	1.57 .09	–	3.28	3	1.09	7	.47
II. Tobiga ...	13.25	.09	2.67	16.01	5	3.20	36	.44
III. Bugari ...	5.27	–	2.62	7.89	4	1.97	15	.51
IV. Banitami	3.54	–	2.36	5.90	2	2.95	7	.84
V. Babila ...	3.88	–	3.04	6.92	6	1.15	19	.36
Totals ... Means ..	27.56 5.51	1.75 .35	10.69 2.14	40.00 8.00	20 4	– 2.00	84 16.8	– .48

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 1 (continued).

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate "not bush"	Bush Farm	Total				
Sambruno— I. Kasalaga	5.59	.99 .90 .26 .45	–	8.19	8	1.02	15	.61
II. Alori ...	2.78	.65 .20 .32 1.00 .51	–	5.46	5	1.09	13	.42
III. Asoro ...	5.50	1.07 .53 .68	–	7.78	3	2.59	11	.73
IV. Ayarina	8.57	.34	–	***8.91	2	4.45	7	1.27
V. Kolgo ...	4.01	1.34	–	5.35	2	2.67	6	.89
Totals ...	26.45	9.24	–	35.69	20	–	52	–
Means ...	5.29	1.85	–	7.14	4	1.78	10.4	.65
Tongo— I. Yembila ...	2.48	2.74	–	5.22	1	5.22	4	1.30
II. Zukori ...	3.82	.45 .59	5.96 4.83 5.65	21.30	7	3.04	36	.59
III. Omara ...	1.68	.61 .65	5.25	8.19	6	1.36	23	.35
IV. Dagbana...	6.43	.46 .51 .68	–	8.08	3	2.69	13	.62
V. Goloma ...	5.98	2.50	–	8.48	6	1.41	19	.44
Totals ...	20.39	9.19	21.69	51.27	23	–	95	–
Means ...	4.08	1.84	4.34	10.25	4.6	2.23	19	.54
Zuarungu— I. Adachama	9.25	3.89 .86	–	14.00	4	3.5	23	.60
II. Abagua ...	5.61	–	–	5.61	2	2.8	10	.56
III. Azogadugu	2.37	–	–	2.37	1	2.37	6	.39
IV. Awuni ...	3.22	–	–	3.22	2	1.61	10	.32
V. Atia ...	2.75	–	–	2.75	1	2.78	3	.92
VI. Asoro ...	7.56	–	–	7.56	4	1.98	8	.99
VII. Abugbiri	2.04	–	1.01	3.05	2	1.52	9	.34
VIII. Ayenpam	1.44	–	1.04	2.48	1	2.48	6	.41
Totals ...	34.24	4.75	2.05	41.04	17	–	75	–
Means ...	4.28	.59	.26	5.13	2.1	2.44	9.4	.55
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 29 COMPOUNDS IN ZUARUNGU AREA								
Totals ...	124.11	40.63	34.45	199.17	98	–	366	–
Means ...	4.28	1.40	1.19	6.87	3.7	2.03	12.6	.54

*Receive assistance. **Two men very old. ***Poor, eroded land.

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 2 (continued).

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Wiaga— I. Abasu ...	3.12	.76 .46	–	4.34	3	1.45	10	.43
II. Akulbalmni	4.62	.89 .77 .57	–	6.85	2	3.43	8	.86
III. Anisedi ...	1.07	3.20	–	4.27	1	4.27	4	1.07
IV. Amanyadi	3.99	2.03	–	6.02	4	1.51	9	.67
V. Azurumi	2.86	1.01	–	3.87	2	1.94	12	.32
VI. Ansodi ...	1.87	.37	–	2.24	1	2.24	9	.25
Totals ... Means ...	17.53 –	10.06 –	– –	27.59 4.59	13 2.1	– 2.12	52 8.6	– .53
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 20 COMPOUNDS IN NAVRONGO AREA								
Totals ... Means ...	110.51 5.52	23.12 1.16	29.97 1.49	163.60 8.19	54 2.7	– 3.03	217 10.8	– .75

*Farmed very extensively. **One man a tailor.

APPENDIX II—TABLE 3.

KUSASI AREA.

Details of areas, men farming, and persons supported at Zebilla. Surveyed 1936.

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Compound No. and Name of Owner	Areas farmed, in acres				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Zebilla— I. Mbila ...	1.58	–	6.37	7.95	1	8.18	4	2.04
II. Abila ...	4.62	–	9.62	14.24	6	2.4	22	.65
III. Agbanbila	4.26	–	4.30	8.56	4	2.16	9	.96
IV. Akobari ...	14.70	5.94	3.76	24.40	6	4.31	17	1.52
V. Aroko ...	4.22	3.23	5.71	13.16	4	3.30	15	.88
Totals ... Means ...	29.38 5.88	9.17 1.83	29.76 5.95	68.31 13.66	21 4.2	– 3.25	67 13.4	– 1.02

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 4.

Summary of Tables 1—3 giving totals and means for 54 compounds surveyed at ten centres in North Mamprusi. (Allowance has been made in areas for land occupied by buildings or waste land. "Persons supported" includes adults and children, except babes in arms.)

District and Centre of Record	No. of Compound	Area farmed in acres				Total Number men farming	Area per man	Total Number persons supported	Area per person	Compound Means			Persons supported per man
		Compound Farm	Farm away *not* bush	Bush Farms	Total Area					Area farmed	Men farming	Persons supported	
Zuarungu Area—													
Bongo ...	6	15.47	15.70	—	31.17	18	1.73	60	.51	5.19	3	10	3.3
Nangodi ...	5	27.56	1.75	10.69	40.00	20	2.00	84	.48	8.00	4	16.8	4.2
Sambruno ...	5	26.45	9.24	—	35.69	20	1.78	52	.65	7.14	4	10.4	2.6
Tongo ...	5	20.39	9.19	21.69	51.27	23	2.23	95	.54	10.25	4.6	19	4.1
Zuarungu ...	8	34.24	4.75	2.05	41.04	17	2.44	75	.55	5.13	2.1	9.4	4.4
Navrongo Area—													
Chana ...	6	54.33	1.41	—	55.74	16	3.48	49	1.14	9.29	2.6	8.1	3.1
Kologo ...	6	29.75	5.09	29.97	64.81	16	4.05	83	.78	10.80	2.6	12.9	4.9
Navrongo ...	2	8.90	6.56	—	15.46	9	1.74	33	.47	7.73	4.5	16.5	3.6
Wiaga ...	6	17.53	10.06	—	27.59	13	2.12	52	.53	4.59	2.1	8.6	4.1
Kusasi Area—													
Zebilla ...	5	29.38	9.17	29.76	68.31	21	3.25	67	1.02	13.66	4.2	13.4	3.2
Totals ...	54	264.00	72.92	94.16	431.08	173	—	650	—	—	—	—	—
Means ...	—	4.89	1.35	1.74	7.98	3.2	2.49	12	.66	7.98	3.2	12	3.7
		61%	17%	22%									

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

Summary of Cropping at 10 Centres of Record in

District :	Zuarungu Area (1932)					
Centre of Record :	Bongo	Nangodi	Sambruno	Tongo	Zuarungu	Tota 29 comp
No. of compounds recorded :	6	5	5	5	8	acres
Cereals— Early millet Late millet Groundcrops*	6.90 (1.71)	7.44 (1.28)	1.04 (.62)	11.91 (6.79)	18.99 (4.19)	46.28 (14.59)
Early millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	9.79 (2.47)	9.80 (1.46)	6.35 (.81)	4.44 (2.89)	5.90 (.72)	36.28 (8.35)
Early millet Late millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	2.98 (1.06)	–	13.15 (6.68)	–	5.32 (1.90)	21.45 (9.64)
Late millet Groundnuts	2.04	5.42	3.81	2.53	2.25	16.05
Late millet Groundcrops	–	.84	.63	19.03	3.23	23.73
Guinea corn Groundcrops	5.69 (1.10)	15.41	1.15 (.83)	11.98	1.22	35.45 (1.93)
Late millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	–	–	2.05	.98	.65	3.68
Rice	–	–	.58	–	.01	.59
Maise	–	–	–	.08 (.02)	.02	.10 (.02)
Legumes— Groundnuts	3.70	.75	3.35	–	2.17	9.97
Bambarra beans	–	.14	.14	–	–	.28
Groundnuts Bambarra beans	–	–	3.17	–	.74	3.91
Kirstingrella geocarpa	–	.09	.09	.11	–	.29
Root Crops— Coleus potatoes	–	–	–	–	.32	.32
Sweet potatoes	–	–	.02	.21	.22	.45
Miscellaneous— Tobacco	–	.11	.02	–	–	.13
Okra	.07	–	–	–	–	.07
Hibiscus cannabinus	–	–	.14	–	–	.14
Total Cereals Percentage	27.40 (6.34) 88	38.91 (2.74) 97	28.76 (8.94) 80	50.95 (9.70) 99	37.59 (6.81) 91	183.61 (34.53) –
Total Legumes Percentage	3.70 12	.98 2	6.75 19	.11 –	2.91 7	14.45 –
Total Roots Percentage	– –	– –	.02 –	.21 –	.54 1	.77 –
Total Miscellaneous... Percentage	.07 –	.11 1	.16 –	– –	– –	.34 –
Total Area cultivated	31.17	40.00	35.69	51.27	41.04	199.17

*Ground crops — nari and cowpeas.

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 6.

tres of Record in North Mamprusi. (All areas are given in acres. Figur

(1932)			Navrongo Area (1934 and 1935)					
Zuarungu	Total 20 compounds		Chana	Kologo	Navrongo	Wiaga	Total 20 compounds	
8	acres	%	6	6	2	6	acres	%
18.99 (4.19)	46.28 (14.59)	23	1.62	5.01	–	.31	6.94	4.2
5.90 (.72)	36.28 (8.35)	18	4.27 (3.29)	9.93	.73	4.40	19.33 (3.29)	11.8
5.32 (1.90)	21.45 (9.64)	10	16.83	12.17 (2.93)	7.08 (4.05)	19.20	55.28 (6.98)	33.8
2.25	16.05	8	1.93	1.31	–	–	3.24	1.9
3.23	23.73	11	5.27	16.63	3.26	.26	25.42	15.3
1.22	35.45 (1.93)	17	7.11	5.20	1.74	–	14.05	8.6
.65	3.68	1.8	6.82	7.04	.53	.31	14.70	9
.01	.59	.24	1.25	2.96	.26	–	4.47	2.7
.02	.10 (.02)	.05	–	–	.05	–	.05	.03
2.17	9.97	5	1.99	2.91	1.66	1.17	7.73	4 .7
–	.28	.14	–	.56	–	–	.56	.3
.74	3.91	1.95	8.57	1.09	–	1.78	11.44	7
–	.29	.14	–	–	–	.16	.16	.09
.32	.32	.16	.05	–	.15	–	.20	.01
.22	.45	.22	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	.13	.06	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	.07	.03	.03	–	–	–	.03	–
–	.14	.07	–	–	–	–	–	–
37.59 (6.81) 91	163.61 (34.53) –	– 92	45.10 (3.29) 81	60.25 (2.93) 93	13.65 (4.05) 88	24.48 89	143.48 (10.27) –	– 87:5
2.91 7	14.45 –	– 7	10.56 19	4.56 7	1.66 11	3.11 11	19.89 –	12.1 –
.54 1	.77 –	– .40	.05 –	– –	.15 1	– –	.20 –	.12 –
– –	.34 –	– .1	.03 –	– –	– –	– –	.03 –	– –
41.04	199.17	–	55.74	64.61	15.46	27.59	163.60	–

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are given in acres. Figures in brackets denote area manured.)

934 and 1935)			Kusasi Area (1936)		Total, 54 compounds at 10 centres		Type of farm where commonly planted : Compound : Type (I) and Type (II) Bush : Type (III)
Wiaga	Total 20 compounds		Zebilla				
6	acres	%	6 acres	%	acres	%	
[illegible]1	6.94	4.2	14.21 (5.97)	20 (9)	67.43 (20.56)	15.6 (4.7)	Compound
4.40	19.33 (3.29)	11.8	12.47 (4.36)	18.2 (6)	68.08 (16.00)	15.8 (3.7)	Compound
19.20	55.28 (6.98)	33.8	–	–	76.73 (16.62)	17.9 (3.8)	Compound
–	3.24	1.9	–	–	19.29	4.6	Compound
.26	25.42	15.3	18.28	26.7	67.43	15.6	Bush and compound
–	14.05	8.6	19.73	28.8	69.23 (1.93)	16 (.45)	Bush and compound
.31	14.70	9	–	–	18.38	4.2	Bush and compound
–	4.47	2.7	.06	–	5.12	1.2	Compound
–	.05	.03	.05 (.05)	– (.06)	.20 (.07)	.04	Compound
1.17	7.73	4.7	2.17	3.1	19.87	4.6	Compound
–	.56	.3	–	–	.84	.2	Compound
1.78	11.44	7	–	–	15.35	3.5	Compound
.16	.16	.09	–	–	.45	.1	Compound
–	.20	.01	1.29	1.8	1.81	.4	Compound
–	–	–	–	–	.45	.1	Compound
–	–	–	–	–	.13	.03	Compound
–	.03	–	–	–	.10	.02	Compound
–	–	–	.05	.07	.19	.04	Compound
24.48 89	143.18 (10.27) –	– 87.5	64.80 (10.38) –	– (15) 94	391.89 (55.18) –	– (12) 91	
3.11 11	19.89 –	12.1 –	2.17 –	– 3.1	36.51 –	– 8.4	
– –	.20 –	.12 –	1.29 –	– 1.8	2.26 –	.5 –	
– –	.03 –	– –	.05 –	.1 –	.42 –	.1 –	
27.59	163.60	–	68.31	–	431.08	–	

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7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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Analysis of Yield Data in North Mamprusi, 19

Mixtures of Crops	ZUARUNGA					
	1932		1934*		1935*	
	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	1
Early millet ... ... late millet and groundcrops (neri and cowpeas)	397 (4[illegible]) 535	625 (9) 762	254 (4) 480 (4)	344 (7) 444 (7)	355 (14) 291	
Early millet guinea corn and groundcrops	286 (40) 422	528 (14) 574	204 (20) 507	270 (4) 653	517 (10) 339	5 5
Early millet late millet guinea corn and groundcrops	384 (29) 125 350 —	406 (9) 100 461 —	203 (4) 175 320	—	—	
Late millet and groundcrops	282 (9)	—	246 (1) —	—	—	
Guinea corn and groundcrops	413 (4)	—	—	—	210 (2)	
Late millet guinea corn and groundcrops	186 (2) 82 (2)	—	—	—	—	
Rice	350 (1)	—	—	—	—	
Late millet groundnuts	159 (13) 582	—	156 (4) 1140	—	—	
Legumes— groundnuts	560 (35)	—	820 (3)	—	860 (15)	
Bambarra beans	487 (5)	—	—	—	—	
Groundnuts Bambarra beans	247 (7) 132		885 (2) 78	—	—	
Cowpeas	78 (123)	102 (49)	64 (29)	77 (13)	106 (24)	
Coleus potatoes	357 (10)	—	—	—	—	
Sweet potatoes	4284 (6)	—	—	—	—	
neri (Cucumis melo)	23 (123)	28 (48)	19 (23)	11 (27)	56 (24)	

*Compound farms only.

**Records from two compounds at Chana and two a

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 6.

North Mamprusi, 1932-1936. (All yields in lbs. per acre. Figures in bra

	ZUARUNGA AREA							
1934*		1935*		1936*		Summary		193
d	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured
))	344 (7) 444 (7)	355 (14) 291	— —	337 (11) 411	— —	370 (69) 462	502 (16) 623	203 (11) 329 (11)
)	270 (4) 653	517 (10) 339	560 (6) 588	410 (6) 501	550 (3) 744	304 (76) 450	500 (27) 608	268 (36) 272
)	—	—	—	—	—	362 (33) 133 346	406 (9) 100 461	233 (62) 184 [illegible]
)	—	—	—	—	—	278 (10)	—	207 (38)
	—	210 (2)	—	—	—	345 (6)	—	126 (27)
	—	—	—	—	—	186 (2) 82	—	[illegible]18 (22) 91
	—	—	—	—	—	350 (1)	—	632 (11)
)	—	—	—	—	—	158 (17) 725	—	106 (4) 623
)	—	860 (15)	—	—	—	660 (53)	—	631 (12)
	—	—	—	—	—	487 (5)	—	—
)	—	—	—	—	—	388 (9) 120	— —	469 (25) 83
)	77 (13)	106 (24)	81 (16)	93 (11)	—	80 (187)	95 (68)	49 (191)
	—	—	—	—	—	3572 (10)	—	1062 (6)
	—	—	—	—	—	4284 (6)	—	8400 (2)
)	11 (27)	56 (24)	45 (16)	—	—	27 (170)	26 (91)	51 (196)

pounds at Chana and two at Navrongo.

[p. 708-ii]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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NDIX II—TABLE 6.

cre. Figures in brackets denote number of sample plots from which each m

	NAVRONGO AREA						
mary	1934		1935		1936**		Summ
Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured
502 (16) 623	203 (11) 329 (11)	— —	146 (3) 403	985 (1) 280	—	—	191 (14) 330
500 (27) 608	268 (36) 272	395 (13) 395	377 (16) 352	821 (16) 458	497 (1) 240	—	305 (53) 295
406 (9) 100 461	233 (62) 184 182	445 (13) 117 300	281 (13) 78 275	572 (15) 72 436	388 (9) 168 483	586 (8) 87 779	252 (84) 166 228
—	207 (38)	—	284 (9)	—	—	—	222 (47)
—	126 (27)	—	292 (5)	—	—	—	152 (32)
—	118 (22) 91	— —	82 (1) 620	— —	— —	— —	116 (23) 113
—	632 (11)	—	746 (7)	—	950 (2)	—	703 (20)
—	106 (4) 623	— —	110 (2) 606	— —	— —	— —	107 (6) 617
—	631 (12)	—	540 (3)	—	—	—	613 (15)
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	469 (25) 83	—	759 (13) 96	—	687 (12) 362	—	597 (50) 153
95 (68)	49 (191)	56 (26)	59 (19)	49 (23)	—	—	50 (210)
—	1662 (6)	—	—	—	—	—	1662 (6)
—	8400 (2)	—	—	—	—	—	8400 (2)
26 (91)	51 (196)	56 (26)	11 (13)	11 (10)	—	—	48 (209)

[p. 708-iii]

s from which each mean was obtained.)

			ZEBILLA			
36**	Summary		1936		Summary for all data	
Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured	Unmanured	Manured
—	191 (14) 330	965 (1) 280	145 (10) 119	378 (17) 241	319 (93) 406	455 (34) 422
—	305 (53) 295	630 (29) 430	160 (11) 257	489 (12) 568	293 (140) 376	553 (68) 525
586 (8) 87 779	252 (84) 166 228	529 (36) 91 463	— —	— —	282 (117) 156 261	505 (45) 93 462
—	222 (47)	—	253 (22)	—	238 (79)	—
—	152 (32)	—	539 (36)	—	356 (74)	—
— —	116 (23) 113	— —	— —	— —	122 (25) 111	— —
—	703 (20)	—	—	—	687 (21)	—
— —	107 (6) 617	—	— —	—	145 (23) 688	— —
—	613 (15)	—	380 (4)	—	635 (72)	—
—	—	—	—	—	487 (5)	—
—	597 (50) 153	—	— —	— —	565 (59) 148	
—	50 (210)	54 (49)	42 (79)	85 (29)	62 (366)	79 (146)
—	1662 (6)	—	6057 (3)	—	3456 (19)	—
—	8400 (2)	—	—	—	5313 (8)	—
—	48 (209)	45 (36)	—	—	39 (379)	31 (127)

[p. 70B-iv]

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 7.

Analysis of yield data for the more important crops grown in North Mamprusi showing yield per crop, irrespective of mixture.

(Figures in brackets denote number of sample plots from which each mean was obtained.)

Crop	Unmanured or Manured	Zuarungu Area				Navrongo Area			Zebilla	Weighted Mean for all data
		1932	1934	1935	1936	1934	1935	1936	1936	
Early millet ...	Unmanured	353(109)	193 (32)	422 (24)	362 (17)	242(109)	323 (13)	438 (15)	153 (21)	271(358)
	Manured	523 (52)	317 (11)	560 (6)	550 (3)	419 (26)	618 (26)	857 (6)	425 (29)	506(159)
Late millet... ...	Unmanured	349 (80)	248 (25)	258 (19)	411 (10)	185(147)	123 (28)	176 (1)	211 (32)	236(342)
	Manured	431 (18)	308 (11)	—	—	117 (13)	59 (18)	107 (3)	241 (17)	227 (80)
Guinea corn ...	Unmanured	395 (75)	464 (26)	317 (12)	510 (6)	193(154)	322 (35)	535 (20)	473 (47)	326(375)
	Manured	530 (23)	539 (8)	588 (6)	744 (3)	360 (26)	378 (26)	870 (6)	568 (12)	486(110)
Rice	Unmanured	350 (1)	—	—	—	632 (11)	746 (7)	950 (2)	—	687 (21)
Groundnuts ...	Unmanured	489 (67)	757 (13)	860 (5)	—	595 (47)	—	776 (13)	389 (4)	594(169)
Bambarra beans ...	Unmanured	251 (12)	78 (2)	—	—	95 (31)	—	441 (3)	—	155 (48)
Cowpeas	Unmanured	78(123)	64 (29)	106 (24)	93 (11)	49(191)	59 (19)	—	42 (79)	62(366)
	Manured	102 (49)	77 (13)	81 (6)	—	58 (26)	49 (23)	—	85 (29)	79(146)
" Neri "	Unmanured	23(123)	19 (23)	56 (24)	—	51(196)	11 (13)	—	—	38(379)
	Manured	28 (48)	11 (27)	45 (6)	—	58 (26)	11 (10)	—	—	31(127)
Coleus potatoes ...	Unmanured	3,752 (10)	—	—	—	1,662 (6)	—	—	6,057 (3)	3,456 (19)
Sweet potatoes ...	Unmanured	4,284 (6)	—	—	—	8,400 (2)	—	—	—	5,313 (8)

[P.72 is blank]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

APPENDIX III.

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824

List of crops more commonly grown in North Mamprusi with their botanic and local native names.

Crop	Nankani	Kassena	Builsa
Early millet (Pennisetum typhoides, var.)	Nara	Chara	Nara
Late millet (Pennisetum typhoides, var.)	Zia	Mumpuana	Zia
Guinea corn (Sorghum vulgare)	Tchee*	Yara	Zamonta
Maize (Zea mays)	Kariana	Kamana	Tumbena
Rice (Oryza sativa)	Mui	Mumulinga	Mua
Groundnuts (Arachis hypogea)	Sunkpam	Sunoga	Sunkpa
Bambarra beans (Voandzeia subterranea)	Suma	Sinonu	Suma
Geocarpa beans (Kerstingiella geocarpa)	Sumperga	—	Sulumperg
Cowpeas (Vigna spp.)	Tia	Suona	Tua
Yams (Dioscorea spp.)	Nyuya	Pia	Nyuya
Sweet potatoes (Ipomoea batatus)	Nyimbemto	Nanuri	Nambanura
Coleus potatoes (Coleus dysentericus)	Pearsa	Yia	Pisa
Cassava (Manihot utilissima)	Banchi	Manchi	Banchib
Okra (Hibiscus esculentus)	Ma-ana	Ma-ana	Ma-ana
Hibiscus (short) (Hibiscus sabdariffa)	Bito	Puora	Suri
Hibiscus (long) (Hibiscus cannabinus)	Bersi	Kasoga	Kasoga
Soup plant (Gynandropsis pentaphylla)	Nangina	Kalema	Karabacho
Neri (Cucumis melo)	Sama	Yakoro	Bura
Calabash (Lagenaria vulgaris)	Tungu	Zonga	Chin
Calabash (bottle shaped) (Lagenaria vulgaris)	Linka	Konkolu	—
Pumpkin (Curcubita pepo)	Yogari	—	—
Bungu (Ceratotheca sesamoides)	Suri	Suru	Boarta
Sesame (Sesamum indicum)	Sasam	Buum	Bunsing

**Note.*—Tchee is also used as a general term for cereals, rather in the same way that we use the word "corn."

[p. 74 is blank]

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great
care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The
work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are
[461] at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more
than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated
in a day is about $\frac{1}{10}$th acre. Hoeing is started near to the compound and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached
the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they
receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never
[476] recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of
grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange
[273] for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or
farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In
a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages.

243 On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three
hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to
earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single
cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice;
or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

241 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of
June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about
243 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this
stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and ground-crops are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a
few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is
allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period
birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them
and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery
threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short
knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to
[242] dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads
are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and
Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—
"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots;
this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet
252 heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants
and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly
to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash

596 462 for consumption. This division of labour runs through the whole of Tale domestic economy and is equally well evinced, e.g. in the organization of house-building and repairing. Boys and girls, too, have their duties in connexion with the care of the live stock and in the house.

596 The head of such a self-supporting unit has his own granary or granaries. Just as he is the final arbiter in agricultural matters, so he alone controls the distribution to the women of the grain jointly produced. In theory he could even sell the grain if he wished without consulting the men dependent on him; in practice, he dare not do so, for they would leave the compound at the first opportunity.

596 422 The entire unit of food economy thus draws its main supply of grain, the staple foodstuff, from a common source. But every household, every primary family, and indeed every individual other than young children has a degree of economic independence which is limited only by the obligations to the bigger unit. An industrious householder usually possesses some poultry and perhaps sheep and goats of his own, supplies a good deal of the minor crops consumed by his own wives and children, and even some grain to augment his wives' rations from the main store. Every woman, again, adds to the food supply of her primary family by her own efforts. If she is a market trader or a potteress, for example, she will have money of her own, will sometimes purchase extra foodstuffs and may invest in live stock which will eventually go to her sons. Her husband has no powers of disposal over her property. If he uses any of it, by her permission, it is a debt which must be repaid.

● 243 DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION IN RELATION TO AGRICULTURE AND CROPS. This system can best be understood in relation to Tale agriculture. The staple crop is millet (generically, *ki*) of which there are three kinds, early millet (*naara: pennisetum typhoideum*); guinea-corn (*ki* specifically, each variety being known by a special term, e.g. *kutɔk*, *kazii* &c.: *sorghum vulgare*); and late millet (*za: pennisetum spicatum*). These with a small amount of rice (*mui: oryza sativa*) occupy 92 per cent. of the area cultivated in the Zuarungu district.[1] The seasonal

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[1] According to Mr. Lynn, who reports observations on 29 compounds in Zuarungu district, five being in Tale settlements. Four were somewhat larger and

variations in the ripening of crops makes it essential, as will be clear 243
later, for a self-supporting unit to have a supply of every type of
cereal, or face starvation at certain times of the year. Early millet is
grown only on the compound farms (*saman*), land immediately surrounding
the compounds and kept fertile by human and animal
manure and by spreading the detritus of the kitchen midden. The 243
compound farms at the disposal of a joint family consist of irregular 311
patches of greatly varying size scattered throughout the area of settlement
of their lineage. They are acquired by inheritance, succession, 425
or gift from the head of one's joint family or lineage. How much of
it a man has depends, thus, upon his seniority within the joint family
and the lineage. The head of a joint family may cultivate 6 or 8 acres
of compound farm; his younger brother and prospective heir, as head
of an independent unit of food economy, may have only two acres or
less allotted to him.[1] The compound farm is so precious that it is
regarded as sacrilege to sell or abandon it.

Guinea-corn or late millet, which ripen several months after 243
the early millet, are grown both on compound farms and on bush 311
farms (*poog*) from one to four miles distant from the settlements of 425
those who cultivate them. Bush farms also descend in the line of 596
inheritance; but they can be bought or borrowed for a term of years.
If the bush land belonging to his own joint family is limited, a man
can always borrow as much as he requires. A head of a joint family
may require no bush farm at all if he has a large compound farm;
junior men, on the other hand, depend the more upon their bush
farms the less compound land they have.[2] Compound land is the
most fertile and most easily worked owing to its proximity. Those
who have large compound farms (e.g. elders) are less liable to food
shortage than those who have mainly bush farms (i.e. younger men).

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richer than the average Tale compound, as they belonged to headmen or elders. Botanical names are taken from Mr. Lynn's report.

[1] Rough calculations based on a survey of farms made for us by Mr. D. S. Commey. Mr. Lynn's records show that the Tale compound farms he measured vary from nearly 7 acres to under an acre; the average being 3·36 acres.

[2] Mr. Lynn found bush farms to vary from about 5 to 10 acres in extent. How much bush farm is cultivated depends, of course, upon the number of men co-operating and upon the food requirements of the unit, as well as upon the amount of *saman* they have.

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table‡ given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalaŋ*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

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[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

‡ [See cat. 116, p.241 — Analyst.]

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[784] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

867 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]
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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243 ●
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pɔhg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

412 mounted on a similar handle. Hoe-blades are now made from
scrap iron, mainly parts of old motor cars and old railway sleepers;
[177] a hoe is sold in the market for 2d. or 3d., which is well within the
purchasing power of everyone. It is not many years, however,
[326] since hoes were made from locally smelted iron; they were then
not so easy to come by and some of the poorer farmers used hoes of
hard wood.

241 The coarse nature of the soil enables a shallow cultivation to
be given effectively with these light implements after a fall of rain.
134 When the ground is dry and hard, cultivation is very laborious and
it is frequently neglected at a time when needed most. This is often
the case early in the season when precarious rains make a soil-mulch desirable.

Preparation for Planting.

•243 Two of the most important crops, early millet and guinea corn, are sown after the second big rain of the year, this is generally in the first week of April. The soil, which has been left untilled since the burn-over after the previous year's harvest, is very hard until humidity rises with the approaching rain, and there is very little time to do any preliminary cultivation. On the majority of farms the only preparation for sowing is to collect the remains of the previous season's crops into heaps and to burn, and sometimes to carry-out manure; very occasionally a little hoeing is done.

Planting Major Crops.

412 On the morning following the big planting rain the whole
countryside turns out to do one of its few really full day's work
241 on the farm for the year. Men walk over the farm with stout sticks
about 6′ long, cut from "tcheea" (Nankani) (Anoegeissus
leiocarpus), or "gopelaga" (Nankani) (Acacia sieberriana),
sharpened at the end to a flat point, resembling a narrow-bladed
oar; or sometimes fitted with a worn hoe blade. With these sticks,
holes are prodded at random 2′ 6″ to 3′ apart in the moist earth;
the soil being ejected with a twist of the wrists. Women and
241 children follow the men with the seed of early millet and cowpeas
mixed in a calabash. The calabash is held in the hand between
the third and fourth fingers, and three to six seeds of early millet,

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more [461] than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated in a day is about $\frac{1}{10}$th acre. Hoeing is started near to the compound and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of [471] grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or [273] farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages.

● 243 On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice; or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

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243 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and ground-crops are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to [242] dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots; this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet 252 heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table‡ given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalaŋ*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

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[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

‡ [See cat. 116, p241 — Analyst.]

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not required at the time, and always borrowed specifically for this purpose from kinsmen and friends. Women rarely obtain their ground-nut fields from their husbands. They prefer to beg land from their own cognatic kinsmen, thus emphasizing their absolute independence of their husbands as regards this crop.

For this reason they never receive assistance from their husbands with the hoeing and planting of their ground-nut fields. A son often assists his mother; or young women 'invite' (*pooh*) a couple of young kinsmen of their husband to hoe their ground-nut fields in return for a very good meal, the grain for which the woman generally provides from her own resources. Many, again, have simply to rely upon their own skill with the hoe. The ground-nut crop thus gained is the woman's to consume or sell, as she pleases.

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Of the remaining subsidiary crops, the most important—though less important than ground-nuts—are the legumes, Bambara beans (*suma: voandzeia subterranea*), cow-peas (*tia: vigna sinensis*) and geocarpa beans (*sulempie: kerstingiella geocarpa*); and the root crops, frafra potatoes (*peeha: coleus dysentericus*) and sweet potatoes (*ŋumhmaʼala: ipomea batatas*). Bambara beans and frafra potatoes are grown by the more energetic younger men on borrowed strips of compound farm after the millet is cut. Cow-peas are planted along the edges of compound farm by the head when he sows his early millet.

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Vegetables are the concern and the property of women. The head of a unit of food economy every year allots a small patch of land, some 100 square yards or less, immediately beside the compound wall to each woman with a kitchen of her own. Here she sows her *naŋgena* (*gynandropsis pentaphylla*), some ocro (*maʼana: hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*h. sabdariffa*), *beris* (*h. cannabinus*). The latter three vegetable plants are also grown like cow-peas and *neri* (*cucumis melo*), alongside the paths which border the compound farm. Thus as they grow and ripen the women can get at them easily without injuring the millet. A woman's vegetable patch is always hoed for her by her husband as the produce is for their common use. The leaves of the cow-pea plant (*tia: vide supra*) are used as a vegetable known as *bɛŋit*, and are plucked for this purpose by the wives of the man who planted the *tia*; and the same rule applies to the use of the *neri* seed as a soup ingredient.

Plate II

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A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

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Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

and occasionally one or two of cowpeas, are deftly ejected into each 241
hole with the thumb and first fingers; both early millet and cowpeas are sown in the same hole. The seed is then lightly covered with soil and made firm by treading as planting proceeds. It generally takes two or three days to finish sowing early millet, and if the ground is still soft enough, guinea corn, mixed with "neri", is sown immediately, in exactly the same way as early millet and cowpeas, in the spaces between. When the sowing of guinea corn is finished in the compound farm, late millet is sown; it is also used for filling blanks in guinea corn. Attention is next given to the farms away from the compound. All cereals, except rice, are planted by the beginning of May, in a normal season.

Planting Minor Crops.

At the end of April or early in May women plant "bersi" 241
(Nankani) (Hibiscus cannabinus), okra, and "nangina" (Gynan- 244
dropsis pentaphylla), in beds close to the compound, and "bito" (Hibiscus sabdariffa) at intervals of 2' beside paths and along farm boundaries. Towards the end of May, groundnuts are planted 6" to 18" apart in a manner similar to cereals, except that frequently the land is hoed first. Bambarra beans are planted next, either on the flat, or if the land is wet, on wide ridges. Coleus potatoes and sweet potatoes are planted on ridges in June. Rice is sown at the end of June, alone, or occasionally between guinea corn on wet land; when the water-table rises in late July, rice is thinned and transplanted as opportunity permits. This is also the time for thinning and transplanting late millet; a common practice
is to transplant it into groundnut farms. Tobacco seed beds are [249]
prepared and sown in August, and the seedlings are transplanted in September and October for the dry season crop.

Crop Varieties.

A number of crop varieties are recognised and although many 241
of the names distinguish only colour factors, other factors, such as earliness of maturity, particular uses, predilection for certain kinds of soil and manure, are known and utilised. With guinea corn, for instance, over a dozen varieties exist.

Cultivation.

Intercultivation starts as soon as crops have germinated, and any manure which was not carried before planting, is applied at this time. Cultivation consists of scraping the top three or four

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have refrained from experimenting with anything outside the capacity of the better farmers in the district to adopt; it would be of little value to us to know, for instance, that ten tons of manure per acre are desirable, when the maximum amount available is say three or four tons. And if these small dressings were not satisfactory we should have to consider other measures for maintaining fertility.

IV. *Root Crops.*

The desirability of increasing the proportion of land planted with root crops has already been stated. Experiments have been conducted with the following crops: yams (Dioscorea spp.), sweet potatoes (Ipomoea batatas), cassava (Manihot utilissima), and Coleus potatoes (Coleus dysentericus). The conclusions reached with regard to each are discussed below.

Yams.

[244]

Yams are the staple crop of the Mamprusis and Dagombas further South, and except for one or two special areas near the Volta Rivers—South Kusasi and South East Zuarungu—where conditions resemble those in Mamprusi, they are practically not grown at all in North Mamprusi. Yams are imported, however, and sell for very good prices in local markets. Ill considered attempts to introduce yams in the past had not met with much success (a notable exception being Chana, in Navrongo Area), and it was considered desirable to explore the situation by experiment.

Our experiments have taken the form of variety trials and two Dagomba varieties, Kuki and Puno, have proved outstandingly the best yielders in every trial, see Appendix IV, Tables 14 and 15. But even the best yield from these does not compare with an indifferent yield in Dagomba. Nevertheless, a low yield of saleable tubers might prove profitable for sale locally as a luxury crop. In a season when rains come early and keep on late, yams yield fairly well; but since the early and the late rains are notoriously variable in North Mamprusi, yams must always be regarded as a gamble and only small scale planting is recommended. A point in favour of yams, which was brought out in the Unit Holding Rotation Experiment at Navrongo in 1936, is the remarkably high residual value of the heavy yam cultivation by comparison with the cultivation for sweet potatoes; this was shown by the yields of a subsequent mixed cereal crop. (The difference was nearly 100%.) A small area of yams would appear to be worth including in unit holding trials.

is used in preparing tobacco for chewing, and also, by percolation, 252
"coom missom" (Nankani), literally "sour water", which is used
in cooking cereal foods. The salts in the ash probably supply [146]
important minerals to the diet [illegible], but the process by which they
are obtained, robs the soi[illegible]ch of the manurial value in the
residue of the early mill[illegible]

The leaves of cowp[illegible]ked by women throughout the 241
growing season and used [illegible]aking soup. Maize is harvested 251
towards the end of July, followed by "neri". The fruits of neri are buried in the ground for about ten days to rot the pericarp; they are then dug up, washed by women in a stream, and the seeds are dried and stored in pots for future use. Early guinea corn is reaped at the end of August and in September, by which time late millet and the main guinea corn crop are coming into flower. At this season, women and children strip all the leaves and sepals from Hibiscus sabdariffa and, after careful drying, store them in pots for making soup during the dry season. The leaves of Hibiscus cannabinus are similarly treated, and the end of the branches, bearing fruits, are cut off and later the seeds are removed
for soup making. The bast fibres of both Hibiscus sabdariffa 248
and Hibiscus cannabinus are drawn after retting in streams for 10 to 12 days: they are made into rope of good quality; this work is generally performed by men. Women also draw the fibres of Hibiscus cannabinus, and scrub them white for making the "tails" they sometimes wear as alternative dress to leaves.

The main harvest season starts during the middle of Septem- 241
ber with groundnuts, and is carried on through October, and into early November, with guinea corn and late millet. During this period, from a peak in August, the rainfall decreases and the water-table falls; with the onset of the harmattan in November, the whole countryside dries rapidly. The groundnut plants are lifted with a hoe, and carried to the shade of a tree, where the nuts are picked off; the hay is carefully conserved as a dry season fodder. The day previous to reaping the late cereal, cowpeas are collected and carried to the compound; the leaves and stems are also conserved for fodder. The heads of late millet and guinea corn are cut off in the same way as those of early millet, and the stems are trampled to the ground. For about three weeks after harvesting, livestock are given open range in the farms and they feed readily upon the still succulent leaves of guinea corn and, to a less extent, millet. But as soon as the material is dry enough, fire is put through the farm to burn off the trash from the resistant cereal stalks, leaving them slightly charred, and clean: in this way much valuable dry season fodder is destroyed. The stalks are chopped from their

improvident or reckless in the utilization of their supplies. The lavish 251 expenditure of live stock and grain prescribed, according to Tale 261 cultural values, for certain ritual and ceremonial occasions merely emphasizes their normal frugality. 'They rebuke you, saying, will you not listen? The time will come when you will wish for cow-peas and there won't be any. Don't you know that hunger is coming? Truly you behave like infants.' These were the words in which an adolescent boy described how the head of a household restrains his children when, at the time the cow-peas are harvested, they snatch handfuls to cook and eat. It is typical of the same attitude that a man should sometimes store part of his ground-nut crop with a friend or relative in order to remove from his household the temptation to fritter it away in unnecessary sporadic eating.

Why then do the Tallensi not preserve their major crop till the rainy season, which they know well enough to be the time of most exacting labour, and live sparingly during the leisure of the dry season? An explanation would require an analysis of the whole of Tale cultural and social life, a task we cannot pursue here. If the correlation observed above is also found with other African peoples, as is not unlikely, it would indicate that a purely physiological or biochemical approach to the study of a native food economy rests upon questionable assumptions. An instinct of self preservation, 'survival value', or a direct correspondence between their biochemical requirements and the system of food economy would presumably have been reflected in a more adequate seasonal organization of the latter. Culturally determined motives seem, however, to be as significant as physiological factors in this regard.[1]

CONVERSION OF THE RAW MATERIALS. We have seen how the raw 000 materials were produced and otherwise brought into the compound by the joint efforts of man, woman, and child. We have studied the fluctuations in the food supply from season to season. We will now

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[1] A neat illustration of how cultural and psychological factors affect the food values and economy of the natives is shown in the exceptional care they devote to their tobacco patches. The same care expended on their farms would go a long way towards raising the subsistence level; yet recurrent food shortages have apparently not brought this home to them. [249]

(ii) *Farms Separate from the Compound Farm, but not in "Bush".* 241

These farms are seldom manured and only rarely are they sufficiently fertile to grow a crop of early millet as well as another cereal; they are treated in the same way, therefore, as those parts of the compound farm which lie outside the sphere of manuring. If there is no land in the compound farm suitable for groundnuts, the farm may have been specially selected for this crop. The general treatment of these farms is the same as that described for the compound farm; but since no early millet is planted, there is no great hurry at the beginning of the season and the farm receives attention when work on the compound farm is well in hand.

Under this heading should be mentioned the dry season tobacco cultivation on the river flats between Bolgatanga and Winkogo and, to lesser extent, at Sambruno and elsewhere. This is a specialised cultivation of importance in these places. The land is fertile because it receives some of the goodness leached out from the surrounding country. In a season when rains fall early, a crop of early millet may be taken off before the land becomes water-logged. In August and September tobacco seed-beds are prepared; the seedlings are transplanted in October and November as the water-table recedes. The tobacco is harvested in January, February, and March. 249 ●

(iii) *Bush Farms.*

Bush farms are found only in areas where unoccupied land is not more than a mile or two away from the compound. They are frequently made on hill-sides where the soil is shallow and weed growth is not very vigorous. Little is done beyond planting the seed and giving a single hoeing. Guinea corn and cowpeas alternated with late millet and cowpeas is the usual cropping until yields fall off; the farm is then left to recuperate for a few years. In a lucky season fair yields may be reaped, and any yield is considered a good return for the small amount of labour expended. It is necessary to mention that in the south of Kusasi Area, and in the south-east of Zuarungu Area, yams are grown in bush farms, and the system of farming followed is typical of South, and not North, Mamprusi. 241

An analysis of the distribution of crops at the ten centres of record is given in Appendix II, Table 5. From this table the following summary (Table 2) has been taken. It shows the crops, and mixtures of crops, and the proportion of the total area cultivated under each, expressed as a percentage for the total area cultivated by 54 recorded compounds. The area manured, as a percentage of the total area cultivated, is also shown.

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PLATE 5

[facing p.112]

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a. A senior wife (*pɔyakpeem*) in her *dɛndɔgo* sorting newly harvested millet. With her are one of her daughter's children and the small son of a co-wife

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b. Homeward bound from a visit to her father's house, where she has received a gift of some millet and other foodstuffs

221 A striking correlation emerges from the above synopsis of the
262 cycle of food economy. It will be seen that domestic food-supplies
are at their lowest at the time—recognized as such by the natives—
of the most strenuous output of physical labour, i.e. in May–June,
and highest when there is least agricultural work. In other words, it
would seem that food consumption is inversely correlated with food
requirements, if we may assume that more food is needed to sustain
the arduous agricultural labour of the rainy season than the leisure
months of the dry season. How this affects the working capacity of
the natives must be left to the social biologist to determine; it is a
type of problem beyond the competence of an ethnographer. The
•251 Tallensi have both excellent receptacles and adequate techniques for
261 storing all kinds of food. We have seen grain and ground-nuts produced from granaries or storage baskets (*kusɔk*) twelve months after
they had been packed, and in perfect condition. Even root crops and
legumes, which appear to be more susceptible to damp and weevils,
can be stored for a year. Nor, in our estimation, are the Tallensi

443 to bring out more clearly the fluctuations in domestic supplies. The market is a fundamental economic institution in Tale society, but we have space here only for a cursory comment on its function in relation to our main theme. Every kind of raw foodstuff, from grain to wild fruits and many varieties of cooked food can be purchased in the market. A visit to the market shows at once what the state of the domestic larder is; high prices indicate empty granaries, low prices, plentiful domestic supplies. The cooked food offered in the market illustrates the seasonal variation in supplementary diet very well. As soon as Bambara beans or frafra potatoes are lifted they appear, both raw and cooked, in the market. The food most commonly sold in the market is porridge (*sayabo*), the staple cereal food; but other cereal and pulse confections can be bought there, many kinds being especially prepared for sale, and rarely, if ever, cooked for home consumption. Such are *maasa*—fried millet-cake, *gaw* and *kamaha*, both made of flour cow-pea. A number of women carry on a regular trade in these luxury foods and thus reap a steady income. Beer is always on sale in the Tale markets, manufactured and sold by a few regular women traders, all Nankansi as far as we know. Only in the markets have we seen intoxicated men; never at ritual gatherings. The market is also the main supplier of tobacco, which most mature men and many old women chew or smoke, but which only a minority are able to grow for themselves, and of kola nuts, imported from Ashanti by foreign traders, and universally chewed as a stimulant by men, women, and even older children. Curdled milk (*bigbikir*), a luxury food, is generally obtained there, too. The market represents the point of contact between the basic subsistence economy of the natives and the money economy which exists side by side with it.

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the time. From a series of menus which we collected over a period 262
of two months (November–January), it would appear that ocro is 252
the favourite soup, while *bet* (*hibiscus sabdariffa*) is the least liked. *Neri*-seed[1] soup is rarely cooked for ordinary consumption, but is prepared on a special occasion such as a visit of an in-law relation.

Though the number of different vegetables planted is few, the 251
women are able to achieve a considerable range of variation by using 262
every part of the plant and by combining them in different ways. Every woman has a well-stocked larder of dried vegetable-leaves and fruits which she keeps in pots (e.g. ocro) or onion-shaped receptacles made of dried guinea-corn leaves (*kiŋkarog*) and suspended from the rafters to keep them dry (e.g. *bet* or *naŋgena*).

The process of preparation is the same in the main for most soups, 252
and is described in the Appendix. Vegetables and other ingredients 515
are never washed or cleaned before use: Tale women are very casual in their cooking hygiene; the cooking-pots are left unwashed from one meal till the next and the soup dishes always have stale food adhering to them.[2]

Meat is a very important ingredient in the soup. It is most com- 252
monly consumed in this way, though it is sometimes eaten by itself 262
by men after sacrifices. It is a great delicacy and men will often spend long hours at a ceremony in order to obtain a morsel of meat or a tiny piece of the viscera. Any scrap of meat or fat which falls to the ground is picked up and swallowed raw. But meat is not 'food', they say, as porridge is, it is *valeg*, i.e. gluttony. While a little of it is strengthening, [753]
too much causes diarrhoea.

The only meat directly killed for cooking is the guinea-fowl. The

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[1] *Neri* (*cucumis melo*) when ripe is buried and covered with guinea-corn stalks and allowed to rot. The seeds are then extracted, dried, and stored for making soups.

[2] The chief reason would seem to be the scarcity of water at certain times of the year, and the labour involved in carrying it, as well as the ingrained indifference of the Tallensi to cleanliness. Yet they take great pleasure in polishing their calabashes at the water-holes to make them yellow and shiny, and treat the new calabashes in a special way to attain the gloss. We have seen women carrying gravel home with them when visiting a neighbouring settlement some 4 miles away because their own clayey soil was not satisfactory for cleaning calabashes. We could not obtain an adequate explanation of this attitude from the women themselves, beyond that 'they like it so'.

252 initiative in this matter is never taken by the woman herself. If she 262 has no meat she cooks without it, but the husband, tasting the soup, will observe that her meat is finished and will catch a guinea-fowl for her or give her money to buy one at the market. A woman may not catch one of her husband's guinea-fowls herself or she would be branded a thief, but she could catch one of her own, if she has any. This is the reason why she tells her husband 'So-and-so gave me a guinea-fowl and I had it killed to-day', if she slaughters one [576] she received as a gift. A woman never kills or plucks a guinea-fowl herself because it is unbecoming. She will ask a young boy in the compound to do it for her. We have frequently observed women carrying home live guinea-fowls already plucked for them in the market by some man, so as to avoid delay in the cooking. The freshly killed ● [251] guinea-fowl is hung up directly over the fireplace where it becomes gradually dried. When it is used the first day it is called *num-mahar*, i.e. fresh meat; after two or three days it is dry on the surface but still soft inside and is known as *num-gahar* or *num-ɔɔra*, i.e. smoked meat; after three days it is dry all through. It is now *num-kpee*, dried meat. There is no preference shown for meat at any particular stage; the Tallensi are an economical people and have a matter-of-fact attitude in this regard. Meat is added to the soup in very small quantities. Used fresh or smoked, it is added as a whole portion, e.g. the head, the neck, a wing, a leg or the breast. Dried meat is ground and stirred into the soup in the same way as the other seasonings. A medium sized guinea-fowl thus lasts a family of seven about a week. Dried meat can be kept any length of time, and if a piece of fresh meat is obtained in the meantime it is used up first. In such a case one guinea-fowl might last a housewife as much as a fortnight.

262 Beef or donkey-meat is much appreciated. We have seen a woman 251 produce about two square inches of dried beef which was a year old. Such meat is carefully preserved in a pot or calabash among a woman's more valued possessions; but dried guinea-fowl is kept with her other soup ingredients in the kitchen.

Fish is used in the same way as meat, though less frequently, and mainly in dried form. This is due to the fact that it is seasonal and has generally to be purchased. But it is appreciated as much as meat.

262 263 Vegetables are the foundation of every soup; meat and fish make

241 keep pace with the growth in intensity of conditions. Farming is regarded as a custom and not as a business, with the result that in crop production and in animal husbandry the maximum is left to Nature. It is custom based upon an unsettled past which underlies the economic system.

Diet.

262 264 The diet of the people is largely vegetarian; only after religious sacrifice, or upon a very special occasion, is the flesh of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys or dogs, eaten, subject to certain taboos. Fowls are not eaten by women, or, in some sections, by first-born male children; they are therefore not generally found in a normal diet; guinea-fowls are eaten, however, by all who can afford them. The big meal of the day is consumed in the evening and consists of cereal flour, cowpeas, or Bambarra beans, prepared as a dough or porridge, over which soup made with or without meat, is poured. In the mornings a light meal is taken off anything left-over from the previous evening; similarly at mid-day. When working in the farms at the beginning of the season cereal flour is taken mixed with drinking water. The results of a study of the diet of the Tallensi—a tribe around Tongo in Zuarungu Area—in relation to domestic economy, has been dealt with very fully by Dr. M. and Mrs. S. L. Fortes (9).

Recurrent Food Shortage.

262 251 241 It is not surprising that with a precarious rainfall and almost complete dependence upon cereals, crop yields are very variable and recurrent food shortage is a common experience. Soil erosion, and a system of continuous cultivation with inadequate manuring, have reduced the bulk of farmed land to a basic minimum of fertility, except in the immediate vicinity of compounds. The food problem is further complicated by a natural improvidence of the people whereby all crops are consumed in the year they are produced. In good years a surplus of grain is used lavishly in performing religious customs; it is seldom stored against the possibility of a bad season. A rise in the market value of crops at planting time suggests that many people are so improvident as not even to save sufficient seed for planting.

Famine Foods.

222 261 A reduced supply of cultivated foods in a poor season is eked out by food from wild sources. There is scarcely a single tree in populated areas which has not some value in this respect; and the seed of an indigenous grass, "Gonongo" (Nankani) (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), is laboriously collected and used as grain.

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pots for making soup during the dry season. The leaves of
Hibiscus cannabinus are similarly treated, and the end of the
branches, bearing fruits, are cut off and later the seeds are removed
for soup making. The bast fibres of both Hibiscus sabdariffa 248
and Hibiscus cannabinus are drawn after retting in streams for
10 to 12 days: they are made into rope of good quality; this work
is generally performed by men. Women also draw the fibres of
Hibiscus cannabinus, and scrub them white for making the "tails"
they sometimes wear as alternative dress to leaves.

The main harvest season starts during the middle of September 241
with groundnuts, and is carried on through October, and into early November, with guinea corn and late millet. During this period, from a peak in August, the rainfall decreases and the water-table falls; with the onset of the harmattan in November, the whole countryside dries rapidly. The groundnut plants are lifted with a hoe, and carried to the shade of a tree, where the nuts are picked off; the hay is carefully conserved as a dry season fodder. The day previous to reaping the late cereal, cowpeas are collected and carried to the compound; the leaves and stems are also conserved for fodder. The heads of late millet and guinea corn are cut off in the same way as those of early millet, and the stems are trampled to the ground. For about three weeks after harvesting, livestock are given open range in the farms and they feed readily upon the still succulent leaves of guinea corn and, to a less extent, millet. But as soon as the material is dry enough, fire is put through the farm to burn off the trash from the resistant cereal stalks, leaving them slightly charred, and clean: in this way much valuable dry season fodder is destroyed. The stalks are chopped from their

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241 In order to demonstrate the annual variation in yields more clearly and the performance of individual crops, the yield of each of the more important crops has been calculated from Table 6, Appendix II, irrespective of the mixture in which it was grown; these yields are given in Appendix II, Table 7. Provided that the proportions of crops in the mixtures were fairly constant from year to year, the figures have a comparative value. From Appendix II, Table 7, the district means obtained in each year have been calculated to the nearest 5 lbs. per acre, and these are set out below in Table 4:—

Table 4.—Summary of mean yields of each of the more important crops, irrespective of mixture, for the years 1932, 1934, 1935 and 1936. Figures in lbs. per acre.

(From Appendix II, Table 7.)

Crop		1932	1934	1935	1936	Summary for all years
Early millet ...	Unmanured	355	230	365	300	270
	Manured	525	385	605	505	505
Late millet ...	Unmanured	350	195	175	255	235
	Manured	430	205	60	220	225
Guinea corn ...	Unmanured	395	230	320	495	325
	Manured	530	400	415	680	485
Groundnuts ...	Unmanured	490	630	725	685	595

The mean yields for 1936 given in the above table are lower than the means for Zuarungu and Navrongo since they include those from Zebilla in Kusasi Area. Zebilla suffered badly from a shortage of rain early in the season, which depressed the yield of the early crops; the guinea corn recovered well, however.

Methods of Storing Crops.

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343 Cereals in bulk are generally stored unthreshed, in conical shaped granaries; the day's allowance is given to the women each morning by the head of the compound, and threshed as required. These granaries ("bari", Nankani) are made of "swish" proofed with cowdung and an infusion of the empty pods of Parkia filicoidea ("aam", Nankani); they are built inside the compound in Navrongo and Zuarungu Areas, and generally outside the door of the compound in Kusasi Area. In size they vary from 4' to 6' in diameter at the base, and from 6' to 10' high. A diagram of a section through a granary is given in Muir and Williams' paper (4).

(4). Small quantities of seed and soup ingredients are stored in earthenware pots and calabashes of different shapes and sizes, which can be sealed with mud and cowdung. Ashes are mixed with cowpeas to discourage attacks from weevils. Groundnuts are generally stored in big baskets, plastered on the outside with mud and cowdung. 25/

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.

The importance of livestock in maintaining a system of fixed cultivation, under the conditions described, is patent. Furthermore the importation from French territory of large quantities of cattle, sheep, goats, and fowls, is a good indication of the size of the market for meat in Ashanti and the Colony; there is no reason why a greater proportion of this market should not be satisfied from local sources than is at present supplied, with benefit to the local farmer. In recognition of this, Government has pursued a policy of general immunisation against cattle plague, which is now practically complete. As a result, the cattle in North Mamprusi are shown to be increasing very satisfactorily (12) since the initial immunisation in 1931-32. From a census taken in 1936 they were found to number over 64,000 head. Thus over one-third of the cattle in the Northern Territories (64,293 head out of 160,000) are being maintained upon less than one-tenth of its area (3,559 sq. miles out of 41,940 sq. miles). The growth of the cattle population, taken into account with the numbers of other livestock, and the shortage of water and of human food in some years, gives some idea of the magnitude of the animal husbandry problems which lie ahead. 231 744

Uneconomic Position of Livestock.

Livestock occupy a peculiar position in local farm economy. Although they are sold in order to get money when necessary, nevertheless, they are not reared for economic purposes, but primarily for religious sacrifice and the payment of marriage dowries. In North Mamprusi, wealth and position are associated, not with money, but with the number of wives and children, and livestock, that a man has. Four cows would enable a man to acquire another wife, but ten pounds would not do so (by custom). As with crop husbandry, so with animal husbandry, economic conditions are changing more rapidly than custom is adjusting itself; unless the adjustment receives careful assistance there is a grave risk of loss of soil fertility and human stamina, on the one hand, and the constitution of the livestock upon the other. 231 182

Numbers of Livestock Owned per Compound.

The numbers of livestock owned by recorded compounds are set out in Table 8, of Appendix II, in detail. From this table text Table 5 below has been extracted. 231

Section III.—DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS IN PARTICULAR RELATION TO FOOD SHORTAGE.

262 The remarks made in this section apply more particularly to the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas than to Kusasi, because, generally speaking, the Kusasis seldom suffer from food shortage and, indeed, they frequently have a surplus for disposal. For this reason the agricultural problem is more acute in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; an adequate and reliable food supply is a prerequisite of all development.

Nature of Food Shortage.

262 251 Enquiry showed that, as far back as memory goes, a shortage of cultivated foods is experienced in about two years out of every five; the problem, therefore, is by no means a new one. Hungry years follow seasons of poor crops, since practically nothing is stored for more than eight months, *i.e.*, from the time of the main harvest in October and November, until early millet is harvested in the following July. A surplus in a good season is not stored against the possibility of a bad one, but is used lavishly in the performance of religious customs, or it is sold or bartered for livestock. Livestock may be regarded as a kind of bank; the sale of stock is the usual means of obtaining money. In years of food shortage, livestock are sold in order to buy grain from Kusasi, Mamprusi, or Dagomba; and because a number of people are selling at the same time, livestock values fall very considerably in these years.

262 222 Although bad seasons result in food shortage for many, they do not necessarily mean starvation, for there are a number of wild sources of food which can be used to eke out a reduced supply of cultivated foods. The most common causes of poor crops are abnormal rains and the ravages of locusts. In good seasons, such as 1932 and 1936, very few people suffer from a shortage: the area of land cultivated is adequate, presumably, and the system of farming is successful. But even in bad seasons it is not everyone who is short. Thus out of the twenty-nine recorded compounds in the Zuarungu Area, ten had sufficient home-grown food remaining from the bad harvest of 1931 (due to shortage of rain after September) until early millet was reaped in 1932. The other nineteen compounds sold livestock and bought grain, and gathered "wild" food. A comparison of statistics from these compounds is given in Table 6 below:—

might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal 604
nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their 618x
cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four 587
generations back.

Though the *pɔɣayabəlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a 764
single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are 571
often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of 562
the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔɣayabəlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and [252] ●
food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔɣayabəlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubɛnib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔɣayabəlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubɛnib* (from *dug*, room, and *bɛ*, to stay or be) because they are identified with the *dugdɛm*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubɛnib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubɛnib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gɔre woman married to a Tɛnzugu man requires the help of *dubɛnib*, she calls upon all the other Gɔre wives, of whom there are very few, of Tɛnzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Gɔreland

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔyayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔyayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
●252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔyayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔyayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
A *pɔyayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacri-
562 fices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[292] to join. A *pɔyayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔyayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

×618 Lastly, a married *pɔyayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔyasama*—a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔyayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

PLATE VIII

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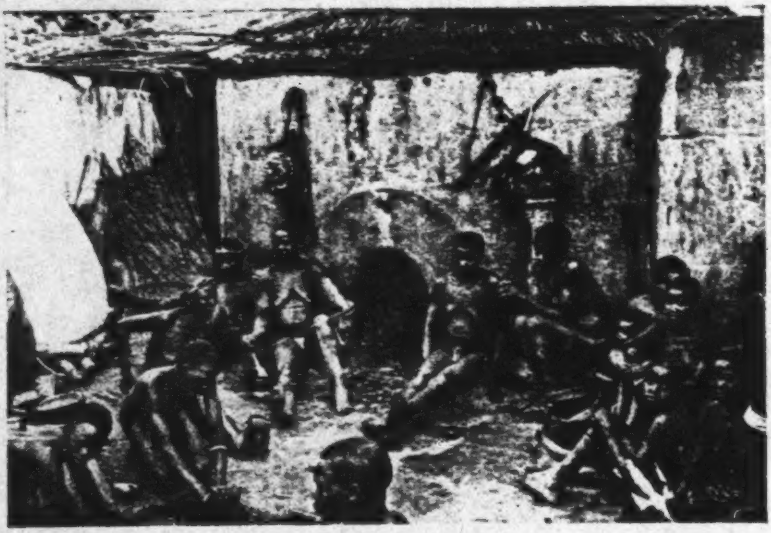

(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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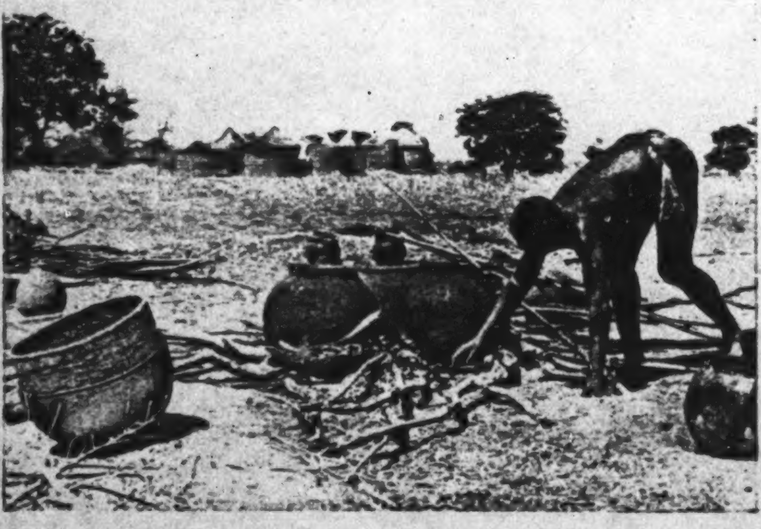

(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔγayabɔlis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[FACING p. 161]

or adolescent son. The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* also serve as a sort of drawing-room. 343 A guest who must be treated with respect is invited to step 592 round to the kitchen to have his meal there in private, a suitor is told to go round to the girl's mother's kitchen to plead his suit with her.

The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* are the counterpart in the social sphere of 576 a woman of the *zɔŋ*, cattle yard (*sapak*), and granary (*buur*) in that of a man. They mark off the economic field reserved for her and the social 592 sphere in which she is supreme. Etiquette and convention show this, and, as in the case of the *zɔŋ* and the *buur*, ritual notions give expression to it and put the seal of mystical value on it. Women do not have ancestor shrines of their own. But in her storeroom an old woman keeps her *zaalɔŋ*. This is a long rope net, holding a neat pile of polished calabash dishes (*ŋman*) of all sizes which she has accumulated during her married life. One of these is her *kumpiog*, 'basket of death'. It is the symbol of her mortal existence.[1] When she dies it stands in her *dendɔŋo* and is eventually taken, with the most meticulous ceremonial care, to her eldest surviving daughter. In this room also she keeps her main storage pot (*dɔk*). It is to her what a man's granary is to him. One sign of this is the rule that her first-born daughter may never, in the mother's lifetime, open it. She does so ritually when her mother's funeral is completed.[2]

Lastly, there is the grinding-room (*neer*), a vastly important item in 343 the organization of the domestic economy, and in the personal relations of the women of a family with one another. It is always a small, low 592 room, 3 or 4 feet in diameter, with a doorway barely large enough to admit a person on hands and knees. A hole under the eaves, the size of a soup plate, lets in a glimmer of light. A waist-high table built of mud, in the hollow surface of which two nether grindstones are embedded, takes up most of the interior. In a small homestead like Ɔndieso's one *neer* is enough, and his mother and wife share it, though the older woman seldom has occasion to use it as her daughter-in-law does most of the cooking for the family. If there are several women in a household, more than one grinding-room is needed. One reason for [252] this is purely mechanical. Grinding the grain for the main meal, in the evening, takes at least an hour, in the period of plenty. The women and girls do this at any time of the day, but prefer to do it in the afternoon. Thus more than one woman may want to use the *neer* at the same time. 343 But there is another reason as well. Co-wives are apt to squabble over 592 the use of the grinding-room, especially if they do not get on harmoni- 578

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[1] The calabash is the commonest domestic utensil and it symbolizes a woman in many contexts. For instance, when a man's wife bears a child he will send to tell her parents; and the messenger reports, with the euphemism the Tallensi always resort to on such occasions, that the woman has born 'a calabash' (*ŋman*) if it is a girl, or a 'staff' (*duor*) if it is a boy—the staff being a hunting-weapon carried by men.

[2] Cf. Ch. VIII below.

595 than the others, all the women must be allocated more or less equal plots for this purpose. Each woman, with the help of her daughters or a [222 263] daughter-in-law, collects and stores wild herbs and edible leaves, buys condiments and seasonings like salt, pepper, and locust bean balls, sometimes with the proceeds of her own petty trading in the markets, and collects shea nuts for the preparation of shea butter, the most important source of fat and the most prized emollient in the native cuisine, for the use of her own *dug*. If a man gives a penny or twopence to one wife for the purchase of seasonings, he must, either immediately or on subsequent market days, give some money to his other wives for this purpose. If he obtains some meat, he must either distribute it amongst all his wives or give all of it to his senior wife to use or preserve for the benefit [846] of the whole family. Only a wife in childbed is entitled to have extra luxuries, which it is the duty of her husband to provide.

595 Though each woman cooks for herself with an eye to the feeding of her own children and her husband, in the first place, co-wives are ●252 obliged to share food prepared with grain from the common supply. In times of plenty, if all the wives of a man have cooked a meal, each woman dishes out a portion of porridge and the accompanying relish for her husband, a portion for herself and her child or children eating with her, and a smaller portion for each of her co-wives. The husband should taste all the dishes sent in to him by his wives, and should pass on to the older children who do not eat with their mothers the dishes he does not want for himself. In times of scarcity a man's wives may cook in rotation for the whole family. But if a woman has a private supply of grain, obtained by trade or from her own relatives, she is entitled to use it for feeding her own children and the husband only; she need not give anything to her co-wives or their children.

596 In the production and utilization of food-supplies, as this brief sketch shows, the common interests of the *yir* are distinctly paramount. Co-wives co-operate most harmoniously, both among themselves and with the other women of the household, in this sphere of family life. In the organization of productive labour and of the domestic economy, and in the conventions regulating mutual help in this sphere, the dependence on one another of all the members of a household for their sustenance is constantly emphasized. But the relative autonomy of the *dug* is never wholly submerged. The women do not pool the products of their individual labour and enterprise. They do not pool their utensils, and family quarrels sometimes arise because one woman or one woman's child has borrowed and damaged a utensil belonging to another. They keep their firewood supplies, the accumulation of which is one of their most arduous tasks, jealously separate; and they do the same with vegetables and seasonings. There is sometimes friction between co-wives over the use of the grinding-room. But it is significant of the balance usually maintained between the centrifugal tendencies of the *dug* and the

The meat, already putrescent, is nevertheless enjoyed despite its stench. 262
Fresh eggs, being potential chickens, are never eaten; but addled
eggs are much appreciated by children, who bake them in ashes.
Children also eat field and domestic mice, a species of toad, and harm-
less snakes, all of which they shoot with miniature bows and arrows [224
in the later months of the dry season. These things are despised by 857]
adolescents and adults who, however, appreciate bigger rodents like
moles and water voles. In short, meat supplies are a matter of chance,
vary greatly with the season, as will be clearer later, and though much
desired, form but a small part of the bulk of food consumed.

Fats and Seasonings. Fats and seasonings have a very important 262
place in Tale cookery, and, like vegetables, are the woman's respon- 263
sibility. But they are mainly market commodities and a man will 252
frequently give his wife money to purchase them. The only fat used
is shea butter (*kpaam*). It is obtainable all the year round. It is made
of the nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) which are carefully preserved after
the fruits have been eaten.

Dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) are made by boiling the seeds of the dawa-dawa fruits. The balls are sold at prices varying from a tenth of a penny for one the size of a large marble to threepence for one the size of a cricket ball.

The laborious processes of manufacture involved prevent many women from making their own shea-butter and dawa-dawa seed balls. Others, who can command the assistance, e.g. of daughters, often prepare enough to have a surplus for sale.

Red pepper (*nanzuuh*) is grown in small quantities by a few men for sale in the market, and much is imported. It is sold at about a halfpenny for a handful.

Rock salt (*yaarem*) is sold in the market by regular traders who fetch it from the south, a small heap (about ¼lb.) for a halfpenny.

Ziem, the ash of valley grasses, and *bakaa*, the ash of early millet stalks, are prepared by the women and are stored in large baskets or calabashes for their own use and for sale. They are used as salt substitutes.

The Productive Cycle and the Food Cycle. We have seen how 596
the domestic organization of the Tallensi works in relation to the
supply of grain and the other main raw materials of their diet. We

000 deal with the conversion of these raw materials into cooked food for
the maintenance of all by the almost exclusive efforts of the woman.

The preparation of food is a woman's task. Though cooking is
462 done by both sexes, men cook only on ritual and special occasions
252 and, as a rule, out of doors. Women always cook in the kitchen, as it
343 is a taboo to prepare food for everyday consumption outside the
compound. As we have already mentioned, every woman other than a young wife has her own quarters (*dug*) consisting of several rooms. Of these, the most important for the present paper are the grinding room (*neer*) and the kitchens (*da'aŋ*). Not every woman possesses her own grinding-room, but she may use that of any other woman in her husband's compound, or of a related neighbouring compound, and no one may refuse her. The owner's permission is never asked, but a woman will not enter a grinding-room if she observes another's grain lying on the grinding-platform.

343 The grinding-room is the source of much friction within the compound.
It is the cause or pretext of women's quarrels which often
578 involve their husbands as well. Disputes arise mainly over the question
of priority, or about the misuse of the grinding stones, e.g. leaving the *baarig* soiled with soup ingredients. Hence, a man will try to build a grinding-room for each wife in order to maintain the peace.

Inside the grinding-room is a low, semicircular platform (*neer*) the
343 surface of which has two or three shallow depressions with their
412 appropriate grindstones (*neekaŋ*). These vary in weight, shape, and
252 texture according to the purpose for which they are intended. There
is a heavy and rough grindstone—*ŋmaarig*—used for crushing the whole grain; a smaller and flatter one—*baarig*—which crushes the rough corn into fine flour (*zɔm*); and a small, round stone—*ziba'axneer*—used only for grinding soup ingredients such as dried vegetables, red pepper, rock-salt, dawa-dawa-seed balls, dried meat, &c. If a grinding-room lacks the latter stone the soup ingredients are mixed with a little flour and ground with the *baarig*. The flour is added so that the stone should be left clean and dry.

343 The kitchen consists of two adjoining rooms, a covered one
(*da'ambɔk*) used during the wet season, which serves also as the storeroom for the owner's produce, her firewood, and cooking-pots, and an open one (*da'aŋ*) used during the dry season. However, it happens

312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption, but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes, but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a radius of not more than 300 yards.

262 A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not in the lean months.

596 261 264 The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, preferably unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism. Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual household and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman carefully considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

562 264 252 However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncertainty of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over (three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home, and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to. Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

PLATE III

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1. Bringing home firewood: Mother and daughter

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2. A woman in her kitchen (posed)

[facing p. 264]

for firewood. A woman with a small child never omits to cook a little 562
for it, whatever the circumstances. The cooking routine also becomes 264
upset under the stress of seasonal activities. When a whole family 252
goes to work at a bush farm or to a fishing expedition, some groundnuts or dry guinea-corn is taken along to chew, and no cooking will be done until evening.

Each woman is responsible for the provision of meals for her 596
husband and family. In certain situations co-wives co-operate for the 476
common good. Thus when building operations take place, or a man
has hired or 'invited' labour the co-wives cook in turn to provide 264
food for the men. On such occasions the owner of the granary allots a special share of grain for the labourers' porridge to the woman whose turn it is to cook for them.

Mutual assistance between co-wives occurs only when a woman is 596
confined or ill. Then her co-wife (a wife of her husband or his 252.
brother) cooks for her and her family. The confined woman provides her own produce and firewood and the cooking is done in her kitchen. This is the duty and prerogative of co-wives. Only as a last resort would the husband's mother or sister cook for her in those circumstances. When a young wife shares her mother-in-law's quarters she does all the household tasks; but when she shares those of a senior wife, they assist each other and cook in turn.

The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and 262
soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea-corn or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or cow-peas or rice is used. When root crops are in season they are cooked instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things they spoil your belly'.[1]

The preparation of porridge is very simple. Flour is not preserved 252

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[1] A Tale friend enquired what kind of food he would be given in our country, and when told that he would eat meat, fish, bread, and eggs, he exclaimed, 'What, no porridge? I call that starvation.'

252 from day to day, but is usually ground fresh whenever required. When her flour is ready, the woman puts some water on to boil in the porridge pot (*sayarok*). Sitting on the flat stone in front of the fireplace she then mixes some flour with cold water, stirring it to a thin paste with her hand, in an old calabash kept for this purpose. When the water boils she pours the paste in, stirring all the while with the stirring-stick. It is left to boil for a few minutes until it thickens and assumes a gluey appearance. With a ladle she pours off about a third of the contents into the old calabash, and puts it aside. She sprinkles a few handfuls of flour into the porridge in the pot, stirring it swiftly with her stick until it becomes quite thick. Every now and again she dips her hand into cold water and with a brisk movement sweeps the porridge adhering to the stick into the pot. The half-cooked contents of the calabash is then added to the porridge and stirred again. When it is thick enough for the stick to stand in it the porridge is ready. The time taken to cook a potful of porridge sufficient for 10 people is only about 10 minutes. The same technique is employed by all the women; the only difference introduced in cooking large quantities is the mixing of the flour with warm water instead of cold.

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252 Porridge is never eaten by itself, but is always accompanied by soup, the main variant in Tale diet. This is made chiefly of fresh or dried vegetables, cultivated or found wild, and there is never a shortage of these. When reduced to its last resources a family subsists almost entirely on soup.

The natives classify soups into two types: *zisaalɔg* and *zizaayɔg*—'slippery' soup and 'coarse' soup. The first is smooth and viscous: 'It slides down as soon as you put it into your mouth, before the porridge.' Ocro soup is the most representative of this kind. The coarse variety is made of crushed ground-nuts, marrow leaves, hibiscus or similar vegetables. 'It sticks in your mouth after the porridge and you have to swallow it down.'

Porridge is the substance, soup is the relish. A woman tries to vary the latter 'so that they do not tire of eating the same'; when a visitor from afar comes she prepares the most tasty soup she knows, and if she wishes to please her husband she observes which soup he prefers and cooks it frequently for him. Seasonal factors, however, count for much, and women cook mainly what is most easily obtainable at

the time. From a series of menus which we collected over a period 262
of two months (November–January), it would appear that ocro is 252
the favourite soup, while *bet* (*hibiscus sabdariffa*) is the least liked.
Neri-seed[1] soup is rarely cooked for ordinary consumption, but is
prepared on a special occasion such as a visit of an in-law relation.

Though the number of different vegetables planted is few, the 251
women are able to achieve a considerable range of variation by using 262
every part of the plant and by combining them in different ways.
Every woman has a well-stocked larder of dried vegetable-leaves and
fruits which she keeps in pots (e.g. ocro) or onion-shaped receptacles
made of dried guinea-corn leaves (*kiŋkarog*) and suspended from the
rafters to keep them dry (e.g. *bet* or *naŋgena*).

The process of preparation is the same in the main for most soups, 252
and is described in the Appendix. Vegetables and other ingredients 515
are never washed or cleaned before use: Tale women are very casual
in their cooking hygiene; the cooking-pots are left unwashed from
one meal till the next and the soup dishes always have stale food
adhering to them.[2]

Meat is a very important ingredient in the soup. It is most com- 252
monly consumed in this way, though it is sometimes eaten by itself 262
by men after sacrifices. It is a great delicacy and men will often spend
long hours at a ceremony in order to obtain a morsel of meat or a tiny
piece of the viscera. Any scrap of meat or fat which falls to the ground
is picked up and swallowed raw. But meat is not 'food', they say, as
porridge is, it is *valeg*, i.e. gluttony. While a little of it is strengthening, [753]
too much causes diarrhoea.

The only meat directly killed for cooking is the guinea-fowl. The

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[1] *Neri* (*cucumis melo*) when ripe is buried and covered with guinea-corn stalks and allowed to rot. The seeds are then extracted, dried, and stored for making soups.

[2] The chief reason would seem to be the scarcity of water at certain times of the year, and the labour involved in carrying it, as well as the ingrained indifference of the Tallensi to cleanliness. Yet they take great pleasure in polishing their calabashes at the water-holes to make them yellow and shiny, and treat the new calabashes in a special way to attain the gloss. We have seen women carrying gravel home with them when visiting a neighbouring settlement some 4 miles away because their own clayey soil was not satisfactory for cleaning calabashes. We could not obtain an adequate explanation of this attitude from the women themselves, beyond that 'they like it so'.

● 252 262 initiative in this matter is never taken by the woman herself. If she has no meat she cooks without it, but the husband, tasting the soup, will observe that her meat is finished and will catch a guinea-fowl for her or give her money to buy one at the market. A woman may not catch one of her husband's guinea-fowls herself or she would be branded a thief, but she could catch one of her own, if she has any. This is the reason why she tells her husband 'So-and-so gave me a guinea-fowl and I had it killed to-day', if she slaughters one [576] she received as a gift. A woman never kills or plucks a guinea-fowl herself because it is unbecoming. She will ask a young boy in the compound to do it for her. We have frequently observed women carrying home live guinea-fowls already plucked for them in the market [251] by some man, so as to avoid delay in the cooking. The freshly killed guinea-fowl is hung up directly over the fireplace where it becomes gradually dried. When it is used the first day it is called *num-mahar*, i.e. fresh meat; after two or three days it is dry on the surface but still soft inside and is known as *num-gahar* or *num-ɔɔra*, i.e. smoked meat; after three days it is dry all through. It is now *num-kpee*, dried meat. There is no preference shown for meat at any particular stage; the Tallensi are an economical people and have a matter-of-fact attitude in this regard. Meat is added to the soup in very small quantities. Used fresh or smoked, it is added as a whole portion, e.g. the head, the neck, a wing, a leg or the breast. Dried meat is ground and stirred into the soup in the same way as the other seasonings. A medium sized guinea-fowl thus lasts a family of seven about a week. Dried meat can be kept any length of time, and if a piece of fresh meat is obtained in the meantime it is used up first. In such a case one guinea-fowl might last a housewife as much as a fortnight.

262 251 Beef or donkey-meat is much appreciated. We have seen a woman produce about two square inches of dried beef which was a year old. Such meat is carefully preserved in a pot or calabash among a woman's more valued possessions; but dried guinea-fowl is kept with her other soup ingredients in the kitchen.

Fish is used in the same way as meat, though less frequently, and mainly in dried form. This is due to the fact that it is seasonal and has generally to be purchased. But it is appreciated as much as meat.

262 263 Vegetables are the foundation of every soup; meat and fish make

a good soup; but no soup is complete without seasonings (*zikuot*). 262
Red pepper (*nanzuuh*), the most important, is never omitted from 263
any soup, is added to other dishes too, and even to native beer to
give it more punch. Salt (*yaarem*), though very highly valued, is not
as indispensable as red pepper. *Ziem* (the ash of valley grasses) or
bakaa (the ash of early millet stalks) is sometimes substituted for salt
or used in addition to it. A much-favoured seasoning is the dawa-dawa
seed ball (*kpɔlug*) which is sometimes even used as the foundation
of a soup. Usually the seasoning ingredients are all used together;
the more pungent the soup the better it is liked. Most women do
not keep large supplies of seasonings, but consider it worth while
to walk several miles to the nearest market to buy them.

Thus, though the native considers soup merely as a relish for his 262
porridge, it really provides the vegetable and animal food (the latter 146
in very small quantities) which balances a purely cereal diet.

The soup is always put on to cook first. While it is boiling, the 252
woman sweeps out the close (*dendɔŋo*) where the meal is to be eaten,
and prepares the vessels for serving it. The preparation and cooking
of the soup takes 30–40 minutes. When it is ready she makes the porridge.
In all these tasks a woman is assisted by her young daughters.
Small boys, too, sometimes give a hand with the fire, but never with
the cooking.

As soon as the porridge is ready it is dished up in several calabashes. 252
The housewife takes much trouble in arranging her husband's portion 264
in neat slices—she is less fastidious about the other portions. Each
portion of porridge is rubbed over with shea butter; that of the
husband's very liberally. This is the most common way in which fat
is consumed. After the porridge has been shared out the soup is
poured into an equal number of dishes, or sometimes over the
porridge. The actual cooking and serving of food, unlike the fetching
of wood and water, does not absorb a great deal of the housewife's
time. One hour is sufficient to prepare a meal for ten people.

The amount of food consumed per meal differs according to the 262
seasons. When food is scarce, whatever quantity of grain a woman
has she will cook, and it will have to suffice; but a Taleŋa never feels
satisfied unless he has had about 1½ lb. of porridge at a sitting.

There is no specially appointed eating-place in the compound. 264

264 Each family eats in its own close, while the man usually eats in that of his senior wife, and his other wives each send him in a dish of food.

● 252 595 As we have already mentioned, each woman in a polygynous household cooks for the husband and her own family. Their cooking is not synchronized, but as the evening meal is always made at sunset, there is no considerable discrepancy in the time of eating by the different families.

264 The man eats with his 'youngest' child, that is, the last one to have stopped suckling. If he has unmarried brothers dependent upon him they, too, eat with him. A few yards further off his sons—young men and boys—form another group, while the woman herself and the young girls eat apart at the kitchen door. Two women sharing a kitchen eat together. Men and women do not eat together except in circumstances which will be noted later.

A calabash of porridge, a dish of soup, a calabash of drinking-water and another for washing the hands are set down for each group. When the senior member of each group has taken his place the others settle in a circle round the food. In order of seniority each one washes his or her right hand perfunctorily. The eldest member is the first to begin eating, but he is also the first to stop. The youngest member finishes last and is usually encouraged to clear the dish; for an older member to continue eating with the youngest is to invite the ridicule of the others. The food is eaten with the right hand. A piece of porridge is broken off and dipped into the soup with cupped fingers. If meat is present each member breaks off a tiny morsel of it to taste. During the meal the water is passed round for every one to drink. Though each group seated round a dish of food acts independently, those sitting in the same close with the head of the household do not begin before him. Eating is a serious business; there is no conversation at meal-times, and as soon as a group has finished they disperse.

264 595 In addition to sending in food to her husband, a woman sends a dish of porridge with soup to her husband's mother, and a dish to each of her co-wives belonging to her own food economy unit. Thus, each woman has to cook enough for her husband and family and to exchange with every kitchen supplied from the same grain store. This rule, naturally, does not hold for food provided by a woman's

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We have been unable to explore the economic context of food in Tale society (e.g. as exhibited in the market); or to discuss the emotional values associated with it; or to describe its functions as a technique for expressing, defining, and imposing social obligations. These problems must be left for consideration at a future date.

M. and S. L. FORTES.

APPENDIX

252 262 We give below a few examples of soups and their method of preparation; a brief description of foods used as substitutes for porridge; of occasional foods which are obtained mainly in the market; and of the preparation of shea-butter.

Soups (*ziet*)

Zisaalɔg—smooth, viscous soup; best example of this is *ma'ana ziet*—ocro soup.

A small handful of ground, dried fish or meat is thrown into a potful of boiling water. A handful of red peppers, a few lumps of salt and a piece of dawa-dawa-seed ball, ground up together and mixed into a paste with a little water is added next. The seasonings are made into a paste so that the pepper should not float on the surface. While this is cooking the ocros are prepared. They are used either fresh or dried; but frequently the two varieties are mixed in equal proportions. They are crushed into a pulp on the grindstone and added to the boiling soup. The contents are stirred with the stirring-stick (*vugr*) every now and again. The soup takes about 30 minutes to cook.

In soups of this type the vegetables used are always crushed to a pulp or cut up very fine. Other viscous soups are made from the leaf of the local elm (*nuom*) and from a common weed (*saalem*), but mainly by the addition of ocro to other vegetables, as, e.g., *vaat ni ma'anar*—leaves and ocro—where the leaves of the ocro or vegetable marrow or baobab tree are used; or *bermihim*, a soup made of the white hibiscus flower with the addition of ocros.

Zizaayɔg—coarse soup. To this group belong all the soups made of the hibiscus and other leaves, and also soups made of ground-nuts and cow-peas. The leaves are sliced and thrown into boiling water. While they are cooking, a small calabashful of ground-nuts is crushed fine, also a handful of peppers, a piece of dawa-dawa-seed ball and a few lumps of salt. These are all mixed together and stirred into the boiling vegetables. If there is meat or fish it is also ground and added at this stage. This soup takes 30 minutes to cook. The thickening, which is always added to this kind of soup, may be made of coarsely ground grain, or of cow-pea flour.

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The Tale women show great ingenuity in the number of appellations they give to soups of this group, which often do not differ from each other in the main ingredients.

Cooked Foods Eaten as Porridge Substitutes

1. *Tubers*:

Frafra potatoes (*peeha*) boiled in the skins and eaten plain. This is called *peefita*.

Cooked without the skins and eaten with soup. The potatoes are put on the ground and trodden with the feet in a circular movement. This removes the skins. They are then washed and put to boil. The water in which they have been cooked is not utilized.

Yam (*ŋuŋa*) boiled in plain water. Is served in small chunks and eaten with soup.

Sweet potatoes (*ŋumhma'ala*) boiled and eaten plain. Sometimes cooked together with frafra potatoes.

2. *Legumes*:

These are boiled in plain water and are eaten with shea-butter and a seasoning of pepper and salt.

3. *Rice*:

Boiled with pepper and salt. Shea-butter is added to it when dished up. Is eaten with soup.

Ground cow-peas or ground rice is occasionally made into porridge.

Occasional Foods

Kameha—fried dumplings made of cow-pea flour. The process of preparing the cow-pea flour (*tia zom*) is rather laborious.

The cow-peas are crushed and washed in several changes of water in order to remove the skin which, if left, would make the flour black. It is then spread out in the sun to dry and later ground to flour. The flour is made into a thick batter to which salt is added. The batter is dropped into boiling shea-butter, handful by handful, and fried a golden brown. This is a much appreciated food and is only cooked for the market. So also is *maasa*—fried cakes made of millet or maize flour. These are much larger than the *kameha* and are fried in the same way.

Gaar—steamed cakes made of cow-pea flour, bean flour, or ground rice. The flour is prepared as for *kameha*. Instead of salt, an infusion of *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is added to the water which is used for making a thick batter. A pot is half-filled with dry grass and a little water added. It is then put on to boil. Small portions of the batter are in the meantime placed in between broad folded leaves of the *bayana* tree, or, if larger cakes are

● 252 262 desired, between two overlapping leaves. As soon as the water boils the cakes are arranged one on top of the other inside the pot, which is then closed tightly with a lid or calabash. The cakes are thus cooked by the steam, and are ready in 15 minutes. They are like baked porridge in appearance and are eaten with melted shea-butter spread over them and a sprinkling of salt and red pepper. *Gwor* is principally cooked for market sale, but is occasionally cooked by the housewife to vary the menu.

Milk (*bihim*)

262 234 Milk is obtained only from cows and is eaten as curds (*bigbihir*) mixed with flour. Herdboys, however, when out on the pasture sometimes milk the cows for a drink.

Shea-Butter (*kpaam*)

252 262 There are five stages in the making of shea-butter:

1. The nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) are crushed with a stone to a brown pulp.
2. The pulp is placed in a large open pot (*sar*) over a fire, and stirred with a stick for a considerable time till it is a thick, sticky mass.
3. This is then ground quite fine. The grinding releases the oil.
4. It is now washed in several changes of water, being stirred continually with the hand, until the oil rises to the surface.
5. The oil is skimmed off the water, melted over a fire, and again skimmed till pure white oil is obtained. This is put into calabashes or small pots. [278] The dark oil-scum (*kpabut*) is kept for medicinal purposes. It is only used externally. The brown fibrous residue left after the washing process is made [372] into small balls and dried. This is *burum* and is used for making fires.

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated in a day is about 1/10th acre. Hoeing is started near to the compound and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages. [461] [471] [273]

243 On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice; or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

241 243 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and ground-crops are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots; this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash [242] ● 252

is used in preparing tobacco for chewing, and also, by percolation, 252
"coom missom" (Nankani), literally "sour water", which is used
in cooking cereal foods. The salts in the ash probably supply [146]
important minerals to the diet (11), but the process by which they
are obtained, robs the soil of much of the manurial value in the
residue of the early millet crop.

The leaves of cowpeas are picked by women throughout the 241
growing season and used in making soup. Maize is harvested 251
towards the end of July, followed by "neri". The fruits of neri
are buried in the ground for about ten days to rot the pericarp;
they are then dug up, washed by women in a stream, and the seeds
are dried and stored in pots for future use. Early guinea corn is
reaped at the end of August and in September, by which time late
millet and the main guinea corn crop are coming into flower. At
this season, women and children strip all the leaves and sepals
from Hibiscus sabdariffa and, after careful drying, store them in
pots for making soup during the dry season. The leaves of
Hibiscus cannabinus are similarly treated, and the end of the
branches, bearing fruits, are cut off and later the seeds are removed
for soup making. The bast fibres of both Hibiscus sabdariffa 248
and Hibiscus cannabinus are drawn after retting in streams for
10 to 12 days: they are made into rope of good quality; this work
is generally performed by men. Women also draw the fibres of
Hibiscus cannabinus, and scrub them white for making the "tails"
they sometimes wear as alternative dress to leaves.

The main harvest season starts during the middle of Septem- 241
ber with groundnuts, and is carried on through October, and into
early November, with guinea corn and late millet. During this
period, from a peak in August, the rainfall decreases and the water-
table falls; with the onset of the harmattan in November, the whole
countryside dries rapidly. The groundnut plants are lifted with a
hoe, and carried to the shade of a tree, where the nuts are picked
off; the hay is carefully conserved as a dry season fodder. The
day previous to reaping the late cereal, cowpeas are collected and
carried to the compound; the leaves and stems are also conserved
for fodder. The heads of late millet and guinea corn are cut off
in the same way as those of early millet, and the stems are trampled
to the ground. For about three weeks after harvesting, livestock
are given open range in the farms and they feed readily upon the
still succulent leaves of guinea corn and, to a less extent, millet.
But as soon as the material is dry enough, fire is put through the
farm to burn off the trash from the resistant cereal stalks, leaving
them slightly charred, and clean: in this way much valuable dry
season fodder is destroyed. The stalks are chopped from their

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years
ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine
is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing
this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and
forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black
man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy
grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on
the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among
distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567]
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke
down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535
end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend
the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good
year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young
mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders
fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There
is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ
kpɛŋŋa*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere
of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of
ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale
ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence.
For the individual the physical well-being of himself and
his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of
offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual
symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep
it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go
back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this:
'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring
be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul
guul, ka dɔɣam dɔɣa, ka guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241
natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and
talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and
industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency
between a *pukpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious
hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption.
One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

221 262 A striking correlation emerges from the above synopsis of the cycle of food economy. It will be seen that domestic food-supplies are at their lowest at the time—recognized as such by the natives—of the most strenuous output of physical labour, i.e. in May–June, and highest when there is least agricultural work. In other words, it would seem that food consumption is inversely correlated with food requirements, if we may assume that more food is needed to sustain the arduous agricultural labour of the rainy season than the leisure months of the dry season. How this affects the working capacity of the natives must be left to the social biologist to determine; it is a type of problem beyond the competence of an ethnographer. 251 261 The Tallensi have both excellent receptacles and adequate techniques for storing all kinds of food. We have seen grain and ground-nuts produced from granaries or storage baskets (*kusɔk*) twelve months after they had been packed, and in perfect condition. Even root crops and legumes, which appear to be more susceptible to damp and weevils, can be stored for a year. Nor, in our estimation, are the Tallensi

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443 to bring out more clearly the fluctuations in domestic supplies. The market is a fundamental economic institution in Tale society, but we have space here only for a cursory comment on its function in relation to our main theme. Every kind of raw foodstuff, from grain to wild fruits and many varieties of cooked food can be purchased in the market. A visit to the market shows at once what the state of the domestic larder is; high prices indicate empty granaries, low prices, plentiful domestic supplies. The cooked food offered in the market illustrates the seasonal variation in supplementary diet very well. As soon as Bambara beans or frafra potatoes are lifted they appear, both raw and cooked, in the market. The food most commonly sold in the market is porridge (*sayabo*), the staple cereal food; but other cereal and pulse confections can be bought there, many kinds being especially prepared for sale, and rarely, if ever, cooked for home consumption. Such are *maasa*—fried millet-cake, *gwr* and *kamsha*, both made of flour cow-pea. A number of women carry on a regular trade in these luxury foods and thus reap a steady income. Beer is always on sale in the Tale markets, manufactured and sold by a few regular women traders, all Nankansi as far as we know. Only in the markets have we seen intoxicated men; never at ritual gatherings. The market is also the main supplier of tobacco, which most mature men and many old women chew or smoke, but which only a minority are able to grow for themselves, and of kola nuts, imported from Ashanti by foreign traders, and universally chewed as a stimulant by men, women, and even older children. Curdled milk (*bigbihir*), a luxury food, is generally obtained there, too. The market represents the point of contact between the basic subsistence economy of the natives and the money economy which exists side by side with it.

improvident or reckless in the utilization of their supplies. The lavish 251 expenditure of live stock and grain prescribed, according to Tale 261 cultural values, for certain ritual and ceremonial occasions merely emphasizes their normal frugality. 'They rebuke you, saying, will you not listen? The time will come when you will wish for cow-peas and there won't be any. Don't you know that hunger is coming? Truly you behave like infants.' These were the words in which an adolescent boy described how the head of a household restrains his children when, at the time the cow-peas are harvested, they snatch handfuls to cook and eat. It is typical of the same attitude that a man should sometimes store part of his ground-nut crop with a friend or relative in order to remove from his household the temptation to fritter it away in unnecessary sporadic eating.

Why then do the Tallensi not preserve their major crop till the rainy season, which they know well enough to be the time of most exacting labour, and live sparingly during the leisure of the dry season? An explanation would require an analysis of the whole of Tale cultural and social life, a task we cannot pursue here. If the correlation observed above is also found with other African peoples, as is not unlikely, it would indicate that a purely physiological or biochemical approach to the study of a native food economy rests upon questionable assumptions. An instinct of self preservation, 'survival value', or a direct correspondence between their biochemical requirements and the system of food economy would presumably have been reflected in a more adequate seasonal organization of the latter. Culturally determined motives seem, however, to be as significant as physiological factors in this regard.[1]

CONVERSION OF THE RAW MATERIALS. We have seen how the raw 000 materials were produced and otherwise brought into the compound by the joint efforts of man, woman, and child. We have studied the fluctuations in the food supply from season to season. We will now

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[1] A neat illustration of how cultural and psychological factors affect the food values and economy of the natives is shown in the exceptional care they devote to their tobacco patches. The same care expended on their farms would go a long way towards raising the subsistence level; yet recurrent food shortages have apparently not brought this home to them. [249]

312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption,
but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to
wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes,
but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a
radius of not more than 300 yards.

A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked
262 food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the
satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the
women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not
in the lean months.

The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his
596 wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never
261 descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, preferably
264 unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism.
Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or
of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young
wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small
basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the
period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain
is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at
noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the
next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of
grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual household
and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a
noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the
ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman carefully
considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the
family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncertainty
562 of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She
264 carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour
252 approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over
(three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home,
and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to.
Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good
reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or
harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Talɔŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adult- 857
hood children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational develop- 82
ment of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

241 keep pace with the growth in intensity of conditions. Farming is regarded as a custom and not as a business, with the result that in crop production and in animal husbandry the maximum is left to Nature. It is custom based upon an unsettled past which underlies the economic system.

Diet.

262 264 The diet of the people is largely vegetarian; only after religious sacrifice, or upon a very special occasion, is the flesh of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys or dogs, eaten, subject to certain taboos. Fowls are not eaten by women, or, in some sections, by first-born male children; they are therefore not generally found in a normal diet; guinea-fowls are eaten, however, by all who can afford them. The big meal of the day is consumed in the evening and consists of cereal flour, cowpeas, or Bambarra beans, prepared as a dough or porridge, over which soup made with or without meat, is poured. In the mornings a light meal is taken off anything left-over from the previous evening; similarly at mid-day. When working in the farms at the beginning of the season cereal flour is taken mixed with drinking water. The results of a study of the diet of the Tallensi—a tribe around Tongo in Zuarungu Area—in relation to domestic economy, has been dealt with very fully by Dr. M. and Mrs. S. L. Fortes (9).

Recurrent Food Shortage.

262 251 241 It is not surprising that with a precarious rainfall and almost complete dependence upon cereals, crop yields are very variable and recurrent food shortage is a common experience. Soil erosion, and a system of continuous cultivation with inadequate manuring, have reduced the bulk of farmed land to a basic minimum of fertility, except in the immediate vicinity of compounds. The food problem is further complicated by a natural improvidence of the people whereby all crops are consumed in the year they are produced. In good years a surplus of grain is used lavishly in performing religious customs; it is seldom stored against the possibility of a bad season. A rise in the market value of crops at planting time suggests that many people are so improvident as not even to save sufficient seed for planting.

Famine Foods.

222 261 A reduced supply of cultivated foods in a poor season is eked out by food from wild sources. There is scarcely a single tree in populated areas which has not some value in this respect; and the seed of an indigenous grass, "Gonongo" (Nankani) (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), is laboriously collected and used as grain.

Nevertheless, although a shortage of cultivated foods does not 222
necessarily mean starvation, it lowers resistance to disease and 261
saps the energy of the people at the end of the dry season when
they need strength to prepare their farms; thus setting up a
"vicious circle". It is not the shortage of food in itself which is
so arresting, however, as the apathy of the people to the shortage.
Ancestor worship causes them to dwell in the past and to think
insufficiently of the present and the future. This, too, is probably
symptomatic of the unsettled conditions when only the past was
certain. It will take some time for the people, the older people
who control affairs especially, to adjust themselves to the swift
developments going on around them. An unfortunate result is [167
that during the period of adjustment, many of the young men 464]
are attracted away from the district to work for wages in Ashanti
and the Colony, where there is a big demand for unskilled labour
in the mines and in handling the cocoa crop. These young men do
not as a rule stay away from home for long at a time, and usually
return with a little money; but they do not take readily to farming
again, and represent a floating population which is the source of
considerable concern to their elders.

Economic Awakening.

An adequate food supply alone does not appear to be sufficient incentive for the adoption of better farming methods; and it is unlikely that changes will come until farming ceases to be regarded mainly as a custom, and becomes a business. There are many signs of an economic awakening, fostered by such factors as a growing desire of the people for imported commodities, and an increase in money consciousness; the completion of an all-weather road to the South; the opening of a gold mine at Nangodi; the developing trade in all classes of livestock with Ashanti and the Colony; the new trade in groundnuts from Bawku for the Kumasi market; together with the work of Government Departments in the improvement of human health, the health of livestock, and not least, the scope of the recently introduced Native Administrations. These are some of the factors helping to bring about a change which can be met only by better farming. Government must anticipate agricultural expansion to be in a position to control its development. 177

The first problem, obviously, is to ensure a sufficiency of food for everyone in every year. Then, when local requirements have been satisfied, it must be shown how a surplus can be disposed of profitably, to satisfy growing demands. Upon this the Department of Agriculture is working in North Mamprusi, and the results of the last four years' work form the basis of this bulletin. 000

other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos 784
are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in 184
many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans,
no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is
considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to
violate (*galəm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental
breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence.
It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children
to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic
taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into
his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden
to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic
taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu
ɔbət*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular
species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory
on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain
maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth
to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals [262
prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages, 853]
when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their
child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into
milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem
does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating
the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one
of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness,
not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners 784
in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But 771
like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage 184
totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything
in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example,
call a totem a sacred object (*bayər*). The emphasis is on the avoidance,
the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in
keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors
and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, 784
though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch 184
these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them;
for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their 627
congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear 184
an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in 618x
this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put
on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the
substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father
and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath,
uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence,

speak only of the Voltaic area, the animal species referred to above occur 171
among the totemic avoidances of people as remote from the Tallensi, 784
both spatially and linguistically, as the Isala and the Lobi,[1] as well as among all the other 'tribes' of the area.

Confining ourselves to Taleland and to the settlements of Gɔrisi 171
fringing this area, we find that the totemic avoidances include birds like 784
the canary (*wurəg*), the turtle-dove (*daŋman*), the domestic fowl (*noo*), and 136
several other species; reptiles, like the snake, the tortoise, the water- 262
tortoise, and the crocodile; fish, like the *tunəg*; insects, like the large grasshopper (*saŋkaan*); rodents, like the squirrel (*sinscrəg*) and the hare (*suoŋ*); ruminants, like the goat (*buu*) and the sheep (*pehug*); carnivores, such as the cat (*sahoo*), the dog (*baa*), and the leopard (*yeogbaa*); and a variety of other animals, such as the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*) and the bush-pig (*dee*).[2]

It is impossible to find any common trait amongst this variety of 171
creatures. Some play an important part in the economic life and the 784
food-supply of the natives, but the majority are negligible in this respect.
Many are prized as delicacies by those who are permitted to eat them; 231
and, on the other hand, some are despised as food. No adult would 262
willingly eat grasshoppers, canaries, or small edible snakes, though little children, who eat almost any small animals they can lay their hands on, quite often do so. Several of these animal species are regarded as always potentially dangerous in the magical as well as the physical sense. Such are the crocodile, snakes, the leopard, and other wild carnivores. But many, on the contrary, are entirely innocent both in the magical and the physical sense. Some have a place in the meagre folk-lore of the Tallensi, including such diverse creatures as the monkey, the turtle-dove, and the cat. Cats, for instance, are considered to be pre-eminently the domestic companions of women, but with a streak of the wild animal in them. Women treat them with a mixture of solicitude, appropriate to a valued pet, and of pseudo-ritual respect that meets with good-humoured ridicule from the men. Incidentally, clans that have the cat as a totem show no particular respect towards household cats, nor are household dogs treated differently by people who may and people who may not eat the dog.

The totemic animals of the Tallensi thus comprise neither a zoological 171
nor a utilitarian nor a magical class. All that can be said of them is that 784

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[1] For the Isala and other 'tribes' of the Voltaic area, see Rattray, op. cit. 182
His report on the Isala is in vol. ii, pp. 465 ff. For the Lobi, see ib., vol. ii, pp. 425 ff., and Labouret, op. cit., pp. 227 ff. Rattray does not distinguish clearly between the different kinds of ritual prohibitions and injunctions coupled with patrilineal descent, some of which are not totemic in the sense we have given to this term. But his observations and those of Labouret confirm the conclusion that there is no precise correlation between these avoidances and clanship ties. Labouret's account of the attitudes and values associated with totemic avoidances among the Lobi shows them to resemble closely those of the Tallensi.

[2] Rattray's list for this area, op. cit., vol. i, p. 236, includes also several big-game animals, such as the roan (*hoo*), hartebeest (*sebog*), bush-cow (*yeognaaf*), and elephant (*wobog*), as well as the lion (*gbiaymer*), the hyena (*gbiŋgbɛr*), and the hippo (*ewor*). But here, as elsewhere in the book, Rattray appears to have lumped together ritual observances that are similar in form though not in function, and he does not state clearly what clans or settlements hold particular taboos.

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential
592 life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this
●262 in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential
576 autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to
which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces
574 himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out,
521 informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out *gafarra* ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dendɔŋ̃ɔ*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be
[584] so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy. Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

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own family. She may, as an act of grace, give some of this food to her husband or to a co-wife with whom she is on friendly terms; but she is not compelled to do so. A junior householder thus augments the food supply for his own wives and children. If he comes into possession [431] of a large amount of grain by his own exertions he will generally make a present of a small quantity to the head of the unit to which he belongs; but, again, this is an act of goodwill, not an obligation. A kind-hearted head of a compound may occasionally present a meagre dish of grain to the wife of a younger head of a self-supporting unit, if they are obviously on the verge of starvation; otherwise, self-supporting units in the same compound never assist one another with grain, in the ordinary course of events.

There are other more incalculable means by which food is brought 602 into the household and family. Cereals are sometimes obtained during 431 the hunger months by women from their paternal kinsmen. A 222 marriageable daughter, again, means a succession of suitors bringing 262 gifts of money, guinea-fowls, and various other comestibles to her mother. Wild sources of food are fully exploited. Fruits of the shea-tree (*ta'aŋ: butyrospermum parkii*) save many a family from the worst straits of hunger, as does the pulp of the dawa-dawa (*doo: parkia filicordea*) pods. These trees have an enormous economic value, as will be evident later. The baobab-tree (*to'o: adansonia digitata*) has a fruit with a floury, sweetish pulp which is relished much as sweetmeats are by ourselves, and its leaves are used to make soup. It is generally found as a shade-tree outside a compound, and women readily get permission from the head of the compound to pluck the leaves. Leaves of the local elm (*nuom: celtis integrifolia*) are also used for soup.[1] Some grasses and fungi serve this purpose too, and small children, who are adepts at foraging for themselves, can often be seen out in groups collecting them.

From the table[2] quoted above it will be seen that one man, on the 592 average, supports himself, 1·2 women, and 1·2 children, over the age of infancy—roughly 3·4 people; but it is clear from the sociological outline given above that any such estimates hold only very approximately in view of the many supplementary sources of grain supply,

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[1] We have seen elm-trees in *tɔŋbana* (sacred groves) and in the bush (where of course, any one can pluck the leaves) but not as shade trees in front of compounds.

[2] [See cat. 116, p. 241 — Analyst]

592 and also, as we shall see, the many unpredictable modes of consumption of the grain (e.g. in recompensing collective labour, *vide infra*).[1]

MEAT AND FISH. Meat (*nimit*) is subject to even greater fluctuations
231 of supply than grain owing to uncontrollable sources. Every com-
235 pound possesses some live stock, if it be only a few fowls and guinea-
262 fowls. A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely, to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never slaughtered specifically for food[2] by the average man. We heard of two donkeys being slaughtered in order to sell the meat by a couple of young men out for profit. This was vigorously denounced by the Chief, and was not repeated. As a rule beef is obtained from sacrifices
[782] to the ancestor spirits, always made by men of senior status, and from animals offered during funeral ceremonies, donkey-meat only from the latter offerings. The carcase is usually divided up among a large number of people in accordance with kinship status. An elder may obtain a whole leg of a bull, but he will sub-divide it among the compounds or households subordinate to him. Thus, in the long run, the share of a single household comes to a very small quantity, often only a few ounces. But nothing is wasted; the whole carcase, including all the viscera, is consumed.

Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again,
231 no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food. In addition
782 to sacrifices and funerals, there is a number of formal occasions on
262 which one of these animals must be killed, e.g. as an act of hospitality to a mother-in-law or a very great friend. Corresponding to their lesser value and much greater abundance, sheep and goats are sacrificed in larger numbers than cows, often by men of junior status. The

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[1] Mr. Lynn, *op. cit.* finds that 1 man supports 3·7 people on the average, on 2·03 acres of farmed land. In addition to the sources of error mentioned in the text, it should be noted that the simplicity of Tale agricultural technology makes it possible for quite small boys to be of occasional, if somewhat casual, assistance in the fields.

[2] The Chief of Tongo slaughtered a cow for his wives and elders at the New Year (*Daa*) Festival in 1934, the only case of the kind we came across.

consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus considerably 231
greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782
leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of 262
junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by
professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which
we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign
settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there
along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief
customers of the butchers. But a Taleŋa occasionally buys a little [435]
meat—from a few ounces for 3*d*., to a leg for 9*d*. to 1*s*. He may do this
when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is
courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her
some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial 231
animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occasions 262
such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great 224
delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs
throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the
majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush
on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost [354]
entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though
regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride
in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once
observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth,
among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal
as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*ziŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small 262
supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and 226
part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially
dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success,
as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought
in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some 262
of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

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[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable
262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The
235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, can-
422 not replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore, the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and individuals within the unit of food economy come to marked expression. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry
[231] freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls
[782 never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and
431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacrifice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred. At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

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[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

The meat, already putrescent, is nevertheless enjoyed despite its stench. 262
Fresh eggs, being potential chickens, are never eaten; but addled
eggs are much appreciated by children, who bake them in ashes.
Children also eat field and domestic mice, a species of toad, and harmless snakes, all of which they shoot with miniature bows and arrows [224
in the later months of the dry season. These things are despised by 857]
adolescents and adults who, however, appreciate bigger rodents like
moles and water voles. In short, meat supplies are a matter of chance,
vary greatly with the season, as will be clearer later, and though much
desired, form but a small part of the bulk of food consumed.

FATS AND SEASONINGS. Fats and seasonings have a very important 262
place in Tale cookery, and, like vegetables, are the woman's respon- 263
sibility. But they are mainly market commodities and a man will 252
frequently give his wife money to purchase them. The only fat used
is shea butter (*kpaam*). It is obtainable all the year round. It is made
of the nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) which are carefully preserved after
the fruits have been eaten.

Dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpəlug*) are made by boiling the seeds of the dawa-dawa fruits. The balls are sold at prices varying from a tenth of a penny for one the size of a large marble to threepence for one the size of a cricket ball.

The laborious processes of manufacture involved prevent many women from making their own shea-butter and dawa-dawa seed balls. Others, who can command the assistance, e.g. of daughters, often prepare enough to have a surplus for sale.

Red pepper (*nanzuuh*) is grown in small quantities by a few men for sale in the market, and much is imported. It is sold at about a halfpenny for a handful.

Rock salt (*yaarem*) is sold in the market by regular traders who fetch it from the south, a small heap (about ⅛lb.) for a halfpenny.

Ziem, the ash of valley grasses, and *bakaa*, the ash of early millet stalks, are prepared by the women and are stored in large baskets or calabashes for their own use and for sale. They are used as salt substitutes.

THE PRODUCTIVE CYCLE AND THE FOOD CYCLE. We have seen how 596
the domestic organization of the Tallensi works in relation to the
supply of grain and the other main raw materials of their diet. We

596 must now consider how these raw materials are consumed by the unit of food economy. It will be impossible in the scope of this paper to discuss every social situation affecting the domestic economy of food, since there is hardly a social act in which something edible or masticable does not participate, be it only a piece of kola-nut or a plug of tobacco. We shall refer briefly, therefore, to the most conspicuous types of situations in which food plays a part, and discuss more fully the domestic consumption of food in the ordinary routine of family life. We emphasize again that our purpose is to give an ethnographic account of these facts, as we have been able to observe them in a single year. We have not the quantitative information to allow us to venture upon a deeper sociological analysis.

Tale food economy has a marked seasonal periodicity, as is to be
●262 expected in an agricultural society. It is this seasonal rhythm which
433 links the supply of foodstuffs with their distribution and consumption.
241 This correlation emerges readily from a calendrical tabulation in which the agricultural and other productive activities are set down side by side with the facts pertaining to the utilization of the food supply. Agriculture in Tale-land is a hazardous enterprise, chiefly because of the uncontrollable natural phenomena upon which a successful crop depends, above all, the correct distribution of rainfall. Good harvests and bad harvests succeed one another erratically and the natives can never predict from one year to the next. Their primitive methods of farming, too, mean that they extract only half as much out of the land as it is capable of producing. 'Nevertheless,' says Mr. Lynn,[1] 'in a good season . . . nobody is short of food. The area of land cultivated is adequate and the system of farming is successful.' But the margin of security for the average householder is extremely small, at any time. We have no means of estimating how representative the observations made by us in 1934 may be; the natives considered it to be a fair year. For our purpose, however, it chanced fortunately, since we were able to observe more easily the relations between supply and consumption of foodstuffs in the average household than might have been possible in either a very good or a very bad year.

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[1] *Op. cit.* Mr. Lynn records that in both 1930 and 1931 the harvest was bad owing to locusts and adverse rains. In 1934 the neighbouring areas were worse off than Tale-land.

The climate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast has two 132
well-marked seasons, a rainy season (*seng*) and a dry season (*uun*). The 221
rainy season is the period of intense agricultural activity and lasts from April to October; the dry season, when agriculture sinks into the background of social interest, from November to March. We shall set out the cycle of agricultural and food economy month by month, beginning with April, the first month of the rains.[1]

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
APRIL: First planting-rain fell on March 26, and early millet (*naara*) with some cow-peas and *neri* was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, &c. Women sowed their vegetable patches; *naggena*, *kibiscus* (*ma'ana*, *bet* and *beris*), marrow (*wok*—planted by only a few women) and other vegetables. Hoeing begun; but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.	Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. 221 262 Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts.[2] Wild fruits—shea (*taamr*), *ximenia americana* (*lieŋ*) and especially dawa-dawa powder (*dɔbugm*)—being consumed to stave off hunger.[3]

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[1] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, but we are following the European calendar [805]
to simplify the exposition. All dates given refer to 1934.

[2] Ground-nut gleaning (*syeek*) is a regular pursuit of children, adolescents, and 222
even adults of households with small supplies of ground-nuts. After the ground-nuts have been lifted any one may come and scratch with a hoe for those left in the ground. Thus little groups of boys and girls, from infancy to adolescence, wander about in the fields near their homes scratching with old hoes for the ground-nuts, which they collect and eat. Early in the dry season these ground-nuts are regarded as snacks. When the dry season reaches its end, however, they become scarcer but are searched for more eagerly as a measure to stop the pangs of hunger between one meal and the next, often twenty-four hours later.

[3] Shea fruits are collected by the women throughout this season, mainly from 222
trees on bush farms belonging to their compound. Dawa-dawa powder is more difficult to come by as the trees are jealously watched by the owners, who are in some areas the chiefs *ex-officio* and in others heads of lineages. Dawa-dawa pods are thus often obtained by gift, purchase, or exchange from the owners, or in the market. Every part of the fruit is of great value—the floury powder is eaten, the seeds collected and turned into *kpolog*, the husks of the pod used to prepare *am*, [356]
the liquid with which the walls and floors of compounds are waterproofed.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
MAY: Rains continue erratically. Early millet planted in the stony and hilly areas. Others interplanting guinea-corn and late millet on compound farms and some ground-nuts. Work on bush farms preparatory to planting commenced. Tempo of agricultural activity increasing rapidly.	Food stores depleished and severe rationing. 'Hunger' (*kɔm*) commences. Poorer households suffer two or three days' hunger a week, living on vegetable soup, ground-nuts and wild fruits. Householders send their wives to purchase grain abroad for consumption and re-sale if they have money. Many selling live stock bit by bit to buy grain in market. Prices of all commodities rising. Visits being paid to relations in more fortunate areas to get some grain.[1]
JUNE: Height of agricultural season. Men completely absorbed in hoeing	Peak of 'hunger' reached. Granaries empty among poorer households.

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[1] The following case-record will illustrate more vividly than explanations the state of affairs in May: Baripeta and his adolescent brother had dependent upon them their mother, the former's two wives, and one infant. Baripeta was known as one of the best young farmers in the settlement. His ortho-cousin, head of the compound, farmed independently. At the end of April Baripeta's supplies were so low that he had to purchase small quantities of grain and send his brother to a relative living in the richer Mampuru country to beg some grain. By May 9 the household was living on shea fruit and vegetable soup, with a meal of porridge every third day, scraped together by the women. Baripeta obtained 2*s*. and sent his brother and senior wife to Mampurugu to buy grain, he himself being unable to abandon his fields just then. They returned (May 15) bringing about 60 lbs. of guinea-corn. After 2 days of complete starvation the household fed adequately though frugally for over a week. As he had to give some of the grain to the head of the compound, Baripeta was left with about 50 lb. of it. A small quantity dribbled away in gifts to other kinsfolk who came to 'beg'. Thus the five adults and the infant used, say, 40 lb. of grain in about 8 to 10 days. Baripeta sent his brother to 'greet' their brother-in-law in the Nabte country and obtain some grain from him. Thus, alternately starving for a couple of days and having enough for a few days, the household carried on until the harvest in July. This case is typical of dozens; but many households were not reduced to such straits, especially those of heads of compounds or elders with large compound farms and several younger men assisting them.

Ground-nuts are chewed all the year round, if available, to stave off hunger, but are never regarded as a substitute for porridge, the real food. But a family with a good ground-nut harvest never starves. There is always a sale for ground-nuts, which figure as contributions in all funeral ceremonies when large groups of people gather and sit about for a whole day and chew them to keep off hunger.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
and weeding, planting guinea-corn and late millet on bush farms, rice, ground-nuts and minor crops. Hiring labour for help in hoeing and weeding.[2] Women plucking *naygena*.	Much live stock sold or bartered for grain very cheaply; grain scarce and dear. Much ground-nuts for sale.[1] Small groups of children wander about hungry, feeding on wild fruits and small animals they find near the settlements. Towards the end of the month many people are staunching their hunger by cutting the ripe or half ripe heads of early millet which they roast on the embers and nibble at.
JULY: Early millet harvested by those who planted first on valley land.[3]	Early millet eaten by those who harvest. Relatives from the later-

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[1] People tend to hoard their ground-nuts until about June, when the price rises to 1*s.* a small basketful, as many require seed then. The proceeds are invested in grain. Grain prices at this time are about twice the average price of roughly ½*d.* a lb.

[2] In June even those whose grain supplies have lasted well begin to feel the 464 pinch. One reason for this is that a considerable amount of grain is expended in feeding and recompensing hired *kpaarip* (lit. hoe-men). These are Nankansi and 241 Builsa who come to Tale-land to seek a few days' work, since their settlements are in a worse plight than those of the Tale. They insist on being paid in grain or ground-nuts which they can take home. As they have to be given flour-water (*zɔmkɔɔm*) in the middle of the day and a good meal at night besides a calabash of 4 or 5 lb. of grain per day to carry home, they make considerable inroads on grain supplies. At this time of the year only those with grain to spare engage *kpaarip*, later even poorer men do so. It may mean economizing on one's own food at the time, but in this way, say the Tale farmers, one can get a large bush farm hoed or weeded expeditiously, and thus make up the grain expended twice over.

[3] Early millet is a catch-crop and the Tallensi realize this. Its function is to tide over the period of waiting until the main crops of guinea-corn and late millet are harvested. Hence the necessity for a piece of compound farm if a unit is to be fully independent.

The Tallensi say that early millet normally lasts for two months, and our observations prove this to be the case. When the millet is brought in by the women, the heads are spread out to dry and sorted into two lots, the good heads (*naarsɔmr*) and the bad heads (*naarbiɛt*). The best of the former are selected for seed, threshed and stored in pots. This is the first task, as it is considered shameful to be without seed at planting time. The bad heads are eaten first, the good millet stored in the granary and eaten later. For a few days there is no restraint. Small children run about all day, nibbling at heads of millet which have been quickly roasted in hot embers. But as soon as the head of the unit of food economy has carried out the thanksgiving sacrifices which permit him, too, to eat of the new crop, he takes control.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
Hoeing and weeding of compound and bush farms in full swing. Some still planting subsidiary crops. Poultry breeding begins.	planting areas come to beg grain.[1] Wild fruits still eaten and hunger prevalent in late-planting areas. Ground-nuts, beginning to ripen, plucked and chewed as snacks.
AUGUST: Late planters harvest early millet. Invited collective labour (*kpaarip*) for hoeing and weeding coming to fore, but hired labour still in evidence.[2] Fresh hibiscus leaves used in soup.	Almost everybody has early millet; hunger appeased for a time.

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[1] The different settlements harvest at such different times corresponding to their times of planting that more than a month elapses between the beginning of the harvest at one end of Tale-land, and its conclusion at the other end. This gives rise to a system of reciprocities the effect of which is to cancel out the lag to some extent. People from the late-planting settlements visit their relatives in the early-planting settlements as soon as these begin to harvest and receive gifts of early millet from them. Women, especially, go thus to visit their parental homes, and no man would send his daughter or sister away empty-handed. Later, when the early-harvesting settlements begin to reach the end of their early millet stores, the process is reversed. The Tallensi never think of this in terms of economic interchange or reciprocal payments. They insist that *A* gives to *B* freely and without expectation of return because *B* is *A*'s daughter. Later, when *B*'s husband harvests his millet he will send some to *A* freely—because *A* is his father-in-law. It is significant that these mutual 'good turns' always occur between people of different settlements, not between patrilineal kin of the same settlement.

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[2] Soon after early millet has been brought in, the elders and others who have had a good crop begin to 'invite hoemen' (*pooh kpaarip*). An elder sends round to all the compounds of his section (a sub-division of a clan settlement) requesting the young men to come out and weed his farms, compound or bush, for him on the following day. As no one would be so ill-mannered or so negligent of a kinsman's duties as to refuse, some 20 or 30 young men turn out next day. The one who issued the invitation recompenses them with two meals, flour-water (*zomkuom*) at noon and a lavish cooked meal at night. Thus commences a round of collective weeding, as every farmer who can afford the 20 or 30 lb. of grain and the meat for feeding them in turn invites his kinsmen and neighbours to come and weed for him. Others have to hire foreign labour to the best of their capacity. The Tallensi account for this institution firstly on the ground that it is only by such a mass attack that the rapidly growing weeds can be kept under, and secondly on the ground that it relieves the strain of unremitting toil in the fields and increases the crops.

Gifts to relatives and feeding collective labour are a considerable strain on a man's granary at this time, though, in the long run, much of it comes back. Reliable informants told us that half of their total crop was expended thus, leaving them short of millet in September.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakaa*.[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely. 221 262
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

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[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakaa* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but the *bakaa* is their own property. [263 422]

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying and stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s.* or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly. 584

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls, 796

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
221 262 DECEMBER: Agricultural work over.	Height of ritual season: funeral ceremonies, children's dedication ceremonies, many marriages; all involving consumption of live stock and grain, in sacrifices, as cooked food, and beer.[1]
JANUARY: Period of secondary activities such as housebuilding, cut-	Grain rationing again begins. Grain and other foodstuffs, including im-

796 guinea-fowls, sheep, goats, and dogs are slaughtered in profusion as sacrifices to ancestral and magical shrines. Beer (*daam*) made of malted grain is boiled, though in small quantities; much food is cooked to receive kinsfolk who call upon and greet each other. Recently married men send baskets of sweet potatoes, frafra potatoes, and yams to greet their parents-in-law. The Festivals last only a few days, but the tubers and animals are consumed over a period of some weeks.

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[1] In this period, too, are celebrated all those clan and family religious ceremonies 796 in which animal sacrifices and cooked food and beer play a great part. Indeed, 764 these rites are often postponed for several years until a sufficiently good harvest enables enough supplies to be accumulated. We have seen a cow, a donkey, about 431 15 sheep and goats, and a large number of fowls and guinea-fowls slaughtered at the funeral ceremonies for a very venerable elder. We were assured by his sons, who were responsible for these ceremonies, that they had used up the whole of a large supply of guinea-corn in the preparation of ritual beer and food and in providing hospitality for throngs of guests. At such a funeral the deceased's cognatic and affinal kin bring obligatory food-contributions of cooked porridge, sheep, goats, and birds. So great were these contributions at one funeral that two or three basketfuls of porridge had to be thrown away as it turned sour. Funerals are extreme cases of the lavish utilization of food at this time of the year; and only three or four big funerals take place in any settlement in one season. Most funerals require a much smaller expenditure of live stock and grain than that made at an elder's funeral.

273 This is not the place to discuss the types of ritual and ceremonial situations in which 'things' (*bon*)—the Tale concept which covers every type of property—are consumed. In a good season there will be a tremendous spate of them; in a poor season only urgent rites will be performed. A word, however, must be said about beer, the most important ritual substance apart from the animals and flour used in sacrifices. Beer is cooked (*doγ-*) by women, malted grain (*kpeγa*) of guinea-corn or millet being issued to them by the man at whose request it is made. In the average compound beer is never cooked except for ritual purposes which may be twice or thrice a year. Chiefs and headmen, who always have a surplus of grain often, and elders occasionally keep a supply of beer on hand for guests. Tale women never make beer for sale in the markets; indeed, any man would be horrified at the suggestion that his hard-won grain should be used in this way. The Tallensi are a sober people on the whole.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
ting grass and timber for roofing, handicraft work. Young men begin to go abroad temporarily.[1]	ported maize, plentiful and cheap at market.
FEBRUARY: As in January.	Grain issued for only one meal a day. Many purchasing grain rather than use up their own supplies. Ground-nuts and cow-peas regular and important supplements to cereal food. Women finding grain to augment supplies, by trading, etc. Market supplies still plentiful, prices average.
MARCH: As in February. Sporadic cleaning of fields and hoeing.	Grain supplies sinking and more carefully rationed. Children and women gleaning ground-nuts to stop hunger. People going to Mampuru and Nabte countries to purchase grain for re-sale. Grain still plentiful in market, also other products, e.g. yams (imported).[2]

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[1] This month of plenitude marks the peak of the food cycle. Soon supplies diminish again; men who are setting up compounds of their own commence building operations; but almost every compound requires some repairs. House-building and thatching are crafts in which a great many men have no skill. They therefore have to invite (*pooh*) neighbours or relatives who have the skill to carry out the repairs for them; and these have to be generously fed in recompense. A new house, again, is built co-operatively with the aid of kinsmen, relatives and friends, who also have to be generously fed. [476 356]

With this further drain on his grain stores, the head of a unit of food economy has to go warily. Hence in spite of the ample and cheap grain available in the market, he begins to reduce the ration of grain he distributes to his dependants. In February the rationing gets stricter, for it is essential to keep a reserve against the first month of the rains 'to strengthen one' against the greater demands upon one's energy made by agricultural labour. They say this explains why those who can afford it buy grain for immediate consumption. Finally, just before the rains, supplies are sinking to the minimum which will be reached in the month preceding the early millet harvest, with the usual effect of causing visits to neighbouring areas in search of grain to purchase.

The temporary migration of young men is more fully dealt with in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Culture Contact as a Dynamic Process', *Africa*, ix. 1, 1936.

[2] We have, in the above table, emphasized the place of cereals in the cycle because they constitute the staple food of the Tallensi; and as we are concerned with the domestic economy of food, we have referred to the market only in order 443

221 A striking correlation emerges from the above synopsis of the cycle of food economy. It will be seen that domestic food-supplies 262 are at their lowest at the time—recognized as such by the natives—of the most strenuous output of physical labour, i.e. in May–June, and highest when there is least agricultural work. In other words, it would seem that food consumption is inversely correlated with food requirements, if we may assume that more food is needed to sustain the arduous agricultural labour of the rainy season than the leisure months of the dry season. How this affects the working capacity of the natives must be left to the social biologist to determine; it is a type of problem beyond the competence of an ethnographer. The 251 Tallensi have both excellent receptacles and adequate techniques for 261 storing all kinds of food. We have seen grain and ground-nuts produced from granaries or storage baskets (*kusɔk*) twelve months after they had been packed, and in perfect condition. Even root crops and legumes, which appear to be more susceptible to damp and weevils, can be stored for a year. Nor, in our estimation, are the Tallensi

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443 to bring out more clearly the fluctuations in domestic supplies. The market is a fundamental economic institution in Tale society, but we have space here only for a cursory comment on its function in relation to our main theme. Every kind of raw foodstuff, from grain to wild fruits and many varieties of cooked food can be purchased in the market. A visit to the market shows at once what [illegible] of the domestic larder is; high prices indicate empty granaries, low prices plentiful domestic supplies. The cooked food offered in the market illustrates the seasonal variation in supplementary diet very well. As soon as Bambara beans or frafra potatoes are lifted they appear, both raw and cooked, in the market. The food most commonly sold in the market is porridge (*sayabɛ*), the staple cereal food; but other cereal and pulse confections can be bought there, many kinds being especially prepared for sale, and rarely, if ever, cooked for home consumption. Such are *maasa*—fried millet-cake, *gwr* and *kamsha*, both made of flour cow-pea. A number of women carry on a regular trade in these luxury foods and thus reap a steady income. Beer is always on sale in the Tale markets, manufactured and sold by a few regular women traders, all Nankansi as far as we know. Only in the markets have we seen intoxicated men; never at ritual gatherings. The market is also the main supplier of tobacco, which most mature men and many old women chew or smoke, but which only a minority are able to grow for themselves, and of kola nuts, imported from Ashanti by foreign traders, and universally chewed as a stimulant by men, women, and even older children. Curdled milk (*bigbihir*), a luxury food, is generally obtained there, too. The market represents the point of contact between the basic subsistence economy of the natives and the money economy which exists side by side with it.

312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption, but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes, but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a radius of not more than 300 yards.

●262 A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not in the lean months.

596 261 264 The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, preferably unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism. Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual household and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman carefully considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

562 264 252 However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncertainty of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over (three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home, and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to. Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

for firewood. A woman with a small child never omits to cook a little 56[illegible]
for it, whatever the circumstances. The cooking routine also becomes 264
upset under the stress of seasonal activities. When a whole family 252
goes to work at a bush farm or to a fishing expedition, some groundnuts or dry guinea-corn is taken along to chew, and no cooking will be done until evening.

Each woman is responsible for the provision of meals for her 596
husband and family. In certain situations co-wives co-operate for the 476
common good. Thus when building operations take place, or a man 264
has hired or 'invited' labour the co-wives cook in turn to provide food for the men. On such occasions the owner of the granary allots a special share of grain for the labourers' porridge to the woman whose turn it is to cook for them.

Mutual assistance between co-wives occurs only when a woman is 596
confined or ill. Then her co-wife (a wife of her husband or his 252
brother) cooks for her and her family. The confined woman provides her own produce and firewood and the cooking is done in her kitchen. This is the duty and prerogative of co-wives. Only as a last resort would the husband's mother or sister cook for her in those circumstances. When a young wife shares her mother-in-law's quarters she does all the household tasks; but when she shares those of a senior wife, they assist each other and cook in turn.

The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and 262
soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea-corn or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or cow-peas or rice is used. When root crops are in season they are cooked instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things they spoil your belly'.[1]

The preparation of porridge is very simple. Flour is not preserved 252

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[1] A Tale friend enquired what kind of food he would be given in our country, and when told that he would eat meat, fish, bread, and eggs, he exclaimed, 'What, no porridge? I call that starvation.'

252 from day to day, but is usually ground fresh whenever required. When her flour is ready, the woman puts some water on to boil in the porridge pot (*sayarok*). Sitting on the flat stone in front of the fireplace she then mixes some flour with cold water, stirring it to a thin paste with her hand, in an old calabash kept for this purpose. When the water boils she pours the paste in, stirring all the while with the stirring-stick. It is left to boil for a few minutes until it thickens and assumes a gluey appearance. With a ladle she pours off about a third of the contents into the old calabash, and puts it aside. She sprinkles a few handfuls of flour into the porridge in the pot, stirring it swiftly with her stick until it becomes quite thick. Every now and again she dips her hand into cold water and with a brisk movement sweeps the porridge adhering to the stick into the pot. The half-cooked contents of the calabash is then added to the porridge and stirred again. When it is thick enough for the stick to stand in it the porridge is ready. The time taken to cook a potful of porridge sufficient for 10 people is only about 10 minutes. The same technique is employed by all the women; the only difference introduced in cooking large quantities is the mixing of the flour with warm water instead of cold.

● 262 252 Porridge is never eaten by itself, but is always accompanied by soup, the main variant in Tale diet. This is made chiefly of fresh or dried vegetables, cultivated or found wild, and there is never a shortage of these. When reduced to its last resources a family subsists almost entirely on soup.

The natives classify soups into two types: *zisaalɔg* and *zizaayɔg*—'slippery' soup and 'coarse' soup. The first is smooth and viscous: 'It slides down as soon as you put it into your mouth, before the porridge.' Ocro soup is the most representative of this kind. The coarse variety is made of crushed ground-nuts, marrow leaves, hibiscus or similar vegetables. 'It sticks in your mouth after the porridge and you have to swallow it down.'

Porridge is the substance, soup is the relish. A woman tries to vary the latter 'so that they do not tire of eating the same'; when a visitor from afar comes she prepares the most tasty soup she knows, and if she wishes to please her husband she observes which soup he prefers and cooks it frequently for him. Seasonal factors, however, count for much, and women cook mainly what is most easily obtainable at

the time. From a series of menus which we collected over a period 262
of two months (November–January), it would appear that ocro is 252
the favourite soup, while *bet* (*hibiscus sabdariffa*) is the least liked. *Neri*-seed[1] soup is rarely cooked for ordinary consumption, but is prepared on a special occasion such as a visit of an in-law relation.

Though the number of different vegetables planted is few, the 251
women are able to achieve a considerable range of variation by using 262
every part of the plant and by combining them in different ways. Every woman has a well-stocked larder of dried vegetable-leaves and fruits which she keeps in pots (e.g. ocro) or onion-shaped receptacles made of dried guinea-corn leaves (*kiŋkarog*) and suspended from the rafters to keep them dry (e.g. *bet* or *naŋgena*).

The process of preparation is the same in the main for most soups, 252
and is described in the Appendix. Vegetables and other ingredients 515
are never washed or cleaned before use: Tale women are very casual in their cooking hygiene; the cooking-pots are left unwashed from one meal till the next and the soup dishes always have stale food adhering to them.[2]

Meat is a very important ingredient in the soup. It is most com- 252
monly consumed in this way, though it is sometimes eaten by itself 262
by men after sacrifices. It is a great delicacy and men will often spend long hours at a ceremony in order to obtain a morsel of meat or a tiny piece of the viscera. Any scrap of meat or fat which falls to the ground is picked up and swallowed raw. But meat is not 'food', they say, as
porridge is, it is *valeg*, i.e. gluttony. While a little of it is strengthening, [753]
too much causes diarrhoea.

The only meat directly killed for cooking is the guinea-fowl. The

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[1] *Neri* (*cucumis melo*) when ripe is buried and covered with guinea-corn stalks and allowed to rot. The seeds are then extracted, dried, and stored for making soups.

[2] The chief reason would seem to be the scarcity of water at certain times of the year, and the labour involved in carrying it, as well as the ingrained indifference of the Tallensi to cleanliness. Yet they take great pleasure in polishing their calabashes at the water-holes to make them yellow and shiny, and treat the new calabashes in a special way to attain the gloss. We have seen women carrying gravel home with them when visiting a neighbouring settlement some 4 miles away because their own clayey soil was not satisfactory for cleaning calabashes. We could not obtain an adequate explanation of this attitude from the women themselves, beyond that 'they like it so'.

252 262 initiative in this matter is never taken by the woman herself. If she has no meat she cooks without it, but the husband, tasting the soup, will observe that her meat is finished and will catch a guinea-fowl for her or give her money to buy one at the market. A woman may not catch one of her husband's guinea-fowls herself or she would be branded a thief, but she could catch one of her own, if she has any. This is the reason why she tells her husband 'So-and-so gave me a guinea-fowl and I had it killed to-day', if she slaughters one [576] she received as a gift. A woman never kills or plucks a guinea-fowl herself because it is unbecoming. She will ask a young boy in the compound to do it for her. We have frequently observed women carrying home live guinea-fowls already plucked for them in the market by some man, so as to avoid delay in the cooking. The freshly killed [251] guinea-fowl is hung up directly over the fireplace where it becomes gradually dried. When it is used the first day it is called *num-mahar*, i.e. fresh meat; after two or three days it is dry on the surface but still soft inside and is known as *num-gahar* or *num-ɔɔra*, i.e. smoked meat; after three days it is dry all through. It is now *num-kpee*, dried meat. There is no preference shown for meat at any particular stage; the Tallensi are an economical people and have a matter-of-fact attitude in this regard. Meat is added to the soup in very small quantities. Used fresh or smoked, it is added as a whole portion, e.g. the head, the neck, a wing, a leg or the breast. Dried meat is ground and stirred into the soup in the same way as the other seasonings. A medium sized guinea-fowl thus lasts a family of seven about a week. Dried meat can be kept any length of time, and if a piece of fresh meat is obtained in the meantime it is used up first. In such a case one guinea-fowl might last a housewife as much as a fortnight.

262 251 Beef or donkey-meat is much appreciated. We have seen a woman produce about two square inches of dried beef which was a year old. Such meat is carefully preserved in a pot or calabash among a woman's more valued possessions; but dried guinea-fowl is kept with her other soup ingredients in the kitchen.

Fish is used in the same way as meat, though less frequently, and mainly in dried form. This is due to the fact that it is seasonal and has generally to be purchased. But it is appreciated as much as meat.

262 263 Vegetables are the foundation of every soup; meat and fish make

a good soup; but no soup is complete without seasonings (*zikant*). 262
Red pepper (*nanzuuh*), the most important, is never omitted from 263
any soup, is added to other dishes too, and even to native beer to give it more punch. Salt (*yaarem*), though very highly valued, is not as indispensable as red pepper. *Ziem* (the ash of valley grasses) or *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is sometimes substituted for salt or used in addition to it. A much-favoured seasoning is the dawa-dawa seed ball (*kpɔlug*) which is sometimes even used as the foundation of a soup. Usually the seasoning ingredients are all used together; the more pungent the soup the better it is liked. Most women do not keep large supplies of seasonings, but consider it worth while to walk several miles to the nearest market to buy them.

Thus, though the native considers soup merely as a relish for his 262
porridge, it really provides the vegetable and animal food (the latter 146
in very small quantities) which balances a purely cereal diet.

The soup is always put on to cook first. While it is boiling, the 252
woman sweeps out the close (*dendɔŋɔ*) where the meal is to be eaten, and prepares the vessels for serving it. The preparation and cooking of the soup takes 30–40 minutes. When it is ready she makes the porridge. In all these tasks a woman is assisted by her young daughters. Small boys, too, sometimes give a hand with the fire, but never with the cooking.

As soon as the porridge is ready it is dished up in several calabashes. 252
The housewife takes much trouble in arranging her husband's portion 264
in neat slices—she is less fastidious about the other portions. Each portion of porridge is rubbed over with shea butter; that of the husband's very liberally. This is the most common way in which fat is consumed. After the porridge has been shared out the soup is poured into an equal number of dishes, or sometimes over the porridge. The actual cooking and serving of food, unlike the fetching of wood and water, does not absorb a great deal of the housewife's time. One hour is sufficient to prepare a meal for ten people.

The amount of food consumed per meal differs according to the 262
seasons. When food is scarce, whatever quantity of grain a woman has she will cook, and it will have to suffice; but a Taleŋa never feels satisfied unless he has had about 1½ lb. of porridge at a sitting.

There is no specially appointed eating-place in the compound. 264

272 of preparing it. The usual way is to mix the flour with water into a stiff dough, then knead it into a smooth, flat cake (*zɔmgar*), and place it in a calabash which is filled with water. A hasty method consists in merely pouring water over a handful of flour and stirring it up with the hand. This is *zɔmsaka*. As porridge is the ideal food so *zɔmkuom* is the ideal everyday beverage. It is the drink offered to guests, and the regular libation given to the ancestors. It is also food. When the water has been drunk the flour is eaten by adults and children. *Zɔmkuom*, unlike ground-nuts, forms a hasty meal and is resorted to when cooking is inconvenient.

264 262 Sporadic eating is a universal habit. It goes on in time of plenty because food abounds, and in time of scarcity because one dare not forego an opportunity of eating anything. When the ground-nuts are nearly ripe people pluck a plant from anybody's field and chew the nuts. When grain is abundant a handful is roasted over a fire and eaten at any time of the day. Nevertheless, the Tallensi are capable of going without food for long stretches at a time.

At the ritual and ceremonial gatherings which take place preponderantly in the dry season but intermittently throughout the year, ritual flour-water or cooked food is often passed round, or ground-nuts distributed to the elders present. At the markets, too, particularly in the months of plenty, both porridge and especially the luxury confections such as *kameha* (fried cakes of cow-pea flour) *maasa* (fried millet cakes) and so on are bought in quantities. The small animals and birds, which children hunt and eat, as well as the ground-nuts they glean, belong to this category of food consumption.

Sporadic eating does not, however, in any way affect the domestic organization of the food economy. The housewife never omits to cook a meal because her children found some titbit for themselves, nor will she even question them about it. The Tallensi do not consider such eating as 'food'; not even in the time of scarcity when meals at home become uncertain.

262 Food taboos, on the other hand, react upon the arrangements for the cooking and distributing of the food. Women never cook fowls or dogs, since they avoid eating them. Men therefore cook these animals for themselves. If a woman observes a totemic taboo, her husband cannot compel her to cook the animal she avoids for him, though he

may do so for himself. She, again, may eat an animal he avoids, but 262
would hardly find it feasible to cook it in her own kitchen.

The occasions for which special foods are customary are few. A [843]
woman in her first pregnancy must eat food 'which is good for her', such as meat and highly seasoned soup and avoid unsuitable foods such as thinly mixed flour-water (*zɔmsaka*), left-over porridge, or too many sweet potatoes or frafra potatoes. Nor may she eat cold food or drink too much cold water. 'Sweet' food (i.e. luxury foods such as sold in the market) is not encouraged, while honey is prohibited for magical reasons. A woman found eating the latter is severely reprimanded and a special rite has to be carried out on the birth of the child or it will have a blocked nose. During confinement a woman is given porridge with highly seasoned soups and a generous allowance of fish or meat to make her strong.

There is no specific food for sick people, except that fresh porridge 262
and pungent soup are considered strengthening. The prognosis is 758
very grave if a sick person refuses food. In the prostration of grief, too, people refuse food and their relatives try to tempt their palate with delicacies.

Old and toothless people in time of food shortage are given crushed 262
ground-nuts (*sukpabugra*) to drink down with water. 888

We have attempted, in this paper, to give an outline of the domestic 000
commissariat of the Tallensi. Our interest has been focussed on the principles according to which the domestic groupings of Tale society organize and sustain the social activities customary for the production of raw foodstuffs, their preservation, and their conversion into and consumption as edible food. We have observed how the ever-changing, developing structure of the joint family determines these activities; how Tale culture defines the values and norms by which these activities are regulated and directed; how these values and norms, on the one hand, and seasonal conditions, on the other, control the annual cycle of food production and consumption; and finally, how the convergent influence of family structure, cultural norms and values, and seasonal exigencies determine the crucial situation of the series, the translation of the product of natural resources and culturally organized labour into the edible food in the kitchen.

000 We have been unable to explore the economic context of food in Tale society (e.g. as exhibited in the market); or to discuss the emotional values associated with it; or to describe its functions as a technique for expressing, defining, and imposing social obligations. These problems must be left for consideration at a future date.

M. and S. L. Fortes.

APPENDIX

252 262 We give below a few examples of soups and their method of preparation; a brief description of foods used as substitutes for porridge; of occasional foods which are obtained mainly in the market; and of the preparation of shea-butter.

Soups (*ziet*)

Zisaalɔg—smooth, viscous soup; best example of this is *ma'ana ziet*—ocro soup.

A small handful of ground, dried fish or meat is thrown into a potful of boiling water. A handful of red peppers, a few lumps of salt and a piece of dawa-dawa-seed ball, ground up together and mixed into a paste with a little water is added next. The seasonings are made into a paste so that the pepper should not float on the surface. While this is cooking the ocros are prepared. They are used either fresh or dried; but frequently the two varieties are mixed in equal proportions. They are crushed into a pulp on the grindstone and added to the boiling soup. The contents are stirred with the stirring-stick (*sugr*) every now and again. The soup takes about 30 minutes to cook.

In soups of this type the vegetables used are always crushed to a pulp or cut up very fine. Other viscous soups are made from the leaf of the local elm (*nuom*) and from a common weed (*saalem*), but mainly by the addition of ocro to other vegetables, as, e.g., *vaat ni ma'anar*—leaves and ocro—where the leaves of the ocro or vegetable marrow or baobab tree are used; or *bermihim*, a soup made of the white hibiscus flower with the addition of ocros.

Zizaayɔg—coarse soup. To this group belong all the soups made of the hibiscus and other leaves, and also soups made of ground-nuts and cow-peas. The leaves are sliced and thrown into boiling water. While they are cooking, a small calabashful of ground-nuts is crushed fine, also a handful of peppers, a piece of dawa-dawa-seed ball and a few lumps of salt. These are all mixed together and stirred into the boiling vegetables. If there is meat or fish it is also ground and added at this stage. This soup takes 30 minutes to cook. The thickening, which is always added to this kind of soup, may be made of coarsely ground grain, or of cow-pea flour.

The Tale women show great ingenuity in the number of appellations they give to soups of this group, which often do not differ from each other in the main ingredients.

Cooked Foods Eaten as Porridge Substitutes

1. *Tubers*:

Frafra potatoes (*peeha*) boiled in the skins and eaten plain. This is called *peefita*.

Cooked without the skins and eaten with soup. The potatoes are put on the ground and trodden with the feet in a circular movement. This removes the skins. They are then washed and put to boil. The water in which they have been cooked is not utilized.

Yam (*nyuya*) boiled in plain water. Is served in small chunks and eaten with soup.

Sweet potatoes (*gumhma'ala*) boiled and eaten plain. Sometimes cooked together with frafra potatoes.

2. *Legumes*:

These are boiled in plain water and are eaten with shea-butter and a seasoning of pepper and salt.

3. *Rice*:

Boiled with pepper and salt. Shea-butter is added to it when dished up. Is eaten with soup.

Ground cow-peas or ground rice is occasionally made into porridge.

Occasional Foods

Kamsha—fried dumplings made of cow-pea flour. The process of preparing the cow-pea flour (*tia zom*) is rather laborious.

The cow-peas are crushed and washed in several changes of water in order to remove the skin which, if left, would make the flour black. It is then spread out in the sun to dry and later ground to flour. The flour is made into a thick batter to which salt is added. The batter is dropped into boiling shea-butter, handful by handful, and fried a golden brown. This is a much appreciated food and is only cooked for the market. So also is *maasa*—fried cakes made of millet or maize flour. These are much larger than the *kamsha* and are fried in the same way.

Gaur—steamed cakes made of cow-pea flour, bean flour, or ground rice. The flour is prepared as for *kamsha*. Instead of salt, an infusion of *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is added to the water which is used for making a thick batter. A pot is half-filled with dry grass and a little water added. It is then put on to boil. Small portions of the batter are in the meantime placed in between broad folded leaves of the *bayana* tree, or, if larger cakes are

252 262 desired, between two overlapping leaves. As soon as the water boils the cakes are arranged one on top of the other inside the pot, which is then closed tightly with a lid or calabash. The cakes are thus cooked by the steam, and are ready in 15 minutes. They are like baked porridge in appearance and are eaten with melted shea-butter spread over them and a sprinkling of salt and red pepper. *Guor* is principally cooked for market sale, but is occasionally cooked by the housewife to vary the menu.

Milk (*bihim*)

262 234 Milk is obtained only from cows and is eaten as curds (*bigbihir*) mixed with flour. Herdboys, however, when out on the pasture sometimes milk the cows for a drink.

Shea-Butter (*kpaam*)

252 262 There are five stages in the making of shea-butter:

1. The nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) are crushed with a stone to a brown pulp.
2. The pulp is placed in a large open pot (*sar*) over a fire, and stirred with a stick for a considerable time till it is a thick, sticky mass.
3. This is then ground quite fine. The grinding releases the oil.
4. It is now washed in several changes of water, being stirred continually with the hand, until the oil rises to the surface.
5. The oil is skimmed off the water, melted over a fire, and again skimmed till pure white oil is obtained. This is put into calabashes or small pots.
[278] The dark oil-scum (*kpabut*) is kept for medicinal purposes. It is only used externally. The brown fibrous residue left after the washing process is made
[372] into small balls and dried. This is *burum* and is used for making fires.

which children of 9 or 10 are fully familiar with and the compulsion 183 of which they experience to the same degree as the adults; and there is the whole body of implicit moral norms which regulate the day-to-day life of the family and emerge in the duties of children to one another and to their parents.

I have already mentioned the prohibition in some clans against the 784 eating of fowl by first-born children. By contrast with the voluntary 688 abstention from fowl meat practised by women, this is a taboo of 869 supreme mystical value for these clans and is exactly parallel to the totemic avoidances of other clans. The Hill Tallis, for instance, may not eat tortoise, some may not eat crocodile or python, and others taboo dog. A 5-year-old knows his or her personal or clan taboo, and can state it emphatically. The remedy for a chance infringement of such a taboo is extremely simple—e.g., in the case of the fowl, crushing some fowl droppings in water and giving the child the fluid to drink. Again the supernatural penalty for a breach is of a vague and general kind. In some cases it is thought that it would lead merely to an eruption of scabies on the head; in others it is said that the offender would slowly lose health and strength. These sanctions, however, are not the effective agencies maintaining the observances. Breaches of these rules are exceptional, both among children and among adults. A Taləŋa submits to a food taboo in virtue of a configuration of positive habits and dispositions built up in childhood, not through fear of the sanctions. From the time that it is a babe in arms a child is prevented from tasting or even touching any food which it is prohibited from eating. Later it will be called away from where its companions are sitting over a fire roasting titbits of food forbidden to it—'Come here, you mustn't eat that; it is forbidden.' I once observed a child of about 5 standing aloof while a group of his brothers and sisters were consuming a dish of python meat—a prized delicacy. 'I don't eat python, it is my taboo,' he explained, with an expression of complete aversion.

A vivid example of how food taboos are inculcated was provided 262 by a biographical reminiscence of the chief of Tongo who, as a first- 869 born, may not eat fowl. There was talk in his court-room of crops and famine in the old days, when an elder wondered if a man would eat a forbidden animal if he were starving. The chief, holding with

● 262 869 some of his elders that it would be too repugnant even for a starving man to do so, told this story of how he had himself, on two occasions, violated his taboo. When he was a child of perhaps 5 or 6 he was the favourite of his grandfather, as often happens. Some one brought the old man a gift of eggs which he promptly had roasted. He had to go outside to attend to some matter and he left his small grandson to see that no one purloined the eggs. Now an egg is a potential fowl, and is therefore equally taboo with the latter. The chief described how there was a brief struggle between his conscience and his desire, and how he succumbed and ate the eggs. His grandfather was furious when he returned and the child in trepidation lied, accusing a girl who was in the next room. The girl denied the accusation and the small boy's father was called in to adjudicate. He at once suspected his son, but the grandfather angrily defended the boy, who was now too terrified even to speak. The matter was dropped; but the small boy, afraid of his father, remained with his grandfather till nightfall. Then he slunk out, only to be caught at once by his father, who had been waiting for him. His father said nothing, but grimly called for a feather and a large gourd of water. 'Drink,' he commanded, and compelled the child, now sobbing with terror, to swallow the whole gourdful of water. 'Open your mouth,' said the father, and began to tickle the child's throat with the feather until he vomited. 'And now,' said the father, grasping the child's arms tightly and striking him right and left, on buttocks, back and head, 'I'll teach you to eat fowl and steal and tell lies.' 'That was how I learnt not to eat fowl,' the chief concluded amid general laughter. But, he continued, many years later, at the time of the great famine, he with two companions was on his way to a neighbouring district and stopped for the night *en route*. They were extremely hungry, not having had a proper meal for days, and when they were offered porridge and a cooked fowl ate ravenously. Now two of them tabooed the fowl, but they were too hungry to resist. The meal finished, they rose, when suddenly the other man who was not allowed to eat fowl was overcome with nausea and began to vomit. Immediately he himself also began to vomit. They had not, after all, been able to stomach the fowl.

183 764 How strongly quite young children feel the compulsion of a ritual obligation was brought home to me when a boy of about 10-11 was

121 each within the context of the particular type of social situation is specific to it and can be determined only from the analysis of the situation itself. It may differ considerably from its "institutional function" in relation to the culture as a whole. Thus the rules of exogamy viewed in relation to the entire social organization of a people may demonstrably serve to emphasize and preserve the integrity of an unilateral kinship group. But in a particular situation, a man barred from marriage with a woman he desires may enter into an illicit sexual intrigue with her, which may lead to dissension within the kinship group. In such a case the "proximate function" of the rules of exogamy appears to be the very contrary of their "institutional function." This is an hypothetical instance; but it will suffice to illustrate what we mean when we say that the components of any type of social situation are inter-related in a manner specific to it or that it exhibits a definite structure. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the structure of a situation which recurs with some frequency in the life of a tribe recently visited by the writer.

226 221 [805] Among the Tallensi, a tribe of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the communal fishing expeditions which take place every year are events of this kind. They extend over a period of about a month, between the close of the dry season and the commencement of the heavy rains. During this month which coincides with most of the native lunar month *Sigkpɛ̀ɔŋ* ("Dry rains"), and the European month of April, rain falls sporadically (five times, at varying intervals, in 1934, a dry year) but sufficiently for the sowing of early millet and some of the minor crops. Sowing demands the concentration of all energies of the family for a day or two after a fall of rain; then it is discontinued until the next fall of rain. Besides sowing, other technological and economic activities compete with fishing during this month. House repairs and rebuilding are still in progress and of course the markets, which take place on two days out of three within the tribal area, are in full swing. All these activities are equally shared by men and women, assisted by the children of both sexes.

226 262 Fishing therefore is not an activity of an economic off-season. Its calendrical incidence depends primarily on the technique employed, which is suitable only for shallow pools; and the pools are shallowest at the end of the dry season. It is, also, only indirectly correlated with the diminution in food supplies which becomes general during the "dry rains", since fish, like meat, is valued as a delicacy and never as a substitute for the staple cereal foods. In any case, the catch is usually too small to influence the economy of food supplies materially. Nevertheless, the luxury value of fish furnishes one of the main inducements to join the fishing expeditions.

226 But the greatest attraction of these fishing expeditions to young and old, men and women, is the excitement and thrill they provide, the immediate pleasure of participation in a communal enterprise with the possibility, however remote, of some gain.

133 226 The pools fished lie in the bed of the White Volta River. When the rains cease the water level gradually sinks till eventually only a series of pools divided from one another

241 keep pace with the growth in intensity of conditions. Farming is regarded as a custom and not as a business, with the result that in crop production and in animal husbandry the maximum is left to Nature. It is custom based upon an unsettled past which underlies the economic system.

Diet.

262 The diet of the people is largely vegetarian ; only after religious sacrifice, or upon a very special occasion, is the flesh of cattle,
264 sheep, goats, donkeys or dogs, eaten, subject to certain taboos. Fowls are not eaten by women, or, in some sections, by first-born male children ; they are therefore not generally found in a normal diet ; guinea-fowls are eaten, however, by all who can afford them. The big meal of the day is consumed in the evening and consists of cereal flour, cowpeas, or Bambarra beans, prepared as a dough or porridge, over which soup made with or without meat, is poured. In the mornings a light meal is taken off anything left-over from the previous evening ; similarly at mid-day. When working in the farms at the beginning of the season cereal flour is taken mixed with drinking water. The results of a study of the diet of the Tallensi—a tribe around Tongo in Zuarungu Area—in relation to domestic economy, has been dealt with very fully by Dr. M. and Mrs. S. L. Fortes (9).

Recurrent Food Shortage.

262 It is not surprising that with a precarious rainfall and almost complete dependence upon cereals, crop yields are very variable
251 and recurrent food shortage is a common experience. Soil erosion, and a system of continuous cultivation with inadequate manuring,
241 have reduced the bulk of farmed land to a basic minimum of fertility, except in the immediate vicinity of compounds. The food problem is further complicated by a natural improvidence of the people whereby all crops are consumed in the year they are produced. In good years a surplus of grain is used lavishly in performing religious customs ; it is seldom stored against the possibility of a bad season. A rise in the market value of crops at planting time suggests that many people are so improvident as not even to save sufficient seed for planting.

Famine Foods.

222 A reduced supply of cultivated foods in a poor season is eked
261 out by food from wild sources. There is scarcely a single tree in populated areas which has not some value in this respect ; and the seed of an indigenous grass, "Gonongo" (Nankani) (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), is laboriously collected and used as grain.

Section III.—DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS IN PARTICULAR RELATION TO FOOD SHORTAGE.

262 The remarks made in this section apply more particularly to the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas than to Kusasi, because, generally speaking, the Kusasis seldom suffer from food shortage and, indeed, they frequently have a surplus for disposal. For this reason the agricultural problem is more acute in the Zuarungu and Navrongo Areas; an adequate and reliable food supply is a prerequisite of all development.

Nature of Food Shortage.

262 251 Enquiry showed that, as far back as memory goes, a shortage of cultivated foods is experienced in about two years out of every five; the problem, therefore, is by no means a new one. Hungry years follow seasons of poor crops, since practically nothing is stored for more than eight months, *i.e.*, from the time of the main harvest in October and November, until early millet is harvested in the following July. A surplus in a good season is not stored against the possibility of a bad one, but is used lavishly in the performance of religious customs, or it is sold or bartered for livestock. Livestock may be regarded as a kind of bank; the sale of stock is the usual means of obtaining money. In years of food shortage, livestock are sold in order to buy grain from Kusasi, Mamprusi, or Dagomba; and because a number of people are selling at the same time, livestock values fall very considerably in these years.

262 222 Although bad seasons result in food shortage for many, they do not necessarily mean starvation, for there are a number of wild sources of food which can be used to eke out a reduced supply of cultivated foods. The most common causes of poor crops are abnormal rains and the ravages of locusts. In good seasons, such as 1932 and 1936, very few people suffer from a shortage: the area of land cultivated is adequate, presumably, and the system of farming is successful. But even in bad seasons it is not everyone who is short. Thus out of the twenty-nine recorded compounds in the Zuarungu Area, ten had sufficient home-grown food remaining from the bad harvest of 1931 (due to shortage of rain after September) until early millet was reaped in 1932. The other nineteen compounds sold livestock and bought grain, and gathered "wild" food. A comparison of statistics from these compounds is given in Table 6 below:—

Table 6.—Comparison of statistics from ten compounds in Zuarungu Area which suffered no food shortage in 1931-32, and nineteen compounds which suffered from a shortage. 262 241

	Means from 10 compounds with no food shortage.	Means from 19 compounds short of food.
Area of land farmed per compound	8.16 acres.	5.66 acres.
Men farming	3.4	3.4
Area farmed per man	2.4 acres.	1.68 acres.
Persons living in compound ...	14.7	11.5
Area cultivated per person ...	.55 acres.	.49 acres.
Persons supported per man farming	4.3	3.4
Units of livestock (March, 1932) ... (Fowl=1 unit.)	399	136

From Table 6 it will be seen that compounds which suffered from no shortage were bigger in almost every particular than compounds which suffered (c.f. district means, Appendix II, Table 4). Observation throughout the 1932 season showed that the farms of the ten successful compounds were better cultivated, and the owners had the reputation for being good farmers. A study of yields, however, showed no appreciable difference in favour of the successful farms; but as already mentioned, 1932 was a very good season for crops in Zuarungu Area, and none of our compounds suffered from a shortage of food during the following dry season. This suggests that under the present system of farming, the major factors determining yield are those lying outside the farmers' control; the most important of these are the amount and distribution of rainfall. The effects of better farming are more marked, therefore, in a bad season than in a good one. It is probably this fact, together with a knowledge of "wild" sources of food, which has resulted in a system of farming which demands the minimum amount of labour from the farmer, and leaves the maximum to Nature; for Nature, in the shape of a "fetish", can be placated by the simple expedient of sacrifice.

CAUSES OF FOOD SHORTAGE.

Indirect Causes.

Food shortage has been ascribed to a lack of land resulting from a concentration of population, and land-settlement schemes have been suggested as the solution of the problem. But the concentration of the population is responsible only indirectly, and only for as long as the system of farming remains unchanged. It 262 178

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is doubtful whether, given unlimited land, the local farmer would be prepared to devote any more time to cultivation. The inherent fertility of virgin land would be quickly dissipated if existing farming methods were followed upon it. Therefore, to provide more land without giving attention to the system of farming to be followed would merely postpone solution of the problem. The maximum distance to "bush" land from any point in North Mamprusi is about 8 miles, and it would not appear unreasonable to expect a man to move this distance voluntarily, if an adequate food supply were his greatest consideration and the acquisition of more land would ensure it. Changing economic and social conditions are bringing about the necessity for changed methods of farming. There is little doubt that development will stimulate expansion into unpopulated areas; then will be the time to foster migration, not before.

Direct Causes.

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Density of population is therefore only indirectly a cause of recurrent food shortage; some of the more direct causes are:—

1. Farming practices which are not sufficiently intensive for conditons. A system of "fixed" cropping is followed and manuring is quite inadequate.

[461]

2. The innate distaste of the people for consistent labour, especially when there is a chance that it may not be essential. That is, a farmer would rather sacrifice to his ancestors for more rain—and perhaps spend the rest of the day at market (not marketing)—than to give his farm a surface cultivation to conserve the moisture already in the ground.

3. The lack of sufficient incentive, and a conservatism which makes a man prefer to cultivate a small area of impoverished land, cultivated by his ancestors, to going eight miles, or less, and having the labour of breaking up bush land (predial larceny is often offered as an excuse when bush farms are suggested).

4. Too great a reliance upon cereal crops. A bad season for cereals, or, as in recent years, depredations by locusts, means food shortage; that the season might have been a good one for root crops or legumes, does not affect the situation very much.

5. A "vicious circle" has been created. Years of living on 241
the margin of subsistence, have sapped the energy of the 146
people and predisposed them to disease; at the present
time, many are physically incapable of the hard work which 164
is necessary to bring about an improvement in their con- 262
ditions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL AGRICULTURE. 000

From our study of the causes of food shortage it is possible to suggest ameliorative measures. The two main forms which these measures must take are:—

1. By increasing the area of land in cultivation.

2. By improving the existing system of farming.

But as we have seen above (Indirect Causes of Food Shortage) the effectiveness of the first measure depends upon the second. It is therefore upon measures for improving the existing farming system with which we are concerned at present. Some of the more important of these are considered, in tabular form, below. It should be mentioned that the improvement in water supplies, which is shortly to receive attention (14), will play an important part in the general improvement of conditions, towards which the following suggestions are made:—

1. *Growth of a greater diversity of crops.*

   Too much reliance is placed upon cereals. The planting of more groundnuts and sweet potatoes; the introduction of pigeon peas, "sanzi" (an early maturing Dagomba bean), cassava, and, in some areas, yams and sesamum, would make useful additions to the present range of crops.

2. *The introduction of a rotation of crops.*

   This would require study over a period of years, but if, as seems desirable, the area of legumes and roots is to be increased, some form of rotation will be essential.

3. *Attention to the increase and maintenance of soil fertility.*

   Just as farmyard manure is the basis of arable farming in most other countries in the world, so might it usefully become the basis of arable farming here. "Mixed farming" provides the solution. The livestock of the country have a greater potential value as the producers of

595 than the others, all the women must be allocated more or less equal plots
for this purpose. Each woman, with the help of her daughters or a
[222 daughter-in-law, collects and stores wild herbs and edible leaves, buys
263] condiments and seasonings like salt, pepper, and locust bean balls, sometimes
with the proceeds of her own petty trading in the markets, and
collects shea nuts for the preparation of shea butter, the most important
source of fat and the most prized emollient in the native cuisine, for the
use of her own *dug*. If a man gives a penny or twopence to one wife for
the purchase of seasonings, he must, either immediately or on subsequent
market days, give some money to his other wives for this purpose.
If he obtains some meat, he must either distribute it amongst all his
wives or give all of it to his senior wife to use or preserve for the benefit
[846] of the whole family. Only a wife in childbed is entitled to have extra
luxuries, which it is the duty of her husband to provide.

Though each woman cooks for herself with an eye to the feeding of
595 her own children and her husband, in the first place, co-wives are
25 obliged to share food prepared with grain from the common supply. In
times of plenty, if all the wives of a man have cooked a meal, each woman
dishes out a portion of porridge and the accompanying relish for her
husband, a portion for herself and her child or children eating with her,
and a smaller portion for each of her co-wives. The husband should
taste all the dishes sent in to him by his wives, and should pass on to
the older children who do not eat with their mothers the dishes he does
not want for himself. In times of scarcity a man's wives may cook in
rotation for the whole family. But if a woman has a private supply of
grain, obtained by trade or from her own relatives, she is entitled to
use it for feeding her own children and the husband only; she need not
give anything to her co-wives or their children.

596 In the production and utilization of food-supplies, as this brief sketch
shows, the common interests of the *yir* are distinctly paramount. Co-wives
co-operate most harmoniously, both among themselves and with
the other women of the household, in this sphere of family life. In the
organization of productive labour and of the domestic economy, and in
the conventions regulating mutual help in this sphere, the dependence
on one another of all the members of a household for their sustenance
is constantly emphasized. But the relative autonomy of the *dug* is never
wholly submerged. The women do not pool the products of their individual
labour and enterprise. They do not pool their utensils, and family
quarrels sometimes arise because one woman or one woman's child has
borrowed and damaged a utensil belonging to another. They keep their
firewood supplies, the accumulation of which is one of their most
arduous tasks, jealously separate; and they do the same with vegetables
and seasonings. There is sometimes friction between co-wives over
the use of the grinding-room. But it is significant of the balance
usually maintained between the centrifugal tendencies of the *dug* and the

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)] and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

845
Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

The meat, already putrescent, is nevertheless enjoyed despite its stench. 262
Fresh eggs, being potential chickens, are never eaten; but addled
eggs are much appreciated by children, who bake them in ashes.
Children also eat field and domestic mice, a species of toad, and harm-
less snakes, all of which they shoot with miniature bows and arrows [224
in the later months of the dry season. These things are despised by 857]
adolescents and adults who, however, appreciate bigger rodents like
moles and water voles. In short, meat supplies are a matter of chance,
vary greatly with the season, as will be clearer later, and though much
desired, form but a small part of the bulk of food consumed.

Fats and Seasonings. Fats and seasonings have a very important 262
place in Tale cookery, and, like vegetables, are the woman's respon- 263
sibility. But they are mainly market commodities and a man will 252
frequently give his wife money to purchase them. The only fat used
is shea butter (*kpaam*). It is obtainable all the year round. It is made
of the nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) which are carefully preserved after
the fruits have been eaten.

Dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpəlug*) are made by boiling the seeds of the dawa-dawa fruits. The balls are sold at prices varying from a tenth of a penny for one the size of a large marble to threepence for one the size of a cricket ball.

The laborious processes of manufacture involved prevent many women from making their own shea-butter and dawa-dawa seed balls. Others, who can command the assistance, e.g. of daughters, often prepare enough to have a surplus for sale.

Red pepper (*nanzuuh*) is grown in small quantities by a few men for sale in the market, and much is imported. It is sold at about a halfpenny for a handful.

Rock salt (*yaarem*) is sold in the market by regular traders who fetch it from the south, a small heap (about ¼lb.) for a halfpenny.

Ziem, the ash of valley grasses, and *bakaa*, the ash of early millet stalks, are prepared by the women and are stored in large baskets or calabashes for their own use and for sale. They are used as salt substitutes.

The Productive Cycle and the Food Cycle. We have seen how 596
the domestic organization of the Tallensi works in relation to the
supply of grain and the other main raw materials of their diet. We

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakaa*.[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely. 221 262
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

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[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakaa* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but the *bakaa* is their own property. [263 422]

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying and stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s*. or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly. 584

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls, 796

252 262 initiative in this matter is never taken by the woman herself. If she has no meat she cooks without it, but the husband, tasting the soup, will observe that her meat is finished and will catch a guinea-fowl for her or give her money to buy one at the market. A woman may not catch one of her husband's guinea-fowls herself or she would be branded a thief, but she could catch one of her own, if she has any. This is the reason why she tells her husband 'So-and-so gave me a guinea-fowl and I had it killed to-day', if she slaughters one [576] she received as a gift. A woman never kills or plucks a guinea-fowl herself because it is unbecoming. She will ask a young boy in the compound to do it for her. We have frequently observed women carrying home live guinea-fowls already plucked for them in the market by some man, so as to avoid delay in the cooking. The freshly killed [251] guinea-fowl is hung up directly over the fireplace where it becomes gradually dried. When it is used the first day it is called *num-mahar*, i.e. fresh meat; after two or three days it is dry on the surface but still soft inside and is known as *num-gahar* or *num-ɔɔra*, i.e. smoked meat; after three days it is dry all through. It is now *num-kpee*, dried meat. There is no preference shown for meat at any particular stage; the Tallensi are an economical people and have a matter-of-fact attitude in this regard. Meat is added to the soup in very small quantities. Used fresh or smoked, it is added as a whole portion, e.g. the head, the neck, a wing, a leg or the breast. Dried meat is ground and stirred into the soup in the same way as the other seasonings. A medium sized guinea-fowl thus lasts a family of seven about a week. Dried meat can be kept any length of time, and if a piece of fresh meat is obtained in the meantime it is used up first. In such a case one guinea-fowl might last a housewife as much as a fortnight.

262 251 Beef or donkey-meat is much appreciated. We have seen a woman produce about two square inches of dried beef which was a year old. Such meat is carefully preserved in a pot or calabash among a woman's more valued possessions; but dried guinea-fowl is kept with her other soup ingredients in the kitchen.

Fish is used in the same way as meat, though less frequently, and mainly in dried form. This is due to the fact that it is seasonal and has generally to be purchased. But it is appreciated as much as meat.

262 263 Vegetables are the foundation of every soup; meat and fish make

a good soup; but no soup is complete without seasonings (*zikuot*). 262
Red pepper (*nanzuuh*), the most important, is never omitted from 263
any soup, is added to other dishes too, and even to native beer to give it more punch. Salt (*yaarem*), though very highly valued, is not as indispensable as red pepper. *Ziem* (the ash of valley grasses) or *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is sometimes substituted for salt or used in addition to it. A much-favoured seasoning is the dawa-dawa seed ball (*kpɔlug*) which is sometimes even used as the foundation of a soup. Usually the seasoning ingredients are all used together; the more pungent the soup the better it is liked. Most women do not keep large supplies of seasonings, but consider it worth while to walk several miles to the nearest market to buy them.

Thus, though the native considers soup merely as a relish for his 262
porridge, it really provides the vegetable and animal food (the latter 146
in very small quantities) which balances a purely cereal diet.

The soup is always put on to cook first. While it is boiling, the 252
woman sweeps out the close (*dendɔŋo*) where the meal is to be eaten, and prepares the vessels for serving it. The preparation and cooking of the soup takes 30–40 minutes. When it is ready she makes the porridge. In all these tasks a woman is assisted by her young daughters. Small boys, too, sometimes give a hand with the fire, but never with the cooking.

As soon as the porridge is ready it is dished up in several calabashes. 252
The housewife takes much trouble in arranging her husband's portion 264
in neat slices—she is less fastidious about the other portions. Each portion of porridge is rubbed over with shea butter; that of the husband's very liberally. This is the most common way in which fat is consumed. After the porridge has been shared out the soup is poured into an equal number of dishes, or sometimes over the porridge. The actual cooking and serving of food, unlike the fetching of wood and water, does not absorb a great deal of the housewife's time. One hour is sufficient to prepare a meal for ten people.

The amount of food consumed per meal differs according to the 262
seasons. When food is scarce, whatever quantity of grain a woman has she will cook, and it will have to suffice; but a Taleŋa never feels satisfied unless he has had about 1½ lb. of porridge at a sitting.

There is no specially appointed eating-place in the compound. 264

602 606 [572] will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires, and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law.

602 On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical to *dɔɣam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never obliterates this.

606 264 574 576 A man must show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pɔt nɔba*), bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual functionary, or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement.

602 606 Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well-defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his

PLATE 8

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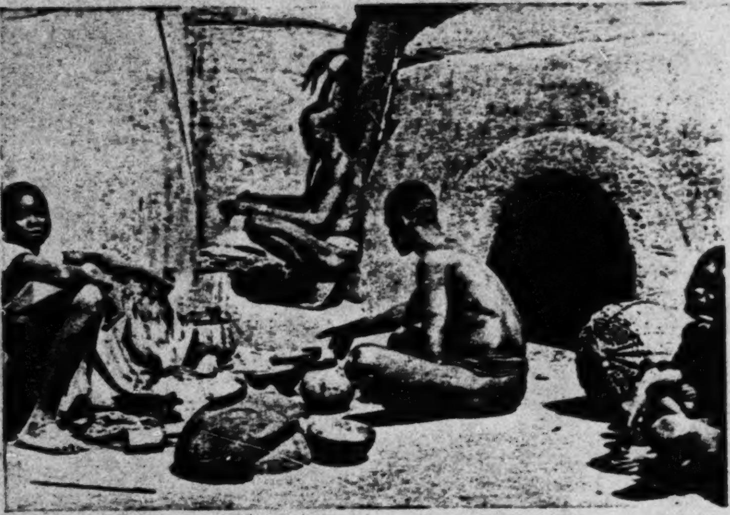

a. A domestic sacrifice of fowls, guinea-fowls, and beer. The head of the joint family is addressing the shrine, which occupies a recess in his senior wife's *Dug*

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b. Omara and his four youngest daughters—each the daughter of a different wife—having a snack at mid-day

[facing p. 129]

PLATE 10

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a. Kinship patterns are not specific in public etiquette or domestic intercourse. An unposed group having a rest in the middle of the day. From left to right: *Kpana Teŋ*, his daughter-in-law, his grandson, and his youngest child

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b. A father eating with his youngest son while his oldest son lounges beside them (Hill Talis)

[facing p. 193]

ficial symbolism is transparent. What they mean is that a child may not be equated with his or her father while he is alive. As we have observed, though these taboos do not occur among non-Namoos, the ideas and sentiments they express are as frankly admitted by them as by Namoos. It was a Tɛnzugu (Talis) man who gave me the clearest statement I obtained on the struggle between the Destinies (*Yina*) of father and son. I remember also being struck by this during the ceremony of exorcising the evil Predestiny of Sinkawol of Kpata'ar's wife. Just as the most important rite of all was begun somebody noticed that Tiezien, Sinkawol's proxy father, was absent. Nyaaŋzum, Sinkawol's proxy grandfather and Tiezien's proxy father, shouted for Tiezien to come out of the homestead. Tiezien shouted back, in some anger, 'No, I won't come. They are exorcising my daughter-in-law's *Yin* and I should be there? Oh no. Is she your (plural) wife or mine? No, it is not for me to be there.' There was a moment's pause and then Nyaaŋzum called back, 'Well, leave it then, you are right.' The point was that a man must not equate himself with his son, particularly where the latter's procreative status is concerned. But grandfather and grandson are equated with each other, as we shall see more fully later. And by the same principle a woman must not be equated with her daughter in her reproductive capacity. Thus when a man's daughter becomes a mother for the second or third time he gives up sleeping with her mother even if she is still of child-bearing age. Tallensi call this an important taboo. It is significant also that among both Namoos and non-Namoos an analogous taboo to that of the father's granary holds between a mother and her first-born daughter. While her mother is alive a girl may not uncover her mother's chief storage-pot (*u pu sugəl u ma doko*). This taboo is not stressed so much as those that discriminate a child from its father, as might be expected in a society so thoroughly organized around the patrilineal line. But it does show that the tension between the generations among the Tallensi is not the product of *patria potestas* only, but arises out of the whole network of the relations between parents and children. 593 578 [784]

The avoidances of first-born children are not the only customary expression of the tension between the generations. A man and his oldest child do not eat together. 'You and your oldest child do not dip your fingers into the same dish of food together,' the natives say, 'for if you did perhaps his finger-nail might scratch you and that would bring misfortune on both of you.' This prohibition is not subject to ritual sanctions, though the misfortune that would follow the symbolic act of aggression would be of a mystical character. Tallensi share a dish with the youngest child for preference; and it is not an uncommon sight to see a man eating with his youngest child while his oldest son is sitting near by eating separately. 593 264

Then there are the restrictions we have already mentioned that must be 593 764

boys are keenly learning the art of courtship and are experimenting 593
with sex. They have sweethearts (*gab*, pl. *gabnam*), most commonly 572
slightly younger girls of the same clan whom they call 'sisters' in the widest sense. These girls may have serious suitors from other clans, but not being quite ripe for marriage find much more pleasure and excitement in their freer relations with their clan 'brothers'. With them [836] they can indulge in sexual play, not always stopping short of intercourse, without criticism. Now when boys go to visit their sweethearts they often like to have the company of a friend (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) of about the same age, who has a similar interest in such adventures. For this a boy prefers a friend from another homestead, a not too near classificatory brother, to a close brother. Later on such a pair of friends will help each other in serious courtship, for one cannot carry on a serious courtship without a friend to act as spokesman and go-between. And a distant brother is preferable to a close brother as a friend in affairs of the heart. It helps to keep them secret from the other members of one's family, and that is desirable because it is a point of honour with every young man to find a wife for himself. The same motives operate with girls between the ages of about 13 and marriage at 16 to 18 years of age. A girl likes going to market with a girl friend of about her own age who is equally interested in the young men around. But if a girl is thinking of eloping with a suitor she prefers to confide in her mother or her clan-brother sweetheart. Having no rights in the bride-price they will—for a bribe from the suitor—help her to get away, whereas her own brothers will insist on a marriage by arrangement so as to make sure of the bride-price.

But the divergence of interests and companionship in the years 593
immediately preceding and following adolescence does not disturb the 264
personal intimacy and attachment of *soog* siblings. Custom prescribes that husband and wife should eat separately. So a man eats with one or two of his younger children, and each of his wives eats with one of her younger daughters or an infant. The other children are divided up, one dish of porridge to this pair of boys or that pair of girls or even to a girl and a boy. They may be full siblings or half-siblings, and the porridge they are eating on a particular occasion may be of their mother's co-wife's cooking. Nevertheless, every child continues to think of his own mother as the food-giver and of his *saarət* as those with whom he automatically shares food. A boy of 12 does not sleep in his mother's room, yet he still regards her as the source of his sense of emotional security. In a small and harmonious polygynous family the children are almost equally at home in all the women's quarters, but in a large joint family the children of one woman tend to be in her quarters for most of the time that they are indoors.

Of many other signs of the lasting intimacy of full siblings and their 593
closer identification with each other than with their half-siblings, the 578

PLATE 14

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a. Siblings by the same parents have breakfast together. The bigger children are a boy and a girl. Note that they are eating out of the same dish

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b. Successive (*nyɛɛr*) *soog* brothers

[facing p. 273]

312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption, but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes, but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a radius of not more than 300 yards.

262 A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not in the lean months.

596 261 264 The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, preferably unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism. Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual household and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman carefully considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

562 264 252 However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncertainty of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over (three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home, and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to. Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

PLATE IV

● 264
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3. At Breakfast: Father and Children
(The man is eating with his 'youngest' child)

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4. The host provides a meal for collective labour invited to help build his house

[facing p. 265]

for firewood. A woman with a small child never omits to cook a little 562
for it, whatever the circumstances. The cooking routine also becomes 264
upset under the stress of seasonal activities. When a whole family 252
goes to work at a bush farm or to a fishing expedition, some groundnuts or dry guinea-corn is taken along to chew, and no cooking will be done until evening.

Each woman is responsible for the provision of meals for her 596
husband and family. In certain situations co-wives co-operate for the
common good. Thus when building operations take place, or a man 476
has hired or 'invited' labour the co-wives cook in turn to provide 264
food for the men. On such occasions the owner of the granary allots a special share of grain for the labourers' porridge to the woman whose turn it is to cook for them.

Mutual assistance between co-wives occurs only when a woman is 596
confined or ill. Then her co-wife (a wife of her husband or his
brother) cooks for her and her family. The confined woman provides 252.
her own produce and firewood and the cooking is done in her kitchen. This is the duty and prerogative of co-wives. Only as a last resort would the husband's mother or sister cook for her in those circumstances. When a young wife shares her mother-in-law's quarters she does all the household tasks; but when she shares those of a senior wife, they assist each other and cook in turn.

The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and 262
soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea-corn or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or cow-peas or rice is used. When root crops are in season they are cooked instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things they spoil your belly'.[1]

The preparation of porridge is very simple. Flour is not preserved 252

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[1] A Tale friend enquired what kind of food he would be given in our country, and when told that he would eat meat, fish, bread, and eggs, he exclaimed, 'What, no porridge? I call that starvation.'

a good soup; but no soup is complete without seasonings (*zikuot*). 262
Red pepper (*nanzuuh*), the most important, is never omitted from 263
any soup, is added to other dishes too, and even to native beer to give it more punch. Salt (*yaarem*), though very highly valued, is not as indispensable as red pepper. *Ziem* (the ash of valley grasses) or *bakaa* (the ash of early millet stalks) is sometimes substituted for salt or used in addition to it. A much-favoured seasoning is the dawa-dawa seed ball (*kpɔlug*) which is sometimes even used as the foundation of a soup. Usually the seasoning ingredients are all used together; the more pungent the soup the better it is liked. Most women do not keep large supplies of seasonings, but consider it worth while to walk several miles to the nearest market to buy them.

Thus, though the native considers soup merely as a relish for his 262
porridge, it really provides the vegetable and animal food (the latter 146
in very small quantities) which balances a purely cereal diet.

The soup is always put on to cook first. While it is boiling, the 252
woman sweeps out the close (*dendɔŋo*) where the meal is to be eaten, and prepares the vessels for serving it. The preparation and cooking of the soup takes 30–40 minutes. When it is ready she makes the porridge. In all these tasks a woman is assisted by her young daughters. Small boys, too, sometimes give a hand with the fire, but never with the cooking.

As soon as the porridge is ready it is dished up in several calabashes. 252
The housewife takes much trouble in arranging her husband's portion 264
in neat slices—she is less fastidious about the other portions. Each portion of porridge is rubbed over with shea butter; that of the husband's very liberally. This is the most common way in which fat is consumed. After the porridge has been shared out the soup is poured into an equal number of dishes, or sometimes over the porridge. The actual cooking and serving of food, unlike the fetching of wood and water, does not absorb a great deal of the housewife's time. One hour is sufficient to prepare a meal for ten people.

The amount of food consumed per meal differs according to the 262
seasons. When food is scarce, whatever quantity of grain a woman has she will cook, and it will have to suffice; but a Taleŋa never feels satisfied unless he has had about 1½ lb. of porridge at a sitting.

There is no specially appointed eating-place in the compound. 264

264 Each family eats in its own close, while the man usually eats in that of his senior wife, and his other wives each send him in a dish of food.

252 595 As we have already mentioned, each woman in a polygynous household cooks for the husband and her own family. Their cooking is not synchronized, but as the evening meal is always made at sunset, there is no considerable discrepancy in the time of eating by the different families.

264 The man eats with his 'youngest' child, that is, the last one to have stopped suckling. If he has unmarried brothers dependent upon him they, too, eat with him. A few yards further off his sons—young men and boys—form another group, while the woman herself and the young girls eat apart at the kitchen door. Two women sharing a kitchen eat together. Men and women do not eat together except in circumstances which will be noted later.

A calabash of porridge, a dish of soup, a calabash of drinking-water and another for washing the hands are set down for each group. When the senior member of each group has taken his place the others settle in a circle round the food. In order of seniority each one washes his or her right hand perfunctorily. The eldest member is the first to begin eating, but he is also the first to stop. The youngest member finishes last and is usually encouraged to clear the dish; for an older member to continue eating with the youngest is to invite the ridicule of the others. The food is eaten with the right hand. A piece of porridge is broken off and dipped into the soup with cupped fingers. If meat is present each member breaks off a tiny morsel of it to taste. During the meal the water is passed round for every one to drink. Though each group seated round a dish of food acts independently, those sitting in the same close with the head of the household do not begin before him. Eating is a serious business; there is no conversation at meal-times, and as soon as a group has finished they disperse.

264 595 In addition to sending in food to her husband, a woman sends a dish of porridge with soup to her husband's mother, and a dish to each of her co-wives belonging to her own food economy unit. Thus, each woman has to cook enough for her husband and family and to exchange with every kitchen supplied from the same grain store. This rule, naturally, does not hold for food provided by a woman's

own efforts in time of scarcity. Each woman cares for her own 264
children only. She keeps food for an absent child, but will offer some 595
to a co-wife's child only if it asks her for it. But the man will give food to all his children. As a rule, he eats the portion sent in by his senior wife and tastes a little from each dish brought in by the others. When he has had his fill he calls his children to come and eat the rest, always remembering those who have not had enough. Thus the discrepancy in the distribution of grain, where each woman gets the same share irrespective of the number of mouths she has to feed, is adjusted by the man in his fair re-distribution of the cooked food.

This general pattern is not a rigid one, but is adapted to the structure
of every household and to its special circumstances, e.g. a man would [576]
eat with his wife and small children from a common dish if they happened to be alone in the compound. To do so if another wife were present would cause envy and quarrelling between the women; these arrangements are a matter of etiquette and not of taboo.

The natives account for the custom of a man's eating with his 264
'youngest' child on the grounds that a child must eat properly in order to grow and must be taught to do so. They say, also, that it thus learns to know its father, and not only its mother whom it is always following about. We have not sufficient material to judge the validity of this interpretation; it is quoted here to indicate the native valuation of the sharing of food in the family.

Infants are given morsels of porridge as soon as they can swallow 853
solid food, and by the age of 18 months can feed themselves dexterously. They are weaned by the age of three not by a forcible or harsh 862
separation from the breast, but by gradual habituation to adult food. 264
The emphasis on the adequate feeding of children is shown, also, in the manner in which *sayakɔrɔt*, left-over porridge, is reserved for them. Porridge remaining after the noon meal is stirred into the porridge cooked at sunset; if it is left after the evening meal it is given to children cold for breakfast next day. Only after they have eaten their fill will adults have some. In the months of plenty children often have a morning meal of *sayakɔrɔt*; at other times a handful of ground-nuts, or a dish of flour-water or of dawa-dawa powder must suffice.

Flour-water (*zɔmkuom*) deserves a note to itself. There are two ways 272

272 of preparing it. The usual way is to mix the flour with water into a stiff dough, then knead it into a smooth, flat cake (*zɔmgar*), and place it in a calabash which is filled with water. A hasty method consists in merely pouring water over a handful of flour and stirring it up with the hand. This is *zɔmsaka*. As porridge is the ideal food so *zɔmkuom* is the ideal everyday beverage. It is the drink offered to guests, and the regular libation given to the ancestors. It is also food. When the water has been drunk the flour is eaten by adults and children. *Zɔmkuom*, unlike ground-nuts, forms a hasty meal and is resorted to when cooking is inconvenient.

264 Sporadic eating is a universal habit. It goes on in time of plenty
because food abounds, and in time of scarcity because one dare not
262 forego an opportunity of eating anything. When the ground-nuts
are nearly ripe people pluck a plant from anybody's field and chew
the nuts. When grain is abundant a handful is roasted over a fire and
eaten at any time of the day. Nevertheless, the Tallensi are capable
of going without food for long stretches at a time.

At the ritual and ceremonial gatherings which take place preponderantly in the dry season but intermittently throughout the year, ritual flour-water or cooked food is often passed round, or ground-nuts distributed to the elders present. At the markets, too, particularly in the months of plenty, both porridge and especially the luxury confections such as *kameha* (fried cakes of cow-pea flour) *maasa* (fried millet cakes) and so on are bought in quantities. The small animals and birds, which children hunt and eat, as well as the ground-nuts they glean, belong to this category of food consumption.

Sporadic eating does not, however, in any way affect the domestic organization of the food economy. The housewife never omits to cook a meal because her children found some titbit for themselves, nor will she even question them about it. The Tallensi do not consider such eating as 'food'; not even in the time of scarcity when meals at home become uncertain.

262 Food taboos, on the other hand, react upon the arrangements for the cooking and distributing of the food. Women never cook fowls or dogs, since they avoid eating them. Men therefore cook these animals for themselves. If a woman observes a totemic taboo, her husband cannot compel her to cook the animal she avoids for him, though he

241 keep pace with the growth in intensity of conditions. Farming is regarded as a custom and not as a business, with the result that in crop production and in animal husbandry the maximum is left to Nature. It is custom based upon an unsettled past which underlies the economic system.

Diet.

262 264 The diet of the people is largely vegetarian; only after religious sacrifice, or upon a very special occasion, is the flesh of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys or dogs, eaten, subject to certain taboos. Fowls are not eaten by women, or, in some sections, by first-born male children; they are therefore not generally found in a normal diet; guinea-fowls are eaten, however, by all who can afford them. The big meal of the day is consumed in the evening and consists of cereal flour, cowpeas, or Bambarra beans, prepared as a dough or porridge, over which soup made with or without meat, is poured. In the mornings a light meal is taken off anything leftover from the previous evening; similarly at mid-day. When working in the farms at the beginning of the season cereal flour is taken mixed with drinking water. The results of a study of the diet of the Tallensi—a tribe around Tongo in Zuarungu Area—in relation to domestic economy, has been dealt with very fully by Dr. M. and Mrs. S. L. Fortes (9).

Recurrent Food Shortage.

262 251 241 It is not surprising that with a precarious rainfall and almost complete dependence upon cereals, crop yields are very variable and recurrent food shortage is a common experience. Soil erosion, and a system of continuous cultivation with inadequate manuring, have reduced the bulk of farmed land to a basic minimum of fertility, except in the immediate vicinity of compounds. The food problem is further complicated by a natural improvidence of the people whereby all crops are consumed in the year they are produced. In good years a surplus of grain is used lavishly in performing religious customs; it is seldom stored against the possibility of a bad season. A rise in the market value of crops at planting time suggests that many people are so improvident as not even to save sufficient seed for planting.

Famine Foods.

222 261 A reduced supply of cultivated foods in a poor season is eked out by food from wild sources. There is scarcely a single tree in populated areas which has not some value in this respect; and the seed of an indigenous grass, "Gonongo" (Nankani) (Dactyloctenium aegyptium), is laboriously collected and used as grain.

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Tenedan' will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good 793
crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good
harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, 793
and the *Tenedan'* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) 782
where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a *Tenedan'* is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to the land. The land is not a human spirit.' The *Tenedan'* will say:

'"We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating, we cannot
refuse you yours, receive this beer." We pour out the beer and then [273]
kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow (through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan'* will then ask every one to give him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a cow. Every one in the *teya* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan'* will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan'* and eats of this
sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan'* and the *Tey-kpeem* (Elders of the *teya*) [623]
always discussed town affairs together.'

Succession to the Tenedan'ship: 'When a *Tenedan'* dies, his next eldest 793
brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest "son"; that means the eldest of all the "sons" among the *Tenedan'* and his brothers. In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan'*, but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan'* had power to drive a man out of the *teya*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would remain until he lost everything.'

Tenedan' and the Land: 'A *Tenedan'* is in charge of all uncultivated 793
land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan'*, 423
saying, "*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I 425
wish to make a farm upon it". The *Tenedan'* will send a boy to look 782
at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the
farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and [273]
take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan'* to sacrifice to the land. This he will do in his own compound, giving it to his father's *bagr* (shrine) to give to the land, saying: "Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give to the land that the farmer may get crops". The remainder of the beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan'* will also send his son to pour some on the land and say:

613 621 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔɣar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔɣada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Seɣahɔg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔɣada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Seɣahɔg biis in contraposition to Bɔɣada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zɔŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seɣahɔg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zɔŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contraposition between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of
[702] unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zɔŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 613 621 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yɔrug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated, contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yɔrug Yin had been the head of Bɔɣada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates
[273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large
[554] pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Sayawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔɔk*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
221 262 DECEMBER: Agricultural work over.*	Height of ritual season: funeral ceremonies, children's dedication ceremonies, many marriages; all involving consumption of live stock and grain, in sacrifices, as cooked food, and beer.[1]
JANUARY: Period of secondary activities such as housebuilding, cut-	Grain rationing again begins. Grain and other foodstuffs, including im-

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796 guinea-fowls, sheep, goats, and dogs are slaughtered in profusion as sacrifices to ancestral and magical shrines. Beer (*daam*) made of malted grain is boiled, though in small quantities; much food is cooked to receive kinsfolk who call upon and greet each other. Recently married men send baskets of sweet potatoes, frafra potatoes, and yams to greet their parents-in-law. The Festivals last only a few days, but the tubers and animals are consumed over a period of some weeks.

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[1] In this period, too, are celebrated all those clan and family religious ceremonies in which animal sacrifices and cooked food and beer play a great part. Indeed, these rites are often postponed for several years until a sufficiently good harvest enables enough supplies to be accumulated. We have seen a cow, a donkey, about 15 sheep and goats, and a large number of fowls and guinea-fowls slaughtered at the funeral ceremonies for a very venerable elder. We were assured by his sons, who were responsible for these ceremonies, that they had used up the whole of a large supply of guinea-corn in the preparation of ritual beer and food and in providing hospitality for throngs of guests. At such a funeral the deceased's cognatic and affinal kin bring obligatory food-contributions of cooked porridge, sheep, goats, and birds. So great were these contributions at one funeral that two or three basketfuls of porridge had to be thrown away as it turned sour. Funerals are extreme cases of the lavish utilization of food at this time of the year; and only three or four big funerals take place in any settlement in one season. Most funerals require a much smaller expenditure of live stock and grain than that made at an elder's funeral.

273 This is not the place to discuss the types of ritual and ceremonial situations in which 'things' (*bon*)—the Tale concept which covers every type of property—are consumed. In a good season there will be a tremendous spate of them; in a poor season only urgent rites will be performed. A word, however, must be said about beer, the most important ritual substance apart from the animals and flour used in sacrifices. Beer is cooked (*doy-*) by women, malted grain (*kpeya*) of guinea-corn or millet being issued to them by the man at whose request it is made. In the average compound beer is never cooked except for ritual purposes which may be twice or thrice a year. Chiefs and headmen, who always have a surplus of grain often, and elders occasionally keep a supply of beer on hand for guests. Tale women never make beer for sale in the markets; indeed, any man would be horrified at the suggestion that his hard-won grain should be used in this way. The Tallensi are a sober people on the whole.

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great
care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The
work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are
[461] at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more
than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated
in a day is about $\frac{1}{16}$th acre. Hoeing is started near to the compound
and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached
the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they
receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never
[471] recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of
grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange
● [273] for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or
farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In
a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages.

243 On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three
hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to
earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single
cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice;
or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

241 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of
June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about
243 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this
stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and ground-crops
are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a
few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is
allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period
birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them
and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery
threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short
knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to
[242] dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads
are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and
Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—
"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots;
this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet
252 heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants
and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly
to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash

252 262 desired, between two overlapping leaves. As soon as the water boils the cakes are arranged one on top of the other inside the pot, which is then closed tightly with a lid or calabash. The cakes are thus cooked by the steam, and are ready in 15 minutes. They are like baked porridge in appearance and are eaten with melted shea-butter spread over them and a sprinkling of salt and red pepper. *Gwor* is principally cooked for market sale, but is occasionally cooked by the housewife to vary the menu.

Milk (*bikim*)

262 234 Milk is obtained only from cows and is eaten as curds (*bigbihir*) mixed with flour. Herdboys, however, when out on the pasture sometimes milk the cows for a drink.

Shea-Butter (*kpaam*)

252 262 There are five stages in the making of shea-butter:

1. The nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) are crushed with a stone to a brown pulp.
2. The pulp is placed in a large open pot (*sar*) over a fire, and stirred with a stick for a considerable time till it is a thick, sticky mass.
3. This is then ground quite fine. The grinding releases the oil.
4. It is now washed in several changes of water, being stirred continually with the hand, until the oil rises to the surface.
5. The oil is skimmed off the water, melted over a fire, and again skimmed till pure white oil is obtained. This is put into calabashes or small pots. [278] The dark oil-scum (*kpabut*) is kept for medicinal purposes. It is only used externally. The brown fibrous residue left after the washing process is made [372] into small balls and dried. This is *burum* and is used for making fires.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
282 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

X 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

vanity apart, they do require ample storage-room for the large quantities of clothes, the saddlery and trappings of their horses, the innumerable odds and ends of European origin, and many articles of native production which they have accumulated by purchase or gift. Their good fortune is exceptional. Others content themselves with small and modest private rooms. Leatherworkers and blacksmiths also often have private rooms where they keep their tools and the materials of their craft. 592 [282 326]

No special provision is made for young children or girls. They live in their mothers' rooms. An unmarried young man usually has a special room of his own, essentially a sleeping-room (*doo*), in his mother's *dug*; and if there are several adolescent boys in a family a *doo* may be built for them in one of the women's *dugət*.

The construction of the dwelling-house shows graphically the division of the domestic family into two complementary spheres. On the one hand, we have the sphere in which the patricentral *yir* predominates; on the other, that in which the matricentral *dug* has priority. It is the line of cleavage between descent from the father (*ba dɔγam*) and descent from the mother (*ma dɔγam*), principles which are antithetical in form but complementary in function in the domestic organization. Maternal origin supplies the canon of differentiation within the family, paternal descent the principle of integration. In the polygynous joint family, which is the natives' ideal domestic unit, the constituent *dugət* are relatively autonomous in relation to one another, and in certain respects even mutually opposed. The *yir* combines them into a single integral unit, but they are not swallowed up; they retain their specific identity according to maternal origin. The *yir*, then, is the complementary factor to the *dug*; it is also the synthesis of a group of *dugət* at a higher level of organization. This, as has been shown in our previous book, is both the structural model and the social matrix of the lineage system. 592 611

The Developmental Cycle of the Joint Family

We have found it convenient to fix our analysis of the Tale homestead by reference to the simplest kind of independent domestic unit. But the elementary family, as we have already remarked, is neither the ideal nor the most common type of independent domestic unit in Taleland; for the typical substratum of a domestic group is not the individual breadwinner but an effective minimal lineage.[1] The domestic group grows, changes, and dissolves with the growth cycle of this lineage, and a particular elementary family is only an episode in this cycle. The structure of the Tale family cannot be divorced from its existence in time. We have to examine it as a process. At any given time we find domestic families at every stage of development in a Tale community. 596

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[1] Cf. p. 9 above for a definition of this unit. A full analysis of its constitution is given in *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

PLATE VIII

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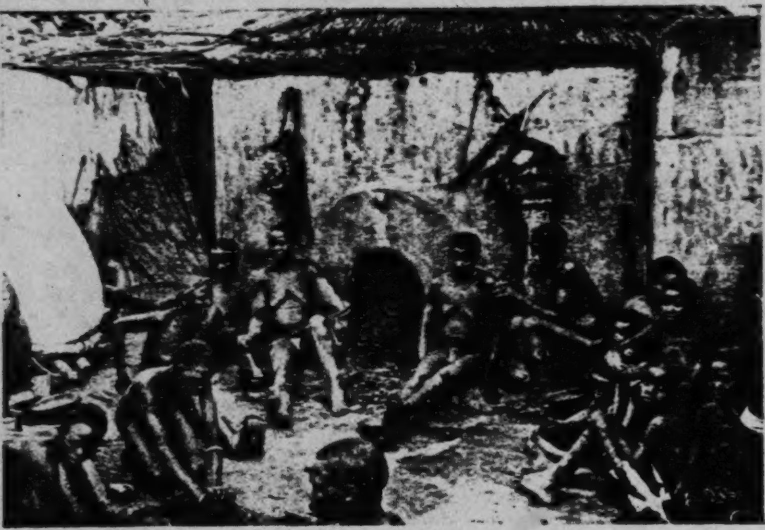

(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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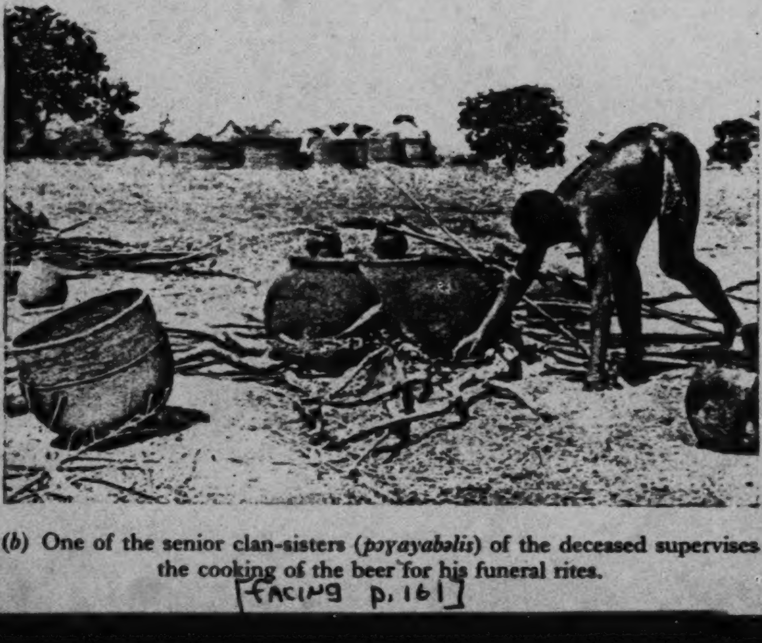

(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔγayabɔlis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[FACING p. 161]

857

524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers
with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
301 ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses.
283 Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls
524 sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

NAMNAM

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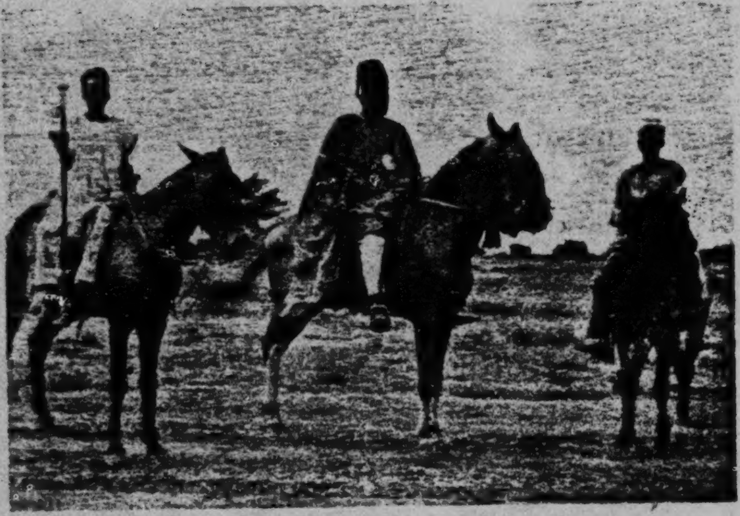

Fig. 79. The Chief of the Namnam

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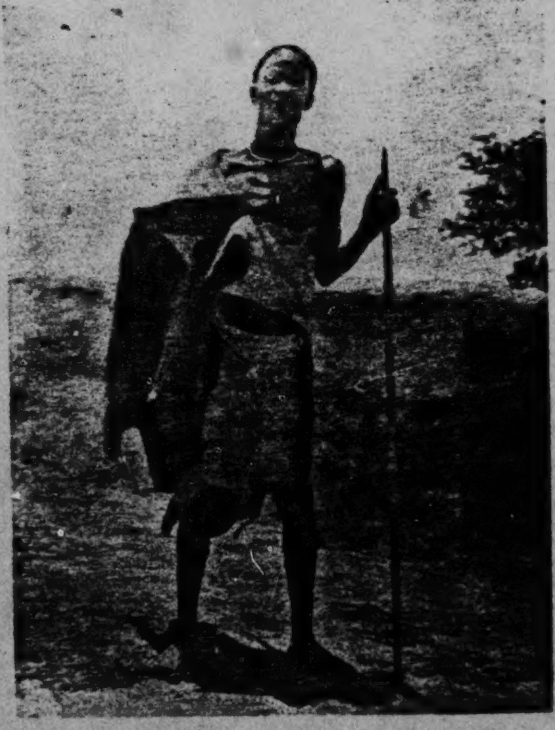

Fig. 80. A Namnam *Ten'dan'* [facing p. 368]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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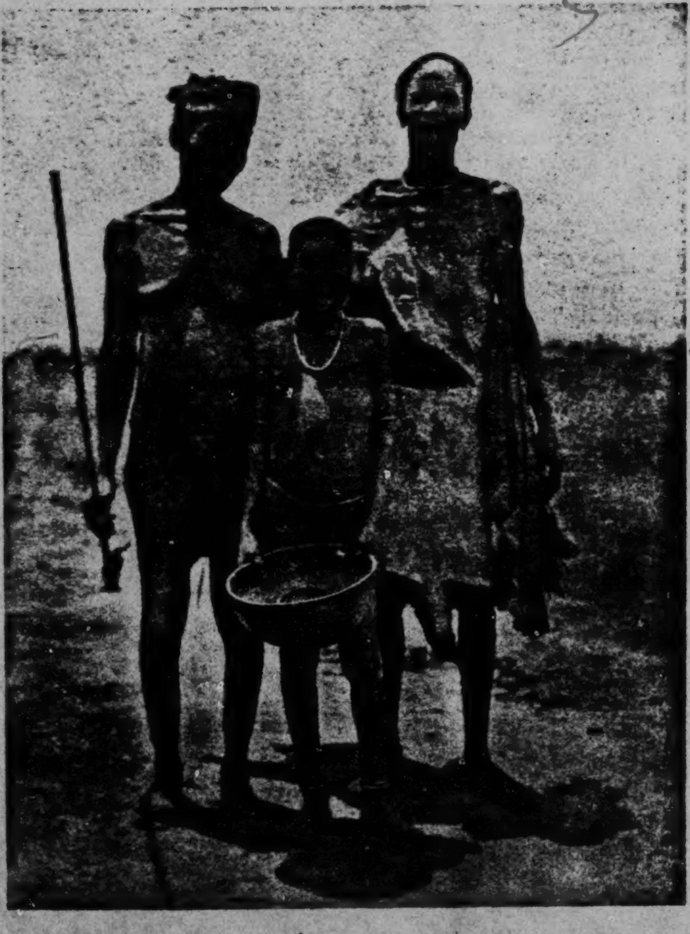

FIG. 81. A female *Ten'dan'* and attendants

[facing p. 370]

[facing p. 372]

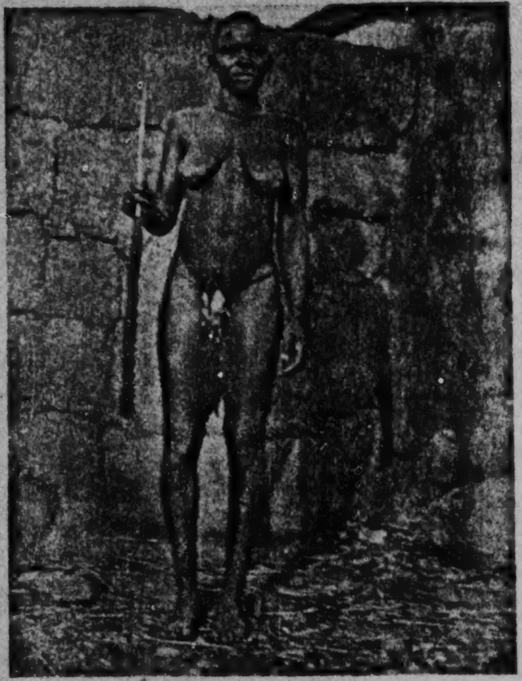

Fig. 82. A Namnam woman

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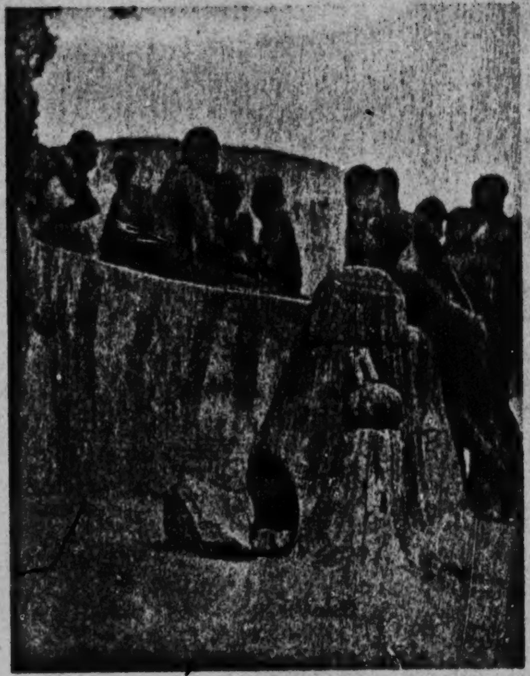

Fig. 83. Namnam children and shrines

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1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

NAMNAM

146 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among
164 the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to
determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have
been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do
not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects.
They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the
common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. The
[657] natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government
dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the
district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the
point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little
better off than their fathers were.

● 291 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from
515 the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in
the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women
go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for
the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In
addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant
of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes
are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference
of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health.
By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry
season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that
soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas
of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies
and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and
wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial
wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead
is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the
homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse
midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of
[514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The
stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake
[240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life
do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human
excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value
on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an
183 impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself.
He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful
and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he
is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the
value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends.
Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical
superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

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relatives may impel a young man to run away to 'Kumasi', the symbol for 167 everything south of the Black Volta.

Thus one finds that about one man in three has at some time or other 177 in the past two decades visited these, to the Tallensi, still foreign parts. In the settlements near the main roads the dry-season migration of young 167 men may, according to rough estimates made in 1936–7, reach over 10 per cent. of the adult male population. Administrative officers estimate that in 1938–9 about 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were working abroad with the apparent intention of staying away for a lengthy period. These men bring back small sums of money, ranging from a few shillings to four or five pounds, as well as clothes and other miscellaneous trade goods. Money and clothes[1] are eagerly desired by the Tallensi. These are the most important new wants that have grown up recently as a result of culture contact. Foreign utensils, implements, or tools have hardly entered the productive system of the natives. The foreign ideas and exotic information brought back by the young men arouse curiosity but have made no appreciable impression on the native scheme of values and beliefs, or on their practical knowledge. Labour migrants remain strongly attached to their families and natal settlements, and it is always assumed that they will eventually return. Hitherto, among the Tallensi, very few have been lost to their natal communities; and when they do return, they resume the traditional way of life. Though they are one of the influences modifying the strict letter of custom in minor respects, they are not a disintegrating ferment

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[1] Tallensi maintain that there has been a tremendous increase in the amount [291] of clothes worn since the white man opened up the country, and especially since the last war. They point out that nowadays every small boy has a loin- 177 cloth for festive occasions, whereas even twenty years ago a youth only obtained one when he began courting, at the age of 18 or 19. In those days the ordinary man rarely had a cloth or tunic. His only garb was an animal skin. Nowadays every man has at least one cloth to cover himself at night and to wear during the day when he is not working, and many have two or three garments—a cloth and a tunic, for instance—while well-to-do men have considerable wardrobes. All cotton goods are imported. The Mossi cloth used in former days is still a favourite, especially for loin-cloths and caps, and tunics for special wear. The bulk of it is still imported from French territory, but there are some Mossi weavers at Bolaga and Zuarungu who add to the supply. However, quite half if not more of the cotton goods worn by Tallensi is of European origin and the demand is increasing. I once listed all the clothes worn by a number of men and women from one of the most prosperous communities of Taleland as they passed my rest house on the way to the market. The figures are instructive as an indication both of the standard of living of the Tallensi and of the degree to which acculturation in this sphere has progressed. The sample consisted of 62 men and 64 women. Of the men, 35 (56 per cent.) wore cover-cloths of European cotton print; 18 (29 per cent.) wore Mossi cloths; 9 (15 per cent.) wore skins; 8 (13 per cent.) wore khaki shorts, several of them on top of native loin-cloths; the remainder wore native loin-cloths; 19 (30 per cent.) wore some form of European head-gear; 30 (48 per cent.) wore native-made caps. Thus 85 per cent. of these men were clothed, but none of them wholly. Of the women 12 (15 per cent.) wore a piece of cotton print and one wore a Mossi cloth—a very large incidence such as would not be found in most other Tale communities. The rest were nude, except for the perineal band and back-flap. As people dress up specially for market day, these figures are not indicative of everyday habits. The greater conservatism of women suggested by these figures is due in great part to their lack of opportunities for obtaining cash incomes for personal use.

PLATE VII

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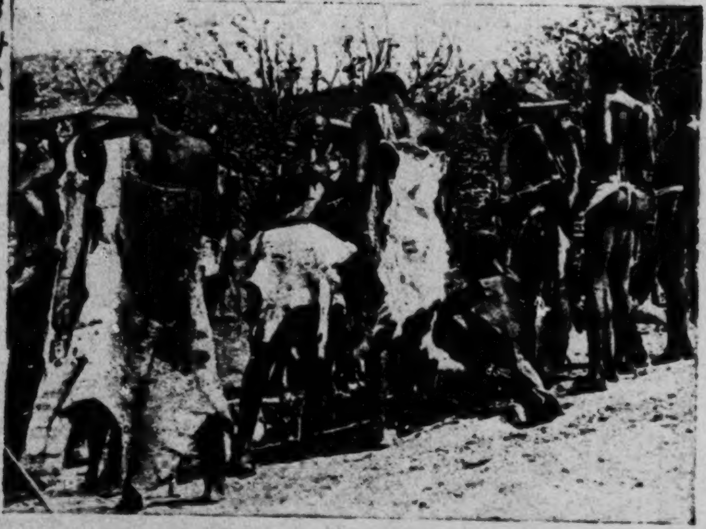

(*a*) The Unity of all the Talis: The chief tɛndaanas of all the Talis settlements assemble to perform the rite of 'blowing the whistles' to inaugurate the Gɔlib Festival.

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(*b*) A sacred crocodile at Zubiuŋ crawling out of the water-hole to take a live frog offered to him by a youth of the clan. Note the latter's fearlessness.

[facing p. 160]

PLATE VIII

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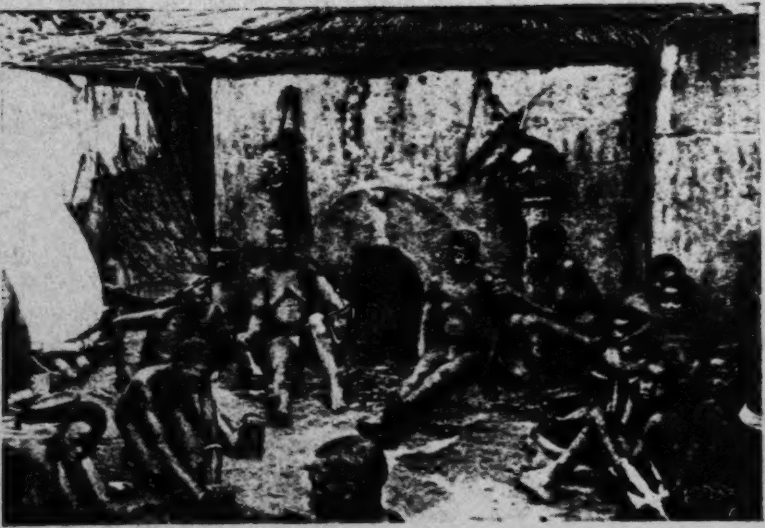

(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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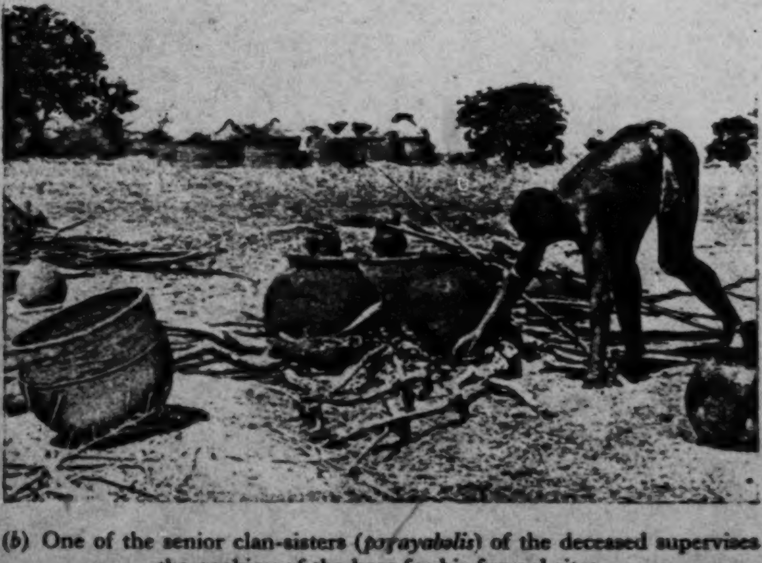

(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔγayabolis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[FACING p. 161]

PLATE IX

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(*a*) A large boulder in the middle of a settlement forms a natural mortar where young girls go to stamp guinea corn.

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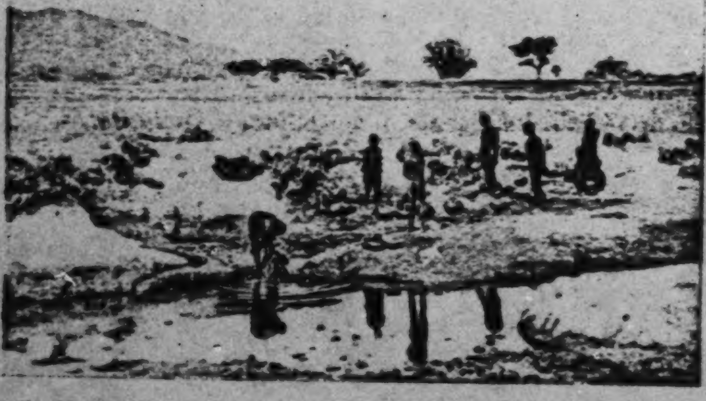

(*b*) Women at a waterhole in the early rainy season. This waterhole serves homesteads within a radius of over a quarter of a mile.

[facing p. 176]

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*hie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋ-*
782] *bana*—for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas. My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanzɛ'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

PLATE XII

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(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔγar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔγar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔγar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p. 225]

[facing p.240]

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(*a*) Yikpemdaana of Tongo, the *kpeem* of Toŋ-Kuorəg.

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(*b*) Loyani, a highly respected junior elder of Zubiuŋ.

621 511 291 [465] and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 311 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land; but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 433 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 721 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

PLATE XIV

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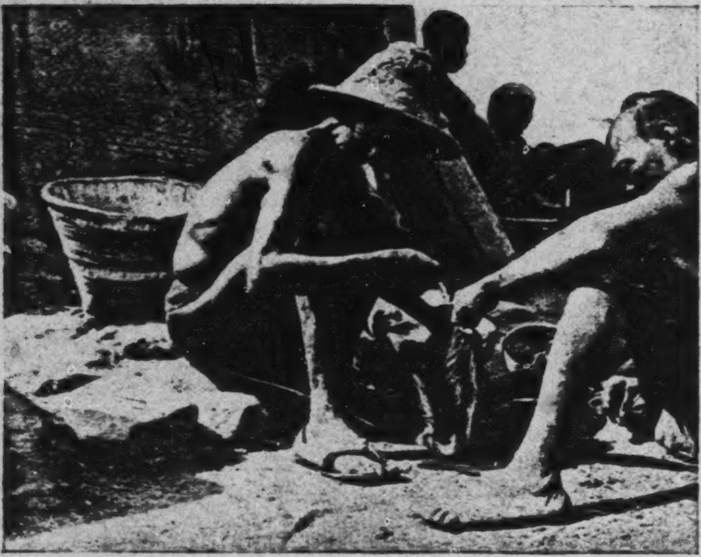

(*a*) *Sunɔɔŋ m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

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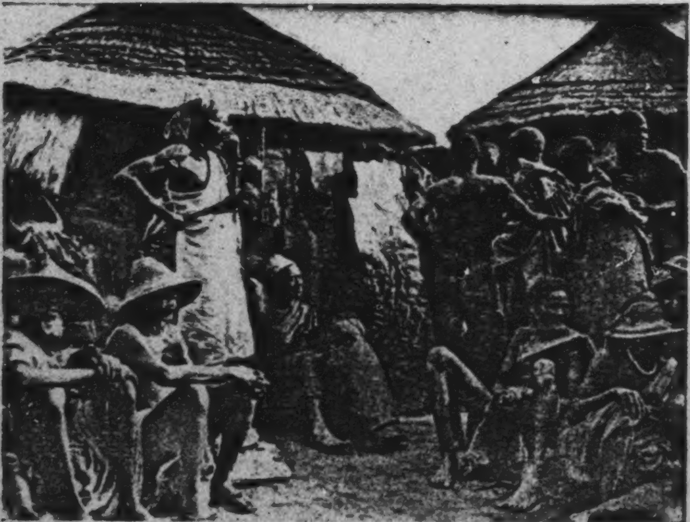

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tendaana at his homestead.

[facing p.24]

PLATE XV

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(*a*) A mimic war parade at Ba'ari to inaugurate an elder's funeral.

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(*b*) The widest politico-ritual community includes all the Tallensi. Part of the vast gathering of people from all over Taleland who come to take part in or watch the concluding ceremonies and dances of the Golib Festival. Note the dust cloud raised by the dancers.

[facing p. 256]

PLATE 5

[facing p. 112]

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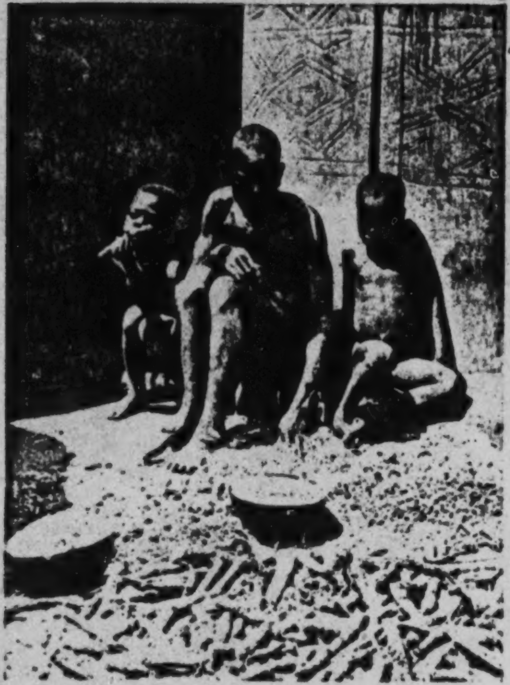

a. A senior wife (*pɔγakpeem*) in her *dɛndɔŋo* sorting newly harvested millet. With her are one of her daughter's children and the small son of a co-wife

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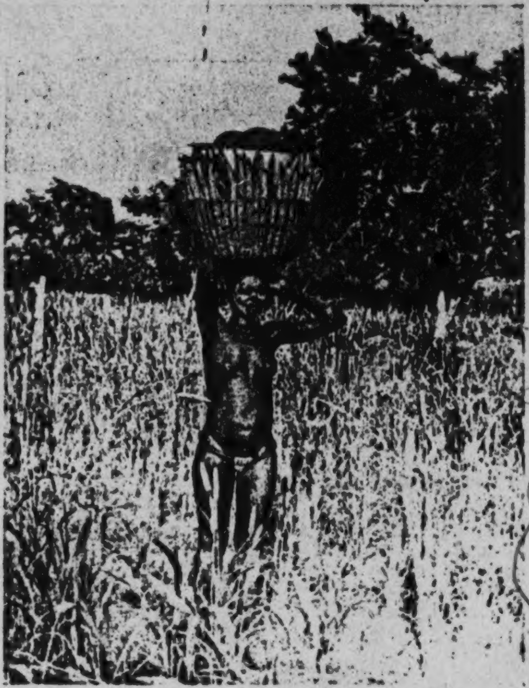

b. Homeward bound from a visit to her father's house, where she has received a gift of some millet and other foodstuffs

PLATE 7

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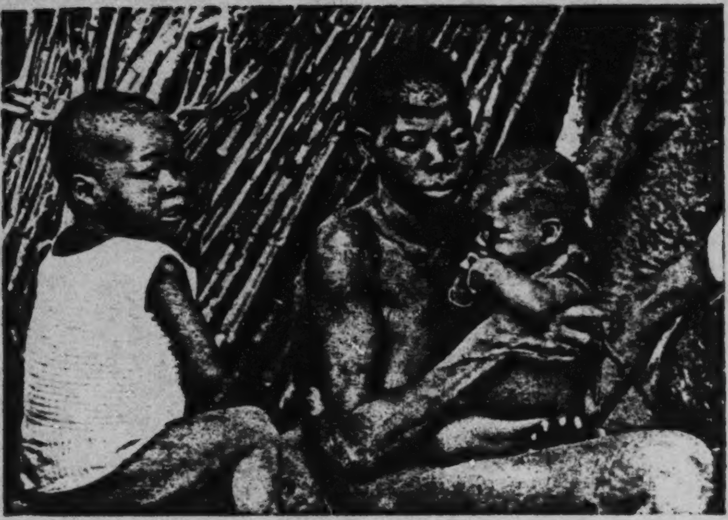

a. A senior wife takes care of her junior co-wives' infants while they are away at the water-hole

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b. A pair of devoted co-wives. The younger woman (with her infant) is about 35, the older about 65, their husband over 70. The older woman has a son of about 45

[facing p. 128]

PLATE 9

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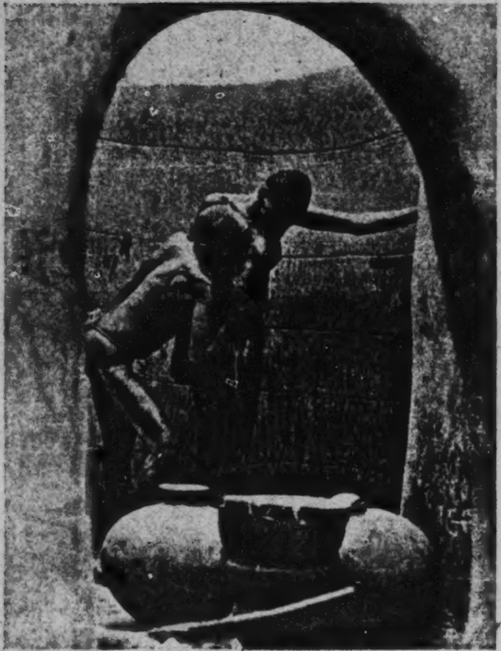
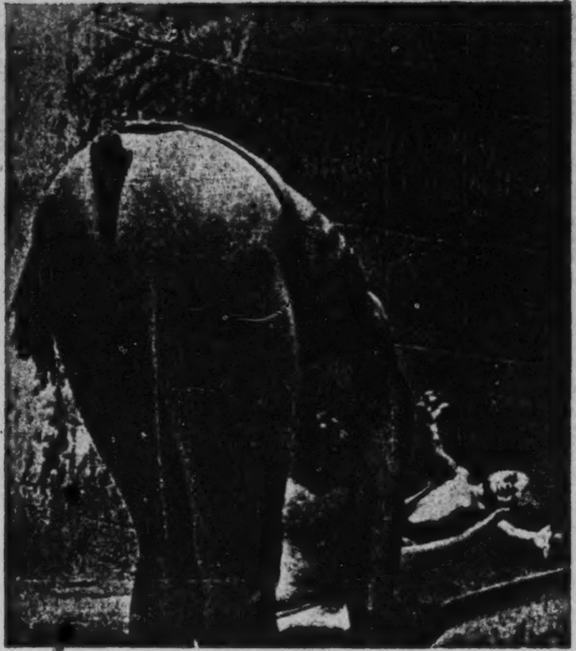
[facing p. 192]



a. The tribulations of motherhood: the daily bath and massage of the mother after childbirth



b. The husband's mother and a co-wife of the new mother give her new-born baby its daily bath. The water is so hot that the baby goes rigid with pain

PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

[facing p.209]

603

patrilineal grandparent and grandchild of the same sex, such as is not found between any other kinsfolk, close or distant. Its nearest parallel is the relationship of full siblings. And as a grandchild grows older this aspect of its relations with its grandparent becomes stronger. Nothing delights grandparents so much as to take care of their grandchildren in babyhood or early childhood. Children often sleep with a grandparent, as we have noted. A woman whose father- or mother-in-law is alive always has someone with whom to leave her baby. Joking is one of the ways in which the grandparent shows his or her joy in the child. But as the grandchild grows older and begins to associate on more adult terms with its grandparents, these demonstrations of affection become unnecessary. Occasionally, as mood and situation dictate, a grandfather or grandmother will throw out a jest at a grandchild. Thus I once heard an old man call out to his grandson's wife with a laugh, as she sauntered past, that she ought to get a wider back *voog* [291] (the decorated flap worn by women over the intergluteal fold) as the one she was wearing was immodest. But it is more likely to be the grandchild who occasionally throws a jest at the grandparent.

There is, then, a kind of freedom and equality between grandparents and grandchildren which could not exist between parents and children. A grandparent does not normally discipline a grandchild. A paternal grandmother has no command over her son's children. I have heard a crotchety old grandmother complain of her grandchildren's noisy habits and lack of obedience but have never heard of a grandmother punishing her grandchildren. The gifts given to her by a granddaughter's suitors are brought as a gesture of respect for the senior woman of the house, but she cannot, as a rule, influence her granddaughter's choice. A paternal grandfather often gives an order to a grandchild or administers a scolding. Tallensi, however, think of a grandfather's scolding as something quite different from a father's discipline. They regard it as a friendly correction. If serious disciplinary action against a grandson is necessary, a grandfather leaves it to his son. A grandfather's jural and ritual authority over a grandson or granddaughter follows from his being the head of the joint family, 'owning' all its members. Thus he can override his son in such matters as the marriage of the latter's son or daughter. But if there is a conflict of wills between him and his grandchild in such a matter he will rely on his son to enforce his decision.

I remember the occasion when Maanlɛrəg eloped with his sister's husband's younger sister in defiance of the veto of the elders of the inner lineage. Nyaaŋzum, Maanlɛrəg's own late paternal grandfather's half-brother, as head of the nuclear lineage, stormed and raged but he could do nothing directly. 'Why don't you control your sons?' he shouted at his 'sons' (his late brothers' sons) Tiezien and Bəyaraam, the culprit's 'fathers'. In fact, it is notorious that grandparents spoil their grandchildren, especially their oldest grandchildren, those whose birth makes

PLATE 16

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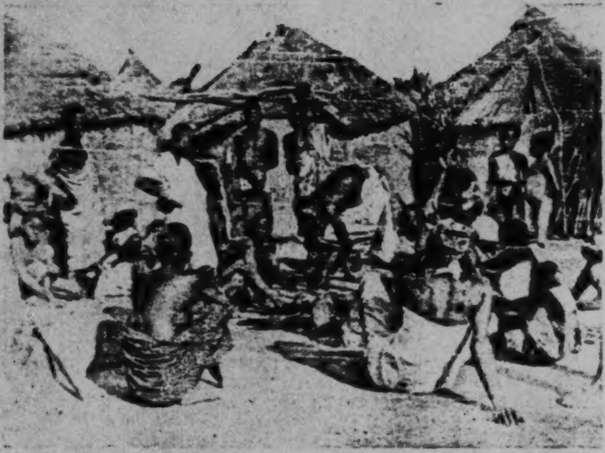

a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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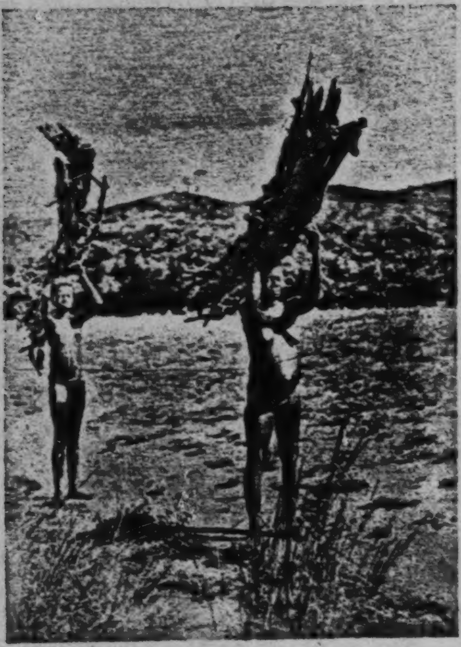
b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[facing p. 289]

PLATE III



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1. Bringing home firewood: Mother and daughter

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2. A woman in her kitchen (posed)

[facing p. 264]

PLATE IV

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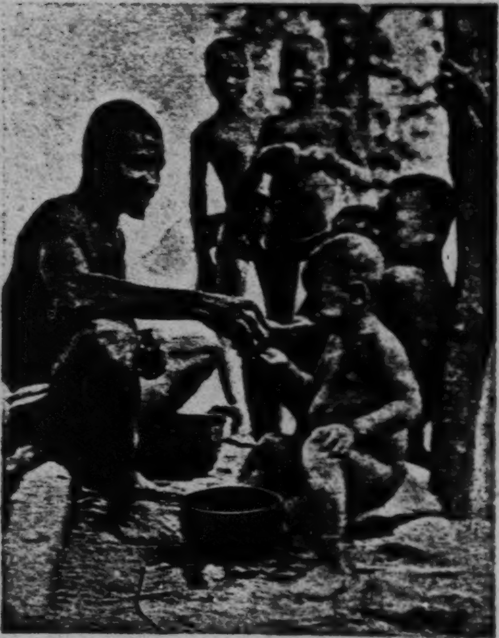

3. At Breakfast: Father and Children
(The man is eating with his 'youngest' child)

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4. The host provides a meal for collective labour invited to help build his house

[facing p. 265]

Plate I

534
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857

A young nursemaid, amusing herself and the baby with a *Kiskayaa* rattle

857

Housekeeping Play. One of the girls combines the duty of looking after an infant with her play. Note the small boy in the party, and the 'utensils'

[facing p. 16]

Plate II

778
857
●291
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A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

857
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Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them. Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them. It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves, bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think, still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, 'is embarrassing' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a
loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and
his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of
shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of
which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult,
the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose
the genitals with the word 'boy' or 'girl'. An infant's excretory
processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
[863] regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a
nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would
dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all
matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions
as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the
expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
'Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said
Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, 'he's a thief. He stole
his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied
him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast,
is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance
and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child
for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours,
nevertheless, go beyond what is merely 'unbecoming'. They are not
nice, *a pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

Plate III

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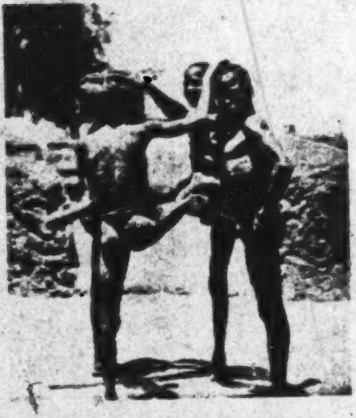

Recreational Play: *Kuobon* (posed)

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A wrestling match—with an eye on the goat lest it wander into the growing crops

[facing p.48]

Plate IV

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●291
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Building Play. In the background a newly built room. On the right of the group a big boy demonstrating to a small boy. Behind them part of a 'house' they have finished. On the left, girls making the swish and explaining the process to the ethnographer's wife.

411
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868

Learning Marksmanship. Note how intently the two smaller boys, who have only recently acquired real bows, are watching the technique of their older companion

[Facing p. 49]

Purification of the land when some one is Sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten'dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering
to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold
his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere'* (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
● [292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become
Ten'dan'.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusoodana*.

Kusase

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these [586]
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows 614
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

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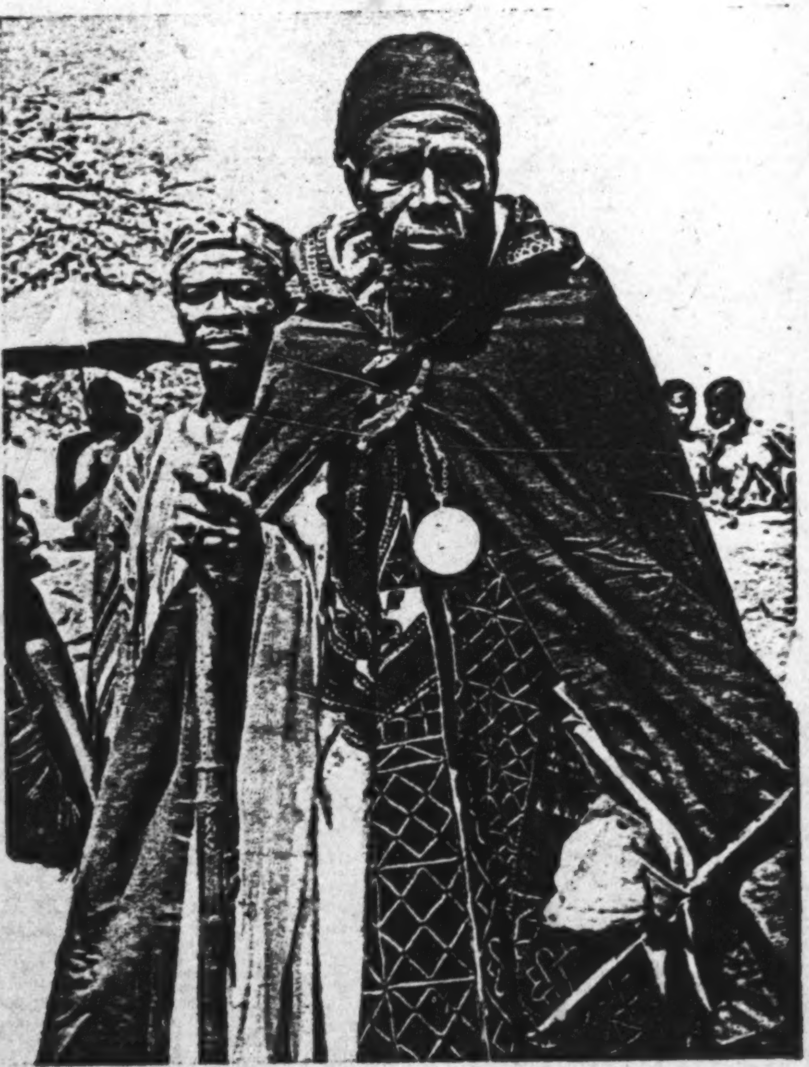

Na Naam Bioŋ, Chief of Tongo (d. 1941), wearing his red fez (*muŋ*) the chief emblem of his office, and clad in his finest ceremonial robes.

[Frontispiece]
[facing p. iii]

173 them back to differences of origin. Everyone knows that all Namoos came originally from Mampurugu, how long ago nobody can tell. The tradition of Tongo, as it was related to me on many occasions, is as follows: The ancestor who founded Tongo was Mosuor. He was the Paramount Chief (*na'ab*) of Mampurugu, but had to flee the country after being vanquished in a fight for the chiefship. When he reached Tongo the Gbizug tɛndaana, Gɛnɔt, was living there. Mosuor came to the house but found nobody there; for Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt had seen him coming and had sought refuge in the nearby hills. Now, there is a watercourse a little distance off and there he found a shallow pit beside which stood a *kiŋkaŋ* (*Ficus*) tree which was shedding its leaves. A path led from this water-hole towards the Hills and someone had been carrying water which had spilled over on to this path. 'Thereupon', to quote the version of one of my Tongo informants, 'our ancestor said, "There is someone in these hills who comes to fetch water here". So he caused the dry fig leaves to be scattered on the path and went to hide quietly. In due course he saw Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt stepping along the path, while the leaves crunched *kaya, kaya,* coming to fetch water. Thereupon our ancestor Mosuor, having seen him, caught him and asked him what he was afraid of. Why did he run away and hide? Gɛnɔt replied that he had seen him wearing a gown and that there was something on his head all red, and fear took hold of him.[1] So Mosuor brought him back and asked, "Who owns this house?" He said that it was his house, and Mosuor brought him home thither and said that he himself would settle down here and Gɛnɔt as well. He said that Gɛnɔt would be his tɛndaana to carry out the sacrifices on his behalf.'

Gbizug elders told the story of Mosuor in much the same way but omitting the trick by which Mosuor caught their ancestor, adding that it was the horses and guns of Mosuor that inspired fear in Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt. 173 608 They say, also, that having accepted Mosuor as a settler and having allotted land to him close beside his own homestead, he told Mosuor what were the taboos of the country (*tɛŋɔn-kiha*), and entered into a solemn pact of blood-brotherhood with him. They *ŋma pɔlɔŋ*, cut wrists. A cut was made on the wrist of each, and each licked the blood of the other. Thus '*ba leeba mabiih, ba leeba soog*, they became brethren, they became uterine brothers' and pledged themselves and their descendants to perpetual peace. This was a unique instance of blood-brotherhood, which is not practised in Taleland to-day.

773 According to this tradition, Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt told Mosuor of his kinsmen, the Ba'at-Sakpar Tɛndaana, the Wakii Tɛndaana, the Degal tɛndaana, and the Ka'ar tɛndaana. These five were the original inhabitants of the country. They sprang from the Earth itself, say their descendants. At Gbizug they declare that Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's ancestor Bumbiogta'adug sprouted from the earth (*u bulme na*), he had no father or mother (*u ka ba u ka ma*). Pressed further they say, '*u yi Naawun zug sig na*—he descended from Heaven'. Heaven and Earth are one, they contend; they have the same mystical value. At Wakii they call their first

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[292] [1] A red fez and a cloth tunic are the distinctive costume of chiefs of Mampuru origin. Tɛndaanas may not wear garments of cloth. They are ritually obliged to wear skins only. Chiefs and their clansmen may ride horses, tɛndaanas not.

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔɣayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔɣayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔɣayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔɣayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
562 A *pɔɣayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
● [292] to join. A *pɔɣayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔɣayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

×618 Lastly, a married *pɔɣayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔɣasama*—a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔɣayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

PLATE VII

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● 292

(*a*) The Unity of all the Talis: The chief tɛndaanas of all the Talis settlements assemble to perform the rite of 'blowing the whistles' to inaugurate the Gɔlib Festival.

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(*b*) A sacred crocodile at Zubiuŋ crawling out of the water-hole to take a live frog offered to him by a youth of the clan. Note the latter's fearlessness.

[facing p. 160]

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
● 292 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

X 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tɛndaańas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tɛnzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

PLATE XV

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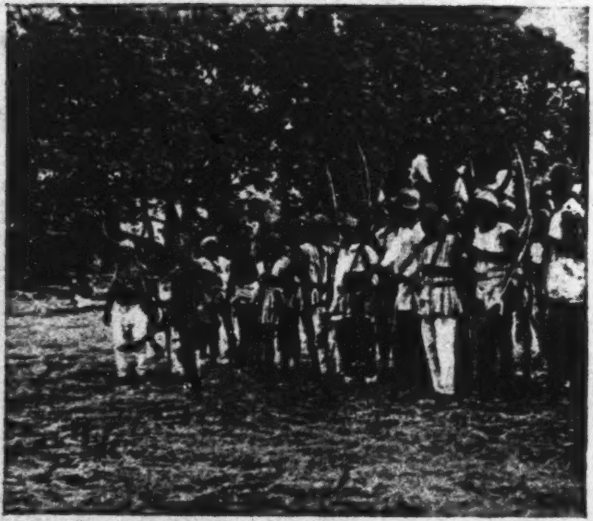

(*a*) A mimic war parade at Ba'ari to inaugurate an elder's funeral.

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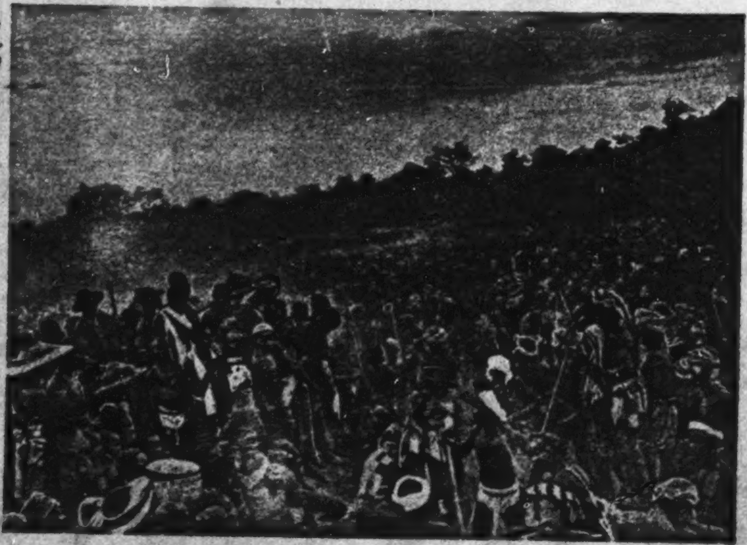

(*b*) The widest politico-ritual community includes all the Tallensi. Part of the vast gathering of people from all over Taleland who come to take part in or watch the concluding ceremonies and dances of the Golib Festival. Note the dust cloud raised by the dancers.

[Facing p. 256]

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-opera-
tion and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as
a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there
is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the house-
hold. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often
lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true
reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared
a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of
the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will
receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir*
is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of
854 *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most
855 significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the
children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his
brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually
help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This
commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient
woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family.
A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by
another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person
to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a
co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to
be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are
reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the
first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty
● [292] of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives
often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children.
This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing.
Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being
herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the
children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and
child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child
736 as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her
co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi
say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan
never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be
given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the
sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

602 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent
to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to
736 fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met
Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things,
we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

602 the family keep an eye on the girl lest she overstrain herself or break one of the dietary taboos. If his father is alive it is he who visits diviners 843 and appeals to th[illegible]cestors.

The wom[illegible]nal family, too, are concerned, especially in a first pregnancy. W[illegible]y have been informed of it, her father appeals to his ancestors[illegible]er in her coming ordeal, and her mother and sisters bring [illegible] firewood, as her time approaches. It is also her mother's duty, [illegible] about the fourth or fifth month, to send one of [292] her co-wives to '[illegible]' the girl with a perineal band (*suol u voog*)', the garb of a matron; for until she has a child a woman wears no genital covering.

The prohibition against giving or accepting bride-price during a woman's pregnancy expresses this general solicitude too. Bride-price transactions involve tension and possible conflict between her father's people and her husband's; and this is not only distressing to her but dangerous to the unborn child. If, for instance, her father, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, as some men are heartless enough to do, takes her from her husband because the bride-price is not paid, the child's legitimate paternity may be prejudiced, as we have noted before, and its health suffer, or the woman herself have a difficult labour.

843 The solicitude for a woman with child reaches its peak at her confinement and during the subsequent three or four weeks, until she has 844 regained her strength and resumes her normal activities. Many men have described to me their feelings in the hour of a wife's labour. 846 'You sit listening to her cries and groans of agony. You can't sleep. Your heart is clenched with fear and pity. You do not know how it will end. Do not women die in childbirth or become ill? Do not children die or get injured at birth?' A man's relief and happiness when his wife has passed safely (*salɔg*) through her confinement is written plainly in his voice and gait. Zaŋ, one of the most morose men I have known, was all smiles and affability on the morning after his wife's confinement. [777] When friends and neighbours congratulate a man on his good luck (*zusɔŋ*, lit. good head) it is as much on account of his wife's safety as on the child's arrival.

846 During the days of seclusion—three for a boy and four for a girl—and for the next week or so, it is the husband's duty to provide sustaining food and appetizing condiments for his wife. He will go out to fetch large logs for the fire that must be kept going day and night in the woman's room while she and the babe are still weak and liable to catch cold. Every morning he will go out or send someone to collect the leaves and herbs to infuse in the hot water with which mother and child are bathed. And if necessary he will himself carry water from the waterhole or do other services for her comfort that men usually consider to be beneath their dignity.

846 A confinement also involves extra labour and the dislocation of routine 602 for the womenfolk of the husband's family. The care of the woman and

577 765 relatives at home decide not to wait for them are the exceptions that prove the rule. In a few cases they are men who have struck root in their new environment after many years of living there and find it difficult to get away. Sometimes they find it easier to procrastinate because they originally left home through a quarrel with the deceased parent. But generally they tarry because the deceased is a proxy parent or because they have older brothers at home who will conduct the funeral. Later, perhaps, when the mantle of the lineage headship falls on their shoulders they will return, like Pal and Dema, to take over and end their lives in the ancestral home. It is a feature of Tale custom that natural human weaknesses are not unduly penalized by public opinion. As long as he lives a man can always try to make good his derelictions of filial duty. It lies between him and his ancestors. The community is neutral.

577 765 593 At funeral ceremonies of old people one also sees that filial piety includes pride in one's parents. The *koordaana*, owner of the funeral or chief mourner (that is, the deceased's oldest son), and his brothers strain their resources to the utmost to provide a lavish funeral. It is not uncommon for nearly the whole harvest of a household to be consumed in making the beer and providing the cooked food required. In addition, animals must be slaughtered in honour of the dead. A poor man may be able to give his father only a couple of sheep or goats which he has had to borrow for the purpose. On the other hand, when Doohraan, the head of Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, died, rich in years and in honour, his sons slaughtered a cow, a donkey, and about a dozen small stock for his spirit; and Sayawuob postponed his mother's funeral for two years so that he should be able to give her a cow. At a big funeral when the war parade (*dee*) and the whole concourse of clansfolk, kinsfolk, neighbours, and friends of the dead stand milling at the gateway, the oldest son climbs on to the wall to address the crowd. Wearing ● [242] his ceremonial plumed helmet of straw, with a large red cock in his hand, he looks down haughtily upon the crowd and delivers his harangue. [537] His speech, spun out with all the tricks of rhetoric in the Tale repertoire, is proud almost to the point of arrogance. He is relating the great deeds of his dead father or mother. They may seem trivial, sometimes, to the cold-blooded ethnographer—so and so borrowed five cows and paid them back in two years; so and so was a redoubtable farmer who in one year sold enough grain to buy three cows; another man boldly carried off his wife from under the noses of Mamprusi who had seized her; and this old woman was a potteress who by her own efforts earned the money to buy two cows, and in addition had been faithful to her first and only husband until his death. But it is not the substance so much as the occasion of these funeral panegyrics that matter to the Tallensi. At the end of his speech the son beats the cock (or if he is a rich man it may be a goat) to death on the wall and flings it to the crowd with a challenge that any person who can claim equal achievements should take it. But

For a man these final rites are more elaborate and variable. Among 765 the Namoos the high-water mark of the rites is the induction of the 593 first-born son and first-born daughter, if they survive, into those secret 578 and forbidden things which they have avoided since infancy. The first-born son is dressed in his father's cap and smock, turned inside out.[1] [292] A stick with a loop of string, and a piece of hollow bamboo, specially prepared for the occasion and symbolizing the father's bow and quiver, are hung round his neck. Then a procession is formed of all the children of the dead man, his first-born daughter following immediately behind the first-born son and holding on to the smock. An old man leads them round the homestead three times. Then the first-borns are taken inside through their dead father's *zɔŋ*, and are taken up to look into his granary for the first time in their lives. The whole rite is felt by the onlookers [781] to be overwhelmingly solemn and the 'showing of the granary (*paal buur*)' is for them an intensely dramatic moment. A hush comes over the crowd of spectators as the son ascends to the granary and his mentor puts a hand behind his head and pushes it forward so that he peers into this hitherto-forbidden place. The son himself appears quite unperturbed, though this is one of the decisive moments of his life. I have been told by men who have been through this rite that they felt quite calm and collected at the time. But Tallensi are that way, and this is perhaps a sign of the efficacy of their ritual practices.

Among the Talis and other non-Namoos, the parallel rite is that of sending the quiver (*ta'ah loko*) of the dead man to the External *Bɔɣar*. When an old man dies, his quiver is hidden in his principal granary by one of the elders and his oldest son and daughter are thereafter forbidden to look into the granary until the end of the funeral ceremonies. 'If they did', a Yinduuri elder once explained to me, 'they would see the spirit of the dead man and die.' Younger sons and daughters are free to look into the granary. This is of particular interest as a parallel to the Namoo taboos; but with the Talis the ritual and affective expression of the tension between father and eldest son is concentrated in the period when its meaning is most significant to the son, the transition period between the extinction of his father's social personality and his assumption of his father's place. For the rite of 'sending the quiver', the 'quiver' (consisting of a real bow and a symbolical quiver exactly like that used by the Namoos) is taken from the granary by the oldest son. Followed by his father's senior surviving wife he is escorted by the clan elders to the External *Bɔɣar*. Sacrifices are made to the ancestors and especially to the dead man, who now belongs to the realm of the ancestors, and his 'quiver' is left in the *Bɔɣar* in token of his final departure from the world of the living. 593

We must conclude that the distinction Tallensi make, both in custom 578

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[1] To distinguish the context of death from that of life and to symbolize the reversal of the taboo.

PLATE 16

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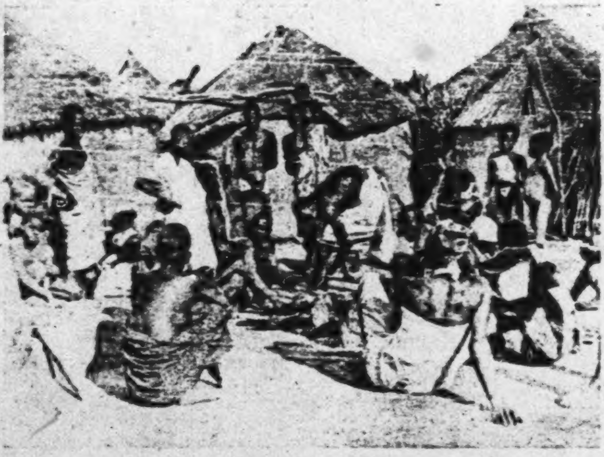

a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[facing p. 289]

About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bolgraana*, who had only recently been installed. To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place " where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences. 226 423 535 [292]

The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements. The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights. 226 423

Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the performance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features— 226 789 782

796 535 tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingauŋ incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

[533 578] A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like
●[292] masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

796 [784] And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingauŋ, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Golib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

● [292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 574 782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos [784] have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

182 518 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

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Na Naam Bioŋ, Chief of Tongo (d. 1941), wearing his red fez (*muŋ*) the chief emblem of his office, and clad in his finest ceremonial robes.

[Frontispiece]
[facing p. iii]

PLATE VII

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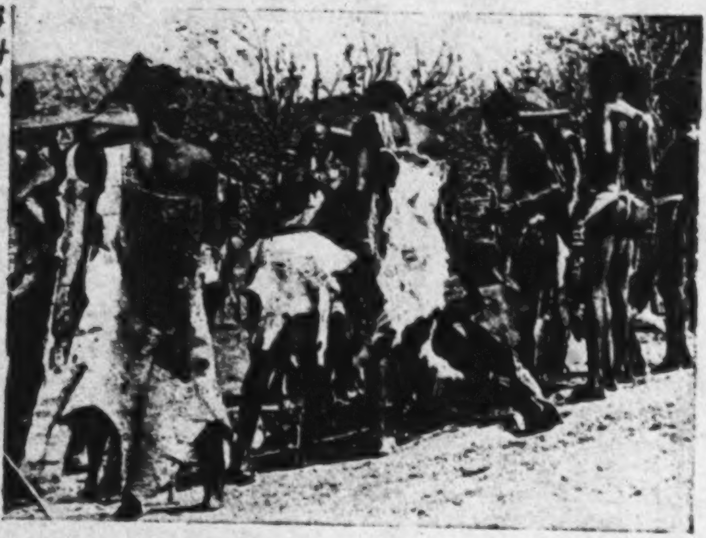

(*a*) The Unity of all the Talis: The chief tendaanas of all the Talis settlements assemble to perform the rite of 'blowing the whistles' to inaugurate the Golib Festival.

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(*b*) A sacred crocodile at Zubiuŋ crawling out of the water-hole to take a live frog offered to him by a youth of the clan. Note the latter's fearlessness.

[facing p. 160]

PLATE XII

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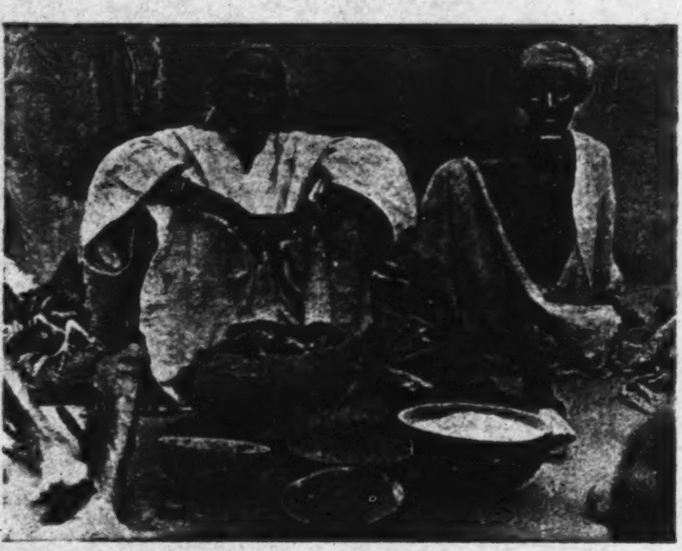

(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔyar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔyar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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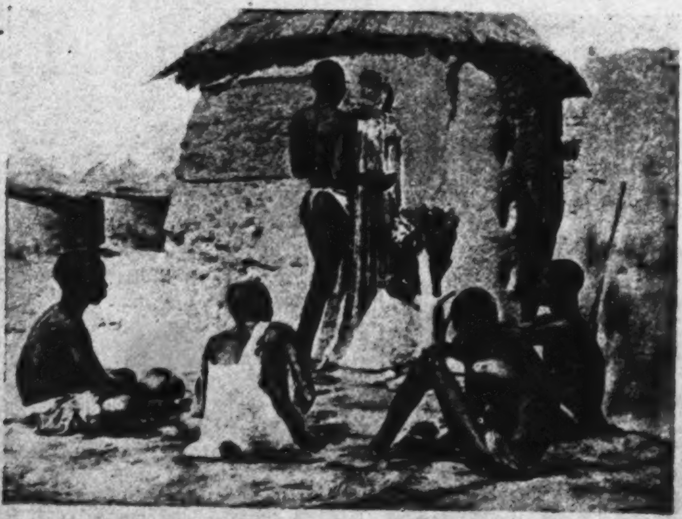

(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔyar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p.225]

PLATE XIV

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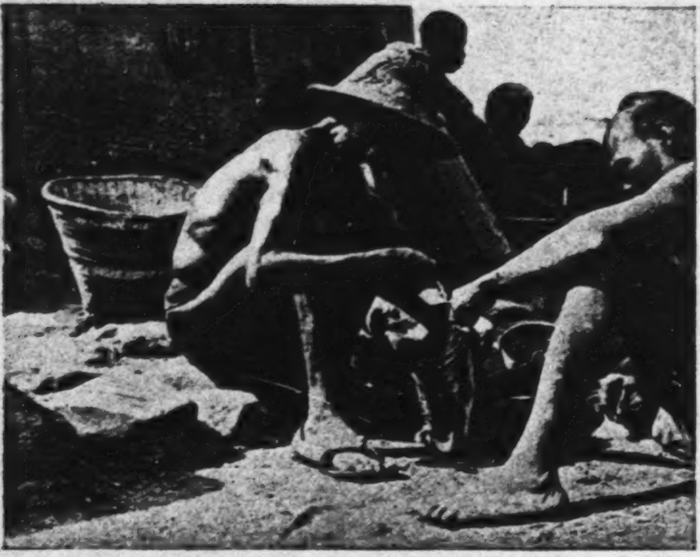

(*a*) *Sunzɔp m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

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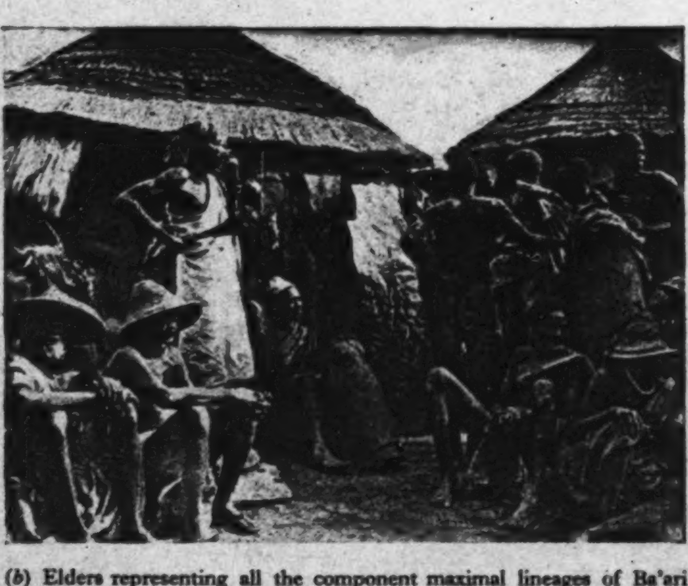

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tendaana at his homestead.

[facing p.24]

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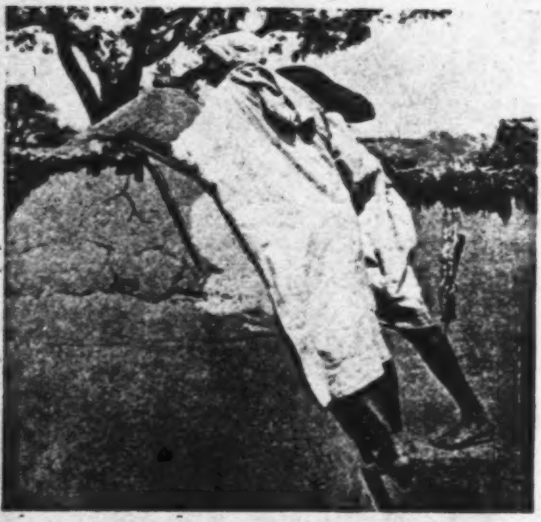

a. The first-born son of a Namoo is ritually 'shown' his father's granary for the first time on the last day of his father's funeral ceremony

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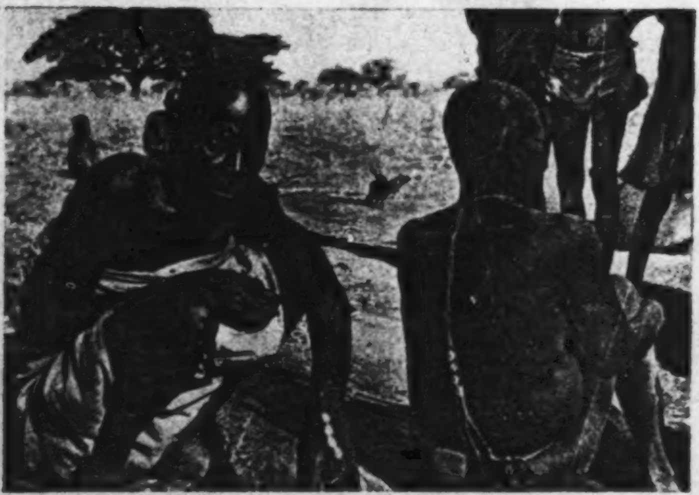

b. The youngest son and the youngest daughter of a dead woman wear the *doołuŋ* during the concluding rites of their mother's funeral

[facing p. 208]

Plate III

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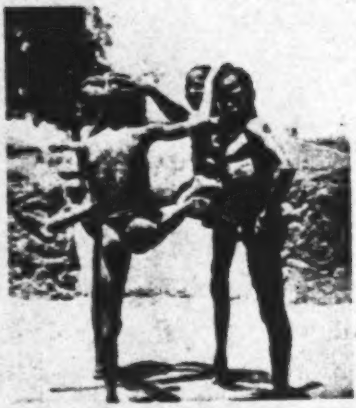

Recreational Play: *Kunbon* (posed)

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A wrestling match—with an eye on the goat lest it wander into the growing crops

[facing p.48]

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524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers
with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
●301 and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses.
283 Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls
524 sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

Look to my sickness that it may cease. If any one is doing this to me, catch him for me, or kill him and let me get health and strength.' 796

Another: 'I was in my town when I heard of this god, that he is strong, so I came to lean on him that he may help me. I am a person who drinks gin always and I am become a drunkard. Help me to stop drinking. Again, whatever work I do, I get in debt. If some one is doing all this to me, let *nana* catch him or kill him for me.' 782

When I state that these supplicants were educated men and women, some of whom owned large businesses, well-furnished European houses, and not a few of them their own cars, in which they had come hundreds of miles to visit this pagan god, the power and influence of the old beliefs may readily be imagined. I need not multiply examples. All the petitions were based on the same formula—the god was *nana*, the supplicants had come to lean upon him (*dan nebo*). They were promised nothing. If their prayers were answered, they would bring back an offering. Nearly every one asked for 'money' or 'profit'. 796 177 771

When the servite was ended, we all backed out again into the sunlight and were led, complete silence being enjoined upon us, to the entrance of the second cave. Here the offerings were sacrificed over a mound so smothered in congealed blood and feathers as to hide its surface completely. 796

The *Ten'dan'* lifted up a round stone and tapped it against this altar. Each person then handed him the offering he or she had brought. Its throat was cut, the blood flowed on the altar, and the sacrifice was cast down. My sheep was sacrificed last of all. The photograph, Fig. 77, shows the old *Ten'dan'* about to cut it[illegible]roat. All this was carried out in complete silence. We all then returned to where every one had undressed, and each person was smeared with a line of red clay on the side of each cheek, between the breasts, on each forearm, on the legs and back. This ended the ceremony. [302]

Kusase

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765
father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769
his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his
father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make
use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the
flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies.
It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years,
later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been
settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the
day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters'
children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations,
assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302]
are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely
shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the
children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765
who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768
they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out.
After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765
main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837
the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle.
She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783
sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there
send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness.
He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the
land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan*' will come and [793]
sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have
sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says
so, he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one
representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their
mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201]
in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses
his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of
the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and
its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also
put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it.
The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a
fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices
the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out
from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

837 783 765 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'. There she is given new waist-strings.

765 768 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother. The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 602 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother, and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives, my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos (*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[302 17] [1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

PLATE XII

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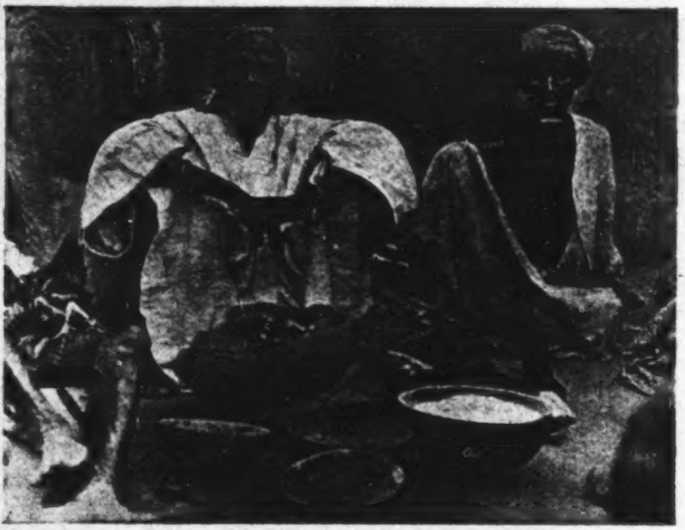

(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyeŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔɣar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔɣar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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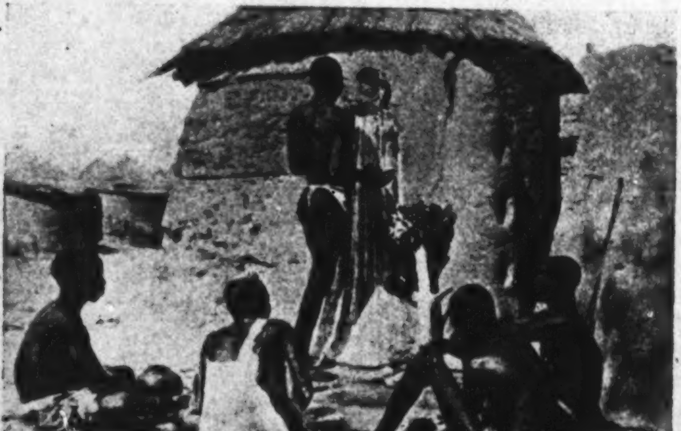

(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔɣar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p.225]

[Facing p.240]

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(*a*) Yikpemdaana of Tongo, the *kpeem* of Toŋ-Kuorəg.

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(*b*) Loɣani, a highly respected junior elder of Zubiuŋ.

PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

[facing p.209]

jectured that the taboo is connected with the fact that the rights over a woman's reproductive powers belong to her husband and must not be confounded with her parents' authority over her. If they came to the funeral of their daughter's child they would have to be received with respect, and it might seem as if they were on a par with the child's paternal grandparents. For the same reason, perhaps, a married woman's parents do not attend her funeral in person, but are represented by other members of her natal family and lineage. 603 765

For a man his son's children stand for the certainty that his line of descent will go on. The wheel of the generations has come full circle. When he and his wife die it will be announced to all the world. On the day of his or her funeral the youngest grandson will be placed before a drum with the drumsticks in his hands and the youngest granddaughter before a calabash with two pieces of cane in her hands. When the signal is given for the funeral to begin they will strike the drum and calabash and cry out, 'Oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather (*N-yaab yee*)'. And when the funeral is concluded the son's children and the brothers' sons' children will have their heads shaved in mourning in the manner prescribed for grandchildren. Half the head will be shaved and half left unshaved. [302] ●

The equivalence of alternate generations is shown by the fact that a grandson may marry the widow of his paternal or maternal grandfather, or of any man whom he calls grandfather, other than his own grandmother. This rule is of practical significance when an old man dies leaving a young widow, and all the men of his inner lineage are either 'sons' or 'grandsons' to him. Then the grandsons who are old enough are encouraged to woo the widow, and the elders of the lineage put pressure on her to choose one of them so that she can remain a wife of that lineage. It was thus that Tiezien married his own paternal grandfather's youngest widow. At that time she had a young infant at the breast who was Tiezien's own father's half-brother. Tiezien was then about 18 or 19. He thus had the unusual experience of bringing up a child who was his proxy father. To-day Tiezien, a vigorous man of about 70, is ritual head of Kpata'ar; but his proxy father Nyaaŋzum, whom he reared, is the head of their inner lineage. Tiezien was made politico-religious head of the clan (*Kpata'ar na'ab*) over Nyaaŋzum's head according to the rule that 'begetting does not cross the *dug*';[1] but within their *dug* he is nominally subject to Nyaaŋzum's authority. This might lead to considerable friction between them if they were not as devoted to each other as they are. The marriage of a grandson with his grandfather's widow is, however, an uncommon occurrence, chiefly 603 587

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[1] Headship of the clan, in this case, goes by selection from amongst the eligible elders, but usually comes to the oldest man in the clan. Tiezien could, however, not have accepted the offer without the consent of his proxy father, Nyaaŋzum. [618]

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely, withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage. But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage. 604 [577 302 789]

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws. The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit. Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever. 604 574 764 [431]

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by her father without having previously arranged to go to another man, she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing 604 586 587 belong to the *Sensereg* (squirrel) clan. We were told by them that the 173 hill did not permit "arrows on the arms," i.e. war. We, too, said we 622 did not want bloodshed. When the *gologo* festival came, we all met on top of the hill and danced. At this festival, the *Ten'dan'* of Dagoli and myself made beer and sacrificed to the land. A month later we sowed.' (I had purposely allowed the Chief to digress from the subject; he now continued.) 'When we came from Nasia we did not see any one here, except the Dagoli people. The Tongo people (see history) had not yet arrived from Mampurugu (near Gambaga). The Dagali had no Chiefs, only *Ten'dan'*; they wore skins. *Sumri* did not become a *Na* (Chief), because he never went back to receive his Chieftainship from Mampurugu. He became *golog'dana* (owner of the drums). The first of my ancestors to go to Mampurugu to get the Chieftainship was *Kumalbeo*; he went to *Na Paya*, the "grandfather" of the present Chief of Mampurugu. He was succeeded by *Atabea*, called after the Chief of Mampurugu, who was his *seyr'* (guardian spirit); Nankane, *segere*.) He was afraid to go to Gambaga because the Europeans were there; he fought with the Europeans because he was told that they had come to take away our land. I am Atabea's son. I was made Chief by the Europeans, but have not yet been confirmed by *Naleregu* (i.e. by the Chief of Mampruse).'

With reference to the title 'owner of the drums', I asked this in- 622 formant if a man could not become a Chief in a new country independently of Mampurugu. He replied he could not do so unless 'he went to Mampurugu (near the present town of Naleregu, the former capital of the Mampruse State) whence spread all the black race.'

History of Yamdiga (as told me by the Chief): 'We came from 173 Mampurugu; my *Yaba* (ancestor) was *Misore*, as was that of Tongo, 622 Beug, and Siega. My ancestor was *Kamuni*, the eldest son of *Misore*; he was of the lion clan. The Chiefs of Yamdiga have been the following: *Gyenkaret*, *Nantog*, *Nakpeleg*, *Gingano*, *Mwampark*, *Nabsobug*, *Lebbaba*, *Na-kaba*, *Kungazur*, *Kunzerpuk*, *Kunoyokurt*, *Kosom*, *Lebdo*, and *Yinsagheg* (lit. God's food, the present Chief). We have now [304] ● become Talense; we no longer circumcise, because the local people would not marry us. The Chief of Kurugu, our "father," still speaks Mampelle, but we no longer do so.'

History of Biun: 'We came from Naleregu (Mampruse), with *Misore*. Our clan is the lion clan; we also taboo goat, and our first-born do not eat a fowl, and women, after reaching puberty, do not eat fowls. We [262] eat goat's flesh, but do not wear its skin until death, when we are

173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
● 304 forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez
from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows
565 these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse,
from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the
upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly,
Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—
128 is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive
enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan),
784 but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tampeŋpeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwɛma* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab*
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine 624

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under the Chief of Nangode.

793

kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan*', also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan*'. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan*' to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).' 793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan*' must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304 ●
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan*' has to be so careful not to eat new crops
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his 173
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan*' of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

and these are left on the grave. The iron heads of the hoes are washed 787
in water containing *grunyoa* grass (*nagwa* in Nankane, used to fumi- [783]
gate everything which has had contact with the dead). If the deceased [778]
had a *bakolog* (soothsaying shrine) it is fumigated with the grass.

Driving the Souls of the Living from Graves: 'Some *bayas* (sextons) can 791
see souls (*sis*) in graves. When they do so, they will take a potsherd 775
and put peppers and tobacco on it and set them on fire and place
them in the open grave in order that the soul may be driven out.'

This exhausts the information which I obtained while living with 000
the Kusase,[1] whom I found a charming and delightful people. I pass
on in my next chapter to describe the Builsa, whom Europeans know
better as the 'Kanjaga'.

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[1] The Kusase do not circumcise, nor do their women practise incision, unless 304
influenced by Mampruse connexions, e.g. at Bawku. They file the teeth. The
women pierce the lower lip only.

197 Administration) of Navrongo or the Bulisi (Builsa) of Kanjaga district,
101 whose tongues are not intelligible to Mole or Dagbane speakers.

In the same way it is well known that the Kusaasi, Namnam, Gorənsi,
171 and Tallensi are more closely allied in culture *inter se* than they are with
101 other neighbouring 'tribes'. In this part of West Africa one can often tell
[304] where a person comes from by his facial cicatrizations.[1] People of these four groups all have the same facial marks, a slashed scar (*ben*) running diagonally downwards from the bridge of the nose across one or both cheeks, which are, in addition, often embellished with a neat tracery of tiny incisions (*yiis*) spreading in herring-bone lines over the forehead and down to the neck. These markings are an emblem of their cultural uniformity, as compared with neighbouring groups. Mamprusi and Mossi, frankly contemptuous of their nakedness and poverty, lump them all together under the sobriquet 'Gorənsi'. Since the coming of the white man they have been called 'the Farafaras' and they are beginning to accept this appellation, which is said to be derived from one of their customary expressions of greeting, *ni i fara-fara-fara*.

107 There are, in short, no precise linguistic or cultural boundaries between
these four groups. Nor are there precise political or structural boundaries
101 between them. They overlap with one another in every way; and further
171 research would, I am certain, show that the Kusaasi, Namnam, and
619 Gorənsi also overlap to some extent with their neighbours other than the Tallensi. At the same time, each of these four groups is considered by members of the other three and by its own members to be in some way a distinct territorial, linguistic, and cultural group. It is, however, a distinction of degree, not of kind. Each group comprises a cluster of communities which have more in common among themselves, linguistically and in the details and nuances of custom, belief, and values, than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. They have closer social ties among themselves than any of them have with their other neighbours, though they have no apparent political unity and never, in the past, combined for war against external enemies or for common defence.

619 This largely implicit feeling of their difference from neighbouring
101 dialect areas which prevails amongst such a cluster of communities is not
based on a conception of tribal unity. Sharp distinctions of custom,
621 belief, and values, as well as of structural relationships, are recognized within the cluster. They are, indeed, of fundamental importance for the social interrelations of the communities making up the cluster. On the same principle as before, the cluster is subdivided into smaller constellations of communities which have more in common, closer bonds, *inter se*, than any of them have with other communities. Culturally, and structurally, as we shall discover in the course of our study, society in the Volta region is built up on a segmentary principle. The degree of unity, coherence, autonomy, or singularity of a socio-geographic segment of

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[1] These distinguishing facial marks were noted by the first European traveller who visited the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the Frenchman Binger. Cf. Binger, Capitaine, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, 1893, vol. ii, pp. 34–7. For diagrams of these markings see Armitage, C. H., *The Tribal Markings and Marks of Adornment of the Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1924, especially figs. 4, 6, 26.

101 in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

101 Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Taləŋ
304 in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Gɔris (*Tam Talis pu ct lan—Gɔris tuomər nla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

361 To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale
103 settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial
133 relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map, p. 15), one of the
621 most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gɔre neighbours, on the other is Yayazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sɔk and Yaməlag, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tenzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Dkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santeŋ, Teeləg, Syɛk, and Wɔyar, separated from Tenzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawaləg. Between Zoo and Yaməlag lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yaməlag occupies a shallow depression between hillocks.
361 Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before
103 the homesteads of Sawaləg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can
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PLATE 8

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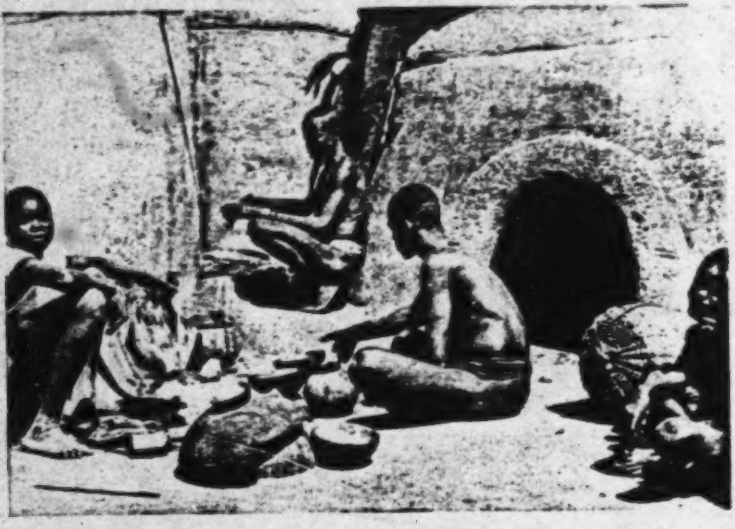

a. A domestic sacrifice of fowls, guinea-fowls, and beer. The head of the joint family is addressing the shrine, which occupies a recess in his senior wife's *Dug*

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b. Ɔmara and his four youngest daughters—each the daughter of a different wife—having a snack at mid-day

[facing p. 129]

621 421 The natives cannot imagine any tract of land or territory being totally unconnected with a human group. Most tracts of uninhabited bush are 'owned' by chiefs, who have ritual jurisdiction over hunting rights. But some tracts of untilled and uninhabited land (e.g. between Biuŋ and the river) appear to have no 'owners', either secular or ritual. The natives say the 'owners' have died out. The land did at one time have a connexion, perhaps only a ritual connexion, with a human group, and this connexion remains mystically effective still. Such areas of *wasak*, as the natives call them, are economically a free good. Anyone can come and build or cultivate there. But a man who does so will try to find some person or some clan to offer sacrifice to the Earth on his behalf, as the residuary legatee of the defunct 'owners', through local or clanship ties with them. If he fails to find anyone, he will consult a diviner to find out for himself where the sacred spots are in this stretch of *wasak* and make the sacrifices himself, thus creating a moral bond with it. Nowhere is the Earth inert; and its mystical powers are a reflex of its relations with human groups.

The three functionally differentiated aspects of man's relations to territory in Taleland are interconnected in Tale thought and custom in a rather complex way, and local differences blur the general principles. The simplest approach will be from the starting-point of land used for agricultural purposes. This is by far the most important economic use of land, but not the only one. There are few products of nature on the earth's surface that the natives do not make some economic use of, or rely on for other practical purposes. It is easy to see, therefore, why the natural environment is built into the social organization and invested with values and meaning in the social philosophy and ritual beliefs of the Tallensi. Our analysis would lead to the same conclusions if we started from uncultivated bush (*moog*), for instance, the source of essential products such as firewood, wild fruits, shea nuts, thatching grass, reeds for mat-making, rafters, medicine roots, and so forth, as well as of game and wild fowl.

Farm-land and Subsistence

●311 Land means many things to the Tale farmer. He distinguishes, firstly, between the soil (*tam*) and the arable, or tilled land (*kuob*). He recognizes and takes into account different kinds and qualities of soil. This is something independent of the tillage of the land; and, conversely, cultivation (*kuo*, from *kɔ*, to hoe) turns any kind of soil (*tam*) into arable (*kuob*). Tilled land, again, is classified, without reference to soil qualities, by its location and by the kind of crops grown on it. Thus, every farmer has one or more home farms (*saman*) in the settlement and one or more bush farms (*poog*) in an area free of human habitations. In addition, a particular farm is merely a parcel of land, a bit carved out of a *tɛŋ*. In this context a *tɛŋ* is a stretch of territory in its useful, material aspect. One can speak of such and such a *tɛŋ* as being very fertile, or as having a sandy soil (*tambiihug*).

241 731 Farming is the basis of the Talɔŋ's livelihood. A failure of crops, nowadays, spells widespread privation. Thirty years ago it would have brought famine. Tallensi often talk of this, especially when unpropitious

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
● [311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋgbana*—
782] for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas.
My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandaɣanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

621 511 291 [465] and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 311 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land; but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 433 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 721 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

variations in the ripening of crops makes it essential, as will be clear 243
later, for a self-supporting unit to have a supply of every type of
cereal, or face starvation at certain times of the year. Early millet is
grown only on the compound farms (*saman*), land immediately sur-
rounding the compounds and kept fertile by human and animal
manure and by spreading the detritus of the kitchen midden. The 243
compound farms at the disposal of a joint family consist of irregular 311
patches of greatly varying size scattered throughout the area of settle-
ment of their lineage. They are acquired by inheritance, succession, 425
or gift from the head of one's joint family or lineage. How much of
it a man has depends, thus, upon his seniority within the joint family
and the lineage. The head of a joint family may cultivate 6 or 8 acres
of compound farm; his younger brother and prospective heir, as head
of an independent unit of food economy, may have only two acres or
less allotted to him.[1] The compound farm is so precious that it is
regarded as sacrilege to sell or abandon it.

Guinea-corn or late millet, which ripen several months after 243
the early millet, are grown both on compound farms and on bush 311
farms (*poog*) from one to four miles distant from the settlements of 425
those who cultivate them. Bush farms also descend in the line of 596
inheritance; but they can be bought or borrowed for a term of years.
If the bush land belonging to his own joint family is limited, a man
can always borrow as much as he requires. A head of a joint family
may require no bush farm at all if he has a large compound farm;
junior men, on the other hand, depend the more upon their bush
farms the less compound land they have.[2] Compound land is the
most fertile and most easily worked owing to its proximity. Those
who have large compound farms (e.g. elders) are less liable to food
shortage than those who have mainly bush farms (i.e. younger men).

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richer than the average Tale compound, as they belonged to headmen or elders. Botanical names are taken from Mr. Lynn's report.

[1] Rough calculations based on a survey of farms made for us by Mr. D. S. Commey. Mr. Lynn's records show that the Tale compound farms he measured vary from nearly 7 acres to under an acre; the average being 3·36 acres.

[2] Mr. Lynn found bush farms to vary from about 5 to 10 acres in extent. How much bush farm is cultivated depends, of course, upon the number of men co-operating and upon the food requirements of the unit, as well as upon the amount of *saman* they have.

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table* given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalaŋ*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

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[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

* [See cat. 116, p241.—Analyst.]

Types of Farm.

Farms are of three types:—

1. Compound Farm. This is the original farm and the most important. It is dressed with any manure which may be available and invariably receives attention first. Size and shape is very variable; average size, 4.89 acres.

2. Farms separate from compound farm but not "bush". These are generally small areas between compound farms, very irregular in outline and farmed less intensely than the compound farm; average size 1.35 acres.

3. "Bush" Farms. These are extensively cultivated farms, away from compounds, often upon stony hillsides. They receive the minimum of attention. The average size of bush farms is 1.74 acres.

Analysis of Areas Cultivated.

Of the land cultivated by 54 recorded compounds, 61% of the total area cultivated was compound farm; 17% farm away from the compound but not in bush; and 22% was bush farm (see Appendix II, Table 4). Not every compound had each kind of farm, however:—

10 compounds (18%) had compound farms only, with an average of 7.47 acres.

22 compounds (41%) had compound farms with an average area of 4.51 acres and in addition farms away from the compound (but not "bush" farms) average area 2.07 acres.

14 compounds (26%) had compound farms of an average area of 4.36 acres and "bush" farms of 4.56 acres.

8 compounds (15%) had compound farms with an average area of 5.89 acres; farms away from the compound but not bush—2.35 acres—and bush farms—5.75 acres.

Bush farms were found at Nangodi, Tongo, Kologo, and Zebilla; none at Bongo, Chana, Sambruno, Navrongo and Wiaga. Two compounds at Zuarungu, on the Nangodi road, had bush farms in the hills. The treatment of different types of farms will be discussed below under the headings for crops and yields.

Man Power and Persons Supported.

Two figures of primary importance to the study of agriculture 241
in its particular relationship to food-supply and density of popula- 311
tion are, (i), the area of land cultivated per man working; and (ii), the area of land cultivated to support a unit of population. These figures, when taken into consideration with the system of farming followed, and the agricultural potentialities of the district, form the basis and starting point for ameliorative measures. Statistics are given for every compound surveyed, in Appendix II, Tables 1—3. These are summarised in Appendix II, Table 4, from which the following data have been extracted.

1. The total area of land cultivated by 54 compounds was 431.08 acres. This gives an average area cultivated per compound of 7.98 acres.

2. The number of men farming 431.08 acres was 173; average area cultivated per man farming—*2.49 acres*.

   (Note. Boys big enough to hoe are included as "men farming". Women and children also assist, particularly with planting and harvesting.)

3. Total number of persons supported on 431.08 acres was 650 (this figure includes children, but not babes in arms); average area cultivated per person—*.66 acres*.

4. 173 men supported 650 persons; 1 man supported 3.7 persons.

5. An average compound farmed 7.98 acres, of which 61% may be compound farm, 17% away from the compound but not bush, and 22% bush farm. This area is farmed by 3.2 men and supports 12 persons.

It is interesting to observe that if these figures are taken as being representative of the whole of North Mamprusi, about one-eighth of the district is under cultivation.

CROP HUSBANDRY.

Crops Grown and Methods of Cropping.

All crops grown in the district are annuals of which the cereals, 241
early millet, late millet, and guinea corn, occupying over 90% of the cultivated land (see Table 2, below), are by far the most important. A list of the crops more commonly grown is given in

APPENDIX II—TABLE 1.

ZUARUNGU AREA.

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Details of areas farmed (in acres), men farming and persons supported for 29 compounds recorded at 5 centres in Zuarungu Area in 1932.

(Note.—The area of land occupied by buildings and waste land is not included.)

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Bongo—								
I. Ayanbiri ...	.53	2.00 1.65 .37 .14 .47	–	* 5.16	1	5.16	10	.51
II. Akani ...	2.89	.67 2.00 .42	– –	* 5.98	1	5.98	4	1.49
III. Inyaba ...	1.04	1.89	–	2.93	2	1.46	5	.58
IV. Aganda ...	6.71	.57	–	7.28	7	1.04	20	.36
V. Akawiboku	1.32	.54	–	1.86	3	**.62	8	.23
VI. Afuki ...	2.98	1.00 .50 1.45 2.03	–	7.96	4	1.99	13	.61
Totals ...	15.47	15.70	–	31.17	18	–	60	–
Means ...	2.58	2.61	–	5.19	3	1.73	10	.51
Nangodi—								
I. Doliba ...	1.62	1.57 .09	–	3.28	3	1.09	7	.47
II. Tobiga ...	13.25	.09	2.67	16.01	5	3.20	36	.44
III. Bugari ...	5.27	–	2.62	7.89	4	1.97	15	.51
IV. Banitami	3.54	–	2.36	5.90	2	2.95	7	.84
V. Babila ...	3.88	–	3.04	6.92	6	1.15	19	.36
Totals ...	27.56	1.75	10.69	40.00	20	–	84	–
Means ...	5.51	.35	2.14	8.00	4	2.00	16.8	.48

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 1 (*continued*).

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate "not bush"	Bush Farm	Total				
Sambruno—								
I. Kasalaga	5.59	.99 .90 .26 .45	–	8.19	8	1.02	15	.61
II. Alori ...	2.78	.65 .20 .32 1.00 .51	–	5.46	5	1.09	13	.42
III. Asoro ...	5.50	1.07 .53 .68	–	7.78	3	2.59	11	.73
IV. Ayarina	8.57	.34	–	***8.91	2	4.45	7	1.27
V. Kolgo ...	4.01	1.34	–	5.35	2	2.67	6	.89
Totals ...	26.45	9.24	–	35.69	20	–	52	–
Means ...	5.29	1.85	–	7.14	4	1.78	10.4	.65
Tongo—								
I. Yembila ...	2.48	2.74	–	5.22	1	5.22	4	1.30
II. Zukori ...	3.82	.45 .59	5.96 4.83 5.65	21.30	7	3.04	36	.59
III. Omara ...	1.68	.61 .65	5.25	8.19	6	1.36	23	.35
IV. Dagbana...	6.43	.46 .51 .68	–	8.08	3	2.69	13	.62
V. Goloma ...	5.98	2.50	–	8.48	6	1.41	19	.44
Totals ...	20.39	9.19	21.69	51.27	23	–	95	–
Means ...	4.08	1.84	4.34	10.25	4.6	2.23	19	.54
Zuarungu—								
I. Adachama	9.25	3.89 .86	–	14.00	4	3.5	23	.60
II. Abagna ...	5.61	–	–	5.61	2	2.8	10	.56
III. Azogadugu	2.37	–	–	2.37	1	2.37	6	.39
IV. Awuni ...	3.22	–	–	3.22	2	1.61	10	.32
V. Atia ...	2.75	–	–	2.75	1	2.78	3	.92
VI. Asoro ...	7.56	–	–	7.56	4	1.98	8	.99
VII. Abugbiri	2.04	–	1.01	3.05	2	1.52	9	.34
VIII. Ayenpam	1.44	–	1.04	2.48	1	2.48	6	.41
Totals ...	34.24	4.75	2.05	41.04	17	–	75	–
Means ...	4.28	.59	.26	5.13	2.1	2.44	9.4	.55
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 29 COMPOUNDS IN ZUARUNGU AREA								
Totals ...	124.11	40.63	34.45	199.17	98	–	366	–
Means ...	4.28	[illegible].40	1.19	6.87	3.7	2.03	12.6	.54

*Receive assistance. **Two men very old. ***Poor, eroded land.

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 2 (continued).

Compound No. and Name of Owner	Area farmed				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Wiaga— I. Abasu ...	3.12	.76 .46	–	4.34	3	1.45	10	.43
II. Akulbalmni	4.62	.89 .77 .57	–	6.85	2	3.43	8	.86
III. Anisedi ...	1.07	3.20	–	4.27	1	4.27	4	1.07
IV. Amanyadi	3.99	2.03	–	6.02	4	1.51	9	.67
V. Azurumi	2.86	1.01	–	3.87	2	1.94	12	.32
VI. Ansodi ...	1.87	.37	–	2.24	1	2.24	9	.25
Totals ... Means ...	17.53 –	10.06 –	– –	27.59 4.59	13 2.1	– 2.12	52 8.6	– .53
SUMMARY OF DATA FOR 20 COMPOUNDS IN NAVRONGO AREA								
Totals ... Means ...	110.51 5.52	23.12 1.16	29.97 1.49	163.60 8.19	54 2.7	– 3.03	217 10.8	– .75

*Farmed very extensively. **One man a tailor.

APPENDIX II—TABLE 3.

KUSASI AREA.

Details of areas, men farming, and persons supported at Zebilla. Surveyed 1936.

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Compound No. and Name of Owner	Areas farmed, in acres				No. men farming	Area per man	No. persons supported	Area per person
	Compound Farm	Separate " not bush "	Bush Farm	Total				
Zebilla— I. Mbila ...	1.58	–	6.37	7.95	1	8.18	4	2.04
II. Abila ...	4.62	–	9.62	14.24	6	2.4	22	.65
III. Aghanbila	4.26	–	4.30	8.56	4	2.16	9	.96
IV. Akobari ...	14.70	5.94	3.76	24.40	6	4.31	17	1.52
V. Aroko ...	4.22	3.23	5.71	13.16	4	3.30	15	.88
Totals ... Means ...	29.38 5.88	9.17 1.83	29.76 5.95	68.31 13.66	21 4.2	– 3.25	67 13.4	– 1.02

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 4.

Summary of Tables 1—3 giving totals and means for 54 compounds surveyed at ten centres in North Mamprusi. (Allowance has been made in areas for land occupied by buildings or waste land. "Persons supported" includes adults and children, except babes in arms.)

District and Centre of Record	No. of Com-pound	Area farmed in acres				Total Number men farming	Area per man	Total Number persons sup-ported	Area per person	Compound Means			Persons sup-ported per man
		Com-pound Farm	Farm away *not* bush	Bush Farms	Total Area					Area farmed	Men farming	Persons sup-ported	
Zuarungu Area—													
Bongo ...	6	15.47	15.70	—	31.17	18	1.73	60	.51	5.19	3	10	3.3
Nangodi ...	5	27.56	1.75	10.69	40.00	20	2.00	84	.48	8.00	4	16.8	4.2
Sambruno ...	5	26.45	9.24	—	35.69	20	1.78	52	.65	7.14	4	10.4	2.6
Tongo ...	5	20.39	9.19	21.69	51.27	23	2.23	95	.54	10.25	4.6	19	4.1
Zuarungu ...	8	34.24	4.75	2.05	41.04	17	2.44	75	.55	5.13	2.1	9.4	4.4
Navrongo Area—													
Chana ...	6	54.33	1.41	—	55.74	16	3.48	49	1.14	9.29	2.6	8.1	3.1
Kologo ...	6	29.75	5.09	29.97	64.81	16	4.05	83	.78	10.80	2.6	12.9	4.9
Navrongo ...	2	8.90	6.56	—	15.46	9	1.74	33	.47	7.73	4.5	16.5	3.6
Wiaga ...	6	17.53	10.06	—	27.59	13	2.12	52	.53	4.59	2.1	8.6	4.1
Kusasi Area—													
Zebilla ...	5	29.38	9.17	29.76	68.31	21	3.25	67	1.02	13.66	4.2	13.4	3.2
Totals ...	54	264.00	72.92	94.16	431.08	173	—	650	—	—	—	—	—
Means ...	—	4.89 61%	1.35 17%	1.74 22%	7.98	3.2	2.49	12	.66	7.98	3.2	12	3.7

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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Summary of Cropping at 10 Centres of Record in

District :	Zuarungu Area (1932)					
Centre of Record :	Bongo	Nangodi	Sambruno	Tongo	Zuarungu	Tots 29 comp
No. of compounds recorded :	6	5	5	5	8	acres
Cereals— Early millet Late millet Groundcrops*	6.90 (1.71)	7.44 (1.28)	1.04 (.62)	11.91 (6.79)	18.99 (4.19)	46.28 (14.59)
Early millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	9.79 (2.47)	9.80 (1.46)	6.35 (.81)	4.44 (2.89)	5.90 (.72)	36.28 (8.35)
Early millet Late millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	2.98 (1.06)	–	13.15 (6.68)	–	5.32 (1.90)	21.45 (9.64)
Late millet Groundnuts	2.04	5.42	3.81	2.53	2.25	16.05
Late millet Groundcrops	–	.84	.63	19.03	3.23	23.73
Guinea corn Groundcrops	5.69 (1.10)	15.41	1.15 (.83)	11.98	1.22	35.45 (1.93)
Late millet Guinea corn Groundcrops	–	–	2.05	.98	.65	3.68
Rice	–	–	.58	–	.01	.59
Maize	–	–	–	.08 (.02)	.02	.10 (.02)
Legumes— Groundnuts	3.70	.75	3.35	–	2.17	9.97
Bambarra beans	–	.14	.14	–	–	.28
Groundnuts Bambarra beans	–	–	3.17	–	.74	3.91
Kirstingrella geocarpa	–	.09	.09	.11	–	.29
Root Crops— Coleus potatoes	–	–	–	–	.32	.32
Sweet potatoes	–	–	.02	.21	.22	.45
Miscellaneous— Tobacco	–	.11	.02	–	–	.13
Okra	.07	–	–	–	–	.07
Hibiscus cannabinus	–	–	.14	–	–	.14
Total Cereals Percentage	27.40 (6.34) 88	38.91 (2.74) 97	28.76 (8.94) 80	50.95 (9.70) 99	37.59 (6.81) 91	183.61 (34.53) –
Total Legumes Percentage	3.70 12	.98 2	6.75 19	.11 –	2.91 7	14.45 –
Total Roots Percentage	– –	– –	.02 –	.21 –	.54 1	.77 –
Total Miscellaneous... Percentage	.07 –	.11 1	.16 –	– –	– –	.34 –
Total Area cultivated	31.17	40.00	35.69	51.27	41.04	199.17

*Ground crops — neri and cowpeas.

[p. 70A-i]

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 5.

tres of Record in North Mamprusi. (All areas are given in acres. Figur

(1932)			Navrongo Area (1934 and 1935)						1
Zuarungu	Total 29 compounds		Chana	Kologo	Navrongo	Wiaga	Total 20 compounds		
8	acres	%	6	6	2	6	acres	%	
18.99 (4.19)	46.28 (14.59)	23	1.62	5.01	–	.31	6.94	4.2	
5.90 (.72)	36.28 (8.35)	18	4.27 (3.29)	9.93	.73	4.40	19.33 (3.29)	11.8	
5.32 (1.90)	21.45 (9.64)	10	16.83	12.17 (2.93)	7.08 (4.05)	19.20	55.28 (6.98)	33.8	
2.25	16.05	8	1.93	1.31	–	–	3.24	1.9	
3.23	23.73	11	5.27	16.63	3.26	.26	25.42	15.3	
1.22	35.45 (1.93)	17	7.11	5.20	1.74	–	14.05	8.6	
.65	3.68	1.8	6.82	7.04	.53	.31	14.70	9	
.01	.59	.24	1.25	2.96	.26	–	4.47	2.7	
.02	.10 (.02)	.05	–	–	.05	–	.05	.03	
2.17	9.97	5	1.99	2.91	1.66	1.17	7.73	4.7	
–	.28	.14	–	.56	–	–	.56	.3	
.74	3.91	1.95	8.57	1.09	–	1.78	11.44	7	
–	.29	.14	–	–	–	.16	.16	.09	
.32	.32	.16	.05	–	.15	–	.20	.01	
.22	.45	.22	–	–	–	–	–	–	
–	.13	.06	–	–	–	–	–	–	
–	.07	.03	.03	–	–	–	.03	–	
–	.14	.07	–	–	–	–	–	–	
37.59 (6.81) 91	183.61 (34.53) –	– 92	45.10 (3.29) 81	60.25 (2.93) 93	13.65 (4.05) 88	24.48 89	143.18 (10.27) –	– 87.5	
2.91 7	14.45 –	– 7	10.56 19	4.56 7	1.66 11	3.11 11	19.89 –	12.1 –	
.54 1	.77 –	– .40	.05 –	– –	.15 1	– –	.20 –	.12 –	
– –	.34 –	– .1	.03 –	– –	– –	– –	.03 –	– –	
41.04	199.17	–	55.74	64.61	15.46	27.59	163.60	–	

[p. 70A-ii]

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are given in acres. Figures in brackets denote area manured.)

934 and 1935)			Kusasi Area (1936)		Total, 54 compounds at 10 centres		Type of farm where commonly planted : Compound : Type (I) and Type (II) Bush : Type (III)
Wiaga	Total 20 compounds		Zebilla				
6	acres	%	6 acres	%	acres	%	
.31	6.94	4.2	14.21 (5.97)	20 (9)	67.43 (20.56)	15.6 (4.7)	Compound
4.40	19.33 (3.29)	11.8	12.47 (4.36)	18.2 (6)	68.08 (16.00)	15.8 (3.7)	Compound
19.20	55.28 (6.98)	33.8	–	–	76.73 (16.62)	17.9 (3.8)	Compound
–	3.24	1.9	–	–	19.29	4.6	Compound
.26	25.42	15.3	18.28	26.7	67.43	15.6	Bush and compound
–	14.05	8.6	19.73	28.8	69.23 (1.93)	16 (.45)	Bush and compound
.31	14.70	9	–	–	18.38	4.2	Bush and compound
–	4.47	2.7	.06	–	5.12	1.2	Compound
–	.05	.03	.05 (.05)	– (.06)	.20 (.07)	.04	Compound
1.17	7.73	4.7	2.17	3.1	19.87	4.6	Compound
–	.56	.3	–	–	.84	.2	Compound
1.78	11.44	7	–	–	15.35	3.5	Compound
.16	.16	.09	–	–	.45	.1	Compound
–	.20	.01	1.29	1.8	1.81	.4	Compound
–	–	–	–	–	.45	.1	Compound
–	–	–	–	–	.13	.03	Compound
–	.03	–	–	–	.10	.02	Compound
–	–	–	.05	.07	.19	.04	Compound
24.46 89	143.18 (10.27) –	– 87.5	64.80 (10.38) –	– (15) 94	391.89 (55.18) –	– (12) 91	
3.11 11	19.89 –	12.1 –	2.17 –	– 3.1	36.51 –	– 8.4	
– –	.20 –	.12 –	1.29 –	– 1.8	2.26 –	.5 –	
– –	.03 –	– –	.05 –	.1 –	.42 –	.1 –	
27.59	163.60	–	68.31	–	431.08	–	

[p. 70A - iii]

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due
to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta
161 plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
●312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Talɔŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*bulɔg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*kolɔg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

PLATE IX

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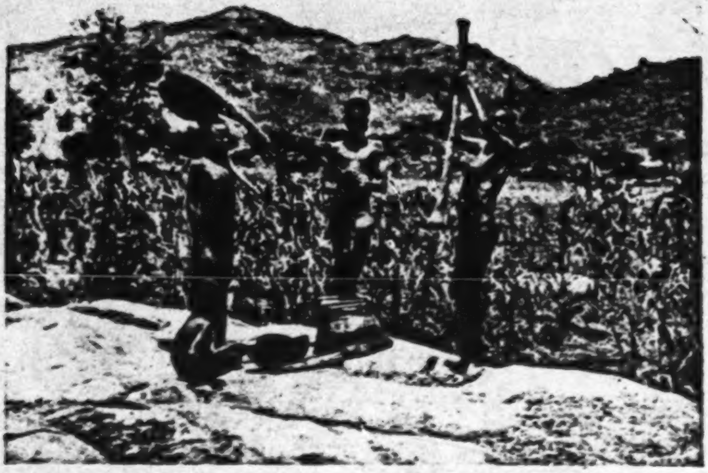

(*a*) A large boulder in the middle of a settlement forms a natural mortar where young girls go to stamp guinea corn.

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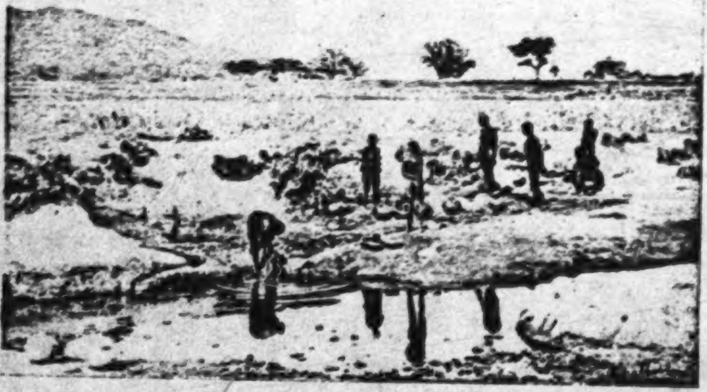


(*b*) Women at a waterhole in the early rainy season. This waterhole serves homesteads within a radius of over a quarter of a mile.

[facing p. 176]

not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat
stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking;
the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace,
and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it;
this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect
enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements
becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to
care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may
therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her
and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in
marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other
firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother
and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate
her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her.
He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only
time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the
harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks
from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room
or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kɔwoor*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch
and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem.
The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the water-holes
collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it
seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and
drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely,
but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

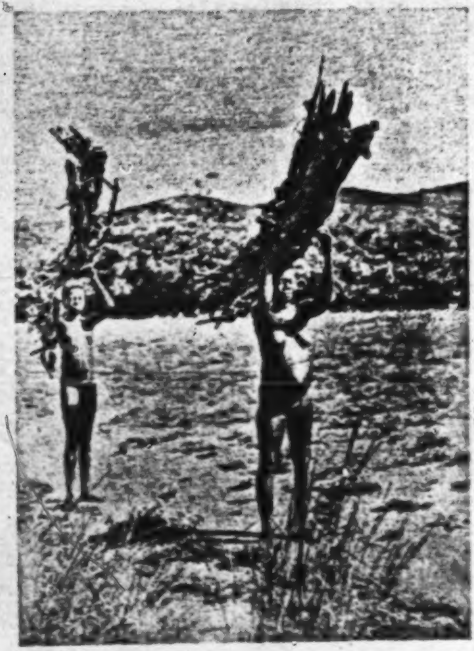
●312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption,
but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to
wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes,
but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a
radius of not more than 300 yards.

A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked
262 food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the
satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the
women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not
in the lean months.

596 The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his
wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never
261 descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, pre-
264 ferably unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism.
Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or
of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young
wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small
basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the
period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain
is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at
noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the
next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of
grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual house-
hold and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a
noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the
ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman care-
fully considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the
family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncer-
562 tainty of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She
264 carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour
252 approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over
(three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home,
and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to.
Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good
reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or
harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

PLATE III



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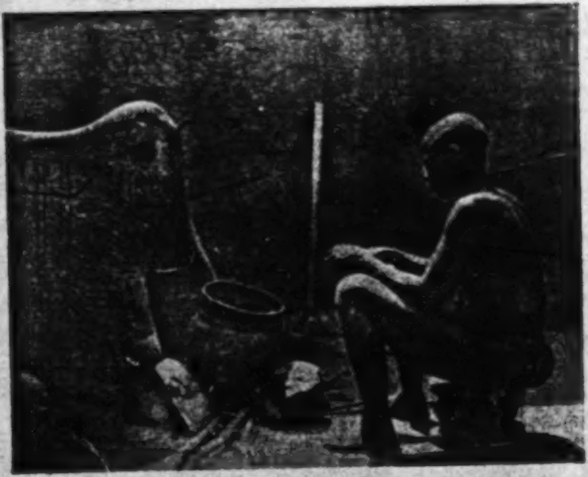
1. Bringing home firewood: Mother and daughter



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2. A woman in her kitchen (posed)

[facing p. 264]

not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat
stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking;
the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace,
and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it;
this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313 ●
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her. He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kɔwoor*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem. The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the water-holes collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely, but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
● [313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front
and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath
[195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the
back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are
cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those
who have lost their fathers.

764 'When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are
boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and
765 after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his
wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then
● [314] given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of
the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its
place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which
they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit
and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is
called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge
of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral
is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is
765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He
769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is
fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the
setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the
deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of
the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[171] [1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita*.

[535 831] [2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river
515 swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the
sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation
562 of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit.
834 The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation: the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political
cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political
578 aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

461 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young
girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick
322 withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

793 female one may not marry or even have a lover. When a woman is chosen as *Ten'dan' poka*, she will leave husband and children and go to Zoka to enter on her work, and the cows which her husband paid for her will not be claimed, as his wife has been chosen by the land, and if her husband claimed back the cows, he would die. I myself left home just a year ago.' The Chief, who was present when this woman was speaking, said, 'We caught her and put the calabash and stalk in her hand, without telling her; she could not refuse; it was the word of our *Yaba* (ancestor). Her predecessor was my own wife; she was taken from me.'

She continued: 'Female *Ten'dan'* are chosen from one family; my clan is *loa* (a red squirrel ?)'.

This woman's small girl attendant told me she would be the *Ten'dan's* servant until she reached puberty and married, when another young girl would replace her.

793
423 I again asked the female *Ten'dan'*, if *Ten'dan'* owned the land. She said, 'No, not really, the grove does, *Ten'dan'* are only children of the *tengwan* (grove)'.

Some Further Notes regarding Ten'dan' and the Land:

'In olden times, the *Ten'dan'* gave the Chief land to farm as well as lesser people. He, the *Ten'dan'*, would point out the place to make the farm and call the name of his grove, saying, "So-and-so wants to eat, help him". The *Ten'dan'* will turn over the first sod, and at that place, *kyili* seed will be planted, the leaves of which are called *bito*. When this farm bears its first crops, and thereafter each year, a basket of corn, a pot of beer, and some fowls are given to the *Ten'dan'* by its owner. As soon as land is totally abandoned, it reverts to the *Ten'dan'*, but as long as it is being cultivated, he cannot take it back, unless its owner offends. The *Ten'dan'* may give land to a stranger provided he lives in the *teya*. [326] Before a smith used iron from the land, he would make a knife, an axe, and a nail called *pin kpa*,[1] and give them to the *Ten'dan'* before doing any work for others.'

The Godan: 'I am called *Ten'dan'*, there is one called *Godan* who wanders and kills meat. His work is to take people to the bush to hunt. When a beast is killed, he receives a foreleg; the remainder goes to the head of the section. The *Godan* "owns" the men whom he takes to the bush to hunt; he does not own any land. If one of my own section

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[1] Used by leather workers.

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
244 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Tale-
land are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one
● [326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A
leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a
popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may
farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There
may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or
two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland
to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than
was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it
impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from
their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even
women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale,
Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some
carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to
work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the
Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of
labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The
experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration
from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked
up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years,
a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on
account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often
goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agri-
cultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get
away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny
in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity,
and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who
return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate
many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

vanity apart, they do require ample storage-room for the large quantities 592 of clothes, the saddlery and trappings of their horses, the innumerable odds and ends of European origin, and many articles of native production which they have accumulated by purchase or gift. Their good fortune is exceptional. Others content themselves with small and modest private rooms. Leatherworkers and blacksmiths also often have private [282 rooms where they keep their tools and the materials of their craft. 326]

No special provision is made for young children or girls. They live in their mothers' rooms. An unmarried young man usually has a special room of his own, essentially a sleeping-room (*doo*), in his mother's *dug*; and if there are several adolescent boys in a family a *doo* may be built for them in one of the women's *dugət*.

The construction of the dwelling-house shows graphically the division 592 of the domestic family into two complementary spheres. On the one hand, we have the sphere in which the patricentral *yir* predominates; 611 on the other, that in which the matricentral *dug* has priority. It is the line of cleavage between descent from the father (*ba dɔɣam*) and descent from the mother (*ma dɔɣam*), principles which are antithetical in form but complementary in function in the domestic organization. Maternal origin supplies the canon of differentiation within the family, paternal descent the principle of integration. In the polygynous joint family, which is the natives' ideal domestic unit, the constituent *dugət* are relatively autonomous in relation to one another, and in certain respects even mutually opposed. The *yir* combines them into a single integral unit, but they are not swallowed up; they retain their specific identity according to maternal origin. The *yir*, then, is the complementary factor to the *dug*; it is also the synthesis of a group of *dugət* at a higher level of organization. This, as has been shown in our previous book, is both the structural model and the social matrix of the lineage system.

The Developmental Cycle of the Joint Family

We have found it convenient to fix our analysis of the Tale homestead 596 by reference to the simplest kind of independent domestic unit. But the elementary family, as we have already remarked, is neither the ideal nor the most common type of independent domestic unit in Taleland; for the typical substratum of a domestic group is not the individual breadwinner but an effective minimal lineage.[1] The domestic group grows, changes, and dissolves with the growth cycle of this lineage, and a particular elementary family is only an episode in this cycle. The structure of the Tale family cannot be divorced from its existence in time. We have to examine it as a process. At any given time we find domestic families at every stage of development in a Tale community.

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[1] Cf. p. 9 above for a definition of this unit. A full analysis of its constitution is given in *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

dual's transition from the child's world to the adult's—e.g. the so- 184
called negative phase or adolescent instability which has been alleged 155
to be universal in our society.[1] It is unknown in Tale society.[2] As between adults and children, in Tale society, the social sphere is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. All participate in the same culture, the same round of life, but in varying degrees, corresponding to the stage of physical and mental development. Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system. Psychological effects of fundamental importance for Tale education follow from this. For it means that the child is from the beginning oriented towards the same reality as its parents and has the same physical and social material upon which to direct its cognitive and instinctual endowment. The interests, motives, and purposes of children are identical with those of adults, but at a simpler level of organization. Hence the children need not be coerced to take a share in economic and social activities. They are eager to do so. This does not mean that Tale children are altogether passive in the hands of their parents. Temperamental idiosyncrasies in children strike the observer at a glance. Tantrums, disobedience, destructiveness, and other aggressive outbursts occur sometimes. Among youths and adults misfits and incompetents can be found. But even they live for the same ends and have the same objective values and interests as the majority.

The unity of the social sphere is the more marked in Tale society 184
since they have almost no social stratification within a genealogical 565
or local community. There are no class or rank cleavages, nor highly organized and exclusive economic, political, or ritual associations cutting across the local, genealogical segmentation; and the social division of labour is rudimentary. The pattern of existence is the same for all members of a given community, varying only in texture
or tone from individual to individual. The social sphere is differen- 184
tiated only as between communities which are generally localized clans 565
or lineages. Thus, the blacksmith lineage of Sakpee is unique, as 326 ●
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[1] See G. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 429–32, for a critical discussion of this question.

[2] Cf. also Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with
it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because
of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog
until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they
were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property
but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere
of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo
neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from
the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi.
They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not
in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[784] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born
children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their
sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first
ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The
psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both
groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation
cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to
their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry
these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of
the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland.
Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether
he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone,
or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of
Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here
to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his
society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

867 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]
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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

412 [177] ● [326] mounted on a similar handle. Hoe-blades are now made from scrap iron, mainly parts of old motor cars and old railway sleepers; a hoe is sold in the market for 2d. or 3d., which is well within the purchasing power of everyone. It is not many years, however, since hoes were made from locally smelted iron; they were then not so easy to come by and some of the poorer farmers used hoes of hard wood.

241 134 The coarse nature of the soil enables a shallow cultivation to be given effectively with these light implements after a fall of rain. When the ground is dry and hard, cultivation is very laborious and it is frequently neglected at a time when needed most. This is often the case early in the season when precarious rains make a soil-mulch desirable.

Preparation for Planting.

243 Two of the most important crops, early millet and guinea corn, are sown after the second big rain of the year, this is generally in the first week of April. The soil, which has been left untilled since the burn-over after the previous year's harvest, is very hard until humidity rises with the approaching rain, and there is very little time to do any preliminary cultivation. On the majority of farms the only preparation for sowing is to collect the remains of the previous season's crops into heaps and to burn, and sometimes to carry-out manure; very occasionally a little hoeing is done.

Planting Major Crops.

412 241 On the morning following the big planting rain the whole countryside turns out to do one of its few really full day's work on the farm for the year. Men walk over the farm with stout sticks about 6′ long, cut from "tcheea" (Nankani) (Anoegeissus leiocarpus), or "gopelaga" (Nankani) (Acacia sieberriana), sharpened at the end to a flat point, resembling a narrow-bladed oar; or sometimes fitted with a worn hoe blade. With these sticks, holes are prodded at random 2′ 6″ to 3′ apart in the moist earth; the soil being ejected with a twist of the wrists. Women and 241 children follow the men with the seed of early millet and cowpeas mixed in a calabash. The calabash is held in the hand between the third and fourth fingers, and three to six seeds of early millet,

PLATE III

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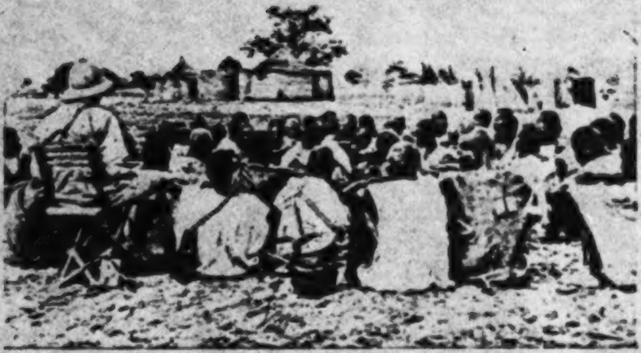

(*a*) Elders of a Maximal Lineage assemble to sacrifice to their Founder.

The Maximal Lineage is a corporate unit: The elders of a maximal lineage, representing all its component segments, assemble to perform a sacrifice on the grave of one of their founding ancestors. Note that (a) only men are present; (b) the members of each segment sit together; (c) the close-packed form of the group, an index of the strong sense of lineage solidarity in such situations.

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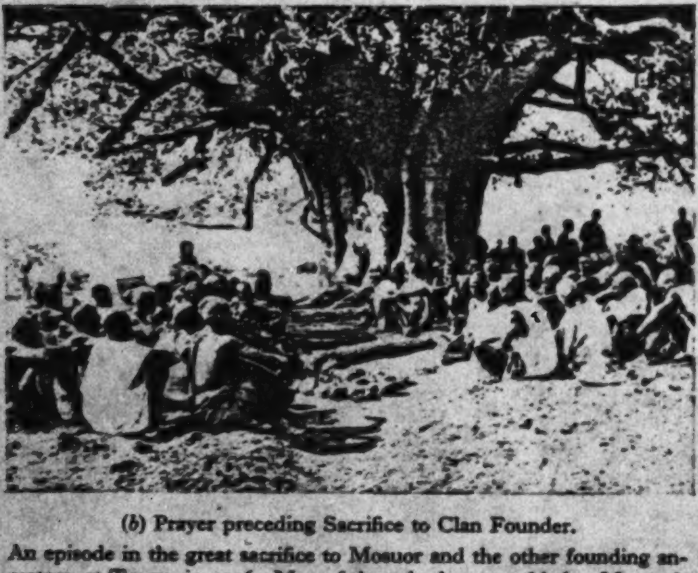

(*b*) Prayer preceding Sacrifice to Clan Founder.

An episode in the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other founding ancestors, at Tongo, in 1936. Men of the sub-clan assembled at Mosuor's grave (stones in foreground) and tree shrine (baobab tree). The photograph was taken as the prayer preceding the sacrifice was being offered.

[facing p. 56]

PLATE VIII

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(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔyayabəlis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[FACING p. 161]

793 Like the tɛndaanas all the *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, and even beyond Taleland,
779 are described as 'kin' (*mabiis*) to one another. In principle, *tɛŋ*,
the Earth, cannot be divided up; it is the tɛndaanaship which is distributed.

471 This explains the diversity and lack of precision one finds in the
793 boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs*. Like settlement boundaries they are determined
by social rather than physical facts, though here and there conspicuous
topographical features may be fixed upon as landmarks from
which to take a bearing. Doo *tɛŋ*, the area immediately surrounding and
including the supreme *tɔŋgban* Doo of Tɛnzugu, is an example of a
tendaana's *tɛŋ* that can easily be distinguished. Homesteads on Doo *tɛŋ*
● [341] may not have roofs of thatch (*mopin*) but must have flat roofs (*bɛa*, vb.) of
mud. This is a quasi-totemic taboo of this *tɛŋ* (cf. p. 142). Standing on
the wall of granite boulders that overlooks this part of Tɛnzugu one can
see where the mud roofs end and the thatched roofs begin. I was very
reluctantly told about, and later shown, what purported to be the fixed
physical boundaries of Doo *tɛŋ* by men of Kpata'ar, the clan which has
ritual jurisdiction over it. A ditch, a line of large boulders, a prominent
tree, a path, such were the landmarks by which they went. But the striking
thing about this boundary was that, almost all the way, it followed the
social boundaries between Kpata'ar and Gundaat on the one side, and
between Bunkiuk and Samiit on the other. In the closely settled parts of
the country, wherever *tɛndaanditib* clans are in occupation of the areas
under their ritual jurisdiction, there is a noticeable tendency for the
alleged physical boundaries of *tɛs* to coincide with social boundaries
between clans or maximal lineages.

621 Settlements like Tongo, where people believed to be of immigrant
471 descent occupy land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans, are
793 instructive. Tongo, like many other Tale settlements, stretches over the
ritual territories of several tɛndaanas (cf. p. 169). The alleged boundaries
between the *tɛs* of the Gbizug, Soog, and Zubiuŋ tɛndaanas run through
Tongo. As the people of Tongo put it, these clans at various times allotted
portions of their own land for Tongo people to build and farm on.
Physical landmarks are pointed out as indicating these boundaries. But if
they are examined it will be seen that they tend to coincide with the social
boundaries between sections (*yizugɔt*) or between segments of sections
(*dugɔt*). (See map at end of book.) Wherever part of a tɛndaana's boundary
runs between homesteads of men of the same segment (*dug*), the homesteads
(rarely more than one or two) on the wrong side of the boundary have
not been sited there for more than a generation. The continual slow
shifting about of homestead sites in a settlement through the course of
generations is paralleled by a shifting of the boundaries between farm
plots; for they pass through alternate phases of being divided up, wholly
or in part, among the segments of a nuclear lineage that has reached a
phase of fission, and of being reconstituted, wholly or in part, at a later
stage of lineage integration. These internal adjustments often result in a
spilling over of one section of a clan into what was till then regarded as
the area of a neighbouring unit of like sort.

178 We lack historical documents; but we can infer from the contemporary
dynamics of Tale social life that the boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* shift

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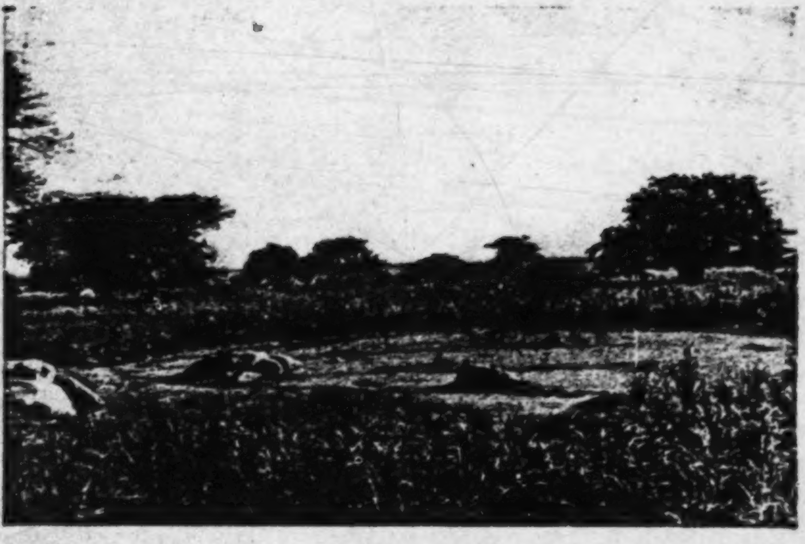

(*a*) The grave of Tendaan Genɔt and the space believed to have been occupied by his homestead and Mosuor's, now the sacred dancing ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, at Tongo. Note that it is not cultivated.

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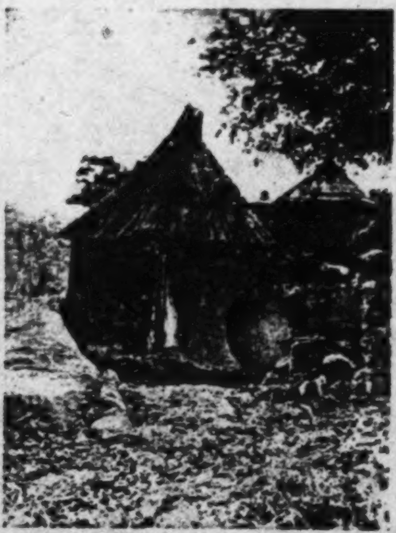

(*b*) A miniature homestead symbolizing the ancestral home of a maximal lineage or clan. Note the lineage *bɔyar* against the outside wall.

[FACING p.224]

PLATE XII

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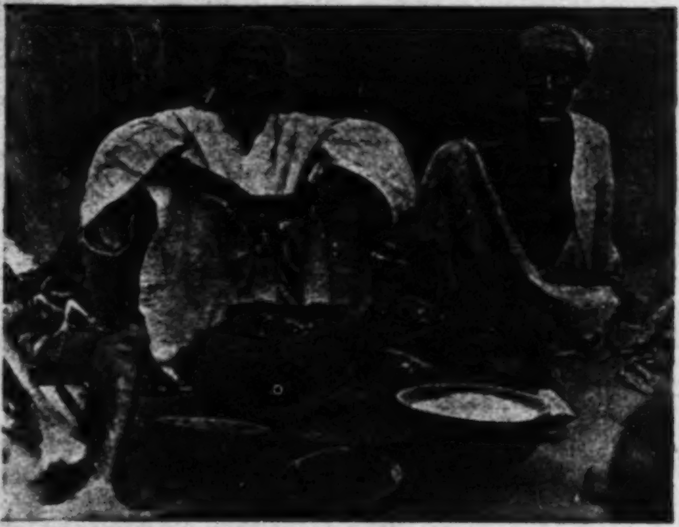

(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyeŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔyar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔyar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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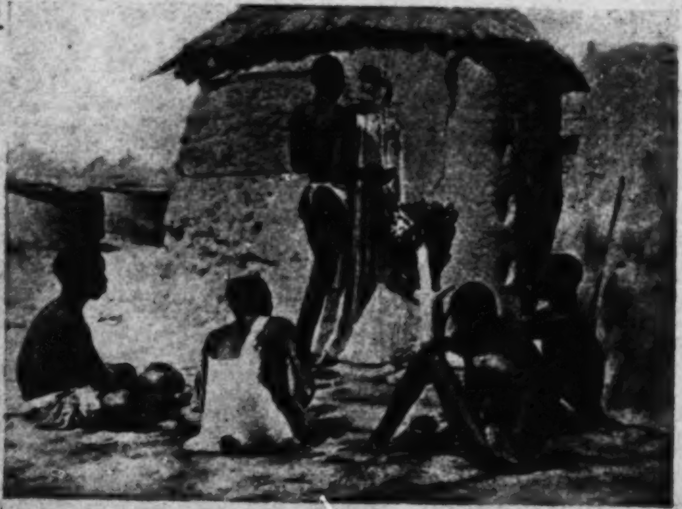

(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔyar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p.225]

PLATE XIV

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(*a*) *Sɔɔŋ m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

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(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tɛndaana at his homestead.

[facing p.241]

342 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces
462 are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers
available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from
three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour
to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All
[476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But
co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment
and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their
services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs
to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the
weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy
rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August
begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man
who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs
every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the
family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes.
With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation.
In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two
or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely
rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its
592 owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant
554 change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from
minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy.
Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have
seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house
itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many
of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the
efficacy of these social ties.

We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the
592 architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations
341 that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same
architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same
basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale
homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The
Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on
to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a
ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and
the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least
one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of
utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men,
women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when
they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning.
Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When 592
his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every 341
morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or [778
two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the 192]
alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the 341
cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihər*) of the 778
Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout. This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and 341
condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and 554
experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu and the Yikpɛmdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular 592
room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White Fathers' Mission at Bolɔga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom, and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious, upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance. The Tɔŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration, but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. 592
A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or 356
lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing like Yɛlnaar of Tɔŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

[facing p. 209]

PLATE 13

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a. Children of a single domestic family. From left to right: Da'ano'o's child, his late father's child, his agnatic cousin's (i.e. classificatory brother's) child

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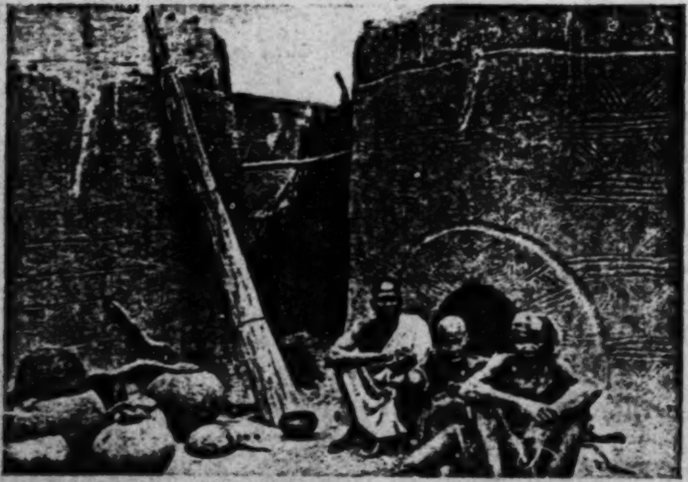

b. Four generations. From left to right: Nyaaŋzum, his own mother with his infant son, his older (deceased) half-brother's son, who married his mother after his father's death and brought him up

[facing p. 272]

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PLATE 16

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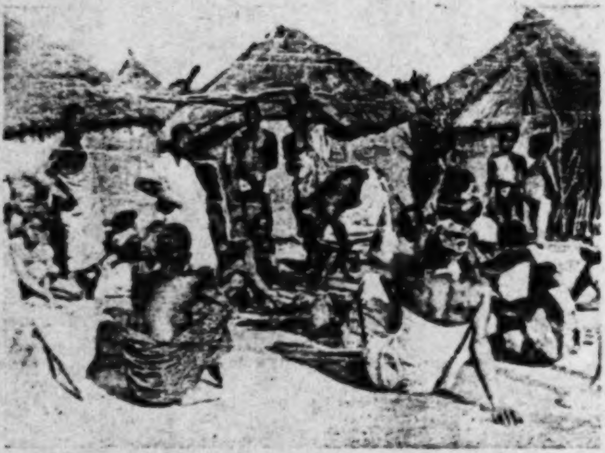

a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[facing p. 289]

105 THE DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION. Tale domestic institutions are very elaborate, and the organization of domestic life is subject to a considerable range of variation due to such factors as the economic position, size and age of the unit, the temperament and character of individuals, the social status of the senior male members, the distribution of economic and ritual specialization (craftsmen, diviners &c.), and so forth. To evaluate the full influence of these factors requires a mass of statistical information which we have not been able to obtain as yet; we must be content with merely indicating its range.

Tale society is essentially democratic; but differences of wealth are prominent. Chiefs and headmen, in virtue of the services they command, cultivate greater areas than any commoner, own much more live stock and have twice and three times as many wives. Both in its structure and in the organization of its domestic life, a chief's compound conforms to the same cultural pattern as the compound of the poorest plebeian; but it is economically entirely atypical. In every settlement, also, there are a few men of wealth considerably above the average. They always have a sufficiency of food, even in the leanest years. Chiefs, headmen, and wealthy men have therefore been excluded from the discussion in this paper.

592 596 341 Tale social organization has a well-defined spatial basis. The unit of residence is a mud compound (*yir*—house) inhabited by a joint family consisting of a group of men of close patrilineal kinship, their wives and children. Its architecture is significantly correlated to the structure and organization of the joint family at the particular phase it has reached in its development. One compound in three—14 out of 40, to be exact—has two or more entrance gateways (*zanɔr*),[1] each corresponding to a completely self-contained dwelling, and independent social unit consisting of one or more households. The plural entrance compound represents a stage in the process of segmentation through which the joint family passes in the course of about three generations, and which ends in complete fission and the setting up of several independent compounds.

592 596 The main gate is always owned by the head of the joint family (*yirdaan*, owner of the house) the most senior (*kpeem*) of the group of

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[1] Statistics quoted here and in subsequent paragraphs are derived from a sample of 40 compounds selected at random from a sociological census we made at Tongo.

Plate IV

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Building Play. In the background a newly built room. On the right of the group a big boy demonstrating to a small boy. Behind them part of a 'house' they have finished. On the left, girls making the swish and explaining the process to the ethnographer's wife.

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Learning Marksmanship. Note how intently the two smaller boys, who have only recently acquired real bows, are watching the technique of their older companion

[FACING p. 49]

613 178 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

793 *The Ten'dan'*: Among the Talense an investigation into the former status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 783 627 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs; this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die, except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*teŋ*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man teŋ*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

782 783 If any one raises the war cry *kah tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person, he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

Kusase

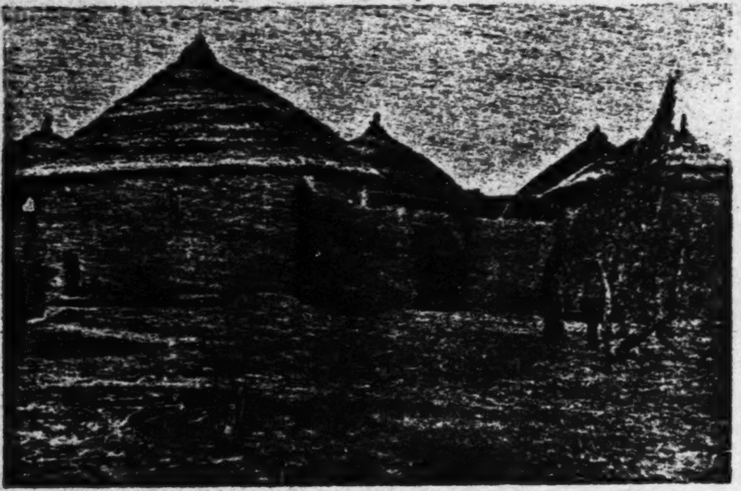

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Fig. 86. A Kusase compound

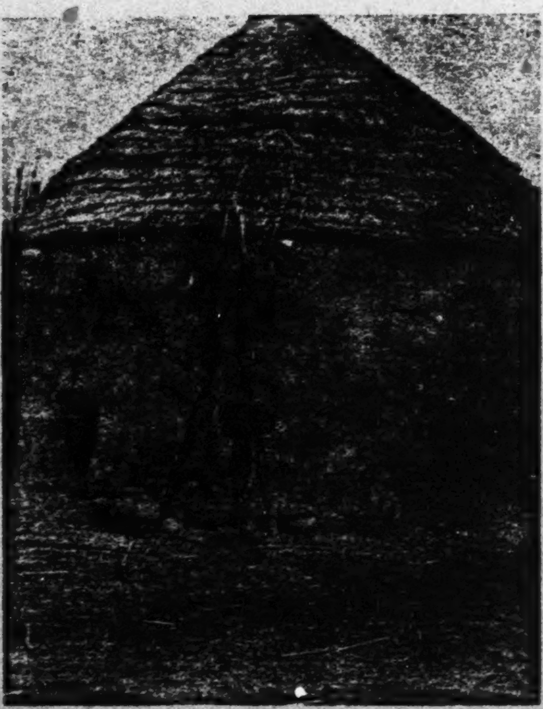

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Fig. 87. The zɔy hut. Note cross above doorway

[Facing p. 380]

751 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top,
778 and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round
with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On
[515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in
which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr*
(lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorw[illegible]
is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' ([illegible]n
769 ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on
the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a *ba' bugr*. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed
343 huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we
enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge
[347] of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside
342 this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a
horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog* (compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other
342 called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The
second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the
778 *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God),
755 a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full
of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the *baa* (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

Kusase

351 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a
751 long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots.
782 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the
342 land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are
withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

342 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry-
361 and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the
[778] latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

778 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or
783 killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

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PLATE II

[facing p. 17]

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(*a*) A Tale grandmother.

(*b*) *A pair of marriageable maidens* dressed up for a visit to the market.

the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, 361
is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 621
600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one 361
part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north 161
side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse population.[1]

Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During 361
the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for 132
cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live 166
there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view 361
of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and
studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are [342] ●
identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settle- 361
ments, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements 161
nearer to the periphery. I cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 [162]
(*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwəlag (Kpolag), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Volta—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his *ahəb* (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)' ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyiəb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

lineage. The latter grows directly out of the former and very often 592
occupies the same dwelling as, or one close to that of, the former. For 593
a woman marriage signifies a sharp break. As wife and mother she generally lives in a different, even if familiarly close, clan settlement from that of her birth. A man, living all his life side by side with the other members of his lineage, participating in the hierarchy of the corporate units that make up the lineage system, identifying himself with all its members through their common jural, economic, and ceremonial interests, makes an easy, self-evident, and gradual transition from the status of a minor (*tarəm*) under his father's control to that of a father and head of a household. The change in status and social role from that of a daughter and member of one lineage to that of a wife and mother in the settlement of another is more drastic and complex. A woman has no rights in or ties with the community[1] in which she spends the greatest part of her life, exercises her heaviest responsibilities, achieves her most cherished fulfilment, and acquires her strongest emotional attachments, except through her family by marriage, her husband, and her children. Thus a woman's life is fraught with many possibilities of conflict between the loyalties and sentiments towards her natal lineage and those which she gradually builds up in relation to her husband's lineage.

The effect of all this is to make the home of even greater importance for a woman than for a man. Her conjugal home is the supreme and almost the sole domain of her labour and life. Her children are the very hub of her existence. She is first and foremost a housewife and mother, toiling devotedly in the care of her children, in attending to her husband's needs, in giving her contribution of labour and skill to the economy of the household, and in the numerous household tasks that call for daily attention.

The Architecture of the Homestead in Relation to the Structure of the Domestic Family

Tale homesteads are solidly constructed of pile (puddled mud, *tan*), 342
and they are built to last. Erecting the circular walls tier by tier, 462
plastering them, roofing the rooms, stamping the floors, adding the small contrivances and the decorations that increase the comfort and attraction of the homestead, are all tasks requiring considerable skill, care, and co-operation. They are not the work of specialists, though some men and women have more skill in them than others, and many people have such poor skill that they never undertake them. The conventional division of labour involves both sexes equally in the building of a homestead. Building and thatching is men's work; plastering, drawing the crude lines and geometrical designs that

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[1] She may, and usually does, have cognatic kinsfolk there, but her ties with them are valid only for the particular individuals.

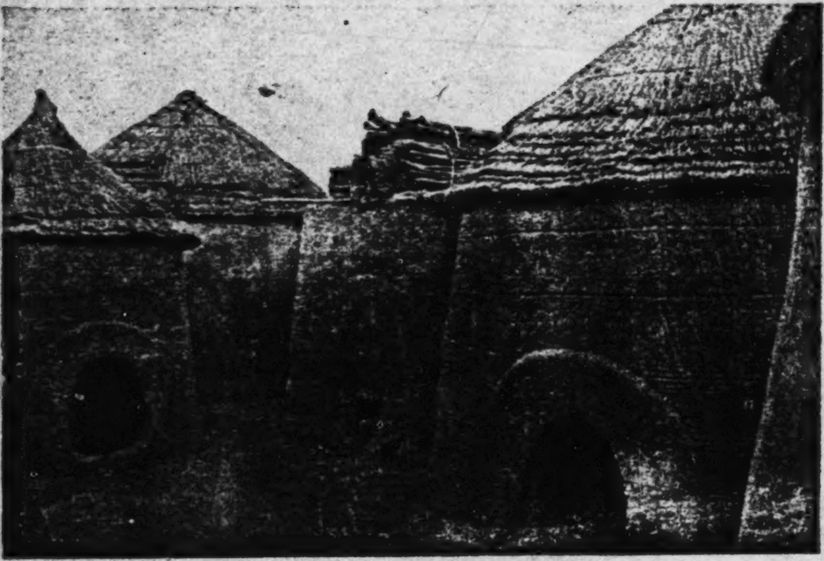
342 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces
462 are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers
available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from
three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour
to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All
[476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But
co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment
and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their
services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs
to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the
weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy
rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August
begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man
who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs
every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the
family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes.
With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation.
In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two
or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely
rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its
592 owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant
554 change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from
minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy.
Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have
seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house
itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many
of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the
efficacy of these social ties.

592 We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the
architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations
341 that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same
architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same
basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale
homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The
Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on
to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a
ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and
the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least
one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of
utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men,
women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when
they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning.
Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

PLATE 3



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a. Interior of a woman's *Dug*. The rooms from right to left are: a store-room (*Da'ŋboog*), a dry season kitchen (*Da'aŋ*), and a small *Dakir* for the woman's young son and daughter-in-law. The woman's own sleeping-room (*Dakir*) is farther to the right, not visible. Note how clean and bare the *Dɛndɔŋo* is and note, also, the bundles of dry guinea-corn stalks on top of the open kitchen. These have been saved for fuel in the rainy season

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b. The homestead of a maximal lineage head, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. Note the ancestor shrines in front of the gateway (X)

[facing p. 48]

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish
hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and
unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every
[622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief
of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining
the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the
privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its
members.

351 Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the
sapak or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary
556 spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish
231 and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any.
[514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and
sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even
by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his
homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor
goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less
than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug
tendaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has
cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls
and guinea-fowls.

[361] From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out
and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the
● 342 homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through
the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*,
and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the
room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed
between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities
are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable posses-
sions, his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth,
[556] the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that
to the Talɔŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated
with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which
wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the
[782] principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain
their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers.
In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the
zɔŋ, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to
nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two
chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber
is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber,
communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey,
for the night.

342 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality.
778 It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342
partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778
room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like
Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck
into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather
tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be
incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s
lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock
there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in
Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds
his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔγar*)
always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*;
the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard.
Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ*
must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there
and the lineage *bɔγar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it.
The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the
zɔŋ, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the
Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622]
of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in
which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great
Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623
deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most 554
conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social
personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 764
subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his 778
own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave
through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose.
But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole
specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tɛbhɔm nla*—This
is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me.
The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman
who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and
to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt,
an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint
of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and
I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is
unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*,
when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried
out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about
the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is
finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611
dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
778 of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes
his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the
zɔŋ of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors,
is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr*
of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11
and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages
later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say,
transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery
she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*.
She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage
against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized
in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not
confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this
ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary
•342 course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a
yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the
sapak. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and
6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One
suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more
numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more
smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with
a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
[351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a
Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the
domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters
and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the
smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and
guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this,
life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and
the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency
of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

343 are the emblems of his individuality. They participate in it, for they
181 are imbued with his body 'dirt (*daɣət*)'—a concept which has a physiological
facet, meaning the exuviae adhering to a man's garments, quiver, or other objects constantly handled by him, and a mystical facet implying the quintessence of his individuality. The Talis also acknowledge this complex association between a man and his granary and other intimate possessions, expressing it in analogous customs, in the routine of family life and in their ideals of family relations.

351 To enter the living-quarters of a homestead one climbs over the low dividing wall (*yɛbəg*) at the back of the *sapak* by means of a step (*bimbimər*) and descends, by a similar step on the other side, into an irregular courtyard (*dɛndɔŋo*, pl. *dɛndɔna*) of beaten gravel, which is surrounded by a number of rooms. According to the wealth, rank, or status of the *yirdaana* this *dɛndɔŋo* varies in size from about 20 to about 6 square yards.

592 This *dɛndɔŋo* belongs to the principal woman (*dugdaana*) of the house.
The *dɛndɔna* of junior wives are smaller. In Ɔndieso's house the senior
593 woman is his mother's surviving co-wife, whom he calls his 'younger
342 mother' (*mapit*, lit. 'mother's younger sister'), and who has remained
351 with him since the death of his father. Her rooms occupy roughly the
left half of the homestead, facing inwards from the *sapak*. From this *dɛndɔŋo*, turning right between a small room beside the granary and a larger room straight ahead, one enters a similar *dɛndɔŋo* in the middle of another set of rooms, those of Ɔndieso's wife. These take up roughly the right half of the homestead, facing inwards. The *yirdaana*'s mother's (own mother, or proxy-mother) rooms always occupy the position of honour in the centre of the arc; his senior wife's (*poɣakpeem*) rooms lie on the right-hand side of these; his second wife's, or his younger brother's senior wife's rooms lie on the left, looking inwards. The rooms of the other wives of the head of the family or of his brothers are distributed as convenience dictates. For example, wives who are clan sisters will usually have adjoining quarters; wives who get on badly will be put in well-separated rooms. If none of a man's father's widows is living with him, and he has more than one wife, his senior wife occupies the central group of rooms, his second wife those on her right, and so forth. Generally the women's apartments all communicate with one another. But if a woman has a quarrelsome disposition or gets on badly with her co-wives for any other reason, her quarters will be separated from those of the next-door wife by a low party wall, to prevent undue trespassing by her co-wives or their children.

342 A woman's apartments make up a self-contained section in the home-
stead. This is her *dug* (pl. *dugət*). Basically *dug* means a single room,
593 but it is extended to mean the single set of rooms belonging to one wife.
In the Tale family every woman with children is entitled to her own *dug*. Women guard this right jealously, and if a man has not built separate quarters for his wife by the time that she has had her first child,

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off 342
to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug*
and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return 593
until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately.
The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person. A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife, mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family.

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments, but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, 595
the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in the case of the latter.

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that 778
are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman.
They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is 595
custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him.

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the 775
ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, 169
into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary rites, make this clear.

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. 592
Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights, after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing or gossiping or asking riddles.

592 A woman is entitled to have at least three rooms in her *dug*, a sleeping-room (*dakir*) a dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*) and a storeroom (*da'aŋboog*). Men of substance often allow their older wives a fourth room (*boog*), which always has a flat mud roof and serves as an extra storeroom and a guest-room, or as a room in which a daughter-in-law can be temporarily accommodated, or where the *yirdaana* can sit and talk to his visitors in the rainy season.

342 592 [352] The *dakir* is the largest room, usually 10 to 12 feet in diameter.[1] Here the woman sleeps with her young children; here her husband comes to her at night; here she is confined when she bears him a child; here she keeps her sleeping-mats and her few personal treasures; and here, if she is his senior wife, her husband's best cloth or tunic, his bow and quiver, and other personal belongings. Her husband and children have free access to her *dakir*. Other members of the family must generally ask her permission to enter it or a family quarrel will result. To enter a *dakir* one crawls through an arched doorway, 2 to 3 feet high and about the same in width. Inside darkness reigns, relieved only by the glimmer of light that enters under the eaves and through the doorway, or a small aperture high up in the wall.

343 592 A stretch of wall 2 or 3 feet long forms a shallow recess between the *dakir* and the unroofed dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*). Here one generally sees a bundle of firewood stacked in a corner, or, in the right season, a heap of shea nuts. The *da'aŋ* itself is horseshoe-shaped and smaller than a *dakir*—from 4 to 8 feet across the shorter axis and 6 to 9 feet across the longer axis. The doorway is usually about 4 feet high, so that one can go in and out easily, as domestic tasks require. As it is for use in dry weather only, it is open to the sky. After the harvest, millet and guinea-corn stalks are spread on top, partly as a shield from the sun but chiefly as a reserve of firewood. The cooking-hearth (*ɔɔrəg*), the water-pots (*kɔwoor*), the cooking-pots and dishes (*dɔyat* and *laas*), the stirring-stick (*vugər*), and ladles (*bies*), lying about in none too orderly a fashion, show well the uses to which this room is put.

Adjoining the *da'aŋ* is the larger, roofed *da'aŋboog*, the storeroom and larder. This room often has a doorway leading into the *da'aŋ* and not into the *dɛndɔŋɔ*, for the greater convenience of the housewife. Here the housewife keeps her stocks of foodstuffs—her dried vegetables and condiments, the odd piece of dried fish or meat she has hoarded, a pot of millet, perhaps, which she acquired by her own efforts, and so forth—as well as the utensils she is not using, and any bulky articles belonging to her or other members of the family. Here she also cooks in the wet season. At a pinch it may be used as a sleeping-room for a visitor

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[1] The diameters of a room are always discrepant, it may be by an inch or two or by as much as a foot, so that its base is never a perfect circle. The natives themselves do not notice this as it is due to their crude method of marking out the circle for the base with the foot.

PLATE 7

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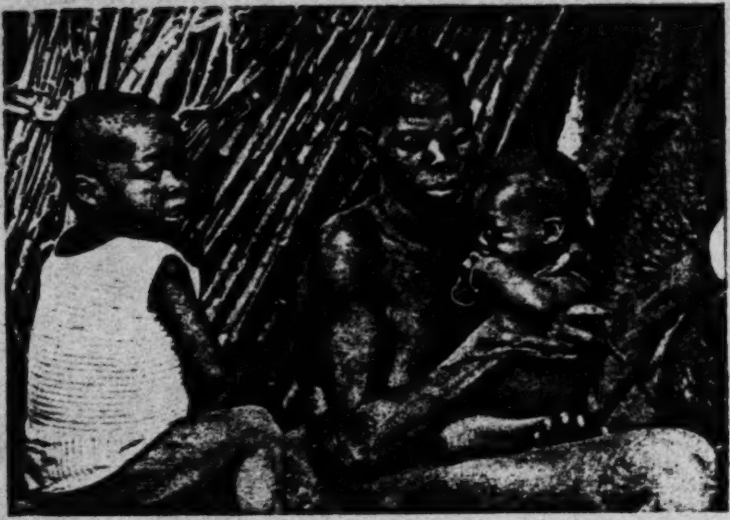

a. A senior wife takes care of her junior co-wives' infants while they are away at the water-hole

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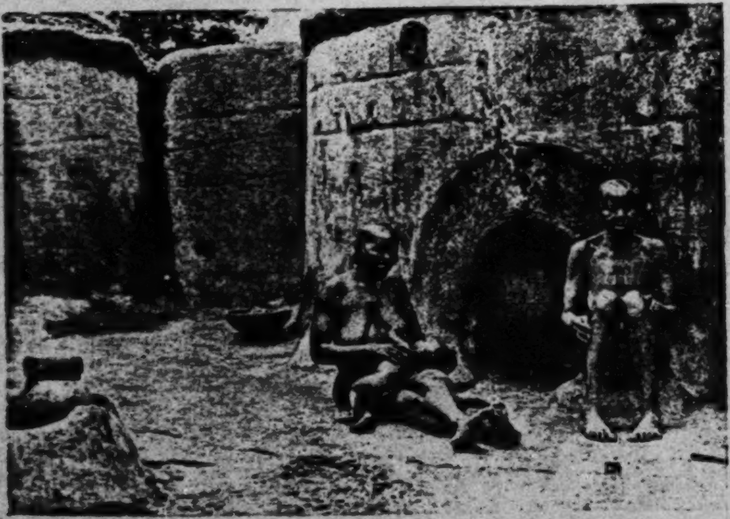

b. A pair of devoted co-wives. The younger woman (with her infant) is about 35, the elder about 65, their husband over 70. The older woman has a son of about 45

[facing p.128]

male agnates. He is *yirdaan* by virtue of indisputable succession which 592 carries with it ritual responsibilities for the whole joint family, legal 596 and moral duties and rights and valuable economic privileges. His younger brothers and his sons share his dwelling as a rule, ortho-cousins or nephews occasionally. Everything depends on factors such as those previously enumerated when it comes to the constitution of a particular compound. But in general, genealogical distance imposes corresponding spatial and social arrangements. Thus, the secondary gate of a plural gate compound[1] is usually owned by an ortho-cousin or nephew (classificatory brother or son) of the *yirdaan*, except for the special case of a man's first-born son.[2]

The single dwelling or the single-gate compound is the habitation of one or more households, each consisting of an adult male, his wife (or wives), and his children. A householder may have younger unmarried brothers or sisters or an old mother dependent on him. Every married man is a householder, but households vary greatly in status according to their degree of social and economic differentiation within the joint family. This is determined not only by the stage of development it has reached, but also by kinship factors and by those individual social and psychological characteristics which we have referred to before. A newly married man, for example, is to all intents and purposes part of the household to which he was attached prior to his marriage, but he has a small degree of autonomy which increases from year to year.

A newly married wife has a room in the quarters of her husband's 596 mother, if she is alive, or of his senior wife. In due course, however, 342 whether it be a man's first or later wife, he must build her separate quarters. Hence, in a well-differentiated household every wife has her own quarters (*dug*) partitioned off from those of her co-wives or her mother-in-law. Here she and her children—the primary family—live, and here she is supreme mistress. A woman's quarters consists

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[1] Two gates are usual, three gates infrequent, and more than three gates found only in exceptional circumstances.

[2] It is taboo for the head of a compound and his first-born son to continue to use a single entrance after the latter has married and founded a family, though this taboo is never enforced until the younger man's children approach adolescence. But few men live long enough to see their first-born sons make their own gateways. [784]

596 of sleeping-rooms and kitchens (to be described later) distributed
roughly in a semicircle round an open space, 10 to 15 feet across,
●342 bounded on one side by a co-wife's quarters or a low partitioning wall.
This little close (*dendɔŋo*) is the central place in the life of the family.
Here it takes its meals in the dry season; here friends are received;
[778] here most of the routine of family life goes on. A man's principal
ancestor shrines are kept in his mother's or senior wife's *dendɔŋo*; and
there he performs many of the frequently recurring rites of the ancestor
cult. The women of a single household have adjacent quarters.
Their husband's mother or the senior wife occupies the central
quarters; junior wives or son's wives are on either side of her, forming
altogether a rough circle or segment of a circle. A householder who
is not also head of the compound has no room of his own. He keeps
his private possessions in his senior wife's sleeping-room. Apart from
this, it is the cardinal principle of family life that a man must divide
his time, his affection, and his supplies of food with absolute impartiality
between his wives.

Within the compound two other kinds of rooms are of special
343 importance for our theme, the granaries and the grinding-rooms.
778 Every independent agricultural unit has its own granaries which are
784 said to belong to the head of the unit. His granary (*boor*) is a man's
most private and personal possession. No woman may enter it, nor
any man not directly authorized by the owner. Ritual prohibitions
associated with it closely identify a man's granary with his social
personality. As one informant put it, with a flash of insight, 'Your
granary is like your soul'.

343 One or more grinding-rooms (*neer*) belongs to every well-differentiated
household. These are discussed later.

The family structure thus outlined is the basis of a domestic
596 economy and of a configuration of moral, legal, religious, and personal
182 relationships which can best be described as a compromise between
strong centralizing or integrating tendencies and powerful differentiating
tendencies. In the domestic economy of food, our sole concern
in this paper, every unit in the system is completely autonomous in
some respects and dependent upon a more comprehensive unit in
others. It is a fluctuating compromise, slowly changing. Births,
deaths, marriages, and their social consequences, even the mere lapse

751 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top,
778 and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round
with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On
[515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in
which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr*
(lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

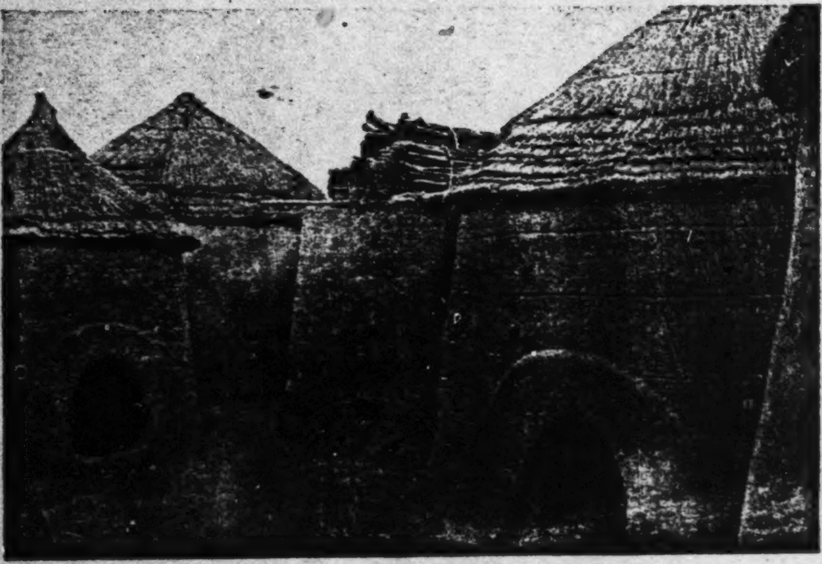
778 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway
is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an
769 ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on
the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a *ba' bugr*. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (*a bagr* ?) and put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed
huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we
343 enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge
[534] of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside
342 this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a
horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog* (compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other
called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The
342 second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the
778 *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God),
755 a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full
of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the *baa* (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

PLATE 3



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a. Interior of a woman's *Dug*. The rooms from right to left are: a store-room (*Da'ŋboog*), a dry season kitchen (*Da'aŋ*), and a small *Dakir* for the woman's young son and daughter-in-law. The woman's own sleeping-room (*Dakir*) is farther to the right, not visible. Note how clean and bare the *Dɛndɔŋo* is and note, also, the bundles of dry guinea-corn stalks on top of the open kitchen. These have been saved for fuel in the rainy season

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b. The homestead of a maximal lineage head, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. Note the ancestor shrines in front of the gateway (X)

[facing p. 48]

[facing p. 49]

PLATE 4

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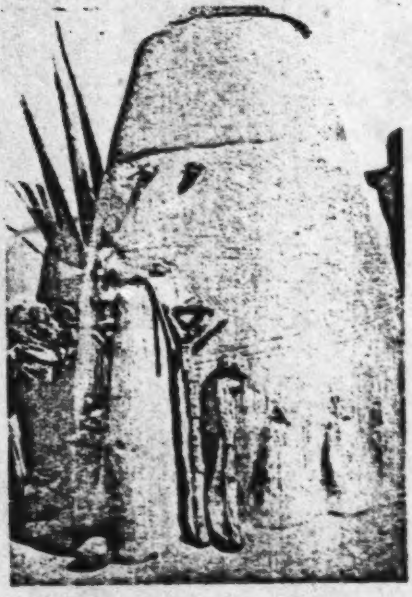

a. The central granary in the homestead of an elder. Note the array of ancestor shrines on the granary. The granary is about 10 ft. high and 5 ft. in diameter at the base

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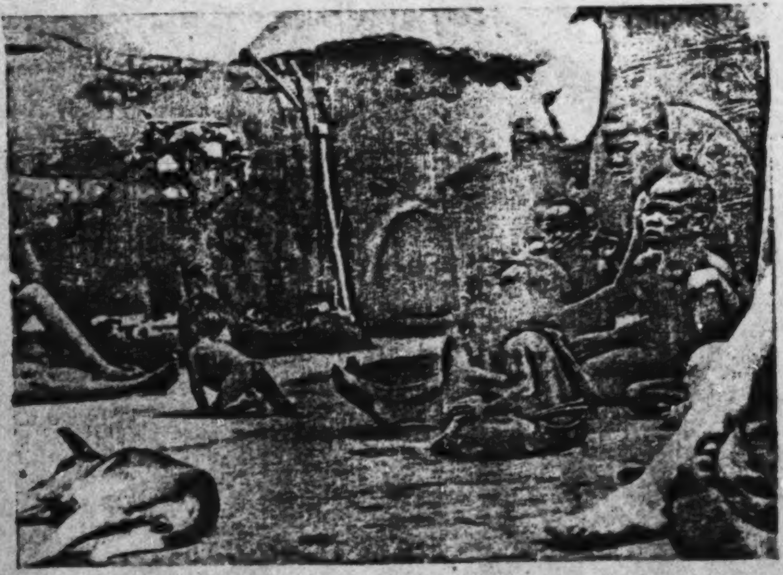

b. In the *Dendogo* of the senior woman of the family. The infant children of several wives of the family left in the care of one of them. (This is the homestead of the head of a medial lineage. Note the lineage *boyar* against the wall on the left, part of it supported on a tree-stump and part on the floor in shallow pottery dishes)

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes 778 his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the *zɔŋ* of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors, is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr* of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11 and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for [782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins 837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say, 627 transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely 778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*. She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary 342 course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to 343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the *sapak*. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and 6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental [351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly 181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that 592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this, life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

volume.[1] The granary symbolizes all the sentiments and ideas, the 343 apprehensions and joys which the struggle for food evokes in Taleland. 181 It stands for the security of the domestic unit in this struggle. In the organization of the household its importance comes from the fact that 592 it is the focus of the economic cohesion and stability of the domestic group. Into it goes the product of the joint labour of the household, from it comes their sustenance. In filling the granary and in the consumption of its contents, the labour of men, women, and children is [578] equally essential, and the rights of all equally valid. When a joint family splits up, the commonest pretext is friction over grain supplies. The family which hives off does so on the ground that it needs its own, independent food-supply. 'They have each his own granary (*ba mara ba buur ba buur*)', is the formula summing up the economic relations of brothers occupying a single homestead but having separate households.

The granary belongs to the head of the house, the *yirdaana*. No one 592 may enter it without his authorization, least of all his wife. A devoted 343 and trusted wife may be allowed to descend (*sig*) into it to issue the grain (*loo ki*) for cooking if there is no suitable male within reach—Tale conventions are not rigidly complied with if doing so involves excessive and absurd inconvenience. But it would be scandalous if she did so on her own initiative. The contents of the granary are formally the property of the head of the household, to be distributed at his discretion. There is no other place in the homestead which is so rigorously private to him. Besides the grain for current consumption, he stores the seed for next year's crop there. He hides a particularly cherished object, or money which he wants to conceal from other members of the family, in his granary, secure in the knowledge that no one will dare to tamper with it there.

The *zɔŋ* enshrines—in both the physical and the ideal sense of this 343 concept—the notion of the continuity of the lineage; the *buur* stands for the social personality of the *yirdaana*, as the centre of an independent 181 domestic family, its economic fulcrum, its jural and ritual head, controller and representative. The position of the granary in the architectural pattern of the homestead corresponds to that of the head of the house in the structure of the family, as the unique link between its parts and the source of its unity.

Tallensi say that a man's soul (*sii*) is in his granary. Using the same phrase one says of a person, '*n siig mbɛ u ni*—my soul is in [drawn towards] him', meaning that one feels a special affinity with him. Among the Namoos the identification of a man with his granary is symbolized explicitly in the taboos that his first-born children have to observe.[2] A man's granary, his cap and tunic, his bow and quiver,

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1937.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. v.

343 181 are the emblems of his individuality. They participate in it, for they are imbued with his body 'dirt (*đaγət*)'—a concept which has a physiological facet, meaning the exuviae adhering to a man's garments, quiver, or other objects constantly handled by him, and a mystical facet implying the quintessence of his individuality. The Talis also acknowledge this complex association between a man and his granary and other intimate possessions, expressing it in analogous customs, in the routine of family life and in their ideals of family relations.

351 To enter the living-quarters of a homestead one climbs over the low dividing wall (*yɛbəg*) at the back of the *sapak* by means of a step (*bimbimər*) and descends, by a similar step on the other side, into an irregular courtyard (*dɛndɔŋo*, pl. *dɛndɔna*) of beaten gravel, which is surrounded by a number of rooms. According to the wealth, rank, or status of the *yirdaana* this *dɛndɔŋo* varies in size from about 20 to about 6 square yards.

592 593 342 351 This *dɛndɔŋo* belongs to the principal woman (*dugdaana*) of the house. The *dɛndɔna* of junior wives are smaller. In Ɔndieso's house the senior woman is his mother's surviving co-wife, whom he calls his 'younger mother' (*mapit*, lit. 'mother's younger sister'), and who has remained with him since the death of his father. Her rooms occupy roughly the left half of the homestead, facing inwards from the *sapak*. From this *dɛndɔŋo*, turning right between a small room beside the granary and a larger room straight ahead, one enters a similar *dɛndɔŋo* in the middle of another set of rooms, those of Ɔndieso's wife. These take up roughly the right half of the homestead, facing inwards. The *yirdaana*'s mother's (own mother, or proxy-mother) rooms always occupy the position of honour in the centre of the arc; his senior wife's (*poγakpeem*) rooms lie on the right-hand side of these; his second wife's, or his younger brother's senior wife's rooms lie on the left, looking inwards. The rooms of the other wives of the head of the family or of his brothers are distributed as convenience dictates. For example, wives who are clan sisters will usually have adjoining quarters; wives who get on badly will be put in well-separated rooms. If none of a man's father's widows is living with him, and he has more than one wife, his senior wife occupies the central group of rooms, his second wife those on her right, and so forth. Generally the women's apartments all communicate with one another. But if a woman has a quarrelsome disposition or gets on badly with her co-wives for any other reason, her quarters will be separated from those of the next-door wife by a low party wall, to prevent undue trespassing by her co-wives or their children.

342 593 A woman's apartments make up a self-contained section in the homestead. This is her *dug* (pl. *dugət*). Basically *dug* means a single room, but it is extended to mean the single set of rooms belonging to one wife. In the Tale family every woman with children is entitled to her own *dug*. Women guard this right jealously, and if a man has not built separate quarters for his wife by the time that she has had her first child,

592 A woman is entitled to have at least three rooms in her *dug*, a sleeping-room (*dakir*) a dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*) and a storeroom (*da'aŋboog*). Men of substance often allow their older wives a fourth room (*boog*), which always has a flat mud roof and serves as an extra storeroom and a guest-room, or as a room in which a daughter-in-law can be temporarily accommodated, or where the *yirdaana* can sit and talk to his visitors in the rainy season.

342 592 [352] The *dakir* is the largest room, usually 10 to 12 feet in diameter.[1] Here the woman sleeps with her young children; here her husband comes to her at night; here she is confined when she bears him a child; here she keeps her sleeping-mats and her few personal treasures; and here, if she is his senior wife, her husband's best cloth or tunic, his bow and quiver, and other personal belongings. Her husband and children have free access to her *dakir*. Other members of the family must generally ask her permission to enter it or a family quarrel will result. To enter a *dakir* one crawls through an arched doorway, 2 to 3 feet high and about the same in width. Inside darkness reigns, relieved only by the glimmer of light that enters under the eaves and through the doorway, or a small aperture high up in the wall.

343 592 A stretch of wall 2 or 3 feet long forms a shallow recess between the *dakir* and the unroofed dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*). Here one generally sees a bundle of firewood stacked in a corner, or, in the right season, a heap of shea nuts. The *da'aŋ* itself is horseshoe-shaped and smaller than a *dakir*—from 4 to 8 feet across the shorter axis and 6 to 9 feet across the longer axis. The doorway is usually about 4 feet high, so that one can go in and out easily, as domestic tasks require. As it is for use in dry weather only, it is open to the sky. After the harvest, millet and guinea-corn stalks are spread on top, partly as a shield from the sun but chiefly as a reserve of firewood. The cooking-hearth (*ɔɔrəg*), the water-pots (*kɔwoor*), the cooking-pots and dishes (*dɔyat* and *laas*), the stirring-stick (*vugər*), and ladles (*bies*), lying about in none too orderly a fashion, show well the uses to which this room is put.

Adjoining the *da'aŋ* is the larger, roofed *da'aŋboog*, the storeroom and larder. This room often has a doorway leading into the *da'aŋ* and not into the *dɛndɔŋo*, for the greater convenience of the housewife. Here the housewife keeps her stocks of foodstuffs—her dried vegetables and condiments, the odd piece of dried fish or meat she has hoarded, a pot of millet, perhaps, which she acquired by her own efforts, and so forth—as well as the utensils she is not using, and any bulky articles belonging to her or other members of the family. Here she also cooks in the wet season. At a pinch it may be used as a sleeping-room for a visitor or adolescent son. The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* also serve as a sort of drawing-room. A guest who must be treated with respect is invited to step round to the kitchen to have his meal there in private, a suitor is told to go round to the girl's mother's kitchen to plead his suit with her. 343 592

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[1] The diameters of a room are always discrepant, it may be by an inch or two or by as much as a foot, so that its base is never a perfect circle. The natives themselves do not notice this as it is due to their crude method of marking out the circle for the base with the foot.

The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* are the counterpart in the social sphere of a woman of the *zɔŋ*, cattle yard (*sapak*), and granary (*buur*) in that of a man. They mark off the economic field reserved for her and the social sphere in which she is supreme. Etiquette and convention show this, and, as in the case of the *zɔŋ* and the *buur*, ritual notions give expression to it and put the seal of mystical value on it. Women do not have ancestor shrines of their own. But in her storeroom an old woman keeps her *zaalɔŋ*. This is a long rope net, holding a neat pile of polished calabash dishes (*ŋman*) of all sizes which she has accumulated during her married life. One of these is her *kumpiog*, 'basket of death'. It is the symbol of her mortal existence.[1] When she dies it stands in her *dɛndɔŋo* and is eventually taken, with the most meticulous ceremonial care, to her eldest surviving daughter. In this room also she keeps her main storage pot (*dɔk*). It is to her what a man's granary is to him. One sign of this is the rule that her first-born daughter may never, in the mother's lifetime, open it. She does so ritually when her mother's funeral is completed.[2] 576 592

Lastly, there is the grinding-room (*neer*), a vastly important item in the organization of the domestic economy, and in the personal relations of the women of a family with one another. It is always a small, low room, 3 or 4 feet in diameter, with a doorway barely large enough to admit a person on hands and knees. A hole under the eaves, the size of a soup plate, lets in a glimmer of light. A waist-high table built of mud, in the hollow surface of which two nether grindstones are embedded, takes up most of the interior. In a small homestead like Ɔndieso's one *neer* is enough, and his mother and wife share it, though the older woman seldom has occasion to use it as her daughter-in-law does most of the cooking for the family. If there are several women in a household, more than one grinding-room is needed. One reason for this is purely mechanical. Grinding the grain for the main meal, in the evening, takes at least an hour, in the period of plenty. The women and girls do this at any time of the day, but prefer to do it in the afternoon. Thus more than one woman may want to use the *neer* at the same time. But there is another reason as well. Co-wives are apt to squabble over the use of the grinding-room, especially if they do not get on harmoni- 343 592 [252] 343 592 578

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[1] The calabash is the commonest domestic utensil and it symbolizes a woman in many contexts. For instance, when a man's wife bears a child he will send to tell her parents; and the messenger reports, with the euphemism the Tallensi always resort to on such occasions, that the woman has born 'a calabash' (*ŋman*) if it is a girl, or a 'staff' (*duor*) if it is a boy—the staff being a hunting-weapon carried by men.

[2] Cf. Ch. VIII below.

343 ously, for it is connected with that precise equality of grain rations to
592 which co-wives are entitled and about which they are extremely touchy.
578 To obviate these squabbles, which sometimes kindle suppressed
antagonisms into serious quarrels, a man usually provides a separate
grinding-room for a wife with a fractious disposition.

592 In a large and well-ordered house there is a great deal of free and easy communication between the different *dugət.* Children in particular go about freely from one woman's quarters (*dug*) to another's, since they are related to all by actual or derived filial ties. The men, too, are free of all the *dugət*, for the women are all either their 'mothers' (*manam*)—own mothers, or fathers' other wives, their wives (*pɔɣaba*)—own wives or brothers' wives, or daughters-in-law (*sampɔɣaba*)—own sons' or brothers' sons' wives. Men and their children, members of the same lineage, are the 'owners' of the homestead. They have determinate rights, duties, and sentiments towards all the women. The women are more circumspect, especially about the *dug* of a co-wife (*nentaa*) or husband's mother (*daŋaampɔk*) if their personal relations are not too cordial; for their social inter-relations are indirect and contingent on their marital ties, unless, as sometimes happens, they belong to the same or to linked clans and have, in consequence, a direct bond of solidarity. In spite of this, the general impression left by a visit to a large house is one of friendly co-operation unsullied by jealous distinctions.

The natives themselves have no illusions on this score. They do not take it for granted that all the women of a family will get on well with one another. They recognize clearly that the spatial differentiation of each *dug* in a house corresponds to its structural differentiation; and with this goes a certain degree of domestic privacy and a differentiation of sentiment and of emotional attachments that may become a source of friction. The *dug* (that is, a woman and her children by one man) constitutes the irreducible unit of Tale social structure, both jurally and morally, held together by the strongest social and emotional bonds conceivable to the Tallensi. The *dug* is the Taləŋ's conceptual model of infrangible solidarity, and his emotional symbol of unstinted nourishment, of complete security, and of parental devotion. It is the prototype, also, of the closely integrated matri-segment within the formally unified patrilineal lineage, as has been shown in our previous volume.[1]

In general, as the foregoing suggests, a man has no room of his own. He keeps his personal belongings in his wife's *dug* and eats and sleeps there, or in his various wives' rooms in turn, if he has more than one. Chiefs, old men, and rich men sometimes have rooms of their own, usually in their senior wives' *dɛndɔna*, where they keep their more bulky personal belongings and to which they can retire if they want privacy. The Gɔlibdaana and the Gorogo Yikpɛmdaana, as we have seen, make an exaggerated display of their private rooms. But as a matter of fact,

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

PLATE II

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a. The first-born son of a Namoo is ritually 'shown' his father's granary for the first time on the last day of his father's funeral ceremony

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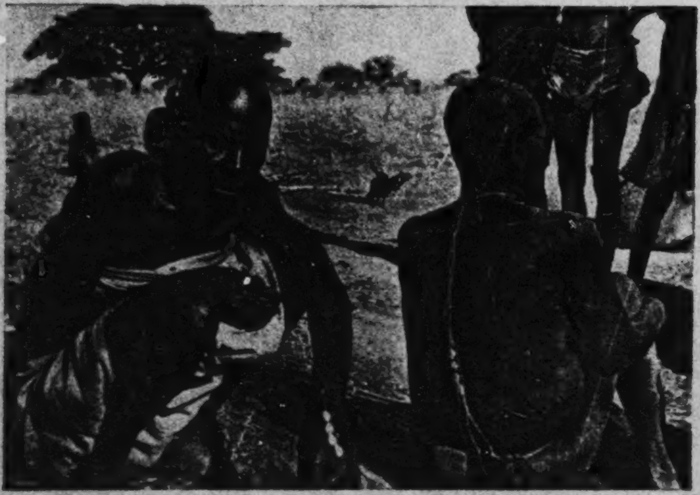

b. The youngest son and the youngest daughter of a dead woman wear the *doóluŋ* during the concluding rites of their mother's funeral

[facing p. 208]

596 of sleeping-rooms and kitchens (to be described later) distributed
342 roughly in a semicircle round an open space, 10 to 15 feet across,
bounded on one side by a co-wife's quarters or a low partitioning wall.
This little close (*dendɔŋo*) is the central place in the life of the family.
Here it takes its meals in the dry season; here friends are received;
[778] here most of the routine of family life goes on. A man's principal
ancestor shrines are kept in his mother's or senior wife's *dendɔŋo*; and
there he performs many of the frequently recurring rites of the ancestor
cult. The women of a single household have adjacent quarters.
Their husband's mother or the senior wife occupies the central
quarters; junior wives or son's wives are on either side of her, forming
altogether a rough circle or segment of a circle. A householder who
is not also head of the compound has no room of his own. He keeps
his private possessions in his senior wife's sleeping-room. Apart from
this, it is the cardinal principle of family life that a man must divide
his time, his affection, and his supplies of food with absolute impartiality
between his wives.

● 343 Within the compound two other kinds of rooms are of special
778 importance for our theme, the granaries and the grinding-rooms.
784 Every independent agricultural unit has its own granaries which are
said to belong to the head of the unit. His granary (*boor*) is a man's
most private and personal possession. No woman may enter it, nor
any man not directly authorized by the owner. Ritual prohibitions
associated with it closely identify a man's granary with his social
personality. As one informant put it, with a flash of insight, 'Your
granary is like your soul'.

343 One or more grinding-rooms (*neer*) belongs to every well-differentiated
household. These are discussed later.

The family structure thus outlined is the basis of a domestic
596 economy and of a configuration of moral, legal, religious, and personal
182 relationships which can best be described as a compromise between
strong centralizing or integrating tendencies and powerful differentiating
tendencies. In the domestic economy of food, our sole concern
in this paper, every unit in the system is completely autonomous in
some respects and dependent upon a more comprehensive unit in
others. It is a fluctuating compromise, slowly changing. Births,
deaths, marriages, and their social consequences, even the mere lapse

800 deal with the conversion of these raw materials into cooked food for the maintenance of all by the almost exclusive efforts of the woman.

The preparation of food is a woman's task. Though cooking is
462 done by both sexes, men cook only on ritual and special occasions
252 and, as a rule, out of doors. Women always cook in the kitchen, as it
343 is a taboo to prepare food for everyday consumption outside the compound. As we have already mentioned, every woman other than a young wife has her own quarters (*dug*) consisting of several rooms. Of these, the most important for the present paper are the grinding room (*neer*) and the kitchens (*dà'aŋ*). Not every woman possesses her own grinding-room, but she may use that of any other woman in her husband's compound, or of a related neighbouring compound, and no one may refuse her. The owner's permission is never asked, but a woman will not enter a grinding-room if she observes another's grain lying on the grinding-platform.

343 The grinding-room is the source of much friction within the compound. It is the cause or pretext of women's quarrels which often
578 involve their husbands as well. Disputes arise mainly over the question of priority, or about the misuse of the grinding stones, e.g. leaving the *baarig* soiled with soup ingredients. Hence, a man will try to build a grinding-room for each wife in order to maintain the peace.

Inside the grinding-room is a low, semicircular platform (*neer*) the
343 surface of which has two or three shallow depressions with their
412 appropriate grindstones (*neekaŋ*). These vary in weight, shape, and
252 texture according to the purpose for which they are intended. There is a heavy and rough grindstone—*gmaarig*—used for crushing the whole grain; a smaller and flatter one—*baarig*—which crushes the rough corn into fine flour (*zɔm*); and a small, round stone—*zibà'axneer*—used only for grinding soup ingredients such as dried vegetables, red pepper, rock-salt, dawa-dawa-seed balls, dried meat, &c. If a grinding-room lacks the latter stone the soup ingredients are mixed with a little flour and ground with the *baarig*. The flour is added so that the stone should be left clean and dry.

343 The kitchen consists of two adjoining rooms, a covered one (*dà'ambɔk*) used during the wet season, which serves also as the storeroom for the owner's produce, her firewood, and cooking-pots, and an open one (*dà'aŋ*) used during the dry season. However, it happens

not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343●
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat
stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking;
the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace,
and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it;
this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her. He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kɔwoor*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem. The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the water-holes collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely, but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

241 In order to demonstrate the annual variation in yields more clearly and the performance of individual crops, the yield of each of the more important crops has been calculated from Table 6, Appendix II, irrespective of the mixture in which it was grown; these yields are given in Appendix II, Table 7. Provided that the proportions of crops in the mixtures were fairly constant from year to year, the figures have a comparative value. From Appendix II, Table 7, the district means obtained in each year have been calculated to the nearest 5 lbs. per acre, and these are set out below in Table 4:—

Table 4.—Summary of mean yields of each of the more important crops, irrespective of mixture, for the years 1932, 1934, 1935 and 1936. Figures in lbs. per acre.

(From Appendix II, Table 7.)

Crop		1932	1934	1935	1936	Summary for all years
Early millet ...	Unmanured	355	230	365	300	270
	Manured	525	385	605	505	505
Late millet ...	Unmanured	350	195	175	255	235
	Manured	430	205	60	220	225
Guinea corn ...	Unmanured	395	230	320	495	325
	Manured	530	400	415	680	485
Groundnuts ...	Unmanured	490	630	725	685	595

The mean yields for 1936 given in the above table are lower than the means for Zuarungu and Navrongo since they include those from Zebilla in Kusasi Area. Zebilla suffered badly from a shortage of rain early in the season, which depressed the yield of the early crops; the guinea corn recovered well, however.

Methods of Storing Crops.

251
343 Cereals in bulk are generally stored unthreshed, in conical shaped granaries; the day's allowance is given to the women each morning by the head of the compound, and threshed as required. These granaries ("bari", Nankani) are made of "swish" proofed with cowdung and an infusion of the empty pods of Parkia filicoidea ("aam", Nankani); they are built inside the compound in Navrongo and Zuarungu Areas, and generally outside the door of the compound in Kusasi Area. In size they vary from 4′ to 6′ in diameter at the base, and from 6′ to 10′ high. A diagram of a section through a granary is given in Muir and Williams' paper (4).

XL

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

The Family Compound (Yir) *and the Shrines* (Bagr) *which it contains*

351/ 171/ KUSASE compounds (*Ya*, s. *Yir*) are roughly circular in shape, as are the huts which they contain, and are widely scattered like those of the Nankanse, Namnam, Talense, and Kasena, but there is one marked difference which immediately strikes the eye between the Kusase house and those already described. The former are not flat-roofed, but are neatly thatched (see Fig. 86). I now propose to describe a typical Kusase compound in detail. The main entrance which faces west is known as *zan pak nore* (compare Nankane *zenore*). It leads directly into the main yard which is also the cattle-kraal. The hut immediately on the left of the main entrance (it is sometimes on the right) is called *zɔŋ*, pl. *zɔn*. This hut is nominally where goats and fowls are shut up at night, but it is also used in the wet season as the place where the senior males in the compound sit and talk. When the head of a compound dies, his body is passed through a back doorway in the *zɔŋ* hut, instead of being taken through the main entrance. The *zɔŋ* (or *zɔŋo*) hut seems to figure largely on many such ceremonial occasions. Immediately outside the entrance of the compound is a grass-roofed hut without any walls, known as *suk* in Kusal (*Paka* in [776] Nankane). It contains a shrine called a *Wen bagr* (God's shrine), a circular mound like that seen in Fig. 142 at Tumu among the Isala. Let into the top of this mound is a sheep's horn and a stone. The stone is called *bagr bugr* (the *bugr* of the *baga*). The head of the compound and others sit or recline on this flat top, and in the very hot weather the compound head may sleep on it. It is sacrificed to at the sowing season, at the harvest, and when new beer is made from the first of the crops. 'The *Tenedaŋ*' sacrifices to the land, I, the Chief, sacrifice on this *bagr*.'

751/ Above the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut, through which the corpse of the head of the house is carried to burial, is a black cross (see Fig. 87) to guard against lightning.[1] The same symbol is put on trees in Kusase farms under which the farmer shelters, and for the same reason. At

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[1] The same symbol is used among the Isala to protect crops from menstruating women.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

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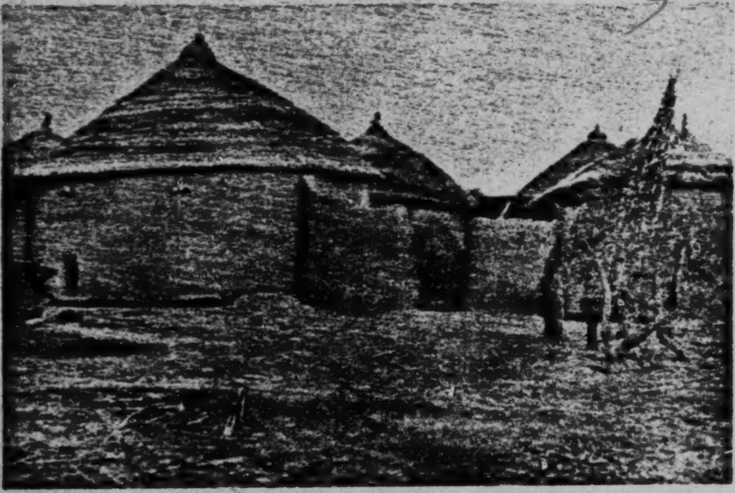

FIG. 86. A Kusase compound

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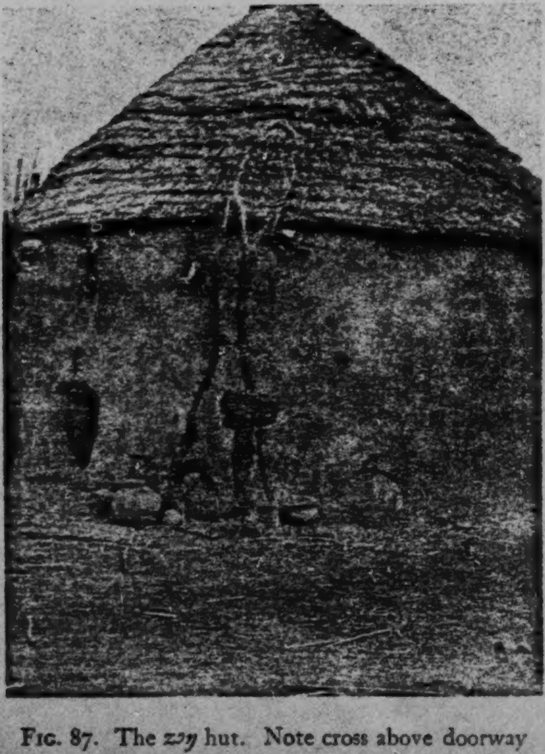

FIG. 87. The *zɔŋ* hut. Note cross above doorway

[Facing p. 380]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

751 778 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top, and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On [515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr* (lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 769 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a *ba' bugr*. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 343 [234] 342 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog* (compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 342 778 755 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God), a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the *baa* (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

Kusase

351 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a
751 long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots.
782 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the
342 land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are
withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

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361 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry- and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the
[778] latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

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783 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

592 356 ashamed of it and exert himself to the utmost to have it repaired. But a poor man who has the energy and can himself build and thatch, or has a son or sons skilled in these crafts, will generally keep his homestead in a satisfactory condition. On the other hand, even men who own cattle and sheep are apt to wait until the thatch is rotted through and the walls collapse before undertaking essential repairs. The ingrained thrift of the natives, fostered by their narrow margin of sufficiency in food-supplies, induces them often to submit to discomfort which would tax less hardy folk to breaking-point rather than expend food and other resources to alleviate it.

356 Indoors, Tale homesteads are usually surprisingly tidy. A good housewife sees that her quarters are swept every morning. Litter indoors is a sign that the mistress of those rooms is a lazy or a sick woman, or one too harassed by family cares or poverty to look after her home properly. A good housewife has her floors regravelled and beaten almost every year to keep them hard and smooth.

592 But individual idiosyncrasies do not affect the layout of a homestead; for apart from minor variations this depends wholly on the constitution of the domestic unit. The layout of a homestead is an index to the structure of the domestic family occupying it.

The simplest domestic and procreative unit is the elementary family—a man, his wife, and their young children—occupying their own homestead. Often the man's mother (*ma*), either his own mother (*ma dɔɣarug*—the mother [of] bearing), or a surviving co-wife (*nentaa*) of his mother lives with him. The whole group constitutes one household, that is, a single economic unit all the members of which are mutually dependent on one another for the production of their common food-supply and the satisfaction of most other wants. Essentially this is a matter of pooling labour and skill, of utilizing land in common, of drawing on the food, livestock, and to some extent monetary resources built up by joint effort, for the benefit of any member of the unit, and of mutual assistance from any private resources that the members may have.

592 ● 351 778 A good example of a domestic family of this kind is that of Ɔndieso of Tɔŋ-Guŋ, a man in the late thirties whose homestead stands on the border of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ and Gbizug. Outside his homestead, 10 or 12 yards from the gateway, stands the usual shade tree. Ɔndieso's tree is also, like almost all shade trees, an ancestor shrine. Between it and the gateway is a bare space, with the midden heap (*tampɔɣar*) on one side and a large, round, flat-topped ancestor shrine built of pile on the other. It is the shrine of his late father's *Yin*. One or more ancestor shrines stand thus at the entrance to every homestead. '*Ɔn nso yirla*—it owns the house', the natives say, meaning by this a spiritual and not material ascendancy in the affairs of the family. It stands outside, at the entrance, as a spiritual sentry guarding the welfare of the house.

If the head of the house is still junior in status in the lineage hierarchy, as Ɔndieso is, it will be the shrine dedicated to his father's Destiny (*yin*), or it may be his father's divining (*bakologo*) shrine. The house is still under the spiritual jurisdiction of Ɔndieso's dead father, though he himself now owns it in the temporal sense. A man of greater social maturity, with grown children and higher lineage status, would very likely have his own *yin* or *bakologo* shrine at his gateway. His house is established; it is no longer the fulfilment of his father's destiny, as is the house of a young man, though it may still be known by his father's or grandfather's name. For as long as a homestead remains standing it is known by the name of the man who first built it. 592 351 778

A bird's-eye view would show a homestead as covering a roughly circular or oval area (Figs. 2*a* and 2*b*). The space in front of the gateway (*zanɔne*—at the gateway) belongs pre-eminently to the menfolk. The public phases of funeral and mortuary ceremonies, which are corporate concerns of the lineage and are conducted by the men, take place there. When anything touching the rights, duties, or interests of the head of the family in his capacity as a member of a particular lineage calls for consultation with fellow members of the lineage, the *zanɔne* is the gathering place. It is the proper place for him to receive greetings, condolences, or congratulations, and to conduct formal negotiations in a matter such as the payment of bride-price owed to him or by him. In the dry season he often rests there, beneath the shade tree, during the sweltering afternoon, chatting with a friend or fondling an infant left in his charge while its mother is busy indoors. Women of the house come and go freely, and often sit or lounge about in front of the gateway; but when 'an affair of the men (*buraas yɛl*)' is in progress they keep away. 592 593

The gateway (*zanɔr*) always faces west to south-west, 'where the sun sets (*nintaŋ nluut*)'. This is a convention never broken by the Tallensi, though they have neither a naturalistic explanation nor a mystical rationalization for it, and it is not subject to mystical sanctions.[1] 351

The gateway is a V-shaped opening, about a foot wide at the base and 3 to 4 feet wide on top, between two round pillars (*meelɔŋ*) forming part of the wall of the house. Large irregularly spaced holes are made in these pillars for short logs to be inserted at night as cross-bars against which a heavy, hollow board (*bɛluŋ*), cut from a tree-trunk, or a bundle of poles can be leaned to close the gateway. Tallensi say that they build the gateway thus in order to bar it the more securely against the ‡

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[1] As the rain-bearing winds blow from the south-east, and the tornadoes that begin and end the rainy season come from an easterly direction, it is possible that the placing of the doorway on the western side of the house is an adaptation to this feature of the climate. Anyone who has experienced the discomfort of a tornado whirling straight into a room, or of a heavy rain, in this region will appreciate the usefulness of placing the only entrance into a homestead on the lee side. But no native has ever given me this obvious explanation, though this may be due to inadequate inquiries on my part. [132]

‡ [Text is continued on p. 54.—Analyst]

● 351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish
hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and
unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every
[622] gateway in Talelând must be barred at night, except that of the Chief
of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining
the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the
privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its
members.

Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the
351 *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary
556 spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish
231 and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any.
[514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and
sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even
by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his
homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor
goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less
than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug
tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has
cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls
and guinea-fowls.

[361] From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out
and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the
342 homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through
the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*,
and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the
room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed
between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities
are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable posses-
[556] sions, his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth,
the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that
to the Talɔŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated
with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which
[782] wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the
principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain
their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers.
In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the
zɔŋ, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to
nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two
chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber
is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber,
communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey,
for the night.

342 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality.
778 It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes
778 his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the
zɔŋ of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors,
is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr*
of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11
and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages
later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say,
transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery
she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*.
She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage
against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized
in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not
confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this
ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary
342 course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbɔg*) a
yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the
sapak. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and
6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One
suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more
numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more
smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with
a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a
[351] Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the
domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters
and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the
smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and
guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this,
life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and
the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency
of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

343 181 are the emblems of his individuality. They participate in it, for they are imbued with his body 'dirt (*dayət*)'—a concept which has a physiological facet, meaning the exuviae adhering to a man's garments, quiver, or other objects constantly handled by him, and a mystical facet implying the quintessence of his individuality. The Talis also acknowledge this complex association between a man and his granary and other intimate possessions, expressing it in analogous customs, in the routine of family life and in their ideals of family relations.

351 To enter the living-quarters of a homestead one climbs over the low dividing wall (*yɛbəg*) at the back of the *sapak* by means of a step (*bimbimər*) and descends, by a similar step on the other side, into an irregular courtyard (*dɛndɔŋo*, pl. *dɛndɔma*) of beaten gravel, which is surrounded by a number of rooms. According to the wealth, rank, or status of the *yirdaana* this *dɛndɔŋo* varies in size from about 20 to about 6 square yards.

592 593 342 351 This *dɛndɔŋo* belongs to the principal woman (*dugdaana*) of the house. The *dɛndɔma* of junior wives are smaller. In Ɔndieso's house the senior woman is his mother's surviving co-wife, whom he calls his 'younger mother' (*mapit*, lit. 'mother's younger sister'), and who has remained with him since the death of his father. Her rooms occupy roughly the left half of the homestead, facing inwards from the *sapak*. From this *dɛndɔŋo*, turning right between a small room beside the granary and a larger room straight ahead, one enters a similar *dɛndɔŋo* in the middle of another set of rooms, those of Ɔndieso's wife. These take up roughly the right half of the homestead, facing inwards. The *yirdaana*'s mother's (own mother, or proxy-mother) rooms always occupy the position of honour in the centre of the arc; his senior wife's (*poɣakpeem*) rooms lie on the right-hand side of these; his second wife's, or his younger brother's senior wife's rooms lie on the left, looking inwards. The rooms of the other wives of the head of the family or of his brothers are distributed as convenience dictates. For example, wives who are clan sisters will usually have adjoining quarters; wives who get on badly will be put in well-separated rooms. If none of a man's father's widows is living with him, and he has more than one wife, his senior wife occupies the central group of rooms, his second wife those on her right, and so forth. Generally the women's apartments all communicate with one another. But if a woman has a quarrelsome disposition or gets on badly with her co-wives for any other reason, her quarters will be separated from those of the next-door wife by a low party wall, to prevent undue trespassing by her co-wives or their children.

342 593 A woman's apartments make up a self-contained section in the homestead. This is her *dug* (pl. *dugət*). Basically *dug* means a single room, but it is extended to mean the single set of rooms belonging to one wife. In the Tale family every woman with children is entitled to her own *dug*. Women guard this right jealously, and if a man has not built separate quarters for his wife by the time that she has had her first child,

592 A woman is entitled to have at least three rooms in her *dug*, a sleeping-room (*dakir*) a dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*) and a storeroom (*da'aŋboog*). Men of substance often allow their older wives a fourth room (*boog*), which always has a flat mud roof and serves as an extra storeroom and a guest-room, or as a room in which a daughter-in-law can be temporarily accommodated, or where the *yirdaana* can sit and talk to his visitors in the rainy season.

342 592 [352] The *dakir* is the largest room, usually 10 to 12 feet in diameter.[1] Here the woman sleeps with her young children; here her husband comes to her at night; here she is confined when she bears him a child; here she keeps her sleeping-mats and her few personal treasures; and here, if she is his senior wife, her husband's best cloth or tunic, his bow and quiver, and other personal belongings. Her husband and children have free access to her *dakir*. Other members of the family must generally ask her permission to enter it or a family quarrel will result. To enter a *dakir* one crawls through an arched doorway, 2 to 3 feet high and about the same in width. Inside darkness reigns, relieved only by the glimmer of light that enters under the eaves and through the doorway, or a small aperture high up in the wall.

343 592 A stretch of wall 2 or 3 feet long forms a shallow recess between the *dakir* and the unroofed dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*). Here one generally sees a bundle of firewood stacked in a corner, or, in the right season, a heap of shea nuts. The *da'aŋ* itself is horseshoe-shaped and smaller than a *dakir*—from 4 to 8 feet across the shorter axis and 6 to 9 feet across the longer axis. The doorway is usually about 4 feet high, so that one can go in and out easily, as domestic tasks require. As it is for use in dry weather only, it is open to the sky. After the harvest, millet and guinea-corn stalks are spread on top, partly as a shield from the sun but chiefly as a reserve of firewood. The cooking-hearth (*ɔɔrəg*), the water-pots (*kɔwoor*), the cooking-pots and dishes (*dɔyat* and *laas*), the stirring-stick (*vugər*), and ladles (*bies*), lying about in none too orderly a fashion, show well the uses to which this room is put.

Adjoining the *da'aŋ* is the larger, roofed *da'aŋboog*, the storeroom and larder. This room often has a doorway leading into the *da'aŋ* and not into the *dɛndɔŋo*, for the greater convenience of the housewife. Here the housewife keeps her stocks of foodstuffs—her dried vegetables and condiments, the odd piece of dried fish or meat she has hoarded, a pot of millet, perhaps, which she acquired by her own efforts, and so forth—as well as the utensils she is not using, and any bulky articles belonging to her or other members of the family. Here she also cooks in the wet season. At a pinch it may be used as a sleeping-room for a visitor

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[1] The diameters of a room are always discrepant, it may be by an inch or two or by as much as a foot, so that its base is never a perfect circle. The natives themselves do not notice this as it is due to their crude method of marking out the circle for the base with the foot.

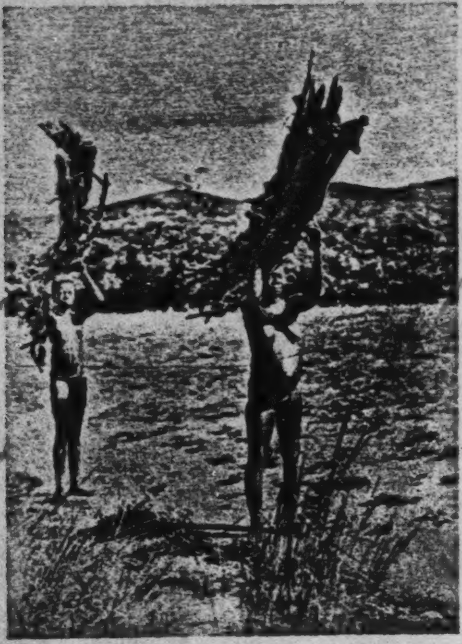
not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking; the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace, and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it; this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her. He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kɔwoor*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem. The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the water-holes collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely, but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

PLATE III



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1. Bringing home firewood: Mother and daughter

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2. A woman in her kitchen (posed)

[facing p. 264]

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decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All [476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes. With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation. In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

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Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy. Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the efficacy of these social ties.

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We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men, women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning. Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When 592
his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every 341
morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for
stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or [778
two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in
the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the 192]
alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something
untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is
needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the 341
cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihɔr*) of the
Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore 778
obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu
all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth
shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout.
This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many
details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and 341
condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and 554
experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gɔlibdaana of
Tɛnzugu and the Yikpemdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular 592
room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White
Fathers' Mission at Bolɔga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom,
and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious,
upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly
dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate
and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became
established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious
innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance.
The Tɔŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy
men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration,
but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not
require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are
built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door
fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very
hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with
one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad
a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been
in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. 592
A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or
lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense 356
relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing
like Yɛlnaar of Tɔŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his
neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

592 ashamed of it and exert himself to the utmost to have it repaired. But a poor man who has the energy and can himself build and thatch, or 356 has a son or sons skilled in these crafts, will generally keep his homestead in a satisfactory condition. On the other hand, even men who own cattle and sheep are apt to wait until the thatch is rotted through and the walls collapse before undertaking essential repairs. The ingrained thrift of the natives, fostered by their narrow margin of sufficiency in food-supplies, induces them often to submit to discomfort which would tax less hardy folk to breaking-point rather than expend food and other resources to alleviate it.

356 Indoors, Tale homesteads are usually surprisingly tidy. A good housewife sees that her quarters are swept every morning. Litter indoors is a sign that the mistress of those rooms is a lazy or a sick woman, or one too harassed by family cares or poverty to look after her home properly. A good housewife has her floors regravelled and beaten almost every year to keep them hard and smooth.

592 But individual idiosyncrasies do not affect the layout of a homestead; for apart from minor variations this depends wholly on the constitution of the domestic unit. The layout of a homestead is an index to the structure of the domestic family occupying it.

The simplest domestic and procreative unit is the elementary family—a man, his wife, and their young children—occupying their own homestead. Often the man's mother (*ma*), either his own mother (*ma dɔɣarug*—the mother [of] bearing), or a surviving co-wife (*nentaa*) of his mother lives with him. The whole group constitutes one household, that is, a single economic unit all the members of which are mutually dependent on one another for the production of their common food-supply and the satisfaction of most other wants. Essentially this is a matter of pooling labour and skill, of utilizing land in common, of drawing on the food, livestock, and to some extent monetary resources built up by joint effort, for the benefit of any member of the unit, and of mutual assistance from any private resources that the members may have.

592 A good example of a domestic family of this kind is that of Ɔndieso 351 of Tɔŋ-Guŋ, a man in the late thirties whose homestead stands on the border of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ and Gbizug. Outside his homestead, 10 or 778 12 yards from the gateway, stands the usual shade tree. Ɔndieso's tree is also, like almost all shade trees, an ancestor shrine. Between it and the gateway is a bare space, with the midden heap (*tampɔɣar*) on one side and a large, round, flat-topped ancestor shrine built of pile on the other. It is the shrine of his late father's *Yin*. One or more ancestor shrines stand thus at the entrance to every homestead. '*Ɔn nso yirla*—it owns the house', the natives say, meaning by this a spiritual and not material ascendancy in the affairs of the family. It stands outside, at the entrance, as a spiritual sentry guarding the welfare of the house.

The climate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast has two well-marked seasons, a rainy season (*seug*) and a dry season (*uun*). The rainy season is the period of intense agricultural activity and lasts from April to October; the dry season, when agriculture sinks into the background of social interest, from November to March. We shall set out the cycle of agricultural and food economy month by month, beginning with April, the first month of the rains.[1] 132 221

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
APRIL: First planting-rain fell on March 26, and early millet (*naara*) with some cow-peas and *neri* was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, &c. Women sowed their vegetable patches; *naŋgena*, *hibiscus* (*ma'ana*, *bɛt* and *bɛris*), marrow (*wɔk*—planted by only a few women) and other vegetables. Hoeing begun; but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.	Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts.[2] Wild fruits—shea (*taamr*), *ximenia americana* (*liɛŋ*) and especially dawa-dawa powder (*dɔbugm*)—being consumed to stave off hunger.[3] 221 262

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[1] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, but we are following the European calendar to simplify the exposition. All dates given refer to 1934. [805]

[2] Ground-nut gleaning (*nyɛɛh*) is a regular pursuit of children, adolescents, and even adults of households with small supplies of ground-nuts. After the ground-nuts have been lifted any one may come and scratch with a hoe for those left in the ground. Thus little groups of boys and girls, from infancy to adolescence, wander about in the fields near their homes scratching with old hoes for the ground-nuts, which they collect and eat. Early in the dry season these ground-nuts are regarded as snacks. When the dry season reaches its end, however, they become scarcer but are searched for more eagerly as a measure to stop the pangs of hunger between one meal and the next, often twenty-four hours later. 222

[3] Shea fruits are collected by the women throughout this season, mainly from trees on bush farms belonging to their compound. Dawa-dawa powder is more difficult to come by as the trees are jealously watched by the owners, who are in some areas the chiefs *ex-officio* and in others heads of lineages. Dawa-dawa pods are thus often obtained by gift, purchase, or exchange from the owners, or in the market. Every part of the fruit is of great value—the floury powder is eaten, the seeds collected and turned into *kpolug*, the husks of the pod used to prepare *am*, the liquid with which the walls and floors of compounds are waterproofed. 222 [356]

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
ting grass and timber for roofing, handicraft work. Young men begin to go abroad temporarily.[1]	ported maize, plentiful and cheap at market.
FEBRUARY: As in January.	Grain issued for only one meal a day. Many purchasing grain rather than use up their own supplies. Ground-nuts and cow-peas regular and important supplements to cereal food. Women finding grain to augment supplies, by trading, etc. Market supplies still plentiful, prices average.
MARCH: As in February. Sporadic cleaning of fields and hoeing.	Grain supplies sinking and more carefully rationed. Children and women gleaning ground-nuts to stop hunger. People going to Mampuru and Nabte countries to purchase grain for re-sale. Grain still plentiful in market, also other products, e.g. yams (imported).[2]

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[1] This month of plenitude marks the peak of the food cycle. Soon supplies diminish again; men who are setting up compounds of their own commence building operations; but almost every compound requires some repairs. House-building and thatching are crafts in which a great many men have no skill. They therefore have to invite (*poah*) neighbours or relatives who have the skill to carry out the repairs for them; and these have to be generously fed in recompense. A new house, again, is built co-operatively with the aid of kinsmen, relatives and friends, who also have to be generously fed. [476 356]

With this further drain on his grain stores, the head of a unit of food economy has to go warily. Hence in spite of the ample and cheap grain available in the market, he begins to reduce the ration of grain he distributes to his dependants. In February the rationing gets stricter, for it is essential to keep a reserve against the first month of the rains 'to strengthen one' against the greater demands upon one's energy made by agricultural labour. They say this explains why those who can afford it buy grain for immediate consumption. Finally, just before the rains, supplies are sinking to the minimum which will be reached in the month preceeding the early millet harvest, with the usual effect of causing visits to neighbouring areas in search of grain to purchase.

The temporary migration of young men is more fully dealt with in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Culture Contact as a Dynamic Process', *Africa*, ix. 1, 1936.

[2] We have, in the above table, emphasized the place of cereals in the cycle because they constitute the staple food of the Tallensi; and as we are concerned with the domestic economy of food, we have referred to the market only in order 443

351 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a
751 long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots.
782 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the
342 land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

342 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry-
● 361 and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the
[778] latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

778 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or
783 killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
[361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161] periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective
491 Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of
161 reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

[facing p. 16]

PLATE I

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(*a*) Outskirts of a Tale settlement in the late dry season. In the distance (right) a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*).

(*b*) View of a Tale settlement about the middle of the rainy season.

101 in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

101 304 Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Taləŋ in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Gɔris (*Tam Talis pu ɛt lan—Gɔris tuomər nla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

361 103 133 621 To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map, p. 15), one of the most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gɔre neighbours, on the other is Yaɣazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sɔk and Yaməlɔg, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tɛnzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Ŋkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santɛŋ, Teelɔg, Syɛk, and Wɔɣar, separated from Tɛnzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawalɔg. Between Zoo and Yaməlɔg lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yaməlɔg occupies a shallow depression between hillocks. 361 103 621 Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before the homesteads of Sawalɔg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔɣalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361 or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with 103 scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a popula- 161 tion of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174 habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrəg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101 sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186 the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tɛnzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tɛnzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔməra Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔɣaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔɣaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamɔlɔg and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔməra namoorət*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalɔg, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbəra Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət.*)[1]

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[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A SETTLEMENT

Introduction

621 A TALE settlement is a miniature of the whole society, and reveals all the basic principles of the social structure. No two settlements are identical in topography, shape, size, or social composition; but all have the same social form, based on the same principles. Yet it is no easy task to describe a settlement as the natives see it. It cannot be isolated from neighbouring units of the same kind by inspection; for though it is locally fixed it is not territorially circumscribed. Its structure is unintelligible without reference to the lineage system, but ecological exigencies and political and ritual ties and cleavages play an important part in it as well.

361 221 The anatomy of a settlement appears in fullest relief during the dry season. Then the homesteads stand out starkly against the dun background of bare earth or the glare of rocks and boulders piled up in red-grey masses in the hilly areas. The foot-paths winding between the homesteads scar the land as if etched into it by generations of feet. Every shade tree in front of a homestead is an inviting landmark. Sacred groves, looking temptingly cool when the sun is high, are unmistakable. The water-holes, pits, and ditches, flooded beyond recognition in the latter part of the rainy season, can easily be distinguished. The boundaries of farm-plots, overgrown with crops and weeds during the rains, are now clearly visible. The landscape is a map of the social relations of the people. This is the season, too, when life goes on largely in the open. There is leisure for gossip and conversation; for paying visits, strolling in the market, going a-courting, making long journeys, dancing in the moonlight; for hunting and fishing drives; there is time also, and the necessary supplies, for the performance of funeral ceremonies and other ritual activities. It is in such events that the structure of Tale society is most vividly actualized.

Types of Settlement and Distribution of Population

361 Two main types of settlements are found: those of ancient habitation (*tɛŋkɔrəg*, old country), covering all the centre of the country, especially on and around the Tong Hills, and including the majority of the Tallensi; and those of recent foundation (*tɛŋpaaləg*, new country), towards the periphery of this area. Though the basic plan is the same, the principles on which a settlement is built operate with different emphasis in each type.

361 621 Neither territorial extent nor density of aggregation affects the basic plan of a settlement. The range of variation is very great. Moreover, processes of expansion and contraction continuously alter the extent of a settlement. Thus, Yamələg and Tongo are ancient settlements of the same general structure, though the latter is four or five times the size of

the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, 361
is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 621
600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one 361
part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north 161
side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse population.[1]

Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During 361
the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for 132
cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live 166
there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view 361
of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are [342]
identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settle- 361
ments, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements 161
nearer to the periphery. I cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 [162]
(*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwalɔg (Kpolag), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Volta—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

161 166 173 The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 312 133 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
[5/5] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Talaŋ is content to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*buləg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*koləg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 133 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

pression liable to flooding in the rainy season. The people of the Tong 361
Hills consider themselves to be particularly fortunate in this respect. 133
Their homesteads stretch densely across the slopes of the hills, and amid the great boulders and rocky piles of the summit. Singing the praises of their tiny fastness, they contrast it with the plain, where one is always ankle-deep in mud and slush during the rains and scorched by the sun in the dry season. On the hills, they say, a sheltered nook can always be found among the rocks, shady when the sun is most cruel, dry in the severest storm, where the children can play or the grown-ups sit and talk.

The Stability and Continuity of a Settlement

Stability and continuity are essential characteristics of a settlement. 621
They are implied in the native concept of a *tɛŋ* (settlement) as both a 361
definite locality and a fixed community. The ancient settlements have attained a very high degree of stability and continuity. The peripheral settlements are rapidly ceasing to be mere economic apanages to the older centres of habitation, and are taking on the form of permanent and stable units. Being still in process of organization, their structure is fluid compared with that of the ancient settlements, and the dynamic factors of Tale social structure sometimes appear more conspicuously in them than in the latter.

But the older settlements are by no means static. The bounds, the layout, and the internal constitution of a settlement alter continuously, if very slowly. Even in a single year one can see how processes of expansion and contraction, of segmentation and incorporation, are at work all the time. Whenever land changes hands by inheritance, or an office passes by succession, or a man achieves economic independence, a minor reshuffle in the collocation of homesteads takes place. The cumulative effects of these processes of slow but progressive readjustment are clearly exhibited in the contemporary structure of a settlement. They are documented in its constitution and layout, in the location of ancestral graves, the ownership of farm plots, and in ceremonial and political relations. Fixity of location and of the structural plan ensure the stability and continuity of a Tale settlement.

Topographical Distinctions and the Natives' Knowledge of Natural History

Precise local orientation is essential in the economic activities and 823
social relations of the Tallensi. Place-names are often derived from 103
prominent topographical or geographical features. Thus, Tenzugu means the head (*zug*) or highest part of the country (*tɛŋ*), Yayazuor means 'perched on a hill', and many other place-names are popularly believed to be corruptions of topographical or spatial metaphors. Within a settlement topographical variations are distinguished by terms like *tɛŋr*, the lower part (the locative of *tɛŋ*, here in the sense of 'ground'), and *saazugu*, the higher part (lit. head-high, or high up). Conspicuous patches of low-lying land, hillocks, rock piles, ditches, water-holes, streams, &c., are named, and are very often sacred spots. The name may indicate peculiar qualities of the soil, prominent trees, or other landmarks formerly or still

621 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here [778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔɣar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 ●361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field [608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunɔɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

PLATE VIII

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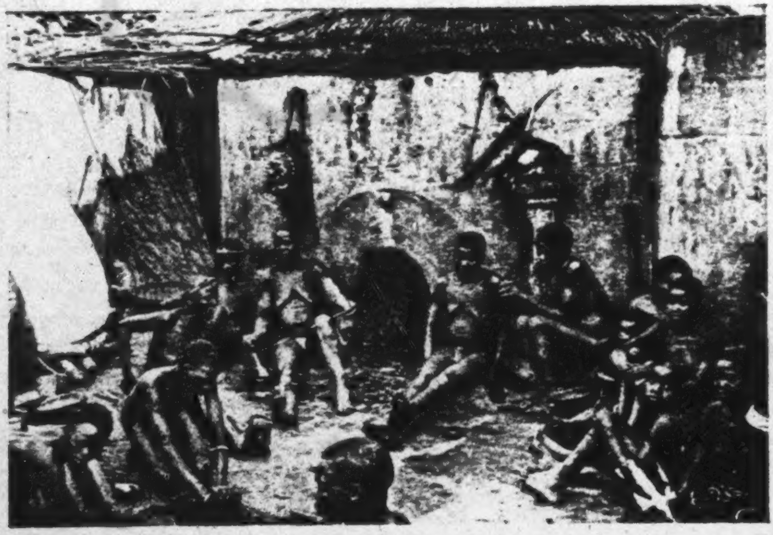
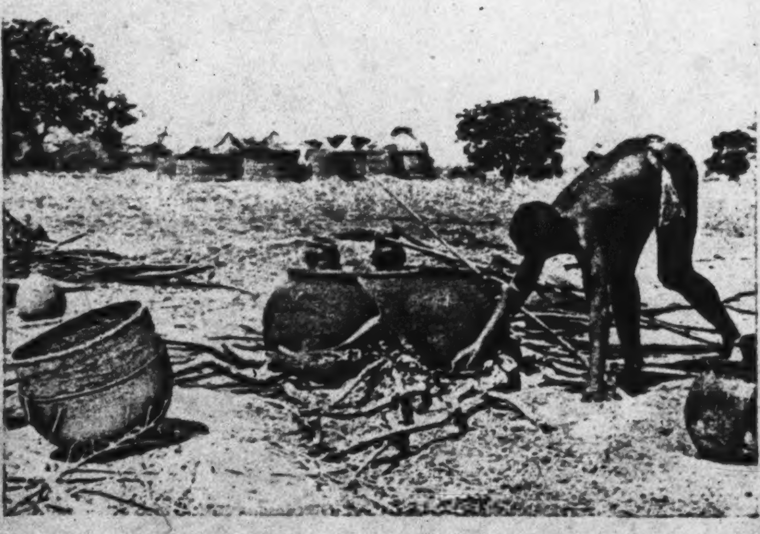


(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

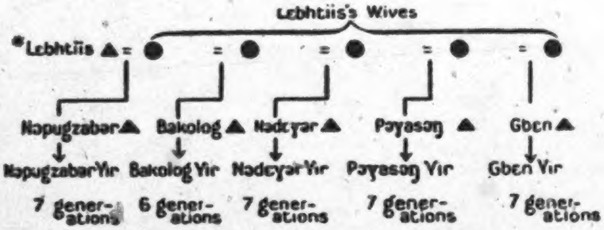
361
415
252



(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔɣayabəlis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[FACING p. 161]

Diagrammatically, the agnatic filiation of the branches of Lɛbhtiis yir 613 (or biis) can be represented as follows:



These five segments form a set of co-ordinate segments, all except Bakolog yidɛm reckoning seven generations inclusively between their present lineage heads and their common ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. Their corporate unity and common interests are symbolized by the ancestor shrine dedicated to the 'fathers' (*banam*) of the lineage, culminating in Lɛbhtiis. This is the *bɔɣar* of Lɛbhtiis, the *banam bɔɣar* (shrine of the forefathers) held by the head (*kpeem*) of the whole lineage, who may be a member of any of the five *dugət*. In 1934 the head of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, Naandɔmər, who was also head of his own segment of Nɔpugzabər yiri died, and as his final funeral rites were not immediately performed, the *banam bɔɣar* remained in the custody of his son, who carried out the duties of head of the whole lineage in his late father's name. Naandɔmər's prospective successor as *kpeem* of Lɛbhtiis yir was Yinyɛla, the *kpeem* of Bakolog yir.

Each segment also has its particular *dugni bɔɣar* (shrine of the 'room'). 613 This, as will be explained presently, is known as its 'mothers'' *bɔɣar* 778 (*manam bɔɣar*)—the shrine of its eponymous founding ancestor among the sons of Lɛbhtiis, and his mother—the symbol of its differentiation, by reference to maternal origin, from its brother (*sunzɔ*) segments of the same descent, and of its specific corporate unity and identity in contraposition to those other segments.

Each segment tends to form a coherent residential cluster, situated on 613 land which has been owned by its members for several generations, and in 361 close proximity to the graves of their ancestors. The lineage as a whole 167 tends to form a local aggregate, though a somewhat looser one than any of its segments. But not all the members of the lineage reside in Puhug, or at Tongo, at a given time. There are its married *pɔɣaɣabəlis* (women members) and absent male members. In Nɔpugzabər yiri two young men were away in 1934, one farming in Mampurugu, another working somewhere in the colony; three of the younger 'sons' of Bakolog yir were away at Kumasi, where they had been for several years. One subsegment of Pɔyasɔŋ yidem has been established at Yamələg for a generation or so; and several members of the other two segments were away in Mampurugu and Ashanti.

Numerically Nɔdeɣər yir is exceptionally small, for it has only eleven 613 male members. The other segments have between twenty and thirty male members each, counting infants as well. Numbers, we must again emphasize, do not in any way affect the status of a lineage or the rights

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such 166
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry 602
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settle- 571
ments. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔɣaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

2: Fortes
131, 133, 361, 487, 778, 764, 621

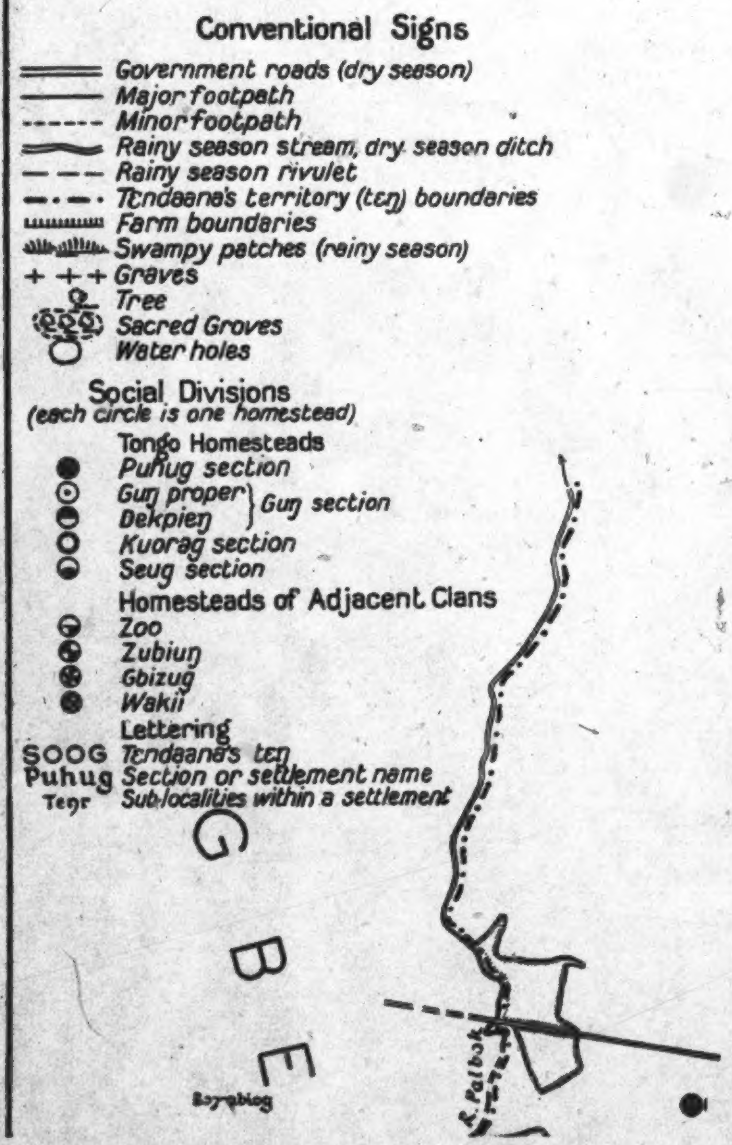
[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

]

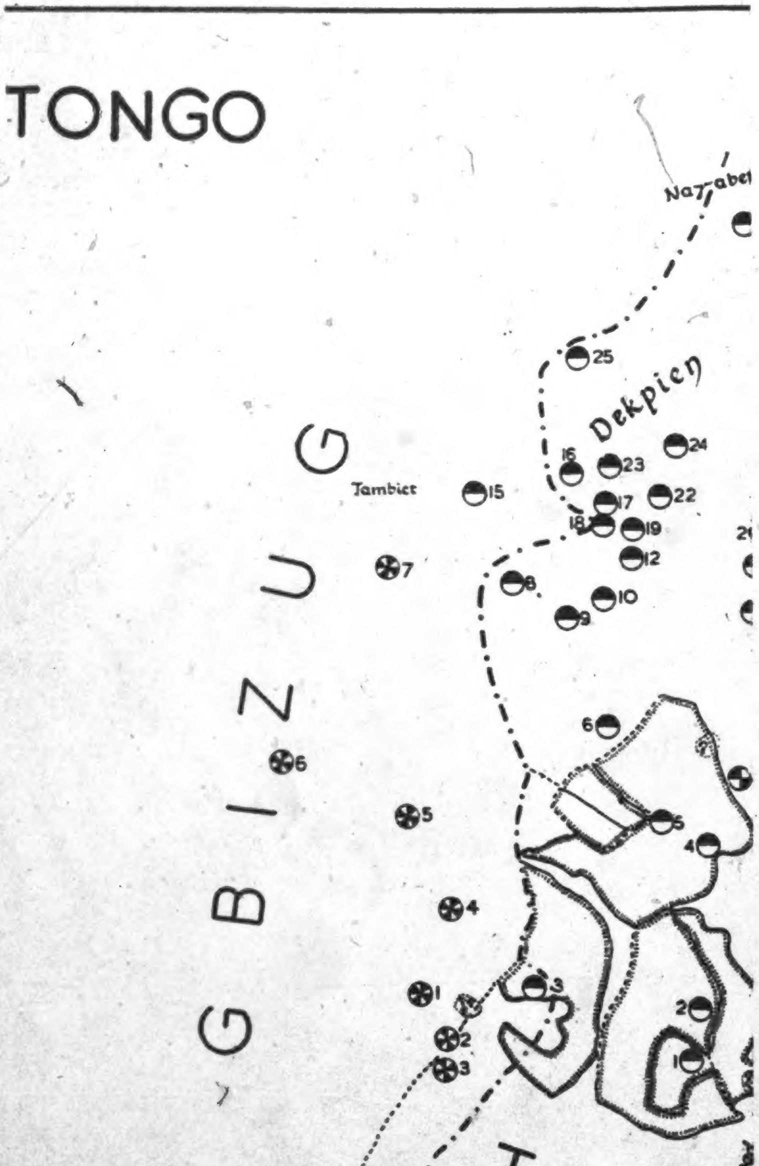
621
487
778
131
764
133
361

MAP OF PART OF TON


Conventional Signs
Government roads (dry season)
Major footpath
Minor footpath
Rainy season stream, dry season ditch
Rainy season rivulet
Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries
Farm boundaries
Swampy patches (rainy season)
+ + + Graves
Tree
Sacred Groves
Water holes
Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)
Tongo Homesteads
● Puhug section
Guŋ proper
Dekpieŋ
Guŋ section
○ Kuorag section
Seug section
Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
Zoo
Zubiuŋ
Gbizug
Wakii
Lettering
SOOG Tɛndaana's tɛŋ
Puhug Section or settlement name
Tɛŋr Sub-localities within a settlement
G
B
E
Soŋrbiog
R. Polbok

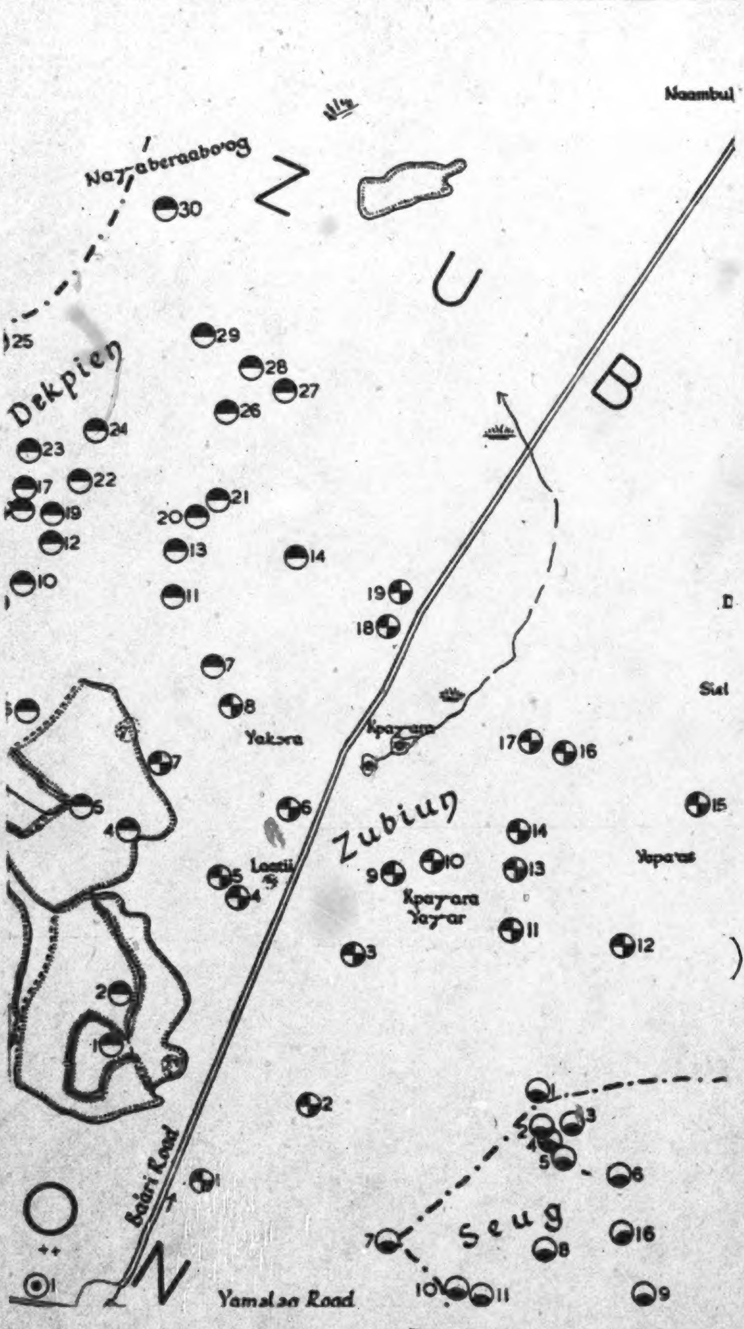
[End-MAP (A)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


TONGO
Naγabel
Dekpieŋ
Tambiet
GBIZUG
Kpoŋkparag
Gorogo Road
Bolari Road
T
O
N
25
24
16
23
15
17
22
18
19
12
7
8
10
9
6
6
5
5
4
4
3
1
2
3
2
1
1
2
5
1
2

[End-MAP (B)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
● 361


Naambul
Naᵹaberaaboog
Z
U
B
N
Dekpien
Zubiun
Yakɔra
Kpaᵹ-ara
Loatii
Kpaᵹ-ara
Yaᵹ-ar
Yaparas
Siul
Seug
Bairi Road
Yamalaa Road
30
29
28
27
26
25
24
23
22
21
20
19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
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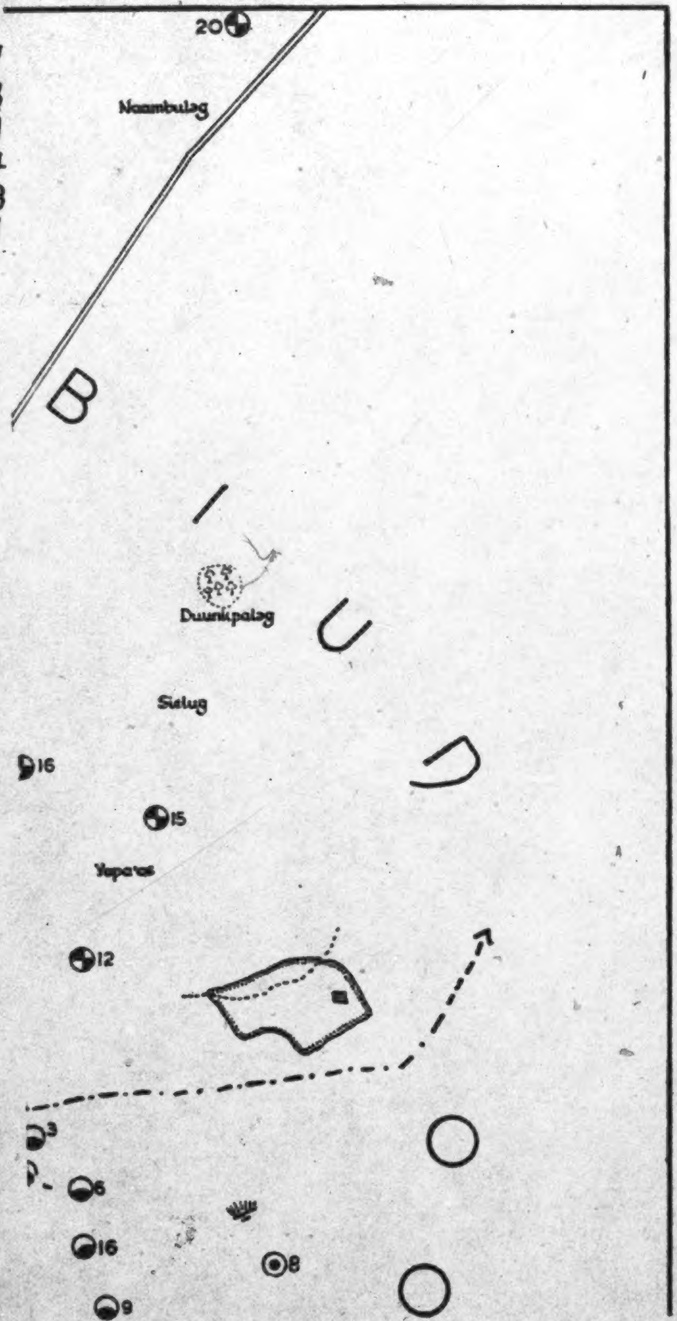
2
1

[End-map (C)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361

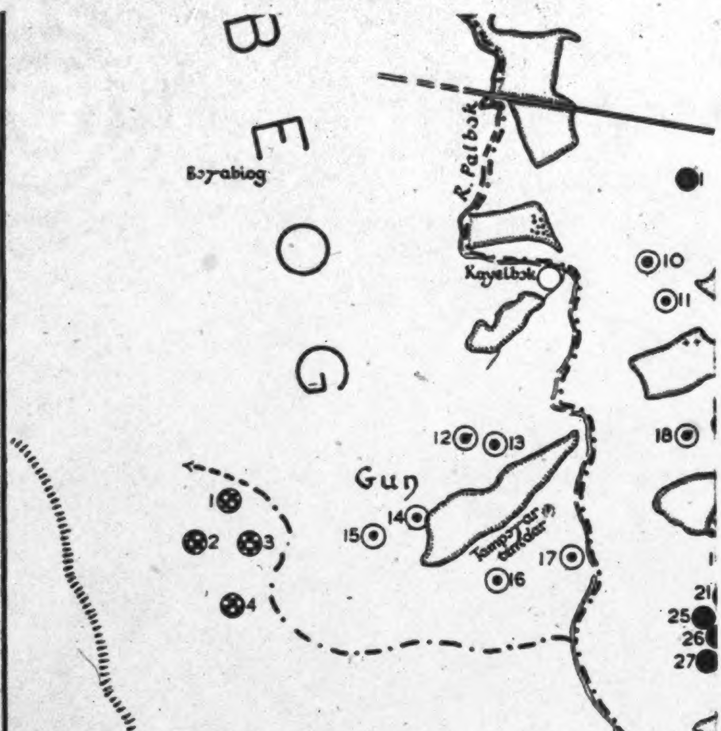

20
Naambulag
B
I
Duunkpalag
U
Sielug
D
16
15
Yaparas
12
3
6
16
8
9

[End-MAP (D)]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945

FE11 Tallensi FE11

621
487
778
131
764
133
361

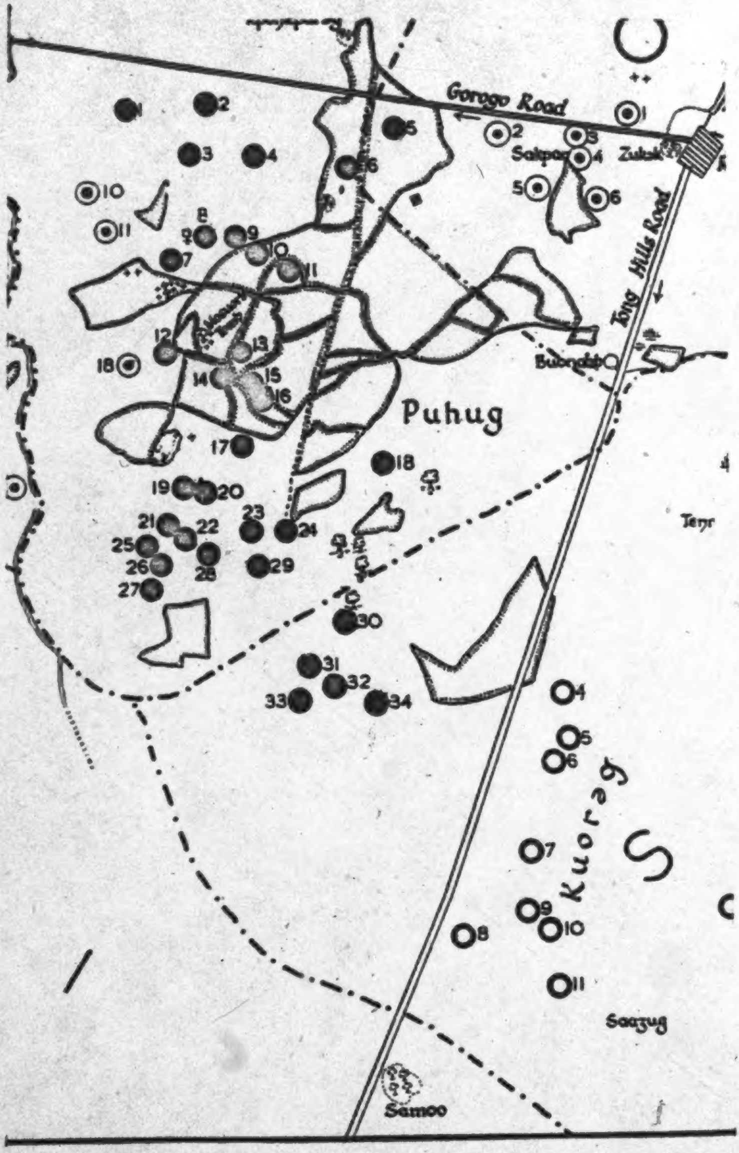

BEOG
Bɔɣabiog
R. Palbɔk
Kɔyɛlbɔk
Gun
Tamporar(?)
Tong Hills
WAKI
1
2
3
4
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
21
25
26
27

SK

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Na*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakɔra se

[End-Map(E)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


Gorogo Road
Saipar
Zubiuŋ
Tong Hills Road
Buondab
Puhug
Kuorəg
Saazug
Samoo
Tenr

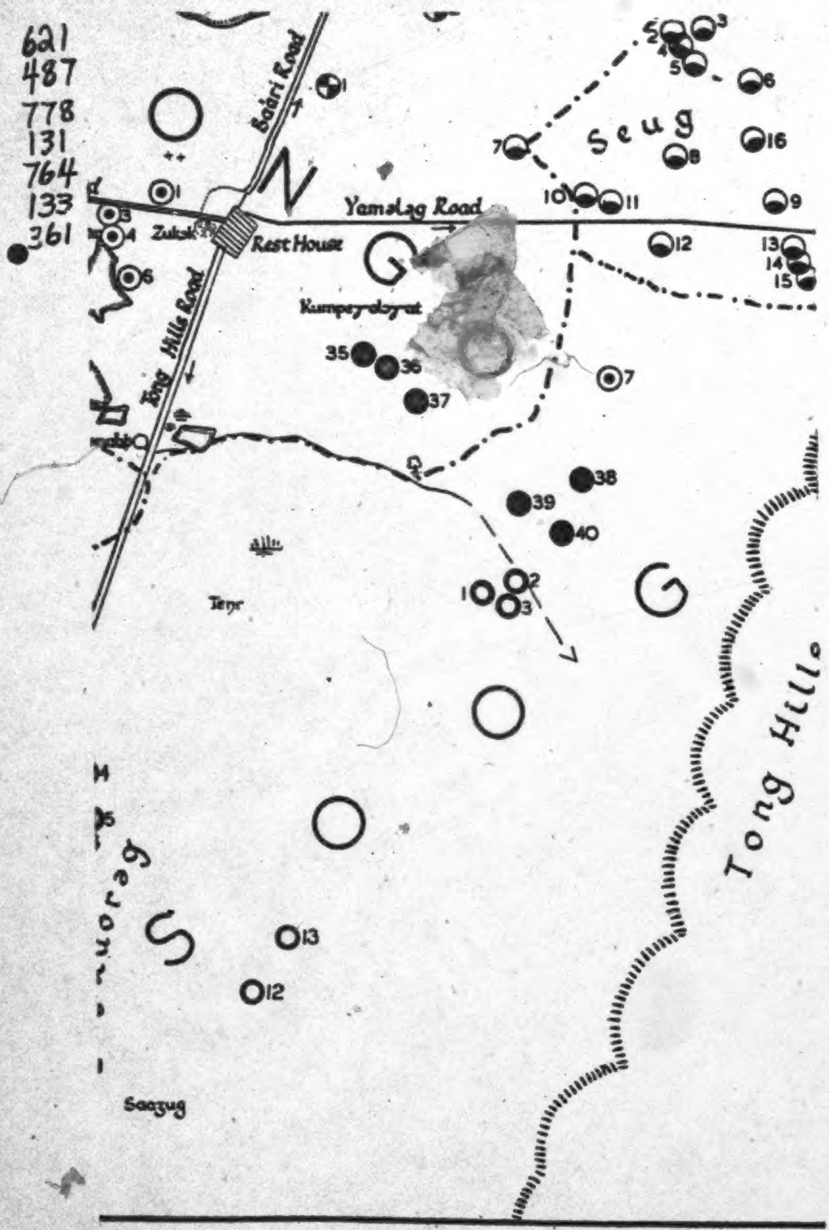
SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Tɔŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social
n and Guŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen
Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).
d of the Yakora section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpayar
few Wal
The
covering

[End-MAP (F)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


Bɔari Road
Seug
Yamɔlag Road
Zubiuŋ
Rest House
Kumpeɣolɔɣat
Tong Hills Road
Teŋr
Saazug
Tong Hills
1
3
4
6
7
35
36
37
38
39
40
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
12
13

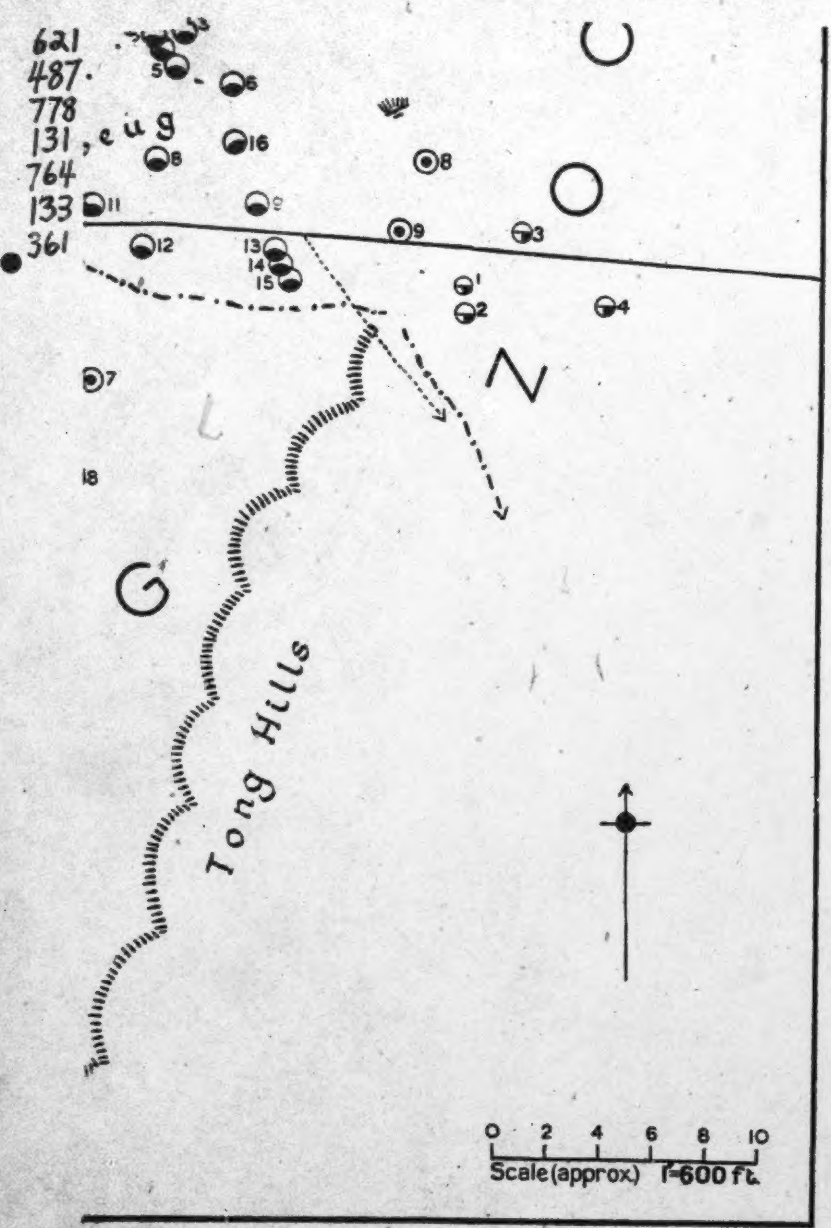
PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

ial Kpaɣara ɣaɣar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
en few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
ŋ- covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' gı

[End-MAP (G)]

621
487
778
131, eug
764
133
361


5
6
16
6
8
11
9
9
3
12
13
14
15
1
2
4
7
N
18
G
Tong Hills
0 2 4 6 8 10
Scale (approx) 1"=600 ft.

TS

r three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a

situation of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid
he founding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-MAP (H)]

of his lineage or clan, other than those whom he describes as his 'fathers' 587
or 'sons'.

Every Tale clan is anchored to a particular locality from which it 361
takes its name. In the central area of Taleland, around the Tong Hills, 621
the present clan settlements appear to date back not less than eight to ten generations. But they have not been and are not territorially static. There are no strict territorial boundaries between adjacent settlements. The homesteads of a settlement merge with those of the adjacent settlements, and the boundaries between them are definable only in social terms, as a function of their ecological and politico-ritual relations at a given time. In the same way every segment of a clan—that is, each of its component maximal lineages—is anchored to a local subdivision of the clan settlement, though many of its members may be dispersed elsewhere.

A striking feature of Tale social organization is the system of inter- 621
clan linkages which constitutes one of the principal forces of cohesion 619
in the society. The genealogically and socially autonomous maximal 182
lineage or clan is not a closed group. The component maximal lineages that form the segments of adjacent clans have ties of clanship identical with those that unite them to one another within their respective clans. Thus if two adjacent clans have segments A, B, C, and D, E, F, G, respectively, then A (but not B or C) may have clanship ties with D (but not with E, F, or G); B may have clanship ties only with E, and C with F. Each of these maximal lineages also has clanship ties with segments of other neighbouring clans. Thus each component maximal lineage of a clan has a field of clanship that includes the other segments of the clan as well as segments of other clans. This results in a network of interlocking clanship ties that embraces all the separate clans of Taleland. All the Talis clans and the main block of Namoo clans are interlocked in this way in two clusters which are in turn similarly connected at certain points. Moreover, this system of linkages ties the Tale aggregate on to adjacent clans of other neighbouring 'tribes'. Thus we observe that at this level of social structure—the skeletal level, so to speak—as in its territorial and cultural relationship to neighbouring 'tribes', Tale society is a segment of a greater society. The network of inter-clan linkages is one of the principal factors by which the socio-geographic region we have called Taleland is differentiated as a distinct segment of this greater society.

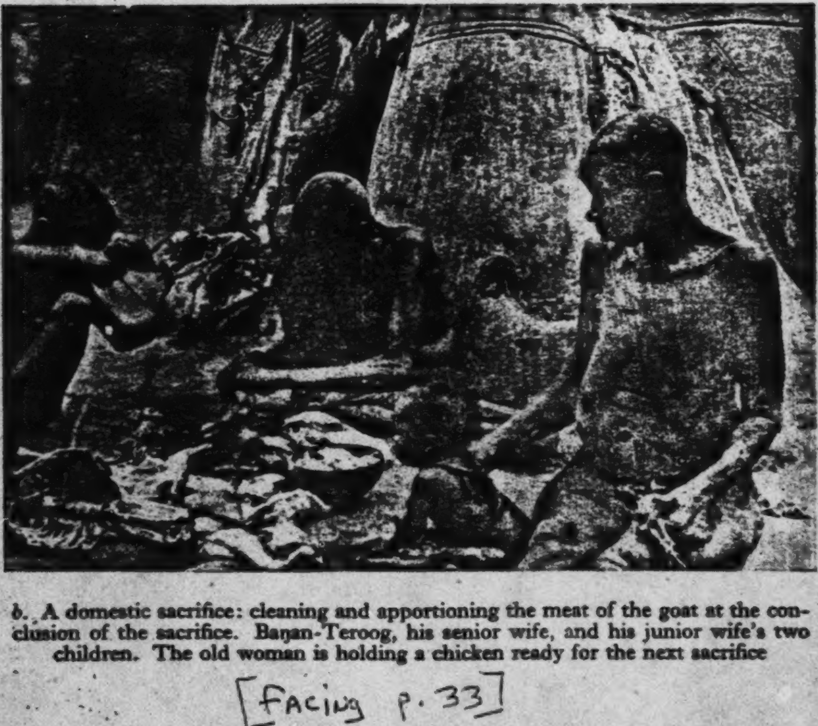
It is also one of the main factors of social equilibrium in Tale society. 626
Dissension between neighbouring clans is kept in check by the mediation of maximal lineages linked by identical ties to both; and warfare is inhibited from disrupting the entire social order by the intervention of social and ritual obligations arising *inter alia* out of the fact that enemies are related directly or indirectly by clanship ties. It is this, in part, that gives Tale wars the complexion of acute family quarrels.

PLATE 2

593
241
361

a. The domestic family is the matrix of kinship. A family party out lifting ground-nuts on the home farm. Their homestead is in the background. From right to left: the head of the family, his infant daughter, his adult son, the latter's wife and baby, the family head's wife and daughter

782



b. A domestic sacrifice: cleaning and apportioning the meat of the goat at the conclusion of the sacrifice. Baŋan-Teroog, his senior wife, and his junior wife's two children. The old woman is holding a chicken ready for the next sacrifice

[FACING p. 33]

CHAPTER III

THE HOMESTEAD AND THE JOINT FAMILY

Homestead and Family—a Single Social Entity

● 361 592 PHYSICALLY a Tale settlement is an aggregation of homesteads irregularly distributed at varying distances from one another.[1] A homestead is the domicile of a domestic family. The edifice of pile and thatch, and its occupants, constitute a single entity. There is no word for either apart from the other. The native concept, *yir* (pl. *yɛa*), a house, means primarily the joint family as a coherent social unit residing in its own dwelling. An unoccupied homestead is a dead shell, left to crumble into ruins.

592 When a homestead is abandoned it becomes a *daboog* (pl. *dabaar*), a word applied both to an empty homestead in any stage of decay and to the site of a former homestead, and carrying two main and complementary implications that spring directly from the dominance of the lineage principle in Tale social values. *Daboog* stands for something good and worthy of praise when it refers to the site of a person's father's or grandfather's homestead, or, by extension, to the site or locality of an ancestor's homestead. A *daboog* in this sense is a symbol of the origins and a portent of the good fortune of an existing lineage; it is an object of personal attachment and religious reverence; though vacant it is not dead; the spirits of the ancestors still abide there, and it may be reoccupied some day; it is a symbol of the living continuity of a line of descent. *Daboog* can also be used to describe the site of a former human habitation left deserted and forlorn through the extinction of a line of descent. No ancestor spirits dwell there; it is an accursed spot, a monument of human sin, and a symbol of the most terrible mystical retribution that can befall a Taləŋ. A curse one sometimes hears uttered when a grave injury has been suffered at the hands of an unknown person is: 'May his house lie in ruins and tobacco be grown there (*K'u yir doon daboog ka ba ɛŋ taba waal nɛŋha*).' A ruined homestead provides an exceptionally fertile patch of soil, suitable for growing tobacco. If a man's line of descent is extinguished, there will be no one to claim ownership of his *daboog*, and anyone who wishes will come and plant tobacco there.

592 769 A homestead is always built for a particular family. From the day when the site is chosen it is the scene of human labour, of organized co-operation, and of religious and moral preoccupations. It must be lived in from the laying of the foundations, lest evil mystical agencies desecrate it. Ancestor shrines are immediately installed in it; for the spirits of a man's fathers and forefathers abide in his house, presiding

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

592

over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities 769
in their lifetime.

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's 592
father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is conse-
crated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, 783
and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who 778
formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tendaana under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebees*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them.

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the 592
elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has
three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They 181
represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another.

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two 592
planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic
descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and 571
the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Taləŋ than of the modern Englishman to say 592
that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall
imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their home- 361
steads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

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[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

no foundation in fact. The climate, the kind of raw material which is
592 plentifully at hand, the economic system, and the social organization
361 of the natives rather than the alleged lawlessness of former times, determine
their mode of house-building. In any case, homesteads very
often stand closer than fifty paces together, the distance at which a
mediocre shot can hit a tree—though I have seen an arrow carry four
times that distance.

A Taləŋ's home is his castle in the psychological rather than the
592 material sense. It is the centre and fount of his major interests, his
181 dominant purposes, his deepest emotional attachments, and his whole
scheme of values; it is his shelter, his storehouse, the stage of his
life's drama. The Tallensi, unlike many African peoples, have no age
sets or initiation schools. A person grows up and receives his entire
education at home. If he practises a craft, such as leatherwork, or is a
diviner, his home is his workshop or consulting place.

As an adult, all his economic enterprise issues from his home and is
devoted primarily to its upkeep. Unless he is one of the few *nouveaux
riches* of to-day he keeps all his material possessions there, and houses
all his livestock within its walls. His sex life, in maturity, is centred
there. His children, the supreme object of his aspirations, are born
and grow up in his home under his care and control. He worships his
immediate forbears there. His personal destiny, past, present, and
future, revolves about his home, its stages perpetuated in the many
shrines and other ritual objects that are housed in it. He receives his
friends and relatives at home, and dispenses hospitality there; and if he
[461] has nothing to do would as lief recline under the shade tree at his own
gateway as go making calls on others. Even the young men who like
gallivanting about the markets spend much of their leisure at home.

The quintessence of his home, to a Taləŋ, resides in his children,
592 and above all his sons, the vehicles of his immortality. That is the
181 essential meaning of *mar yiri*, 'to have a house'. Ask any native what
626 happens to a man who does not adequately expiate a sacrilege such as
murder. '*U yiri ŋmaarəme*—his house will fall to pieces,' is the answer,
given with emphatic and solemn conviction, and often with circumstantial
illustrations from experience or hearsay. A parent curses an
insubordinate child, a chief or tɛndaana curses a clansman who has
grossly insulted him, '*u ku nye yiri*—he will not see (i.e. have) a house',
that is, he will die without offspring to perpetuate his line and to sacrifice
to his spirit; and this is an extremely serious matter. It never fails
to bring the culprit to heel with humble apologies. On the other hand,
'*i na nye yiri*—you will have a house', is the most propitious blessing a
diviner can convey to a man from his ancestor spirits.

592 Patrilocal residence and the tendency for the lineage to be localized
593 give a man's domestic life greater continuity than a woman's. His
natal family and his conjugal family are both strung on the same

•361
592

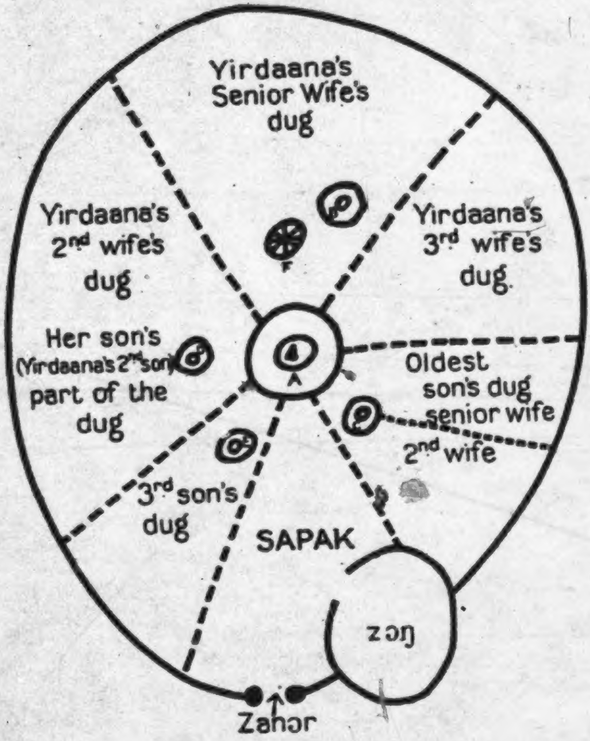
Yirdaana's Senior Wife's dug
Yirdaana's 2nd wife's dug
Yirdaana's 3rd wife's dug
F
A
Her son's (Yirdaana's 2nd son) part of the dug
Oldest son's dug senior wife
2nd wife
3rd son's dug
SAPAK
zɔŋ
Zahɔr

FIG. 2*a*. Diagram (not to scale) showing the layout of the different *dugət* in a large joint family homestead. The head of the homestead (*yirdaana*) has three living wives and three married sons, one with two wives.

A — Principal granary (*buur tenta'ar*) of the *yirdaana*
B — Small granary belonging to *yirdaana*
C — Oldest son's private small granary
D — Second son's private small granary
E — Third son's private small granary
F — *Yirdaana's Yin* shrine

[p. 52]

361●
592

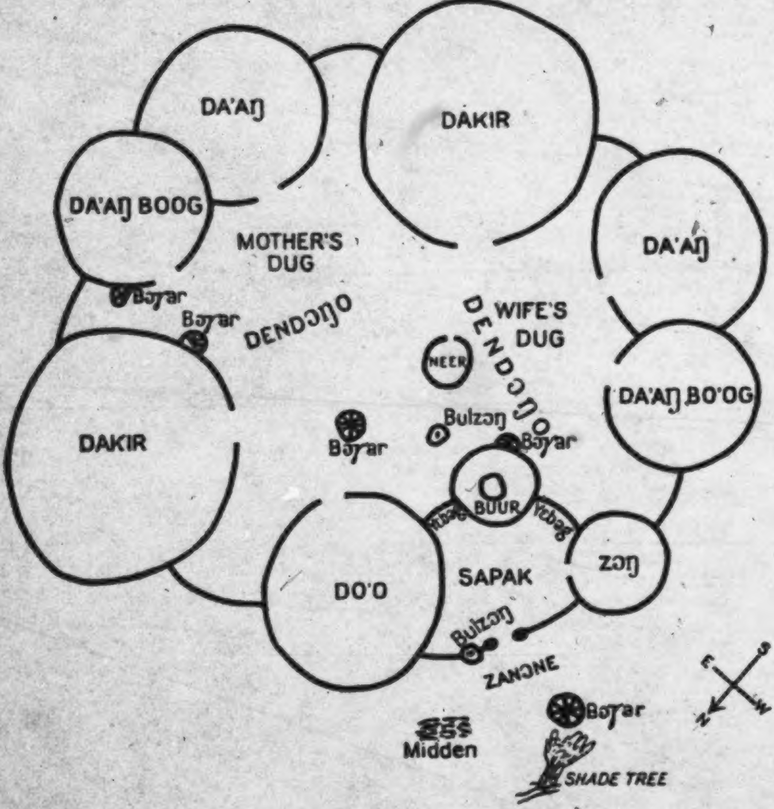
DA'AŊ
DAKIR
DA'AŊ BOOG
MOTHER'S DUG
DA'AŊ
Bɔɣar
Bɔɣar
DENDɔŊO
WIFE'S DUG
DENDɔŊO
NEER
DA'AŊ BO'OG
DAKIR
Bulzɔŋ
Bɔɣar
Bɔɣar
BUUR
Yebag
Yebag
ZɔŊ
SAPAK
DO'O
Bulzɔŋ
ZANɔNE
Bɔɣar
Midden
SHADE TREE
E
S
W
N

FIG. 2*b*. Diagram of Ɔndieso's homestead, showing the layout of the quarters and the rooms, (Scale: 1:45 approx.)

Glossary

Bɔyar	Ancestor shrine
Buur	Granary
Bulzɔŋ	Shelter for hens
Da'aŋ	Unroofed dry-season kitchen
Da'aŋboog	Storeroom and wet-season kitchen
Dakir	Sleeping-room
Do'o	Room for adolescent boys
Dendɔŋo	Open courtyard
Sapak	Livestock yard
Zanɔne	Open space at the gateway where the men foregather
Zɔŋ	The homestead head's special room
Neer	Grinding-room
Yebɔg	Low diyiding wall

[p. 53]

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish
hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and
unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every
[622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief
of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining
the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the
privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its
members.

351 Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the
sapak or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary
556 spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish
231 and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any.
[514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and
sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even
by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his
homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor
goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less
than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug
tendaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has
cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls
and guinea-fowls.

● [361] From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out
and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the
342 homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through
the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*,
and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the
room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed
between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities
are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable posses-
[556] sions, his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth,
the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that
to the Taləŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated
with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which
[782] wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the
principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain
their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers.
In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the
zɔŋ, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to
nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two
chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber
is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber,
communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey,
for the night.

342 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality.
778 It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

134 difficult. In areas where the flow of storm water is particularly swift, the top soil has been completely scoured away, leaving bare expanses of sub-soil. Where this has occurred close to roads, the rapid run-off results in considerable damage. After a very heavy rain sections of the road may be washed completely away. (An example of this occurred in August, 1936, on the road between Bolgatanga and Zuarungu.)

Primitive Nature of the People.

105 The people of North Mamprusi are divided into a number of tribes; they differ in their customs and speak different dialects of Mole, but their methods of living and farming are the same. They are all primitive pagans, with simple requirements. Little or no dress is worn other than a goatskin by men, and leaves or string by the women. There is no indigenous cotton industry, and cotton goods, which are increasingly worn to-day, especially around market centres, are all imported or manufactured by strangers, generally Moshis, in the Zongos.

Absence of Villages.

●361 An important feature of the district is that the people live in scattered compounds, unlike the Dagombas and South Mamprusis who live in villages and hamlets. The distance between compounds varies considerably; at one time it was probably about the length of a good arrow shot, but closer building around centres of importance, as near markets and lorry termini, is resulting in the formation of towns. This can be seen at places like Bolgatanga, and near Government stations. Each compound resembles a miniature fort and in the past there is little doubt that it served as such: it is roughly elliptical in shape and consists of a number of round mud houses opening inwards; and the whole is enclosed by a high mud wall. Roofs are made either flat, of beaten mud, or conical, and thatched. A single narrow doorway, which can be heavily barricaded, gives entrance to the compound: the space inside is divided into compartments by low walls. [231] Livestock are kept in an open compartment near the entrance. [241] The land lying between compounds is farmed intensively and manuring forms a definite part of the farming system.

Fixed Cultivation.

[161] 241 The high density of population necessitates a system of "fixed" cultivation. It is difficult to say whether the need for /"fixed" cultivation resulted in the people living on their land in

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate 596 association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and 362 her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. 576 Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room.

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know 593 about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. 596 He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Taləŋa can keep his own counsel if need be.

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not 593 remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At 581 one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another.

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. 581 They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with 589 men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously mentally defective; another was an invert; [158] two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

146 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among
164 the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to
determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have
been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do
not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects.
They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the
common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. The
[657] natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government
dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the
district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the
point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little
better off than their fathers were.

291 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from
515 the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in
the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women
go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for
the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In
addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant
of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes
are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

● 364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead
is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the
homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse
midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of
[514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The
stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake
[240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life
do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human
excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value
on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an
183 impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself.
He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful
and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he
is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the
value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends.
Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical
superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to 613
their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with 621
the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant 571
agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, 182
religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties 613
with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and 621
the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted, most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face communication and association in the organization of their collective life. Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by
their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the [212
absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, 401
communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of 371] ●
Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are the most important factors in the situation.

The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo. 613

Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster 621
of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligər yidɛm (see above, p. 57), homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic lineage with which Ligər yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkəŋto'o yidɛm, the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son (*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

252 262 desired, between two overlapping leaves. As soon as the water boils the cakes are arranged one on top of the other inside the pot, which is then closed tightly with a lid or calabash. The cakes are thus cooked by the steam, and are ready in 15 minutes. They are like baked porridge in appearance and are eaten with melted shea-butter spread over them and a sprinkling of salt and red pepper. *Guor* is principally cooked for market sale, but is occasionally cooked by the housewife to vary the menu.

Milk (*bihim*)

262 234 Milk is obtained only from cows and is eaten as curds (*bigbihir*) mixed with flour. Herdboys, however, when out on the pasture sometimes milk the cows for a drink.

Shea-Butter (*kpaam*)

252 262 There are five stages in the making of shea-butter:

1. The nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) are crushed with a stone to a brown pulp.
2. The pulp is placed in a large open pot (*sar*) over a fire, and stirred with a stick for a considerable time till it is a thick, sticky mass.
3. This is then ground quite fine. The grinding releases the oil.
4. It is now washed in several changes of water, being stirred continually with the hand, until the oil rises to the surface.
5. The oil is skimmed off the water, melted over a fire, and again skimmed till pure white oil is obtained. This is put into calabashes or small pots. [278] The dark oil-scum (*kpabut*) is kept for medicinal purposes. It is only used externally. The brown fibrous residue left after the washing process is made [372] into small balls and dried. This is *burum* and is used for making fires.

241
[372]

The stalks are chopped from their roots with an old hoe, collected into bundles, and stacked near the compound for use as fuel in the dry season, and for building purposes. Throughout the dry season the ground is hard and bare, except for the roots of cereals lying about; it remains in this condition until the farming cycle starts again with the approach of rain in the following year.

Yields of Crops.

The methods by which yield data were collected have already been described on page 16. The yields from nearly a thousand sample plots have been recorded at the ten centres in North Mamprusi during the years 1932, 1934, 1935, and 1936. These yields have been analysed according to district, year of record, and whether or not the plots were manured in that year, and the analysis is given as Tables 5 and 6 of Appendix II. The number of sample plots from which each mean was obtained is given in brackets, as an index of reliability. (Unfortunately it is not possible to give standard errors of the means since the first recorded individual plot yields have been mislaid and only the mean yields and the numbers of plots were placed on record.) It will be seen from this table that wide fluctuations in yield occur from year to year and from one district to another in the same year. 1932 and 1936 were generally recognised to be good years and it is interesting to note that in both these years the rainfall curves were very similar. They show: showers of rain in February; good planting rains in early April, with curves rising to peaks in May, and then falling slightly at the end of June for the ripening of early millet; after that a steady rise to second peaks at the end of September, instead of August, which do not fall quickly until the end of October. The year 1934 was considered to be rather below the average due to shortage of rain, both early and late in the season, and an excess at the time early millet was ripening. From Table 5 in Appendix II the mean yields for the more important mixtures of crops have been taken and these are given in Table 3 opposite to the nearest 5 lbs. per acre; this table should be considered in conjunction with Table 2 (text). Yields from plots which were manured in the year of record are classified as such; it was not possible to consider either the quality or the quantity of manure applied in relation to yield. The remarkable effect of quite small dressings of native compost (see page 23) upon yields is noteworthy.

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The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

728 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire when its allied clan made peace.

727 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the
721 old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in
721 its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

[621] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region
[182] is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was
726 that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied
● 411 men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows,
[701] their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

[1] A clan-head could initiate a just war of revenge, with the consent of all the clan elders, and after consulting a diviner, in theory without incurring mystical blood-guilt. And yet, in after years, misfortunes falling on his descendants might be ascribed to this act.

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount
over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment
holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary
politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments
that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are
subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and
kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations
between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in
every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though
corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties
to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit
are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very
careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen
who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage
for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might
descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored
grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the
enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would
be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder
or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the
cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have
seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was [462
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights.
As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very
heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men,
fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a
general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out
between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was
told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have
been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of
the wound.

PLATE XV

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(*a*) A mimic war parade at Ba'ari to inaugurate an elder's funeral.

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(*b*) The widest politico-ritual community includes all the Tallensi. Part of the vast gathering of people from all over Taleland who come to take part in or watch the concluding ceremonies and dances of the Golib Festival. Note the dust cloud raised by the dancers.

[facing p. 256]

Plate IV

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Building Play. In the background a newly built room. On the right of the group a big boy demonstrating to a small boy. Behind them part of a 'house' they have finished. On the left, girls making the swish and explaining the process to the ethnographer's wife.

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868

Learning Marksmanship. Note how intently the two smaller boys, who have only recently acquired real bows, are watching the technique of their older companion

[FACING p. 49]

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔyar*, 133
"river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226
river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 196
social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226
clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789]
and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226
expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226
customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203
falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market. Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622]
country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226
day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush. The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [441]
partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482]
But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

PLATE IX

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(*a*) A large boulder in the middle of a settlement forms a natural mortar where young girls go to stamp guinea corn.

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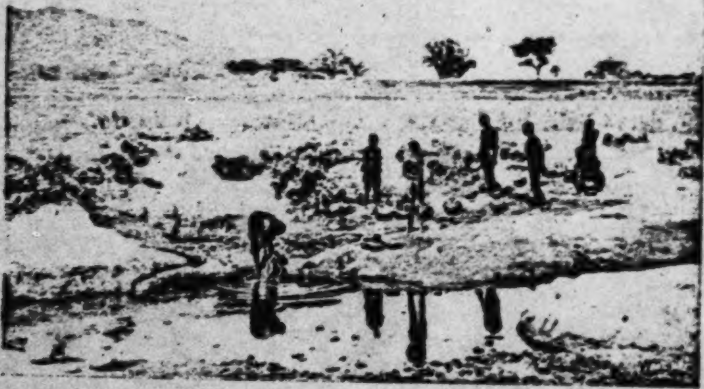

(*b*) Women at a waterhole in the early rainy season. This waterhole serves homesteads within a radius of over a quarter of a mile.

[facing p. 176]

800 deal with the conversion of these raw materials into cooked food for
the maintenance of all by the almost exclusive efforts of the woman.

The preparation of food is a woman's task. Though cooking is
462 done by both sexes, men cook only on ritual and special occasions
252 and, as a rule, out of doors. Women always cook in the kitchen, as it
343 is a taboo to prepare food for everyday consumption outside the
compound. As we have already mentioned, every woman other than a young wife has her own quarters (*dug*) consisting of several rooms. Of these, the most important for the present paper are the grinding room (*neer*) and the kitchens (*da'aŋ*). Not every woman possesses her own grinding-room, but she may use that of any other woman in her husband's compound, or of a related neighbouring compound, and no one may refuse her. The owner's permission is never asked, but a woman will not enter a grinding-room if she observes another's grain lying on the grinding-platform.

343 The grinding-room is the source of much friction within the com-
pound. It is the cause or pretext of women's quarrels which often
578 involve their husbands as well. Disputes arise mainly over the ques-
tion of priority, or about the misuse of the grinding stones, e.g. leaving the *baarig* soiled with soup ingredients. Hence, a man will try to build a grinding-room for each wife in order to maintain the peace.

Inside the grinding-room is a low, semicircular platform (*neer*) the
343 surface of which has two or three shallow depressions with their
● 412 appropriate grindstones (*neekaŋ*). These vary in weight, shape, and
252 texture according to the purpose for which they are intended. There
is a heavy and rough grindstone—*ŋmaarig*—used for crushing the whole grain; a smaller and flatter one—*baarig*—which crushes the rough corn into fine flour (*zɔm*); and a small, round stone—*ziba'axneer*—used only for grinding soup ingredients such as dried vegetables, red pepper, rock-salt, dawa-dawa-seed balls, dried meat, &c. If a grinding-room lacks the latter stone the soup ingredients are mixed with a little flour and ground with the *baarig*. The flour is added so that the stone should be left clean and dry.

343 The kitchen consists of two adjoining rooms, a covered one
(*da'ambɔk*) used during the wet season, which serves also as the store-room for the owner's produce, her firewood, and cooking-pots, and an open one (*da'aŋ*) used during the dry season. However, it happens

Plate II

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A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

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Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

Manuring.

It has already been mentioned that manuring forms a definite part of the farming system; there is scarcely a single compound which has not a compost heap of some kind in front of it, and everyone is familiar with the value, and the use, of manure. It is surprising, therefore, to find no great attention paid to either quality or quantity. Table 2, column 3, shows that 12% only of the total area cultivated received a dressing of manure in the year of survey. The manure (compost) consists of household sweepings, that is, the dung from livestock mixed with vegetable waste; but the amount of manure which is accumulated in this way is very small by comparison with the amount which could be made if a little more care was exercised in its preparation. Women and children carry the manure from the midden in baskets and put it on to the land in small heaps, just before, or just after, early millet is planted. From these heaps it is spread around at the next hoeing. The baskets hold from 4 to 15 lbs. and the heaps are made from 6′ to 8′ apart; this gives an average dressing of from 2 to 5 tons per acre. The yield figures (see Tables 3 and 4 below) leave no doubt as to the value of these small dressings of manure. Undesirable as it may be from a sanitation point of view, the vigorous growth of crops around compounds and near to markets, suggests that nightsoil plays no small part in the maintenance of soil fertility (a point which should be remembered when considering the provision of latrines: a septic tank used to compost vegetable waste is much to be preferred, where practicable, to pit latrines and incineration). 241

Implements.

The agricultural implements used by a people are generally a good index to the standard of their agriculture. This is certainly true of the implements used by the people in North Mamprusi: they are very rudimentary and the standard of cultivation is low. The hoe, with which most of the work is done, consists of simple oblong-shaped iron blade, 7″ long and 5″ wide, slightly concave on its inner face. The middle of the top of the blade is drawn up into a ring, this is forced on to the tapered end of a short hooked stick which serves as a handle; the whole weighs under 2 lbs. The blade is set on to the handle at an angle of about 85°, and the hoe is used by working it towards the body. The handle is about 1½′-2′ long, made generally from "ginga" (Nankani) (Diospyros mespiliformis), or "gopelaga" (Acacia sieberriana). For chopping, or cultivation in particularly hard ground, an adze is used; this is made of heavier iron than the hoe, 1½″-3″ wide and 4″-6″ long, 412

412 [177] [326] mounted on a similar handle. Hoe-blades are now made from scrap iron, mainly parts of old motor cars and old railway sleepers; a hoe is sold in the market for 2d. or 3d., which is well within the purchasing power of everyone. It is not many years, however, since hoes were made from locally smelted iron; they were then not so easy to come by and some of the poorer farmers used hoes of hard wood.

241 134 The coarse nature of the soil enables a shallow cultivation to be given effectively with these light implements after a fall of rain. When the ground is dry and hard, cultivation is very laborious and it is frequently neglected at a time when needed most. This is often the case early in the season when precarious rains make a soil-mulch desirable.

Preparation for Planting.

243 Two of the most important crops, early millet and guinea corn, are sown after the second big rain of the year, this is generally in the first week of April. The soil, which has been left untilled since the burn-over after the previous year's harvest, is very hard until humidity rises with the approaching rain, and there is very little time to do any preliminary cultivation. On the majority of farms the only preparation for sowing is to collect the remains of the previous season's crops into heaps and to burn, and sometimes to carry-out manure; very occasionally a little hoeing is done.

Planting Major Crops.

412 241 On the morning following the big planting rain the whole countryside turns out to do one of its few really full day's work on the farm for the year. Men walk over the farm with stout sticks about 6' long, cut from "tcheea" (Nankani) (Anoegeissus leiocarpus), or "gopelaga" (Nankani) (Acacia sieberriana), sharpened at the end to a flat point, resembling a narrow-bladed oar; or sometimes fitted with a worn hoe blade. With these sticks, holes are prodded at random 2' 6" to 3' apart in the moist earth; the soil being ejected with a twist of the wrists. 241 Women and children follow the men with the seed of early millet and cowpeas mixed in a calabash. The calabash is held in the hand between the third and fourth fingers, and three to six seeds of early millet,

PLATE III

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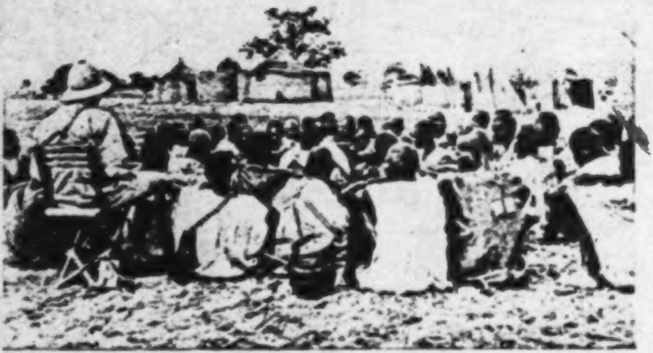

(*a*) Elders of a Maximal Lineage assemble to sacrifice to their Founder.

The Maximal Lineage is a corporate unit: The elders of a maximal lineage, representing all its component segments, assemble to perform a sacrifice on the grave of one of their founding ancestors. Note that (a) only men are present; (b) the members of each segment sit together; (c) the close-packed form of the group, an index of the strong sense of lineage solidarity in such situations.

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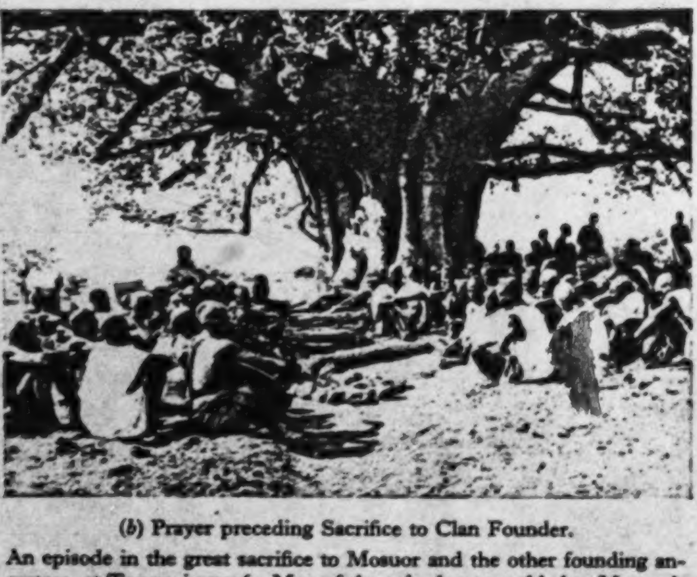
769



(*b*) Prayer preceding Sacrifice to Clan Founder.

An episode in the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other founding ancestors, at Tongo, in 1936. Men of the sub-clan assembled at Mosuor's grave (stones in foreground) and tree shrine (baobab tree). The photograph was taken as the prayer preceding the sacrifice was being offered.

[facing p. 56]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE VIII

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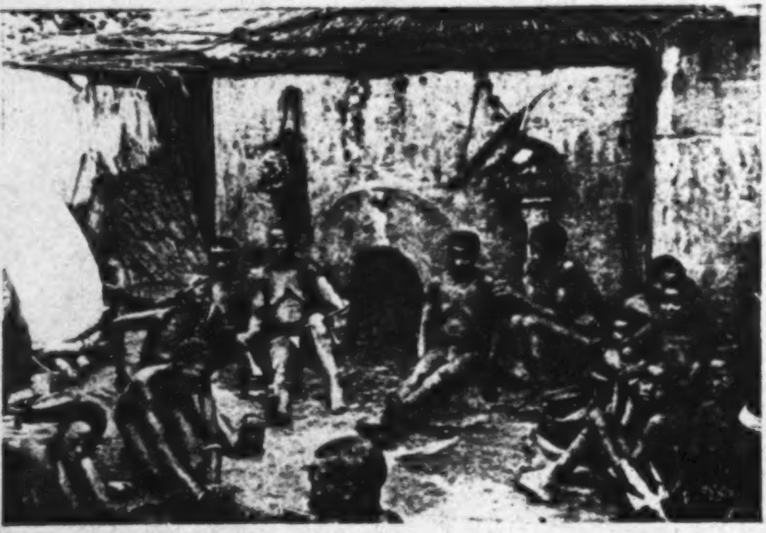

(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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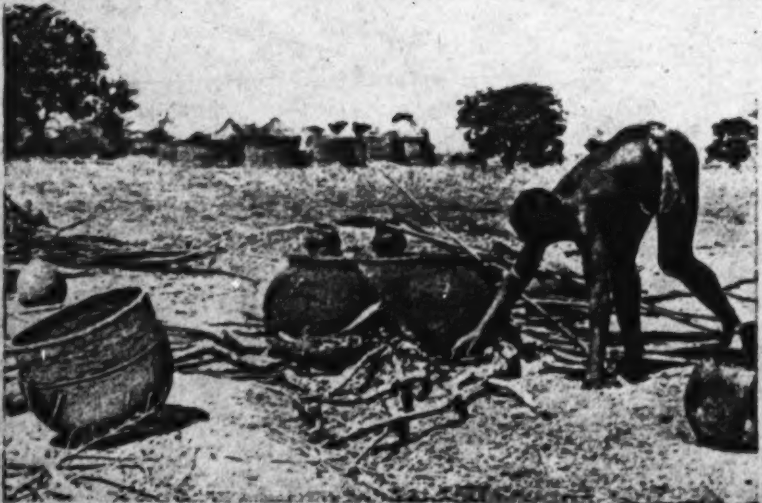

(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔyayabolis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[FACING p. 161]

PLATE IX

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● 415
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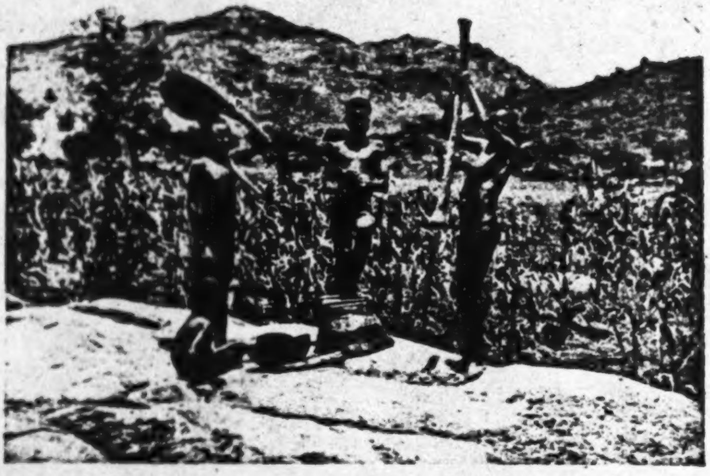

(*a*) A large boulder in the middle of a settlement forms a natural mortar where young girls go to stamp guinea corn.

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(*b*) Women at a waterhole in the early rainy season. This waterhole serves homesteads within a radius of over a quarter of a mile.

[facing p. 176]

PLATE XII

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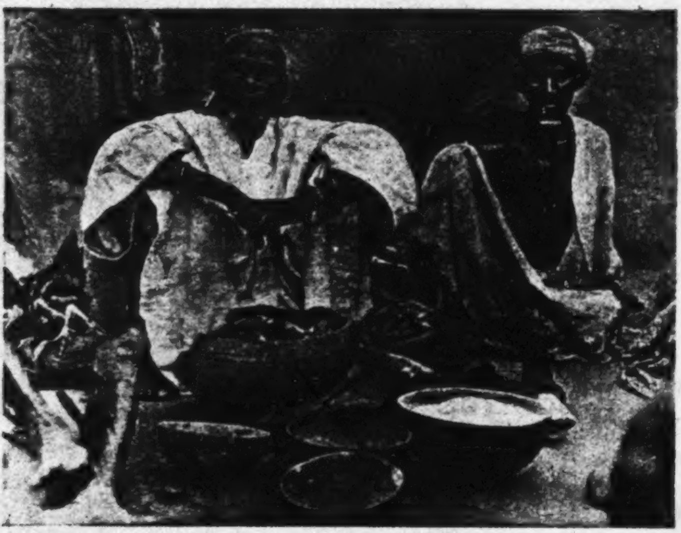

(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔɣar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔɣar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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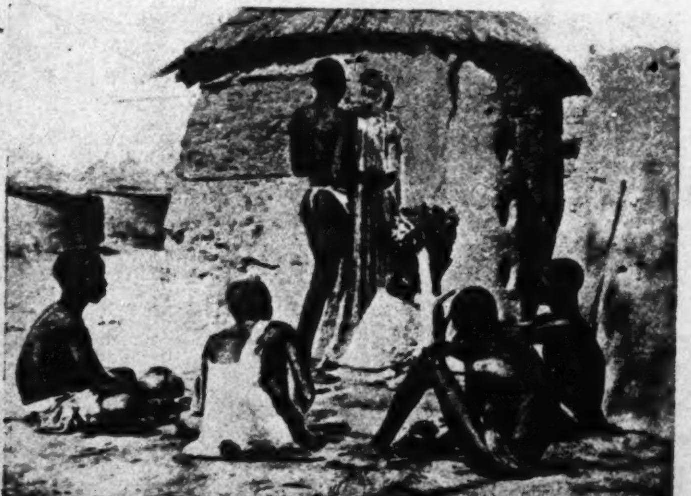

(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔɣar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p.225]

PLATE XIV

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● 415
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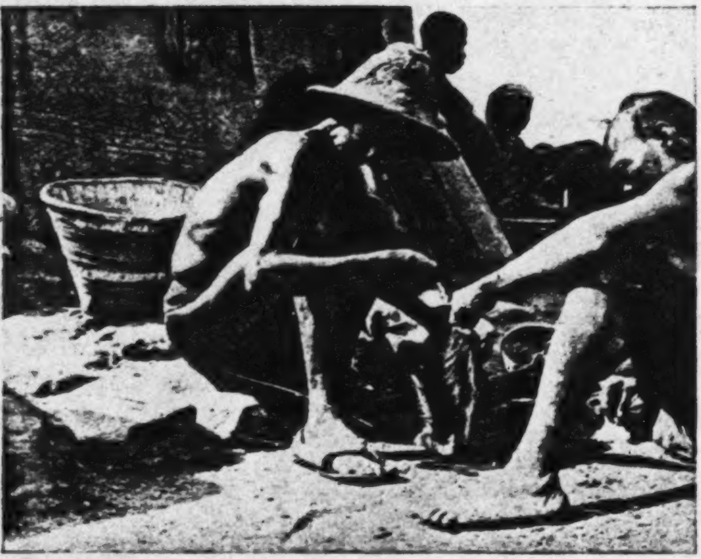

(*a*) *Sunzɔp m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

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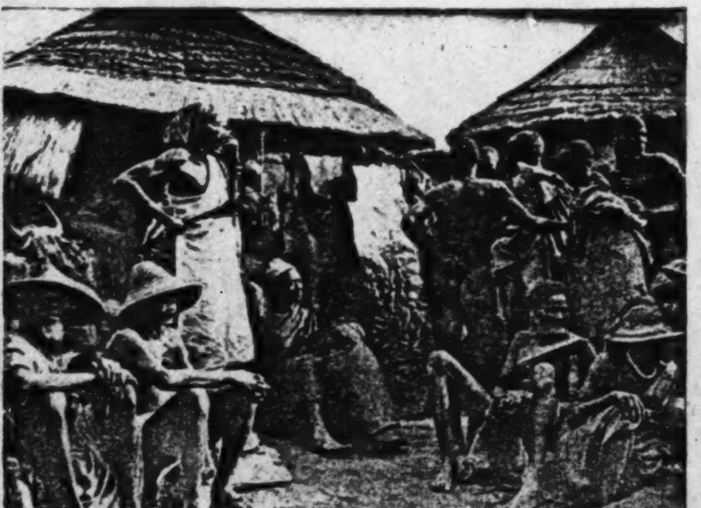

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tendaana at his homestead.

[facing p.241]

3:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE)1

[facing p.112]

PLATE 5

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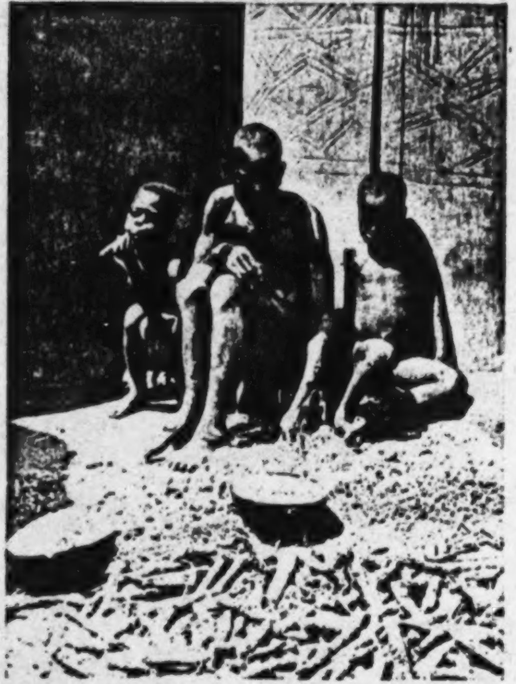

a. A senior wife (*tɔyakpeem*) in her *dɛndɔŋo* sorting newly harvested millet. With her are one of her daughter's children and the small son of a co-wife

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b. Homeward bound from a visit to her father's house, where she has received a gift of some millet and other foodstuffs

PLATE 7

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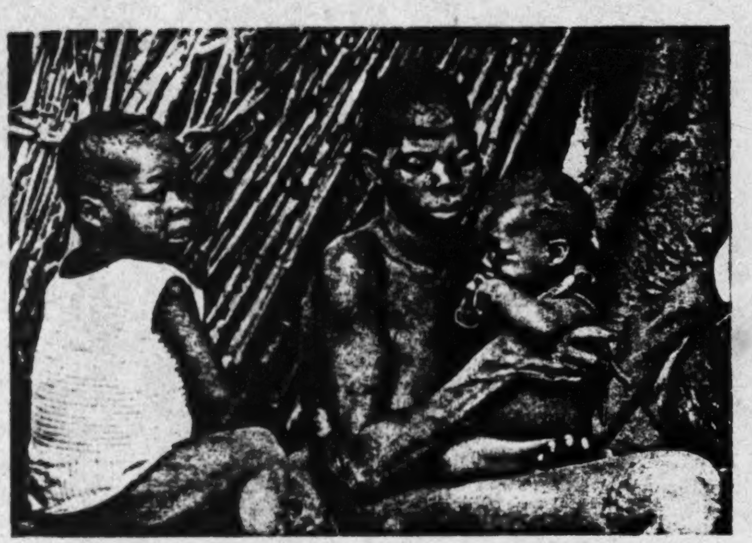

a. A senior wife takes care of her junior co-wives' infants while they are away at the water-hole

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● 415
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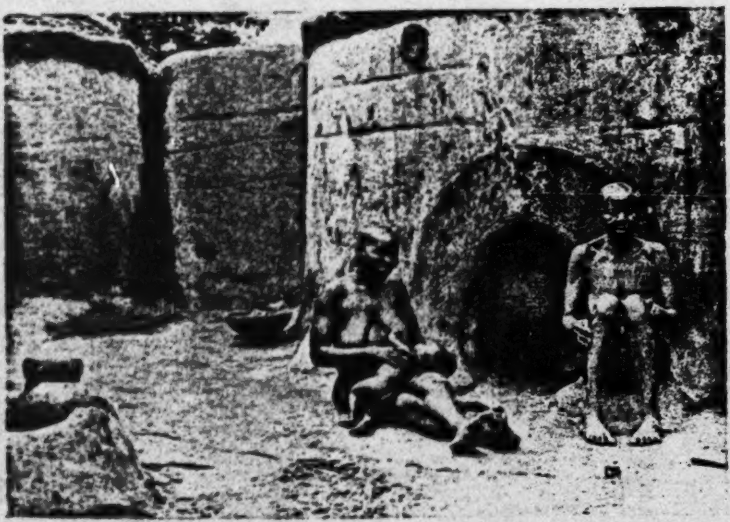

b. A pair of devoted co-wives. The younger woman (with her infant) is about 35, the older about 65, their husband over 70. The older woman has a son of about 45

[facing p.128]

PLATE 8

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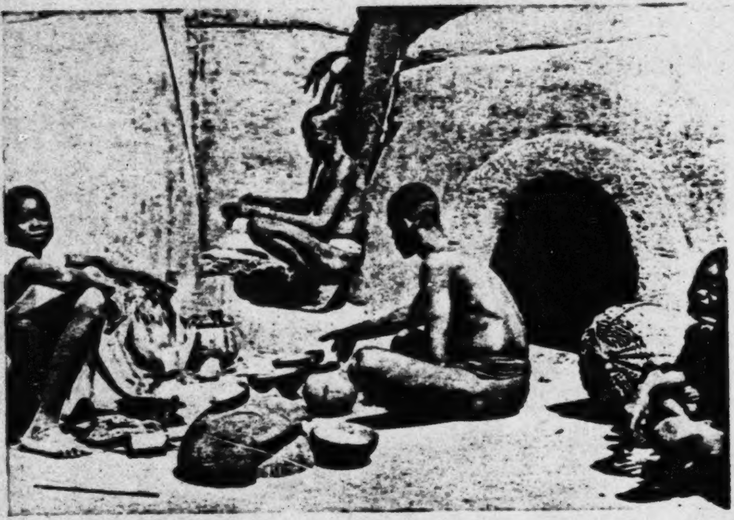

a. A domestic sacrifice of fowls, guinea-fowls, and beer. The head of the joint family is addressing the shrine, which occupies a recess in his senior wife's *Dug*

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b. Omara and his four youngest daughters—each the daughter of a different wife—having a snack at mid-day

[facing p. 129]

PLATE 9

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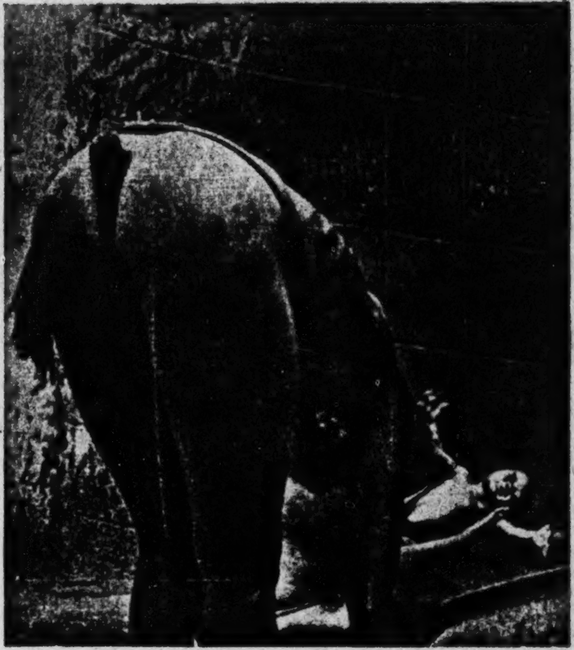
a. The tribulations of motherhood: the daily bath and massage of the mother after childbirth



b. The husband's mother and a co-wife of the new mother give her new-born baby its daily bath. The water is so hot that the baby goes rigid with pain

[facing p. 192]

PLATE 10

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a. Kinship patterns are not specific in public etiquette or domestic intercourse. An unposed group having a rest in the middle of the day. From left to right: *Kpana Teŋ*, his daughter-in-law, his grandson, and his youngest child

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b. A father eating with his youngest son while his oldest son lounges beside them (Hill Talis)

[facing p. 193]

PLATE 13

593

a. Children of a single domestic family. From left to right: Da'ano'o's child, his late father's child, his agnatic cousin's (i.e. classificatory brother's) child

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b. Four generations. From left to right: Nyaaŋzum, his own mother with his infant son, his older (deceased) half-brother's son, who married his mother after his father's death and brought him up

[facing p. 272]

PLATE 14

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a. Siblings by the same parents have breakfast together. The bigger children are a boy and a girl. Note that they are eating out of the same dish

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b. Successive (*nyeer*) *soog* brothers

[facing p. 273]

not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking; the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace, and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it; this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her. He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kɔwoor*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem. The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the water-holes collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely, but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

PLATE III

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1. Bringing home firewood: Mother and daughter

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2. A woman in her kitchen (posed)

[facing p. 264]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

NAMNAM

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes.
The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language
Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls,
and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse
and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have
been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the
Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came
here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a
people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They
spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and
Zan became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people
whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
● [421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The
Ten'dan' makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European
doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but
it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded
by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men
(Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We
met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge
of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1]
report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed,
informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
[783] given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

CHAPTER XI

LAND, LOCALITY, AND THE EARTH

Definition of the Bonds between People and the Land

As we have already seen, there is in Tale social organization an intrinsic connexion between every defined social group or part of a social group and a specific locality. Now there are, as yet, no communities in Taleland consisting of aggregations of individuals or families of completely heterogeneous cultural or genealogical origin, whose sole common interest in the locality they occupy is utilitarian, and whose sole bond with one another is their common subjection to a single political authority. As we shall see, even in the new peripheral settlements, which are now, under the pressure of land shortage, being permanently occupied by mixed populations, the decisive bonds of association are ties of consanguineous and affinal kinship. It could hardly be otherwise in a society so homogeneous and also lacking centralized government. 621

The connexion between community and locality has the three aspects found in all Tale social institutions. It is utilitarian—for men build their homes on the land and get their livelihood from it; it is also morphological, particular units of the social structure being tied to defined localities so that the social unit and its locality form a single entity; and it has a moral and ritual coefficient. Men have moral and ritual relations with one another and with the land in virtue of their occupancy or utilization of particular portions of its surface. We have touched on this in our preliminary remarks on the Tale concept of *tɛŋ*. We return, here, to the further elucidation of this concept.

The bonds between a community and a locality, or between an individual or a lineage and land, are summed up in the idea of 'ownership' (*solɔm*). This concept, which occurs in various contexts, has certain general implications. Where it is a matter of property such as land, or where persons or localities associated with social groups are concerned, to 'own' (*so*) them means to have responsibilities towards and for them, rights over and on behalf of them, privileges and duties in relation to other individuals or corporate groups in virtue of being the 'master' (*daana* or *-raana*) of the land, locality, or person in question. In every case, there is no such thing as purely utilitarian ownership. Utilitarian ownership exists within a framework of the relations of a defined social group to the land, the person, the locality; and this framework, in turn, is held together by a scheme of moral and ritual values and sanctions. 621 421

Thus, in the case of land, exercising or acquiring 'ownership' for productive purposes is regulated by clanship and kinship ties and limited by the moral and ritual values of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. In some circumstances clanship or kinship may be the more important determinant, in others ritual considerations may be the vital factor. The three aspects of 'ownership' may be vested in the same individual or group, or in different individuals or groups. But they are always there.

621 421 The natives cannot imagine any tract of land or territory being totally unconnected with a human group. Most tracts of uninhabited bush are 'owned' by chiefs, who have ritual jurisdiction over hunting rights. But some tracts of untilled and uninhabited land (e.g. between Biuŋ and the river) appear to have no 'owners', either secular or ritual. The natives say the 'owners' have died out. The land did at one time have a connexion, perhaps only a ritual connexion, with a human group, and this connexion remains mystically effective still. Such areas of *wasak*, as the natives call them, are economically a free good. Anyone can come and build or cultivate there. But a man who does so will try to find some person or some clan to offer sacrifice to the Earth on his behalf, as the residuary legatee of the defunct 'owners', through local or clanship ties with them. If he fails to find anyone, he will consult a diviner to find out for himself where the sacred spots are in this stretch of *wasak* and make the sacrifices himself, thus creating a moral bond with it. Nowhere is the Earth inert; and its mystical powers are a reflex of its relations with human groups.

The three functionally differentiated aspects of man's relations to territory in Taleland are interconnected in Tale thought and custom in a rather complex way, and local differences blur the general principles. The simplest approach will be from the starting-point of land used for agricultural purposes. This is by far the most important economic use of land, but not the only one. There are few products of nature on the earth's surface that the natives do not make some economic use of, or rely on for other practical purposes. It is easy to see, therefore, why the natural environment is built into the social organization and invested with values and meaning in the social philosophy and ritual beliefs of the Tallensi. Our analysis would lead to the same conclusions if we started from uncultivated bush (*moog*), for instance, the source of essential products such as firewood, wild fruits, shea nuts, thatching grass, reeds for mat-making, rafters, medicine roots, and so forth, as well as of game and wild fowl.

Farm-land and Subsistence

311 Land means many things to the Tale farmer. He distinguishes, firstly, between the soil (*tam*) and the arable, or tilled land (*kuob*). He recognizes and takes into account different kinds and qualities of soil. This is something independent of the tillage of the land; and, conversely, cultivation (*kuo*, from *kɔ*, to hoe) turns any kind of soil (*tam*) into arable (*kuob*). Tilled land, again, is classified, without reference to soil qualities, by its location and by the kind of crops grown on it. Thus, every farmer has one or more home farms (*saman*) in the settlement and one or more bush farms (*poog*) in an area free of human habitations. In addition, a particular farm is merely a parcel of land, a bit carved out of a *tɛŋ*. In this context a *tɛŋ* is a stretch of territory in its useful, material aspect. One can speak of such and such a *tɛŋ* as being very fertile, or as having a sandy soil (*tambiilug*).

241 731 Farming is the basis of the Taləŋ's livelihood. A failure of crops, nowadays, spells widespread privation. Thirty years ago it would have brought famine. Tallensi often talk of this, especially when unpropitious

581 which cannot be done without the assistance of women. He can command other services from her. For instance, nowadays he can send her
593 to buy grain for him in distant markets and sell it for him in the home market; and he can ask for many little services that make life more comfortable for him. A man has a right to these services; but it is a right limited by the principle of reciprocity.[1] In return a man is bound to protect and care for his wife, in particular to provide her with a home, with food, and with curative treatment if she is ill.

There is an obvious material basis for the economic reciprocity of
593 husband and wife. Primarily it is a function of the system of economic
592 co-operation, by means of which the household satisfies its material wants. The head of the family owns the land and the livestock from which all draw their sustenance. The men do the heavy work of farming and care for the livestock. The women perform the tasks already mentioned. Within this subsistence unit the rule of reciprocity of economic rights and duties governs the economic relations of parent and child, of brother and brother, as well as those of husband and wife. For it is an application of the wider principle that all those who pool their labour in the common task of providing food and shelter for the household are entitled, severally, to a just share in the product of their common labour.

The authority of husband over wife in the matter of economic duties
593 and services is tempered, also, by a principle that really follows as a
●421 logical corollary upon the principle just stated. The products of individual industry and enterprise belong to the individual, subject to the nominal over-right of anyone who has authority over him or her, in particular, of the head of the family. The rule applies to all property relations between the members of the family. Thus, as soon as a wife acquires a *dug* of her own she begins to have a certain degree of economic autonomy, and this increases with the passage of time, as her children become more and more able to do without her regular care. She has her own vegetable plot allocated to her by her husband. She often has a ground-nut plot of her own, which she cultivates herself. She has her small private store of grain, obtained by gift from her father or brothers or other kinsmen. Her vegetables, her ground-nuts, and her grain do not go into the pool of family resources. They do, however, serve to supplement these resources; for it is a woman's duty to provide the vegetable food, and it would be unthinkable for her not to use other supplies she may possess to feed her children and her husband in time of scarcity. But if her private supplies are not required for this purpose she can dispose of them as she pleases. She can exchange them for money or goods, or use them to give hospitality to her own kin or guests. The same rule holds for such things as shea fruit and shea butter, which
[437] it is a woman's duty to provide for the household. Thus, it is common for women to barter surplus shea nuts for household utensils, and these are entirely their own property.

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[1] Cf. p. 213 below.

are entirely their own property. A woman owns the sleeping-mats she makes. A potteress is in the same position as a blacksmith or leather-worker. She keeps the money or natural products for which she exchanges her pots. Nowadays many women who live near a market carry on a regular or intermittent petty trade in cooked food. Sometimes, borrowing the small capital (two or three shillings is sufficient) with which to start, they keep the profits of their trade. It is not uncommon for women to own livestock, mainly poultry but often sheep and goats, and occasionally a cow. They may be obtained by gift or purchase, in the case of small stock, or by exchanging the natural increase of small stock for more valuable stock. A woman's sheep, goat, or cow will be herded with the family livestock, but her 'ownership' (*solɔm*, from *so*, to own) remains secure. 593 421 ● [426]

A woman's clothing, and her household utensils, most of which she provides for herself, belong to her solely. They are distributed, on her death, to her daughters, daughters-in-law, and sisters. Any money or livestock she may possess passes to her sons on her death, these being what might be called consumers' capital goods, the appropriate owners of which are men. They remain, therefore, in her *dug*, and do not accrete to the patrimonial property of her husband's effective minimal lineage. But it is an accepted principle that her husband has an over-right to them in her lifetime. For, as the natives put it, 'How can a man own his wife and not own the products of her labour?' 768 422 593

There is a quibble in this statement, the concept 'own' being used first in the sense of 'to have authority over', and secondly to mean 'having full rights of disposal over'—rights *in personam* being equated with rights *in rem*, to speak in lawyer's language.[1] And the Tallensi are not blind to this. Theoretically a man is entitled to utilize his wife's property as he wishes. In practice, he would not dare to do so without her consent, and the transaction is looked upon as a loan (*samɔr*). True, like all loans within the domestic family, it is not subject to book-keeping. But just as the woman feels morally bound to put her possessions at her husband's disposal if he is in difficulties, so her husband feels in honour bound to repay her in time, and generously, if he has any self-respect. Similarly, if a woman contracts a debt without ~~her~~ husband's knowledge and explicit permission he cannot be held liable. But no 'man of sense' would publicly repudiate his wife's debt. He reserves his reproaches for the privacy of the home. Significantly, a man does not, as a rule, settle his wife's debt. He will try to temporize with the creditor—an art in which the Tallensi are past masters—until his wife succeeds in finding the wherewithal to satisfy him. Or, if the husband cannot avoid paying the debt, he considers this as an advance 593 426 paternal control when he has no more fathers in the nuclear lineage. 613 The death of his own father marks the beginning of what might be called this process of emancipation, though it is not overtly felt to be 885 that by the natives. As previous references have shown, this is usually the thin end of the wedge that in due course splits the joint family economically and eventually gives the sons jural and ritual independence. It is not too much to say that the cycle of fission and reintegration in the joint family, with its co-ordinate processes of ramification in the lineage, is kept in motion by the deaths of fathers. That is one reason why the relations of successive generations are most conspicuously symbolized in funeral rites and ceremonies.

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[1] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession', *Iowa Law Review*, xx. 2, Jan. 1935, for an illuminating discussion of the anthropological relevance of these legal concepts.

Underlying all changes in status due to the extinction of particular 421 social relationships are changes in property relations which include, for the Tallensi, both rights over people and rights over material objects and economic resources. These rights pass from one generation to the next by inheritance or succession. There are rights over farm-land, the basic capital resource of the natives, and over homesteads; rights of disposal over livestock and other valuables, as well as over services and social bonds that have been created in exchange for valuables; rights over the working power and allegiance of men, women, and children; and last but not least, rights to the custody of ancestor shrines and other religious objects and to the politico-ritual offices that go with some of them.

All these property relations are tied directly to the lineage structure; 613 they are graded and interlocked with one another in conformity with that structure. They fall into two major categories: patrimonial rights 421 and property, for which the Tallensi have a specific term, *faar*; and individual rights and property, for which there is no specific term. Looking at it through native eyes, in terms of the continuity of the lineage and the march of the generations, we can see why this is so. *Faar* belongs to the lineage—it may be only the nuclear lineage or it may be the maximal lineage. All the members of the lineage are potential heirs to it. But the man who is in possession at a given time has complete freedom in using it—though not in disposing of it. On the other hand, individually acquired property and rights belong to the individual. A 'fatherless' man is free to use, dispose of, or destroy his individually acquired property—be it a piece of land, an animal, a garment, money, or whatnot—as he wishes. A man subject to some degree of paternal authority is in theory obliged to be ruled by his 'father' in the use and disposal of his individual property, though in practice he has a very large measure of freedom in this matter. But the crucial point is this. Individual property becomes patrimonial property when, as inevitably happens on the death of the original owner, it is inherited. In this way it comes about that every segment of a lineage tends to have its own transmissible *faar*.

593 882 his father's household making an essential contribution to its economy by his labour and skill; he is his father's future heir; he will one day sacrifice to his father's spirit; above all, it is through him that his father's agnatic line is socially and physically perpetuated. And yet there is the cleavage of successive generations between them and the self-differentiation of the son which begins in childhood.

593 ●421 From adolescence onwards economic co-operation is the sheet anchor of the relationship between a youth and his father. The guiding principle is the rule that all those who work together to supply the needs of the household are entitled to a just share in the products of their common labour, and its corollary that the fruits of individual labour belong to the individual. But the working of this rule is complicated by the fact that the head of the household owns the land and 'owns' (that is, has authority over and responsibility for) his dependants. Thus a man 'owns' his son's labour and the products of it. Strictly speaking, a son cannot own property of any kind while his father is alive, and a father can dispose of a son's property as he pleases. By this rule a man does not even 'own' his children if his father is alive; and this means proxy father as well as own father. Tallensi assert this rule very emphatically, both in speech and in act, for they hold it to be the crucial sign of a father's authority. Though this authority arises automatically from the fact of begetting, its most concrete expression is found in the economic relations of father and son. When I asked the Chief of Tongo how many cattle he had he replied soberly that he had none; all his cattle belonged to his old father Nakyɛna'ab. Though, in practice, Nakyɛna'ab will not forbid the chief from doing what he pleases with these cattle, the chief never disposes of a cow, either in ritual or by sale or in jural transactions such as the payment of bride-price, without telling his father and obtaining the old man's formal consent.

The Tallensi regard the economic relations, the jural relations, and the moral and ritual relations of father and son as different aspects of the same thing. Each of these categories of relations has a binding force on the other categories. A man 'owns' his son because he begot him; but he sometimes says that he has authority over his son because the latter is dependent on him and that he has responsibilities for his son because the latter works for him. In the same way a son must work for his father as an obligation of filial piety; but his work is also the return he makes for his father's economic support and for the ritual and jural responsibility his father bears on his behalf. Just which factor is emphasized depends on the particular situation. The different elements of this configuration are linked together by the principle of reciprocity. Its essence is the idea that duties imply equivalent rights for the *taram*, the junior or inferior person, as well as for the *kpeem*, the senior or superior.

This configuration is not peculiar to the relations of own father and son. It is the general pattern prevailing between the head of a household

and any of his dependants—between husband and wife, proxy father and 593
son, older brother and younger brother. And, as we have mentioned
before, its elements often stand out more clearly where the consolidating 421
effect of the emotional ties between own parent and own child is absent. They emerge clearly, also, when there is a divergence between a son's (or other dependant's) desire for independence and his father's (or the household head's) claims on his labour and loyalty.

By the time a young man marries he has advanced on the path to economic independence beyond the stage of breeding chickens for himself. He has his own ground-nut plot and generally also his *sensɛyar*. This is a plot of land allocated to him by his father, or the head of the household, where he can grow the ordinary cereal crops. It may be no more than a few hundred square yards or it may be up to an acre in size. The larger his father's home farm (*saman*) is and the fewer his brothers, the larger will a young man's *sensɛyar* be. A man allocates these private plots to his sons with an eye to the future. When, in course of time, the sons (or *their* sons) separate, each will keep the plot given to him by their father as the portion of the patrimonial land that henceforth belongs exclusively to his agnatic descendants.

A young man cultivates his private grain plot and ground-nut plot in 593
the spare time left after he has done the work required of him on his
father's farm, which always has the prior claim. There is no hard-and- 461
fast arrangement. Much is left to the young man's own discretion. He knows very well that the first essential is to make sure of the common food-supply. At the same time his father manages to keep a discreet but sharp eye on his economic activities. It is a firm rule of etiquette that no member of a family should go anywhere without informing the head of the family. When a young man goes off to hoe his grain plot or ground-nut plot in the morning he will tell his father, in what seems to be a casual aside, what he is going to do, if he has not already told him the previous day. Then the father will either let him go or he will ask his son to leave it for a day or two until they have finished this or that job on the household farm.

In a well-run family, and at most times, this loose arrangement works 593
perfectly smoothly. But there are times when clashes occur; and there are families in which friction over this issue is common between father and son. For instance, there was the tussle between Naabdiya and his younger son Mosuor. Mosuor wanted to lift his ground-nuts so as to sell them and buy a new cloth for the Giŋgaaŋ Festival. Naabdiya, however, insisted that *his* ground-nuts should be lifted first, before the dry weather hardened the ground and made the task more laborious. Mosuor protested that Naabdiya was being unfair to him; Naabdiya's wife and the other children could help him in the meanwhile; and Mosuor went off to his ground-nut plot. This incensed Naabdiya, who cried out that the boy was flouting his commands, and in his anger he

593 pronounced the ominous words, 'You will see'. In an hour or two Mosuor's temper cooled off and he began to feel uneasy over the enormity of his offence. His father had uttered what amounted to a curse; and before the day was out he had called on one of his father's oldest friends to ask him to go and beg Naabdiya's forgiveness for him.

593 421 We have seen in a previous chapter that as a son grows older and his conjugal family increases, his desire for independence grows stronger, owing to the increasing wants of his wife and children. But it is not easy for a son to obtain his father's permission to set up on his own. It may take five or six years of pressure on the son's part before the old man gives way. A son only desires to go out on his own if he has younger brothers who will remain at home to work for his father—there would be no motive if he were the only son. When these younger brothers marry the pressure on the common resources of the household grows and it becomes expedient to disperse temporarily. Economic separation does not remove a son from his father's authority. He can be and often is called upon to help with the work on his father's land; his property still belongs formally to his father. Indeed, any sheep, goats, and cattle he may acquire by his industry or receive for a daughter's bride-price are housed in his father's homestead and not in his.

593 167 Nowadays a common form of independent labour and enterprise by young men is to go south for a season or longer. The chief economic stimulus for this is the desire for money to buy clothes or to make certain of the payment of bride-price for a wife. A father is not bound to provide his sons—or any other dependant—with clothes. These young men go in the dry season carrying crates of fowls to sell or seeking 'white man's work'. The youths who go at other times of the year are often stealing away without permission. But in the dry season, when farm work is at a standstill, a man will often give his sons permission to go south until the rains commence. Some men do so very readily in the hope that the boys will bring back money and 'things'. Others are still reluctant to let their sons go off, even for a short while, lest they should be tempted to stay away for a long time. Tallensi say that the freedom of movement of to-day is undermining parental authority. They say that if a man is severe with his sons, as he has every right to be, they simply run away and go south. Hence the men who think that working abroad spoils a youth or who cherish the ideal of keeping the family together all through their life, and therefore try to restrain their sons from going south, have to be tactful in handling them. Observation shows that it is usually the wise and considerate father, the man who manages his family well, who succeeds in restraining his sons from making long sojourns abroad. Where there is much friction between father and son, the son is apt to find a way out by going south; and, as we have mentioned, the likelihood of a son's leaving home is increased if one or both of his own parents are dead and he is living with

a proxy parent. As is natural, fathers and sons take different views of 593
this situation. Sons do not think that they are showing a lack of filial
loyalty when they go abroad. For, they argue, it is only a temporary 167
absence and the money they earn will eventually accrue, in part at least,
to the family exchequer. As has been mentioned previously, no man
ever turns away a son who comes home from abroad, whether he brings
any goods and money or not; and a son who does bring back 'things'
and money is doubly welcome.

We said earlier that a father owns all his son's property. This might 593
seem to contradict what was said about the independent ownership by
a son of the livestock he acquires by breeding from a gift hen or by other 421
means. The Tallensi themselves do not admit a contradiction in this.
They see it as an instance of the gradation of rights and duties that is
distinctive of their whole social organization. A father's over-right
entitles him to veto his son's using his own property in ways that seem
extravagant; but it would be an injustice rightfully resented by the son
if he were stopped from using his fowl or goat or sheep for purposes that
public opinion considers legitimate. Thus everybody would agree that
a father who forbade a son from using his own fowls and guinea-fowls
in his courtship, or from selling his own ground-nuts in order to buy
a cloth, would be acting unfairly. The case of Kpana-Tee's grandson
(p. 195) illustrates this principle.

The rights of a father and the rights of a son in the son's property are reconciled by the principle of reciprocity. If a man makes use of his son's goat or sheep he should, in due course, make an equivalent return; for example, by using one of his own sheep or goats to do something for the son. This object is immediately achieved if the son's property is used for the son's benefit, as in the payment of bride-price. There is no book-keeping, but in the long run the son should feel that the gains he has received are commensurate with the amount of his own property that has been used up. A proxy father should be more careful in this regard than a man's own father. A proxy father is less concerned about the future of his 'son' than the latter's own father would be and is therefore sometimes inclined to take selfish advantage of his paternal authority. Though they have no alternative but to submit, young men deeply resent unfairness of this sort, whether on the part of their own father or on that of a proxy father; and this may be the first stimulus to their determination to set up on their own.

This is epitomized in one of the reasons Tallensi regularly produce 593
when they are asked why young men secede from their paternal house- 596
holds. They say: 'It is because of hens and eggs.' Every man has at
least a hen or two, even if he has nothing else, and, as we know, his hen 422
symbolizes the starting-point of his accumulation of property. But hens
lay their eggs anywhere and this gives rise to petty quarrels. Anybody
who finds an egg claims it and another member of the family may dispute

are entirely their own property. A woman owns the sleeping-mats she makes. A potteress is in the same position as a blacksmith or leather-worker. She keeps the money or natural products for which she exchanges her pots. Nowadays many women who live near a market carry on a regular or intermittent petty trade in cooked food. Sometimes, borrowing the small capital (two or three shillings is sufficient) with which to start, they keep the profits of their trade. It is not uncommon for women to own livestock, mainly poultry but often sheep and goats, and occasionally a cow. They may be obtained by gift or purchase, in the case of small stock, or by exchanging the natural increase of small stock for more valuable stock. A woman's sheep, goat, or cow will be herded with the family livestock, but her 'ownership' (*soləm*, from *so*, to own) remains secure. 593 421 [426]

A woman's clothing, and her household utensils, most of which she provides for herself, belong to her solely. They are distributed, on her death, to her daughters, daughters-in-law, and sisters. Any money or livestock she may possess passes to her sons on her death, these being what might be called consumers' capital goods, the appropriate owners of which are men. They remain, therefore, in her *dug*, and do not accrete to the patrimonial property of her husband's effective minimal lineage. But it is an accepted principle that her husband has an over-right to them in her lifetime. For, as the natives put it, 'How can a man own his wife and not own the products of her labour?' 768 422 593

There is a quibble in this statement, the concept 'own' being used first in the sense of 'to have authority over', and secondly to mean 'having full rights of disposal over'—rights *in personam* being equated with rights *in rem*, to speak in lawyer's language.[1] And the Tallensi are not blind to this. Theoretically a man is entitled to utilize his wife's property as he wishes. In practice, he would not dare to do so without her consent, and the transaction is looked upon as a loan (*samər*). True, like all loans within the domestic family, it is not subject to book-keeping. But just as the woman feels morally bound to put her possessions at her husband's disposal if he is in difficulties, so her husband feels in honour bound to repay her in time, and generously, if he has any self-respect. Similarly, if a woman contracts a debt without her husband's knowledge and explicit permission he cannot be held liable. But no 'man of sense' would publicly repudiate his wife's debt. He reserves his reproaches for the privacy of the home. Significantly, a man does not, as a rule, settle his wife's debt. He will try to temporize with the creditor—an art in which the Tallensi are past masters—until his wife succeeds in finding the wherewithal to satisfy him. Or, if the husband cannot avoid paying the debt, he considers this as an advance 593 426

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[1] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession', *Iowa Law Review*, xx. 2, Jan. 1935, for an illuminating discussion of the anthropological relevance of these legal concepts.

a proxy parent. As is natural, fathers and sons take different views of 593
this situation. Sons do not think that they are showing a lack of filial
loyalty when they go abroad. For, they argue, it is only a temporary 167
absence and the money they earn will eventually accrue, in part at least,
to the family exchequer. As has been mentioned previously, no man
ever turns away a son who comes home from abroad, whether he brings
any goods and money or not; and a son who does bring back 'things'
and money is doubly welcome.

We said earlier that a father owns all his son's property. This might 593
seem to contradict what was said about the independent ownership by
a son of the livestock he acquires by breeding from a gift hen or by other 421
means. The Tallensi themselves do not admit a contradiction in this.
They see it as an instance of the gradation of rights and duties that is
distinctive of their whole social organization. A father's over-right
entitles him to veto his son's using his own property in ways that seem
extravagant; but it would be an injustice rightfully resented by the son
if he were stopped from using his fowl or goat or sheep for purposes that
public opinion considers legitimate. Thus everybody would agree that
a father who forbade a son from using his own fowls and guinea-fowls
in his courtship, or from selling his own ground-nuts in order to buy
a cloth, would be acting unfairly. The case of Kpana-Tee's grandson
(p. 195) illustrates this principle.

The rights of a father and the rights of a son in the son's property are reconciled by the principle of reciprocity. If a man makes use of his son's goat or sheep he should, in due course, make an equivalent return; for example, by using one of his own sheep or goats to do something for the son. This object is immediately achieved if the son's property is used for the son's benefit, as in the payment of bride-price. There is no book-keeping, but in the long run the son should feel that the gains he has received are commensurate with the amount of his own property that has been used up. A proxy father should be more careful in this regard than a man's own father. A proxy father is less concerned about the future of his 'son' than the latter's own father would be and is therefore sometimes inclined to take selfish advantage of his paternal authority. Though they have no alternative but to submit, young men deeply resent unfairness of this sort, whether on the part of their own father or on that of a proxy father; and this may be the first stimulus to their determination to set up on their own.

This is epitomized in one of the reasons Tallensi regularly produce 593
when they are asked why young men secede from their paternal house- 596
holds. They say: 'It is because of hens and eggs.' Every man has at
least a hen or two, even if he has nothing else, and, as we know, his hen 422
symbolizes the starting-point of his accumulation of property. But hens
lay their eggs anywhere and this gives rise to petty quarrels. Anybody
who finds an egg claims it and another member of the family may dispute

593 the claim. But if the head of the family claims an egg no one can gainsay him, so a young man might find himself left without any eggs to breed 596 from. That is why he wishes to be independent. It is a kind of rudi- ●422 mentary myth summing up the economic causes of family fission. The point of interest is the emphasis on the inequitable behaviour of the 'father'. He uses his economic authority to his own advantage without making an equivalent return and thus prevents the 'son' from getting a start on the road of economic independence.

593 The adjustment of father's rights and son's rights has an added subtlety where cash is concerned. Supposing a young man returns from abroad with four or five pounds in cash that he has saved. According to the letter of custom he should hand all of it over to his father. But money, unlike a cow or a sheep, can be easily concealed and does not require attention; our young man can retain a part of his savings without his father's knowing of it. If it is his own father he may keep only a few shillings, particularly if he has recently been, or is about to be married and the money is wanted to pay his wife's bride-price. If it is his proxy father he will probably hand over only a pound or two, unless, again, the money is required for the bride-price of his wife; and then he will try not to hand over the money until his father-in-law actually demands the bride-price. It is common knowledge that this is the regular practice of young men returning from abroad. Fathers have no power to stop it, though most of them would like to; for up to a point, the young men are within their rights. Have they not 'taken their own legs and gone to get their money' by labour that is always arduous and sometimes dangerous? Again conflicts are inevitable, though as yet not more frequent than over other forms of property. For some men are only too apt to fritter away the money entrusted to them by a dependant before the time comes for it to be used for the benefit of the latter.

593 As we have mentioned before, one of the heaviest responsibilities a man bears on behalf of his son, or for a dependant standing in the same 584 economic and jural relationship to him, is in 'marriage affairs'. It is the bridegroom's father or proxy father who has to undertake the series of jural actions required from his paternal kin in order to legitimize the union. In marriage by arrangement (*pɔɣalak*) it is the bridegroom's father who starts the negotiations and carries them through. The young man himself hardly sees his bride, after his first few courting visits, until she is brought to his home. In marriage by elopement (*pɔɣazaɣər*) the bridegroom's father's consent is essential for the marriage to be properly concluded. While, as we have already indicated, a father never openly disapproves of a son's marriage but on the contrary always displays apparent pleasure over it, he can easily cause it to break down by holding back the bride-price.

As we know already, the two significant jural acts in the conclusion of a marriage are the sending of the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) and the

593 793 eye was caught by an old woman who seemed to be particularly privileged, as she walked about giving orders, and greeting the guests. I was not surprised to learn that she was Teroog's only surviving full sister (*tasoog*). He presented her to me with great pride, holding her hand affectionately. She sat beside him throughout the rites, listening intently to his long invocation to their ancestors, prompting him once or twice, and helping him as if she and he were jointly succeeding to the ownership of the *bɔyar*. One could see that the notion that any woman might *well have been in her brother's place in the social system if it were not* for an accident of birth has a very concrete meaning to the Tallensi.

593 Full (*soog*) siblings, as we have already related, constantly visit one another, bringing and taking away gifts. When a woman has a baby, her full sister hastens to her with a bundle of firewood or a dish of soup ingredients. If a person falls ill, his full siblings come running to see him. When Kuur fell and broke his ankle there was consternation among his immediate relatives. Two of his half-brothers rushed off at once to consult a diviner about the accident—no laughing matter, as they well realized, for a man in the fifties—while his full sister stayed behind to nurse him. His wife hovered about helplessly, only approaching him when his sister called for some more hot water. The sister came to him every day for the next week or so and was his most devoted nurse.

593 622 We have described before, also, how full brothers generally hold together, economically and residentially, longer than half-brothers and often throughout their lives. This is due, basically, to their close identification with and attachment to each other. One constantly comes across examples of this. Samane was the Chief of Tongo's right-hand man and probably the only person who had the chief's absolute trust. Why, I once asked Samane, did the chief not put the same trust in his own son Saa? 'Don't you see', said Samane, 'the chief and I are born of one father and one mother. We are as one. He will have no secrets from me or I from him. A man's brother is more to him than his son. Saa wouldn't care[1] if the chief died and he succeeded. I want my brother to live, for his being chief is just as if I were chief myself.' Again, one of the very few cases I knew of men working abroad sending home regular remittances of money was Sɔyar's policeman brother. When I praised him, Sɔyar said, as if in explanation, 'He is my *soog*'.

593 422 This comes out very clearly, too, in the property relations of full brothers. Men of the same joint family borrow one another's clothes freely, though the individual ownership of the clothes is never in doubt and the owner's permission is always necessary. But full brothers behave almost as if their clothes were their common property. Hence when a man dies his full brother often takes some of his clothes, instead of leaving all to his sons. There is also a specific ritual sanction in this relationship, the common subjection of full brothers to their mother's

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[1] He was the chief's first-born son. Cf. p. 225 above.

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spirit, perpetuating, on the religious plane, their common dependence 422
on her in her lifetime.

It must not be thought, however, that friction between full siblings 593
never occurs. That would be contrary to human nature, the natives
often declare. As amongst most peoples, sibling solidarity conceals a 578
strong element of rivalry. Indeed there is one circumstance in which 856
it is taken for granted that *soog* siblings will be prone to quarrel all their lives, even if they do not set up separate homesteads. Two successive children of the same mother and father are regarded as born rivals. The second of the two children, irrespective of sex, is called the *nyeer* of the first. The first *nye* (verb = immediately precedes) the second, who *tayal* (verb = immediately follows) the first in birth order. The definition applies strictly to birth sequence, not to survival order. A child is not its older *soog* sibling's *nyeer* if between them their mother had another child who died in infancy, or a miscarriage—for a miscarriage counts as a birth. The concept *nyeer* is regularly used to indicate an infant's degree of maturity. An infant that has a *nyeer*, or is old enough to have a *nyeer*, is entering the second conventionally recognized stage of social development, childhood proper. So if a native is asked about the stage of development reached by a particular child and says, 'It has a *nyeer* (*u mar nyeer*)' or 'It is fit to have a *nyeer* (*u saya nyeer marəga*)', one can infer that the child is between 3 and 5 years old—or, to keep to native categories of thought, that it is weaned, no longer needs the constant care of its mother or a nursemaid, and is beginning to fend for itself, to join in children's play-groups, and to become acquainted with the world outside the homestead walls.

A child and its *nyeer* are believed to be rivals almost from the day the 593
nyeer is born. This predisposes them to be ill tempered with each other
and wrangle on the most trivial provocation. Often when I have noticed 578
two children bickering or annoying each other in some petty way, my companion—a man or an older child perhaps—has said with a laugh, 'There 's someone and his *nyeer* (*nit ni u nyeer nla*)'. Once at a funeral ceremony there was an argument between the two sons of the dead man. It ended with the older giving the younger a buffet across the mouth that drew blood. Relatives intervened and separated them. Then an old woman, their father's *soog* sister, with mingled pleading, protests, and sighs, dragged the younger brother away to attend to his cut lip. He was weeping with injured pride and humiliation, exclaiming, 'If he were not my older brother (*bier*) I would kill him'. The people sitting around commented scathingly on this shameless spectacle. Then someone remarked, 'Oh well, it 's a case of a man and his *nyeer*'. It had all begun, I learnt, from the younger lad's accusing the older of having appropriated something belonging to him and the older losing his temper with him for fussing about ridiculous trifles on such a solemn day.

596 462 for consumption. This division of labour runs through the whole of Tale domestic economy and is equally well evinced, e.g. in the organization of house-building and repairing. Boys and girls, too, have their duties in connexion with the care of the live stock and in the house.

596 The head of such a self-supporting unit has his own granary or granaries. Just as he is the final arbiter in agricultural matters, so he alone controls the distribution to the women of the grain jointly produced. In theory he could even sell the grain if he wished without consulting the men dependent on him; in practice, he dare not do so, for they would leave the compound at the first opportunity.

596 422 The entire unit of food economy thus draws its main supply of grain, the staple foodstuff, from a common source. But every household, every primary family, and indeed every individual other than young children has a degree of economic independence which is limited only by the obligations to the bigger unit. An industrious householder usually possesses some poultry and perhaps sheep and goats of his own, supplies a good deal of the minor crops consumed by his own wives and children, and even some grain to augment his wives' rations from the main store. Every woman, again, adds to the food supply of her primary family by her own efforts. If she is a market trader or a potteress, for example, she will have money of her own, will sometimes purchase extra foodstuffs and may invest in live stock which will eventually go to her sons. Her husband has no powers of disposal over her property. If he uses any of it, by her permission, it is a debt which must be repaid.

243 **Domestic Organization in Relation to Agriculture and Crops.** This system can best be understood in relation to Tale agriculture. The staple crop is millet (generically, *ki*) of which there are three kinds, early millet (*naara: pennisetum typhoideum*); guinea-corn (*ki* specifically, each variety being known by a special term, e.g. *kutɔk*, *kazii* &c.: *sorghum vulgare*); and late millet (*za: pennisetum spicatum*). These with a small amount of rice (*mui: oryza sativa*) occupy 92 per cent. of the area cultivated in the Zuarungu district.[1] The seasonal

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[1] According to Mr. Lynn, who reports observations on 29 compounds in Zuarungu district, five being in Tale settlements. Four were somewhat larger and

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table‡ given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalaŋ*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

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[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

‡ [See cat. 116, p.241 — Analyst.]

244 596 422

not required at the time, and always borrowed specifically for this purpose from kinsmen and friends. Women rarely obtain their ground-nut fields from their husbands. They prefer to beg land from their own cognatic kinsmen, thus emphasizing their absolute independence of their husbands as regards this crop.

For this reason they never receive assistance from their husbands with the hoeing and planting of their ground-nut fields. A son often assists his mother; or young women 'invite' (*pooh*) a couple of young kinsmen of their husband to hoe their ground-nut fields in return for a very good meal, the grain for which the woman generally provides from her own resources. Many, again, have simply to rely upon their own skill with the hoe. The ground-nut crop thus gained is the woman's to consume or sell, as she pleases.

Of the remaining subsidiary crops, the most important—though less important than ground-nuts—are the legumes, Bambara beans (*suma: voandzeia subterranea*), cow-peas (*tia: vigna sinensis*) and geocarpa beans (*sulempie: kerstingiella geocarpa*); and the root crops, frafra potatoes (*peeha: coleus dysentericus*) and sweet potatoes (*ɲumhma'ala: ipomea batatas*). Bambara beans and frafra potatoes are grown by the more energetic younger men on borrowed strips of compound farm after the millet is cut. Cow-peas are planted along the edges of compound farm by the head when he sows his early millet. 244

Vegetables are the concern and the property of women. The head of a unit of food economy every year allots a small patch of land, some 100 square yards or less, immediately beside the compound wall to each woman with a kitchen of her own. Here she sows her *naŋgena* (*gynandropsis pentaphylla*), some ocro (*ma'ana: hibiscus esculentus*), *bet* (*h. sabdariffa*), *beris* (*h. cannabinus*). The latter three vegetable plants are also grown like cow-peas and *neri* (*cucumis melo*), alongside the paths which border the compound farm. Thus as they grow and ripen the women can get at them easily without injuring the millet. A woman's vegetable patch is always hoed for her by her husband as the produce is for their common use. The leaves of the cow-pea plant (*tia: vide supra*) are used as a vegetable known as *beŋit*, and are plucked for this purpose by the wives of the man who planted the *tia*; and the same rule applies to the use of the *neri* seed as a soup ingredient. 244 462

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable
262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The
235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, can-
422 not replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore, the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and individuals within the unit of food economy come to marked expression. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry
[231] freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls
[782 never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and
431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacrifice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred. At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

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[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakaa.*[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely. 221 262
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakaa* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but the *bakaa* is their own property. [263 422]

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying and stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s.* or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly. 584

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls, 796

not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking; the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace, and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it; this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her. He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kɔwoor*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem. The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the water-holes collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely, but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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793 female one may not marry or even have a lover. When a woman is chosen as *Ten'dan' poka*, she will leave husband and children and go to Zoka to enter on her work, and the cows which her husband paid for her will not be claimed, as his wife has been chosen by the land, and if her husband claimed back the cows, he would die. I myself left home just a year ago.' The Chief, who was present when this woman was speaking, said, 'We caught her and put the calabash and stalk in her hand, without telling her; she could not refuse; it was the word of our *Yaba* (ancestor). Her predecessor was my own wife; she was taken from me.'

She continued: 'Female *Ten'dan'* are chosen from one family; my clan is *loa* (a red squirrel ?)'.

This woman's small girl attendant told me she would be the *Ten'dan's* servant until she reached puberty and married, when another young girl would replace her.

793 423 I again asked the female *Ten'dan'*, if *Ten'dan'* owned the land. She said, 'No, not really, the grove does, *Ten'dan'* are only children of the *tengwan* (grove)'.

Some Further Notes regarding Ten'dan' and the Land:

'In olden times, the *Ten'dan'* gave the Chief land to farm as well as lesser people. He, the *Ten'dan'*, would point out the place to make the farm and call the name of his grove, saying, "So-and-so wants to eat, help him". The *Ten'dan'* will turn over the first sod, and at that place, *kyili* seed will be planted, the leaves of which are called *bito*. When this farm bears its first crops, and thereafter each year, a basket of corn, a pot of beer, and some fowls are given to the *Ten'dan'* by its owner. As soon as land is totally abandoned, it reverts to the *Ten'dan'*, but as long as it is being cultivated, he cannot take it back, unless its owner offends. The *Ten'dan'* may give land to a stranger provided he lives in the *teya*. [326] Before a smith used iron from the land, he would make a knife, an axe, and a nail called *pin kpa*,[1] and give them to the *Ten'dan'* before doing any work for others.'

The Godan: 'I am called *Ten'dan'*, there is one called *Godan* who wanders and kills meat. His work is to take people to the bush to hunt. When a beast is killed, he receives a foreleg; the remainder goes to the head of the section. The *Godan* "owns" the men whom he takes to the bush to hunt; he does not own any land. If one of my own section

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[1] Used by leather workers.

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kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan*', also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan*'. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan*' to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).'

793
Tattooing: A *Ten'dan*' must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan*' has to be so careful not to eat new crops
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his 173
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan*' of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

Kusase

Tenedan' will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good 793
crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good
harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, 793
and the *Tenedan'* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) 782
where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a
Tenedan' is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made
on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to
the land. The land is not a human spirit.' The *Tenedan'* will say:

'"We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating, we cannot
refuse you yours, receive this beer." We pour out the beer and then [273]
kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow
(through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan'* will then ask every one to give
him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a
cow. Every one in the *teya* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan'*
will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children
too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan'* and eats of this
sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan'* and the *Tey-kpeem* (Elders of the *teya*) [623]
always discussed town affairs together.'

Succession to the Tenedan'ship: 'When a *Tenedan'* dies, his next eldest 793
brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest "son"; that
means the eldest of all the "sons" among the *Tenedan'* and his brothers.
In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan'*,
but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan'* had power to drive a
man out of the *teya*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would
remain until he lost everything.'

Tenedan' and the Land: 'A *Tenedan'* is in charge of all uncultivated 793
land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan'*, 423 ●
saying, "*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I 425
wish to make a farm upon it". The *Tenedan'* will send a boy to look 782
at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn
up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the
farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and [273]
take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan'* to sacrifice to the land. This he
will do in his own compound, giving it to his father's *bagr* (shrine) to
give to the land, saying: "Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody
has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has
brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give
to the land that the farmer may get crops". The remainder of the
beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan'*
will also send his son to pour some on the land and say:

423 '"Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm.
425 Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache
782 and belly-ache."

'When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan'* a large
793 bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a
423 guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his "sons", but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan'* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan'* still "owns" the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'*, even if growing on a man's land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man's own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan'* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.'

793 *Lost Animals*: 'Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tenedan'*.
425 I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries. Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. 'No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.'

'In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are "*Wen*" (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan'*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan'* only received a hind leg.'

224 *Go-dan*: 'We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost
624 a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan'* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of
Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time;
but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their
families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be
living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that
boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential
distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this
rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to
those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *tɛŋ* is not a *tɛŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the con- [578]
tradiction between the conception of a defined territorial boundary
fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the
native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties,
ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused
solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually
supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries
divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both
spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations.
But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo
and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same
extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tɛnzugu, in
particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit subcommunities within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Gɔlibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Adminis- 578
tration as headman of Tɛnzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source
of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially
defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tɛnzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Gɔlibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for
arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Gɔlibdaana,
crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong,
took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such
disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

621 comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Degal tɛndaana, the ritual
578 'owner' of the land of Bunkiuk, the Gɔlibdaana's clan. As the head of
● 423 Bunkiuk and headman of Tɛnzugu, which includes Degal, he held political authority over all the territory under the ritual jurisdiction of the latter. Hence this strip of territory, as far as the watercourse, belonged to him. The people dwelling there were no concern of his; let them go elsewhere if they wished.

The Yinduurna'aba, a simple and inarticulate old man, who has never mastered the wiles of modern headmanship, protested vehemently. The Gɔlibdaana's arguments were untenable. The ritual jurisdiction of tɛndaanas had nothing to do with the matter. In any case the Zandoya tɛndaana would contest the Degal tɛndaana's claim. Everybody knows that tɛndaanas acknowledge no boundaries. The group in question was a segment of Zandoya. How could they belong to any other political unit than the latter? To talk of their abandoning the land on which their ancestors had dwelt was preposterous. Indeed, the whole situation was something quite unheard of; it could never have occurred before the coming of the white man, when everyone had his acknowledged place in the society. The truth was that the Gɔlibdaana was deliberately trying to entice his people away from him.

There the matter rested. The case was widely discussed and public opinion, except for the Gɔlibdaana's supporters, sided unanimously with the Yinduurna'aba. Five other cases of the same kind came to my notice; and in all of them the verdict of native custom is unequivocal; social affiliation and not alleged territorial boundaries define the extent of a community. Even the new settlements, though they sprawl more widely than the old settlements and are usually surrounded by considerable tracts of uninhabited land, have no defined geographical boundaries. They can and do go on expanding.

The Concept of the Tɛŋ

621 A Tale settlement can only be identified as a unit by reference to the lineage relationships, politico-ritual ties and cleavages, and jural rights and duties, prevailing within it and between it and its neighbours. That is why we have avoided the word 'village', which conjures up the image of a neatly isolated, compact territorial unit. *Tɛŋ* (pl. *tɛs*) is the native concept denoting a settlement; but no English translation can convey its exact sense. In some ways it is reminiscent of the deme of ancient Greece, a coalescence of local association, lineage organization, common religious cult, and political solidarity. None of these factors serves to demarcate a *tɛŋ* absolutely from adjacent *tɛs*; all of them link together neighbouring *tɛs* or parts of *tɛs* as closely in respect of that one category of social relations as they unite segments of the same *tɛŋ*. A settlement is only a relatively autonomous community. One might perhaps define it as the region of maximum overlap of all the categories of social relations found among the Tallensi.

621 Native linguistic usage reflects this, for *tɛŋ* has a width of reference
619 varying with the situation. A man beginning a discourse on marriage
829 with '*ti tɛŋɔ, nyɛn di pɔya* . . .—In this our land, if you marry a wife . . .'

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613
and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621
on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778
tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding 557
ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [423]
by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [184]
organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits 613
on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 621
life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 602
and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies [191]
are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

593 siblings whose mothers are or were classificatory or clan sisters have stronger bonds than those whose mothers were not kin. Such ties, intersecting those of patrilineal kinship, are very common. The children of a woman and her *pɔɣasoog*[1] (a 'sister' or other kinswoman she brings into the family as a child to look after her baby, and who later marries her husband or another man of the family) feel almost as close to each other as if they were full sisters' children. Most common, however, are cases such as that of Naabdiya and Barimoda, who trace their long-lasting amicable association back to the excellent personal relations of their mothers.

After adolescence, with the attainment of greater economic responsibility, the cleavage between *sunzɔ* siblings becomes more apparent, though it is still largely masked by membership of the same domestic and economic unit. Paternal control and the common needs of the unit hold their divergent interests in check. Sex differences become significant in the same way as with *soog* siblings; but brothers are usually partners in work and often comrades in leisure.

593 865 At this time the pattern of their future relations emerges clearly. Its keynote is a free-and-easy comradeship on terms of equality. Differences of age, formally recognized in the terminology of kinship and socially significant as they are in the distribution of authority, rights, and duties, hardly influence the personal relations of brothers in young manhood, or even later. No Taləŋ, man, woman, or child, will submit to arbitrary authority without resistance. If any demand made on another person in virtue of superiority of generation, age, or sex is felt to be unreasonable or unjust it will be resisted. Quite small children, obedient as they are, jib at commands from parents or older siblings if they think them unreasonable or unfair.

593 This attitude is particularly strong among siblings. The basis of their social and personal relationships is the principle of sharing (*tɔt*). This principle underlies the social relations of siblings of any degree as well as of corporate units whose relative standing is assimilated to those of siblings, such as co-ordinate lineage segments. As we have noted earlier, it is one of the chief contrasts between the relations of father and son and those of brother and brother. It is summed up in the maxim: 'A man and his father do not share; a man and his brother share (*Nit ni u ba pu tɔta; nit ni u mabiig ntɔt*).'

593 428 423 As will be recollected, this maxim is most clearly illustrated in the rules of inheritance. Brothers are coheirs, even though the effective management of the lands and chattels they inherit from their father is vested in the oldest of them at any given time. Hence if a man has only 'sons' to consider in dealing with property that has come to him by inheritance from his father or brother, he is in theory free to dispose of it as he pleases. But if he is merely the oldest of a group of brothers

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[1] Cf. Ch. IV. above.

inheriting from their father he will be effectively restrained by his 593
brothers. This rule is constantly met with in discussions of the pledging 428
of property or the sale of land or cattle. Naabdiya summed up these
rules very well in reference to the various farms held by the members 423
of his inner lineage of Kunduzoor biis. First there was the home farm originally inherited and left intact by Kunduzoor at the time of his death, now owned by the last of his and his brothers' sons, Na'am. Na'am could, if he wished, sell some or all of this land, since on his death it will pass to men whom he calls 'sons'. 'We (the sons) could protest but we could not restrain him', said Naabdiya, 'but Kunduzoor (i.e. his spirit) would be angry and would slay Na'am.' Then there was some land Kunduzoor had himself acquired and left intact, heritable only by his direct descendants. The largest part of this was now owned by Na'ampa'ahya, the oldest of his true grandsons. 'He cannot sell this land', said Naabdiya; 'we, his brothers (who will inherit after him) could restrain him. In the old days we should not hesitate to draw arrows in order to do so, but now we would drag him to the chief, who would forbid the sale.'

The records of land sales in the past which I collected at Tongo amply confirm Naabdiya's statement. When Na'ampa'ahya inherited this land from the last of Kunduzoor's own sons it was as oldest of a group of brothers. So he had to 'cut off (*ŋma*)' portions of it for his other brothers. These distributed portions are normally re-amalgamated with the main block of patrimonial land as the brothers inherit from one another and add their portions to the main block. But if friction develops between brothers over a serious issue, it may result in one of them refusing to let his portion revert to the patrimonial land. Such a case occurred in Naabdiya's inner lineage in his father's time. One of Kunduzoor's sons, having become his father's heir, took offence at an apparent slight put upon him by a son of his father's brother. So he took an oath that his portion of the patrimonial land should never revert to the brother who would inherit from him and made a bond with his brothers that they should act likewise. Such a compact could never have been made by a man with his 'sons'. Characteristically, the compact left uneasy consciences. A generation later deaths occurred in the lineage.
Diviners said they were a punishment for certain actions that resulted [787]
from this compact and Kunduzoor's grandsons were commanded to annul it. They could no longer do so in fact, but a token annulment and an expiatory sacrifice to their grandfather were considered sufficient.

In accordance with this principle we find that duties and rewards are 593
distributed among siblings on a basis of equality of status, though in proportion to such distinguishing personal attributes as age, ability, need, and in conformity with the demands of the situation. When brothers work together as a team in the production of the household's food resources, each is expected to contribute the maximum share he is

About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed 226
by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a 423
minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bɔlgruana*, who had only recently been installed. 535
To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the
full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The [292]
musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place "where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences.

The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move 226
about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense 423
is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements. The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights.

Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the per- 226
formance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to 789
start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, 782
surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features—

226 651 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor [622] of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. Besides, [685] such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[554] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practice and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

241 scattered compounds, or whether closer building between compounds, on land previously available for farming, enforced the system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation, as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously.

Land Tenure.

793 622 425 The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana" (Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs command people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs' and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide.

To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. [427] The question of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agricultural land has no value in the economic sense; there are a number of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the land, through the tindana.

428 423 In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been conveyed through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the requirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible, either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land

428 423 allotted by the father. On the death of the head of the family the male survivors inherit the land in varying proportions as tenants in common with benefits of survivorship. The eldest son assumes the responsibilities of his father and may elect to live either in his father's compound, or to remain in his own. In either case he will receive a large share of his father's farm and retain also an interest in his own. After a number of generations the distribution and ownership of land becomes very complicated in congested areas and considerable fragmentation of holdings takes place. Land not in use may be lent to another for farming, but often with a stipulation to plant non-exhausting crops.

Distribution of Population.

162 The distribution of population is very variable both from one political area to another and within each area. If one takes the the district as a whole, 3,559 square miles, the population by the 1931 census (7) is shown to be 406,566 persons; this gives a density of population of 114 per square mile (c.f. South Mamprusi 23 per square mile, and Western Dagomba 15). It is estimated that at least one-third of the total area is uninhabited, and much of this is fertile alluvial land near to rivers, where tse-tse flies abound. In other areas ruins are found for which slave raiding, sleeping sickness, and yellow fever, are variously held responsible. Table I below gives the distribution of tribes and population.

Table 1.—Distribution of Population in North Mamprusi.

Political Area	Area, square miles	Total Population	Density of Population per sq. ml.	Tribes
Navrongo ...	1,551	120,870	78	Nankani, Kassena, and Builsa.
Zuarungu ...	781	133,981	172	Nankani, Tallensi, and Nabdam.
Kusasi and	807	110,614	137	Kusasi, Busanga, Bemoba and strangers.
Br. Togoland ...	420	41,101	98	
Total ...	3,559	406,566	114	—

Political Organisation.

631 History shows that North Mamprusi was continually harrassed from outside (8) until comparatively recent times. The Mamprusis in the South, who were at one time a powerful and organised tribe,

226 typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also
789 many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance.
781 Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the
[778] apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*).
The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*.
Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a
large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's
tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices
and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious
symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous
creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical
performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced
earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool
[787] and of the magical specialist. A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted
by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his
ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn
also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist.
Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bolgraana's*
first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish.
The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark
or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the
fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display
of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near
[424] pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of
Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

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[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

Purification of the land when some one is Sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten'dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering
to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold
his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere*' (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan'*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
● 425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become
Ten'dan'.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusoodana*.

793

kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan'*, also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425 ●
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan'*. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan'* to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).'

793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan'* must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan'* has to be so careful not to eat new crops
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his 173
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan'* of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

Tenedan' will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, and the *Tenedan'* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a *Tenedan'* is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to the land. The land is not a human spirit.' The *Tenedan'* will say: 793 793 782

'"We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating, we cannot refuse you yours, receive this beer." We pour out the beer and then kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow (through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan'* will then ask every one to give him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a cow. Every one in the *teŋa* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan'* will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan'* and eats of this sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan'* and the *Teŋ-kpeem* (Elders of the *teŋa*) always discussed town affairs together.' [273] [623]

Succession to the Tenedan'ship: 'When a *Tenedan'* dies, his next eldest brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest "son"; that means the eldest of all the "sons" among the *Tenedan'* and his brothers. In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan'*, but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan'* had power to drive a man out of the *teŋa*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would remain until he lost everything.' 793

Tenedan' and the Land: 'A *Tenedan'* is in charge of all uncultivated land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan'*, saying, "*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I wish to make a farm upon it". The *Tenedan'* will send a boy to look at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan'* to sacrifice to the land. This he will do in his own compound, giving it to his father's *bagr* (shrine) to give to the land, saying: "Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give to the land that the farmer may get crops". The remainder of the beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan'* will also send his son to pour some on the land and say: 793 423 425 782 [273]

Kusase

793
423 '"Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm.
425 Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache
782 and belly-ache."

'When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan'* a large
793 bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a
423 guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his "sons", but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan'* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan'* still "owns" the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'*, even if growing on a man's land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man's own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan'* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.'

793 *Lost Animals*: 'Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tene-*
425 *dan'*. I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries. Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. 'No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.'

'In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are "*Wen*" (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan'*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan'* only received a hind leg.'

224 *Go-dan*: 'We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost
624 a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan'* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tɛndaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425 ●
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on 688

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[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. [193]
To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

779 the earth (*teŋənpiima*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray
425 animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *teŋənpiimər*. It must be
688 handed to a tendaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

714 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak
774 of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in
793 human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but
567 he is given to a chief and not to a tendaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified to sell a human being into slavery; a tendaana would commit a sacrilege
622 against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *ya-a-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and con- 793
siderable moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.' The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the state-
ment implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term 'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties, privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to 784
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship. And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

● 425 of his own sub-clan. This is the central field of integrated social relations
471 pivoting on this chiefship. But his ritual status also affects the prosperity
× 618 and welfare of Zubiuŋ and Zoo directly and that of the Hill Talis indirectly.
In fact, in the last resort, it affects all the clans of Taleland that
622 have a place in the cycle of the Great Festivals. 'The community (*tɛŋ*)
784 cannot be subdivided (*bɔk*)', the Chief of Tongo once told me in explanation
793 of the ritual significance of his office. Famine, pestilence, war cannot
be dammed and confined to one place. And so if the Chief of Tongo dies
the whole country suffers, though his own clan will perhaps suffer most
and the remoter zones of his politico-ritual influence least.

182 The bonds between man and land, community and locality that are so fundamental in the structure of Tale society cannot be understood apart from this context of ritual values and moral norms. Difficult as they are to grasp and pin down in exact language, they are as ever present to the native's mind as his sentiment of attachment to his native soil. They cause men who have been away from home for many years to give up splendid farms in Mampurugu or good jobs in Kumasi to return to take up their patrimonial land.

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice.
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal 431
lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation-
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from 486
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or
misdeeds.

431 This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts
in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to
£10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have
good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their
board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the
Bɔyar.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidem of Bunkiuk. The head of this
lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country,
recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his
political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own
hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual
functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the
aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu
clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex
organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and
clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a
Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate
his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his
gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income
of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the
members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in
running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own
half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make
them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three
henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual func-
tionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance
of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his
near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana
keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—
to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar
age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number
of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-
supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no
outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be
invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

cultivation. It is felt to be incompatible with clanship ties. Clansmen 604
form a corporate unit, in theory made up of a vastly expanded group
of brothers. In theory, every member of a clan or maximal lineage has 426
an interest in and a potential right to inherit the property of any other member of the clan. Hence if a lineage segment dies out all the land formerly owned by its members passes into the ownership of the next higher lineage of which it forms a segment, and is vested in the head of that lineage. Thus if a man were to lend land for permanent farming to a clansman he would never be able to demand its return. The lender, moreover, would not give the land with that feeling of personal interest in the recipient's welfare and desire for his prosperity that an *ahəb* has towards his sister's son or an *ahəŋ* towards his mother's brother. A matrilateral kinsman gives freely, solely out of consideration for the needs of his kinsman, not because the latter has a right to what he asks for; and the spirit in which the gift is made carries with it the blessings of the giver's ancestors. There is an advantage to the giver in that what is voluntarily given can be taken back without affecting the relationship of the parties, and an advantage to the recipient in that restoring the borrowed land to its owner does not mean a surrender of a right.

I have recorded the ownership of a large number of bush-farms. They 471
fall into three approximately equal groups: those which are said to have
belonged to the lineage from time immemorial; those which it is claimed 425
were bought by an ancestor; and those which, it is said, were obtained by an ancestor by gift from a mother's brother or other matrilateral kinsman. The latter explanation is so common and so stereotyped that it may well be mythical in many cases. But cross-checking and the fact that such gifts are still commonly made show that the claim is true for most cases. I witnessed the whole procedure twice, when two men well known to me obtained gifts of bush-farms from matrilateral kinsmen. Ɔmara, a Zoo man, obtained his from the head of the inner lineage at Zubiuŋ to which his paternal great-grandfather's *ahəb* had belonged; and Səmbura from Ba'ari obtained his from his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage at Tongo. These cases are the more significant in that it has been the practice, for several generations, for Tongo people to get land from their matrilateral kinsmen at Zoo, and for Ba'ari people to resort to their kinsmen at Yayazoor for grants of bush-farms.

The procedure is as follows. A man looking for a new bush-farm 604
sees a suitable piece of land which he knows belongs to his true or to a
classificatory mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidem*). He ascertains that 425
it has not been cultivated for the last ten or fifteen years, which suggests that the owners are not hard pressed for land. He then goes to 'beg' (*soh*) the land from his *ahəb yidem*. The land Ɔmara desired belonged to his lineage *ahəb*[1] Dawoog's inner lineage; and partly for this reason,

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[1] i.e. the progenitrix of Ɔmara's medial lineage had been a daughter of Dawoog's inner lineage.

604 partly because Ɔmara's relationship was with the whole inner lineage,
not with Dawoog personally, the request had to be placed before the
425 assembled elders of the inner lineage. The land could not have been
granted without their unanimous consent. This having been obtained,
a day was fixed for handing over the land. Early in the morning of the
appointed day Ɔmara, followed by his oldest son, arrived bringing a
[782] fowl and a guinea-fowl and a large basket of guinea corn. Dawoog then
summoned all the men of his inner lineage, and proceeded to sacrifice
the birds to his lineage ancestors at the lineage *bɔɣar*. Addressing the
ancestors he explained all the circumstances of their 'grandson' Ɔmara's
request and exhorted them to bless his labour and to grant that the new
farm might bring him prosperity. It was a long prayer detailing exactly
how Ɔmara was related to Dawoog's lineage and promising that he
would bring further offerings in gratitude to the *bɔɣar* whenever the
new farm produced good crops. The flesh of the birds was divided
amongst all present, including Ɔmara, in accordance with the customary rules.

Ɔmara and his son, accompanied by two young men and an elder of the *ahəb yiri* deputed by Dawoog, then repaired to the bush-farm. The elder showed Ɔmara the boundaries of the farm and the young men hoed a strip along one boundary to symbolize marking them out (*kyie*). They then set to, with the aid of Ɔmara and his sons, to hoe a small patch, and so symbolically to hand over the right of working the farm. This was symbolized, also, in a simple rite in which the elder handed Ɔmara a large pellet of soil from the farm, mixed with a handful of the flour used in the sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, to eat.

The procedure was identical in the case of Sɔmbura, with one exception. The land belonged to his *ahəb* Sayamane's nuclear lineage, so
there was no need to obtain the consent of the elders of his inner lineage.
Sayamane did, however, inform them because, as he put it, 'you cannot
[577] undertake so important a transaction without the knowledge of your
"brothers" and "fathers", and besides, telling them makes them witnesses to the act'. It means that there will always be some member of
the inner lineage who knows the circumstances and conditions of the
gift.

Tallensi attach very great importance to the ritual steps in this trans-
604 action. They secure the blessing of his matrilateral ancestors for the
577 recipient of the land. Without this, they believe, failure and even
disaster would overtake him when he starts farming the new bush-farm;
425 for, they say, the land really belongs to the ancestors who first cultivated
it. Moreover, the ritual formalities also have an explicitly stressed jural
function. It is a solemn covenant between the parties, made in the
presence of the ancestors, in which all those who have rights in the land
avow their consent to the gift and the recipient pledges himself to abide
by the implicit conditions of the tenure of the land. The arrangement

has the sanctions of the ancestor cult behind it, and the guarantee of 604 577
having been made with the public consent of all who have an interest 425
in the land.

The recipient pays no rent or dues for the land. During the first three 604
or four years he must give a basket of guinea corn or millet to the
grantors after every harvest. If he has had good crops it will be a large 427
basketful; if he has had a poor season it will be a small basket. In subsequent
years he need only bring a gift of grain if his crops are good and 425
if he wishes to do so. Some of this grain will be ground into flour and a libation poured to his matrilateral ancestors at their *bɔɣar*, expressing thanks for their beneficence. This serves also to reaffirm the ownership of the land by the grantors. Occasionally, too, he may bring a fowl to offer at the ancestral *bɔɣar* of his *ahəb* lineage in gratitude for the beneficence of the ancestors whose land he is working.

In principle, the lineage that grants the land can recover use of it at 604
any time by giving the recipient a year's notice. But this right would only
be exercised, in practice, if the latter offends them in any way—for 425
instance, by withholding the gifts of grain in spite of having excellent crops. As a rule, therefore, the *ahəŋ* retains the use of the land until he no longer requires it. It then reverts automatically to its proper owners. If the original recipient dies, his son may continue to use the land without specially renewing the arrangement with his *ahəb yidɛm*.

Now supposing the farm is so large that the recipient need not cultivate all of it at one time. By cultivating and fallowing different portions of the farm in rotation he and his sons after him may keep it in use continually. If this goes on for two generations, by which time all the individuals who were present in person at the original transaction are probably dead, the land passes into the effective ownership of the original recipient's lineage, in the third generation. The successors of the original grantor no longer have the right of recovering the land but they are still the nominal owners of the land. If it is wholly abandoned they may resume occupation; the users may not sell the land; and if they grossly offend the nominal owners, the latter can, in theory, turn them off it.

This right is most emphatically claimed, though it is, by all accounts, very rarely exercised. An incident concerning Ɔndieso is suggestive of what might happen. Ɔndieso quarrelled with his neighbour and the head of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. The latter, in his anger, ordered Ɔndieso to leave the land he was farming. This land had been given to Ɔndieso's grandfather by his mother's brother, the then Gbizug Tɛndaana. Ɔndieso, previously defiant, was filled with dismay. Not to comply with the tɛndaana's demand meant risking both the wrath of his matrilateral ancestors and the vengeance of the Earth whose cult is so closely bound up with Gbizug. So he went across to Deemzeet, the head of Puhug section of

Tongo and therefore the senior lineage head of all Tongo, and begged him to intercede. As Deemzeet was also the head of the Gbizug Tendaana's grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the choice was doubly fortunate. Deemzeet thereupon sent two of his sons to plead with the tendaana, who consented to withdraw his demand if Ɔndieso would bring a fowl and a guinea-fowl to sacrifice to the ancestor who had originally made the gift of the land, in sign of contrition.

Though Ɔndieso climbed down for fear of mystical retribution, both he and others maintained that the tendaana had exceeded his rights. The land Ɔndieso's grandfather had been given was no longer a bush-farm. Ɔndieso's father's brother had been given leave to build on it and the homestead had stood there for two generations. This, they considered, gave Ɔndieso a title amounting to complete ownership of the land. Had his *ahɔb* been an ordinary person and not a tendaana, whose ritual position gives his fulminations the force of a curse, Ɔndieso could have ignored his demand.

It has always been and still is a frequent practice for men to solicit a site for a homestead and a piece of land to make a home farm, from a matrilateral kinsman, if they wish to set up an independent homestead. As we have recorded in our earlier book, this is how many Tongo people have come to live at Zoo and this is how many immigrants into the peripheral settlements find sites for their homes.[1] We mentioned there that it is considered to be morally wrong to refuse such a request if one has land to spare.[2] The rules of tenure are the same as for a bush-farm borrowed from a matrilateral kinsman. But if the house site and home farm have been continuously occupied by the same nuclear lineage for two or three generations, their ownership is considered to be entire. Their title rests not only on the passage of the generations but on the fact that they have begun to bury their dead there and to transmit the land in accordance with the rules of inheritance. Indeed, Tallensi say that only the person who originally granted the land can really recover it. Even his immediate heir could not compel the recipient to surrender the land. The latter could, if he wished, refuse to go. He would invoke the common ancestors of his hosts and himself and this would be sufficient—unless he had committed some particularly heinous breach of kinship amity against his hosts. Pa'anbɔbis furnishes a case in point. Many years ago, owing to a quarrel with his older half-brother he went to build his homestead on a bush-farm he had borrowed from his matrilateral kinsman and clansman Mambaŋya. There he lived for perhaps twenty years. Then Mambaŋya asked him to relinquish the land. He said his sons were growing up and wanted more land to cultivate. So Pa'anbɔbis went back to his original home. Both men understood and admitted in private that Mambaŋya's story was a polite pretext. The point was that he did not wish this land to be lost to his sons altogether; and he therefore took the precaution of getting it back in his own lifetime. 604 425

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 161, 221.

[2] Ibid., p. 163.

If a man gives land over which he has full rights of disposal to his own sister's son, this amounts to an outright gift. The land belongs to the sister's son and his heirs in perpetuity. This is always explained by the jural fiction that the *ahəb* (identifying himself with his sister) has, like a father, bestowed a portion of his own land on 'his child'. When the *ahəb* dies the *ahəŋ* has the same rights in respect of the share of the patrimonial land allocated to him as the *ahəb*'s own sons have in respect of any shares he might have given them. It is an application of the rule that siblings are equals. Barimoda and Kpelimɛrəme both had farms given to them on these terms by their mothers' brothers and both said they would never part with their farms. Wherever a branch of one clan is found settled on land coming under the ritual jurisdiction of a neighbouring clan, the origin of the relationship is traced back to such a gift of land. Thus Nəŋsuur yidem of Tongo occupy and own land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zubiuŋ-Yakəra Tɛndaana.[1] They ascribe their rights in their land and the fact that they are living on Zubiuŋ land to their founding ancestor's having been a true sister's son of the Zubiuŋ-Yakəra Tɛndaana of his time. He was given a very large piece of land by the tɛndaana and came to live there. It is this land that his descendants now occupy.

The Status of an Ahəŋ as a Foster-child in his Ahəb's Family

We have mentioned before that a boy who loses his own parents and cannot settle down with a proxy father sometimes goes to live with his mother's brother. A few cases of this sort are found in every settlement. As a rule the boy eventually goes back to his natal home to settle down there; occasionally he settles permanently in his mother's brother's settlement. In any case, he never loses touch with his natal home and never forfeits his rights and status in his own lineage and clan. He does not, as we know, become a member of the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*. This brings us back to the question of the jural relations of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*. 604 597

A boy who grows up in his mother's brother's household is treated exactly like a son and is indistinguishable from a son of the family, to the outsider. Thus it was many months before I discovered that Puvolimra was not the Gbizug Tɛndaana's son but his sister's son. He was probably in his late twenties and had lived with the tɛndaana since boyhood. He continued to farm with the tɛndaana after the latter's oldest son had established his own household. He was, indeed, the tɛndaana's right-hand man, more trusted by him, in some ways, than

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 59.

if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great 622
lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tɛndaana. In 183
addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahəŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office.

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an 425 ●
ahəŋ or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a par-
ticular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in 622
former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yɛa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tɛnzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahəŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman.

Certain powers normally held by tɛndaanas only are sometimes vested 793
in lineages that do not have tɛndaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of
Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo 604
Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyɛbəg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahəŋ* of the tɛndaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tɛndaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors.

The Ahəŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahəŋ* forms a link between his father's 604
lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to
every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahəŋ* is always chosen 584
as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

variations in the ripening of crops makes it essential, as will be clear 243 later, for a self-supporting unit to have a supply of every type of cereal, or face starvation at certain times of the year. Early millet is grown only on the compound farms (*saman*), land immediately surrounding the compounds and kept fertile by human and animal manure and by spreading the detritus of the kitchen midden. The 243 compound farms at the disposal of a joint family consist of irregular 311 patches of greatly varying size scattered throughout the area of settlement of their lineage. 425 ● They are acquired by inheritance, succession, or gift from the head of one's joint family or lineage. How much of it a man has depends, thus, upon his seniority within the joint family and the lineage. The head of a joint family may cultivate 6 or 8 acres of compound farm; his younger brother and prospective heir, as head of an independent unit of food economy, may have only two acres or less allotted to him.[1] The compound farm is so precious that it is regarded as sacrilege to sell or abandon it.

Guinea-corn or late millet, which ripen several months after 243 the early millet, are grown both on compound farms and on bush 311 farms (*poog*) from one to four miles distant from the settlements of 425 those who cultivate them. Bush farms also descend in the line of 596 inheritance; but they can be bought or borrowed for a term of years. If the bush land belonging to his own joint family is limited, a man can always borrow as much as he requires. A head of a joint family may require no bush farm at all if he has a large compound farm; junior men, on the other hand, depend the more upon their bush farms the less compound land they have.[2] Compound land is the most fertile and most easily worked owing to its proximity. Those who have large compound farms (e.g. elders) are less liable to food shortage than those who have mainly bush farms (i.e. younger men).

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richer than the average Tale compound, as they belonged to headmen or elders. Botanical names are taken from Mr. Lynn's report.

[1] Rough calculations based on a survey of farms made for us by Mr. D. S. Commey. Mr. Lynn's records show that the Tale compound farms he measured vary from nearly 7 acres to under an acre; the average being 3·36 acres.

[2] Mr. Lynn found bush farms to vary from about 5 to 10 acres in extent. How much bush farm is cultivated depends, of course, upon the number of men co-operating and upon the food requirements of the unit, as well as upon the amount of *saman* they have.

scattered compounds, or whether closer building between com- 241
pounds, on land previously available for farming, enforced the
system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The
result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers
living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have
bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation,
as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously.

Land Tenure.

The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of 793
land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land 622
is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to 425
deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana"
(Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the
land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs com-
mand people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through
the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to
an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the
tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The
area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs'
and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide.

To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be
claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first
approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If
the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer
him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An
application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made
through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the
tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make
suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. The question
of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agri- [427]
cultural land has no value in the economic sense; there are a num-
ber of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the
land, through the tindana.

In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, 428
water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason
for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been con- 423
veyed through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family
receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush
area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the re-
quirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder
sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A
new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible,
either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784
agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again 184
may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425]
over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows, dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778]
(tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186
political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764
vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793
barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction. The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. 622
Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among 622
the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when
discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or
nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to
Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble
among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the
post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method
of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save
that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts.
No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies,
to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the
'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized
and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head
Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we [624]
find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the
kambon na, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the
positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly 622
twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. 554
It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named
'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any
one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of
their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to
assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no
historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day
as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his house- 592
hold among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we
are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief 593
and pawn (verb, *nwe talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need 426
not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder
brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for
from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If
the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man
to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat
or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera.*)'

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[1] See Chapter XXVI.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688 with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471 corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays 432 there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*walɔg*) such difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471 punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's dependants 688 and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613 thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471 and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426 now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782] act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471 always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426 ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

471 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the
426 process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation
in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the
602 household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit
471 of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

621 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is
471 security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage
182 security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of the *tɛŋ* as a community. The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

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[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

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adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182
of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769
bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182
principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of
the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to
more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of
thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment
of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector
of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests
evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182
constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618X
evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the
lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Taləŋ identifies
himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to
which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidɛm*)' and
of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔyaba*)' and 'our children (*ti
biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions to-day, a Taləŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an
argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or
a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's
or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182
for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426
groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old
days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman of his debtor,
but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different
clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former
case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman,
the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567]
into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had
been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the
clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously
made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations.
It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt.
Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the
mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583
unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426
man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'.
Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted
the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled.
The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original
wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss
of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals
such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the
abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682
clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618X

never undertakes anything of importance without consulting Yikpɛm- 602
daan; Yikpɛmdaan need never be in want of a sheep or goat to sacrifice if there are sheep and goats in Tinta'aləm's house. If any member of the lineage segment of which Tinta'aləm is the head gets into difficulty, he goes at once to Yikpɛmdaan for counsel and help.

A more telling case is that of Lɔɣani and Gai. They belong to 602
different segments of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra.[1] Many years ago Gai quarrelled 626
with the elders of the maximal lineage over the succession to the 578
lineage *bɔɣar*. The Yakɔra Tɛndaana of the time took an oath binding all the people of Yakɔra to have nothing to do with Gai in jural and ritual matters until he apologized and a ritual reconciliation was made. Gai and his family keep aloof from all corporate activities of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. He has obstinately rejected several indirect advances made to him suggesting a reconciliation. One day there was a funeral at Gai's house, and I called to see how a man who is virtually ostracized by his clan would manage an affair that is usually a corporate activity of the whole clan. Finding no other Yakɔra people at the funeral, I went round to Lɔɣani's house afterwards. We discussed Gai and his affairs; and Lɔɣani, with that blunt candour that has won him general esteem, told me the whole story. Gai's conduct, Lɔɣani concluded, was specially distressing to him. 'For', said he, with a trace of bitterness, 'Gai is my *soog*. I should be the one to go to his help immediately and to support him in all his troubles. But if I did, would not the people of Zubiuŋ say that I was breaking faith? Would I not be rejecting the oath of the late (Yakɔra) Tɛndaana? And so I can do nothing.'

In this case Lɔɣani's position of influence and responsibility in the 602
maximal lineage compels him to put the interests of lineage unity before 578
those of his *soog*, and Gai's obduracy makes it more difficult for him to compromise. The case of Ɔndieso and Nɛna'ab, who are also *saarət* belonging to different segments of the same maximal lineage, is more
usual. They 'borrow (*pɛŋ*)' things from each other on the same principle [426]●
as do members of an expanded family. Normally, if a man borrows something from a member of a lineage segment other than his own, it is a debt that must be repaid in due course. Eight or nine years ago, Ɔndieso borrowed a goat from Nɛna'ab's son. No request was ever made for repayment; but about three years later, Nɛna'ab borrowed three shillings from Ɔndieso; and this was tacitly understood, by both, to have cancelled the debt of the goat. In 1936 an ancient quarrel between Ɔndieso's segment and Nɛna'ab's segment that had been dormant for years flared up again owing to a dispute over the inheritance of a widow. For some months the two segments were completely estranged, the more so as the head of Nɛna'ab's segment had taken the dispute to the chief and so brought the slur of publicity on the head of Ɔndieso's segment. Just then there was a death in Nɛna'ab's family;

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi, passim.

are entirely their own property. A woman owns the sleeping-mats she 593
makes. A potteress is in the same position as a blacksmith or leatherworker. 421
She keeps the money or natural products for which she exchanges
her pots. Nowadays many women who live near a market carry
on a regular or intermittent petty trade in cooked food. Sometimes, [426]
borrowing the small capital (two or three shillings is sufficient) with
which to start, they keep the profits of their trade. It is not uncommon
for women to own livestock, mainly poultry but often sheep and goats,
and occasionally a cow. They may be obtained by gift or purchase, in
the case of small stock, or by exchanging the natural increase of small
stock for more valuable stock. A woman's sheep, goat, or cow will be
herded with the family livestock, but her 'ownership' (*solɔm*, from *so*, to
own) remains secure.

A woman's clothing, and her household utensils, most of which she 768
provides for herself, belong to her solely. They are distributed, on her 422
death, to her daughters, daughters-in-law, and sisters. Any money or
livestock she may possess passes to her sons on her death, these being 593
what might be called consumers' capital goods, the appropriate owners
of which are men. They remain, therefore, in her *dug*, and do not
accrete to the patrimonial property of her husband's effective minimal
lineage. But it is an accepted principle that her husband has an overright
to them in her lifetime. For, as the natives put it, 'How can a man
own his wife and not own the products of her labour?'

There is a quibble in this statement, the concept 'own' being used 593
first in the sense of 'to have authority over', and secondly to mean 426
'having full rights of disposal over'—rights *in personam* being equated
with rights *in rem*, to speak in lawyer's language.[1] And the Tallensi are
not blind to this. Theoretically a man is entitled to utilize his wife's
property as he wishes. In practice, he would not dare to do so without
her consent, and the transaction is looked upon as a loan (*samər*). True,
like all loans within the domestic family, it is not subject to bookkeeping.
But just as the woman feels morally bound to put her possessions
at her husband's disposal if he is in difficulties, so her husband
feels in honour bound to repay her in time, and generously, if he has
any self-respect. Similarly, if a woman contracts a debt without her
husband's knowledge and explicit permission he cannot be held liable.
But no 'man of sense' would publicly repudiate his wife's debt. He
reserves his reproaches for the privacy of the home. Significantly, a
man does not, as a rule, settle his wife's debt. He will try to temporize
with the creditor—an art in which the Tallensi are past masters—until
his wife succeeds in finding the wherewithal to satisfy him. Or, if the
husband cannot avoid paying the debt, he considers this as an advance

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[1] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession', *Iowa Law Review*, xx. 2, Jan. 1935, for an illuminating discussion of the anthropological relevance of these legal concepts.

593 which, it is tacitly understood, his wife will one day make good. Often
such debts between spouses are straightened out by mutual borrowings,
426 tacitly understood to cancel one another. Very often, however, a man has to cajole his wife with definite promises to repay before she will lend him her property. But the natives are emphatic about one point: that all such transactions belong to the give and take of marital co-operation and solidarity. It is one of the ways in which a woman stands by her husband and a man by his wife.

The Husband's Authority over his Wife

593 As might well be expected, these rights and duties of spouse to spouse
do not rest on anything in the nature of a formal compact. There is no
578 jural machinery or sanction by means of which a husband or wife can be compelled to perform his or her duties to his or her partner. A man can, and sometimes does, chastise his wife for incorrigible laziness, disobedience, or a misdemeanour detrimental to the unity of the family. He does it usually in a fit of anger or exasperation, as one would strike a child, and not as a deliberate punishment. For though Tallensi think that such disciplinary measures are right and necessary sometimes (women being kittle cattle, who will not always listen to reason), they consider them to be a regrettable and undignified necessity not entirely in keeping with the relationship of marriage, and at bottom repugnant to a self-respecting man. That is why when a quarrel between husband and wife ends in blows, neighbours hearing the commotion rush in to separate the pair and calm the enraged husband. 'I often scold my wives', said a Tale friend to me, after a heated argument with one of them, 'but I have never, as I sit here, lifted a hand to them. How could I thrash my wife, seeing that she gave up her father and her mother to come and marry me?' To beat a wife, in short, shows a poor appreciation of her.

Women admit the right of a man to strike his wife, and they see it as a feature of the authority over her conferred on him by marriage. But in fact, cases of wife-beating are far from common. Judging by the cases I have heard of, they are least likely to occur at the two extremes of the marriage cycle. A young man fears that he may lose his wife if he beats her; an older man, as the statement quoted above shows, with a wife of long standing, feels that it is incompatible with their mutual trust and comradeship.

593 A woman will not, as a rule, bear a grudge for blows struck under
provocation. But if she is excessively, or, in her opinion, unjustifiably
627 thrashed, she will run away from her husband. She may go off with another man; or she may return to her father or brother, who, if he is a self-respecting man, will take her part and refuse to give her up until her husband apologizes and promises better behaviour in future. In any case, it is a troublesome affair for the husband. It is worth noting, also, that in her conjugal family only a woman's husband has the right

593 payment of at least a part of the fixed bride-price of three cows and a
bull, or their equivalent. The essential responsibility for the per-
584 formance of these two acts lies with the bridegroom's father or father's
heir, subject to the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.
Formally, the bride's paternal kin send their invitation to the bride-
groom's paternal kin to *lu sɔndaan* through the head of the latter's
nuclear or inner lineage, and make their demands for bride-price
through the same channels; for no jural act takes place except in the
framework of the lineage system. But actually the responsibility for
satisfying the bride's kin falls on the bridegroom's father. He must
'find the things'—the fowls and guinea-fowls—for the placation gifts;
he must send off the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) who carries them to the
bride's family; he must furnish the animals or goods or money to pay
the bride-price. 'Is it not his child? (*Pa.u biiga*)' say the natives, imply-
ing that this is a duty arising out of the fact of parenthood. In part it is
593 a specific duty; in part it is an aspect of a general responsibility that a
672 man bears for his son's jural relations. Thus if his son's wife is abducted
it is the father who calls on the other members of his inner lineage to
●426 stand by him in taking action to recover the wife. If his son has abducted
another man's wife the father is directly answerable. Strictly speaking a son cannot contract a debt involving heritable property such as cattle or large sums of money without his father's authorization. Even if the son is a man of substance, a wise creditor will insist that his father's (and also his brothers' of the same nuclear lineage) consent to the transaction be obtained first and made known to him. If this is not done the creditor's chances of recovery are small. It becomes a question of one man's word against another's and Tallensi are past masters in the art of putting off a creditor. The concurrence of the debtor's father and brothers fixes liability for ever, and if the debtor dies before settling the debt his father, or his heir, is liable. These rules do not apply to small sums of money, say a shilling or two, or things of small value such as a hen or a loin-cloth. But petty borrowing and lending rarely takes place between people who are not friends or close kin, and it is thus generally fitted into the scheme of reciprocal aid that obtains between friends and kinsfolk.

593 In their jural aspect these obligations of a father arise from the fact
of 'begetting (*dɔɣam*)'; in their economic aspect they are greatly influ-
584 enced by the principle of reciprocity. Where obligations of such great
social consequence are involved, the principle of reciprocity is not
577 limited to particular individuals but it binds their heirs and successors
as well owing to the operation of the lineage principle. One or two cases
will show how these two aspects are interwoven.

While Tampɔɣar was courting his wife he had very little recourse to his proxy father's help. The few shillings he had received from selling ground-nuts and a fowl or two sufficed to provide the occasional penny

593 577 its working, as we have seen. Moreover, it applies equally to all members of a household and is implicit in all kinship and affinal relations. It arises out of common interests, mutual rights, and mutual obligations and is a way of giving expression to them. As these interests, rights, and obligations are of different kinds and degrees, corresponding to the differences in quality and degree of the relations involved, so there are different kinds and degrees of reciprocity. But all forms of equivalent returns have the general purpose of keeping social relations on a stable and mutual footing. The greater the field of common interests between persons, the less does deliberate calculation enter into the working of this principle. Hence the closer and more personal the relationship between people, the less formal is the rendering of equivalent returns for services or loans. Mutual services, between lineage segments, as, for instance, in the performance of one another's funeral ceremonies, are highly stereotyped. A son-in-law's services to his father-in-law must be immediately recompensed with food and drink. But between father and son, brother and brother, or husband and wife there is a continual give-and-take on a basis of all-in reciprocity. Equivalent returns cannot be demanded; it depends upon the good sense of the person concerned as to when and how he makes them, even in situations where custom lays down a definite norm. Meanness or selfishness in this respect gives rise to ill feeling and so to disharmony.

593 577 426 Tallensi sum up the observance of the principle of equivalent returns under the idea of debt (*samər*). Debts are goods or services accepted or requested on the definite understanding that they will be repaid and it is a maxim that debts never die (*sama pu kpira*). A man's heirs are liable for his debts.[1] Where equivalent returns are the customary mode of recompense, accepting goods and services is not a debt. A man 'borrows' (*peŋ*) money or a cow from a distant clansman and that is a debt; he 'takes' (*zaŋ*) or 'accepts' (*die*) his son's or wife's belongings if he needs them, and it is not a debt (*la ka samər*).

The most important criterion determining whether or not a particular service or gift or loan creates a debt is kinship. Members of a nuclear lineage and of an expanded family do not incur debts by borrowing from one another. The same rule applies to cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of a nuclear lineage. If a man obtains something from his own mother's brother, for example, it is not a debt. This is definite. In theory there can be no debts either between members of the same inner lineage, or cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of one inner lineage. What happens in practice

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[1] Unless, as has been mentioned, they were not made a party to the debts at the time they were incurred or were not told of them by the debtor himself. The question of the procedures and sanctions that can be used to secure payment of a debt do not concern us here. One of the chief sanctions is public opinion. A defaulter finds it very difficult to borrow again.

varies from case to case and from lineage to lineage. We have seen how
this works out among the members of Ziŋgan biis. Another instance is 593
that of Yinworəb and his 'son' (his grandfather's brother's great-grand-son) 577
Kadɛne. Yinworəb gave Kadɛne three shillings to pay the hearing
fee when he was summoned to the chief's tribunal. This was not a debt. 426 ●
Three or four months later Yinworəb borrowed a goat from Kadɛne.
Again, this was not a debt but it was tacitly understood to be an equivalent
return for the loan of the three shillings. By contrast, Lɔyani used
some sheep belonging to Maantiya, his father's half-brother's grandson
and therefore his 'son'. This he regarded as a debt because the sheep
were earmarked for the payment of Maantiya's wife's bride-price.

Outside the inner lineage, however, a debt is incurred by accepting goods or services from a clansman. The only exceptions are if the lender is also a matrilateral kinsman of the borrower—e.g. a uterine kinsman—or a close friend.

The principle of reciprocity, as seen in operation in the family and 613
lineage, ties on to a more general theory of social action in Tale society.
It is a particular application of the principle of equilibrium in the social 577
system. The idea that in the long run mutual services or favours should
balance is inherent in Tale social organization. Canalized by the lineage
system, it means that a son or grandson or later descendant can make or
expect equivalent returns for an action of his father or grandfather or
earlier ancestor. It is a matter of pride as well as of moral or jural
obligation to see that one benefit is balanced by another. For example,
it is a common thing at an elder's funeral to see a distant clansman of
his, who is not obliged to do so, bring a sheep or goat as a valedictory
offering to the dead. The donor explains that there is a special reason
for this offering. The deceased had been a friend of his father. When
his father died the deceased brought a goat as a valedictory offering to
his father. His goat is a return gift. The maxim that 'debts do not die'
springs from this principle; and it applies not only to the relations of
the living among themselves but to their relations with their departed
ancestors. A grandson may have to atone for his grandfather's sins, as
happened with Kuwaas. Years of constant ill luck were attributed by
a succession of diviners to the sins of his paternal grandfather, whose
name he bore. Kuwaas I, as Chief of Tongo, had betrayed his office by
abandoning his clan and seeking only his personal safety once when the
Hill Talis attacked Tongo. This was a grave sin against the ancestors, [688]
who demanded a large expiatory sacrifice, and until this was paid the sin
would continue to lie heavily on the descendants of Kuwaas I. The
right of self-help by raiding, and the notion that retaliatory warfare and
retaliatory abduction of women are simply 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg
samər*)',[1] belong to the same category of ideas. The principle of reciprocity
underlies all these categories of social behaviour.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 236, 245.

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birth his mother might have been an owner of these things. In the past, when people moved about less freely than now, a man passing through the clan settlement of his *ahəb* could seize any guinea-fowl he saw and collect any guinea-fowl eggs he came across[1] irrespective of which member of his mother's brother's clan they belonged to. Nowadays this custom is objected to. Tallensi say that with people moving about so freely and frequently as they do now, it would soon lead to the destruction of all their flocks of guinea-fowl. But an *ahəŋ* is still at liberty to cut himself a few heads of guinea corn or millet from any farm when walking through the settlement of his *ahəb*, if he is feeling hungry.

Women *ahəs* have an analogous privilege of much more practical value. As we have learnt, if a woman has a small baby she often gets a young sister of her own inner lineage or clan to come and live with her and be the infant's nursemaid. If there is no suitable girl in her father's lineage, she is entitled to ask her *ahəb* or her father's *ahəb* to give her a little girl. This is a very common practice.

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Sister's son and mother's brother cannot contract debts towards each other. If a man borrows money or livestock from an *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* repayment cannot be demanded. It rests with the borrower to make an equivalent return in due course. Ɔndieso provided an amusing illustration of this rule. He borrowed three shillings from Naambuləg, a member of the lineage of his paternal grandfather's *ahəb*, and a friend of his. For about a year nothing was said about this loan and the friendship of the two men continued as before. Then a disagreement developed between Kutəbis, head of Ɔndieso's inner lineage, and the head of Naambuləg's clan, for which the latter was in part responsible. As it was a question of a right vested in the inner lineage, Ɔndieso supported and indeed instigated Kutəbis. He was particularly angry with Naambuləg. Thereupon the latter immediately demanded repayment of the loan, thus symbolically relegating Ɔndieso to the class of non-relatives, and Ɔndieso ostentatiously repaid two shillings. Repaying Naambuləg in kind, he had deducted one shilling for two fowls Naambuləg had borrowed from his brother two or three years previously.

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When Bontuya died his son Ba'andoog had to sacrifice a white bull to the dead man's *Yin* shrine before starting the funeral ceremonies. Ba'andoog went to his father's sister's son, who, he knew, had a white bull, and asked for the animal. Very reluctantly the *ahəŋ* parted with his bull. As he explained to me afterwards, it was a very fine young bull. 'But', he said, 'Bontuya begot me and I have no power to refuse him anything.' Several months later the father-in-law of the *ahəŋ* came to him demanding a cow of his daughter's bride-price. The young man promptly went

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[1] Guinea-fowl are only semi-domestic birds. They live out of doors and are very difficult to catch alive. They also lay their eggs out of doors. The privilege of an *ahəŋ* therefore had more of a token value than any practical worth. But I know several men who claim to have used their privilege at least once.

to his mother's brother's house and Ba'andoog gave him a cow of some- 604
what greater value than the white bull to give to his father-in-law. But 431
such exchanges are exceptional. A fowl, a sixpence, a slab of tobacco,
a few kola nuts, these are the more usual kinds of gifts that pass between
extra-clan kin.

There are two gifts from a mother's brother to which great significance 604
is attached. One of these is the gift of a hen to a lad from his *ahɔb* when
he becomes capable of productive labour. This is almost a universal 431
custom among the Tallensi. As we have shown in an earlier chapter,
its importance lies in that it marks the beginning of the economic (and, 556
therefore, in due course, social) self-differentiation of a boy within the joint family. It symbolizes, and in many cases actually serves as, the starting-point of the accumulation of wealth by individual effort. It was the proud boast of Barimoda that starting as a small boy with a fowl given to him by his father's *ahɔb* he had eventually 'achieved' (*paa*) a cow from which he had had several calves. In every settlement one can find two or three men who have matched this achievement, but it is more common to find men who have 'achieved' a goat or a sheep in this way. And though Tallensi always speak as if they began with one hen this is not strictly true. A boy may receive fowls from two or three matrilateral kinsmen, and he may be given more than one fowl by an *ahɔb* who is specially attached to him. Kɔɣatee was unlucky with the first hen his true mother's brother gave him. When it died he told his *ahɔb*, who gave him another. He successfully bred a brood of chickens from this hen and was given yet another hen by the same mother's brother.

An *ahɔb* has no claims on livestock bred in this way by his sister's son. 604
Very often, if a man needs a fowl for a sacrifice and has none that is
suitable, he will send to ask his sister's son for one; but this is not con- 431
nected with the gift of a hen he may have made to the latter many years 769
before. The equivalent return for the mother's brother's hen is made in another way. As has been previously mentioned, when a man 'achieves' a cow, after starting with his mother's brother's hen, he owes this cow to his mother's brother's lineage ancestor shrine (*bɔɣar*). He keeps the cow until it is too old to calve and then takes it to his mother's brother's lineage as a thank-offering to his maternal ancestors. For, say the natives, it must surely have been their beneficence that gave him prosperity, since the hen came from their son.

Far more important is the gift of land by an *ahɔb* to an *ahɔŋ*. There 604
are degrees of finality about such a gift. It is a very common practice
for both men and women to beg a plot of land from an *ahɔb*—or any 426●
other extra-clan matrilateral kinsman—living in an adjacent settlement to plant with ground-nuts or sweet potatoes. The land given for these purposes generally lies on the outskirts of the donor's settlement, near that of the recipient. As often as not, it is land too exhausted for grain crops; or else it is land not required by the *ahɔb* that season. Use of the land

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is granted for one season only, but the *ahəŋ* is often allowed to retain it for several years with the tacit understanding that it must be surrendered whenever the donor asks for it, as he will do a season in advance when he wishes to resume cultivation of it. The gift is made without any special ceremony and the recipient pays no rent. If he gets a good crop he usually gives his *ahəb* a basket of ground-nuts or sweet potatoes as a token of gratitude. But this is entirely optional. A person may borrow a ground-nut plot in the same way from a uterine or other matrilateral or sororal kinsman in his or her own clan and the same rules apply. Women also borrow plots for ground-nuts from their own kinsmen belonging to their husbands' clans. This practice is so common that it can be described as the normal thing for young men, especially if they are unmarried and farming with their fathers. Nor is it shortage of land that makes young men ask an *ahəb* for a ground-nut plot rather than their fathers. Nayabaal, Nalɛbseug, and Mosuor, all youths aged between 15 and 20, had borrowed ground-nut and sweet potato plots from their mothers' brothers' people, but the fathers of all three had ample land. Indeed Nayabaal's father allowed two of his *ahəs* to grow ground-nuts on a distant piece of fallow land belonging to him. A strong motive is the knowledge that a youth's father will, as a rule, not interfere with the manner in which the youth may wish to dispose of a crop grown on his mother's brother's land as he might if it were grown on land belonging to the nuclear lineage. There is always the feeling that anything obtained through the use of lineage resources must be at the disposal of the whole domestic group if it is required. Thus borrowing a ground-nut plot from one's mother's brother reflects the association we have previously stressed of individual self-differentiation in economic and social terms with maternal origin. But there is also a more important jural reason. A man cannot refuse his son or brother's son if the latter asks for some land to use for himself and the father has spare land. But then he cannot take possession of the land again without very good reason. The result is that if a man obtains a plot of land from his father or the head of his nuclear lineage for growing ground-nuts he tends, in due course, to establish *de facto* possessory rights over it and it never reverts to the patrimonial land. Unless, therefore, a man wishes deliberately to endow a son or brother's son with land, to be held in perpetuity by the latter's agnatic descendants, he prefers not to grant such a dependant a plot for his private use. He cannot make such a grant to one son or brother's son only; he would have to give similar plots to his other sons and proxy sons. Resort to matrilateral kin avoids this dilemma.

This arises also in the more serious business of borrowing land to cultivate as a regular bush-farm for a period of years. A man who wants a new bush-farm commonly tries to get one from a matrilateral or sororal kinsman or lineage. It is very rare for land to be borrowed from a clansman who is not also a matrilateral or sororal kinsman, for permanent

cultivation. It is felt to be incompatible with clanship ties. Clansmen 604 form a corporate unit, in theory made up of a vastly expanded group of brothers. In theory, every member of a clan or maximal lineage has 426 an interest in and a potential right to inherit the property of any other member of the clan. Hence if a lineage segment dies out all the land formerly owned by its members passes into the ownership of the next higher lineage of which it forms a segment, and is vested in the head of that lineage. Thus if a man were to lend land for permanent farming to a clansman he would never be able to demand its return. The lender, moreover, would not give the land with that feeling of personal interest in the recipient's welfare and desire for his prosperity that an *ahəb* has towards his sister's son or an *ahəŋ* towards his mother's brother. A matrilateral kinsman gives freely, solely out of consideration for the needs of his kinsman, not because the latter has a right to what he asks for; and the spirit in which the gift is made carries with it the blessings of the giver's ancestors. There is an advantage to the giver in that what is voluntarily given can be taken back without affecting the relationship of the parties, and an advantage to the recipient in that restoring the borrowed land to its owner does not mean a surrender of a right.

I have recorded the ownership of a large number of bush-farms. They 471 fall into three approximately equal groups: those which are said to have belonged to the lineage from time immemorial; those which it is claimed 425 were bought by an ancestor; and those which, it is said, were obtained by an ancestor by gift from a mother's brother or other matrilateral kinsman. The latter explanation is so common and so stereotyped that it may well be mythical in many cases. But cross-checking and the fact that such gifts are still commonly made show that the claim is true for most cases. I witnessed the whole procedure twice, when two men well known to me obtained gifts of bush-farms from matrilateral kinsmen. Ɔmara, a Zoo man, obtained his from the head of the inner lineage at Zubiuŋ to which his paternal great-grandfather's *ahəb* had belonged; and Sɔmbura from Ba'ari obtained his from his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage at Tongo. These cases are the more significant in that it has been the practice, for several generations, for Tongo people to get land from their matrilateral kinsmen at Zoo, and for Ba'ari people to resort to their kinsmen at Yayazoor for grants of bush-farms.

The procedure is as follows. A man looking for a new bush-farm 604 sees a suitable piece of land which he knows belongs to his true or to a classificatory mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*). He ascertains that 425 it has not been cultivated for the last ten or fifteen years, which suggests that the owners are not hard pressed for land. He then goes to 'beg' (*soh*) the land from his *ahəb yidɛm*. The land Ɔmara desired belonged to his lineage *ahəb*[1] Dawoog's inner lineage; and partly for this reason,

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[1] i.e. the progenitrix of Ɔmara's medial lineage had been a daughter of Dawoog's inner lineage.

Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering
to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold
his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere'* (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become
Ten'dan'.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusodana*.

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has the sanctions of the ancestor cult behind it, and the guarantee of 577 having been made with the public consent of all who have an interest 425 in the land.

The recipient pays no rent or dues for the land. During the first three 604 or four years he must give a basket of guinea corn or millet to the grantors after every harvest. If he has had good crops it will be a large 427 basketful; if he has had a poor season it will be a small basket. In subsequent years he need only bring a gift of grain if his crops are good and 425 if he wishes to do so. Some of this grain will be ground into flour and a libation poured to his matrilateral ancestors at their *bɔγar*, expressing thanks for their beneficence. This serves also to reaffirm the ownership of the land by the grantors. Occasionally, too, he may bring a fowl to offer at the ancestral *bɔγar* of his *ahəb* lineage in gratitude for the beneficence of the ancestors whose land he is working.

In principle, the lineage that grants the land can recover use of it at 604 any time by giving the recipient a year's notice. But this right would only be exercised, in practice, if the latter offends them in any way—for 425 instance, by withholding the gifts of grain in spite of having excellent crops. As a rule, therefore, the *ahəŋ* retains the use of the land until he no longer requires it. It then reverts automatically to its proper owners. If the original recipient dies, his son may continue to use the land without specially renewing the arrangement with his *ahəb yidem*.

Now supposing the farm is so large that the recipient need not cultivate all of it at one time. By cultivating and fallowing different portions of the farm in rotation he and his sons after him may keep it in use continually. If this goes on for two generations, by which time all the individuals who were present in person at the original transaction are probably dead, the land passes into the effective ownership of the original recipient's lineage, in the third generation. The successors of the original grantor no longer have the right of recovering the land but they are still the nominal owners of the land. If it is wholly abandoned they may resume occupation; the users may not sell the land; and if they grossly offend the nominal owners, the latter can, in theory, turn them off it.

This right is most emphatically claimed, though it is, by all accounts, very rarely exercised. An incident concerning Ɔndieso is suggestive of what might happen. Ɔndieso quarrelled with his neighbour and the head of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. The latter, in his anger, ordered Ɔndieso to leave the land he was farming. This land had been given to Ɔndieso's grandfather by his mother's brother, the then Gbizug Tɛndaana. Ɔndieso, previously defiant, was filled with dismay. Not to comply with the tɛndaana's demand meant risking both the wrath of his matrilateral ancestors and the vengeance of the Earth whose cult is so closely bound up with Gbizug. So he went across to Deemzeet, the head of Puhug section of

scattered compounds, or whether closer building between compounds, on land previously available for farming, enforced the system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation, as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously. 241

Land Tenure.

The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana" (Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs command people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs' and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide. 793 622 425

To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. The question of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agricultural land has no value in the economic sense; there are a number of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the land, through the tindana. [427] ●

In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been conveyed through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the requirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible, either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land 428 423

XXXV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms. Rites de Passage. Shrines. Soothsayers

● 428 *PROPERTY and Inheritance:* The rules already given in Chapter XXII for the devolution of private, family, and ancestral property apply equally here. I noted, however, in many cases, deliberate attempts to mislead the enquirer, being repeatedly told that the son succeeds to his father's property to the exclusion of the brother. In every case where such a statement was made it was found that the wish was father of the thought, and that in no case was such succession in conformity with Native customary law. In one of the histories recorded in the previous chapter it will be noted that a son succeeded his father, but this was only due to the coincidence that when *Misore* was driven away from Mampruse he was not accompanied by any of his brothers. The real facts are, that, where there are no brothers, the eldest 'son,' not necessarily of the deceased—he may be son of deceased's brother—succeeds.

582 *Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms*: No new facts were disclosed which have not already been discussed, save in connexion with the marriage avoidances relating to cross-cousins.[1] With regard to these, the following, perhaps ingenious rather than convincing, excuse was given for the prevalent dislike for such unions.

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586 'If you married your mother's brother's daughter, and quarrelled about the cows paid to your *ahen* or *asen* (maternal uncle, Nankane *asiba*) for *sull*, (Nankane, *sulle*), this would lead to trouble. Suppose you quarrelled with your wife after marriage and she returned to her father, who is your maternal uncle, you would ask him to return the cows. Should he not do so, you would be entitled to seize cows belonging to any person from his, that is from your own mother's, town; you would descend into the valley (*sig boog nwoy nigi*; Nankane, *sig boo nyoge*). After doing so you could no longer perform sacrifices to your mother or to her mother; you would not sleep; your children would die, and your uncle would also suffer.'

Marriage with Father's Sister's Daughter: A somewhat similar explanation was given for this avoidance. 'You cannot marry her because

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[1] See p. 4.

Kusase

XLI

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Rites de Passage

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IF the heir, who is the deceased's next eldest brother, is a *meŋ dan pud sob* (a greedy person) he will come, almost immediately, after the final funeral custom, to see about the division of the deceased's property.[1] He will tell the eldest son to produce all his late father's cowries. These the heir shares out among the sons, giving the eldest son most, because he is the one who will sacrifice to his father. The heir also takes some, but less than he gives to the eldest son. The eldest son accounts to the heir for all the cattle, sheep, horses, goats, donkeys, fowls, and guinea-fowls, which had belonged to the deceased, but once having done so, these remain under the care of the son, the heir drawing on them from time to time when he needs any. Though these remain in charge of the son, he has not any right to sell or lend any of them, and if asked to do so, he will say, "No, they belong to my 'father' ". The heir has already become head of his own compound, so he does not inherit the compound of the deceased. The deceased's eldest son will return to it and all his younger brothers who are married will quit, leaving only his unmarried brothers.'

Inheritance of Farms: 'The eldest son of the deceased takes the *saman* farm (near the compound), and his brothers who are "going out" take the *put* (bush farms). The heir has his own *saman* and does not take any farm of the deceased. Standing crops and crops in the grain-store are divided among those who had helped the deceased to work on his farm, but widows of the deceased who do not marry clansmen do not get any of this.'

Clothes, Hoes, Axes, &c.: 'The day the heir comes to see the property, he will see all these things, but will leave everything with the son.'

[778] *Shrines*: 'The eldest son will take his father's spirit, building a *bay* (shrine) for it; the heir will take the shrine of the deceased's father to his own compound and all family ancestral shrines and family ancestral "medicine". All personal "medicine" belonging to the deceased is taken by the son.'

The Leather Bag (*Kolog*): 'This is taken by the eldest brother of the

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[1] Among the Nankanse, the time this is done is from two to five months after the final funeral.

[p. 384]

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these [586]
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows 614
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

428 *Inheritance of Wife's Property*: All the property which a wife brings with her and everything she earns later at her husband's compound by her own individual labour—by brewing beer, making baskets and pots—on her death goes to her children. If she has no children her father's family will take it, not her husband.[1]

Son's Property: His brother takes it, including any wives. A father may not take a son's widow.

Rites de Passage:

787
844
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Birth: 'When a woman conceives, we consult the soothsayer about it, to find out if she will be delivered easily. When she gives birth, we send a long piece of wood notched in three or four places (according to sex of child) to the woman's mother. The husband may take this himself, or, if he has other children, send it by one of them. This stick is cut through at one of the notches and used for firewood. Three or four days later, her mother will come to visit her daughter, bringing some *dawa dawa*. A woman takes care not to be confined inside a room. She will either go into the yard, or cattle-kraal, or to the *saman* farm. Leaves are spread on the ground for her to bring forth upon. The afterbirth (*zar*)[2] is buried in the compound farm in a pot and covered by another pot. The heads of mother and child are shaved on the day the navel string is cut. That of the child is thrown down in the fowl-house, that of the mother in the *saman* farm. The mother and child are bathed in warm water containing certain leaves. From these leaves the child gets its father's taboos. If a woman is confined in her mother's village, they would not dare to bathe the infant in their medicine. They would send a messenger to her husband, who would then dispatch some one with his medicine to treat his wife properly. Neither the father nor any other male will see the child until its navel string is healed up. When it finally drops off, it is buried where the afterbirth was put. A child is not taken outside until it becomes black, but as soon as the mother is better she may go out and fetch water as usual. Sometimes a soothsayer may say that an infant must be taken outside for the first time by such and such a person. This woman must be a *poato* (i.e. a woman born in the infant's father's town, a clanswoman). Five to six months after birth, 000

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[1] Among the Nankanse, what a woman earns while living with her husband belongs to him. Her private property, however, which she brought with her, belongs to her daughter.

[2] In Nankane, the afterbirth of animals is called *zale*, that of human beings *yala*.

577 784 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

613 428 627 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔɣar*) of the founding ancestor of Bɔɣada biis at Tongo was a case in point. Saŋbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'aləm, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'aləm, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔɣar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔɣada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'aləm, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*mieŋ*), and the crocodile (*baŋ*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pɛhug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Puliebər yidɛm, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'aləm and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle. 787 A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

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No one was surprised when Tinta'aləm gained the verdict. Thus the ancestors themselves vouched for the legitimate status of Yidaan biis.

Other Namoo Clans

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The most important of the Namoo clans that come within the political orbit of Tongo, though not related to it by ties of clanship, is the contiguous clan of Zoo. A number of Tongo families live on Zoo land, which was not so densely populated as Tongo 50 or 60 years ago and could therefore accommodate some of its overflow population. In the same way, a number of Zoo families have overflowed into the neighbouring locality of Gbambee, where they live among Tongo people. These ecological adjustments are facilitated, though not solely determined, by the structural ties between Zoo and Tongo, and by the fact that both are Namoo settlements. Ten out of the thirty-nine homesteads at Zoo belong to Tongo people, and they are members of all but one of the major segments of Tongo. By contrast, Tongo people are reluctant to move out to vacant parts of Zubiuŋ, where the people, though their neighbours and cognatic kinsfolk, are Talis in their ritual beliefs and practices. In recent years only one Tongo man has done this as a temporary measure.

618x

The people of Zoo (Zoodɛm) comprise two maximal lineages. One of these, Zoo proper, is a maximal lineage of three segments, to one of which is attached a 'sister's son's' lineage. Their founding ancestor, Yikpɛmdaan, is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*) of Mosuor, whom he accompanied from Mampurugu. As Zoodɛm marry any of the descendants of Mosuor, the fiction of original kinship (*mabiirət*) here emphasizes the cultural and political solidarity of the two groups, not a genealogical connexion.

Living side by side with Zoodɛm proper (Yikpɛmdaan biis) is another maximal lineage known as Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm. These two maximal lineages exclude one another from the cults of their respective founding ancestors and from the ritual observances connected with them. Indeed, Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are affiliated to the Talis by ritual observance and cult. Nevertheless, Zoodɛm proper and Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm have all the ties of clanship that hold between constituent lineages of the same clan who consider themselves to be *sunzɔp*. The explanation they give is that 'it is because we live together side by side (*tin kab ziin ni taaba la zugu*)'. Here clanship is attributed to local coalescence. These clanship ties are shown in all ceremonial matters that concern either of the lineages as well as in their co-operative enterprises. Though they do not take part in the esoteric ritual of one another's funeral ceremonies, they act as *sunzɔp* to one another in the public and exoteric phases of the ceremonies. If a party of Zoodɛm proper set out to pay their respects to a deceased relative-in-law, they will always be supported by some young men from Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm; and if a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is summoned to take a working party to help his father-in-law, he will always be accompanied by a few young men of the other lineage.

Zoo-Yiraaŋ is linked by ties of clanship to one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ.[1] Zoodɛm proper have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ or with any other clan. Yet they are often described as 'our

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[1] See ch. VI.

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔɣar*, the married *pɔɣayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔɣayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔɣayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔɣayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

● 428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔɣar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive
succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the
lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his succes-
[787] sor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔɣayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination.
Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔɣar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔɣar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent
through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dispossessed
471 without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut'
(*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus
all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among
the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important
613 part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage
splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting
segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of
its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of
the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear
lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average
nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is
generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
●428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*)
577 what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-existing
rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the
land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements
he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to
restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to
provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming
with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity
within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural
justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
[686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or
unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will
find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this
sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily
slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage
head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops,
or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to
471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of
the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and
preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a
slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—
the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the
natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire
necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where
this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be
sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction
against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however,
but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present.
Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that
they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

837 his friend's children. Tale sentiment takes no cognizance of physical paternity in this situation. No kinship tie is recognized between the physiological father and the child he was deputed to beget. One might almost describe it as, from their point of view, a kind of artificial insemination.

The case of an unmarried woman's child (*yi-yeem-bii*) is different. 848 It is brought up as the foster-child of her father or brother. If it is 611 a girl, no difficulties occur, as she will eventually marry and Tale kinship ideas permit *her* children to regard her mother's lineage as their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yir*). She will even be allowed to marry into her mother's clan provided it is a different major segment of the clan. Several instances of this are on record; for no stigma attaches to anybody concerned, since an illegitimate child is not a true clan member.

An illegitimate boy's circumstances are not so easy. The evidence of two cases I was acquainted with amply confirms conventional opinion on this subject. Such a boy will grow up to all intents and purposes as a child of his mother's father's or brother's family and as a full member of the clan. He will be treated exactly like other sons of the family, whom he will call his brothers. His quasi-father will, for example, provide the cattle and take the responsibility for his marriage, as would not be done for a legitimate sister's son (*ahəŋ*) growing up in his maternal uncle's (*ahəb*) home. But he has two fundamental disabilities, which nothing can overcome and which pass, by the principle of the corporate identity of the lineage, to his agnatic male descendants. He [428 has no right to inherit his quasi-father's patrimonial estate, though he 769] may be permitted to do so if there are no other heirs; and he has no right to sacrifice directly to his spirit, or consequently, to the lineage ancestors. He cannot, therefore, succeed to the custody of lineage ancestors' shrines or hold an office vested in the lineage. The tie of true agnatic descent, which alone confers these rights, cannot be fabricated.

An illegitimate boy's status in the lineage is in fact, therefore, inferior 848 to that of his quasi-brothers. He is always liable to a certain amount of covert contempt, though good manners forbid the mention of his irregular descent in the normal course of events. But if he gets involved in a quarrel with his quasi-siblings or quasi-clansmen, even as a child, they might well taunt him as an interloper (*zaŋkuomər*). His lot may be harder, if he has an intractable character, than that of a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with his mother's brother (*ahəb*); for the latter has a home of his own to fall back upon, where he is entitled, by right of legitimate descent, to his patrimonial inheritance, protection, and communion in the ancestor cult. In no circumstances, however, can an illegitimate son be deprived of those rights that belong to him. His quasi-father's home is his home, his mother's clan his clan. From him may spring an accessory lineage of the clan. In theory, incidentally, he may marry a daughter of a different major segment of his adoptive clan, but I know

593 sees any of Ɔmara's children misbehaving he can stop them and punish
them if necessary. But ordinarily, though he can scold Ɔmara's children,
602 he would cause grave offence to Ɔmara if he were to strike them. When,
to quote a case that occurred in a similar structural setting, Pumaan's
son threw a stone at Zaŋ's (Pumaan's younger brother's) wife, Zaŋ
shouted anathemas at the boy and complained to the neighbours but
dared not whip him; that was Pumaan's prerogative. For Zaŋ and
Pumaan have separate households and are both sticklers for their
rights. By contrast, Bɔyazie, who lives and farms with his older brother
and gets on extremely well with him, can command obedience from
and can discipline the latter's children by corporal punishment if need
be. But even in such a case a man might hesitate to strike his brother's
children if he and his brother were not on terms of the greatest mutual
trust. If Saandi asks his brother's son to do an errand or a job for him
the boy will usually obey, but he cannot be compelled to do so, as he
can by his own father. Co-wives, as we know, are particularly cautious
in dealing with one another's children.

There is, however, at any given time, only one man who has full
593 paternal authority over a person, child or adult. In the first instance
it is the man who begot him or her; and if this man dies, it is the man
who takes on his social role, that is his distinctive rights and duties, by
inheritance. The critical rights and duties are those connected with
the land and other patrimonial property which the child's father owned
or was heir to, and those connected with the cult of the child's father's
father. In practice this means the head of the household to which the
child belongs, who is also the person who sacrifices to the child's grand-
father's spirit; and this limits the range to the child's father's brothers
by the same father.

During a child's minority a father's agnatic cousin (brother in native
429 terms) may act *in loco parentis* if the father's nearer male agnates are
428 lacking; but it is a position of trusteeship rather than of full paternal
authority. The son will set up an independent household as soon as he
602 is able to farm for himself. He will then take possession of any land
which his father acquired by his own efforts and will become the
effective owner of, for example, bride-price cattle obtained for his
own sister, though he cannot dispose of them without the formal
consent of the head of the nuclear lineage. In relation to an adult, a
father's cousin (or remoter classificatory 'brother' of the same inner
lineage) retains only the ritual and jural attributes of a father; and this
chiefly in virtue of being head of the inner or nuclear lineage to which
the person belongs. Important as these attributes are, they represent
a less direct and personal authority than that of one's own or one's
proxy father.

603 We shall see later that the relations between grandchildren (*yaaŋ*,
pl. *yaas*) and grandparents (*yaab-doog* or *ba-kpeem*, masc. *yaab-pɔk* or

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The general rules governing inheritance and succession are simple. Because they are so closely tied up with the lineage structure and come under the strongest sanctions of the ancestor cult, they are seldom, to my knowledge, deliberately violated. But they leave room for adjustments and compromises, to some extent also for arbitrary action bordering on injustice, that seem, on the surface, to contradict them. Inheritance and succession follow the lineage and go from fathers to sons in order of seniority by generation or by age.[1] Within the inner lineage, that is, within the range in which classificatory kinship is recognized, seniority by generation (*dɔɣam kpɛmət*) takes precedence over seniority by age (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*), beyond that range it is entirely a matter of seniority by age. This is what the maxim 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage' implies. Since a 'son' cannot take precedence over a 'father' in the inner lineage, it follows that a man's next senior 'brother' inherits before his oldest 'son'. But Tallensi say 'A father's property is heritable; a brother's property is not (*Ba bon nɛvaagət; mabii bon pu vaagəra*)'. A 'brother' inherits from a 'brother' only what came to the latter from their 'father' (plus what has accrued to it by natural increase or improvement), not what the latter acquired by his own effort. Theoretically all 'brothers' are coheirs and the senior is merely the manager with first pick of the inherited property. It is this which leads to apparent anomalies. Thus when Kurug died his oldest brother Sawɔŋba inherited the *faar* land. But he preferred to stay on in his homestead at Gbambee rather than move back to the lineage *daboog* at Kuorəg. This homestead and the *faar* land surrounding it therefore remained in the hands of Kurug's sons. When Sawɔŋba died there were no more 'fathers' and the oldest generation of men in the inner lineage were all 'brothers'. Again the heir preferred to stay at Gbambee. If the next heir of Sawɔŋba's branch also refuses to go back to the lineage *daboog*, the chances are that the *faar* land there will cease to be regarded as patrimonial property of the whole inner lineage and will become *de facto* the *faar* of the branch that stayed on at Kuorəg.

The point of this is that whereas 'brothers' are equal to one another 'fathers' and 'sons' are not. A 'brother' inheriting lineage *faar* is not on the same footing as a 'father'; he cannot exercise all the rights and the authority of a 'father' which belong intrinsically and exclusively to a 'father's' social status, 'because of begetting (*dɔɣam la zugu*)'. A proxy father who has no brothers alive is at liberty to use his rights over *faar* in an arbitrary manner and to his personal advantage. If he wishes, he can, for example, pawn *faar* land or consume *faar* cattle in spite of the protests of his 'sons'. They have no redress. Or a father may use his position to distribute parts of the patrimonial land among his sons and proxy sons so that they should all have some good land to work for themselves after his death. The 'son' who inherits cannot cancel such gifts. A 'brother' would arouse fierce opposition from his junior 'brothers' if he attempted to use or dispose of *faar* arbitrarily without their consent. When disputes occur over the division of patrimonial lands or other property that passes by inheritance, it is always amongst a group of 'brothers', never between 'father' and 'sons'.

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[1] The private property of women is an exception, but it is of relatively small importance in the total economy and its mode of transmission is, in fact, quite consistent with this principle. A woman's household utensils and garments are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law on her death. Any livestock she has acquired by her own efforts or through her cognatic kin go to her sons and become their joint private property. The reason for this is that livestock, unlike utensils and clothes, can breed and so become *faar*, which is not transmissible by descent from or through women.

The difference of emphasis due to difference of generation appears most plainly in the inheritance of rights over people. Tallensi say that 'an older brother (who succeeds to headship of the household or lineage) is like a father (in relation to his juniors) (*Bier ɣman ni ba la*)'. But they also add that he is nevertheless not a father. An oldest brother, as senior son, steps into the shoes of his 'father' in relation to society at large. He does not acquire paternal status within the lineage *vis-à-vis* his 'brothers'. The rights he exercises over dependants are shared by them. And when he is succeeded by a 'brother' the latter does not assume new rights over these dependants but merely extends his existing rights.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage, where generation differences no longer count, questions of inheritance and succession turn chiefly on rights to the custody of the shrines of founding ancestors. The moral and ritual authority of heads of lineages beyond the range of the inner lineage rests on their custody of these shrines. Sometimes, ritual offices like the tɛndaanaship go with the succession to the custody of maximal lineage shrines; and in many cases this also confers rights to control the use of or to have sole use of certain farm-lands vested in the head of the maximal lineage.

It follows from the foregoing that when a 'father' dies there very often is a wide rearrangement of property relations in the whole hierarchy of lineage segments to which he belonged. To take an actual case, let us return to Ziŋgan biis (p. 152). When Yidaan, the head of the inner lineage, died in 1933 he was succeeded by his brother Kutɔbis as head of the domestic family. As Kutɔbis was oldest by generation in the inner lineage he succeeded to the custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* of Ziŋgan.[1] He would not have done so if, say, Ɔndieso had been senior to him by generation, though younger in years.

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[1] About a generation ago, as is still the case with many lineages of this order, there was a tract of low-lying (*bo'og*) land that went with the *bɔɣar*, and the head of the inner lineage automatically had control over it. Any member of the lineage could, however, farm part of it with his nominal permission. After Pa'ana's death this land was divided into three parts, one part going to Ɔndieso's grandfather, another to Bayanlorag's descendants, and the third to Pa'ana's sons.

613 428 Kutɔbis also inherited the lineage *bɔɣar* of Pa'anbɔbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and brother's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbɔbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutɔbis. With this *bɔɣar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbɔbis's homestead. If on Kutɔbis's death the present head of Baɣanlɔrɔg biis, Na'abzɔ, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutɔbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Baɣana, Pa'ana, and Sɔmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Sɔmnam's line of descent. On Kutɔbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbɔbis II. Lastly, Kutɔbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Baɣana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Baɣana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutɔbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutɔbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutɔbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

613 593 784 601 On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*ɣman*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

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[1] This was because Kutɔbis and Yidaan were *saarɔt*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

593 siblings whose mothers are or were classificatory or clan sisters have stronger bonds than those whose mothers were not kin. Such ties, intersecting those of patrilineal kinship, are very common. The children of a woman and her *pɔγasoog*[1] (a 'sister' or other kinswoman she brings into the family as a child to look after her baby, and who later marries her husband or another man of the family) feel almost as close to each other as if they were full sisters' children. Most common, however, are cases such as that of Naabdiya and Barimoda, who trace their long-lasting amicable association back to the excellent personal relations of their mothers.

After adolescence, with the attainment of greater economic responsibility, the cleavage between *sunzɔ* siblings becomes more apparent, though it is still largely masked by membership of the same domestic and economic unit. Paternal control and the common needs of the unit hold their divergent interests in check. Sex differences become significant in the same way as with *soog* siblings; but brothers are usually partners in work and often comrades in leisure.

At this time the pattern of their future relations emerges clearly. Its 593 keynote is a free-and-easy comradeship on terms of equality. Differ- 865 ences of age, formally recognized in the terminology of kinship and socially significant as they are in the distribution of authority, rights, and duties, hardly influence the personal relations of brothers in young manhood, or even later. No Taləŋ, man, woman, or child, will submit to arbitrary authority without resistance. If any demand made on another person in virtue of superiority of generation, age, or sex is felt to be unreasonable or unjust it will be resisted. Quite small children, obedient as they are, jib at commands from parents or older siblings if they think them unreasonable or unfair.

593 This attitude is particularly strong among siblings. The basis of their social and personal relationships is the principle of sharing (*tɔt*). This principle underlies the social relations of siblings of any degree as well as of corporate units whose relative standing is assimilated to those of siblings, such as co-ordinate lineage segments. As we have noted earlier, it is one of the chief contrasts between the relations of father and son and those of brother and brother. It is summed up in the maxim: 'A man and his father do not share; a man and his brother share (*Nit ni u ba pu tɔta; nit ni u mabiig ntɔt*).'

As will be recollected, this maxim is most clearly illustrated in the 593 rules of inheritance. Brothers are coheirs, even though the effective 428 management of the lands and chattels they inherit from their father is 423 vested in the oldest of them at any given time. Hence if a man has only 'sons' to consider in dealing with property that has come to him by inheritance from his father or brother, he is in theory free to dispose of it as he pleases. But if he is merely the oldest of a group of brothers inheriting from their father he will be effectively restrained by his brothers. This rule is constantly met with in discussions of the pledging of property or the sale of land or cattle. Naabdiya summed up these rules very well in reference to the various farms held by the members of his inner lineage of Kunduzoor biis. First there was the home farm originally inherited and left intact by Kunduzoor at the time of his death, now owned by the last of his and his brothers' sons, Na'am. Na'am could, if he wished, sell some or all of this land, since on his death it will pass to men whom he calls 'sons'. 'We (the sons) could protest but we could not restrain him', said Naabdiya, 'but Kunduzoor (i.e. his spirit) would be angry and would slay Na'am.' Then there was some land Kunduzoor had himself acquired and left intact, heritable only by his direct descendants. The largest part of this was now owned by Na'ampa'ahya, the oldest of his true grandsons. 'He cannot sell this land', said Naabdiya; 'we, his brothers (who will inherit after him) could restrain him. In the old days we should not hesitate to draw arrows in order to do so, but now we would drag him to the chief, who would forbid the sale.' 593 428 423

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[1] Cf. Ch. IV. above.

The records of land sales in the past which I collected at Tongo amply confirm Naabdiya's statement. When Na'ampa'ahya inherited this land from the last of Kunduzoor's own sons it was as oldest of a group of brothers. So he had to 'cut off (*ŋma*)' portions of it for his other brothers. These distributed portions are normally re-amalgamated with the main block of patrimonial land as the brothers inherit from one another and add their portions to the main block. But if friction develops between brothers over a serious issue, it may result in one of them refusing to let his portion revert to the patrimonial land. Such a case occurred in Naabdiya's inner lineage in his father's time. One of Kunduzoor's sons, having become his father's heir, took offence at an apparent slight put upon him by a son of his father's brother. So he took an oath that his portion of the patrimonial land should never revert to the brother who would inherit from him and made a bond with his brothers that they should act likewise. Such a compact could never have been made by a man with his 'sons'. Characteristically, the compact left uneasy consciences. A generation later deaths occurred in the lineage. Diviners said they were a punishment for certain actions that resulted from this compact and Kunduzoor's grandsons were commanded to annul it. They could no longer do so in fact, but a token annulment and an expiatory sacrifice to their grandfather were considered sufficient. [787]

In accordance with this principle we find that duties and rewards are distributed among siblings on a basis of equality of status, though in proportion to such distinguishing personal attributes as age, ability, need, and in conformity with the demands of the situation. When brothers work together as a team in the production of the household's food resources, each is expected to contribute the maximum share he is 593

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We might mention here that the institution of the sororate, which is considered by some authorities[1] to be the natural complement of the levirate, only exists in a rudimentary—some might say vestigial—form among the Tallensi. It comes up if a man loses his only wife and is left a lone widower. Then his father-in-law sends a party of mourners to the funeral who take with them a young girl of his clan—perhaps one of his own daughters, perhaps the daughter of a 'brother' of his inner or medial lineage. This girl, a real or classificatory sister of the dead wife, is presented to the grief-stricken widower. She has been brought, the father-in-law's messengers say, 'to sit on your knees, to console you, to dry your tears, to be your wife' and so take the place of her dead sister. It is, however, more a gesture of condolence than a real offer of a substitute for the dead wife. Tallensi say that very occasionally the girl might stay on as the wife of the widower; most commonly she goes home immediately after the funeral or within a few weeks. Her deputy wifehood is purely ceremonial, for she is usually too young to do all the housekeeping or to be slept with.

●428 The rules of inheritance among brothers also illustrate the gradation of their social equivalence in accordance with their genealogical distance. These rules have been considered from various angles in earlier contexts and little remains to be added. Their operation, as we have seen, depends on the conditions of economic co-operation to a very considerable extent. If two brothers farm together they automatically have joint rights in all lands, livestock, and other resources they possess. If one dies the other does not so much inherit his property and position in society as amalgamate it with his own. What was formerly managed by two men conjointly now becomes the concern of one man. There is practically no change, to begin with, in the social relations of their dependants as the result of the death of one brother. When Nindɔyat died his *soog* brother Yintee inherited the homestead they had both occupied. Nindɔyat's wives at first stayed on as Yintee's wives, his children naturally remained in the homestead. They had lost their own father, but there was no change in their social position or their economic condition as a result of his death. If brothers farm independently they inherit from each other in order of seniority and of degree of consanguinity. Patrimonial property, rights, and ritual objects that have been transmitted intact from their fathers are inherited strictly by seniority amongst the group of brothers who trace their descent to the original holder of these possessions. But property acquired by the deceased's own father goes only to his brothers by the same father, in order of seniority. And the custody of his children will pass to his genealogically nearest brother whether or not he is the heir to the patrimonial property.

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Here a revealing jural fiction deserves mention. Brothers are thought

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[1] Cf. Lowie, R., *Primitive Society*, p. 33.

to be closer to one another than father and son—this is one aspect of 593
their social equivalence, as we have previously observed. In theory 428
this holds for any brother of the same inner lineage, in practice it is only full or half-brothers who feel such close bonds. Now any land a man acquires by his own efforts goes to his sons, not to his brothers. There is no question about this. The sons have contributed by their labour to the acquisition of the land and this is their title to it. Cattle acquired by purchase also belong to the man's sons; but the heir to the patrimonial property, if he is a proxy father to or a father's brother's son older than the man's own sons, has titular control over the use to which they may wish to put any of their father's livestock. It is different with clothes and weapons; and here the fiction we have mentioned comes into the picture. Clothes are very intimately associated with a person; they are a sort of extension of his individuality, as was suggested in an earlier chapter. A man's bow, his quiver of arrows, his knife, and his spear are also thought of as symbols of himself as an individual in a way that land is not. The fiction is that such personal effects should be inherited by a man's brothers, not by his sons. Thus when a man's funeral is finished his brothers of the inner lineage assemble in his *zɔŋ*. His oldest son fetches all his personal effects in. But the brothers do not divide them amongst themselves. At most they might take an arrow apiece from the dead man's quiver. The other personal effects they will restore to the sons. 'We have seen it and now you keep it', they say. A full or half-brother, especially one who has farmed with the deceased, may, if he desires, take some garments. He may take all if the dead man's children are all too young to farm for themselves, as he then becomes their proxy father in fact as well as in name. Even then he might return some of the clothes to the sons when they are old enough to use them.

In the same way a woman's personal effects go to her daughters on her death, but her close sisters may claim some of them if they wish. For example, every woman accumulates a number of calabashes (*ŋman*, pl. *ŋmana*) during her lifetime. There is a good material reason for this, for there is hardly a more useful domestic utensil than the ubiquitous calabash dish. A woman will, however, store away her best calabashes for use on special occasions only. As she grows older she collects more and more of these select calabashes, and an old woman may have as many as forty or fifty. She keeps them in her large string bag (*zaalɔŋ*), hung up in the darkest corner of her sleeping-room. At the bottom of the *zaalɔŋ* bag is the largest and finest calabash. This will be part of her *kumpiog* (basket of death) when she dies. In it she keeps her particular treasures. Because of this an old woman's *zaalɔŋ* is as sacrosanct as a man's granary—to which, in fact, Tallensi compare it. No one but the old woman herself ever looks into the bottom calabash of the *zaalɔŋ*. When she dies an old woman's *kumpiog* is taken to her oldest daughter, who also gets the *zaalɔŋ* bag. But she does not get all

428 593 the calabashes. The old woman's close sisters have first pick of the calabashes and the remainder are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law.

Outside the inner lineage, as has been previously indicated, succession goes by age seniority. Succession to the custody of a maximal lineage *bɔyar* or to a politico-ritual office such as a chiefship or tɛndaanaship follows this rule. This, as we can now see, is in conformity with the principle that members of the same maximal lineage or clan who are not of the same inner lineage are titular 'brothers'.

593 602 It is in the usages of extended kinship, however, that the social equivalence of siblings is most apparent. We have already dealt at length with the extensions of parental roles within the lineage and it is necessary only to observe that they are based on the principle of the social equivalence of brothers. We shall find, in the next chapter, that it is an equally important factor in the web of matrilateral and sororal kinship ties, outside the agnatic lineage.[1] We shall see that, as in the ramification of lineage structure, so in extra-clan kinship bonds the tie of siblingship is the principal mechanism of their wide-spreading reticulation.

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[1] This is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the chief mechanism responsible for classificatory kinship in primitive societies. Tale material amply supports him. See Radcliffe-Brown, 'Social Organisation of Australian Tribes', previously cited, and his articles on 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', *South African Journal of Science*, xxi, 1924, and on 'The Study of Kinship Systems', *J.R.A.I.*, lxxi, 1941.

602 789 to do this service because, as a kinsman of the sufferer, he naturally wishes to see him free of his evil fate. He is held to desire this the more strongly because his *ahəb* sacrifices on his behalf. Hence his welfare depends on the continued life and the perpetuation of the lineage of the *ahəb*, both of which are threatened by the evil Predestiny. Lastly, he is specially suitable because a complete stranger might use the opportunity to do the sufferer magical harm; while a patrilineal kinsman of his might be contaminated by the evil Predestiny. Again, anybody who can be identified as an *ahəŋ*, in however remote a classificatory sense, may be asked to perform this service.

The Father's Sister

604 We have left the discussion of the relationship of father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) and brother's child (*bii*) for this chapter, although it is not a relationship of extra-clan kinship. Father's sister and brother's child are members of the same clan and lineage. But Tallensi associate the father's sister with relatives outside the clan. This is due to her marrying out of the clan, to her having no significant public voice in the affairs of the lineage, ● [428] and to her being unable to inherit lineage property or ancestor shrines.[1] Thus a native usually compares his relationship with his father's sister to his relationship with his mother's brother, not to his relationship with his parents. It is thought of more as the opposite of the relationship between sister's son and mother's brother than as an item in the scheme of intra-familial or intra-lineage relationships.

As in the case of mother's brother and sister's child, the bond between father's sister and brother's child tends to be more effective for brother's sons than for brother's daughters. In the case of the brother's sons it is reinforced by the ties a woman has with her paternal lineage and by the ties her children have with their mother's brother and his sons. In the case of brother's daughters, it is attenuated because the daughters tend to be dispersed by marriage and their relationship with their father's sister is much more a purely personal affair.

Compared with the mother's brother, the father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) counts for little in the web of extra-clan kinship. Tallensi say this is because she is a woman. 'It is not she who sacrifices for you but you (her brother's son) may one day sacrifice on her behalf.' At the same time they declare that 'she is your father'. I have several times had an old woman introduced to me by a man or a woman as 'my father'. Eŋwala, explaining her affection for her full brother's son, Anaaho, said in the stock phraseology, 'Is he not my child? If you and your brother together have a child, is he not also your child [as much as your brother's]?

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[1] Except, as has been mentioned before if she is the last surviving member of the lineage. Even then she does not inherit the ancestor shrines but merely sacrifices to them, as if she were acting on behalf of her deceased father. She can never inherit lineage land.

241 scattered compounds, or whether closer building between compounds, on land previously available for farming, enforced the system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation, as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously.

Land Tenure.

793 622 425 The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana" (Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs command people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs' and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide.

[427] To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. The question of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agricultural land has no value in the economic sense; there are a number of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the land, through the tindana.

428● 423 In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been conveyed through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the requirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible, either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land

428 allotted by the father. On the death of the head of the family the male survivors inherit the land in varying proportions as tenants in
423 common with benefits of survivorship. The eldest son assumes the responsibilities of his father and may elect to live either in his father's compound, or to remain in his own. In either case he will receive a large share of his father's farm and retain also an interest in his own. After a number of generations the distribution and ownership of land becomes very complicated in congested areas and considerable fragmentation of holdings takes place. Land not in use may be lent to another for farming, but often with a stipulation to plant non-exhausting crops.

Distribution of Population.

162 The distribution of population is very variable both from one political area to another and within each area. If one takes the the district as a whole, 3,559 square miles, the population by the 1931 census (7) is shown to be 406,566 persons; this gives a density of population of 114 per square mile (c.f. South Mamprusi 23 per square mile, and Western Dagomba 15). It is estimated that at least one-third of the total area is uninhabited, and much of this is fertile alluvial land near to rivers, where tse-tse flies abound. In other areas ruins are found for which slave raiding, sleeping sickness, and yellow fever, are variously held responsible. Table I below gives the distribution of tribes and population.

Table 1.—Distribution of Population in North Mamprusi.

Political Area	Area, square miles	Total Population	Density of Population per sq. ml.	Tribes
Navrongo ...	1,551	120,870	78	Nankani, Kassena, and Builsa.
Zuarungu ...	781	133,981	172	Nankani, Tallensi, and Nabdam.
Kusasi and Br. Togoland ...	807 420	110,614 41,101	137 98	Kusasi, Busanga, Bemoba and strangers.
Total ...	3,559	406,566	114	—

Political Organisation.

631 History shows that North Mamprusi was continually harrassed from outside (8) until comparatively recent times. The Mamprusis in the South, who were at one time a powerful and organised tribe,

593 sees any of Ɔmara's children misbehaving he can stop them and punish them if necessary. But ordinarily, though he can scold Ɔmara's children, 602 he would cause grave offence to Ɔmara if he were to strike them. When, to quote a case that occurred in a similar structural setting, Pumaan's son threw a stone at Zaŋ's (Pumaan's younger brother's) wife, Zaŋ shouted anathemas at the boy and complained to the neighbours but dared not whip him; that was Pumaan's prerogative. For Zaŋ and Pumaan have separate households and are both sticklers for their rights. By contrast, Bɔyazie, who lives and farms with his older brother and gets on extremely well with him, can command obedience from and can discipline the latter's children by corporal punishment if need be. But even in such a case a man might hesitate to strike his brother's children if he and his brother were not on terms of the greatest mutual trust. If Saandi asks his brother's son to do an errand or a job for him the boy will usually obey, but he cannot be compelled to do so, as he can by his own father. Co-wives, as we know, are particularly cautious in dealing with one another's children.

593 There is, however, at any given time, only one man who has full paternal authority over a person, child or adult. In the first instance it is the man who begot him or her; and if this man dies, it is the man who takes on his social role, that is his distinctive rights and duties, by inheritance. The critical rights and duties are those connected with the land and other patrimonial property which the child's father owned or was heir to, and those connected with the cult of the child's father's father. In practice this means the head of the household to which the child belongs, who is also the person who sacrifices to the child's grandfather's spirit; and this limits the range to the child's father's brothers by the same father.

429 428 602 During a child's minority a father's agnatic cousin (brother in native terms) may act *in loco parentis* if the father's nearer male agnates are lacking; but it is a position of trusteeship rather than of full paternal authority. The son will set up an independent household as soon as he is able to farm for himself. He will then take possession of any land which his father acquired by his own efforts and will become the effective owner of, for example, bride-price cattle obtained for his own sister, though he cannot dispose of them without the formal consent of the head of the nuclear lineage. In relation to an adult, a father's cousin (or remoter classificatory 'brother' of the same inner lineage) retains only the ritual and jural attributes of a father; and this chiefly in virtue of being head of the inner or nuclear lineage to which the person belongs. Important as these attributes are, they represent a less direct and personal authority than that of one's own or one's proxy father.

603 We shall see later that the relations between grandchildren (*yaaŋ*, pl. *yaas*) and grandparents (*yaab-doog* or *ba-kpeem*, masc. *yaab-pɔk* or

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ŋmaarəme*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against
682 a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide
577 may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the
latter case it is like a c[illegible] that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or
682 between human communities. The taboos against them show us the
Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of
471 a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots
it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for
[461] a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed
431 or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*)
● —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dis- 471 possessed without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or 431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut' (*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important 613 part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have 428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is 613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*) what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co- 577 existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a [686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to 471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust 432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

682 Some sixty years ago a Tamboog man was killed by a group of Yamələg
×618 men with whom he quarrelled at a dance. Two or three years later a couple of Tamboog men met a Yamələg man alone in the bush and slew him in revenge. The Yamələg people understood that this was a case of 'wiping out a debt' and the matter was regarded as closed.

×618 The principle of representative status enhances the sense of lineage or
●431 clan solidarity. We have seen how, in ceremonial situations, any member of a lineage or clan is regarded as representing the whole unit. I have often seen men refuse gifts of meat or food at ceremonies because these had no precedent and accepting them would be equivalent to committing their lineage or clan to reciprocate in the same way at some future time.

613 Co-operation in ceremonies, especially in funerals, brings to light the
764 institutional machinery of lineage and clan solidarity. Its basis is the
×618 distribution of duties and privileges among the different segments of the lineage or clan concerned in the situation, in accordance with their segmentary relationship to the group principally affected. Thus in funerals, in accordance with the maxim 'Brother lineages take charge of one's affairs (*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*)', members of a close brother lineage of the bereaved lineage supervise the ceremonies. In addition, all the segments of the maximal lineage or clan concerned send prescribed food contributions and receive prescribed shares of beer, meat, and food distributed during the ceremonies. Funerals are important because the death of a person may entail a rearrangement of social relations in a segment and this is a matter of common interest to the whole clan.

×618 These obligatory reciprocal services and privileges constantly remind the individual of his dependence on his clansmen for the proper management of the critical events of his life. In consequence the obligation of reciprocity is strongly felt, in both secular and ritual matters, the strength of the feeling being relative to the lineage relationship of the parties. When a man invites a collective hoeing party (*pooh kpa'arəp*) it is always co-members of his medial lineage who turn up in largest force. Distant clansmen only come if they have ties of personal matrilateral kinship with him. And the motive usually given for responding to such an invitation is 'To-morrow I may need the help of a hoeing party'. Public opinion is critical of those who do not conform to the conventions of mutual assistance, and when they find themselves compelled to call for assistance in collective hoeing or housebuilding or some similar activity, they are left in the lurch.

578 Intra-clan disputes involving lineages of a higher order than the
×618 nuclear lineage very rarely arise over economic affairs—that is, in effect, over the ownership of land or live-stock. Disputes in higher order lineages arise over the inheritance of widows or marriage with a woman who was formerly the wife of a member of a different segment of the clan. Members of the deceased husband's medial lineage feel they have a prior claim to a widow's hand and sometimes object to her marrying a man of a different branch of the clan. And if a marriage is dissolved, no matter what the reason may be, it is regarded as a grave breach of clan solidarity for any other member of the husband's clan to take her to wife. It arouses suspicion of collusion between the woman and the second

This aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔɣar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice.
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal 431
lineages which own the particular *Bɔɣar*. Nowadays these gifts are of
small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities
can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in
the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly
prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔɣar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔɣar*,
to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and
to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally
placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔɣar*. But these services
are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals
sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors.
Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the
client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relationships 486
than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔɣar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers
of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from
these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards.
And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor,
farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and
Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of
the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔɣar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims.
Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase
the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔɣar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔɣar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or
misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
● 431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts
in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to
£10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have
good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their
board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the
Bɔyar.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this
471 lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country,
recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his
political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own
hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual
functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the
aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu
clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex
organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and
clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a
Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate
his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his
gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income
of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the
members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in
running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own
half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make
them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three
henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance
of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his
near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana
keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—
to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar
age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number
of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no
outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be
invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

602 The usual range of effective uterine kinship is a good illustration of the correlation between spatial relationships and genealogical relationships in the social space of the individual. The physical range of the individual's social contacts and communication with others is, as we have already noted, a function of his range of social relations, which is determined principally by his genealogical connexions. In the days before the establishment of the British peace, matrilateral, and especially uterine kinship, played a very important part in enabling people to travel outside their normal range of social contacts, and so to build up social relations with members of clans usually inaccessible to their own clansmen. A story will illustrate how this occurred.

602 574 484 When the Gorogo-Yikpemdaana was a young man of 17 or 18, sometime during the first decade of this century, a food shortage approaching famine, such as periodically swept the country, descended on the Tallensi. He decided to make a journey to Gbimis, in Mampurugu, across the White Volta, in order to barter some livestock for grain. But such a journey was full of peril. A Taləŋ wandering in Mampurugu would be set upon and killed or taken as a slave by any armed Mamprusi who encountered him. So he went, first, to a *soog* at Pwalagu. This man escorted him across the river to another *soog* living in a small village there, and this *soog* conducted him to Gbimis. Under the safe conduct of his Mampuru *saarət* he was able to carry out his project. In later years he often made this trip to Mampurugu to buy things for resale in the small markets of Taleland.

Though people can travel where they will in freedom and security nowadays, it is still usual for anyone having business of a ritual or jural kind with a distant or unfamiliar clan to follow the web of uterine kinship thither. The route is much curtailed, but the principle remains. If Banərəg's wife's brother, a Sakpee man, has such business at Bongo, he will probably go to his *saarət* at Zuarungu, stay the night with them, go on next morning to a *soog* at Yaraga, and find out from him or her if they have a *soog* at Bongo with whom he could stay and who will guide him and act as his spokesman with *his* clansmen.

602 476 431 In the same way uterine kin assist one another in economic matters. A man who loses time in his farming programme through illness will often ask a *soog* from a neighbouring settlement to come and do a day's hoeing for him where he would not ask for such help from a clansman. Again, crops do not ripen at the same time throughout Taleland. There may be an interval of several days or several weeks between the harvest at Sii and the harvest at Datək. It is the custom, at harvest time, especially at the time of the early millet harvest after the hungry months, for people living in areas that have a late harvest to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts of grain from relatives living in early harvesting areas. Later, when the early harvesting settlements have exhausted their supplies, people will go to kinsfolk in later harvesting areas to beg for grain to tide them

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over. Such reciprocal gifts pass between kinsmen of all categories. 476
But the giving is specially generous and cordial between *soog* kin. 431

In keeping with the unrestricted range of cognatic kinship among the Tallensi, the close ties of kinship between male *saarət* are extended to 602 their children and sometimes to their grandchildren. With men whose fathers were *saarət*, whether they belong to the same clan or not, the formal ties of kinship are often mellowed by the affection and trust of a friendship like that of their fathers. This is rarer with grandsons of male *saarət*, but not unknown. I have seen a man break down with grief over the death of a clansman who was his father's *soog*'s son. He would have felt no sense of personal loss at all if this extra bond had not existed between him and his dead clansman. Again, there was Tiezien of Kpata'ar's lifelong friendship with his father's *soog*'s son at Zuarungu—a friendship which would not normally have arisen between a Taləŋ and a Gərəŋ living eight miles apart.

A link of uterine kinship is often used to define the relations of 602 individuals who are not themselves directly related by kinship. A typical case that shows how far the classificatory principle can be pressed, if 582 there is a *soog* link in the chain of relationships connecting two people, is the following. Zaawɔmya of Bunkiuk began courting the young widow of a Wakii man. But in the course of making inquiries he discovered that the girl's late husband's father's mother and his own mother had been distant *saarət*. Zaawɔmya concluded, therefore, that the girl's late husband's father would have stood to him in the relationship of an 'older brother' (*bier*), since he would have called the latter's mother his 'mother' (*ma*). Hence the girl's husband would have been his 'son' (*bii*) and the girl herself his 'daughter-in-law' (*sampɔɣa*). 'Well just think of it', he said to me, when he told me the story, 'how can a man marry his daughter-in-law? So I gave it up.' When Mansami, Ɔmara's own father's brother's son ran away with the wife [578] of Ɔmara's father's *soog*'s son at Dkoog, there was a bitter quarrel between them. Ɔmara accused Mansami of disgracing his (Ɔmara's) kinship ties and ordered him either to give up the girl or leave the homestead. Mansami, obstinately insisting that he and the girl's husband were not related, made this the pretext for keeping her and went off to stay with his mother's brother. Such roundabout connexions through a *soog* link are often exploited for ulterior motives. A common trick of fathers who object to a daughter's marrying a particular man is to allege a remote kinship tie of this sort between the girl and her suitor. The latter and his family head may be sceptical of the alleged evidence for this but they can do nothing about it.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial cere-
mony. Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tenzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live, [789]
expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

PLATE 6

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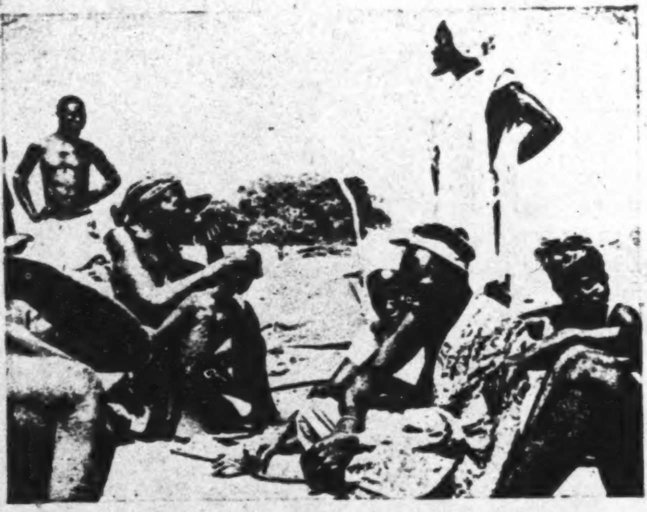

a. Kinship *versus* affinal relationships: sons-in-law, sitting in the customary posture of respect, on the right, come to offer condolences to their father-in-law's family and lineage on the occasion of a death

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b. A husband goes to inform his parents-in-law of the birth of his wife's first child. He carries a hen as a gift and a thick stick of Shea wood on which four notches have been cut, which shows that the baby is a girl

[FACING p. 113]

602 606 parents-in-law, particularly in the early years while he is not quite sure of his wife. If his father-in-law sends for him to help with the hoeing, or with [illegible]uilding, or his mother-in-law requests him to help thatch her [illegible] must respond with alacrity and bring as large a party of his [illegible] assist him as he can manage. In this way a man shows honou[illegible]tes himself with (*giem*), his affines; for these services are [illegible]ble obligations, and usually cease to be asked for after the ma[illegible] has become stabilized. They bear no relation to the bride-price, and are lavishly recompensed. A visiting work-party brought by a son-in-law expects generous hospitality, and the father-in-law, if he is a reputable man, would feel that he had lost dignity if he did not feed and entertain the work-party well. But though these services cannot be enforced, no man would risk offending his parents-in-law by refusing them. These material demonstrations of respect, gratitude, and goodwill are essential for the smooth working of a relationship artificially established by a jural compact. Parents-in-law praise and like an obliging son-in-law, even if he has not paid the bride-price, the natives say.

602 607 This is one side of the affinal relationship. It also has an aspect of friendliness and familiarity, as we have seen, which comes out most conspicuously in a man's relations with his siblings-in-law. A man has a joking relationship with his siblings-in-law similar to that of his wife with his sisters and distant clansmen. It goes so far that a man may sleep with an unmarried sister-in-law (*dakiipɔk*) who is visiting his house, and is therefore in that situation identified with his wife. A man's siblings-in-law belong to the familiar and friendly generation of his wife. They are identified with her. But they also belong to the potentially hostile lineage of her father, whose heir a brother-in-law will one day be. In very many ways a man's siblings-in-law are sympathetically drawn to him; but their rights in relation to his wife may pit them against him. The convention of joking serves to reconcile these two potentially discordant elements of their relationship. But when the marriage has lasted many years, and the possibility of a conflict of rights disappears, the element of friendliness in the relationship can assert itself without prejudice to its jural aspect. Thus, conventional teasing usually drops out of the intercourse of siblings-in-law of long standing.

606 764 ● 431 The formal distance between affines is further shown in the duties and obligations to which a man is liable on the death of a son-in-law or parent-in-law. On the death of a parent-in-law a man is obliged to attend the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. He should come escorted by a large party of clansmen and their wives, and the mourning party should wear their finest clothes and be led by drummers and musicians. A son-in-law should provide the gravestone for a parent-in-law. He should distribute money freely to the grave-diggers, to the drummers, singers, and musicians, whose raucous noise stimulates the crowd

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women 764
tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of 431
the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law. [576] [554]

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of 606
prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small 754
contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribu- 431
tion is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This 574
consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samər*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*layapieləb*, pl. *layapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *layah*, pl. *ligəri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown. [436]

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754 431 574 fully repaid in the bestowal of his daughter as a wife. A similar sanction to that mentioned in the case of a son-in-law operates here.

764 602 If one watches the behaviour of men at the funeral of an affine, one can see that they feel themselves to be under strong constraint. They and their clansmen accompanying them keep together, and when there are no ceremonies or festivities in progress they stay apart from the rest of the crowd. In former days a mourning party of affines always carried arms, and it is said that fighting sometimes broke out at funerals. When Tallensi comment on the ceremonial obligations of affines, they emphasize the feeling of constraint associated with them. One is impressed by the contrast between this attitude and the attitudes associated with the ceremonial obligations that follow on the death of a clansman or cognatic kinsman. It is as if the native feels his ceremonial obligations to an affine to be forced on him from outside, without his choice, whereas he seems to accept his duties and obligations on the death of a kinsman willingly and from within.

602 431 It is evident that reciprocity between affines is different in character from that which prevails between people who have a bond of common interests, such as members of the same family. There is not the same free give and take. When gifts or services pass between affines, whether they are prescribed or ostensibly spontaneous, there is a deliberate effort to counterbalance them. A sort of book-keeping occurs. This appears most clearly in the jural formalities of marriage, but it comes out quite plainly in the apparently voluntary services and reciprocal hospitality of son-in-law and father-in-law. The side that benefits feels impelled to make an equivalent return in order not to give the other party grounds for a grudge. And people who flout this convention not only upset their good relations with their affines and so provide pretexts for conflict with them, but also incur the censure of public opinion.

606 431 One incident will illustrate this. Banorəg asked his son-in-law, a member of an adjacent clan, to come and help him finish the hoeing of his home farm. The young man brought a couple of his clansmen and they worked with zeal from early morning till sunset. Then they went home, politely refusing Banorəg's invitation to come home with him for the evening meal. Had they come as a formal hoeing party they would have been entitled to a good meal as a reward at the end of the day. But they had come informally, and their own homes were near enough for them to get back in time for the evening meal. They spoke of their day's work for Banorəg as a simple act of courtesy to a father-in-law. As we watched them saunter homewards, Banorəg said to me 'Sons-in-law are shy (*deenam mmar vi*). They can't come home with you (their father-in-law) and eat with your children (as if they were your kin)'. But next day Banorəg sent a large basket of millet flour to his daughter with orders to cook a generous meal for her husband and his friends. He would feel ashamed, he told me, if he did not 'thank' the young men

thus; and besides, people would say he was mean. This attitude does 606 not occur with the true reciprocity that prevails in the domestic family 431 or between near kin.

Sex in the Relationship of Affines

While, therefore, the relations of affines assume the existence of a 602 formal distance between them, they are not encumbered by avoidances or other social barriers that make friendliness impossible or ordinary social intercourse a burden. There is amity as well as opposition in their relationship. In one matter only is there a rigorous barrier between affines. In respect to sex and procreation they are strictly separate. The emphasis is on the deed, not the word; there is no prohibition against talking to or in the presence of an affine about sexual matters.

One aspect of this ban on bringing sex into the relationship of affinity 602 is the native attitude about a sexual offence against an affine. For a man to seduce the wife of an affine is almost as heinous a transgression as 577 intercourse with the wife of a man of one's own expanded family, though it is not regarded as incest; and the offence is nearly as bad if the culprit is a close agnate of the woman's husband's affine or the woman the wife of a close agnate of the affine concerned. It is a grave offence, also, if a man or his close agnate abducts the wife of an affine or his close agnate. There are no explicit mystical sanctions against either of these wrongs, but Tallensi describe them as 'a thing of enormous evil (*yelbiog tenta'ar*)' bound to bring ill fortune on the wrongdoer, and in any case involving such serious social consequences that no man in his senses would descend to them. They think of the possible culprit as being the son-in-law, and they say that the father-in-law would take away his daughter and the bride-price be forfeited. Affines are bound to fall out with one another now and then. Usually apologies proffered through an intermediary lead to their making it up again. But in the case of a sexual [783] offence against a father-in-law, it is quite impossible to beg or receive pardon. For it is a sin; it 'pollutes the room (*sayam dug*)' of the injured man.[1]

'Pollution of the room' in this sense is very rare among the Tallensi. But it is not unknown for a man to abduct the wife of the father- or brother-in-law (true or classificatory) of one of his own clansmen. The elders of both the abductor's medial lineage and the wronged husband's medial lineage are then extremely indignant. The latter demand the return of 'their' wife; and in all the cases I have come across the former see to it at once that the woman is sent back to her husband.

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[1] Cf. p. 28 above. *Sayam dug* has the double sense of a mystical defilement of the sleeping-room—the inner sanctuary of family and of reproductive life—and of an irreparable infringement of lineage rights. If the offender is a distant clansman of the true son-in-law, a ritual reconciliation between the two lineages might be allowed after the defilement has been ritually removed.

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paternal kin and more strongly by her uterine kin (*saarət*), insist on doing so. If she survived, she and her children and other *soog* kin would never forgive her accuser. There would be chronic friction in the family. If she died, her children and other *soog* kin would still resent the imputation against them and would have a lifelong grievance against her accuser and her children. The accuser would in any case bear the ritual blame, and would be in danger of mystical retribution. Nowadays, to judge by one case that came to my notice, the accused woman and her kin insist on an oath by the *bɔɣar*, usually the *bɔɣar* of the husband's medial lineage. Both women swear to the justice of their case before the *bɔɣar*, and the one who suffers a serious misfortune soonest—a misfortune such as grave sickness or death in her own *dug* of the house—is deemed to be in the wrong. Whatever the outcome, it amounts to one member of the family invoking the *bɔɣar* which watches over the welfare of the whole group to injure another member of the unit; and this is a sacrilege, even if it is done in the name of justice. It must be atoned for by sacrifices to which both women and their husband (or husbands) have to contribute. But the *bɔɣar* is never wholly appeased; it may still bring misfortune on the family for the sacrilege. And, of course, both women and their *soog* kin might continue to harbour resentment. An accusation of witchcraft, itself the symptom of the conflicts latent in the structure of the polygamous family, breeds endless discord.

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But it must be emphasized that such cases are rare. For the most part women rub along pretty well with their co-wives. In this the senior wife (*pɔɣakpeem*)—seniority being reckoned according to order of marriage—may exercise a great deal of influence, especially if, as is likely, she is older than the others. Though she has no disciplinary authority over her younger co-wives, she has considerable moral authority over them. As her husband's closest confidante among his wives she knows all the affairs of the family and has its interests close at heart. She stands for the common allegiance of the wives to their husband and the family. A wise and tactful senior wife will keep an eye on the household economy and on the children without seeming to interfere with the liberty of her younger co-wives. Looking up to her with respect and affection, her younger co-wives will accept advice and guidance from her that does much to make the routine of family life smooth and pleasant. The fiction that she is the real mistress of the house (*dugdaana*) and that all the children 'belong' to her in a special sense gives her a formal status that makes this easier. If a suitor calls to see a girl of the family he must pay his respects to the senior wife before he goes to greet the girl's own mother. If a woman's son-in-law sends her gifts of sweet potatoes, yams, and guinea-fowls at the time of the Harvest Festival, she will call all her co-wives proudly to see the gifts, and will distribute some of the tubers among them; but in addition the senior wife will receive a guinea-fowl as a mark of special honour. In such ways is the mistress of the

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593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of
861 parenthood as *dɔɣam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb,
[538] 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔɣam*)', often
quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or
● [431] foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a
'cow of rearing (*ughug na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price
cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian,
and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure,
only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it.
It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in
bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to
bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and
that is the hardest part.

In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability
593 of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their
855 natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children
estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly
78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per
cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and
only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a
particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of
861 the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of
428 individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is
always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

presents a remarkable jumble of ages and generations owing to the longevity and protracted fertility of its founder, Kuŋkɔŋki. Because a period of about fifty years elapsed between the birth of Kuŋkɔŋki's first son and the birth of his youngest son, the latter's children are 'fathers' to his older brothers' children, some of whom are three or four times their age. That is how Sinkawol came to be the classificatory 'son' of Kyekambe. Now and then Sinkawol had to speak sharply to his pupil. I asked if he would hit the boy if he did not obey his instructions. 'Oh no', replied Sinkawol gravely, 'I cannot strike him. He begot me. He is my father. If he were my brother or my son I wouldn't hesitate to clout him.' Kyekambe could not exercise authority over Sinkawol owing to his social immaturity and inexperience. But he would take precedence of Sinkawol in matters of inheritance, and when he grew up would be entitled to precede Sinkawol in rights of succession to ritual office, if he wished to. 613 602

Proxy and classificatory parents also feel a responsibility for the welfare of their 'brothers'' children. Thus if two brothers have separate households, they are not obliged to assist each other with food in times of shortage; and pride restrains a man from asking for help from a brother who is economically independent of him. I have seen men grow wan with hunger, through living for days on end on nothing but wild herbs; but they would never ask for assistance from their better-off brothers. It is up to the latter to offer a gift of grain voluntarily. And when such a gift is given (it is usually only 3 or 4 lb. of grain, enough for a couple of meals) it is offered as a gift for the children and their mothers. The giver will send a calabashful of grain to his brother's wife, with a message that it is for the children. As the natives always say, 'Your brother's children are your children. You cannot see them growing thin with hunger and let them starve.' A woman, too, will sometimes give food to the children of a co-wife of the same joint family, if the two women get on well together. 593 602 [431] ●

A proxy parent's authority over his or her classificatory children during their own parent's life cannot be exactly defined. It depends on the situation in which authority is exercised, on the personalities and economic relationships of the people concerned, and especially on the genealogical closeness of own parent and proxy parent. Ɔmara and Saandi are agnatic first cousins (brothers, in native terms) occupying adjoining semi-detached homesteads. They do not farm together. Saandi has no direct responsibility for feeding Ɔmara's children or for educating them. He is, however, directly interested in their welfare and upbringing. For as the head of the nuclear lineage, he must be consulted, and will have an influential, though not the decisive voice in all matters of a jural or ritual kind affecting Ɔmara's children—such matters, for instance, as the marriage of a son or daughter, or the rites of placing a child under the ritual guardianship of an ancestor. If he

These affective divergencies spring from the different social relations 573 of father and son on the one hand, and father and daughter on the other. Though a woman's ties with her paternal family are never severed, a man's jural responsibilities for his daughter cease with her marriage. He never loses the moral and religious authority of a father, however, or the corresponding ritual responsibilities for her. His curse is as potent as ever. The shrine of her spirit guardian is in his keeping and he sacrifices to it on her behalf when her husband requests him to do so. His chief ritual responsibility arises if she is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). It is his duty to have the rites of exorcism [789] performed so that she can bear children and fulfil satisfactorily her role as a wife. He is obliged to send ceremonial gifts to the funeral if she or his son-in-law dies; and he must 'fetch her funeral home (*die koor*)' and carry out the rites that bring her spirit back to her ancestral fold when she is dead. He has a very definite social and personal interest in her children too. When a woman bears her first child her husband must 593 send immediately to tell her parents and they demonstrate their continued affection and concern for h[illegible] and her children by sending her 431 gifts of food and other necessaries as generous as their means allow. A poor man might send only a basket of unthreshed guinea corn or millet and a couple of guinea-fowls, while his wife sends some shea butter, vegetables, and firewood. A rich chief I knew, when his first-born daughter had her first baby sent a procession of his younger wives bearing an assortment of gifts, including a 25-lb. bag of salt, several baskets of grain, a sheep, six guinea-fowls, and various luxury articles. Throughout her life a woman has a right to substantial gifts of grain from her father's house at harvest time, and to a home if she is left homeless. Women make a special point of collecting these gifts of grain at harvest time whether they are in want or not. As Tanzoo, the wife of a well-to-do man with enough grain and to spare, said when she received a large basket of early millet from her brother, 'I should feel ashamed not to fetch this grain. My co-wives would scoff saying I have no brother, no father.' Thus it is a source of pride, a test of family solidarity and, most important, a recurrent demonstration of a right to share in the products of the patrimonial estate which they might have owned if they had been born men.[1] These duties that a man has towards his daughter are the nucleus of his relations with her children. They are socially prescribed and fall upon his heirs when he dies.

From Adolescence to Adulthood

Let us return to the relations of father and son during this phase of 593 the latter's growth and study it more closely. The son is a member of 882 also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Təŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal 601 ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining 602 his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sɔk—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sɔk; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 178.

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in 604 the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1]

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u ŋman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u ŋman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends 604
a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her 843
pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl 431●
with a perineal band (*suol voog*). This is a proud moment for her, as [884]
the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have
entered the ranks of the matrons (*pəγaŋaaŋ*, pl. *pəγaŋaas*). Then, before 2/A

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[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

2/A [Text continued on p. 301.—Analyst]

the child is due, her husband sends a sacrifice for her spirit guardian to 604
her father, to secure the blessing of her patrilineal ancestors on the 843
ordeal she is soon to undergo. When the child is born, a messenger is
again dispatched to announce its birth to the girl's parents. He is 431
received with the hospitality due to a bearer of particularly glad tidings.
Now the girl's mother sends her four new calabashes. These are the [854]
infant's toilet-vessels—one for giving the infant its daily medicated water to drink, one as a dipper for use when bathing it, one as a slop basin, one for scooping up its excrement. These private toilet utensils are in part a magical protection for the baby. The occasion is also marked, as we have learnt, by a special gift of foodstuffs to the new mother from her father. All these formalities are not necessary for children after the first; it is enough to send a message on the birth of the child. But the woman's paternal relatives are no less interested in these later children than in her first child.

A child makes the acquaintance of its mother's paternal family very 604
early in life. Its mother's sisters and mother's mother, if she is not too old, are frequent visitors to its mother. Its mother's brothers may be frequent visitors too, especially if they are on friendly terms with its father. But it is not till the child reaches the age of about 5 or 6, when it begins to be taken on visits to its *ahəb yiri*, that it clearly distinguishes these relatives. The person who matters most to a small child at its mother's brother's house is its maternal grandmother (*ma-kpeem*), in whose quarters and under whose care the child lives.[1] Old people, both [574]
men and women, love to have their daughters' young children to stay with them, and pet and spoil them quite as much as their sons' children. As will be remembered, grandchildren joke with their maternal grandparents. At harvest time, in particular, old women often have daughters' children to stay for a week or two, so that they can enjoy the good food available at that time. Playing and eating and sleeping with the children of the house, a child learns to regard them as siblings, and partly through imitating them, partly through coming directly under the discipline of his mother's brother, a child thus visiting its *ahəb yiri* learns to think of its *ahəb* as a 'sort of father'. He hears all the gossip of the family. When a domestic sacrifice is performed he is present and receives the portion of the animal—the neck (*naŋgoor*)—prescribed for an *ahəŋ*. I have more than once seen a small boy of perhaps 8 receive the neck of a sacrifice, amid an amused chuckle from his mother's brothers. If a woman dies leaving a young child of less than 5 or 6 years old it is a common thing for the child to be sent to live with its maternal grandmother for a year or two until it is old enough to need only a minimum of maternal care.

Thus, a child learns to think of its *ahəb yiri*, in the strict sense of its mother's brother's homestead, at first, in the more extended sense, later, as a place where it is given food, shelter, affectionate attention, and

sion to go, saying that the quarrel between the two clans had nothing to do with the question of personal kinship ties. As this example shows, there is a strong element of moral (but not jural) compulsion in the respect owed by a sister's son to his mother's brother, and the sanction behind it is the allegiance every man owes to his maternal ancestors. 604 765 [577]

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[1] This follows directly from the constitution of the joint family.

On the level of sentiment and affective attitudes there is clearly a close resemblance between the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child and that of father and child. The difference, and it is a fundamental difference, lies in the fact that *ahɔb* and *ahɔŋ* have no common economic or jural interests. Thus a man can be familiar with all the affairs of his *ahɔb* or *ahɔŋ* and be keenly concerned that they should go well, but he is under no responsibility for their satisfactory outcome. The tension underlying the relationship of father and son is absent, and in this important respect the relationship of *ahɔb* and *ahɔŋ* resembles that of mother and child more closely. An *ahɔb* must be respected by and he has considerable moral authority over his *ahɔŋ*; but he cannot demand obedience from him as of right. This will be clearer from what follows. 604

Here it is pertinent to ask why the mother's brother and not her father—though he is the head of her natal family—holds the key position in the network of social relations that bind a person to his mother's patrilineal kin. As our analysis makes clear, it follows from the interaction of the principle of the equivalence of siblings and the principle of the cleavage between successive generations. A person cannot identify himself with his mother in relation to her father. He cannot have the status of a son and the status of a grandson in relation to the same person. On the other hand, as the preceding discussion makes clear, it is in conformity both with the logic of the social structure and with the pattern of sentiments uniting parent and child, for a person to extend to his mother's brother the filial attitude he has towards his mother. He can consistently be his mother's son and at the same time have a quasi-filial status in relation to her brother.

The Place of Gifts in the Relations of Ahɔb and Ahɔŋ

An *ahɔb* demonstrates his interest in his sister's son's well-being by the gifts (*piini*) he occasionally gives him. The theory is that they are given freely out of kinship amity. By the rule of reciprocity there should be a similar freely-given flow of gifts and services from *ahɔŋ* to *ahɔb*, but the emphasis lies on the generosity of the *ahɔb*. A man is under no jural or ritual obligation to give things to his sister's child; he does so voluntarily as a quasi-paternal gesture. And though an *ahɔŋ* has no property rights in the lineage or clan of his *ahɔb*, he is, in theory, allowed certain liberties with things belonging to them, as if he were a kind of son of the clan. This is explained by the formula that but for the accident of 604 431

604 431 birth his mother might have been an owner of these things. In the past, when people moved about less freely than now, a man passing through the clan settlement of his *ahəb* could seize any guinea-fowl he saw and collect any guinea-fowl eggs he came across[1] irrespective of which member of his mother's brother's clan they belonged to. Nowadays this custom is objected to. Tallensi say that with people moving about so freely and frequently as they do now, it would soon lead to the destruction of all their flocks of guinea-fowl. But an *ahəŋ* is still at liberty to cut himself a few heads of guinea corn or millet from any farm when walking through the settlement of his *ahəb*, if he is feeling hungry.

Women *ahəs* have an analogous privilege of much more practical value. As we have learnt, if a woman has a small baby she often gets a young sister of her own inner lineage or clan to come and live with her and be the infant's nursemaid. If there is no suitable girl in her father's lineage, she is entitled to ask her *ahəb* or her father's *ahəb* to give her a little girl. This is a very common practice.

604 426 Sister's son and mother's brother cannot contract debts towards each other. If a man borrows money or livestock from an *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* repayment cannot be demanded. It rests with the borrower to make an equivalent return in due course. Ɔndieso provided an amusing illustration of this rule. He borrowed three shillings from Naambulɔg, a member of the lineage of his paternal grandfather's *ahəb*, and a friend of his. For about a year nothing was said about this loan and the friendship of the two men continued as before. Then a disagreement developed between Kutɔbis, head of Ɔndieso's inner lineage, and the head of Naambulɔg's clan, for which the latter was in part responsible. As it was a question of a right vested in the inner lineage, Ɔndieso supported and indeed instigated Kutɔbis. He was particularly angry with Naambulɔg. Thereupon the latter immediately demanded repayment of the loan, thus symbolically relegating Ɔndieso to the class of non-relatives, and Ɔndieso ostentatiously repaid two shillings. Repaying Naambulɔg in kind, he had deducted one shilling for two fowls Naambulɔg had borrowed from his brother two or three years previously.

604 431 When Bontuya died his son Ba'andoog had to sacrifice a white bull to the dead man's *Yin* shrine before starting the funeral ceremonies. Ba'andoog went to his father's sister's son, who, he knew, had a white bull, and asked for the animal. Very reluctantly the *ahəŋ* parted with his bull. As he explained to me afterwards, it was a very fine young bull. 'But', he said, 'Bontuya begot me and I have no power to refuse him anything.' Several months later the father-in-law of the *ahəŋ* came to him demanding a cow of his daughter's bride-price. The young man promptly went

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[231] [1] Guinea-fowl are only semi-domestic birds. They live out of doors and are very difficult to catch alive. They also lay their eggs out of doors. The privilege of an *ahəŋ* therefore had more of a token value than any practical worth. But I know several men who claim to have used their privilege at least once.

to his mother's brother's house and Ba'andoog gave him a cow of some- 604
what greater value than the white bull to give to his father-in-law. But
such exchanges are exceptional. A fowl, a sixpence, a slab of tobacco, 431
a few kola nuts, these are the more usual kinds of gifts that pass between
extra-clan kin.

There are two gifts from a mother's brother to which great significance 604
is attached. One of these is the gift of a hen to a lad from his *ahɔb* when
he becomes capable of productive labour. This is almost a universal 431
custom among the Tallensi. As we have shown in an earlier chapter,
its importance lies in that it marks the beginning of the economic (and, 556
therefore, in due course, social) self-differentiation of a boy within the
joint family. It symbolizes, and in many cases actually serves as, the
starting-point of the accumulation of wealth by individual effort. It was
the proud boast of Barimoda that starting as a small boy with a fowl
given to him by his father's *ahɔb* he had eventually 'achieved' (*paa*) a
cow from which he had had several calves. In every settlement one can
find two or three men who have matched this achievement, but it is more
common to find men who have 'achieved' a goat or a sheep in this way.
And though Tallensi always speak as if they began with one hen this is
not strictly true. A boy may receive fowls from two or three matrilateral
kinsmen, and he may be given more than one fowl by an *ahɔb* who is
specially attached to him. Kɔyatee was unlucky with the first hen his
true mother's brother gave him. When it died he told his *ahɔb*, who
gave him another. He successfully bred a brood of chickens from this
hen and was given yet another hen by the same mother's brother.

An *ahɔb* has no claims on livestock bred in this way by his sister's son. 604
Very often, if a man needs a fowl for a sacrifice and has none that is
suitable, he will send to ask his sister's son for one; but this is not con- 431
nected with the gift of a hen he may have made to the latter many years 769
before. The equivalent return for the mother's brother's hen is made
in another way. As has been previously mentioned, when a man
'achieves' a cow, after starting with his mother's brother's hen, he owes
this cow to his mother's brother's lineage ancestor shrine (*bɔɣar*). He
keeps the cow until it is too old to calve and then takes it to his mother's
brother's lineage as a thank-offering to his maternal ancestors. For, say
the natives, it must surely have been their beneficence that gave him
prosperity, since the hen came from their son.

Far more important is the gift of land by an *ahɔb* to an *ahɔŋ*. There 604
are degrees of finality about such a gift. It is a very common practice
for both men and women to beg a plot of land from an *ahɔb*—or any 426
other extra-clan matrilateral kinsman—living in an adjacent settlement
to plant with ground-nuts or sweet potatoes. The land given for these
purposes generally lies on the outskirts of the donor's settlement, near that
of the recipient. As often as not, it is land too exhausted for grain crops;
or else it is land not required by the *ahɔb* that season. Use of the land

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau ŋ-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604
will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked
why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each
other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577
when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head 302
shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, 789]
Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power
of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely,
withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having
done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage.
But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to
his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the
jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency
is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother
and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604
rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574
principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a 764
woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party
of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws.
The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman
calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these
young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young
men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the
girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the
young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the
visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl [431]
who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit.
Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers
of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in
the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is
giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this
declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody
knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604
her father without having previously arranged to go to another man,
she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, 586
under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587
She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any
case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that
she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for
some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though
courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of
another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself
with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

in common with those of mother's brother and sister's child. They are similarly influenced by the closeness of the sibling tie between the brother and the sister, as is to be expected. There is this difference, however, that the contacts between *ba-pɔk* and brother's child are chiefly maintained by the *ba-pɔk*'s visits to her parental home, and not by the brother's child's being taken, or going on visits to her. They are largely a by-product of the woman's contacts with her parental home, and they diminish as she grows older. A man has no occasion to visit his *ba-pɔk* regularly, and a woman is apt to do so only if she lives near her. Opportunity and disposition count for more than in the personal relations of true mother's brother and sister's child. Thus a *ba-pɔk* sometimes has a brother's child to live with her, but this is rarer than for children to stay with an *ahəb*, and there is usually a utilitarian motive on the side of the *ba-pɔk*. Ɔmara's sister had their late brother's two sons staying with her for two or three years each, in succession. She had them to stay with her so that they could look after her son's horse, and they went home again as soon as they were big enough to farm. If a girl stays with a *ba-pɔk* it is almost always as a nursemaid to her baby. A boy does not go to live with a *ba-pɔk* and grow up in her household, as he might with an *ahəb*. There is an obvious reason for all this. A *ba-pɔk* does not 'own' her household as an *ahəb* does. She cannot have her brother's child living with her except with her husband's consent; and though he would, out of consideration for her, not withhold his consent, he might demur against the burden of supporting another man's child, who is no kin of his, for a long time. A woman cannot give her brother's son a place in the household economy as an *ahəb* can to his sister's son. 604

With these limitations, the personal relations of father's sister and brother's child are often extremely cordial. Anaaho was a constant visitor to his father's sister's house when he was working near where she lived. He often went there for meals and sought her advice about his affairs. Da'amo'o was welcomed with open arms by his *ba-pɔk* when he travelled with me to her husband's clan settlement. She gave him some presents for his wife who had just had a baby and got permission from her husband for him to take away a large log of a tree that had fallen down near their homestead. A *ba-pɔk* shows her interest in her brother's children by giving or sending them gifts. A person visiting his or her *ba-pɔk* seldom leaves without some such token of her interest and affection. It may be a chicken or a few pence for a nephew, or a basket of shea nuts, a dish of dried vegetables, or a new back-flap to wear at the next festival dance for a niece. The death of her brother's child, especially of a young adult son or daughter, is often a great shock to a *ba-pɔk*. A *ba-pɔk*'s death, on the other hand, seldom grieves her brother's children as much as the death of a favourite *ahəb*, and they have no formal obligations to attend the funeral with prescribed gifts, or to undergo mourning rites other than the head-shaving of the eldest son. 604 431

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own family. She may, as an act of grace, give some of this food to her husband or to a co-wife with whom she is on friendly terms; but she is not compelled to do so. A junior householder thus augments the food supply for his own wives and children. If he comes into possession [431] of a large amount of grain by his own exertions he will generally make a present of a small quantity to the head of the unit to which he belongs; but, again, this is an act of goodwill, not an obligation. A kind-hearted head of a compound may occasionally present a meagre dish of grain to the wife of a younger head of a self-supporting unit, if they are obviously on the verge of starvation; otherwise, self-supporting units in the same compound never assist one another with grain, in the ordinary course of events.

There are other more incalculable means by which food is brought 602 into the household and family. Cereals are sometimes obtained during 431 the hunger months by women from their paternal kinsmen. A 222 marriageable daughter, again, means a succession of suitors bringing 262 gifts of money, guinea-fowls, and various other comestibles to her mother. Wild sources of food are fully exploited. Fruits of the shea-tree (*ta'aŋ: butyrospermum parkii*) save many a family from the worst straits of hunger, as does the pulp of the dawa-dawa (*doo: parkia filicordea*) pods. These trees have an enormous economic value, as will be evident later. The baobab-tree (*to'o: adansonia digitata*) has a fruit with a floury, sweetish pulp which is relished much as sweetmeats are by ourselves, and its leaves are used to make soup. It is generally found as a shade-tree outside a compound, and women readily get permission from the head of the compound to pluck the leaves. Leaves of the local elm (*nuom: celtis integrifolia*) are also used for soup.[1] Some grasses and fungi serve this purpose too, and small children, who are adepts at foraging for themselves, can often be seen out in groups collecting them.

From the table* quoted above it will be seen that one man, on the 592 average, supports himself, 1·2 women, and 1·2 children, over the age of infancy—roughly 3·4 people; but it is clear from the sociological outline given above that any such estimates hold only very approximately in view of the many supplementary sources of grain supply,

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[1] We have seen elm-trees in *tɔŋbana* (sacred groves) and in the bush (where of course, any one can pluck the leaves) but not as shade trees in front of compounds.

*[See cat. 116, p. 241 —Analyst]

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable 262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The 235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, 422 cannot replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore, the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and individuals within the unit of food economy come to marked expression. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry [231] freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls [782 never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and 431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacrifice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred. At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

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[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
221 262 Hoeing and weeding of compound and bush farms in full swing. Some still planting subsidiary crops. Poultry breeding begins.	planting areas come to beg grain.[1] Wild fruits still eaten and hunger prevalent in late-planting areas. Ground-nuts, beginning to ripen, plucked and chewed as snacks.
AUGUST: Late planters harvest early millet. Invited collective labour (*kpaarip*) for hoeing and weeding coming to fore, but hired labour still in evidence.[2] Fresh hibiscus leaves used in soup.	Almost everybody has early millet; hunger appeased for a time.

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241 431 [1] The different settlements harvest at such different times corresponding to their times of planting that more than a month elapses between the beginning of the harvest at one end of Tale-land, and its conclusion at the other end. This gives rise to a system of reciprocities the effect of which is to cancel out the lag to some extent. People from the late-planting settlements visit their relatives in the early-planting settlements as soon as these begin to harvest and receive gifts of early millet from them. Women, especially, go thus to visit their parental homes, and no man would send his daughter or sister away empty-handed. Later, when the early-harvesting settlements begin to reach the end of their early millet stores, the process is reversed. The Tallensi never think of this in terms of economic interchange or reciprocal payments. They insist that *A* gives to *B* freely and without expectation of return because *B* is *A*'s daughter. Later, when *B*'s husband harvests his millet he will send some to *A* freely—because *A* is his father-in-law. It is significant that these mutual 'good turns' always occur between people of different settlements, not between patrilineal kin of the same settlement.

241 476 [2] Soon after early millet has been brought in, the elders and others who have had a good crop begin to 'invite hoemen' (*pooh kpaarip*). An elder sends round to all the compounds of his section (a sub-division of a clan settlement) requesting the young men to come out and weed his farms, compound or bush, for him on the following day. As no one would be so ill-mannered or so negligent of a kinsman's duties as to refuse, some 20 or 30 young men turn out next day. The one who issued the invitation recompenses them with two meals, flour-water (*zɔmkuom*) at noon and a lavish cooked meal at night. Thus commences a round of collective weeding, as every farmer who can afford the 20 or 30 lb. of grain and the meat for feeding them in turn invites his kinsmen and neighbours to come and weed for him. Others have to hire foreign labour to the best of their capacity. The Tallensi account for this institution firstly on the ground that it is only by such a mass attack that the rapidly growing weeds can be kept under, and secondly on the ground that it relieves the strain of unremitting toil in the fields and increases the crops.

Gifts to relatives and feeding collective labour are a considerable strain on a man's granary at this time, though, in the long run, much of it comes back. Reliable informants told us that half of their total crop was expended thus, leaving them short of millet in September.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
221 262 DECEMBER: Agricultural work over.	Height of ritual season: funeral ceremonies, children's dedication ceremonies, many marriages; all involving consumption of live stock and grain, in sacrifices, as cooked food, and beer.[1]
JANUARY: Period of secondary activities such as housebuilding, cut-	Grain rationing again begins. Grain and other foodstuffs, including im-

796 guinea-fowls, sheep, goats, and dogs are slaughtered in profusion as sacrifices to ancestral and magical shrines. Beer (*daam*) made of malted grain is boiled, though in small quantities; much food is cooked to receive kinsfolk who call upon and greet each other. Recently married men send baskets of sweet potatoes, frafra potatoes, and yams to greet their parents-in-law. The Festivals last only a few days, but the tubers and animals are consumed over a period of some weeks.

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796 764 431 [1] In this period, too, are celebrated all those clan and family religious ceremonies in which animal sacrifices and cooked food and beer play a great part. Indeed, these rites are often postponed for several years until a sufficiently good harvest enables enough supplies to be accumulated. We have seen a cow, a donkey, about 15 sheep and goats, and a large number of fowls and guinea-fowls slaughtered at the funeral ceremonies for a very venerable elder. We were assured ~~by his sons~~, who were responsible for these ceremonies, that they had used up the whole of a large supply of guinea-corn in the preparation of ritual beer and food and in providing hospitality for throngs of guests. At such a funeral the deceased's cognatic and affinal kin bring obligatory food-contributions of cooked porridge, sheep, goats, and birds. So great were these contributions at one funeral that two or three basketfuls of porridge had to be thrown away as it turned sour. Funerals are extreme cases of the lavish utilization of food at this time of the year; and only three or four big funerals take place in any settlement in one season. Most funerals require a much smaller expenditure of live stock and grain than that made at an elder's funeral.

273 This is not the place to discuss the types of ritual and ceremonial situations in which 'things' (*bon*)—the Tale concept which covers every type of property—are consumed. In a good season there will be a tremendous spate of them; in a poor season only urgent rites will be performed. A word, however, must be said about beer, the most important ritual substance apart from the animals and flour used in sacrifices. Beer is cooked (*doy-*) by women, malted grain (*kpeya*) of guinea-corn or millet being issued to them by the man at whose request it is made. In the average compound beer is never cooked except for ritual purposes which may be twice or thrice a year. Chiefs and headmen, who always have a surplus of grain often, and elders occasionally keep a supply of beer on hand for guests. Tale women never make beer for sale in the markets; indeed, any man would be horrified at the suggestion that his hard-won grain should be used in this way. The Tallensi are a sober people on the whole.

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dispossessed
471 without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut'
(*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus
all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among
the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important
613 part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage
splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is
generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*)
what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-
577 existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the
land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
[686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or
unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to
471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of
the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and
preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688
with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471
corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays
there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*waləg*) such 432
difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471
punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's depen- 688
dants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613
thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471
and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426
now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the
significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782]
act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471
always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426
ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1] [432] Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by inheritance. [578] But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of.

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of 578 competition both between individuals and between corporate groups. This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction 583 of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests.

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict between individuals and groups in Taleland. 691 More than 90 per cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with 185 wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing 578 for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter.

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much 581 scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, 595 whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus 622 robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

621 and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a
511 direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which
291 produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its
[465] own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land;
311 but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the
● 433 past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the
721 society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities b[illegible]ng the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

596 must now consider how these raw materials are consumed by the unit of food economy. It will be impossible in the scope of this paper to discuss every social situation affecting the domestic economy of food, since there is hardly a social act in which something edible or masticable does not participate, be it only a piece of kola-nut or a plug of tobacco. We shall refer briefly, therefore, to the most conspicuous types of situations in which food plays a part, and discuss more fully the domestic consumption of food in the ordinary routine of family life. We emphasize again that our purpose is to give an ethnographic account of these facts, as we have been able to observe them in a single year. We have not the quantitative information to allow us to venture upon a deeper sociological analysis.

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Tale food economy has a marked seasonal periodicity, as is to be expected in an agricultural society. It is this seasonal rhythm which links the supply of foodstuffs with their distribution and consumption. This correlation emerges readily from a calendrical tabulation in which the agricultural and other productive activities are set down side by side with the facts pertaining to the utilization of the food supply. Agriculture in Tale-land is a hazardous enterprise, chiefly because of the uncontrollable natural phenomena upon which a successful crop depends, above all, the correct distribution of rainfall. Good harvests and bad harvests succeed one another erratically and the natives can never predict from one year to the next. Their primitive methods of farming, too, mean that they extract only half as much out of the land as it is capable of producing. 'Nevertheless,' says Mr. Lynn,[1] 'in a good season . . . nobody is short of food. The area of land cultivated is adequate and the system of farming is successful.' But the margin of security for the average householder is extremely small, at any time. We have no means of estimating how representative the observations made by us in 1934 may be; the natives considered it to be a fair year. For our purpose, however, it chanced fortunately, since we were able to observe more easily the relations between supply and consumption of foodstuffs in the average household than might have been possible in either a very good or a very bad year.

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[1] *Op. cit.* Mr. Lynn records that in both 1930 and 1931 the harvest was bad owing to locusts and adverse rains. In 1934 the neighbouring areas were worse off than Tale-land.

pensation sink into the background, the sanctions inherent in the native 177
social structure prevail, and the traditional ties of politico-ritual collabora- 578
tion come into force. But when the new interests brought into being 623
by the influence of the British Administration come to the fore, the traditional social ties and the sanctions associated with them no longer prevail. For among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, such ties and sanctions do not function at all times and in all circumstances. They work in the context of the scheme of social relationships of which they form a part and not in other contexts. These new interests mobilize the existing corporate units of Tale society. Thus they tend to deepen some of the cleavages that exist, and to weaken the countervailing ties, between lineages and clans. It is noteworthy that rivalry for the rewards of political power under the British Administration is most acute between clans that have close ties in the native social system. As was the case with war in former days, clans and maximal lineages that are widely separated from one another, either locally or in terms of their fields of social relations, cannot come into conflict or competition with one another. Thus political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and his 'younger brother' the Chief of Yamələg is severe and has led to estrangement between these two branches of Mosuor biis. But there is no political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and the Chief of Datɔk. Competition for politico-ritual office within clans is fiercer than it was in the past and less scrupulous, though it still follows the lines of cleavage in the lineage structure.

At the same time some chiefs have used their new powers to weld their clans into closer unity on the political plane than existed in the old days. This has happened at Tongo and at Sie. But it has not been to the benefit of the social balance in the greater society. By strengthening the autocratic ambitions of these chiefs, the closer unity of their clans has tended to aggravate the antagonisms between clans.

B. *Pecuniary Competition among the Hill Talis*

A new factor of disequilibrium that has had a very disturbing influ- 177
ence among the Hill Talis is pecuniary competition which has become 434
associated with certain traditional institutions. Many families nowadays 438
obtain driblets of money through members of the family working abroad, 578
or by petty trade. But the pecuniary competition we are referring to concerns money on a scale unprecedented in Tale history; and its disruptive influence is due to its association with a traffic in ritual benefits comparable to that of the notorious Southern Nigerian oracles.

The centre of this traffic is the Tong Hills, and its disruptive influence 178
has been greatest among the Hill Talis, where it has brought violent 438
competition into the sphere of the common ritual interests and values 578
which form the bulwark of their cohesion. The integration of the Hill Talis in the native social structure depends, as we have seen, on a meticulous balance of local, clanship, and ritual ties and cleavages focused in the politico-ritual offices vested in the heads of maximal lineages. So nicely calculated is the distribution of these politico-ritual functions amongst the various maximal lineages that none can claim

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or
misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts
in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to
£10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have
good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their
board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the
Bɔyar.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this
lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country,
recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his
political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own
hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual
functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the
aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu
clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex
organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and
clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a
Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate
his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his
gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income
of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the
members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in
running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own
half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make
them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three
henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual func-
tionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance
of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his
near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana
keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—
to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar
age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number
of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-
supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no
outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be
invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
241 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland
are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A
leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a
popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may
farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There
may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or
two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland
to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than
was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it
impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from
their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even
women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale,
Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some
carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to
work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the
Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of
labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The
experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration
from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked
up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years,
a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on
account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often
goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural
activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get
away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny
in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity,
and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who
return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate
many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

Other Sources of Food Supply. A particular household at a
437 particular time may have quite a number of sources of food supply
besides the fields of the unit of food economy to which it belongs.
Next to their farms the most important source of food supply for the
Tallensi is the market, especially in the lean months. A completely
empty granary imposes upon the head of the self-supporting unit the
duty of finding grain. This is when he falls back on his live stock and
sells or barters them for grain.[1] As long as he has some grain to ration
out, however frugally, he will not buy for common consumption.
Each household and each primary family must exert itself to make up
the deficient grain supply. The junior householders and the women—
the keenest and most inveterate market traders—exploit the resources
[439] of the grain market. Those who have a little money go as far as Nabte
or Mampuru land, countries rich in grain two or three days' march
away, to buy guinea-corn, late millet, or maize. They bring back the
grain in bags of roughly 20 to 40 lb. weight. The usual procedure is
for the purchaser to bring home his or her grain, set aside a small
portion—perhaps 5 to 10 lb.—for his or her own consumption and
retail the rest at the local market so as to realize the original outlay or
a few pence more. The principal profit consists in the small quantity
eaten. Many women turn the grain or pulse they buy into cooked
food, a small proportion of which goes to feed their husbands and
children, but most of which is sold in the market at a profit and the
proceeds re-invested in grain. But very many people have to be content with purchasing small quantities in the local markets. A man may
sell a few chickens or guinea-fowl or a goat or something he has made,
like an adze-shaft or a bow; a woman sells some ground-nuts, dried
vegetables, shea nuts, shea butter or some dawa-dawa seed balls
(*kpɔlug*) to buy the grain. In this way does the market help to eke out
the domestic supply of grain.

This source of grain supply is wholly subject to the principle of
596 differentiation of subordinate units within the unit of food economy.
A woman's market-purchases, like her ground-nuts, go to feed her

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[1] A bull is usually reckoned as worth about 30*s*., a heifer £2, a sheep from 3*s*.
[435] to 6*s*., a goat from 2*s*. 6*d*. to 4*s*. Prices depend on the season, and the age and
condition of the animal. A bull exchanges for about 40 large baskets of unthreshed grain, sheep, and goats in proportion.

consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus considerably 231
greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782
leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of 262
junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by
professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which
we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign
settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there
along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief
customers of the butchers. But a Taleŋa occasionally buys a little [435]
meat—from a few ounces for *3d.*, to a leg for *9d.* to *1s.* He may do this
when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is
courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her
some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial 231
animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occasions 262
such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great 224
delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs
throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the
majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush
on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost [354]
entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though
regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride
in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once
observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth,
among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal
as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*ziŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small 262
supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and 226
part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially
dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success,
as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought
in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some 262
of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

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[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable
262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The
235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, can-
422 not replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore, the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and individuals within the unit of food economy come to marked expres-
[231] sion. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls
[782 never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and
431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacrifice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred. At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

•[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

535

868 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would
858 not be sent for to come home.

858 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom
857 allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: 'Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.' 'You'd better run,' one of the others advised, as he
[231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with
882 their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindəl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindəl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindəl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—' The boy has justice on his side '—he said, when he told me the story.

857 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk
858 for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s*. 6*d*. a month
234 is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to
[435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why?
His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

to be profitably exported from distances more than 600 miles from 654
the coast. The alternative is a local export to some part of the country with money to spend; the obvious solution lies in the export of livestock to Ashanti and the Colony.

Livestock Industry.

The conditions under which livestock are kept in North 231
Mamprusi have been fully discussed under the heading "Animal
Husbandry", pages 31 to 33. It has been shown that whilst live- [178]
stock are used mainly for uneconomic purposes, marriage dowries and sacrifice, they are becoming increasingly regarded as a source of money; and with the rapid development in money consciousness which is proceeding to-day, there is no doubt that the value of livestock will become to be recognised more and more. Survey showed that 54% of compounds (probably rather less over the whole district) owned cattle of the West African Shorthorn type.
Bullocks find a ready sale to butchers' agents at prices varying [435] ●
from £1 10s. to £3 15s.; and milk, in the form of curds, is sold in local markets. Nearly all compounds own sheep, goats, fowls, and guinea fowls, and the trade in fowls is already very well established. The market for livestock in Ashanti and the Colony is practically unlimited; only a very small proportion of the meat slaughtered is locally grown. But if this proportion is to be increased, local methods of animal husbandry must be improved. Attention to breeding alone is not enough, as the Director of Veterinary Services pointed out in his Annual Report for 1935-36 (12). And because the bulk of the livestock in the Gold Coast belong to the cultivators of the soil, it will be seen, that the development of mixed farming is just as necessary for the future of the livestock industry, as the development of the livestock industry is for the future of mixed farming. Thus the ultimate justification for the investment of capital in working bullocks and cattle-drawn implements must be in the export of livestock. Work with livestock is necessarily slow, but if good feeding and good breeding produce an improvement in the local stock equivalent to the improvement effected in Northern Nigeria, by attention to these matters with Zebu cattle (13)—and there would seem to be no reason why it should not—we shall have little difficulty in justifying the cost of a plough, when local unimproved bullocks are worth nearly £4 a head to butchers' agents at the present time.

Sale of Surplus Foodstuffs.

But before livestock receive better treatment the people them- 439
selves must have sufficient food, and it is by the sale, as food upon local markets, of a surplus of production over individual requirements that the first mixed farmers are likely to receive a return. At the present time, large quantities of grain are imported from

Kusasi

439 Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Kusasi, during the dry season, and much of this is stored at such places as Bolgatanga, and sold during the time of greatest shortage, that is before early millet is reaped at the end of June. A sack of corn weighs approximately 439 180 lbs. and sells at from 14s. to 18s. a sack. This trade enables •435 us to give a money value to the produce from our farms. It is interesting to examine the yields from the cultivation experiment in the Headman of Goragu's compound farm (see Appendix IV, Table 3). From this it will be seen that during a three-year period the total mean yield of grain per acre from "native" plots was 2,370 lbs., and from "ridged" plots (cultivation by hand in 1934 and 1935 and by plough in 1936), 4,384 lbs.; a mean increase per acre for three years of 2,014 lbs. If this increase had been sold in Bolgatanga market at 13s. for 180 lbs. (*i.e.*, 14s. less 1s. for the bag) it would have realised nearly £7 10s. It would not require many acres yielding at this rate to justify the expenditure of £4 upon implements and £6-£8 upon working bullocks, that is assuming the farmer had no bullocks of his own already. Furthermore, very much less labour was expended upon the "ridged" plots than "native". Admittedly other cultivation experiments have not given such spectacular results, but the indication is the same in all.

000 It is difficult to say how much grain it would take to saturate the local market, but by the time it becomes saturated the Department of Agriculture should have acquired sufficient information to advise farmers how a surplus can most profitably be fed to livestock. For this reason an experimental stock farm is an essential part of the machinery for mixed farming research. In passing it might be mentioned that foodstuff prices will fall, as saturation point is approached: whilst this will not be popular with fixed farmers, it will assist the poor man to get food more easily. In this way we shall be accomplishing one of our primary objects in working in North Mamprusi; for it is the poor man who creates the food shortage problem, not the would-be mixed farmer.

Kusasi Groundnut Trade.

A consideration of sources of farming capital would not be 439 complete without reference to a newly developed trade in de-435 corticated groundnuts and groundnut oil from Kusasi, for the Kumasi market. From a start of 200 bags in 1933 the export has developed to 9,000 bags in 1937 (weight per bag approximately 160 lbs.). The trade is almost entirely in the hands of Messrs. Chedid, who centralise the nuts in Bawku and send them on their lorries to Kumasi when the supply of sheep and goats will not give them a full load. The lorries come North with cola, salt, cloths, etc. The price paid to the producer for decorticated groundnuts is 8s.

Kusasi

to 8s. 6d. a bag (about £4 18s. per ton); and the cost of transport on a bag to Kumasi, a distance of 380 miles, is from 4s. to 5s., which works out at about 2d. per ton mile. The trade is of particular interest in that it shows the people in Kusasi are prepared to grow a crop to sell for cash, and that transport will follow production, even at so great a distance from the market. 439 435

CONCLUSIONS.

The time is ripe for the introduction of mixed farming. That is to utilise livestock, firstly, to provide an adequate food supply for the people; and secondly, to produce a surplus for sale, either directly, as in the case of groundnuts in Kusasi, or metabolized and sold in the form of livestock, for which we have seen there is a large market in the South. In cases where labour has to be hired for farm work, as upon school farms, and possibly upon the farms of salaried Chiefs, when tribute and tribute labour is commuted, mixed farming can be recommended immediately as a profitable investment. It is possible that the production of such money crops as groundnuts, cotton, ginger, and sesamum, which are not profitable to grow by hand methods of cultivation for an external market, might become profitable with animal cultivation. 000

The control of burning and the use of the material so protected, as dry season fodder or bedding for livestock and the manufacture of farmyard manure, is within the power of everyone to adopt with advantage. But animal cultivation has a limited application in North Mamprusi for two main reasons :—

1. Lack of farming capital. Some form of loan scheme similar to the one in Nigeria will have to be devised to overcome this difficulty. We must first prove that it will be possible for a farmer to repay his loan before we can prepare details.

2. Density of population, and the shortage of land. The average area of land cultivated by a man at present is 2½ acres but the average area farmed by a compound is 8 acres. The compound must therefore be the unit owning a plough and bullocks. The time so saved can be devoted to the rearing of livestock, making enclosures round farms and grazing lands, and so on.

It is probable that, ultimately, expansion will take place into areas at present unoccupied. This must be attended with careful control.

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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APP

Giving an analysis of the livestock o

Livestock	Value in Units†	Bongo						Nangodi				
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI*	I	II*	III	IV	V*
Cattle	60	8	–	–	1	–	3	–	4	8	1	2
Donkeys	30	1	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	2	–	–
Sheep	10	–	–	1	2	–	6	–	15	4	1	8
Goats	8	10	–	1	6	–	7	–	25	4	1	5
Fowls	1	15	–	–	10	1	10	–	16	15	5	20
Guinea fowls ...	1	–	–	–	–	–	8	–	25	14	3	16
Horses	160	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total Units ...		605	nil	18	168	1	374	–	631	641	86	276

Livestock	Value in Units	NAVRONGO										
		Chana						Kologo				
		I*	II	III	IV*	V	VI	I	II	III*	IV	V
Cattle	60	3	–	–	1	–	3	3	–	6	–	–
Donkeys	30	–	–	–	3	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
Sheep	10	–	–	–	5	2	2	1	2	7	3	7
Goats	8	8	–	–	5	2	2	–	–	1	4	2
Fowls	1	23	9	2	24	10	–	17	8	10	15	20
Guinea fowls ...	1	21	2	2	10	7	–	–	–	5	9	6
Horses	160	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total Units ...		288	11	4	274	53	246	207	28	453	86	142

*Compounds suffering no shortage of cultivated foods during the previous year.

†The unit is taken to be the fowl and all other classes of stock are related to it at roughly thei since it does not take into account the age of the stock. The unit is useful for comparing the stocl

[p. 72A-i]

[p. 72 is blank]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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APPENDIX II—TABLE 8.

the livestock owned by 54 compounds at 10 centres in North Mamprusi.

ZUARUNGU AREA (April, 1933)

agoli			Sambruno.					Tongo					Zuarungu				
Compound No.																	
I	IV	V*	I	II	III	IV	V	I*	II	III	IV*	V	I*	II*	III	IV	V
8	1	2	3	–	2	1	–	3	–	1	6	–	2	3	–	–	–
2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	2	–
4	1	8	8	8	3	10	–	–	6	8	–	4	9	–	–	3	–
4	1	5	2	5	6	8	2	–	4	4	6	4	5	10	10	1	3
5	5	20	25	6	24	10	7	–	12	28	7	20	20	7	6	1	4
4	3	16	6	5	8	11	–	27	4	5	11	40	12	3	–	–	6
	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
1	86	276	207	131	230	345	23	287	106	213	580	135	342	209	85	99	34

NAVRONGO AREA (April, 1934)

Kologo				Navrongo		Wiaga						Total 20 com- pounds	Mean	K	
														2	
I*	IV	V	VI	I*	II*	I	II	III	IV*	V	VI*			I	II
6	–	–	–	6	–	7	3	–	5	5	3	48	2.4	–	–
-	–	1	–	1	–	1	1	–	1	–	1	10	.5	–	–
7	3	7	2	5	21	–	–	–	6	3	5	62	3.1	–	–
1	4	2	4	4	7	6	4	–	4	8	7	70	3.5	–	12
10	15	20	15	–	20	17	6	8	20	8	6	220	11.0	4	10
5	9	6	9	–	7	7	10	–	10	6	5	118	5.9	4	10
-	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
32	80	142	86	472	180	550	230	9	620	410	327	4,776	238	8	276

t at roughly their exchangeable value. It is purely arbitrary
mparing the stocking on different compounds.

[p. 72A-ii]

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rusi.

Zuarungu						Total 29 compounds	Mean
III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII		
–	–	–	3	3	–	55	1.9
–	2	–	1	–	–	12	.4
–	3	–	13	–	–	109	3.7
10	1	3	15	–	1	145	5
6	1	4	–	9	3	289	10
–	–	6	14	–	–	218	7.5
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
86	90	34	474	189	11	6,577	226

	KUSASI AREA (1936)						
ean	Zebilla					Total 5 compounds	Mean
	I	II	III	IV	V		
2.4	–	–	–	2	–	2	.4
.5	–	–	–	2	2	4	.8
.1	–	–	–	10	2	12	2.4
.5	–	12	–	4	4	20	4
.9	4	10	6	5	15	40	8
.9	4	10	–	–	9	23	4.75
	–	–	–	–	1	1	.2
6	8	276	6	317	136	743	148

LIVESTOCK OWNED BY 54 COMPOUNDS IN NORTH MAMPRUSI

	Total	Mean
Horses	2	–
Cattle	105	1.9
Donkeys	26	.5
Sheep	183	3.4
Goats	335	6.2
Fowls	567	10.5
Guinea fowls ...	359	6.6
Units ...	12,036	223

[p. 72A-iii]

606 764 431

and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law. [576] [554]

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samar*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime. 606 754 431 574

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*layapielsh*, pl. *layapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *layah*, pl. *ligeri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown. [436]

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal
lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of
small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities
can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in
the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly
prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*,
to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and
to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally
placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services
are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals
sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors.
Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the
client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation- 486
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers
of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from
these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow north-
wards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor,
farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and
Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of
the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims.
Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase
the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

581 which cannot be done without the assistance of women. He can command other services from her. For instance, nowadays he can send her
593 to buy grain for him in distant markets and sell it for him in the home market; and he can ask for many little services that make life more comfortable for him. A man has a right to these services; but it is a right limited by the principle of reciprocity.[1] In return a man is bound to protect and care for his wife, in particular to provide her with a home, with food, and with curative treatment if she is ill.

There is an obvious material basis for the economic reciprocity of
593 husband and wife. Primarily it is a function of the system of economic co-operation, by means of which the household satisfies its material
592 wants. The head of the family owns the land and the livestock from which all draw their sustenance. The men do the heavy work of farming and care for the livestock. The women perform the tasks already mentioned. Within this subsistence unit the rule of reciprocity of economic rights and duties governs the economic relations of parent and child, of brother and brother, as well as those of husband and wife. For it is an application of the wider principle that all those who pool their labour in the common task of providing food and shelter for the household are entitled, severally, to a just share in the product of their common labour.

The authority of husband over wife in the matter of economic duties
593 and services is tempered, also, by a principle that really follows as a
421 logical corollary upon the principle just stated. The products of individual industry and enterprise belong to the individual, subject to the nominal over-right of anyone who has authority over him or her, in particular, of the head of the family. The rule applies to all property relations between the members of the family. Thus, as soon as a wife acquires a *dug* of her own she begins to have a certain degree of economic autonomy, and this increases with the passage of time, as her children become more and more able to do without her regular care. She has her own vegetable plot allocated to her by her husband. She often has a ground-nut plot of her own, which she cultivates herself. She has her small private store of grain, obtained by gift from her father or brothers or other kinsmen. Her vegetables, her ground-nuts, and her grain do not go into the pool of family resources. They do, however, serve to supplement these resources; for it is a woman's duty to provide the vegetable food, and it would be unthinkable for her not to use other supplies she may possess to feed her children and her husband in time of scarcity. But if her private supplies are not required for this purpose she can dispose of them as she pleases. She can exchange them for money or goods, or use them to give hospitality to her own kin or guests. The same rule holds for such things as shea fruit and shea butter, which
● [437] it is a woman's duty to provide for the household. Thus, it is common for women to barter surplus shea nuts for household utensils, and these are entirely their own property.

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[1] Cf. p. 213 below.

OTHER SOURCES OF FOOD SUPPLY. A particular household at a 437 particular time may have quite a number of sources of food supply besides the fields of the unit of food economy to which it belongs. Next to their farms the most important source of food supply for the Tallensi is the market, especially in the lean months. A completely empty granary imposes upon the head of the self-supporting unit the duty of finding grain. This is when he falls back on his live stock and sells or barters them for grain.[1] As long as he has some grain to ration out, however frugally, he will not buy for common consumption. Each household and each primary family must exert itself to make up the deficient grain supply. The junior householders and the women—the keenest and most inveterate market traders—exploit the resources [439] of the grain market. Those who have a little money go as far as Nabte or Mampuru land, countries rich in grain two or three days' march away, to buy guinea-corn, late millet, or maize. They bring back the grain in bags of roughly 20 to 40 lb. weight. The usual procedure is for the purchaser to bring home his or her grain, set aside a small portion—perhaps 5 to 10 lb.—for his or her own consumption and retail the rest at the local market so as to realize the original outlay or a few pence more. The principal profit consists in the small quantity eaten. Many women turn the grain or pulse they buy into cooked food, a small proportion of which goes to feed their husbands and children, but most of which is sold in the market at a profit and the proceeds re-invested in grain. But very many people have to be content with purchasing small quantities in the local markets. A man may sell a few chickens or guinea-fowl or a goat or something he has made, like an adze-shaft or a bow; a woman sells some ground-nuts, dried vegetables, shea nuts, shea butter or some dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) to buy the grain. In this way does the market help to eke out the domestic supply of grain.

This source of grain supply is wholly subject to the principle of 596 differentiation of subordinate units within the unit of food economy. A woman's market-purchases, like her ground-nuts, go to feed her

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[435] [1] A bull is usually reckoned as worth about 30*s*., a heifer £2, a sheep from 3*s*. to 6*s*., a goat from 2*s*. 6*d*. to 4*s*. Prices depend on the season, and the age and condition of the animal. A bull exchanges for about 40 large baskets of unthreshed grain, sheep, and goats in proportion.

pensation sink into the background, the sanctions inherent in the native 177
social structure prevail, and the traditional ties of politico-ritual collabora- 578
tion come into force. But when the new interests brought into being 622
by the influence of the British Administration come to the fore, the traditional social ties and the sanctions associated with them no longer prevail. For among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, such ties and sanctions do not function at all times and in all circumstances. They work in the context of the scheme of social relationships of which they form a part and not in other contexts. These new interests mobilize the existing corporate units of Tale society. Thus they tend to deepen some of the cleavages that exist, and to weaken the countervailing ties, between lineages and clans. It is noteworthy that rivalry for the rewards of political power under the British Administration is most acute between clans that have close ties in the native social system. As was the case with war in former days, clans and maximal lineages that are widely separated from one another, either locally or in terms of their fields of social relations, cannot come into conflict or competition with one another. Thus political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and his 'younger brother' the Chief of Yaməlɔg is severe and has led to estrangement between these two branches of Mosuor biis. But there is no political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and the Chief of Datɔk. Competition for politico-ritual office within clans is fiercer than it was in the past and less scrupulous, though it still follows the lines of cleavage in the lineage structure.

At the same time some chiefs have used their new powers to weld their clans into closer unity on the political plane than existed in the old days. This has happened at Tongo and at Sie. But it has not been to the benefit of the social balance in the greater society. By strengthening the autocratic ambitions of these chiefs, the closer unity of their clans has tended to aggravate the antagonisms between clans.

B. *Pecuniary Competition among the Hill Talis*

A new factor of disequilibrium that has had a very disturbing influ- 177
ence among the Hill Talis is pecuniary competition which has become 434
associated with certain traditional institutions. Many families nowadays 438
obtain driblets of money through members of the family working abroad, 578
or by petty trade. But the pecuniary competition we are referring to concerns money on a scale unprecedented in Tale history; and its disruptive influence is due to its association with a traffic in ritual benefits comparable to that of the notorious Southern Nigerian oracles.

The centre of this traffic is the Tong Hills, and its disruptive influence 178
has been greatest among the Hill Talis, where it has brought violent 438
competition into the sphere of the common ritual interests and values 578
which form the bulwark of their cohesion. The integration of the Hill Talis in the native social structure depends, as we have seen, on a meticulous balance of local, clanship, and ritual ties and cleavages focused in the politico-ritual offices vested in the heads of maximal lineages. So nicely calculated is the distribution of these politico-ritual functions amongst the various maximal lineages that none can claim

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
[556] through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gorisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tɛndaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation- 486
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or
misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts
in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔγar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this
lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country,
recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔγar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his
gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔγar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔγar*—to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth 471
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and
economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered
by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and
unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately 794
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

437 **Other Sources of Food Supply.** A particular household at a particular time may have quite a number of sources of food supply besides the fields of the unit of food economy to which it belongs. Next to their farms the most important source of food supply for the Tallensi is the market, especially in the lean months. A completely empty granary imposes upon the head of the self-supporting unit the duty of finding grain. This is when he falls back on his live stock and sells or barters them for grain.[1] As long as he has some grain to ration out, however frugally, he will not buy for common consumption. Each household and each primary family must exert itself to make up the deficient grain supply. The junior householders and the women—the keenest and most inveterate market traders—exploit the resources [439] of the grain market. Those who have a little money go as far as Nabte or Mampuru land, countries rich in grain two or three days' march away, to buy guinea-corn, late millet, or maize. They bring back the grain in bags of roughly 20 to 40 lb. weight. The usual procedure is for the purchaser to bring home his or her grain, set aside a small portion—perhaps 5 to 10 lb.—for his or her own consumption and retail the rest at the local market so as to realize the original outlay or a few pence more. The principal profit consists in the small quantity eaten. Many women turn the grain or pulse they buy into cooked food, a small proportion of which goes to feed their husbands and children, but most of which is sold in the market at a profit and the proceeds re-invested in grain. But very many people have to be content with purchasing small quantities in the local markets. A man may sell a few chickens or guinea-fowl or a goat or something he has made, like an adze-shaft or a bow; a woman sells some ground-nuts, dried vegetables, shea nuts, shea butter or some dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) to buy the grain. In this way does the market help to eke out the domestic supply of grain.

596 This source of grain supply is wholly subject to the principle of differentiation of subordinate units within the unit of food economy. A woman's market-purchases, like her ground-nuts, go to feed her

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[435] [1] A bull is usually reckoned as worth about 30*s.*, a heifer £2, a sheep from 3*s.* to 6*s.*, a goat from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* Prices depend on the season, and the age and condition of the animal. A bull exchanges for about 40 large baskets of unthreshed grain, sheep, and goats in proportion.

The animal

Health Department have done much good by castrating scrub 232
bulls, but unfortunately the farmers themselves have carried the 231
matter further, to a dangerous degree, by castrating many of the remaining bulls in order to sell them to itinerant butchers' agents. This trade has developed rapidly during recent years and the services of any bull at all, let alone a good bull, are not always readily obtainable. The difficulty is that the cattle are owned one or two head at a time and rarely in herds, and a farmer who wants money, and has a bull he can sell to obtain it, does not see why he should keep a bull to serve his neighbours' cows, and is prepared to risk his own cow, or cows, not finding a mate. The supply of bulls is a matter receiving the attention of the Animal Health Department, through the Native Administrations.

Tending of Livestock.

The farmers' attitude to livestock is typified by the fact that 231
herding is the responsibility of small boys. The stock are housed at night in an open compartment within the compound. No bedding is supplied and the unbeaten floor of the standing is only irregularly cleaned out; the result is a very unhealthy mess in the rains. Except to save groundnut and cowpea hay for feeding to horses and donkeys, no provision is made for dry season fodder. The stock are turned out to browse where they will over the stubble and upon recognised grazing grounds between farms; but since these are generally burnt over, the fodder supply is sparse in quantity and poor in quality, and all stock show considerable loss of condition as the dry season advances, particularly in years when rains are late. The supply of water also presents a problem in many areas. In the rains, sheep and goats are generally tethered to short stakes along farm boundaries, and cattle are herded on the grazing grounds.

Fowls.

Of all classes of livestock probably fowls receive most attention. 235
They are able to pick up a fair living by gleaning around threshing floors, and the protein constituent of their diet is obtained largely from white ants. These are collected with cowdung placed in an old pot inverted over an ant run in the soil. There is scarcely a single compound in North Mamprusi that does not engage in the export trade in fowls to Kumasi. In the dry season a man will [439]
collect together about twenty-five fowls at a time and head-load them in a long crate to some market on the road, usually Bolgatanga, or Savelugu, and either sell them to a middleman there, or join a lorry and sell them in Kumasi. With the proceeds from the sale of fowls, it is common to purchase grain in Dagomba or South Mamprusi, to re-sell in Navrongo or Zuarungu Area, and thus to show a profit upon both the journey down, and the journey up.

to be profitably exported from distances more than 600 miles from 654
the coast. The alternative is a local export to some part of the country with money to spend; the obvious solution lies in the export of livestock to Ashanti and the Colony.

Livestock Industry.

The conditions under which livestock are kept in North 231
Mamprusi have been fully discussed under the heading "Animal [178]
Husbandry", pages 31 to 33. It has been shown that whilst livestock are used mainly for uneconomic purposes, marriage dowries and sacrifice, they are becoming increasingly regarded as a source of money; and with the rapid development in money consciousness which is proceeding to-day, there is no doubt that the value of livestock will become to be recognised more and more. Survey showed that 54% of compounds (probably rather less over the whole district) owned cattle of the West African Shorthorn type. Bullocks find a ready sale to butchers' agents at prices varying [435]
from £1 10s. to £3 15s.; and milk, in the form of curds, is sold in local markets. Nearly all compounds own sheep, goats, fowls, and guinea fowls, and the trade in fowls is already very well established. The market for livestock in Ashanti and the Colony is practically unlimited; only a very small proportion of the meat slaughtered is locally grown. But if this proportion is to be increased, local methods of animal husbandry must be improved. Attention to breeding alone is not enough, as the Director of Veterinary Services pointed out in his Annual Report for 1935-36 (12). And because the bulk of the livestock in the Gold Coast belong to the cultivators of the soil, it will be seen, that the development of mixed farming is just as necessary for the future of the livestock industry, as the development of the livestock industry is for the future of mixed farming. Thus the ultimate justification for the investment of capital in working bullocks and cattle-drawn implements must be in the export of livestock. Work with livestock is necessarily slow, but if good feeding and good breeding produce an improvement in the local stock equivalent to the improvement effected in Northern Nigeria, by attention to these matters with Zebu cattle (13)—and there would seem to be no reason why it should not—we shall have little difficulty in justifying the cost of a plough, when local unimproved bullocks are worth nearly £4 a head to butchers' agents at the present time.

Sale of Surplus Foodstuffs.

But before livestock receive better treatment the people them- 439
selves must have sufficient food, and it is by the sale, as food upon local markets, of a surplus of production over individual requirements that the first mixed farmers are likely to receive a return. At the present time, large quantities of grain are imported from

Kusasi

439 Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Kusasi, during the dry season, and much of this is stored at such places as Bolgatanga, and sold during the time of greatest shortage, that is before early millet is reaped at the end of June. A sack of corn weighs approximately 180 lbs. and sells at from 14s. to 18s. a sack. This trade enables us to give a money value to the produce from our farms. It is interesting to examine the yields from the cultivation experiment in the Headman of Goragu's compound farm (see Appendix IV, Table 3). From this it will be seen that during a three-year period the total mean yield of grain per acre from "native" plots was 2,370 lbs., and from "ridged" plots (cultivation by hand in 1934 and 1935 and by plough in 1936), 4,384 lbs.; a mean increase per acre for three years of 2,014 lbs. If this increase had been sold in Bolgatanga market at 13s. for 180 lbs. (*i.e.*, 14s. less 1s. for the bag) it would have realised nearly £7 10s. It would not require many acres yielding at this rate to justify the expenditure of £4 upon implements and £6-£8 upon working bullocks, that is assuming the farmer had no bullocks of his own already. Furthermore, very much less labour was expended upon the "ridged" plots than "native". Admittedly other cultivation experiments have not given such spectacular results, but the indication is the same in all.

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000 It is difficult to say how much grain it would take to saturate the local market, but by the time it becomes saturated the Department of Agriculture should have acquired sufficient information to advise farmers how a surplus can most profitably be fed to livestock. For this reason an experimental stock farm is an essential part of the machinery for mixed farming research. In passing it might be mentioned that foodstuff prices will fall, as saturation point is approached: whilst this will not be popular with fixed farmers, it will assist the poor man to get food more easily. In this way we shall be accomplishing one of our primary objects in working in North Mamprusi; for it is the poor man who creates the food shortage problem, not the would-be mixed farmer.

Kusasi Groundnut Trade.

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A consideration of sources of farming capital would not be complete without reference to a newly developed trade in decorticated groundnuts and groundnut oil from Kusasi, for the Kumasi market. From a start of 200 bags in 1933 the export has developed to 9,000 bags in 1937 (weight per bag approximately 160 lbs.). The trade is almost entirely in the hands of Messrs. Chedid, who centralise the nuts in Bawku and send them on their lorries to Kumasi when the supply of sheep and goats will not give them a full load. The lorries come North with cola, salt, cloths, etc. The price paid to the producer for decorticated groundnuts is 8s.

Kusasi

to 8s. 6d. a bag (about £4 18s. per ton); and the cost of transport on a bag to Kumasi, a distance of 380 miles, is from 4s. to 5s., which works out at about 2d. per ton mile. The trade is of particular interest in that it shows the people in Kusasi are prepared to grow a crop to sell for cash, and that transport will follow production, even at so great a distance from the market. 439 435

CONCLUSIONS.

The time is ripe for the introduction of mixed farming. That is to utilise livestock, firstly, to provide an adequate food supply for the people; and secondly, to produce a surplus for sale, either directly, as in the case of groundnuts in Kusasi, or metabolized and sold in the form of livestock, for which we have seen there is a large market in the South. In cases where labour has to be hired for farm work, as upon school farms, and possibly upon the farms of salaried Chiefs, when tribute and tribute labour is commuted, mixed farming can be recommended immediately as a profitable investment. It is possible that the production of such money crops as groundnuts, cotton, ginger, and sesamum, which are not profitable to grow by hand methods of cultivation for an external market, might become profitable with animal cultivation. 000

The control of burning and the use of the material so protected, as dry season fodder or bedding for livestock and the manufacture of farmyard manure, is within the power of everyone to adopt with advantage. But animal cultivation has a limited application in North Mamprusi for two main reasons :—

1. Lack of farming capital. Some form of loan scheme similar to the one in Nigeria will have to be devised to overcome this difficulty. We must first prove that it will be possible for a farmer to repay his loan before we can prepare details.

2. Density of population, and the shortage of land. The average area of land cultivated by a man at present is 2½ acres but the average area farmed by a compound is 8 acres. The compound must therefore be the unit owning a plough and bullocks. The time so saved can be devoted to the rearing of livestock, making enclosures round farms and grazing lands, and so on.

It is probable that, ultimately, expansion will take place into areas at present unoccupied. This must be attended with careful control.

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443 **RETAIL MARKETING**--extent and variety of retail specialization; types of retail outlets (e.g., itinerant merchants, markets, bazaars, general stores, trading posts, specialty shops, chain stores, department stores, mail-order houses); pricing (e.g., fixed, variable); services to customers (e.g., deliveries); specialized personnel (e.g., sales clerks); etc. See also:

Business organization	47	Accounting methods	451
Description of business structures	347	Extension of credit	452
Upkeep of store buildings	358	Employer-employee relations	466
Trading centers	366		

221
262

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
ting grass and timber for roofing, handicraft work. Young men begin to go abroad temporarily.[1]	ported maize, plentiful and cheap at market.
FEBRUARY: As in January.	Grain issued for only one meal a day. Many purchasing grain rather than use up their own supplies. Ground-nuts and cow-peas regular and important supplements to cereal food. Women finding grain to augment supplies, by trading, etc. Market supplies still plentiful, prices average.
MARCH: As in February. Sporadic cleaning of fields and hoeing.	Grain supplies sinking and more carefully rationed. Children and women gleaning ground-nuts to stop hunger. People going to Mampuru and Nabte countries to purchase grain for re-sale. Grain still plentiful in market, also other products, e.g. yams (imported).[2]

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[1] This month of plenitude marks the peak of the food cycle. Soon supplies diminish again; men who are setting up compounds of their own commence building operations; but almost every compound requires some repairs. House-building and thatching are crafts in which a great many men have no skill. They therefore have to invite (*pooh*) neighbours or relatives who have the skill to carry out the repairs for them; and these have to be generously fed in recompense. A new house, again, is built co-operatively with the aid of kinsmen, relatives and friends, who also have to be generously fed. [476
356]

With this further drain on his grain stores, the head of a unit of food economy has to go warily. Hence in spite of the ample and cheap grain available in the market, he begins to reduce the ration of grain he distributes to his dependants. In February the rationing gets stricter, for it is essential to keep a reserve against the first month of the rains 'to strengthen one' against the greater demands upon one's energy made by agricultural labour. They say this explains why those who can afford it buy grain for immediate consumption. Finally, just before the rains, supplies are sinking to the minimum which will be reached in the month preceeding the early millet harvest, with the usual effect of causing visits to neighbouring areas in search of grain to purchase.

The temporary migration of young men is more fully dealt with in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Culture Contact as a Dynamic Process', *Africa*, ix. 1, 1936.

[2] We have, in the above table, emphasized the place of cereals in the cycle because they constitute the staple food of the Tallensi; and as we are concerned with the domestic economy of food, we have referred to the market only in order 443 ●

221 A striking correlation emerges from the above synopsis of the
cycle of food economy. It will be seen that domestic food-supplies
262 are at their lowest at the time—recognized as such by the natives—
of the most strenuous output of physical labour, i.e. in May–June,
and highest when there is least agricultural work. In other words, it
would seem that food consumption is inversely correlated with food
requirements, if we may assume that more food is needed to sustain
the arduous agricultural labour of the rainy season than the leisure
months of the dry season. How this affects the working capacity of
the natives must be left to the social biologist to determine; it is a
type of problem beyond the competence of an ethnographer. The
251 Tallensi have both excellent receptacles and adequate techniques for
261 storing all kinds of food. We have seen grain and ground-nuts produced from granaries or storage baskets (*kusɔk*) twelve months after
they had been packed, and in perfect condition. Even root crops and
legumes, which appear to be more susceptible to damp and weevils,
can be stored for a year. Nor, in our estimation, are the Tallensi

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443 to bring out more clearly the fluctuations in domestic supplies. The market is a fundamental economic institution in Tale society, but we have space here only for a cursory comment on its function in relation to our main theme. Every kind of raw foodstuff, from grain to wild fruits and many varieties of cooked food can be purchased in the market. A visit to the market shows at once what the state of the domestic larder is; high prices indicate empty granaries, low prices, plentiful domestic supplies. The cooked food offered in the market illustrates the seasonal variation in supplementary diet very well. As soon as Bambara beans or frafra potatoes are lifted they appear, both raw and cooked, in the market. The food most commonly sold in the market is porridge (*sayabo*), the staple cereal food; but other cereal and pulse confections can be bought there, many kinds being especially prepared for sale, and rarely, if ever, cooked for home consumption. Such are *measo*—fried millet-cake, *gwr* and *kameha*, both made of flour cow-pea. A number of women carry on a regular trade in these luxury foods and thus reap a steady income. Beer is always on sale in the Tale markets, manufactured and sold by a few regular women traders, all Nankansi as far as we know. Only in the markets have we seen intoxicated men; never at ritual gatherings. The market is also the main supplier of tobacco, which most mature men and many old women chew or smoke, but which only a minority are able to grow for themselves, and of kola nuts, imported from Ashanti by foreign traders, and universally chewed as a stimulant by men, women, and even older children. Curdled milk (*bighikir*), a luxury food, is generally obtained there, too. The market represents the point of contact between the basic subsistence economy of the natives and the money economy which exists side by side with it.

461

461 **LABOR AND LEISURE**--ideas of the value and dignity of labor; notions of pleasant and unpleasant tasks; distribution of labor and leisure time; incentives to labor (e.g., pride in craftsmanship, prestige, material rewards, compulsion); time and motion studies; intensity of effort; palliation of labor, (e.g., with drugs, rhythm, music); work tempo (e.g., steady, intermittent);standards of productivity and production norms; laziness and malingering; rest periods; loafing and loitering; etc. See also:

Annual cycle of economic activities	221	Holidays	527
Unemployment	464	Slavery	567
Leisure-time activities	517	Social offenses	680

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ymaarəme*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against
682 a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide
577 may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or
682 between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of
471 a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for
●[461] a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed
431 or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*) —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a
sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar*
and Sɛɣahəg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose
section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and
officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Gɛnət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahəg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour- 461 ●
water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bɔɣar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

592 361 no foundation in fact. The climate, the kind of raw material which is plentifully at hand, the economic system, and the social organization of the natives rather than the alleged lawlessness of former times, determine their mode of house-building. In any case, homesteads very often stand closer than fifty paces together, the distance at which a mediocre shot can hit a tree—though I have seen an arrow carry four times that distance.

592 181 A Talɔŋ's home is his castle in the psychological rather than the material sense. It is the centre and fount of his major interests, his dominant purposes, his deepest emotional attachments, and his whole scheme of values; it is his shelter, his storehouse, the stage of his life's drama. The Tallensi, unlike many African peoples, have no age sets or initiation schools. A person grows up and receives his entire education at home. If he practises a craft, such as leatherwork, or is a diviner, his home is his workshop or consulting place.

As an adult, all his economic enterprise issues from his home and is devoted primarily to its upkeep. Unless he is one of the few *nouveaux riches* of to-day he keeps all his material possessions there, and houses all his livestock within its walls. His sex life, in maturity, is centred there. His children, the supreme object of his aspirations, are born and grow up in his home under his care and control. He worships his immediate forbears there. His personal destiny, past, present, and future, revolves about his home, its stages perpetuated in the many shrines and other ritual objects that are housed in it. He receives his friends and relatives at home, and dispenses hospitality there; and if he ● [461] has nothing to do would as lief recline under the shade tree at his own gateway as go making calls on others. Even the young men who like gallivanting about the markets spend much of their leisure at home.

592 181 626 The quintessence of his home, to a Talɔŋ, resides in his children, and above all his sons, the vehicles of his immortality. That is the essential meaning of *mar yiri*, 'to have a house'. Ask any native what happens to a man who does not adequately expiate a sacrilege such as murder. '*U yiri ŋmaarəme*—his house will fall to pieces,' is the answer, given with emphatic and solemn conviction, and often with circumstantial illustrations from experience or hearsay. A parent curses an insubordinate child, a chief or tɛndaana curses a clansman who has grossly insulted him, '*u ku nye yiri*—he will not see (i.e. have) a house', that is, he will die without offspring to perpetuate his line and to sacrifice to his spirit; and this is an extremely serious matter. It never fails to bring the culprit to heel with humble apologies. On the other hand, '*i na nye yiri*—you will have a house', is the most propitious blessing a diviner can convey to a man from his ancestor spirits.

592 593 Patrilocal residence and the tendency for the lineage to be localized give a man's domestic life greater continuity than a woman's. His natal family and his conjugal family are both strung on the same

to strike her. Her parents-in-law, for instance, despite their authority 593
over her, would not do so. If anything, they would try to restrain their 627
son from beating her. Only her husband has that combination of [606]
authority and intimacy in relation to her which permits the use of physical force upon her.

But flight is not the only weapon a woman has in order to maintain 593
her rights and privileges in her conjugal family. Once she is fairly free
from the leading strings of her mother-in-law, she is the mistress of her 461
time and energies. It is an accepted axiom of married life, which no 578
man questions, that a wife is free to dispose of her time as she pleases, provided she does not hamper the essential economic activities of the household, or neglect her children, or remain away from home for unwarrantable periods or at times—e.g. during the Great Festivals—when all the members of the family should be together. The routine of domestic tasks, over which men have no control, is a strong line of defence against the interference of men in their wives' disposal of their time. But differences of opinion on this matter are a common cause of squabbles between husband and wife. A young woman dresses up to go to market; her husband objects, saying that other men will be paying court to her there, or that the children will be left hungry all day; she insists; and a heated argument ensues. Nine times out of ten the woman has her way. Occasionally the husband succeeds in stopping her, by persuasion or by force. It is only at sowing or harvest time, or when, for instance, preparations for an important ceremony are in hand, that a man has full control over his wife's time.

At all times a wife's freedom to arrange her work and her leisure as best suits her may subject her husband to inconvenience. If, at the end of the day, she is too preoccupied or too tired to cook, he can but grumble and go hungry. And if he annoys her she can make a point of being too busy to attend to some want of his or too tired to cook the evening meal. This, men say frankly, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of keeping on good terms with one's wife.

Tallensi regard these utilitarian rights and duties, services and atten- 593
tions of husband and wife towards each other as a most important
feature of marriage. But it is clear that they do not constitute the unique 581
relationship that distinguishes the marriage tie from other social ties of the Tallensi. Thus a woman performs much the same utilitarian services as daughter in her natal home, and as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law in her conjugal home. They are but a part of the whole configuration of co-operation, mutual help, reciprocal services, etiquette, and mutual tolerance that keep the wheels of family life running smoothly. And it is clear, also, that they imply the existence of common interests that create a sense of mutual moral obligation.

This underlying bond of mutual moral obligation is the basic sanction of reciprocity and co-operation in the domestic family. In the case of

and any of his dependants—between husband and wife, proxy father and 593 son, older brother and younger brother. And, as we have mentioned before, its elements often stand cut more clearly where the consolidating 421 effect of the emotional ties between own parent and own child is absent. They emerge clearly, also, when there is a divergence between a son's (or other dependant's) desire for independence and his father's (or the household head's) claims on his labour and loyalty.

By the time a young man marries he has advanced on the path to economic independence beyond the stage of breeding chickens for himself. He has his own ground-nut plot and generally also his *sensɛyar*. This is a plot of land allocated to him by his father, or the head of the household, where he can grow the ordinary cereal crops. It may be no more than a few hundred square yards or it may be up to an acre in size. The larger his father's home farm (*saman*) is and the fewer his brothers, the larger will a young man's *sensɛyar* be. A man allocates these private plots to his sons with an eye to the future. When, in course of time, the sons (or *their* sons) separate, each will keep the plot given to him by their father as the portion of the patrimonial land that henceforth belongs exclusively to his agnatic descendants.

A young man cultivates his private grain plot and ground-nut plot in 593 the spare time left after he has done the work required of him on his father's farm, which always has the prior claim. There is no hard-and-461 fast arrangement. Much is left to the young man's own discretion. He knows very well that the first essential is to make sure of the common food-supply. At the same time his father manages to keep a discreet but sharp eye on his economic activities. It is a firm rule of etiquette that no member of a family should go anywhere without informing the head of the family. When a young man goes off to hoe his grain plot or ground-nut plot in the morning he will tell his father, in what seems to be a casual aside, what he is going to do, if he has not already told him the previous day. Then the father will either let him go or he will ask his son to leave it for a day or two until they have finished this or that job on the household farm.

In a well-run family, and at most times, this loose arrangement works 593 perfectly smoothly. But there are times when clashes occur; and there are families in which friction over this issue is common between father and son. For instance, there was the tussle between Naabdiya and his younger son Mosuor. Mosuor wanted to lift his ground-nuts so as to sell them and buy a new cloth for the Giŋgaaŋ Festival. Naabdiya, however, insisted that *his* ground-nuts should be lifted first, before the dry weather hardened the ground and made the task more laborious. Mosuor protested that Naabdiya was being unfair to him; Naabdiya's wife and the other children could help him in the meanwhile; and Mosuor went off to his ground-nut plot. This incensed Naabdiya, who cried out that the boy was flouting his commands, and in his anger he

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 515 562 834 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit. The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation: the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 578 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

●461 322 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more [461] than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated in a day is about $\frac{1}{16}$th acre. Hoeing is started near to the compound and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of [476] grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange [273] for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages.

243 On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice; or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

241 243 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and ground-crops are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to [242] dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots; this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet 252 heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash

262 178 is doubtful whether, given unlimited land, the local farmer would be prepared to devote any more time to cultivation. The inherent fertility of virgin land would be quickly dissipated if existing farming methods were followed upon it. Therefore, to provide more land without giving attention to the system of farming to be followed would merely postpone solution of the problem. The maximum distance to "bush" land from any point in North Mamprusi is about 8 miles, and it would not appear unreasonable to expect a man to move this distance voluntarily, if an adequate food supply were his greatest consideration and the acquisition of more land would ensure it. Changing economic and social conditions are bringing about the necessity for changed methods of farming. There is little doubt that development will stimulate expansion into unpopulated areas; then will be the time to foster migration, not before.

Direct Causes.

241 262 Density of population is therefore only indirectly a cause of recurrent food shortage; some of the more direct causes are:—

1. Farming practices which are not sufficiently intensive for conditons. A system of "fixed" cropping is followed and manuring is quite inadequate.

[461] 2. The innate distaste of the people for consistent labour, especially when there is a chance that it may not be essential. That is, a farmer would rather sacrifice to his ancestors for more rain—and perhaps spend the rest of the day at market (not marketing)—than to give his farm a surface cultivation to conserve the moisture already in the ground.

3. The lack of sufficient incentive, and a conservatism which makes a man prefer to cultivate a small area of impoverished land, cultivated by his ancestors, to going eight miles, or less, and having the labour of breaking up bush land (predial larceny is often offered as an excuse when bush farms are suggested).

4. Too great a reliance upon cereal crops. A bad season for cereals, or, as in recent years, depredations by locusts, means food shortage; that the season might have been a good one for root crops or legumes, does not affect the situation very much.

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not own the land, but is in charge of the hunting party for the time 624
that they are away in the bush.

'The *Tenedan*' would separate people fighting by spreading ashes 793
on the land between the combatants; no man may shoot an arrow 834
over this line. It is taboo to the land to have sexual intercourse in the
bush. Any one who found people doing so will collect a heap of leaves
and branches at that spot, and every one who passed there must add
more. Such a place is called *pey bok* (vagina hole).

'A woman may not become a *Tenedan*.'[1] *Tenedan*' have not any 793
distinctive dress from that of any Elder. There is no difference 462 ●
between the funeral custom for a *Tenedan*' and that of an Elder.' 764

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[1] But see p. 371. [i.e. The opposite is true among the Nam Nam - Analyst.]

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations between clans and lineages. Every Talɔŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a 'Talis clan; but it would be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have
seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was [462
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights.
As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very
heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of
the wound.

592 593 lineage. The latter grows directly out of the former and very often occupies the same dwelling as, or one close to that of, the former. For a woman marriage signifies a sharp break. As wife and mother she generally lives in a different, even if familiarly close, clan settlement from that of her birth. A man, living all his life side by side with the other members of his lineage, participating in the hierarchy of the corporate units that make up the lineage system, identifying himself with all its members through their common jural, economic, and ceremonial interests, makes an easy, self-evident, and gradual transition from the status of a minor (*tarəm*) under his father's control to that of a father and head of a household. The change in status and social role from that of a daughter and member of one lineage to that of a wife and mother in the settlement of another is more drastic and complex. A woman has no rights in or ties with the community[1] in which she spends the greatest part of her life, exercises her heaviest responsibilities, achieves her most cherished fulfilment, and acquires her strongest emotional attachments, except through her family by marriage, her husband, and her children. Thus a woman's life is fraught with many possibilities of conflict between the loyalties and sentiments towards her natal lineage and those which she gradually builds up in relation to her husband's lineage.

The effect of all this is to make the home of even greater importance for a woman than for a man. Her conjugal home is the supreme and almost the sole domain of her labour and life. Her children are the very hub of her existence. She is first and foremost a housewife and mother, toiling devotedly in the care of her children, in attending to her husband's needs, in giving her contribution of labour and skill to the economy of the household, and in the numerous household tasks that call for daily attention.

The Architecture of the Homestead in Relation to the Structure of the Domestic Family

342 462 Tale homesteads are solidly constructed of pile (puddled mud, *tan*), and they are built to last. Erecting the circular walls tier by tier, plastering them, roofing the rooms, stamping the floors, adding the small contrivances and the decorations that increase the comfort and attraction of the homestead, are all tasks requiring considerable skill, care, and co-operation. They are not the work of specialists, though some men and women have more skill in them than others, and many people have such poor skill that they never undertake them. The conventional division of labour involves both sexes equally in the building of a homestead. Building and thatching is men's work; plastering, drawing the crude lines and geometrical designs that

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[1] She may, and usually does, have cognatic kinsfolk there, but her ties with them are valid only for the particular individuals.

342 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces
●462 are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All
[476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes. With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation. In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its
592 owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant
554 change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy. Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the efficacy of these social ties.

We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the
592 architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations
341 that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least one flat-roofed room (*pȕ*), as a matter both of convention and of utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men, women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning. Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

595 578 According to the natives, quarrels between co-wives are often due to one or other of them having an intractable disposition. Men add that women lack self-control and are very prone to petty jealousy; they are apt to quarrel if they think they are being unfairly treated, if, for instance, one wife seems to receive more than a fair share of her husband's attention. But when actual cases of such quarrels are examined they are seen to be an expression of the tensions springing from the cleavages in the structure of the domestic family. They are temporary disturbances of the balance between the relatively autonomous matri-central *dug* and the inclusive patri-central *yir*. That is why they occur so rarely between women who are related by kinship or clanship, and who therefore think of their *dugət* as subdivisions of a single wider *dug*. Co-wives live in harmony as long as they act in the interests of the common *yir*; dissensions arise between them when they do not accept the paramountcy of the *yir*, and assert their relative autonomy in relation to one another. In the normal run of family life the interests of the common *yir* come first, for the sustenance of the family and the general welfare of all its members depend upon proper co-operation between them, resting on mutual loyalty and goodwill.

595 ● 462 241 The women of the household, both those who are co-wives to one another, and those who are mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or mother and daughter to one another, usually work together harmoniously to perform their share of the productive labour of agriculture. They work under the direction of the head of the house, and the products of their labour accrue to the common food supply. This is a part of the co-operative economic organization of the household. Thus at sowing or harvest time one often sees a whole family working together in the fields. When a sowing party is at work one sees the men striding vigorously ahead, dibbling the holes with their long heavy dibbles cut from saplings, while the women follow behind, chattering and laughing amicably as they sow the grain. And when the harvest is in full swing, one sees similar cheerful family parties out on the field or homeward bound at dusk in Indian file, the men in front, perhaps carrying their pear-shaped wicker coops in which they have collected a brood of chickens that had been allowed to run in the fields during the day, the women sauntering close behind them, the heavy baskets of grain on their heads, and small boys and girls gambolling in the rear blowing their whistles and shaking their rattles (*kiŋkayah*) of serrated calabash disks. [534]

595 The independence of the *dug* comes out in the utilization of the food-supply. As the women have to supply the vegetables for cooking the relish which the natives regard as an indispensable accompaniment to their heavy porridge, each woman who has her own *dug* is entitled to a vegetable patch beside the wall of the homestead. Except for the senior woman of the house, who has a slightly larger vegetable patch

593 (*Man daa nye fara dɔŋi ki cŋəm la ŋwala*)', this is a curse of the most
789 terrible kind. For that reason, no doubt, none of my informants could
quote an instance of a mother actually putting this curse on a child.
826 The symbolism is of interest, however, in view of the stress Tallensi lay
on the mother as food-giver in their conventional picture of her.

Childhood

The next three or four years of a child's life are probably its freest and
857 happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the imme-
593 diate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older
siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in being with their parents too. They will hang around their mother in the kitchen and trot around or sit with their father when he is resting under the shade tree. They see and hear everything that is going on in the house and are tolerated at all domestic occasions. In this way, and through their mimetic play, they build up the rudimentary schemas[1] of ideas, manual dexterities, and sentiments out of which grow the skills, interests, and values of later life. Love and indulgence is still the keynote of their parents' and other close relatives' attitude to them. Tallensi say that small children at this stage are still more attached to their mother than to their father because it is she who feeds them. In fact, as we have already mentioned, throughout a Talɔŋ's life he thinks of his mother as the one who gave him food without stint, going hungry herself, if need be, so that her child might be fed.

By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex;
857 and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it
868 reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it
still remains free to play for much of its time. But from the age of 7 or
593 so boys and girls are eager to participate in the adult routine of life and
they become more and more involved in it. They begin by being given the simplest economic and household tasks such as scaring the birds from the fields of ripening grain, tethering the goats, rounding up the poultry—tasks which children of both sexes perform—or sweeping the house, carrying a tiny pot of water, gathering edible fungi or herbs for the pot, which girls only do. A very common task of both girls and boys at this stage is acting nursemaid to a baby. As this shows, there is very little social differentiation between them as yet.

857 By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division
of labour customary among the Tallensi, and with it the corresponding
593 division of social roles and ideals. Boys start following their older
462 brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any.
868 They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12
reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother

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[1] Cf. the discussion of this concept in my Memorandum just cited.

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857
own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home
farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593
chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462
of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of
9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868
plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a housewife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155
their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861
ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it
is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔɣa yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593
and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and
social maturity permit. Its parents will henceforth assert their authority 867
and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

CHAPTER XII

THE FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

OUR study has made it clear that the recognition of genealogical relationships in the ordering of social life has an extremely wide range of application among the Tallensi. To be sure, some classes of social relations in which individuals or organized groups normally participate do not necessarily imply cognizance of genealogical connexions. There are the activities of buyers and sellers in the market-place, for example. These are transactions in which kinship may, but for the most part does not, play a critical part. If it comes into the picture it does so as an adventitious factor, not as an intrinsic constitutive element. Even between kinsfolk transactions in the market are ruled by considerations of price, costs, profits, supply, and demand. A man who goes to market to buy a cap will not patronize a kinsman who has caps for sale if he can get one cheaper from a stranger. But it may happen that a seller of caps will be satisfied with a slightly smaller margin of profit if the buyer is his kinsman than if he is a stranger. 601

Apart from such ephemeral inter-personal relations, there are lasting social ties, such as those of friendship (*zoot*), which do not necessarily presuppose genealogical connexions. It is a common thing for Tallensi, especially for men, to have friends (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) in other clans than their own, and nowadays in neighbouring tribes. Friends visit one another occasionally, help one another sometimes, and give one another gifts. A man may also have a woman friend (*sɔm*), usually the wife of one of his clansmen. The man takes small gifts to his *sɔm* from time to time and she reciprocates by cooking a meal for him. She may assist him to find a wife from among her clan sisters. But if friends are not necessarily kinsmen, they very often have common kin. In fact friendships between unrelated Tallensi are most often formed through one of the parties visiting a kinsman of the other party and so making his acquaintance. Many friendships arise from contacts at funeral ceremonies or when hoeing or building parties come to help a father- or brother-in-law. In any case, the commonest and most prized form of friendship is friendship with a clansman or a neighbour of a related clan. Many such friendships go back to childhood and are the more highly prized because they are voluntary, personal, and not subject to hard-and-fast rules. 572

In the same way, though the Tallensi do not have institutionalized age-grades, men or women of about the same degree of social maturity are often grouped together in situations in which many people of all ages play a part. One sees this very clearly on ceremonial occasions. At funeral ceremonies, for example, there is first of all the usual separation 561 462

[p. 337]

561 ● 462 of the spheres of the two sexes. The sphere of the women is within the homestead. There they stay most of the time and there they carry out the duties that fall to them. The sphere of the men is outside, in front of the gateway, in the cattle yard and the *zɔŋ* (cf. p. 53). All the public rites take place outside. But in addition there is a distribution of tasks, duties, and privileges in accordance with a broad stratification by seniority. The oldest people in both spheres are spoken of as the elders (*kpɛm*). They have the seats of honour. For the most part they merely advise, and if hitches arise exercise a somewhat distant supervision over the activities. If they take an active part it is only in the most important of the rites. But they have the highest privileges. When food or meat or beer is distributed it is the elders who receive the portions due to the lineage units they represent and take the largest share of these portions. It is the old women, too, who take the lion's share of the gifts and obligatory contributions of foodstuffs handed over to the womenfolk. The burden of managing the ceremonies, performing the complicated series of rites, and attending to the many practical tasks involved, such as digging the grave, slaughtering sacrificial animals, and preparing food and beer, falls on the men who 'come after the elders (*kpɛm taɣalis*)' and their female counterparts. The *kpɛm taɣalis* are the men of mature experience but still able-bodied, men in the late forties and early fifties, the corresponding stratum among the women being those who have adolescent children. The young men and women, assisted by the adolescent boys and girls, do the fetching and carrying and give any casual help that may be required. The boys have the privilege of plucking and roasting any fowls that are slaughtered and keep some of the titbits for themselves. The girls surfeit themselves with frequent tasting of porridge and oily bean stew while they are cooking. This pattern can be observed in any collective activity.

601 Such arrangements, informal products though they are of the pragmatic requirements of the situation, are so stereotyped that they can be called customary. They arise without reference to genealogical connexions. But it is characteristic of Tale social life that they do so in situations whose structure is determined by kinship and clanship institutions. In fact the ideology of kinship is so dominant in Tale society, and the web of genealogical connexions so extensive, that no social relationships or events fall completely outside the orbit of kinship. In this respect the Tallensi resemble very many other primitive societies among whom, as Firth puts it,[1] kinship is the articulating principle of social organization. Just because kinship acts as a major determinant of social behaviour in every aspect and department of social life, it is the basis of the machinery of social integration in societies of this type, as many studies in Africa, Oceania, and America have shown. The result, as we have seen, both in this book and in the first part of our study, is that

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[1] Raymond Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, 1936, p. 577.

of time reflected in the growing up of children and the aging of 596
parents, bring about changes which materially affect the food economy. 182

THE UNIT OF FOOD ECONOMY. Food is produced and consumed by 596
what we shall call the unit of food economy. The following table, derived from the data for the 40 randomly selected compounds mentioned previously, shows the relation between this unit and those we have already described.

Compounds		*Gateways*	*Units of food economy*	*Households*	*Primary families*	*Productive men*	*Women*
Total .	40	56	58	77	114	107	124
Ratio .		1	1	1·4	2·0	1·9	2·2
							Children
Total .							132
Ratio .							2·4

A unit of food economy thus corresponds, generally, to a single gateway,[1] and comprises more than one household. The man at the head of this unit holds the land from which it derives the major part of its sustenance and organizes the exploitation of this land. The productive men (i.e. those capable of agricultural labour, including boys over 15) jointly cultivate this land; the women and children jointly assist in sowing it and in such duties as scaring birds from the standing crops. At harvest time the men and boys cut the grain, women and girls carry it home in baskets. The head of the unit supervises the sorting of the grain, and is responsible for the selection and preservation of seed. He sees to the storage of the grain—the seed separately and specially carefully, the grain for consumption in the granary. The ground-nut crop is similarly handled by co-operative [476]
labour. It is a maxim that those who work together share the products of their labour. This applies not only to joint labour in the fields, but to the division of labour between the sexes and generations. Upon 596
the men falls the most arduous agricultural labour, but the women 462
have equally exacting duties connected with the preparation of food

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[1] The two units of food economy in excess of the number of gateways represent pairs of full brothers who were economically independent of each other, but continued to occupy the same compound for kinship reasons. Four other units of food economy were in process of splitting up at the time the census was taken.

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596 for consumption. This division of labour runs through the whole of Tale domestic economy and is equally well evinced, e.g. in the
462 organization of house-building and repairing. Boys and girls, too, have their duties in connexion with the care of the live stock and in the house.

The head of such a self-supporting unit has his own granary or
596 granaries. Just as he is the final arbiter in agricultural matters, so he alone controls the distribution to the women of the grain jointly produced. In theory he could even sell the grain if he wished without consulting the men dependent on him; in practice, he dare not do so, for they would leave the compound at the first opportunity.

596 The entire unit of food economy thus draws its main supply of grain, the staple foodstuff, from a common source. But every household,
422 every primary family, and indeed every individual other than young children has a degree of economic independence which is limited only by the obligations to the bigger unit. An industrious householder usually possesses some poultry and perhaps sheep and goats of his own, supplies a good deal of the minor crops consumed by his own wives and children, and even some grain to augment his wives' rations from the main store. Every woman, again, adds to the food supply of her primary family by her own efforts. If she is a market trader or a potteress, for example, she will have money of her own, will sometimes purchase extra foodstuffs and may invest in live stock which will eventually go to her sons. Her husband has no powers of disposal over her property. If he uses any of it, by her permission, it is a debt which must be repaid.

243 DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION IN RELATION TO AGRICULTURE AND CROPS. This system can best be understood in relation to Tale agriculture. The staple crop is millet (generically, *ki*) of which there are three kinds, early millet (*naara: pennisetum typhoideum*); guinea-corn (*ki* specifically, each variety being known by a special term, e.g. *kutɔk*, *kazii* &c.: *sorghum vulgare*); and late millet (*za: pennisetum spicatum*). These with a small amount of rice (*mui: oryza sativa*) occupy 92 per cent. of the area cultivated in the Zuarungu district.[1] The seasonal

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[1] According to Mr. Lynn, who reports observations on 29 compounds in Zuarungu district, five being in Tale settlements. Four were somewhat larger and

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not required at the time, and always borrowed specifically for this 596
purpose from kinsmen and friends. Women rarely obtain their 422
ground-nut fields from their husbands. They prefer to beg land from their own cognatic kinsmen, thus emphasizing their absolute independence of their husbands as regards this crop.

For this reason they never receive assistance from their husbands with the hoeing and planting of their ground-nut fields. A son often assists his mother; or young women 'invite' (*pooh*) a couple of young kinsmen of their husband to hoe their ground-nut fields in return for a very good meal, the grain for which the woman generally provides from her own resources. Many, again, have simply to rely upon their own skill with the hoe. The ground-nut crop thus gained is the woman's to consume or sell, as she pleases.

Of the remaining subsidiary crops, the most important—though 244
less important than ground-nuts—are the legumes, Bambara beans (*suma: voandzeia subterranea*), cow-peas (*tia: vigna sinensis*) and geocarpa beans (*sulempie: kerstingiella geocarpa*); and the root crops, frafra potatoes (*peeha: coleus dysentericus*) and sweet potatoes (*ŋumhma'ala: ipomea batatas*). Bambara beans and frafra potatoes are grown by the more energetic younger men on borrowed strips of compound farm after the millet is cut. Cow-peas are planted along the edges of compound farm by the head when he sows his early millet.

Vegetables are the concern and the property of women. The head 244
of a unit of food economy every year allots a small patch of land, some 462
100 square yards or less, immediately beside the compound wall to each woman with a kitchen of her own. Here she sows her *naŋgena* (*gynandropsis pentaphylla*), some ocro (*ma'ana: hibiscus esculentus*), *bεt* (*h. sabdariffa*), *bεris* (*h. cannabinus*). The latter three vegetable plants are also grown like cow-peas and *neri* (*cucumis melo*), alongside the paths which border the compound farm. Thus as they grow and ripen the women can get at them easily without injuring the millet. A woman's vegetable patch is always hoed for her by her husband as the produce is for their common use. The leaves of the cow-pea plant (*tia: vide supra*) are used as a vegetable known as *beŋit*, and are plucked for this purpose by the wives of the man who planted the *tia*; and the same rule applies to the use of the *neri* seed as a soup ingredient.

000 deal with the conversion of these raw materials into cooked food for the maintenance of all by the almost exclusive efforts of the woman.

The preparation of food is a woman's task. Though cooking is
462 done by both sexes, men cook only on ritual and special occasions
252 and, as a rule, out of doors. Women always cook in the kitchen, as it
343 is a taboo to prepare food for everyday consumption outside the compound. As we have already mentioned, every woman other than a young wife has her own quarters (*dug*) consisting of several rooms. Of these, the most important for the present paper are the grinding room (*neer*) and the kitchens (*da'aŋ*). Not every woman possesses her own grinding-room, but she may use that of any other woman in her husband's compound, or of a related neighbouring compound, and no one may refuse her. The owner's permission is never asked, but a woman will not enter a grinding-room if she observes another's grain lying on the grinding-platform.

343 The grinding-room is the source of much friction within the compound. It is the cause or pretext of women's quarrels which often
578 involve their husbands as well. Disputes arise mainly over the question of priority, or about the misuse of the grinding stones, e.g. leaving the *baarig* soiled with soup ingredients. Hence, a man will try to build a grinding-room for each wife in order to maintain the peace.

Inside the grinding-room is a low, semicircular platform (*neer*) the
343 surface of which has two or three shallow depressions with their
412 appropriate grindstones (*neekaŋ*). These vary in weight, shape, and
252 texture according to the purpose for which they are intended. There is a heavy and rough grindstone—*ŋmaarig*—used for crushing the whole grain; a smaller and flatter one—*baarig*—which crushes the rough corn into fine flour (*zɔm*); and a small, round stone—*zibɛ'ɛɛnɛr*—used only for grinding soup ingredients such as dried vegetables, red pepper, rock-salt, dawa-dawa-seed balls, dried meat, &c. If a grinding-room lacks the latter stone the soup ingredients are mixed with a little flour and ground with the *baarig*. The flour is added so that the stone should be left clean and dry.

343 The kitchen consists of two adjoining rooms, a covered one (*da'ambɔk*) used during the wet season, which serves also as the store-room for the owner's produce, her firewood, and cooking-pots, and an open one (*da'aŋ*) used during the dry season. However, it happens

not infrequently that a woman has only an open kitchen and uses her 343
sleeping-room for wet-season cooking and for storage purposes.

A woman owns all her cooking utensils, and it is usually her mother 415
who equips her with these as soon as her husband has built her a 422
kitchen. Before that she uses the pots of the woman whose kitchen 343
she shares. The fittings of a Tale kitchen are not elaborate: a fireplace [354]
consisting of two stones placed side by side against the wall; a flat
stone or low stool facing it on which the woman sits while cooking; the stirring-stick leaning against the wall to the right of the fireplace, and one or two old and partly broken calabashes to the left of it; this is the complete picture.

The most exacting task in a woman's routine is the provision of 462
firewood and water. She collects her firewood on her husband's 313
bush farm or on unowned bush land, which may be as much as 4 or 312
5 miles from her home. It takes her the best part of a day to collect enough for three days. The strain of coping with her firewood requirements becomes acute when a woman has a new-born infant to care for and cannot absent herself for many hours at a time. She may therefore invite a young sister or cousin to come and stay with her and assist her; and such a young girl is often eventually taken in marriage by her husband. Co-wives never lend or give each other firewood; but when a woman has recently been confined, her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood when they come to congratulate her, and her husband looks about for heavy logs to bring home to her. He may assist her to carry water, too, for a few days. This is the only time when a man performs these domestic duties. At the end of the harvesting season each woman carefully collects guinea-corn stalks from the fields and stores them on the flat roof of the sleeping-room or inside the kitchen for firewood.

Water is kept in large earthenware pots (*kɔwoor*) in the kitchen. 312
There is no scarcity of water during the rainy season, as every ditch and furrow becomes a stream, but in the dry season it is a problem. The women and young girls spend many patient hours at the water-holes collecting the water, drop by drop, in their calabashes, as it seeps through the moist sand. This water is kept for cooking and drinking purposes only. A few water-holes do not dry away completely, but become foul with rotting vegetation and stagnancy. The

571 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship
861 from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 *Age and mobility*. Infants still requiring care are often carried about
857 by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate-groups.

571 *Sex*. Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently
857 go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely,
● 462 accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 *The social situation*. Yet none of these children's groups resemble
857 gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is,
861 however, not that of children to children but of children to parents.
858 It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

in sacrifices to domestic shrines; the girls assist in household tasks 857
such as sweeping and carrying water. Towards the end of this period 868
boys whose fathers own cattle go out with the cattle-herds and girls are beginning to help in the preparation of food. A 10-year-old girl can prepare the majority of usual dishes. At the age of 6 or 7 brothers and sisters often play together; at 9 or 10 the sexual dichotomy has become firmly established.[1]

At this stage the play of infancy develops in three directions. The 857
sporadic motor exuberance is transformed into recreational play—organized group games and dances; the rudimentary mimetic play becomes elaborate and protracted imaginative and constructive play; and the rude toy-making of infancy grows into children's arts and crafts.

Tale children have a great many organized games, passed on from one generation of children to the next by drawing younger ones into the games played by those who already know them. The games are traditional, and often built round themes derived from the cultural idiom—farming, hunting, marriage, chiefs, &c. But their value is predominantly recreational. Children play them for the pleasure of collective singing, rhythmical physical activity, and sensory and bodily stimulation. The ordinary dances of moonlight nights in which both adults and children participate are regarded as 'play' of this kind.

Kuobon is a game of this sort. Both boys and girls from 7–8 to 857
about 15 years play it on moonlight nights in single-sex groups. A 526
group of about the same size forms a ring, clasping each other and standing on one leg. The other leg is extended towards the centre of the ring, and the children arrange themselves so that their extended legs cross one another. The group then commences to revolve, singing as they go round and round, *kuobon, yee-e-e la ŋaah*, 'fruits of farming, yee, how nice'. The game goes on until they are tired and the extended legs begin to drop. It breaks up with much laughter, only to start again after a rest. Similar games are played by boys 857
only and others by girls only; but for both sexes dancing is the 535
supreme recreation. In both the mixed dances and the single-sex

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[1] Nevertheless, this sexual dichotomy is not so absolute as to prohibit a girl or a woman from stepping into a breach if there is no male available for a man's task; and men often undertake women's work in an emergency.

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463 OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALIZATION--number of partially and fully specialized occupations; major occupational categories (e.g., learned and artistic professions, independent industrial and business entrepreneurs, managerial personnel, independent and tenant farmers, government officials, clerical and white-collar workers, skilled artisans, semi-skilled and unskilled industrial workers, farm laborers, domestic servants, slaves); general information about occupational specialization; vocational guidance; specific information on occupations not classifiable elsewhere; etc. This category is designed for summary statements about occupational specialization; in nearly all instances specific information will be classified elsewhere under a wide range of functional and occupational headings. See also:

Stratification of occupations by class and caste	56	Status, role, and prestige	554
Occupational composition of the population	162	Vocational education	874

obsequious among themselves. With all their respect for custom they are 181
not its slaves. Individual initiative, ambition and independence of action, 183
within the limits imposed by their social and material order, are common.

Tallensi do not question their traditional ritual values, but there is an element of what we should call rationalism in their religious attitudes. Their ancestor cult, an elaborate body of beliefs, rites, and ceremonies, is minutely woven into their everyday existence, but it does not pursue them with phantom terrors. On the contrary, it is the principal means provided by Tale culture for keeping the individual and the group on an even keel.

Stability; tolerance of physical hardship and discomfort as well as of human frailty and idiosyncrasy; a reasonable degree of conformity; a tenacious attachment to life fortified by an elaborate ancestor cult—these characteristics of Tale culture strike the observer at the outset. On the surface the Tale ideal is to have enough to eat, to be a successful parent, and to live at peace with one's fellows. Closer acquaintance, however, reveals hidden undercurrents. Beneath the overt stability and integration of the social order lie continuous tensions. Indeed the stability of Tale society can only be understood as a product of these tensions, created and maintained by the social processes that resolve them. Again, the natives' keen sense of the importance of social obligations hides a tendency to aggressive self-assertion. Tallensi are quick to anger if they feel themselves wronged, and are good haters. Their usual spirit of good-natured tolerance masks a proneness to suspicious watchfulness, and their frugality covers a spendthrift streak. These contradictions are subtly revealed in their religious practices. The strength of their ancestor cult rests not only on its predominant role as an integrating force in their social structure, but also on its profound psychological value for the individual. Tallensi react to misfortune with strong anxiety and guilt feelings from which they find a refuge in their ancestor cult.

This sketch of how the Tallensi strike a European calls for qualifications. It is couched in terms of our cultural values in order to help us to visualize these people in terms of a familiar vocabulary and automatic mental images. Objectively, from the standpoint of the people themselves, the value judgements implicit in our description lose their meaning. What we see as their poverty, dirtiness, poor health, and rudeness of culture they accept with equanimity as the normal conditions of their life. They have no grievance or shame about them. Being common to everybody, these conditions do not create rifts in their society or maladjustments in the individual as they do with us. They are in one respect simply part of the atmosphere within which the culture of the Tallensi (and their neighbours) develops its own richness and amplitude; in another, the material of significant themes in that culture.

Every aspect of Tale social life is conditioned by the fact that they are 181
a primitive peasantry. There is no division of labour apart from that of 241
the sexes. Censuses taken in various parts of the country show that not 463
less than 95 per cent. of the adult males are wholly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, and all of the odd 5 per cent. are partially dependent on the same source. Craft specialists work at their crafts only

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
241 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
● 463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland
are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A
leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a
popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may
farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There
may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or
two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
167 so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale, Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years, a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny
in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity, and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was [462
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights. As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of the wound.

dual's transition from the child's world to the adult's—e.g. the so- 184
called negative phase or adolescent instability which has been alleged 155
to be universal in our society.[1] It is unknown in Tale society.[2] As between adults and children, in Tale society, the social sphere is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. All participate in the same culture, the same round of life, but in varying degrees, corresponding to the stage of physical and mental development. Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system. Psychological effects of fundamental importance for Tale education follow from this. For it means that the child is from the beginning oriented towards the same reality as its parents and has the same physical and social material upon which to direct its cognitive and instinctual endowment. The interests, motives, and purposes of children are identical with those of adults, but at a simpler level of organization. Hence the children need not be coerced to take a share in economic and social activities. They are eager to do so. This does not mean that Tale children are altogether passive in the hands of their parents. Temperamental idiosyncrasies in children strike the observer at a glance. Tantrums, disobedience, destructiveness, and other aggressive outbursts occur sometimes. Among youths and adults misfits and incompetents can be found. But even they live for the same ends and have the same objective values and interests as the majority.

The unity of the social sphere is the more marked in Tale society 184
since they have almost no social stratification within a genealogical 565
or local community. There are no class or rank cleavages, nor highly organized and exclusive economic, political, or ritual associations cutting across the local, genealogical segmentation; and the social division of labour is rudimentary. The pattern of existence is the same for all members of a given community, varying only in texture
or tone from individual to individual. The social sphere is differen- 184
tiated only as between communities which are generally localized clans 565
or lineages. Thus, the blacksmith lineage of Sakpee is unique, as 326
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[1] See G. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 429–32, for a critical discussion of this question.

[2] Cf. also Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[784] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

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243 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

184 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In
867 the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of
463 Puvəlɔmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tale lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvəlɔmra.

592 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period
622 of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members
861 of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them —may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

184
867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm 241 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement 463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Taleland are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tɛnzugu, and only one [326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops, baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale [465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner, and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

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relatives may impel a young man to run away to 'Kumasi', the symbol for everything south of the Black Volta. 167

Thus one finds that about one man in three has at some time or other 177 in the past two decades visited these, to the Tallensi, still foreign parts. In the settlements near the main roads the dry-season migration of young 167 men may, according to rough estimates made in 1936–7, reach over 10 per cent. of the adult male population. Administrative officers estimate that in 1938–9 about 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were working abroad with the apparent intention of staying away for a lengthy period. These men bring back small sums of money, ranging from a few shillings to four or five pounds, as well as clothes and other miscellaneous trade goods. Money and clothes[1] are eagerly desired by the Tallensi. These are the most important new wants that have grown up recently as a result of culture contact. Foreign utensils, implements, or tools have hardly entered the productive system of the natives. The foreign ideas and exotic information brought back by the young men arouse curiosity but have made no appreciable impression on the native scheme of values and beliefs, or on their practical knowledge. Labour migrants remain strongly attached to their families and natal settlements, and it is always assumed that they will eventually return. Hitherto, among the Tallensi, very few have been lost to their natal communities; and when they do return, they resume the traditional way of life. Though they are one of the influences modifying the strict letter of custom in minor respects, they are not a disintegrating ferment

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[1] Tallensi maintain that there has been a tremendous increase in the amount [291] of clothes worn since the white man opened up the country, and especially since the last war. They point out that nowadays every small boy has a loin- 177 cloth for festive occasions, whereas even twenty years ago a youth only obtained one when he began courting, at the age of 18 or 19. In those days the ordinary man rarely had a cloth or tunic. His only garb was an animal skin. Nowadays every man has at least one cloth to cover himself at night and to wear during the day when he is not working, and many have two or three garments—a cloth and a tunic, for instance—while well-to-do men have considerable wardrobes. All cotton goods are imported. The Mossi cloth used in former days is still a favourite, especially for loin-cloths and caps, and tunics for special wear. The bulk of it is still imported from French territory, but there are some Mossi weavers at Bolɔga and Zuarungu who add to the supply. However, quite half if not more of the cotton goods worn by Tallensi is of European origin and the demand is increasing. I once listed all the clothes worn by a number of men and women from one of the most prosperous communities of Taleland as they passed my rest house on the way to the market. The figures are instructive as an indication both of the standard of living of the Tallensi and of the degree to which acculturation in this sphere has progressed. The sample consisted of 62 men and 64 women. Of the men, 35 (56 per cent.) wore cover-cloths of European cotton print; 18 (29 per cent.) wore Mossi cloths; 9 (15 per cent.) wore skins; 8 (13 per cent.) wore khaki shorts, several of them on top of native loin-cloths; the remainder wore native loin-cloths; 19 (30 per cent.) wore some form of European head-gear; 30 (48 per cent.) wore native-made caps. Thus 85 per cent. of these men were clothed, but none of them wholly. Of the women 12 (15 per cent.) wore a piece of cotton print and one wore a Mossi cloth—a very large incidence such as would not be found in most other Tale communities. The rest were nude, except for the perineal band and back-flap. As people dress up specially for market day, these figures are not indicative of everyday habits. The greater conservatism of women suggested by these figures is due in great part to their lack of opportunities for obtaining cash incomes for personal use.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
and weeding, planting guinea-corn and late millet on bush farms, rice, ground-nuts and minor crops. Hiring labour for help in hoeing and weeding.[2] Women plucking *naŋgena*.	Much live stock sold or bartered for grain very cheaply; grain scarce and dear. Much ground-nuts for sale.[1] Small groups of children wander about hungry, feeding on wild fruits and small animals they find near the settlements. Towards the end of the month many people are staunching their hunger by cutting the ripe or half ripe heads of early millet which they roast on the embers and nibble at.
JULY: Early millet harvested by those who planted first on valley land.[3]	Early millet eaten by those who harvest. Relatives from the later-

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[1] People tend to hoard their ground-nuts until about June, when the price rises to 1*s.* a small basketful, as many require seed then. The proceeds are invested in grain. Grain prices at this time are about twice the average price of roughly ½*d.* a lb.

[2] In June even those whose grain supplies have lasted well begin to feel the pinch. One reason for this is that a considerable amount of grain is expended in feeding and recompensing hired *kpaarip* (lit. hoe-men). These are Nankansi and Builsa who come to Tale-land to seek a few days' work, since their settlements are in a worse plight than those of the Tale. They insist on being paid in grain or ground-nuts which they can take home. As they have to be given flour-water (*zɔmkwɔm*) in the middle of the day and a good meal at night besides a calabash of 4 or 5 lb. of grain per day to carry home, they make considerable inroads on grain supplies. At this time of the year only those with grain to spare engage *kpaarip*, later even poorer men do so. It may mean economizing on one's own food at the time, but in this way, say the Tale farmers, one can get a large bush farm hoed or weeded expeditiously, and thus make up the grain expended twice over.

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[3] Early millet is a catch-crop and the Tallensi realize this. Its function is to tide over the period of waiting until the main crops of guinea-corn and late millet are harvested. Hence the necessity for a piece of compound farm if a unit is to be fully independent.

The Tallensi say that early millet normally lasts for two months, and our observations prove this to be the case. When the millet is brought in by the women, the heads are spread out to dry and sorted into two lots, the good heads (*naarsɔmr*) and the bad heads (*naarbiet*). The best of the former are selected for seed, threshed and stored in pots. This is the first task, as it is considered shameful to be without seed at planting time. The bad heads are eaten first, the good millet stored in the granary and eaten later. For a few days there is no restraint. Small children run about all day, nibbling at heads of millet which have been quickly roasted in hot embers. But as soon as the head of the unit of food economy has carried out the thanksgiving sacrifices which permit him, too, to eat of the new crop, he takes control.

Nevertheless, although a shortage of cultivated foods does not 222
necessarily mean starvation, it lowers resistance to disease and 261
saps the energy of the people at the end of the dry season when
they need strength to prepare their farms; thus setting up a
"vicious circle". It is not the shortage of food in itself which is
so arresting, however, as the apathy of the people to the shortage.
Ancestor worship causes them to dwell in the past and to think
insufficiently of the present and the future. This, too, is probably
symptomatic of the unsettled conditions when only the past was
certain. It will take some time for the people, the older people
who control affairs especially, to adjust themselves to the swift
developments going on around them. An unfortunate result is [167
that during the period of adjustment, many of the young men
are attracted away from the district to work for wages in Ashanti 464]
and the Colony, where there is a big demand for unskilled labour
in the mines and in handling the cocoa crop. These young men do
not as a rule stay away from home for long at a time, and usually
return with a little money; but they do not take readily to farming
again, and represent a floating population which is the source of
considerable concern to their elders.

Economic Awakening.

An adequate food supply alone does not appear to be sufficient incentive for the adoption of better farming methods; and it is unlikely that changes will come until farming ceases to be regarded mainly as a custom, and becomes a business. There are many signs of an economic awakening, fostered by such factors as a growing desire of the people for imported commodities, and an increase in money consciousness; the completion of an all-weather road to the South; the opening of a gold mine at Nangodi; the developing trade in all classes of livestock with Ashanti and the Colony; the new trade in groundnuts from Bawku for the Kumasi market; together with the work of Government Departments in the improvement of human health, the health of livestock, and not least, the scope of the recently introduced Native Administrations. These are some of the factors helping to bring about a change which can be met only by better farming. Government must anticipate agricultural expansion to be in a position to control its development. 177

The first problem, obviously, is to ensure a sufficiency of food for everyone in every year. Then, when local requirements have been satisfied, it must be shown how a surplus can be disposed of profitably, to satisfy growing demands. Upon this the Department of Agriculture is working in North Mamprusi, and the results of the last four years' work form the basis of this bulletin. 000

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leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
● [465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a
popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may
farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There
may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or
two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale, Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years, a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agricultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d.* to 1*s.*, a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s.*,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny in any market in 1934-7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity, and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

621 and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a
511 direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which
291 produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its
●[465] own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land;
311 but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the
433 past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the
721 society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ŋmaarəme*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against
682 a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide
577 may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or
682 between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of
471 a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots
it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for
[461] a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed
431 or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*) —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dispossessed
471 without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut'
(*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*solɔm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among
613 the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*)
577 what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
[686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to
471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688
with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471
corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays
there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*walɔg*) such 432
difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471
punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's depen- 688
dants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613
thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471
and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426
now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the
significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782]
act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471
always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426
ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

471 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the
426 process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the
602 household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit
471 of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

621 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is
471 security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage
182 security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of the *tɛŋ* as a community. The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

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[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621
not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471
loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182
the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends. There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity, and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farm- 577
land. It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a ground- 471
nut plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them. And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred
in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167]
twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days. Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621
use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471
is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands 182
of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious. This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of. For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *tɛŋ* at its widest extent, symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure, of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependants, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tɛndaanaship 622

The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico- 793
ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages.

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
778 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect
● 4711 bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

ritual custody of a particular clan or maximal lineage. Such a territorial 778
section is the *tɛŋ* of a particular tɛndaana. He is the master (*daana*) of 779
that locality (*tɛŋ*), exercising ritual jurisdiction over it on behalf of the 793
maximal lineage or clan which has the ritual ownership of it, in virtue of 471
being the head of that unit. He is the mediator between the Earth and the
people whose interests lie in that fraction of its physical surface. When
the concept *tɛŋ* is coupled with a tɛndaana it has a double meaning. It
denotes both a stretch of territory and a place of contact with the mystical
Earth. It may be used to designate a single Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) and
its precincts, a total area of anything from about 20 square yards to an
acre or two; and it can be applied to the whole of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*, which
includes a number of *tɔŋgbana*.

Tɛndaanas' *tɛs* vary greatly in extent. As I have no exact measurements, 471
I can only indicate roughly the range of differences. Small *tɛs* are the 793
rule in the older and more densely settled part of the country. The area
of a clan settlement on Tɛnzugu, for instance, perhaps a square mile altogether,
may be divided amongst three or four tɛndaanas. On the other
hand, at the peripheries tɛndaanas have ritual jurisdiction over large
tracts of land, many square miles in extent. This is largely due to the
absence of permanent settlement in these parts until recently, and the
still relatively scanty population living there.

Tallensi do not think of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* in terms of its size but in 471
terms of its position relatively to the *tɛs* of neighbouring tɛndaanas. 793
Tɛndaanas themselves claim that their *tɛs* have definite boundaries, but 779
when asked to show them they become very uneasy and quote the
maxim 'The boundaries of a *tɛŋ* must not be pointed out (*Tɛŋən tentɔris pu
pa'ana*)'. When my bona fides was, at length, accepted by the Tallensi I
was able to persuade several tɛndaanas to have the boundaries of their *tɛs*
shown to me. My guides were always ill at ease, and apparently felt that
what they were doing verged on sacrilege. Chiefs and elders of clans that
do not have tɛndaanas usually declare that it is impossible for tɛndaanas
to have boundaries (cf. p. 164); for are not neighbouring tɛndaanas
always 'kin' (*mabiis*)—by clanship or by ritual ties? Do they not often
sacrifice together at one another's Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) or go by stealth,
at night, to sacrifice at a neighbouring tɛndaana's Earth shrines? Tɛndaanas
do not deny this. In every group of contiguous maximal lineages,
each presided over by a tɛndaana (as for instance Gbeog, Gbizug, and
Zubiuŋ), the senior tɛndaana (in this instance the Gbizug tɛndaana)
always claims to be the real 'owner' of the aggregate of *tɛs* held by the
group of tɛndaanas. He talks of this aggregate of *tɛs* as if it were one *tɛŋ*
apportioned amongst his junior 'brothers' and himself for the greater
convenience of performing the priestly duties of the tɛndaanaship. They
divide their common spiritual jurisdiction rather than a distinct stretch
of territory; and in principle this rule embraces the whole of Taleland.
For the powers of the Earth are indivisible, the Earth is a unity. When the [782]
Gbizug tɛndaana sacrifices to his supreme *tɔŋgban*—or, as he often
phrases it, his *tɛŋ*—Kpoŋkparəg, he invokes all the important *tɔŋgbana* of
Taleland, up to the limit of the field of politico-ritual relations in which
Gbizug participates, from Duusi in the north-east to Biuŋ in the south.

793 Like the tɛndaanas all the *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, and even beyond Tale-
779 land, are described as 'kin' (*mabiis*) to one another. In principle, *tɛŋ*,
the Earth, cannot be divided up; it is the tɛndaanaship which is distributed.

471 This explains the diversity and lack of precision one finds in the
793 boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs*. Like settlement boundaries they are determined by social rather than physical facts, though here and there conspicuous topographical features may be fixed upon as landmarks from which to take a bearing. Doo *tɛŋ*, the area immediately surrounding and including the supreme *tɔŋgban* Doo of Tɛnzugu, is an example of a
[341] tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* that can easily be distinguished. Homesteads on Doo *tɛŋ*
may not have roofs of thatch (*mopin*) but must have flat roofs (*bɛa*, vb.) of mud. This is a quasi-totemic taboo of this *tɛŋ* (cf. p. 142). Standing on the wall of granite boulders that overlooks this part of Tɛnzugu one can see where the mud roofs end and the thatched roofs begin. I was very reluctantly told about, and later shown, what purported to be the fixed physical boundaries of Doo *tɛŋ* by men of Kpata'ar, the clan which has ritual jurisdiction over it. A ditch, a line of large boulders, a prominent tree, a path, such were the landmarks by which they went. But the striking thing about this boundary was that, almost all the way, it followed the social boundaries between Kpata'ar and Gundaat on the one side, and between Bunkiuk and Samiit on the other. In the closely settled parts of the country, wherever *tɛndaanditib* clans are in occupation of the areas under their ritual jurisdiction, there is a noticeable tendency for the alleged physical boundaries of *tɛs* to coincide with social boundaries between clans or maximal lineages.

621 Settlements like Tongo, where people believed to be of immigrant
471 descent occupy land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans, are
793 instructive. Tongo, like many other Tale settlements, stretches over the ritual territories of several tɛndaanas (cf. p. 169). The alleged boundaries between the *tɛs* of the Gbizug, Soog, and Zubiuŋ tɛndaanas run through Tongo. As the people of Tongo put it, these clans at various times allotted portions of their own land for Tongo people to build and farm on. Physical landmarks are pointed out as indicating these boundaries. But if they are examined it will be seen that they tend to coincide with the social boundaries between sections (*yizugət*) or between segments of sections (*dugət*). (See map at end of book.) Wherever part of a tɛndaana's boundary runs between homesteads of men of the same segment (*dug*), the homesteads (rarely more than one or two) on the wrong side of the boundary have not been sited there for more than a generation. The continual slow shifting about of homestead sites in a settlement through the course of generations is paralleled by a shifting of the boundaries between farm plots; for they pass through alternate phases of being divided up, wholly or in part, among the segments of a nuclear lineage that has reached a phase of fission, and of being reconstituted, wholly or in part, at a later stage of lineage integration. These internal adjustments often result in a spilling over of one section of a clan into what was till then regarded as the area of a neighbouring unit of like sort.

178 We lack historical documents; but we can infer from the contemporary dynamics of Tale social life that the boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* shift

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tεndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tεndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of
Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men
who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg
is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors
was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his
ahəb (maternal uncle), the Soog tεndaana. Similarly, Lebhtiis yidεm of
Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most
of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tεndaanas' *tεŋ* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tεndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tεndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tεndaana.[1] In these cases
the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one
living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as
at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been
carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they
undertook the tεndaanaship themselves.

A tεndaana's *tεŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he
constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in
order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *tεŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build
a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tεndaana of that *tεŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)'
ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed
portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tεndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the
dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead
is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is
fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual
and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tεndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tεndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tεndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tεndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[175] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋg-*
782] *bana*—for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the im-
291 portant *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛn-
daanas. My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and con- 793
siderable moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the
formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations
of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say
gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed
ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.'
The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the state-
ment implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But
this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's
curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term
'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply
a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties,
privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community
with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to
the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The
material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine
or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to
be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major
emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the
earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to 784
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is
sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be
sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and
is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction
between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common
and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a
Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of
their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis
on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship.
And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as
the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises
an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

425 of his own sub-clan. This is the central field of integrated social relations
●471 pivoting on this chiefship. But his ritual status also affects the prosperity
×618 and welfare of Zubiuŋ and Zoo directly and that of the Hill Talis in-
622 directly. In fact, in the last resort, it affects all the clans of Taleland that have a place in the cycle of the Great Festivals. 'The community (*tɛŋ*)
784 cannot be subdivided (*bɔk*)', the Chief of Tongo once told me in explana-
793 tion of the ritual significance of his office. Famine, pestilence, war cannot be dammed and confined to one place. And so if the Chief of Tongo dies the whole country suffers, though his own clan will perhaps suffer most and the remoter zones of his politico-ritual influence least.

182 The bonds between man and land, community and locality that are so fundamental in the structure of Tale society cannot be understood apart from this context of ritual values and moral norms. Difficult as they are to grasp and pin down in exact language, they are as ever present to the native's mind as his sentiment of attachment to his native soil. They cause men who have been away from home for many years to give up splendid farms in Mampurugu or good jobs in Kumasi to return to take up their patrimonial land.

621 511 291 [465] and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

● 471 311 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land; but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 433 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 721 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔyar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this
lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country, recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
[595] agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been 471
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and
economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered
by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and
unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar 794
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as
they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among
the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim
traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it.
The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but
smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the
profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same
lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the
accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system.
Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client
communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations
between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the
Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu
people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since
1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these
matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the
Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of
them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

cultivation. It is felt to be incompatible with clanship ties. Clansmen 604
form a corporate unit, in theory made up of a vastly expanded group
of brothers. In theory, every member of a clan or maximal lineage has 426
an interest in and a potential right to inherit the property of any other member of the clan. Hence if a lineage segment dies out all the land formerly owned by its members passes into the ownership of the next higher lineage of which it forms a segment, and is vested in the head of that lineage. Thus if a man were to lend land for permanent farming to a clansman he would never be able to demand its return. The lender, moreover, would not give the land with that feeling of personal interest in the recipient's welfare and desire for his prosperity that an *ahəb* has towards his sister's son or an *ahəŋ* towards his mother's brother. A matrilateral kinsman gives freely, solely out of consideration for the needs of his kinsman, not because the latter has a right to what he asks for; and the spirit in which the gift is made carries with it the blessings of the giver's ancestors. There is an advantage to the giver in that what is voluntarily given can be taken back without affecting the relationship of the parties, and an advantage to the recipient in that restoring the borrowed land to its owner does not mean a surrender of a right.

I have recorded the ownership of a large number of bush-farms. They 471 ●
fall into three approximately equal groups: those which are said to have
belonged to the lineage from time immemorial; those which it is claimed 425
were bought by an ancestor; and those which, it is said, were obtained by an ancestor by gift from a mother's brother or other matrilateral kinsman. The latter explanation is so common and so stereotyped that it may well be mythical in many cases. But cross-checking and the fact that such gifts are still commonly made show that the claim is true for most cases. I witnessed the whole procedure twice, when two men well known to me obtained gifts of bush-farms from matrilateral kinsmen. Ɔmara, a Zoo man, obtained his from the head of the inner lineage at Zubiuŋ to which his paternal great-grandfather's *ahəb* had belonged; and Səmbura from Ba'ari obtained his from his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage at Tongo. These cases are the more significant in that it has been the practice, for several generations, for Tongo people to get land from their matrilateral kinsmen at Zoo, and for Ba'ari people to resort to their kinsmen at Yaɣazoor for grants of bush-farms.

The procedure is as follows. A man looking for a new bush-farm 604
sees a suitable piece of land which he knows belongs to his true or to a
classificatory mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*). He ascertains that 425
it has not been cultivated for the last ten or fifteen years, which suggests that the owners are not hard pressed for land. He then goes to 'beg' (*soh*) the land from his *ahəb yidɛm*. The land Ɔmara desired belonged to his lineage *ahəb*[1] Dawoog's inner lineage; and partly for this reason,

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[1] i.e. the progenitrix of Ɔmara's medial lineage had been a daughter of Dawoog's inner lineage.

biis—we are the children of one father', when they want to stress recent 613 common ancestry, or '*ti a yaab yɛni biis*—we are the children of one ancestor', whenever they emphasize remote common ancestry. The same contrast is expressed in the appellations *dug* (room) and *yir* (house). Members of lineage V, for example, will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* (members of one room) by contrast with members of lineage W, whom they would describe as *ti yidɛm* (people of our house). Members of X will say 'We, the children of so and so (F.IV.1), are four rooms', but they will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* in contrast to Y, who would be called their *yidɛm*, e.g. at funeral ceremonies. Thus the segments of X or of Y are closer *sunzɔp* than are X and Y, which, again, are closer *sunzɔp* than are the major segments of the maximal lineage. A specially close tie is acknowledged also between lineages of common agnatic ancestry which have a common ancestress. Thus, if F.V.1 had three wives, from whom have sprung, respectively, segments *a*+*b* and *c*, *d*+*e*, and *f*, then the first two segments regard each other as closer *sunzɔp* than either of the other two.

Genealogical distance and the tie of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are most 613 palpable in situations which bring out the structural equilibrium of the 764 set of lineages. When, for instance, a funeral occurs in lineage *g*, contributions of cooked food will be made by the *sunzɔp* as follows: by the head of *h*+*i*, the closest *sunzɔ* segment, on behalf of that segment; by the head of W on behalf of the whole lineage, not by its constituent segments, the contribution being given to its *sunzɔ* V, not to the segment *g*; and by the head of X, if it is the funeral of an elder, on behalf of the whole of X, when the recipient unit is considered to be Y, not *g*. If the other half of the maximal lineage, Major Segment II, sends a contribution, it will be given by the head of the segment on behalf of the whole unit as an obligation owed to the *sunzɔ* segment, the house of F.I.1. Cooked food, beer, and the meat of ceremonially slaughtered animals are distributed according to the same scale of genealogical distance, and the allocation of ritual duties, though less strictly regulated, depends on it, too. Hence any members of W who may be present at the funeral are regarded as representing W, however many segments of W they may individually represent. They are entitled only to those portions of food, beer, and meat which are the due share of W. An identical share can be claimed by members of X who may be present, whether they come from one of its segments or from all; and the same holds for the major segments of the maximal lineage. *Sunzɔt* here implies duties and privileges vested in the lineage as a corporate unit and exercised on its behalf by any representatives of that unit in relation to other units of a like sort.

There are many other institutions and situations in which the tie of 613 *sunzɔt* operates in the same way and receives precise and formal recognition according to the same rules. It operates thus in all corporate actions and in relation to all corporate interests of a lineage. It dictates the manner in which every activity associating people in groups is organized. Hoeing and building teams organize their work broadly along the lines [476] of the lineage structure and distribute the food they receive in reward in accordance with it. In a hunting party lineage *sunzɔp* have the right to

602 The usual range of effective uterine kinship is a good illustration of the correlation between spatial relationships and genealogical relationships in the social space of the individual. The physical range of the individual's social contacts and communication with others is, as we have already noted, a function of his range of social relations, which is determined principally by his genealogical connexions. In the days before the establishment of the British peace, matrilateral, and especially uterine kinship, played a very important part in enabling people to travel outside their normal range of social contacts, and so to build up social relations with members of clans usually inaccessible to their own clansmen. A story will illustrate how this occurred.

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When the Gorogo-Yikpemdaana was a young man of 17 or 18, sometime during the first decade of this century, a food shortage approaching famine, such as periodically swept the country, descended on the Tallensi. He decided to make a journey to Gbimis, in Mampurugu, across the White Volta, in order to barter some livestock for grain. But such a journey was full of peril. A Taləŋ wandering in Mampurugu would be set upon and killed or taken as a slave by any armed Mamprusi who encountered him. So he went, first, to a *soog* at Pwalagu. This man escorted him across the river to another *soog* living in a small village there, and this *soog* conducted him to Gbimis. Under the safe conduct of his Mampuru *saarət* he was able to carry out his project. In later years he often made this trip to Mampurugu to buy things for resale in the small markets of Taleland.

Though people can travel where they will in freedom and security nowadays, it is still usual for anyone having business of a ritual or jural kind with a distant or unfamiliar clan to follow the web of uterine kinship thither. The route is much curtailed, but the principle remains. If Banɔrəg's wife's brother, a Sakpee man, has such business at Bongo, he will probably go to his *saarət* at Zuarungu, stay the night with them, go on next morning to a *soog* at Yaraga, and find out from him or her if they have a *soog* at Bongo with whom he could stay and who will guide him and act as his spokesman with *his* clansmen.

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In the same way uterine kin assist one another in economic matters. A man who loses time in his farming programme through illness will often ask a *soog* from a neighbouring settlement to come and do a day's hoeing for him where he would not ask for such help from a clansman. Again, crops do not ripen at the same time throughout Taleland. There may be an interval of several days or several weeks between the harvest at Sii and the harvest at Datɔk. It is the custom, at harvest time, especially at the time of the early millet harvest after the hungry months, for people living in areas that have a late harvest to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts of grain from relatives living in early harvesting areas. Later, when the early harvesting settlements have exhausted their supplies, people will go to kinsfolk in later harvesting areas to beg for grain to tide them

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over. Such reciprocal gifts pass between kinsmen of all categories. 476 ●
But the giving is specially generous and cordial between *soog* kin. 431

In keeping with the unrestricted range of cognatic kinship among the Tallensi, the close ties of kinship between male *saarət* are extended to 602 their children and sometimes to their grandchildren. With men whose fathers were *saarət*, whether they belong to the same clan or not, the formal ties of kinship are often mellowed by the affection and trust of a friendship like that of their fathers. This is rarer with grandsons of male *saarət*, but not unknown. I have seen a man break down with grief over the death of a clansman who was his father's *soog*'s son. He would have felt no sense of personal loss at all if this extra bond had not existed between him and his dead clansman. Again, there was Tiezien of Kpata'ar's lifelong friendship with his father's *soog*'s son at Zuarungu—a friendship which would not normally have arisen between a Taləŋ and a Gorəŋ living eight miles apart.

A link of uterine kinship is often used to define the relations of 602 individuals who are not themselves directly related by kinship. A typical case that shows how far the classificatory principle can be pressed, if 582 there is a *soog* link in the chain of relationships connecting two people, is the following. Zaawɔmya of Bunkiuk began courting the young widow of a Wakii man. But in the course of making inquiries he discovered that the girl's late husband's father's mother and his own mother had been distant *saarət*. Zaawɔmya concluded, therefore, that the girl's late husband's father would have stood to him in the relationship of an 'older brother' (*bier*), since he would have called the latter's mother his 'mother' (*ma*). Hence the girl's husband would have been his 'son' (*bii*) and the girl herself his 'daughter-in-law' (*sampɔɣa*). 'Well just think of it', he said to me, when he told me the story, 'how can a man marry his daughter-in-law? So I gave it up.' When [578] Mansami, Ɔmara's own father's brother's son ran away with the wife of Ɔmara's father's *soog*'s son at Dkoog, there was a bitter quarrel between them. Ɔmara accused Mansami of disgracing his (Ɔmara's) kinship ties and ordered him either to give up the girl or leave the homestead. Mansami, obstinately insisting that he and the girl's husband were not related, made this the pretext for keeping her and went off to stay with his mother's brother. Such roundabout connexions through a *soog* link are often exploited for ulterior motives. A common trick of fathers who object to a daughter's marrying a particular man is to allege a remote kinship tie of this sort between the girl and her suitor. The latter and his family head may be sceptical of the alleged evidence for this but they can do nothing about it.

342 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces
462 are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers
available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from
three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour
to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All
[476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But
co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment
and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their
services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs
to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the
weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy
rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August
begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man
who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs
every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the
family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes.
With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation.
In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two
or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely
rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its
592 owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant
554 change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from
minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy.
Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have
seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house
itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many
of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the
efficacy of these social ties.

We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the
592 architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations
341 that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same
architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same
basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale
homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The
Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on
to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a
ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and
the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least
one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of
utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men,
women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when
they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning.
Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

593 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan
602 talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or
even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple
579 of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most
● 476 apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institu-
tionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most
764 conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of
[837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's
wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social
571 relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same
quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a
835 consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

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of time reflected in the growing up of children and the aging of parents, bring about changes which materially affect the food economy.

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THE UNIT OF FOOD ECONOMY. Food is produced and consumed by what we shall call the unit of food economy. The following table, derived from the data for the 40 randomly selected compounds mentioned previously, shows the relation between this unit and those we have already described.

	Compounds	*Gateways*	*Units of food economy*	*Households*	*Primary families*	*Productive men*	*Women*
Total .	40	56	58	77	114	107	124
Ratio .		1	1	1·4	2·0	1·9	2·2
							Children
Total .							132
Ratio .							2·4

A unit of food economy thus corresponds, generally, to a single gateway,[1] and comprises more than one household. The man at the head of this unit holds the land from which it derives the major part of its sustenance and organizes the exploitation of this land. The productive men (i.e. those capable of agricultural labour, including boys over 15) jointly cultivate this land; the women and children jointly assist in sowing it and in such duties as scaring birds from the standing crops. At harvest time the men and boys cut the grain, women and girls carry it home in baskets. The head of the unit supervises the sorting of the grain, and is responsible for the selection and preservation of seed. He sees to the storage of the grain—the seed separately and specially carefully, the grain for consumption in the granary. The ground-nut crop is similarly handled by co-operative labour. [476] It is a maxim that those who work together share the products of their labour. This applies not only to joint labour in the fields, but to the division of labour between the sexes and generations. Upon the men falls the most arduous agricultural labour, but the women have equally exacting duties connected with the preparation of food

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[1] The two units of food economy in excess of the number of gateways represent pairs of full brothers who were economically independent of each other, but continued to occupy the same compound for kinship reasons. Four other units of food economy were in process of splitting up at the time the census was taken.

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
221 262 Hoeing and weeding of compound and bush farms in full swing. Some still planting subsidiary crops. Poultry breeding begins.	planting areas come to beg grain.[1] Wild fruits still eaten and hunger prevalent in late-planting areas. Ground-nuts, beginning to ripen, plucked and chewed as snacks.
AUGUST: Late planters harvest early millet. Invited collective labour (*kpaarip*) for hoeing and weeding coming to fore, but hired labour still in evidence.[2] Fresh hibiscus leaves used in soup.	Almost everybody has early millet; hunger appeased for a time.

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241 431 [1] The different settlements harvest at such different times corresponding to their times of planting that more than a month elapses between the beginning of the harvest at one end of Tale-land, and its conclusion at the other end. This gives rise to a system of reciprocities the effect of which is to cancel out the lag to some extent. People from the late-planting settlements visit their relatives in the early-planting settlements as soon as these begin to harvest and receive gifts of early millet from them. Women, especially, go thus to visit their parental homes, and no man would send his daughter or sister away empty-handed. Later, when the early-harvesting settlements begin to reach the end of their early millet stores, the process is reversed. The Tallensi never think of this in terms of economic interchange or reciprocal payments. They insist that *A* gives to *B* freely and without expectation of return because *B* is *A*'s daughter. Later, when *B*'s husband harvests his millet he will send some to *A* freely—because *A* is his father-in-law. It is significant that these mutual ' good turns ' always occur between people of different settlements, not between patrilineal kin of the same settlement.

241 476 [2] Soon after early millet has been brought in, the elders and others who have had a good crop begin to ' invite hoemen ' (*pooh kpaarip*). An elder sends round to all the compounds of his section (a sub-division of a clan settlement) requesting the young men to come out and weed his farms, compound or bush, for him on the following day. As no one would be so ill-mannered or so negligent of a kinsman's duties as to refuse, some 20 or 30 young men turn out next day. The one who issued the invitation recompenses them with two meals, flour-water (*zomkuom*) at noon and a lavish cooked meal at night. Thus commences a round of collective weeding, as every farmer who can afford the 20 or 30 lb. of grain and the meat for feeding them in turn invites his kinsmen and neighbours to come and weed for him. Others have to hire foreign labour to the best of their capacity. The Tallensi account for this institution firstly on the ground that it is only by such a mass attack that the rapidly growing weeds can be kept under, and secondly on the ground that it relieves the strain of unremitting toil in the fields and increases the crops.

Gifts to relatives and feeding collective labour are a considerable strain on a man's granary at this time, though, in the long run, much of it comes back. Reliable informants told us that half of their total crop was expended thus, leaving them short of millet in September.

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
ting grass and timber for roofing, handicraft work. Young men begin to go abroad temporarily.[1]	ported maize, plentiful and cheap at market.
FEBRUARY: As in January.	Grain issued for only one meal a day. Many purchasing grain rather than use up their own supplies. Ground-nuts and cow-peas regular and important supplements to cereal food. Women finding grain to augment supplies, by trading, etc. Market supplies still plentiful, prices average.
MARCH: As in February. Sporadic cleaning of fields and hoeing.	Grain supplies sinking and more carefully rationed. Children and women gleaning ground-nuts to stop hunger. People going to Mampuru and Nabte countries to purchase grain for re-sale. Grain still plentiful in market, also other products, e.g. yams (imported).[2]

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[1] This month of plenitude marks the peak of the food cycle. Soon supplies diminish again; men who are setting up compounds of their own commence building operations; but almost every compound requires some repairs. House-building and thatching are crafts in which a great many men have no skill. They therefore have to invite (*pooh*) neighbours or relatives who have the skill to carry out the repairs for them; and these have to be generously fed in recompense. A new house, again, is built co-operatively with the aid of kinsmen, relatives and friends, who also have to be generously fed. [476 356]

With this further drain on his grain stores, the head of a unit of food economy has to go warily. Hence in spite of the ample and cheap grain available in the market, he begins to reduce the ration of grain he distributes to his dependants. In February the rationing gets stricter, for it is essential to keep a reserve against the first month of the rains 'to strengthen one' against the greater demands upon one's energy made by agricultural labour. They say this explains why those who can afford it buy grain for immediate consumption. Finally, just before the rains, supplies are sinking to the minimum which will be reached in the month preceeding the early millet harvest, with the usual effect of causing visits to neighbouring areas in search of grain to purchase.

The temporary migration of young men is more fully dealt with in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Culture Contact as a Dynamic Process', *Africa*, ix. 1, 1936.

[2] We have, in the above table, emphasized the place of cereals in the cycle because they constitute the staple food of the Tallensi; and as we are concerned with the domestic economy of food, we have referred to the market only in order 443

for firewood. A woman with a small child never omits to cook a little 562
for it, whatever the circumstances. The cooking routine also becomes 264
upset under the stress of seasonal activities. When a whole family 252
goes to work at a bush farm or to a fishing expedition, some groundnuts or dry guinea-corn is taken along to chew, and no cooking will be done until evening.

Each woman is responsible for the provision of meals for her 596
husband and family. In certain situations co-wives co-operate for the 476
common good. Thus when building operations take place, or a man 264
has hired or 'invited' labour the co-wives cook in turn to provide food for the men. On such occasions the owner of the granary allots a special share of grain for the labourers' porridge to the woman whose turn it is to cook for them.

Mutual assistance between co-wives occurs only when a woman is 596
confined or ill. Then her co-wife (a wife of her husband or his 252
brother) cooks for her and her family. The confined woman provides her own produce and firewood and the cooking is done in her kitchen. This is the duty and prerogative of co-wives. Only as a last resort would the husband's mother or sister cook for her in those circumstances. When a young wife shares her mother-in-law's quarters she does all the household tasks; but when she shares those of a senior wife, they assist each other and cook in turn.

The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and 262
soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea-corn or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or cow-peas or rice is used. When root crops are in season they are cooked instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things they spoil your belly'.[1]

The preparation of porridge is very simple. Flour is not preserved 252

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[1] A Tale friend enquired what kind of food he would be given in our country, and when told that he would eat meat, fish, bread, and eggs, he exclaimed, 'What, no porridge? I call that starvation.'

241 inches of soil. Because of the haphazard method of planting, great
care has to be exercised not to damage the young plants. The
work is tedious; and the grain stores at this season of the year are
[461] at their lowest (9); seldom is a man prepared to work for more
than two or three hours at a time, and the maximum area cultivated
in a day is about $\frac{1}{10}$th acre. Hoeing is started near to the compound and works outward; by the time the bush farm is reached
the crops there are almost choked with weeds, and commonly they
receive a set-back in their early stages from which they never
● [476] recover. A farmer fortunate enough to have a good supply of
grain may call his neighbours to assist with hoeing, in exchange
[273] for food and "dam" (Nankani), the local guinea corn beer. Or
farmers may take turn about to work on each others' farms. In
a few cases labour is hired and paid money wages.

On land where early millet is planted it is usual to give three
243 hoeings; two before harvesting early millet, and a final one to
earth-up the late cereal afterwards. Land planted with a single
cereal, guinea corn or late millet, is generally hoed only twice;
or, in the case of some bush farms on the hills, once only.

Harvesting, Methods and Times.

241 Early millet is the first crop to be harvested, at the end of
June or beginning of July, having occupied the ground for about
243 80 days. When mature, this crop is from 5 to 7 feet high; at this
stage the interplanted late cereal is 3 to 4 feet high, and ground-crops are beginning to make a cover. It is common to pluck a
few heads "green" for immediate consumption, but the grain is
allowed to harden before the main harvest. During this period
birds become a serious pest; children spend the day scaring them
and women carry rattles, made from pieces of broken pottery
threaded on to a thin stick.

The heads of millet are cut off at the neck by men using short
knives, and women carry the crop in baskets to the compound to
[242] dry. The best heads are selected for seed; second grade heads
are stored, unthreshed, in a granary (see diagram by Muir and
Williams (4)) and threshed as required for use. Poor heads—
"konkoni" (Nankani)—are boiled, threshed, and stored in pots;
this grain is used for thickening soups. When all the early millet
252 heads have been gathered, women pull up the remains of the plants
and transport them to a flat rock, where they burn them slowly
to obtain the ash, which is carefully collected in pots. The ash

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and
their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate
units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the
ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is
not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead
man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the
Sakpee tendaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own
matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced
that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors,
for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Golibdaana's side; for
the Sakpee tendaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of
which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which
they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these
ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through
which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the
lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor
have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Golibdaana's
maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in
opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up
cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will
not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out
of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when
the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Golibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tenzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been
regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations
of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Boyaraana
of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar*
as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control
of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief
of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia
and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount
Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high
status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[777] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of
Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and
unanimously resent the Golibdaana's presumption. It is notable that
they do not in the least envy the Golibdaana his pecuniary monopoly.
Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as
a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through
the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals.
The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

PLATE 5

[facing p. 112]

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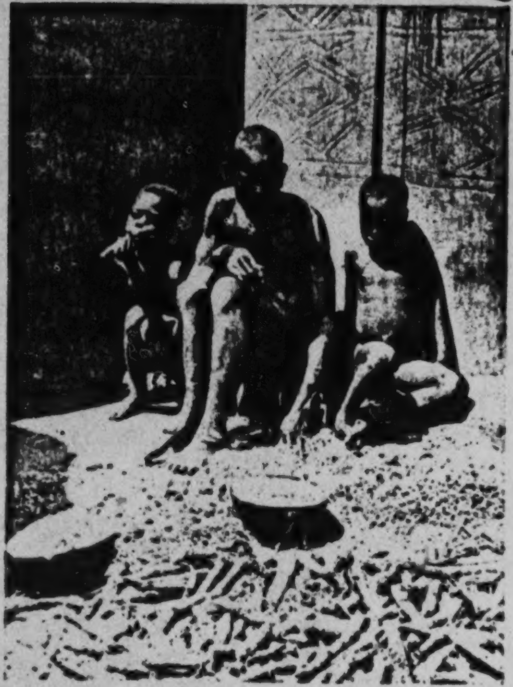

a. A senior wife (*pɔɣakpeem*) in her *dɛndɔŋo* sorting newly harvested millet. With her are one of her daughter's children and the small son of a co-wife

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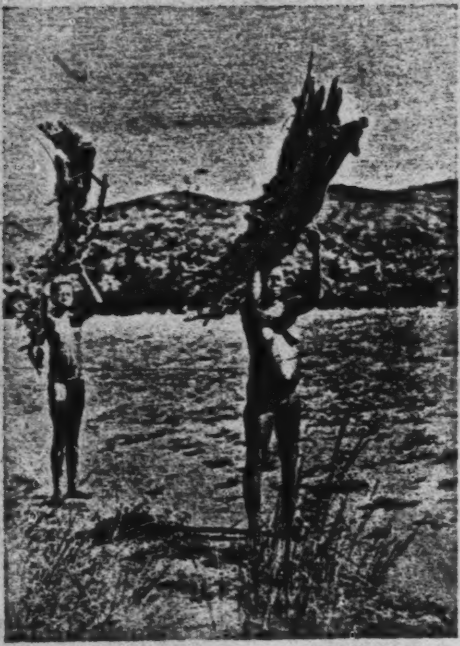
b. Homeward bound from a visit to her father's house, where she has received a gift of some millet and other foodstuffs

PLATE III



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1. Bringing home firewood: Mother and daughter

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2. A woman in her kitchen (posed)

[facing p. 264]

Plate I

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A young nursemaid, amusing herself and the baby with a *Kinkayax* rattle

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Housekeeping Play. One of the girls combines the duty of looking after an infant with her play. Note the small boy in the party, and the 'utensils'

[facing p. 16]

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔγar*, 133
"river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226
river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 796
social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226
clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789]
and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226
expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226
customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203
falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market. Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622]
country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226
day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush. The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [411]
partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out
of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482]
But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

788 defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a
776 grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl.
778 There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the
punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come
down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme
776 Being, does not, as far ~~as I could~~ discover, possess any shrine beyond
778 a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags. The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the
796 first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of
788 Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* had not yet appeared. From then onwards,
until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder
● [484] and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who
I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi, Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived. The former was a really magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely
[777] proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the
Ten'dan' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to
796 attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They
asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets, and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75). We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted. I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

In marked contrast is the average person's ignorance of settlements, 823
even near at hand, with which his clan has no close social bonds or with which he has no personal links of kinship or friendship. Tallensi acquire their knowledge of geography and natural history gradually in childhood, by direct experience. It is already well established by the age of 9 or 10, and grows *pari passu* with the expansion of the child's social space. The basis of this is the child's natal settlement, where, except for occasional visits to kinsfolk elsewhere, it spends its entire childhood. But even adults had little liberty of movement in the past, since they could hardly go unmolested in settlements unrelated to theirs by clanship or political ties or where they had no kinsfolk. Most of the older people have never [484]
been outside Taleland, and many of them have never, or only rarely, visited some of the settlements within an hour's walk of their own.

A Taləŋ inevitably has a profound emotional attachment to his native 186
settlement. It is striking how many Tale emigrants return home eventually after years of absence, casting aside the flesh-pots of Ashanti or the rich fields of Mampurugu. '*Kpala m-mah*—Here it is pleasant', they say, in spite of the penury of existence; for here are your kith and kin, here is the scene of your childhood joys and sorrows, and above all, the abode of your forefathers. The Taləŋ's empirical knowledge of his habitat is the precipitate in his thought and experience of the economic and structural facts that determine the local fixity of his native settlement. His affective attachment to it finds an institutionalized expression and support in the ancestor cult.

Settlement Boundaries

The hub of Taleland is Tongo (see map on p. 15). This ancient 621
settlement, geographically central and politically nodal in the network of interclan relations, provides a very good model of the structure of a typical Tale settlement.

As we know, the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis live in such close spatial 101
and social propinquity with Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and Zoo that these clans are 621
often spoken of collectively as 'the people of Tongo (Tɔŋdɛm)'. For precision, Tongo proper is referred to as Tɔŋ-Nayiri—the Chief's House of Tongo—all over Taleland. Throughout the Mole-Dagbane-speaking region clans which hold a chiefship are thus identified by reference to it. Those which have tɛndaanas are sometimes called Tɛndaaŋ, on the same principle. Thus outsiders distinguish between Sie-Nayiri and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ.

Tɔŋ-Nayiri, Tongo proper, forms an irregular block of homesteads, 101
somewhat less than three square miles in area and is one of the largest 161
settlements in Taleland. It comprised, in 1934, 192 homesteads and a 621
total population of about 2,400.[1] This does not include Tongo people

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[1] Calculations, based on my own census samples and on figures kindly supplied to me by the A.D.C. Zuarungu, show that in Taleland the average number of people of both sexes and all ages occupying a homestead is 12 to 14. Owing to the variation in the constitution of homesteads this figure must be accepted with reserve; but it is sufficient for a rough estimate of population in a country where accurate statistics do not exist.

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal
lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of
small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities
can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in
the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly
prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*,
to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and
to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally
placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services
are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals
sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors.
Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the
client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relationships
than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from 486
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers
of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from
these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards.
And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor,
farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and
Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of
the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims.
Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase
the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Toŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

602 The usual range of effective uterine kinship is a good illustration of the correlation between spatial relationships and genealogical relationships in the social space of the individual. The physical range of the individual's social contacts and communication with others is, as we have already noted, a function of his range of social relations, which is determined principally by his genealogical connexions. In the days before the establishment of the British peace, matrilateral, and especially uterine kinship, played a very important part in enabling people to travel outside their normal range of social contacts, and so to build up social relations with members of clans usually inaccessible to their own clansmen. A story will illustrate how this occurred.

602 574 484 When the Gorogo-Yikpɛmdaana was a young man of 17 or 18, sometime during the first decade of this century, a food shortage approaching famine, such as periodically swept the country, descended on the Tallensi. He decided to make a journey to Gbimis, in Mampurugu, across the White Volta, in order to barter some livestock for grain. But such a journey was full of peril. A Taləŋ wandering in Mampurugu would be set upon and killed or taken as a slave by any armed Mamprusi who encountered him. So he went, first, to a *soog* at Pwalagu. This man escorted him across the river to another *soog* living in a small village there, and this *soog* conducted him to Gbimis. Under the safe conduct of his Mampuru *saarət* he was able to carry out his project. In later years he often made this trip to Mampurugu to buy things for resale in the small markets of Taleland.

Though people can travel where they will in freedom and security nowadays, it is still usual for anyone having business of a ritual or jural kind with a distant or unfamiliar clan to follow the web of uterine kinship thither. The route is much curtailed, but the principle remains. If Banərəg's wife's brother, a Sakpee man, has such business at Bongo, he will probably go to his *saarət* at Zuarungu, stay the night with them, go on next morning to a *soog* at Yaraga, and find out from him or her if they have a *soog* at Bongo with whom he could stay and who will guide him and act as his spokesman with *his* clansmen.

602 476 431 In the same way uterine kin assist one another in economic matters. A man who loses time in his farming programme through illness will often ask a *soog* from a neighbouring settlement to come and do a day's hoeing for him where he would not ask for such help from a clansman. Again, crops do not ripen at the same time throughout Taleland. There may be an interval of several days or several weeks between the harvest at Sii and the harvest at Datok. It is the custom, at harvest time, especially at the time of the early millet harvest after the hungry months, for people living in areas that have a late harvest to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts of grain from relatives living in early harvesting areas. Later, when the early harvesting settlements have exhausted their supplies, people will go to kinsfolk in later harvesting areas to beg for grain to tide them

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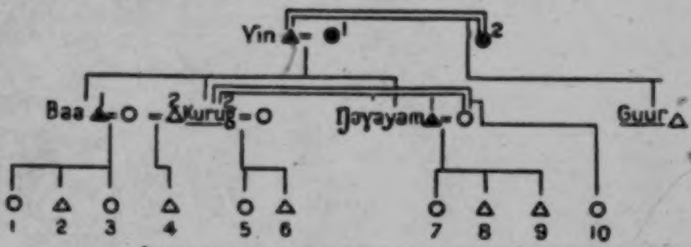
613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody [142] else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the ● [487] rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of [177] some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*) and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayəlis*). But one would have to know [515] the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body- [577] cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious farmer by native standards, a l[illegible]abiding citizen, a loyal member of his section and of the settlement. ([illegible]llowing genealogical chart and map at end of book.)



[*NB: Double lines (=) show marriages*]

[128] *in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed*
Living men △
Living women ○
Dead men ▲
Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Ŋɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

2: Fortes
131, 133, 361, 487, 778, 764, 621

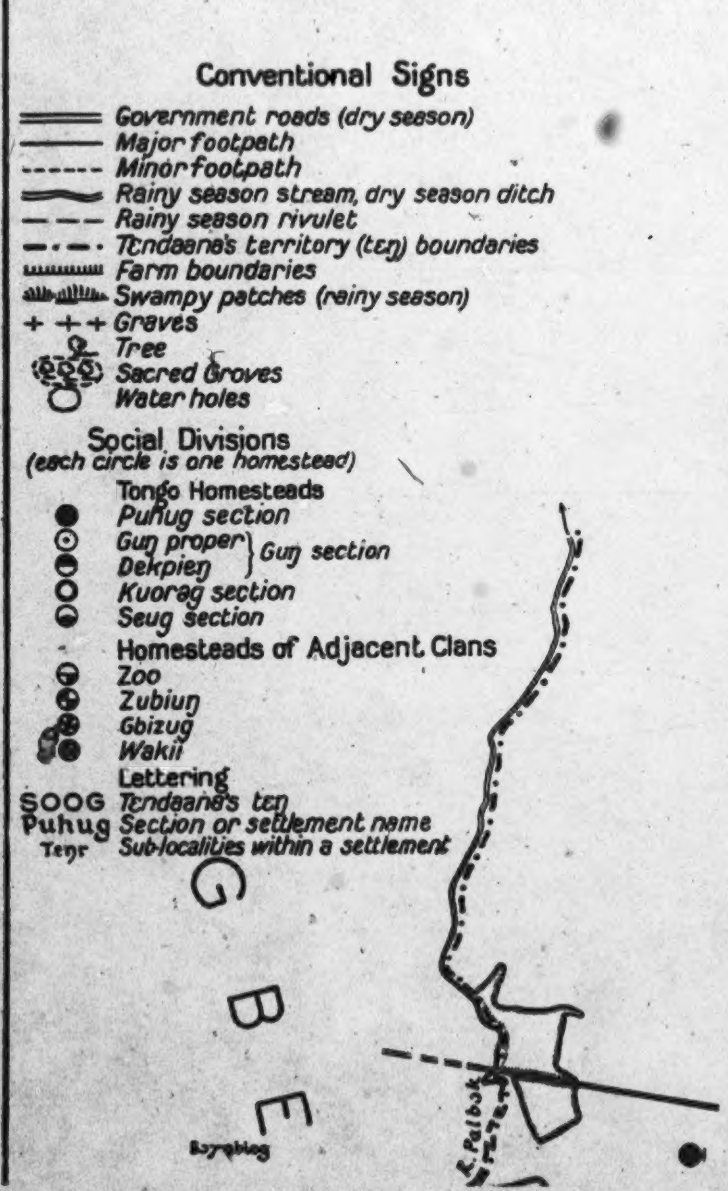
[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

]

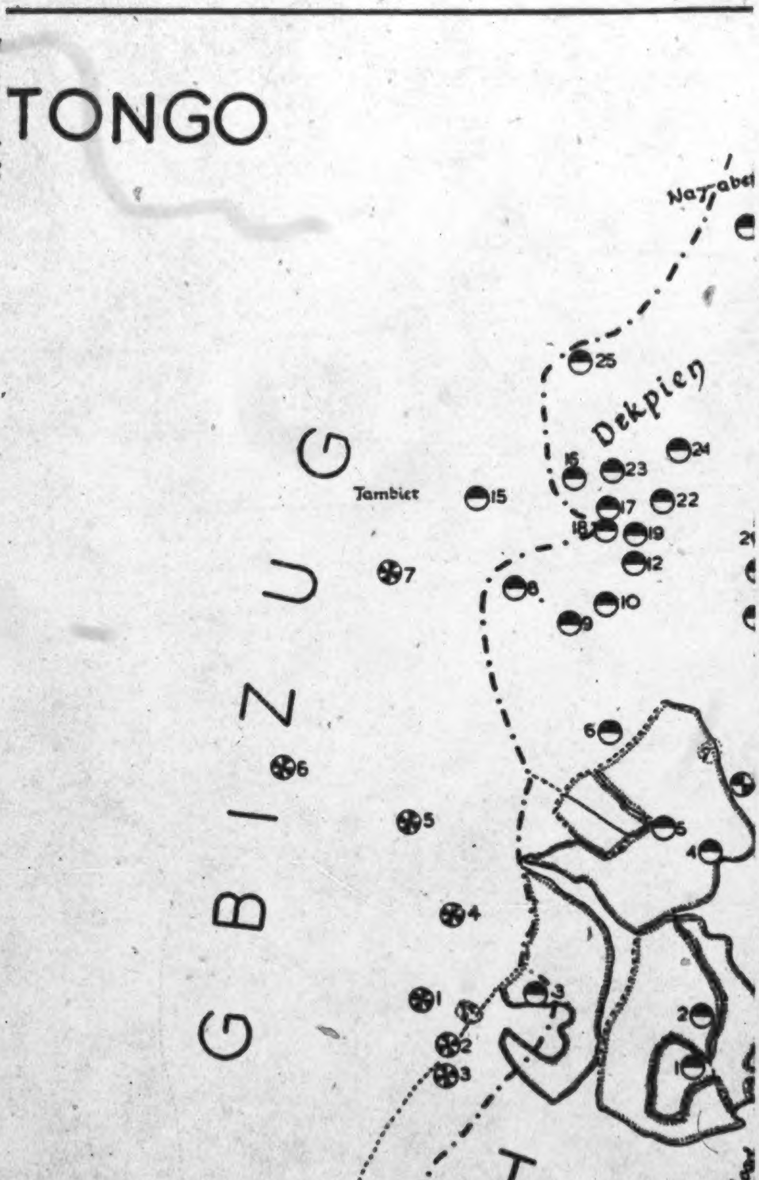
621
487
778
131
764
133
361

MAP OF PART OF TON


Conventional Signs
Government roads (dry season)
Major footpath
Minor footpath
Rainy season stream, dry season ditch
Rainy season rivulet
Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries
Farm boundaries
Swampy patches (rainy season)
Graves
Tree
Sacred Groves
Water holes
Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)
Tongo Homesteads
Puhug section
Guŋ proper
Dekpieŋ
Guŋ section
Kuorag section
Seug section
Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
Zoo
Zubiuŋ
Gbizug
Wakii
Lettering
SOOG Tɛndaana's tɛŋ
Puhug Section or settlement name
Tɛŋr Sub-localities within a settlement
G
B
E
Bɔŋɡbiog
R. Palbok

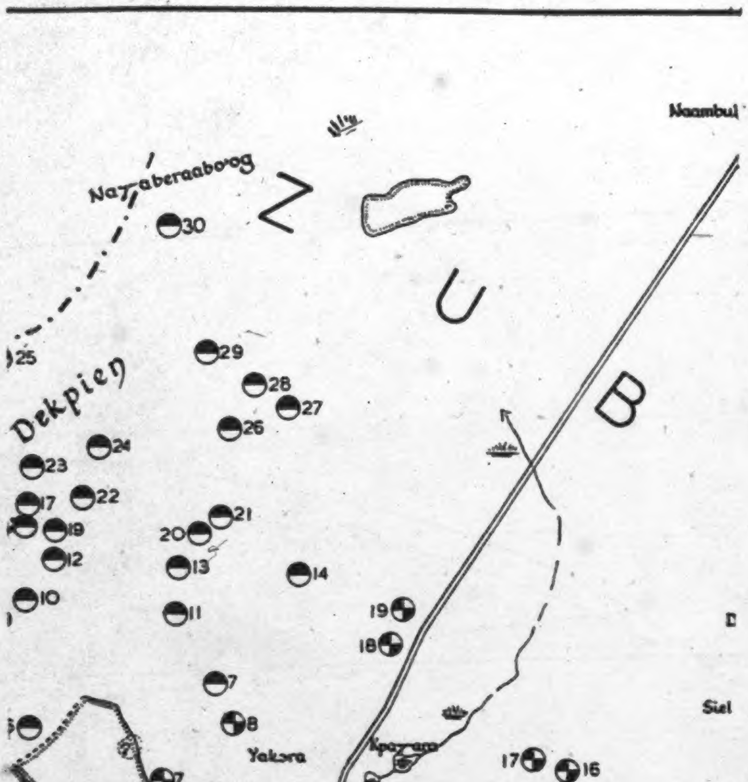
[End-MAP (A)]

621
●487
778
131
764
133
361


TONGO
Na'abet
Dekpien
Tambiet
GBIZUG
TO
Kpankparag
Gorogo Road
Baari Road
25
24
23
22
21
19
17
18
16
15
12
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

[End-MAP (B)]

621
●487
778
131
764
133
361


Naambul
Naɣaberaabo'og
Z
U
B
N
Dekpien
Zubiuŋ
Seug
Yakɔra
Kpaɣara
Leatii
Kpaɣara Yaɣar
Yaparas
Siel
D
Bɑbri Road
Yamɑlɑɑ Road
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
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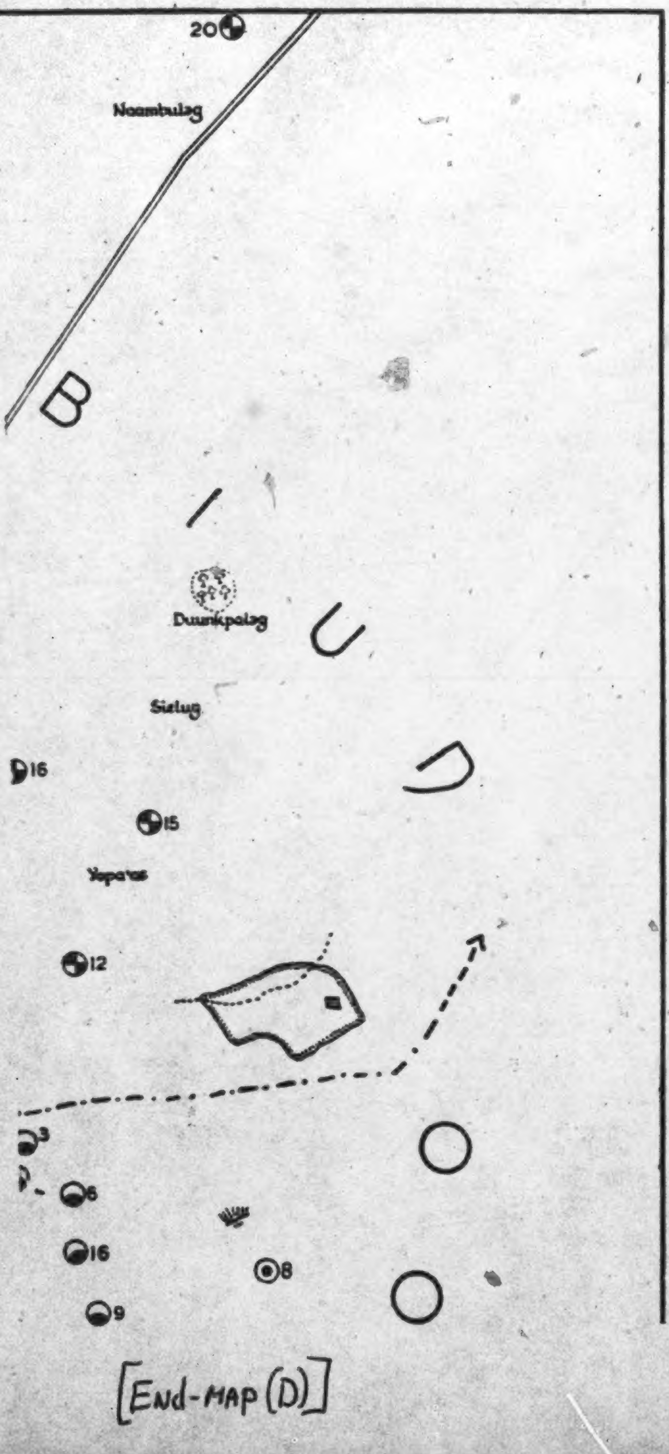
29
30

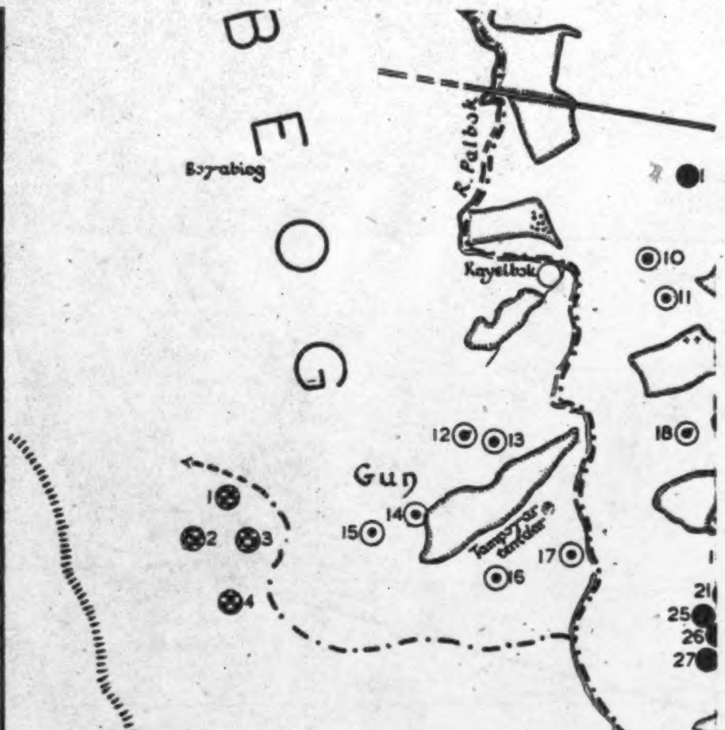
[End-map (C)]

621
●487
778
131
764
133
361


20
Naambulag
B
I
U
D
Duunkpalag
Sialug
16
15
Yapaas
12
3
6
16
8
9

[End-MAP (D)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361

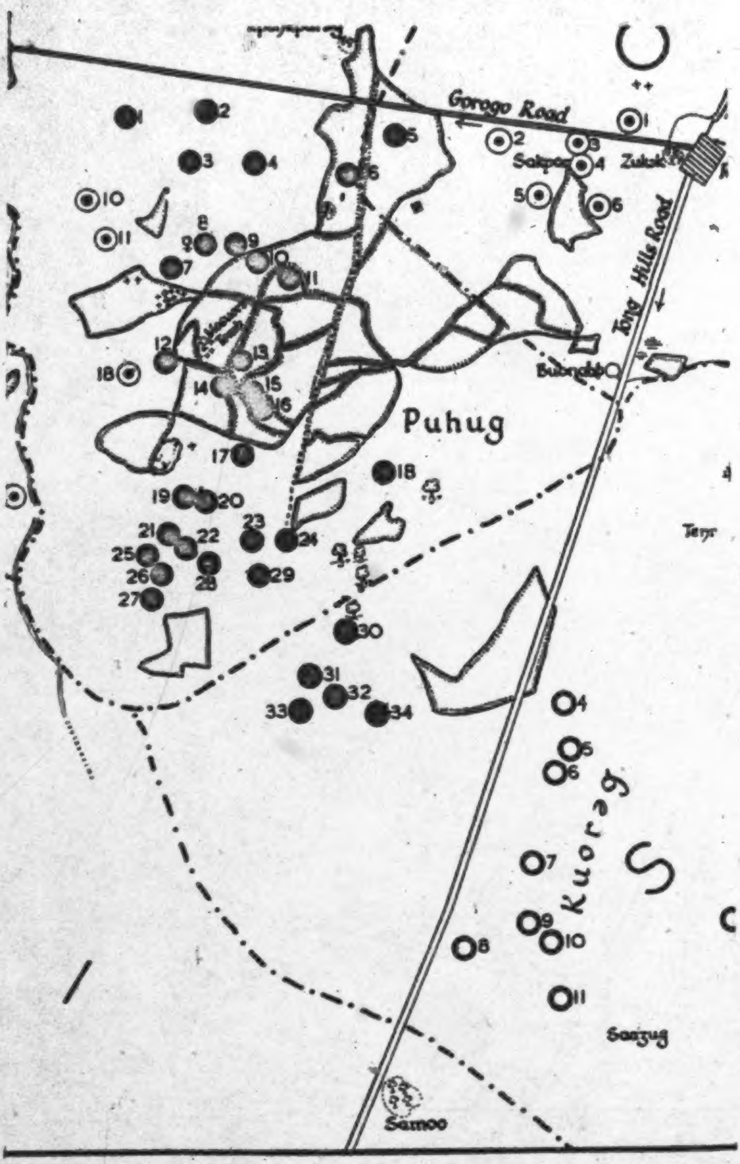

BEOG
Bɔyabiog
R. Palbok
Kayelbok
10
11
12
13
18
Guŋ
1
2
3
4
14
15
16
17
21
25
26
27
Tong Hills
WAKI

S

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Na*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakɔra se

[End-Map(E)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


Gorogo Road
Sakpee
Zuluk
Tong Hills Road
Bubongbb
Puhug
Tenr
Kuorəg
Sanzug
Samoo

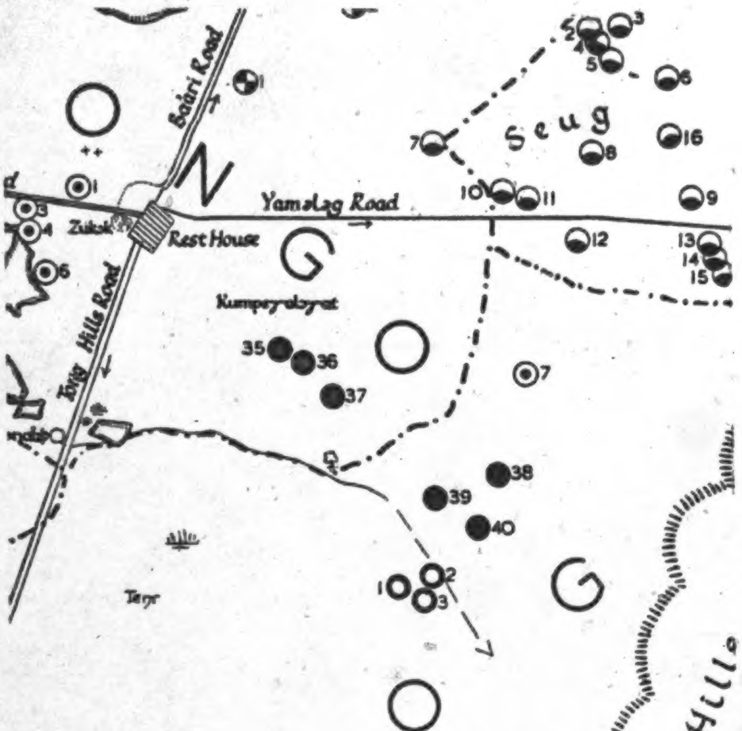
SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Tɔŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social n and Guŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).
d of the Yakɔra section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpayan
few Wal
The
covering

[End-MAP (F)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


Bairi Road
N
Seug
Yamǝlag Road
Rest House
Zuⁱok
Tong Hills Road
Kumpǝyǝlǝyat
Tenr
Tong Hills
Saazug
G
S
1
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
35
36
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38
39
40

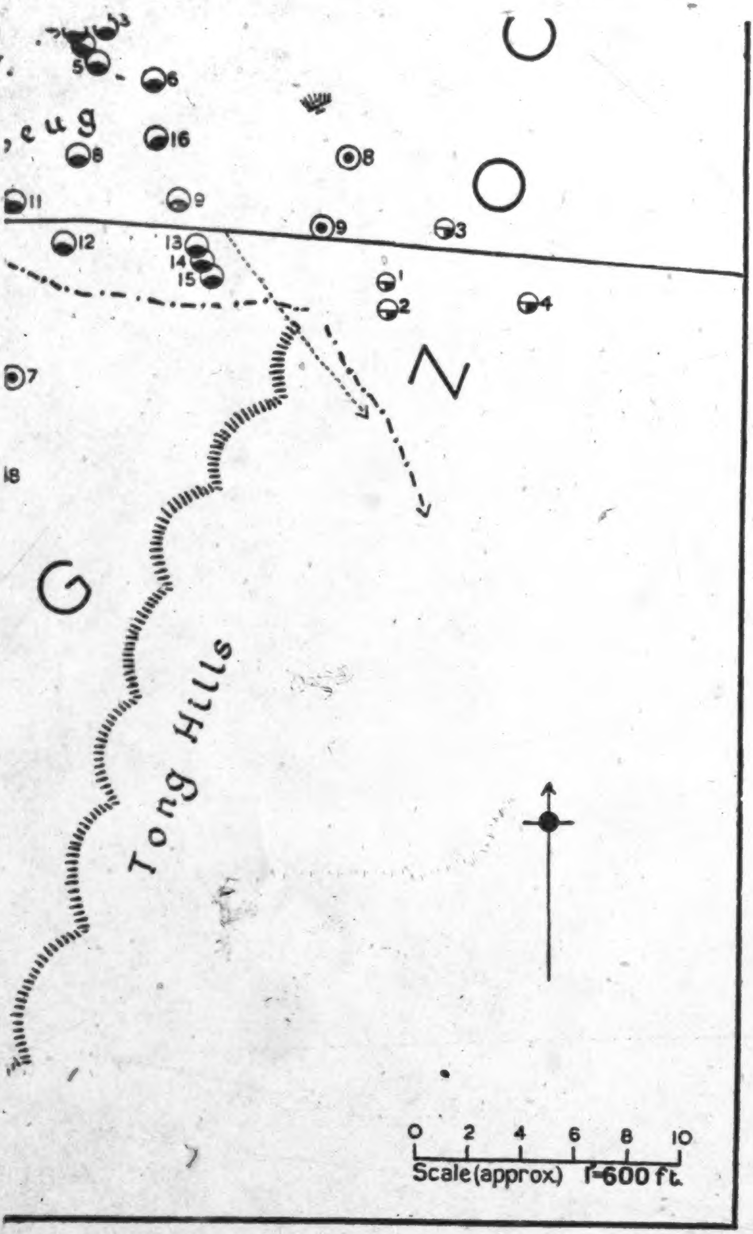
PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

ɜal Kpayara yayar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
en few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
ŋ- covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' gi

[End-MAP (G)]

621
● 487
778
131, e u g
764
133
361


3
5
6
16
8
8
11
9
9
3
12
13
14
15
1
2
4
7
18
Tong Hills
0 2 4 6 8 10
Scale (approx) 1"=600 ft.

NTS

r three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a

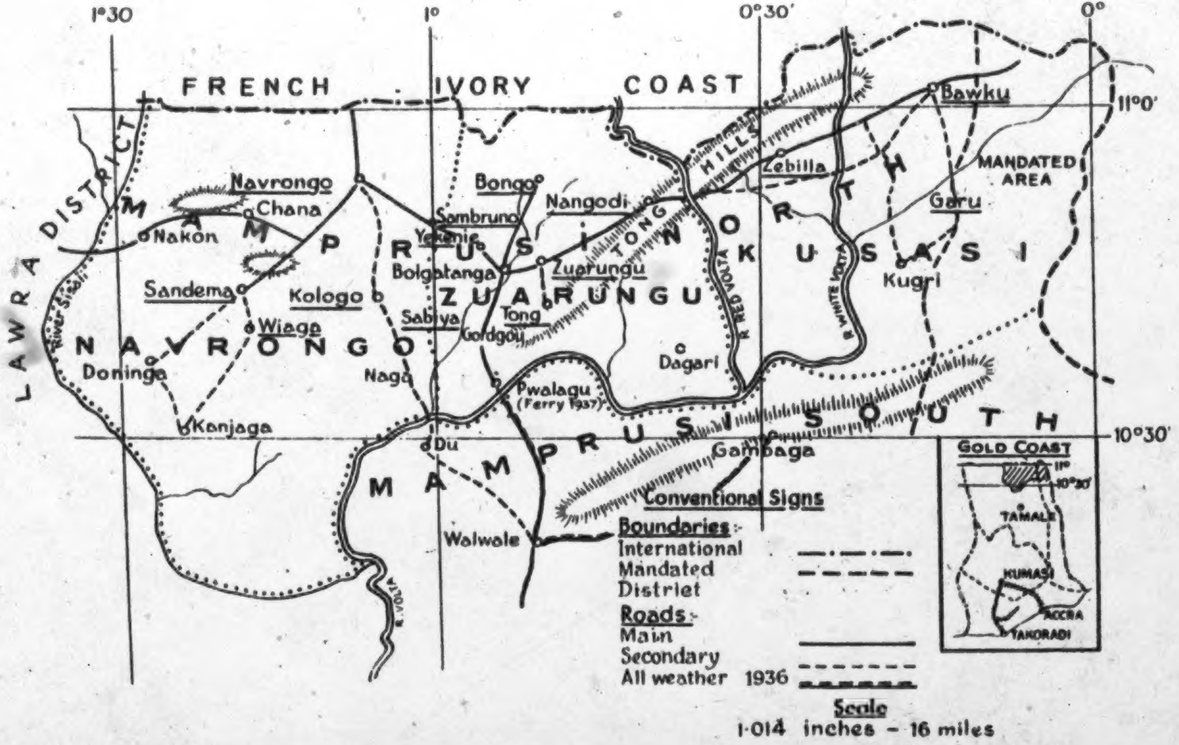
ituation of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid
h· fou·ding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-map (H)]

[P. III

[P. IV is blank]

NORTH MAMPRUSI, GOLD COAST.


1°30
1°
0°30'
0°
11°0'
10°30'
FRENCH IVORY COAST
LAWRA DISTRICT
MAMPRUSI
NORTH
KUSASI
MANDATED AREA
NAVRONGO
ZUARUNGU
TONG HILLS
SOUTH
MAMPRUSI
River Sissili
R. RED VOLTA
R. WHITE VOLTA
R. VOLTA
Navrongo
Chana
Nakon
Sandema
Kologo
Wiaga
Doninga
Kanjaga
Bongo
Sambruno
Yekene
Bolgatanga
Sabiya
Gorogo
Naga
Nangodi
Zuarungu
Tong
Pwalagu (Ferry 1937)
Du
Walwale
Dagari
Zebilla
Bawku
Garu
Kugri
Gambaga
GOLD COAST
11°
10°30'
TAMALE
KUMASI
ACCRA
TAKORADI
Conventional Signs
Boundaries:-
International
Mandated
District
Roads:-
Main
Secondary
All weather 1936
Scale
1·014 inches – 16 miles

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

131
487
133

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
[361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161] periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and densest and most ancient in the middle.

636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts
491 were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuwaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of
161 reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

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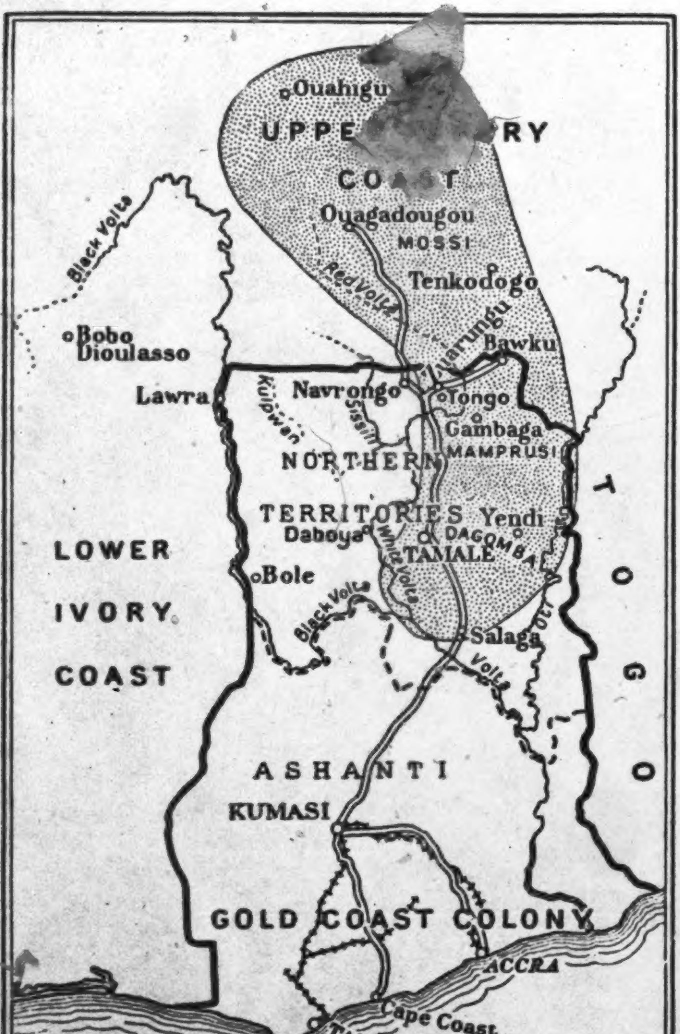
Ouahigu
UPPE RY
COAST
Ouagadougou
MOSSI
Black Volta
Red Volta
Tenkodogo
Nuarungu
Bawku
Bobo Dioulasso
Lawra
Navrongo
Tongo
Kulpawn
Sissili
Gambaga
MAMPRUSI
NORTHERN
TERRITORIES
Yendi
Daboya
White Volta
DAGOMBA
TAMALE
LOWER
IVORY
COAST
Bole
Black Volta
Salaga
Oti
Volta
TOGO
ASHANTI
KUMASI
GOLD COAST COLONY
ACCRA
Cape Coast
TAKORADI
Scale of Miles
0
50
100
150

BOUNDARIES OF THE GOLD COAST
The dotted portion shows the area occupied by Mole-Dagbane speaking peoples

[p. 5]

and the Earth when representatives of the various clans gather to perform 621
one of the great annual ceremonies, as their ritual obligations compel them to, even though they are nowadays divided into two hostile camps. For these are the occasions when the essential unity of Tɛnzugu—a unity in relation to which the six clans rank merely as *yizugət*—can rightly be insisted upon, when frank reproaches verging on warnings of spiritual retribution can be directed against the destroyers of this unity.

Yet in other situations the component maximal lineages of a particular Tɛnzugu clan are referred to as its *yizugət*. Thus, in connexion with their distinct ritual offices in the cult of the External *Bɔγar* or their divergent clanship linkages, the three maximal lineages of Bunkiuk are always described as *yizugət*. For, like the clan in relation to its neighbour clans, the maximal lineage forms a distinct genealogical and residential unity within the clan settlement. Looked at from within, each maximal lineage is a relatively autonomous integral unit, the majority of whose members live close together inside its social boundaries, which are defined in relation to the other lineages of the clan in the same way as those of the clan settlement are defined in relation to neighbouring clans. The difference is one of degree only, the social boundaries of a lineage within a clan being more fluid than those of a clan. The stability of a settlement rests on the equilibrium of its sections with one another, and this depends upon their being precisely differentiated from one another.

The Sections of Tongo

Tongo proper (Təŋ-Nayiri) has four *yizugət*—Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and [491]
Kuorəg. Two roads, laid down some years ago by the Administration, 621
which intersect almost at right angles where the Resthouse stands (see
map at end of book), by chance afford a convenient set of co-ordinates for 101
describing its layout. Puhug occupies most of the south-western quadrant and a corner of the south-eastern quadrant, most of which is Kuorəg. Seug is an irregular block in the north-eastern quadrant. Guŋ is divided: part of it, Guŋ proper, lies across the watercourse to the west of Puhug; but the majority of its members live in the north-western quadrant, in a broad wedge between Zubiuŋ and Gbizug known as Dekpieŋ. A few Guŋ homesteads also lie on the border between Seug and Zoo. Nevertheless, scattered as it is, Guŋ constitutes a single *yizug* in all corporate affairs except those connected with modern administrative demands. In the latter the local criterion prevails, Dekpieŋ having its own headman and the Guŋ homesteads at Seug coming under the supervision of the Seug headman. Members of all four sections live at Zoo and at Gbambee, but they always act with their respective sections in matters of common concern.

The names of these sections are typical of section and settlement names 621
all over the country. Puhug gets its name from an ancient *puhug* or *puəga* 101
(*Tamarindus Indica*) tree, which is said to have stood at the edge of the 137
sacred dancing-ground in the centre of the section from time immemorial. It died long ago, but old men still remember seeing its stump. Guŋ is called after the silk-cotton tree (*Ceiba Pentandra*; Talni, *guŋ*) so common in the country. Trees of all kinds, and especially those as tall as the

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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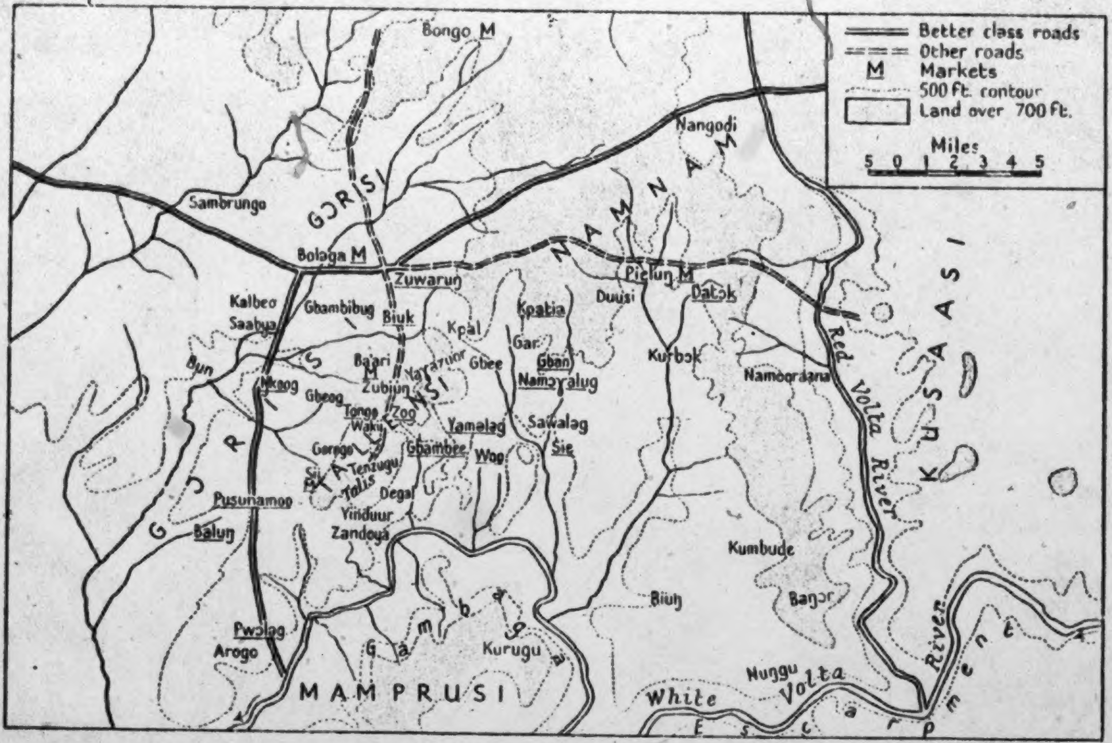
[p 282]



Better class roads
Other roads
M Markets
500 ft. contour
Land over 700 ft.
Miles
5 0 1 2 3 4 5
Bongo M
Sambrungo
GORISI
Bolaga M
Nangodi
NAMNAM
Zuwarun
Pielun M
Datok
Duusi
Kalbeo
Saabua
Gbambibug
Biuk
Kpal
Kpatia
Gar
Gban
Namoyalug
Ba'ari M
Yarazuor
Gbee
Bun
Nkoog
Zubiun
TALENSI
Gbeog
Tongo
Waku
Zoo
Yamalag
Sawalag
Sie
Gorogo
Ghambee
Woo
Tenzugu
Sii
Tolis
Degal
Yinduur
Zandoya
Pusunamoo
Balun
GURISI
Kurbok
Namoo'raana
Red Volta River
KUSASI
Kumbude
Biun
Bagor
Gambaga
Kurugu
Pwalag
Arogo
MAMPRUSI
Nuggu
White Volta River
Escarpment

Isolation.

An important economic feature of the district is its distance from the coast, 500 miles, and from rail head, 350 miles. This means expensive road transport precluding the possibility of all but local exports with the present prices ruling on the world's markets. The isolation is further emphasised by the fact that the main road to the South is not yet all-weather. Motor traffic is cut off from the end of May until the end of November, when the Volta rivers wash away the temporary dry season drifts. 131 491

European Contact.

Contact with Europeans has taken place only comparatively recently, *i.e.*, within about the last forty years, and for some time, soldiers, police, and political officers were the only "white men" known to the people; these were followed by medical and veterinary officers. It was not until 1930 that an agricultural officer visited the district in the growing season, and then only temporarily upon locust control duty. Observations made during this visit are recorded in the Department's Year Book for 1930 (4). In 1932 practically new ground had to be broken, and a natural suspicion, increased by not altogether unfounded rumours of direct taxation, had to be overcome before the people's confidence was obtained. The importance of this confidence for the success of our work requires no stressing. 177

Climate.

The main climatic feature of the district is a well defined rainy season, lasting from the beginning of April until the middle of November, alternating with an intensely dry season. The mean annual rainfall at Zuarungu is 43.92", at Navrongo 47.83", and at Bawku 41.20". Monthly means are given in Appendix I. The whole of North Mamprusi is included in the Sudanese Climatic Zone (5). Rainbearing winds come from the South East, but tornadoes from the East and North East mark the beginning and the end of the rainy season; then precipitations are very localised. From November until February or March the "harmattan" (5) wind blows with varying severity. 132

Vegetation—Trees.

The natural vegetation of North Mamprusi is "tree savannah" (6) with fringing forest along the banks of the larger rivers. In the populated parts of the district only trees of economic value, 137

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances
that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

776 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
272 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in
clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The
tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and
children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping
feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd,
the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in
their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the
dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies
and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the
highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents,
an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each
group.

×618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
● 508 contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[721] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed
during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others
wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung
back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and
see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer
and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée
several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and
men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their
sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but
they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still
exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the
original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations
with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship
or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋgbana*—
782] for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas.
My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanzeʼe*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and
by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-
aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[535] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of
funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
● [511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who
wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the
warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount
over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment
holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary
politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments
that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are
subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and
kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations
between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in
every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though
corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties
to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit
are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very
careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen
who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage
for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might
descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored
grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the
enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would
be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder
or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the
cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have
seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was [462
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights. As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of the wound.

621 and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a
511 direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which
291 produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its
[465] own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is
only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land;
311 but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the
433 past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the
721 society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

146 164 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. [657] The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 515 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake [240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 183 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

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351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every [622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its members.

351 556 231 Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any. [514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls and guinea-fowls.

[361] 342 From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*, and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable possessions, his livestock. [556] Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth, the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that to the Talɔŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which [782] wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers. In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the *zɔŋ*, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber, communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey, for the night.

342 778 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality. It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A
baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. 593
I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its 751
mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking,
to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What
discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period
comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until
it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative [515]
from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is
an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain
water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a
decoction of roots (*ŋaɣ·a*), the generic term for any vegetable products
used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by
the child's spirit guardian (*sɛɣ·ər*). After its bath the mother lays the
child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth,
and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It
splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is
poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected 514
to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt
to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside 863
in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may
happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training
or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a
gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications
with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the
adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the 593
child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There 789
is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have
anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. 826
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of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to
nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of
milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt
to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously
affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her
breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another [183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact 876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?' 868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of 198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules [576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete 514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

751 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top,
778 and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round
with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On
●[515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in
which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr*
(lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway
is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an
769 ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on
the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that
of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a
ba' bugr. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father
and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and
put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive
these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father
receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen*
(Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the
spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed
huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we
343 enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge
[234] of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside
342 this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a
horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog*
(compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other
342 called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The
second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the
778 *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God),
755 a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full
of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons
one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to
one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When
a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the
baa (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

146 164 No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the [657] common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 515 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of [514] flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake [240] the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 183 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

361 much as a quarter of a mile apart. The greater congestion of the older
121 settlements is correlated with greater fragmentation of holdings, due
to the greater length of time they have been continuously occupied.

The population of Taleland, as of the remainder of the trans-Volta
161 plateau, appears to have been increasing steadily in the recent past. In
166 the older settlements it is clearly excessive in relation to the available land
173 and the level of technical skill of the natives. This is the opinion both of Government officials and of the natives themselves. The natives always say that shortage of cultivable land was the main incentive for the migration of young men to the peripheral 'bush' zone in the past; and the men who have come to settle permanently in the peripheral settlements during the last two or three decades always ascribe their move from their natal settlements to the same cause. Labour migration during the past ten or fifteen years has been much influenced by pressure of population on the land in the most congested areas.

161 These economic adaptations of the natives and their general standard of living, as well as the territorial distribution of such clans as Mosuor biis in Taleland, compel the inference that the population has been increasing for some time. But adequate statistics for measuring the present rate of increase in the population, or for establishing its trend in the past, are lacking.[1]

361 There are no clear-cut geographical features regulating the distribution
312 of homesteads in most settlements. The location of water-supplies has
133 no bearing on it, since Tale agriculture relies wholly on rainfall, and
domestic requirements are a secondary consideration, and offer no
difficulties in the wet season. Towards the end of the dry season the
domestic consumption of water is cut to the minimum necessary for
●[515] cooking and drinking. When water is scarce, the average Taləŋ is content
to go unwashed for weeks at a stretch. By the end of the dry season most surface supplies have vanished, and water is usually obtained from shallow pits, artificially deepened and enlarged from time to time by those who use them. These pits are regular water-holes (*buləg*), utilized solely for that purpose throughout the year. A large settlement has several, situated in the dry beds of what are strong streams (*koləg*), or in the depressions (*bo'og*) which become swamps and pools during the rains. A water-hole generally serves the needs of the homesteads within a radius of about a quarter to half a mile. But at times of acute shortage the women and girls may have to go a mile or more to fill their water-pots.

361 Variations in elevation influence the scatter of homesteads to some
133 extent. Inured though they are to the discomforts of their climate, the
Tallensi prefer to build on high ground if possible. Thus, in the older settlements, homesteads tend to cluster closer together where there is a rise in the ground, and to be few and far between where there is a de-

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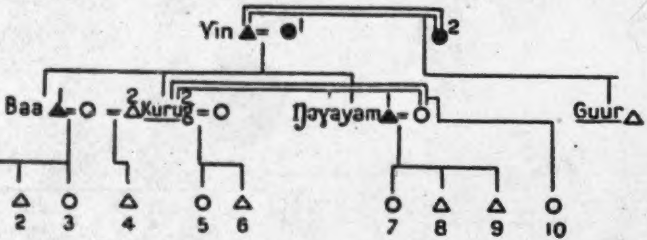
[1] Reliable reproduction rates, either for the Northern Territories as a whole or for Taleland in particular, cannot be calculated from the data given in the abstract of the census of 1931, and there are no other official statistics, published or unpublished, which could be used for this purpose. My own exiguous demographic data suggest that the population of the older Tale settlements is increasing, though not steeply.

613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody
[142] else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a
man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the
[487] rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of
[177] some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*)
and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayəlis*). But one would have to know
● [515] the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb
of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body-
[577] cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious
farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his
section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map
at end of book.)



[*NB: Double lines (=) show marriages*]

[128] *in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed*
Living men △
Living women ○
Dead men ▲
Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Ŋɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

TO complete our ~~analysis of the norms~~ governing the relations of parents and children we must now glance at their development in the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at successive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differentiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the surface. 593 183

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother. 854 593 [751 515]

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has 853 854

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[1] Tallensi distinguish different stages of infancy according to the feeding-habits and level of physical skill reached by the infant. They never count months or years, but a parent is often able to state roughly how many months or years have elapsed since the birth of the child, working it out, most commonly, by reference to harvest and sowing times or to the Great Festivals. A babe in arms is *bilie*; until it is weaned it is described as 'still suckling (*u na mɔɣarme*)'. If it is said to be still suckling but 'eating a little porridge (*u diit saɣabo biel-biel*)' one can infer that it is at least 2. The unweaned infant's stage of development is further specified by stating whether it is crawling (*u bɔɣarme*) or walking (*u kyenme*) or already talking (*u vɔləmrəme*). When the child is weaned it is said to 'have left off milk (*u tuk biisim*)'. Lastly comes the stage, at between 3 and 4 years, when it is said to be old enough to have another immediately following sibling (*u saɣa nyeer marɔga*)—an idea we shall explain in a later chapter. The subject-matter of this chapter is supplemented by my paper, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, cit. supra. [856]

[p. 187]

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

PLATE 9

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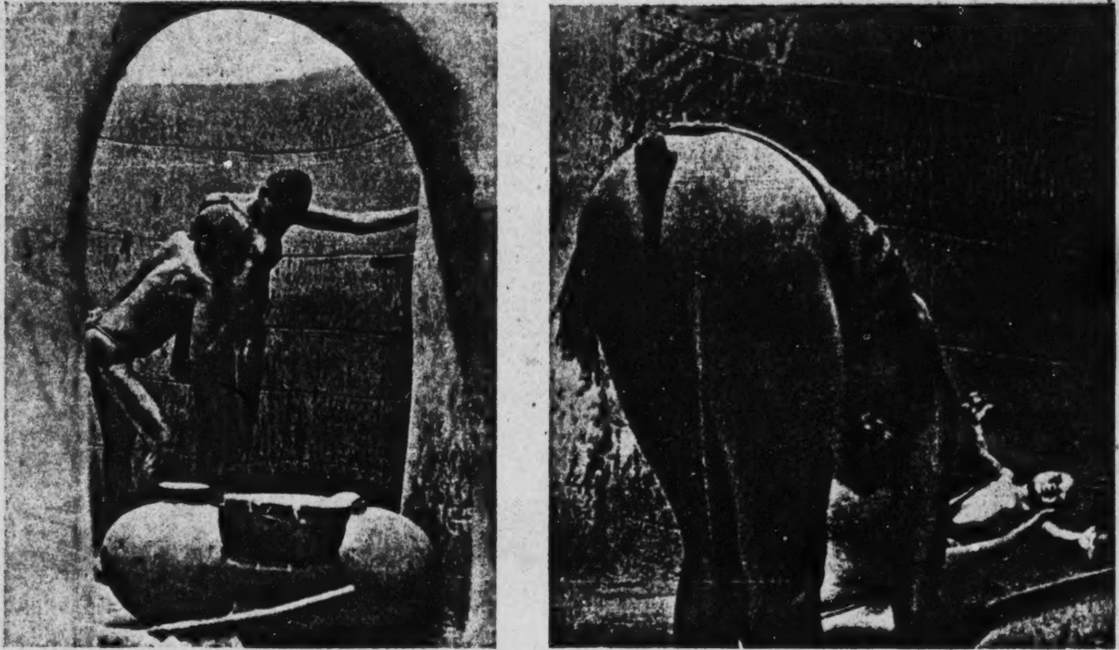

a. The tribulations of motherhood: the daily bath and massage of the mother after childbirth

b. The husband's mother and a co-wife of the new mother give her new-born baby its daily bath. The water is so hot that the baby goes rigid with pain

[facing p. 192]

the time. From a series of menus which we collected over a period 262
of two months (November–January), it would appear that ocro is 252
the favourite soup, while *bet* (*hibiscus sabdariffa*) is the least liked.
Neri-seed[1] soup is rarely cooked for ordinary consumption, but is
prepared on a special occasion such as a visit of an in-law relation.

Though the number of different vegetables planted is few, the 251
women are able to achieve a considerable range of variation by using 262
every part of the plant and by combining them in different ways.
Every woman has a well-stocked larder of dried vegetable-leaves and
fruits which she keeps in pots (e.g. ocro) or onion-shaped receptacles
made of dried guinea-corn leaves (*kiŋkarog*) and suspended from the
rafters to keep them dry (e.g. *bet* or *naŋgena*).

The process of preparation is the same in the main for most soups, 252
and is described in the Appendix. Vegetables and other ingredients 515●
are never washed or cleaned before use: Tale women are very casual
in their cooking hygiene; the cooking-pots are left unwashed from
one meal till the next and the soup dishes always have stale food
adhering to them.[2]

Meat is a very important ingredient in the soup. It is most com- 252
monly consumed in this way, though it is sometimes eaten by itself 262
by men after sacrifices. It is a great delicacy and men will often spend
long hours at a ceremony in order to obtain a morsel of meat or a tiny
piece of the viscera. Any scrap of meat or fat which falls to the ground
is picked up and swallowed raw. But meat is not 'food', they say, as
porridge is, it is *valeg*, i.e. gluttony. While a little of it is strengthening, [253]
too much causes diarrhoea.

The only meat directly killed for cooking is the guinea-fowl. The

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[1] *Neri* (*cucumis melo*) when ripe is buried and covered with guinea-corn stalks and allowed to rot. The seeds are then extracted, dried, and stored for making soups.

[2] The chief reason would seem to be the scarcity of water at certain times of the year, and the labour involved in carrying it, as well as the ingrained indifference of the Tallensi to cleanliness. Yet they take great pleasure in polishing their calabashes at the water-holes to make them yellow and shiny, and treat the new calabashes in a special way to attain the gloss. We have seen women carrying gravel home with them when visiting a neighbouring settlement some 4 miles away because their own clayey soil was not satisfactory for cleaning calabashes. We could not obtain an adequate explanation of this attitude from the women themselves, beyond that 'they like it so'.

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 515 562 834 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit. The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation: the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 578 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

461 322 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE 10

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a. Kinship patterns are not specific in public etiquette or domestic intercourse. An unposed group having a rest in the middle of the day. From left to right: *Kpana Tey*, his daughter-in-law, his grandson, and his youngest child

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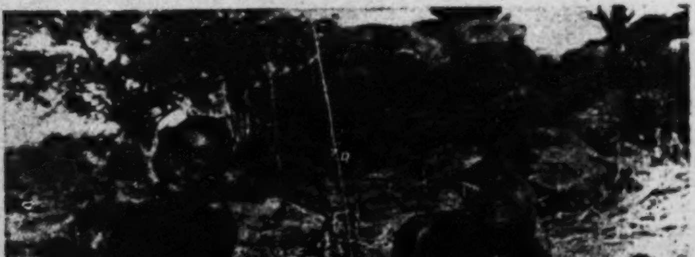

b. A father eating with his youngest son while his oldest son lounges beside them (Hill Talis)

[facing p. 193]

PLATE IV

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3. At Breakfast: Father and Children
(The man is eating with his 'youngest' child)

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4. The host provides a meal for collective labour invited to help build his house

[facing p. 265]

Plate II

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A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

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Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister, brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
● [516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids. A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them. Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them. It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves, bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think, still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

Plate III

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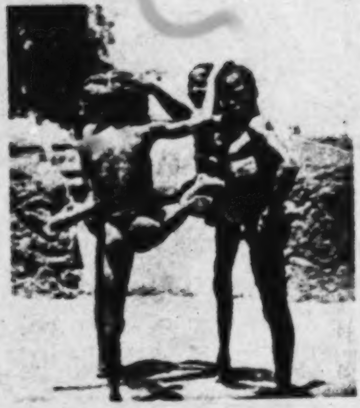

Recreational Play: *Kuobon* (posed)

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A wrestling match—with an eye on the goat lest it wander into the growing crops

[facing p.48]

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential
592 life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this
262 in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential
576 autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to
which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces
574 himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out,
521 informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out *gafarra* ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dɛndɔŋo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart
[584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy. Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

and are taunted for months afterwards by their fellows. But these are 593
not the reasons why children so rarely commit this impropriety. It is
because of the intimacy, the closeness to each other in daily life, of 864
brother and sister. Children do not need to be told that it is wrong to
copulate with a sibling of the same joint family; they know it themselves.
And, in fact, children from the age of 6 or 7 and upwards always say,
with an expression of disgust, that sexual play with one's own siblings
is wrong. Moreover, though they are not taught it as an avoidance, they
are well aware of the conventional attitudes on the subject from listening
to adult conversation.[1]

Incidentally, there are no taboos on conversation on sex matters 521
among the Tallensi. Men, women, and children are all outspoken about 831
sexual matters, though young women are apt to use euphemisms and
to talk more circumspectly than men. Some men also say that it is 593
embarrassing to talk about sexual subjects in front of young wives or
female relatives-in-law. But no native hesitates to discuss these subjects
in the presence of his sister.

These ties of mutual affection and devotion between *soog* siblings 593
last throughout life and are extended to their children too. One sees
this most dramatically in the grief people show, and especially women, 761
over the death of a *soog* sibling. Tallensi say that very often the loss
of a full brother is a greater shock to a woman than the death of her
husband. A husband is replaceable, a full brother not, they add. When
Kpe'emi died his wife fainted and afterwards sat about disconsolately,
weeping at intervals for days. His *soog* sister also fainted, but, the men
said, it had been much more difficult to revive her than her sister-in-law
and she became ill with grief. Seeing the two young women together
one could not doubt that it was the sister who felt the blow worst.

Another vivid demonstration of the strength of this tie between 593
full siblings occurred when Tendaan Teroog performed the succession
ceremony on succeeding to the custody of his maximal lineage *bɔɣar*. 793
A large crowd had gathered, chiefly men—clansmen, and neighbours and
matrilateral kinsmen of Teroog's maximal lineage. Amongst them my

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[1] The psychological undercurrents of these conventional attitudes do not concern us here, but it may be remarked that there is probably a strong and partly overt sexual component in the affective relations of brother and sister. I was struck by this when I once had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of Yamzooya (aged about 11) and his *soog* sister (aged about 8) who were playing together in a corner of the room where I was chatting to their father. The children, who were quite naked, stood embracing each other, the boy with his legs round his sister's, and they twisted and wriggled about as if they were engaged in a mixture of an orgiastic dance and a wrestling-match. They were both in a state of high excitement, panting and giggling and muttering to each other, with obvious sexual pleasure. They seemed to be oblivious of their surroundings. This game went on for about twenty minutes after which they seperated and lolled back as if exhausted. These two children were most attached to each other.

153 laughing and called to me: ' Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

861 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's
153 co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activities in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish[1] for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Talɔŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its co-operation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

153 *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrəme,*
● 524 ' they are playing ') is well defined and clearly recognized by the
[828]

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[1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

1 [A Kind of mud mortar -- Analyst]

[828] 153 ●524 Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 524 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 867 On a morning in June I found Gɔmna, aged about 7, his half-sister Zɔŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

868 857

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[1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

Plate IV

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Building Play. In the background a newly built room. On the right of the group a big boy demonstrating to a small boy. Behind them part of a 'house' they have finished. On the left, girls making the swish and explaining the process to the ethnographer's wife.

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Learning Marksmanship. Note how intently the two smaller boys, who have only recently acquired real bows, are watching the technique of their older companion

[Facing p. 49]

524 scaring birds on the home farm. They sat astride the trailing branch
867 of a baobab tree on the boundary of Gɔmna's father's farm and Zoo's
868 father's farm. They slid down to talk to me, and a bigger lad, Tɔŋ,
857 aged about 10, joined us. Gɔmna had wandered off a few yards and
now came running up with three locusts. He called to his sister and
Zoo. Eagerly they squatted round the locusts. 'These are our cows,'
said Gɔmna, 'let's build a yard for them.' Zoo and the little girl
foraged around and produced a few pieces of decayed bark. The
children, Gɔmna dominant, giving orders and keeping up a running
commentary, set about building a 'cattle-yard' of the pieces of bark.
Tɔŋ, the older boy, also squatted down to help. He and Gɔmna
constructed an irregular rectangle with one side open of the pieces
of bark. Zoo fetched some more pieces of bark which Tɔŋ used to
roof the yard. The little girl stood looking on. Gɔmna carefully
pushed the locusts in, one by one, and declared, 'We must make a
gateway.' Rummaging about, the boys found two pebbles which
they set up as gate-posts, with much argument as to how they ought
to stand. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and Tɔŋ started
putting it up again. The little girl meanwhile had found a pair of
stones and a potsherd and was on her knees, 'grinding grain'.
Suddenly the two small boys dashed off into the growing grain,
shouting to scare the birds. In a minute or two they returned to squat
by the collapsed 'cattle-yard'. They appeared to have forgotten all
about the 'cows', for they were engrossed in a conversation about
'wrestling'. Some one called Tɔŋ, who departed. Zɔŋ, finishing her
'grinding', came up to the boys with the 'flour' on a potsherd and
said, 'Let's sacrifice to our shrine.' Gɔmna said indifferently, 'Let
Zoo do it.' Zoo declared that Gɔmna was senior to him, and an
argument ensued as to who was senior. Eventually Gɔmna asserted,
'I'm the senior.' Zɔŋ meanwhile had put down her 'flour' which
[526] was quite forgotten; for Zoo challenged Gɔmna's assertion. Gɔmna
retorted that he was undoubtedly senior since he could throw Zoo in
wrestling. Zoo denied this, and in a few minutes they were grappling
each other. Gɔmna managed to throw Zoo and rolled over him; but
they stood up in perfectly good temper, panting and proud. Suddenly
with a shout Gɔmna began to scramble up the baobab branch,
followed by Zoo, calling out, 'Let's swing.' For a minute or two

they rocked back and forth on the branch and then descended. Now 524
Gomna remembered his cows. Vehemently he accused his sister of 867
having taken them, and when she denied this challenged her to 868
'swear'. 'All right,' she said placidly. Gomna took a pinch of sand 857
in his left hand and put his right thumb on it. Zoŋ licked her thumb and pressed down with it on Gomna's thumb-nail. He stood still a moment, then suddenly withdrew his thumb. (This is a children's play ordeal.) Gomna examined his sister's thumb and found sand adhering. 'There you are,' he said, rapping her on the head with a crooked finger. The 'cows' were completely forgotten though, for now they turned their attention to me, asking me various questions. After a while Gomna, who had been observing my shoes, said, 'Let's make shoes,' and took a couple of pieces of the decayed bark previously used to build the cattle-yard to make shoes. He and Zoŋ found some grass and old string lying about and tried to tie the pieces of bark to the soles of their feet. Gomna now noticed his 'cows' and picked them up, but he was still trying to make 'shoes'. The 'shoes' refused to hold together so he abandoned them and squatted over his 'cows' for a moment, moving them hither and thither. 'I'm going to let them copulate,' he burst out with a grin, and tried to put one locust on top of another. Looking up, he noticed a flutter of birds' wings. 'Zoŋ,' he cried, jumping to his feet, 'scare the birds!' and he raced into the grain, followed by his companions, shouting and stooping to pick up handfuls of gravel to fling at the birds. For the next five minutes they were engrossed in bird-scaring. The entire episode lasted over half an hour.

The developmental phases of play. Infant play. Up to the age of 6 or 7 524
a good deal of play, especially that of boys, consists in sheer motor 534
exuberance. Small boys run about, leap and prance for the pleasure 857
of it, frequently in a totally unorganized way. But even 3-year-old boys often introduce mimetic themes, spontaneously or in response to suggestions from older children. They 'ride horses', using a long stick as a horse, with a wisp of grass attached as bridle. In the Festival season they love 'playing drums'. Cylindrical tins discarded by our cook and useless as receptacles were in great demand for this purpose. A remnant of goatskin tied over one end with a strip of bark or grass makes a satisfactory diaphragm, and a hooked twig

524 serves as a drumstick. Often an older boy of 8 or 9 manufactures a
534 toy drum for himself or an infant brother. A small discarded calabash
857 is covered with a piece of skin—a remnant of goatskin or the skin of a rat caught by the boy himself and prepared by himself. The skin is cleverly attached to the calabash with strong thorns. Small boys delight in walking round, tapping out a rhythm on a toy drum, sometimes executing a few dance steps. Another instrument they like to copy is the *kolog*, a single-string fiddle. I once saw a boy of about 6 singing to a ' fiddle ' which consisted of a large bow made of a green stick and a thread of grass—the ' fiddle '—and a smaller bow of the same materials—the ' bow '. A bow of the very same sort with a short piece of thick reed as arrow is the 4- to 6-year-old's introduction to the handling of bow and arrow. They very soon develop an accurate aim at a dozen yards or so. Play of this kind is generally very egocentric. I have watched groups of children playing side by side—a boy with a ' drum ' absorbed in his banging, another lying on his back absorbed in fantasy, a couple of little girls playing at housekeeping—all indifferent to one another's activities.

857 The little girl of 3 to 6 plays in much the same way at times; but
868 she is already being drawn into the family play of slightly older children, and, like the small boy with the toy bow, she tends to mimic simpler features of older girls' play when she is playing alone. Hence one often sees a little girl of this age sitting and playing at ' grinding millet '—one stone as metate, a smaller stone as muller, and a handful of sand or a potsherd as the grain.

Play in early childhood. Between the ages of about 6 and 10 the play of both sexes becomes more social and more complex. This is the period when the child is beginning to co-operate in real economic activities, subject to real responsibility, and is acquiring a knowledge of his social space. His or her play reflects these experiences and reflects also the interests and activities characteristic of the stage of maturity just ahead of it. There is, in all Tale children's play, this feature of looking ahead, as it were, experimenting tentatively with what lies just beyond the present psychological horizon.

During this period the younger children, both boys and girls, have charge of the goats, scare the birds from the newly planted fields and the crops, run errands, nurse the infants, and so forth. The boys help

On any day in the dry season or the first half of the rainy season 857
one can find a group of girls playing at housekeeping. Most com- 524
monly they consist of a group of sisters and ortho-cousins—two to 868
four active participants with, perhaps, a couple of infants attached. Often one or two small boys of about 5 or 6 are in their company, sharing in their play or absorbed in their own separate play. In play, as in the simple economic duties, there is as yet no marked sex dichotomy at this age; and small boys are not ridiculed for 'grinding grain' and 'cooking porridge', or small girls for 'building houses' in play. The girls generally constitute a mixed age group, varying from 6 to 10–11 years, for even those who are already capable of real cooking enjoy playing at it. When they are of about equal maturity their play tends to be loosely organized. Each cooks for herself, but they help one another, lending one another 'utensils', 'grain', 'firewood', and exchanging 'dishes of porridge' like co-wives. When one girl is older than the others she tends to take the lead, and the smaller girls assist her on the pattern of daughter helping mother in real cooking. Infants are 'our children'; and reliable informants have told me that small boys are said to be the 'husbands'—but I have never observed boys being addressed thus, though I have watched housekeeping play very frequently. According to my observation, it is merely implied in the manner of distributing the 'cooked porridge', which follows the pattern of family feeding. Older girls sometimes introduce dolls as the 'children'—clay figures of people made by themselves or, more usually, for them by their brothers.

The essentials of the play consist in 'grinding flour', 'cooking sauce' and 'porridge', and 'sharing out' the 'food'. Every feature of the real processes is mimicked, but with the most ingenious imaginative adaptations. A pair of flattish stones or a boulder and a large pebble serve as 'grindstones'. For pots, dishes, calabashes, and ladles various things are used—old sherds chipped into roughly circular pieces the size of a half-crown or crown, fragments of old
calabashes, the husks, whole or bisected, of *mɔləmɔk* or *kaləmpoo*, [824
spherical fruits of common trees varying in size from that of a large 137]
marble to that of a cricket ball, and even old tins or bits of tins, while
some girls make little pots of clay. Pebbles make a fire-place, a thin [177]
piece of millet-stalk is the stirring-stick, some dried grass the firewood.

857 Sometimes a real fire is lit, but usually it is merely imagined. Real
●524 grain is never used in such play—it is too valuable to waste thus, as
868 the children themselves would be the first to insist. A piece of potsherd
pounded up or a handful of sand serves as grain; but a much more realistic effect is sometimes achieved by using dry baobab stamens. These can be 'winnowed' and the 'grain' ground. Green weeds and leaves are vegetables.

The children play with great zest and earnestness, yet never forget that it is but play. As they grind they hum in a low voice a grinding song they have heard from mother or elder sister. They examine the 'flour' to see that it is fine enough, try to get the right proportion of water, stir the 'porridge' thoroughly, 'dish' it out with scrupulous fairness. There is a constant interchange of conversation and commands to the smaller children: 'Bring me that dish', 'Lend me your broom', 'That's my firewood', 'Don't stir so fast', 'Come and fetch your porridge', and so on. As a rule they play together most amicably. I have observed arguments in such groups about who should do some task or another, but never quarrels. There is real co-operation, based on a distribution of tasks in play.

Such play is occasionally associated with a 'house' built of mud
by a brother who often does not share the play, or actually uses the
'house' for his cattle play while his sisters are 'cooking' nearby.
[864] It is said, also, that housekeeping play sometimes branches into sexual
play, little boys and girls pretending to be husband and wife and
trying to copulate. Detailed inquiry shows that this is not common.
[836] The usual method of sexual experimentation at this stage of development follows the pattern of adolescence. Small boys 'woo sweethearts' with little gifts, and sexual experiments occur in connexion with dancing or by chance opportunities.[1]

Girls' housekeeping play ceases with the beginning of pubescence. Not only are they by then already taking a full share in real housekeeping but their interests are turning to youths and marriage. Housekeeping play, in which the child rehearses the interests which it has as yet neither the skill nor the degree of social development to satisfy, and expresses the wishes which pubescence brings near to realization, has served its purpose.

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[1] See my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

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It occurs more sporadically than the girls' play, particularly with older
boys; but as much fantasy and invention go into it. Sometimes, 524
indeed, it seems like an overt day-dream of leisure hours. One boy
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or recreational play ousts it—they wrestle, shoot arrows, gamble with 857
ground-nuts, or at certain seasons pitch bangles and hoops of plaited
reed. Boys of all ages are far less placid than girls.

The 'cattle' play involves constructing a 'house' in which the 857
'gateway' and the 'stable' are prominently indicated and finding 524
something to serve as 'cattle'—sheep and goats never seem to enter. 868
These activities, and moving the cattle about in and out of the 'stable', with murmured remarks in monologue or addressed to a companion, constitutes the play. I have never been able to record this accompanying speech as I have always had to watch cattle play from a distance. Boys say that it is 'about bulls and cows'.

'Cattle' play has more of pure fantasy and less reproduction of real activities than 'housekeeping' play. Sometimes the 'house' and 'stable' are built of mud—a circular 'wall', 9 or 10 inches in diameter and 2 inches high, with a space left for the 'gateway', and a smaller circle of mud adjoining it as the 'stable'—to last for a whole dry season. Often it is constructed *ad hoc*—two circles drawn in the sand or made of heaped-up sand may be enough. A great variety of objects serve as 'cattle'. Boys who like modelling may make clay figures of cows and bulls for their play; bits of sticks, leaves of a common shrub which can be opened so as to stand up on their edges, pebbles, and other things are used. Yet despite the meagre materials and the paucity of mimetic content the play fascinates boys from the age of 5 or 6, when they are still too young to go out with the herds, to about 12, when they may be full-blown herd-boys. Even if their families have no cattle and they have never followed a herd regularly, they play at it. The interest and identification are active nevertheless.

At this stage, too, domestic ritual begins to be reflected in the play 857
of boys. A boy's or girl's schema of ritual and religious ideology at 524
the age of 9 or 10 includes the main structural principles of the system. 869
As his knowledge has been acquired by attending at sacrifices, he
knows most about the ritual acts and conventional formulas connected

857 with sacrifice and least about the beliefs and theories. He is familiar
524 with all the concepts of Tale religion and magic but cannot assign
869 them accurately to their relevant contexts. He knows that ancestor spirits and medicines are different, and can even describe some of the latter by their functions, but cannot elucidate these differences. He knows also and believes that health, prosperity and success depend on mystical agencies, that sickness, death, and misfortune are caused by them, and that sacrifices must be made to placate them or to expiate offences. He has heard talk of all this and seen consultations of diviners. As an infant, perhaps, he has been called by his mother to get off a partition wall 'lest the spirits push you off', or has seen food put out 'for the spirits' during the ritual festivals. He knows what different types of shrines look like and what are their appurtenances. But it is surface knowledge, confused in details and full of gaps.

857 Ritual is men's business, though women are well versed in it.
524 Hence it emerges mostly in the play of boys and not of girls. Signifi-
869 cantly, it is permitted till pubescence, that is, as long as a boy is not likely to take a responsible part in real ritual. After that he is liable to
781 have to accept an ancestor spirit demanding real sacrifices and may no
788 longer play at it. At 13 or 14 years of age, when a boy's ritual schemas approximate those of an adult, he fully understands and acquiesces in this prohibition. It suggests, however, that playing at ritual has a different value for children than actual ritual has for adults. Children share the adults' interest in ritual and accept its prescriptions, but not the adults' emotional relationship to ritual. In their play they express this interest and their identifications, rehearse their knowledge, and integrate it with the rest of their educational achievements.

857 Small boys build shrines a few inches high for themselves in a corner
524 of the cattle-yard. They take great pains to achieve verisimilitude and
869 neatness, and their inventiveness is remarkable. *Kalmpoo* husks are turned into medicine-pots; fragments of calabash or potsherd represent the hoe-blade which is essential to many ancestor shrines; a pronged twig is a shrine's 'tree'; the tail of a stillborn kid or lamb, tied with string and feathers in the same way as adults do, is a shrine's 'tail', another object commonly dedicated to real shrines. There are 'roots' —of grass—as in adult medicine-pots, and other appurtenances.

Whenever they build miniature houses, during the building season, 857
'shrines' are added and, as in real life, each has his own. 524

Play with these shrines is woven into other play activities, and it 869
revolves around sacrifice. When a small boy goes out hunting for fieldmice or birds, if he happens to have a 'shrine' he will 'give it water', i.e. pour a libation to it. Ashes represent flour, which is stirred up in water as in a real sacrifice. He invokes the shrine, 'My father' (but never mentioning names as in real sacrifice since his own father is probably still alive), 'accept this water and grant that I have successful hunting. If I kill an animal, I will give you a dog.' Some time later he may catch a live mouse, and when he has played with it to satiety he 'sacrifices' it on his shrine—this is the promised 'dog'. A nestling bird found alive is 'sacrificed' as a 'fowl' or 'guinea-fowl'. If he finds a live mouse or bird by chance it will always be taken home and 'sacrificed' thus before it is cut up and eaten. Taboos like those of adults are invented for his shrines. Fetishes, like those of adults, accept only red and black 'fowls'; other shrines
only white ones. Siikaoni, a small boy of about 7 or 8, built him- [778
self a *loo* fetish, which can be dispatched to 'tie up' any one 789]
who might interfere with one's enterprises. Siikaoni pretended to use his *loo* to keep the parents of his 'sweetheart' out of the way when he went to see her—a frequent use of a real *loo* by young men.

Of the imaginative and constructive play produced as a response 857
to current social activities in which children co-operate, I shall 524
instance only building. During the building season a favourite pre- 868
occupation of the children is to build miniature rooms or houses. It is a co-operative group enterprise, boys and girls frequently working together, led by a boy of about 12–13. It is carried on in the intervals between helping the men. Sometimes they are content to build only walls, a few inches high, but when the leader is keen they undertake a complete replica of a house—walls a foot or more high, several rooms properly arranged, a roof, a beaten inner court, and shrines. The work goes on for days on end and needs planning and organization. The girls and smaller boys make the swish and roll it into pellets, the older boys do the actual building, often with extraordinary skill. When the 'house' is built and roofed and the walls have dried, if the

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524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers
with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
301 ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
283 and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses.
Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls
524 sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such
delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

12–13) about when the lad was helping with the housebuilding and 861
even scold him if he bungled a task. This was legitimate technical 593
instruction. But he declared emphatically that he dare not strike the boy, *ɔn ndɔyam la zugu.* From the authority of parent over child is derived that of elder sibling over younger. It is equally absolute. A youth or girl has no hesitation in restraining or correcting a younger sibling with a cuff which often sends the latter off howling at the top of his voice. The authority of seniors in general over juniors is accepted by custom (e.g., among herdboys), though not so absolutely and unquestioningly. It is often maintained by force, or in virtue of superior skill. It is intelligible, therefore, why the Tallensi usually say *ti banam yɛl nla*, 'our forefathers' matter is this' when they are asked to account for an observance, and why their children say, *bumkɔra la yɛl ti la ŋwala*, 'the grown-ups have told us so'.

Just as all Tallensi, children or adults, recognize the force of 867
authority, even though they sometimes flout it, so they accept the 857
principle of equal rights for equals. One can see this, not only in standardized patterns of behaviour, but, e.g., in the spontaneity with which children share things and activities. When a small boy snares a bird or kills a mouse or lizard he will always share his catch with friends or siblings, apportioning it according to sex and age. A [526]
favourite pastime of boys of all ages, from 5 upwards, is wrestling. Sometimes bigger youths stand by to supervise, but always scrupulous fairness is insisted upon, and thus instilled. It is as correct and even praiseworthy to demand what one is entitled to as it is reprehensible to take what one has no right to. A nice illustration, showing incidentally how such principles are sometimes taught, came to my notice during an evening ceremony which had been unduly dragged out. A dozen or more small boys aged from 5 upwards had gathered at the ceremony to wait for a share of the feast which would follow the religious rites. The food was sent out and distributed by an adult, one or two boys of equal size to a dish. Suddenly an elder called out, 'Where is Zuur?' (a small boy of about 5) and rose to look for him. Zuur lay fast asleep in a corner. The old man shook the child roughly to awaken him, and dragged him towards a dish of food upbraiding him, 'Where do you think you will find food after it has all been eaten? You can't control yourself at all.' Zuur, still

Plate III

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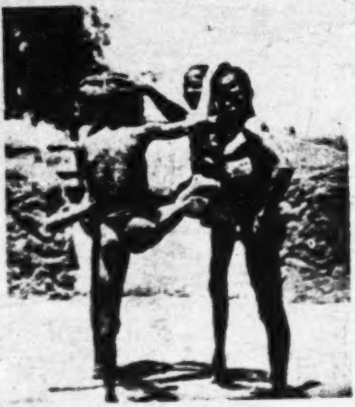

Recreational Play: *Kwobon* (posed)

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A wrestling match—with an eye on the goat lest it wander into the growing crops

[facing p.48]

524 scaring birds on the home farm. They sat astride the trailing branch
867 of a baobab tree on the boundary of Gəmna's father's farm and Zoo's
868 father's farm. They slid down to talk to me, and a bigger lad, Təŋ,
aged about 10, joined us. Gəmna had wandered off a few yards and
857 now came running up with three locusts. He called to his sister and
Zoo. Eagerly they squatted round the locusts. 'These are our cows,'
said Gəmna, 'let's build a yard for them.' Zoo and the little girl
foraged around and produced a few pieces of decayed bark. The
children, Gəmna dominant, giving orders and keeping up a running
commentary, set about building a 'cattle-yard' of the pieces of bark.
Təŋ, the older boy, also squatted down to help. He and Gəmna
constructed an irregular rectangle with one side open of the pieces
of bark. Zoo fetched some more pieces of bark which Təŋ used to
roof the yard. The little girl stood looking on. Gəmna carefully
pushed the locusts in, one by one, and declared, 'We must make a
gateway.' Rummaging about, the boys found two pebbles which
they set up as gate-posts, with much argument as to how they ought
to stand. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and Təŋ started
putting it up again. The little girl meanwhile had found a pair of
stones and a potsherd and was on her knees, 'grinding grain'.
Suddenly the two small boys dashed off into the growing grain,
shouting to scare the birds. In a minute or two they returned to squat
by the collapsed 'cattle-yard'. They appeared to have forgotten all
about the 'cows', for they were engrossed in a conversation about
'wrestling'. Some one called Təŋ, who departed. Zəŋ, finishing her
'grinding', came up to the boys with the 'flour' on a potsherd and
said, 'Let's sacrifice to our shrine.' Gəmna said indifferently, 'Let
Zoo do it.' Zoo declared that Gəmna was senior to him, and an
argument ensued as to who was senior. Eventually Gəmna asserted,
'I'm the senior.' Zəŋ meanwhile had put down her 'flour' which
[526] was quite forgotten; for Zoo challenged Gəmna's assertion. Gəmna
retorted that he was undoubtedly senior since he could throw Zoo in
wrestling. Zoo denied this, and in a few minutes they were grappling
each other. Gəmna managed to throw Zoo and rolled over him; but
they stood up in perfectly good temper, panting and proud. Suddenly
with a shout Gəmna began to scramble up the baobab branch,
followed by Zoo, calling out, 'Let's swing.' For a minute or two

in sacrifices to domestic shrines; the girls assist in household tasks 857
such as sweeping and carrying water. Towards the end of this period 868
boys whose fathers own cattle go out with the cattle-herds and girls
are beginning to help in the preparation of food. A 10-year-old girl
can prepare the majority of usual dishes. At the age of 6 or 7 brothers
and sisters often play together; at 9 or 10 the sexual dichotomy has
become firmly established.[1]

At this stage the play of infancy develops in three directions. The 857
sporadic motor exuberance is transformed into recreational play—
organized group games and dances; the rudimentary mimetic play
becomes elaborate and protracted imaginative and constructive play;
and the rude toy-making of infancy grows into children's arts and
crafts.

Tale children have a great many organized games, passed on from one generation of children to the next by drawing younger ones into the games played by those who already know them. The games are traditional, and often built round themes derived from the cultural idiom—farming, hunting, marriage, chiefs, &c. But their value is predominantly recreational. Children play them for the pleasure of collective singing, rhythmical physical activity, and sensory and bodily stimulation. The ordinary dances of moonlight nights in which both adults and children participate are regarded as 'play' of this kind.

Kuobon is a game of this sort. Both boys and girls from 7–8 to 857
about 15 years play it on moonlight nights in single-sex groups. A 526
group of about the same size forms a ring, clasping each other and
standing on one leg. The other leg is extended towards the centre of
the ring, and the children arrange themselves so that their extended
legs cross one another. The group then commences to revolve, sing-
ing as they go round and round, *kuobon, yee-e-e la ŋaah*, 'fruits of
farming, yee, how nice'. The game goes on until they are tired and
the extended legs begin to drop. It breaks up with much laughter,
only to start again after a rest. Similar games are played by boys 857
only and others by girls only; but for both sexes dancing is the 535
supreme recreation. In both the mixed dances and the single-sex

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[1] Nevertheless, this sexual dichotomy is not so absolute as to prohibit a girl or a woman from stepping into a breach if there is no male available for a man's task; and men often undertake women's work in an emergency. [462]

857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
● 526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

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boys; but as much fantasy and invention go into it. Sometimes, 524
indeed, it seems like an overt day-dream of leisure hours. One boy
alone, or two, usually play. When the group is bigger more boisterous 526
or recreational play ousts it—they wrestle, shoot arrows, gamble with 857
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As his knowledge has been acquired by attending at sacrifices, he
knows most about the ritual acts and conventional formulas connected

XXXVI

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Ceremonies in Connexion with Sowing and Harvest. The Talense Calendar

527 THERE appear to be at least three great festivals which are held by the Talense in connexion with the crops and harvest. These are:

- (*a*) *Gologo*, held in the month of February by the whole of the Talense.
- *b*) *Bugram Waa* (lit. the *Bugram* dance) held in October by the following towns: Sia, Winduri, Gorogo, Wakyi, Teŋ'zugu, and Gbeo.
- (*c*) *Da koom*, *Da meŋ* or simply *Waa*, (the dance) held by Bade and Tɔngo, in the months of August and September.

[171] Among the Nankanse we have seen that the October festival is called *Tingana* (the Groves), or simply *Waa* (the Dance), a festival which is held by Winkoŋo, Orogo, Kologo, and Na, in rotation.

(*a*) *The Gologo Ceremony*: It was my intention to have attended this ceremony in person; hence I omitted to obtain a full description of it. I am informed, however, that during the time when the festival is being held 'every one is permitted to abuse his neighbour and even to laugh at any physical deformity, and that no one is allowed to quarrel'. [171] All this seems most reminiscent of the *Apo* ceremony, which has been described in another volume.[1] Circumstances, however, prevented me ever carrying out my intention, and a full description of this ceremony must be left to some other historian to record. I hope an account of it will be obtained before the extraordinarily rapid changes in conditions in these parts have interfered with or altered its characteristic observances.

527 793 796 535 *The Da koom and Da meŋ Ceremonies*: 'When we dance these, all our ancestors sleep. When the time approaches for the ceremonies, the *Ten'dan'* of Bade takes a calabash (*zu-gur*, lit. a head-calabash), puts it in a net, and hangs it outside the entrance to the *zoŋo* hut. When the rain falls, it is filled. Before dawn, early in the morning after the appearance of the new moon, the Bat (*Anglice* Bade) *Ten'dan'* pours out

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[1] See *Ashanti*, Chapter XV.

some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day 527
is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may
be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, 793
but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* 796
(or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the 535
water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'* of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the words:

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches 527
the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of 793
Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree
used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for 769
you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return 796
the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices.

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never 534
brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on the land that it may know all is well.'

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests be- 241
came ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that 527
the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant.

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

NAMNAM

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kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan'*, also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan'*. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan'* to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).' 793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan'* must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan'* has to be so careful not to eat new crops
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his 173
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan'* of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

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● [527]

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
2. Gunfuku	February	Gun', gunga—kapok tree. fuku—blowing of the wind. The period when the kapok pods ripen. This is evidence of the Dagomba extraction of this people, since kapok is, undoubtedly, a southern production. Their own tradition says they came from the south as a result of interfamily wars.
3. Gologu	March	This is the name of a festival which takes place shortly after full moon. In 1921 the ceremonial dancing and symbolic planting of corn, which I witnessed by good luck, took place on March 1st. In 1922 about March 13th.
4. Sionbeo	End of March or early April	Time of early planting. Sion—making holes in which to drop the grains. beo—poor. At this time it is not certain if the dry season will not return for a period and so dry up the first shoots.
5. Sionsongo	April and May	The time of good planting. songo—good. This is the proper planting time.
6. Sionyio	Late May and early June	The time of late planting. yio—conveys an idea of doubt. Planting at this time may or may not have a result.
7. Narechag	Late June and early July	Early millet harvest. Nare—early millet. chag'—cut.
8. Nabiri	Late July, mid August	Na'—early millet. biri—small. The time for eating the small ears of early millet, which are not put in the granary owing to their smallness.
9. Komwanrega	August-September	Kom—water. wanreg'—month or moon. The period of heavy rain.

9: Cardinall G-5 (ca. 1920)1924 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

A. W. CARDINALL.

[p. 63]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945

FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE XII

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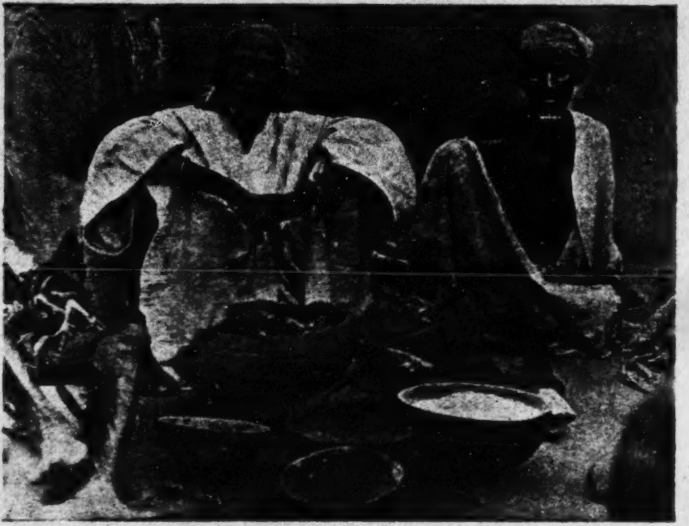

(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiytŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔɣar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔɣar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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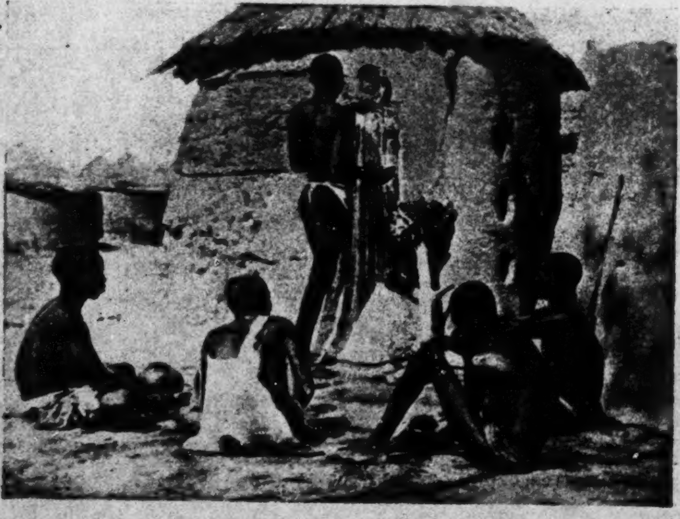

(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔɣar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p.225]

[facing p.240]

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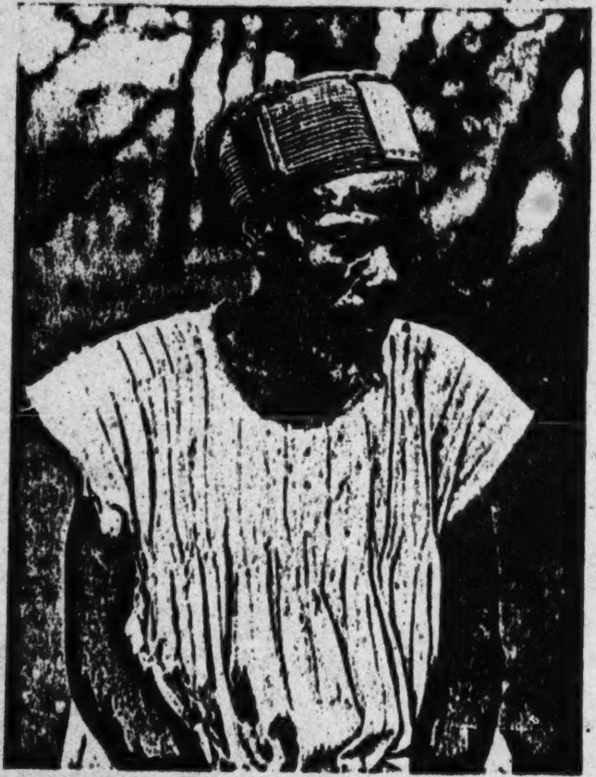

(*a*) Yikpemdaana of Tongo, the *kpeem* of Toŋ-Kuorəg.

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(*b*) Loyani, a highly respected junior elder of Zubiuŋ.

PLATE XIV

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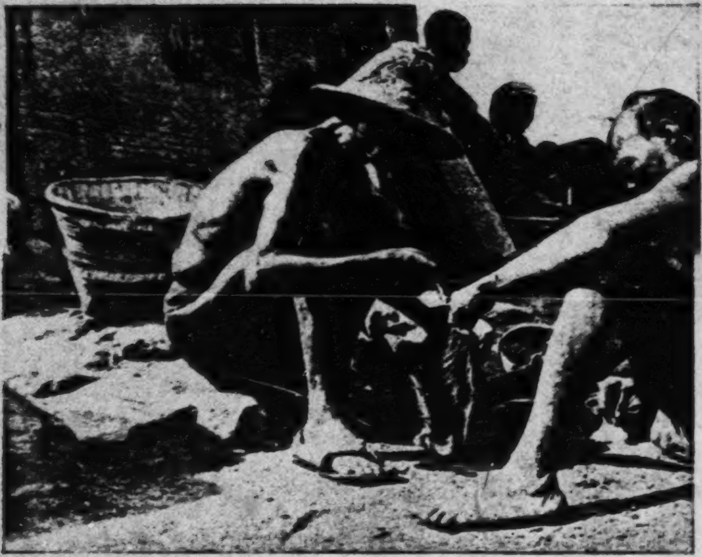

(*a*) *Sunzɔp m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakora by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

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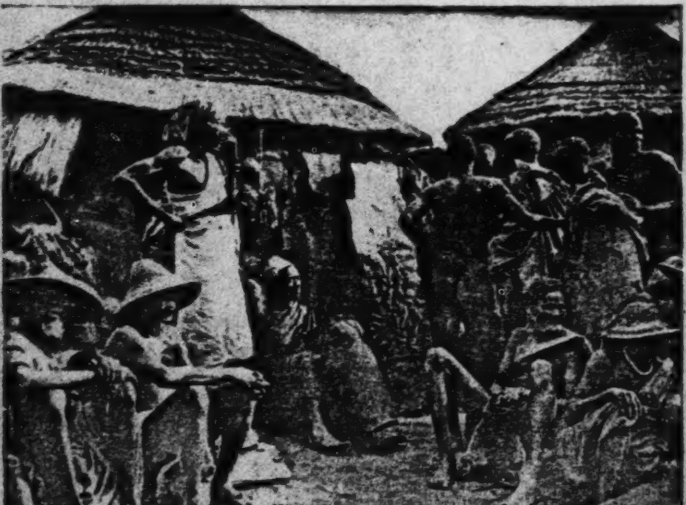

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tendaana at his homestead.

[facing p.24]

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a. Interior of a woman's *Dug*. The rooms from right to left are: a store-room (*Da'ŋboog*), a dry season kitchen (*Da'aŋ*), and a small *Dakir* for the woman's young son and daughter-in-law. The woman's own sleeping-room (*Dakir*) is farther to the right, not visible. Note how clean and bare the *Dendɔŋo* is and note, also, the bundles of dry guinea-corn stalks on top of the open kitchen. These have been saved for fuel in the rainy season

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b. The homestead of a maximal lineage head, the Gbizug Tendaana. Note the ancestor shrines in front of the gateway (X)

[facing p. 48]

PLATE 13

593

a. Children of a single domestic family. From left to right: Da'ano'o's child, his late father's child, his agnatic cousin's (i.e. classificatory brother's) child

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b. Four generations. From left to right: Nyaaŋzum, his own mother with his infant son, his older (deceased) half-brother's son, who married his mother after his father's death and brought him up

[facing p. 272]

PLATE 14

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a. Siblings by the same parents have breakfast together. The bigger children are a boy and a girl. Note that they are eating out of the same dish

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b. Successive (nyeer) soog brothers

[facing p. 273]

PLATE 16

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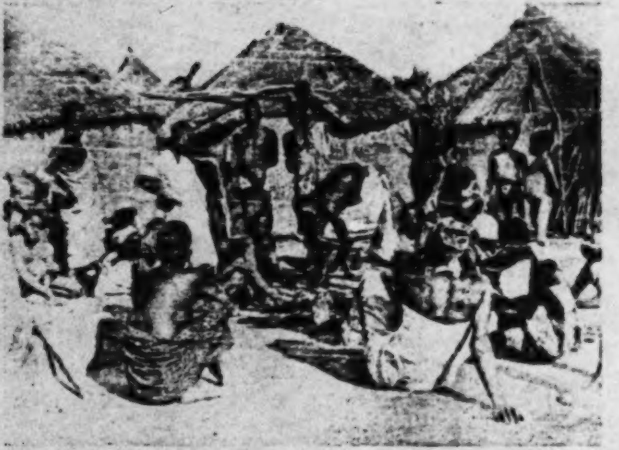

a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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531

b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[Facing p. 289]

82 861 9 or 10 the children are thoroughly familiar with the ecological environment of their clan settlements. They know the economically important trees, grasses, and herbs, e.g., a girl of about 9 once named and showed me nine varieties of herbs used for making soup. They have a fair idea of the gross anatomy of the fowl, small field animals, and larger live stock. But apart from these achievements which lead one to infer the existence of an interest in the natural environment, I was able to obtain some direct evidence thereof. The natives say that small children frequently ask questions about people and things they see around them. However, listening to children's talk for 'why' questions,[1] I was surprised to note how rarely they occurred; and the few instances I recorded refer to objects or persons foreign to the normal routine of Tale life. It would seem that Tale children rarely have to ask 'why' in regard to the people and things of their normal environment because so much of their learning occurs in real situations where explanation is generally coupled with instruction, and because they hear so much adult discussion, in terms of cause and effect, as these are understood by the Tallensi, of the things they are interested in. Yet two examples will prove that even quite small children react with exploratory interest to what is new and unusual. I gave some tiny tin figures of animals to a group of small children to play with. A little boy of about 5 looked intently at the figure of a horse. 'Why does he stoop like that?' he asked, speaking to himself rather than to his companions. But immediately he answered his own question, 'He is eating grass.' On another occasion I observed the 3-year-old son of our cook, pointing to the garbage tin, ask the horseboy: 'Why has that got a lid?'

857 177 532 Again, making clay figures is a favourite diversion of small boys and adolescents. The standard figures are men and women, cows and horses. But a youngster of about 9 or 10 once produced a motorcycle, explaining that he had recently seen the Agricultural Officer arrive on one. Another boy, a little older, once made a roan antelope, explaining that some two years previously he had seen one of these animals which, fleeing from a hunting party, had entered the settlement and been surrounded and killed there.

128 I have not attempted to give an exhaustive account of the interests

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[1] See N. Isaacs in *Intellectual Growth of Young Children.*

524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers
with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
301 ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses.
283 Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls
524 sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
● 532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and
by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-
aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
● [535] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of
funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who
wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the
warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances
that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
282 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in
clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The
tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and
children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping
feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd,
the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in
their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the
dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies
and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the
highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents,
an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each
group.

× 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
● 533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed
during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others
wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung
back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and
see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer
and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée
several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and
men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their
sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but
they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still
exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the
original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations
with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship
or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

684 577 man does not even have sexual desire for a sister or a daughter. This is the standard, conscious, sexual attitude to a sister and it is in keeping with the conscious attitude about incest with a sister or daughter. Such an act is spoken of as tabooed (*kih*), but it is neither a crime nor a sin. It is simply despicable conduct that the culprits ought to be ashamed of as unworthy of grown persons. Even children talk of copulation with a sibling as something beneath contempt, though, in fact, it is common knowledge that up to the age of about 8 or 9 boys often try to have sexual intercourse with a small girl playmate in their play and for the most part playmates are close lineage siblings. Adults reprove the children if they discover them in this kind of play, but dismiss it as due to childish irresponsibility.[1] This, indeed, is the essence of the general attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter. It is disreputable, because it does not conform to the accepted standards of responsible adult conduct. Only in the case of incest with a full (*soog*) sister is there a feeling of horror. It is felt to be unlucky in a vague way. She is the person of the opposite sex with whom a man is most fully identified. What is more important, she perpetuates their mother's uterine line and therefore stands for the indestructibility of the unique bond between mother and child. Sexual intercourse with her would be almost like incest with one's own mother; and this feeling is extended to distant female uterine kin (*saarət*) as well.

Incest with a mother, a brother's wife, or a daughter-in-law is in a different class of reprehensible acts. It is a taboo for a man even to sit on the sleeping-mat of a woman related to him in any of these ways (and thus, we may presume, symbolically betraying a wish to seduce her). To have intercourse with her is a very grievous sin. It is utterly repugnant to Tale morality.

684 577 539 Incest with one's own mother the natives regard as a thing of such monstrous iniquity that it is ridiculous to conceive of anyone who is not mentally deranged committing it. Incest with a father's wife, other than one's own mother, or a brother's or son's wife is almost as heinous a sin and is regarded with little less horror; but it is known to happen sometimes. In one of the cases that occurred during my stay in Taleland, a man raped his father's elderly wife (his own dead mother's co-wife), whom he called '*ma-pit* (younger mother)'; in the other, a notoriously dissolute young man seduced his father's brother's wife, whom he would [626 533] also describe as '*ma-pit*'. Both were publicly derided in the songs sung during the dances of the Great Festivals. One of the songs about the second man went as follows:

Badiemaal (his name) you who rape vaginas, Oh!
Bakyɛlbanɔya (the woman) is a slut.
Zimbil-Badiemaal is a dog.

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[1] Cf. my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, Memorandum XVII, International African Institute, 1938.

pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of 226
his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated 789
with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a
little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus 782
symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in
closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its 226
highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round [533]
him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was taken of sending four good swimmers in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

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[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognized. Members 602
of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

796 535 tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingauŋ incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

[533 578] A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like [592] masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

796 [784] And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingauŋ, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chiet of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Golib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day 527
is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may
be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, 793
but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* 796
(or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the 535
water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'*
of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the
custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad
water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the
words:

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches 527
the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of 793
Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree
used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for 769
you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return 796
the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in
peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices.

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never 534 ●
brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on
the land that it may know all is well.'

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests be- 241
came ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that 527
the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be
held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant.

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

PLATE VII

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(*a*) The Unity of all the Talis: The chief tendaanas of all the Talis settlements assemble to perform the rite of 'blowing the whistles' to inaugurate the Gəlib Festival.

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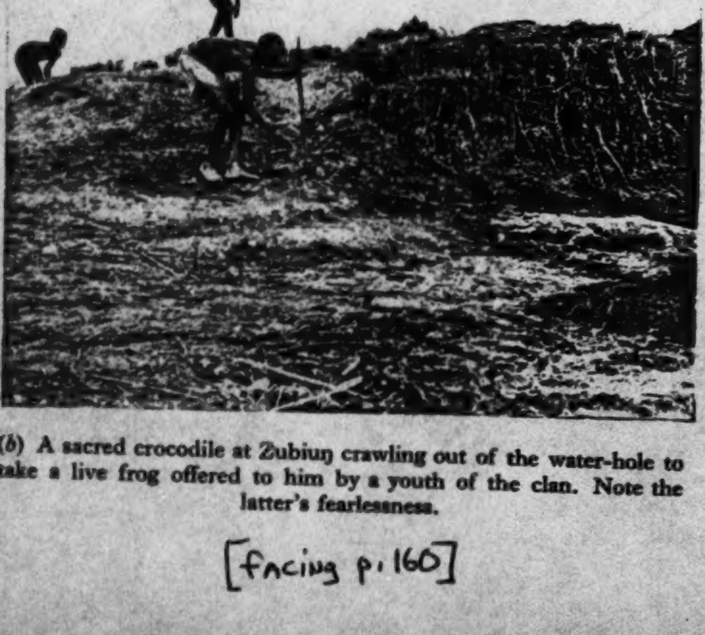

(*b*) A sacred crocodile at Zubiuŋ crawling out of the water-hole to take a live frog offered to him by a youth of the clan. Note the latter's fearlessness.

[facing p. 160]

595 578 According to the natives, quarrels between co-wives are often due to one or other of them having an intractable disposition. Men add that women lack self-control and are very prone to petty jealousy; they are apt to quarrel if they think they are being unfairly treated, if, for instance, one wife seems to receive more than a fair share of her husband's attention. But when actual cases of such quarrels are examined they are seen to be an expression of the tensions springing from the cleavages in the structure of the domestic family. They are temporary disturbances of the balance between the relatively autonomous matri-central *dug* and the inclusive patri-central *yir*. That is why they occur so rarely between women who are related by kinship or clanship, and who therefore think of their *dugət* as subdivisions of a single wider *dug*. Co-wives live in harmony as long as they act in the interests of the common *yir*; dissensions arise between them when they do not accept the paramountcy of the *yir*, and assert their relative autonomy in relation to one another. In the normal run of family life the interests of the common *yir* come first, for the sustenance of the family and the general welfare of all its members depend upon proper co-operation between them, resting on mutual loyalty and goodwill.

595 462 241 The women of the household, both those who are co-wives to one another, and those who are mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or mother and daughter to one another, usually work together harmoniously to perform their share of the productive labour of agriculture. They work under the direction of the head of the house, and the products of their labour accrue to the common food supply. This is a part of the co-operative economic organization of the household. Thus at sowing or harvest time one often sees a whole family working together in the fields. When a sowing party is at work one sees the men striding vigorously ahead, dibbling the holes with their long heavy dibbles cut from saplings, while the women follow behind, chattering and laughing amicably as they sow the grain. And when the harvest is in full swing, one sees similar cheerful family parties out on the field or homeward bound at dusk in Indian file, the men in front, perhaps carrying their pear-shaped wicker coops in which they have collected a brood of chickens that had been allowed to run in the fields during the day, the women sauntering close behind them, the heavy baskets of grain on their heads, and small boys and girls gambolling in the rear blowing their whistles and shaking their rattles (*kiŋkaɣah*) of serrated calabash disks. [534]

595 The independence of the *dug* comes out in the utilization of the food-supply. As the women have to supply the vegetables for cooking the relish which the natives regard as an indispensable accompaniment to their heavy porridge, each woman who has her own *dug* is entitled to a vegetable patch beside the wall of the homestead. Except for the senior woman of the house, who has a slightly larger vegetable patch

Plate I

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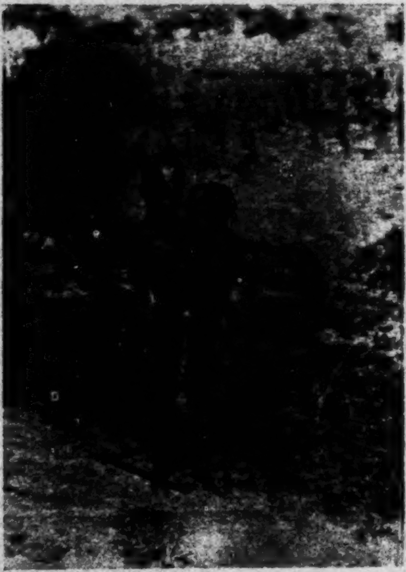

A young nursemaid, amusing herself and the baby with a *Kinkeyaɛ* rattle

857.

Housekeeping Play. One of the girls combines the duty of looking after an infant with her play. Note the small boy in the party, and the 'utensils'

[facing p.16]

they rocked back and forth on the branch and then descended. Now 524
Gɔmna remembered his cows. Vehemently he accused his sister of 867
having taken them, and when she denied this challenged her to 868
'swear'. 'All right,' she said placidly. Gɔmna took a pinch of sand 857
in his left hand and put his right thumb on it. Zɔŋ licked her thumb and pressed down with it on Gɔmna's thumb-nail. He stood still a moment, then suddenly withdrew his thumb. (This is a children's play ordeal.) Gɔmna examined his sister's thumb and found sand adhering. 'There you are,' he said, rapping her on the head with a crooked finger. The 'cows' were completely forgotten though, for now they turned their attention to me, asking me various questions. After a while Gɔmna, who had been observing my shoes, said, 'Let's make shoes,' and took a couple of pieces of the decayed bark previously used to build the cattle-yard to make shoes. He and Zɔŋ found some grass and old string lying about and tried to tie the pieces of bark to the soles of their feet. Gɔmna now noticed his 'cows' and picked them up, but he was still trying to make 'shoes'. The 'shoes' refused to hold together so he abandoned them and squatted over his 'cows' for a moment, moving them hither and thither. 'I'm going to let them copulate,' he burst out with a grin, and tried to put one locust on top of another. Looking up, he noticed a flutter of birds' wings. 'Zɔŋ,' he cried, jumping to his feet, 'scare the birds!' and he raced into the grain, followed by his companions, shouting and stooping to pick up handfuls of gravel to fling at the birds. For the next five minutes they were engrossed in bird-scaring. The entire episode lasted over half an hour.

The developmental phases of play. Infant play. Up to the age of 6 or 7 524
a good deal of play, especially that of boys, consists in sheer motor 534
exuberance. Small boys run about, leap and prance for the pleasure 857
of it, frequently in a totally unorganized way. But even 3-year-old boys often introduce mimetic themes, spontaneously or in response to suggestions from older children. They 'ride horses', using a long stick as a horse, with a wisp of grass attached as bridle. In the Festival season they love 'playing drums'. Cylindrical tins discarded by our cook and useless as receptacles were in great demand for this purpose. A remnant of goatskin tied over one end with a strip of bark or grass makes a satisfactory diaphragm, and a hooked twig

524 534 857 serves as a drumstick. Often an older boy of 8 or 9 manufactures a toy drum for himself or an infant brother. A small discarded calabash is covered with a piece of skin—a remnant of goatskin or the skin of a rat caught by the boy himself and prepared by himself. The skin is cleverly attached to the calabash with strong thorns. Small boys delight in walking round, tapping out a rhythm on a toy drum, sometimes executing a few dance steps. Another instrument they like to copy is the *kolog*, a single-string fiddle. I once saw a boy of about 6 singing to a 'fiddle' which consisted of a large bow made of a green stick and a thread of grass—the 'fiddle'—and a smaller bow of the same materials—the 'bow'. A bow of the very same sort with a short piece of thick reed as arrow is the 4- to 6-year-old's introduction to the handling of bow and arrow. They very soon develop an accurate aim at a dozen yards or so. Play of this kind is generally very egocentric. I have watched groups of children playing side by side—a boy with a 'drum' absorbed in his banging, another lying on his back absorbed in fantasy, a couple of little girls playing at housekeeping—all indifferent to one another's activities.

857 869 The little girl of 5 to 6 plays in much the same way at times; but she is already being drawn into the family play of slightly older children, and, like the small boy with the toy bow, she tends to mimic simpler features of older girls' play when she is playing alone. Hence one often sees a little girl of this age sitting and playing at 'grinding millet'—one stone as metate, a smaller stone as muller, and a handful of sand or a potsherd as the grain.

Play in early childhood. Between the ages of about 6 and 10 the play of both sexes becomes more social and more complex. This is the period when the child is beginning to co-operate in real economic activities, subject to real responsibility, and is acquiring a knowledge of his social space. His or her play reflects these experiences and reflects also the interests and activities characteristic of the stage of maturity just ahead of it. There is, in all Tale children's play, this feature of looking ahead, as it were, experimenting tentatively with what lies just beyond the present psychological horizon.

During this period the younger children, both boys and girls, have charge of the goats, scare the birds from the newly planted fields and the crops, run errands, nurse the infants, and so forth. The boys help

From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have 787
selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival 796
is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: [778
a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large
one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. 534]
Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into 796
abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social in- 535
terest, until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." 796
It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the
dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effer-
vescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which [578]
threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement,
planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages sur-
vive the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo [784]
against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. 796
Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festi- 535
val, and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ meŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

XXXVI

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Ceremonies in Connexion with Sowing and Harvest.
The Talense Calendar

527 THERE appear to be at least three great festivals which are held by the Talense in connexion with the crops and harvest. These are:

(*a*) *Gologo*, held in the month of February by the whole of the Talense.

b) *Bugram Waa* (lit. the *Bugram* dance) held in October by the following towns: Sia, Winduri, Gorogo, Wakyi, Teŋ'zugu, and Gbeo.

(*c*) *Da koom*, *Da mey* or simply *Waa*, (the dance) held by Bade and Tongo, in the months of August and September.

[171] Among the Nankanse we have seen that the October festival is called *Tingana* (the Groves), or simply *Waa* (the Dance), a festival which is held by Winkoŋo, Orogo, Kologo, and Na, in rotation.

(*a*) *The Gologo Ceremony*: It was my intention to have attended this ceremony in person; hence I omitted to obtain a full description of it. I am informed, however, that during the time when the festival is being held 'every one is permitted to abuse his neighbour and even to laugh at any physical deformity, and that no one is allowed to quarrel'. [171] All this seems most reminiscent of the *Apo* ceremony, which has been described in another volume.[1] Circumstances, however, prevented me ever carrying out my intention, and a full description of this ceremony must be left to some other historian to record. I hope an account of it will be obtained before the extraordinarily rapid changes in conditions in these parts have interfered with or altered its characteristic observances.

527 793 796 535 *The Da koom and Da mey Ceremonies*: 'When we dance these, all our ancestors sleep. When the time approaches for the ceremonies, the *Ten'dan'* of Bade takes a calabash (*zu-gur*, lit. a head-calabash), puts it in a net, and hangs it outside the entrance to the *zoyo* hut. When the rain falls, it is filled. Before dawn, early in the morning after the appearance of the new moon, the Bat (*Anglice* Bade) *Ten'dan'* pours out

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[1] See *Ashanti*, Chapter XV.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* (or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'* of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the words: 527 793 796 535

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices. 527 793 769 796

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on the land that it may know all is well.' 534

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests became ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant. 241 527

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front
and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath
[195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the
back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are
cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those
who have lost their fathers.

764 When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are
765 boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and
after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his
[314] wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then
given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of
the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its
place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which
they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit
and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is
called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge
of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral
is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is
765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He
769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is
fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the
setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the
deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of
the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[171] [1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita.*

● [535 831] [2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567]
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535
end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ kpɛŋŋa*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence. For the individual the physical well-being of himself and his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this: 'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ha kuo kɔ, ha guul guul, ha dɔɣam dɔɣa, ha guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241
natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency between a *guhpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption. One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances
that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
● 535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
292 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

X 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
508 contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed
during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tɛndaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

PLATE XV

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(*a*) A mimic war parade at Ba'ari to inaugurate an elder's funeral.

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(*b*) The widest politico-ritual community includes all the Tallensi. Part of the vast gathering of people from all over Taleland who come to take part in or watch the concluding ceremonies and dances of the Golib Festival. Note the dust cloud raised by the dancers.

[Facing p. 256]

which Tale children develop in the course of their education. I have 128
tried to indicate only some typical interests and their relation to the
educational process.

Skills. The acquisition of skills also commences in early infancy, 868
with the child's first experiments in motor co-ordination and speech. 858
Bodily dexterity provides merely the foundation upon which are 857
subsequently built up the socially important skills of adult life. They include not only the predominantly manual skills, such as are connected with farming and care of live stock, with hunting, fishing, building, thatching, cooking, housekeeping and gardening, and the technology of specialists, but also non-manual skills, such as a knowledge of the kinship system, of ritual and ceremonial, of economically useful herbs and roots and of others used as drugs to cure illness, of buying and selling, of law and custom—in short, of the whole body of cultural definitions which guide the Talɔŋa in his daily existence. Such skills are the end-results of education; and it will be obvious that they represent merely the cognitive and motor aspects of activities rooted in developing interests and fostered by the expectation of normal behaviour. Typical skills will be referred to as we proceed, but one general feature must be noted here. Children in Taleland are remarkably free from over-solicitious supervision. They have the maximum freedom and responsibility commensurate with their skill and maturity. On the one hand they can go where they like and do what they like, on the other they are held fully responsible for tasks entrusted to them. Thus, a 6-year-old is quite often charged with the care of an infant for several hours at a stretch. Girls of 9 or 10 can be seen in large numbers in every market, selling or buying things for their mothers or themselves. Boys of this age and even younger swarm in the markets. One market day I discovered a boy of about 10–11 selling a basketful of leaves used as a food for animals which he had himself collected in the bush near his settlement. He hoped to earn a penny or twopence to buy arrow-heads for himself. Another day a boy of about the same age offered his services to the butcher. He earned a tenth of a penny which he spent on a feed of
locust-bean flour for himself and a friend. Similarly, when there is 868
dancing at a homestead, the children of about 6 years and upwards 851
from the whole neighbourhood congregate there and remain till 535

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868 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would
858 not be sent for to come home.

858 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom
857 allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying
their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be
quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years,
at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly
exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement
and consternation: 'Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a
whipping.' 'You'd better run,' one of the others advised, as he
[231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his
father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty
to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest
hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he
told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in
till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with
882 their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to
which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right
to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for
co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of
youths running away from home when they considered themselves
to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their
services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindɔl, aged about 11, an
intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable
assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the
great dances came round, Yindɔl wanted a new loin cloth. His father
refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindɔl went on strike, neglected
the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush
farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la
mar buurt*—'The boy has justice on his side'—he said, when he told
me the story.

857 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk
858 for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s*. 6*d*. a month
234 is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to
[435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why?
His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with 867
other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total 155
pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's 868
learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants 535 ●
just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same 867
way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected 601
in the 3–4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non- 602
kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

in sacrifices to domestic shrines; the girls assist in household tasks 857
such as sweeping and carrying water. Towards the end of this period 868
boys whose fathers own cattle go out with the cattle-herds and girls
are beginning to help in the preparation of food. A 10-year-old girl
can prepare the majority of usual dishes. At the age of 6 or 7 brothers
and sisters often play together; at 9 or 10 the sexual dichotomy has
become firmly established.[1]

At this stage the play of infancy develops in three directions. The 857
sporadic motor exuberance is transformed into recreational play—
organized group games and dances; the rudimentary mimetic play
becomes elaborate and protracted imaginative and constructive play;
and the rude toy-making of infancy grows into children's arts and
crafts.

Tale children have a great many organized games, passed on from one generation of children to the next by drawing younger ones into the games played by those who already know them. The games are traditional, and often built round themes derived from the cultural idiom—farming, hunting, marriage, chiefs, &c. But their value is predominantly recreational. Children play them for the pleasure of collective singing, rhythmical physical activity, and sensory and bodily stimulation. The ordinary dances of moonlight nights in which both adults and children participate are regarded as 'play' of this kind.

Kuobon is a game of this sort. Both boys and girls from 7–8 to 857
about 15 years play it on moonlight nights in single-sex groups. A 526
group of about the same size forms a ring, clasping each other and
standing on one leg. The other leg is extended towards the centre of
the ring, and the children arrange themselves so that their extended
legs cross one another. The group then commences to revolve, singing as they go round and round, *kuobon, yee-e-e la yaah*, 'fruits of
farming, yee, how nice'. The game goes on until they are tired and
the extended legs begin to drop. It breaks up with much laughter,
only to start again after a rest. Similar games are played by boys 857
only and others by girls only; but for both sexes dancing is the 535
supreme recreation. In both the mixed dances and the single-sex

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[1] Nevertheless, this sexual dichotomy is not so absolute as to prohibit a girl or a
woman from stepping into a breach if there is no male available for a man's task; [462]
and men often undertake women's work in an emergency.

857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bɔlgraana*, who had only recently been installed. To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place "where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences.

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The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights.

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Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the performance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features—

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From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have 787
selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival 796
is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: [778
a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large
one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. 534]
Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into 796
abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest,
until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have 535
almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." 796
It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effervescence
associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which [578]
threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement, planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive
the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo [784]
against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. 796
Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festival, 535
and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ meŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

796 535 tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingauŋ incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

[533 578] A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like [292] masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

796 [784] And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingauŋ, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Golib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

Daa (the supreme bɔɣar of the Baari people) and Mosur will jointly prosper 796 the land. Then he departs. That day Baari celebrates Daa.

That same evening the large Gingauŋ drum is escorted tô Baari by the 796 Gbizug Tendaana and the Wakyi Tendaana, following a ritual path. All Tongo flocks to Baari to dance with great enthusiasm on a traditional spot 535 outside the grove of Baat Daa. Near the dance, but silently aloof, wait the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas. A few hundred yards away, as if indifferent to the dance, young men of Baari assemble, wearing their ritual garb, a goatskin. When the Baari Tendaana and his ritual coadjutors arrive to join them, the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas are summoned. Greetings are exchanged, and then led by the Baari Tendaana, the whole company files away in a most solemn and silent procession, brought up by the youngest members carrying pots of consecrated beer. With utter gravity this procession thrice encircles the dancers who continue to dance as if oblivious to this. Anyone who dares to break through the encircling pro- [784] cession is doomed to a supernatural death. The procession files away again, into the sacred grove. There the Tendaanas pour libations of beer to Baat Daa, calling down the very same blessings as had been invoked by the Chief earlier in the day. They drink the beer and send a small pot out to the representative of the Chief, who is among the dancers. Now the Tendaanas' procession emerges, again solemnly encircles the dancers, and files away. At a tree which marks the path to Tongo they stop, and marching round it in a circle, chant a song the burden of which is Mosur boot kuliga ("Mosur wants to go home"). Upon this signal the allusion of which is obvious to all, the dance breaks up, the ritual is over.

That finishes the Gingauŋ dance for a year. The next three days at 796 Tongo are given over to the gayest festivities of the season, the celebration of Daa. This is a New Year's festival, a fitting conclusion to the dancing season. Dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, the whole of Tongo assembles at the Chief's compound on the day after the rites at Baari. From far and near, Tongo women who have married away return to their [574] homes, many bearing gifts of special food from their husbands. The Chief's house throngs with his people and strangers. His elders bring him presents of guinea fowls and he, sitting in state, has a bullock slaughtered, part of which he shares amongst them. The Chief, it is true, gets the better part of this exchange of gifts, but good form is satisfied. The afternoon is devoted to light-hearted dancing in praise of the Chief.

The Gbizug Tendaana has also celebrated Daa, but very quietly. That 796 evening, however, Chief and Tendaana meet in ceremonial. The scene is 778 the dancing ground. This is a dedicated area which may not be cultivated.

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, 796
like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to
the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881
initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar.
Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of
one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough
stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If [784]
I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of
the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796
home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who
have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574
follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535
Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social
interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may
not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171
with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its 796
calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and
elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of re- 182
sponsibility for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182
festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

577 relatives at home decide not to wait for them are the exceptions that
765 prove the rule. In a few cases they are men who have struck root in their
new environment after many years of living there and find it difficult to
get away. Sometimes they find it easier to procrastinate because they
originally left home through a quarrel with the deceased parent. But
generally they tarry because the deceased is a proxy parent or because
they have older brothers at home who will conduct the funeral. Later,
perhaps, when the mantle of the lineage headship falls on their shoulders
they will return, like Pal and Dema, to take over and end their lives in
the ancestral home. It is a feature of Tale custom that natural human
weaknesses are not unduly penalized by public opinion. As long as he
lives a man can always try to make good his derelictions of filial duty.
It lies between him and his ancestors. The community is neutral.

577 At funeral ceremonies of old people one also sees that filial piety
765 includes pride in one's parents. The *kɔɔrdaana*, owner of the funeral
593 or chief mourner (that is, the deceased's oldest son), and his brothers
strain their resources to the utmost to provide a lavish funeral. It is
not uncommon for nearly the whole harvest of a household to be consumed in making the beer and providing the cooked food required. In
addition, animals must be slaughtered in honour of the dead. A poor
man may be able to give his father only a couple of sheep or goats which
he has had to borrow for the purpose. On the other hand, when
Doohraan, the head of Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, died, rich in years and in
honour, his sons slaughtered a cow, a donkey, and about a dozen small
stock for his spirit; and Saɣawuob postponed his mother's funeral for
two years so that he should be able to give her a cow. At a big funeral,
when the war parade (*dee*) and the whole concourse of clansfolk, kinsfolk, neighbours, and friends of the dead stand milling at the gateway,
the oldest son climbs on to the wall to address the crowd. Wearing
[242] his ceremonial plumed helmet of straw, with a large red cock in his
hand, he looks down haughtily upon the crowd and delivers his harangue.
●[537] His speech, spun out with all the tricks of rhetoric in the Tale repertoire,
is proud almost to the point of arrogance. He is relating the great deeds
of his dead father or mother. They may seem trivial, sometimes, to the
cold-blooded ethnographer—so and so borrowed five cows and paid
them back in two years; so and so was a redoubtable farmer who in one
year sold enough grain to buy three cows; another man boldly carried
off his wife from under the noses of Mamprusi who had seized her; and
this old woman was a potteress who by her own efforts earned the money
to buy two cows, and in addition had been faithful to her first and only
husband until his death. But it is not the substance so much as the
occasion of these funeral panegyrics that matter to the Tallensi. At the
end of his speech the son beats the cock (or if he is a rich man it may
be a goat) to death on the wall and flings it to the crowd with a challenge
that any person who can claim equal achievements should take it. But

593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of
861 parenthood as *dɔyam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb,
538 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔyam*)', often quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or
431 foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a 'cow of rearing (*ughug na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian, and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure, only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it. It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and that is the hardest part.

593 In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability
855 of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly 78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a
861 particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of
828 the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

551 It is entertaining to run through a list of Tale open names if one knows the allusions contained in them. Let me quote a few that are derived from proverbs and are known to everybody, though, of course, only the parents and very close kin of the person know what the exact circumstances were that made the saying apposite.

551 538 The name Yam-Pu-Yiit is the first phrase of the proverb "*Yam pu yiit yeŋha, ka be la pooni*". The concept *yam* has a wide ambit of meaning. It means wisdom, prudence, commonsense, intelligence, etc. Here it can be translated "counsel" in the sense we give to this word when we speak of "keeping one's own counsel". The proverb can be rendered "Counsel (i. e. judgments about persons and events) does not come out on the surface; it remains in the heart". In other words, a prudent person keeps his own counsel. The man who gave his daughter this name was feeling aggrieved over the intrigues of a rival, but prudence dictated doing nothing other than obliquely giving out his feelings in the naming of his child. The sentiment is very characteristic of Tale values. Tallensi are anything but submissive in the face of rivalry or scorn; but to be carried away by resentment and to act rashly are thought to be foolish, in such circumstances.

"*Nigɔm n-di*" is another characteristic Tale proverb that I came across in a name. It is a good example of the puritan streak in Tale values. It means, more or less literally, "persevere and (you will have enough) to eat", perseverance here carrying the implication of hard work and frugality. It was the name given to his son by a man who was proud of having begun life as a very poor man but of having prospered by hard work and frugality.

A saying reminiscent of our maxim that hard words do not break bones is "*yel pu kura*", literally: "a telling (off) doesn't kill". I knew a youth called Yel-Pu-Kura, but did not ascertain why he was so called.

A final example is the name Zaŋ, to seize, take, grasp. This monosyllabic name was the abbreviation of a proverb "*Salɔnsaa yie, gum zaŋ pu tɔ*", that is, "The ant says, gather together and take hold of it, that is not hard". In other words, a task that is too hard for the individual to accomplish if he is alone can be done with the co-operation of many. This is an exhortation for kin and friends to help one another.

551 And now a few more instances of names that document events in family history and incidents of a personal nature.

Dim-Bɔrəgya, enmity has vanished, commemorates a reconciliation between the child's father and his father-in-law.

Ba-Kyel-Marib, let them stop being responsible for me, was the name Saandi gave to his first born daughter after he left his father's brother and started to farm for himself.

Yaan-Bɔrəgya, honour has departed, was the name given to a man after the tendaanaship which his father had held passed, on the latter's death, to another branch of the lineage.

Sabaalug, iron peg, Dok, pot, Baγana, a species of tree, are names that refer to different kinds of medicine shrines acquired by the fathers at the time the children were born.

x618 784 have been their founding ancestors' paternal clans. In other cases the correlation is not so clear, since the attached lineages concerned are intercalary between clans that have the same avoidances. But it is not a general rule that attached lineages preserve the avoidances of the clan of the alleged father of their founding ancestor, as can be seen from the case of Ba'at-Lakum yidem, who do not keep the Zubiuŋ taboos.

Thus Talis sometimes cite common totemic and other ritual observances as a sign of clanship ties, and at other times deny any necessary connexion between ritual observances and clanship ties. When they want to emphasize the close interdependence, or the sense of community of a particular group of clans, by contrast with other Talis or non-Talis clans, they tend to pick on common ritual observances in proof of this. But on the other hand, they are equally ready to quote peculiar totemic taboos as signs of the genealogical or social singularity of a clan or lineage. The apparent inconsistency does not worry them. For, as we have seen, Tallensi cannot visualize precisely the structure of their society in its entirety, and there is good evidence for both views in the ritual observances of the Talis. There is a tendency for some clans that are closely interconnected to have some totems in common, and for others to have different totems.

x618 784 184 The totemic avoidances found among the clans of the Sie district in general follow the pattern found at Ba'ari; but in this area there is no close-knit nuclear aggregate of clans like the Hill Talis. The relative autonomy of the maximal lineage stands out more markedly, and there is consequently a greater diversity of totemic avoidances.

Totemic Myths

773 We have previously remarked that Namoos show little interest in the mythology of their totemic taboos. This attitude is characteristic of all Tallensi. Talis elders, whose authority and wisdom in ritual matters were widely respected, and who willingly gave me information of the most secret kind, were content to dismiss the question of the origin of their totemic taboos with some trite remark such as, 'We grew up to find it thus'. But here and there one comes across a myth accounting for the origin of a totemic taboo, especially in the Sie area. They are all expansions of the text 'The animal conferred a benefit on our ancestor (*u daa maal ti yaab la*)'. Though they all have the same moral, they vary greatly in substance.

773 ●539 Thus, according to one version, the avoidance of the tortoise and water-tortoise among the Hill Talis began in this way: 'Our (anonymous) ancestor' was suffering severely from thirst once and could find no water. He saw a tortoise crawling along and followed it. The animal reached a heap of dry leaves, which it scratched aside revealing a spring. Thereupon 'our ancestor' vowed that never again would he or his descendants eat the tortoise; and as the water-tortoise is merely another species of the same family, this taboo naturally extends to it as well.

According to another version, which is worth quoting as an example of the variations in these myths, 'our ancestor' was on a journey and was

held up by an impassable river. He noticed a water-tortoise descending 773
the bank, and followed it. Thus he was led to a ford, which enabled him 539
to cross. Thereupon he vowed that he and his descendants would refrain
from eating this animal and its brother species, the tortoise.

Similar myths are current among other clans that taboo aquatic
animals. Thus one of the segments of Sie have the special avoidance of
the crocodile in addition to the usual fowl avoidance of the Namoos. The
head of this segment told me the following myth in explanation. There
was a communal fish drive, during which their ancestor, Layɛn, dis- [226]
appeared. He was given up for lost, and next day a party was dispatched
to search for the body. But when they reached the river, they found him
sitting on the bank with a crocodile at his feet. He told them that the
crocodile had saved his life (*fa u ŋovor bah*) by holding him down and
covering him up. Hence he vowed that he and his descendants would
never again eat crocodile.

In the same way the elders of Gban narrate that 'their ancestor' was 773
suffering with a swollen hand. He asked friends to lance it, but they 539
thought this was unnecessary. Then one day, as he sat resting his hand 757
on his head because of the pain, a large grasshopper of a species with
sharply serrated legs (*saŋkaan*) landed on it. The ancestor scared it away.
As it leaped off, it kicked out and ripped the skin of the festering hand
with its saw-edged legs. This let out the accumulated pus and cured the
hand. Thereupon the ancestor vowed, in the phrase that usually concludes these myths, 'May he grow old with his grandson, but no
descendant of his should ever again eat the *saŋkaan* (*ɔn kɔrəgən ni u
yaaŋa, ka ɔn bii ku le di saŋkaan*)'.

Other myths of this kind relate how the anonymous ancestor was saved 773
from an enemy about to slay him by the opportune appearance of the 539
totemic animal. Thus, according to one of the elders of Sawaləg: 'Bows
were in conflict (*tap ndaa ŋme*)', ('Perhaps', he added, as an afterthought,
'there was a fight with Mamprusi who came to raid for slaves') 'and our
ancestor fled, seeking refuge in an animal's burrow. The enemy was
about to break open the burrow when a squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) darted past.
They turned to pursue it, and left our ancestor. Thereupon, he vowed
never to eat the squirrel again, neither he nor his descendants.'

As this sample of totemic myths shows, the pattern is the same as that 773
of the Namoo myth accounting for the fowl avoidance. They are more 787
unstable in content, however. The two versions of the tortoise myth
were obtained from two equally authoritative elders of the same clan.
There is, indeed, always an element of speculation, or of *ad hoc* construction, in these myths. Listening to them one often has the feeling that
they are being elaborated by logical deduction. The starting-point is the
premiss that the totemic avoidance was due to a vow made by 'our
ancestor' in gratitude for an extraordinary service that saved his life.
The process of reasoning is to deduce an action on the part of the animal
consistent with its known peculiarities of appearance and of behaviour.
Informants are never able to tell one where and when they first heard
these myths. They say vaguely: 'We heard them from our fathers.' This
method of reasoning, however, is congenial to the Tallensi. It forms the

684 577 man does not even have sexual desire for a sister or a daughter. This is the standard, conscious, sexual attitude to a sister and it is in keeping with the conscious attitude about incest with a sister or daughter. Such an act is spoken of as tabooed (*kih*), but it is neither a crime nor a sin. It is simply despicable conduct that the culprits ought to be ashamed of as unworthy of grown persons. Even children talk of copulation with a sibling as something beneath contempt, though, in fact, it is common knowledge that up to the age of about 8 or 9 boys often try to have sexual intercourse with a small girl playmate in their play and for the most part playmates are close lineage siblings. Adults reprove the children if they discover them in this kind of play, but dismiss it as due to childish irresponsibility.[1] This, indeed, is the essence of the general attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter. It is disreputable, because it does not conform to the accepted standards of responsible adult conduct. Only in the case of incest with a full (*soog*) sister is there a feeling of horror. It is felt to be unlucky in a vague way. She is the person of the opposite sex with whom a man is most fully identified. What is more important, she perpetuates their mother's uterine line and therefore stands for the indestructibility of the unique bond between mother and child. Sexual intercourse with her would be almost like incest with one's own mother; and this feeling is extended to distant female uterine kin (*saarət*) as well.

Incest with a mother, a brother's wife, or a daughter-in-law is in a different class of reprehensible acts. It is a taboo for a man even to sit on the sleeping-mat of a woman related to him in any of these ways (and thus, we may presume, symbolically betraying a wish to seduce her). To have intercourse with her is a very grievous sin. It is utterly repugnant to Tale morality.

684 577 ●539 Incest with one's own mother the natives regard as a thing of such monstrous iniquity that it is ridiculous to conceive of anyone who is not mentally deranged committing it. Incest with a father's wife, other than one's own mother, or a brother's or son's wife is almost as heinous a sin and is regarded with little less horror; but it is known to happen sometimes. In one of the cases that occurred during my stay in Taleland, a man raped his father's elderly wife (his own dead mother's co-wife), whom he called '*ma-pit* (younger mother)'; in the other, a notoriously dissolute young man seduced his father's brother's wife, whom he would [626 533] also describe as '*ma-pit*'. Both were publicly derided in the songs sung during the dances of the Great Festivals. One of the songs about the second man went as follows:

> Badiemaal (his name) you who rape vaginas, Oh!
> Bakyelbanɔya (the woman) is a slut.
> Zimbil-Badiemaal is a dog.

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[1] Cf. my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, Memorandum XVII, International African Institute, 1938.

684 Badiemaal, is this how you behave?
Zimbil-Badiemaal will never inherit the (lineage) *bɔγar*;
577 Why did you copulate with Naaho's wife?

•539 *Badiemaal, pɛnzierug, woo-oo!*
Bakyɛlbanɔya a bumbarəŋ.
Zimbil-Badiemaal, u a baa.

Badiemaal, i ɛŋa ŋwala?
Zimbil-Badiemaal ku vaa bɔγar;
I nyɛb Naah pɔγa bo?

It was widely held that both of these men would take the first opportunity to get out of Taleland.

613 684 577 The Tallensi explain that such acts are so severely reprobated because they cause deep and irreconcilable 'enmity' (*diuŋ*) between father and son, brother and brother, and this is a mortal blow to the solidarity of the family and the lineage. They arouse the wrath of the ancestors. If the injured father, brother, or son does not bring the matter up before the elders of his medial lineage or maximal lineage, he will be struck down by the ancestors. If he does, he must be ritually reconciled with his offending son, brother, or father. But in spite of such a formal reconciliation, 'the enmity remains within'. The sinner will never be able to offer sacrifice to his injured father with a clear conscience, or an injured son to the spirit of his father who so grievously sinned and offended him; nor may two brothers between whom this bitter inner discord prevails sacrifice together. Therefore, as the scornful song about Badiemaal declares, the sinner cannot, with a clear conscience, inherit the shrines common to the lineage; and since a man's sins spiritually taint his children and children's children, the sinner's whole line of agnatic descendants will be virtually outcast from the moral unity of the lineage, even if they are allowed to participate formally in the cult of its ancestors. Again, a man who has seduced his brother's wife cannot inherit her after his death, for he has broken the bond of brotherhood. The incestuous sexual act is sinful because it disrupts the moral relationship of father and son or brother and brother, and thus undermines the solidarity of the lineage at its core. There is a magical deterrent as well, which reflects this. If two men have sexual relations with the same woman and one of them gets ill, the other may not see him; it would cause him to sink and perhaps die; and to shun a sick parent, sibling, or child is the very negation of family solidarity.

593 613 A man's 'fathers', 'brothers', and 'sons' within the limits of the nuclear lineage are the men who have the most direct interest in his wife, especially in her reproductive powers. They will all be concerned in, and one or other of them will be responsible for, the payment of her bride-price. His children mean almost as much to them as to him. They

Lebzure, *Kunwase* (You-do-not-stroke-a-snake), son of *Lebkura*. In 173
his time we fired arrows at the people on the Tong hills; there was a
famine and we used to rob them. All the people, except Winkoŋo 622
and Sia, rose against us, saying we were too proud. *Kunwase* was succeeded
by *Kundizore* (Water-cannot-pull-down-a-hill), a son of
Sapelega. There was also a war in his time which arose out of a quarrel
during a hunting expedition, in which Bade and Yazore had taken part.
Small-pox (called *Naba*, the Chief) also broke out in his time. *Kundizore*
was succeeded by *Nalebseyo* (It-will-change-to-the-wet-season), son of
Kabu. He was succeeded by *Pilibazaa* (Cover-them-all), son of *Bupaa*.
During his time the Europeans came. *Pilibazaa* was taken by the [177]
white men to Gambaga and asked to pay two hundred cows because
the Tɔng people had fired arrows at them (the Europeans). He died
at Gambaga and was succeeded by *Kunbanbeo* (Cannot-know-tomorrow),
a son of *Kundizore*. He was succeeded by *Yirisano* (Destroyer-of-compounds),
alias *Dentele*, a son of *Lebenwana*. In his time
the Europeans came and asked the Hill-people (Teŋ-zugu) to come
and see them, but they refused. He was succeeded by myself, *Kpama*,
son of *Pilibazaa*. I brought my father's bones from Gambaga, and
they were buried outside his compound.'

The above list comprises twenty-eight names, and, with other 551
similar genealogies, supplies us with an approximate estimate of the 173
time when the foreigners from Mampurugu first extended their influence 622
to embrace this area. The names of these Chiefs as here given
are their titles only; it is forbidden to mention their real names. Such
nicknames are called *sam-wur* in Talene, *saan-yure* in Nankane.

The ruling house at Tɔngo belongs to the *gwegmere* (lion) clan. 128
When I recorded the above and the other histories which follow I had 622
not as yet grasped the full significance of what I came to discover later, 565
namely, that in recording the history of these migrations as supplied
by the Chiefs, I was really only tracing the origins of a minute section
of the population, i.e. of those who formed the upper ruling class, and
not of their subjects, who formed the mass of the people. In consequence
I am unable, in the present instance, to specify the clans to
which the majority of the inhabitants of the 'towns', already given,
really belong. In my notebooks I find these clans, in nearly every case,
recorded as 'the lion clan'. This is only due, however, to my having
fallen into the error of failing to distinguish between rulers and ruled,
and imagining the histories told me by Chiefs and their following to be
applicable also to their subjects. I do not make any apology however,

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'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551] ●
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab* 624
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under the Chief of Nangode.

Kusase

Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787]
father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782
then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on
that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water
to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

' "Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787
daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574
that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834
more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is
walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845
Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766
fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die." '

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583
barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586
them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may
take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

x618 Duunkpalɔg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the
778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child
placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a
[551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages
x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a
764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously
778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is
794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of
782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these
182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say
771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpalɔg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar* to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into
● [551] communion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
[582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛyəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage 621
customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. 619
They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to 829
themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one
another. Tenzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and
close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized;
but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated
as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on [578]
between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of
both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*',
but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right
and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to
native custom.

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as 621
a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a
lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the
width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of
corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the
Tenzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them
might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of
local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted,
is the keel of Tale social organization.

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual 621
significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in 182
the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and 771
its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but
often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects
to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the
sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy
of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one
aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes
both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu
sayat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive
reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of
another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty
of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of
the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement
farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native
beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari
to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character).

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we 621
may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settlement 618x
name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages
whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that 556
of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most
often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name
of a well-known *tɔŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are
called Saniiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a
name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her

621 clan from her husband's, e.g. Namooga, the appellation used by Talis for x618 their Tongo wives. Lastly, it may be a name taken from some politico-551 ritual office vested in her clan or maximal lineage, e.g. Bɔɣaraan, for Sii women, Tɛndaan-bii for Gbizug women. This shows how, without explicit formulation, the notions of locality, lineage, sacred attributes of the Earth, distinctive customs, and politico-ritual office—the major themes of Tale social and political organization—are linked together in a single ideological configuration.

The Section—Yizug

621 With the exception of the settlements of a few small clans not divided into maximal lineages of independent descent, all clan settlements are further divided into sections. The principles that regulate the structure of the settlement as a whole also determine the structure of its sections and of segments of these sections. This rests on the fact that the different orders of segmentation in the maximal lineage are serially homologous. An old-established settlement is the home of a clan or sub-clan. It is built up on the lineage system. All groupings and alinements that emerge in corporate affairs tend to follow lineage ties and cleavages. Thus, a section is a local subdivision of the *tɛŋ* occupied by a defined segment of the clan or maximal lineage. *Yizug* (pl. *yizugət*), the native term here translated by 'section', means literally 'Superior House',[1] and shows that the genealogical criterion predominates in the native definition of a section. Occasionally people speak of a *yizug* or part of a *yizug* as a *faaŋ* (quarter, pl. *fɔna*), using a term more common among the Mamprusi, when they are thinking of it primarily as a residential unit.

In the new settlements, however, the *yizug* is predominantly a local subdivision. This is due to their genealogical heterogeneity and political immaturity. At Datɔk, for example, one finds Gɔrisi, Tallensi, and Namnam from many different clans, drawn thither by the need for land, and connected with one another not by lineage but by ties of extra-clan kinship and affinity. Moreover, before British rule brought security and gave the titular chief of Datɔk real authority over it, its population was small and largely temporary, and constituted a group of loosely associated neighbours, not a political community. In these circumstances the subdivision of the settlement on strictly local lines is inevitable, the more so as the present-day administrative organization is based on territorial groupings.

Primarily, a *yizug* is a localized lineage segment of a clan settlement. But, characteristically, the Tallensi often extend its reference to denote a whole clan, considered as a member of an interlocking group of adjacent clans that have a greater degree of political solidarity and social cohesion *inter se* than any of them have with other clans. Tɛnzugu, as we have seen, is the outstanding instance of such a community. Tɛnzugu elders often describe the six clans dwelling there as 'our six *yizugət*' when they recapitulate stories of fights with Tongo in the days of long ago. It is a phrase constantly heard in the invocations to the ancestor spirits as if the name could have a character moulding, — a soul shaping, as he might 121 put it, — effect. Such names, moreover, make up a living record of notable events or persons or achievements in the father's life.

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[1] *Yir*, 'house', or, in this context, 'lineage', and *zug*, 'head', or by extension, 'superior, supreme'.

It is in this sense, mainly because of what they symbolise and record, that names and naming customs can be said to be part of a people's oral literature. There is no better testimony to this than in one of Professor WESTERMANN's own linguistic explorations, the enchanting life story which he recorded of the Ewe Bonifatius Foli[5]). It will be remembered that the story opens with Foli's explanation of how he came by his name. Had he been born a commoner, he says, he would have been called Kofi, the day name for a male born on Friday. But he was of chiefly descent and so received the corresponding aristocratic name, a name which no commoner would normally bear.

The ethnographical and linguistic writings on Africa abound with examples 551 pertinent to my theme, but I want to illustrate it from my own field work among the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast[6]). All Tallensi are curious and alert in the matter of personal names. Early in my stay among them I once asked a young man what was the point of name giving. This is what he answered: "(The reason) why they give names is that you may know so-and-so and the other one, and know what he looks like; for if they did not confer names on you they would not know you." The name stands for the individual, is part of what marks him out from others. This feeling about the individuality of a name is shown in the delight with which Tallensi meet someone bearing the same name as themselves. Two persons with the same name call each other "*n-wu'uri*", 609 (my name-sake) and exchange friendly banter.

The Tallensi have a technical term for the giving of a name, *pit wu'uri*, to confer 553 a name; and this term has a cognate which, we shall see, is very revealing, *pɔt wu'uri* to utter or announce a name. Let us consider, first, the giving of names. This is quite a complex matter. I realised this shortly after arriving among the Tallensi, on the occasion of Ma'an-ɔb's funeral. Just before any burial, an elder offers a red cock to the dead with an invocation that he may depart and join his ancestors. I was struck by the fact that the elder, in this case, addressed the dead man as Yin, not as Ma'an-ɔb; and this led to a train of enquiries.

I thus discovered that a person can have, and very commonly does have two 551 given names. One is his *wu'ur-zoo*, his open or everyday name; the other is his *seyraan wu'uri*, his spirit-guardian name. It is the latter name that is invoked at death and on other ritual occasions in which a person's well being is at issue. It is the name used, for instance, when a person's evil Pre-destiny is exorcised[7]). It is not a secret name. Though it is not usually known outside the circle of his close kin, those who normally share with him in sacrifices to common ancestors of

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[5]) D. WESTERMANN, "Kindheitserinnerung des Togonegers Bonifatius Foli". *Mitt. d. Sem. f. Orient. Sprachen*, XXXIV, iii, 1931.

[6]) I have described much of the life and social organisation of the Tallensi in my two books *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (1945) and *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, (1949).

[7]) For a fuller account of this notion and of the notion of the *seyɛr* see op. cit., *The Web of Kinship*, passim. See also R. S. RATTRAY, *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, vol. II. passim.

551 his immediate household, it is willingly told to a *bona fide* enquirer. Nor is it a sacred name to be used, perhaps, only in religious contexts; for, as I have implied, the spirit-guardian name can, and often does serve also as the mundane name. It is, rather, a private name, symbolising a unique relationship of religious dependence and reciprocity between the ward and his ancestors. 551 A person's *sεγər* is the ancestor or ancestress (or sometimes group of ancestors) who keeps spiritual 776 watch over the person's life, as the Tallensi put it. The *sεγər* is an ancestor mystically located at a particular shrine whose status as an ancestor spirit is quite independent of his relationship with his namesake. Any ancestral shrine can be a *sεγər* shrine to one or other descendant of the ancestor commemorated. As the guardian of the ward's life the *sεγər* spirit has to receive sacrifices for and from the ward at certain crises, such as childbirth in the case of a woman, or whenever the spirit demands it; and, as follows logically, the *sεγər* has to be informed and placated when the ward dies.

553 This is an over-simplified outline of what the notion of spirit-guardianship means to the Tallensi but it must suffice. 776 What we are here interested in is how a person comes by his *sεγəraan* name and what such a name is likely to be. My friend Saγəbazaa summed the matter up. Your *wu'ur-zoo*, he said, is just "thought up" — *i tiih i pooni*; but your *sεγər* name is a "command from a shrine" — *baγər n-yεl* — given through a diviner. In conformity with the strong patriarchal character of Tale social organisation it is the right and duty of the father (or of the patrilineal head of his family such as his father or someone in that position if he is still alive) to name his children. It is he — sometimes following a suggestion from a son or brother — who thinks up the everyday name; and it is he, as head of the house, who consults the diviner to find which of the ancestors demands a child as spiritual ward. This demand may come before the child is born, incidentally to a consultation on other matters; or, if the prospective father is anxious, for instance, as often happens with his wife's first born, it may come out in a consultation held some time before the baby is due, mainly in order to find out which ancestors to appeal to for help for the woman in her condition. With later children it may be left for days or even a week or two after the birth of the child. At all events, it is in this consultation that an ancestor (or ancestress) "declares himself" as the new babe's spirit-guardian. It is, on the face of it, not a voluntary choice by the infant's father, but a behest which he cannot reject.

Anyhow, having ascertained his child's *sεγər*, the father now returns home and makes a small offering to the shrine at which the ancestor has declared himself to reside in his role of spirit-guardian. The father may offer no more than a libation of flour stirred up in water (*zɔm-koom*) or he may offer a chicken as well. He prays that the ancestor may take good care of his new ward so that he may live long and prosper.

The child may henceforth be called by his *sεγəraan* name; but if he also has an 551 open name, he will be known by that. In fact he is in a transitional state, as regards 776 his spirit-guardian. It is a tentative relationship, as yet. The Hill Talis[6]) show this by calling every infant, at this stage, SAMPANA, a term used in no other context

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[6]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

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and probably best translated as "Baby". Proper guardianship is later fixed by a special ritual of dedicating the child to its spirit-guardian with a larger sacrifice of a sheep or a goat or other animal of that standing, which takes place at the first head-shaving of the child, generally when it is two or three years old. By then the child may have a successor in birth order and he will have proved himself to be under good guardianship by virtue of his survival.

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But our concern is with the names themselves. What sort of names are these private ones? Some are immediately obvious to anyone who knows the language and culture of the Tallensi. These are names of particular kinds of ancestor shrines which all men have, or owe homage to, through their family or lineage head. Thus, one of the commonest Tale names is Yin[9]) or some compound of this root. It is the root of the word Naayin, literally Chief-God, that is the heavenly god. But more pertinently for the subject of names, it is the name for the shrine and the associated ancestors, powers, and votive objects that together make up the cult focus of what is thought of as the individual's Destiny. The best fortune a Taləŋa can have is to have many children; and if he is lucky in this respect it is attributed to the benevolence of his Yin. Thus it happens that some of a man's children are almost always claimed as wards by his Yin ancestors; and a census soon shows that there are few families in which one or more children are not called by the name Yin or a compound of this word. Like all Tale names, it can be borne by both males and females, and is, of course, both the *seyəraan* name and the open name.

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Since having children is so often interpreted as a sign of the benevolence of a person's Yin, it is not surprising to find that often a number of a man's children are the wards of his Yin. If they are all under the guardianship of the Yin "as such" they may all bear the name Yin but with affixes that help to distinguish one child from another. The following is a list of some of the commonest Yin names. They are taken from a list of names found among the children and grandchildren of one old man.

Yin: Yin-Doog (lit. male Yin); Yim-Pɔk (lit. female Yin); Yim-Bil (lit. little Yin); Yin-Zie (lit. red Yin — because the child was light skinned); Yin-Tee (lit. Yin's tree — referring to one of the votive objects on the shrine); Yin-Teebil (lit. little Yintee).

Similar devices are used with other names that may be repeated among several children and grandchildren of one family; for a man's children may be successively given as wards to other ancestor figures than the Yin. Thus another common name that is both a private name and an open name is Bɔɣar and its compounds. Children so named may be the wards of the distant lineage ancestors mystically assembled at the central shrine of the lineage, the *bɔɣar*[10]), as it is called. But they are also so named because they are the spiritual wards of one of the Hill Talis "external"

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[9]) Cognate forms, in other dialects, are Wun, Wende. I have given some account of the Yin concept in my previously mentioned books. Yin is also the name given to the first-born of a pair of twins, "because he is the first to see the heavens above". The second-born is called Zoor, tail, "because he comes behind the first".

[10]) This is the supreme ancestral shrine of a clan or a lineage. See op. cit. *Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

551 776 *bɔɣar* centres. This happens when a woman is taken to the "external" *bɔɣar* because she has no child, in order to supplicate for offspring. When, later, she bears a child, this child is dedicated to the *bɔɣar* as a ward. The name shows this. In addition, however, each of the Talis "external" *bɔɣar* centres has its own set of names for its wards. These names are used in exactly the same way as the general name BƆƔAR. Both this general name and the particular names are modifiable in the same way as YIN is to distinguish several wards of the same shrine in one family or lineage. So we find the names BƆƔA-BIL, BƆƔA-ZIE, etc.; or to take a particular name, TƆŊ, TAN-DOOG, TƆŊ-PƆK, TAN-ZOO, etc. which are given to children who are wards of the Bunkying "external" *bɔɣar*.

This procedure is followed for children who come under the spiritual tutelage of any shrine. For example, KOLOGO is the name given to a child who is the ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine and TƆBƆGA is the name for a child whose spirit guardian is an ancestor connected with a magical medicine often owned by senior elders; and there are many others. But this mode of naming does not account for all persons who are wards of *yin* or *bɔɣar* or other shrines. Thus, in addition to the YINs, there were, among TINTA'ALƏM's children and sons' children, MƆRBU and MƆRBIL, BANTAŊ and BANTAMBILL, and all of these were the wards of the same *yin* shrine as the YINs.

551 553 776 The reason for this is typical. The most important ancestor spirit associated with TINTA'ALƏM's Destiny (*yin*) shrine was that of his own father MƆRBU. While some of the children were the wards of the *yin* "as such", the two MƆRBUs were specifically claimed as wards by their dead grandfather "sitting at" TINTA'ALƏM's *yin* as the Tallensi state it. They were his particular wards, but under his spiritual oversight through the medium of the *yin*. So they were given his name. Thus many people who have names other than YIN are the wards of ancestors associated with *yin* shrines and their names may be both private and open. The interesting point here is that the name thus given is that of an ancestor who received it not as a private name but as a *wu'ur-soo*. The original MƆRBU's *sɔyəraan* name was YIDAAN; but when he in turn became an ancestot it was his open name that was commemorated. This is the common practice, and the reason is obvious. Like the equivalent in European languages, the Tale word *wu'uri* means both "appellation" and "repute" or "renown". Now a person's repute is not a private matter. It is the public esteem in which he is held. He is remembered by his descendants — invariably with pride, whatever his true character might have been — by the public name he was known by. So we have the apparent paradox that it is the private name that carries some element of ritual value but when a person achieves the high status of an ancestor spirit he is commemorated in the shrines dedicated to him and in the names given to his descendants by his open — in this context perhaps we might say his profane — — name. Neighbours, friends and acquaintances of TINTA'ALƏM's family, hearing one of the children addressed as MƆRBU, at once recollect who is being commemorated. They would not associate the name YIDAAN with the man who was known to them and their fathers as MƆRBU.

Again, what applies to a Yin holds for other groupings of ancestors linked to specific ritual vehicles. A person whose spirit guardian is a *bɔɣar* or a *bakologo* may be claimed by one of the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated and

may be given his name; and the same rule applies to all cult groupings of ancestors, 551
for example at *ga'an*, at *tɔbəga*, at *nɔya-dok* and other shrines. 553

What about BANTAŊ and BANTAMBIL? This name literally translated means 776 crocodile. It is one of very many animal names given to people and these again are part of the larger class of names taken from natural objects in general. Other names that fall into this class are NAAHO, cow or bull, BAA, dog, WAAFO, snake. They are very common either in their root forms or in the usual derivative forms. So are names like KURUG, iron, KUGƏR, stone, TEE, tree, and their compounds. There is nothing totemistic about such names. How they arise can best be made clear by an example. When TINTA'ALƏM was a youth he went on a communal fishing expedition and had the good fortune to catch a young crocodile. This is regarded as both a feat of skill and a sign of great good fortune. Not only is it difficult to catch crocodiles on these battues but it often happens that anybody who tries to catch one he has sighted gets bitten, and the consequences may be very serious. Men have lost limbs thus and some have even died as a result of such bites. So when TINTA'ALƏM got home his father at once took him off to consult a diviner. It emerged that the episode with the crocodile was a manifestation of TINTA'ALƏM's *yin*, specifically of his grandfather's wish to be recognised as one of his *yin* ancestors; and in due course, after the necessary rites had been done, the skull of the animal was placed on the *yin* shrine to commemorate and symbolise the event. The spirit of the crocodile caught on this expedition thus becomes one of the votive elements of the *yin*, and if the ancestor associated with the occasion claims a child as a ward it will be given the name BANTAŊ.

This is the standard pattern of belief and observance when a votive element is 551
part of an ancestor shrine. Thus, to continue with TINTA'ALƏM's Yin, among its
votive objects are a much worn hoe blade and the skull of a cow. The explanation 776
is that TINTA'ALƏM was a hard working farmer. He prospered and was able, by 778
occasional sales of surplus grain, gradually to acquire some livestock. In middle age his *yin* ancestors demanded a cow from him as a thank-offering — symbolically, the first cow he was able to acquire as the fruits of his good fortune. After the sacrifice, the cow's skull was placed on the *yin* shrine. But long before that, when TINTA'ALƏM had saved enough only to buy his first sheep, his *yin* had directed him to dedicate to it his hoe, the implement with which the good farmer gains his living. When his first hoe, the hoe he had bought for himself to cultivate his own land, wore out he placed it on his *yin* shrine in dedication.

What happens in the case of a child of this family whose private name is NAAHO, 553
cow, or KUUR, hoe, or KURUG, iron, is that one (or more) of the ancestors who have 776
manifested themselves as watching over TINTA'ALƏM's Destiny — that is, as his 778
yin — on demanding this child as a ward has declared the cow or the hoe have been his special vehicle. Sacrifices offered on behalf of the ward will be given to all the ancestors manifested in the *yin*, but the cow or the hoe blade will be particularly cited.

Similar ideas and beliefs are associated with other ritual vehicles of the ancestors. Thus one KURUG I know was the spiritual ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine. His father had fallen ill shortly after shooting a python and this proved to be the manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor demanding recognition. Both the arrow

553 head and the python skull were placed on the shrine that was eventually conse-
776 crated to the *bakologo* spirit and my informant's name was a reference to the arrow
778 head. One of *his* sons taken in guardianship by the same shrine was named WAAFO, snake.

[775] This case is interesting from another angle, too. The Tallensi have no belief in reincarnation. There is no special bond between a person and his ancestral namesake. He is not supposed to resemble or expected to emulate his ancestor. His name is a display of pride in ancestry, on the one hand, and a sign of submission to the religious supremacy of the ancestors, on the other. Thus he has no special ritual observances, on account of his name, if he is the ward of a patrilineal ancestor. [614] But if his *sɛyər* is a matrilateral ancestor, this person might have belonged to a clan different from his own. In that case he is often obliged to keep the totemic taboos of the clan of this ancestor. Thus in the above case it is not altogether an accident that the slain python turned out to be a manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor whose clan have a taboo against killing and eating this animal. Children taken in spirit-guardianship by this ancestor have therefore to observe the same taboo, whether or not it is followed by other members of their family and clan.

I do not want to follow further the complex ramifications of this aspect of Tale
553 naming customs. One more detail must suffice. The greatest renown, that is the
776 most respected *yu'uri*, comes from election to an office. A chief (*Na'ab*) or Custodian of the Earth (*Tɛndaana*) is always addressed and referred to by his title. After his death he is certain to have descendants through his sons, grandsons, and daughters, placed under his spiritual guardianship. They will be named either by the name he took to himself on election to his office, which I shall describe presently, or by his title. NA'AB, NA'ABPƆK, TENDAANA, etc. are common names among descendants of such dignitaries.

And here it is pertinent to add that certain forms of disgrace which are associated with ritual danger result in the suppression of ancestral names. Thus if a man dies of smallpox, or is killed in war, his name is never given to a descendant. He will be remembered in sacrifices if he has descendants but not in their names.

● 551 I want to turn now to the open names. Their variety is extraordinary. A few refer to accidental or conventional circumstances connected with the birth of the
553 bearer and are therefore fairly frequent. ZIBA, knows not father, is the name always given to a posthumous child. SAMANE, the home farm, is a common name. It is given to a child whose mother was overcome by labour pains while engaged on some task on the home farm. SUOR, path, has the same origin. TAMPƆƔAR, the garbage heap, may be the name given to a child born after the onset of labour pains at the ash heap. But it also arises in this way. A woman has had several children all of whom have died soon after birth. This is failure or malevolence on the part of the various ancestors who claimed these children as wards. When her next child is born the father says: "I give this child's life to be watched over by the garbage heap. My ancestors have failed me, for all that my children are good for is to be buried (as babies that die are so buried) in the garbage heap." This is a well tried magical idea, found also elsewhere in West Africa and in many other parts of the world.

But the majority of open names refer to personal, local, family, historical and 551 such like circumstances at the time of the person's birth. Sometimes a proverb or maxim is aptly turned into a name to suit the event. More usually the father 553 or grandfather invents the name and the allusion may be so personal and obscure that only the family members see it. It is among these names that one finds what corresponds to the literary imagination of the Tallensi wisely, wittily, and often movingly expressed.

So luxuriant is the variety of these names that it is possible to quote only a few from amongst the many hundreds in my notebooks. A rare name is GƆMNA. It was borne by the son of a chief's headman. He was born on what was, for the chief and his headmen, a red-letter occasion that came around only once in two or three years, the day on which the Governor paid a visit to the area. So he was named GƆMNA, the Tale corruption of "Governor". By contrast, take such a name as NƆŊDEM-ZUOYA, literally, poor people abound. This is a proverbial saying used to console someone for a loss, particularly of livestock — as by disease — or other property. The father, in this case, had just suffered such a loss. A similar name is WƱ'UR-BEMI, literally, the name or renown remains. When the child was born, the father said, he and his brothers were poor and insignificant people. But they had their renown as the descendants of chiefs and as men of good character. Their day would come, he said to himself, quoting the proverbial saying that whatever else might be lacking "the name remains". NA'AB-DIYA, the chief has taken office, was born immediately after his grandfather's election as chief and his name commemorates this event. As he explained to me: "I was born when Kunduzoor had just got his chiefship. He said: '*Na'ab diya*, the chief has taken office. If he is a good chief, he stays in office; if he is a bad chief, he stays in office. Nobody can now deprive him of the chiefship.'" This name, therefore, sums up one of the essential laws of Tale chiefship, the law of the inviolability of chiefship. Once installed a chief cannot be unseated. Na'abdiya had a son called SUH-PUDUMƆRA, the heart does not ache. The death of a child had greatly distressed him; but the birth soon afterwards of this son came as a consolation; hence the name.

A very respectable elder had a son of about 25 who bore the name BA-DI-DATA, 551 let them not pull (my ear). When I asked for an explanation there was a burst 553 of hilarity. The youth's father, grinning reminiscently, told the following story. 684 As a young man, being the son of a chief he was a gay spark. Though already married he had an affair with the young wife of a senior chief. At that time the Administration took a serious view of adultery and treated it as a crime. So our friend found himself summoned to answer the charge of adultery and before the very chief whom he had wronged. The penalty was a heavy fine. Now a euphemistic [861] way of talking about a court fine is to call it "tugging" or "twisting the ear" — *dɛrɛg tɔbɛr*, an allusion to a practice sometimes resorted to by irate parents in correcting young children. As it happened, the culprit's wife had just born a son. The fine was announced in court but the wronged chief declared that it was not heavy enough, and demanded that it be increased by a sheep and a pot of beer. At this the culprit protested and begged "let them not twist my ear further". This episode is commemorated in the son's name.

551 It is entertaining to run through a list of Tale open names if one knows the allusions contained in them. Let me quote a few that are derived from proverbs and are known to everybody, though, of course, only the parents and very close kin of the person know what the exact circumstances were that made the saying apposite.

551 538 The name Yam-Pu-Yiit is the first phrase of the proverb "*Yam pu yiit yɛŋha, ka bɛ la pooni*". The concept *yam* has a wide ambit of meaning. It means wisdom, prudence, commonsense, intelligence, etc. Here it can be translated "counsel" in the sense we give to this word when we speak of "keeping one's own counsel". The proverb can be rendered "Counsel (i. e. judgments about persons and events) does not come out on the surface; it remains in the heart". In other words, a prudent person keeps his own counsel. The man who gave his daughter this name was feeling aggrieved over the intrigues of a rival, but prudence dictated doing nothing other than obliquely giving out his feelings in the naming of his child. The sentiment is very characteristic of Tale values. Tallensi are anything but submissive in the face of rivalry or scorn; but to be carried away by resentment and to act rashly are thought to be foolish, in such circumstances.

"*Nigɔm n-di*" is another characteristic Tale proverb that I came across in a name. It is a good example of the puritan streak in Tale values. It means, more or less literally, "persevere and (you will have enough) to eat", perseverance here carrying the implication of hard work and frugality. It was the name given to his son by a man who was proud of having begun life as a very poor man but of having prospered by hard work and frugality.

A saying reminiscent of our maxim that hard words do not break bones is "*yel pu kura*", literally: "a telling (off) doesn't kill". I knew a youth called Yel-Pu-Kura, but did not ascertain why he was so called.

A final example is the name Zaŋ, to seize, take, grasp. This monosyllabic name was the abbreviation of a proverb "*Salɔnsaa yie, gum zaŋ pu tɔ*", that is, "The ant says, gather together and take hold of it, that is not hard". In other words, a task that is too hard for the individual to accomplish if he is alone can be done with the co-operation of many. This is an exhortation for kin and friends to help one another.

551 And now a few more instances of names that document events in family history and incidents of a personal nature.

Dim-Bɔrəgya, enmity has vanished, commemorates a reconciliation between the child's father and his father-in-law.

Ba-Kyel-Marib, let them stop being responsible for me, was the name Saandi gave to his first born daughter after he left his father's brother and started to farm for himself.

Yaan-Bɔrəgya, honour has departed, was the name given to a man after the tendaanaship which his father had held passed, on the latter's death, to another branch of the lineage.

Sabaalug, iron peg, Dok, pot, Baγana, a species of tree, are names that refer to different kinds of medicine shrines acquired by the fathers at the time the children were born.

551 As to the following, their meanings are known but the context of circumstances can only be guessed.

N-Nye-Fara, I have seen sorrow; ɔn-Ti-Wari, who gives something for nothing? Saγa-Ti-Ba, submit to them; ɔn-Die-Sɔ, he who accepts (humbly) is better; Zi-Kihib, men who know no taboos; Ku-ŋaaŋ-Ba, will not overwhelm them; Ba-Eŋ-Ka-Mi, let them do it and find out.

As I have already noted, the same names are used for both males and females, occasionally with a suffix to indicate the sex of the person. But there is one respect in which women's names differ from men's. When they marry they are known in their husband's home only by a nominal form of the name of their natal settlement or clan, never by their given name. The given name is used only when they are at home among their own family and clan. This is one of the ways in which the strict separation of a woman's role in life as wife and mother, on the one hand, and as daughter and sister, on the other, is symbolised. I have described these ideas more fully in *The Dynamics of Clanship*, CH. IX, and in *The Web of Kinship*, CH. IV, and therefore say no more about them here.

553 One more topic must be briefly discussed. The naming customs I have described all belong to what Tallensi call "conferring names" — *pit wu'uri*. It is clear that names so given do serve very precisely to distinguish individuals. What about the other naming process, the uttering or announcing of names — *pɔt wu'uri?*

553 622 793 This takes place whenever a man is elected to a politico-ritual office as a chief (*na'ab*) among Namoo clans or as a tendaana or *bɔyar* officiant among the Talis[11]). The installation ceremonies include a short period of seclusion in a room where the clan and Earth shrines are housed. Then, following the common pattern of such *rites de passage*, the new chief or priest announces the names by which he wishes to be henceforth known. He has put aside his former social personality and the new one he assumes must be symbolised by an appropriate name. From his chamber of seclusion he announces his new names through the elder whose traditional duty it is to proclaim them. As a rule, three names are proclaimed, and as the last is given out the people assembled for the ceremonies shout in acclamation. The new chief or priest then comes out himself. Hereafter it is a taboo for his given name to be mentioned and he goes down to posterity by his new name, or rather by that one of them for which he shows most preference. I might add that it is impressive to see what a profound change a man seems to undergo when he is elected to a politico-ritual office. It is the supreme honour to which a man and all his kin can aspire, the greatest renown that can come to a name. Yet it is also a heavy burden. The new name stands for constant watchfulness and responsibility. Among the Tallensi, these duties are largely expressed in religious concepts and observances, though they are related to vital necessities such as the regularity of rainfall, peace and the absence of disease. To ensure this, chiefs and tendaanas have to keep ritual taboos, make sacrifices to the ancestors, arbitrate honestly in disputes, in short, watch over the welfare of the land and the people. The new names stand for this.

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[11]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship*, passim, for details.

553 551 The Tallensi call these accession names *na'am wu'uri*, chiefship name, or *tendaan wu'uri*, tendaana name, or more generally *saam-wu'uri*, a term colloquially used for what we call nick-names, but meaning the name by which a person is publicly acclaimed. Accession names are, of course, "thought up" by the office-holder elect and so resemble the ordinary open names, which indeed they parallel in function. But they are interesting because they reflect not only the circumstances of the individual's achieving the honour of office, but his ideas about himself, his political role, and his historical position. In the legendary history of Tale clans the names of leaders often sum up the significance of the clan in the total social organisation. Thus an early Gbizug Tendaana is said to have been named GERIBAZAA, to mix all together, a name that well represents the present social and ritual functions of this tendaana as the intermediary between the Namoos and the Talis[12]).

553 A few examples only are needed to illustrate what I have said. I take, first, some well known chiefs' accession names.

551 622 One of the famous chiefs of Tongo was NAMBɔγADA, still crawling. This name was taken by a young chief who announced that he was, as yet, but an infant in chiefship, "still a crawler", but would soon grow up as a chief and do great things. A more recent chief called himself DEŊ-TIES, short for *Deŋ-ties-kunkɔŋ-na'am*, first to think of what to do will not lack a chiefship. He had acted quickly to seek election, before anybody else had thought of it, and implied that this was a promise of how he would act in the future. KU-NDU-ZOOR, cannot climb a hill, was the proud name taken by a chief whom I have previously mentioned. The reference was to the fact that water cannot run up-hill. Had he not excelled his competitors he would have been like water, unable to rise superior to the rest. Alas, his short chiefship was saddened by famine and his successor took to himself the name of NA-LEB-SEUG, it will turn to the rainy season. However long and hard a dry season may seem, he declared, it must give way to the rains at length. Coming after a famine — a long dry season, as it were — he proclaimed himself as the bringer of rain and so of food. The list can be extended but I will give only one more example. The Chief of Tongo, when I was there in 1935—37, had the given name of KPA'AMA, and this is how he is named, in breach of native ideas of propriety, in some Administrative records of the time[13]). His chiefly name was NA-NAAM-BIUŊ, will change into a lake. This is short for *Bul-sɔŋ-na-naam-biuŋ*, a good spring (rising in a small pool) will change into a lake. He meant that he was as yet only a small pool, an inexperienced and young chief, but given time to grow he would change into a lake, a great and beneficent chief — — beneficent, because water, being scarce in Taleland, is thought of as a very valuable thing.

551 553 793 The accession names of tendaanas and other holders of priestly offices follow the same pattern. One tendaana I saw installed proclaimed his new name as DOγ-BAZAA, begetter of all. He wished everybody to know that he regarded himself in his new role as the father of all his people, watching over their welfare as a father watches over that of his children.

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[12]) See my previously cited books for details of this division.

[13]) Cf. also RATTRAY, op. cit. vol. II, ch. 33.

Another tɛndaana called himself NA-DEŊ-BUGƏLUG, will drop manure. He was 557
comparing himself to a herd of cattle whose coming would bring fertility to the 553
impoverished soil of his clan and so give them more food and well-being. A well 793
known tɛndaana of former days was called MAAL-BAZAA, he who puts everything
right by the proper religious acts.

Naming customs of the kind I have described are found among all the tribes 553
and peoples of Africa. They show with particular clarity, just because the data seem so simple, how fundamental a really good knowledge of a people's language is for a proper understanding of their culture. How deep can the understanding of the culture be if the ethnographer who is studying it does not immediately understand the meaning of the names of the people he is in daily contact with? It can be seen, also, that a name is a document epitomising personal experiences, historical happenings, attitudes to life, and cultural ideas and values.

182 794 796 of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme, through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔyaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔyar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔyar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔyar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔyar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔyar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔyar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔya* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

782 794 [552] So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔyar*, the officiant in his invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔya*, enumerating them by name, to 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔyar* has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔya* of all the Talis clans are

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[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔyar* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

as if the name could have a character moulding, — a soul shaping, as he might put it, — effect. Such names, moreover, make up a living record of notable events or persons or achievements in the father's life. 121

It is in this sense, mainly because of what they symbolise and record, that names and naming customs can be said to be part of a people's oral literature. There is no better testimony to this than in one of Professor WESTERMANN's own linguistic explorations, the enchanting life story which he recorded of the Ewe Bonifatius Foli5). It will be remembered that the story opens with Foli's explanation of how he came by his name. Had he been born a commoner, he says, he would have been called Kofi, the day name for a male born on Friday. But he was of chiefly descent and so received the corresponding aristocratic name, a name which no commoner would normally bear.

The ethnographical and linguistic writings on Africa abound with examples 551
pertinent to my theme, but I want to illustrate it from my own field work among the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast6). All Tallensi are curious and alert in the matter of personal names. Early in my stay among them I once asked a young man what was the point of name giving. This is what he answered: "(The reason) why they give names is that you may know so-and-so and the other one, and know what he looks like; for if they did not confer names on you they would not know you." The name stands for the individual, is part of what marks him out from others. This feeling about the individuality of a name is shown in the delight with which Tallensi meet someone bearing the same name [609]
as themselves. Two persons with the same name call each other "*n-wu'uri*", (my name-sake) and exchange friendly banter.

The Tallensi have a technical term for the giving of a name, *pit wu'uri*, to confer 553
a name; and this term has a cognate which, we shall see, is very revealing, *pot wu'uri* to utter or announce a name. Let us consider, first, the giving of names. This is quite a complex matter. I realised this shortly after arriving among the Tallensi, on the occasion of Ma'an-ɔb's funeral. Just before any burial, an elder offers a red cock to the dead with an invocation that he may depart and join his ancestors. I was struck by the fact that the elder, in this case, addressed the dead man as Yin, not as Ma'an-ɔb; and this led to a train of enquiries.

I thus discovered that a person can have, and very commonly does have two 551
given names. One is his *wu'ur-soo*, his open or everyday name; the other is his *seyraan wu'uri*, his spirit-guardian name. It is the latter name that is invoked at death and on other ritual occasions in which a person's well being is at issue. It is the name used, for instance, when a person's evil Pre-destiny is exorcised7). It is not a secret name. Though it is not usually known outside the circle of his close kin, those who normally share with him in sacrifices to common ancestors of

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5) D. WESTERMANN, "Kindheitserinnerung des Togonegers Bonifatius Foli". *Mitt. d. Sem. f. Orient. Sprachen*, XXXIV, iii, 1931.

6) I have described much of the life and social organisation of the Tallensi in my two books *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (1945) and *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, (1949).

7) For a fuller account of this notion and of the notion of the *seyer* see op. cit., *The Web of Kinship*, passim. See also R. S. RATTRAY, *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, vol. II. passim.

551 his immediate household, it is willingly told to a *bona fide* enquirer. Nor is it a sacred name to be used, perhaps, only in religious contexts; for, as I have implied, the spirit-guardian name can, and often does serve also as the mundane name. It is, rather, a private name, symbolising a unique relationship of religious dependence and reciprocity between the ward and his ancestors. A person's *sɛγər* is the 551 776 ancestor or ancestress (or sometimes group of ancestors) who keeps spiritual watch over the person's life, as the Tallensi put it. The *sɛγər* is an ancestor mystically located at a particular shrine whose status as an ancestor spirit is quite independent of his relationship with his namesake. Any ancestral shrine can be a *sɛγər* shrine to one or other descendant of the ancestor commemorated. As the guardian of the ward's life the *sɛγər* spirit has to receive sacrifices for and from the ward at certain crises, such as childbirth in the case of a woman, or whenever the spirit demands it; and, as follows logically, the *sɛγər* has to be informed and placated when the ward dies.

553 776 This is an over-simplified outline of what the notion of spirit-guardianship means to the Tallensi but it must suffice. What we are here interested in is how a person comes by his *sɛγəraan* name and what such a name is likely to be. My friend Saγəbazaa summed the matter up. Your *wu'ur-zoo*, he said, is just "thought up" — *i tiih i̧ pooni*; but your *sɛγər* name is a "command from a shrine" — *baγər n-yel* — given through a diviner. In conformity with the strong patriarchal character of Tale social organisation it is the right and duty of the father (or of the patrilineal head of his family such as his father or someone in that position if he is still alive) to name his children. It is he — sometimes following a suggestion from a son or brother — who thinks up the everyday name; and it is he, as head of the house, who consults the diviner to find which of the ancestors demands a child as spiritual ward. This demand may come before the child is born, incidentally to a consultation on other matters; or, if the prospective father is anxious, for instance, as often happens with his wife's first born, it may come out in a consultation held some time before the baby is due, mainly in order to find out which ancestors to appeal to for help for the woman in her condition. With later children it may be left for days or even a week or two after the birth of the child. At all events, it is in this consultation that an ancestor (or ancestress) "declares himself" as the new babe's spirit-guardian. It is, on the face of it, not a voluntary choice by the infant's father but a behest which he cannot reject.

Anyhow, having ascertained his child's *sɛγər*, the father now returns home and makes a small offering to the shrine at which the ancestor has declared himself to reside in his role of spirit-guardian. The father may offer no more than a libation of flour stirred up in water (*zɔm-koom*) or he may offer a chicken as well. He prays that the ancestor may take good care of his new ward so that he may live long and prosper.

551 776 The child may henceforth be called by his *sɛγəraan* name; but if he also has an open name, he will be known by that. In fact he is in a transitional state, as regards his spirit-guardian. It is a tentative relationship, as yet. The Hill Talis*) show this by calling every infant, at this stage, SAMPANA, a term used in no other context

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*) See *The Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

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551 776 *bɔγar* centres. This happens when a woman is taken to the "external" *bɔγar* because she has no child, in order to supplicate for offspring. When, later, she bears a child, this child is dedicated to the *bɔγar* as a ward. The name shows this. In addition, however, each of the Talis "external" *bɔγar* centres has its own set of names for its wards. These names are used in exactly the same way as the general name BɔγAR. Both this general name and the particular names are modifiable in the same way as YIN is to distinguish several wards of the same shrine in one family or lineage. So we find the names BɔγA-BIL, BɔγA-ZIE, etc.; or to take a particular name, TɔŊ, TAN-DOOG, TɔŊ-PɔK, TAN-ZOO, etc. which are given to children who are wards of the Bunkying "external" *bɔγar*.

This procedure is followed for children who come under the spiritual tutelage of any shrine. For example, KOLOGO is the name given to a child who is the ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine and TɔBəGA is the name for a child whose spirit guardian is an ancestor connected with a magical medicine often owned by senior elders; and there are many others. But this mode of naming does not account for all persons who are wards of *yin* or *bɔγar* or other shrines. Thus, in addition to the YINs, there were, among TINTA'ALəM's children and sons' children, MɔRBU and MɔRBIL, BANTAŊ and BANTAMBILL, and all of these were the wards of the same *yin* shrine as the YINs.

551 553 776 The reason for this is typical. The most important ancestor spirit associated with TINTA'ALəM's Destiny (*yin*) shrine was that of his own father MɔRBU. While some of the children were the wards of the *yin* "as such", the two MɔRBUs were specifically claimed as wards by their dead grandfather "sitting at" TINTA'ALəM's *yin* as the Tallensi state it. They were his particular wards, but under his spiritual oversight through the medium of the *yin*. So they were given his name. Thus many people who have names other than YIN are the wards of ancestors associated with *yin* shrines and their names may be both private and open. The interesting point here is that the name thus given is that of an ancestor who received it not as a private name but as a *wu'ur-zoo*. The original MɔRBU's *seyəraan* name was YIDAAN; but when he in turn became an ancestor it was his open name that was commemorated. This is the common practice, and the reason is obvious. Like the equivalent in European languages, the Tale word *wu'uri* means both "appellation" and "repute" or "renown". Now a person's repute is not a private matter. It is the public esteem in which he is held. He is remembered by his descendants — invariably with pride, whatever his true character might have been — by the public name he was known by. So we have the apparent paradox that it is the private name that carries some element of ritual value but when a person achieves the high status of an ancestor spirit he is commemorated in the shrines dedicated to him and in the names given to his descendants by his open — in this context perhaps we might say his profane — — name. Neighbours, friends and acquaintances of TINTA'ALəM's family, hearing one of the children addressed as MɔRBU, at once recollect who is being commemorated. They would not associate the name YIDAAN with the man who was known to them and their fathers as MɔRBU.

Again, what applies to a Yin holds for other groupings of ancestors linked to specific ritual vehicles. A person whose spirit guardian is a *bɔγar* or a *bakologo* may be claimed by one of the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated and may be given his name; and the same rule applies to all cult groupings of ancestors, for example at *gɑ'an*, at *tɔbɩga*, at *nɔya-dok* and other shrines. 551 553

What about BANTAŊ and BANTAMBIL? This name literally translated means crocodile. It is one of very many animal names given to people and these again are part of the larger class of names taken from natural objects in general. Other names that fall into this class are NAAHO, cow or bull, BAA, dog, WAAFO, snake. They are very common either in their root forms or in the usual derivative forms. So are names like KURUG, iron, KUGƆR, stone, TEE, tree, and their compounds. There is nothing totemistic about such names. How they arise can best be made clear by an example. When TINTA'ALƆM was a youth he went on a communal fishing expedition and had the good fortune to catch a young crocodile. This is regarded as both a feat of skill and a sign of great good fortune. Not only is it difficult to catch crocodiles on these battues but it often happens that anybody who tries to catch one he has sighted gets bitten, and the consequences may be very serious. Men have lost limbs thus and some have even died as a result of such bites. So when TINTA'ALƆM got home his father at once took him off to consult a diviner. It emerged that the episode with the crocodile was a manifestation of TINTA'ALƆM's *yin*, specifically of his grandfather's wish to be recognised as one of his *yin* ancestors; and in due course, after the necessary rites had been done, the skull of the animal was placed on the *yin* shrine to commemorate and symbolise the event. The spirit of the crocodile caught on this expedition thus becomes one of the votive elements of the *yin*, and if the ancestor associated with the occasion claims a child as a ward it will be given the name BANTAŊ. 776

This is the standard pattern of belief and observance when a votive element is part of an ancestor shrine. Thus, to continue with TINTA'ALƆM's Yin, among its votive objects are a much worn hoe blade and the skull of a cow. The explanation is that TINTA'ALƆM was a hard working farmer. He prospered and was able, by occasional sales of surplus grain, gradually to acquire some livestock. In middle age his *yin* ancestors demanded a cow from him as a thank-offering — symbolically, the first cow he was able to acquire as the fruits of his good fortune. After the sacrifice, the cow's skull was placed on the *yin* shrine. But long before that, when TINTA'ALƆM had saved enough only to buy his first sheep, his *yin* had directed him to dedicate to it his hoe, the implement with which the good farmer gains his living. When his first hoe, the hoe he had bought for himself to cultivate his own land, wore out he placed it on his *yin* shrine in dedication. 551 776 778

What happens in the case of a child of this family whose private name is NAAHO, cow, or KUUR, hoe, or KURUG, iron, is that one (or more) of the ancestors who have manifested themselves as watching over TINTA'ALƆM's Destiny — that is, as his *yin* — on demanding this child as a ward has declared the cow or the hoe have been his special vehicle. Sacrifices offered on behalf of the ward will be given to all the ancestors manifested in the *yin*, but the cow or the hoe blade will be particularly cited. 553 776 778

Similar ideas and beliefs are associated with other ritual vehicles of the ancestors. Thus one KURUG I knew was the spiritual ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine. His father had fallen ill shortly after shooting a python and this proved to be the manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor demanding recognition. Both the arrow

553 776 778 head and the python skull were placed on the shrine that was eventually consecrated to the *bakologo* spirit and my informant's name was a reference to the arrow head. One of *his* sons taken in guardianship by the same shrine was named WAAPO, snake.

[775] This case is interesting from another angle, too. The Tallensi have no belief in reincarnation. There is no special bond between a person and his ancestral namesake. He is not supposed to resemble or expected to emulate his ancestor. His name is a display of pride in ancestry, on the one hand, and a sign of submission to the religious supremacy of the ancestors, on the other. Thus he has no special ritual observances, on account of his name, if he is the ward of a patrilineal ancestor. [614] But if his *sεγər* is a matrilateral ancestor, this person might have belonged to a clan different from his own. In that case he is often obliged to keep the totemic taboos of the clan of this ancestor. Thus in the above case it is not altogether an accident that the slain python turned out to be a manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor whose clan have a taboo against killing and eating this animal. Children taken in spirit-guardianship by this ancestor have therefore to observe the same taboo, whether or not it is followed by other members of their family and clan.

553 776 I do not want to follow further the complex ramifications of this aspect of Tale naming customs. One more detail must suffice. The greatest renown, that is the most respected *wu'uri*, comes from election to an office. A chief (*Na'ab*) or Custodian of the Earth (*Tεndaana*) is always addressed and referred to by his title. After his death he is certain to have descendants through his sons, grandsons, and daughters, placed under his spiritual guardianship. They will be named either by the name he took to himself on election to his office, which I shall describe presently, or by his title. NA'AB, NA'ABPƆK, TENDAANA, etc. are common names among descendants of such dignitaries.

And here it is pertinent to add that certain forms of disgrace which are associated with ritual danger result in the suppression of ancestral names. Thus if a man dies of smallpox, or is killed in war, his name is never given to a descendant. He will be remembered in sacrifices if he has descendants but not in their names.

551 553 I want to turn now to the open names. Their variety is extraordinary. A few refer to accidental or conventional circumstances connected with the birth of the bearer and are therefore fairly frequent. ZIBA, knows not father, is the name always given to a posthumous child. SAMANE, the home farm, is a common name. It is given to a child whose mother was overcome by labour pains while engaged on some task on the home farm. SUOR, path, has the same origin. TAMPƆΓAR, the garbage heap, may be the name given to a child born after the onset of labour pains at the ash heap. But it also arises in this way. A woman has had several children all of whom have died soon after birth. This is failure or malevolence on the part of the various ancestors who claimed these children as wards. When her next child is born the father says: "I give this child's life to be watched over by the garbage heap. My ancestors have failed me, for all that my children are good for is to be buried (as babies that die are so buried) in the garbage heap." This is a well tried magical idea, found also elsewhere in West Africa and in many other parts of the world.

But the majority of open names refer to personal, local, family, historical and 551 such like circumstances at the time of the person's birth. Sometimes a proverb or maxim is aptly turned into a name to suit the event. 553 More usually the father or grandfather invents the name and the allusion may be so personal and obscure that only the family members see it. It is among these names that one finds what corresponds to the literary imagination of the Tallensi wisely, wittily, and often movingly expressed.

So luxuriant is the variety of these names that it is possible to quote only a few from amongst the many hundreds in my notebooks. A rare name is GƆMNA. It was borne by the son of a chief's headman. He was born on what was, for the chief and his headmen, a red-letter occasion that came around only once in two or three years, the day on which the Governor paid a visit to the area. So he was named GƆMNA, the Tale corruption of "Governor". By contrast, take such a name as NƆŊDEM-ZUOYA, literally, poor people abound. This is a proverbial saying used to console someone for a loss, particularly of livestock — as by disease — or other property. The father, in this case, had just suffered such a loss. A similar name is WU'UR-BEMI, literally, the name or renown remains. When the child was born, the father said, he and his brothers were poor and insignificant people. But they had their renown as the descendants of chiefs and as men of good character. Their day would come, he said to himself, quoting the proverbial saying that whatever else might be lacking "the name remains". NA'AB-DIYA, the chief has taken office, was born immediately after his grandfather's election as chief and his name commemorates this event. As he explained to me: "I was born when Kunduzoor had just got his chiefship. He said: '*Na'ab diya*, the chief has taken office. If he is a good chief, he stays in office; if he is a bad chief, he stays in office. Nobody can now deprive him of the chiefship.' " This name, therefore, sums up one of the essential laws of Tale chiefship, the law of the inviolability of chiefship. Once installed a chief cannot be unseated. Na'abdiya had a son called SUH-PUDUMƏRA, the heart does not ache. The death of a child had greatly distressed him; but the birth soon afterwards of this son came as a consolation; hence the name.

A very respectable elder had a son of about 25 who bore the name BA-DI-DATA, 551 let them not pull (my ear). When I asked for an explanation there was a burst 553 of hilarity. The youth's father, grinning reminiscently, told the following story. 684 As a young man, being the son of a chief he was a gay spark. Though already married he had an affair with the young wife of a senior chief. At that time the Administration took a serious view of adultery and treated it as a crime. So our friend found himself summoned to answer the charge of adultery and before the very chief whom he had wronged. The penalty was a heavy fine. Now a euphemistic way of talking about a court fine is to call it "tugging" or "twisting the ear" — [861] *darəŋ təbər*, an allusion to a practice sometimes resorted to by irate parents in correcting young children. As it happened, the culprit's wife had just born a son. The fine was announced in court but the wronged chief declared that it was not heavy enough, and demanded that it be increased by a sheep and a pot of beer. At this the culprit protested and begged "let them not twist my ear further". This episode is commemorated in the son's name.

As to the following, their meanings are known but the context of circumstances can only be guessed. 551

N-Nye-Fara, I have seen sorrow; ɔn-Ti-Wari, who gives something for nothing! Saγa-Ti-Ba, submit to them; ɔn-Die-Sɔ, he who accepts (humbly) is better; Zi-Kihib, men who know no taboos; Ku-ŋaaŋ-Ba, will not overwhelm them; Ba-Eŋ-Ka-Mi, let them do it and find out.

As I have already noted, the same names are used for both males and females, occasionally with a suffix to indicate the sex of the person. But there is one respect in which women's names differ from men's. When they marry they are known in their husband's home only by a nominal form of the name of their natal settlement or clan, never by their given name. The given name is used only when they are at home among their own family and clan. This is one of the ways in which the strict separation of a woman's role in life as wife and mother, on the one hand, and as daughter and sister, on the other, is symbolised. I have described these ideas more fully in *The Dynamics of Clanship*, CH. IX, and in *The Web of Kinship*, CH. IV, and therefore say no more about them here.

One more topic must be briefly discussed. The naming customs I have described all belong to what Tallensi call "conferring names" — *pii wu'uri*. It is clear that names so given do serve very precisely to distinguish individuals. What about the other naming process, the uttering or announcing of names — *pɔt wu'uri?* 553

This takes place whenever a man is elected to a politico-ritual office as a chief (*na'ab*) among Namoo clans or as a tendaana or *bɔyar* officiant among the Talis[11]). The installation ceremonies include a short period of seclusion in a room where the clan and Earth shrines are housed. Then, following the common pattern of such *rites de passage*, the new chief or priest announces the names by which he wishes to be henceforth known. He has put aside his former social personality and the new one he assumes must be symbolised by an appropriate name. From his chamber of seclusion he announces his new names through the elder whose traditional duty it is to proclaim them. As a rule, three names are proclaimed, and as the last is given out the people assembled for the ceremonies shout in acclamation. The new chief or priest then comes out himself. Hereafter it is a taboo for his given name to be mentioned and he goes down to posterity by his new name, or rather by that one of them for which he shows most preference. I might add that it is impressive to see what a profound change a man seems to undergo when he is elected to a politico-ritual office. It is the supreme honour to which a man and all his kin can aspire, the greatest renown that can come to a name. Yet it is also a heavy burden. The new name stands for constant watchfulness and responsibility. Among the Tallensi, these duties are largely expressed in religious concepts and observances, though they are related to vital necessities such as the regularity of rainfall, peace and the absence of disease. To ensure this, chiefs and tendaanas have to keep ritual taboos, make sacrifices to the ancestors, arbitrate honestly in disputes, in short, watch over the welfare of the land and the people. The new names stand for this. 553 622 793

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[11]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship*, passim, for details.

553 551 The Tallensi call these accession names *na'am wu'uri*, chiefship name, or *tɛndaan wu'uri*, tɛndaana name, or more generally *saam-wu'uri*, a term colloquially used for what we call nick-names, but meaning the name by which a person is publicly acclaimed. Accession names are, of course, "thought up" by the office-holder elect and so resemble the ordinary open names, which indeed they parallel in function. But they are interesting because they reflect not only the circumstances of the individual's achieving the honour of office, but his ideas about himself, his political role, and his historical position. In the legendary history of Tale clans the names of leaders often sum up the significance of the clan in the total social organisation. Thus an early Gbizug Tɛndaana is said to have been named GERIBAZAA, to mix all together, a name that well represents the present social and ritual functions of this tɛndaana as the intermediary between the Namoos and the Talis[12]).

553 A few examples only are needed to illustrate what I have said. I take, first, some
551 well known chiefs' accession names.

One of the famous chiefs of Tongo was NAMBƆγADA, still crawling. This name
622 was taken by a young chief who announced that he was, as yet, but an infant in chiefship, "still a crawler", but would soon grow up as a chief and do great things. A more recent chief called himself DEŊ-TIES, short for *Deŋ-ties-kunkɔŋ-na'am*, first to think of what to do will not lack a chiefship. He had acted quickly to seek election, before anybody else had thought of it, and implied that this was a promise of how he would act in the future. KU-NDU-ZOOR, cannot climb a hill, was the proud name taken by a chief whom I have previously mentioned. The reference was to the fact that water cannot run up-hill. Had he not excelled his competitors he would have been like water, unable to rise superior to the rest. Alas, his short chiefship was saddened by famine and his successor took to himself the name of NA-LEB-SEUG, it will turn to the rainy season. However long and hard a dry season may seem, he declared, it must give way to the rains at length. Coming after a famine — a long dry season, as it were — he proclaimed himself as the bringer of rain and so of food. The list can be extended but I will give only one more example. The Chief of Tongo, when I was there in 1935—37, had the given name of KPA'AMA, and this is how he is named, in breach of native ideas of propriety, in some Administrative records of the time[13]). His chiefly name was NA-NAAM-BIUŊ, will change into a lake. This is short for *Bul-sɔŋ-na-naam-biuŋ*, a good spring (rising in a small pool) will change into a lake. He meant that he was as yet only a small pool, an inexperienced and young chief, but given time to grow he would change into a lake, a great and beneficent chief —— beneficent, because water, being scarce in Taleland, is thought of as a very valuable thing.

551 The accession names of tɛndaanas and other holders of priestly offices follow
553 the same pattern. One tɛndaana I saw installed proclaimed his new name as
793 DOγ-BAZAA, begetter of all. He wished everybody to know that he regarded himself in his new role as the father of all his people, watching over their welfare as a father watches over that of his children.

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[12] See my previously cited books for details of this division.

[13] Cf. also RATTRAY, op. cit. vol. II, ch. 33.

Another tɛndaana called himself Na-Deŋ-Bugəlug, will drop manure. He was 557
comparing himself to a herd of cattle whose coming would bring fertility to the 553
impoverished soil of his clan and so give them more food and well-being. A well 793
known tendaana of former days was called Maal-Bazaa, he who puts everything right by the proper religious acts.

Naming customs of the kind I have described are found among all the tribes 553
and peoples of Africa. They show with particular clarity, just because the data seem so simple, how fundamental a really good knowledge of a people's language is for a proper understanding of their culture. How deep can the understanding of the culture be if the ethnographer who is studying it does not immediately understand the meaning of the names of the people he is in daily contact with! It can be seen, also, that a name is a document epitomising personal experiences, historical happenings, attitudes to life, and cultural ideas and values.

land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among 622
the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts. No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies, to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the 'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we [624]
find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the *kambon na*, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly 622
twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. 554
It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named 'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his house- 592
hold among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief 593
and pawn (verb, *nwe talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need 426
not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera.*)'

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[1] See Chapter XXVI.

its founding ancestors and its own differential line of agnatic descent. 618x Each sub-clan sacrifices separately to its own founding ancestor. Mosuor 769 is regarded as the common ancestor of all the sub-clans, but the cult of his shrine is the sole prerogative and duty of the Tongo branch of his posterity. According to Tale interpretation, a long period of territorial separation, bringing about political independence of one another, has inevitably resulted in the corresponding religious autonomy of each unit. A *bɔɣar* cannot be separated from the grave and the home-site (*daboog*) of the ancestor it enshrines. Though the custody and cult of Mosuor's *bɔɣar* are the exclusive province of the Tongo branch of the clan, because residence, lineage, and ancestor cult must have a concurrent continuity, these rights and duties are held to be exercised on behalf of the whole clan.

An unusual incident showed how the cult of Mosuor's *bɔɣar* is related to the constitution of the clan. It was on the occasion of the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other early ancestors of Tongo described below (pp. 53–4). When the beer was being distributed, a man called out that there was a young man from Yamələg present. This was quite unprecedented. The elders began to discuss the situation vigorously. The people of Yamələg had no right to attend such a sacrifice; but they were Mosuor's agnatic descendants, and if one of them turned up by chance, could he be excluded? 'Is not Mosuor their ancestor as well as ours?' At this point the Yamələg man stepped forward. He said that the question was of no importance; he was not a complete outsider intruding on the ritual of people not connected with him, neither was he there as a representative of Yamələg; he had come solely in his personal capacity, to 'scrounge' some of the beer and meat, and not to take part in the sacrifice. In short, though he could not be turned away from the sacrifice (as, say, a Zubiuŋ or Zoo man would have been) without offence to the clan ancestors, his presence there did not signify a claim by Yamələg to be represented at such rites, nor would it establish a precedent for the future. On this understanding, so amicably reached, he was given a courtesy portion of beer and meat.

As with the ancestor cult, so with the chiefship. Each sub-clan has 618x its own chiefship (*na'am*), in keeping with its territorial and political 622 autonomy, but the prototypical chiefship is that of Tongo, since it was established by Mosuor. Just as the four sub-clans are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) to one another, so their chiefs are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) equal in status but graded in seniority of rank, Tongo being the most senior and Biuk the most junior.

The equality of status of the four sub-clans is paralleled in the structure 618x of the maximal lineage which they constitute. In their relations of clan- 554 ship they are distant 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*), treating one another as relatively autonomous lineages. A Tongo man, when his conduct is determined by the norms of clanship, thinks of Yamələg, Sie, or Biuk as a corporate unit. Its internal structure is of no relevance to him. At any of these places, in any relations of clanship, he represents Tongo, taken as a unit, irrespective of his position in its internal structure.

The children of Mosuor think of their maximal lineage as finally and 618x

consequence, become almost completely submerged in the authentic lineages. Only one attached lineage (Zɔŋ yidɛm) still intermarries with other members of the sub-clan, provided they belong to a different major segment from that to which Zɔŋ yidɛm are attached, and these marriages are not encouraged. At Sie, by contrast, 15 out of the 43 wives of Siedatɔk are members of Wooŋ yidɛm or other branches of Mosuor biis not related to them by clanship ties. 618x

The attached lineages at Tongo are accounted for by the stereotyped tradition which is found, in similar circumstances, all over Taleland. The story is that a woman of the authentic lineage concerned (e.g. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm)—a 'sister' in the classificatory sense—married a member of one of the Hill Talis clans and bore children to him. Later, however, her husband divorced her by the rite of 'blowing' (*pɛbh*), by which he not only banished her from his home but disowned the children she had borne to him. She returned to live at her parental home, where her children grew up and settled, and where one son gave rise to the lineage attached to his mother's brother's lineage. Because of their founding ancestors' paternity, which even the act of formal repudiation of wife and child could not extinguish, two of the attached lineages preserve the totemic taboos and some of the funeral customs of the Hill Talis. It is a religious duty which they say could not be abandoned without the greatest peril.

Apart from this mark of distinction and the disabilities which will be mentioned later and which apply to all accessory lineages, they participate in social events as ordinary segments of the lineages to which they are attached. They can even represent these lineages in relation to other groups.

An attached lineage is said, sometimes, to have sprung from an unmarried girl's son (*yiyeembii*). His paternity never having been socially recognized, it has no influence on his social role or on that of the lineage which originates from him. Thus, such a lineage has all the customs and observances of its maternal lineage—the lineage, that is, of its founder's mother, to which her son is reckoned as belonging. The third attached lineage at Tongo is said to be descended from an unmarried 'sister's' son and their ritual observances confirm this view. 618x 848

Tongo also includes several assimilated lineages. These are indistinguishable, at first sight, from the authentic lineages either by the criterion of differences in custom or from their manner of participation in the social events which mobilize structural relations. Whatever their real origin may be alleged to be, they are linked to the constellation of authentic lineages by the fiction of direct agnatic descent from the founder of the whole sub-clan, Mosuor himself. They are, as this implies, more closely welded into the sub-clan than are the attached lineages. It would be inconceivable, for example, for a member of an assimilated lineage to marry any other member of the sub-clan. 618x

Attached lineages, everywhere, are incorporated into a lineage of authentic descent by an indirect route, as it were. They are hinged on to the true agnatic line by a compromise, as descendants of a woman of the true agnatic line. This introduces a clear distinction by the canon 618x 554

*618 554 of descent. The status of an attached lineage is always somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, there is nothing derogatory, by native standards, in the link through a woman, as will be more fully appreciated when we come to the domestic side of Tale social structure.[1] It is but an accident of birth, argue the natives, which made their ancestress a woman instead of a man; otherwise they might have been as much members of the unbroken patrilineal line as the authentic lineages. This explains why attached lineages do not hesitate to advertise their identity by holding to distinctive ritual usages and traditions of origin, and why they may, as at Sie, have a place in the social structure which makes use of their genealogical position. The 'accident of birth' is capitalized as a factor of social organization. On the other hand, there is no escaping the fact that it bars the attached lineage from complete absorption by the authentic line. Its members are debarred from the privileges which are indefeasibly bound up with the unbroken agnatic line and symbolize the uniqueness of this line. They could not at Tongo, for example, participate in sacrifices to Mosuor until recently (see below, pp. 54–5), and they cannot succeed to the custody of his *bɔɣar*. They can join in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the authentic lineage-segment to which they are directly attached; but they cannot hold the custody of his *bɔɣar*. The Tongo chiefship is of course rigorously closed to them. All these are crucial values, and to be excluded from the rights and privileges associated with them is a distinct disability. The rights which an attached lineage has in the sub-clan are in part a concession. Thus, though its status need never be glossed over, it cannot be vaunted.

*618 554 567 Assimilated lineages, by contrast, cannot be discriminated by means of an explicitly accepted modification in the canon of agnatic descent, since they are always regarded as having sprung from 'strangers' (*saan*, pl. *saam*), slaves or refugees. To incorporate them in the lineage structure of the sub-clan there is no alternative but to assimilate them by a fiction. A male slave is thus incorporated into his master's family and a refugee into that of his protector. Homeless and kinless, they must be endowed with a new social personality and given a definite place in the community. But the bond of actual paternity cannot be fabricated; the fiction is a makeshift and always remains so. A slave or a refugee can never acquire the one right which is conferred exclusively by the tie of blood, or as the Tallensi say, of begetting (*dɔɣam*), the right to offer sacrifice directly, as the owner (*daana*) of his shrine (*baɣər*)[2] to the spirit of the patron whom he has described in his lifetime as his father (*ba*). In this respect they have no advantage over matrilateral kin, for a man's spirit can receive direct sacrifice only from his agnatic posterity. Like matrilateral kin, also, an adopted slave is barred from rights of inheritance and succession that are confined to the agnatic line, even though he is for all practical purposes the child (*bii*) of his patron in a way that a matrilateral kinsman could never be.

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[1] This is dealt with in the second part of this study, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

[2] *Baɣər* (pl. *baɣa*) is the generic term for any ancestor or medicine shrine; *bɔɣar* (pl. *bɔɣa*) is the special shrine dedicated to the founding ancestor of a lineage.

Assimilated lineages, therefore, all over Taleland, though thoroughly 618x
absorbed into the structure of the sub-clan or clan, suffer the same dis- 554
abilities as the more precisely differentiated attached lineages; they cannot, 576
however, make a virtue of this, as the latter sometimes can; they cannot 567
explain away their status. To tax a person, openly or explicitly, with being the descendant of a slave (*da'abər bii*) is one of the deadliest insults, however remote his slave ancestry may be. This is more than a matter of etiquette. It amounts, in certain circumstances, to blasphemy against the spirit of the man who originally adopted this slave ancestor. Thus, under this rule of courtesy to clansmen and respect for ancestors, the status of an assimilated lineage is never commented on publicly unless a serious issue hangs on it or a severe quarrel is involved. This exceptional circumspection about assimilated lineages shows better than anything else their ambiguous position in the clan.

Such elements of the social structure as these are not apparent at first 618x
glance. I did not discover the existence of assimilated lineages at Tongo until the end of my first year in the field. To do so it was essential to have a very thorough understanding of the way the lineage system works and of the internal structure of the Tale community. I was able then to notice and to be puzzled by the absence, or self-effacement, of certain people in situations where they would normally be representing their lineage segments. It was not the behaviour to be expected of them if their segments were of equal status with the authentic segments of Mosuor biis. Veiled hints began to have a meaning which confidential informants confirmed.

One of my earliest friends and frankest informants at Tongo was 618x
Sayəbazaa, an elder in whom the chief had the greatest confidence and 115
who was universally esteemed for his industry and probity. Sayəbazaa was the head (*kpeem*) of Nəŋsuur yidem, a major segment of one of the major segments of Tongo. One of its members held an important and confidential office under the chief. Nəŋsuur yidem appeared to be of the true agnatic line of Mosuor. I took this for granted the more readily because, when the Great Festival season came round and all the elders of Tongo were summoned to the chief's house so that a diviner could be consulted, it was Sayəbazaa who consulted the diviner on behalf of the chief and the whole of Tongo, in order to ascertain what offerings must be given to Mosuor and the chiefly ancestors.

Nevertheless, Nəŋsuur yidem is an assimilated lineage whose founding 618x
ancestor is vaguely said to have arrived with Mosuor. Though almost completely absorbed by the authentic line of Mosuor biis, a last barrier remains, which I discovered only through one of the most striking of the events which revealed the existence and status of accessory lineages at Tongo. It showed also how there is a continuous process of adjustment going on in every sector of the social structure, resolving the tensions and contradictions latent in it.

It was an occasion of historic importance marking the climax of one 618x
phase in the absorption of the accessory lineages by the authentic lineages 769
of Tongo. The occasion was that of the great thanksgiving sacrifice to the founding ancestors of Tongo, Mosuor and his son Seyahəg, which took place in 1936. Beer and animals were contributed by the chief, who gave

the Yakɔradɛm ('the people of the old homes') mingle with those of their 618X Tongo neighbours and spread out irregularly into what is properly Ba'ari. The next block of homesteads, separated from them by a stone's throw and known as the Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm ('the people of the Kpaɣara side'), so named after a sacred pool in their midst, abuts on the fields of other Tongo neighbours and straggles over into the part occupied by the third maximal lineage. These, the Yapaasdɛm ('the people of the new homesteads'), have Zoo homesteads as their neighbours on one side and somewhat more distantly Ba'ari neighbours on the other. By the criteria of clanship with which we have become familiar, Zubiuŋ forms a single clan; the three maximal lineages act together as a unit in all secular and religious affairs of common interest.

Outsiders regard Zubiuŋ as a single unit, like Tongo or Zoo, and the relations of its constituent maximal lineages to one another are organized on the plan of a single maximal lineage of three segments. Thus, the mortuary rites or funeral ceremonies of an important member of any one of these lineages cannot be carried out without the presence and collaboration of representatives of the other two lineages. They have the reciprocal privileges and obligations of close clan *sunzɔp* in relation to one another. They speak of one another as kinsmen by consanguinity (*dɔyam*).

Nevertheless, it is generally known that the three segments of Zubiuŋ 618X are of diverse origin. The Yakɔradɛm have a status senior to the others. 554 According to the myth, which has already been recorded, their founding ancestor (*yaab*) was a 'brother' of the primordial Gbizug tɛndaana. They were the first to settle at Zubiuŋ. The Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm, who are next in order of seniority, claim that their line was founded by immigrants who accompanied Mosuor as his Gbandaat—a ceremonial office which is still their exclusive prerogative in relation to the Chief of Tongo. The Yapaasdɛm are said to be offshoots of the other two lineages, and are therefore the most junior. The relative status of the three lineages is shown in all their corporate activities. Thus, if they make a joint sacrifice and the sacrificial animal is provided by either of the senior lineages, the Yapaasdɛm receive only a shoulder (that is, a junior portion) as their rightful share, whereas the other lineages receive the legs (the senior portions). The two senior lineages are relatively equal in status compared with Yapaas.

Overlooking this diversity of origin, the people of Zubiuŋ say: 'We 618X have become consanguineous kin (*ti leeba dɔyam*).' One focus of their 778 unity and corporate identity as a clan is their External (*yɛŋha*) *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpalɔg, a sacred grove whose mystical powers are renowned and respected far beyond the borders of Taleland. Duunkpalɔg is the shrine of all the ancestors of all three maximal lineages. 'All our ancestors are there (*ti yaanam waabi be nɛŋha*)', is the formula used by the natives to define this shrine. Any ritual event which involves a sacrifice at Duunkpalɔg requires the presence of all three lineages, each represented by its head (*kpeem*), and he should be accompanied by the head of each constituent segment of his lineage and by any other of its mature male members who are able to come. The ideological dominance of

622 These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior
793 office connected with an External *Bɔyar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship
[184] is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so,
tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

622 Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*)
793 ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority
554 over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office
incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

622 As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔyar* cult function
793 as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan
system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

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[177] [1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

613 621 nuclear lineage; but this land may be some distance from the ancestral home, owing to the scattering of holdings.

Looking at it from the native point of view, we should say, not that individuals tend to live near one another because they are agnatic kin, but that all lineages down to the effective minimal lineage tend to be tied to localities; and the more closely lineages are related, the greater is the spatial propinquity of their dwelling areas. The distribution of households is not rigidly parallel to the lineage structure at a given time. Mere spatial proximity cannot be directly translated into terms of lineage proximity. There is a diachronic element as well. Kurug's homestead (No. 6), for example, is nearer to Pumaan's (No. 5) in yards and feet than to Lɛbhtiis's; but Kurug is closer to Lɛbhtiis than to Pumaan in lineage. This is due chiefly to changes in the internal structure of their respective nuclear lineages in the last twenty or thirty years. The spatial relations of homesteads to one another reflect lineage relations in their diachronic aspect.

The Concept of the Lineage Home

613 621 778 Lineages tend to be tied to specific localities even if many of their members are permanently or temporarily away from the lineage home. Some representatives of the lineage will generally continue to reside near the ancient home where the spirits of the ancestors still dwell. The *daboog*, the site of the original home of the lineage, the first dwelling-place of its founding ancestor, is a hallowed spot. It is identified by reference to ancestral land and to the graves of the ancestors. These are the fixed things. Homesteads are not eternal. Their collocation reflects the structure of the lineage at a given time; but it changes as the composition and segmentation of the lineage alters. Whenever an alteration of this sort occurs, there is a corresponding reshuffle in the housing arrangements. New homesteads are erected, old homesteads replanned and rebuilt or abandoned. A lineage being an organic unit has, in native eyes, but one home (*yir*), though the material embodiment of this home is distributed at any given time. The *daboog* of the lineage of Nɔpugzabər yidem, the original homestead site of their ancestor Nɔpugzabər, is on what was in 1934 the home farm of the head of the lineage, Deemzeet, a stone's throw from his gateway. The graves of Nɔpugzabər and his sons, and a tree which sprouted on Nɔpugzabər's grave and is believed, therefore, to enshrine his spirit, mark the spot where his gateway (*zanɔr*) stood.

From this arises the concept of the lineage *zanɔr*. All the homesteads of its members together make up the lineage home (*yir*), and this home has its single gateway (*zanɔr*), the lineage *zanɔr*. The notion is pre-eminently symbolical, but its material embodiment is the homestead of the lineage head, and therefore, specifically, the gateway of his homestead. It applies to all levels of lineage organization, up to the maximal lineage. In a maximal lineage the site of the founding ancestor's homestead is generally a sacred spot, often marked by the erection on or near it of a
[554] miniature room to represent the ancestral *zɔŋ*. This room is one of the shrines connected with the lineage *bɔyar*, and its custody is vested in a

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613
and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621
on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778
tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding [557]
ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage
zanɔr. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [423]
by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [184]
organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits 613
on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 621
life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 602
and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies [191]
are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

613 621 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔɣar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔɣada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛɣahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔɣada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛɣahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔɣada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zɔŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seɣahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zɔŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of [782] contraposition between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zɔŋ yidem say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 613 621 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yərug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated, contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yərug Yin had been the head of Bɔɣada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates [273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large [554] pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Sayawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔɔk*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar* and Sɛɣahəg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Gɛnət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahəg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are 461
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour-water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons; infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bɔɣar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

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Seniority (*kpɛmət*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔγam pu yakət dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

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No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Tɔŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*ɛŋ yaləŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔγar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

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[1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next volume of this study.

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tɛndaana says of another 'I gave

342 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces 462 are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All [476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes. With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation. In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its 592 owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant ● 554 change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy. Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the efficacy of these social ties.

We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the 592 architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations 341 that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men, women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning. Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When 592
his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every 341
morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for
stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or [778
two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in
the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the 192]
alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something
untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is
needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the 341
cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihər*) of the
Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore 778
obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu
all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth
shrines (*təŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout.
This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many
details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and 341
condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and 554●
experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gəlibdaana of
Tɛnzugu and the Yikpɛmdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular 592
room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White
Fathers' Mission at Boləga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom,
and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious,
upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly
dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate
and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became
established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious
innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance.
The Təŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy
men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration,
but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not
require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are
built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door
fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very
hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with
one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad
a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been
in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. 592
A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or
lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense 356
relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing
like Yelnaar of Təŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his
neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342 partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778 room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔɣar*) always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*; the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard. Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ* must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there and the lineage *bɔɣar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it. The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the *zɔŋ*, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622] of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623 deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most 554 conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 764 subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his 778 own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose. But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tɛbhɔm nla*—This is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me. The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt, an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*, when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611 dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the w[illegible]ws, to the old women tending the corpse, and to the girls da[illegible]ravagantly in honour of the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the g[illegible]to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do [illegible]n his behalf. These duties are undertaken readily and wit[illegible] rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his d[illegible]ed parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law. [576] [554] ●

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A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samǝr*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be of this is clearest in funeral customs. If Paanbɔbis II, Kutɔbis's 613 brother, were to die, Ɔndieso would take part in all the rites prohibited to men whose fathers are still alive. He would not refrain out of respect for Kutɔbis.

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*layapielǝb*, pl. *layapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *layah*, pl. *ligǝri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown. [436]

But in matters which involve Ziŋgan biis as a segment of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri, Ɔndieso acknowledges Kutɔbis as his 'father'. Thus when Bontuya, who belonged to one of the other four inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt biis, died, Ɔndieso went to the funeral as one of the representatives of Ziŋgan biis. He then refused to take part in the rites tabooed to men who have fathers alive, saying that if he did it would be an insult to Kutɔbis.

Ziŋgan biis also appear as a unit in reckoning prohibited degrees of 613 kinship for purposes of marriage. As we have mentioned before, the inner lineage is the widest corporate group that is a jural unit in marriage. 582 A distant 'sister's son' (*ahaŋ*) of Kutɔbis would not be allowed to marry a daughter of Ɔndieso. And this criterion applies also to the inheritance of widows. If Kutɔbis were to die, Ɔndieso could not seek any of his widows in marriage, because they are his classificatory 'mothers'. On the other hand, he could do so if Kutɔbis were his classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather'. He can court the widow of any member of any of the four other inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri since generation differences are not recognized beyond the boundaries of Ziŋgan yiri.

In spite of the ambiguities lurking in his relationship to Kutɔbis, the 613 predominant affective tone it has for Ɔndieso is that he is a 'son' and will remain a 'child' (*bii*) in public affairs that involve the whole clan 554 as long as Kutɔbis or any of his brothers is alive. Until they are dead there will always be a living if shadowy representative of paternal authority standing between Ɔndieso and his remote ancestors—and that means between him and the world at large, as it impinges on him through the corporate activities of the whole clan. This influences Ɔndieso's attitude to life considerably. He feels that he has not yet reached full social maturity, though he is much more intelligent and better informed than many of the clan elders. One sees and feels this vividly enough in one's intercourse with the natives, but it is not easy to pin down. It came out, for instance, in Ɔndieso's behaviour whenever he accompanied me to the Chief's court. He always took a back seat then, as befits a 'youngster'. It came out also in his attitude to Kutɔbis whom he despised for his uncouth ways and all-round incompetence, but yet deferred to with the modicum of respect that is correct in one's relations with a 'father'.

A man who can say 'I no longer have any fathers' associates himself 613 with the elders, the *kpɛm*, in thought and action even if he is younger 622 in years than some men whom he calls 'sons'. He thinks of himself as a 'father', in particular in relation to the ancestors, as one who has the 554 duty of watching over the welfare of others. It is most marked among

613 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their
622 predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed,
554 some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔγa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

778 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully
554 established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔne*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a
[888] house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

601 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in
613 the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a
554 moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

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[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without first obtaining Kutɔbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutɔbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only. 613 554

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutɔbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10*s.* He showed it to Kutɔbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutɔbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bɔɣayiedət yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutɔbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30*s.* to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutɔbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutɔbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutɔbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutɔbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutɔbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutɔbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutɔbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them. 613

Our discussion of what it means to a Taləŋ to have a father alive or not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them. 613 178 601

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were 593
non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but 571
may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's
wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's 835
wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between 593
brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office
is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. 622
No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the 584
same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social 593
equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists
between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with 554
the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

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[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

593 covers almost every standard social relationship of siblings in Tale society. Siblings are laterally identified with one another, so to speak; ● 554 brothers can replace one another in the social structure in a way that gives rise to a minimum of readjustment in the social relations of any other people affected. This contrasts with the vertical identification of parent and child, which rests on the continuity of the descent line not on actual or potential identity of social roles. This is a generalized formula. It leaves out of account a very important item, the effect of the sexual dichotomy of Tale culture. The distinctive social roles imposed on men and women by this factor restrict the identification of brother and sister to a narrow sphere, and the functions of women limit the social equivalence of sisters to their relationship with each other's children.

593 In infancy and childhood the equivalence of siblings is of little consequence. It comes out chiefly in the rule that parents should not 855 discriminate between their children (proxy children as well as own children). Tallensi say that, in practice, one cannot help preferring 577 one son to another or one daughter to another. One child may be more obedient or industrious or better tempered than his brothers and sisters, so one will be inclined to favour him; and there is the admitted bias in favour of younger children, especially the youngest, as we have seen. Moreover, proxy children are rarely as dear to the heart of a parent as own children are. Even a mother, whose love for all her children (except the youngest) is proverbially without bias, sometimes has favourites among them. There is plenty of evidence for these admissions. The Chief of Tongo had well over two-score children; among them his favourites were a son and a daughter of about 18, born soon after he was appointed chief. Nor do such preferences stop with childhood. Tiezien reposed his trust in his late brother's two sons, who had grown up in his care. The only son he had of his own who was old enough to assist him in public affairs was, he said good humouredly, too stupid.

But, say the Tallensi, this is a matter of *feelings*—what 'your heart desires (*i suh mboot*)'. When it is a matter of *rights*, to discriminate between children is bad, almost sinful; it is like rejecting one child for the sake of another. It would be regarded as iniquitous for a man to let some of his children go hungry while others were well fed. With two adult sons, as we have seen, it is considered right for both of them to be assisted to marry before either is allowed to have two wives. It is the same with other things in which there is an element of right or duty; and the majority of natives are very conscientious in this matter, at least as far as their own children are concerned. Nowadays, in particular, as has often been emphasized to me, if a man has two sons and does not deal with them equally, the one who feels himself unjustly treated soon finds an opportunity for running away to seek work abroad. Sensible parents follow this rule conscientiously even in trivial matters. Omara

consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus consider- 231
ably greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782
leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of 262
junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by
professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which
we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign
settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there
along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief
customers of the butchers. But a Taleŋa occasionally buys a little [435]
meat—from a few ounces for *3d.*, to a leg for *9d.* to *1s.* He may do this
when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is
courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her
some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial 231
animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occa- 262
sions such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great 224
delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs
throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the
majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush
on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost [354]
entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though
regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride
in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once
observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth,
among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal
as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*ziŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small 262
supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and 226
part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially
dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success,
as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought
in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some 262
of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

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[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

226 651 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions ? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor [622] of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this [685] affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. Besides, such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it ; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[554] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practise and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

621 and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a
511 direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which
291 produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its
[465] own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is
only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land;
311 but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not
profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the
433 past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad
or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the
721 society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the
records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
[564] through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gɔrisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or
misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts
in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to
£10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have
good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their
board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the
Bɔyar.

● 556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidem of Bunkiuk. The head of this
lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country,
recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his
political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own
hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual
functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the
aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu
clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex
organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and
clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a
Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate
his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his
gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income
of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the
members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in
running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own
half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make
them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three
henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance
of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his
near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana
keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—
to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar
age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number
of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no
outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be
invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been 471
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar 794
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every [622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its members.

351 ●556 231 [514] Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any. One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls and guinea-fowls.

[361] 342 From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*, and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable possessions, his livestock. [556] Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth, the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that to the Taləŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which [782] wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers. In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the *zɔŋ*, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber, communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey, for the night.

342 778 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality. It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

581 589 said, had never had the enterprise to find a wife. I heard of no woman who had never married. Deformities which do not wholly incapacitate a person or arouse repulsion are not a bar to marriage. The blind, the deaf, and the lame find spouses if they are otherwise able-bodied and presentable.

Tallensi attach immense importance to marriage, not only because it is the sole means to the most ardently desired of all ends, the procreation of legitimate children, but also because no man or woman can adequately satisfy all his or her wants or lead a normal social life, after reaching maturity, without a spouse. Sooner or later a man must have a wife and a woman a husband. Hence 'finding a wife (*pɔya booga*)' is the most urgent preoccupation of unmarried men, apart from getting a living. Among unmarried young men it is an obsession, the most absorbing pursuit of their leisure and an interminable topic of conversation. A girl's life is entirely directed towards marriage from childhood onwards.

581 181 It is a common thing to find a group of men discussing the relative importance of farms and wives, the two basic practical interests of the natives. They seldom fail to come down to the fundamentals. I have heard an elder sum it up somewhat in this fashion: 'If you don't farm you will have no food; and if you have no food you die. Then what is the use of a wife without food? But if you have no wife you will have no children and your life is wasted.' In the end, however, it is usually agreed that farming is the more important, for the man who lives long enough will not lack a wife and without food one cannot support a family.

556 Land and wives have many features in common, as their juxtaposition in native thought shows. Both stand for the fulfilment of fundamental social needs. Both come under the jurisdiction of the lineage, though they are of direct service to individuals. But there are certain differences which show the special importance of wives. There is no intense competition for the possession of land. Owing to technical and economic limitations there is no inducement to accumulate land. Wealth—that is, property acquired by saving, or in exchange for surplus grain or cash—consists pre-eminently of livestock; and the use to which livestock is principally put is in acquiring wives, performing sacrifices, celebrating funerals, and, to a much lesser extent, competing for certain politico-ritual offices. Such wealth is, therefore, really equivalent to provision for delayed consumption or special forms of consumption arising out of ritual obligations or differences in status.[1] It has no durable productive value. Compared with livestock, the purchase of farm-land is insignificant

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[1] But Tale standards of wealth are extremely low. Except for a handful of chiefs and headmen—who have herds of cattle numbering from 20 to 50, and, in at least one case, apparently, over 100, as well as numbers of small stock—a man with a dozen sheep, a few goats, and three or four head of cattle is considered to be wealthy (*bondaan*).

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of [432]
Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1]
Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by [578]
inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of.

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of 578
competition both between individuals and between corporate groups.
This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction 583
of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests.

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of con- 691
flict between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per
cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with 185
wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing 578
for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter.

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much 581
scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, 595
whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus
robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally 622
prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

to his mother's brother's house and Ba'andoog gave him a cow of somewhat 604
greater value than the white bull to give to his father-in-law. But 431
such exchanges are exceptional. A fowl, a sixpence, a slab of tobacco,
a few kola nuts, these are the more usual kinds of gifts that pass between
extra-clan kin.

There are two gifts from a mother's brother to which great significance 604
is attached. One of these is the gift of a hen to a lad from his *ahəb* when
he becomes capable of productive labour. This is almost a universal 431
custom among the Tallensi. As we have shown in an earlier chapter,
its importance lies in that it marks the beginning of the economic (and, 556
therefore, in due course, social) self-differentiation of a boy within the
joint family. It symbolizes, and in many cases actually serves as, the
starting-point of the accumulation of wealth by individual effort. It was
the proud boast of Barimoda that starting as a small boy with a fowl
given to him by his father's *ahəb* he had eventually 'achieved' (*paa*) a
cow from which he had had several calves. In every settlement one can
find two or three men who have matched this achievement, but it is more
common to find men who have 'achieved' a goat or a sheep in this way.
And though Tallensi always speak as if they began with one hen this is
not strictly true. A boy may receive fowls from two or three matrilateral
kinsmen, and he may be given more than one fowl by an *ahəb* who is
specially attached to him. Koyatee was unlucky with the first hen his
true mother's brother gave him. When it died he told his *ahəb*, who
gave him another. He successfully bred a brood of chickens from this
hen and was given yet another hen by the same mother's brother.

An *ahəb* has no claims on livestock bred in this way by his sister's son. 604
Very often, if a man needs a fowl for a sacrifice and has none that is
suitable, he will send to ask his sister's son for one; but this is not connected 431
with the gift of a hen he may have made to the latter many years 769
before. The equivalent return for the mother's brother's hen is made
in another way. As has been previously mentioned, when a man
'achieves' a cow, after starting with his mother's brother's hen, he owes
this cow to his mother's brother's lineage ancestor shrine (*bəɣar*). He
keeps the cow until it is too old to calve and then takes it to his mother's
brother's lineage as a thank-offering to his maternal ancestors. For, say
the natives, it must surely have been their beneficence that gave him
prosperity, since the hen came from their son.

Far more important is the gift of land by an *ahəb* to an *ahəŋ*. There 604
are degrees of finality about such a gift. It is a very common practice
for both men and women to beg a plot of land from an *ahəb*—or any 426
other extra-clan matrilateral kinsman—living in an adjacent settlement
to plant with ground-nuts or sweet potatoes. The land given for these
purposes generally lies on the outskirts of the donor's settlement, near that
of the recipient. As often as not, it is land too exhausted for grain crops;
or else it is land not required by the *ahəb* that season. Use of the land

carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764
or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602
When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya* (sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man, he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it, may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept, as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-fowl they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave. It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*) for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one, even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given
to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561
ku-kweem just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834
his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765
'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768
would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171]
custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem* funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane *kaleŋa*), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*), and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

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Seniority (*kpɛmət*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

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No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Təŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*ɛŋ yaləŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔyar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

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[1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next volume of this study.

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tɛndaana says of another 'I gave

CHAPTER XII

THE FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

601 OUR study has made it clear that the recognition of genealogical relationships in the ordering of social life has an extremely wide range of application among the Tallensi. To be sure, some classes of social relations in which individuals or organized groups normally participate do not necessarily imply cognizance of genealogical connexions. There are the activities of buyers and sellers in the market-place, for example. These are transactions in which kinship may, but for the most part does not, play a critical part. If it comes into the picture it does so as an adventitious factor, not as an intrinsic constitutive element. Even between kinsfolk transactions in the market are ruled by considerations of price, costs, profits, supply, and demand. A man who goes to market to buy a cap will not patronize a kinsman who has caps for sale if he can get one cheaper from a stranger. But it may happen that a seller of caps will be satisfied with a slightly smaller margin of profit if the buyer is his kinsman than if he is a stranger.

572 Apart from such ephemeral inter-personal relations, there are lasting social ties, such as those of friendship (*zoot*), which do not necessarily presuppose genealogical connexions. It is a common thing for Tallensi, especially for men, to have friends (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) in other clans than their own, and nowadays in neighbouring tribes. Friends visit one another occasionally, help one another sometimes, and give one another gifts. A man may also have a woman friend (*sɔm*), usually the wife of one of his clansmen. The man takes small gifts to his *sɔm* from time to time and she reciprocates by cooking a meal for him. She may assist him to find a wife from among her clan sisters. But if friends are not necessarily kinsmen, they very often have common kin. In fact friendships between unrelated Tallensi are most often formed through one of the parties visiting a kinsman of the other party and so making his acquaintance. Many friendships arise from contacts at funeral ceremonies or when hoeing or building parties come to help a father- or brother-in-law. In any case, the commonest and most prized form of friendship is friendship with a clansman or a neighbour of a related clan. Many such friendships go back to childhood and are the more highly prized because they are voluntary, personal, and not subject to hard-and-fast rules.

561 462 In the same way, though the Tallensi do not have institutionalized age-grades, men or women of about the same degree of social maturity are often grouped together in situations in which many people of all ages play a part. One sees this very clearly on ceremonial occasions. At funeral ceremonies, for example, there is first of all the usual separation

561 462 of the spheres of the two sexes. The sphere of the women is within the homestead. There they stay most of the time and there they carry out the duties that fall to them. The sphere of the men is outside, in front of the gateway, in the cattle yard and the *zɔŋ* (cf. p. 53). All the public rites take place outside. But in addition there is a distribution of tasks, duties, and privileges in accordance with a broad stratification by seniority. The oldest people in both spheres are spoken of as the elders (*kpɛm*). They have the seats of honour. For the most part they merely advise, and if hitches arise exercise a somewhat distant supervision over the activities. If they take an active part it is only in the most important of the rites. But they have the highest privileges. When food or meat or beer is distributed it is the elders who receive the portions due to the lineage units they represent and take the largest share of these portions. It is the old women, too, who take the lion's share of the gifts and obligatory contributions of foodstuffs handed over to the womenfolk. The burden of managing the ceremonies, performing the complicated series of rites, and attending to the many practical tasks involved, such as digging the grave, slaughtering sacrificial animals, and preparing food and beer, falls on the men who 'come after the elders (*kpɛm taɣalis*)' and their female counterparts. The *kpɛm taɣalis* are the men of mature experience but still able-bodied, men in the late forties and early fifties, the corresponding stratum among the women being those who have adolescent children. The young men and women, assisted by the adolescent boys and girls, do the fetching and carrying and give any casual help that may be required. The boys have the privilege of plucking and roasting any fowls that are slaughtered and keep some of the titbits for themselves. The girls surfeit themselves with frequent tasting of porridge and oily bean stew while they are cooking. This pattern can be observed in any collective activity.

601 Such arrangements, informal products though they are of the pragmatic requirements of the situation, are so stereotyped that they can be called customary. They arise without reference to genealogical connexions. But it is characteristic of Tale social life that they do so in situations whose structure is determined by kinship and clanship institutions. In fact the ideology of kinship is so dominant in Tale society, and the web of genealogical connexions so extensive, that no social relationships or events fall completely outside the orbit of kinship. In this respect the Tallensi resemble very many other primitive societies among whom, as Firth puts it,[1] kinship is the articulating principle of social organization. Just because kinship acts as a major determinant of social behaviour in every aspect and department of social life, it is the basis of the machinery of social integration in societies of this type, as many studies in Africa, Oceania, and America have shown. The result, as we have seen, both in this book and in the first part of our study, is that

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[1] Raymond Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, 1936, p. 577.

571 861 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 857 *Age and mobility.* Infants still requiring care are often carried about by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate groups.

571 857 462 *Sex.* Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely, accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 857 *The social situation.* Yet none of these children's groups resemble gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 861 858 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is, however, not that of children to children but of children to parents. It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

793 562 *Woman Ten'dan'*: 'A woman might become a *Ten'dan'*. She has the right to offer sacrifices, and receive lost things. She sits down saying: "Land receive your water and all your things". After she has said so, a man cuts the throat of the offering. She has a calabash, not a string hat. She owns the land and can stop wars with the corn stalk.' (A female *Ten'dan'* is interviewed later.)

791 *Rain-makers*: 'A rain-maker is separate from a *Ten'dan'*. He is called *Sa-ran*. We have none here.'

793 764 *Ten'dan' and Funeral Customs*: 'The family of the deceased would "reach" the *Ten'dan'* and he would give them a place to make a grave; were he to refuse they could not bury him. The *Ten'dan'* would send the boy to mark out the grave, making a circle with a calabash and the pointed stick used for digging the grave. He will say:

'*Dakirig* (a grove) some one is dead, can I refuse to bury him, therefore may you hear, and let the "room" be a proper one that he may sleep well?' A sheep is then sacrificed near the grave.

764 *Graves*: The Namnam bury their dead outside, not in, the compound. As many as twenty corpses may be in one grave. Men and women are buried in the same grave. The graves are circular with a bottle-neck. A boy or girl who has not any *nyere*[1] must have a separate grave.

834 A man does not have sexual intercourse with his wife for three years after she bears a child, i.e. if the child lives.

793 *Female Ten'dan'* (*Ten'dan' poka*): Akayiri, a female *Ten'dan'*, who may be seen in Fig. 81, told me the following:

'My ancestress was a *Ten'dan' poka* (a female *Ten'dan'*), called Banams. My grove is called Tinkyena; it is always a female *Ten'dan'* who is in charge of it. The calabash, which the little girl who always accompanies me carries, and my uncut hair, are the signs of my office. I own the land at Zoga. If the Zoga men want to fight, I will go between them, and place a corn stalk on the ground. Zoga has two *Ten'dan'*, a male and a female, but I own the land, as is proved by the fact that mine is the hind leg of all sacrifices; the male only gets a foreleg. Because "a female may kill a snake, but only a male cut off its head" (*poka ka kure wafo nwa zugo*), therefore, when I have given the sacrifice, the male cuts its throat. This male has no hat or skin. When I say that the land at Zogo belongs to me, I mean it belongs to the spirits. I am their servant. A male *Ten'dan'* may have a wife, but a

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[1] See p. 8. This only applies to a child whose mother is still young enough to bear children. [Nyere is a term applied to two children born consecutively of the same parents —Analyst.]

Kusase

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they 834
must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back [586]
the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then 587
remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries 614
outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

CHAPTER IX

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE CLAN ORGANIZATION

The Concept of a Clanswoman

562● 618× [591]

We have occasionally referred to the role of women in the clan organization of the Tallensi, but this subject deserves further consideration. In a certain sense women illustrate the principle of the corporate unity and identity of lineage and clan more strikingly than men. On marriage women leave their paternal settlements to reside with their husbands. They never, however, lose their status as members of their own patrilineal lineage and clan. It is true that they have not the same jural rights and duties as their clan brothers and cannot exercise a responsible role in lineage or clan ritual; for, as we shall see in the second part of this study,[1] a woman is a minor in jural and ritual matters. Nevertheless, women are subject to the critical norms of clanship in the same way as men. They are bound by the same rules of exogamy as the men, and by the same ritual observances that distinguish maximal lineage from maximal lineage or clan from clan. They also have certain privileges as members of their patrilineal descent group. We deal with these points in outline here. The details will come more appropriately in our next volume.

The term *pɔɣayabələg* sums up the status of a woman as a member of her patrilineal maximal lineage and clan. It can best be translated as 'woman of the clan'; and it refers to a woman of the clan or maximal lineage whether she is residing at her father's house or living with her husband. *Pɔɣayabələg* denotes the general status of clanswoman irrespective of what segment of the clan she may belong to. At all funeral ceremonies, for instance, certain duties and tasks both of a ritual and non-ritual kind fall on *pɔɣayabəlis*. Some of these tasks, such as the gathering of firewood, are usually performed by young unmarried *pɔɣayabəlis*. The girls who volunteer for these tasks are treated as a single group, irrespective of what segment of the clan they belong to. Other tasks and ritual duties that have to be carried out by clanswomen fall upon older women, usually married women who return home specially for the funeral. Any woman of the clan who is qualified by her knowledge and seniority can perform these duties. If a married woman living with her husband is asked where she comes from, she always replies: 'I am a *pɔɣayabələg* of such-and-such a clan.'

It is a maxim that all *pɔɣayabəlis* are equal to one another in relation to their natal clan. 'No one owns a *pɔɣayabələg*, we all own her (*sɔ pu so pɔɣayabələg, ti waabi nso ka*)', is the native formula. The implication is that the clan as a whole is the primary unit claiming the allegiance of a

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[1] Forthcoming shortly under the title of *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

562 *pɔɣayabələg*, particularly of one who is living at her husband's house. x618 To be sure, her kinship ties with her own family and with the segment of the maximal lineage to which her father belongs are not severed; indeed, a woman's relations with her paternal clan are largely regulated and mediated by these ties. The concept of *pɔɣayabələg* implicitly stresses the fact that it is a woman's fate to be married out of the clan and to be cut off from its routine corporate activity; and it contains the idea that a woman thus separated from her parental home is felt to belong primarily to the widest corporate unit that stands in contraposition to her husband's, where his relations with her are concerned.

Thus outside the range of the lineage segment in which generation differences are recognized, a *pɔɣayabələg* is referred to as 'our sister (*ti tau*)' by any of her clansmen, and she speaks of them as *ntap*, 'my brothers'. A man visiting the settlement of another clan makes himself at home in the rooms of any *pɔɣayabələg* of his clan. When the cow-peas are ripening, a *pɔɣayabələg* visiting her clan settlement—her 'father's house' (*ba yiri*), as it is described by extension of the concept of the father's house or lineage in the narrowest sense—may pluck cow-pea leaves (*beŋət*) for herself anywhere in the settlement. A Yaməlәg or Sie *pɔɣayabələg* can do this at Tongo, for instance, if she is merely passing [578] through on her way elsewhere. No one would resent it; but if the wife of a member of a segment of the clan other than his own were to pluck a man's cow-pea leaves without his express permission, it would lead to a quarrel. Similarly, it is customary for women to come and collect a basket of grain from the men of their parental family after the harvest. A *pɔɣayabələg*, however, is permitted to ask any of her clansmen for a gift of this kind. Thus it sometimes happens that a Yaməlәg or Sie woman married to a man at Yinduuri comes to a clansman at Tongo after the harvest for a gift of grain, or a Tongo woman married to a man at Datək or Duusi calls on a clansman at Sie for such a gift. As these examples indicate, a *pɔɣayabələg* of a linked maximal lineage counts as a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan.

562 764 When a woman's funeral is celebrated by her husband's people the last act is 'to send her home (*kulh*)' to her father's house. For this ceremony a large party of men and women in their gayest clothes, led by the nearest agnates of the dead woman and escorted by drummers and musicians, sets out for her husband's settlement to 'receive her funeral (*die koor*)'. When such a party is being assembled, messages are sent to the heads of all the constituent lineages of the clan, and representatives are generally sent from all the lineages to accompany the party. It is partly a matter of duty, and partly an act of courtesy and a voluntary demonstration of clan solidarity. Sometimes young people of linked lineages join the party, knowing that it will be lavishly entertained by the affinal clan and that there will be dancing and girls to flirt with. Fetching the funeral of a *pɔɣayabələg* is an affair of the whole clan.

562 613 The *pɔɣayabələg* has a formal status in the lineage and clan, and this status is recognized as an intrinsic element in the structure of the lineage and clan. The fiction behind this is the idea often explicitly stated by the natives that but for an accident of birth she might have been a man

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562
of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613
relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔɣayabəlis*, deprived by an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan. This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784] *pɔɣayabələg* of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives, of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔɣayabələg* might, in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔɣayabələg* as 562
an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854
example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan. Usually she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787] will be a suitable *pɔɣayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a *pɔɣayabələg* is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task; it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being. Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔɣar* is significant in 562
this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793
shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769
case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔɣayabəlis* have the right to take part

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔɣar*, the married *pɔɣayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔɣayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔɣayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔɣayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔɣar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive
succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the
lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his succes-
[787] sor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔɣayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination.
Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔɣar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔɣar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent
through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal 604
nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their 618x
cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four 587
generations back.

Though the *pɔyayabɔlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a 764
single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are 571
often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of 562
the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔyayabɔlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔyayabɔlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member
of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and [252]
food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔyayabɔlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubenib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔyayabɔlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubenib* (from *dug*, room, and *be*, to stay or be) because they are identified with the *dugdem*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubenib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubenib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gore woman married to a Tenzugu man requires the help of *dubenib*, she calls upon all the other Gore wives, of whom there are very few, of Tenzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Gɔreland

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔyayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔyayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔyayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔyayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
562 A *pɔyayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[252] to join. A *pɔyayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔyayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

×618 Lastly, a married *pɔyayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔyasama*—a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔyayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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means of which the lineage acquires wives. But what is more important, 613
the women carry the descent of the clan into other clans, and thus build 562
up that network of interclan kinship ties which breaks down the rigid 602
exclusiveness of the lineage and clan, interweaves clan with clan, and is one of the factors that restrain strife between clans and prevent Tale society from splitting into anarchic fragments. Since the tie of descent is indestructible, women members of the lineage and clan have definite rights and duties in all those practical and ritual institutions which bring out most precisely the solidarity and corporate identity of the lineage through the passage of time and the mutability of generations.

family head, she does so as a privileged spectator. She has this privilege 593
because her welfare is bound up with that of her husband and children,
and theirs with hers. She remains outside the religious and moral 769
solidarity of her husband's clan and maximal lineage, and, indeed, has
only a contingent interest in the solidarity of his minimal lineage. It is
noteworthy that women, both daughters and wives, are excluded from
the esoteric ritual activities in which the moral sanctions of the unity
and continuity of lineage and clan are embodied. In religious, jural, 593
and political matters—all of which are closely interconnected—Tale
women have the status of minors. This exclusion is most stringent in 562
the case of the Earth cult and the cult of the lineage *bɔɣar*. But the
segregation is not so rigid as to keep women in entire ignorance of or
wholly disinterested in these male monopolies. Their welfare depends
upon the propitious outcome of these activities as much as that of their
menfolk. They see, hear, and discuss among themselves and with their
menfolk ritual affairs and jural actions that concern their husbands'
lineages of which, indeed, wives and children often form the main
subject. They grind the flour, brew the beer, and witness the preparations
for esoteric religious rites. They see the public and semi-public
phases of big religious ceremonies and overhear the endless consultations
and discussions between the men which these ceremonies always produce. 593

A wife, therefore, can be in sympathy with the interests and can respect
the values that rule the actions of her husband and her sons as members 578
of their agnatic descent group, while being herself excluded from an 787
effective public role in relation to them. But a cleavage remains. Thus
in a conflict between her husband's clan and her father's clan she might
very well take the side of the latter, not openly, it is true, but covertly.
How strongly the natives feel this was shown at the divination ceremony
following the death of Siiyɛlib of Təŋ-Seug. This divination was so
cryptic and involved that I could make no sense of it. Fortunately I was
able to get an explanation from one of my most trustworthy informants,
a close agnate of the dead man. Siiyɛlib's death, it appeared, was a
mystical retribution for a grave sin he had committed many years before.
He had been one of the instigators of the white man's attack on the Hill
Talis, and was an accessory, therefore, to the slaughter of many men.
Now there were several Talis present at the funeral—kinsmen, affines,
and, last but not least, wives of the dead man and his close agnates. If
Siiyɛlib's sin were publicly brought out in the divination it would stir
up all their hostile feelings. They would feel resentful towards Siiyɛlib's
surviving agnates on account of his complicity in the destruction of their
fathers and grandfathers. And this would produce strife between the
men of Seug and their Talis wives, their Talis cognates, and their Talis
affines.

The social and psychological cleavage which underlies all the relations 593
of husband and wife is the structural kernel around which the 578

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies
581 are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of
834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his
[768] social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

593 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the
562 critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

602 The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in
562 a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to
606 one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

593 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly
apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every
571 one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies
764 certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical
instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔγakiis saγabo*)',
602 one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahɔŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Sayawuob's mother's funeral Latarɔg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Sayawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen,
in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident
593 of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers
562 is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the
daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔγayabɔlɔgkpeŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the
[782] lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members 613
in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. 593
The token funeral performed for a woman by her father's people, after 562
her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔɣayabɔlɔg-kpɛŋ* [766]
not by her own father's heirs but by the head of the inner or medial or
even maximal lineage, her status-brother, so to speak. Tallensi say she
belongs to the whole lineage not to her paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow 595
may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan
or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two 587
principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', 595
and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint 613
leviratic rights is one of the critical norms of clanship,[1] implying that
all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither 593
absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to 587
them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption, but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes, but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a radius of not more than 300 yards.

A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked
262 food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not in the lean months.

The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his
596 wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never
261 descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, pre-
264 ferably unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism. Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual household and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman carefully considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncer-
562 tainty of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She
264 carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour
252 approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over (three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home, and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to. Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

for firewood. A woman with a small child never omits to cook a little 562
for it, whatever the circumstances. The cooking routine also becomes 264
upset under the stress of seasonal activities. When a whole family 252
goes to work at a bush farm or to a fishing expedition, some groundnuts or dry guinea-corn is taken along to chew, and no cooking will be done until evening.

Each woman is responsible for the provision of meals for her 596
husband and family. In certain situations co-wives co-operate for the 476
common good. Thus when building operations take place, or a man 264
has hired or 'invited' labour the co-wives cook in turn to provide food for the men. On such occasions the owner of the granary allots a special share of grain for the labourers' porridge to the woman whose turn it is to cook for them.

Mutual assistance between co-wives occurs only when a woman is 596
confined or ill. Then her co-wife (a wife of her husband or his 252
brother) cooks for her and her family. The confined woman provides her own produce and firewood and the cooking is done in her kitchen. This is the duty and prerogative of co-wives. Only as a last resort would the husband's mother or sister cook for her in those circumstances. When a young wife shares her mother-in-law's quarters she does all the household tasks; but when she shares those of a senior wife, they assist each other and cook in turn.

The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and 262
soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea-corn or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or cow-peas or rice is used. When root crops are in season they are cooked instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things they spoil your belly'.[1]

The preparation of porridge is very simple. Flour is not preserved 252

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[1] A Tale friend enquired what kind of food he would be given in our country, and when told that he would eat meat, fish, bread, and eggs, he exclaimed, 'What, no porridge? I call that starvation.'

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river
515 swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the
sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation
●562 of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit.
834 The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation: the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political
578 cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

461 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick
322 withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes.
The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language
Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls,
and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse
and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have
been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
167 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
●563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the
Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came
here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a
people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They
spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and
Zan became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people
whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The
Ten'dan' makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European
doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but
it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones).
A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded
by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men
(Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We
met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

Lebzure, *Kunwase* (You-do-not-stroke-a-snake), son of *Lebkura*. In 173
his time we fired arrows at the people on the Tɔng hills; there was a famine and we used to rob them. 622
All the people, except Winkoŋo and Sia, rose against us, saying we were too proud. *Kunwase* was succeeded by *Kundizore* (Water-cannot-pull-down-a-hill), a son of *Sapelega*. There was also a war in his time which arose out of a quarrel during a hunting expedition, in which Bade and Yazore had taken part. Small-pox (called *Naba*, the Chief) also broke out in his time. *Kundizore* was succeeded by *Nalebseyo* (It-will-change-to-the-wet-season), son of *Kabu*. He was succeeded by *Pilibazaa* (Cover-them-all), son of *Bupaa*. During his time the Europeans came. *Pilibazaa* was taken by the [177]
white men to Gambaga and asked to pay two hundred cows because the Tɔng people had fired arrows at them (the Europeans). He died at Gambaga and was succeeded by *Kunbanbeo* (Cannot-know-to-morrow), a son of *Kundizore*. He was succeeded by *Yirisano* (Destroyer-of-compounds), alias *Dentele*, a son of *Lebenwana*. In his time the Europeans came and asked the Hill-people (Teŋ-zugu) to come and see them, but they refused. He was succeeded by myself, *Kpama*, son of *Pilibazaa*. I brought my father's bones from Gambaga, and they were buried outside his compound.'

The above list comprises twenty-eight names, and, with other 551
similar genealogies, supplies us with an approximate estimate of the 173
time when the foreigners from Mampurugu first extended their influence to embrace this area. 622
The names of these Chiefs as here given are their titles only; it is forbidden to mention their real names. Such nicknames are called *sam-wur* in Talene, *saan-yure* in Nankane.

The ruling house at Tɔngo belongs to the *gwegmere* (lion) clan. 128
When I recorded the above and the other histories which follow I had 622
not as yet grasped the full significance of what I came to discover later, 565
namely, that in recording the history of these migrations as supplied by the Chiefs, I was really only tracing the origins of a minute section of the population, i.e. of those who formed the upper ruling class, and not of their subjects, who formed the mass of the people. In consequence I am unable, in the present instance, to specify the clans to which the majority of the inhabitants of the 'towns', already given, really belong. In my notebooks I find these clans, in nearly every case, recorded as 'the lion clan'. This is only due, however, to my having fallen into the error of failing to distinguish between rulers and ruled, and imagining the histories told me by Chiefs and their following to be applicable also to their subjects. I do not make any apology however,

128 for the inclusion here of such records, as, once their limitations and 622 significance are realized, they, equally with other information recorded, 565 go to form part of the composite picture which I am attempting to draw of the traditions of these people.

173 622 *History of Siega* (as told me by the Chief Zoaga): 'We came from Mampurugu at the same time as *Misorę* (see previous history). The Winkoŋo people are related to us (he refers, I believe, to the Chief of that place). My clan is lion; I am the seventeenth Chief of Siega. The Chieftainship is under (the patronage of) Kurugu and can descend to any one of the lion clan. My first-born also taboos a fowl. We have had a Chief, distinct from *Ten'dan'*, since ancient times. The first Chief of Siega was *Kukye*.'

History of Datoko (as told me by the present Chief, Borezina): 'We came from Mampurugu, but not with *Misore*. We travelled by way of Nuŋ (Nungo); from Nuŋ to Tula; from Tula to Kumbule; from Kumbule to Datoko. We met the Kusase people in the land, but drove them across the river (Volta). We marry the Kusase. We are of the lion clan. Chiefs of Datoko are appointed by Kurugu. The man who gives most presents becomes the new Chief, and on obtaining the Chieftainship will try to recover what he has paid. Now Chiefs are made by Government, but still go to Kurugu to receive the *muŋ'* (red fez). I am the son of the late Chief, and am ninth of my line. Datoko has six sections (*Yi-zug'*); each section, since Europeans came, is in charge of a *kambon-nab* (head gunman). Since ancient times we have had *Ten'dan'*. Their work and the Chiefs' work are separate. I settle all cases. The *Ten'dan'* performs the ceremonies when the rain does not fall, unless it is at my own *tengzan* (Nankane, *tingane*), when I perform the sacrifices.' (Here, it will be noticed, the *kambon-nab*, appointed by the Chief (who, when a vacancy occurs, bids with the 624 other applicants for the post), are ousting the old time section-heads, called in Talene, *yi-zug-kpɛɛm*, who have been forced into the background. The *Ten'dan'* (Nankane, *Ten'dana*) has also become more or less a nonentity.)

History of Ten'zugu (as told me by Ten'goli): 'My ancestor came from Nasia; he was called *Sumri* and was a son of the Chief of Mampurugu. When his father died he wished to succeed him, but was driven away and came to Bulbi. His enemies followed him there, and again he fled and came to Daa, at the foot of the Tong hills. Later he went on top of the hill and settled there. He found some people called Dagali. They were Talense. We married with them. The Dagali people

173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
[304] forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows
565 these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—
128 is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan),
784 but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tamperypeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

dual's transition from the child's world to the adult's—e.g. the so- 184
called negative phase or adolescent instability which has been alleged 155
to be universal in our society.[1] It is unknown in Tale society.[2] As between adults and children, in Tale society, the social sphere is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. All participate in the same culture, the same round of life, but in varying degrees, corresponding to the stage of physical and mental development. Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system. Psychological effects of fundamental importance for Tale education follow from this. For it means that the child is from the beginning oriented towards the same reality as its parents and has the same physical and social material upon which to direct its cognitive and instinctual endowment. The interests, motives, and purposes of children are identical with those of adults, but at a simpler level of organization. Hence the children need not be coerced to take a share in economic and social activities. They are eager to do so. This does not mean that Tale children are altogether passive in the hands of their parents. Temperamental idiosyncrasies in children strike the observer at a glance. Tantrums, disobedience, destructiveness, and other aggressive outbursts occur sometimes. Among youths and adults misfits and incompetents can be found. But even they live for the same ends and have the same objective values and interests as the majority.

The unity of the social sphere is the more marked in Tale society 184
since they have almost no social stratification within a genealogical 565
or local community. There are no class or rank cleavages, nor highly organized and exclusive economic, political, or ritual associations cutting across the local, genealogical segmentation; and the social division of labour is rudimentary. The pattern of existence is the same for all members of a given community, varying only in texture
or tone from individual to individual. The social sphere is differen- 184
tiated only as between communities which are generally localized clans 565
or lineages. Thus, the blacksmith lineage of Sakpee is unique, as 326 463

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[1] See G. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 429–32, for a critical discussion of this question.

[2] Cf. also Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with
it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[744] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

867 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]
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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family; and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering
to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold
his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere'* (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan'*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become
Ten'dan'.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusoodana*.

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If [783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land, the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for ●[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance) to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away. [772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove. Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land, [621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the *Ten'dan'* went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk. Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku* ‡ have not anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 624 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not formerly a Chief's concern.'

685 624 *Theft*: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to [177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

622 793 628 [783] *Murder*: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

‡ [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

*618 554 of descent. The status of an attached lineage is always somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, there is nothing derogatory, by native standards, in the link through a woman, as will be more fully appreciated when we come to the domestic side of Tale social structure.[1] It is but an accident of birth, argue the natives, which made their ancestress a woman instead of a man; otherwise they might have been as much members of the unbroken patrilineal line as the authentic lineages. This explains why attached lineages do not hesitate to advertise their identity by holding to distinctive ritual usages and traditions of origin, and why they may, as at Sie, have a place in the social structure which makes use of their genealogical position. The 'accident of birth' is capitalized as a factor of social organization. On the other hand, there is no escaping the fact that it bars the attached lineage from complete absorption by the authentic line. Its members are debarred from the privileges which are indefeasibly bound up with the unbroken agnatic line and symbolize the uniqueness of this line. They could not at Tongo, for example, participate in sacrifices to Mosuor until recently (see below, pp. 54–5), and they cannot succeed to the custody of his *bɔγar*. They can join in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the authentic lineage-segment to which they are directly attached; but they cannot hold the custody of his *bɔγar*. The Tongo chiefship is of course rigorously closed to them. All these are crucial values, and to be excluded from the rights and privileges associated with them is a distinct disability. The rights which an attached lineage has in the sub-clan are in part a concession. Thus, though its status need never be glossed over, it cannot be vaunted.

*618 554 •567 Assimilated lineages, by contrast, cannot be discriminated by means of an explicitly accepted modification in the canon of agnatic descent, since they are always regarded as having sprung from 'strangers' (*saan*, pl. *saam*), slaves or refugees. To incorporate them in the lineage structure of the sub-clan there is no alternative but to assimilate them by a fiction. A male slave is thus incorporated into his master's family and a refugee into that of his protector. Homeless and kinless, they must be endowed with a new social personality and given a definite place in the community. But the bond of actual paternity cannot be fabricated; the fiction is a makeshift and always remains so. A slave or a refugee can never acquire the one right which is conferred exclusively by the tie of blood, or as the Tallensi say, of begetting (*dɔγam*), the right to offer sacrifice directly, as the owner (*daana*) of his shrine (*baγər*)[2] to the spirit of the patron whom he has described in his lifetime as his father (*ba*). In this respect they have no advantage over matrilateral kin, for a man's spirit can receive direct sacrifice only from his agnatic posterity. Like matrilateral kin, also, an adopted slave is barred from rights of inheritance and succession that are confined to the agnatic line, even though he is for all practical purposes the child (*bii*) of his patron in a way that a matrilateral kinsman could never be.

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[1] This is dealt with in the second part of this study, *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

[2] *Baγər* (pl. *baγa*) is the generic term for any ancestor or medicine shrine; *bɔγar* (pl. *bɔγa*) is the special shrine dedicated to the founding ancestor of a lineage.

Assimilated lineages, therefore, all over Taleland, though thoroughly 618x
absorbed into the structure of the sub-clan or clan, suffer the same
disabilities as the more precisely differentiated attached lineages; they cannot, 554
however, make a virtue of this, as the latter sometimes can; they cannot 576
explain away their status. To tax a person, openly or explicitly, with 567
being the descendant of a slave (*da'abər bii*) is one of the deadliest insults,
however remote his slave ancestry may be. This is more than a matter
of etiquette. It amounts, in certain circumstances, to blasphemy against
the spirit of the man who originally adopted this slave ancestor. Thus,
under this rule of courtesy to clansmen and respect for ancestors, the
status of an assimilated lineage is never commented on publicly unless a
serious issue hangs on it or a severe quarrel is involved. This exceptional
circumspection about assimilated lineages shows better than anything else
their ambiguous position in the clan.

Such elements of the social structure as these are not apparent at first 618x
glance. I did not discover the existence of assimilated lineages at Tongo
until the end of my first year in the field. To do so it was essential to have
a very thorough understanding of the way the lineage system works and
of the internal structure of the Tale community. I was able then to notice
and to be puzzled by the absence, or self-effacement, of certain people in
situations where they would normally be representing their lineage
segments. It was not the behaviour to be expected of them if their segments
were of equal status with the authentic segments of Mosuor biis. Veiled
hints began to have a meaning which confidential informants confirmed.

One of my earliest friends and frankest informants at Tongo was 618x
Saɣəbazaa, an elder in whom the chief had the greatest confidence and 115
who was universally esteemed for his industry and probity. Saɣəbazaa
was the head (*kpeem*) of Nɔŋsuur yidem, a major segment of one of the
major segments of Tongo. One of its members held an important and
confidential office under the chief. Nɔŋsuur yidem appeared to be of the
true agnatic line of Mosuor. I took this for granted the more readily
because, when the Great Festival season came round and all the elders of
Tongo were summoned to the chief's house so that a diviner could be
consulted, it was Saɣəbazaa who consulted the diviner on behalf of the
chief and the whole of Tongo, in order to ascertain what offerings must
be given to Mosuor and the chiefly ancestors.

Nevertheless, Nɔŋsuur yidem is an assimilated lineage whose founding 618x
ancestor is vaguely said to have arrived with Mosuor. Though almost
completely absorbed by the authentic line of Mosuor biis, a last barrier
remains, which I discovered only through one of the most striking of the
events which revealed the existence and status of accessory lineages at
Tongo. It showed also how there is a continuous process of adjustment
going on in every sector of the social structure, resolving the tensions and
contradictions latent in it.

It was an occasion of historic importance marking the climax of one 618x
phase in the absorption of the accessory lineages by the authentic lineages 769
of Tongo. The occasion was that of the great thanksgiving sacrifice to the
founding ancestors of Tongo, Mosuor and his son Sɛyahəg, which took
place in 1936. Beer and animals were contributed by the chief, who gave

178 forefathers in that way (*ti ku zaŋ ti banam bah ŋwala*)'. Some of the 182 younger men of Yapaas were merely being tiresome. 'You'll see', 578 countered the man who had spoken earlier, sceptically, 'some day there will be a quarrel over something, the division of meat at a sacrifice, or the inheritance of a widow, or something of that sort, and then you people of Zubiuŋ will split up.'

578 Meanwhile, we continued to wait for the Yapaasdεm, for the ritual could not be performed without the presence of their representatives. In due course they arrived. Far from expressing contrition, they excused themselves by accusing the others of having bungled the sequence of the rites. A violent argument followed, but one of the elders cut it short. No doubt, he said, the Yapaasdεm preferred a different order of the rites. That was their affair. The senior lineages had no intention of copying them. To-day the ceremonies were *their* concern, and now that all the lineages were properly assembled they might as well get on with the business.

Linked Maximal Lineages and the Field of Clanship

x618 Corresponding to this structural differentiation within the clan, each maximal lineage has its distinct field of clanship. One segment of Yakɔradεm, known as Pulien biis, is an attached lineage descended from a [567] 'sister's son' of the authentic lineage. Another segment (Zaŋgɔbɔg yidεm) is an assimilated lineage, said to be of slave descent. Members of this segment are debarred from holding the tεndaana-ship. Pulien biis have the right to hold the office, but mainly in a titular capacity, for they are barred from its most essential responsibilities. In other respects these accessory lineages have been fully absorbed by the authentic line of Yakɔradεm, and participate in all the corporate activities of the latter.

The Yakɔradεm have ties of clanship with Gbizug, which counts as the senior segment of Gbeog, and is bound to Gbeog proper by the usual ties of clanship. But there are no ties of clanship between Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Gbeog proper. They may not marry a daughter of Gbizug; they may and do marry Gbeog women, who would of course be barred by the rule of exogamy from marrying into Gbizug. Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra also have ties of clanship with Ba'at-Sakpar, one of the major segments of the clan of Ba'ari; but they have no ties of clanship with any of the other Ba'ari maximal lineages. Similarly, they have ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ, but not with the Namoo lineage of Zoodεm proper. The other two component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ are excluded from this field of clanship. For instance, they can and do marry Gbizug, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zoo-Yiraaŋ women.

x618 These extra-clan ties of clanship are rationalized in various ways. 811 Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar claim to be the consanguineous kin (*dɔyam*) of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, because, as the myth of the primordial tεndaanas relate, the founding ancestors of all three lineages were 'brothers'. The Zoo-Yiraaŋdεm are claimed as kin (*dɔyam*) of the latter because their founding ancestor is said to have been a 'sister's son' of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. It should be noted that such a remote cognatic link does not in every case establish ties of clanship. The same fiction is used to account for the existence of

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years
ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine
is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing
this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and
forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black
man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy
grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on
the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among
distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567] ●
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke
down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535
end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend
the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good
year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young
mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders
fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There
is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ
kpɛŋŋa*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of
ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale
ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence. For the individual the physical well-being of himself and
his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of
offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual
symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep
it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go
back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this:
'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka gɔal
gɔal, ka dɔɣam dɔɣa, ka gɔom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241
natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and
talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and
industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency
between a *pakpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious
hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption. One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

779 425 688 the earth (*teŋɔnpiima*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *teŋɔnpiimɔr*. It must be handed to a tendaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

714 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 774 793 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but [567 622] he is given to a chief and not to a tendaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified to sell a human being into slavery; a tendaana would commit a sacrilege against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *yo-o-o-o-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

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adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182
of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769
bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182
principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182
constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618X
evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Taləŋ identifies himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidɛm*)' and of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔyaba*)' and 'our children (*ti biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions to-day, a Taləŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182
for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426
groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman of his debtor, but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman,
the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567] ●
into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations. It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt. Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583
unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426
man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'. Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled. The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the
abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682
clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618X

of no case, in recent years, of this having occurred. Public sentiment 848
would not be sympathetic to it, since he is felt to be so closely connected with the clan.

It sometimes happens that a woman who has an illegitimate child 848
takes it with her when she gets married, and the child is brought up in her husband's house. Eŋwala's illegitimate son, Kumahe, grew up thus 583
under the care of her husband, Yɛanbɔrəgya. The boy and his stepfather were greatly attached to each other. Kumahe farmed with Yɛanbɔrəgya like his own sons, and was treated like a son in the ordinary affairs of the household. When he began courting a daughter of his stepfather's clan, Yɛanbɔrəgya gave him fatherly support and counsel. But when Kumahe's prospective parents-in-law asked for an advance payment on the bride-price, Yɛanbɔrəgya neither provided it nor took responsibility for it. For Kumahe had not acquired filial status in Yɛanbɔrəgya's lineage, and the responsibility for the payment of bride-price on his behalf rested with his jural guardian, his mother's brother. Kumahe belongs to his mother's clan, and both he, his stepfather, and his mother's brother told me, at different times, that he would undoubtedly return one day to live amongst this clan.

The status of a male slave (*da'abər*) in former times was similar, 567
though in some respects less advantageous. The Tallensi seem to have kept few slaves.[1] It is said that a man usually bought a male slave if he lacked a son to help him with his farming and to support him in his old age. Slaves were never natives of Taleland but hapless strangers from other parts of the Northern Territories found wandering in the country. Having no kinsfolk in Taleland to protect them they fell a prey to anyone who chanced to encounter them. Their only security lay in the taboo that made it obligatory for them to be handed over to chiefs, who alone had the ritual status entitling men to sell fellow men. To fit them into the social structure they were incorporated into the family and lineage of their owners by being placed under the spiritual guardianship of one of their owner's lineage ancestors' shrines. This gave a slave a quasi-filial status of the same kind, with the same rights and disabilities, as an illegitimate son's.

In his social relations with his quasi-paternal family and clan a slave was indistinguishable from an illegitimate member of the group. In a quarrel he might be abused as a slave—'a bought thing (*bonda'abər*)'—and his quasi-clansmen would be inclined to regard him with a kind of patronizing contempt. But his owner would take up the cudgels for him as energetically as for one of his own sons if he were wantonly

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[1] When they are questioned on the subject, men of 50–60 can usually quote one or two slaves they knew of in their childhood, never more. The impression I got from talks with many people was that there were never more than five or six male slaves living at any one time in Tongo, and correspondingly fewer in smaller settlements.

567 insulted or molested; for it was held to be both good policy and a moral duty to treat a slave no differently from a son. As the ward of the lineage ancestors, he had a place and a moral status in the lineage; but, Tallensi say, he was bound to harbour some resentment at his invidious social position, and would certainly try to abscond if he were ill-used.

These ideas are as active as ever among the Tallensi; for a few ex-slaves still survive, and there are one or two sons, grandsons, and remoter agnatic descendants of slaves in many settlements, who, by the lineage principle, retain their ancestors' social status in a much attenuated form. These people have exactly the same place in society that they would have occupied in former times. To judge by their participation in social activities, both profane and ceremonial, there is no obvious distinction between them and other members of the clan. They are as loyal and patriotic members of the clan as any other members of it. Wəla of Zoo always took a leading part in the public affairs and ceremonial activities of Zoo. I was surprised to discover accidentally that he was an ex-slave. I was told on excellent authority that he is still often teased about his slave status, but that he takes it in good part, saying that since the coming of the white man a slave is as good a man as his neighbour. Usually no one would so affront a man and his quasi-relatives as to refer pointedly to his slave status or descent if he did not provoke it by offensive conduct. Wrongly to accuse a person of slave descent, if only by implication, is a deadly insult. And even those of whom it is true never voluntarily betray it. Not everyone has Wəla's aggressive sense of humour, and good manners require that tact and discretion be exercised in such delicate matters of social standing.

Analogously, a slave girl's (*da'abpɔk*) status resembled that of an illegitimate daughter. She was taken in marriage like any other girl, so her children had no disabilities in respect of their patrilineal connexions. They regarded their mother's quasi-paternal kin as their maternal uncle's lineage. But I have records of cases in which the descendants of a slave woman have sought out her true paternal kin in a distant land in order to establish correct ritual ties with them.

567 All the men with whom I discussed the question affirmed without
hesitation that it would be disgraceful and immoral to treat a slave, or
602 an illegitimate son or brother, differently from true agnatic kin. But
they all emphasized, nevertheless, that a slave or an illegitimate son
cannot possibly become a son or a brother in the full sense of these
terms. He can be to you *in loco filii* or *fratris* but not *filius* or *frater*,
since he cannot sacrifice directly to his quasi-father's spirit or inherit,
[842] as of right, his patrimony. The principle at issue is that physical father
and social father, *genitor* and *pater*, must be the same person. The
vicissitudes of marriage illustrate the same point.

611 842 It often happens that a young woman becomes the bride of one man, is later married to another man, by whom she conceives or has a

young man was a lazy spendthrift and there was constant trouble between the two. One day Dɛŋkumis forcibly stopped him from beating his wife and he turned and struck Dɛŋkumis. There was an uproar, for other men of the lineage set upon Dmaarəb with sticks and fists. Next day Dɛŋkumis, followed by all the men of his lineage segment, dragged the delinquent to the chief. As it was a *dugni yɛl*, an affair of the inner lineage, the chief dealt with it as head of the clan. Trembling with anger and contempt he read the youth an excoriating homily on how a person ought to behave to his parents. Dɛŋkumis, ended the chief, had been too patient with the worthless scamp just because he was his brother's son. Let him beware. Another action of this kind, and Dɛŋkumis would be commanded to throw him out of his house.

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Another story deserves recording as an example of the working of filial piety. Kuŋaaŋba was born when his father was an old man. At that time a famine swept the country. A distant clansman of his father seized his mother and her babe to sell them into slavery and recoup himself for a debt owed to him by Kuŋaaŋba's father. But the woman managed to escape. When the famine was over she returned home to find her husband dead and his brother Gəlime at the head of the household. Gəlime, however, disregarding the rule that whoever inherits a man's property and status must take over his duties and liabilities, at first refused to have her back. She was like a corpse that had come to life again, he said. But his own wife, with an independence of spirit that Tale women often show, threatened to leave him if he did not take her co-wife and the child back, so he gave in. In due course Kuŋaaŋba's mother remarried one of her late husband's classificatory brothers, under whose care the boy grew up. Jurally and ritually Gəlime remained his 'father'. Then Kuŋaaŋba went to work for the white man at Kumasi. He returned with a quantity of clothes, a bag of salt, and three or four pounds in cash. He found Gəlime, now an old man in decline, left almost destitute, as his own sons, whom he had always treated with severity, had both run away to the Colony. Kuŋaaŋba at once took the old man to his own house. He gave him a cloth to wear, bought a supply of grain for him, and left him some money when he himself departed for another spell of work abroad. Thereafter Kuŋaaŋba took care of Gəlime as if he were his own father until the end of his life. 'For', said Kuŋaaŋba, as he concluded his simple tale, 'was he not my father? What did it matter that he had treated me badly in my childhood, since I am still alive and healthy? I couldn't leave my father to die of starvation just because his own sons were wastrels.' I asked Kuŋaaŋba if Gəlime had ever expressed remorse for having neglected his duty to him in his childhood. 'No,' was the answer, 'he would not do that. He would keep it to himself but his heart would be sore (*u suh [illegible]*). And now that he is dead he will (as a spirit) do good to me.' It was true, commented an elder who had listened to the story; a son who had

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jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual 602
coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tendaana's brother, who often deputizes for 618x
him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of 578
the tendaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true, but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's [789]
ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohag*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiiret*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations 184
which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also 571
confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of 571
clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, 577
but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihər*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*ba yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

571 Hence, people connected in this way are careful not to ask each other
577 for things. In the hunt, if a member of one group kills an animal and any members of the other group happen to be on the spot, the slayer will not lay a hand on the kill until the latter have cut a portion for themselves.

765 Sometimes it happens that a great tragedy overwhelms a member of
571 one group and he abandons himself to grief, refusing food, drink, and consolation. Then, as a last resort, his relatives send for the head of the
577 lineage whose requests cannot be refused, to persuade the stricken man to face life again. This happened, for example, when Puyɛl of Wakii's child was accidentally burnt to death. He was prostrate with grief, and said that he wished to die. Thereupon his brothers sent for the Bɔɣarna'ab of Gundaat, the clan to whose members Puyɛl's lineage must yield, and the Bɔɣarna'ab persuaded him to accept food and water, a sign that he was ready to throw off his despair. 'It is a matter of our fathers and our ancestors', the Bɔɣarna'ab declared when he told the story. 'He dare not refuse; I would call on the Earth, and my *bɔɣar*, and our ancestors, to witness, and his house would be destroyed if he remained obstinate.' Elders of other Talis clans explained the inviolability of this bond in almost the same words. It rests upon religious sanctions, the cult of the Earth and the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, common to all the Talis.

The Rationalization of Clanship Ties

811 Tallensi have no explanation to offer for the joking partnership or the bond of privileged moral coercion between clans or lineages, though they regard them as being somehow connected with the network of clanship. 'It is a matter of our fathers and forefathers', is all that even the best informed elders have to say about these ties.

*618 Clanship ties, however, always have the warrant of dogma or myth, as
811 we have seen. It is worth while examining a few more instances.

Sometimes common agnatic ancestry is claimed, though no common ancestor can be cited by name or any point of convergence of the different genealogies suggested. This is the case with Yinduuri and Sii, for instance. Frequently the fiction of a cognatic link is used. Thus, in explanation of the clanship ties existing between Degal and Kpata'arna'ab yidem of Kpata'ar, it is said that the latter are the sororal nephews (*ahəs*) of the former. The name of the Degal woman who is thus alleged to have been the progenitrix of the Kpata'ar lineage is unknown, and no Kpata'ar man would even speculate as to which of their ancestors might have been her husband. Similarly, Dakuor yidem of Bunkiuk are said to be the descendants of a sororal nephew of Kpata'arna'ab yidem with whom they have ties of clanship. The fictional character of this formula is revealed when we compare the neighbouring clan of Samiit. The people of Samiit say that their founding ancestor was a Wakii man (hence their ties of clanship with Wakii), who migrated to the top of the hills because he had by accident killed and eaten a python, which is a taboo at Wakii. After wandering about for some time, he found refuge with the people of Gundaat, one of whose daughters was later given to him as a wife. The people of Samiit are the posterity (*tu'u*) of this pair. Strictly speaking, therefore, the people of Samiit are the sororal nephews of Gundaat; and

might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal 604
nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their 618X
cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four 587
generations back.

Though the *pɔɣayabəlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a 764
single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are 571 ●
often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of 562
the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔɣayabəlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member
of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and [252]
food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔɣayabəlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubɛnib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔɣayabəlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubɛnib* (from *dug*, room, and *bɛ*, to stay or be) because they are identified with the *dugdɛm*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubɛnib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubɛnib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gore woman married to a Tɛnzugu man requires the help of *dubɛnib*, she calls upon all the other Gore wives, of whom there are very few, of Tɛnzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Goreland

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔɣayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔɣayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔɣayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔɣayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
A *pɔɣayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacri-
562 fices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[252] to join. A *pɔɣayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔɣayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*daɣat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

×618 Lastly, a married *pɔɣayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔɣasama* —a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔɣayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious
in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

PLATE VIII

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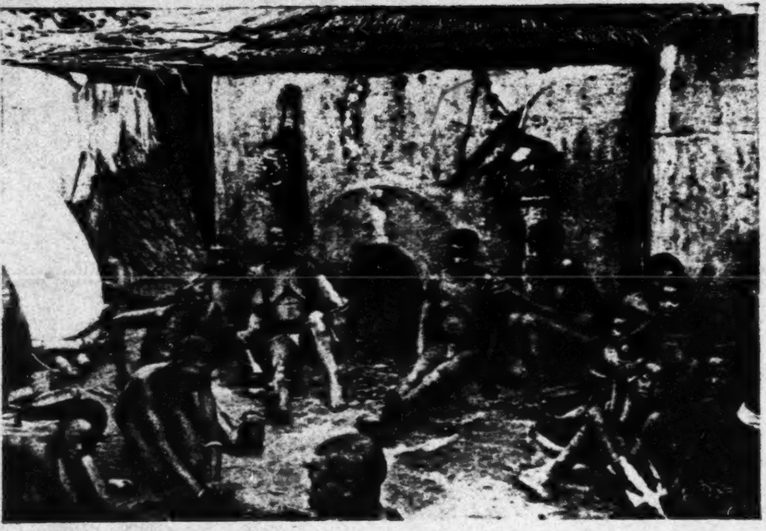

(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔɣayabalis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[FACING p. 161]

of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. 621
To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet 577
closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by 621
territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one 613
locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. 571
Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another
section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find
it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but
mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of
Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a
section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage
criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits
set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably
stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counter-
part in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a
stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section
is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any
of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been
chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo
section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists
between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and
regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding
moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section,
both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them
and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent [578]
hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections
than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one
another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the 621
territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of 618x
ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point
emphasized by the Yinduurna'ab in the case previously quoted. Tongo
stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies
on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the
Gbizug tɛndaana's ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual
jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpɛmdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly
on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect. The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaana's clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth (*tɛŋən kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

sunzɔt (division into brother (patri-) segments)', he said, 'but we shall 613
eventually do so. Our line of descent has not yet gone far enough, for we are all the children of one woman (i.e. the descendants of a common progenitrix not very far back). A woman's offspring do not split up, it is a man's offspring that split (*Bumpɔk dɔyam pu bɔkəra, buraa dɔyam m-bɔkət*).' In fact, Gundaatdɛm form a lineage of rather narrow span considering the number of ascendant generations which they reckon to their founding ancestor.

Incidentally the Bɔyarna'ab's statement brings out vividly the native conception of a lineage as a perpetual entity, 'going on (*kyɛŋ sa*)' for ever, unitary and identical beneath the surface of its changing personnel, the 'children of one woman (or one man)' as long as it lasts.

According to this scheme, in the set of lineages we have been analysing, Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, the agnatic descendants of Nɔpugzabər, constitute one of the five *dugət* of the *yir*, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, which in turn is a *dug* of the section (*yizug*) of Puhug, and this in its turn is a *dug* of the sub-clan of Tongo. Nɔpugzabər yir, again, may in certain situations be regarded as consisting of two *dugət*, Yidaan biis and Zoobɔŋ biis; and as Təbəg and Dəbil are *soog* brothers, their agnatic descendants will form a single matricentral segment, with greater cohesion than Yidaan biis.

Though *dug* and *yir* are relative concepts—relative both to each other and to the particular situation in which a given order of lineage segmentation is critical—there is a sense in which *dug* has a more precise connotation. As usual in Tale social organization no rigorous criterion can be found for this. It can be defined only in dynamic terms. Tallensi tend to think of the field of lineage relations as made up of three broad zones: the zone of clanship,[1] as when a man says, 'I am a Tongo man'; within this zone, the zone of section (*yizug*) relations, as when a Tongo man says, 'I am a Puhug man'; and within this zone, the zone of *dug* relations, which lies between the limits of the major segment of the *yizug* to which the individual belongs, on the one hand, and a level of segmentation of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm—that is, with a common ancestor placed about five generations back, on the other. Thus, if a man says of another member of his clan, 'We are *dugdɛm* (members of the same *dug*)', one can infer that he is thinking of a lineage segment of an order between that of Doohraan yidɛm and that of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug, though the exact genealogical extension of the lineage intended will vary from clan to clan.

This notion of the *dug*, to which we have given a purely morphological 571
formulation, is a reflex of the configuration of social interests that regulate 613
the corporate functions of the lineage. The zone of clanship is correlated with interclan and intersettlement political and ritual relations, and with the maximum extension of the rule of exogamy. The zone of *yizug* relations is correlated with intra-clan political and ritual relations, with the aliquot distribution between segments of the clan of rights to politico-ritual offices, and with the complementary rights and duties of the major segments of the clan, upon which the maintenance of its structural equilibrium depends. The zone of *dug* relations corresponds to a field

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[1] Cf. Chapter IV.

571 613 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 613 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 [578] Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. [835] Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not [837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

613 where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent
621 group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of
residence, common interests, and common experience. The local con-
602 centration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its
[769] ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult
of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

613 In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with
621 local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her
571 relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance
with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the
[587] segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her
children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close
[602] agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as
effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to 613
their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with 621
the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant 571
agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, 182
religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties 613
with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and 621
the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted, most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face communication and association in the organization of their collective life. Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by
their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the [212
absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, 401
communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of 371]
Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are the most important factors in the situation.

The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo. 613

Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster 621
of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligər yidɛm (see above, p. 57), homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic lineage with which Ligər yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkəŋto'o yidɛm, the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son (*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such 166
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*yma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry 602
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settle- 571
ments. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔyaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

of Təŋ-Kuorəg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 769
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody 182
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage 182
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes 782
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

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over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities in their lifetime. 769

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is consecrated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tendaana under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebees*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them. 592 783 778

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another. 592 181

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families. 592 571

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Talɔŋ than of the modern Englishman to say that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their homesteads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has 592 361

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[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

593 602 579 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 476 764 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of [837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 ● 571 835 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were 593
non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but
may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's 571 ●
wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's 835
wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength
of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between 593
brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office
is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. 622
No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the 584
same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's
behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same
maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again,
Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of
suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men
of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a
vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally
the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his
brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win
a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to
medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor
shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social 593
equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists
between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with 554
the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features
of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the
preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as
indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions
of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

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[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth
regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive,
851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their
[783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that
has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded
845 and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which
593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their
parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye somma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are
593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults
571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best
exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should
591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her
571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs
of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins)
165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye
it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

593 voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head
571 of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark
583 at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

593 Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman
571 with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another
607 indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (*deem*)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

593 Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters
601 speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our
607 wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*sɛt*) in the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

593 571 764 602 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Saɣawuob's mother's funeral Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Saɣawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 593 562 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔɣayabələg-kpeŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the lineage. [782] If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

ahəs, representing perhaps five or six clans, over the division of the cow's neck amongst themselves. It is on such occasions that the *ahəs* divide into two groups, the *dugni ahəs*, who are sisters' sons of the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony, and the *yɛŋha* (outside) *ahəs*, whose matrilateral links are with other segments of the clan. Etiquette dictates that the choicest and largest part of the meat apportioned to the *ahəs* should be given to the 'outside *ahəs*'. The *dugni ahəs*, it is argued, have many more opportunities of attending ceremonies of this inner lineage and receiving their shares of the sacrificial meat. 604 782

There are certain ceremonial occasions on which sisters' children of all degrees usually turn up in large numbers.[1] They include not only *ahəs* of the lineage immediately responsible for the ceremony but also remote *ahəs* and 'grandsons (*yaas*)' of the clan. The death of a senior elder or of the holder of a politico-ritual office brings 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' from a wide range to the funeral. They are present at all stages of the funeral, but the largest number usually come on the day of the burial, on the day the funeral proper (as opposed to the burial rites) commences, and on the two occasions when a diviner is consulted to ascertain the mystical author of the death. These are all occasions when animals are slaughtered as offerings and tributes to the dead, or else food or beer is used in the rites and shared amongst all present. The meat and the drink form a big attraction to all who have kinship ties with the lineage celebrating the funeral. It is no mean attraction either, considering that at a big funeral, such as that of the head of a section (*yizug*) of a clan or of a maximal lineage, two or three big beasts (cows and donkeys) and from twenty to forty small stock (sheep and goats) will be slaughtered, not to speak of innumerable fowls. In addition there will be great quantities of porridge and other cooked food. And *ahəs* have prescribed shares of all these items. Similar prodigality is shown in the brewing of beer for a big funeral. 604 764

But greed is far from being the chief motive that brings matrilateral and sororal kin to an important funeral. The profusion of food and beer—both of which are distributed only on specific ritual occasions—serves chiefly to create and maintain the right atmosphere of pride and kinship amity. For it must be remembered that most of the 'sisters' sons' will bring a gift, if it is only a meagre chicken and a small basket of grain; and if there are twenty or thirty 'sisters' sons' present the share of meat and beer each will receive is of less value than the things he brings. 604 764

A 'sister's son' or a 'grandson', like everybody else who attends such 571

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[1] As these ceremonies are almost always conducted by men and belong to the ritual and jural spheres of activity dominated by the men, the *ahəs* who come are principally males; but often one or two female *ahəs* come as well. The neck of the animal sacrificed belongs in theory to the *ahəs* of both sexes, but I have never seen it given to a woman.

604 764 571 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 571 602 782 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

793 602 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 769 778 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

commits a *faux pas*, or shows lack of understanding, or misbehaves 577
morally the comment is *u ka yam*, 'he has no sense'. The concept
is used to refer both to qualities of personality and to attributes of
behaviour. It is applied also in a genetic sense to describe the social
development of the child. A normal child between the ages of about 856
6 and 9 years is said to 'have sense at length'. It knows how to 577
behave in the social situations which confront it, whereas an infant of
3 or 4 years old does not. Yet a 4-year-old having learned bladder and
bowel control is said to 'have sense' as compared with a 2-year-old.
Similarly Nindoyat, (17–18 years) telling me of his sweethearting,
waxed scornful about his own boyish friendship with girls two years
before. 'I still had no sense then', he explained. The concept, it
will be seen, is generally used relatively to a particular situation.

Children's attitude to education. In Tale society every pupil becomes 861
in some situations a teacher. At the one extreme there are specialized
ritual performances which some men do not learn till they are grey,
and at the other, the toddler leaning over to play with his nursling
brother is teaching the latter something about his environment. This
holds right through the age-scale. Considering also the unity of the
social sphere, one is not surprised to find that children have the same
attitudes about education as their elders. Hence children are rarely
unwilling to learn. As a rule, too, they are not ashamed of confessing
failure, ignorance, or inability to do or make something. Conversely,
children laugh good-humouredly at one another's deficiencies in skill
or knowledge, they never jeer. Ridicule is reserved for the correction [626]
of uncouth manners, disgraceful morals, or aberrant interests.

Fundamental educational relationships. It will be evident from the 861
preceding analysis that Tale children receive their education not only 571
from the adults but also from older children and adolescents who are
always transmitting what they know of the cultural heritage to their
younger brothers and sisters and cousins. From the age of 5 or 6 years
until they become fully absorbed into the economic system children
often go about in small groups. These groups[1] usually consist of

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King*, 1936, for ancillary information about these groups. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix, 1936, for an outline of their structural context.

571 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship
861 from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 *Age and mobility*. Infants still requiring care are often carried about
857 by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate groups.

571 *Sex*. Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently
857 go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely,
462 accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 *The social situation*. Yet none of these children's groups resemble
857 gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is,
861 however, not that of children to children but of children to parents.
858 It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

226 227 The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wəd*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*asyur*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

226 ● 571 The manual skill involved is however of secondary significance. Sociologically, the essential fact is that fishing is a group activity. Everybody fishes with and against his neighbour, his motor alertness and competitive cupidity at the highest. The excitement is indescribable. The glint of a fin through the water, brown with the mud churned up by the slow moving mass of men, causes a scrimmage. Pushing and shouting, a dozen men plunge their nets after the fish. In a well stocked pool the terrified fish leap out of the water, a fantastic and beautiful sight. Hands and nets swing out after the leaping fish, and the older men who remain on the bank watching call out with eager delight at the sight. The first catch of the day is greeted with a shout of pleasure, not very welcome to the fortunate fisherman, however, for the fish thus noticed cannot escape confiscation by the owner of the pool, as it is the ritual perquisite of the fetish.

226 578 579 Disputes are inevitable and may become violent. The rule is that a fish belongs to the person who nets or traps it. But a fish may be netted by one man, escape, and be at once netted by another, or a leaping fish may be pinned between two nets. Such incidents lead to an angry altercation in which the one who has the fish generally gets the better. Once a quarrel over a fish occurred between a man of the *Namoos* group and one of the *Tallis* group. The latter ran ashore with his fish followed by the *Namoos* claimant. In a few minutes a small riot had broken out. *Namoos* and *Tallis* rushed out, snatched sticks, branches of trees, fishing nets, and flew at each other. Only the intervention of a brother of the Chief of Tongo stopped what might have become a serious fight. The dispute over the fish in this case was the signal for an outburst of political hostility. Words quickly lead to blows in such an atmosphere of heightened muscular and emotional tension.

834 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property,
765 it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her
768 eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women;
any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

•572 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the
584 sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of
her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will
764 be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another 602
regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires,
and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the 606
relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); [572]
and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live
near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law.

On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even 602
conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical to *dɔɣam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never obliterates this.

A man must show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their 606
representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in
ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits 264
down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pɔt nɔba*), 574
bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual func-
tionary, or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they 576
in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement.

Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well- 602
defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links
them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that 606
a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his

593 857 [155] Once a smaller boy who was with them hit Maɛŋya. Maɛŋya turned furiously on the small boy; but it was somewhat comical to see Tɛndaanbon equally angry with the assailant. Like many full or half-siblings of about the same age and the same sex, these two boys were extraordinarily alike in character, modelling themselves obviously on their father. They had his blunt and honest habits of speech, his diligence and readiness to oblige, and a sense of responsibility beyond their years.

Until one of them reaches the age of about 9 or 10, and sometimes even after that age, *soog* siblings are frequently together irrespective of sex. That is why one often sees a little girl with a group of small boys, or a little boy with a group of small girls. Between the ages of about 9 and 12 the sexual dichotomy prevailing in Tale culture begins to have a strong influence on the children, as we have seen. Different economic activities divide boys and girls. One rarely finds girls accompanying the herd boys or boys going for firewood with their mothers and sisters. Boys are beginning to share the interests and activities of the men, girls those of the women. Boys go about with their 'mates' (*taab*, sing. *taraan*) or 'chums' (*dɔlɔntaas*, sing. *dɔlɔntaa*) of about the same age, and girls with their girl chums. Boys of 11 and 12 are apt to be rather scornful of girls, and girls of this age turn up their noses at their boy contemporaries. Overtly, their attitudes to one another remind one of the latency phase in European children. Children round about 11 to 13 do not play together much in groups except on special occasions. Girls, in particular, are at home a good deal.

593 ● 572 This is the time, therefore, when the sex factor begins to exercise a strong influence on the relations of siblings; age differences also become significant; and with this emerges a distinction between the social aspect of siblingship and the affective, personal aspect. A boy of 11 to 13 may make a boon companion of a half-brother or a classificatory brother from a neighbouring homestead of about his own age, leaving his younger *soog* brother or sister to his or her own devices if the difference between them is considerable. When Koɣatee came to see me it was always with one of his chums who belonged to a different branch of his medial lineage, never with his younger *soog* brother or sister.

It is the same with girls at this stage. Ba'anzee's best friend was her classificatory 'daughter' of about her own age from the next homestead. They used to come up to the camp to call on my wife, as they generally announced to me, their arms affectionately round each other's neck. Maanyeya's daily playmate was her classificatory sister of about the same age from a neighbouring homestead—until her mother had a baby who wholly absorbed Maanyeya's delighted attention.

This tendency to seek outside friendships, though still chiefly among siblings of the same inner lineage, increases with the approach of adolescence. From the age of about 14 to 16 up to about 18 to 20 many

boys are keenly learning the art of courtship and are experimenting 593
with sex. They have sweethearts (*gab*, pl. *gabnam*), most commonly 572
slightly younger girls of the same clan whom they call 'sisters' in the widest sense. These girls may have serious suitors from other clans, but not being quite ripe for marriage find much more pleasure and excitement in their freer relations with their clan 'brothers'. With them [836]
they can indulge in sexual play, not always stopping short of intercourse, without criticism. Now when boys go to visit their sweethearts they often like to have the company of a friend (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) of about the same age, who has a similar interest in such adventures. For this a boy prefers a friend from another homestead, a not too near classificatory brother, to a close brother. Later on such a pair of friends will help each other in serious courtship, for one cannot carry on a serious courtship without a friend to act as spokesman and go-between. And a distant brother is preferable to a close brother as a friend in affairs of the heart. It helps to keep them secret from the other members of one's family, and that is desirable because it is a point of honour with every young man to find a wife for himself. The same motives operate with girls between the ages of about 13 and marriage at 16 to 18 years of age. A girl likes going to market with a girl friend of about her own age who is equally interested in the young men around. But if a girl is thinking of eloping with a suitor she prefers to confide in her mother or her clan-brother sweetheart. Having no rights in the bride-price they will—for a bribe from the suitor—help her to get away, whereas her own brothers will insist on a marriage by arrangement so as to make sure of the bride-price.

But the divergence of interests and companionship in the years 593
immediately preceding and following adolescence does not disturb the 264
personal intimacy and attachment of *soog* siblings. Custom prescribes that husband and wife should eat separately. So a man eats with one or two of his younger children, and each of his wives eats with one of her younger daughters or an infant. The other children are divided up, one dish of porridge to this pair of boys or that pair of girls or even to a girl and a boy. They may be full siblings or half-siblings, and the porridge they are eating on a particular occasion may be of their mother's co-wife's cooking. Nevertheless, every child continues to think of his own mother as the food-giver and of his *saarət* as those with whom he automatically shares food. A boy of 12 does not sleep in his mother's room, yet he still regards her as the source of his sense of emotional security. In a small and harmonious polygynous family the children are almost equally at home in all the women's quarters, but in a large joint family the children of one woman tend to be in her quarters for most of the time that they are indoors.

Of many other signs of the lasting intimacy of full siblings and their 593
closer identification with each other than with their half-siblings, the 578

CHAPTER XII

THE FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

OUR study has made it clear that the recognition of genealogical relationships in the ordering of social life has an extremely wide range of application among the Tallensi. To be sure, some classes of social relations in which individuals or organized groups normally participate do not necessarily imply cognizance of genealogical connexions. There are the activities of buyers and sellers in the market-place, for example. These are transactions in which kinship may, but for the most part does not, play a critical part. If it comes into the picture it does so as an adventitious factor, not as an intrinsic constitutive element. Even between kinsfolk transactions in the market are ruled by considerations of price, costs, profits, supply, and demand. A man who goes to market to buy a cap will not patronize a kinsman who has caps for sale if he can get one cheaper from a stranger. But it may happen that a seller of caps will be satisfied with a slightly smaller margin of profit if the buyer is his kinsman than if he is a stranger. 601

Apart from such ephemeral inter-personal relations, there are lasting social ties, such as those of friendship (*zoot*), which do not necessarily presuppose genealogical connexions. It is a common thing for Tallensi, especially for men, to have friends (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) in other clans than their own, and nowadays in neighbouring tribes. Friends visit one another occasionally, help one another sometimes, and give one another gifts. A man may also have a woman friend (*sɔm*), usually the wife of one of his clansmen. The man takes small gifts to his *sɔm* from time to time and she reciprocates by cooking a meal for him. She may assist him to find a wife from among her clan sisters. But if friends are not necessarily kinsmen, they very often have common kin. In fact friendships between unrelated Tallensi are most often formed through one of the parties visiting a kinsman of the other party and so making his acquaintance. Many friendships arise from contacts at funeral ceremonies or when hoeing or building parties come to help a father- or brother-in-law. In any case, the commonest and most prized form of friendship is friendship with a clansman or a neighbour of a related clan. Many such friendships go back to childhood and are the more highly prized because they are voluntary, personal, and not subject to hard-and-fast rules. 572 ●

In the same way, though the Tallensi do not have institutionalized age-grades, men or women of about the same degree of social maturity are often grouped together in situations in which many people of all ages play a part. One sees this very clearly on ceremonial occasions. At funeral ceremonies, for example, there is first of all the usual separation 561 462

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[p. 337]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grandfather's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows: 551 [787] 782

'"Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months. 787 574

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die."' 834 845 766

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.' 583 586

This summary statement follows closely the formulations of the 613 Tallensi themselves. They normally think of a lineage, a set of lineages, 618X or a community, as a unit in relation to other units of a like sort, irrespective of its internal differentiation. Thus, Tongo people say: '*Tam ni* 574 *Yamələgdɛm ni Siedɛm ni Biukdɛm a la yaab yɛni biis*—We and the people of Yamələg, and the people of Sie and the people of Biuk are the children of one ancestor.' The place-name serves to designate the social group. Once, at Sie, some young men from Tongo, members of an assimilated lineage, called on me. 'We've only come on a visit', they said, '*daɣa ti mabiis n a Siedɛm?*—Are not these people of Sie our kinsfolk?'

Such intercourse is constant amongst the three Talni-speaking branches of Mosuor's posterity (*tu'u*). Biuk, both because of its fusion with the Gəris and its geographical location, is somewhat isolated from regular contact with its Talni-speaking clansmen. But the ties which control this voluntary fraternization emerge more precisely in a number of critical norms and institutions.

The Critical Norms of Clanship

Most important of these is the rule of exogamy. Marriage is uncon- 618X ditionally prohibited between the four branches of Mosuor's posterity— 582 i.e. between members of the authentic lineages of Tongo, Yamələg, Sie, and Biuk. The prohibition extends to the assimilated lineages as well, but not to all attached lineages, though the natives state it as if it applied to the entire sub-clan. They regard it as the inevitable corollary of their common ancestry. It is, therefore, the widest extension of the rule which prohibits marriage within the agnatic lineage. I discovered only one instance of the transgression of this rule at Tongo, and this occurred in abnormal circumstances.

A second critical norm always cited is: '*ti diit taaba pakoya*—We marry 587 one another's widows.' A Tongo man has the right to seek the hand of 618X the widow of a Yamələg, a Sie, or a Biuk man; but in actual practice remarriage of widows is restricted by so many other conditions that this leviratic right is mainly significant as an ideological index of clanship. It is the correlative of the rule of exogamy and, like it, the widest extension of a right which holds primarily within the lineage. Occasionally this right is exercised in its widest sense. The Chief of Tongo, for example, has availed himself of it to solve the problem of accommodation for himself and his retinue when he is compelled to visit the Administrative Headquarters at Zuarungu. An elderly widow at Biuk is nominally his wife and he may therefore stay in her house without embarrassment. In another case a middle-aged Yamələg widow elected to marry a stalwart young man from Tongo in preference to any of her dead husband's closer kinsmen. It is extremely unlikely that either woman would have been permitted to marry so distant an agnate of her dead husband if she were still capable of child-bearing. Nevertheless, it is an essential consequence of the leviratic right that if a man from one of the sub-clans should succeed in marrying a young widow of a member of another, no reprisals could be publicly undertaken against him, whereas anyone outside the range of clanship would be courting armed vengeance by such an act.

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔɣar* in return. 788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔɣar* to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion with it. [551] Wards of the *Bɔɣar* have prescribed names according to their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔɣare; later children have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. [582] A girl ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔɣar* before she goes to her husband.

769 648 574 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔɣa* extends, also, to whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔɣar* of the Hill Talis has a traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔɣar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔɣar*. [609] From time to time reciprocal visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔɣar*. These visitors, coming as emissaries of the *Bɔɣar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔɣar*.

784 776 184 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔɣar* are instances of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for instance. Then the ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

of Tɔŋ-Kuorɛg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 769
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody 182
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage 182
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes 782
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

This aspect of the *Bɔγar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔγar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔγar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔγar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔγar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔγar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation- 486
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔγar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔγar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔγar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔγar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive
by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently
guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often
continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her
guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children
by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following
case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moɣaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman
of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold
porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush
with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this
instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp.
His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and
the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill
with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
787 reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the
old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the
cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality
and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt.
There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into
consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself
partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at
someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the
matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no
doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared
her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence.
The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock
(*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant,
as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the
theme of one of the dance songs of the Gɔlib Festival. 'Wherever she
goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance
at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public
ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted
on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
754 mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
[771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms
consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

602 The usual range of effective uterine kinship is a good illustration of the correlation between spatial relationships and genealogical relationships in the social space of the individual. The physical range of the individual's social contacts and communication with others is, as we have already noted, a function of his range of social relations, which is determined principally by his genealogical connexions. In the days before the establishment of the British peace, matrilateral, and especially uterine kinship, played a very important part in enabling people to travel outside their normal range of social contacts, and so to build up social relations with members of clans usually inaccessible to their own clansmen. A story will illustrate how this occurred.

602 574 484 When the Gorogo-Yikpemdaana was a young man of 17 or 18, sometime during the first decade of this century, a food shortage approaching famine, such as periodically swept the country, descended on the Tallensi. He decided to make a journey to Gbimis, in Mampurugu, across the White Volta, in order to barter some livestock for grain. But such a journey was full of peril. A Taləŋ wandering in Mampurugu would be set upon and killed or taken as a slave by any armed Mamprusi who encountered him. So he went, first, to a *soog* at Pwalagu. This man escorted him across the river to another *soog* living in a small village there, and this *soog* conducted him to Gbimis. Under the safe conduct of his Mampuru *saarət* he was able to carry out his project. In later years he often made this trip to Mampurugu to buy things for resale in the small markets of Taleland.

Though people can travel where they will in freedom and security nowadays, it is still usual for anyone having business of a ritual or jural kind with a distant or unfamiliar clan to follow the web of uterine kinship thither. The route is much curtailed, but the principle remains. If Banərəg's wife's brother, a Sakpee man, has such business at Bongo, he will probably go to his *saarət* at Zuarungu, stay the night with them, go on next morning to a *soog* at Yaraga, and find out from him or her if they have a *soog* at Bongo with whom he could stay and who will guide him and act as his spokesman with *his* clansmen.

602 476 431 In the same way uterine kin assist one another in economic matters. A man who loses time in his farming programme through illness will often ask a *soog* from a neighbouring settlement to come and do a day's hoeing for him where he would not ask for such help from a clansman. Again, crops do not ripen at the same time throughout Taleland. There may be an interval of several days or several weeks between the harvest at Sii and the harvest at Datok. It is the custom, at harvest time, especially at the time of the early millet harvest after the hungry months, for people living in areas that have a late harvest to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts of grain from relatives living in early harvesting areas. Later, when the early harvesting settlements have exhausted their supplies, people will go to kinsfolk in later harvesting areas to beg for grain to tide them

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential
592 life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this
262 in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential
576 autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to
574 which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces
521 himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out, informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out *gafarra ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is* usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dɛndɔŋo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart
[584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy. Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

602 a woman marries she does not forfeit her status as a daughter of her 593 natal lineage (*pɔɣayabɔlɔg*) or lose her personal ties with her parents and siblings. We have discussed this, in its broader aspects, in our previous volume[1] and confine ourselves here to family ties. Throughout her life she keeps in close touch with her parents and siblings and other members of her clan, especially her close agnates. If, as is common, other daughters of her clan have married into her husband's clan, these will be the classificatory co-wives with whom she has most contact and to whom she gives and from whom she receives most help, kindness, and support. She visits her natal settlement, as well as her sisters married elsewhere, regularly, and is often visited by members of her parental family. She not only has emotional bonds with her natal family that time never erases, but she also retains certain privileges, which have almost the force of rights, in it and in her natal clan, as we have shown in our previous volume. Her natal family and clan also have claims on her all her life. This is strongly marked in the first two or three years of marriage, before motherhood, habit, and an increasing share in its routine have knit her firmly into her conjugal family.

574 593 In the early years of marriage a woman seldom lets an opportunity of visiting her natal family go by. She calls in to see how they are on her way to or from market. Now and then she comes to stay a few days. If she is ill she will generally come to stay with her mother, who will tend her much more carefully than her co-wives or in-laws. When Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan's daughter developed an asthmatic complaint she stayed with her parents for nearly a year. When Da'amo'o's wife went down with guinea-worm she took her three-months-old baby and went to her father's house until she was cured, though it is considered a risky thing to take so young an infant out of its father's house. At sowing or harvest time a man often sends for a young married daughter who has no child to come and help. At all times a married daughter is informed, and sometimes sent for, if there is serious sickness in her parental home. She must be sent for if a member of her parental family dies; and she will go even if it means leaving a tiny infant in the care of a co-wife for a day or two.

761 602 On this matter Tallensi are extremely sensitive, for death is the great test of all social ties among them. All relatives of the dead, and especially the principal mourners—parents, spouses, children, siblings—have defined ritual observances, ritual duties, and practical tasks in mortuary and funeral ceremonies. A death often comes as a shock to these close relatives, and especially the death of a parent or sibling to a married daughter of the family. Her mother-in-law or husband will break the news gently to her with a tactful periphrasis. But she must be told and sent for, else she—and, backing her up, her conjugal family—would be deeply offended. On her part, not to go when thus summoned would

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial cere-
mony. Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tɛnzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live,
expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's
lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
602 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
627 for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It is not until the formal placation gift (*sundaan*) is sent to the girl's father with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

675 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument
by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
583 marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
576 maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan. The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

● 574 A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
593 parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority. Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two, though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
[837] have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives
run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes, for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law, his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

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solve the conflict between these antithetic bonds in favour of her conjugal family. 593

Tallensi say that a woman is like a stranger or guest (both ideas are contained in the native word *saan*) in her husband's house during the first year or two of marriage. Standing outside the intimate life and vital concerns of the family, she cannot yet be relied upon. Gradually she grows accustomed (*malɔm*) to her conjugal family; and after some years, when she has several children, she becomes so far absorbed into the family that full trust can be reposed in her and she takes a full and self-confident part in family affairs. 593

It needs little observation to see how apt is this description of the gradual absorption of women into their husbands' families. On a visit to a homestead to which a newly wedded wife has just been added, one can easily observe the 'shyness (*valɔm*)', as the Tallensi call it, of the new wife (*pɔɣa*) and her husband (*sɛt*) towards each other. This goes farther than formal etiquette. Good manners require that a woman should always show respect to her husband in public. She walks behind him if they have to go anywhere together on a ceremonial occasion. She stoops or kneels whenever she offers him food or drink. But this behaviour is customary for a woman with all adult males other than her own children. It is a sign of the general attitude of respect due from women to men in a society so dominated in public social relations by the patriarchal principle. The 'shyness' of a newly married wife comes out in other ways. She tries to keep out of her husband's way as much as possible during the day, busying herself zealously with the household tasks given to her by her mother-in-law. She is submissive to all his requests. She speaks to him only when she is spoken to. She takes no initiative in anything. 593 576

This attitude is even more marked in her behaviour towards her parents-in-law (*daŋaam*, pl. *daŋaanam*), to whom she is bound to show formal deference at all times, and to her adult brothers-in-law, with whom she must always be circumspect because of the incest barrier which we shall discuss later. It often comes into her private relations with her husband if he is much older than she is. She will flirt and be more companionable with a young husband, in private, natives say; for he is probably like herself a *tarɔm*, junior, under authority, and connubial joys mean so much to him that he comes down to an equal footing with his wife for their sake. 606 593

The Relationships of a Wife with her Relatives-in-law

A woman does not avoid any of her relatives-in-law or her husband, nor are her relations with them regulated by strict prescription. She maintains a general attitude of deference, modesty, and complaisance towards them. A well-behaved young wife is industrious and obedient in helping her mother-in-law with her domestic work, and she will be self-effacing and deferential towards her father-in-law, her husband, 606 607

will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another 602
regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires, 606
and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the
relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); [572]
and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live
near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price
debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine
belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the
same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men
show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law.

On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even 602
conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage
never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to
be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This
is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical
to *dɔyam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained
between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never
obliterates this.

A man mu[illegible] show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their 606
representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in
ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits 264
down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pɔt nɔba*), 574 ●
bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual functionary,
or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they 576
in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement.

Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well- 602
defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links
them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that 606
a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law. [576] [554]

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A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samɔr*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*laγapielɔb*, pl. *laγapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *laγah*, pl. *ligəri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown. [436]

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754 431 fully repaid in the bestowal of his daughter as a wife. A similar sanction
574 to that mentioned in the case of a son-in-law operates here.

764 602 If one watches the behaviour of men at the funeral of an affine, one can see that they feel themselves to be under strong constraint. They and their clansmen accompanying them keep together, and when there are no ceremonies or festivities in progress they stay apart from the rest of the crowd. In former days a mourning party of affines always carried arms, and it is said that fighting sometimes broke out at funerals. When Tallensi comment on the ceremonial obligations of affines, they emphasize the feeling of constraint associated with them. One is impressed by the contrast between this attitude and the attitudes associated with the ceremonial obligations that follow on the death of a clansman or cognatic kinsman. It is as if the native feels his ceremonial obligations to an affine to be forced on him from outside, without his choice, whereas he seems to accept his duties and obligations on the death of a kinsman willingly and from within.

602 431 It is evident that reciprocity between affines is different in character from that which prevails between people who have a bond of common interests, such as members of the same family. There is not the same free give and take. When gifts or services pass between affines, whether they are prescribed or ostensibly spontaneous, there is a deliberate effort to counterbalance them. A sort of book-keeping occurs. This appears most clearly in the jural formalities of marriage, but it comes out quite plainly in the apparently voluntary services and reciprocal hospitality of son-in-law and father-in-law. The side that benefits feels impelled to make an equivalent return in order not to give the other party grounds for a grudge. And people who flout this convention not only upset their good relations with their affines and so provide pretexts for conflict with them, but also incur the censure of public opinion.

606 431 One incident will illustrate this. Banɔrəg asked his son-in-law, a member of an adjacent clan, to come and help him finish the hoeing of his home farm. The young man brought a couple of his clansmen and they worked with zeal from early morning till sunset. Then they went home, politely refusing Banɔrəg's invitation to come home with him for the evening meal. Had they come as a formal hoeing party they would have been entitled to a good meal as a reward at the end of the day. But they had come informally, and their own homes were near enough for them to get back in time for the evening meal. They spoke of their day's work for Banɔrəg as a simple act of courtesy to a father-in-law. As we watched them saunter homewards, Banɔrəg said to me 'Sons-in-law are shy (*deenam mmar vi*). They can't come home with you (their father-in-law) and eat with your children (as if they were your kin)'. But next day Banɔrəg sent a large basket of millet flour to his daughter with orders to cook a generous meal for her husband and his friends. He would feel ashamed, he told me, if he did not 'thank' the young men

606 602 837 577 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman, anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house. Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 606 837 577 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly within the limits of the medial lineage. [576] A man may not even meet his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 434 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 574 434 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They 584
expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations
with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about 574
as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are 834
more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep in separate rooms.

These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry 574
season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the
rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which 834
a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her 606
father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of 783
the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we
have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous 844
position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his 606
father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will 783
not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in
the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. 827
The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

the child is due, her husband sends a sacrifice for her spirit guardian to 604
her father, to secure the blessing of her patrilineal ancestors on the 843
ordeal she is soon to undergo. When the child is born, a messenger is
again dispatched to announce its birth to the girl's parents. He is 431
received with the hospitality due to a bearer of particularly glad tidings.
Now the girl's mother sends her four new calabashes. These are the [854]
infant's toilet-vessels—one for giving the infant its daily medicated
water to drink, one as a dipper for use when bathing it, one as a slop
basin, one for scooping up its excrement. These private toilet utensils
are in part a magical protection for the baby. The occasion is also
marked, as we have learnt, by a special gift of foodstuffs to the new
mother from her father. All these formalities are not necessary for
children after the first; it is enough to send a message on the birth of the
child. But the woman's paternal relatives are no less interested in these
later children than in her first child.

A child makes the acquaintance of its mother's paternal family very 604
early in life. Its mother's sisters and mother's mother, if she is not too
old, are frequent visitors to its mother. Its mother's brothers may be
frequent visitors too, especially if they are on friendly terms with its
father. But it is not till the child reaches the age of about 5 or 6, when
it begins to be taken on visits to its *ahəb yiri*, that it clearly distinguishes
these relatives. The person who matters most to a small child at its
mother's brother's house is its maternal grandmother (*ma-kpeem*), in
whose quarters and under whose care the child lives.[1] Old people, both [574]
men and women, love to have their daughters' young children to stay
with them, and pet and spoil them quite as much as their sons' children.
As will be remembered, grandchildren joke with their maternal grandparents.
At harvest time, in particular, old women often have daughters'
children to stay for a week or two, so that they can enjoy the good food
available at that time. Playing and eating and sleeping with the children
of the house, a child learns to regard them as siblings, and partly through
imitating them, partly through coming directly under the discipline of
his mother's brother, a child thus visiting its *ahəb yiri* learns to think of
its *ahəb* as a 'sort of father'. He hears all the gossip of the family. When
a domestic sacrifice is performed he is present and receives the portion
of the animal—the neck (*naŋgoor*)—prescribed for an *ahəŋ*. I have more
than once seen a small boy of perhaps 8 receive the neck of a sacrifice,
amid an amused chuckle from his mother's brothers. If a woman dies
leaving a young child of less than 5 or 6 years old it is a common thing
for the child to be sent to live with its maternal grandmother for a year
or two until it is old enough to need only a minimum of maternal care.

Thus, a child learns to think of its *ahəb yiri*, in the strict sense of its
mother's brother's homestead, at first, in the more extended sense, later,
as a place where it is given food, shelter, affectionate attention, and

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[1] This follows directly from the constitution of the joint family.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604
will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked
why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each
other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577
when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head 302
shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, 789]
Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power
of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely,
withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having
done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage.
But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to
his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the
jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency
is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother
and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604
rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574 ●
principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a 764
woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party
of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws.
The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman
calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these
young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young
men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the
girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the
young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the
visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl [431]
who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit.
Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers
of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in
the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is
giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this
declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody
knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604
her father without having previously arranged to go to another man,
she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, 586
under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587
She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any
case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that
she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for
some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though
courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of
another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself
with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

867 In Taleland an infant remains confined to the house for the first
three to six months or even longer. During this period its social space
is extremely restricted. It has effective social relationships with its
mother, sometimes its grandmother or a co-wife of its mother, or an
older sibling or half-sibling, and its father—in this order of frequency
[856] and intensity. At the age of 3 to 4, when it is beginning to talk
fluently and can run about, its effective range of contacts includes all
the members of the joint family and probably those of closely neighbouring
related joint families. It is beginning to associate with groups
of other related children belonging to its immediate milieu and to
know the topography of its parental homestead and its immediate
[574] surroundings. By the age of 6 or 7 it is being taken on visits to its
mother's brother's house (*ahəb yir*) and begins to incorporate into the
texture of its life its relationships with its mother's people and their
settlement. A little later it commences to take a share in very simple
economic duties. In this way the child's social space is continuously
expanding as it grows older. The educational agencies to which it is
subjected become more numerous and more diverse and its experiences
more variegated as it participates in an ever-increasing range of social
situations. With adolescence a great increase in mobility ensues and
a new interest emerges—the opposite sex as potential spouses. This
coincides with the beginning of real economic responsibility. When
[182] he reaches adulthood, the individual's social space is a function of the
entire social structure in its complete ecological setting.[1] He should
be capable of appropriate behaviour in any social situation which may
confront the normal Taləŋa. He is a full citizen—which means that
he is actually or potentially subject to the whole gamut of constraints
inherent in Tale society.

861 In the evolution of an individual's social space we have a measure of his educational development. In Taleland this is brought about not only by accretion to, but also by differentiation of, his or her field of social activity. Sex, for example, is a differentiating factor of great

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[1] A person's social space is not equivalent to the entire social structure since it is included in the latter, which is never fully known to or acted on by the individual. Take, for instance, the Tale joint family. As a structural unit it can be easily distinguished and described by the anthropologist; but each member's view of the whole is unique—that of the head of the joint family is different from that of his wife or son—yet all derived from the same single unit of structure.

significance. From childhood on a person's relation to the economic 861
system is chiefly determined by sex. In the kinship system sex operates
as a differentiating factor from an equally early age, from the time,
in fact, when a child learns to designate like-sex siblings by different
terms from opposite-sex siblings. Local, lineage, or family institutions
also act as differentiating factors, though not in the same way. This
is a consequence in part of the peculiarities of Tale political structure.
Local groupings, clans and lineages are asymmetrically linked *inter se* 621
and with communities outside the Tale area proper by political, genea- 648
logical, territorial, or ritual ties. The most striking case of this sort
is presented by the Hill Talis who have immemorial ritual links with
villages and genealogical groups among Dagomba, Mamprussi, Bulisi
(Builsa), Woolisi (Kassena), Mossi, and other neighbouring peoples.
Each of the Hill communities has its exclusive associates in these
foreign areas. The people of Sii were traditionally associated with the
Bulisi, the people of Gorogo with the Woolisi, the Kpata'ar clan with
certain villages of Black Dagomba, and so forth. There was in former
times, and is even more so now, a constant traffic between the Tong Hills
and the outside areas linked with the clans dwelling there—pilgrims
coming to the Fertility Shrines in the Hills and Talis paying ceremonial
visits to their associates. But the economic and political by-products of
this traffic were most important. In this way a range of geographical
and social contacts was, and is, available to a member of the Hill clans
which no Namoos had, and among the Hill clans themselves the
actual contacts varied from clan to clan. The Namoos again have their
traditional political associates among the Mamprussi. It is especially
interesting to note that the Mamprussi associates of the Hill Talis and
the Mamprussi associates of the Namoos belonged to a single political
structure; yet the latter would not, a generation ago, have hesitated to
overpower and enslave any Hill Talis they encountered defenceless.

Factors of this sort become significant only after adolescence and 574
more so in the life of men than of women; but they are operative even 191
in childhood. The Black Dagomba guests at a Kpata'ar elder's home-
stead are familiar figures to his children; and one sign of the interest
taken in them by the children is the fact that most Kpata'ar youths
understand and easily speak the dialect of the Black Dagomba, whereas
other Tallensi do not.

Daa (the supreme bɔɣar of the Baari people) and Mosur will jointly prosper the land. 796 Then he departs. That day Baari celebrates Daa.

That same evening the large Gingauŋ drum is escorted to Baari by the 796
Gbizug Tendaana and the Wakyi Tendaana, following a ritual path. All
Tongo flocks to Baari to dance with great enthusiasm on a traditional spot 535
outside the grove of Baat Daa. Near the dance, but silently aloof, wait the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas. A few hundred yards away, as if indifferent to the dance, young men of Baari assemble, wearing their ritual garb, a goatskin. When the Baari Tendaana and his ritual coadjutors arrive to join them, the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas are summoned. Greetings are exchanged, and then led by the Baari Tendaana, the whole company files away in a most solemn and silent procession, brought up by the youngest members carrying pots of consecrated beer. With utter gravity this procession thrice encircles the dancers who continue to dance as if
oblivious to this. Anyone who dares to break through the encircling pro- [784]
cession is doomed to a supernatural death. The procession files away again, into the sacred grove. There the Tendaanas pour libations of beer to Baat Daa, calling down the very same blessings as had been invoked by the Chief earlier in the day. They drink the beer and send a small pot out to the representative of the Chief, who is among the dancers. Now the Tendaanas' procession emerges, again solemnly encircles the dancers, and files away. At a tree which marks the path to Tongo they stop, and marching round it in a circle, chant a song the burden of which is Mosur boot kuliga ("Mosur wants to go home"). Upon this signal the allusion of which is obvious to all, the dance breaks up, the ritual is over.

That finishes the Gingauŋ dance for a year. The next three days at 796
Tongo are given over to the gayest festivities of the season, the celebration of Daa. This is a New Year's festival, a fitting conclusion to the dancing season. Dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, the whole of Tongo assembles at the Chief's compound on the day after the rites at Baari.
From far and near, Tongo women who have married away return to their [574]
homes, many bearing gifts of special food from their husbands. The Chief's house throngs with his people and strangers. His elders bring him presents of guinea fowls and he, sitting in state, has a bullock slaughtered, part of which he shares amongst them. The Chief, it is true, gets the better part of this exchange of gifts, but good form is satisfied. The afternoon is devoted to light-hearted dancing in praise of the Chief.

The Gbizug Tendaana has also celebrated Daa, but very quietly. That 796
evening, however, Chief and Tendaana meet in ceremonial. The scene is 778
the dancing ground. This is a dedicated area which may not be cultivated.

796 For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he
[778] received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every
newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never
set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground,
wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by
boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every
newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or
two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo.
He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug
Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark
and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present,
and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the
Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the
blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming
year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path,
followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he
arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound,
including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the
rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the
secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a
libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he
has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and
so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama
reenacting his first installation.

796 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates
the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and
•574 counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one
782 congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major
interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls,
guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice
to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed,
and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this,
and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings
for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos
[784] have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that
the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

182 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First,
they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos
518 and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana.
It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, 796
like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to
the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881
initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar.
Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of
one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough
stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If [784]
I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of
the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796
home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who
have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574
follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535
Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social
interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may
not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171
with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its 796
calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and
elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of responsibility 182
for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of
lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of
jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion
in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual
of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special
emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182
festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand
it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by
the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

Assimilated lineages, therefore, all over Taleland, though thoroughly 618x
absorbed into the structure of the sub-clan or clan, suffer the same dis- 554
abilities as the more precisely differentiated attached lineages; they cannot,
however, make a virtue of this, as the latter sometimes can; they cannot 576●
explain away their status. To tax a person, openly or explicitly, with 567
being the descendant of a slave (*da'abər bii*) is one of the deadliest insults,
however remote his slave ancestry may be. This is more than a matter
of etiquette. It amounts, in certain circumstances, to blasphemy against
the spirit of the man who originally adopted this slave ancestor. Thus,
under this rule of courtesy to clansmen and respect for ancestors, the
status of an assimilated lineage is never commented on publicly unless a
serious issue hangs on it or a severe quarrel is involved. This exceptional
circumspection about assimilated lineages shows better than anything else
their ambiguous position in the clan.

Such elements of the social structure as these are not apparent at first 618x
glance. I did not discover the existence of assimilated lineages at Tongo
until the end of my first year in the field. To do so it was essential to have
a very thorough understanding of the way the lineage system works and
of the internal structure of the Tale community. I was able then to notice
and to be puzzled by the absence, or self-effacement, of certain people in
situations where they would normally be representing their lineage segments.
It was not the behaviour to be expected of them if their segments
were of equal status with the authentic segments of Mosuor biis. Veiled
hints began to have a meaning which confidential informants confirmed.

One of my earliest friends and frankest informants at Tongo was 618x
Sayəbazaa, an elder in whom the chief had the greatest confidence and 115
who was universally esteemed for his industry and probity. Sayəbazaa
was the head (*kpeem*) of Nɔŋsuur yidem, a major segment of one of the
major segments of Tongo. One of its members held an important and
confidential office under the chief. Nɔŋsuur yidem appeared to be of the
true agnatic line of Mosuor. I took this for granted the more readily
because, when the Great Festival season came round and all the elders of
Tongo were summoned to the chief's house so that a diviner could be
consulted, it was Sayəbazaa who consulted the diviner on behalf of the
chief and the whole of Tongo, in order to ascertain what offerings must
be given to Mosuor and the chiefly ancestors.

Nevertheless, Nɔŋsuur yidem is an assimilated lineage whose founding 618x
ancestor is vaguely said to have arrived with Mosuor. Though almost
completely absorbed by the authentic line of Mosuor biis, a last barrier
remains, which I discovered only through one of the most striking of the
events which revealed the existence and status of accessory lineages at
Tongo. It showed also how there is a continuous process of adjustment
going on in every sector of the social structure, resolving the tensions and
contradictions latent in it.

It was an occasion of historic importance marking the climax of one 618x
phase in the absorption of the accessory lineages by the authentic lineages 769
of Tongo. The occasion was that of the great thanksgiving sacrifice to the
founding ancestors of Tongo, Mosuor and his son Seyahəg, which took
place in 1936. Beer and animals were contributed by the chief, who gave

or adolescent son. The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* also serve as a sort of drawing-room. 343 A guest who must be treated with respect is invited to step 592 round to the kitchen to have his meal there in private, a suitor is told to go round to the girl's mother's kitchen to plead his suit with her.

The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* are the counterpart in the social sphere of 576 ● a woman of the *zɔŋ*, cattle yard (*sapak*), and granary (*buur*) in that of a man. They mark off the economic field reserved for her and the social 592 sphere in which she is supreme. Etiquette and convention show this, and, as in the case of the *zɔŋ* and the *buur*, ritual notions give expression to it and put the seal of mystical value on it. Women do not have ancestor shrines of their own. But in her storeroom an old woman keeps her *zaalɔŋ*. This is a long rope net, holding a neat pile of polished calabash dishes (*ŋman*) of all sizes which she has accumulated during her married life. One of these is her *kumpiog*, 'basket of death'. It is the symbol of her mortal existence.[1] When she dies it stands in her *dɛndɔŋo* and is eventually taken, with the most meticulous ceremonial care, to her eldest surviving daughter. In this room also she keeps her main storage pot (*dɔk*). It is to her what a man's granary is to him. One sign of this is the rule that her first-born daughter may never, in the mother's lifetime, open it. She does so ritually when her mother's funeral is completed.[2]

Lastly, there is the grinding-room (*neer*), a vastly important item in 343 the organization of the domestic economy, and in the personal relations of the women of a family with one another. It is always a small, low 592 room, 3 or 4 feet in diameter, with a doorway barely large enough to admit a person on hands and knees. A hole under the eaves, the size of a soup plate, lets in a glimmer of light. A waist-high table built of mud, in the hollow surface of which two nether grindstones are embedded, takes up most of the interior. In a small homestead like Ɔndieso's one *neer* is enough, and his mother and wife share it, though the older woman seldom has occasion to use it as her daughter-in-law does most of the cooking for the family. If there are several women in a household, more than one grinding-room is needed. One reason for [252] this is purely mechanical. Grinding the grain for the main meal, in the evening, takes at least an hour, in the period of plenty. The women and girls do this at any time of the day, but prefer to do it in the afternoon. Thus more than one woman may want to use the *neer* at the same time. 343 But there is another reason as well. Co-wives are apt to squabble over 592 the use of the grinding-room, especially if they do not get on harmoni- 578

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[1] The calabash is the commonest domestic utensil and it symbolizes a woman in many contexts. For instance, when a man's wife bears a child he will send to tell her parents; and the messenger reports, with the euphemism the Tallensi always resort to on such occasions, that the woman has born 'a calabash' (*ŋman*) if it is a girl, or a 'staff' (*duor*) if it is a boy—the staff being a hunting-weapon carried by men.

[2] Cf. Ch. VIII below.

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly
lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch
sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential
592 life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this
262 in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential
576 autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces
almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to
which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces
574 himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out,
521 informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out
gafarra ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dɛndɔŋo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be
so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart
[584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy.
Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate 596 association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, 362 and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. 576 Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room.

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can 593 confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. 596 He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Taləŋa can keep his own counsel if need be.

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not 593 remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At 581 one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another.

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. 581 They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with 589 men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously [158] mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial ceremony. 578
Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tɛnzugu man against her father's
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576 ●
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live, expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's
602 lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
627 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It is not until the formal placation gift (*sɛndaan*) is sent to the girl's father with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

676 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument
583 by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
●576 maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her
husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan. The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

574 A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
593 desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority. Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two, though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives
[837] run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for
the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes, for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law, his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

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solve the conflict between these antithetic bonds in favour of her con- 593 jugal family.

Tallensi say that a woman is like a stranger or guest (both ideas are 593 contained in the native word *saan*) in her husband's house during the first year or two of marriage. Standing outside the intimate life and vital concerns of the family, she cannot yet be relied upon. Gradually she grows accustomed (*malɔm*) to her conjugal family; and after some years, when she has several children, she becomes so far absorbed into the family that full trust can be reposed in her and she takes a full and self-confident part in family affairs.

It needs little observation to see how apt is this description of the 593 gradual absorption of women into their husbands' families. On a visit 576● to a homestead to which a newly wedded wife has just been added, one can easily observe the 'shyness (*valɔm*)', as the Tallensi call it, of the new wife (*pɔγa*) and her husband (*sɛt*) towards each other. This goes farther than formal etiquette. Good manners require that a woman should always show respect to her husband in public. She walks behind him if they have to go anywhere together on a ceremonial occasion. She stoops or kneels whenever she offers him food or drink. But this behaviour is customary for a woman with all adult males other than her own children. It is a sign of the general attitude of respect due from women to men in a society so dominated in public social relations by the patriarchal principle. The 'shyness' of a newly married wife comes out in other ways. She tries to keep out of her husband's way as much as possible during the day, busying herself zealously with the household tasks given to her by her mother-in-law. She is submissive to all his requests. She speaks to him only when she is spoken to. She takes no initiative in anything.

This attitude is even more marked in her behaviour towards her 606 parents-in-law (*dayaam*, pl. *dayaanam*), to whom she is bound to show formal deference at all times, and to her adult brothers-in-law, 593 with whom she must always be circumspect because of the incest barrier which we shall discuss later. It often comes into her private relations with her husband if he is much older than she is. She will flirt and be more companionable with a young husband, in private, natives say; for he is probably like herself a *tarɔm*, junior, under authority, and connubial joys mean so much to him that he comes down to an equal footing with his wife for their sake.

The Relationships of a Wife with her Relatives-in-law

A woman does not avoid any of her relatives-in-law or her husband, 606 nor are her relations with them regulated by strict prescription. She maintains a general attitude of deference, modesty, and complaisance 607 towards them. A well-behaved young wife is industrious and obedient in helping her mother-in-law with her domestic work, and she will be self-effacing and deferential towards her father-in-law, her husband,

606 and his adult brothers. The only relaxation of this attitude occurs with
her sisters-in-law (*pɔγakie*, pl. *pɔγakies*). With them, often her equals
607 in years and her companions in work, she can laugh and play and joke.
Like herself, they are already, or are fated to be, married out of their natal families to 'strangers'. This is a bond of fellowship superadded to that of sex and often age. But they also belong to the opposite camp. Identifying themselves with their brothers and their lineage, they sometimes speak of her as 'our wife (*ti pɔγa*)', and she sometimes refers to them as 'my husbands (*n-sɛrib*)'. They will take the side of their brother if she comes into conflict with her husband or deserts him. Her relationship with them is typical of the ambivalence that underlies the joking relationship among the Tallensi.

601 In the first year or so of marriage a woman tries to avoid having to
address her male in-laws and her husband directly in public. If they
●576 address her it will be in a somewhat formal and courteous way, her
husband and his brothers using her clan name, her father-in-law addressing her as 'mother (*ma*)'. She is most at home—but in a very deferential manner—with her mother-in-law, in whose rooms and under whose care she lives, whose domestic duties she largely takes over, and who also addresses her as 'mother (*ma*)'. To any member of the family she speaks of her father-in-law as 'father (*ba*)' and of her mother-in-law as 'mother (*ma*)', and she addresses the latter by this term. Outside the family a woman speaks of her husband as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)'; of his brothers as 'my older' or 'my younger husband (*n-sɛt-bier*, or *n-sɛt-pit*)'; and of his parents as 'my father (mother)-in-law (*n-daŋaamdoog*, masc.—*n daŋaampɔk*, fem.)'. Her husband speaks of her as 'my wife (*mpɔγa*)'; his brothers as 'my older or younger brother's wife (*m-bier* or *m-pit pɔγa*)', or in some situations as 'our (i.e. the lineage's) wife'; her parents-in-law as *sampɔγa*.

606 The status of a woman in her conjugal family is most sharply focused in her relations with her parents-in-law. For it is they who form the axis around which the family revolves. Its unity, its independence, the management of its material affairs, and the maintenance of its well-being all reside in them. Though the general impression one receives of a woman's relationship with her parents-in-law is one of affability and ease, it is potentially anomalous, particularly in the early years. As their son's wife she is in the position of a daughter to them. She will give valuable and indispensable service in the economy of the household. She will produce children to augment the family and the lineage. But, as she herself knows and feels, she is an intruder. She is made to feel this in the early years of marriage even if, as so often happens, she belongs to an adjacent clan, and was personally well known to her conjugal family before marriage. For marriage creates entirely new associations between individuals and families. If she was married by elopement she knows that she is on trial, perhaps the object of a

that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since 831
the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriage-
able girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. 836
Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain
amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so
disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love 831
affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members
of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not con- 835
sidered to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan 836
does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual
penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them. This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply contrasted with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction, characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the 581
same thing (*Pɛn nyɛ̀bəg ni pɔɣadir, ba ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 831
'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for
the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is fundamental as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider 581
first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By 593
marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of
her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority
he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has
he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as [576] ●
a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth. She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires, and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law. 602 606 [572]

On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical to *dɔɣam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never obliterates this. 602

A man must show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pɔt nɔba*), bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual functionary, or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement. 606 264 574 576

Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well-defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his 602 606

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women 764
tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of 431
the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to
the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These [576] ●
duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition,
there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand [554]
opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law.

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of 606
prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small 754
contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribu-
tion is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This 431
consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a 574
large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samər*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells [436]
(*layapieləb*, pl. *layapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *layah*, pl. *ligəri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown.

606 602 837 577 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman, anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house. Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 606 837 577 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly ●[576] within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 434 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 574 434 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

Parents and Children in Everyday Intercourse

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One of the most interesting things about the relations of parents and children among the Tallensi is their conduct to one another in the intercourse of everyday life. It brings out, incidentally, the distinction always clearly made between own parents and proxy parents. There is a familiarity, almost a camaraderie, between parent and child that makes the observer wonder how the authority of the parent can be as effective, and the respect and obedience of the child as sincere as the evidence of custom and belief show them to be. In this matter the Tallensi resemble us more closely than they do some other primitive peoples. It is most striking in the case of the father. From babyhood up, Tallensi address their father, both own father and classificatory father, by his name. The term *ba* (pl. *banam*), father, is used to refer to one's father or classificatory father but never in addressing him, while he is alive. After his death it is often used in addressing him in prayer as an expression of reverence. It is also used as a term of respect when addressing someone from whom one is begging a favour, or to show particular deference or courtesy, chiefly to old men. A passer-by greeting an old man not closely related to him or her, or a person of rank such as a chief's brother, addresses him as father; a person asking a small boy not closely related to him or her, for a drink, says, 'Bring me the water, oh my father'; a man who has come to intercede with a friend on behalf of the friend's son pleads, 'Desist, oh my father, desist'. Similarly, parents speak of a child as *m-bii*, 'my child', of a son as *n-dawoo* (pl. *dawoos*), 'my son', of a daughter as *m-pɔγawoo* (pl. *pɔγawōos*), 'my daughter', but always address a child by name.

With this mode of address goes great freedom of speech and behaviour towards a father, particularly one's own father. If children are asked about their attitudes to their parents they always say that they do not 'fear' (*zo*—in the sense of 'to stand in awe of') their own father as much as they 'fear' their father's older brother. Children will speak directly to their father, argue with him, contradict him politely, if necessary, laugh with him. No topic of conversation is tabooed or barred by etiquette.[1] No one can tell from the behaviour to each other in ordinary intercourse of a man and his adult son or married daughter that they are parent and child. In fact, the greater the apparent comradeship of a young adult with an old man, the more likely is it that they are own father and child.

One's mother, on the other hand, is never addressed by name but always as '*ma*, mother'; but a mother's co-wife is commonly addressed by the name used for her by her in-laws. There is also more restraint in the manner in which a person speaks to his mother than in his manner

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[1] Sex matters, for instance, are freely discussed between parents and adult children, subject only to the rules of polite conversation.

of speaking to his father. A boy might order his mother about when 573
the family is out harvesting, for instance, and a girl might argue with
her mother as spontaneously as if she were an equal. But the underlying 576
attitude of deference can always be detected.

This undertone of deference is also present in intercourse with the father, only less obviously than in relation to the mother. For instance, if a child is some distance away and its father or mother wants to call it, he or she will shout the child's name. But if a child, even when grown up, wishes to call a parent he will go up to him or her. A boy or a man will borrow his brother's cloth without asking permission. He will not take anything belonging to his father without permission. If two brothers or sisters or a sister and brother are eating together either will start first and both may be dipping their hands into the dish of porridge at the same time. If a child is eating with his parent he will wait for his parent to begin first and to tell him to eat, and will wait for his parent to finish and leave the dish to be 'cleaned out (*veeh*)' by him. In particular, the familiarity between parents and children never goes so far as mutual teasing, as in a joking relationship. If a native is asked about this he frowns and says that it would be most offensive for a son or daughter to tease or joke with (*kooh*) a parent or vice versa. You cannot tease or joke with your parent or your child, the Tallensi say, because you do so with your grandparent or grandchild. We shall return to this presently.

We see, again, that there is an apparent paradox in the relations of Tale parents and children. The natives cannot explain it and are puzzled if they are asked for explanations. But if we take into account the whole complex of parent-child relations an interpretation is possible. What we meet again is that ever-recurring principle of Tale social organization, the conjunction of polar forces, the synthesis of tendencies that work in opposite directions. The sense of continuity between the generations, which is so strong among the Tallensi, has to be reconciled with the sense of divergence due to differences of generation and of interests between them, if the relations of parents and children are to run smoothly. In terms of sentiments and attitudes the authority parents have over their children must be reconciled with their love for them; and children must be able to show respect for their parents, to bow to their control, without ceasing to love them and without foregoing their own independence. Children are the fulfilment of their parents' life—and at the same time felt to be in some way their parents' rivals. Parents suffer and spend themselves to give life to their child. They provide for him and fix his place in society. But he can never escape from their constraint. In all their relations with each other parents and children have to cope with actually or potentially conflicting motives and sentiments as well as with the pull and pressure of divergent social forces.

The familiarity and friendliness between parents and children in their everyday relations is one of the means by which these diverse

593 tendencies are reconciled. The liberty to address his father by name is a reassurance, to the child, of the love and solicitude that lie behind the ●576 authority his father exercises over him. Perhaps it is also an expression of the identification of father and child by the lineage principle. And the greater deference in his behaviour towards his mother than towards his father is a sign that he recognizes her control, though she seems to have only love and devotion for him. Familiarity in everyday intercourse compensates for the filial piety due to a parent in the more formal, particularly in the jural and ritual aspects, of parent–child relations. The greater overt freedom with the father compensates for the greater emphasis on respect and dependence in the child's relations with him; the franker signs of deference towards the mother compensate for the greater emphasis on her love for her child as against her authority over him.

Clearly there is a very high degree of consistency between the social 593 images of the parents projected in the cultural norms of the Tallensi and the actual behaviour of children to parents. The mother is thought of as the food-giver. Her love for her children is subject to no limits or laws and her status in relation to them is almost sacrosanct. Her relations with them are based on love tempered with authority. The father is thought of as the source of discipline, the guardian of good conduct. He is strict without being harsh or tyrannous. His role is of special importance in the face of the community at large and in relation to the spiritual powers that govern human life. His relations with his children are based on his authority over them, his responsibility for them, and justice tempered with love.

Adolescence and the Principle of Reciprocity

For a Tale boy the years between about 13 and 20 bring changes in 883 degree rather than in kind in his relations with his parents. There is no affective or social break to mark a transition from childhood to adulthood among the Tallensi. Even among the Hill Talis initiation into the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is not associated with adolescence; it can take place at any age. A boy's social development is a process of gradual advance along lines laid down in early childhood.[1] As he grows older

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[1] Tallensi distinguish the main phases of a boy's development not by 856 chronological age but by two criteria of a broader character, either separately or together, according to the situation. They have a physiological criterion and an economic one. Physiologically they distinguish three major phases, after babyhood, in a boy: (*a*) when he is still a 'small boy (*bumbil*)' with undescended testicles, showing, as they put it, only a 'pale scrotum (*lanzɛɛ*)'; (*b*) Pubescence, denoted by the verb *sol*, to mature physically, and marked by the testicles descending (*lana sigərəme*) and the emergence of pubic hair (*saŋkperuŋ kɔbət*). They say 'he has matured completely (*u sol ba'a:ime*)' of a boy who has reached puberty and is entering manhood. (*c*) Lastly comes adulthood, when he is a 'grown man (*bɔnkɔrag*)'. It is by reference to these physiological phases that men often date events in their life. The second criterion is that of advancing economic proficiency. A 'small boy' is capable only of scaring the birds from the newly

252 262 initiative in this matter is never taken by the woman herself. If she has no meat she cooks without it, but the husband, tasting the soup, will observe that her meat is finished and will catch a guinea-fowl for her or give her money to buy one at the market. A woman may not catch one of her husband's guinea-fowls herself or she would be branded a thief, but she could catch one of her own, if she has any. This is the reason why she tells her husband 'So-and-so gave me a guinea-fowl and I had it killed to-day', if she slaughters one she received as a gift. ● [576] A woman never kills or plucks a guinea-fowl herself because it is unbecoming. She will ask a young boy in the compound to do it for her. We have frequently observed women carrying home live guinea-fowls already plucked for them in the market by some man, so as to avoid delay in the cooking. [251] The freshly killed guinea-fowl is hung up directly over the fireplace where it becomes gradually dried. When it is used the first day it is called *num-mahar*, i.e. fresh meat; after two or three days it is dry on the surface but still soft inside and is known as *num-gahar* or *num-ɔɔra*, i.e. smoked meat; after three days it is dry all through. It is now *num-kpee*, dried meat. There is no preference shown for meat at any particular stage; the Tallensi are an economical people and have a matter-of-fact attitude in this regard. Meat is added to the soup in very small quantities. Used fresh or smoked, it is added as a whole portion, e.g. the head, the neck, a wing, a leg or the breast. Dried meat is ground and stirred into the soup in the same way as the other seasonings. A medium sized guinea-fowl thus lasts a family of seven about a week. Dried meat can be kept any length of time, and if a piece of fresh meat is obtained in the meantime it is used up first. In such a case one guinea-fowl might last a housewife as much as a fortnight.

262 251 Beef or donkey-meat is much appreciated. We have seen a woman produce about two square inches of dried beef which was a year old. Such meat is carefully preserved in a pot or calabash among a woman's more valued possessions; but dried guinea-fowl is kept with her other soup ingredients in the kitchen.

Fish is used in the same way as meat, though less frequently, and mainly in dried form. This is due to the fact that it is seasonal and has generally to be purchased. But it is appreciated as much as meat.

262 263 Vegetables are the foundation of every soup; meat and fish make

own efforts in time of scarcity. Each woman cares for her own 264
children only. She keeps food for an absent child, but will offer some 595
to a co-wife's child only if it asks her for it. But the man will give
food to all his children. As a rule, he eats the portion sent in by his
senior wife and tastes a little from each dish brought in by the others.
When he has had his fill he calls his children to come and eat the rest,
always remembering those who have not had enough. Thus the
discrepancy in the distribution of grain, where each woman gets the
same share irrespective of the number of mouths she has to feed, is
adjusted by the man in his fair re-distribution of the cooked food.

This general pattern is not a rigid one, but is adapted to the structure
of every household and to its special circumstances, e.g. a man would [576]
eat with his wife and small children from a common dish if they
happened to be alone in the compound. To do so if another wife were
present would cause envy and quarrelling between the women; these
arrangements are a matter of etiquette and not of taboo.

The natives account for the custom of a man's eating with his 264
'youngest' child on the grounds that a child must eat properly in order
to grow and must be taught to do so. They say, also, that it thus
learns to know its father, and not only its mother whom it is always
following about. We have not sufficient material to judge the validity
of this interpretation; it is quoted here to indicate the native valuation
of the sharing of food in the family.

Infants are given morsels of porridge as soon as they can swallow 853
solid food, and by the age of 18 months can feed themselves dexter-
ously. They are weaned by the age of three not by a forcible or harsh 862
separation from the breast, but by gradual habituation to adult food. 264
The emphasis on the adequate feeding of children is shown, also,
in the manner in which *sayakɔrɔt*, left-over porridge, is reserved for
them. Porridge remaining after the noon meal is stirred into the
porridge cooked at sunset; if it is left after the evening meal it is given
to children cold for breakfast next day. Only after they have eaten
their fill will adults have some. In the months of plenty children
often have a morning meal of *sayakɔrɔt*; at other times a handful of
ground-nuts, or a dish of flour-water or of dawa-dawa powder must
suffice.

Flour-water (*zɔmkɔm*) deserves a note to itself. There are two ways 272

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating
either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner
appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of
maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the
demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another
[183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact
876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour.
We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation
entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and
little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever
we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of
Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little
doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without
being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect
their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of
development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from
earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children
deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and
talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the
daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves.
A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand:
'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?'
868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of
198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour
acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of
clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk
or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs
of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into
the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors.
The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong
stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules
[576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete
514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way
from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to
learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean
habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall
refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them. Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them. It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576 ●
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves, bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is unbecoming 183
for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think, still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

773 the fowl, the man merely said, 'The fowl is thirsty'. Thus his wife knew that people had been deceiving her and she remained with him. Afterwards she bore a daughter, and vowed solemnly that her child should never eat fowl. Later a son followed, and the man declared that the boy too must refrain from eating fowl. That is why the first-born son and first-born daughter of all Namoos have the fowl avoidance; but later children may eat it, for if they, too, were prohibited, who would consume the fowls which men sacrifice to their ancestors?

771 If we bear in mind the enormous importance Tallensi attach to marriage and progeny, we can sympathize with the respect they pay to the common domestic fowl in return for this apparently trivial benefit conferred on their ancestor. Of course nobody knows or cares who this ancestor was, but it would not occur to anybody to doubt the truth of this tale. Every day some animal, domestic or wild, becomes a shrine (*bayər*), the symbol and medium of contact with the ancestor spirits, to some person or another in every Tale settlement; and the occasion of this ritual transformation of a commonplace creature is always a piece of good or ill fortune associated with it. Nor would the fact, admittedly contrary to ordinary experience, that a fowl broke into speech, disconcert the natives. They see no need for explaining away such incongruities, either by invoking the supernatural or by referring it to a fabulous age when animals possessed the power of speech. 'That is the story', they declare, and that is enough for them; as we might say, it fits in with the logic of the myth.

186 This casual attitude to the myth is due to the fact that the natives attach little importance to it in comparison with the observance it seeks to explain. For the myth is simply a formulation of the idea that the fowl taboo is the fundamental symbol of the social definition of Namoos. Everywhere within the social ambit of the Tallensi, and at all times, Namoos are those who are subject to distinctive ritual and moral restrictions in virtue of their agnatic descent; and amongst these the fowl taboo is crucial. That is how others think of Namoos, and that is how they themselves visualize their social identity. Through these observances the individual identifies himself in thought and feeling with the fraternity of clans of which his own is a part and, what is of equal significance, with the dead but still regnant forebears.

The anonymity of the ancestor in the myth shows that he stands for the prototype of all the ancestors who must necessarily have gone before in order that the present generation of men should exist, and to whom the living owe their whole social order. It is a notion entirely in keeping with the ideas underlying the kinship system of the Tallensi. But for the intervention of the fowl, says the myth, the Namoo stock might never have come into existence; and the taboo which commemorates that event came into being with the birth of their stock, which was at the same time the birth of their role in society. All Namoos, it must be remembered, are concerned with their totemic observances; for those who are themselves exempt from them have this privilege only because they are the brothers or sisters of individuals who are compelled to observe them.

577 The fowl taboo and the ritual observances associated with it symbolize

the paramount moral values of the Namoos. The oath a Namoo swears 577
by his father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells to rebut an
accusation or assert his honesty is evidence of this.

The natives think of these rules as coeval with their social order. 613
They are axioms of conduct, which men accept without questioning as 577
they accept the fact that one is born a Namoo. Since they are binding on
and restricted to the patrilineal line of descent, these avoidances serve
to express the ultimate and unconditional validity of agnatic descent,
through which the individual's place in a corporate unit is irrevocably
fixed at birth, and by which his whole social and spiritual destiny is
largely controlled. Through ignorance or stupidity, irreverence or lack of
self-control, individuals sometimes, though very rarely, break these
taboos. Such lapses will bring down mystical retribution on the sinner's
head; that is his affair. They cannot impair the intrinsic validity of these
rules or undermine their obligatory character.

It would be inconceivable for a Namoo to flout the taboo of the 688
goatskin loin-cover for the dead. To do so would be a sacrilege so gratuitous
and so lunatic as to lie beyond the bounds of sane human behaviour.
Actually a situation in which such a sacrilege would be possible would
never occur, for the simple reason that a death is an affair of the clan.
The clan elders conduct all mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and the
inviolability of the prescribed ritual is thus safeguarded by the mechanics
of its performance.

It is otherwise with the fowl taboo. This too the natives consider to 688
be something so fundamental and axiomatic that it requires no sanction 673
against possible breach except by accident. The danger of a breach occurs
only with children. The first-born child who eats a fowl or even a hen's
egg, either through inadvertence, through greed, or through childish
recklessness, may sink into a decline (*u burəmrəme*), or at the least will
break out in a rash on the head (*u zug koorəme*). But such a transgression
by a child is venial, and the antidote is simple. The child is given an
infusion of fowl droppings in water to drink which makes him vomit and
so purges him.

Observation and questioning show that breaches of this taboo are 688
as rare as the natives assert them to be. I have often seen a first-born 613
man (*nɔ-kihir*, pl. *-kihib*, one who taboos the fowl) sacrificing fowls to his
ancestor spirits and leaving them to others to consume. After such a rite
a *nɔ-kihir* always washes his hands carefully lest he contaminate his food
at the next meal with the blood of the fowl. Not only do parents, siblings,
and other relatives take care to prevent children from breaking the taboo,
but the children who have to observe it have a horror of doing so.
By the time they are five or six years old children will tell an inquirer
with great emphasis, 'I am an eldest child, and I don't eat fowl'. Though
they do not know the myth that accounts for the taboo, they appreciate
its obligatory character.

We have spoken of these taboos as symbols of moral values because, 577
though binding on all Namoos, they do not imply specific ties either 784
political or ceremonial, and are obligatory on individuals. Their observance
is in the last resort a matter of conscience and belief. In the widest

577 784 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

613 428 627 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔɣar*) of the founding ancestor of Bɔɣada biis at Tongo was a case in point. Saŋbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'aləm, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'aləm, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔɣar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔɣada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'aləm, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*mieŋ*), and the crocodile (*baŋ*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pɛhug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Puliebər yidem, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'aləm and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle.
[787] A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual 602
coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tendaana's brother, who often deputizes for 618x
him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of 578
the tendaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true, but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's [789] ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohəg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiirət*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations 184
which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also 571
confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of 571
clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, 577
but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihər*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*ba yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

571 Hence, people connected in this way are careful not to ask each other
●577 for things. In the hunt, if a member of one group kills an animal and any members of the other group happen to be on the spot, the slayer will not lay a hand on the kill until the latter have cut a portion for themselves.

765 Sometimes it happens that a great tragedy overwhelms a member of
571 one group and he abandons himself to grief, refusing food, drink, and
consolation. Then, as a last resort, his relatives send for the head of the
577 lineage whose requests cannot be refused, to persuade the stricken man to face life again. This happened, for example, when Puyɛl of Wakii's child was accidentally burnt to death. He was prostrate with grief, and said that he wished to die. Thereupon his brothers sent for the Bɔɣarna'ab of Gundaat, the clan to whose members Puyɛl's lineage must yield, and the Bɔɣarna'ab persuaded him to accept food and water, a sign that he was ready to throw off his despair. 'It is a matter of our fathers and our ancestors', the Bɔɣarna'ab declared when he told the story. 'He dare not refuse; I would call on the Earth, and my *bɔɣar*, and our ancestors, to witness, and his house would be destroyed if he remained obstinate.' Elders of other Talis clans explained the inviolability of this bond in almost the same words. It rests upon religious sanctions, the cult of the Earth and the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, common to all the Talis.

The Rationalization of Clanship Ties

811 Tallensi have no explanation to offer for the joking partnership or the bond of privileged moral coercion between clans or lineages, though they regard them as being somehow connected with the network of clanship. 'It is a matter of our fathers and forefathers', is all that even the best informed elders have to say about these ties.

*618 Clanship ties, however, always have the warrant of dogma or myth, as
811 we have seen. It is worth while examining a few more instances.

Sometimes common agnatic ancestry is claimed, though no common ancestor can be cited by name or any point of convergence of the different genealogies suggested. This is the case with Yinduuri and Sii, for instance. Frequently the fiction of a cognatic link is used. Thus, in explanation of the clanship ties existing between Degal and Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm of Kpata'ar, it is said that the latter are the sororal nephews (*ahəs*) of the former. The name of the Degal woman who is thus alleged to have been the progenitrix of the Kpata'ar lineage is unknown, and no Kpata'ar man would even speculate as to which of their ancestors might have been her husband. Similarly, Dakuor yidɛm of Bunkiuk are said to be the descendants of a sororal nephew of Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm with whom they have ties of clanship. The fictional character of this formula is revealed when we compare the neighbouring clan of Samiit. The people of Samiit say that their founding ancestor was a Wakii man (hence their ties of clanship with Wakii), who migrated to the top of the hills because he had by accident killed and eaten a python, which is a taboo at Wakii. After wandering about for some time, he found refuge with the people of Gundaat, one of whose daughters was later given to him as a wife. The people of Samiit are the posterity (*tu'u*) of this pair. Strictly speaking, therefore, the people of Samiit are the sororal nephews of Gundaat; and

619 gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pɛhug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tendaana.

764 [884] Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*waləg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teeləg lineages, use only a piece of string

619 184 The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

173 Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Wooləga country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teeləg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

577 764 The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihər*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihər*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time; but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *teŋ* is not a *teŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the con- [578]
tradiction between the conception of a defined territorial boundary
fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties, ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations. But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tenzugu, in particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit subcommunities within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Golibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Adminis- 578
tration as headman of Tenzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tenzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Golibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Golibdaana, crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong, took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

621 101 137 silk-cotton, are prominent landmarks in a country of monotonous plains; hence settlements and sections often bear the names of species of trees found there.

621 101 Kuorɔg was thus named, according to popular etymology, because the Soog Yikpɛmdaana, who holds the ritual jurisdiction over the land on which the homesteads of Kuorɔg stand, ritually allocated or 'cut' (*kuo*) the sites for all these homesteads when Tongo men first settled there. In the same way popular etymology explains the name Dekpieŋ ('it is hard') as derived from the hardness (*kpeoŋ*) of the soil in that part of the settlement as compared with that of Puhug or Seug. Seug literally means 'the rainy season', but no one in Tongo was ever able to suggest how this section acquired its name; and this is characteristic of very many settlement and section names in Taleland.

621 173 To the people of Tongo their present residential constellation is the visible deposit, as it were, of the continuous expansion of the sub-clan through many generations within the limits of its geographical environment and social boundaries. They read the spatial disposition of the four sections as a record of their structural evolution, as a map of the contemporary constitution, and as proof of the chronological retrospect of the sub-clan. Mosuor came to settle at Puhug, where his grave still marks the site of his homestead. As his posterity increased in numbers, they began to move outwards in the same way as young men migrate to Zoo, Gbambee, and farther, nowadays, and for the same reason, shortage of farm-land. Thus Guŋ, Kuorɔg, and Seug were occupied. Later, the descendants of those who founded Guŋ became too numerous for the land available there, and, prevented from expanding into Wakii by the social barriers between Tongo and that clan, filtered gradually into the area that is now Dekpieŋ. Arguing from what may be observed nowadays, they say that this was largely a process of occupying hitherto vacant land at a time when the population was very small. But it was partly, also, a process of dispossessing and pushing out to their present location the people of Zubiuŋ and of Gbizug, who claim to have lived at Puhug originally. In proof of this they cite their myths of origin, the fact that the dancing-ground in Puhug is sacred because it is the site of Tɛndaan Genɔt's homestead, and the ritual jurisdiction exercised over part of the land of Puhug by Gbizug and over the remainder by Zubiuŋ. Indeed, there are Zubiuŋ graves on land now occupied by Dekpieŋ men which are said to date back only three to five generations. This proves that the people of Zubiuŋ were still yielding ground to the Tɔndɛm, as they themselves admit, when elders alive to-day were 'already born'.

621 577 There is nothing derogatory in such a retreat. On the contrary, Gbizug and Zubiuŋ elders boast of it as additional evidence of the dependence of the people of Tongo on their ritual benevolence and bounty. It is a cardinal rule of Tale ethics that a request for land to build on and farm—especially if it comes from a kinsman, friend, or neighbour—may not be refused if it can be granted without hardship. There was formerly, and there still is to a small extent, land to spare at Gbizug and at Zubiuŋ. Tongo people have innumerable ties of kinship and neighbourhood with Gbizug and Zubiuŋ, which are the more effective on account of the ties

of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. 621
To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet 577
closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by 621
territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one 613
locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. 571
Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another
section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find
it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but
mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of
Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a
section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage
criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits
set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably
stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counterpart
in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a
stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section
is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any
of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been
chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo
section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists
between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and
regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding
moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section,
both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them
and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent [578]
hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections
than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one
another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the 621
territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of 618X
ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point
emphasized by the Yinduuma'ab in the case previously quoted. Tongo
stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies
on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the
Gbizug tɛndaana's ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual
jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpɛmdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly
on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect. The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaana's clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth (*tɛŋɛn kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ymaarome*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 682 ● 577 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 682 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 471 [461] 431 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*)—pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dispossessed
471 without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut' (*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important
613 part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*) what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-
● 577 existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
[686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to
471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621
not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471
loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182
the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends. There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity, and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farm- 577
land. It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a ground- 471
nut plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them. And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred
in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167]
twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days. Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621
use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471
is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands
of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership 182
over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious. This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of. For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *tey* at its widest extent, symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure, of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependants, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tendaanaship 622

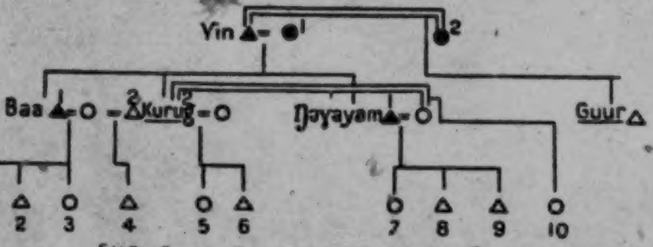
The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico-
ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages. 793

his ritual powers and duties give a tendaana very great prestige and considerable 793
moral authority over people living on his tɛŋ whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tendaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the
formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations
of everyday life. 'He owns the land (ɔn nso tɛŋ la)', Tongo people say
gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed
ourselves. If we offend the tendaana he can drive us away from here.'
The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tendaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the statement
implies. I have seen a tendaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But
this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tendaana's
curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term
'owner' applied to a chief or tendaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply
a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties,
privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community
with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to
the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The
material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tendaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine
or language. Whenever or wherever the concept tɛŋ comes up it tends to
be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major
emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the
earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tendaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to 784
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tendaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material 622
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is
sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be
sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and
is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction
between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common
and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a
Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of
their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis
on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship.
And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as
the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises
an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody
[142] else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a
man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the
[487] rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of
[177] some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*)
and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayəlis*). But one would have to know
[515] the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb
of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body-
● [577] cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious
farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his
section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map
at end of book.)



[*NB: Double lines (=) show marriages*]

[128] *in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed*

Living men △
Living women ○
Dead men ▲
Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Dɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

613 Tallensi say that lineage headship is conferred by inheritance of, or succession to (the same term, *vaa*, vb. is used for both), firstly, the custody of the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔɣar*), and secondly the patrimonial property (*faar*), in particular the home farm (*saman*) of the lineage. Within the nuclear lineage, or at most the inner lineage, both conditions apply; beyond that limit lineage headship does not confer title to land, except in a few special cases; it is determined solely by succession to the custody of the *bɔɣar*. The rules of inheritance and succession are backed by the most powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and supported by the whole fabric of the social system. Within the medial lineage inheritance disputes occur so rarely as to be negligible. This is a reflection of the strong solidarity of this unit, and of the recognition of classificatory fatherhood within it. Beyond that range succession disputes are settled either by the arbitration of the maximal lineage head or by an appeal to the ancestors through divination or an oracle test.

613 577 The range of application of the two conditions of *kpɛmət* define the gradation of powers and functions discharged by lineage heads. Within the nuclear (or at most inner) lineage the head has paternal authority[1] associated with his control of the farm-land and of the labour of his dependants. He has corresponding jural and ritual responsibilities for the junior members of the lineage. Formally, his is the decisive voice in all matters in which the lineage emerges as a corporate unit—for example, in the disposal of the daughters in marriage and in the payment of bride-price for sons' wives. Beyond the nuclear lineage the lineage head's powers and authority are purely moral and ritual. He cannot, for instance, command the services of any member of the lineage (outside his nuclear lineage) as of right, nor is he responsible for any of them in such matters as bride-price payments. And the degree to which he commands the loyalty of his lineage co-members depends considerably on his personality. They will always support him unhesitatingly where the common interests of the lineage are concerned, but they might not, in private matters, treat him with the confidence due to his status if he lacks tact or tries to be dictatorial. A lineage head represents the lineage. He is the pivot of its corporate unity. Everything he does as lineage head is for and on behalf of the lineage. Hence he never takes action in corporate affairs without consulting and obtaining the consent of the heads of all the component segments of the lineage. In fact a lineage head very rarely takes action in corporate matters without the presence of all the senior male members of the lineage. Thus it is common for the initiative and drive in corporate activities to come from younger men of intelligence and forceful personality, though they are carried out by, or in the name of, the lineage head. This is especially the case when, as often happens, lineage heads are old and infirm. Tinta'aləm's senility did not diminish the respect and affection in which he was held by all the people

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[648] him land to dwell on and therefore I am his superior' he must not be taken literally. He is referring to a tradition of settlement going back to the founding ancestors of their lineages.

[1] We analyse the function of classificatory fatherhood and of paternal authority in the lineage more fully in the second volume of this study.

of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make [577
a chief or tendaana any the less a chief or tendaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tendaana has, in addition, the sanction of the 769
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 182
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage 182
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is 782
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and
by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-aged
men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[535] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of
funeral dirges.

● 577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who
wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the
warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577
ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721
reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life.
There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173
kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives. At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one. Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime, about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛləg*)' him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worthwhile life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682
the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577
the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721
in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In 1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury, lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards. And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721
matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673
for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might 682
follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628
neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578
of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations, in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578
demanded that Gbaləg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787]
among his forefathers. This meant that Gbaləg's sons should beg the Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors. But Gbaləg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578
At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x
of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783]
behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation. Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbaləg's defection was thus erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613
solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x
source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577]
of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen, the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a con- 182
sideration of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage member- 183
ship. There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife. Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan. These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms. This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife, the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

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A striking illustration of this antithesis occurred at a sacrifice that Diŋkaha made to one of his ancestors. An ambitious and none too scrupulous braggart of considerable intelligence and drive, Diŋkaha had been very useful to me and had made the most of his connexion with me. One of the objects of this ceremony was to show off his friendship with me to his clansmen, and his prestige among them to me. It was, therefore, a specially lavish occasion. In the middle of the ceremony Diŋkaha's father-in-law called in. The old man was respectfully received and ushered into his daughter's rooms. Diŋkaha finished the sacrifice and began to distribute the meat. Various members of his lineage and clan received the portions due to them. And then, intoxicated with conceit at having his white friend in his house and at the obvious appreciation of his stock, in consequence, in the eyes of his clansmen, a rash impulse overcame him. Holding up a goat's foreleg—one of the ritually prescribed portions that should be reserved for those entitled by birth to share in the sacrifice—he launched out into a speech, the gist of which was that he desired his father-in-law to accept it in order to mark this special occasion. A sombre look came upon the old man's face. He was visibly shocked. Speaking gravely but curtly, he refused the gift. *Deenam*, he said, do not sacrifice together; it is an unheard-of thing; he could not accept the gift. Diŋkaha retired in discomfiture behind a smoke-screen of apologies.

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Marriage implies the absence of kinship ties between the parties; kinship, the impossibility of marriage. Kinship ties exist in their own right; *deen* is an artificial alliance of a contractual nature. The parties to a marriage deliberately and voluntarily enter into a bond, the bride's guardian permitting her to marry in return for a promise on the part of the bridegroom's guardian to pay him four head of cattle. Kinship ties are not voluntary and are automatically binding. The parties to a marriage are bound by rights and duties which did not exist before. Kinship automatically entails moral, jural, and ritual bonds, whereas there is an avowed element of mutual coercion, and therefore potential tension, in the relations of in-laws. They rely upon a special, impartial jural instrument, the bride-price, for the adjustment of their rival claims on the woman.

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Tallensi think of *deen* as a relationship for ever fraught with the possibility of conflict over these claims. Nearly all their litigation nowadays, like much inter-clan fighting in former days, concerns bride-price debts or the rival claims over a woman or her children of father-in-law and son-in-law. Such quarrels are incompatible with kinship. They would cut to pieces the solidarity of kinsfolk—that is why, say the Tallensi, kinsfolk do not marry. *Dɔyam*, in short, presupposes some degree of identification of the parties concerned, mutual or common interests, and especially a bond of amity that excludes strife which might fix a permanent gulf between them.

602 577 These norms of kinship the Tallensi regard as axiomatic, one might say as the *a priori* moral premisses of their social behaviour. Behind the utility of kinship in practical life and the jural and ritual sanctions that buttress kinship ties stands the notion of kinship as the rock-bottom category of social relations, inviolable in its own right. The root of this notion lies in the bond between parent and child and it reflects the fact that genealogical relationship is the binding medium of Tale social structure. The Tallensi are outspoken sceptics about human nature. They take it for granted that the ideal norms of kinship will often be violated. They know well, however, that they are usually effective and cannot be destroyed by the transgressions of individuals; for these, in the end, always bring their own revenge and are compensated for in the total flow of collective life. In any case, the lapses of individuals, and the fact that strong sanctions exist to check them, do not diminish the absolute, *a priori* character of kinship.

602 769 It is worth noting that economic reciprocity—which is a conspicuous element in kinship, especially among close kin—and jural rights and duties have a much less direct connexion with this fundamental assumption of kinship than religious bonds have. This is connected with the important place of ancestor worship in Tale society. To trace genealogical relationship it is necessary to recollect common ancestors; and if these have religious value, ritual allegiance to a common ancestor or ancestress inevitably forms an intrinsic feature of kinship ties and their most powerful sanction. The more distant a genealogical tie is, the more does it become a matter of moral and ritual, rather than of jural or economic, relations. We shall see this in more detail when we come to compare social relations within the domestic family with the relations of kinship outside the domestic family.

Two Classes of Kinship Relations

602 Any relation of kinship belongs to one of two classes. If people say 'We are *dɔɣam*', the basic analogy they have in mind is that of siblings. Two men who are cognatically related to the same lineage—e.g. two men who have a common maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yir*) or whose fathers or grandfathers had a common maternal uncle's lineage—describe themselves thus. They visualize their relationship primarily as one of common though independent religious allegiance to a particular line of common ancestors, in sacrifices to whom they may both partake. By the operation of the lineage principle two lineages might consider themselves to be related in such a manner. Kɔnbamɛŋ and Pudiniba, two young men of the same clan but of different sections of the clan, were good friends. When I asked them how their friendship had arisen, they resorted, characteristically, to the idiom of kinship. Being members of the same clan is not a sufficient reason for so personal a relationship as friendship. The reason they adduced was that they were both sister's

His family had had a windfall of two daughters in half a generation and 848
that meant eight cows.

Yet the Tallensi believe emphatically that a girl can only realize her 848
womanhood to the full by bearing legitimate children. For this she must
marry; and marriage means having only one husband at a time. It is as 581
her husband's sexual mate that a woman is most sharply separated from
her natal family; it is her husband's exclusive rights over her reproductive powers that definitively makes them husband and wife.

This proposition applies also to the husband's field of social relations. 835
Within the region of family and kinship ties where generation differences
are socially recognized, sexual relations may occur only between married partners. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman of the family who is not his wife is incest. The Tallensi have no name for this act. They say, simply, 'It is tabooed (*de kihme*)'; and they look on it with unanimous revulsion. Translating their ideas into our cultural idiom, we should say that they regard any form of incest as an unnatural act.[1]

Incest, to a Talɛŋa, includes sex relations with a sister or daughter, that is, a woman of one's own lineage: with a mother, the wife of one's own or classificatory father; with a brother's wife; and with a son's wife. Such acts of misconduct are considered incestuous if they occur within the limits of the expanded family—that is, the family group based on the inner lineage (the narrow *dug*). The natives stress this, putting the emphasis on the fact that the narrow *dug* is the smallest lineage segment with a common ancestor shrine (*bɔɣar*). Such acts are, also, often regarded as incestuous within the limits of the family cluster based on the medial lineage, particularly if this lineage has a narrow span.

Incest occurs occasionally in every Tale community. Such an act soon leaks out, and is remembered with contempt for many years. I have discussed such cases with many informants, and was able, also, to witness the public reaction to two cases that occurred during my field work.[2]

There are no penal sanctions against any form of incest, nor are the 835
culprits believed to be subject to automatic mystical retribution. Incest
is so incompatible with the pattern of co-operation and the structure 577
of disciplinary and affective relations in the family that this itself serves
to banish it from the field of family relationships. Though incest taboos are never deliberately inculcated, the habits, attitudes, and organization of family life (to put the native expressions into sociological language) create internal barriers against incest, in the normal person. This applies particularly to incest with a sister or daughter, whether it is a single impulsive act or a more lasting liaison. Tallensi explain that a normal

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[1] A preliminary analysis of this subject was given in my paper, 'Kinship, Incest, and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King: Essays presented to R. R. Marett*, 1936.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

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man does not even have sexual desire for a sister or a daughter. This is the standard, conscious, sexual attitude to a sister and it is in keeping with the conscious attitude about incest with a sister or daughter. Such an act is spoken of as tabooed (*kih*), but it is neither a crime nor a sin. It is simply despicable conduct that the culprits ought to be ashamed of as unworthy of grown persons. Even children talk of copulation with a sibling as something beneath contempt, though, in fact, it is common knowledge that up to the age of about 8 or 9 boys often try to have sexual intercourse with a small girl playmate in their play and for the most part playmates are close lineage siblings. Adults reprove the children if they discover them in this kind of play, but dismiss it as due to childish irresponsibility.[1] This, indeed, is the essence of the general attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter. It is disreputable, because it does not conform to the accepted standards of responsible adult conduct. Only in the case of incest with a full (*soog*) sister is there a feeling of horror. It is felt to be unlucky in a vague way. She is the person of the opposite sex with whom a man is most fully identified. What is more important, she perpetuates their mother's uterine line and therefore stands for the indestructibility of the unique bond between mother and child. Sexual intercourse with her would be almost like incest with one's own mother; and this feeling is extended to distant female uterine kin (*saarət*) as well.

Incest with a mother, a brother's wife, or a daughter-in-law is in a different class of reprehensible acts. It is a taboo for a man even to sit on the sleeping-mat of a woman related to him in any of these ways (and thus, we may presume, symbolically betraying a wish to seduce her). To have intercourse with her is a very grievous sin. It is utterly repugnant to Tale morality.

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Incest with one's own mother the natives regard as a thing of such monstrous iniquity that it is ridiculous to conceive of anyone who is not mentally deranged committing it. Incest with a father's wife, other than one's own mother, or a brother's or son's wife is almost as heinous a sin and is regarded with little less horror; but it is known to happen sometimes. In one of the cases that occurred during my stay in Taleland, a man raped his father's elderly wife (his own dead mother's co-wife), whom he called '*ma-pit* (younger mother)'; in the other, a notoriously dissolute young man seduced his father's brother's wife, whom he would also describe as '*ma-pit*'. Both were publicly derided in the songs sung during the dances of the Great Festivals. One of the songs about the second man went as follows:
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Badiemaal (his name) you who rape vaginas, Oh!
Bakyɛlbanɔya (the woman) is a slut.
Zimbil-Badiemaal is a dog.

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[1] Cf. my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, Memorandum XVII, International African Institute, 1938.

684 Badiemaal, is this how you behave?
Zimbil-Badiemaal will never inherit the (lineage) *bɔyar*;
●577 Why did you copulate with Naaho's wife?

539 *Badiemaal, pɛnzierug, woo-oo!*
Bakyɛlbanɔya a bumbarɔŋ.
Zimbil-Badiemaal, u a baa.

Badiemaal, i ɛŋa ŋwala?
Zimbil-Badiemaal ku vaa bɔyar;
I nyɛb Naah pɔya bo?

It was widely held that both of these men would take the first opportunity to get out of Taleland.

The Tallensi explain that such acts are so severely reprobated because
613 they cause deep and irreconcilable 'enmity' (*diuŋ*) between father and
684 son, brother and brother, and this is a mortal blow to the solidarity of the family and the lineage. They arouse the wrath of the ancestors.
577 If the injured father, brother, or son does not bring the matter up before the elders of his medial lineage or maximal lineage, he will be struck down by the ancestors. If he does, he must be ritually reconciled with his offending son, brother, or father. But in spite of such a formal reconciliation, 'the enmity remains within'. The sinner will never be able to offer sacrifice to his injured father with a clear conscience, or an injured son to the spirit of his father who so grievously sinned and offended him; nor may two brothers between whom this bitter inner discord prevails sacrifice together. Therefore, as the scornful song about Badiemaal declares, the sinner cannot, with a clear conscience, inherit the shrines common to the lineage; and since a man's sins spiritually taint his children and children's children, the sinner's whole line of agnatic descendants will be virtually outcast from the moral unity of the lineage, even if they are allowed to participate formally in the cult of its ancestors. Again, a man who has seduced his brother's wife cannot inherit her after his death, for he has broken the bond of brotherhood. The incestuous sexual act is sinful because it disrupts the moral relationship of father and son or brother and brother, and thus undermines the solidarity of the lineage at its core. There is a magical deterrent as well, which reflects this. If two men have sexual relations with the same woman and one of them gets ill, the other may not see him; it would cause him to sink and perhaps die; and to shun a sick parent, sibling, or child is the very negation of family solidarity.

593 A man's 'fathers', 'brothers', and 'sons' within the limits of the nuclear lineage are the men who have the most direct interest in his wife, espe-
613 cially in her reproductive powers. They will all be concerned in, and one or other of them will be responsible for, the payment of her brideprice. His children mean almost as much to them as to him. They

593 replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of
his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into
613 the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he
[587] dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's
hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

613 We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are
so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest
835 with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of
●577 the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She
belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kɔrih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

835 What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly
lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly
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[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

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By contrast, sex relations with the wife of a member of the same lineage or clan outside the range of the inner lineage is a wrong. It is not incest, but the most reprehensible form of adultery. It does not bear the same moral stigma as the corresponding form of incest, nor does it carry religious penalties for the adulterer. Unless the two men concerned have personal cognatic ties, which makes the offence more serious, they are related to each other only as members of related lineage segments. Their personal identity is submerged in the corporate unit, and the offence is interpreted as an injury to the husband's segment by the culprit's segment of a like order. What is a moral and ritual offence in the inner lineage shades over into a misdemeanour or jural injury in the wider lineage. The shift of evaluation is correlated with a change in the intensity though not in the kind of interests involved, and a widening of the span of the unit. The wider lineage has similar but less direct interests in a man's wife than his inner lineage; its unity and solidarity are of the same order as, but less intimate than that of the inner lineage. It has a jural and political unity and solidarity, primarily associated with formal sentiments of amity and mutual loyalty; whereas the cohesion of the inner lineage (based as it is on common economic interests, co-operation and consultation in the everyday affairs of life, contiguous residence, and minimal internal segmentation for jural purposes such as marriage arrangements with other lineages) is primarily moral, and associated with strong emotions of person-to-person amity and loyalty. Thus, beyond the range of the inner lineage, when the customary ritual reconciliation between the segment of the adulterer and the segment of the husband has been completed, the matter is over and done with so far as the public relations of the parties are concerned. No material compensation is made to the husband, and, in the absence of a judicial system, there is no one who can inflict a penalty on the adulterer. The wronged husband may harbour resentment against his wife's seducer; the magical danger inherent in their seeing each other if either is ill remains as a barrier between them; but the corporate unity of the lineage and clan to which they both belong is restored.

Still, adultery with the wife of a clansman or of a member of a linked maximal lineage[1] (to which the same rules apply) creates dissension in the corporate body. It violates the principle that all men of the clan have a formally equal interest in the wife of a fellow member. It leaves behind rankling animosity that hinders united action. For these reasons [626] it usually arouses an outburst of anger against the wrongdoer. Public opinion is a strong sanction against it therefore. Though cases are far from common, they occur more frequently than the corresponding form of incest. I was able to obtain details of a few cases that occurred immediately before and during my stay in Taleland. In one case the husband and his brothers were so outraged that they fell upon the offender in his

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to 837
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no conse- 577●
quence compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the
ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrə́g samər*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets
a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by
mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual re-
lations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It
is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*daɣət*), mystical defilement. It may bring
sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf,
for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted
before, adultery (*pɔɣamboən*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with
revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed
something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her
husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be
admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill
Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔɣar,[1] the
supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous
third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a con-
fession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few 765
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject
to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver
sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

thus; and besides, people would say he was mean. This attitude does 606
not occur with the true reciprocity that prevails in the domestic family 431
or between near kin.

Sex in the Relationship of Affines

While, therefore, the relations of affines assume the existence of a 602
formal distance between them, they are not encumbered by avoidances or other social barriers that make friendliness impossible or ordinary social intercourse a burden. There is amity as well as opposition in their relationship. In one matter only is there a rigorous barrier between affines. In respect to sex and procreation they are strictly separate. The emphasis is on the deed, not the word; there is no prohibition against talking to or in the presence of an affine about sexual matters.

One aspect of this ban on bringing sex into the relationship of affinity 602
is the native attitude about a sexual offence against an affine. For a man
to seduce the wife of an affine is almost as heinous a transgression as 577●
intercourse with the wife of a man of one's own expanded family, though it is not regarded as incest; and the offence is nearly as bad if the culprit is a close agnate of the woman's husband's affine or the woman the wife of a close agnate of the affine concerned. It is a grave offence, also, if a man or his close agnate abducts the wife of an affine or his close agnate. There are no explicit mystical sanctions against either of these wrongs, but Tallensi describe them as 'a thing of enormous evil (*yelbiog tenta'ar*)' bound to bring ill fortune on the wrongdoer, and in any case involving such serious social consequences that no man in his senses would descend to them. They think of the possible culprit as being the son-in-law, and they say that the father-in-law would take away his daughter and the bride-price be forfeited. Affines are bound to fall out with one another now and then. Usually apologies proffered through an intermediary lead to their making it up again. But in the case of a sexual [783]
offence against a father-in-law, it is quite impossible to beg or receive pardon. For it is a sin; it 'pollutes the room (*sayam dug*)' of the injured man.[1]

'Pollution of the room' in this sense is very rare among the Tallensi. But it is not unknown for a man to abduct the wife of the father- or brother-in-law (true or classificatory) of one of his own clansmen. The elders of both the abductor's medial lineage and the wronged husband's medial lineage are then extremely indignant. The latter demand the return of 'their' wife; and in all the cases I have come across the former see to it at once that the woman is sent back to her husband.

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[1] Cf. p. 28 above. *Sayam dug* has the double sense of a mystical defilement of the sleeping-room—the inner sanctuary of family and of reproductive life—and of an irreparable infringement of lineage rights. If the offender is a distant clansman of the true son-in-law, a ritual reconciliation between the two lineages might be allowed after the defilement has been ritually removed.

606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman,
602 anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house.
Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-
837 in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settle-
5[illegible] ment. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces
the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one
[illegible] his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible
[illegible] of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily
[illegible]rce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and
the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I
have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or
someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of
606 his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and
837 on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking
577 thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particu-
[576] larly within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the pro-
834 hibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for
574 instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A
834 man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

dies childless, and that children are the greatest source of joy and pride, comfort and support that anybody can have. The Tallensi are much like ourselves in this matter and do not think there is any inconsistency between these two aspects of parenthood. Their whole philosophy of life is like that. Realists as they are, they take it for granted that life has many risks and troubles, but, as they often put it, 'Does anybody desire death on that account?' When I told them that Europeans often refrain deliberately from having children, they were either sceptical or appalled. 593

The Parent–Child Bond as an Absolute Bond

Tallensi say that the bonds between parent and child can never be obliterated and may not be repudiated. This is a fundamental moral principle and it goes back to the notion that bearing or begetting children is hard. From it follows the duty of filial piety.

You cannot disown your child. 'Even if your child is a good-for-nothing, you have no alternative but to keep him,' said Loyani, one of the most intelligent and upright men I knew. 'Have you not suffered to beget him?' he went on. 'How can you reject him? You are always thinking of your children's good, though they are often selfish and think only of their own advantage. Your child may be lazy or ill-behaved. But yet you cannot drive him away, you cannot harass him so that he quits you.'

Many examples could be quoted to illustrate the strength of this ideal. I sacked one of my servants for petty theft. A day or two later an elder who was known to be one of my friends came to intercede for him. He admitted that the man was a thief, but he was very disappointed when I declined to take him back. 'You are his father,' he said, 'and you ought to take him back.' Then, after a short silence, he added gravely, 'You white men! You are not like us. You do not understand the meaning of "to beg forgiveness".' 593 685

A better instance is an incident in which Loyani himself was concerned some days after he made the comment quoted above. A youth of Loyani's clan stole a fowl owned by another member of his own joint family, whom he called his older brother (*bier*). The theft, a despicable thing in any case, was made blacker by the youth's attempt to conceal it; and when it was discovered, the whole clan was agog with it. The culprit's father, in his shame and anger at the disgrace brought upon his family, struck and cursed him saying that he must never again set foot in the house. Thereupon the young man took refuge with Loyani, whose son was his friend. Loyani himself, like all respectable people, was shocked at the theft. 'Heaven save me from theft,' he said, when he told me the story. 'Death were better than that. It is shameful.' And he went on to describe how everybody scorns and derides a thief. Nevertheless, as soon as the boy arrived Loyani went to the elders of the boy's lineage to get them to intercede with the father to withdraw his [577] ● [789]

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curse and take his son back. But meanwhile the boy sneaked away and went to his brother in Mampurugu for fear of public ridicule. 'But', said Loɣani, 'one day he will return and his father will certainly take him back.' It is because a man cannot disown his child that a Tale father always stands by his son in what the natives call *pɔɣadir yɛla*, marriage affairs, the test occasions of jural responsibility. A man may have strong private objections to his son's marriage and eventually cause it to be dissolved. He may criticize and scold his son for it. But in public he will support the boy if the marriage does not infringe some rule of kinship or convention of social relationships. This, it should be noted, is not the same thing as a man's responsibility for his son's bride-price which rests on a different principle. For the same reason a woman can never be denied refuge in her father's house if she has nowhere else to stay.

593 A woman, too, cannot disown her child. Indeed Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for a woman, bound as she is to her child by even stronger emotional bonds than a man. It happens, of course, that women desert, or are taken away from one husband to marry another and leave a child behind. But if the child is still too tiny to fend for itself it accompanies its mother until it is old enough to be separated (*pɔhɔg*) from her. Tallensi are very critical of a woman who deserts a child when she leaves its father, though not without ulterior motives; for a runaway wife is a loss, whether she leaves children or not. As has been mentioned, they say that in such cases 'Rearing is more important than bearing'. And yet, they say, a woman yearns after her child no matter who has the custody of it. She might easily desert a later husband to return to an earlier husband with whom she has left a child; and if a woman who has been married more than once returns to her first husband, his rights take precedence of all the others' by Tale custom. That is why men object strongly to a wife's attempting to visit or even see a child she has left with a former husband. I have seen a man keep watch on his wife for days lest she make such an attempt. 'Do you know what bearing (a child) means to a woman?' he said, in explanation. In any case, her marital history makes no difference to the *soog* (uterine) tie between a woman and her child and to the social relationships arising out of it. As we have already learnt, there is no surer guarantee that a woman will [837] stay with a husband than if she has two or three children by him. If she has children, a woman who commits adultery almost invariably returns to her husband, risking the wrath of his ancestor spirits and enduring the shame of a semi-public confession. If she has none, she usually runs off with her paramour.

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The ideas we have been discussing are not thought to have a ritual sanction where own parents and children are concerned. But with proxy parents, as might be expected, a ritual sanction comes into the picture openly. A man who disowns or ill-treats or in other ways neglects the

duties of a 'father' to a dead brother's children, especially minor children, incurs the anger of his paternal ancestors. Human nature being what it is, Tallensi say, it happens all too often that men behave disgracefully to a dead brother's children. Sometimes retribution comes in their lifetime. Sometimes, however, the sanction which re-establishes the moral law only comes into action after their death. Then the diviners who are consulted declare that they have not been 'accepted' (*die*) by the ancestors whom they have gone to join. Their own sons must make ritual amends to set the matter right, and so the moral principles they sinned against are vindicated.

Filial Piety

The counterpart of parental duty and devotion is filial piety. It is regarded by the Tallensi as an equally binding moral principle and an equally strong motive of individual conduct; and they trace it back, also, to the tribulations parents undergo in bringing a child into the world. It is not a formally elaborated doctrine, as among the Chinese, nor a dogma of faith, as among the ancient Hebrews, nor a legal principle, as in ancient Rome, but a diffused norm of conduct. The Tallensi would laugh at the idea of kowtowing to a parent, and their respect for parental authority is far from being blind obedience. For one of the significant characteristics of the relations of parents and children is their ambivalence. In everyday intercourse there is a freedom in these relations, verging on camaraderie. Yet they are full of tensions due to the self-assertion of children against their parents. It is the characteristic picture of the relations between successive generations in a patrilineal society—parents and children bound to one another by the strongest ties of sentiment and interest but latently pitted against one another, particularly in the case of fathers and sons. Filial piety among the Tallensi can be interpreted, in some of its expressions, as a bulwark against the disintegrative effects of these tensions or as a stabilizing mechanism of behaviour the main function of which is to close the gap between parents and children if it threatens to become too large.

We have seen how important it is for a man's status whether or not he has a father alive. If anything, his status is advanced by the death of his nearest fathers, and it is not until he is 'fatherless' within the nuclear lineage that he attains jural autonomy. In this, as in all aspects of the relations of father and son, Tale custom is ambivalent. After a certain stage of social maturity men desire to be free of paternal restraint, and yet they are glad to leave the bigger responsibilities for their lives in the hands of a father. It is not surprising that the affective stress, in Tale thought, is on the blessings of having a father alive.

Speaking conventionally, Tallensi say that one must obey one's father, respect him, work for him, take his side against everybody else—even

593 against one's mother—'*ɔn dɔyi la zugu*—because he begot you'. One's dependence on him increases one's attachment and sense of duty
●577 towards him. Dependence on one's father is a good thing, a highly desirable and advantageous state of affairs, and the essence of filial piety is to accept this condition of dependence as the right thing in life. Tallensi say that a man has no cares while his father is alive. He looks after all one's affairs (*maal i yɩla*). He takes charge of the farming, attends to all ritual matters such as sacrifices to the ancestors and the consultation of diviners if one is ill, and assumes responsibility for such things as the payment of bride-price. He takes care of the house (*gur yiri*) both in the physical sense of always staying at home and in the jural and ritual sense of being its responsible head, leaving his sons free to go about as they please. The emphasis is on the father as the one who bears all responsibility for one's welfare in economic, jural, and ritual matters. That is why, the natives say, a man mourns the death of a father, for henceforth he must take on the burden of responsibility for himself. It means the end of protection and security in relation to society at large and to the spirits of the ancestors.

The picture is overdrawn but not inaccurate. The burden of social responsibility does not weigh so heavily as this statement implies. Siŋ and Gbana, both young men in the twenties, managed their households very well. But both often bemoaned their fate in having been left fatherless when still boys. 'If my father were alive I would have had a wife by now', said Siŋ, 'and Na'abzɔ (his proxy father) would not have used my sister's bride-price cattle for his own purposes.' The death of the father often means the uprooting of his sons. 'Now', said Kɛlibsɔ after his father's funeral ceremonies were over, 'we (he and his brothers) shall become poor men. When our father was alive we had a large home farm to cultivate. Now our junior father (*ba-pit*) will take that and we shall have to go and farm our bush farms. Soon the day will come when we shall move out, for who knows how a *ba-pit* will look after you?' I have heard boys of 9 or 10 talk in this way after the death of their father. It is easier for a woman who has her husband's protection. But even she suffers a sad loss in the death of her own father. His heirs, even her own brothers, will never have quite the same intimate and personal interest in her and her children.

[769] There is a direct connexion between this emphasis on the dependence of children on parents and the worship of the ancestors. Nor is the underlying feeling of a hidden antagonism between father and son, of which we shall have more to say presently, altogether incongruous with this overt stress on the security the father symbolizes. The social relations of father and son, at every stage of the latter's development, are always a compromise between the mutual dependence of father and son and the limited dependence enjoyed by the latter.

There is not the same degree of tension between mother and child or

even mother and daughter, and hence, perhaps, Tallensi do not have 573
such a definite conventional rationalization of their attitudes towards the
mother. They say you respect your mother and cherish her in old age 577
because she bore and fed you. In childhood you were more attached to her than to your father; you ran to her whenever you were tired or hungry or ill and she comforted and fed you; as an adult you realize the importance of 'father's begetting' (*ba-dɔɣam*) in jural, ritual, and economic matters such as marriage or landowning, and in crises like sickness or death; but your mother is still honoured as the centre of your domestic arrangements if you are a man, and if you are a woman, she is the one person you can always come to in sickness or trouble, in the certainty of loving attention. Comfort, emotional security, and food—these are the distinguishing qualities of a mother in Tale thought. It corresponds to the more personal character of the bonds between mother and child, by contrast with the jurally and ritually weighted ties with the father.

Tallensi say that one must respect one's living parents; but to one's 769
dead parents one owes reverence and submission in surpassing degree.
That is what the proverb 'Fear the dead and do not fear the living' 577
means to them.[1] One can defy a living parent sometimes and rely on being forgiven; one cannot defy a dead parent. One can live without the help of a living parent, if necessary, but not without the mystical protection of one's dead parents.

In the religious practice of the Tallensi the ancestors exercise their 769
powers without compunction. They punish and slay as arbitrarily as
they bless. Every dry season men return to rebuild their parental homes 577
which have been allowed to lie in decay for many years. They come 167
from Mampurugu, from outlying parts of Taleland, or from Ashanti and the Colony. Some have been away for years. Pal of Zubiuŋ had a prosperous farm in Mampurugu, where he had gone to settle on being discharged from the regiment after the war of 1914–18. During his fifteen years in Mampurugu he had become fairly wealthy, with five wives, a horse, several head of cattle, and a quantity of good clothes. Dema of Tenzugu, who joined the regiment as far back as 1912 and had lived in Ashanti as a trader since his discharge after the war, was obviously a man of considerable wealth by Tale standards. Both returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads in 1935–6. They told the same story. Wives and children had died; there had been repeated bouts of sickness in the family; other misfortunes had piled up over the years; and all, as the diviners declared, because they had 'rejected (*zaɣah*) their fathers (*banam*)' by remaining in foreign parts. It did not matter much while there were older brothers at home to 'give water (*zaŋ kuom ti*)', that is, make sacrifices, to the ancestral shrines. But

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[1] The verb *zo*, to fear, has a wide range of meaning and here it means to show respect towards, to revere, to stand in awe of. [192]

769 when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come
•577 home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not
167 done so. Dema is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own
people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his
living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to
abandon in Mampurugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there
is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his
dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the
same with Na'abzɔ, Kaɣar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many
others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad
in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

769 While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety
towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the
577 observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every
757 native owns some 'roots (*ŋaɣa*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the
therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties
as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to
mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative
rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors
for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call
you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you
(to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na
mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔɣam la zug, nyɛn dɔɣəm
la zugu*).'

Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for
577 a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities
593 and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan,
with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other
769 patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is
important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A
woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛɣəraan*) of one of her paternal forbears
and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her
life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations
with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her
father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit
when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance
[782] to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female
survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she
can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual
as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines
dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after
his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more
peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers.
A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

of his dead mother's spirit; she is not tied to the lineage home in the 577
same way as a father's spirit is and can be 'given water' more easily 593
wherever the man happens to be. Nevertheless, his welfare and that of 769
his dependants rests as much on his maintaining good relations with her spirit as with his father's spirit.

Filial piety among the Tallensi is a great deal more than a customary 577
injunction to honour and respect one's parents. Psychologically it is
a very complex sentiment. Even during their lifetime parents have 593
quasi-mystical attributes, as we shall see more clearly when we consider
the relations of parents and first-born children, and these dominate the 789
sentiment. A parent can bless or curse a child. A parent's curse, in particular, is greatly dreaded, as we have previously noted, and, in consequence, only resorted to in case of gross affront or unforgivable defiance on the part of a child. If a parent expresses or merely feels resentment against a child, that is equivalent to a curse which may cause it illness or other harm. Thus one element in the sentiment of filial piety is respect for the blessing and fear of the curse of a parent. That is why, men say, it is sometimes embarrassing to have an old mother in one's house, though one is bound to keep her, both in duty and out of
affection. For old women become completely egoistic. All they think [888]
of is having enough to eat and being comfortable, and if they are crossed they are apt to curse anybody incontinently.

In a large joint family one often finds a young man with a growing family of his own torn between his devotion to his father and his desire to be economically independent so as to provide for his wife and children more satisfactorily. He cannot go out to farm on his own without his father's blessing and consent else his venture will surely fail. He begins to drop hints or makes a tentative approach to his father. But if the latter shows displeasure he retreats at once. I have seen this happen more than once. When Təyalbərəgu wanted to go out to farm on his own, his father Naabdiya reproached him, saying that *he* had not deserted *his* father as Təyalbərəgu now wished to desert *him*. Təyalbərəgu apologized and withdrew. But, as Naabdiya told me, 'I still had resentment in my heart and he still secretly cherished his plan'. A couple of weeks later Təyalbərəgu developed a large boil in the armpit. In panic he begged an elder to ask Naabdiya to forgive him and formally withdraw his implicit curse, which, he was certain, was the cause of the boil. It was the same with Yinyela's son Duun. Though as an eldest son he felt entitled to start farming on his own, he dared not ask that hard old man's permission for fear that it might arouse his resentment.

It is an interesting point that when a young man who has been living 577
and farming with his dead father's brother, for example, sets up in his 593
own homestead, the pretext for the separation is often not an economic one. It is commonly recognized that the young man moves out because he needs more land and freedom to provide for his family by himself.

577 593 But if the father's brother does not take the initiative of pointing out to his 'son' that he would be better off on his own, the latter cannot do so. It would be like suggesting that his proxy father is not treating him as fairly as his own father. The usual course of events is that something goes wrong with the young man's affairs. It may be a trivial mishap, such as a hen being caught by a hyena, or something more serious, such as the sickness of wife or child. The young man goes with his proxy father to consult a diviner; and the diviner declares that the trouble was caused by the young man's own father, because the young man has not yet built his own homestead. The dead father lets it be known that he wants to go directly to his son's own house to accept sacrifices and not have to go to his brother's house as a mere guest. Thus the dictates of filial piety are subtly and doubly fulfilled.

577 593 769 Filial piety, as these examples show, is the psychological bridge between the relations of parents and children in life and in the ritual relationships of the living with the ancestors. All the ancestors are projections of the parents, different manifestations of the images Tale culture draws of certain aspects of the parents that do not appear in conventional, overt behaviour. This is clear, also, from the element of reverence that enters into the sentiment of filial piety.

577 593 Siŋ's father and Na'abzɔ were the sons of two brothers. When Siŋ's father died, Na'abzɔ married his widow and took charge of the children. But Na'abzɔ is a notoriously cantankerous person. So Siŋ took his younger brothers and mother and set up in his own homestead as soon as he was old enough. In jural and ritual matters, however, Na'abzɔ is still his 'father'. Passing Siŋ's house one day with an elder I heard sounds of violent quarrelling between him and Na'abzɔ. Na'abzɔ stood on the flat roof of a room in his house hurling abuse at Siŋ, who replied angrily, but politely, from his gateway 50 yards away. My companion and I turned aside to talk to Siŋ. It appeared that Na'abzɔ had as usual been nagging Siŋ and his brothers unreasonably. He demanded that they should leave their own farm-work to come and hoe his farm. When Siŋ asked for his help, which was indispensable, in an important ritual matter, he had refused out of petty spite; and now he had upset Siŋ's sister's marriage by arbitrary and inconsiderate demands on her husband. I asked Siŋ, 'Why don't you take hold of Na'abzɔ and thrash him? That should stop him.' He looked at me in dismay and said, 'No, no. I couldn't do that. It is forbidden. He is my father. He begot me.' My companion, almost as shocked, chimed in, 'No, you can't strike your father, you can't strike your mother. They have borne (*dɔγa*) you. He who strikes his father or his mother is a good-for-nothing.' He went on to say that everybody knew what sort of a person Na'abzɔ was, but Siŋ
577 593 627 must be patient. It would all come right. For would not Na'abzɔ die one day and Siŋ inherit all his property? Similar comments were made by everybody I met about Dɛŋkumis's brother's son, Dmaarəb. The

young man was a lazy spendthrift and there was constant trouble 577
between the two. One day Dɛŋkumis forcibly stopped him from beating
his wife and he turned and struck Dɛŋkumis. There was an uproar, for 593
other men of the lineage set upon Dmaarəb with sticks and fists. Next 627
day Dɛŋkumis, followed by all the men of his lineage segment, dragged the delinquent to the chief. As it was a *dugni yɛl*, an affair of the inner lineage, the chief dealt with it as head of the clan. Trembling with anger and contempt he read the youth an excoriating homily on how a person ought to behave to his parents. Dɛŋkumis, ended the chief, had been too patient with the worthless scamp just because he was his brother's son. Let him beware. Another action of this kind, and Dɛŋkumis would be commanded to throw him out of his house.

Another story deserves recording as an example of the working of 577
filial piety. Kuŋaaŋba was born when his father was an old man. At 593
that time a famine swept the country. A distant clansman of his father
seized his mother and her babe to sell them into slavery and recoup [567]
himself for a debt owed to him by Kuŋaaŋba's father. But the woman managed to escape. When the famine was over she returned home to find her husband dead and his brother Gɔlime at the head of the household. Gɔlime, however, disregarding the rule that whoever inherits a man's property and status must take over his duties and liabilities, at first refused to have her back. She was like a corpse that had come to life again, he said. But his own wife, with an independence of spirit that Tale women often show, threatened to leave him if he did not take her co-wife and the child back, so he gave in. In due course Kuŋaaŋba's mother remarried one of her late husband's classificatory brothers, under whose care the boy grew up. Jurally and ritually Gɔlime remained his 'father'. Then Kuŋaaŋba went to work for the white man at Kumasi. He returned with a quantity of clothes, a bag of salt, and three or four pounds in cash. He found Gɔlime, now an old man in decline, left almost destitute, as his own sons, whom he had always treated with severity, had both run away to the Colony. Kuŋaaŋba at once took the old man to his own house. He gave him a cloth to wear, bought a supply of grain for him, and left him some money when he himself departed for another spell of work abroad. Thereafter Kuŋaaŋba took care of Gɔlime as if he were his own father until the end of his life. 'For', said Kuŋaaŋba, as he concluded his simple tale, 'was he not my father? What did it matter that he had treated me badly in my childhood, since I am still alive and healthy? I couldn't leave my father to die of starvation just because his own sons were wastrels.' I asked Kuŋaaŋba if Gɔlime had ever expressed remorse for having neglected his duty to him in his childhood. 'No,' was the answer, 'he would not do that. He would keep it to himself but his heart would be sore (*u suh ndum*). And now that he is dead he will (as a spirit) do good to me.' It was true, commented an elder who had listened to the story; a son who had

577 no charity (*ɔn ka sugɔru*) would perhaps have done otherwise, but
593 Kuŋaaŋba's way was the right way.

It is on the death of a parent that filial piety is most sharply evoked, just as it is the death of a child that brings out most poignantly a parent's love and devotion. We have referred to this previously. In this matter filial sentiment and ritual sanctions converge.

The supreme act of filial piety sons owe to their parents is the per-
764 formance of their mortuary and funeral ceremonies. If a man or woman
577 dies leaving no sons then this duty falls upon his or her nearest proxy
sons. The initiative and chief responsibility rest with the oldest living
593 son. The burial rites must be carried out immediately; but when and
765 how the funeral ceremony is to be made is for the sons to decide. No one can put pressure on them to hurry on the funeral if they wish to postpone it for several years. It is customary to delay the funeral of an elder, an old woman, or a person holding a ritual office until the third year after his or her death, ostensibly so as to enable the sons to collect the large stock of grain and the livestock required for the ceremony. Meanwhile, in the case of a man the sons exercise the social role of the
[793] deceased. If he was a tendaana they will perform the duties and exercise the rights of his office, and this may be a motive for delaying his funeral beyond the customary period. The old men who are eligible for the office can object and grumble; they cannot compel a dead man's son to make his father's funeral. The issue lies between the dead man and his sons. If they delay unduly they will incur their father's anger. For until his funeral has been celebrated he dwells between the world of the living and the world of the spirits. As the Tallensi say, his one leg is in the earth (among the spirits) and his other on the surface of the earth (among the living) (*u gbɛr dɛkɔ bɛ teŋni ka gbɛr dɛna bɛ doorni*). He cannot 'join his forefathers (*paag u banam*)' until he has been 'taken back into the house (*kpeeh dugni*)' as a spirit. And the situation is the same with a dead mother, though she is of less jural importance.

The duty of burying a parent and celebrating his or her funeral is
769 the first step in the most exacting of all filial duties, the cult of the dead
577 parents. Native thought and behaviour show that the Tallensi feel it as
an inescapable compulsion of conscience, and not as a mere act of pro-
764 priety. Tallensi are quite matter-of-fact about the corpse (*kum*) of a dead parent. They describe it as the 'slough (*fɔrɔŋ*)' of the soul (*sii*). What they are concerned about is the spirit (*kpiim*) of the dead parent. A man cannot rest secure until he has assimilated his father's or mother's spirit into the framework of his life, domesticated it, so to speak, as the expression *kpeek dugni* shows; and this is the function of the funeral ceremony. For that reason Tallensi want to have the graves of their parents near their dwellings. True, a man's ancestor spirits accompany him wherever he goes, but they are most tangibly present in his house, where he sacrifices to them. It often happens that a man has to be

buried in one of the peripheral settlements, or abroad, where he has 769
been living temporarily. Then, if his sons return to the ancestral home, 577
perhaps years after his death, he will one day, through a diviner, order
them to exhume (*gurɔg*) him and rebury him among his ancestors at the 764
ancestral home (*daboog*). The notion that when a person dies he joins
his ancestors (or a woman her husband's ancestors as well as her own), [775]
and that his body should therefore lie among their bodies, is a basic idea
in Tale religion and an obvious reflex of filial piety.

As the case of Sawɔŋba's daughter, previously quoted (p. 89), shows, 764
daughters are as much bound as sons to mourn the death of a parent.
All the children of the deceased must come to the funeral so as to 765
undergo the mourning rites. They are ritually unclean until they
have done so and have had their heads ritually shaved (*kuo zug*) in 577
sign of it. Though the ritual uncleanness (*dayɔt*) of a person who 783
has lost a parent does not interfere with normal life, it is felt to be a psychological burden, for, as we have noted, until a dead person's funeral has been made, his or her social personality is not wholly erased from the real world. I have heard children of 10 or 11 say gravely that they wished their mother's or father's funeral could be made soon so that they could 'shave off the uncleanness (*kuo dayɔt la bah*)'. The uncleanness adheres primarily to the deceased's own children, but it also affects proxy children who have no living parent (as determined by the criteria of 'fatherlessness' or 'motherlessness') of the same sex as the deceased. One of the ways in which Tallensi demonstrate respect and affection for a classificatory parent such as a father's agnatic cousin or a classificatory father's wife, who has never been a proxy parent to them, is to undergo the chief mourning rites for him or her—provided, of course, the mourner is 'fatherless' or 'motherless' in that situation. When an old man or woman who was the last of the generation of 'fathers' or 'mothers' of the inner lineage dies, the men and women of the lineage to whom he or she is a classificatory parent gather from far and wide for the funeral and all undergo the rites of shaving the head. It is not compulsory for anyone to have the head shaved for a classificatory parent, but it is a pious gesture which at the same time proclaims the solidarity of the lineage. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* might be a Tale proverb. Old grudges are forgotten—though not necessarily buried for ever—and men and women who have been estranged from their classificatory brothers and sisters or the deceased parent turn up to the funeral to do the proper thing.

Nowadays the death of a parent is one of the strongest sanctions that 577
induce the men who go to work abroad to return home, if only for a
while. The absentees may dawdle for weeks or months or even two 765
or three years—for funeral ceremonies can be postponed, as we have noted, for periods up to three, four, or more years—but most of them come home eventually for the rites. Those who delay so long that their

577 relatives at home decide not to wait for them are the exceptions that
765 prove the rule. In a few cases they are men who have struck root in their
new environment after many years of living there and find it difficult to
get away. Sometimes they find it easier to procrastinate because they
originally left home through a quarrel with the deceased parent. But
generally they tarry because the deceased is a proxy parent or because
they have older brothers at home who will conduct the funeral. Later,
perhaps, when the mantle of the lineage headship falls on their shoulders
they will return, like Pal and Dema, to take over and end their lives in
the ancestral home. It is a feature of Tale custom that natural human
weaknesses are not unduly penalized by public opinion. As long as he
lives a man can always try to make good his derelictions of filial duty.
It lies between him and his ancestors. The community is neutral.

577 At funeral ceremonies of old people one also sees that filial piety
765 includes pride in one's parents. The *koordaana*, owner of the funeral
593 or chief mourner (that is, the deceased's oldest son), and his brothers
strain their resources to the utmost to provide a lavish funeral. It is
not uncommon for nearly the whole harvest of a household to be consumed
in making the beer and providing the cooked food required. In
addition, animals must be slaughtered in honour of the dead. A poor
man may be able to give his father only a couple of sheep or goats which
he has had to borrow for the purpose. On the other hand, when
Doohraan, the head of Siiyeŋ biis of Tongo, died, rich in years and in
honour, his sons slaughtered a cow, a donkey, and about a dozen small
stock for his spirit; and Sayawuob postponed his mother's funeral for
two years so that he should be able to give her a cow. At a big funeral,
when the war parade (*dee*) and the whole concourse of clansfolk, kinsfolk,
neighbours, and friends of the dead stand milling at the gateway,
the oldest son climbs on to the wall to address the crowd. Wearing
[292] his ceremonial plumed helmet of straw, with a large red cock in his
hand, he looks down haughtily upon the crowd and delivers his harangue.
[537] His speech, spun out with all the tricks of rhetoric in the Tale repertoire,
is proud almost to the point of arrogance. He is relating the great deeds
of his dead father or mother. They may seem trivial, sometimes, to the
cold-blooded ethnographer—so and so borrowed five cows and paid
them back in two years; so and so was a redoubtable farmer who in one
year sold enough grain to buy three cows; another man boldly carried
off his wife from under the noses of Mamprusi who had seized her; and
this old woman was a potteress who by her own efforts earned the money
to buy two cows, and in addition had been faithful to her first and only
husband until his death. But it is not the substance so much as the
occasion of these funeral panegyrics that matter to the Tallensi. At the
end of his speech the son beats the cock (or if he is a rich man it may
be a goat) to death on the wall and flings it to the crowd with a challenge
that any person who can claim equal achievements should take it. But

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can 593 match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so. 765

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride in one's parents among the Tallensi. They always show off an old 593 parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often 577 been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man 888 or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old [777] people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck (*zusɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full? (*U pu di ŋɔvɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and senile, as Doohraan was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage, the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among 593 the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect, 577 affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relationships. 577 A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from 613 his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion, and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

577 613 is usually land that has come to him by inheritance from his father.[1] It is hallowed land because it has come to him thus. This land is the basis of his local and economic ties with his lineage and clan. In psychological terms it stands for the most significant aspects of his own development and of his relationship with his father. It was here that he learnt to farm, working side by side with his father and thus coming to know every inch of it. His father's social personality is for him closely associated with this land, with the homestead which stands on it somewhere, and with the family graves including, in time, those of his parents, that lie there. When he inherits this land it is the principal sign that he has at length stepped into his father's shoes.

577 613 166 The cycle of development through which the nuclear lineage regularly passes shows the working of filial piety very clearly. A typical history is that of Ba'ahug's house. When Ba'ahug inherited the homestead and the home farms of his nuclear lineage, at Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg, about thirty years ago, he had living with him his son Saŋgbɔŋ and his full brother Zɔŋ. Then Ba'ahug died and his brother Zɔŋ inherited the homestead and the patrimony. In due course Saŋgbɔŋ moved out to build his homestead on his own father's part of the patrimonial bush farm at Gbambee, and there he brought up his family. In 1934 Zɔŋ died and Saŋgbɔŋ inherited the homestead and patrimony. He remained at Gbambee, however, until 1936. There had been illness and other mishaps in his family, and the diviners declared that his father, who was buried beside the original homestead at Kuorɔg, was demanding that he (Saŋgbɔŋ) should go back there. So in 1936 he handed over the homestead at Gbambee and some of the land there to his oldest son and returned to take up his abode in the ancestral homestead. For him the cycle of development from the domestically unitary joint family through the phase of its dispersion and back to a phase of unity was completed. The unity would have been more obvious still if he had made his oldest son accompany him to the old homestead, and if his late 'father' Zɔŋ's children had remained with him. Actually Zɔŋ's sons, finding that the land that would now be available for their use was insufficient, decided to move to Biuŋ; and there was no need for Saŋgbɔŋ to summon his own oldest son to come and live with him as the homestead at Gbambee is regarded merely as an outpost of the ancestral home. There is this advantage, also, about keeping up the Gbambee outpost, that when Saŋgbɔŋ dies Zɔŋ's oldest son will be the heir and will return to resume the ancestral home and lands. This will mean that Saŋgbɔŋ's sons will probably have to move out to their father's land at Gbambee, so the homestead might as well be kept up. If Saŋgbɔŋ had died at Gbambee before inheriting the ancestral home he would have been brought home to Kuorɔg for burial beside his father and forefathers.

In the next generation there will be a new development. For Saŋgbɔŋ's

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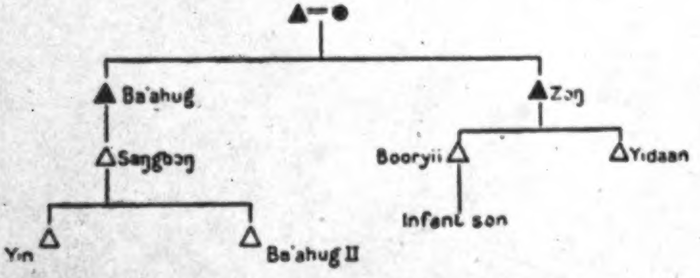
[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

sons their father's home and land has a double location. In terms of 577●
their own experience and immediate attachments it is the home and land 613
at Gbambee; in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage it
is the home and land at Kuorəg. The oldest of them may go back to /166
Kuorəg when he inherits the patrimony. The younger may prefer to stay at Gbambee when he becomes head of the lineage and leave the Kuorəg homestead and land to the other branch of the lineage. He will be living in what is to him his father's homestead and on what is to him his father's land in the most intimate and personal sense. And when he dies his kinsmen will probably be informed by the diviner consulted on the day he is buried that he desires to be buried at Gbambee and not at Kuorəg. Thenceforth a new home is established for one of the lines of agnatic descent sprung from Saŋgbɔŋ. This branch will still maintain close jural, economic, and religious ties with the other branches of the same segment established at Kuorəg and will act together with those branches in all corporate affairs, but it will be independently localized. Thus filial piety which has drawn Saŋgbɔŋ back into the local orbit of his ancestral lineage, and will keep him there even after death, will be the ostensible incentive that will make one of his sons establish a new home for his posterity at Gbambee.

The following genealogy shows the agnatic relationship of the individuals that have been mentioned:



And the table on p. 184 shows the cycle of development of this nuclear lineage as we have sketched it.

The natives are well aware, of course, that these processes of dispersion and reintegration in the nuclear lineage arise directly out of the genealogical cleavages and economic needs of its component segments. But the chief sanction for each defined stage in the process is, in their eyes, filial piety. Objectively, it appears to the anthropologist as a socially accepted rationalization or pretext covering a rearrangement of property and jural relations made necessary by economic needs and the logic of the social structure; subjectively, it is felt by those concerned as an irresistible ritual sanction, crystallized as a command from the father's spirit. It works consistently in the direction of keeping the lineage intact 1/1

1/^ [Text continued on p. 185.—Analyst]

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in relation to its local and spiritual focus. Economic necessity is undoubtedly the chief incentive to fission in the joint family, but the process of reintegration is as much or more the result of ritual and affective forces.

This is the essence of the pull exercised on every Taləŋ by his father's original home (*daboog* pl. *dabaar*), and on lineages in their corporate existence by the *daboog* of their founding ancestor. We have already recorded several cases of men who returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads after many years of absence. As these instances show, it often involves an economic loss when a man gives up fertile land in a peripheral settlement to return to one of the ancient settlements where the soil is less productive. There are many men who in their young days farmed at Biuŋ or Gbambee or Datɔk and had many cattle, sheep, and goats then but now have no more than their neighbours. Their explanation is that they had to give up their farms in the peripheral settlements to come and rebuild their fathers' original homesteads, thus exchanging plenty for poverty. This was the story of Sayəbazaa and Na'ampaahya, of Saandi, Loobuol-Kugər, and of Sayawuob, and of many more than need be mentioned here, in addition to those already referred to. It was the religious and affective associations of their ancestral homes that drew the Hill Talis back to the hills in 1936 after twenty-five years of exile, in spite of the economic sacrifice this meant for a great many of them. Down on the plains most of them had all the land they needed immediately around their homesteads. It was fertile land, too, won from the uncultivated bush. They were better off for food than they had been on the hills. But they gladly gave up their temporary homes and farms to return to their exiguous stony patches and strips on their hilltops, the crops of which have to be supplemented by farming bush farms three or four miles away. For all their rationalizations about the better climate and pleasanter surroundings of the hills, the truth was that it was a matter of faith. On the hills they were back among their fathers and forefathers, and this gave them a sense of religious security they had lacked on the plains. It meant, also, that they were back in the right local setting of their clan and lineage relationships.

The return of the Hill Talis to their ancestral homes is a striking case because it involved the building of between 250 and 300 homesteads[1] in two dry seasons and the movement of over 2,000 people. But every dry season, within a settlement, one finds men rebuilding homesteads on the long-deserted sites of their fathers' homesteads. This happens when a man at length succeeds to the position his father held in the lineage structure. So Deemzeet built a new homestead on the site of his own father's homestead when he became head of the section of Puhug at Tongo. Or it may be simply that a man has a series of

[1] A minimum estimate. The total number of homesteads built or rebuilt was probably nearer 500, but I was not able to check this.

577 misfortunes and learns from a diviner that this is due to his dead father
613 who is angry with him for leaving his *daboog* site derelict. That was the
166 case with Pa'anbɔbis and Mambaŋya.

We have said previously that the sentiments, the rights, and the duties
577 of parent and child to one another are traced back by the natives to the
fact of birth; but in actual social usage they are fortified by strong
593 ritual sanctions. Tallensi have these in mind when they say that a
688 father's authority is irresistible because 'he sacrifices for you (to your
ancestors)'. Your father 'owns (*so*)' you because he begot (*dɔɣa*) you; and he sacrifices (*kaab*) on your behalf because he begot you; you can only approach your ancestors through your father while he is alive, and if you do so after his death it is always through the intermediation of his spirit. It all goes back to the fact of birth, but the ritual sanctions are the most important instrument by which a father's authority is maintained, as our discussion has several times shown, particularly in the case of a proxy or classificatory father. Siŋ cannot defy his proxy father Na'abzɔ 'because', as he says, 'he sacrifices for me'; Da'amo'o chafes under the vexations Kutɔbis and his sons frequently put upon him, but he cannot, for the same reason, disregard Kutɔbis's authority over him as his late father's brother. It is very rarely indeed that a man in a paternal position will refuse to sacrifice on behalf of another who is in the position of a 'son' to him; but the fear of this sanction has a restraining influence in cases such as those of Siŋ and Da'amo'o. The whole hierarchy of authority in the lineage rests on this ritual office. Most of the men of Yinyɛla's inner lineage were opposed to his cutting himself off from the rest of Puhug, but they had to 'follow (*dɔl*)' him because he had custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* and 'sacrificed for them'.

593 payment of at least a part of the fixed bride-price of three cows and a
bull, or their equivalent. The essential responsibility for the performance
584 of these two acts lies with the bridegroom's father or father's
heir, subject to the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.
Formally, the bride's paternal kin send their invitation to the bridegroom's
paternal kin to *lu səndaan* through the head of the latter's
nuclear or inner lineage, and make their demands for bride-price
through the same channels; for no jural act takes place except in the
framework of the lineage system. But actually the responsibility for
satisfying the bride's kin falls on the bridegroom's father. He must
'find the things'—the fowls and guinea-fowls—for the placation gifts;
he must send off the intermediary (*pəɣasama*) who carries them to the
bride's family; he must furnish the animals or goods or money to pay
the bride-price. 'Is it not his child? (*Pa u biiga*)' say the natives, implying
that this is a duty arising out of the fact of parenthood. In part it is
593 a specific duty; in part it is an aspect of a general responsibility that a
672 man bears for his son's jural relations. Thus if his son's wife is abducted
it is the father who calls on the other members of his inner lineage to
426 stand by him in taking action to recover the wife. If his son has abducted
another man's wife the father is directly answerable. Strictly speaking
a son cannot contract a debt involving heritable property such as cattle
or large sums of money without his father's authorization. Even if the
son is a man of substance, a wise creditor will insist that his father's
(and also his brothers' of the same nuclear lineage) consent to the transaction
be obtained first and made known to him. If this is not done the
creditor's chances of recovery are small. It becomes a question of one
man's word against another's and Tallensi are past masters in the art of
putting off a creditor. The concurrence of the debtor's father and
brothers fixes liability for ever, and if the debtor dies before settling the
debt his father, or his heir, is liable. These rules do not apply to small
sums of money, say a shilling or two, or things of small value such as
a hen or a loin-cloth. But petty borrowing and lending rarely takes
place between people who are not friends or close kin, and it is thus
generally fitted into the scheme of reciprocal aid that obtains between
friends and kinsfolk.

593 In their jural aspect these obligations of a father arise from the fact
of 'begetting (*dəɣam*)'; in their economic aspect they are greatly influenced
584 by the principle of reciprocity. Where obligations of such great
social consequence are involved, the principle of reciprocity is not
● 577 limited to particular individuals but it binds their heirs and successors
as well owing to the operation of the lineage principle. One or two cases
will show how these two aspects are interwoven.

While Tampoɣar was courting his wife he had very little recourse to his proxy father's help. The few shillings he had received from selling ground-nuts and a fowl or two sufficed to provide the occasional penny

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he gave the girl whenever he saw her in the market and the gifts of tobacco and kola nuts he took to his prospective parents-in-law. He had some guinea-fowls of his own and his proxy father gave him a few more to take as presents to his prospective mother-in-law. Just when he thought the time was ripe to elope with the girl her father warned him not to attempt it as she was under a ritual taboo which prohibited her from marrying in this way. To his chagrin Tampɔɣar was therefore compelled to ask his proxy father Kurug to negotiate for the girl's hand. At this point Kurug began to temporize. Marriage by arrangement is an expensive business. Had not Tampɔɣar better wait a while until the guinea-fowl chicks were bigger? Tampɔɣar's answer was a fit of sulks, a warning to his 'father' that he felt injured. Had he not stayed at home to help with the farming when he could easily have followed some of his contemporaries to Kumasi? Then he would have earned enough to pay the expenses of his marriage himself. Why should he tire himself out in farming if this was the treatment he got in return?

Meanwhile Kurug had been talking to the other men of his inner lineage about the affair. He felt that it was high time Tampɔɣar had a wife, and he knew that if the young man were frustrated his work during the coming farming season would suffer. Moreover, he might take it into his head to run away to Kumasi. Kurug's lineage brothers shared his views. Besides, Kurug had enough cattle to pay the bride-price at once if need be and it was his duty to get a wife for the youth. It was his duty as the boy's proxy father; it was a return he owed the boy for the labour he had been contributing for several years to the household economy; it was, also, a return he owed to Tampɔɣar's dead father. When the latter died Kurug had inherited his wife and his property as well as his children. Kurug had benefited from this inheritance and must now repay it to the dead man's son. And so he at length agreed to arrange the marriage. He asked one of his neighbours and clansmen, whose grandfather had been a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) of the bride-to-be's clan, to act as intermediary and began to get together the fowls and guinea-fowls that would be needed for the ceremony by which the bride is given to her future husband's lineage representatives.

Kurug himself provided the bulk of the 'things' required for this ceremony, but Tampɔɣar gave a couple of his own guinea-fowls. Kurug provided the basket of millet with which the bride's mother's co-wife was 'seen off home (*beeh*)' when she paid her the customary formal visit shortly after the marriage, and he provided all but one of the fowls and guinea-fowls for the placation gifts, Tampɔɣar himself giving one fowl. Lastly, it was Kurug who gave the two cows which Tampɔɣar's father-in-law demanded as the first instalment of the bride-price. These were cows to the purchase of which Tampɔɣar's labour had contributed; and if Kurug had died before Tampɔɣar's marriage, Tampɔɣar would have inherited them.

This case, typical of dozens that occur every day among the Tallensi, 593
shows how the motif of duty and the motif of reciprocity are intertwined.
This appears still more clearly when 'father' and 'son' farm separately. 691
Thus Saɣabo of Kpata'ar was Nyaaŋzum's late half-brother's son. He 577
occupied the same homestead as Nyaaŋzum, but separate quarters with an independent gateway and farm for himself. When Saɣabo abducted a Gorogo man's wife, the injured husband, supported by his father-in-law, brought a case against Saɣabo at the chief's court. Nyaaŋzum, together with Saɣabo and almost all the other men of their inner lineage, went to answer the suit. Nyaaŋzum's defence was simple and straightforward. He knew of no bar to the marriage. They had no kinship ties with the girl's paternal kin, nor clanship ties with Gorogo. In former times Kpata'ar men and Gorogo men had not hesitated to abduct one another's wives. He was ready to pay the bride-price at once if the 'owner of the child (*biiraan*)'—that is the girl's jural guardian in this case, the father—agreed. The latter, however, refused to accept Saɣabo as a son-in-law, so she was returned to her first husband and Nyaaŋzum forfeited his hearing fee of three shillings. Incidentally, this fee was made up of a shilling contributed by Saɣabo, a shilling from Nyaaŋzum, and a shilling from another member of the inner lineage.

Why was Nyaaŋzum so ready to accept the responsibility for Saɣabo's 593
marriage and to answer for him at court, seeing that Saɣabo was not
farming with him? In the first place it was his duty as Saɣabo's proxy 577
father; and being a man of principle he would not evade such a duty. Even if he disapproved of the young man's behaviour he must answer for it in public, and he was under a jural obligation to pay the bride-price for the youth's wife, from his own resources if need be. In fact, however, he would not have offered to pay the bride-price with such alacrity if it were a question of using his own resources, for he had his own sons to think of. Another factor came into the situation, as Nyaaŋzum himself explained to me.

When Saɣabo's father, Nyaaŋzum's half-brother Galəmɔɣar, died, Nyaaŋzum inherited a number of cattle from him. Some were cattle Galəmɔɣar had received as bride-price for a younger sister of his and Nyaaŋzum's. These cattle accrued to the *faar*, the patrimonial property, in the strict sense; Nyaaŋzum was entitled to dispose of them as he pleased since he was the last of his father's sons. In addition, Galəmɔɣar's herd included cattle he had himself bought or had received in payment of his daughters', Saɣabo's sisters', bride-price. As Saɣabo was still only a boy, Nyaaŋzum took possession of these cattle too. In theory he could dispose of them as he pleased. In practice Saɣabo had a prior right to them, since they were his father's own earnings and his sisters' bride-price animals, and Nyaaŋzum had merely a nominal over-right. Nyaaŋzum had utilized most of these cattle for his own purposes; but he considered himself morally bound to make an equivalent return

593 577 for them to Saɣabo. This was the main reason why he was ready to meet Saɣabo's bride-price debt immediately. There was also a religious sanction in the background. Had he refused to support the youth, Galəməɣar's spirit would have become angry. He would have gone to their father's spirit and protested against the ill-treatment his son was receiving at his brother's hands, and the father would have punished Nyaaŋzum.

593 672 In the same way the father is the person who bears the essential jural responsibility for his son if the latter commits adultery. Though the negotiations for the reconciliation with the offended lineage or clan are carried out through the head of the inner lineage or medial lineage or even wider lineage segment to which the wrongdoer belongs, the animals sacrificed in the reconciliation rites are provided by his father.

593 577 Similarly a father is responsible for his son in all ritual matters in which the son is concerned as a member of the lineage or as the person through whom his father's line is perpetuated. A man is responsible to the ancestor spirits for performing the rites by which his child, boy or girl, is placed under the mystical care of a spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). It is the father's duty to provide the flour, beer, fowls, guinea-fowls, or other animals needed for these rites. If a child gets ill, its father has the duty of consulting a diviner and is obliged to provide any money, animals, or other goods that may be needed for the sacrifices to the ancestors, the treatment, and the payment of the medicine owner. Of course, if it is his own child a man does not think of such obligations as a duty but rather feels them to be a natural action of love and solicitude. But I have known cases where a proxy child was concerned in which the proxy father was less moved by affection than by his sense of duty and fear of mystical retribution. Among the Hill Talis it is a father's duty to provide the animals, flour, and beer required for his son's initiation into the External *Bɔɣar* cult. And, to complete this catalogue of examples, a father must take the initiative and provide the 'things' needed for the rites of exorcism, if his son is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). If his daughter-in-law is the sufferer, he must request her father to come and perform the exorcism and must provide the contributions due from the girl's husband's family.

593 The mutual rights and duties of parents and children among the Tallensi have a feature of particular interest which has already been indicated in the course of our analysis, but deserves further notice. They can be used as weapons of coercion by one side against the other, the principle of reciprocity being turned into an *ad hoc* sanction. The case of Tampɔɣar illustrates how a son can make use of the fact that his working power is essential for the household economy to force his father to get him a wife. This sanction is openly admitted by fathers. One day at Yinduuri I came upon a group of men engaged in a vehement argument. In the middle of the group was a man whose leg was badly

swollen with guinea-worm. It appeared that he had recently inherited his late brother's widow and her two children, a boy of about 16 or 17 and a girl of about 15. He had given this girl in marriage to a Sii man, but she had taken a dislike to him and had the previous day run back home again. Now the Sii man was anxious to make sure that the girl would be regarded as his legitimate wife. He feared that she would either be kept at home now, or else take the first chance of eloping with someone else. So he at once sent an intermediary with the prescribed placation gifts, and this emissary had just arrived. But this procedure was quite contrary to custom. The placation gifts must not be sent or accepted if the bride is at her father's house. The group of men was discussing the situation. It was in the course of this discussion that the girl's proxy father said that he could not take any decision without consulting her brother. 'He is a youngster (*bii*)', he said, 'and I own him. But he is the girl's brother. And you see that I am laid up with a bad leg. If I don't consult him, will he help me on the farm and do my errands for me?'

In using these mutual rights and duties as a sanction parents have the advantage over children. Within the limits of the inner lineage a father's payment of his son's bride-price is thought of as an obligation to the son. But as against the society at large it has an extra nuance. A son has no jural *locus standi*. He cannot get a wife unless his father is prepared to accept responsibility for the bride-price, even if he himself provides the means of payment. Thus Naaho, who was earning good wages, paid all the expenses of his courtship. He bought all the 'things' needed for marrying his wife by arrangement, as well as the two cows asked for her, out of his own pocket. But he was powerless to arrange the marriage by himself. He had to appeal to his father's brother, under whose paternal authority he was, to undertake this. It is true that it would be a most unusual thing for any man to refuse to take formal responsibility for his son in such a situation. But the mere fact that the latter cannot do without his assistance reinforces his authority over his son. Again, this consideration is of more importance for a proxy-father's authority than for the natural father's. It is the same, as has been observed earlier, with the ritual sanctions a proxy father commands.

We have spoken of the principle of reciprocity in the preceding paragraphs without attempting to define it. To do so it is necessary to take into account a wider context than the relations of parents and children. 593
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The principle of reciprocity or, more accurately, of equivalent returns[1] is implicit in the relations of parents and children. The natives see it as following on the mutual rights and duties of parents and children, and not as an explicit rule of conduct. There is a large voluntary element in

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[1] I am indebted to Professor Radcliffe-Brown for this concept and for stimulus in appreciating its significance. I owe much, also, to Malinowski's *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*, both here and elsewhere in this book.

593 its working, as we have seen. Moreover, it applies equally to all members
of a household and is implicit in all kinship and affinal relations. It
●577 arises out of common interests, mutual rights, and mutual obligations
and is a way of giving expression to them. As these interests, rights, and obligations are of different kinds and degrees, corresponding to the differences in quality and degree of the relations involved, so there are different kinds and degrees of reciprocity. But all forms of equivalent returns have the general purpose of keeping social relations on a stable and mutual footing. The greater the field of common interests between persons, the less does deliberate calculation enter into the working of this principle. Hence the closer and more personal the relationship between people, the less formal is the rendering of equivalent returns for services or loans. Mutual services, between lineage segments, as, for instance, in the performance of one another's funeral ceremonies, are highly stereotyped. A son-in-law's services to his father-in-law must be immediately recompensed with food and drink. But between father and son, brother and brother, or husband and wife there is a continual give-and-take on a basis of all-in reciprocity. Equivalent returns cannot be demanded; it depends upon the good sense of the person concerned as to when and how he makes them, even in situations where custom lays down a definite norm. Meanness or selfishness in this respect gives rise to ill feeling and so to disharmony.

Tallensi sum up the observance of the principle of equivalent returns
593 under the idea of debt (*samər*). Debts are goods or services accepted or
577 requested on the definite understanding that they will be repaid and it
is a maxim that debts never die (*sama pu kpira*). A man's heirs are liable
426 for his debts.[1] Where equivalent returns are the customary mode of
recompense, accepting goods and services is not a debt. A man 'borrows' (*pɛŋ*) money or a cow from a distant clansman and that is a debt; he 'takes' (*zaŋ*) or 'accepts' (*die*) his son's or wife's belongings if he needs them, and it is not a debt (*la ka samər*).

The most important criterion determining whether or not a particular service or gift or loan creates a debt is kinship. Members of a nuclear lineage and of an expanded family do not incur debts by borrowing from one another. The same rule applies to cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of a nuclear lineage. If a man obtains something from his own mother's brother, for example, it is not a debt. This is definite. In theory there can be no debts either between members of the same inner lineage, or cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of one inner lineage. What happens in practice

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[1] Unless, as has been mentioned, they were not made a party to the debts at the time they were incurred or were not told of them by the debtor himself. The question of the procedures and sanctions that can be used to secure payment of a debt do not concern us here. One of the chief sanctions is public opinion. A defaulter finds it very difficult to borrow again.

varies from case to case and from lineage to lineage. We have seen how
this works out among the members of Ziŋgan biis. Another instance is 593
that of Yinworəb and his 'son' (his grandfather's brother's great-grandson) 577
Kadɛne. Yinworəb gave Kadɛne three shillings to pay the hearing
fee when he was summoned to the chief's tribunal. This was not a debt. 426
Three or four months later Yinworəb borrowed a goat from Kadɛne.
Again, this was not a debt but it was tacitly understood to be an equivalent
return for the loan of the three shillings. By contrast, Loγani used
some sheep belonging to Maantiya, his father's half-brother's grandson
and therefore his 'son'. This he regarded as a debt because the sheep
were earmarked for the payment of Maantiya's wife's bride-price.

Outside the inner lineage, however, a debt is incurred by accepting goods or services from a clansman. The only exceptions are if the lender is also a matrilateral kinsman of the borrower—e.g. a uterine kinsman—or a close friend.

The principle of reciprocity, as seen in operation in the family and 613
lineage, ties on to a more general theory of social action in Tale society.
It is a particular application of the principle of equilibrium in the social 577
system. The idea that in the long run mutual services or favours should
balance is inherent in Tale social organization. Canalized by the lineage
system, it means that a son or grandson or later descendant can make or
expect equivalent returns for an action of his father or grandfather or
earlier ancestor. It is a matter of pride as well as of moral or jural
obligation to see that one benefit is balanced by another. For example,
it is a common thing at an elder's funeral to see a distant clansman of
his, who is not obliged to do so, bring a sheep or goat as a valedictory
offering to the dead. The donor explains that there is a special reason
for this offering. The deceased had been a friend of his father. When
his father died the deceased brought a goat as a valedictory offering to
his father. His goat is a return gift. The maxim that 'debts do not die'
springs from this principle; and it applies not only to the relations of
the living among themselves but to their relations with their departed
ancestors. A grandson may have to atone for his grandfather's sins, as
happened with Kuwaas. Years of constant ill luck were attributed by
a succession of diviners to the sins of his paternal grandfather, whose
name he bore. Kuwaas I, as Chief of Tongo, had betrayed his office by
abandoning his clan and seeking only his personal safety once when the
Hill Talis attacked Tongo. This was a grave sin against the ancestors, [688]
who demanded a large expiatory sacrifice, and until this was paid the sin
would continue to lie heavily on the descendants of Kuwaas I. The
right of self-help by raiding, and the notion that retaliatory warfare and
retaliatory abduction of women are simply 'cancelling a debt (*kɛrəg samər*)',[1] belong to the same category of ideas. The principle of reciprocity
underlies all these categories of social behaviour.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 236, 245.

The Duty of Supporting the Parents in Old Age

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Parents retain their rights and authority over their children throughout their lives. A man may be so senile that he can take no active part in household or public affairs. He is still the father of his children and the head of the household, the owner of the farms and livestock that belong to the household. Any of his sons living with him is automatically bound to farm for him. On this basis alone, and apart from the dictates of filial piety, an old man who has a son need not lack economic support. It is the same with an old woman who has a son. In her case, however, the stress is on the duty—a duty which is felt to be in part a privilege—of a son to care for his old mother, since she does not own any land.

An old man who has no adult sons need not necessarily lack food or shelter. He either has land of his own or can obtain some from a kinsman, and it is a question then of securing labour to work it. This, however, is no easy matter. Sporadic assistance can be obtained from kinsmen and neighbours, but it is impossible to get regular full-time labour. No one would go and work another man's farms for a whole farming season, either for a wage or as a kinship obligation. Thus an old man in this position is not likely to have more than the minimum of food and other necessaries. Tɛndaan Teroog was in this position. His only adult son was not living with him and he was dependent on others for the cultivation of his land. When his neighbours and kinsmen were too busy with their own farms to help him, his wife did the weeding in a rough-and-ready way. If it were not for the gifts of grain sent to him by his adult son from Mampurugu, Teroog and his family would have lived at starvation level right through the year. As it is they were just managing to subsist.

Cases like that of Teroog are not numerous, simply because the number of old men who are incapable of doing some work for themselves is small. In the whole of Tongo I knew only six old men (apart from chronic invalids) who were completely incapable of work. Another ten or fifteen (according to the criterion of efficiency employed[1]) could work, but would probably not have been able to support themselves and their wives without assistance.

A somewhat different and less frequent case is that of Sabaalug. He is an old bachelor living with his half-brother. But he does not help with the farming and so is not entitled to be supported by his brother. He keeps himself by 'scrounging' (*bimh*) a bit of food or a basket of millet, a few pence or an old garment from his matrilateral kinsmen and friends. A childless old woman like Tɔŋ, who lives with a 'son' of her long dead husband ekes out a poor existence in the same way. Tallensi are very

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[1] Kuwaas, for example, might have done much more work if he had not had two adult sons; Voŋraan-Tee would certainly have worked less if he had had a son to help him; Ta'aŋ spent so much time on ritual and communal affairs that he did less work on his farms than he was capable of.

tolerant of such old folk, but they consider their mode of life a pitiable 988
one, not so much from the purely material aspect as from the social side.
'Who will mourn his death? Who will give him a proper funeral?' they 577
say. But such cases serve as examples for an argument they often put 573
forward. I once heard it very well put in a comment on life in the coast towns. There, said the speaker, you starve if you have no money. Here, at home, no one need die of destitution. If he has no children he can always find a roof with a kinsman, either one of his close agnates or his mother's brother's people, and keep himself alive by the gifts of food he gets from kinsfolk and friends. Though a man is not bound to be overgenerous, and he is not compelled to feed a kinsman living with him who does not contribute to the common pool, it is an offence against the ancestors to refuse food to a kinsman in straits.

Still rarer are instances of people who come to live with a daughter in their old age. I knew of only two cases, one that of an old man, the other of a woman. It is considered to be unbecoming for a man or woman to live with a married daughter. It is not compatible with 'in-lawship' (*deen*) and Tallensi say it causes friction. A married daughter contributes to her parents' material welfare indirectly. Her chief contribution is through the bride-price paid for her. A cow received for a daughter's bride-price may be the starting-point of the accumulation of more livestock. In times of severe shortage a bride-price animal may be used to purchase grain and so save the family from starvation. Most important, however, is the use of a daughter's bride-price to pay off bride-price debts of her natal family. It helps, therefore, to add to the woman-power of her father's household upon which a large part of the household's productivity depends. The occasional assistance given to a man by his daughter's husband in farming, house-building, thatching, and so forth is a small item relatively to the total labour required to maintain a household, but it is enough to turn the scales in a difficult year. Many of the homesteads that were being built on the Tong Hills in 1936 would not have been completed that dry season if the owners' sons-in-law from other parts of the country had not come to their aid.

In short, a native's chief economic asset in old age (and this applies to sickness too) lies in the possession of sons, best of all own sons, but also proxy sons, that is, all those who have an interest in the patrimonial land which is for the time being in his keeping. As we already know, more distant 'sons' than those of the nuclear lineage are very unlikely to live with and work for a man whom they recognize as a classificatory father. Tallensi say that one of the reasons why sons are preferred to daughters is because they will farm for one when one is old. Women are even more apt than men to emphasize the insurance value of sons just because they are more dependent on a son's sense of moral obligation to care for them.

Yet Tallensi do not explicitly state it as one of the duties of a son to

888 support an old father economically. They assume support of an old
father to follow automatically from the economic and jural relations of
577 parents and children and from the moral obligations of filial piety. It
593 is simply an aspect of co-operative production and joint consumption
in the household under the household head's management, and a result of the principle of reciprocity. If a man's only son, for example, were living in his native settlement and refused to have his father or proxy father in his homestead, it would be a monstrous breach of ethics. He would lay himself open to immediate punishment by the ancestors; he would, indeed, be unable to participate in the life of the community since he could not act for himself in ritual or jural affairs.

888 This is an hypothetical instance, for I know of no such case. But
nowadays the question of supporting an aged parent does occasionally
593 arise when men emigrate from their native settlements to seek work
abroad or to farm outside Taleland. Cases are occurring of men who
577 stay away abroad and postpone their return home from year to year,
167 leaving an aged parent to struggle on alone. They are far from numerous
—I knew of some six or seven only, counting two cases where the sons had genuine grounds for their absence.

Native opinion about these absentees is illuminating. They are not criticized for neglecting to send money home regularly. Tallensi do not expect regular remittances from relatives working abroad and still tend to regard the occasional remittances that are sent home as windfalls. Absentee sons are censured rather for deserting their parents, for leaving them without the companionship and the social support of a son. Tɛndaan Teroog's son used to send baskets of guinea corn and maize to his father from Mampurugu. Nevertheless, the old man kept pressing him to return home; and when the son died suddenly people said it was because he had 'rejected' (*zayah*) his father. He should have come home long ago to be his father's companion (*kɔyal*, vb.), to act for him in jural matters, assist him in ritual activities, and manage the household for him. The same sentiment was uppermost in Maantiya's mind when he explained why he could not leave his proxy father Saantarəba, though the latter was able to support himself and his wife with occasional assistance from kinsmen. Maantiya went down to the coast every dry season carrying fowls to sell and usually stayed away three or four months. He was always home again before the rains began. He said: 'I cannot abandon my father. He has no one else.' When I was going home in 1937 a number of men asked me to find their absent sons in Kumasi or Accra or elsewhere in the south, and to try to persuade them to return home. 'Tell them', said one old man, 'that we do not care about the money or things, but we want them to come home.'

888 We have said that there is a more definite emphasis on the duty of
593 a son to provide for his mother. There was an old woman at Kpata'ar
577 whose only son had been abroad for some years. She sent him many

messages begging him to return, but to no avail. 'That good-for-nothing', said Tiezien, contemptuously, telling me about this youth. 'He leaves his mother to starve here while he goes wandering abroad. He is no person (*u ka nit*).'[1] 888 593 577●

This feeling that it is a son's bounden duty to support an aged mother is strongly marked in the case of one's own mother. It sometimes happens that a woman is widowed while still young and is left with one or two young children. She remarries into her late husband's clan and has children by her second husband. When she gets past child-bearing age, even if her second husband is still alive, she usually goes to live with her oldest son of the first marriage. Tallensi say that the right person to support such a woman is this son, as her second husband has no further interest in her after she ceases to be able to bear children.

Any surviving widow of one's own father or proxy father (i.e. a close co-wife of one's own mother) is felt to be entitled to support, but in this case a ritual sanction enters the picture. Tallensi say a man is bound to support his own mother 'because she bore you (*ɔn ·n-dɔyi la zugu*)' It is a direct moral duty to her. But one has to support a mother's widowed co-wife because she was one's father's wife and he would be angry if one did not. This rule applies only to widows of fathers of one's own nuclear lineage. Outside that range no obligation is felt to support an old widow whom one's mother would have called her co-wife. It now becomes a question of more abstract ethical values summed up in the concept *dulɔm*. There is no exact equivalent for this concept in English. According to Tale ethics, any act of deliberate malice or even thoughtlessness that causes trouble or suffering to another person through no fault of his own is immoral. For example, deliberately giving a person wrong information that leads him into trouble; or refusing to give or lend a person something that can well be spared, and so causing him to suffer a serious loss; or if one is in a position to prevent a person getting hurt and makes no effort to do so—all such actions come into this category of moral delinquency. They incur *dulɔm*. The concept covers both the sufferer's resentment and the ethical stigma attaching to the wrong done to him by allowing evil to befall him. The native phrase is 'it brings (or is) *dulɔm* (*de mar dulɔm*)'; and *dulɔm* bears mystical retribution in its track.

Tallensi say that if an old woman whom one calls 'mother' (either because she is the widow of a classificatory father, or out of courtesy, because she belongs to one's mother's generation of wives of the clan) has no one to support her and appeals to one, it is *dulɔm* to refuse her. *Dulɔm* is one of the reasons why one cannot refuse food to a kinsman in need. It was the reason Kuŋaaŋba gave for allowing his old 'mother'

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[1] This expression of contempt contains a wealth of meaning for the native. It means, broadly, someone who has no sense of decency or is oblivious of his social responsibilities.

888 593 •577 Tɔŋ to stay with him. Banɔrəg furnished another instance. One afternoon he looked in on his way home from the market and found two elders with me. He told us he was having some trouble with Ziba, a young man of his inner lineage. Ziba had an old woman, whom he called 'mother', living with him; but he had suddenly decided to get rid of her. Banɔrəg told us how he had expostulated with the heartless young man. 'It is an evil thing to do', he concluded, amid murmurs of assent from the two elders. 'A man who drives out an old woman to starve becomes blameworthy before Heaven (*u kpera Naawun taale*); it is *dubm*.' Banɔrəg's efforts, in this case, were in vain since he had no paternal authority over Ziba. The intervention of an older kinsman does not always check disgraceful treatment of domestic relatives, and public opinion only takes notice of it after the event and then often has no power to make the culprit remedy it.

A Methodological Point

593 181 The cases we have quoted in the preceding pages are précis of statements, opinions, and explanations given to me by Tallensi themselves. If space allowed, a score of cases could be quoted for each one I have recorded. I mention this because it might seem incredible, to anyone who has not lived amongst the Tallensi, that a people so primitive in their mode of livelihood should balance up rights and obligations in the most commonplace activities of their lives in so calculating a fashion. But the picture I have sketched is not a distortion. Description and analysis inevitably reduce human action to slow motion and men's motives to a seemingly mechanical pattern. In reality Tale parents commonly act as spontaneously and generously as parents in any other country and their children respond as spontaneously and sincerely. But even the most spontaneous actions and feelings of the natives occur within the framework of their social organization and subject to the values postulated in their culture. Social organization and cultural values allow of alternative forms of action and affect in any particular situation, but not of infinitely numerous alternatives. Where the relations of parents and children are involved these alternatives are not unlimited; and allowing for differences of personality and character, as the natives themselves do, we can say that the alternative that will be selected in a particular situation is determined by the structural relations of the individuals concerned. Men's motives and their social relations are closely integrated with one another among the Tallensi, as we have emphasized before. In their actual social behaviour Tallensi do not have to stop and think out every situation before they act. The individual's ideas and attitudes have been shaped by the social structure and the cultural norms. The framework of his social relations is as much a part of him as he is a part of it. He automatically evaluates every situation in terms of his social relations. To put it crudely, every Taləŋ carries a set of

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and in sentiment, between oldest children and youngest children is of more than casual significance. It is as if the two major aspects of parent-child relations are split apart and distributed so as to make them more easily reconcilable. The mutual identification, mutual love and devotion of parents and children are focused in the relations of parents with their youngest children; the cleavage between successive generations is focused in the relations between parents and oldest children; and we can easily see why this is so. For it is the latter who will take the place of the parents on their death, who seem to be standing on the threshold waiting for them to die. The emphasis of the Namoos on first-born children is, as we have noted, due to the fact that it is the first-born child which makes a man and woman parents. Hence, if a first-born dies, its parents have to undergo a special purification rite; and a wife who has not borne a child to her husband does not undergo the purification rites for a widow when he dies. Later children do not change the role and status of a person in the same way; they do not make him or her more of a parent. Nor does the sex of the first-born matter, though the agnatic principle makes a first-born son of greater importance to a man than a first-born daughter. This and the principle of the equivalence of siblings explain why both sons and daughters are subject to the taboos of the first-born among the Namoos.

The Ancestors as Parent Images

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The ambivalence in the relations of parents and children is more dramatically expressed in the ancestor cult than in any other aspect of Tale culture. We cannot discuss this at length here. We can only note that there is a direct continuity between the relations of parents and children in life and their relations after the parents' death. The worship of the ancestors is a culturally standardized projection on to the mystical plane of the tangle of attachments, reciprocities, tensions, and submerged antagonisms that bind parents and children to one another in life. Anyone unfamiliar with the speech and customs of the Tallensi would often find it impossible to tell, in some situations, whether a man is speaking of his living father or his dead father. The dead parents are the prototypes of all the ancestors. Distinctions of name and generation conceal the same primary images. This is clear from the fact that no man can sacrifice to an ancestor or ancestress except through the medium of the spirit of the parent who links him to that ancestor or ancestress.

It will not surprise the psychologist, however, to learn that the attributes with which the spirits of the parents are invested differ in some respects markedly from those that are conventionally assumed for living parents. The disciplinary limitations imposed by the demands of economic and social adjustment and by the rationale of reality are no longer operative. The figures of the dead parents are clothed in qualities that are in part highly magnified versions of their most praiseworthy qualities

in real life and in part distorted reflections of the tensions that exist 593
between parents and children in reality. It is no misrepresentation to 769
describe them as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the
parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically 578
omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent and long-suffering; but the emphasis is far more on the persecuting than on the protect- 577
ing attributes. The distortion is most striking in the case of a mother's spirit. All ancestor spirits are apt to reveal themselves more often by the misfortune they inflict than by the benefits they bring. They emerge as sanctions of conduct more by reason of the punishments they bring down on wrongdoers than because of the benefits they confer for right doing. But the spirits of female ancestors are believed to be specially hard, cruel, and capricious. This is remarkable when we consider the love and devotion a mother shows for her child throughout his life. As we have observed elsewhere,[1] there is a never-ending struggle between a man and his ancestors. It is psychologically rooted in the relations of parents and children during the lifetime of the parents. Sacrifices and prayers are reminiscent of the principle of reciprocity in the real relations of parents and children. They contain the same elements of acquiescence, justice, and hidden coercion. They show another aspect, though, in the propitiation, reverence, and gratitude they often express.[2]

We can see why filial piety towards the dead parents is more strongly stressed than towards the living. While he is alive a person's father has direct jural and ritual authority over him; when he dies, the father becomes the paramount sanction of moral conduct for him; and this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, in only a lesser degree to the mother. The oath 'by my father and his goatskin (or sheepskin) and his three cowries' discussed in our previous book[3] is one proof of this. The centre of gravity of the whole social system of the Tallensi is the relationship of father and son, and it is the idea of filial piety that keeps this relationship in balance in the face of all the forces that tend to divide father and son. In this as in other respects the Tallensi are typical of patrilineal and patriarchal societies of simple culture from many parts of the globe, both ancient and modern.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 145.

[2] As death, among the Tallensi, is always believed to be mystically caused by
a particular ancestor spirit or a group of ancestor spirits (material causes such as [761
sickness being recognized as necessary but not sufficient without the mystical
adjunct), it follows that a dead father or mother can kill (*ku*) his or her own child. 682]
The converse is impossible, since children, in life, have no jurisdiction over parents. I have asked Tallensi if patricide ever occurs or is known to have occurred. My most trusted informants said they had never heard of a case and thought the very idea abhorrent beyond measure. The idea of matricide they considered even more vile and unnatural.

[3] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 66.

responsible member of his society. Of this we have had ample evidence.[1] 593
Again, there are strong economic elements in the individual's adhesion
to the lineage. There is the pressure due to the form and organization 578
of Tale economy as a whole, which tends to restrict excessive mobility.
As Tallensi themselves often put it, shrewdly picking on the key item 613
in their productive cycle, it is all a question of manure, including human excrement. A home farm in one of the old settlements kept at a high level of fertility by continuous manuring is not light-heartedly abandoned.[2] This fact, and the scarcity of unutilized and unowned farmland in the old settlements, puts a premium on the right to inherit land in them. To-day, it is true, the pressure of these forces has been relaxed by the opening up of an easily accessible external labour market and of facilities for trade both in Taleland and with other areas. These extraneous outlets have made life easier for the natives but they have not, as we have observed before, materially altered their traditional mode of livelihood. In fact they serve to emphasize the contention of the natives that economic motives are of secondary consequence in maintaining lineage unity.

It is not joint interest in, and equal rights to the inheritance of, 593
their patrimonial lands which alone hold a group of brothers together.
Men who leave their natal settlements on account of land shortage do not 577
return home eventually only because they have at last inherited their 764
patrimonial lands. The decisive sanction, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, lies in the obligation of filial piety and what it stands for in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage. The focus of unity for every lineage is the authority of the father, either the real authority of the living father or the mystical supremacy of the dead father or his surrogate, an ancestor spirit. Men like Yinwɔrəb and Da'amo'o gave up wage labour in Kumasi very reluctantly to return home because the death of their fathers left them at the head of their respective joint families, and other similar cases have been quoted in an earlier chapter (p. 179). Similarly, a group of brothers may be scattered, some at home, some in a peripheral settlement, some in Mampurugu, some working abroad. On certain ritual occasions those who are near enough make a point of returning home. Family funerals, in particular, bring the scattered members of the family together. The three chief mourners at Tendaan Gieŋ's funeral were his brothers' sons Gikoo-Duun, who lived near Sameni in Mampurugu, Saanbuohba, who had been farming near Tola on the Red Volta for some years, and Baŋ-Duun who had been living at Biuŋ for nearly twenty years. They all

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[1] In preceding chapters as well as in *Dynamics of Clanship*, *passim*.

[2] We have touched on this subject in our earlier book, chapters i and xi. It is more fully considered in C. W. Lynn's report, *Agriculture in North Mamprussi* (Dept. of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Bulletin 34, 1937), and in M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936.

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● 577 764 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

593 613 As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 578 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zaγahkpɛmәre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zaγahkpɛmәre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zaγahkpɛmәre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zaγahkpɛmәre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 601 784 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another. As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔγa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

593 554 covers almost every standard social relationship of siblings in Tale society. Siblings are laterally identified with one another, so to speak; brothers can replace one another in the social structure in a way that gives rise to a minimum of readjustment in the social relations of any other people affected. This contrasts with the vertical identification of parent and child, which rests on the continuity of the descent line not on actual or potential identity of social roles. This is a generalized formula. It leaves out of account a very important item, the effect of the sexual dichotomy of Tale culture. The distinctive social roles imposed on men and women by this factor restrict the identification of brother and sister to a narrow sphere, and the functions of women limit the social equivalence of sisters to their relationship with each other's children.

593 855 ●577 In infancy and childhood the equivalence of siblings is of little consequence. It comes out chiefly in the rule that parents should not discriminate between their children (proxy children as well as own children). Tallensi say that, in practice, one cannot help preferring one son to another or one daughter to another. One child may be more obedient or industrious or better tempered than his brothers and sisters, so one will be inclined to favour him; and there is the admitted bias in favour of younger children, especially the youngest, as we have seen. Moreover, proxy children are rarely as dear to the heart of a parent as own children are. Even a mother, whose love for all her children (except the youngest) is proverbially without bias, sometimes has favourites among them. There is plenty of evidence for these admissions. The Chief of Tongo had well over two-score children; among them his favourites were a son and a daughter of about 18, born soon after he was appointed chief. Nor do such preferences stop with childhood. Tiezien reposed his trust in his late brother's two sons, who had grown up in his care. The only son he had of his own who was old enough to assist him in public affairs was, he said good humouredly, too stupid.

But, say the Tallensi, this is a matter of *feelings*—what 'your heart desires (*i suh mboot*)'. When it is a matter of *rights*, to discriminate between children is bad, almost sinful; it is like rejecting one child for the sake of another. It would be regarded as iniquitous for a man to let some of his children go hungry while others were well fed. With two adult sons, as we have seen, it is considered right for both of them to be assisted to marry before either is allowed to have two wives. It is the same with other things in which there is an element of right or duty; and the majority of natives are very conscientious in this matter, at least as far as their own children are concerned. Nowadays, in particular, as has often been emphasized to me, if a man has two sons and does not deal with them equally, the one who feels himself unjustly treated soon finds an opportunity for running away to seek work abroad. Sensible parents follow this rule conscientiously even in trivial matters. Ɔmara

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bet* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *beris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the age of about 4 [i.e. is old enou[illegible] to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)] and is placed under the spiri[illegible] guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is a twin definitely regarded as a [illegible]plete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a [illegible]tter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring 165
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that

by his clansmen as a classificatory kinsman, and predispose *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* to greater mutual confidence, than if one's *ahəb* belongs to the traditionally hostile Talis. On the other hand, a man whose mother's brother is at Wakii does not wish evil to befall that clan, and he may find himself in an embarrassing position if there is conflict between his own clan and that clan. 602

Kinship Amity

Outside situations in which specific extra-clan kinship ties correlated to defined modes of conduct emerge, the social relations of kin are governed by a general rule of amity. A kinsman of any degree is a person in whose welfare one is interested and whom one is under a moral obligation to help in difficulties, if possible. A good illustration of this occurred one day when I was on a visit to Kpata'ar. Nyaaŋzum asked, in the customary way, what was the news from Tongo. I ran through the conventional items—the chief, the crops, current gossip, births, marriages, and deaths. When I told him that Gben-Təŋ's mother had died he exclaimed, 'Eee! And why haven't I been told? I'll have it out with Gben-Təŋ next time I see him. This is his maternal ancestors' home (*u yaab yir nla*). I sacrifice on his behalf so that he may sleep peacefully; and now that he is not sleeping well (i.e. has trouble), if he does not send to tell me, is that as it should be?' Thus also Banərəg complained that he had given away about twenty baskets of grain in a period of one month after his harvest to kinsfolk who had come to 'beg (*səh*)' gifts to tide them over a time of food shortage. But, he concluded, 'you can't refuse a kinsman (*i ku tuo nzayah i dəyam la*). One day I myself may have to go and ask my kinsmen for some grain.' A kinsman in need of hospitality cannot be refused, though there is no obligation to go out of one's way to persuade him to accept it. In the old days if a person saw anyone wantonly molesting a kinsman of his from another clan, it was his duty to intervene. It is wrong to seek a kinsman's harm and a sin that will bring down the wrath of the ancestors to cause his death. In 1936 the Təŋraana and the Gəlibdaana were compelled to meet in order to try to settle one of the latter's grievances against the former. At the end of the long and fruitless discussion the Təŋraana burst out, with scarcely veiled vexation, 'You and I, Gəlibdaana, are kin. We have begotten each other. Why do you seek my enmity always?' 602 577

As we have previously learnt, one of the most important duties of kinship in the old days was to protect a kinsman in one's own clan territory. A typical example is the story of Baŋam-Teroog's journey to Sandema in the Builsa country, some fifty or sixty years ago. Had he gone openly by himself he would certainly have been caught and sold into slavery by the Builsa. He had been commanded by an ancestress, through a diviner, to go to her home in Builsa country and perform the

602 577 rites of setting up a shrine dedicated to her. For safety's sake all the travelling on such journeys was always done at night. During the day the traveller lay low in a kinsman's house. So Teroog set off one night. He went first to his father's mother's brother's home at Gorogo. Thence he was escorted to his father's mother's mother's natal home at Sii. The Sii people took him to a more remote kinsman at Balung and from there he was conducted, by similar stages, to Sandema. His return journey was made in the same way. The whole trip took nearly a month. The same journey can be done on foot, nowadays, in three or four days each way.

Similarly Zubiuŋ men relate how in the old days their Tongo neighbours, being of a different and unconnected clan,[1] used sometimes to raid their livestock to recover bride-price debts. As the people of Tongo were much more numerous than those of Zubiuŋ resistance was generally impossible. But if a Zubiuŋ man had a close matrilateral or affinal kinsman at Tongo, this afforded him some protection. His kinsman would intercede to get any livestock of his that had been seized restored to him, or, if the debtor were a very close agnate of his, to arrange a settlement between creditor and debtor. Often the head of an intercalary lineage, such as Nɔŋsuur yidem,[2] undertook this on behalf of his classificatory mother's brother's lineage.

602 782 Nowadays the most important obligations extra-lineage kin have towards one another are in ritual matters, and these are unavoidable obligations. This applies especially to kin of a senior generation in relation to those of a junior generation. A person owes ritual allegiance to his matrilateral ancestors as well as to his paternal ancestors. In fact, in the strictly personal affairs of the individual, his matrilateral ancestors have as decisive a role in his life as his patrilineal ancestors. This accords with the recognition given to maternal origin in the social structure and with the rule that kinship never dies out. Hence there are many occasions in the life of a man when he has to go to his mother's brother or to someone standing in that order of relationship to him to ask him to sacrifice on his behalf. For it must be remembered that the canon of agnatic descent prohibits anyone other than a true patrilineal descendant from sacrificing to an ancestor or ancestress. Thus if a man wants to sacrifice to his mother's spirit guardian he has to go to her natal home and ask her father (or his heir) to perform the sacrifice. Herein lies the force of the statement commonly used to define extra-clan kinship ties, 'I sacrifice on his behalf', or 'he sacrifices on my behalf'. The whole weight of the ancestor cult stands behind these and other ritual obligations of extra-clan kin to one another and no Taləŋ would violate them.

602 582 If we add to this the rule that marriage between extra-clan kin of any degree is forbidden, we can see that there is much in common between

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

[2] Cf. ibid., pp. 59 and 78.

sion to go, saying that the quarrel between the two clans had nothing 604
to do with the question of personal kinship ties. As this example shows, 765
there is a strong element of moral (but not jural) compulsion in the [577]
respect owed by a sister's son to his mother's brother, and the sanction behind it is the allegiance every man owes to his maternal ancestors.

On the level of sentiment and affective attitudes there is clearly a close resemblance between the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child and that of father and child. The difference, and it is a fundamental difference, lies in the fact that *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* have no common economic or jural interests. Thus a man can be familiar with all the affairs of his *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* and be keenly concerned that they should go well, but he is under no responsibility for their satisfactory outcome. The tension underlying the relationship of father and son is absent, and in this important respect the relationship of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* resembles that of mother and child more closely. An *ahəb* must be respected by and he has considerable moral authority over his *ahəŋ*; but he cannot demand obedience from him as of right. This will be clearer from what follows. 604

Here it is pertinent to ask why the mother's brother and not her father—though he is the head of her natal family—holds the key position in the network of social relations that bind a person to his mother's patrilineal kin. As our analysis makes clear, it follows from the interaction of the principle of the equivalence of siblings and the principle of the cleavage between successive generations. A person cannot identify himself with his mother in relation to her father. He cannot have the status of a son and the status of a grandson in relation to the same person. On the other hand, as the preceding discussion makes clear, it is in conformity both with the logic of the social structure and with the pattern of sentiments uniting parent and child, for a person to extend to his mother's brother the filial attitude he has towards his mother. He can consistently be his mother's son and at the same time have a quasi-filial status in relation to her brother.

The Place of Gifts in the Relations of Ahəb and Ahəŋ

An *ahəb* demonstrates his interest in his sister's son's well-being by 604
the gifts (*piini*) he occasionally gives him. The theory is that they are
given freely out of kinship amity. By the rule of reciprocity there should 431
be a similar freely-given flow of gifts and services from *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*, but the emphasis lies on the generosity of the *ahəb*. A man is under no jural or ritual obligation to give things to his sister's child; he does so voluntarily as a quasi-paternal gesture. And though an *ahəŋ* has no property rights in the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*, he is, in theory, allowed certain liberties with things belonging to them, as if he were a kind of son of the clan. This is explained by the formula that but for the accident of

604 partly because Ɔmara's relationship was with the whole inner lineage,
not with Dawoog personally, the request had to be placed before the
425 assembled elders of the inner lineage. The land could not have been
granted without their unanimous consent. This having been obtained,
a day was fixed for handing over the land. Early in the morning of the
appointed day Ɔmara, followed by his oldest son, arrived bringing a
fowl and a guinea-fowl and a large basket of guinea corn. Dawoog then
[782] summoned all the men of his inner lineage, and proceeded to sacrifice
the birds to his lineage ancestors at the lineage *bɔɣar*. Addressing the
ancestors he explained all the circumstances of their 'grandson' Ɔmara's
request and exhorted them to bless his labour and to grant that the new
farm might bring him prosperity. It was a long prayer detailing exactly
how Ɔmara was related to Dawoog's lineage and promising that he
would bring further offerings in gratitude to the *bɔɣar* whenever the
new farm produced good crops. The flesh of the birds was divided
amongst all present, including Ɔmara, in accordance with the customary rules.

Ɔmara and his son, accompanied by two young men and an elder of the *ahəb yiri* deputed by Dawoog, then repaired to the bush-farm. The elder showed Ɔmara the boundaries of the farm and the young men hoed a strip along one boundary to symbolize marking them out (*kyie*). They then set to, with the aid of Ɔmara and his sons, to hoe a small patch, and so symbolically to hand over the right of working the farm. This was symbolized, also, in a simple rite in which the elder handed Ɔmara a large pellet of soil from the farm, mixed with a handful of the flour used in the sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, to eat.

The procedure was identical in the case of Sɔmbura, with one exception. The land belonged to his *ahəb* Saɣamane's nuclear lineage, so
there was no need to obtain the consent of the elders of his inner lineage.
Saɣamane did, however, inform them because, as he put it, 'you cannot
•[577] undertake so important a transaction without the knowledge of your
"brothers" and "fathers", and besides, telling them makes them witnesses to the act'. It means that there will always be some member of
the inner lineage who knows the circumstances and conditions of the
gift.

604 Tallensi attach very great importance to the ritual steps in this transaction. They secure the blessing of his matrilateral ancestors for the
577 recipient of the land. Without this, they believe, failure and even
disaster would overtake him when he starts farming the new bush-farm;
425 for, they say, the land really belongs to the ancestors who first cultivated
it. Moreover, the ritual formalities also have an explicitly stressed jural function. It is a solemn covenant between the parties, made in the presence of the ancestors, in which all those who have rights in the land avow their consent to the gift and the recipient pledges himself to abide by the implicit conditions of the tenure of the land. The arrangement

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has the sanctions of the ancestor cult behind it, and the guarantee of 577
having been made with the public consent of all who have an interest 425
in the land.

The recipient pays no rent or dues for the land. During the first three 604
or four years he must give a basket of guinea corn or millet to the
grantors after every harvest. If he has had good crops it will be a large 427
basketful; if he has had a poor season it will be a small basket. In subsequent 425
years he need only bring a gift of grain if his crops are good and
if he wishes to do so. Some of this grain will be ground into flour and a libation poured to his matrilateral ancestors at their *bɔyar*, expressing thanks for their beneficence. This serves also to reaffirm the ownership of the land by the grantors. Occasionally, too, he may bring a fowl to offer at the ancestral *bɔyar* of his *ahɔb* lineage in gratitude for the beneficence of the ancestors whose land he is working.

In principle, the lineage that grants the land can recover use of it at 604
any time by giving the recipient a year's notice. But this right would only
be exercised, in practice, if the latter offends them in any way—for 425
instance, by withholding the gifts of grain in spite of having excellent crops. As a rule, therefore, the *ahɔŋ* retains the use of the land until he no longer requires it. It then reverts automatically to its proper owners. If the original recipient dies, his son may continue to use the land without specially renewing the arrangement with his *ahɔb yidem*.

Now supposing the farm is so large that the recipient need not cultivate all of it at one time. By cultivating and fallowing different portions of the farm in rotation he and his sons after him may keep it in use continually. If this goes on for two generations, by which time all the individuals who were present in person at the original transaction are probably dead, the land passes into the effective ownership of the original recipient's lineage, in the third generation. The successors of the original grantor no longer have the right of recovering the land but they are still the nominal owners of the land. If it is wholly abandoned they may resume occupation; the users may not sell the land; and if they grossly offend the nominal owners, the latter can, in theory, turn them off it.

This right is most emphatically claimed, though it is, by all accounts, very rarely exercised. An incident concerning Ɔndieso is suggestive of what might happen. Ɔndieso quarrelled with his neighbour and the head of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. The latter, in his anger, ordered Ɔndieso to leave the land he was farming. This land had been given to Ɔndieso's grandfather by his mother's brother, the then Gbizug Tɛndaana. Ɔndieso, previously defiant, was filled with dismay. Not to comply with the tɛndaana's demand meant risking both the wrath of his matrilateral ancestors and the vengeance of the Earth whose cult is so closely bound up with Gbizug. So he went across to Deemzeet, the head of Puhug section of

on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tendaana 604
refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvɔlimra
succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the 602
girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made to the head of Puvɔlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it to Puvɔlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it. It was then that the Gbizug Tendaana made Puvɔlimra a present of a bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over to Puvɔlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time being; but that dry season Puvɔlimra went, for the first time in his life, to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for 597
the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his
foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopt- 602
ing the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb*. It is as if his mother's bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son. And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the clan settlement of his *ahəb*. He retains only ritual ties with his paternal clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*. At Gbeog, for instance, there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral. When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not 602
forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care 613
of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For
example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day 577 •
killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home to his *ahəb*. The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's 'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise. This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
183 would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly, they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604
will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked
why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each
other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577
when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head
shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, 302
Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power 789]
of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely,
withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having
done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage.
But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to
his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the
jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency
is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother
and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604
rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574
principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a
woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party 764
of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws.
The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman
calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these
young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young
men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the
girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the
young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the
visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl [431]
who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit.
Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers
of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in
the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is
giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this
declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody
knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604
her father without having previously arranged to go to another man,
she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, 586
under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587
She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any
case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that
she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for
some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though
courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of
another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself
with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

604 which a father would never do. In theory, this means that the *ba-pɔk*
586 consents to the new marriage. In practice, her action has no binding
force on her brother. This rule applies also to an unmarried girl who is
587 given in marriage by her *ba-pɔk*. A woman might have one of her brother's daughters living with her as a nursemaid for her baby. She might promise the girl as a wife to one of her husband's brothers. But her brother need not consider himself bound by this promise if he has objections to the marriage.

604 A father's sister is, in short, a kind of female 'father', but without the
jural and ritual attributes of fatherhood. A father's sister must be
577 treated with respect. It would be grossly improper, for example, to joke with her as one jokes with a wife's sister; and to strike or abuse her, even if she were much younger than oneself, would be a sin. But the respect accorded to her is only a pale reflection of the attitude implicit in filial piety. It is much more a matter of etiquette than of emotion, as if it were merely conventional and not evoked by a feeling of moral obligation.

604 A marked characteristic of a person's relations with his or her father's sister is the absence of specific mutual obligations. Just as a *ba-pɔk* has in reality no rights over her brother's children, so she has no specific duties of either a ritual or a secular kind towards them, or they to her. This is the chief contrast between this relationship and that of parent and child or that of mother's brother and sister's child. Only a shadow of a ritual sanction comes into the relationship, in the form of the belief that the curse of a *ba-pɔk* can harm her brother's child, and in the notion that she stands under the protection of the same ancestors as the latter. Hence, though she cannot demand services from her brother's child, it is felt that a request for help from her should be met, even at the cost of
[789] some inconvenience. If a person offends his father's sister and she
reproaches him saying, 'I bore you (identifying herself with her brother) and this is how you treat me. My ancestors have seen it, my fathers have seen it (*Man dɔγi la·k-i cyəm là ŋwala; n-yaanam nyeya, m-banam nyeya*)', this has the force of a curse because she is invoking her ancestors who are also his ancestors. Such a curse would disturb a native, but not nearly so deeply as a father's curse or if a mother's brother refused to sacrifice on his behalf.

Because their relationship is devoid of a definite jural coefficient and is not subject to organized ritual sanctions; because, also, a father's sister stands outside the scheme of economic and domestic associations in which the relationship of parent and child is set, the relations of father's sister and brother's child are free of the undercurrent of tension found in those of father and child. A woman's bonds with her brother's children are fundamentally bonds of sentiment. That is why they seldom endure beyond one generation, or extend beyond the nuclear lineage.

The personal relations of father's sister and brother's child have much

861 At the same time, no one hesitates to punish when it seems to be merited. A child who neglects a task entrusted to him or her may expect to be rebuked or even chastised. Incidents such as the following occur frequently. Strolling through Puhug one morning in June when the early millet was ripening, I stopped to chat with Tampɔyar, a young man of 25 or so. Suddenly there came the sound of furious railing from his father's house-top. 'Your ears don't listen. Can't you look after your cattle properly, you good-for-nothings, you things-with-sunken-eyes. . . .' A voice from a neighbouring house-top joined in to the same effect, adding: 'I'll come down and thrash you.' The objects of these fulminations were two small boys, about 9–10 years, who were driving some cattle out to pasture. They were dawdling and their beasts stopped to munch at the millet. The rebuke had the desired effect. Tampɔyar's comment was to point to a scar on his body where for the same crime he had been so severely whipped, as a small boy, that a suppurating wound resulted.

Disciplinary punishment is also administered at times. A small boy is told to go and scare the birds from the fields. He refuses. A hard smack on the haunches sends him scampering.

Nevertheless, I have never observed vindictive punishment or malicious bullying, either of children by adults or of young children by older ones. Indeed, punishment appeared to me to be extremely rare among the Tallensi, as compared with ourselves. It is thought to be necessary sometimes to use rough measures in teaching morals and manners, but not in teaching skills. A very intelligent elder once declared *nyɛn pu mugɛ ibii la u ku ŋɔya yam*, 'If you don't harass your child, he will not gain sense.' This view is held by many. But, as the context of conversation showed, what he meant was not so much corporal punishment as that constant supervision is necessary in the training of children for life.

● 577 *The concept of 'yam'.* Tallensi often use the concept *yam* when discussing social behaviour. It corresponds to our notion of 'sense' when we refer to a 'sensible man', or 'sound common sense'. As the Tallensi use the term it suggests the quality of 'insight'. Its range of usage is wide. If it is said of some one *u mar yam pam*, 'he has a great deal of sense', the implication is that he is a man of wisdom, or is intelligent, or experienced in affairs, or resourceful. If some one

commits a *faux pas*, or shows lack of understanding, or misbehaves 577
morally the comment is *u ka yam*, 'he has no sense'. The concept
is used to refer both to qualities of personality and to attributes of
behaviour. It is applied also in a genetic sense to describe the social
development of the child. A normal child between the ages of about 856
6 and 9 years is said to 'have sense at length'. It knows how to 577
behave in the social situations which confront it, whereas an infant of
3 or 4 years old does not. Yet a 4-year-old having learned bladder and
bowel control is said to 'have sense' as compared with a 2-year-old.
Similarly Nindɔyat, (17–18 years) telling me of his sweethearting,
waxed scornful about his own boyish friendship with girls two years
before. 'I still had no sense then', he explained. The concept, it
will be seen, is generally used relatively to a particular situation.

Children's attitude to education. In Tale society every pupil becomes 861
in some situations a teacher. At the one extreme there are specialized
ritual performances which some men do not learn till they are grey,
and at the other, the toddler leaning over to play with his nursling
brother is teaching the latter something about his environment. This
holds right through the age-scale. Considering also the unity of the
social sphere, one is not surprised to find that children have the same
attitudes about education as their elders. Hence children are rarely
unwilling to learn. As a rule, too, they are not ashamed of confessing
failure, ignorance, or inability to do or make something. Conversely,
children laugh good-humouredly at one another's deficiencies in skill
or knowledge, they never jeer. Ridicule is reserved for the correction [626]
of uncouth manners, disgraceful morals, or aberrant interests.

Fundamental educational relationships. It will be evident from the 861
preceding analysis that Tale children receive their education not only 571
from the adults but also from older children and adolescents who are
always transmitting what they know of the cultural heritage to their
younger brothers and sisters and cousins. From the age of 5 or 6 years
until they become fully absorbed into the economic system children
often go about in small groups. These groups[1] usually consist of

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King*, 1936, for ancillary information about these groups. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix, 1936, for an outline of their structural context.

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234
longer drive the cow out to graze.

Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsi- 183
bilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Talɔŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and how they are maintained. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale*.

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty
to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them.
Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip
of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them.
It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal
about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds
they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and
the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as
far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused
laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for
example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves,
bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all
fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the
buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up
to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread
out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with
legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social
world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think,
still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination
of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from
these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that
which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, ' is embarrassing ' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult, the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose the genitals with the word ' boy ' or ' girl '. An infant's excretory processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
[863] regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
' Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said Batiigŋwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, ' he 's a thief. He stole his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast, is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours, nevertheless, go beyond what is merely ' unbecoming '. They are not nice, *a-pu maha.*

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience
rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Golibdaana, in his
overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Golibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power
failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
578 the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

of the group to which it refers. Owing to the balanced distribution of 173
political and ceremonial functions between units of structure, the members 773
of a group always overrate their own relative significance while non- 578
members underrate its importance. These, sometimes contradictory,
valuations find expression, also, in the way myths are presented. It is the
technique of contraposition coming to the surface again. When, therefore,
in these days new tensions develop, erupting sometimes into open conflict,
they are inevitably reflected in the cast given to their myths of origin by
interested parties.

The Major Cleavage in Tale Society

Our reconnaissance of the cultural landscape of the Tallensi has left us 000
with a tangle of facts which do not fall into an obvious pattern. The
reader may rest assured that his perplexity bears no comparison to that
of an ethnographer seeking, for the first time, to understand Tale culture
and social organization. The perspective changes as the investigator shifts
his vantage point. The greatest puzzle of all is why there is so little apparent
unity and coherence in an area of such dense and close habitation, carrying
a population that has been sedentary for a long time, has a more or less
homogeneous culture, and a strong sense of the continuity and stability
of its social order. Leaving aside this puzzle, for the present, let us see
what are the positive conclusions to which our survey leads.

The point of primary importance is that a major cleavage runs through 184
the whole of Tale society. On the one side stand communities or parts
of communities the members of which are generally agreed to be the
descendants of immigrant Mamprusi. These are the Namoos. On the
other side stand similar social groups who claim to be and are accepted
as the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and earlier
immigrants whom they absorbed. This cleavage is given a symbolic
formulation in myths of origin the historicity of which need not concern us.

This cleavage is so fundamental that it permeates the whole social out- 184
look of the people. One sees it most vividly in the martial choruses chanted 764
at important funerals. One of the high lights at the opening ceremonies of
the funeral of an important person is a grand mimic war march (*dee*) of
the men of the clan. In their finest clothes, weapons in hand, plumed
helms on their heads, blowing whistles and accompanied by drummers,
the men gather in lineage squadrons to march round the settlement, and
eventually mass at the house of the funeral. They march irregularly in
an unorganized mob with excited children trailing behind and women
dancing on the flanks trilling the shrill *kpɛləmət* cry of elation. And as
they march, especially as they approach the funeral house, they chant
defiant challenges against their traditional enemies in the wars of former
days. 'Yo ho!' they chant, 'we might rise one day at break of dawn to
sally forth against certain people.' 'Is it not because of us', the Namoos
chant taunting the Talis, 'that you have water to drink?' And again,
'Do you not mock at them, do you not laugh at them?' And now and
then a man leaps forward, crouches scowling, pretends to shoot off an
arrow, and cries scornfully, 'If it were not for the white man, by now we
would be meeting them in battle'. It is all play-acting, but there is an

x618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tɛndaana, both receive sacrifices. 182 But the *Bɔɣar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a 771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

774 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔɣar* cult and the Earth cult, both 769 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve 182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages. 613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔɣar* (*dugni bɔɣar*), the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔɣar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔɣar* (Duunkpaləg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔɣar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tɛndaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔɣar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tɛndaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tɛndaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

x618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of 182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[773] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one 178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpaɣara-yaɣar 182 tɛndaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders 578 to Duunkpaləg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdem did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tɛndaana-elect to Duunkpaləg. The Yapaasdem, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

178 forefathers in that way (*ti ku zaŋ ti banam bah ŋwala*)'. Some of the
182 younger men of Yapaas were merely being tiresome. 'You'll see',
● 578 countered the man who had spoken earlier, sceptically, 'some day there
will be a quarrel over something, the division of meat at a sacrifice, or the inheritance of a widow, or something of that sort, and then you people of Zubiuŋ will split up.'

578 Meanwhile, we continued to wait for the Yapaasdɛm, for the ritual could not be performed without the presence of their representatives. In due course they arrived. Far from expressing contrition, they excused themselves by accusing the others of having bungled the sequence of the rites. A violent argument followed, but one of the elders cut it short. No doubt, he said, the Yapaasdɛm preferred a different order of the rites. That was their affair. The senior lineages had no intention of copying them. To-day the ceremonies were *their* concern, and now that all the lineages were properly assembled they might as well get on with the business.

Linked Maximal Lineages and the Field of Clanship

x618 Corresponding to this structural differentiation within the clan, each
maximal lineage has its distinct field of clanship. One segment of
Yakɔradɛm, known as Pulien biis, is an attached lineage descended from a
[567] 'sister's son' of the authentic lineage. Another segment (Zaŋgɔbɔg yidɛm)
is an assimilated lineage, said to be of slave descent. Members of this segment are debarred from holding the tɛndaana-ship. Pulien biis have the right to hold the office, but mainly in a titular capacity, for they are barred from its most essential responsibilities. In other respects these accessory lineages have been fully absorbed by the authentic line of Yakɔradɛm, and participate in all the corporate activities of the latter.

The Yakɔradɛm have ties of clanship with Gbizug, which counts as the senior segment of Gbeog, and is bound to Gbeog proper by the usual ties of clanship. But there are no ties of clanship between Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Gbeog proper. They may not marry a daughter of Gbizug; they may and do marry Gbeog women, who would of course be barred by the rule of exogamy from marrying into Gbizug. Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra also have ties of clanship with Ba'at-Sakpar, one of the major segments of the clan of Ba'ari; but they have no ties of clanship with any of the other Ba'ari maximal lineages. Similarly, they have ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ, but not with the Namoo lineage of Zoodɛm proper. The other two component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ are excluded from this field of clanship. For instance, they can and do marry Gbizug, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zoo-Yiraaŋ women.

x618 These extra-clan ties of clanship are rationalized in various ways.
811 Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar claim to be the consanguineous kin (*dɔyam*) of
Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, because, as the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas relate, the founding ancestors of all three lineages were 'brothers'. The Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are claimed as kin (*dɔyam*) of the latter because their founding ancestor is said to have been a 'sister's son' of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. It should be noted that such a remote cognatic link does not in every case establish ties of clanship. The same fiction is used to account for the existence of

602 ground-nuts ready for harvesting, might pluck a few twigs of guinea corn
608 or pull up a bunch of ground-nuts to stay his hunger. He would shout
x618 out, 'Whose corn is this, yo-o-o? I am going to pluck some.' The
owner, standing on his flat roof, would probably remonstrate and swear,
but he would not raise a hue and cry, for this was not theft but an
exaggerated assertion of clanship ties. Nowadays, since the political
● [578] jealousies between the chiefs of Tongo and of Yamələg have brought
about a state of chronic hostility between the two places, this pleasant
custom has fallen into disuse. It is impossible to tease people with whom
one has open or suppressed enmity; it would certainly provoke a fight.

x618 Such liberties, it is of interest to note, could never be taken with the people of Sie or Biuk, though they, too, are the clan *sunzɔp* of Tongo. For, as my informants explained, 'they are too far away, and therefore they would resent it'. On the other hand, while any Tongo man can pluck a handful of guinea corn or a bunch of ground-nuts from a clansman's field at Tongo if the two men are on good terms, no one would dare to intercept the food contribution of another Tongo section's relatives-in-law. A serious quarrel would inevitably result. 'We are too near each other, we are like the members of a single family', explained my informants. Every segment of Tongo is likely to be represented at the funeral ceremony at which these contributions from relatives-in-law are shared, to claim the share due to it. For any segment to anticipate this by violence would be a gratuitous insult implying that the other segments do not respect its rights. The people of Yamələg and of Sie used to act in the same way towards each other before the political jealousies that to-day poison their relationship arose.

184 All Tallensi think alike in matters of this sort, which fall within the
x618 ambit of their common culture, whatever their particular structural
affiliations may be. This Namoo custom and its recent obsolescence fit
the pattern we have established for the more conventionalized joking
partnerships of the Talis.

x618 Yet another kind of joking which I have several times witnessed
602 adds confirmation to our analysis, the more so because it is entirely
578 informal. This occurs between the members of two maximal lineages
which are bound to one another by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence. They are usually maximal lineages which have complementary politico-ritual offices, such as a chiefship and the tɛndaanaship complementary to it. A large element of tension is necessarily involved in these relationships. Mutual loyalty and solidarity in situations involving common interests are counterbalanced by mutual suspicion in matters concerning the private interests and possessions of each lineage. Behind a strong sense of amity and interdependence lurks a jealous vigilance in regard to reciprocal rights and duties.

When, therefore, representatives of the two groups meet in a ceremonial or jural situation, the more aggressive among the elders often taunt one another playfully at moments when ceremonial formality is relaxed. Gbizug and Tongo men, for example, have a habit of doing this. The Chief of Tongo and the Gbizug tɛndaana, on the rare occasions when they meet in public, will interrupt a long and ceremonious discussion with a

jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual 602
coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tɛndaana's brother, who often deputizes for 618x
him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of 578
the tɛndaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true, but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's [789] ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohɛg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiirɛt*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations 184
which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also 571
confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of 571
clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, 577
but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihɛr*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*bɛ yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

182 have not only bonds of local contiguity, but an additional tie of ritual
x618 interdependence in that their heads install each other in their respective
769 ritual offices. Similarly, Sakpee and Samiit have an added ritual tie in that their heads each have a special role in the ceremonial installation of the other. Finally, the head of Samiit exercises a special politico-ritual function in relation to the head of Kpata'ar. It is his task, in times of great social emergency, formally to adjure the head of Kpata'ar to initiate the ritual procedures necessary to avert disaster.

Thus, underneath the general collaboration of the communicants of Bona'ab with one another in the *Bɔyar* cult, and interweaving with it, spread these particular, divergent ties between different pairs of maximal lineages. In many situations these subordinate ties hold fast where the superordinate ties of ritual collaboration between all the communicants are not strong enough to override the cleavages between them. It is a
●[578] striking thing, for instance, that whereas Nakɣeet yiri and Sakpee have tended to side with the Gɔlibdaana of Bunkiuk in the struggle for power that has been going on between him and the head of Kpata'ar during the last few years, Gundaat has stood staunchly by the latter. The general bond of ritual collaboration in the *Bɔyar* cult has not ensured the support of the whole Bona'ab congregation for Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm in this struggle, and even the specific ties of clanship between them and Nakɣeet yidɛm have not been proof against the lure of the Gɔlibdaana's fleshpots.

It is characteristic of Tale society that the structure of a community, whether it be a permanent community or a temporary community such as emerges in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, is directly mirrored in every situation and every institution in which this structure becomes manifest. To take a very simple example: when the congregation of Bona'ab assembles there for a sacrifice, the representatives of the different maximal lineages sit in a fixed order. Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm sit in the place of greatest honour, since they are the senior custodians, and the other lineages are distributed as shown in the diagram opposite. It will be seen that this diagram gives a picture also of the structural relations between the different lineages, and incidentally of their local relations to one another. It shows in a nutshell how local, structural, and politico-ritual relations are interlocked with one another and converge to create and maintain interclan co-operation and solidarity. The diagram shows also how the ritual roles in any of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship at the *Bɔyar* are distributed amongst the different maximal lineages.

182 Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm are the senior custodians also of the supreme
x618 Earth shrine of Tɛnzugu, Doo; but in the cult of Doo they have a com-
794 pletely different set of ritual collaborators from those associated with
796 them in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. They have a different field of ritual relations counterpoised to that of which the External *Bɔyar* is the focus. The units associated with Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm in the cult of Doo are Degal (linked by clanship ties to them, but having its own External *Bɔyar*), Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk (who have no clanship ties with Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, and are the senior custodians of a different External

Bɔyar from theirs), and Tamboog (who also have no clanship ties with 182.
Kpata'ar, and have an independent External *Bɔyar*). These four units 769
must be represented at all rites performed at Doo during the Great 794
618x

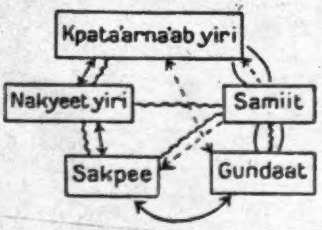

Diagram showing the seating arrangements at ceremonies in the sacred grove of the External Bɔyar BONA'AB, as reflecting the structural relations underlying ritual collaboration in the Bɔyar cult.

⟷ = Clanship ties
∼∼∼ = Ties of local contiguity
- - -> = Specific ties of politico-ritual interdependence
⌒ = Other social ties.

Festivals. Each one has also a private Earth shrine, with which the other three groups have no connexion, but their common allegiance to Doo binds them to one another in mutual ritual dependence. This should mean also, and by all accounts formerly did mean, a bond of mutual amity and cohesion; for there is nothing, according to Tale belief, which the Earth abhors so greatly as strife between those who worship it together at the same shrine.

To-day the cult of Doo furnishes an outstanding instance of the rela- 182
tivity of such ritual sanctions to the structural relations of the corporate 618x
units amongst which they are effective. During the Great Festivals, the 794
four maximal lineages meet as of old to perform the prescribed rites at
Doo. For this limited period and this objective they are obliged to set
aside their antagonisms and collaborate amicably. At other times, how- [578]
ever, they are divided by the struggle for power that has been going on
between the Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab. Both Degal (in spite of
their clanship ties with Kpata'ar) and the majority of the Tamboog people
have been seduced by the wealth and power of the Gɔlibdaana.

The pull of loyalty to Kpata'ar sustained by the common cult of Doo 578
has not, however, remained altogether ineffective. In order to make their religious relations with Kpata'ar consistent with their newly arisen political hostility to them, the supporters of the Gɔlibdaana have tried to oust Kpata'arna'ab yidem from their traditional status in relation to Doo. They would thus, if they succeeded, have put Kpata'ar in the position of a faction opposed to the rightful principals in the cult of Doo.

578 On the other hand, there are dissidents in the Gɔlibdaana's camp who rationalize their opposition to him and find a rallying motive for it in the traditional loyalty which they owe to Kpata'ar in virtue of their reciprocal ties of ritual collaboration.

182 For Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, Degal, Bunkiuk, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm, and Tamboog, their common allegiance to Doo counteracts their divergent loyalties to their respective *Bɔɣar* congregations. Doo, however, does more than merely bind these four units to one another. It is the focus of integration of the four *Bɔɣar* communities they represent; and it is the point of confluence of the distinctive fields of clanship and of local ties of these four units. The ritual of the Gɔlib Festival when closely analysed shows that Doo is the palladium of all the Talis, the centre about which the equilibrium of all their corporate relations with one another swings.

Thus, to be specific, Tamboog is regarded as representing Wakii, and therefore, in virtue of the latter's ties with Gbizug, Zubiuŋ, and Ba'ari, these clans as well. Tamboog also represents Wɔɣar and the other members of its *Bɔɣar* congregation. Kpata'ar represents the other units constituting its *Bɔɣar* congregation, and through them Soog and Gbeog. Degal represents the Talis on the east slope of the hills and the adjacent plain. Bunkiuk represents its *Bɔɣar* congregation, which includes segments of Zandoya, Yinduuri, Sii, and Gorogo. And intersecting these groupings run the numerous ties of clanship, joking partnership, clanship-by-courtesy, privileged coercion, and local contiguity, that link up particular members of different groups.

We have considered only the two major ritual institutions through the medium of which the clans of the Talis are articulated into interdependent sets, and these again serially interlocked in a single system. There are also a number of other religious institutions ancillary to the cults of the *Bɔɣar* and the *Tɛŋ* in which more localized forms of ritual collaboration unite maximal lineages and clans, not otherwise ritually related, on certain occasions. It would be tedious to deal with them at length. It is enough to say that their effect is to interweave more closely the numerous threads which form the amazing web of politico-ritual relations among the Talis. They make the system complete to its last detail.

182
796 The all-embracing range of this web of politico-ritual relations comes out most plainly in the Great Festivals. The cycle requires the ritual co-operation not only of all the Talis but of the Namoos as well. The distribution of ritual roles and responsibilities amongst the clans is such that every corporate unit has a specific role associated with a particular phase of the cycle and with particular ritual emblems. Thus the cycle of the Great Festivals unites all the Tallensi in the performance of one connected series of ritual acts, and this is a bond of profound importance for all their social relations with one another.

The Great Festivals are dramatizations on the plane of ritual symbolism of the most vital and universal values of the Tallensi. They express the idea that the common good of all the Tallensi is founded on the inescapable interdependence of their elaborately differentiated clans and lineages. This common good, the ritual of the Great Festivals might be interpreted

562 *pɔɣayabələg*, particularly of one who is living at her husband's house. x618 To be sure, her kinship ties with her own family and with the segment of the maximal lineage to which her father belongs are not severed; indeed, a woman's relations with her paternal clan are largely regulated and mediated by these ties. The concept of *pɔɣayabələg* implicitly stresses the fact that it is a woman's fate to be married out of the clan and to be cut off from its routine corporate activity; and it contains the idea that a woman thus separated from her parental home is felt to belong primarily to the widest corporate unit that stands in contraposition to her husband's, where his relations with her are concerned.

Thus outside the range of the lineage segment in which generation differences are recognized, a *pɔɣayabələg* is referred to as 'our sister (*ti tau*)' by any of her clansmen, and she speaks of them as *ntap*, 'my brothers'. A man visiting the settlement of another clan makes himself at home in the rooms of any *pɔɣayabələg* of his clan. When the cow-peas are ripening, a *pɔɣayabələg* visiting her clan settlement—her 'father's house' (*ba yiri*), as it is described by extension of the concept of the father's house or lineage in the narrowest sense—may pluck cow-pea leaves (*bɛŋət*) for herself anywhere in the settlement. A Yamələg or Sie *pɔɣayabələg* can do this at Tongo, for instance, if she is merely passing ●[578] through on her way elsewhere. No one would resent it; but if the wife of a member of a segment of the clan other than his own were to pluck a man's cow-pea leaves without his express permission, it would lead to a quarrel. Similarly, it is customary for women to come and collect a basket of grain from the men of their parental family after the harvest. A *pɔɣayabələg*, however, is permitted to ask any of her clansmen for a gift of this kind. Thus it sometimes happens that a Yamələg or Sie woman married to a man at Yinduuri comes to a clansman at Tongo after the harvest for a gift of grain, or a Tongo woman married to a man at Datɔk or Duusi calls on a clansman at Sie for such a gift. As these examples indicate, a *pɔɣayabələg* of a linked maximal lineage counts as a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan.

562 When a woman's funeral is celebrated by her husband's people the 764 last act is 'to send her home (*kulh*)' to her father's house. For this ceremony a large party of men and women in their gayest clothes, led by the nearest agnates of the dead woman and escorted by drummers and musicians, sets out for her husband's settlement to 'receive her funeral (*die koor*)'. When such a party is being assembled, messages are sent to the heads of all the constituent lineages of the clan, and representatives are generally sent from all the lineages to accompany the party. It is partly a matter of duty, and partly an act of courtesy and a voluntary demonstration of clan solidarity. Sometimes young people of linked lineages join the party, knowing that it will be lavishly entertained by the affinal clan and that there will be dancing and girls to flirt with. Fetching the funeral of a *pɔɣayabələg* is an affair of the whole clan.

562 The *pɔɣayabələg* has a formal status in the lineage and clan, and this 613 status is recognized as an intrinsic element in the structure of the lineage and clan. The fiction behind this is the idea often explicitly stated by the natives that but for an accident of birth she might have been a man

621 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here [778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔyar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔyar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

×618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field [608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ, which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
● [578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us, and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo. This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time; but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *tɛŋ* is not a *tɛŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the contradiction [578]
between the conception of a defined territorial boundary fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties, ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations. But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tɛnzugu, in particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit sub-communities within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Golibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Administration 578
as headman of Tɛnzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tɛnzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Golibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Golibdaana, crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong, took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

621 comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Degal tɛndaana, the ritual
578 'owner' of the land of Bunkiuk, the Gɔlibdaana's clan. As the head of
423 Bunkiuk and headman of Tɛnzugu, which includes Degal, he held political
authority over all the territory under the ritual jurisdiction of the latter. Hence this strip of territory, as far as the watercourse, belonged to him. The people dwelling there were no concern of his; let them go elsewhere if they wished.

The Yinduurna'aba, a simple and inarticulate old man, who has never mastered the wiles of modern headmanship, protested vehemently. The Gɔlibdaana's arguments were untenable. The ritual jurisdiction of tɛndaanas had nothing to do with the matter. In any case the Zandoya tɛndaana would contest the Degal tɛndaana's claim. Everybody knows that tɛndaanas acknowledge no boundaries. The group in question was a segment of Zandoya. How could they belong to any other political unit than the latter? To talk of their abandoning the land on which their ancestors had dwelt was preposterous. Indeed, the whole situation was something quite unheard of; it could never have occurred before the coming of the white man, when everyone had his acknowledged place in the society. The truth was that the Gɔlibdaana was deliberately trying to entice his people away from him.

There the matter rested. The case was widely discussed and public opinion, except for the Gɔlibdaana's supporters, sided unanimously with the Yinduurna'aba. Five other cases of the same kind came to my notice; and in all of them the verdict of native custom is unequivocal; social affiliation and not alleged territorial boundaries define the extent of a community. Even the new settlements, though they sprawl more widely than the old settlements and are usually surrounded by considerable tracts of uninhabited land, have no defined geographical boundaries. They can and do go on expanding.

The Concept of the Tɛŋ

621 A Tale settlement can only be identified as a unit by reference to the lineage relationships, politico-ritual ties and cleavages, and jural rights and duties, prevailing within it and between it and its neighbours. That is why we have avoided the word 'village', which conjures up the image of a neatly isolated, compact territorial unit. *Tɛŋ* (pl. *tɛs*) is the native concept denoting a settlement; but no English translation can convey its exact sense. In some ways it is reminiscent of the deme of ancient Greece, a coalescence of local association, lineage organization, common religious cult, and political solidarity. None of these factors serves to demarcate a *tɛŋ* absolutely from adjacent *tɛs*; all of them link together neighbouring *tɛs* or parts of *tɛs* as closely in respect of that one category of social relations as they unite segments of the same *tɛŋ*. A settlement is only a relatively autonomous community. One might perhaps define it as the region of maximum overlap of all the categories of social relations found among the Tallensi.

621 Native linguistic usage reflects this, for *tɛŋ* has a width of reference
619 varying with the situation. A man beginning a discourse on marriage
829 with '*ti tɛŋɔ, nyɛn di pɔɣa* . . .—In this our land, if you marry a wife . . .'

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage 621
customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. 619
They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to 829
themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one
another. Tɛnzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and
close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized;
but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated
as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on [578] ●
between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of
both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*',
but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right
and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to
native custom.

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as 621
a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a
lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the
width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of
corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the
Tɛnzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them
might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of
local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted,
is the keel of Tale social organization.

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual 621
significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in 182
the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and 771
its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but
often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects
to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the
sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy
of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one
aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes
both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu
sayat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive
reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of
another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty
of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of
the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement
farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native
beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari
to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character).

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we 621
may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settlement 618x
name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages 551
whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that
of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most
often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name
of a well-known *tɔŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are
called Saniiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a
name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her

of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. 621
To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet 577
closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by 621
territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one 613
locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. 571
Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another
section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find
it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but
mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of
Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a
section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage
criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits
set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably
stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counterpart in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a
stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section
is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any
of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been
chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo
section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists
between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and
regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding
moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section,
both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them
and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent [578]
hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections
than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one
another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the 621
territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of 618x
ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point
emphasized by the Yinduurna'ab in the case previously quoted. Tongo
stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies
on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the
Gbizug tɛndaana's ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual
jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpɛmdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly
on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect. The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaana's clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth (*tɛŋən kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ŋmaarame*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against
682 a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide
577 may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or
682 between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of
471 a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for
[461] a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed
431 or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*) —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

571 613 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 613 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but [578] this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. [835] Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not [837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

sexual relations with a brother's or father's wife is a grave sin. What is 613 more important, the solidarity of this *dug* very often rests on a common economic interest in patrimonial land, to which every male member of the lineage is a potential heir. This common interest in land gives the cohesion of the narrow *dug* a foundation upon which its moral solidarity, reinforced by the close bonds of sentiment its members have with one another, rests so firmly as to make it almost infrangible. The narrow *dug* is the widest lineage unit that always stands together like one man, right or wrong. Dissensions between its members are regarded [578] as personal quarrels even when they follow the lines of genealogical cleavage within it. However acrimonious they may be, they are not permitted to divide the unit into mutually hostile segments.

Neither the wide nor the narrow limits of the *dug* can be fixed by a count of ascendant generations. The narrow *dug* may place its founding ancestor from four to six generations up the tree of ascent, the wide *dug* from five to seven generations back, reckoning from its present living head inclusively. It varies from clan to clan, the dimensions of the *dug* being always relative to the span and the degree of internal segmentation of the maximal lineage of which it forms a segment. As we have seen, there are maximal lineages like Gundaat which are so little segmented that they still function as wide *dugət*. Furthermore, a unit that is counted as a *dug* to-day may in a generation or two segment into two or more *dugət*. And it must be remembered also that in composite clans the section [618]x (*yizug*) is genealogically a maximal lineage, so that the *dug* constitutes a major segment of a maximal lineage.[1]

Thus the *dug* is a flexible unit and more difficult to visualize than the maximal and minimal lineages. It cannot, like them, be isolated by a morphological criterion; we identify the *dug* only when it emerges in social action.

It will simplify our analysis and save some confusion if we give a name to the *dug* in the context of the lineage structure. This is justifiable as well as expedient, for in a particular clan the *dug* has a determinate lineage span and segmentary order at any given time. We shall therefore use the terms 'medial lineage or segment' for what we have called the wide *dug*, and 'inner lineage or segment' for the *dug* in its narrow limits. We thus have a hierarchy of lineage segments: the effective minimal lineage or segment, the nuclear lineage or segment, the inner lineage or segment, the medial lineage or segment, the section or major segment, the maximal lineage.

[1] In many maximal lineages we find an intermediate grade of *dug* which is less closely integrated than the narrow *dug*, but more so than the wide *dug*. In diachronic terms it readily falls into place as a phase in the process of internal differentiation by which the narrow *dug* develops into a wide *dug*. In the set of lineages we have been considering the segment of Bakolog yidem of Lebhtiis yidem behaves like a *dug* of this sort. It has a somewhat wider span than Doohraan yidem, but a powerful contributory cause has been the personality of the *dug* head, Yinyela, whose actions have led the heads of the effective minimal lineages to reject his headship on several occasions and to stress the relative autonomy of their sub-segments in consequence.

764 quarters) for the other three sections of Tongo, since one of the hind
613 quarters (*gbɛr*) remains with the 'owner of the funeral', the man who is
621 celebrating it. Thus the genealogical cleavage between Kuorəg and the rest of Tongo asserted itself. Kuorəg was treated as the *sunzɔp* of the rest of Tongo and received a forequarter, the remaining hind quarter going to the other three sections. There are stories of intra-clan quarrels in the
● [578] old days in which Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug banded themselves together against Kuorəg.

613 Nevertheless, in the corporate affairs of Tongo as a whole Kuorəg
621 emerges as a segment of the same order as the other three sections. It is one of the four co-ordinate sections (*yizugət*). A significant index of this is the fact that in all four sections nine generations of ascendants are reckoned inclusively between the present section heads (*yizug kpeem*) and Mosuor. No Tongo man, however profoundly versed in the traditions and customs of his clan, is aware of this, however. Tallensi never have occasion to work out the genealogical relations of all the minimal segments of a maximal lineage with one another.

A man's genealogical knowledge is built up gradually and piecemeal in the give and take of social life, by participation in jural, ritual, and ceremonial activities. But a man of wide experience knows the lineage ancestry of the component segments of his own *dug* as far as its founding ancestor; he will know who were the putative brothers of this man, the founding ancestors of the other major segments of his section, and their sons, the founding ancestors of large sub-segments like Nɔpugzabər yidem, in his section; and he will know the founding ancestors of the other *yizugət* of the clan, and possibly their sons; but he will not know the whole descent of other major segments of other sections.

The nine-generation ladder of ascent found at Tongo is an index of the structural differentiation and internal equilibrium of the clan. As we have already observed, the maximal lineage (and Tongo functions as a maximal lineage, though strictly speaking it is not one) is unalterably fixed. Its major segments cannot be altered in relation to one another by further segmentation of its minimal segments. Its internal equilibrium is a function of the relations between its major segments; and the same principle applies to each major segment. This is symbolized in the tree of ascent of the people of Tongo. The structure of the maximal lineage does not permit of the recognition of more than one generation between Mosuor and his nine putative grandsons. Following the simplest possible pattern of symmetrical lineage segmentation, all Mosuor's progeny are first divided into two major (matri-)segments in accordance with the stereotyped scheme of differentiation by reference to their progenitrices; and each of these is again segmented on the same principle. Kuorəg counts as a section of the same order as Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug in the corporate affairs of the whole sub-clan, because this is necessary for the equilibrium of the sub-clan. The internal differentiation of Sɛyahəg biis has reached an advanced stage. The relative autonomy of the three sections that constitute it is now so great that they can only act together as equal partners. Each of these three sections has a corporate unity and common interests that sometimes bring it into conflict with the other two

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of
daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same
as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, but all who participate feel them to
be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and
fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing
out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads
that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The
religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion
and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief
representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the
ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is
concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage
head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual
or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted
to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage),
and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar
situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he
receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔyar* of his
medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as
well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a
new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of
a sacrifice to the *bɔyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of
being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat
in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the
responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's*
duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their
goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
627

of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head
of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders,
makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit
himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the
head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal
lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage.
It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are
performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of interlineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not,
the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway.
This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is
one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of
the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted
at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—
cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting 224
out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be
faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service
for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every
animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and 587
the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be
informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in
theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's
nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right
generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his
medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late
husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that
lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The
right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head
of her nucleur lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577
ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721
reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life.
There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173
kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives.
At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst
it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they
shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one.
Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or
political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more
influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his
prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime,
about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛlɔg*)'
him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which
resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges
and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good
farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worthwhile
life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682
the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577
the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721
in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was
not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the
Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In
1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk
about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury,
lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their
long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse
still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors
of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards.
And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their
young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the
animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721
matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673
for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might
follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib 682
died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an
unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after
another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out
his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him
and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills
Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one
of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628
neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578
of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—
that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations,
in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

628 to enforcement by explicit or implicit sanctions—it prevailed only within
578 the clan or a cluster of closely interrelated clans, or between individual kinsfolk of different clans. Even so, every line of social cleavage was a source of weakness to the sanctions of right. It needed very little temptation or provocation for men of different clans or maximal lineages, however close the links between their respective groups, to lay violent hands on one another's property, person, or dependants. There was a general atmosphere of non-cognizance of rights *as such*. Times of crisis, such as famine, brought about a relapse into lawlessness.

691 In consequence the ultimate sanction of jural rights outside the clan
628 was self-help. If a man could not recover a wife who had been abducted or a bride-price debt owing to him through the intermediation of the elders of his clan and those of the abductor's or debtor's clan, he had the right to use self-help and make a raid on the cattle of the offender's clan. This was legitimate and reprisals were not allowed. If the offender were to attempt any, his clansmen would not support him. But these raids
726 might result in an armed clash with the cattle herds. Men might be killed; and then war flared up.

721 But raiding (*gɔk*), as a measure of self-help, in itself was not an act of
628 war. It led to war if men were killed, but not if there were no bloodshed.
578 Sometimes, even if a raid ended in an affray and men were killed, a reconciliation was made before an interclan fight could develop. The Tallensi distinguished precisely between raiding, as a method of self-help which they considered a legitimate jural device for redressing a wrong, and warfare. The custom of raiding reinforced warfare because it provided occasions for armed clashes and because of the habit of mind that lay behind it. Though this habit ran counter to the moral repugnance of the Tallensi to shedding human blood, it tolerated the use of violence as the proper ultimate means of asserting one's rights. This attitude still survives, to some extent. Men still carry their weapons when they go on a journey. Disputes over wives or unpaid debts sometimes bring the parties to the brink of a sanguinary fight. One reason why these fights are suppressed by the natives themselves before they become serious is the fear of the white man with his armed police in the background. Another
[177] and more powerful reason is the system of chiefs' tribunals and District Commissioners' courts imposed by the British. This judicial system has become an established part of native life. It has provided an effectively sanctioned alternative to self-help and made the latter obsolete (cf. p. 13). But in the past the attitude of mind we have described led the natives to think of warfare in its corporate aspect as a mechanism for redressing wrongs that could not otherwise be put right. Considering their lack of a single, all-embracing government and their segmentary social structure, it was inevitable that conflicts should often arise that could only be settled by fighting.[1]

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[1] In this connexion it is worth noting that the Tallensi have only one term, *zabɛr*, for every kind of fighting, from a quarrel between co-wives to a war. But, in addition, war was distinguished by referring to it euphemistically as 'arrows' (*peema*). Thus a war is identified as 'the arrows of so-and-so', after its chief instigator.

Forty years ago, when no man ventured outside the bounds of his own 578 settlement without weapons, when it was a common thing for a little group of armed men to raid the cattle of another clan in settlement of a debt, when a passing member of a different clan could be set upon and robbed, if he was unprotected, a trivial argument might lead to blows in the twinkling of an eye. Thus many fights occurred between clans and 721 lineages. But general wars, involving all the Tallensi, were less frequent. Only three seem to have taken place in the last three or four generations.

These general wars always took place between Tale clans or between some Tale clans and neighbouring non-Tale clans. The Tallensi never united for defence or offence against other 'tribes'. Wars began between adjacent clans which were not united by direct or indirect ties of clanship, and then spread by mobilizing the opposing forces along the lines of structural interconnexions which we have described. This was a basic feature of warfare. Tongo could not fight Gorogo directly, for to get at the men of Gorogo the Tongo warriors would have to cross the hostile territory of Gbeog and Wakii. Tenzugu could only fight Tongo if Wakii and Soog gave their men passage and took their side. A general war therefore inevitably followed the line of major cleavage between the Namoos and non-Namoos. An example will show how this occurred.

Some fifty years ago a quarrel between a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man led to a general war. It began in the way many of those wars did, with an argument about a wife. There was dancing at Yaɣazuor one night and a Kpatia man who was present was accused of trying to abduct the wife of a Yaɣazuor man. Next day one of the annual communal game drives took place. A bush turkey was brought down and both a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man claimed it. Such disputes were and still are common at these big game drives, when it is often difficult to determine whose club or arrow inflicted the death blow on an animal. In the circumstances, with the competitive spirit at its highest pitch, with men standing beside their clansmen with weapons in hand, with the excitement of the chase as a stimulus, words soon led to blows. Besides, the squabble of the previous evening over the woman was still rankling. So fighting broke out between the men of Yaɣazuor and the men of Kpatia.

Next morning the alarum was raised at both settlements. Ba'ari at 726 once came out to help its *sunzɔp* the Yaɣazuor men. Namɔɣalug and Sie rallied to the side of their fellow Namoos at Kpatia. Yamələg followed suit. Tongo, to assist Sie and Yamələg, attacked Ba'ari. Gbeog then attacked Tongo to help Ba'ari; Wakii and Soog, followed shortly by Tenzugu, came out to support their kin, the Gbeog people; Zoo immediately set out against the Hill Talis in support of Tongo, and Zubiuŋ, hitherto neutral, followed suit. Then Gorogo came to the help of Gbeog; and Sii and Yinduuri, mindful of their ties with Tongo through the chiefship of Sii, attacked Gorogo from the rear. All this happened in two or three days. Then the Gbizug and Wakii tendaanas, armed with 728 their ritual peacemaking powers, intervened and compelled the combatants to lay down arms. Tongo and Wakii made peace and the news was broadcast from clan to clan. Once two important representative clans made peace thus, all the others had to stop fighting. The ties of clanship

722 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire
when its allied clan made peace.

727 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the
721 old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its
721 meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

[621] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region
[182] is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic
domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was
726 that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied
411 men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows,
[701] their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly
as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

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[1] A clan-head could initiate a just war of revenge, with the consent of all the clan elders, and after consulting a diviner, in theory without incurring mystical blood-guilt. And yet, in after years, misfortunes falling on his descendants might be ascribed to this act.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
282 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

x 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

●578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

● 578 acts as peacemaker. But in principle they go back to the same facts as general wars, the structural differentiation of maximal lineages and clans.

We can see that Tale wars were in fact a kind of intestine feud within a single homogeneous social region, rather than wars in our sense. We have refrained from calling them feuds because they were usually short and sharp and never led to a long series of mutual reprisals. If one war was followed a year later by a war of revenge, as in the instance given [669] in this chapter, that was the end of it. One might even describe them as a kind of civil war, since they sprang from the cleavages inherent in the social structure, particularly the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos. They served to keep these cleavages alive, to defend the corporate unity of the maximal lineage and clan and the corporate rights associated with it, against other like units. They were, at bottom, a mechanism for resolving tensions within the society[1] and not an instrument of political action against outsiders. The ever-present possibility of war was a potent factor in maintaining the segmentary structure of the society. It achieved this by enhancing to the utmost both aspects of the social differentiation of maximal lineages and clans—the demarcation of unit from unit by genealogical and local criteria, and the corporate solidarity of each unit in its own right. However much the Tallensi 578 deplored bloodshed among them, as in civilized nations, in warfare all 186 personal interests were subordinated to the common interest of the clan or maximal lineage, whether its cause was just or not. All normal activities were suspended and every man, woman, and adolescent child took some part in the fighting or in caring for the wants of the fighters. Clan patriotism reached a pitch of fervour which no other occasion could evoke. It was felt as passionately by the women and girls carrying water to the fighters and dragging the wounded away, and by the old men at home who tended the wounded and went around from shrine to shrine making sacrifices to the ancestors, as by the fighting men. Something of this spirit comes out to-day in the inaugural ceremonies of an important elder's funeral, when the whole clan turns out for a pageant mimicking the activities of war.

578 Yet there was never any danger of wars or smaller fights breaking the 182 society up into a number of anarchic fragments. They were inhibited from doing so by the countervailing influence of the strong social ties between traditionally hostile groups. Indeed their very occurrence [728] stimulated the reassertion of the overriding common interests of the society and the reaffirmation of the bonds of unity between the factions. In a war between Namoos and non-Namoos peace had to be made quickly and the *status quo ante* restored because the two groups are so closely interconnected by ties of marriage and kinship that the majority of members of one group have bonds of duty, affection, and mutual interest with members of the other; because they are such close neighbours; above all, because they are bound together by ties of politico-

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[1] These tensions persist, though they are kept well in check by fear of the British Administration. The new judicial system provides a safety valve to some extent; but they break through, chiefly in the form of political intrigue, as we shall see in the next section.

ritual collaboration in a series of complementary relations the proper 578
maintenance of which they believe to be indispensable for their common 182
welfare. This is the basis of the ritual sanctions against instigating war and shedding blood and of the moral repugnance associated with them. A war temporarily upset the equilibrium of Tale society; it could not destroy it.

The social system of the Tallensi, in its widest extent, is held together 182
by its religious superstructure. Its unity is none the less real because it appears only on the highest plane of common religious values known to the natives. As we have noted, the complementary politico-ritual offices of the chiefship, which is typically a Namoo office, and the tendaanaship, typically an office found amongst non-Namoos, constitute the focus of the institutions that maintain this unity; and the annual cycle of the Great Festivals are at once the chief sanction and the supreme expression of it. The coming of the white man has made very little difference to the way [177]
these institutions operate in relation to the fundamental structure of Tale society. They continue to be the crowning mechanism of equilibrium in Tale society, because its segmentary social structure has kept its traditional form and vitality. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that only a strong and universally accepted religious sanction could hold such a society together. In practice the equilibrium is achieved by the distribution of mutually complementary offices among the segments of the society, all of which are essential for the performance of definite ritual duties.

It is a significant index of the type of social system presented by [728]
the Tallensi that the widest range of social solidarity found among 796
them is evoked by their Great Festivals. Great stress is laid on the ritually sanctioned truce to all fighting or discord between clans or maximal [582]
lineages during the Festivals. That is why marriages are forbidden during 182
the *Gɔlib* Festival. The Festival Cycle begins with the Harvest Festivals. These are celebrated by single clans or groups of linked maximal lineages independently of one another and serve to enhance the sense of clan and lineage solidarity. The climax is the *Gɔlib* Festival, immediately before the rains. This gives ritual sanction and dramatic expression to the idea of the close-knit interdependence of all the Tallensi with one another. Its reiterated themes are the common interests of all the Tallensi—food, peace, and fecundity—which must be achieved if they are to survive, and the supreme common values—the cult of the ancestors and of the Earth—by which the whole of Tale social life is steered. The lesson of *Gɔlib*, to the Tallensi, is that men cannot realize their greatest common interests or pursue their greatest common purposes in mutual enmity. *Gɔlib* is the most powerful counterweight to war and to the tendency of each clan and maximal lineage to set its own corporate interests above the common interest of the whole society. It is noteworthy that the Great Festivals do not presuppose the suspension of the primary loyalties of the segments that make up Tale society. They represent a synthesis, for the time being, of these primary loyalties—a synthesis that is possible only by giving full scope to the feeling of clan and maximal lineage unity and singularity in each group. *Gɔlib* emphasizes the mutual dependence of Namoos and Talis, but it does this by simultaneously enhancing the

796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within
182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many
sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from
breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they
[625] always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out
during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater
solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies
throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare
681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the
obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity,
arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity
possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political
life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the
extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments;
on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of
the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of
721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from
the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its
effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus
it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

● 578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels
182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in
769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within
clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal
tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend
to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the
form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider
solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy
of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts
in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically
unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social
structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence
in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the
long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate
membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating
the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage
and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual
restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck
between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the
centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the
ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

578

adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182
of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769
bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182
principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of
the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to
more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of
thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment
of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector
of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests
evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182
constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618 X
evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the
lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Taləŋ identifies
himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to
which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidɛm*)' and
of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔyaba*)' and 'our children (*ti
biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions
to-day, a Taləŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an
argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or
a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's
or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182
for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426
groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old
days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman of his debtor,
but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different
clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former
case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman,
the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567]
into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had
been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the
clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously
made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations.
It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt.
Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the
mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583
unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426
man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'.
Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted
the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled.
The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original
wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss
of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals
such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the
abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682
clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618X

682 Some sixty years ago a Tamboog man was killed by a group of Yamələg
x618 men with whom he quarrelled at a dance. Two or three years later a couple of Tamboog men met a Yamələg man alone in the bush and slew him in revenge. The Yamələg people understood that this was a case of 'wiping out a debt' and the matter was regarded as closed.

x618 The principle of representative status enhances the sense of lineage or
431 clan solidarity. We have seen how, in ceremonial situations, any member of a lineage or clan is regarded as representing the whole unit. I have often seen men refuse gifts of meat or food at ceremonies because these had no precedent and accepting them would be equivalent to committing their lineage or clan to reciprocate in the same way at some future time.

613 Co-operation in ceremonies, especially in funerals, brings to light the
764 institutional machinery of lineage and clan solidarity. Its basis is the
x618 distribution of duties and privileges among the different segments of the lineage or clan concerned in the situation, in accordance with their segmentary relationship to the group principally affected. Thus in funerals, in accordance with the maxim 'Brother lineages take charge of one's affairs (*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*)', members of a close brother lineage of the bereaved lineage supervise the ceremonies. In addition, all the segments of the maximal lineage or clan concerned send prescribed food contributions and receive prescribed shares of beer, meat, and food distributed during the ceremonies. Funerals are important because the death of a person may entail a rearrangement of social relations in a segment and this is a matter of common interest to the whole clan.

x618 These obligatory reciprocal services and privileges constantly remind the individual of his dependence on his clansmen for the proper management of the critical events of his life. In consequence the obligation of reciprocity is strongly felt, in both secular and ritual matters, the strength of the feeling being relative to the lineage relationship of the parties. When a man invites a collective hoeing party (*pooh kpa'arəp*) it is always co-members of his medial lineage who turn up in largest force. Distant clansmen only come if they have ties of personal matrilateral kinship with him. And the motive usually given for responding to such an invitation is 'To-morrow I may need the help of a hoeing party'. Public opinion is critical of those who do not conform to the conventions of mutual assistance, and when they find themselves compelled to call for assistance in collective hoeing or housebuilding or some similar activity, they are left in the lurch.

578 Intra-clan disputes involving lineages of a higher order than the
x618 nuclear lineage very rarely arise over economic affairs—that is, in effect, over the ownership of land or live-stock. Disputes in higher order lineages arise over the inheritance of widows or marriage with a woman who was formerly the wife of a member of a different segment of the clan. Members of the deceased husband's medial lineage feel they have a prior claim to a widow's hand and sometimes object to her marrying a man of a different branch of the clan. And if a marriage is dissolved, no matter what the reason may be, it is regarded as a grave breach of clan solidarity for any other member of the husband's clan to take her to wife. It arouses suspicion of collusion between the woman and the second

578 618x husband. In both types of case conflicts reflect the importance of wives as a common interest of the lineage and clan.

But the chief source of intra-clan discord is rival claims to priority in the exercise of rights of a politico-ritual nature, which are generally vested in lineages and are associated with the dominant values of the society. The conflict may be precipitated by a clash of personalities. But very often the underlying pressure comes from a change in the internal constitution of the lineage that has been taking place gradually with the passage of the generations and is not yet recognized. In the course of two or three generations an inner lineage may ramify so widely that its members claim the status of a medial lineage when it comes to succeeding to the headship of a more inclusive lineage, and this claim may be resisted by the other branches of the more inclusive lineage. It is such conflicts that eventually get resolved by the setting up of a new equilibrium in which the change is recognized by the redistribution of reciprocal rights and obligations. Intra-clan discord is often due to the universal human propensity to resist infringements of one's recognized social rights or one's self-regard; or to the complementary tendency for individuals to assert themselves by aggressive action. But it is probably more often a phase in the structural development of a lineage or clan, a symptom of a hitherto unrecognized internal change in its structure. This does not make the conflict less acute or disturbing while it lasts; but it does mean that there are always social forces at work that counteract the conflict even while it is going on and will prevent it from disrupting the corporate group entirely.

578 618x 177 These processes are so characteristic of the social system of the Tallensi that they could be illustrated from the contemporary history of any clan or maximal lineage. Tallensi say that intra-clan conflicts have increased since the coming of the white man. They maintain that the suppression of warfare and of self-help, and the new freedom of movement, have greatly diminished lineage and clan solidarity. People no longer need the help of their kinsmen as much as they used to. But careful inquiry shows that intra-clan discord was as common forty or fifty years ago as to-day and sometimes more violent. Many of the most deep-seated and intractable antagonisms within and between lineages or clans to-day go back to conflicts that began fifty or sixty years ago.

793 578 A typical instance is the dispute between the Gbizug tendaana and the Gbeog tendaana which began with the immediate predecessors of the present tendaanas. The dispute concerns the degree of autonomy to which the Gbeog tendaana is entitled in his ritual jurisdiction over the *tey* of Gbeog (see p. 87). He claims full autonomy. The Gbizug tendaana as 'elder brother' (*bier*) in ritual status of the Gbeog tendaana, and head of the senior maximal lineage of the clan, citing ancient custom, claims to have an over-right over the Gbeog tendaana. He says that the Gbeog tendaana is simply his deputy and should therefore render to him the perquisites that a tendaana receives for the performance of such ritual services as marking out graves. The men of Gbizug are unreservedly on the side of their lineage head. The men of Gbeog are torn between their loyalty to their maximal lineage and the greater solidarity

793 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as
● 578 their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the
privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as
the Gbizug tɛndaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at
ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tɛndaana. For a short
while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two
tɛndaanas together again, when the Gbeog tɛndaana had to perform the
principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tɛndaana. But soon
afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans
declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tɛndaanas are right, they say. The
Gbizug tɛndaana is going by 'what used to be (*dɛn daa a siem*)', the
Gbeog tɛndaana by 'what is now (*dɛn a siem zinala*)'. It is a problem of
adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary
relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be
a Gbizug tɛndaana who will accept the present position. Then the two
tɛndaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co-operation
x 618 and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of
conduct. Yinyɛla's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led
to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members
of Yinyɛla's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his
house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly
rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal
scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in
public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to
focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solidarity
[208] as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of
the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of
stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time
one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the
mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and
social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment.
The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and
relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors,
concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means
[769 of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in
182] which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the
lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common
ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination
of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

578 We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago
[780] Gbalɔg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief
pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbalɔg went to
settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with
him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father,
stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo.
Yet Gbalɔg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man,
boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But
[787] the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578
demanded that Gbalɔg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787]
among his forefathers. This meant that Gbalɔg's sons should beg the
Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors.
But Gbalɔg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to
do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother
Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There
was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be
done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by
custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear
to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578
At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x
of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was
sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the
recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783]
behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and
several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his
father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be
present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation.
Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and
brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects
he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of
whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbalɔg's defection was thus
erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613
solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x
source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral
premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of
Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display
of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577]
of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own
right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen,
the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodi-
ment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a con- 182
sideration of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage member- 183
ship. There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions
centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the
identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their
common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the
correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife.
Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings
and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan.
These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms.
This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife,
the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband
if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 613 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 182 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 175 578 622 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 578 622 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-

pensation sink into the background, the sanctions inherent in the native 177
social structure prevail, and the traditional ties of politico-ritual collabora- 578
tion come into force. But when the new interests brought into being 622
by the influence of the British Administration come to the fore, the traditional social ties and the sanctions associated with them no longer prevail. For among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, such ties and sanctions do not function at all times and in all circumstances. They work in the context of the scheme of social relationships of which they form a part and not in other contexts. These new interests mobilize the existing corporate units of Tale society. Thus they tend to deepen some of the cleavages that exist, and to weaken the countervailing ties, between lineages and clans. It is noteworthy that rivalry for the rewards of political power under the British Administration is most acute between clans that have close ties in the native social system. As was the case with war in former days, clans and maximal lineages that are widely separated from one another, either locally or in terms of their fields of social relations, cannot come into conflict or competition with one another. Thus political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and his 'younger brother' the Chief of Yamələg is severe and has led to estrangement between these two branches of Mosuor biis. But there is no political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and the Chief of Datək. Competition for politico-ritual office within clans is fiercer than it was in the past and less scrupulous, though it still follows the lines of cleavage in the lineage structure.

At the same time some chiefs have used their new powers to weld their clans into closer unity on the political plane than existed in the old days. This has happened at Tongo and at Sie. But it has not been to the benefit of the social balance in the greater society. By strengthening the autocratic ambitions of these chiefs, the closer unity of their clans has tended to aggravate the antagonisms between clans.

B. *Pecuniary Competition among the Hill Talis*

A new factor of disequilibrium that has had a very disturbing influ- 177
ence among the Hill Talis is pecuniary competition which has become 434
associated with certain traditional institutions. Many families nowadays 438
obtain driblets of money through members of the family working abroad, 578
or by petty trade. But the pecuniary competition we are referring to concerns money on a scale unprecedented in Tale history; and its disruptive influence is due to its association with a traffic in ritual benefits comparable to that of the notorious Southern Nigerian oracles.

The centre of this traffic is the Tong Hills, and its disruptive influence 178
has been greatest among the Hill Talis, where it has brought violent 438
competition into the sphere of the common ritual interests and values 578
which form the bulwark of their cohesion. The integration of the Hill Talis in the native social structure depends, as we have seen, on a meticulous balance of local, clanship, and ritual ties and cleavages focused in the politico-ritual offices vested in the heads of maximal lineages. So nicely calculated is the distribution of these politico-ritual functions amongst the various maximal lineages that none can claim

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
● 578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
[556] through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external
sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans
among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gɔrisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon
of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth 471
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and
economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered
by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and
unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar 794
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

621 lineages inherent in the native social structure. The majority of the
622 Golibdaana's own maximal lineage share in the profits of his monopoly and are solidly behind him; the maximal lineages of the leaders of the
177 opposition are solidly against him; but many of the maximal lineages that
●578 have clanship or ritual links with both sides are split. Many of the young men of these lineages side with the Golibdaana—enticed, their elders say bitterly, by his lavish gifts. The older men are uneasily neutral or tacitly opposed to the Golibdaana because he has brought dissension to the Hills and has flouted some of the ancient ritual customs. Both parties try to manœuvre the opposition into a position which will set the Administration in motion against them; the leaders of both parties say that the white man's authority is the only force that will help them to victory. And they feel particularly bitter because the vigilance of Administrative officers has frustrated all their efforts to exploit this potent sanction.

At the same time they try to use the sanctions of their own social structure to gain their aims. For outside the struggle for control of the pilgrim traffic, the ties of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration remain valid as before. During the Great Festivals the feud sinks into temporary abeyance. The Golibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab speak with hatred of each other when it is a question of political power or the pilgrim traffic; they continue to perform those rites of the Great Festivals and of the Earth cult in which they are ritually obliged to collaborate, with apparent cordiality. This is a 'separate thing' they declare. It would be an appalling sin bringing catastrophe on the whole country, they say, if they threw over these bonds.

But the new alinements in the pecuniary struggle and the traditional social structure cannot be kept apart in watertight compartments. The Kpata'arna'ab and the Golibdaana try to coerce each other through their mutual ritual obligations. They try to put pressure on each other through maximal lineages that are intercalary between their lineages; and to win over the other maximal lineages with which they have clanship or ritual ties.

Experienced elders maintain, with the sceptical candour that is one of the few charms Tallensi have for an ethnographer, that this can never decide the issue. Putting it at its highest, the bonds of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration are a double-edged weapon. If Kpata'ar tries to coerce Samiit to side with it by refusing to collaborate with Samiit in the rites of their common External *Bɔyar*, the ancestors might well blame Kpata'ar and punish them. Tallensi are not—so the old men say—restrained from doing something to their personal advantage by the fear of mystical penalties. 'Who fears death before death comes upon you?' It is only after a death occurs that the survivors see in it signs and omens referring to their social relations with one another.

578 Whenever a death occurs in any of the Hill clans, especially if it is the
764 death of an important person, the chronic discord between them is openly recollected. It is both a symptom of the general feeling of uneasiness and a move in the game of attempted mutual coercion by mystical sanctions. A funeral almost inevitably causes this feeling to be ventilated. For people of all the Tenzugu and many other clans are present, as kinsfolk, affines,

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and
their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors, for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which
they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tɛnzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been
regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar* as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[177] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly. Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals. The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

the social structure as a whole kinship is the fundamental binding 602
element. It furnishes the primary axioms of all categories of interpersonal and inter-group relations.

From the standpoint of the individual, all the norms and conditions that govern his social behaviour fall within a single, syncretic frame of reference; and kinship forms the base line from which this frame of reference is projected. This is a consequence of the syncretic structure of Tale society, based as it is on genealogical connexion. The alinement of individuals and groups for all social purposes follows genealogical lines; with few exceptions, social relations always have a genealogical coefficient. And because they have a common foundation in the genealogical structure of the society, Tale institutions interlock with one another in a consistent scheme. For the same reason Tale social relations do not fall into distinct categories with only adventitious connexions between them. Economic relations serve jural, political, and religious ends as well; political relations are at the same time religious relations; jural rights and duties are aspects of economic, religious, and political bonds.

The extent to which the idiom of kinship dominates Tale thought 602
about human affairs is shown by the tendency of the people to explain
conduct that conforms to the norms by appealing to kinship. The late 578
Chief of Tongo, for example, justified his conciliatory tactics with the Gɔlibdaana, in spite of the latter's provocations, on the grounds of their ties of cognatic and affinal kinship. On the other hand, departure from normal standards of conduct is apt to be ascribed to personal idiosyncrasies. Thus when Zaɣahkpemɔre fought with his older brother over the division of their late father's land, the elders of his lineage ascribed it to his violent temper and lack of intelligence. In keeping with this idiom of thought, a gross breach of kinship duty is the prototype of the Tale notion of sin.

Cognatic and Agnatic Kinship

It is essential to distinguish two kinds of genealogical ties among the 602
Tallensi. There are, firstly, cognatic ties, that is, ties of actual or assumed
physical consanguinity and of the social relations entailed by them, 611
which link person to person or an individual to a lineage or one lineage to another in a specifically defined and particular bond. Such ties may be traced through males only, through females only, or through both males and females. Secondly, there are lineage ties, social relations based on the tie of common agnatic descent.

Cognatic kinship and agnatic kinship have different, in some situations even opposed, functions in Tale collective life. The distinction turns on the principle that lineage ties always unite people in or relate them to corporate groups serving common interests and held together by common values, whereas cognates do not necessarily form corporate

A striking illustration of this antithesis occurred at a sacrifice that Diŋkaha made to one of his ancestors. An ambitious and none too scrupulous braggart of considerable intelligence and drive, Diŋkaha had been very useful to me and had made the most of his connexion with me. One of the objects of this ceremony was to show off his friendship with me to his clansmen, and his prestige among them to me. It was, therefore, a specially lavish occasion. In the middle of the ceremony Diŋkaha's father-in-law called in. The old man was respectfully received and ushered into his daughter's rooms. Diŋkaha finished the sacrifice and began to distribute the meat. Various members of his lineage and clan received the portions due to them. And then, intoxicated with conceit at having his white friend in his house and at the obvious appreciation of his stock, in consequence, in the eyes of his clansmen, a rash impulse overcame him. Holding up a goat's foreleg—one of the ritually prescribed portions that should be reserved for those entitled by birth to share in the sacrifice—he launched out into a speech, the gist of which was that he desired his father-in-law to accept it in order to mark this special occasion. A sombre look came upon the old man's face. He was visibly shocked. Speaking gravely but curtly, he refused the gift. *Deenam*, he said, do not sacrifice together; it is an unheard-of thing; he could not accept the gift. Diŋkaha retired in discomfiture behind a smoke-screen of apologies. 602 577

Marriage implies the absence of kinship ties between the parties; kinship, the impossibility of marriage. Kinship ties exist in their own right; *deen* is an artificial alliance of a contractual nature. The parties to a marriage deliberately and voluntarily enter into a bond, the bride's guardian permitting her to marry in return for a promise on the part of the bridegroom's guardian to pay him four head of cattle. Kinship ties are not voluntary and are automatically binding. The parties to a marriage are bound by rights and duties which did not exist before. Kinship automatically entails moral, jural, and ritual bonds, whereas there is an avowed element of mutual coercion, and therefore potential tension, in the relations of in-laws. They rely upon a special, impartial jural instrument, the bride-price, for the adjustment of their rival claims on the woman. 581 602

Tallensi think of *deen* as a relationship for ever fraught with the possibility of conflict over these claims. Nearly all their litigation nowadays, like much inter-clan fighting in former days, concerns bride-price debts or the rival claims over a woman or her children of father-in-law and son-in-law. Such quarrels are incompatible with kinship. They would cut to pieces the solidarity of kinsfolk—that is why, say the Tallensi, kinsfolk do not marry. *Dɔyam*, in short, presupposes some degree of identification of the parties concerned, mutual or common interests, and especially a bond of amity that excludes strife which might fix a permanent gulf between them. 602 578

602 these bonds except by birth. No other ties can wholly supersede them in linking person to person and affiliating individuals to defined social groups.

We have noted, however, that not all genealogical ties have an equal 602 value. Though a person acquires significant social ties through both 611 parents, his agnatic relationships have an outstanding importance; and this is particularly so for a man. For not only is patrilineal descent the vertebral principle of Tale social organization and the vehicle of the continuity and stability of the social structure, but men hold the reins of authority, direct economic life, control the political organization, and are supreme in religious and ceremonial thought and action. From his father a man derives his rights to inherit land and other property, his clan membership and the political rights and ritual obligations that go with it, and his ritual relations with his most important ancestors. A woman does not inherit land or other property of value, nor does she succeed to political or ritual office. But clan membership and the concomitant totemic observances,[1] as well as her ritual allegiance to her patrilineal ancestors, mean a great deal for her social destiny and for her children. In short, paternity is the predominant side of parentage in this conspicuously patriarchal society.

842 Like many other primitive societies, the Tallensi recognize a distinction between physiological paternity and jural paternity—between 848 *genitor* and *pater*, as Radcliffe-Brown puts it. However, the Tallensi feel very strongly that a person's physiological father is his or her right jural father. The assumption is that all the social attributes that come to one from one's father should come from a father who both begot one and recognizes one as his legitimate offspring. Thus there is an inevitable tendency for conflict to arise if a person's physiological and jural paternity do not coincide. Such a person tends to be penalized in respect of his social status, for jural paternity by itself cannot altogether take the place of physiological cum jural paternity.

848 The conflict is least in the case of an adulterine child, who is always accepted as the rightful child of its mother's husband. No difficulties at all arise in the case of a daughter, who marries out of the lineage as soon as she is nubile. An adulterine son has complete and unreserved filial status. He has full rights of inheritance, of succession, and of ritual access to his putative patrilineal ancestors. Nevertheless, the blot on the scutcheon is not without effect. The story of Saɣəbazaa's first-born son, Kologo, illustrates this.

848 Some years before my first visit to Tongo, Kologo had left his father to go and farm near Datok. There seemed to be no adequate motive for ● 578 this in his case. But when Saɣəbazaa died, in 1936, and Kologo as chief mourner had to be summoned for the mortuary rites, I was able to piece together how it had occurred, from guarded hints and veiled comments

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

made by other members of the family and by one of Saɣəbazaa's maternal kinsmen. 848 Kologo, it appeared, was an adulterine child. Saɣəbazaa could never forget this, though it was not a thing that was ever mentioned 578 in public. A man of strong principles, inclined in any case to keep a firm hand on his children, Saɣəbazaa was often over-severe with Kologo. The tension admitted by custom to exist between a man and his first-born son was exacerbated. At length Kologo deliberately violated—or so Saɣəbazaa said—the Namoo taboos of a first-born son; and Saɣəbazaa thereupon cursed him and expelled him from the house. It was evident from the remarks which gave the clue to the story that the seed of discord here was Kologo's physical paternity, though it did not affect his rights to inherit his father's property and ancestral shrines.

This kind of psychological friction is said not to occur in the special 837 case of a child begotten in permitted extra-marital intercourse, which the Tallensi do not regard as adultery (*pɔɣambon*). A man who is sterile or impotent may allow his wife to conceive by another man. The proper way to do this is for him to inform the elders of his lineage first. With their blessing and consent he may give his wife permission to find a lover wherever she wishes—'*u gɔma, nye puur, ɔn nye Moog ni Zaŋbiog ɔn nyɛbma*—let her walk about to get a belly; if she meets a Mossi man or a Hausa man (i.e. any passer-by) let her copulate'—is the traditional formula with which he sets her free to be promiscuous, if she chooses, in order to become pregnant. Sensible men and women prefer a more reputable procedure, however. Either the husband asks a friend or kinsman not of his own clan to deputize for him sexually, or he lets the wife choose one of her own distant clan-brothers as a lover. This man is then formally deputed (*galəh*) to be the woman's lover by being presented to the lineage elders, who sacrifice a fowl on his behalf to the lineage ancestors, with an explanation of the circumstances and pleas for a blessing on the affair. The arrangement, though formal, is strictly private, for no man willingly admits to sterility or sexual incapacity; and when, as inevitably happens, it leaks out, public opinion is sympathetic rather than contemptuous. Tallensi say that such cases of begetting a child by proxy do not occur very often.

While I was in Taleland, Baŋam-Teroog's junior wife had a child by a deputed lover. Teroog was an old man, shrivelled and half-blind with age. He once begged me for medicine to restore his fertility, but admitted with regret that he was probably too old for procreation. He deputed his closest friend and distant sister's son, Naabdiya, to beget a child for him. The liaison continued throughout the woman's pregnancy, but ceased as soon as her child was born. I often saw Teroog with this baby, fondling and caressing it with a tenderness that showed more eloquently than words that he regarded it as his own child. Naabdiya, for his part, though his relations with Teroog were as cordial as ever, took no more interest in the infant than any man might take in

never undertakes anything of importance without consulting Yikpɛmdaan; Yikpɛmdaan need never be in want of a sheep or goat to sacrifice if there are sheep and goats in Tinta'aləm's house. If any member of the lineage segment of which Tinta'aləm is the head gets into difficulty, he goes at once to Yikpɛmdaan for counsel and help. 602

A more telling case is that of Lɔɣani and Gai. They belong to different segments of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra.[1] Many years ago Gai quarrelled with the elders of the maximal lineage over the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar*. The Yakɔra Tɛndaana of the time took an oath binding all the people of Yakɔra to have nothing to do with Gai in jural and ritual matters until he apologized and a ritual reconciliation was made. Gai and his family keep aloof from all corporate activities of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. He has obstinately rejected several indirect advances made to him suggesting a reconciliation. One day there was a funeral at Gai's house, and I called to see how a man who is virtually ostracized by his clan would manage an affair that is usually a corporate activity of the whole clan. Finding no other Yakɔra people at the funeral, I went round to Lɔɣani's house afterwards. We discussed Gai and his affairs; and Lɔɣani, with that blunt candour that has won him general esteem, told me the whole story. Gai's conduct, Lɔɣani concluded, was specially distressing to him. 'For', said he, with a trace of bitterness, 'Gai is my *soog*. I should be the one to go to his help immediately and to support him in all his troubles. But if I did, would not the people of Zubiuŋ say that I was breaking faith? Would I not be rejecting the oath of the late (Yakɔra) Tɛndaana? And so I can do nothing.' 602 626 578

In this case Lɔɣani's position of influence and responsibility in the maximal lineage compels him to put the interests of lineage unity before those of his *soog*, and Gai's obduracy makes it more difficult for him to compromise. The case of Ɔndieso and Nɛna'ab, who are also *saarət* belonging to different segments of the same maximal lineage, is more usual. They 'borrow (*pɛŋ*)' things from each other on the same principle as do members of an expanded family. Normally, if a man borrows something from a member of a lineage segment other than his own, it is a debt that must be repaid in due course. Eight or nine years ago, Ɔndieso borrowed a goat from Nɛna'ab's son. No request was ever made for repayment; but about three years later, Nɛna'ab borrowed three shillings from Ɔndieso; and this was tacitly understood, by both, to have cancelled the debt of the goat. In 1936 an ancient quarrel between Ɔndieso's segment and Nɛna'ab's segment that had been dormant for years flared up again owing to a dispute over the inheritance of a widow. For some months the two segments were completely estranged, the more so as the head of Nɛna'ab's segment had taken the dispute to the chief and so brought the slur of publicity on the head of Ɔndieso's segment. Just then there was a death in Nɛna'ab's family; 602 578 [426]

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi, passim.

602 and Ɔndieso was one of the first to come to the help of his *soog* in his
● 578 sorrow. The other members of Ɔndieso's segment demonstratively remained away.

602 Other ties of matrilateral kinship also create bonds of personal attachment between members of the same maximal lineage, but none is so effective as that of uterine kinship.

The Dispersion of Uterine Kin

602 The majority of a person's uterine kin are, however, dispersed among
582 other clans than his own. This is a natural result of the rule of clan exogamy. But Tallensi, as we shall see later,[1] tend to marry into nearby
591 clans rather than into distant clans. A woman of clan A marries into the adjacent clan B; her daughters marry into the next clans C and D; their daughters marry into clans E and F; and so the process goes on. The result is, firstly, that with the passage of the generations the uterine line becomes more and more dispersed; and secondly, that any person's genealogically nearest uterine kin are also, generally, his spatially nearest uterine kin. In practice, it is these near *saarət* whom he knows and knows of; it is they who are concerned in witchcraft accusations or *tyuk* guilt. His more distant *saarət*—distant in both the genealogical sense and in residence—are often unknown to him. The main reason for this is that uterine kinship remains effective only through personal contact. The children of sisters know one another because their mothers have kept in touch, visited one another, and often helped one another all their lives. Similarly, the uterine grandchildren of sisters know one another, if they live near one another, because their mothers have kept in touch, though not so faithfully as true siblings. Often these contacts are maintained into the fourth generation of a woman's uterine descendants; rarely beyond the fourth generation; and a person does not, as a rule, know all his or her *saarət* whose link with him or her is a common great-grandmother. Some of them will, as likely as not, be Gɔrisi or Namnam and he will not even know of their existence.

602 In principle, however, uterine kinship is never extinguished, and it often happens that people of different clans, who are strangers to one
[769] another, discover by chance that they are distant *saarət*. Supposing, for instance, a man proposes to make an important sacrifice to a lineage ancestor. His agnatic co-descendants of this ancestor are bound to be present; but he will also send to tell the cognatic descendants through women of that ancestor and some of them will come. Two men of different clans may be present who now discover, for the first time, that they are cognatically related through the lineage of their host. They trace out their genealogical connexion (*tumh dɔyam*) and find that they are distant *saarət*. I have seen this happen more than once, and the delight of the men concerned was a vivid testimony to the meaning

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI.

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over. Such reciprocal gifts pass between kinsmen of all categories. 476
But the giving is specially generous and cordial between *soog* kin. 431

In keeping with the unrestricted range of cognatic kinship among the Tallensi, the close ties of kinship between male *saarət* are extended to 602 their children and sometimes to their grandchildren. With men whose fathers were *saarət*, whether they belong to the same clan or not, the formal ties of kinship are often mellowed by the affection and trust of a friendship like that of their fathers. This is rarer with grandsons of male *saarət*, but not unknown. I have seen a man break down with grief over the death of a clansman who was his father's *soog*'s son. He would have felt no sense of personal loss at all if this extra bond had not existed between him and his dead clansman. Again, there was Tiezien of Kpata'ar's lifelong friendship with his father's *soog*'s son at Zuarungu—a friendship which would not normally have arisen between a Taləŋ and a Gorəŋ living eight miles apart.

A link of uterine kinship is often used to define the relations of 602 individuals who are not themselves directly related by kinship. A typical case that shows how far the classificatory principle can be pressed, if 582 there is a *soog* link in the chain of relationships connecting two people, is the following. Zaawɔmya of Bunkiuk began courting the young widow of a Wakii man. But in the course of making inquiries he discovered that the girl's late husband's father's mother and his own mother had been distant *saarət*. Zaawɔmya concluded, therefore, that the girl's late husband's father would have stood to him in the relationship of an 'older brother' (*bier*), since he would have called the latter's mother his 'mother' (*ma*). Hence the girl's husband would have been his 'son' (*bii*) and the girl herself his 'daughter-in-law' (*sampɔɣa*). 'Well just think of it', he said to me, when he told me the story, 'how can a man marry his daughter-in-law? So I gave it up.' When Mansami, Ɔmara's own father's brother's son ran away with the wife [578] ● of Ɔmara's father's *soog*'s son at Dkoog, there was a bitter quarrel between them. Ɔmara accused Mansami of disgracing his (Ɔmara's) kinship ties and ordered him either to give up the girl or leave the homestead. Mansami, obstinately insisting that he and the girl's husband were not related, made this the pretext for keeping her and went off to stay with his mother's brother. Such roundabout connexions through a *soog* link are often exploited for ulterior motives. A common trick of fathers who object to a daughter's marrying a particular man is to allege a remote kinship tie of this sort between the girl and her suitor. The latter and his family head may be sceptical of the alleged evidence for this but they can do nothing about it.

volume.[1] The granary symbolizes all the sentiments and ideas, the 343 apprehensions and joys which the struggle for food evokes in Taleland. 181 It stands for the security of the domestic unit in this struggle. In the organization of the household its importance comes from the fact that 592 it is the focus of the economic cohesion and stability of the domestic group. Into it goes the product of the joint labour of the household, from it comes their sustenance. In filling the granary and in the consumption of its contents, the labour of men, women, and children is [578] ● equally essential, and the rights of all equally valid. When a joint family splits up, the commonest pretext is friction over grain supplies. The family which hives off does so on the ground that it needs its own, independent food-supply. 'They have each his own granary (*ba mara ba buur ba buur*)', is the formula summing up the economic relations of brothers occupying a single homestead but having separate households.

The granary belongs to the head of the house, the *yirdaana*. No one 592 may enter it without his authorization, least of all his wife. A devoted and trusted wife may be allowed to descend (*sig*) into it to issue the grain 343 (*loo ki*) for cooking if there is no suitable male within reach—Tale conventions are not rigidly complied with if doing so involves excessive and absurd inconvenience. But it would be scandalous if she did so on her own initiative. The contents of the granary are formally the property of the head of the household, to be distributed at his discretion. There is no other place in the homestead which is so rigorously private to him. Besides the grain for current consumption, he stores the seed for next year's crop there. He hides a particularly cherished object, or money which he wants to conceal from other members of the family, in his granary, secure in the knowledge that no one will dare to tamper with it there.

The *zɔŋ* enshrines—in both the physical and the ideal sense of this 343 concept—the notion of the continuity of the lineage; the *buur* stands for the social personality of the *yirdaana*, as the centre of an independent 181 domestic family, its economic fulcrum, its jural and ritual head, controller and representative. The position of the granary in the architectural pattern of the homestead corresponds to that of the head of the house in the structure of the family, as the unique link between its parts and the source of its unity.

Tallensi say that a man's soul (*sii*) is in his granary. Using the same phrase one says of a person, '*n siig mbɛ u ni*—my soul is in [drawn towards] him', meaning that one feels a special affinity with him. Among the Namoos the identification of a man with his granary is symbolized explicitly in the taboos that his first-born children have to observe.[2] A man's granary, his cap and tunic, his bow and quiver,

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1937.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. v.

or adolescent son. The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* also serve as a sort of drawing-room. 343
A guest who must be treated with respect is invited to step 592
round to the kitchen to have his meal there in private, a suitor is told to go round to the girl's mother's kitchen to plead his suit with her.

The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* are the counterpart in the social sphere of 576
a woman of the *zɔŋ*, cattle yard (*sapak*), and granary (*buur*) in that of
a man. They mark off the economic field reserved for her and the social 592
sphere in which she is supreme. Etiquette and convention show this, and, as in the case of the *zɔŋ* and the *buur*, ritual notions give expression to it and put the seal of mystical value on it. Women do not have ancestor shrines of their own. But in her storeroom an old woman keeps her *zaalɔŋ*. This is a long rope net, holding a neat pile of polished calabash dishes (*ŋman*) of all sizes which she has accumulated during her married life. One of these is her *kumpiog*, 'basket of death'. It is the symbol of her mortal existence.[1] When she dies it stands in her *dendɔŋo* and is eventually taken, with the most meticulous ceremonial care, to her eldest surviving daughter. In this room also she keeps her main storage pot (*dɔk*). It is to her what a man's granary is to him. One sign of this is the rule that her first-born daughter may never, in the mother's lifetime, open it. She does so ritually when her mother's funeral is completed.[2]

Lastly, there is the grinding-room (*neer*), a vastly important item in 343
the organization of the domestic economy, and in the personal relations
of the women of a family with one another. It is always a small, low 592
room, 3 or 4 feet in diameter, with a doorway barely large enough to admit a person on hands and knees. A hole under the eaves, the size of a soup plate, lets in a glimmer of light. A waist-high table built of mud, in the hollow surface of which two nether grindstones are embedded, takes up most of the interior. In a small homestead like Ɔndieso's one *neer* is enough, and his mother and wife share it, though the older woman seldom has occasion to use it as her daughter-in-law does most of the cooking for the family. If there are several women in
a household, more than one grinding-room is needed. One reason for [252]
this is purely mechanical. Grinding the grain for the main meal, in the evening, takes at least an hour, in the period of plenty. The women and girls do this at any time of the day, but prefer to do it in the afternoon.
Thus more than one woman may want to use the *neer* at the same time. 343
But there is another reason as well. Co-wives are apt to squabble over
the use of the grinding-room, especially if they do not get on harmoni- 592

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[1] The calabash is the commonest domestic utensil and it symbolizes a woman 578
in many contexts. For instance, when a man's wife bears a child he will send to tell her parents; and the messenger reports, with the euphemism the Tallensi always resort to on such occasions, that the woman has born 'a calabash' (*ŋman*) if it is a girl, or a 'staff' (*duor*) if it is a boy—the staff being a hunting-weapon carried by men.

[2] Cf. Ch. VIII below.

343 ously, for it is connected with that precise equality of grain rations to
592 which co-wives are entitled and about which they are extremely touchy.
578 To obviate these squabbles, which sometimes kindle suppressed antagonisms into serious quarrels, a man usually provides a separate grinding-room for a wife with a fractious disposition.

592 In a large and well-ordered house there is a great deal of free and easy communication between the different *dugɔt.* Children in particular go about freely from one woman's quarters (*dug*) to another's, since they are related to all by actual or derived filial ties. The men, too, are free of all the *dugɔt*, for the women are all either their 'mothers' (*manam*)—own mothers, or fathers' other wives, their wives (*pɔɣaba*)—own wives or brothers' wives, or daughters-in-law (*sampɔɣaba*)—own sons' or brothers' sons' wives. Men and their children, members of the same lineage, are the 'owners' of the homestead. They have determinate rights, duties, and sentiments towards all the women. The women are more circumspect, especially about the *dug* of a co-wife (*nentaa*) or husband's mother (*daŋaampɔk*) if their personal relations are not too cordial; for their social inter-relations are indirect and contingent on their marital ties, unless, as sometimes happens, they belong to the same or to linked clans and have, in consequence, a direct bond of solidarity. In spite of this, the general impression left by a visit to a large house is one of friendly co-operation unsullied by jealous distinctions.

The natives themselves have no illusions on this score. They do not take it for granted that all the women of a family will get on well with one another. They recognize clearly that the spatial differentiation of each *dug* in a house corresponds to its structural differentiation; and with this goes a certain degree of domestic privacy and a differentiation of sentiment and of emotional attachments that may become a source of friction. The *dug* (that is, a woman and her children by one man) constitutes the irreducible unit of Tale social structure, both jurally and morally, held together by the strongest social and emotional bonds conceivable to the Tallensi. The *dug* is the Talɔŋ's conceptual model of infrangible solidarity, and his emotional symbol of unstinted nourishment, of complete security, and of parental devotion. It is the prototype, also, of the closely integrated matri-segment within the formally unified patrilineal lineage, as has been shown in our previous volume.[1]

In general, as the foregoing suggests, a man has no room of his own. He keeps his personal belongings in his wife's *dug* and eats and sleeps there, or in his various wives' rooms in turn, if he has more than one. Chiefs, old men, and rich men sometimes have rooms of their own, usually in their senior wives' *dɛndɔma*, where they keep their more bulky personal belongings and to which they can retire if they want privacy. The Gɔlibdaana and the Gorogo Yikpɛmdaana, as we have seen, make an exaggerated display of their private rooms. But as a matter of fact, homestead accompanied often by the family head's old mother. This is the usual history of the independent elementary family in Taleland; and about 1 in 8 of the domestic families of our sample have this constitution. Often, however, when a man secedes from the joint family he already has more than one wife, though his children are all still under marriageable age. Polygynous domestic families of this class occur in about the same proportion—1 in 8—in the sample. And thus the cycle begins again. As the children grow up and marry, each fraction of the dismembered joint family evolves into a new joint family, or at least has the possibility of doing so. 59b

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

A joint family splits up—into family segments, be it noted, not into a number of dispersed individuals—if it has existed long enough to have reached an advanced stage of internal differentiation; but during its existence it is a remarkably cohesive unit. The fissiparous tendencies inherent in its structure are kept well in check until the pressure of economic needs, psychological friction, or a radical alteration in the constellation of the social relations, such as occurs when the family head dies, makes them irresistible. The split follows the lines of cleavage inherent in the structure of the effective minimal lineage on which a particular joint family is founded, and it takes place by stages.

We shall study the process of fission in the joint family later. Here only the results concern us. The simplest split occurs when the oldest son of the family head 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)',[1] or 'cuts his own gateway (*bit u zanɔr*)' in the family homestead, during his father's lifetime. He thus sets up an independent household, though perhaps living in a semi-detached part of the paternal homestead. But when the old man dies, he frequently returns to the parental home, and the joint family is reconstituted under his authority.

Permanent fission usually occurs between brothers (full, or half-brothers, or paternal cousins), or by the secession of the family head's deceased brother's sons. It begins, and may persist until the family head's death, as a purely economic division. Thus two full (*soog*) brothers—the older being the family head—may decide to farm independently because the growing economic wants of their respective families no longer permit them to maintain a common household. The bond of full brotherhood (*soog*) inhibits further fission altogether, or until such time as both men have adult children. Until then they generally continue to occupy the same homestead, using a single common gateway, cattle-yard (*sapak*), and *zɔŋ*. Their respective sections of the

people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, 828 they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships. 156 People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experiences, his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew 123 intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees in families like those of Kutɔbis of Tɔŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of Tɔŋ-Puhug.

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[1] The intra-family tensions which lead to the 'going out' of the eldest son will be discussed later. They are rationalized, and the secession of the eldest son is given a mystical sanction by the taboo which, among the Namoos, forbids a man ever meeting his first-born adult son face to face in his gateway after the latter has a family of adolescent children. Non-Namoos do not have the taboo, but the beliefs expressed in it are as strong among them as among the Namoos. Cf. below, Ch. VIII. [578 784]

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but 596 there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevitable, some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the 156 structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain 578 dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas an erratic man like Kutɔbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor in the cycle of changes that a family passes through.

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life 602 of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance, and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of [432] Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1] Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by [578] inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of.

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of 578 competition both between individuals and between corporate groups. This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction 583 of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests.

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict 691 between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with 185 wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing 578 for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter.

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much 581 scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, 595 whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally 622 prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial cere-
mony. Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tɛnzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live,
expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

members of two mutually exclusive corporate groups. That is why the 602
lineages of husband and wife are implicated in the marriage and have a lasting interest in its course and in the offspring that come from it. Tale speech and etiquette reveal this, and the classificatory extension of affinal kinship depends on this. Thus if your friend's son or daughter has recently married, you do not ask him 'Whom did he (she) marry?', but 'Where (i.e. which clan) did he (she) marry?', and 'A child of whose house (i.e. what segment of the clan) did he (she) marry?'. We shall take up this thread again at a later stage of our analysis. At present we are concerned with the consequences for the relations of husband and wife of their divergent lineage ties.

The tension due to these opposing sets of social ties appears most 578
acutely in the early stages of marriage, obviously as a result of the fact
that marriage is an alliance between two genealogically independent 582
corporate units with rival interests in the protagonists. Every marriage in which the husband is a young man begins as a struggle, carried on with many wiles, stratagems, pretexts, and even threats of or recourse to force. Firstly, the suitor has to compete with other young men whom his would-be bride and in-laws often play off astutely against him. The largest part of his courtship consists in winning over the girl's parents with frequent presents and soft words. To elope with her he must buy the secret connivance of her mother or brother, for her father will always stand out for a negotiated marriage. This is not only an acknowledgement of the father's right to dispose of his daughter's hand, but a guarantee of the consent of the bridegroom's guardian and lineage elders and hence of the payment of the bride-price on demand. It is a defeat for the bridegroom, who has to bow to the will of his father-in-law.

The real struggle begins, however, only after a man succeeds in 578
carrying off his bride by elopement. If the elders on both sides tacitly
accept the match as a good one, it becomes a matter of mere formality; 602
but all the conventions of the jural transactions necessary to make a 628
legitimate marriage are couched in the idiom of a struggle between hostile groups. That is why they must take place through an intermediary, the *pɔyasama*, a clansman of the bridegroom and a cognatic kinsman of the bride, bound to hold an even balance between the two parties by reason of his kinship with both.[1] But often enough the struggle turns into a genuine and sometimes acrimonious battle for the girl which may go on for weeks or months. It is then that the lack of a constituted legal system in Tale political organization makes itself felt. The girl's father resorts to all sorts of devices to coerce her abductors. He may use ritual pretexts, exploit ties of cognatic kinship with the abductors' lineage or clan, even, in extremity, threaten to kill himself on their doorstep, or, in the old days, to stir up war against their clan. I have been present at several violent altercations between a party of men

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[1] Cf. pp. 317–18 below.

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's
lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
602 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
627 for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle
with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It
is not until the formal placation gift (*sendaan*) is sent to the girl's father
with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not
until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace
appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

675 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument
by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
583 marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights
over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from
her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role
as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to
her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
576 maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her
husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young
man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon
him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan.
The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
574 desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
593 parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority.
Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her
parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is
not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for
her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return
to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young
wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as
we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two,
though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives
[837] run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for
the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against
the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes,
for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if
she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty
to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law,
his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side
with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of
marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

hidden struggle between her husband and her father-in-law. Though 606
she is in the position of a daughter to her parents-in-law, she cannot feel for them nor they for her the love and devotion that moderate the strictness of parental authority and give a tone of easy-going friendliness to the normal intercourse of parents and children. One side of the parent-child relationship, the authority of parents over their children, looms foremost for her. The cleavage between successive generations and the tension that holds them apart, are underlined at the expense of the mutual devotion and identification of parents and children.

Parents-in-law, for their part, have ambivalent feelings towards their 606
daughter-in-law. Behind their ostensible pride and pleasure in their son's marriage lurks the shadow of resentment. A man realizes that his 578
son's marriage is the first step in his eventual emancipation. It is the seed from which grow responsibilities and interests that compete with those he owes to his natal family and threaten his loyalties to them. A woman sees in her son's marriage a sign that her reproductive life is over. Tallensi hold that it is improper, and to some extent mystically [843]
dangerous, for mother-in-law and daughter-in-law to bear at the same time. Hence parents often, though covertly, try to prevent a first son marrying young, or else, in self-defence, display exaggerated conceit at a son's early marriage. Only the coming of grandchildren, coinciding as it does with the habituation of the daughter-in-law to her conjugal family, and itself a distinction inspiring great pride and joy in the grandparents, compensates for the renunciations implicitly required of a man's parents when he takes a wife.

Inevitably, therefore, there is an element of tension in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. The fact that the daughter-in-law is under the power of her husband's family, particularly of her father-in-law, and that they are formally, if not openly, opposed to her paternal family, to which, however, she is still attached by the strongest ties of duty and sentiment, may add to the strain. It may be quite superficial in a well-regulated family or in the case of an approved marriage, apparent only in the conventions of speech and etiquette. In an ill-managed family, or if there is opposition to the marriage, it often comes out openly. Parents-in-law complain of their daughter-in-law's manners or actions, or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law have petty squabbles. As time passes the strain is mitigated with the gradual absorption of the daughter-in-law into her conjugal family. It is never wholly erased. Even in so well organized a family as Ɔmara's, there was a standing feud between his younger wives and his mother. The old woman, half-sunk in the hebetude of senility, complained ceaselessly of the neglect of her daughters-in-law; and they often quarrelled with her vehemently on account of what they regarded as her exorbitant demands on their firewood, their labour, and their food-supply.

The conventions of behaviour followed by parents-in-law and daugh-

606 •578 ter-in-law towards one another, and the terminology of address associated with them, put a protective fence between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. 'My mother', or 'my father', in this context means 'a person to whom I owe punctilious respect'. The relation is one of reciprocal respect, because it is based on something in the nature of a contract. The daughter-in-law's attitude is an exaggeration of one aspect of filial respect towards the parents. This aspect is more prominent in kinship relations outside the focal field and in ceremonial relations patterned on, but structurally different from, true parent-child relations, than in the latter. It is reminiscent of the behaviour of his clansmen to a chief or tɛndaana on formal occasions, when his symbolic position as father (*ba*) of the clan is most apparent.

Naturally the barrier between father-in-law and daughter-in-law is stricter than between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law owing to the difference of sex, though it is not obvious to an outsider. Once she is accepted, a man usually treats his daughter-in-law with kindness and affability. In public he treats her with a familiar friendliness, in the same way as if she were his daughter. But whereas he scolds his daughter without hesitation, he does not scold or criticize his daughter-in-law directly. It would offend and hurt her, and upset their amicable relations. The barrier between them—and this applies in a lesser degree to the mother-in-law too—can be maintained only on the basis of mutual courtesy and affability. Where the barrier is most sharply emphasized is not in their public intercourse but in their relations as
[835] members of opposite sexes. For a man to have sexual relations with, or even sit on the same mat as, his daughter-in-law is a sin of the first magnitude. '*Dɛn n-kih pam!* (that is an extreme taboo)', say the natives, with every sign of repugnance. It is a sin that can never be wholly atoned for. Sooner or later the culprits will be slain by the ancestor spirits; for, like incest with a father's wife of which it is the counterpart, it destroys irreparably the moral and religious bonds of father and son. I heard of an old man who died some years ago who used to have his daughters-in-law sit on his lap, and 'play' with them. This, my informants said scoffingly, was just the ill manners of an old dotard. But Gunyaam's seduction of his daughter-in-law was revealed to me with bated breath. It was no wonder, my informant said, that he died soon after, and that misfortunes crowded on his family.

The relations of daughter-in-law to parents-in-law are well summed up in the statement always made by Tallensi if they are asked for an explanation of the terminology of address used between these relatives. They say: 'We stand in awe of them (parents-in-law or daughters-in-law)', (*ti zootbame*, lit. 'we fear them').[1]

601 [1] This terminology of address is of considerable theoretical interest. Rattray (op. cit., p. 6) attributes the custom of addressing a daughter-in-law as 'mother' (customary also amongst the Gɔrisi, Namnam, and other peoples adjacent to

family head, she does so as a privileged spectator. She has this privilege 593
because her welfare is bound up with that of her husband and children,
and theirs with hers. She remains outside the religious and moral 769
solidarity of her husband's clan and maximal lineage, and, indeed, has only a contingent interest in the solidarity of his minimal lineage. It is noteworthy that women, both daughters and wives, are excluded from the esoteric ritual activities in which the moral sanctions of the unity and continuity of lineage and clan are embodied. In religious, jural, 593
and political matters—all of which are closely interconnected—Tale
women have the status of minors. This exclusion is most stringent in 562
the case of the Earth cult and the cult of the lineage *bɔɣar*. But the segregation is not so rigid as to keep women in entire ignorance of or wholly disinterested in these male monopolies. Their welfare depends upon the propitious outcome of these activities as much as that of their menfolk. They see, hear, and discuss among themselves and with their menfolk ritual affairs and jural actions that concern their husbands' lineages of which, indeed, wives and children often form the main subject. They grind the flour, brew the beer, and witness the preparations for esoteric religious rites. They see the public and semi-public phases of big religious ceremonies and overhear the endless consultations and discussions between the men which these ceremonies always produce. 593

A wife, therefore, can be in sympathy with the interests and can respect
the values that rule the actions of her husband and her sons as members 578 ●
of their agnatic descent group, while being herself excluded from an 787
effective public role in relation to them. But a cleavage remains. Thus in a conflict between her husband's clan and her father's clan she might very well take the side of the latter, not openly, it is true, but covertly. How strongly the natives feel this was shown at the divination ceremony following the death of Siiyɛlib of Tɔŋ-Seug. This divination was so cryptic and involved that I could make no sense of it. Fortunately I was able to get an explanation from one of my most trustworthy informants, a close agnate of the dead man. Siiyɛlib's death, it appeared, was a mystical retribution for a grave sin he had committed many years before. He had been one of the instigators of the white man's attack on the Hill Talis, and was an accessory, therefore, to the slaughter of many men. Now there were several Talis present at the funeral—kinsmen, affines, and, last but not least, wives of the dead man and his close agnates. If Siiyɛlib's sin were publicly brought out in the divination it would stir up all their hostile feelings. They would feel resentful towards Siiyɛlib's surviving agnates on account of his complicity in the destruction of their fathers and grandfathers. And this would produce strife between the men of Seug and their Talis wives, their Talis cognates, and their Talis affines.

The social and psychological cleavage which underlies all the rela- 593
tions of husband and wife is the structural kernel around which the 578

593 basic dichotomy of *dug* and *yir* crystallizes. The comradeship which
● 578 grows up gradually between husband and wife with the lapse of time is the obverse, paradoxical as it may seem, of a process of gradual emancipation of the wife. As her children grow up, the centre of gravity of her life shifts more and more to them and away from her husband. If she has a grown-up son, her interests and emotions become centred more and more on him and his family by marriage. They constitute her *dug*, in which she is secure, honoured, and titularly, if not effectively, supreme. It is her son and grandson who will honour her spirit and commemorate her in worship after her death. Her son has become the effective breadwinner, and she looks to him for sustenance. If a young woman loses her husband, her grief is aggravated because she realizes that she has lost the head and pivot of her young family and must face uprooting and readjustment to a new partner. An old woman mourns the death of her husband greatly, too, but her grief is mitigated, if she
888 has a son, by her feeling of security and of fulfilment. The death of an adult son, especially an only son, is an irreparable tragedy to her.

593 Thus it happens that a woman who has been twice married often lives, in her old age, with the oldest son of her first marriage, rather than with her husband. This was the case with Tiezien's old wife, Naaho; and the reason Tiezien and Naaho's son, Nyaaŋzum, gave for this brings out a point of the first importance. Laughing, they said, 'She is no use any longer as a wife, she can't cook; and she has no vulva now (*u le ka pɛn yaha*)—that is, her reproductive powers are finished. And they laid special stress on the last point.

A woman attains her fullest freedom in the family when she ceases to have sexual value, that is, from the native point of view, when she ceases to be reproductive.

The Sexual Relationship in Marriage

831 The sexual relationship is the corner-stone of Tale marriage. At first sight this is puzzling to the observer, for the Tallensi have a thoroughly
836 matter-of-fact attitude about sex. They regard sex as a normal and natural appetite. Any aspect of the generative functions can be discussed without circumlocution in the presence of men, women, or children. A young woman, or a girl, may show signs of shyness or coyness, but no one ever shows any real embarrassment. Bawdy or salacious talk about sex is common amongst men; very rarely does it verge on the obscene. The Tallensi take it for granted that children will indulge in sexual play, and attach no value to prenuptial chastity. In the ritual of the Arrow Medicine (*Peentee*) for protection in war, the services of a virgin boy and virgin girl are required. These children are bound to the medicine by a taboo of chastity in early childhood; but they are released as soon as they approach puberty; for by that time, the natives say, they cannot be expected to resist sexual temptation. Tallensi say

593 426 which, it is tacitly understood, his wife will one day make good. Often such debts between spouses are straightened out by mutual borrowings, tacitly understood to cancel one another. Very often, however, a man has to cajole his wife with definite promises to repay before she will lend him her property. But the natives are emphatic about one point: that all such transactions belong to the give and take of marital co-operation and solidarity. It is one of the ways in which a woman stands by her husband and a man by his wife.

The Husband's Authority over his Wife

593 ●578 As might well be expected, these rights and duties of spouse to spouse do not rest on anything in the nature of a formal compact. There is no jural machinery or sanction by means of which a husband or wife can be compelled to perform his or her duties to his or her partner. A man can, and sometimes does, chastise his wife for incorrigible laziness, disobedience, or a misdemeanour detrimental to the unity of the family. He does it usually in a fit of anger or exasperation, as one would strike a child, and not as a deliberate punishment. For though Tallensi think that such disciplinary measures are right and necessary sometimes (women being kittle cattle, who will not always listen to reason), they consider them to be a regrettable and undignified necessity not entirely in keeping with the relationship of marriage, and at bottom repugnant to a self-respecting man. That is why when a quarrel between husband and wife ends in blows, neighbours hearing the commotion rush in to separate the pair and calm the enraged husband. 'I often scold my wives', said a Tale friend to me, after a heated argument with one of them, 'but I have never, as I sit here, lifted a hand to them. How could I thrash my wife, seeing that she gave up her father and her mother to come and marry me?' To beat a wife, in short, shows a poor appreciation of her.

Women admit the right of a man to strike his wife, and they see it as a feature of the authority over her conferred on him by marriage. But in fact, cases of wife-beating are far from common. Judging by the cases I have heard of, they are least likely to occur at the two extremes of the marriage cycle. A young man fears that he may lose his wife if he beats her; an older man, as the statement quoted above shows, with a wife of long standing, feels that it is incompatible with their mutual trust and comradeship.

593 627 A woman will not, as a rule, bear a grudge for blows struck under provocation. But if she is excessively, or, in her opinion, unjustifiably thrashed, she will run away from her husband. She may go off with another man; or she may return to her father or brother, who, if he is a self-respecting man, will take her part and refuse to give her up until her husband apologizes and promises better behaviour in future. In any case, it is a troublesome affair for the husband. It is worth noting, also, that in her conjugal family only a woman's husband has the right

593 627 [606] to strike her. Her parents-in-law, for instance, despite their authority over her, would not do so. If anything, they would try to restrain their son from beating her. Only her husband has that combination of authority and intimacy in relation to her which permits the use of physical force upon her.

593 461 578 But flight is not the only weapon a woman has in order to maintain her rights and privileges in her conjugal family. Once she is fairly free from the leading strings of her mother-in-law, she is the mistress of her time and energies. It is an accepted axiom of married life, which no man questions, that a wife is free to dispose of her time as she pleases, provided she does not hamper the essential economic activities of the household, or neglect her children, or remain away from home for unwarrantable periods or at times—e.g. during the Great Festivals—when all the members of the family should be together. The routine of domestic tasks, over which men have no control, is a strong line of defence against the interference of men in their wives' disposal of their time. But differences of opinion on this matter are a common cause of squabbles between husband and wife. A young woman dresses up to go to market; her husband objects, saying that other men will be paying court to her there, or that the children will be left hungry all day; she insists; and a heated argument ensues. Nine times out of ten the woman has her way. Occasionally the husband succeeds in stopping her, by persuasion or by force. It is only at sowing or harvest time, or when, for instance, preparations for an important ceremony are in hand, that a man has full control over his wife's time.

At all times a wife's freedom to arrange her work and her leisure as best suits her may subject her husband to inconvenience. If, at the end of the day, she is too preoccupied or too tired to cook, he can but grumble and go hungry. And if he annoys her she can make a point of being too busy to attend to some want of his or too tired to cook the evening meal. This, men say frankly, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of keeping on good terms with one's wife.

593 581 Tallensi regard these utilitarian rights and duties, services and attentions of husband and wife towards each other as a most important feature of marriage. But it is clear that they do not constitute the unique relationship that distinguishes the marriage tie from other social ties of the Tallensi. Thus a woman performs much the same utilitarian services as daughter in her natal home, and as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law in her conjugal home. They are but a part of the whole configuration of co-operation, mutual help, reciprocal services, etiquette, and mutual tolerance that keep the wheels of family life running smoothly. And it is clear, also, that they imply the existence of common interests that create a sense of mutual moral obligation.

This underlying bond of mutual moral obligation is the basic sanction of reciprocity and co-operation in the domestic family. In the case of

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
●[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔyat tried to lay hands on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

581 753 757 A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripeta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripeta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

581 585 587 [837] The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries. She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife, whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

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succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife, and may 581
sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery.
Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that 585
of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was 587
pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried, but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this
soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology) of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of
the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself
with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant
at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy,
he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's
marriage with the woman had never been consummated.

It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with 581
her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by
her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this 585
line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to
use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how
Baŋyɛlib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance
of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning,
as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by
the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She
was helpless, and Baŋyɛlib, who had purposely stayed in the room,
'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told
me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform
his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to
eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told
him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with
humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree.
Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time [842]
in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that
shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to
procreation rather than to gratification.

Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, 595
she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the
support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must 578
divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected
wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say,
somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the
jealousy (*yuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common
husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her
husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on
her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for
him in revenge.

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with 586
genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his 684
wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the 158
sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against 827
the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the 586
others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have 578●
coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his
rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if 833
she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If 684
any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman 581
marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and
even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its 613
members as 'our wives (*ti pɔγaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman 618
trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

readily consents to another daughter's marrying into the same joint 595
family; and this cordiality is easily extended to more distant clansmen on both sides. A Tenzugu man who has a son-in-law at Zubiuŋ with whom his relations are cordial will be pleased to see another daughter marry this son-in-law or one of his close agnates; and if the son-in-law himself or a member of his medial lineage comes to seek the hand of a daughter of the father-in-law's medial lineage, the men of that lineage would be favourably disposed to the suitor.

Another factor favouring successive marriages with women of the same lineage or clan is the preference of the natives for wives from a nearby rather than a distant clan. A man looking for an additional wife tends to turn his eyes first to the same neighbouring settlements in which he formerly sought a wife, and men of the same lineage tend to seek wives in the same settlements, as we shall find.

When co-wives refer to one another as 'sisters' they are using a kinship term in a metaphorical sense to indicate their social equivalence— [601]
that is, their identity of role and status in their conjugal home and settlement. But if they are kin they speak of one another as 'sisters' in a deeper sense. They have a bond of mutual attachment that holds independently of their relations as wives of the same man or the same lineage. As 'sisters' in the kinship sense they help each other more regularly and more altruistically; they share such things as foodstuffs and firewood more readily; they mother each other's children with more devotion and with a greater feeling of common interest in them; they live together more harmoniously, in general, than unrelated co-wives. This is especially true of a woman and a co-wife whom she has 'fetched in' as the term *poyasoog*, literally a *soog* sister wife (that is, a wife who is like a *soog* sister to another wife), suggests. The older woman watches over the younger almost as if she were a younger full sister or her own daughter.

Tallensi take it for granted that co-wives are apt to quarrel. 'Oh yes', 595
both men and women say with a laugh, if they are asked about it, 'co- 578●
wives quarrel—but nevertheless they stay on.' The point is that quarrels between co-wives are taken as a matter of course and do not lead to a wife's desertion. These quarrels may be nothing more than the flaring up of frayed tempers; for among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, people who live so intimately together as the members of a family are prone to fall out over trifles. Or they may be real fights, beginning with taunts and insults and ending with blows. Neighbours, usually men of the husband's lineage, hearing the uproar, may rush in to separate the women, if the husband himself or other men of his family are not on the spot to do so. For there is no one among the women of a household with authority to discipline the others. The senior mistress of the home, whether she is the mother or the senior wife of the owner of the house, ranks above the rest of the women, but has no disciplinary authority over them.

595 •578 According to the natives, quarrels between co-wives are often due to one or other of them having an intractable disposition. Men add that women lack self-control and are very prone to petty jealousy; they are apt to quarrel if they think they are being unfairly treated, if, for instance, one wife seems to receive more than a fair share of her husband's attention. But when actual cases of such quarrels are examined they are seen to be an expression of the tensions springing from the cleavages in the structure of the domestic family. They are temporary disturbances of the balance between the relatively autonomous matri-central *dug* and the inclusive patri-central *yir*. That is why they occur so rarely between women who are related by kinship or clanship, and who therefore think of their *dugət* as subdivisions of a single wider *dug*. Co-wives live in harmony as long as they act in the interests of the common *yir*; dissensions arise between them when they do not accept the paramountcy of the *yir*, and assert their relative autonomy in relation to one another. In the normal run of family life the interests of the common *yir* come first, for the sustenance of the family and the general welfare of all its members depend upon proper co-operation between them, resting on mutual loyalty and goodwill.

595 462 241 The women of the household, both those who are co-wives to one another, and those who are mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or mother and daughter to one another, usually work together harmoniously to perform their share of the productive labour of agriculture. They work under the direction of the head of the house, and the products of their labour accrue to the common food supply. This is a part of the co-operative economic organization of the household. Thus at sowing or harvest time one often sees a whole family working together in the fields. When a sowing party is at work one sees the men striding vigorously ahead, dibbling the holes with their long heavy dibbles cut from saplings, while the women follow behind, chattering and laughing amicably as they sow the grain. And when the harvest is in full swing, one sees similar cheerful family parties out on the field or homeward bound at dusk in Indian file, the men in front, perhaps carrying their pear-shaped wicker coops in which they have collected a brood of chickens that had been allowed to run in the fields during the day, the women sauntering close behind them, the heavy baskets of grain on their heads, and small boys and girls gambolling in the rear blowing [534] their whistles and shaking their rattles (*kiŋkayah*) of serrated calabash disks.

595 The independence of the *dug* comes out in the utilization of the food-supply. As the women have to supply the vegetables for cooking the relish which the natives regard as an indispensable accompaniment to their heavy porridge, each woman who has her own *dug* is entitled to a vegetable patch beside the wall of the homestead. Except for the senior woman of the house, who has a slightly larger vegetable patch

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest 736
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had
their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside
extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get
the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her chil- 602
dren from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for
the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to
co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives.
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her 595
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past. So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*) and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been com- 627
pelled to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

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paternal kin and more strongly by her uterine kin (*saarət*), insist on doing so. If she survived, she and her children and other *soog* kin would never forgive her accuser. There would be chronic friction in the family. If she died, her children and other *soog* kin would still resent the imputation against them and would have a lifelong grievance against her accuser and her children. The accuser would in any case bear the ritual blame, and would be in danger of mystical retribution. Nowadays, to judge by one case that came to my notice, the accused woman and her kin insist on an oath by the *bɔɣar*, usually the *bɔɣar* of the husband's medial lineage. Both women swear to the justice of their case before the *bɔɣar*, and the one who suffers a serious misfortune soonest—a misfortune such as grave sickness or death in her own *dug* of the house—is deemed to be in the wrong. Whatever the outcome, it amounts to one member of the family invoking the *bɔɣar* which watches over the welfare of the whole group to injure another member of the unit; and this is a sacrilege, even if it is done in the name of justice. It must be atoned for by sacrifices to which both women and their husband (or husbands) have to contribute. But the *bɔɣar* is never wholly appeased; it may still bring misfortune on the family for the sacrilege. And, of course, both women and their *soog* kin might continue to harbour resentment. An accusation of witchcraft, itself the symptom of the conflicts latent in the structure of the polygamous family, breeds endless discord.

595 But it must be emphasized that such cases are rare. For the most part women rub along pretty well with their co-wives. In this the senior wife (*pɔɣakpeem*)—seniority being reckoned according to order of marriage—may exercise a great deal of influence, especially if, as is likely, she is older than the others. Though she has no disciplinary authority over her younger co-wives, she has considerable moral authority over them. As her husband's closest confidante among his wives she knows all the affairs of the family and has its interests close at heart. She stands for the common allegiance of the wives to their husband and the family. A wise and tactful senior wife will keep an eye on the household economy and on the children without seeming to interfere with the liberty of her younger co-wives. Looking up to her with respect and affection, her younger co-wives will accept advice and guidance from her that does much to make the routine of family life smooth and pleasant. The fiction that she is the real mistress of the house (*dugdaana*) and that all the children 'belong' to her in a special sense gives her a formal status that makes this easier. If a suitor calls to see a girl of the family he must pay his respects to the senior wife before he goes to greet the girl's own [431] mother. If a woman's son-in-law sends her gifts of sweet potatoes, yams, and guinea-fowls at the time of the Harvest Festival, she will call all her co-wives proudly to see the gifts, and will distribute some of the tubers among them; but in addition the senior wife will receive a guinea-fowl as a mark of special honour. In such ways is the mistress of the

595 house apprised of what is going on in the quarters of the younger women and enabled to exercise benevolent supervision over them.

595 846 Her supervision is of special importance when any of the younger women is confined. She sees to it that mother and child are properly attended, that the rites of confinement and of emergence from seclusion are properly performed, that mother and babe are bathed in the prescribed way, and that the mother is given nourishing food. I was passing Ɔmara's homestead one afternoon, about a fortnight after the birth of a child to one of his wives, and called in. The new baby's mother was just coming out of the gateway with an empty water-pot on her head, and I noticed that she was looking far from well. Ɔmara's senior wife, a woman of sterling character, unsoured even by the leprosy that was rapidly getting a hold on her, was sitting outside in the shade. 'Where are you going to?' asked the older woman. 'To the water-hole,' replied her young co-wife. 'Don't go alone,' said the senior wife, 'I'll come with you'; and she rose to accompany the girl. For the first few weeks after the birth of her child a woman must not go about alone outside the homestead. She is still suffering from 'the dreams of a parturient woman (*pɔɣarɔɣah za'ahug*)'; that is, she is weak and liable to hallucinations or attacks of terror—or, as the natives think of it, to attacks from evil trees and stones—which might drive her mad. That was why the older woman accompanied the young mother. Many such incidents could be quoted in illustration of the concern shown by a senior wife for the welfare of her juniors.

595 [578]● Of course, not all senior wives exercise their role in a wise and unselfish spirit. A woman with an overbearing disposition may make life difficult for her juniors. One result will be that each woman tends to keep strictly to her own *dug* so as to avoid clashing with the senior wife or the other women, and co-operation between co-wives tends to follow the letter of convention rather than the spirit of family unity. Again, there are families in which the senior wife has through age, infirmity, or weakness of character resigned the effective supervision of the household to a younger co-wife, though she still remains the titular senior. But observation shows that on the whole senior wives conform to the pattern we have outlined above. Their position in the family, their responsibilities and privileges, shape them to this pattern.

596 It must be remembered, also, that the size and stage of development of a family have a great influence on the relations between co-wives. In a family like that of Da'amo'o of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ who has but recently set up in his own homestead, there are only three women, two being Da'amo'o's wives and the third his younger brother's wife. They are all young women round about the age of 20, two with an infant each and the other still a maiden (*pɔɣasarət*). In such a family the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* is rudimentary. The three girls work in co-operation and live together harmoniously like sisters and with no visible distinction

The economic self-differentiation is both a sign of his psycho-

logical and social self-differentiation from his father and a stimulus to it. 866
Naturally it results in conflict at times.[1] For example, Kpana-Tee took 593
his grandson, a boy of about 14, to live with him because the boy had
quarrelled with his father, Kpana-Tee's oldest son, who was farming on 578
his own in one of the peripheral settlements. The youngster had two hens which he had bred from a hen given to him by his *ahəb*. He wanted to sell one in order to buy a loin-cloth for the Gɔlib Festival. His father said this was extravagance and forbade it. But the boy, supported by his mother, insisted that he could do what he liked with his 'things' (*bon*). This angered his father so much that he thrashed him. Thereupon the boy ran away to his grandfather, who took his part, and told him not to go back home for the present. As a man grows older the chances of such conflicts due to the clash between paternal authority and filial self-determination increase and are only kept in check by the sanctions of filial piety.

The process of incipient self-differentiation at this stage is distinctive 866
of boys. It does not occur with girls before pubescence. Until that stage
their relations with their parents continue to have a more childish stamp 593
than is the case with their brothers. Whereas a 10-year-old boy would be ashamed to be found hanging round his mother when she is busy in the kitchen, a 10-year-old girl still enjoys sitting among the infants listening to her father in conversation with other men at the *zanɔne*. One notices that little girls of about this age are more quiet and docile than boys. Attached as they are to their mothers, they do not yet show that diffidence towards their fathers in public which another two or three years will bring. They do not feel the weight of the father's authority yet, beyond the ordinary discipline he exercises over their manners and habits. But there is a rapid change as they get nearer to puberty and at the same time become more proficient in women's work and more absorbed in the social world of the women. A 12-year-old girl shows more respect to her father in public than her brother does. Like her mother she will always stoop or crouch to greet a male visitor of her father's or when she is offering her father food. With her mother she is to all appearances on intimate and friendly, almost sisterly, terms. She may still be sleeping with her mother, especially if the latter is past child-bearing age.

Between the age of about 7 and the beginning of pubescence at about 593
12 to 14 years of age, the pattern of parent–child relations crystallizes 867
out in the form it will have for the rest of the child's life. Proxy parents and classificatory parents are correctly discriminated and set in proper relation to own parents. Kinship sentiments are finally formed.

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[1] But this is not associated with overt signs of 'adolescent instability', nor is there an institutionalized group revolt of adolescents against the generation of the fathers. Cf. my previously cited Memorandum.

CHAPTER VIII

TENSIONS IN THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Rivalry between Parents and Children

593 ● 578 PERHAPS the most extraordinary feature of Tale parents' relations with their children is the recognition, in custom and belief, of the latent antagonism behind their mutual identification and comradeship, their devotion and co-operation. We have already had some glimpses of this. A psycho-analyst might say that the Oedipus complex is apparently openly recognized in Tale culture. He would have to add that it is built into their social organization in such a way as to enable them to control it. The mystical ideas and ritual symbols in which the rivalry between successive generations is clothed form the cultural mechanism by which it is neutralized and made to serve socially useful ends.

784 [184] 578 593 We have discussed the taboos observed by first-born children among the Namoos in our previous book. We showed there[1] that the distinguishing mark of all Namoo clans as opposed to non-Namoo clans is the observance of these taboos. Among all Namoos a man's first-born son and daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, may not wear any of their father's garments or his quiver, or look into his granary during his lifetime. The latter taboos are connected with the fact that a man's clothes and quiver and granary are intimately identified with his social personality. As the natives put it, a man's clothes and quiver are imbued with his bodily exuviae from constant contact with his body, while his granary is associated with his unique status in the patricentral family. It is easy to see that these possessions are peculiarly apt symbols of a man's social self. It is not surprising, therefore, that though these taboos are not formally observed by non-Namoos analogous usages with the same symbolic significance occur among them.

In our previous book we studied the significance of these taboos as quasi-totemic symbols in the system of inter-clan relations; but they have other dimensions of meaning as well, like all Tale customs and ideas that give expression to fundamental elements in their social organization. For they go back to deep and universal tendencies in human psychology. These taboos have a particular meaning in the contemporary structure of Tale society as symbols of corporate units; but underlying this is the deeper meaning they have in the relations of successive generations and for the individual himself in the conduct of his life.

We are concerned here with these latter aspects of their meaning. We cannot attempt to unravel all that lies behind them, but their superficial symbolism is transparent. What they mean is that a child may not be equated with his or her father while he is alive. As we have observed, though these taboos do not occur among non-Namoos, the ideas and sentiments they express are as frankly admitted by them as by Namoos. It was a Tenzugu (Talis) man who gave me the clearest statement I obtained on the struggle between the Destinies (*Yina*) of father and son. I remember also being struck by this during the ceremony of exorcising the evil Predestiny of Sinkawol of Kpata'ar's wife. Just as the most important rite of all was begun somebody noticed that Tiezien, Sinkawol's proxy father, was absent. Nyaaŋzum, Sinkawol's proxy grandfather and Tiezien's proxy father, shouted for Tiezien to come out of the homestead. Tiezien shouted back, in some anger, 'No, I won't come. They are exorcising my daughter-in-law's *Yin* and I should be there? Oh no. Is she your (plural) wife or mine? No, it is not for me to be there.' There was a moment's pause and then Nyaaŋzum called back, 'Well, leave it then, you are right.' The point was that a man must not equate himself with his son, particularly where the latter's procreative status is concerned. But grandfather and grandson are equated with each other, as we shall see more fully later. And by the same principle a woman must not be equated with her daughter in her reproductive capacity. Thus when a man's daughter becomes a mother for the second or third time he gives up sleeping with her mother even if she is still of child-bearing age. Tallensi call this an important taboo. It is significant also that among both Namoos and non-Namoos an analogous taboo to that of the father's granary holds between a mother and her first-born daughter. While her mother is alive a girl may not uncover her mother's chief storage-pot (*u pu sugəl u ma doko*). This taboo is not stressed so much as those that discriminate a child from its father, as might be expected in a society so thoroughly organized around the patrilineal line. But it does show that the tension between the generations among the Tallensi is not the product of *patria potestas* only, but arises out of the whole network of the relations between parents and children. 593 578 [784]

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. v and viii.

[p. 222]

The avoidances of first-born children are not the only customary expression of the tension between the generations. A man and his oldest child do not eat together. 'You and your oldest child do not dip your fingers into the same dish of food together,' the natives say, 'for if you did perhaps his finger-nail might scratch you and that would bring misfortune on both of you.' This prohibition is not subject to ritual sanctions, though the misfortune that would follow the symbolic act of aggression would be of a mystical character. Tallensi share a dish with the youngest child for preference; and it is not an uncommon sight to see a man eating with his youngest child while his oldest son is sitting near by eating separately. 593 264

Then there are the restrictions we have already mentioned that must be 593 764

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observed at funeral ceremonies by anyone who has a parent of the same sex as the deceased still living. Similarly an oldest son may not deputize for his father in making sacrifices to an ancestor shrine which is in the latter's custody; 'he is too near to inheriting the shrine', the Tallensi say. The implication is that if an oldest son deputizes for his father in relation to the ancestors he is anticipating his inheritance and this is tantamount to wishing his father dead. Even during the interval between the mortuary rites and the final funeral ceremony of a dead father it is his younger sons who make sacrifices in his name to the ancestor shrines that were in his possession and will be inherited by the oldest son.

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All these customs indicate how strongly the Tallensi feel that there is an underlying rivalry between parents and children that must not be allowed to drive a wedge between them. While his parent (particularly his father) is alive, a child (particularly a son) must not act in any way that suggests a desire to usurp the parent's place; and this holds vice versa for the parent too, as the incident between Tiezien and Nyaaŋzum shows. It is implicit in the Tale concept of incest. It can be summed up in the formula that father and son may not take each other's place in the procreative relationship, which is the fundamental relationship defining their positions in society relatively to each other; but this principle is extended to all social relations of father and son, particularly the first-born son. Tallensi state this quite openly, and it is worth quoting what Yarəg of Gbizug, who is not a Namoo, said to me once in this connexion. There had been a ceremony the previous night at which the Gbizug tɛndaana had been represented by one of his younger sons. I asked Yarəg why he did not sometimes deputize for the tɛndaana in these ceremonies, for surely he knew more about the rites than his younger classificatory brothers? 'No', he replied, 'that is impossible. I am like the tɛndaana's oldest son, for my father was his full (*soog*) brother; I cannot put on his cap and skin and perform these rites for him. We are Talis and it is not a taboo for us, but it would not be right, it would not be seemly.'

We have seen that the undercurrent of rivalry is most apparent in the relations of father and son. Marriage removes a daughter from the arena of possible conflict with her parents and her social role does not create interests and motives that bring her into competition with either of her parents. She cannot take the place of either her father or her mother. Removal from their control has the effect, if anything, of strengthening her uterine tie with her mother and her lineage tie with her father. The first-born daughter is associated with the first-born son in these taboos by the principle of sibling equivalence.[1] She is the first-born child of her sex, and stands for the filial generation as much as her brother does. It is their first child, whether it be son or daughter, that makes a married couple into parents. Moreover, we must not forget the Tale maxim that

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[1] This principle is discussed in Ch. X below.

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she might have been a son but for the accident of birth. A son's situation is entirely different, as we have shown in the preceding chapters. He remains a member of his parental family all his life. He does eventually take the place of his father in the life of the community and could be suspected of wanting to hurry on the day when this will happen. His desire for independence is liable, as we have seen, to run counter to his father's plans and demands. Every advance in his social and economic development might be interpreted as an added threat to his father's dominance. He will not be his own master until he has no father. The very principle of reciprocity which plays such an important part in their economic co-operation conceals mutual jealousy about property. And the social cleavage between his generation and his father's is emphasized by the wider context of fatherhood. A man's father's brothers, who are identified with his father both by generation and by birth, stand between him and his full independence as his father's heir. Even after his own father's death they retain authority over him. As we have seen, the cleavage between successive generations usually comes to a head more decisively with a proxy father than with one's own father.

Tallensi themselves make no bones about the matter. 'Your oldest son is your rival (*I bikpeem a i dataa*)', the men say bluntly. I have heard this phrase used by both Namoos and non-Namoos from every part of the country. 'Look at my oldest son', an elder once said to me. 'He would not care if I should die to-morrow. Then he would inherit all my possessions, he would own the *zɔŋ* and he could take his ease. The things connected with an oldest son are hard (*bikpeem yɛla ntɔ*).'

This candour in fathers is not matched by their sons, who never admit the rivalry. They laugh it off as 'an affair of custom (*de yɛl nla*)', or simply say that it is a ritual matter, a taboo (*kihər*) like any other taboo that one accepts without questioning. And they generally launch out, with obvious sincerity, into the kind of panegyric on the advantages of having a father that has been previously quoted (p. 172). This is as one might expect, for it is the fathers who feel the threat to their dominance; and they feel it the more strongly as they grow older and their powers decline.

The taboos of first-born children begin to be enforced in early childhood. By the age of 7 or 8 a child takes them as seriously as his parents.[1] But it is only after the son is married and has a growing family, when the father is getting on in years, that the opposition symbolized in ritual observances emerges as an opposition in practical life. It coincides with the son's increased striving to free himself from his father's economic control. This is expressly symbolized, among all the Tallensi, in a taboo which the first-born son begins to observe about the time he gets married. He and his father must not meet face to face in the gateway of their common homestead. This taboo is as scrupulously observed as

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

593 ● 578 the other taboos of first-born children. Its meaning is plain if we bear in mind what the gateway and the *zɔŋ* symbolize in the structure of the family and the lineage.[1] Significantly enough, a first-born daughter does not observe it.

Eventually, when the son's older children are reaching adolescence, the opposition between his father and himself culminates in his formal separation from his parental family. We have noticed before that fission in the joint family is basically due to structural and economic factors. In the case of an eldest son's hiving off, Tallensi say that it is often brought about by the jealousies of the womenfolk. The son's wife or wives complain that they are not getting a fair deal in the distribution of food-supplies in the joint family. They are always nagging at their husband on that account. So when a son 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)' natives say it is in order the better to support his wives and children. But the separation is actually due as much to the relations between the man and his father as to the purely economic causes. It is an instance of the convergence and congruence of structural principles and economic necessities.

593 578 884 Most commonly an eldest son separates off formally by cutting a new gateway for himself in the family homestead. The native phrase is *bit u zanɔr* ('slit his gateway'), and it describes precisely what happens. The wall of the homestead is cut through so as to make an extra gateway leading into the son's quarters. Though he and his wife and children will very often use the main gateway, he is by status the owner of his own subsidiary gateway and cannot formally clash with his father. At the same time he achieves a considerable measure of economic independence. He will have his own bush farm and small home farm and be responsible for providing the bulk of the food required by his wife and children. But he still helps his father and younger brothers with their farm work, and receives some food-supplies from his father in return if his own supplies are insufficient for his needs. Sometimes, however, an eldest son moves out altogether. His father may let him build a homestead on a bush farm belonging to the family, or he may migrate to one of the peripheral settlements. As we have seen, it usually takes a few years for a son to achieve this step. I have heard young men who were pressing their claims for a separate gateway express impatience with an obstinate old father and even resentment against his apparent tyranny. But when the parting comes it is usually amicable, and father and son continue to be on excellent and intimate terms thereafter. The son is still under his father's final authority in jural and ritual matters.

593 *The Native Theory of the Tension between the Generations*

578 777 Tallensi explain the rivalry between father and son by means of the

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[1] Cf. Ch. III above.

mystical concept of the *Yin* or personal Destiny.[1] There is, they say, 573
an inborn antagonism between the *Yin* of a father and the *Yin* of his
eldest son. While the son is still young his *Yin* is weak, but as he grows 578
older his *Yin* grows more powerful and wants to make him master of 777
his own affairs. The son's *Yin* wants to destroy the father's *Yin*; but the father's *Yin* desires the father to live and be well and remain master of the house. It wishes to continue to receive sacrifices from the father. Therefore it will try to destroy the son's *Yin*, and if it is the stronger *Yin* it will cause misfortune and perhaps death to the son. That is the reason why father and son must avoid meeting in the gateway of the homestead and why it is better for them to separate, after the son has reached a stage of maturity when his *Yin* begins to be as powerful as his father's. In the same way an oldest daughter's evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) is a threat to her mother's life and health. When Sinkawol's wife was waiting for her evil Predestiny to be exorcised she was not allowed to go and visit her sick mother for fear that her *Yinbe'er* might cause her mother to get worse.

To appreciate the profundity of this interpretation we need to under- 777
stand the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is one of the most difficult of their religio-psychological ideas to translate into our categories of thought. Indeed, it is not a precise notion but, like all Tale ritual ideas, a configuration of mutually overlapping ideas, beliefs, and values.

Yin is the shortened form of *Naawun* or *Naayin*, the Tale term which can best be translated as Heaven. But whereas *Naawun* is concerned with all mankind, each person's *Yin* belongs uniquely to that person. It is the symbol of his individuality, of what makes his life history different in his own eyes from that of every other person. If he falls ill he is enduring something that is the common human lot, and he tries to cope with his illness by the same measures that anybody else would take. But, he asks himself, why should he have fallen ill just at this time and not his brother or somebody else, for instance. When he kills an animal in the hunt, or buys a cow, or marries, or has a child he goes through experiences that every man has, and his social personality takes on attributes that are part of the social personality of every man of about the same stage of social maturity. Yet they are his own private experiences. They form part of the unique continuity of his personal development. None of them was inevitable. They are due to the intervention of chance in his life; or, as the Tallensi believe, to the action of the mystical agencies that dictate the course of human life.

These, very briefly, are the ideas, as nearly as one can translate them into our modes of thought, behind the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is a mystical notion because their ideas of causality are couched in a ritual idiom and are rooted in ritual beliefs; and it serves several ends. Tallensi do not

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 144, for a discussion of this concept from a different angle.

777 conceive of the inner life of the individual as a distinct phenomenon apart from the external, material, and social facts of his life. But they understand clearly that each person is unique as an individual. The notion of *Yin* is the means by which they visualize the connexion between the material and social facts of the person's life and his individuality. It enables them, also, to see a tendency and a determinism in the life of the individual by reference to which they make the intervention of chance intelligible and emotionally tolerable.

A person's Destiny has various aspects, some or all of which may emerge in the course of his life. There is, first of all, his Predestiny (*nuor Yin*, the *Yin* of the mouth). This is the fate the individual has preordained for himself before birth. In his pre-natal state he 'spoke when he was with Heaven above (*u daa vɔləm Naayin zugni*)'. Both men and women have this *Yin*; and it is this *Yin* that sometimes manifests itself as an evil *Yin* (*Yinbe'er*), when the individual is pursued by chronic bad luck in the important things of life—things like health, marriage, parenthood. He (or she) had declared before birth that he does not want to have parents or children or a spouse or any of the good things of life. A child suffering from an evil Predestiny is constantly ailing; a man so afflicted cannot find a wife or is deserted by every wife he marries; or he loses his children one after the other in infancy; or he is for ever having bad crops or losing his livestock; and a woman with a *Yinbe'er* loses her children one after another in infancy, or her husband, or perhaps she herself gets ill of some wasting disease. Moreover, this ill luck that haunts the unwitting sufferer is also a constant danger to his family. A child's evil *Yin* may cause the death of a parent or a sibling; a man's or woman's evil *Yin* spoils the life of his or her spouse, children, and parents as well as his or her own life. •[578] The evil *Yin* symbolizes all the subterranean animosities and aggression latent in the relations of members of the joint family with one another. The cure is a ritual exorcism, carried out by the maximal or medial lineage of the sufferer, but this is not always successful.

If a woman's Predestiny is harmless or beneficent it remains latent, as it were. It is not objectified in any way as she has no ritual status.[1] Her *Yin* is subordinate to and submerged in her father's or her husband's *Yin*. But a man's Predestiny, if it is beneficent, may declare itself to him, usually after adolescence, but occasionally before. Thus a young man may kill an animal in the hunt and this will declare itself, through a diviner, to be the vehicle of his *nuor Yin*, and demand that he dedicate a shrine to it.

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[1] Women have no *Yin* or other ancestor shrines as they have no independent relationship with the ancestors. This is a reflex of their status in Tale society as jural and ritual minors who do not play a part in maintaining the continuity of the society or the equilibrium of the body politic independently of their relationship to their fathers or husbands.

777 778 But a man's most important *Yin* is that with which certain of his ancestors are associated. This too may come to him in childhood, though it does so more commonly in early manhood. Usually it manifests itself to him through an accident or a coincidence. Thus a young man falls ill shortly after he has bought a new hoe or killed an animal in the hunt. The diviners then declare that his illness was caused by his *Yin*; his ancestors so and so, and so and so, are thus revealing themselves as his *Yin*; the hoe or the animal is their vehicle; they brought illness on him because they demand that he should accept them as his *Yin* and sacrifice to them. The young man will then build a shrine dedicated to these ancestors placing the skull of the animal or the blade of the hoe on it, and will henceforth sacrifice to them on this shrine. This is his first and most intimately personal shrine, and it plays an enormous part in his life thereafter. As far as his own personal affairs are concerned, it will always be his most important link with his ancestors. It is through his *Yin* that they exercise the most direct influence upon his life and that he seeks to maintain their goodwill specifically for himself. When he becomes head of his joint family he will entrust most of the children born into the family to his *Yin* as spirit guardian. Every important step in his social development will be registered in his relations with his *Yin*; it may be by a special sacrifice, or it may be by a change in the location of the shrine, or the addition of an ancestor to the group of ancestors who have revealed themselves (*naam*) as his *Yin*. A man's *Yin* is both the chart of his life and the helm with which he steers his way through life.

777 769 All the ancestors and ancestresses of a man have a potential mystical relevance for his life, but they have the same potential relevance for any of their descendants. His *Yin* ancestors, on the other hand, are concerned exclusively with him, for his own sake, so to speak. They form a particular combination, usually of very recent forebears, who do not belong together in just that grouping for any other of their descendants. They may be patrilateral or matrilateral ancestors or a combination of both lines. Thus a man might have as his *Yin* ancestors his father, father's father, father's father's mother, and her father, while his brother has their father, father's mother, and father's mother's father as his *Yin* ancestors. Of another pair of brothers, one's *Yin* ancestors may be their mother's father, maternal grandfather, and maternal great-grandfather; and the other's might be their mother's mother, her father, and his father (see Fig. 5, page 230).

593 578 777 Thus when a Talәŋ says that his *Yin* and his eldest son's *Yin* are mutually dangerous, he is saying that his son's successful growth and development into and through manhood is a threat to his authority and primacy in the family, a symbol of the inevitable decline in his physical and mental power that comes with age, and a warning that he must in due course make way for the next generation; and yet it is also the

593 crowning achievement of his life, the most significant sign that his *Yin* has
777 prospered him (*maal*) well. The relations of father and son are a balance
between their ties of solidarity and mutual identification, which form the
● 578 central link of the lineage system, and the cleavage due to their belonging
to successive generations. Once more we encounter the fundamental principle of Tale social organization, that every constellation of social relationships is made up of a polar balance of ties and cleavages.

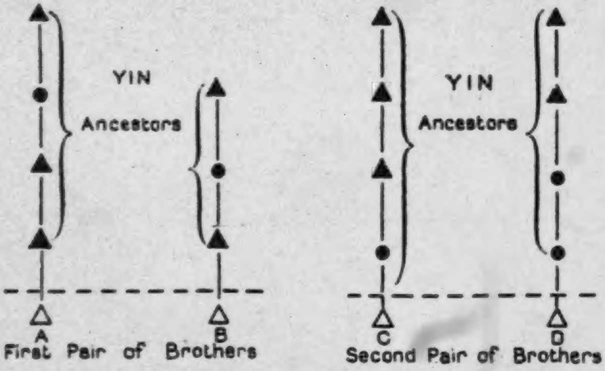

FIG. 5. *Yin* Ancestors.

The Discrimination between Oldest Children and Youngest Children

593 The cleavage between father and first son obviously plays an impor-
tant part in the cycle of development of the joint family and lineage.
578 The oldest son's breakaway from the parental home is the first phase
of fission of the joint family, and it is not until after his father's death that he and his brothers are likely to become reunited into a single domestic unit.

We have spoken sometimes as if the cleavage between successive generations lay solely between parents and their first-born children, at other times as if it were a gulf between parents and all their children. In practice, tension crops up between a parent and any of his or her adolescent or adult children, but one reason why it is always likely to be sharpest with oldest children is simply because they have gone farthest along the road of social and economic maturity and so symbolize
the filial generation most effectively of all the children. Among
593 non-Namoos it does not seem to matter whether the oldest children
578 are first-born or merely the oldest surviving children. Among the
184 Namoos, however, there is the striking peculiarity of their fixing the
ritual and affective bar between the generations on the first-born children. If a man's first-born son is dead, and even if he died in infancy, the oldest living son does not assume the taboos of the first-born. The

tension that develops between a father and his oldest surviving son is 593
never as great as that which occurs between a man and his first-born 578
son. An oldest surviving son may in time begin to farm on his own, but
he will very often stay in his father's homestead, for his *Yin* is not a 184
danger to his father's.

Tallensi have no explanation for this. Their only comment is to point 593
to the fact, which can often be observed, that parents discriminate 578
between their older children and their younger children, especially between the oldest and the youngest. Youngest children are the favourites, upon whom they lavish all their tenderness when they have long ceased to make a show of affection for the older children. A man's or a woman's last child (*bikpa'ar*) is the apple of its parent's eye. Tallensi say that a last child is always spoiled and pampered, and therefore grows up to be vain, lazy, and extravagant. Guna'ab was a man of this stamp, and his older brothers explained contemptuously that he had been their mother's *bikpa'ar* and they had been unable to discipline him after their father's death.

Tallensi say that a person's younger children, and in particular the youngest child, feel their dependence on their parents till the last. There is, as in so many aspects of the relations of parents and children, an element of reciprocity in this. For a man's youngest son, for instance, is still farming with him when his oldest son is farming either wholly or partly for himself—'thinking of how to feed his wife and children rather than of his parents', they often say. 'If I die to-day', men have said to me, 'do you think my oldest son will weep? Oh no; but my youngest son, he will shed bitter tears.' There is much truth in this. I have more than once seen a man's youngest son being harshly rated by an older brother for abandoning himself to grief over his father's death. Because older children no longer need their parents' care they do not inspire the same affection as young children. In the eyes of the natives, therefore, the discrimination between youngest and oldest children is a natural result of the process of upbringing. But I have heard women say, also, that a woman's love for her *bikpa'ar* is due to her seeing in him the sign of the end of her reproductive powers.

It is, however, not merely a matter of the vagaries of parental psycho- 593
logy. This discrimination runs deeply into the social structure of the 787
Tallensi. A curious but enlightening indication of this occurs with
divining (*bakologo*) shrines. When a diviner dies, the clairvoyant power
associated with his shrine sometimes passes on to one of his sons by a
process which the Tallensi think of as a kind of mystical contagion (*lɔŋ*).
The son who is selected for this privilege is always a younger son. There 593
is more sympathy between father and younger son than between father 765
and oldest son. But the best indication of this is found at funeral cere-
monies, where the oldest and the youngest children of the deceased 578
have distinctive mourning duties. The oldest son and oldest daughter,

593 ●578 765 as the chief mourners, have the most arduous mourning duties. They have to take part in almost every rite, both by day and by night, and these rites are mystically dangerous to those who participate in them. Hence they have to be carried out very carefully. All the participants must, for instance, observe absolute silence throughout these rites. The youngest son and youngest daughter, on the other hand, wear the *dooluŋ* string as a special emblem of mourning. The *dooluŋ* string is decorated with four cowrie shells for a dead mother and three cowrie shells if the deceased is the mourner's father. The youngest son wears it on his hand, looped about his middle finger in a prescribed fashion; the youngest daughter wears it round the neck and waist and down the back.

The most important of these rites are those which conclude the funeral. The rites differ in content from clan to clan, as we have mentioned in our earlier book,[1] but their symbolism is the same for all clans. Everywhere they symbolize the removal of the social personality of the deceased from the world of the living and his or her incorporation among the ancestors. They symbolize also the emancipation of the children from the control of their living parent and the assumption by the oldest son or daughter of the father's or mother's position in society. This is evident from the rites by which the customs, taboos, and articles which stood for the cleavage between the generations are ritually annulled or transferred to the son or daughter. In the case of a woman, among all the Tallensi, the principal rites are 'the sealing of the store-pot (*bea dok*)' and the sending of the *kumpiog*.

The rite of 'sealing the store-pot' is the only ritual act performed solely by women for a woman. On the last day but one of an old woman's funeral a group of old women, her co-wives, sisters-in-law, and friends, together with her daughters, gather in her sleeping-room. They take one of her large store-pots, put inside it a ladle, a dish, and other articles characteristic of women's activities that belonged to her, and solemnly seal it with a potsherd plastered over with mud and cow-dung. Beer and porridge are offered on the pot to her spirit. Her oldest daughter takes part in these rites, and then the pot is hidden in a place where she is not likely to see it. She may not come near it until it is finally disposed of. Next day the pot is ritually opened by the old women and the oldest daughter, who thus symbolically discards the taboo which she had to observe all her life if she is a first-born, or since her mother's death if she is not. Later the pot is removed from the house and taken by one of the old women. The daughter must never see it again.

At the end of the funeral ceremonies a dead woman's *kumpiog*, the special pot and calabash which stand for her social personality as a woman and mother, is solemnly and extremely carefully carried to her oldest daughter's house and given to her, as we have noted before.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. viii.

For a man these final rites are more elaborate and variable. Among 765
the Namoos the high-water mark of the rites is the induction of the 593
first-born son and first-born daughter, if they survive, into those secret
and forbidden things which they have avoided since infancy. The first- 578
born son is dressed in his father's cap and smock, turned inside out.[1] [292]
A stick with a loop of string, and a piece of hollow bamboo, specially prepared for the occasion and symbolizing the father's bow and quiver, are hung round his neck. Then a procession is formed of all the children of the dead man, his first-born daughter following immediately behind the first-born son and holding on to the smock. An old man leads them round the homestead three times. Then the first-borns are taken inside through their dead father's *zɔŋ*, and are taken up to look into his granary for the first time in their lives. The whole rite is felt by the onlookers [781]
to be overwhelmingly solemn and the 'showing of the granary (*paal buur*)' is for them an intensely dramatic moment. A hush comes over the crowd of spectators as the son ascends to the granary and his mentor puts a hand behind his head and pushes it forward so that he peers into this hitherto-forbidden place. The son himself appears quite unperturbed, though this is one of the decisive moments of his life. I have been told by men who have been through this rite that they felt quite calm and collected at the time. But Tallensi are that way, and this is perhaps a sign of the efficacy of their ritual practices.

Among the Talis and other non-Namoos, the parallel rite is that of sending the quiver (*ta'ah loko*) of the dead man to the External *Bɔyar*. When an old man dies, his quiver is hidden in his principal granary by one of the elders and his oldest son and daughter are thereafter forbidden to look into the granary until the end of the funeral ceremonies. 'If they did', a Yinduuri elder once explained to me, 'they would see the spirit of the dead man and die.' Younger sons and daughters are free to look into the granary. This is of particular interest as a parallel to the Namoo taboos; but with the Talis the ritual and affective expression of the tension between father and eldest son is concentrated in the period when its meaning is most significant to the son, the transition period between the extinction of his father's social personality and his assumption of his father's place. For the rite of 'sending the quiver', the 'quiver' (consisting of a real bow and a symbolical quiver exactly like that used by the Namoos) is taken from the granary by the oldest son. Followed by his father's senior surviving wife he is escorted by the clan elders to the External *Bɔyar*. Sacrifices are made to the ancestors and especially to the dead man, who now belongs to the realm of the ancestors, and his 'quiver' is left in the *Bɔyar* in token of his final departure
from the world of the living. 593

We must conclude that the distinction Tallensi make, both in custom 578

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[1] To distinguish the context of death from that of life and to symbolize the reversal of the taboo.

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and in sentiment, between oldest children and youngest children is of more than casual significance. It is as if the two major aspects of parent-child relations are split apart and distributed so as to make them more easily reconcilable. The mutual identification, mutual love and devotion of parents and children are focused in the relations of parents with their youngest children; the cleavage between successive generations is focused in the relations between parents and oldest children; and we can easily see why this is so. For it is the latter who will take the place of the parents on their death, who seem to be standing on the threshold waiting for them to die. The emphasis of the Namoos on first-born children is, as we have noted, due to the fact that it is the first-born child which makes a man and woman parents. Hence, if a first-born dies, its parents have to undergo a special purification rite; and a wife who has not borne a child to her husband does not undergo the purification rites for a widow when he dies. Later children do not change the role and status of a person in the same way; they do not make him or her more of a parent. Nor does the sex of the first-born matter, though the agnatic principle makes a first-born son of greater importance to a man than a first-born daughter. This and the principle of the equivalence of siblings explain why both sons and daughters are subject to the taboos of the first-born among the Namoos.

The Ancestors as Parent Images

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The ambivalence in the relations of parents and children is more dramatically expressed in the ancestor cult than in any other aspect of Tale culture. We cannot discuss this at length here. We can only note that there is a direct continuity between the relations of parents and children in life and their relations after the parents' death. The worship of the ancestors is a culturally standardized projection on to the mystical plane of the tangle of attachments, reciprocities, tensions, and submerged antagonisms that bind parents and children to one another in life. Anyone unfamiliar with the speech and customs of the Tallensi would often find it impossible to tell, in some situations, whether a man is speaking of his living father or his dead father. The dead parents are the prototypes of all the ancestors. Distinctions of name and generation conceal the same primary images. This is clear from the fact that no man can sacrifice to an ancestor or ancestress except through the medium of the spirit of the parent who links him to that ancestor or ancestress.

It will not surprise the psychologist, however, to learn that the attributes with which the spirits of the parents are invested differ in some respects markedly from those that are conventionally assumed for living parents. The disciplinary limitations imposed by the demands of economic and social adjustment and by the rationale of reality are no longer operative. The figures of the dead parents are clothed in qualities that are in part highly magnified versions of their most praiseworthy qualities

in real life and in part distorted reflections of the tensions that exist 593
between parents and children in reality. It is no misrepresentation to
describe them as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the 769
parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically 578
omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent and long-suffering; but the emphasis is far more on the persecuting than on the protecting 577
attributes. The distortion is most striking in the case of a mother's spirit. All ancestor spirits are apt to reveal themselves more often by the misfortune they inflict than by the benefits they bring. They emerge as sanctions of conduct more by reason of the punishments they bring down on wrongdoers than because of the benefits they confer for right doing. But the spirits of female ancestors are believed to be specially hard, cruel, and capricious. This is remarkable when we consider the love and devotion a mother shows for her child throughout his life. As we have observed elsewhere,[1] there is a never-ending struggle between a man and his ancestors. It is psychologically rooted in the relations of parents and children during the lifetime of the parents. Sacrifices and prayers are reminiscent of the principle of reciprocity in the real relations of parents and children. They contain the same elements of acquiescence, justice, and hidden coercion. They show another aspect, though, in the propitiation, reverence, and gratitude they often express.[2]

We can see why filial piety towards the dead parents is more strongly stressed than towards the living. While he is alive a person's father has direct jural and ritual authority over him; when he dies, the father becomes the paramount sanction of moral conduct for him; and this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, in only a lesser degree to the mother. The oath 'by my father and his goatskin (or sheepskin) and his three cowries' discussed in our previous book[3] is one proof of this. The centre of gravity of the whole social system of the Tallensi is the relationship of father and son, and it is the idea of filial piety that keeps this relationship in balance in the face of all the forces that tend to divide father and son. In this as in other respects the Tallensi are typical of patrilineal and patriarchal societies of simple culture from many parts of the globe, both ancient and modern.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 145.

[2] As death, among the Tallensi, is always believed to be mystically caused by a particular ancestor spirit or a group of ancestor spirits (material causes such as sickness being recognized as necessary but not sufficient without the mystical adjunct), it follows that a dead father or mother can kill (*ku*) his or her own child. The converse is impossible, since children, in life, have no jurisdiction over parents. I have asked Tallensi if patricide ever occurs or is known to have occurred. My most trusted informants said they had never heard of a case and thought the very idea abhorrent beyond measure. The idea of matricide they considered even more vile and unnatural. [761
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[3] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 66.

boys are keenly learning the art of courtship and are experimenting 593
with sex. They have sweethearts (*gab*, pl. *gabnam*), most commonly 572
slightly younger girls of the same clan whom they call 'sisters' in the widest sense. These girls may have serious suitors from other clans, but not being quite ripe for marriage find much more pleasure and
excitement in their freer relations with their clan 'brothers'. With them [836]
they can indulge in sexual play, not always stopping short of intercourse, without criticism. Now when boys go to visit their sweethearts they often like to have the company of a friend (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) of about the same age, who has a similar interest in such adventures. For this a boy prefers a friend from another homestead, a not too near classificatory brother, to a close brother. Later on such a pair of friends will help each other in serious courtship, for one cannot carry on a serious courtship without a friend to act as spokesman and go-between. And a distant brother is preferable to a close brother as a friend in affairs of the heart. It helps to keep them secret from the other members of one's family, and that is desirable because it is a point of honour with every young man to find a wife for himself. The same motives operate with girls between the ages of about 13 and marriage at 16 to 18 years of age. A girl likes going to market with a girl friend of about her own age who is equally interested in the young men around. But if a girl is thinking of eloping with a suitor she prefers to confide in her mother or her clan-brother sweetheart. Having no rights in the bride-price they will—for a bribe from the suitor—help her to get away, whereas her own brothers will insist on a marriage by arrangement so as to make sure of the bride-price.

But the divergence of interests and companionship in the years 593
immediately preceding and following adolescence does not disturb the
personal intimacy and attachment of *soog* siblings. Custom prescribes 264
that husband and wife should eat separately. So a man eats with one or two of his younger children, and each of his wives eats with one of her younger daughters or an infant. The other children are divided up, one dish of porridge to this pair of boys or that pair of girls or even to a girl and a boy. They may be full siblings or half-siblings, and the porridge they are eating on a particular occasion may be of their mother's co-wife's cooking. Nevertheless, every child continues to think of his own mother as the food-giver and of his *saarət* as those with whom he automatically shares food. A boy of 12 does not sleep in his mother's room, yet he still regards her as the source of his sense of emotional security. In a small and harmonious polygynous family the children are almost equally at home in all the women's quarters, but in a large joint family the children of one woman tend to be in her quarters for most of the time that they are indoors.

Of many other signs of the lasting intimacy of full siblings and their 593
closer identification with each other than with their half-siblings, the 578

593 578 best is this. A 12-year-old is conscious of his seniority (*kpcmət*) in relation to his younger siblings. He orders them about and pulls them up if they are not behaving properly. But whereas he would not hesitate for a moment to smack a younger *soog*, he will not go further than scolding a younger half-sibling for the same offence. Tallensi say that if you strike your younger *soog* it does not matter; your mother or your father may rebuke you afterwards and the affair is forgotten. But if you strike a half-sibling—even if the child has behaved so disgracefully that public opinion will be on your side—you cause friction in the family. The child's mother gets annoyed with you and with your mother and quarrels arise.

593 835 There is another interesting indication of this. As has been previously mentioned, Tallensi do not designate incest between brother and sister as sinful. When they say it is forbidden (*kih*), as they sometimes do, they mean it rather in the sense that it is disgraceful, scandalous, and unnatural than in the narrower ritual sense. If they are asked why then it is so uncommon, considering the many opportunities and temptations that surely offer, they explain it by the intimacy of siblings in childhood and adolescence. They deny that the temptation exists. 'Look', said Sinkawol, arguing this point with me, 'my sister, is she not marriageable? And here am I, however attractive she is, I do not even notice it; I am never aware that she has a vagina; she is just my sister and someone will one day come and marry her and I will give her to him and get my cows. You and your sister grow up together, you quarrel and make it up, how can you desire to have intercourse with her?' This is a stock argument with the Tallensi.

593 864 At the same time the natives are the first to point out that sexual play in childhood generally begins with a classificatory sibling. Family play is a regular thing in the under-8 play-groups; and the final realistic touch is for the 'husband' and 'wife' to pretend to have coitus. This is common knowledge, and adults laugh at it. A standing joke is to tease a small boy about his so-called sweethearts. As we have seen, Tallensi say that small children 'have no sense (*ka yam*)', and therefore it is not a breach of propriety or morals for them to play at coitus with a sibling. Every man I questioned on the subject told me, with a grin of amusement, that his first sweetheart was a 'sister', sometimes of the same expanded family, more often of the same inner or medial lineage. 'We were very small and didn't know better', they said.

But Tallensi maintain stoutly that even small boys of 6 or 7 do not play at coitus with their *soog* sisters or half-sisters. There are exceptions, of course, they readily admit. There are stupid children, precocious children, and badly brought up children. Among such children instances of brothers copulating with sisters are bound to occur. It has been known to happen even with adolescents, who are presumed to 'have sense'. If it is found out, the culprits are given a severe thrashing

593 422 spirit, perpetuating, on the religious plane, their common dependence on her in her lifetime.

593 578 ● 856 It must not be thought, however, that friction between full siblings never occurs. That would be contrary to human nature, the natives often declare. As amongst most peoples, sibling solidarity conceals a strong element of rivalry. Indeed there is one circumstance in which it is taken for granted that *soog* siblings will be prone to quarrel all their lives, even if they do not set up separate homesteads. Two successive children of the same mother and father are regarded as born rivals. The second of the two children, irrespective of sex, is called the *nyeer* of the first. The first *nye* (verb = immediately precedes) the second, who *taɣal* (verb = immediately follows) the first in birth order. The definition applies strictly to birth sequence, not to survival order. A child is not its older *soog* sibling's *nyeer* if between them their mother had another child who died in infancy, or a miscarriage—for a miscarriage counts as a birth. The concept *nyeer* is regularly used to indicate an infant's degree of maturity. An infant that has a *nyeer*, or is old enough to have a *nyeer*, is entering the second conventionally recognized stage of social development, childhood proper. So if a native is asked about the stage of development reached by a particular child and says, 'It has a *nyeer* (*u mar nyeer*)' or 'It is fit to have a *nyeer* (*u saɣa nyeer marəga*)', one can infer that the child is between 3 and 5 years old—or, to keep to native categories of thought, that it is weaned, no longer needs the constant care of its mother or a nursemaid, and is beginning to fend for itself, to join in children's play-groups, and to become acquainted with the world outside the homestead walls.

593 578 A child and its *nyeer* are believed to be rivals almost from the day the *nyeer* is born. This predisposes them to be ill tempered with each other and wrangle on the most trivial provocation. Often when I have noticed two children bickering or annoying each other in some petty way, my companion—a man or an older child perhaps—has said with a laugh, 'There 's someone and his *nyeer* (*nit ni u nyeer nla*)'. Once at a funeral ceremony there was an argument between the two sons of the dead man. It ended with the older giving the younger a buffet across the mouth that drew blood. Relatives intervened and separated them. Then an old woman, their father's *soog* sister, with mingled pleading, protests, and sighs, dragged the younger brother away to attend to his cut lip. He was weeping with injured pride and humiliation, exclaiming, 'If he were not my older brother (*bier*) I would kill him'. The people sitting around commented scathingly on this shameless spectacle. Then someone remarked, 'Oh well, it 's a case of a man and his *nyeer*'. It had all begun, I learnt, from the younger lad's accusing the older of having appropriated something belonging to him and the older losing his temper with him for fussing about ridiculous trifles on such a solemn day.

If a person is ill tempered or unnecessarily sharp with him, or appears 593 to dislike him, a Taləŋ retorts with 'Why do you dislike me? Am I •518 your *nyeer*, or what? (*I yaagəm bo? Man a i nyeer bɛ?*)' This formula is always spoken half-mockingly; for the rivalry of successive children, though assumed to be in the very nature of their relationship, is not taken too seriously. It is not, like the underlying rivalry of father and first-born son, subject to ritual sanctions. It is simply an acute expression of the familiarity and equality of siblings and does not destroy their solidarity.[1] Tallensi themselves say that successive siblings often get on together admirably and stand together as staunchly as any other full siblings. I have never heard it said that *soog* brothers are quicker to set up separate households if they are successive siblings than if they are not.

Tale custom recognizes the rivalry of successive siblings in a number 518 of other ways. Thus successive siblings (this applies chiefly to brothers) 593 may not be buried in the same grave. If they are, their spirits will be continually quarrelling and persecuting their descendants until they 595 are exhumed and separated. Again, successive sisters may not be married to the same man or even to the same clan. But this rule is, to my own knowledge, often broken. If they do happen to be married into the same clan the sisters must avoid being pregnant at the same time or, if they are, they must not see each other during their pregnancy. If they do one or both will miscarry. Here it is belief rather than practice that is a sign of the rivalry of successive siblings. Tallensi object to having two sisters married to the same man for prudential reasons. They say that it is obviously more difficult to get eight cows out of one man in payment of bride-price than it is to get four cows. Nevertheless it does sometimes occur. A well-to-do son-in-law who has his father-in-law's esteem can often persuade the old man to give him another daughter to wife. If the girls are successive siblings, a very [789] simple magical rite involving the burying of a hoe at the entrance of the husband's homestead serves to 'cut' their *nyeer* relationship.[2]

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[1] I do not know whether successive siblings quarrel more often than non-successive siblings. Tallensi say they do. Knowing the Tallensi, I have no doubt that conventional expectation itself acts as a stimulus to petty wrangling between successive siblings. Every time they have a disagreement not only onlookers but they themselves put the conventional interpretation on the situation, and this is bound to make them more touchy in relation to each other than to other siblings. In every aspect of Tale social life cultural definitions and expectations direct behaviour in this way. On the other hand, I knew several pairs of successive siblings who got on extremely well together and to all appearances never said a cross word to each other. Tallensi admit that this is quite common and explain it by the invariable stock phrase 'It 's all a matter of character'.

[2] A question that immediately suggests itself is, whence does the rivalry of 828 successive siblings arise? I have put this question to many Tallensi. The usual answer is in terms of the cliché that 'it is in the nature of things (*de yɛl nla*)'.

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To return to our main subject, squabbles between children, 593 whether they are successive siblings or not, are laughed away. When adult brothers and sisters quarrel it is taken more seriously. The 578 ● irresponsibility—as the men view it—of women in marriage often leads to family quarrels. A woman who runs away from a husband to whom she has been given, or obstinately returns to one from whom she has been taken, arouses her father's and her brothers' anger. There may be a temporary estrangement between them. But in the end they usually become reconciled again. If she does not give in, her father or brothers do. 'They have no alternative but to give in (*ba kɔŋ ka diegɔra*)', the natives say. Before that happens, however, there may be a father's curse on the girl and hard words spoken to her and her husband by her brothers.

Adult *soog* brothers also fall out at times, but in contrast to disputes between half-brothers this seems very rarely to become either the pretext or the stimulus to their deciding to separate. Tallensi ascribe it to peculiarities of personality. The very fact that full brothers are often alike in character may be the cause of friction between them. To give one or two illustrations, there was the case of Zaŋ and his older *soog* brother Pumaan. They were both inclined to be solitary, egocentric, excessively touchy about their status, and suspicious of others. The strong competitive streak in them inevitably coloured their relations. So Zaŋ often complained that he found Pumaan's authority irksome. But there was never, as far as I could discover, an open quarrel between

But one or two more thoughtful informants appeared to have an inkling of the deeper sources of this peculiarity. They connected it with the fact that the older 828 sibling is 'set aside' or 'left to itself (*bah*)' by the mother when she becomes pregnant with its *nyeer*. That is to say, the child's physical weaning is completed and simultaneously its affective attachment to its mother—a very possessive attachment with unweaned Tale babies—is brought to an end. A *nyeer* dispossesses its immediately preceding sibling of their mother's undivided care and devotion in both the physical and the psychological sense. This is a fact of observation and one which has a direct influence on family life. As we know, Tallensi maintain that it is very difficult for a woman to take care of two unweaned infants, hence the prohibition against a woman's becoming pregnant [843] again before her infant is old enough to do without her undivided attention. When this custom is broken, so that a premature pregnancy follows, the parents are said to *nye* their child. As this term, cognate with *nyeer*, suggests, and conventional opinion confirms, a premature *nyeer* is believed to endanger a child's life. On the analogy of what is known to happen in our society, it can be surmised that the open acknowledgement of rivalry between successive siblings is a culturally standardized safety-valve for the jealousy and resentment the older sibling has against the younger for robbing him of their mother's attention. This explains also why successive birth order is the significant feature and not survival order. The older child's resentment will be directed only against its immediately next-born sibling, the one on whose account it was 'set aside', whether that sibling lives or not. It is possible, moreover, that open acknowledgement of the rivalry of successive siblings prevents it from turning into a disruptive element in the relations of siblings.

593 ●578 them, and Zaŋ stood unswervingly by Pumaan, when the latter took sides against the head of their own medial lineage in the dispute over the succession to the clan *bɔyar*. Nindɔyat and Yintee, who, unlike Zaŋ and Pumaan, still farmed together, were cast in the same mould. Both were notorious for their instability and aggressiveness. They were known to quarrel frequently and on at least one occasion came to blows. But no one could have been more loyal to Nindɔyat than Yintee, in particular where the possessions of the family were concerned.

In short, though *soog* siblings come into conflict at times it does not undermine their solidarity. The reason for this is obvious. The crux of the sibling relationship lies in its social definition. Personal qualities may modify its content in particular cases; they cannot break up its structure; and this holds for every degree of sibling relationship. In the case of *soog* siblings the infrangible core is the relation of uterine siblings to and through their mother, as members of the matricentral *dug* in contraposition to the patricentral *yir*, first in the joint family and later in the lineage. The significance of this factor, the notion of maternal origin, can be judged from the relations of *soog* brothers who have different fathers. They may have no common economic interests and may grow up separately, after the early years of childhood. But they have very firm ties of affection and mutual loyalty, which are often expressed through mutual economic aid. Sie and Da'amo'o were *soog* brothers thus related, their mother having first been married to Sie's father and after his death to Da'amo'o's father, who belonged to a different medial lineage of the clan. Sie was the older of the two by ten or fifteen years. Whenever he was in trouble over something Da'amo'o went to seek Sie's advice rather than his proxy father's. This principle, as we have noted before, is of general validity in Tale social structure. It appears in the stronger cohesion and amity always found between individuals and lineages whose progenitors were *saarət* than between those who are only patrilineally connected. Nɛna'ab and Ɔndieso remained great friends in spite of the long-standing quarrel between their two inner lineages, because their mothers were full sisters. At the level of maximal lineage organization, Seug is a much more closely knit section of Tongo than the other three sections, because the founding ancestors of the two major segments of Seug were sons of one mother.[1]

Solidarity and Equality among sunzɔ Siblings

593 605 But the critical importance of the idea of their common parentage, bilaterally or unilaterally, in the relations of siblings is best shown in the differences between the relations of *soog* siblings and those of half-siblings and other paternal siblings (*sunzɔp*). Tallensi tend to draw a line between *soog* siblings and all other sibling relatives within the same nuclear lineage or inner lineage. Thus half-siblings (i.e. children of

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 213.

593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

593 •578 584 Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *sunzɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbɔm. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbɔm.

593 613 The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

593 867 This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood, first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

of distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this pattern. 593 867

The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family. 593 613

As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course, in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action. 593 602

The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences, postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land. 593

We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity. 593 884

The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the 593 884 578

593 cleavages between *sunzɔ* siblings, both on the level of jural and economic
relations and in sentiment, more prominently to the fore. It is the
884 starting-point of those intra-familial tensions that, according to native
●578 views, stir up jealousies between co-wives who are wives of brothers.
As we know, these tensions are said to culminate, very often, in quarrels over alleged unfairness in the apportionment of food-supplies, or over the treatment of children, or other ostensible acts of discrimination between co-wives. This is one of the reasons most often adduced for a man's leaving the paternal homestead to farm on his own. From these tensions arise also those disagreements between brothers over petty trespasses on one another's property or independence, summed up in the conventional formula of 'quarrels about chickens and eggs'. The stage is thus set for the typical process of residential and economic fission in the joint family along the genealogical lines of cleavage inherent in it. The equality in status and rights of brothers in relation to one another within the lineage thus attains its maximum emphasis in the social structure. The natives are well aware of the economic pressures behind this process; but they also see that these pressures would not work out in just the way they do if it were not for the inherent dichotomy in the structure of the family and the lineage. These two factors mutually determine and reinforce each other.

This brings up a point of some importance. It is conceivable that
593 tension between brothers, whatever it is a symptom of, might result in
578 young men separating after the death of their father, or after marriage,
to take up land wherever they can find any. Thus a group of brothers
613 would be scattered without respect to their lineage ties; and this process
would in a few generations lead to the disintegration of the present highly localized lineage structure, and the emergence of a system of dispersed intermingled clans such as is found in many West African societies.[1] In fact, as previous chapters have shown, there is a slow process of dispersion in progress among the Tallensi all the time, but it has not led to a breakdown of the lineage system. The lineage ramifies, it does not break up into independent units that sever their genealogical ties with the main branch.

The basis of this is the fact that brothers separate but do not thereby relinquish membership of their maximal lineage. They do not sever their social and personal bonds with one another; which means that they do not forfeit any of their rights or relinquish any of their duties as sons and brothers. They are independent only within the bounds set by the corporate unity and the common interests of the lineage system. For it is only through his position in the lineage system that a Taləŋ is able satisfactorily to secure his rights and perform his duties as a

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[1] This would appear to be the case among the Ashanti (cf. R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, ch. viii) and the Jukun (cf. C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom*, ch. ii), to cite only two widely separated examples.

responsible member of his society. Of this we have had ample evidence.[1] 593
Again, there are strong economic elements in the individual's adhesion
to the lineage. There is the pressure due to the form and organization 578
of Tale economy as a whole, which tends to restrict excessive mobility.
As Tallensi themselves often put it, shrewdly picking on the key item 613
in their productive cycle, it is all a question of manure, including human excrement. A home farm in one of the old settlements kept at a high level of fertility by continuous manuring is not light-heartedly abandoned.[2] This fact, and the scarcity of unutilized and unowned farmland in the old settlements, puts a premium on the right to inherit land in them. To-day, it is true, the pressure of these forces has been relaxed by the opening up of an easily accessible external labour market and of facilities for trade both in Taleland and with other areas. These extraneous outlets have made life easier for the natives but they have not, as we have observed before, materially altered their traditional mode of livelihood. In fact they serve to emphasize the contention of the natives that economic motives are of secondary consequence in maintaining lineage unity.

It is not joint interest in, and equal rights to the inheritance of, 593
their patrimonial lands which alone hold a group of brothers together.
Men who leave their natal settlements on account of land shortage do not 577
return home eventually only because they have at last inherited their 764
patrimonial lands. The decisive sanction, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, lies in the obligation of filial piety and what it stands for in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage. The focus of unity for every lineage is the authority of the father, either the real authority of the living father or the mystical supremacy of the dead father or his surrogate, an ancestor spirit. Men like Yinworəb and Da'amɔ'o gave up wage labour in Kumasi very reluctantly to return home because the death of their fathers left them at the head of their respective joint families, and other similar cases have been quoted in an earlier chapter (p. 179). Similarly, a group of brothers may be scattered, some at home, some in a peripheral settlement, some in Mampurugu, some working abroad. On certain ritual occasions those who are near enough make a point of returning home. Family funerals, in particular, bring the scattered members of the family together. The three chief mourners at Tɛndaan Gieŋ's funeral were his brothers' sons Gikoo-Duun, who lived near Sameni in Mampurugu, Saanbuohba, who had been farming near Tola on the Red Volta for some years, and Baŋ-Duun who had been living at Biuŋ for nearly twenty years. They all

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[1] In preceding chapters as well as in *Dynamics of Clanship, passim.*

[2] We have touched on this subject in our earlier book, chapters i and xi. It is more fully considered in C. W. Lynn's report, *Agriculture in North Mamprussi* (Dept. of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Bulletin 34, 1937), and in M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936.

593 577 764 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni yɛlmɛyar*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its 593 psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its 613 validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 •578 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zayahkpɛmɔre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zayahkpɛmɔre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zayahkpɛmɔre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zayahkpɛmɔre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 601 784 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another. As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔɣa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

593 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidem slew the
682 ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice
784 together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective ancestors.

593 Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brother-
hood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact
● 578 that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties
602 to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one another.

In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings
593 sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classi-
602 ficatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Tɔŋ-Tɔbɔg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzɔ* siblings.

As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests
593 involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible
602 guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few
613 examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will be much more likely to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔɣadir yɛla*) involve the common interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*) brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son. But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment
and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action
vis-à-vis non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a
question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of
the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will
come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a
man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224]
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal,
especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days 602
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

604 *ahəb*. Nevertheless she has much the same attitude to him as her brothers have and will, if need arises, go to him for help as if he were her father. A woman will go to her mother's brother for a basket of grain at harvest time if her husband's grain supplies are very low and she knows that her father or brother has none to spare.

These personal bonds are transferred, in accordance with the principles we have previously made clear, to sons and grandsons and collateral relatives, as well as to the lineages, of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*. Yarəg of Gbizug was a close friend of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's family at Puhug. Sayəbazaa, who was both a neighbour and a distant classificatory *ahəŋ* of Zubiuŋ (since both the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage and one of his inner lineage forbears were sister's sons of a Zubiuŋ lineage), took great pride in being the *ahəŋ-kpeem*, most senior of the 'sisters' sons' of that clan. He took a keen interest in its affairs and never missed attending important ceremonies anywhere in Zubiuŋ. The elders of the clan spoke of him with respect as 'our elder brother (*ti bier*)'. But naturally, the more distant the relationship is, the less intimate and the more formal do the mutual interests of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* tend to become.

604 Death is the key test of kinship sentiments. The day after Kpe'emi's death I happened to call at the house of his mother's full brother,
765 Lɔyani. I found Lɔyani and his brother sitting listlessly at their gateway and the house was as quiet as if there were a person on his death-bed inside. The women, who should have been out collecting firewood, were at home, and the children, usually playing boisterously at that time of the day, sat in corners, talking in subdued voices. When I asked what was the matter, Lɔyani said mournfully, 'Have you not heard of our child Kpe'emi's death? That is our grief (*ti suhkpɛləg nla*). We sitting here, our bodies are prostrate (*ti nɛŋgbina nkpi*—lit. our bodies are dead). We have no thought for food or drink or work.' Barimoda was deeply affected when his *ahəb* Teroog died, though he was then a very old man. Barimoda could not publicly manage the funeral but he did in fact manage it behind the scenes. As we shall see later, an *ahəŋ* has certain
● [578] customary obligations to fulfil at the funeral of his *ahəb*. The feud between the Gəlibdaana's faction and the Kpata'arna'ab's supporters at Tɛnzugu placed many men in the camp opposed to that of their *ahəb* or *ahəs*. Kpata'ar men and Bunkyiuk men stopped having any contacts with each other. But just then the mother's brother of Nayabil of Kpata'ar died. I was with the Kpata'arna'ab, the head of the maximal lineage, when Nayabil came to tell him of this. 'I want to tell you', he said, 'because he (the dead man) is my true *ahəb* (i.e. mother's full brother) and if I do not go to the funeral to mourn his death it would be unseemly (*de ku maali*). Besides', he went on, turning to me, 'if I don't go my mother (also dead) would be angry because I was scorning her brother's funeral.' The Kpata'arna'ab at once gave Nayabil permis-

604 613 754 belonged to and who he was. The method of sorcery was to dip this 'evil arrow (*peembier*)' secretly into some food or drink the slayer was about to take. If this was done he would die. The problem then was to find someone who would carry out this task. It could not be done by any of the victim's clansmen since it required intimate contact with the slayer's family.

578 604 613 754 If there was a daughter of the victim's clan, or better still, inner lineage married to a member of the slayer's inner lineage, she might be persuaded to do it. Such an action would be a grave sin, for which the woman's husband's ancestors would punish her with death. But sometimes women hate their husbands so much in their hearts, Tallensi say, that they will risk anything to injure them and their clan. And if the dead man was a close agnate of the woman, she might put vengeance for his death above her duty to her husband's clan. Alternatively, an *ahəŋ* of the victim's inner lineage or clan, who is a member of the slayer's inner lineage or clan, might be persuaded to undertake the commission. Only a man who had a deep grudge against the slayer would undertake so wicked an action for which the clan ancestors would certainly punish him with death. But enmity between clansmen, even between brothers of the same inner lineage, is not unknown; and as Tallensi often assert, the belief that the ancestors may punish an action with death does not always restrain an unscrupulous man. Whether or not this act of sorcery was ever carried out I cannot tell. It is impossible to obtain verifiable information on a point of this sort. But what is of interest is the belief itself. Assuming that it is founded on fantasy, it still suggests that the loyalties of an *ahəŋ* are felt to be more evenly divided than is conventionally admitted.

604 578 There is other evidence for this view. The Gəlibdaana of Tɛnzugu earned the hostility of most of the maximal lineage and clan heads of the Tongo district by his high-handed drive to aggrandize himself.[1] In public his opponents had the support of practically all their clan or lineage elders. But amongst them there were, in every clan, one or two private sympathizers of the Gəlibdaana. The usual explanation was that these men were 'sisters' sons' or 'grandsons' of his inner lineage or clan. One of the Chief of Tongo's most trusted and devoted elders used to visit the Gəlibdaana regularly. Another elder of the chief pointed out to me, in explanation, that the first was an *ahəŋ* of the Gəlibdaana's inner lineage. He quoted several other men who were *ahəs* of the Gəlibdaana's inner lineage and maintained close contact with him. It was through them, he added, that the Gəlibdaana kept himself so well informed of everything that happened at Tongo, even of matters that should not be known outside the chief's family. He admitted that the Chief of Tongo probably had similar contacts with the Gəlibdaana's faction and kept himself informed of the Gəlibdaana's activities in the same way.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 251 ff.

000 deal with the conversion of these raw materials into cooked food for the maintenance of all by the almost exclusive efforts of the woman.

The preparation of food is a woman's task. Though cooking is
462 done by both sexes, men cook only on ritual and special occasions
252 and, as a rule, out of doors. Women always cook in the kitchen, as it
343 is a taboo to prepare food for everyday consumption outside the compound. As we have already mentioned, every woman other than a young wife has her own quarters (*dug*) consisting of several rooms. Of these, the most important for the present paper are the grinding room (*neer*) and the kitchens (*da'aŋ*). Not every woman possesses her own grinding-room, but she may use that of any other woman in her husband's compound, or of a related neighbouring compound, and no one may refuse her. The owner's permission is never asked, but a woman will not enter a grinding-room if she observes another's grain lying on the grinding-platform.

343 The grinding-room is the source of much friction within the compound. It is the cause or pretext of women's quarrels which often
578 involve their husbands as well. Disputes arise mainly over the question of priority, or about the misuse of the grinding stones, e.g. leaving the *baarig* soiled with soup ingredients. Hence, a man will try to build
9 a grinding-room for each wife in order to maintain the peace.

Inside the grinding-room is a low, semicircular platform (*neer*) the
343 surface of which has two or three shallow depressions with their
412 appropriate grindstones (*neekaŋ*). These vary in weight, shape, and texture according to the purpose for which they are intended. There
252 is a heavy and rough grindstone—*ŋmaarig*—used for crushing the whole grain; a smaller and flatter one—*baarig*—which crushes the rough corn into fine flour (*zɔm*); and a small, round stone—*ziba'axneer*—used only for grinding soup ingredients such as dried vegetables, red pepper, rock-salt, dawa-dawa-seed balls, dried meat, &c. If a grinding-room lacks the latter stone the soup ingredients are mixed with a little flour and ground with the *baarig*. The flour is added so that the stone should be left clean and dry.

343 The kitchen consists of two adjoining rooms, a covered one (*da'ambɔk*) used during the wet season, which serves also as the storeroom for the owner's produce, her firewood, and cooking-pots, and an open one (*da'aŋ*) used during the dry season. However, it happens

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 515 562 834 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit. The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation: the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 ● 578 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

461 322 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

226 227 The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wɔk*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*sɔyar*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

226 571 The manual skill involved is however of secondary significance. Sociologically, the essential fact is that fishing is a group activity. Everybody fishes with and against his neighbour, his motor alertness and competitive cupidity at the highest. The excitement is indescribable. The glint of a fin through the water, brown with the mud churned up by the slow moving mass of men, causes a scrimmage. Pushing and shouting, a dozen men plunge their nets after the fish. In a well stocked pool the terrified fish leap out of the water, a fantastic and beautiful sight. Hands and nets swing out after the leaping fish, and the older men who remain on the bank watching call out with eager delight at the sight. The first catch of the day is greeted with a shout of pleasure, not very welcome to the fortunate fisherman, however, for the fish thus noticed cannot escape confiscation by the owner of the pool, as it is the ritual perquisite of the fetish.

226 578 579 Disputes are inevitable and may become violent. The rule is that a fish belongs to the person who nets or traps it. But a fish may be netted by one man, escape, and be at once netted by another, or a leaping fish may be pinned between two nets. Such incidents lead to an angry altercation in which the one who has the fish generally gets the better. Once a quarrel over a fish occurred between a man of the *Namoos* group and one of the *Tallis* group. The latter ran ashore with his fish followed by the *Namoos* claimant. In a few minutes a small riot had broken out. *Namoos* and *Tallis* rushed out, snatched sticks, branches of trees, fishing nets, and flew at each other. Only the intervention of a brother of the Chief of Tongo stopped what might have become a serious fight. The dispute over the fish in this case was the signal for an outburst of political hostility. Words quickly lead to blows in such an atmosphere of heightened muscular and emotional tension.

The principal disputes, however, concern the tribute due to the owner of the pool. 226
Morally his rights are beyond question and are never denied. But except for members 578
of the owner's immediate family, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute, 651
a moral obligation of this sort counts for nothing in practice without effective sanctions. 602
Hence the owner sees to it that members of his family are dispersed amongst the crowd in the water. These young men keep a sharp watch and do not hesitate to take by force the fish which they regard as their rightful tribute. The owner himself often enters the pool to assist in the police work. Those who contest the confiscation of their fish do so in vain. Not only will public opinion not support them, but the owner's "policemen" would not hesitate to give them a drubbing. A maternal kinsman, sister's son, or in-law relation of the owner is, however, allowed to keep his first fish, unless his catch is large, in virtue of kinship. This is a concession which the owner might also make to his personal friends, and not a right.

One obligation, by contrast, is never evaded. Young crocodiles are sometimes caught, 651
and the owner of the fetish is entitled to the hind legs and tail of every crocodile caught. 226
This is the perquisite of his *bayar* one part of which, the hoe shaft, will be covered with the skin of a crocodile tail thus delivered to him. 626
Not only is it very difficult to conceal the capture of a crocodile, but the supernatural penalties of evasion—certain injury from a crocodile in a future fishing expedition being the least of them—dare not be risked.

Fishing continues thus from about 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m., or in a well stocked pool, 226
to 5 p.m. The exodus commences sporadically. People who had earlier in the day been cutting hoe shafts or rafters, collecting firewood, or medicinal herbs, come out first to complete these tasks. Finally, when only a few remain in the pool, the owner of the fetish goes down to pull up his *bayar*. As he does this, he shouts to those remaining to come out. The removal of the axe shaft is the signal that the fishing is over.

The catch in such expeditions varies greatly. The tribute received by the owner of the pool may be taken as a rough index of the catch. In the three expeditions in which I participated the owner's tribute varied from six to fifteen medium and large fish. The last pool was exceptionally prolific and was fished on two successive days. I estimated the number of men—men only fished on the first day—at about four hundred; on this occasion the catch was declared to be enormous, surpassing all expectations. Few people left empty handed. But on the other hand, nobody had more than four medium or large fish, which would be taken home and divided up within each man's immediate family. The best proof of the paucity of the catch relative to the population fishing and of the valuation of fish as a delicacy rather than as an addition to the food supply, was that throughout the fishing month fish caught on these expeditions never appeared for sale at the market.

Clearly too, communal fishing does not benefit the owner of the pool much materially. 226
However large his tribute, the net gain to himself is small since he distributes much of 651
it to others—men of rank and elders who attend the fishing as an expression of clan loyalty

From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have 787 selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival 796 is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: [778 a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. 534] Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into 796 abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest, until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have 535 almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." 796 It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effervescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which [578] threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement, planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo [784] against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. 796 Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festival, 535 and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ meŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

796 535 tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingauŋ incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

[533 ● 578] A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like [292] masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

796 [784] And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingauŋ, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Gɔlib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 514 782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that [784] the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

182 578 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other.

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate 182
and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of 578
the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the 796
following moon, Bɔγaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival
of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival 778
translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. 769
Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔγar, after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔγar may be a grove of trees, a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders. It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔγar's communicants generally comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔγar cult is built up on the notion of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔγar. The bɔγar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral, like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I 778
had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The
Namoos know the dates of Bɔγaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they 881
had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted by the bɔγar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔγaraam ritual is at the same time communion, initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔγar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔγaraam on 796

182 even to the date of its festival, each community celebrates its release from the hazards of the past year and especially of the food-growing season, and fortifies itself by magical and religious techniques for another year. Nothing could more strikingly demonstrate the factors of dichotomy and antagonism in the polarity which we saw previously to be fundamental to Tale political structure than the difference between the rites of the Hill Tallis and those of the Namoos. It is true that every Tale ceremonial activity expresses the exclusiveness of the group performing it; but in these festivals the expression of difference has a political validity because it is reciprocal. The difference is published in the dance and dramatized in esoteric ritual.

But Namoos and Tallis are culturally equivalent communities, dwelling in close juxtaposition, having intimate economic and social relationships with each other. This, it seems to me, sets a limit to the degree of antagonistic differentiation tolerable; and thus the other factor in the polarity of Tale society comes into existence—the equilibrium between the two communities. The very opposition, as it were, engenders dependence. This aspect of Namoos-Tallis relations comes out clearly in the ceremony at Baari, in the visits of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief, and in the ritual reenacting of the Chief's induction at Tongo. It is notable how these rituals vividly insulate each group from the other, while at the same time uniting them in common responsibility for the welfare of the country.

182 796 The same compulsion to coöperate in the magical safeguarding of the land and the people obtains between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis. It is expressed in the Gɔlib festival, which unfortunately space does not permit me to describe fully. The purpose of this festival, which occurs in the last month of the dry season, is to ensure a successful sowing and harvesting of early millet and to call down the blessing of fertility in general. In it all the clans of the Hill Tallis collaborate ritually and unite to dance together. In their ritual collaboration the distribution of offices and sacred apparatus among the several clans is so remarkably equal that each one of them can claim with ostensibly full justification to be more important than
● [578] the others. It so happens that a bitter personal feud is at present raging between one of these officiants, on the one hand, and the Chief of Tongo and another of the Gɔlib officiants, on the other. But none of them could escape his obligation to coöperate with his enemy in the appropriate ceremonial situations. Here, perhaps, is a clue to the problem of why ritual forms and religious situations should be the institutional media selected for the expression of the equilibrium in Tale society. They have a compulsive power which a pragmatic institution orientated to the demands of the objective world could never have.

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Gɔlib is a dangerous month, during which both Namoos and Tallis are subject to numerous taboos, mainly aimed at averting quarrels and strife at the dances and in everyday relations between the groups. It is forbidden to shed blood on the earth, lest supernatural death overtake one, to take a wife, to carry out the final ceremonies connected with delayed funeral rites, to wear cloth garments in any of the Hill Tallis settlements, and so forth. Marriages are the cause of most inter-group litigation, and funeral ceremonies represent social situations in which large numbers of people from different settlements congregate and often give rise to disputes. Throughout, the Namoos are spectators of the dancing and excluded from the ritual. But on two occasions they meet the Hill Tallis in ceremonial interaction. In the inaugural rites the Hill Tallis, led by their Tendaanas, march to all their sacred groves in succession blowing sacred whistles in honor of them. When they reach the sacred groves which lie in Tongo, every Namoo man, woman, and child hides indoors. A Namoo who sees these rites of the Hill Tallis risks the destruction of his entire home and family by the outraged sacred groves. Once again, therefore, are the Namoos and Tallis mutually insulated or segregated by the symbolism of unchallengable ritual, the living affirmation of tradition. But there is a ritual reintegration of the groups. The final rite of Gɔlib requires the coöperation of the Chief of Tongo. Again led by their Tendaanas, the Hill Tallis come down to the Chief's house to dance; and there Tendaanas and Chief join together to beg for blessings upon the land, for the safety of the people and the abundance of crops.

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To revert to the harvest festivals, the magical and religious value of the ceremonial to the group performing it must not blind us to its socially integrative functions. The former is mainly determined by the seasonal context of the festivals and is evidenced preeminently in commonplace techniques, such as the sacrifice. The latter, which is determined primarily by the context of the social structure, is evidenced in the ceremonies peculiar to the occasion. These differ completely in content, as between Namoos and Tallis, a fact which the natives would explain by citing the historically different origins of the two groups. This suggests the principle common to all the integrative ceremonies. It is the dramatization of the nodal, hence traditionally sanctioned, relationship in the social structure of each group —the Chieftainship at Tongo, the right of access to the bɔɣar among the Tallis. This fundamental bond is resuscitated in both the symbolical and the direct phases of the ceremonies. The Chief and the Gbizug or Baari Tendaana thus reimpose on each other those responsibilities which bind them to a common task; and, by the very same rites, the Chief and his

184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the
764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger
of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have
[579] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group
of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound
of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration
[123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as
796 composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris,
796 Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take
648 the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the [illegible] of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs ([illegible]*dir yɛla*) involve the com-
mon interests of the whole lineage [illegible] observer cannot deduce from
the opinions or actions of any member [illegible] the inner lineage, in such a
situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*)
brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main
actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme'*—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is
not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son.
But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For
instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the
payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at
moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*)
acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but
of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody
understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain
the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment
and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action
vis-à-vis non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a
question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of
the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will
come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a
man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224]
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal,
especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days 602
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

593 602 579 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 476 764 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of [837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 571 835 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

226 227 The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wɔk*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*sɔyar*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

226 571 The manual skill involved is however of secondary significance. Sociologically, the essential fact is that fishing is a group activity. Everybody fishes with and against his neighbour, his motor alertness and competitive cupidity at the highest. The excitement is indescribable. The glint of a fin through the water, brown with the mud churned up by the slow moving mass of men, causes a scrimmage. Pushing and shouting, a dozen men plunge their nets after the fish. In a well stocked pool the terrified fish leap out of the water, a fantastic and beautiful sight. Hands and nets swing out after the leaping fish, and the older men who remain on the bank watching call out with eager delight at the sight. The first catch of the day is greeted with a shout of pleasure, not very welcome to the fortunate fisherman, however, for the fish thus noticed cannot escape confiscation by the owner of the pool, as it is the ritual perquisite of the fetish.

226 578 579 Disputes are inevitable and may become violent. The rule is that a fish belongs to the person who nets or traps it. But a fish may be netted by one man, escape, and be at once netted by another, or a leaping fish may be pinned between two nets. Such incidents lead to an angry altercation in which the one who has the fish generally gets the better. Once a quarrel over a fish occurred between a man of the *Namoos* group and one of the *Tallis* group. The latter ran ashore with his fish followed by the *Namoos* claimant. In a few minutes a small riot had broken out. *Namoos* and *Tallis* rushed out, snatched sticks, branches of trees, fishing nets, and flew at each other. Only the intervention of a brother of the Chief of Tongo stopped what might have become a serious fight. The dispute over the fish in this case was the signal for an outburst of political hostility. Words quickly lead to blows in such an atmosphere of heightened muscular and emotional tension.

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are 166
linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round
men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original
settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who
built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample
land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this
land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at 602
Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours
because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not
related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more
finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settlements. 571
Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically
dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at
Mɔɣaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages
can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of
the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no
clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position.
In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt
with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers
a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a
dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the
elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action
required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate
assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes
part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk
neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by
ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people.
In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

A striking illustration of this antithesis occurred at a sacrifice that 602
Diŋkaha made to one of his ancestors. An ambitious and none too
scrupulous braggart of considerable intelligence and drive, Diŋkaha 577
had been very useful to me and had made the most of his connexion with me. One of the objects of this ceremony was to show off his friendship with me to his clansmen, and his prestige among them to me. It was, therefore, a specially lavish occasion. In the middle of the ceremony Diŋkaha's father-in-law called in. The old man was respectfully received and ushered into his daughter's rooms. Diŋkaha finished the sacrifice and began to distribute the meat. Various members of his lineage and clan received the portions due to them. And then, intoxicated with conceit at having his white friend in his house and at the obvious appreciation of his stock, in consequence, in the eyes of his clansmen, a rash impulse overcame him. Holding up a goat's foreleg—one of the ritually prescribed portions that should be reserved for those entitled by birth to share in the sacrifice—he launched out into a speech, the gist of which was that he desired his father-in-law to accept it in order to mark this special occasion. A sombre look came upon the old man's face. He was visibly shocked. Speaking gravely but curtly, he refused the gift. *Deenam*, he said, do not sacrifice together; it is an unheard-of thing; he could not accept the gift. Diŋkaha retired in discomfiture behind a smoke-screen of apologies.

Marriage implies the absence of kinship ties between the parties; 581
kinship, the impossibility of marriage. Kinship ties exist in their own
right; *deen* is an artificial alliance of a contractual nature. The parties 602
to a marriage deliberately and voluntarily enter into a bond, the bride's guardian permitting her to marry in return for a promise on the part of the bridegroom's guardian to pay him four head of cattle. Kinship ties are not voluntary and are automatically binding. The parties to a marriage are bound by rights and duties which did not exist before. Kinship automatically entails moral, jural, and ritual bonds, whereas there is an avowed element of mutual coercion, and therefore potential tension, in the relations of in-laws. They rely upon a special, impartial jural instrument, the bride-price, for the adjustment of their rival claims on the woman.

Tallensi think of *deen* as a relationship for ever fraught with the 602
possibility of conflict over these claims. Nearly all their litigation nowa-
days, like much inter-clan fighting in former days, concerns bride-price 578
debts or the rival claims over a woman or her children of father-in-law and son-in-law. Such quarrels are incompatible with kinship. They would cut to pieces the solidarity of kinsfolk—that is why, say the Tallensi, kinsfolk do not marry. *Dɔyam*, in short, presupposes some degree of identification of the parties concerned, mutual or common interests, and especially a bond of amity that excludes strife which might fix a permanent gulf between them.

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate 596
association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions,
and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and 362
her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. 576
Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room.

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can 593
confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know
about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. 596
He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Taləŋa can keep his own counsel if need be.

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not 593
remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At 581 ●
one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another.

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. 581
They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage
throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with 589
men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who
would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously [158]
mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

581 589 said, had never had the enterprise to find a wife. I heard of no woman who had never married. Deformities which do not wholly incapacitate a person or arouse repulsion are not a bar to marriage. The blind, the deaf, and the lame find spouses if they are otherwise able-bodied and presentable.

Tallensi attach immense importance to marriage, not only because it is the sole means to the most ardently desired of all ends, the procreation of legitimate children, but also because no man or woman can adequately satisfy all his or her wants or lead a normal social life, after reaching maturity, without a spouse. Sooner or later a man must have a wife and a woman a husband. Hence 'finding a wife (*pɔɣa booga*)' is the most urgent preoccupation of unmarried men, apart from getting a living. Among unmarried young men it is an obsession, the most absorbing pursuit of their leisure and an interminable topic of conversation. A girl's life is entirely directed towards marriage from childhood onwards.

581 181 It is a common thing to find a group of men discussing the relative importance of farms and wives, the two basic practical interests of the natives. They seldom fail to come down to the fundamentals. I have heard an elder sum it up somewhat in this fashion: 'If you don't farm you will have no food; and if you have no food you die. Then what is the use of a wife without food? But if you have no wife you will have no children and your life is wasted.' In the end, however, it is usually agreed that farming is the more important, for the man who lives long enough will not lack a wife and without food one cannot support a family.

556 Land and wives have many features in common, as their juxtaposition in native thought shows. Both stand for the fulfilment of fundamental social needs. Both come under the jurisdiction of the lineage, though they are of direct service to individuals. But there are certain differences which show the special importance of wives. There is no intense competition for the possession of land. Owing to technical and economic limitations there is no inducement to accumulate land. Wealth—that is, property acquired by saving, or in exchange for surplus grain or cash—consists pre-eminently of livestock; and the use to which livestock is principally put is in acquiring wives, performing sacrifices, celebrating funerals, and, to a much lesser extent, competing for certain politico-ritual offices. Such wealth is, therefore, really equivalent to provision for delayed consumption or special forms of consumption arising out of ritual obligations or differences in status.[1] It has no durable productive value. Compared with livestock, the purchase of farm-land is insignificant

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[1] But Tale standards of wealth are extremely low. Except for a handful of chiefs and headmen—who have herds of cattle numbering from 20 to 50, and, in at least one case, apparently, over 100, as well as numbers of small stock—a man with a dozen sheep, a few goats, and three or four head of cattle is considered to be wealthy (*bondaan*).

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1] Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of. [432] [578]

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of competition both between individuals and between corporate groups. This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests. 578 583

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter. 691 185 578

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief 581 595 622

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

581 595 622 or headman or important elder, backed as it often is by lavish gifts to her parents, security of the bride-price, and the attraction of his wealth and power or status. Few parents would hesitate to force their daughter to accept such an offer. Chiefs and headmen do in fact have an excessive number of wives. The five biggest chiefs and headmen of the Tongo district had between them about 160 wives of all ages in 1936. Their predecessors of a generation ago would have had perhaps 30 between them, at the utmost. The extra 130 wives they have means that probably 100 other men have been cheated of wives. This has no doubt diminished the chances of early marriage for a proportion of young men, but not so greatly as the men assert. All the evidence of Tale domestic institutions and of Tale genealogies goes to show that wives were always highly prized because they were always at a premium.[1] In consequence, no unmarried girl or woman of child-bearing age lacks suitors, and no wife of child-bearing age need endure an intolerable marriage. She can always find another husband. That women take advantage of their scarcity value is what one would expect; but they do so to a smaller extent than one anticipates. This is due partly to the strength and stability of the patrilineal lineage system, expressed in inter-personal relations in the power of the *patria potestas*, and partly to the great value women set upon wifehood and motherhood. Life is a failure to a Tale woman who never becomes a wife and mother.

The Stability of Marriage

586 587 582 In consequence, partly, of the scarcity value of wives, but more, no doubt, of the conflict of loyalties and interests which has to be overcome, marriage tends to be unstable in the initial stages. A young man rarely settles down permanently with his first bride, and young women generally treat their first marriage as an experiment unless the husband is a much older man to whom they have been married by formal negotiation. In the course of collecting census material I noted the marriages of over a hundred men. There is not one man over the age of 30, approximately (excluding a few physically or psychologically abnormal men), who has failed to experience one or more unsuccessful and usually short-lived marriages. Most men of 30 to 40 can give a history of five

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[582] [1] I have no demographic evidence suggesting that there was formerly or is now a marked deficiency of marriageable women as compared with men in Taleland. My own crude demographic inquiries suggest a sex ratio of about unity among the Tallensi. Polygynous marriage, therefore, inevitably means competition for wives, even though women are usually married by the age of 16 or 17, as near as one can guess, and men rarely succeed in finding a wife before the age of about 25. The natives maintain that the age of marriage for girls has been decreasing rapidly since the coming of the white man (cf. my paper, 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, xxv, 1943, 3-4).

or six abortive—or rather, to translate the native attitude into our own 586
terms, experimental—marriages. Men of over 50 say, with a laugh, that 587
they cannot remember all the women they have married who left them
after a short time. Women are more discreet about their marital history; 582
but observation leads to the conclusion that between 50 and 60 per cent.
of all married women have had more than one husband.[1]

A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, 586
generally the woman, or through that of the wife's guardian. The
Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get
rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by withholding the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or
he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman
decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because
she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects
her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women, [828]
according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can
seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays
longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man
or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable
dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.

Despite these initial pitfalls of marriage, families do get established 581 ●
and remain stable. Though the idea of marriage as a lifelong and
irrevocable bond does not exist among the Tallensi, many couples do
settle down for life, and many other couples remain united for a long
enough stretch of years to produce one or more children.

Many complicated circumstances have an influence on this. Naturally, 581
the jural formalities must be properly complied with. That is to say, 583

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[1] Many of these experimental marriages are not marriages at all, according to the strict letter of custom, since they are sometimes dissolved before placation gifts have been made and often before any instalment of the bride-price has been paid. Some last only a few weeks. But they are always called marriages; for it is a fact that many marriages that begin in exactly this way do turn out to be stable in the end. Counting as 'wives' only those for whom bride-price was paid and who bore children to their husbands, I found, among a randomly chosen group of 20 men over 45, approximately, that only 2 had had 1 wife each; only 3 had had 2 wives each; the remaining 15 (= 75 per cent.) had all had more than 2 wives each. Altogether, these 20 men had had 71 wives (average 3·5 wives each); they had lost 21 (average 1 each) by death; and at the time of the census they had 45 wives (average 2·25 each). But most of them claimed to have 'married' from 10 to 20 times and were able to give a fairly complete history of these abortive 'marriages'.

Among a randomly chosen group of 20 women of child-bearing age—who were therefore not yet at the end of their matrimonial careers—6 (= 30 per cent.) had had only one husband each; 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had only 2 husbands each; the remaining 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had more than 2 husbands each, 4 of them having had more than 3 husbands each. Apart from the propensity to choose a final husband by trial and error, the custom of the levirate helps to increase the number of husbands a woman may have in her lifetime.

581 the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*)
583 to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price
[586] acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

582 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage. Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot
593 remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away, though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband, he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of
[789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

583 Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on
691 the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives of the lineage. Pukiehɔt's wife was taken from him five times because he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehɔt. The chief put it to her that Pukiehɔt was, in effect, treating both her and her guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehɔt saw he was in danger of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a really effective force in maintaining the marriage. 586

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond is of vital importance in this relationship. 581

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima, Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace, formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women. Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat during sleep is a grave mystical offence endangering the life of the husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent back to her parents. 581 586 [842] [685] [827]

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When 602 593

that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since 831
the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriageable
girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. 836
Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain
amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so
disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love 831
affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members
of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not considered 835
to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan
does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual 836
penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them.
This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as
the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the
social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply contrasted
with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in
marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox
is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will
be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction,
characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly
between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual
intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the 581
same thing (*Pɛn nyɛ̀bɔg ni pɔɣadir, ba ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 831
'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for
the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be
fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is fundamental
as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of
children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider 581
first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By
marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of 593
her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority
he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has
he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as [576]
a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he
bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately
to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority
over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in
the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected
with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of
water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth.
She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

581 593 which cannot be done without the assistance of women. He can command other services from her. For instance, nowadays he can send her to buy grain for him in distant markets and sell it for him in the home market; and he can ask for many little services that make life more comfortable for him. A man has a right to these services; but it is a right limited by the principle of reciprocity.[1] In return a man is bound to protect and care for his wife, in particular to provide her with a home, with food, and with curative treatment if she is ill.

593 592 There is an obvious material basis for the economic reciprocity of husband and wife. Primarily it is a function of the system of economic co-operation, by means of which the household satisfies its material wants. The head of the family owns the land and the livestock from which all draw their sustenance. The men do the heavy work of farming and care for the livestock. The women perform the tasks already mentioned. Within this subsistence unit the rule of reciprocity of economic rights and duties governs the economic relations of parent and child, of brother and brother, as well as those of husband and wife. For it is an application of the wider principle that all those who pool their labour in the common task of providing food and shelter for the household are entitled, severally, to a just share in the product of their common labour.

593 421 The authority of husband over wife in the matter of economic duties and services is tempered, also, by a principle that really follows as a logical corollary upon the principle just stated. The products of individual industry and enterprise belong to the individual, subject to the nominal over-right of anyone who has authority over him or her, in particular, of the head of the family. The rule applies to all property relations between the members of the family. Thus, as soon as a wife acquires a *dug* of her own she begins to have a certain degree of economic autonomy, and this increases with the passage of time, as her children become more and more able to do without her regular care. She has her own vegetable plot allocated to her by her husband. She often has a ground-nut plot of her own, which she cultivates herself. She has her small private store of grain, obtained by gift from her father or brothers or other kinsmen. Her vegetables, her ground-nuts, and her grain do not go into the pool of family resources. They do, however, serve to supplement these resources; for it is a woman's duty to provide the vegetable food, and it would be unthinkable for her not to use other supplies she may possess to feed her children and her husband in time of scarcity. But if her private supplies are not required for this purpose she can dispose of them as she pleases. She can exchange them for money or goods, or use them to give hospitality to her own kin or guests. The same rule holds for such things as shea fruit and shea butter, which [437] it is a woman's duty to provide for the household. Thus, it is common for women to barter surplus shea nuts for household utensils, and these are entirely their own property.

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[1] Cf. p. 213 below.

to strike her. Her parents-in-law, for instance, despite their authority over her, would not do so. If anything, they would try to restrain their son from beating her. Only her husband has that combination of authority and intimacy in relation to her which permits the use of physical force upon her. 593 627 [606]

But flight is not the only weapon a woman has in order to maintain her rights and privileges in her conjugal family. Once she is fairly free from the leading strings of her mother-in-law, she is the mistress of her time and energies. It is an accepted axiom of married life, which no man questions, that a wife is free to dispose of her time as she pleases, provided she does not hamper the essential economic activities of the household, or neglect her children, or remain away from home for unwarrantable periods or at times—e.g. during the Great Festivals—when all the members of the family should be together. The routine of domestic tasks, over which men have no control, is a strong line of defence against the interference of men in their wives' disposal of their time. But differences of opinion on this matter are a common cause of squabbles between husband and wife. A young woman dresses up to go to market; her husband objects, saying that other men will be paying court to her there, or that the children will be left hungry all day; she insists; and a heated argument ensues. Nine times out of ten the woman has her way. Occasionally the husband succeeds in stopping her, by persuasion or by force. It is only at sowing or harvest time, or when, for instance, preparations for an important ceremony are in hand, that a man has full control over his wife's time. 593 461 578

At all times a wife's freedom to arrange her work and her leisure as best suits her may subject her husband to inconvenience. If, at the end of the day, she is too preoccupied or too tired to cook, he can but grumble and go hungry. And if he annoys her she can make a point of being too busy to attend to some want of his or too tired to cook the evening meal. This, men say frankly, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of keeping on good terms with one's wife.

Tallensi regard these utilitarian rights and duties, services and attentions of husband and wife towards each other as a most important feature of marriage. But it is clear that they do not constitute the unique relationship that distinguishes the marriage tie from other social ties of the Tallensi. Thus a woman performs much the same utilitarian services as daughter in her natal home, and as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law in her conjugal home. They are but a part of the whole configuration of co-operation, mutual help, reciprocal services, etiquette, and mutual tolerance that keep the wheels of family life running smoothly. And it is clear, also, that they imply the existence of common interests that create a sense of mutual moral obligation. 593 581

This underlying bond of mutual moral obligation is the basic sanction of reciprocity and co-operation in the domestic family. In the case of

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
●581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔɣat
of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔɣat tried to lay hands
on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

581 A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripeta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripeta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries.
She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by
her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
[837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife,
whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

[837]

succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife, and may 581
sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery.
Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that 585
of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was 587
pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried, but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this
soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology) of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of
the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself
with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant
at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy,
he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's
marriage with the woman had never been consummated.

It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with 581
her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by
her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this 585
line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to
use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how
Baŋyɛlib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance
of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning,
as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by
the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She
was helpless, and Baŋyɛlib, who had purposely stayed in the room,
'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told
me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform
his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to
eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told
him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with
humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree.
Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time [842]
in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that
shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to
procreation rather than to gratification.

Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, 595
she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the
support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must 578
divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected
wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say,
somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the
jealousy (*yuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common
husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her
husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on
her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for
him in revenge.

586 684 Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

158 827 586 Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

578 833 It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pen tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

684 A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

581● 613 618 To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

613 ●581 587 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife, implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however, not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

581 837 593 The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Unlike the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extramarital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non.* Tallensi express contempt for the Gorisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeembii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbobis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbobis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbobis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

His family had had a windfall of two daughters in half a generation and that meant eight cows. 848

Yet the Tallensi believe emphatically that a girl can only realize her womanhood to the full by bearing legitimate children. For this she must marry; and marriage means having only one husband at a time. It is as her husband's sexual mate that a woman is most sharply separated from her natal family; it is her husband's exclusive rights over her reproductive powers that definitively makes them husband and wife. 848 581

This proposition applies also to the husband's field of social relations. Within the region of family and kinship ties where generation differences are socially recognized, sexual relations may occur only between married partners. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman of the family who is not his wife is incest. The Tallensi have no name for this act. They say, simply, 'It is tabooed (*de kihme*)'; and they look on it with unanimous revulsion. Translating their ideas into our cultural idiom, we should say that they regard any form of incest as an unnatural act.[1] 835

Incest, to a Taleŋa, includes sex relations with a sister or daughter, that is, a woman of one's own lineage: with a mother, the wife of one's own or classificatory father; with a brother's wife; and with a son's wife. Such acts of misconduct are considered incestuous if they occur within the limits of the expanded family—that is, the family group based on the inner lineage (the narrow *dug*). The natives stress this, putting the emphasis on the fact that the narrow *dug* is the smallest lineage segment with a common ancestor shrine (*bɔɣar*). Such acts are, also, often regarded as incestuous within the limits of the family cluster based on the medial lineage, particularly if this lineage has a narrow span.

Incest occurs occasionally in every Tale community. Such an act soon leaks out, and is remembered with contempt for many years. I have discussed such cases with many informants, and was able, also, to witness the public reaction to two cases that occurred during my field work.[2]

There are no penal sanctions against any form of incest, nor are the culprits believed to be subject to automatic mystical retribution. Incest is so incompatible with the pattern of co-operation and the structure of disciplinary and affective relations in the family that this itself serves to banish it from the field of family relationships. Though incest taboos are never deliberately inculcated, the habits, attitudes, and organization of family life (to put the native expressions into sociological language) create internal barriers against incest, in the normal person. This applies particularly to incest with a sister or daughter, whether it is a single impulsive act or a more lasting liaison. Tallensi explain that a normal 835 577

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[1] A preliminary analysis of this subject was given in my paper, 'Kinship, Incest, and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King: Essays presented to R. R. Marett*, 1936.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to 837
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no conse- 577
quence compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the
ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrəg samər*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets
a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*dayət*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔɣambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔyar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581●
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few 765
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without
●581 infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of
834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his
[768] funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

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562 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

602
562 The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602
606 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

XXXV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms. Rites de Passage. Shrines. Soothsayers

428 *PROPERTY and Inheritance:* The rules already given in Chapter XXII for the devolution of private, family, and ancestral property apply equally here. I noted, however, in many cases, deliberate attempts to mislead the enquirer, being repeatedly told that the son succeeds to his father's property to the exclusion of the brother. In every case where such a statement was made it was found that the wish was father of the thought, and that in no case was such succession in conformity with Native customary law. In one of the histories recorded in the previous chapter it will be noted that a son succeeded his father, but this was only due to the coincidence that when *Misore* was driven away from Mampruse he was not accompanied by any of his brothers. The real facts are, that, where there are no brothers, the eldest 'son,' not necessarily of the deceased—he may be son of deceased's brother—succeeds.

582 *Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms*: No new facts were disclosed which have not already been discussed, save in connexion with the marriage avoidances relating to cross-cousins.[1] With regard to these, the following, perhaps ingenious rather than convincing, excuse was given for the prevalent dislike for such unions.

582 586 'If you married your mother's brother's daughter, and quarrelled about the cows paid to your *aben* or *asen* (maternal uncle, Nankane *asiba*) for *sull*, (Nankane, *sulle*), this would lead to trouble. Suppose you quarrelled with your wife after marriage and she returned to her father, who is your maternal uncle, you would ask him to return the cows. Should he not do so, you would be entitled to seize cows belonging to any person from his, that is from your own mother's, town; you would descend into the valley (*sig boog nwoy nigi*; Nankane, *sig boo nyoge*). After doing so you could no longer perform sacrifices to your mother or to her mother; you would not sleep; your children would die, and your uncle would also suffer.'

Marriage with Father's Sister's Daughter: A somewhat similar explanation was given for this avoidance. 'You cannot marry her because of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with the sacrifices to your father and father's father.' 582 586

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[1] See p. 4.

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor approaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nankane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows. 584 585 171 [776] [782]

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo: 764 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

607 *Privileged Familiarity*: 'A man may play and be familiar with his sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents,
603 for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the
648 Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the Mampruse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat
607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

● 582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's
[587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.
[2] See p. 8.
[3] But see p. 508.

throughout its past; and it is, at the same time, the embryo of its future 613
organization. A Tale lineage cannot be dissociated from its temporal
extension.

A maximal lineage is fixed with reference to its founding ancestor, who 613
is the focus of its unity and the symbol of its corporate identity. From 769
time to time its unity and identity become explicit in the common cult of this ancestor and in the regulation of intra-lineage relations which hinges on it. The ancestor cult is the calculus of the lineage system, the mechanism by means of which the progressive internal differentiation of a lineage is ordered and is fitted into the existing structure. It is also the principal ideological bulwark of the lineage organization.

Every maximal lineage is continually expanding and proliferating 613
through the fission of its minor segments. But though its span is thus constantly increasing, its form does not alter. It has a fixed centre and a fixed locus we might say. In theory it always remains the same lineage, and new maximal lineages cannot arise through the splitting up of an existing maximal lineage. It is a unit of common agnatic descent, and no branch of it can ever repudiate this. In theory ties of descent can never
lapse. A maximal lineage is also an exogamous unit, and no branch of it [582]
can contract out of this bond.

To the contemporary observer the Tale lineage system appears as a stable and finally established factor of the constituted social structure, the ground plan of which was laid down in the distant past by processes which are still going on. In any maximal lineage, therefore, the fission of minor segments does not alter the equilibrium of the major segments at any given time. Changes in minimal lineages, in fact, cannot alter the equilibrium of any segment greater than the minimal. This is reflected in the naming of lineages and their segments. Every lineage is named after its founder, and as long as a lineage persists it bears the same name. Thus the names of segments greater than the minimal may be regarded as fixed once for all. A lineage is called the 'children (*biis*) of so-and-so' or 'the house (*yir*) or people of the house (*yidem*) of so-and-so'. These ways of denoting a lineage are interchangeable. A lineage may also be described as a 'room' (*dug*) of a superordinate lineage. This indicates that it is being thought of as a segment of the latter.

This formal analysis will be more easily understood from the diagram which follows. It shows, in a simplified way, the structure of a major segment of a maximal lineage which is assumed to have only two major segments. The major segment not included must be homologous with the major segment shown here since a lineage necessarily divides into segments of equal order. Similarly, the relations of the two major segments of our hypothetical maximal lineage to each other are repeated, at a lower order of segmentation, in the relations of the major segments of each major segment to one another. In the diagram the relations of subsegments X and Y to each other, within the framework of Major Segment I, are identical in form with those of Major Segment I and its brother (*sunzɔ*) segment, Major Segment II, and this rule holds for every subsequent order of segmentation. We shall later on study the interests, rights, and obligations associated with such an ordered series

This summary statement follows closely the formulations of the 613
Tallensi themselves. They normally think of a lineage, a set of lineages, 618X
or a community, as a unit in relation to other units of a like sort, irrespective of its internal differentiation. Thus, Tongo people say: '*Tam ni* 574
Yamɔlɔgdɛm ni Siedɛm ni Biukdɛm a la yaab yɛni biis—We and the people of Yamɔlɔg, and the people of Sie and the people of Biuk are the children of one ancestor.' The place-name serves to designate the social group. Once, at Sie, some young men from Tongo, members of an assimilated lineage, called on me. 'We've only come on a visit', they said, '*daɣa ti mabiis n a Siedɛm?*—Are not these people of Sie our kinsfolk?'

Such intercourse is constant amongst the three Talni-speaking branches of Mosuor's posterity (*tu'u*). Biuk, both because of its fusion with the Gɔris and its geographical location, is somewhat isolated from regular contact with its Talni-speaking clansmen. But the ties which control this voluntary fraternization emerge more precisely in a number of critical norms and institutions.

The Critical Norms of Clanship

Most important of these is the rule of exogamy. Marriage is uncon- 618X
ditionally prohibited between the four branches of Mosuor's posterity— 582
i.e. between members of the authentic lineages of Tongo, Yamɔlɔg, Sie, and Biuk. The prohibition extends to the assimilated lineages as well, but not to all attached lineages, though the natives state it as if it applied to the entire sub-clan. They regard it as the inevitable corollary of their common ancestry. It is, therefore, the widest extension of the rule which prohibits marriage within the agnatic lineage. I discovered only one instance of the transgression of this rule at Tongo, and this occurred in abnormal circumstances.

A second critical norm always cited is: '*ti diit taaba pakoya*—We marry 587
one another's widows.' A Tongo man has the right to seek the hand of 618X
the widow of a Yamɔlɔg, a Sie, or a Biuk man; but in actual practice remarriage of widows is restricted by so many other conditions that this leviratic right is mainly significant as an ideological index of clanship. It is the correlative of the rule of exogamy and, like it, the widest extension of a right which holds primarily within the lineage. Occasionally this right is exercised in its widest sense. The Chief of Tongo, for example, has availed himself of it to solve the problem of accommodation for himself and his retinue when he is compelled to visit the Administrative Headquarters at Zuarungu. An elderly widow at Biuk is nominally his wife and he may therefore stay in her house without embarrassment. In another case a middle-aged Yamɔlɔg widow elected to marry a stalwart young man from Tongo in preference to any of her dead husband's closer kinsmen. It is extremely unlikely that either woman would have been permitted to marry so distant an agnate of her dead husband if she were still capable of child-bearing. Nevertheless, it is an essential consequence of the leviratic right that if a man from one of the sub-clans should succeed in marrying a young widow of a member of another, no reprisals could be publicly undertaken against him, whereas anyone outside the range of clanship would be courting armed vengeance by such an act.

lineage is also a region where different fields of clanship overlap. This is 618x
what gives it its intercalary functions (see Diagram on p. 86).

Quasi-Clanship: Joking Partnership

Beyond the lineage's field of clanship lies a zone of social relations with which it has no constituted ties. For example, Zubiuŋ has no constituted ties with Zandoya. When Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the young wife of a Zandoya man, this was his justification for an act which would have been considered an outrage if she had been the wife of a Ba'ari man. Again, when Saγabo of Kpata'ar clandestinely brought home the wife of a Gorogo man, the elders of his lineage were ready to shield him. A few months later another youth of the same lineage eloped with the wife of a man belonging to a linked lineage, and the same elders peremptorily sent her home to her former husband.

Somewhere between clanship and potential enmity come two other 618x
kinds of ties belonging to the same class of structural relations as clanship 602
and generally accounted for as arising out of some form of kinship (*mabiirət*). Each clan among the Talis, and in some cases a particular maximal lineage, has one or more joking partnerships with other clans or lineages. Thus Ba'ari has a joking partnership with Gorogo, Zubiuŋ with Sakpee and Gundaat, Kpata'ar with Wakii, Degal with Samiit, and so forth. The natives describe these relationships in the following terms. They say, 'We tease one another (*ti kiehət ni taaba*)', or 'We abuse one another (*ti turɛ taaba*)'. If they are asked for an explanation they say, 'It is laughter (*la'at*)', 'it is brother-in-lawship (*dakiirət*)'. Talking of it always raises a grin.

The joking partnership has two conventional modes of expression. When, for example, a Ba'ari man meets a Gorogo man or woman on a path by chance they abuse each other with impunity, in such terms as 'you ugly thing (*bonbɔrəga*)', or 'you good for nothing (*boŋwari*)', or some similar objurgation. Spoken in anger, these are deadly insults. Between joking partners, who shout them out with mock seriousness, they arouse only a roar of laughter. As we have noted, the natives compare them with the joking relationship of affines of the same generation. A man will tease his wife's brother (*dakii*) or sister (*dakii-pɔk*) or his sister's husband (*dakii*) or a clansman's wife in this way, and a woman her brother's wife (*pɔγakii*) or her husband's sister (*pɔγakii*), to the amusement of both.[1]

The other gesture of privileged aggression which is a convention of the 618x
joking partnership I once observed at a Zubiuŋ funeral. A cow had been 764
slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and the elders were distributing 602
the meat. A huge crowd of people had gathered, as is usual, for the occasion, and the tumult was indescribable. The division of the meat was still in progress. This process is always accompanied by loud and what appears to be truculent argument. Suddenly a youth sprang forward from the middle of the crowd, snatched the leg of a sheep, and sprinted off at top speed. There was a moment's consternation, and then an uproar. Laughing and shouting taunts and mockery at the top of their voices, the crowd looked on as one of the most respected elders of Zubiuŋ dashed off

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[1] But marriage is not prohibited between joking partners.

182. 796 to declare, is not a matter of expediency or calculation but the essence of life for the individual and the community. It is a sacred necessity; and men must be in harmony amongst themselves and with the mystical powers that control their lives if they desire to gain the beneficence of these powers for this end. The ritual, the sacrifices, and the prayers to the ancestors and to the Earth, pleading for the fruitfulness of the land, of women, and of the flocks and herds, for health, prosperity, and peace, and offering thanks at the end of the agricultural year for these boons, eloquently express the Tale conception of the common good. In the rites of the Great Festivals the widest community that has social relevance for any Taləŋ emerges, not as a hard-and-fast political unit, but as a temporary synthesis of all the forces of social integration operative in Tale society. This is an expression of the fact that, though they have no centralized government, the Tallensi do form a single body politic, albeit one without defined territorial boundaries. This unit is built up on the widely ramifying structural ties which knit the independent corporate units together. But its ultimate basis is a body of moral and jural norms and values accepted as binding by all Tallensi, and defended from the disruptive action of conflicting sectional interests by the most solemn ritual sanctions of Tale religion. The function of ritual collaboration between clans and lineages is to maintain the unchallengeable validity of these norms and values; for upon their observance the attainment of the common good ultimately depends.[1]

Native Thought and the Realities of Social Structure

582 ● We have digressed to survey the scope and function of ritual collaboration among the Talis in order to see what truth there is in the maxim that 'those who sacrifice together do not intermarry'. As a generalization it is obviously inaccurate; but it is valid for particular instances of linkage by clanship ties, though only as an *a posteriori* inference.

829 Tale elders do not fall into this error of deduction through lack of intelligence or ignorance of their social organization. Among the Tallensi, as among most primitive peoples, what appears to us to be defective logic usually proves to be a product of the social organization as it is apprehended by native thought. When an individual Taləŋ applies the maxim we have criticized to his own particular field of social relations—not to that of his lineage or clan—it is perfectly apposite. For an individual in his personal capacity can only sacrifice together with other individuals if they are his kinsfolk or clansfolk; and this implies automatically that he cannot marry their daughters or sisters.

829 602 In the social philosophy of the Tallensi, as will be shown in the next volume of this study, kinship is the model of all social ties between individuals and groups. The ties of clanship, ritual collaboration, or local contiguity are visualized as so many different extensions and transformations of the fundamental patterns of kinship. For the individual this is accurate to a very large extent. There is a kinship element in all his social

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[1] This aspect of Tale political organization and its wider sociological implications are discussed in *African Political Systems*, cit. supra.

for example, avoid the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*); the Tamboog people do not 784
eat the dog (*baa*), the leopard (*yeogbaa*), the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*), and the 184
hare (*suoŋ*). 618x

The majority of the clans which observe the two characteristic avoidances of the Talis have additional discriminatory totems. Zubiuŋ has the cat (*sakoo*); at Wakii it is the snake (*waaf*), and this includes all species of snake, even the innocent little green *bɛnɔrəg* which children of other clans kill and eat. A whole group of clans, including all that part of the network of linked lineages that connects Bunkiuk, Yinduur, Sii, and Gorogo, taboo the snake and the crocodile (*baŋ*) in addition to the land and water tortoises. Among these clans a snake that injures a domestic animal or a person is killed without hesitation, and if it is of an edible species, such as the python (*waɣakpɛm*), it will be given to a friend or kinsman of a neighbouring clan which does not taboo snakes. This rule applies to all species of dangerous animals that serve as totems to a clan. If they injure mankind, or man's property, they are transgressing (*galəm*) and deserve to be killed. This does not mean, however, that the Tallensi conceive of a special tie of friendship or kinship between a clan and its totem animals. But we shall come back to this point later.

Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, with the exception of one accessory lineage, do not fall into the same circle of totemic avoidances. Their taboos vary from one maximal lineage to another. Thus, Ba'at-Sakpar taboos the dog and the hare; but Lakum yiri has no totemic avoidances.

When a clan or lineage has several totemic avoidances they are all
considered to be of equal importance. In some situations the totems
common to several clans are stressed, in others the natives draw attention
to those which differentiate units among a number that have some
common totems. There is no precise correlation between the ties of
clanship and the distribution of totemic avoidances. Tamboog and Gundaat,
closely allied as they are by ties of clanship, have different totemic
avoidances. The constituent maximal lineages of clans like Soog and
Ba'ari have no common totems, nor have the linked lineages of Zubiuŋ
and Ba'ari, or Soog and Sakpee. Conversely, common totemic avoidances
do not by themselves indicate the existence of clanship ties. Ba'at-Sakpar
has no clanship ties with Tamboog, though both taboo the dog and the
hare, and the avoidance of the Degal people is found also among some
clans of the Sie area which have no ties of clanship with Degal. It follows [582]
from this that (as among the Namoos) common totemic prohibitions are
not a bar to marriage; lineage and clan exogamy operate in terms of
clanship ties only.

On the other hand, clanship ties are in some instances associated with 618x
totemic avoidances. Dun biis of Ba'ari are said to observe the same 784
avoidances as the Hill Talis, because they have clanship ties with Samiit.
Alaa biis of Dkoog have the totemic taboos of Wakii, as well as those of
Dkoog proper (a Namoo clan), because of their clanship ties with Wakii.
Both these are attached lineages, whose descent is attributed to a son of
a clan sister who had been married to a Samiit and a Wakii man respectively
and had subsequently been divorced and sent back home with her
children. The two lineages thus preserve the avoidances of what would

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔɣar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔɣar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into com-
[551] munion with it. Wards of the *Bɔɣar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔɣare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
●[582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔɣar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔɣa* extends, also, to
648 whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔɣar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔɣar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔɣar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔɣar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔɣar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔɣar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔɣar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

571 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the
613 clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a
strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail
in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests.
Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship,
corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual
interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and
the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

● 582 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage
613 segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in
economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing
party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his
widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the
same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all,
and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of
matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears
similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate
support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi
may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever.
A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage
(*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal
dug. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug
would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—
and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter
of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but
[578] this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct
threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between
such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the
wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or
between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous.
Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of
[835] one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not
[837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory
brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual
relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous,
a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister
is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle.
The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation
and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond
that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the
dug corresponds to a segment of about the order of Dɔohraan yidɛm.
This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it
determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its
members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the
recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as
corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly
stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this
unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head
of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders,
makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit
himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the
head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal
lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage.
It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are
performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of inter-lineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not,
the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway.
This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is
one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of
the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted
at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—
cf. p. 208) (*Ti yela kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting 224
out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be
faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service
for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every
animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and 587
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and
the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be
informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in
theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's
nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right
generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his
medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late
husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that
lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582a
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The
right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head
of her nucleur lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

613 price;[1] and conversely, it is he who is directly responsible for the payment 582 of bride-price for the wives of members of the nuclear lineage, and for any other outlay entailed by the marriage formalities. But for all these transactions the formal consent (which is in fact never withheld) of the medial lineage head is required. This has the force of a blessing. When 613 583 the bridegroom's people send the placation gifts (*lu sendaan*) by which the marriage is regularized, the messenger goes first to the head of the girl's medial or maximal lineage, and gives him a live cock, the most important item among the placation gifts.[2] By accepting the live cock the lineage head signifies the acquiescence of the whole lineage in the marriage and the blessing of the ancestors thereon. Whether or not bride-price is paid, the girl is thereafter the jurally recognized wife of the bridegroom. As a rule it is perfectly safe for the lineage head to accept the cock, as placation gifts are only sent when the head of the girl's nuclear lineage consents. But cases do occur in which they are sent without the knowledge of the latter as a dodge by which to compel him to acquiesce in the marriage. Then if the head of the medial lineage accepts the live cock, the head of the girl's nuclear lineage must perforce acquiesce. This makes the marriage binding but does not secure it against dissolution through action taken by the head of the girl's nuclear lineage.

In the same way, when a woman's father's people come to demand the payment of bride-price from her husband's nuclear lineage, they go first to the head of the husband's medial lineage. He conducts the messengers to the head of the husband's nuclear lineage and formally presides over the negotiations.

Marriage transactions illustrate a very important principle of Tale jural relations. They are always relations between lineage units. Even when they appear to involve only particular individuals the lineage framework is implicit in the transaction. But this does not mean that ~~all~~ Tale jural relations are based on the concept of collective responsibility. On the contrary, jural responsibility is precisely fixed on particular individuals or exactly defined corporate units. This is graphically summed up in many Tale maxims. Thus they say 'A pipe sounds best in its owner's mouth (*Yiig m-mah ka daana nuoni*)'—that is, an action should be answered for by the person directly responsible for it. What we find, rather, is that all jural relations involve a configuration of rights on one side and a configuration of responsibilities on the other, both corresponding to the range of lineage segments involved. And no jural transaction is complete until the whole configuration of rights and responsibilities, on both sides, is brought into action. Though marriage formalities involve primarily the nuclear lineage and medial lineage, they presuppose the entire framework of maximal lineage and clan relations; and this is the case with most other jural relations among the Tallensi.

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[1] Subject to limitations that will be detailed in our next volume.

[602] [2] In many clans there is an arrangement between pairs of medial or maximal lineages that have some special tie of kinship by which the *sendaan* cock for a girl of one lineage is delivered to the *kpeem* of the other lineage and vice versa. E.g. this arrangement obtains between Lebhtiis yidem and Kabuu yidem at Tɔŋ-Puhug and is a sign of their close kinship as lineages sprung from one original progenitrix (see p. 212).

ritual collaboration in a series of complementary relations the proper 578 maintenance of which they believe to be indispensable for their common 182 welfare. This is the basis of the ritual sanctions against instigating war and shedding blood and of the moral repugnance associated with them. A war temporarily upset the equilibrium of Tale society; it could not destroy it.

The social system of the Tallensi, in its widest extent, is held together 182 by its religious superstructure. Its unity is none the less real because it appears only on the highest plane of common religious values known to the natives. As we have noted, the complementary politico-ritual offices of the chiefship, which is typically a Namoo office, and the tendaanaship, typically an office found amongst non-Namoos, constitute the focus of the institutions that maintain this unity; and the annual cycle of the Great Festivals are at once the chief sanction and the supreme expression of it. The coming of the white man has made very little difference to the way [177] these institutions operate in relation to the fundamental structure of Tale society. They continue to be the crowning mechanism of equilibrium in Tale society, because its segmentary social structure has kept its traditional form and vitality. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that only a strong and universally accepted religious sanction could hold such a society together. In practice the equilibrium is achieved by the distribution of mutually complementary offices among the segments of the society, all of which are essential for the performance of definite ritual duties.

It is a significant index of the type of social system presented by [728] the Tallensi that the widest range of social solidarity found among 796 them is evoked by their Great Festivals. Great stress is laid on the ritually sanctioned truce to all fighting or discord between clans or maximal [582]● lineages during the Festivals. That is why marriages are forbidden during 182 the *Gɔlib* Festival. The Festival Cycle begins with the Harvest Festivals. These are celebrated by single clans or groups of linked maximal lineages independently of one another and serve to enhance the sense of clan and lineage solidarity. The climax is the *Gɔlib* Festival, immediately before the rains. This gives ritual sanction and dramatic expression to the idea of the close-knit interdependence of all the Tallensi with one another. Its reiterated themes are the common interests of all the Tallensi—food, peace, and fecundity—which must be achieved if they are to survive, and the supreme common values—the cult of the ancestors and of the Earth—by which the whole of Tale social life is steered. The lesson of *Gɔlib*, to the Tallensi, is that men cannot realize their greatest common interests or pursue their greatest common purposes in mutual enmity. *Gɔlib* is the most powerful counterweight to war and to the tendency of each clan and maximal lineage to set its own corporate interests above the common interest of the whole society. It is noteworthy that the Great Festivals do not presuppose the suspension of the primary loyalties of the segments that make up Tale society. They represent a synthesis, for the time being, of these primary loyalties—a synthesis that is possible only by giving full scope to the feeling of clan and maximal lineage unity and singularity in each group. *Gɔlib* emphasizes the mutual dependence of Namoos and Talis, but it does this by simultaneously enhancing the

The Generic Concept of Kinship

602 Among the Tallensi the generic concept of kinship, *dɔɣam*, subsumes all kinds and degrees of genealogical relationship, however remote, through one or more progenitors or progenetrices. But its primary reference is to procreation. One might perhaps translate it by the word 'generation' in its etymological sense. Its root, the verb *dɔɣ*—to bear or beget a child—signifies both the male and the female function in procreation. *Dɔɣam*, the abstract noun, describes the process, or the act, or the physiological capacity, of bringing a child into the world, as well as the ties thus created. The logic behind this generalized concept of kinship is plain. Every genealogical relationship goes back, eventually, to one pair of parents. Both in fact and in Tale kinship theory the parent-child bond is the nodal bond of kinship.

Though the Tallensi see every genealogical relationship as a tie of physical consanguinity, this is not the thing that matters most. What matters most is the social relations entailed by consanguinity. A genealogical tie between two people or two genealogically defined units comes into action in the palpable facts of economic life, jural relations, moral values, ceremonial duties, and ritual ideas and performances. Genealogical ties very often have economic or political utility and are sustained by powerful moral and religious sanctions. But behind all this lies a general notion which the natives themselves do not need to formulate but which is implicit in all their kinship behaviour. A great deal of Tale kinship custom is specific. In ceremonial situations different categories of kin often behave in prescribed ways which sharply distinguish them from one another. At a funeral ceremony, for example, one can tell at once, from the kind of gifts they bear and the attitudes they display, whether a party of mourners are relatives-in-law (*deenam*), clansmen (*yidɛm*), or sisters' children (*ahəs*), of the bereaved. But in the routine of ordinary life the intercourse of kinsfolk has no such formal precision, and is often indistinguishable from the intercourse of friends, neighbours, or other associates. Not even the native, attuned as he is to the fine nuances of his cultural idiom, could tell whether two women working and chatting amicably together are co-wives, mother and daughter, or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The general notion we have mentioned corresponds to this indeterminate and elastic manifestation of kinship.

582 The Tallensi indicate it most clearly in connexion with the rules governing a proper marriage. They draw a sharp distinction between
602 *dɔɣam*, kinship, and *deen*, in-lawship. The crux of the rule of clan exogamy and of the collateral prohibition of marriage with consanguineous kin of any degree (and the natives do not distinguish these two classes of restrictions) is the principle that *dɔɣam* and *deen* are irreconcilably contradictory. They must not be 'mixed' (*gyɛt*).

606 611 602 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*; they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

835 The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

582 602 Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*. [586] If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bək*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'aləm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpemdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpemdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'aləm, are well known. Tinta'aləm

602 578 and Ɔndieso was one of the first to come to the help of his *soog* in his sorrow. The other members of Ɔndieso's segment demonstratively remained away.

602 Other ties of matrilateral kinship also create bonds of personal attachment between members of the same maximal lineage, but none is so effective as that of uterine kinship.

The Dispersion of Uterine Kin

602 582 591 The majority of a person's uterine kin are, however, dispersed among other clans than his own. This is a natural result of the rule of clan exogamy. But Tallensi, as we shall see later,[1] tend to marry into nearby clans rather than into distant clans. A woman of clan A marries into the adjacent clan B; her daughters marry into the next clans C and D; their daughters marry into clans E and F; and so the process goes on. The result is, firstly, that with the passage of the generations the uterine line becomes more and more dispersed; and secondly, that any person's genealogically nearest uterine kin are also, generally, his spatially nearest uterine kin. In practice, it is these near *saarət* whom he knows and knows of; it is they who are concerned in witchcraft accusations or *tyuk* guilt. His more distant *saarət*—distant in both the genealogical sense and in residence—are often unknown to him. The main reason for this is that uterine kinship remains effective only through personal contact. The children of sisters know one another because their mothers have kept in touch, visited one another, and often helped one another all their lives. Similarly, the uterine grandchildren of sisters know one another, if they live near one another, because their mothers have kept in touch, though not so faithfully as true siblings. Often these contacts are maintained into the fourth generation of a woman's uterine descendants; rarely beyond the fourth generation; and a person does not, as a rule, know all his or her *saarət* whose link with him or her is a common great-grandmother. Some of them will, as likely as not, be Gɔrisi or Namnam and he will not even know of their existence.

602 [769] In principle, however, uterine kinship is never extinguished, and it often happens that people of different clans, who are strangers to one another, discover by chance that they are distant *saarət*. Supposing, for instance, a man proposes to make an important sacrifice to a lineage ancestor. His agnatic co-descendants of this ancestor are bound to be present; but he will also send to tell the cognatic descendants through women of that ancestor and some of them will come. Two men of different clans may be present who now discover, for the first time, that they are cognatically related through the lineage of their host. They trace out their genealogical connexion (*tumh dɔɣam*) and find that they are distant *saarət*. I have seen this happen more than once, and the delight of the men concerned was a vivid testimony to the meaning

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI.

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over. Such reciprocal gifts pass between kinsmen of all categories. 476
But the giving is specially generous and cordial between *soog* kin. 431

In keeping with the unrestricted range of cognatic kinship among the Tallensi, the close ties of kinship between male *saarət* are extended to 602
their children and sometimes to their grandchildren. With men whose fathers were *saarət*, whether they belong to the same clan or not, the formal ties of kinship are often mellowed by the affection and trust of a friendship like that of their fathers. This is rarer with grandsons of male *saarət*, but not unknown. I have seen a man break down with grief over the death of a clansman who was his father's *soog*'s son. He would have felt no sense of personal loss at all if this extra bond had not existed between him and his dead clansman. Again, there was Tiezien of Kpata'ar's lifelong friendship with his father's *soog*'s son at Zuarungu—a friendship which would not normally have arisen between a Taləŋ and a Gorəŋ living eight miles apart.

A link of uterine kinship is often used to define the relations of 602
individuals who are not themselves directly related by kinship. A typical
case that shows how far the classificatory principle can be pressed, if 582
there is a *soog* link in the chain of relationships connecting two people, is the following. Zaawəmya of Bunkiuk began courting the young widow of a Wakii man. But in the course of making inquiries he discovered that the girl's late husband's father's mother and his own mother had been distant *saarət*. Zaawəmya concluded, therefore, that the girl's late husband's father would have stood to him in the relationship of an 'older brother' (*bier*), since he would have called the latter's mother his 'mother' (*ma*). Hence the girl's husband would have been his 'son' (*bii*) and the girl herself his 'daughter-in-law' (*sampɔɣa*). 'Well just think of it', he said to me, when he told me the story, 'how can a man marry his daughter-in-law? So I gave it up.' When
Mansami, Ɔmara's own father's brother's son ran away with the wife [578]
of Ɔmara's father's *soog*'s son at Ŋkoog, there was a bitter quarrel between them. Ɔmara accused Mansami of disgracing his (Ɔmara's) kinship ties and ordered him either to give up the girl or leave the homestead. Mansami, obstinately insisting that he and the girl's husband were not related, made this the pretext for keeping her and went off to stay with his mother's brother. Such roundabout connexions through a *soog* link are often exploited for ulterior motives. A common trick of fathers who object to a daughter's marrying a particular man is to allege a remote kinship tie of this sort between the girl and her suitor. The latter and his family head may be sceptical of the alleged evidence for this but they can do nothing about it.

581 595 622 or headman or important elder, backed as it often is by lavish gifts to her parents, security of the bride-price, and the attraction of his wealth and power or status. Few parents would hesitate to force their daughter to accept such an offer. Chiefs and headmen do in fact have an excessive number of wives. The five biggest chiefs and headmen of the Tongo district had between them about 160 wives of all ages in 1936. Their predecessors of a generation ago would have had perhaps 30 between them, at the utmost. The extra 130 wives they have means that probably 100 other men have been cheated of wives. This has no doubt diminished the chances of early marriage for a proportion of young men, but not so greatly as the men assert. All the evidence of Tale domestic institutions and of Tale genealogies goes to show that wives were always highly prized because they were always at a premium.[1] In consequence, no unmarried girl or woman of child-bearing age lacks suitors, and no wife of child-bearing age need endure an intolerable marriage. She can always find another husband. That women take advantage of their scarcity value is what one would expect; but they do so to a smaller extent than one anticipates. This is due partly to the strength and stability of the patrilineal lineage system, expressed in inter-personal relations in the power of the *patria potestas*, and partly to the great value women set upon wifehood and motherhood. Life is a failure to a Tale woman who never becomes a wife and mother.

The Stability of Marriage

586 587 •582 In consequence, partly, of the scarcity value of wives, but more, no doubt, of the conflict of loyalties and interests which has to be overcome, marriage tends to be unstable in the initial stages. A young man rarely settles down permanently with his first bride, and young women generally treat their first marriage as an experiment unless the husband is a much older man to whom they have been married by formal negotiation. In the course of collecting census material I noted the marriages of over a hundred men. There is not one man over the age of 30, approximately (excluding a few physically or psychologically abnormal men), who has failed to experience one or more unsuccessful and usually short-lived marriages. Most men of 30 to 40 can give a history of five

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[582] [1] I have no demographic evidence suggesting that there was formerly or is now a marked deficiency of marriageable women as compared with men in Taleland. My own crude demographic inquiries suggest a sex ratio of about unity among the Tallensi. Polygynous marriage, therefore, inevitably means competition for wives, even though women are usually married by the age of 16 or 17, as near as one can guess, and men rarely succeed in finding a wife before the age of about 25. The natives maintain that the age of marriage for girls has been decreasing rapidly since the coming of the white man (cf. my paper, 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, xxv, 1943, 3-4).

or six abortive—or rather, to translate the native attitude into our own 586
terms, experimental—marriages. Men of over 50 say, with a laugh, that 587
they cannot remember all the women they have married who left them
after a short time. Women are more discreet about their marital history; 582
but observation leads to the conclusion that between 50 and 60 per cent. of all married women have had more than one husband.[1]

A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, 586
generally the woman, or through that of the wife's guardian. The Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by withholding the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women, [828]
according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.

Despite these initial pitfalls of marriage, families do get established 581
and remain stable. Though the idea of marriage as a lifelong and irrevocable bond does not exist among the Tallensi, many couples do settle down for life, and many other couples remain united for a long enough stretch of years to produce one or more children.

Many complicated circumstances have an influence on this. Naturally, 581
the jural formalities must be properly complied with. That is to say, 583

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[1] Many of these experimental marriages are not marriages at all, according to the strict letter of custom, since they are sometimes dissolved before placation gifts have been made and often before any instalment of the bride-price has been paid. Some last only a few weeks. But they are always called marriages; for it is a fact that many marriages that begin in exactly this way do turn out to be stable in the end. Counting as 'wives' only those for whom bride-price was paid and who bore children to their husbands, I found, among a randomly chosen group of 20 men over 45, approximately, that only 2 had had 1 wife each; only 3 had had 2 wives each; the remaining 15 (= 75 per cent.) had all had more than 2 wives each. Altogether, these 20 men had had 71 wives (average 3·5 wives each); they had lost 21 (average 1 each) by death; and at the time of the census they had 45 wives (average 2·25 each). But most of them claimed to have 'married' from 10 to 20 times and were able to give a fairly complete history of these abortive 'marriages'.

Among a randomly chosen group of 20 women of child-bearing age—who were therefore not yet at the end of their matrimonial careers—6 (= 30 per cent.) had had only one husband each; 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had only 2 husbands each; the remaining 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had more than 2 husbands each, 4 of them having had more than 3 husbands each. Apart from the propensity to choose a final husband by trial and error, the custom of the levirate helps to increase the number of husbands a woman may have in her lifetime.

581 the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*)
583 to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price
acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the
[586] bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

●582 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage.
Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot
593 remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away, though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband, he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of
[789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

583 Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at
least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on
691 the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives of the lineage. Pukiehɔt's wife was taken from him five times because he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehɔt. The chief put it to her that Pukiehɔt was, in effect, treating both her and her guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehɔt saw he was in danger of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

members of two mutually exclusive corporate groups. That is why the 602 lineages of husband and wife are implicated in the marriage and have a lasting interest in its course and in the offspring that come from it. Tale speech and etiquette reveal this, and the classificatory extension of affinal kinship depends on this. Thus if your friend's son or daughter has recently married, you do not ask him 'Whom did he (she) marry?', but 'Where (i.e. which clan) did he (she) marry?', and 'A child of whose house (i.e. what segment of the clan) did he (she) marry?'. We shall take up this thread again at a later stage of our analysis. At present we are concerned with the consequences for the relations of husband and wife of their divergent lineage ties.

The tension due to these opposing sets of social ties appears most 578 acutely in the early stages of marriage, obviously as a result of the fact that marriage is an alliance between two genealogically independent 582 corporate units with rival interests in the protagonists. Every marriage in which the husband is a young man begins as a struggle, carried on with many wiles, stratagems, pretexts, and even threats of or recourse to force. Firstly, the suitor has to compete with other young men whom his would-be bride and in-laws often play off astutely against him. The largest part of his courtship consists in winning over the girl's parents with frequent presents and soft words. To elope with her he must buy the secret connivance of her mother or brother, for her father will always stand out for a negotiated marriage. This is not only an acknowledgement of the father's right to dispose of his daughter's hand, but a guarantee of the consent of the bridegroom's guardian and lineage elders and hence of the payment of the bride-price on demand. It is a defeat for the bridegroom, who has to bow to the will of his father-in-law.

The real struggle begins, however, only after a man succeeds in 578 carrying off his bride by elopement. If the elders on both sides tacitly accept the match as a good one, it becomes a matter of mere formality; 602 but all the conventions of the jural transactions necessary to make a 628 legitimate marriage are couched in the idiom of a struggle between hostile groups. That is why they must take place through an intermediary, the *pɔγasama*, a clansman of the bridegroom and a cognatic kinsman of the bride, bound to hold an even balance between the two parties by reason of his kinship with both.[1] But often enough the struggle turns into a genuine and sometimes acrimonious battle for the girl which may go on for weeks or months. It is then that the lack of a constituted legal system in Tale political organization makes itself felt. The girl's father resorts to all sorts of devices to coerce her abductors. He may use ritual pretexts, exploit ties of cognatic kinship with the abductors' lineage or clan, even, in extremity, threaten to kill himself on their doorstep, or, in the old days, to stir up war against their clan. I have been present at several violent altercations between a party of men

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[1] Cf. pp. 317–18 below.

of this is clearest in funeral customs. If Paanbɔbis II, Kutɔbis's 613
brother, were to die, Ɔndieso would take part in all the rites prohibited to men whose fathers are still alive. He would not refrain out of respect for Kutɔbis.

But in matters which involve Ziŋgan biis as a segment of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri, Ɔndieso acknowledges Kutɔbis as his 'father'. Thus when Bontuya, who belonged to one of the other four inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt biis, died, Ɔndieso went to the funeral as one of the representatives of Ziŋgan biis. He then refused to take part in the rites tabooed to men who have fathers alive, saying that if he did it would be an insult to Kutɔbis.

Ziŋgan biis also appear as a unit in reckoning prohibited degrees of 613
kinship for purposes of marriage. As we have mentioned before, the
inner lineage is the widest corporate group that is a jural unit in marriage. 582
A distant 'sister's son' (*ahɔŋ*) of Kutɔbis would not be allowed to marry a daughter of Ɔndieso. And this criterion applies also to the inheritance of widows. If Kutɔbis were to die, Ɔndieso could not seek any of his widows in marriage, because they are his classificatory 'mothers'. On the other hand, he could do so if Kutɔbis were his classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather'. He can court the widow of any member of any of the four other inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri since generation differences are not recognized beyond the boundaries of Ziŋgan yiri.

In spite of the ambiguities lurking in his relationship to Kutɔbis, the 613
predominant affective tone it has for Ɔndieso is that he is a 'son' and
will remain a 'child' (*bii*) in public affairs that involve the whole clan 554
as long as Kutɔbis or any of his brothers is alive. Until they are dead there will always be a living if shadowy representative of paternal authority standing between Ɔndieso and his remote ancestors—and that means between him and the world at large, as it impinges on him through the corporate activities of the whole clan. This influences Ɔndieso's attitude to life considerably. He feels that he has not yet reached full social maturity, though he is much more intelligent and better informed than many of the clan elders. One sees and feels this vividly enough in one's intercourse with the natives, but it is not easy to pin down. It came out, for instance, in Ɔndieso's behaviour whenever he accompanied me to the Chief's court. He always took a back seat then, as befits a 'youngster'. It came out also in his attitude to Kutɔbis whom he despised for his uncouth ways and all-round incompetence, but yet deferred to with the modicum of respect that is correct in one's relations with a 'father'.

A man who can say 'I no longer have any fathers' associates himself 613
with the elders, the *kpɛm*, in thought and action even if he is younger 622
in years than some men whom he calls 'sons'. He thinks of himself as
a 'father', in particular in relation to the ancestors, as one who has the 554
duty of watching over the welfare of others. It is most marked among

602 577 rites of setting up a shrine dedicated to her. For safety's sake all the travelling on such journeys was always done at night. During the day the traveller lay low in a kinsman's house. So Teroog set off one night. He went first to his father's mother's brother's home at Gorogo. Thence he was escorted to his father's mother's mother's natal home at Sii. The Sii people took him to a more remote kinsman at Balung and from there he was conducted, by similar stages, to Sandema. His return journey was made in the same way. The whole trip took nearly a month. The same journey can be done on foot, nowadays, in three or four days each way.

Similarly Zubiuŋ men relate how in the old days their Tongo neighbours, being of a different and unconnected clan,[1] used sometimes to raid their livestock to recover bride-price debts. As the people of Tongo were much more numerous than those of Zubiuŋ resistance was generally impossible. But if a Zubiuŋ man had a close matrilateral or affinal kinsman at Tongo, this afforded him some protection. His kinsman would intercede to get any livestock of his that had been seized restored to him, or, if the debtor were a very close agnate of his, to arrange a settlement between creditor and debtor. Often the head of an intercalary lineage, such as Nəŋsuur yidem,[2] undertook this on behalf of his classificatory mother's brother's lineage.

602 782 Nowadays the most important obligations extra-lineage kin have towards one another are in ritual matters, and these are unavoidable obligations. This applies especially to kin of a senior generation in relation to those of a junior generation. A person owes ritual allegiance to his matrilateral ancestors as well as to his paternal ancestors. In fact, in the strictly personal affairs of the individual, his matrilateral ancestors have as decisive a role in his life as his patrilineal ancestors. This accords with the recognition given to maternal origin in the social structure and with the rule that kinship never dies out. Hence there are many occasions in the life of a man when he has to go to his mother's brother or to someone standing in that order of relationship to him to ask him to sacrifice on his behalf. For it must be remembered that the canon of agnatic descent prohibits anyone other than a true patrilineal descendant from sacrificing to an ancestor or ancestress. Thus if a man wants to sacrifice to his mother's spirit guardian he has to go to her natal home and ask her father (or his heir) to perform the sacrifice. Herein lies the force of the statement commonly used to define extra-clan kinship ties, 'I sacrifice on his behalf', or 'he sacrifices on my behalf'. The whole weight of the ancestor cult stands behind these and other ritual obligations of extra-clan kin to one another and no Taləŋ would violate them.

602 582 If we add to this the rule that marriage between extra-clan kin of any degree is forbidden, we can see that there is much in common between

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

[2] Cf. ibid., pp. 59 and 78.

the basic rules of inter-personal sentiment and conduct for extra-clan 602
kin and for members of one clan or lineage. As in the lineage, so among 582
extra-clan kin, the pattern of sentiment and conduct we have sketched has greater force with close than with distant kin. The differences between kinship within the lineage and kinship outside the lineage lie less in the sphere of individual sentiment and conduct than in the different structural implications of the two kinds of social ties.

The Classificatory Extension of Extra-clan Kinship

At the outset of this chapter we referred to the classificatory extension 602
of extra-clan kinship ties. This requires further elucidation. In the 601
early stages of my field-work this aspect of Tale kinship seemed to me extraordinarily confused. The natives seemed to label any extra-clan kinsman a 'mother's brother (*ahəb*)' or 'sister's child (*ahəŋ*)' quite indiscriminately. The only distinction they appeared to make was in terms of generation differences. A person was apparently labelled a 'sister's son' if he was related to the speaker through any ancestress who was a member of the latter's clan, and he was described as a 'mother's brother' if the woman forming the link was the speaker's mother or ancestress and a member of the other person's clan.

This apparent confusion soon resolves itself into an orderly picture if the three principles in accordance with which kinsfolk are identified with one another are applied. In addition we must take into account the socio-spatial distribution of these kinship ties, and, especially, the time dimension without which no aspect of Tale social structure can be understood. Naturally the natives themselves do not consciously use such general conceptions in sorting out their kinship bonds; to them it is simply a question of spontaneous adjustment within the everlasting stream of social relations.

The most important of these factors is the lineage principle. An indication of this is found in the constant reference made by natives to their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yiri*) or maternal grandfather's lineage (*yaab yiri*). If a native is asked about his matrilateral kin the first thing he mentions is his *ahəb yiri*—the clan and perhaps clan segment of his mother's brother. The interpretation given to the concept *yiri* varies according to the situation, and follows the rules that govern its usage within the clan or lineage. For instance, I went to Tɛnzugu one day accompanied by two Tongo men. When we reached Kpata'ar one of them said 'This is my *ahəb yiri*', and explained that his mother was a Kpata'ar woman (*pɔγayabələg*). A little later he stopped and broke off a couple of heads of ripe millet in a farm through which the path wound. I twitted him with stealing other people's crops. 'No', he replied, 'this is my *ahəb yiri*. This is La'ab's farm and I am an *ahəŋ* of his *dug*. They won't object to my taking a few heads of millet.' Thus

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a
dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share
is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriage-
able age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people
before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's
brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grand-
mother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may
be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her
father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to
return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of
773 an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were
originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—
usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or
ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his
sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with
him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had
no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs,
the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to
send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with
the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the
ahəŋ became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened
stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with
him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded
by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately con-
ferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession
of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant
position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of
Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly,
183 they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121
mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be
culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining
a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145
correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884
of physiological and psychological development and that of social and
cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of 182
which social development lags behind psycho-physical development.
A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but
has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and
social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she
is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight
in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that
he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four
or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physio-
logical development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower
than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily
be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856]
age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single
words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are
used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one
can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at
about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as
a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582]
they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827
ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881
growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812
The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage
from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West
African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls,
which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality
as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the
body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical
and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural
emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

Kusase

Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787]
father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782
then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

' "Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787
daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574
that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834
more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is
walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845
Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766
fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die." '

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583
barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586
them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

●583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul*. This sanction is very typical.

583 768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

584 585 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'.
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I 591
asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been
arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth
would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such,
for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom
would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner
would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible
for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants
a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [664]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows
for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back,
he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back
by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*sumapog*) 583 ●
once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears
him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking
out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every
new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and
go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep
and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral [764]
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his
village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones.
When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an
egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law
they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne
a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets
of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child,
for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

613 price;[1] and conversely, it is he who is directly responsible for the payment
582 of bride-price for the wives of members of the nuclear lineage, and for
any other outlay entailed by the marriage formalities. But for all these
transactions the formal consent (which is in fact never withheld) of the
medial lineage head is required. This has the force of a blessing. When
613 the bridegroom's people send the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) by which the
583 marriage is regularized, the messenger goes first to the head of the girl's
medial or maximal lineage, and gives him a live cock, the most important
item among the placation gifts.[2] By accepting the live cock the lineage
head signifies the acquiescence of the whole lineage in the marriage and
the blessing of the ancestors thereon. Whether or not bride-price is paid,
the girl is thereafter the jurally recognized wife of the bridegroom. As
a rule it is perfectly safe for the lineage head to accept the cock, as placation gifts are only sent when the head of the girl's nuclear lineage consents. But cases do occur in which they are sent without the knowledge of the latter as a dodge by which to compel him to acquiesce in the marriage. Then if the head of the medial lineage accepts the live cock, the head of the girl's nuclear lineage must perforce acquiesce. This makes the marriage binding but does not secure it against dissolution through action taken by the head of the girl's nuclear lineage.

In the same way, when a woman's father's people come to demand the payment of bride-price from her husband's nuclear lineage, they go first to the head of the husband's medial lineage. He conducts the messengers to the head of the husband's nuclear lineage and formally presides over the negotiations.

Marriage transactions illustrate a very important principle of Tale jural relations. They are always relations between lineage units. Even when they appear to involve only particular individuals the lineage framework is implicit in the transaction. But this does not mean that all Tale jural relations are based on the concept of collective responsibility. On the contrary, jural responsibility is precisely fixed on particular individuals or exactly defined corporate units. This is graphically summed up in many Tale maxims. Thus they say 'A pipe sounds best in its owner's mouth (*Yiig m-mah ka daana nuom*)'—that is, an action should be answered for by the person directly responsible for it. What we find, rather, is that all jural relations involve a configuration of rights on one side and a configuration of responsibilities on the other, both corresponding to the range of lineage segments involved. And no jural transaction is complete until the whole configuration of rights and responsibilities, on both sides, is brought into action. Though marriage formalities involve primarily the nuclear lineage and medial lineage, they presuppose the entire framework of maximal lineage and clan relations; and this is the case with most other jural relations among the Tallensi.

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[1] Subject to limitations that will be detailed in our next volume.

602 [2] In many clans there is an arrangement between pairs of medial or maximal lineages that have some special tie of kinship by which the *sɛndaan* cock for a girl of one lineage is delivered to the *kpeem* of the other lineage and vice versa. E.g. this arrangement obtains between Lɛbhtiis yidɛm and Kabuu yidɛm at Tɔŋ-Puhug and is a sign of their close kinship as lineages sprung from one original progenitrix (see p. 212).

578

adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182 of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769 bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182 principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182 constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618 x evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Taləŋ identifies himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidɛm*)' and of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔyaba*)' and 'our children (*ti biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions to-day, a Taləŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182 for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426 groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman [illegible] his debtor, but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman, the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567] into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations. It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt. Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583 ● unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426 man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'. Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled. The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682 clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618 x of no case, in recent years, of this having occurred. Public sentiment would not be sympathetic to it, since he is felt to be so closely connected with the clan. 848

It sometimes happens that a woman who has an illegitimate child takes it with her when she gets married, and the child is brought up in her husband's house. Eŋwala's illegitimate son, Kumahe, grew up thus under the care of her husband, Yɛanbɔrəgya. The boy and his stepfather were greatly attached to each other. Kumahe farmed with Yɛanbɔrəgya like his own sons, and was treated like a son in the ordinary affairs of the household. When he began courting a daughter of his stepfather's clan, Yɛanbɔrəgya gave him fatherly support and counsel. But when Kumahe's prospective parents-in-law asked for an advance payment on the bride-price, Yɛanbɔrəgya neither provided it nor took responsibility for it. For Kumahe had not acquired filial status in Yɛanbɔrəgya's lineage, and the responsibility for the payment of bride-price on his behalf rested with his jural guardian, his mother's brother. Kumahe belongs to his mother's clan, and both he, his stepfather, and his mother's brother told me, at different times, that he would undoubtedly return one day to live amongst this clan. 848 583

The status of a male slave (*da'abər*) in former times was similar, though in some respects less advantageous. The Tallensi seem to have kept few slaves.[1] It is said that a man usually bought a male slave if he lacked a son to help him with his farming and to support him in his old age. Slaves were never natives of Taleland but hapless strangers from other parts of the Northern Territories found wandering in the country. Having no kinsfolk in Taleland to protect them they fell a prey to anyone who chanced to encounter them. Their only security lay in the taboo that made it obligatory for them to be handed over to chiefs, who alone had the ritual status entitling men to sell fellow men. To fit them into the social structure they were incorporated into the family and lineage of their owners by being placed under the spiritual guardianship of one of their owner's lineage ancestors' shrines. This gave a slave a quasi-filial status of the same kind, with the same rights and disabilities, as an illegitimate son's. 567

In his social relations with his quasi-paternal family and clan a slave was indistinguishable from an illegitimate member of the group. In a quarrel he might be abused as a slave—'a bought thing (*bonda'abər*)'—and his quasi-clansmen would be inclined to regard him with a kind of patronizing contempt. But his owner would take up the cudgels for him as energetically as for one of his own sons if he were wantonly

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[1] When they are questioned on the subject, men of 50–60 can usually quote one or two slaves they knew of in their childhood, never more. The impression I got from talks with many people was that there were never more than five or six male slaves living at any one time in Tongo, and correspondingly fewer in smaller settlements.

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The 611
second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its
life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father 842
a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or
has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right
rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so
much importance to having children that they generally make every
effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony,
or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the
care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When 611
she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the 583
cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense
of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three
head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law
(or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's
children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established
as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted 611
as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory
he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In
practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in
the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of
his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when
he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare,
when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours,
sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came
across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and
eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite
an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted 613
into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without 618
any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt
to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition 602
to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more
important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship
and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the
new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one
would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old
man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance
of his father's estate, but was elected tendaana over the heads of men
who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's
jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either
his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do
so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow
of redemption.

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of [432] Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1] Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by [578] inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of.

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of 578 *competition both* between individuals and between corporate groups. This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction 583 of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests.

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict 691 between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per cent. 185 of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing 578 for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter.

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much 581 scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, 595 whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally 622 prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

or six abortive—or rather, to translate the native attitude into our own 586
terms, experimental—marriages. Men of over 50 say, with a laugh, that 587
they cannot remember all the women they have married who left them
after a short time. Women are more discreet about their marital history; 582
but observation leads to the conclusion that between 50 and 60 per cent.
of all married women have had more than one husband.[1]

A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, 586
generally the woman, or through that of the wife's guardian. The
Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get
rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by withholding
the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or
he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman
decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because
she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects
her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women,
according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can [828]
seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays
longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man
or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable
dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.

Despite these initial pitfalls of marriage, families do get established 581
and remain stable. Though the idea of marriage as a lifelong and
irrevocable bond does not exist among the Tallensi, many couples do
settle down for life, and many other couples remain united for a long
enough stretch of years to produce one or more children.

Many complicated circumstances have an influence on this. Naturally, 581
the jural formalities must be properly complied with. That is to say, 583

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[1] Many of these experimental marriages are not marriages at all, according to the strict letter of custom, since they are sometimes dissolved before placation gifts have been made and often before any instalment of the bride-price has been paid. Some last only a few weeks. But they are always called marriages; for it is a fact that many marriages that begin in exactly this way do turn out to be stable in the end. Counting as 'wives' only those for whom bride-price was paid and who bore children to their husbands, I found, among a randomly chosen group of 20 men over 45, approximately, that only 2 had had 1 wife each; only 3 had had 2 wives each; the remaining 15 (= 75 per cent.) had all had more than 2 wives each. Altogether, these 20 men had had 71 wives (average 3·5 wives each); they had lost 21 (average 1 each) by death; and at the time of the census they had 45 wives (average 2·25 each). But most of them claimed to have 'married' from 10 to 20 times and were able to give a fairly complete history of these abortive 'marriages'.

Among a randomly chosen group of 20 women of child-bearing age—who were therefore not yet at the end of their matrimonial careers—6 (= 30 per cent.) had had only one husband each; 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had only 2 husbands each; the remaining 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had more than 2 husbands each, 4 of them having had more than 3 husbands each. Apart from the propensity to choose a final husband by trial and error, the custom of the levirate helps to increase the number of husbands a woman may have in her lifetime.

581 the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*)
583 to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price
[586] acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the
bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

582 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage.
Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot
593 remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law
he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away, though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband, he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of
[789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might
curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at
583 least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on
691 the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives
of the lineage. Pukiehət's wife was taken from him five times because he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehət. The chief put it to her that Pukiehət was, in effect, treating both her and her guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehət saw he was in danger of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's
lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
602 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
627 for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It is not until the formal placation gift (*sendaan*) is sent to the girl's father with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

676 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument
by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
●583 marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
576 maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan. The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
574 desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
593 parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority. Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two, though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
[837] have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes, for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law, his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth
regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive,
851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their
[783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which
593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are
593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults
571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

● 583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should
591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her
571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

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854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs
of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins)
165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

593 571 583 voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

593 571 607 Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (*deem*)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

593 601 607 Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our wife (*ti pɔγa*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*sɛt*) in the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584 ●
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, 171
or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782]
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo: 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul*. This sanction is very typical.

583 768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

● 584 585 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'. 591
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such, for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [664]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back, he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-pog*) once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 583 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen* (*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law [764]
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones. When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child, for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

834 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property,
765 it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her
eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women;
768 any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

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584 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pok zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

764 Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely 571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with 562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔγayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of 764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform 571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for 562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔγayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of 252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔγayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔγayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them, 571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites. 562 A *pɔγayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about [292] to join. A *pɔγayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔγayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*daγat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

x618 Lastly, a married *pɔγayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and 728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which ● 584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔγasama*—a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔγayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members. 562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation 602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly
lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch
sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential
592 life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this
262 in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential
576 autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces
almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to
which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces
574 himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out,
521 informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out
gafarra ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dendɔyo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be
so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart
[584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy.
Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a distant clan-sister (*pɔɣaɣabələg*) do not clash with the habits, morals, and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships. Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen. Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the latter's settlement.

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A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own. The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation. There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives to stay long at their parents' homes.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman,
602 anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house.
Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-
837 in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settle-
ment. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces
577 the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one
of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible
form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily
divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and
the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I
have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or
someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of
606 his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and
837 on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking
thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a
577 father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own
wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married
couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from
her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before,
if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her
status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and
daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his
status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not
abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble con-
flict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations.
So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's
lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particu-
[576] larly within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet
his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his,
if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this
would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though
not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the pro-
834 hibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's
paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settle-
ment), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the
husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children
borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done,
disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited
by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for
574 instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few
days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A
834 man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

584 574 834 expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep in separate rooms.

574 834 These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

606 783 844 The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

606 783 827 A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

593 the claim. But if the head of the family claims an egg no one can gainsay him, so a young man might find himself left without any eggs to breed 596 from. That is why he wishes to be independent. It is a kind of rudi- 422 mentary myth summing up the economic causes of family fission. The point of interest is the emphasis on the inequitable behaviour of the 'father'. He uses his economic authority to his own advantage without making an equivalent return and thus prevents the 'son' from getting a start on the road of economic independence.

593 The adjustment of father's rights and son's rights has an added subtlety where cash is concerned. Supposing a young man returns from abroad with four or five pounds in cash that he has saved. According to the letter of custom he should hand all of it over to his father. But money, unlike a cow or a sheep, can be easily concealed and does not require attention; our young man can retain a part of his savings without his father's knowing of it. If it is his own father he may keep only a few shillings, particularly if he has recently been, or is about to be married and the money is wanted to pay his wife's bride-price. If it is his proxy father he will probably hand over only a pound or two, unless, again, the money is required for the bride-price of his wife; and then he will try not to hand over the money until his father-in-law actually demands the bride-price. It is common knowledge that this is the regular practice of young men returning from abroad. Fathers have no power to stop it, though most of them would like to; for up to a point, the young men are within their rights. Have they not 'taken their own legs and gone to get their money' by labour that is always arduous and sometimes dangerous? Again conflicts are inevitable, though as yet not more frequent than over other forms of property. For some men are only too apt to fritter away the money entrusted to them by a dependant before the time comes for it to be used for the benefit of the latter.

As we have mentioned before, one of the heaviest responsibilities a 593 man bears on behalf of his son, or for a dependant standing in the same ●584 economic and jural relationship to him, is in 'marriage affairs'. It is the bridegroom's father or proxy father who has to undertake the series of jural actions required from his paternal kin in order to legitimize the union. In marriage by arrangement (*pɔyalak*) it is the bridegroom's father who starts the negotiations and carries them through. The young man himself hardly sees his bride, after his first few courting visits, until she is brought to his home. In marriage by elopement (*pɔyazaŋər*) the bridegroom's father's consent is essential for the marriage to be properly concluded. While, as we have already indicated, a father never openly disapproves of a son's marriage but on the contrary always displays apparent pleasure over it, he can easily cause it to break down by holding back the bride-price.

As we know already, the two significant jural acts in the conclusion of a marriage are the sending of the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) and the

593 payment of at least a part of the fixed bride-price of three cows and a bull, or their equivalent. The essential responsibility for the ● 584 performance of these two acts lies with the bridegroom's father or father's heir, subject to the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Formally, the bride's paternal kin send their invitation to the bridegroom's paternal kin to *lu sendaan* through the head of the latter's nuclear or inner lineage, and make their demands for bride-price through the same channels; for no jural act takes place except in the framework of the lineage system. But actually the responsibility for satisfying the bride's kin falls on the bridegroom's father. He must 'find the things'—the fowls and guinea-fowls—for the placation gifts; he must send off the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) who carries them to the bride's family; he must furnish the animals or goods or money to pay the bride-price. 'Is it not his child? (*Pa u biiga*)' say the natives, implying that this is a duty arising out of the fact of parenthood. In part it is 593 a specific duty; in part it is an aspect of a general responsibility that a 672 man bears for his son's jural relations. Thus if his son's wife is abducted it is the father who calls on the other members of his inner lineage to 426 stand by him in taking action to recover the wife. If his son has abducted another man's wife the father is directly answerable. Strictly speaking a son cannot contract a debt involving heritable property such as cattle or large sums of money without his father's authorization. Even if the son is a man of substance, a wise creditor will insist that his father's (and also his brothers' of the same nuclear lineage) consent to the transaction be obtained first and made known to him. If this is not done the creditor's chances of recovery are small. It becomes a question of one man's word against another's and Tallensi are past masters in the art of putting off a creditor. The concurrence of the debtor's father and brothers fixes liability for ever, and if the debtor dies before settling the debt his father, or his heir, is liable. These rules do not apply to small sums of money, say a shilling or two, or things of small value such as a hen or a loin-cloth. But petty borrowing and lending rarely takes place between people who are not friends or close kin, and it is thus generally fitted into the scheme of reciprocal aid that obtains between friends and kinsfolk.

593 In their jural aspect these obligations of a father arise from the fact of 'begetting (*dɔɣam*)'; in their economic aspect they are greatly 584 influenced by the principle of reciprocity. Where obligations of such great social consequence are involved, the principle of reciprocity is not 577 limited to particular individuals but it binds their heirs and successors as well owing to the operation of the lineage principle. One or two cases will show how these two aspects are interwoven.

While Tampɔɣar was courting his wife he had very little recourse to his proxy father's help. The few shillings he had received from selling ground-nuts and a fowl or two sufficed to provide the occasional penny

593 ●584 577 he gave the girl whenever he saw her in the market and the gifts of tobacco and kola nuts he took to his prospective parents-in-law. He had some guinea-fowls of his own and his proxy father gave him a few more to take as presents to his prospective mother-in-law. Just when he thought the time was ripe to elope with the girl her father warned him not to attempt it as she was under a ritual taboo which prohibited her from marrying in this way. To his chagrin Tampɔɣar was therefore compelled to ask his proxy father Kurug to negotiate for the girl's hand. At this point Kurug began to temporize. Marriage by arrangement is an expensive business. Had not Tampɔɣar better wait a while until the guinea-fowl chicks were bigger? Tampɔɣar's answer was a fit of sulks, a warning to his 'father' that he felt injured. Had he not stayed at home to help with the farming when he could easily have followed some of his contemporaries to Kumasi? Then he would have earned enough to pay the expenses of his marriage himself. Why should he tire himself out in farming if this was the treatment he got in return?

Meanwhile Kurug had been talking to the other men of his inner lineage about the affair. He felt that it was high time Tampɔɣar had a wife, and he knew that if the young man were frustrated his work during the coming farming season would suffer. Moreover, he might take it into his head to run away to Kumasi. Kurug's lineage brothers shared his views. Besides, Kurug had enough cattle to pay the bride-price at once if need be and it was his duty to get a wife for the youth. It was his duty as the boy's proxy father; it was a return he owed the boy for the labour he had been contributing for several years to the household economy; it was, also, a return he owed to Tampɔɣar's dead father. When the latter died Kurug had inherited his wife and his property as well as his children. Kurug had benefited from this inheritance and must now repay it to the dead man's son. And so he at length agreed to arrange the marriage. He asked one of his neighbours and clansmen, whose grandfather had been a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) of the bride-to-be's clan, to act as intermediary and began to get together the fowls and guinea-fowls that would be needed for the ceremony by which the bride is given to her future husband's lineage representatives.

Kurug himself provided the bulk of the 'things' required for this ceremony, but Tampɔɣar gave a couple of his own guinea-fowls. Kurug provided the basket of millet with which the bride's mother's co-wife was 'seen off home (*beeh*)' when she paid her the customary formal visit shortly after the marriage, and he provided all but one of the fowls and guinea-fowls for the placation gifts, Tampɔɣar himself giving one fowl. Lastly, it was Kurug who gave the two cows which Tampɔɣar's father-in-law demanded as the first instalment of the bride-price. These were cows to the purchase of which Tampɔɣar's labour had contributed; and if Kurug had died before Tampɔɣar's marriage, Tampɔɣar would have inherited them.

593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

593 578 ●584 Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *sunzɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbɔm. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbɔm.

593 613 The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

593 867 This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood, first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were 593
non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but 571
may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's
wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's 835
wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between 593
brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office
is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. 622
No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the 584
same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social 593
equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists
between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with 554
the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

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[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great 622
lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tendaana. In 183
addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahəŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office.

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an 425
ahəŋ or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a par-
ticular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in 622
former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yεa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tenzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahəŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman.

Certain powers normally held by tendaanas only are sometimes vested 793
in lineages that do not have tendaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of 604
Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyεbəg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahəŋ* of the tendaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tendaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors.

The Ahəŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahəŋ* forms a link between his father's 604
lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to
every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahəŋ* is always chosen 584
as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

604 *pɔɣasama*. As has been previously stated, he is a clansman of the bridegroom who is also an *ahəŋ* of the bride's clan—*ahəŋ* being under-
● 584 stood to include any sororal kinsman of whatever degree. The reason for this choice was well put by a group of elders with whom I discussed this subject. 'He (the *pɔɣasama*) is our (the bridegroom's clan's) person and is also their (the bride's clan's) person. He may not deceive us nor may he deceive them. If he deceives either of us the ancestors will not permit it.'[1]

604 The *pɔɣasama* appears in every transaction between the two parties to a marriage. He takes the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) to the bride's
584 father. When, later, the bride's father sends messengers (*duondɛm*) to demand the bride-price, the *pɔɣasama* conducts them to the person
764 responsible for paying the bride-price and assists in the negotiations. Many a marriage is saved by the skill and patience of a *pɔɣasama* in persuading the bride's people and the bridegroom's people to a compromise on the question of bride-price payments. He must be present whenever bride-price payments are made; for if, at any subsequent time, a dispute should arise as to what was paid, his word is final. The *pɔɣasama* also acts as intermediary in all the formal claims, services, and duties that arise between the parties as a result of the marriage. He is the messenger who goes to announce the birth of her first child to the bride's parents. If a woman's father or mother dies, the *pɔɣasama* conducts the party sent by her husband with his obligatory food contributions to the funeral, and he hands these contributions over to his 'mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*)'. In this and similar jural or ritual relations between the husband's people and the wife's people, the *pɔɣasama* has to be present both as a witness of the transaction and as a mediator, in case the recipients object to the quantity or quality of the food contributions or the payments offered. For though the obligations of the parties in such situations are clearly defined by custom, there is room for much quibbling over details. Custom declares that a man must kill and cook a goat or a sheep to send to his father-in-law's funeral at a certain stage. But one man will, out of generosity or as a special sign of respect, kill a large goat, whereas another will be mean and choose a puny animal. I have seen violent arguments arise between a son-in-law's messengers and his late father-in-law's lineage over a point of this sort. The mere presence of the *pɔɣasama*, even if he is but a young lad, has a conciliatory influence. As will be remembered, the *pɔɣasama*'s role does not come to an end on his death. It passes to his brothers and sons, like any other attribute of his social personality.

604 There are other situations in which an *ahəŋ* acts as intermediary
778 between the members of his paternal clan and his matrilateral clan. For example, the setting up of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine for a man is done

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[1] *'U a tam nit ha le a bàm nit; u ku too m-paah tam, u ku too m-paah bam-mi; ən paah ti sɔ kpiinam la ku sayi.'*

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakaa*.[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely. 221 262
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

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[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakaa* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but the *bakaa* is their own property. [263 422]

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying and stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s*. or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly. 584

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls, 796

system and his or her gradual acquisition of a responsible status in 883
the social structure. By the age of 14 or 15 most girls are already 868
married or being courted in marriage. They take their household
duties more lightly perhaps than older women with children, but 866
their childhood education is complete. Their education in the duties and responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood lies outside the scope of this paper. 'To play' now means to join in the dance or to dress up and go to market, there to gossip and flirt. These are recreations merely, like conversation in the evening after a good meal, when the whole family sits or sprawls about in one of the inner courts or in front of the gateway. Such 'play' is educative in quite a different sense to that of childhood.

Boys, too, between the ages of 12 or 13 and 16 to 18 are at the stage of transition from childhood to young manhood. The imaginative play still prominent at the beginning of this period is given up by degrees and usually altogether abandoned when puberty is established. Like the adolescent girl, the boy of 16 or so finds his principal recreation in the dance at certain seasons. He, too, begins to frequent markets [584]
when time permits, for he is greatly preoccupied with the opposite sex, with courtship and flirtations and even transient love affairs, and there is no place like the market for pretty girls. An adolescent youth is already applying the deftness and skill acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. A 16-year-old takes an active part in building and thatching and in the manufacture of bows and arrows, or in the practice of crafts like leatherwork or the forging of tools and implements.

The transition from boyhood to manhood can readily be observed in the development of farming interests and skill during this period. The boy of 10 to 12 is extremely keen to plant, hoe and weed. Helping his father, he sows ground-nuts for himself amongst his father's early millet. Frequently he has a small plot of cereals, a few yards square, in a useless corner of one of his father's fields. He hoes and plants and weeds his plot with great energy and zest, though somewhat crudely, borrowing one of his father's discarded hoes for this purpose. He assists his mother to farm her ground-nuts and beans. But his efforts make no difference to the family commissariat or to the care and sustenance given him by his parents. He is still

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, 171
or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782]
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo: 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The ***kunran*** (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul*. This sanction is very typical.

583 768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

584 585 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

Kusase

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'.
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I 591
asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been
arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth
would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such,
for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom
would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner
would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible
for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants
a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [664]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows
for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back,
he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back
by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-pog*) 583
once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears
him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking
out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every
new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and
go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep
and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral [764]
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his
village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones.
When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an
egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law
they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne
a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets
of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child,
for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔɣat
of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔɣat tried to lay hands
on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
581 spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripeta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripeta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual
relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is
this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries.
She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by
her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
[837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife,
whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife, and may sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery. Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried, but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology) of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy, he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's marriage with the woman had never been consummated. 581 585 587

It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how Baŋyelib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning, as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She was helpless, and Baŋyelib, who had purposely stayed in the room, 'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree. Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to procreation rather than to gratification. 581 585 [842]

Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say, somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the jealousy (*yuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for him in revenge. 595 578

XXXV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms. Rites de Passage. Shrines. Soothsayers

428 PROPERTY *and Inheritance:* The rules already given in Chapter XXII for the devolution of private, family, and ancestral property apply equally here. I noted, however, in many cases, deliberate attempts to mislead the enquirer, being repeatedly told that the son succeeds to his father's property to the exclusion of the brother. In every case where such a statement was made it was found that the wish was father of the thought, and that in no case was such succession in conformity with Native customary law. In one of the histories recorded in the previous chapter it will be noted that a son succeeded his father, but this was only due to the coincidence that when *Misore* was driven away from Mampruse he was not accompanied by any of his brothers. The real facts are, that, where there are no brothers, the eldest 'son,' not necessarily of the deceased—he may be son of deceased's brother—succeeds.

582 *Particular Significance of Certain Relationship Terms*: No new facts were disclosed which have not already been discussed, save in connexion with the marriage avoidances relating to cross-cousins.[1] With regard to these, the following, perhaps ingenious rather than convincing, excuse was given for the prevalent dislike for such unions.

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586 'If you married your mother's brother's daughter, and quarrelled about the cows paid to your *aben* or *asen* (maternal uncle, Nankane *asiba*) for *sull*, (Nankane, *sulle*), this would lead to trouble. Suppose you quarrelled with your wife after marriage and she returned to her father, who is your maternal uncle, you would ask him to return the cows. Should he not do so, you would be entitled to seize cows belonging to any person from his, that is from your own mother's, town; you would descend into the valley (*sig boog nwoy nigi*; Nankane, *sig boo nyoge*). After doing so you could no longer perform sacrifices to your mother or to her mother; you would not sleep; your children would die, and your uncle would also suffer.'

Marriage with Father's Sister's Daughter: A somewhat similar explanation was given for this avoidance. 'You cannot marry her because

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[1] See p. 4.

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, 171
or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782]
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tɔngo: 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back [586] ●
the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then 587
remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries 614
outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

Five to six months after birth
the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787]
father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782
then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

'"Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787
daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574
that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834
more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is
walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845
Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766
fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die."'

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583
barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586
them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

The Chain of Sub-clans

x618 613 Thus came into being this chain of four patrilineal sub-clans (Tongo, Yamalɔg, Sie, and Biuk), each the skeleton of a community. From these primary nuclei colonies have continually hived off to settle in neighbouring areas, particularly at Gbambee, Gorogo, Ba'ari, Woo, and Datɔk. Each sub-clan is itself a composite system of lineages: authentic lineages constituted by the direct line of agnatic descent from the clan founder, Mosuor; attached lineages, linked to these usually by the dogma of [611] sister-descent; and assimilated lineages. The attached lineages are identified as *ti tau biis*—our sister's children—descendants in the direct male line of a female member of one of the authentic lineages. The stereotyped formula attributes the origin of such a lineage either to a sister's son (*ahɔŋ*) who came to live in his mother's brother's (*ahɔb*) community, or to a sister who was divorced by her husband by the irrevocable procedure of blowing ash on her (*pɛbh*), and returned to the shelter of her parental home with her children. By this form of divorce a man renounces his rights in his children, who henceforth become members of their maternal lineage, as if they had been illegitimately begotten by a lover. The agnatic posterity of such children, as of any spinster's son, becomes a lineage attached to that of their ancestor's mother.

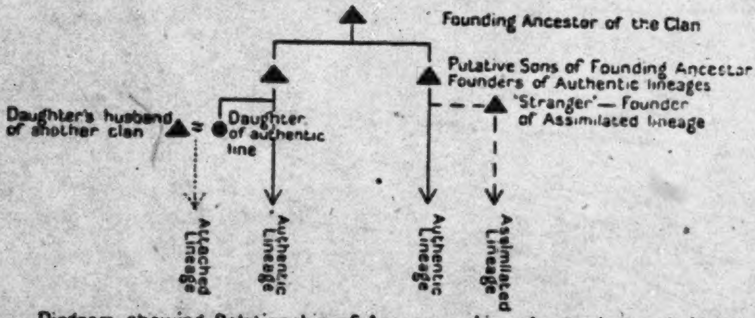
Founding Ancestor of the Clan
Putative Sons of Founding Ancestor
Founders of Authentic lineages
'Stranger'— Founder of Assimilated lineage
Daughter's husband of another clan
Daughter of authentic line
Attached Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Assimilated Lineage

Diagram showing Relationship of Accessory Lineages to Authentic Line

● [586]

We shall call these 'attached lineages' because they are linked to the authentic lineages by actual or putative cognatic ties. An attached lineage maintains its continuity and distinctness, like any other lineage, even if its patrilineal progenitor is alleged to have repudiated its ancestress and his own progeny.

The existence of the assimilated lineages is often traced to an ancestor who was a 'kinsman' (*mabii*) accompanying the founder of the authentic lineage when he first arrived. Of some such lineages, however, it is whispered that they sprang from slaves of the authentic lineage with which they are connected, or from foreign refugees who sought their protection. The term used for these lineages is intended to convey that they are incorporated in the sub-clan by virtue of their dependence on and participation in the life of an authentic lineage. We shall also describe these two kinds of lineages collectively as accessory lineages.

606 611 602 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*; they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

835 The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

582 602 Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*. ● [586] If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bɔk*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'aləm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpemdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpemdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'aləm, are well known. Tinta'aləm

581 or headman or important elder, backed as it often is by lavish gifts to
595 her parents, security of the bride-price, and the attraction of his wealth
622 and power or status. Few parents would hesitate to force their daughter
to accept such an offer. Chiefs and headmen do in fact have an excessive number of wives. The five biggest chiefs and headmen of the Tongo district had between them about 160 wives of all ages in 1936. Their predecessors of a generation ago would have had perhaps 30 between them, at the utmost. The extra 130 wives they have means that probably 100 other men have been cheated of wives. This has no doubt diminished the chances of early marriage for a proportion of young men, but not so greatly as the men assert. All the evidence of Tale domestic institutions and of Tale genealogies goes to show that wives were always highly prized because they were always at a premium.[1] In consequence, no unmarried girl or woman of child-bearing age lacks suitors, and no wife of child-bearing age need endure an intolerable marriage. She can always find another husband. That women take advantage of their scarcity value is what one would expect; but they do so to a smaller extent than one anticipates. This is due partly to the strength and stability of the patrilineal lineage system, expressed in inter-personal relations in the power of the *patria potestas*, and partly to the great value women set upon wifehood and motherhood. Life is a failure to a Tale woman who never becomes a wife and mother.

The Stability of Marriage

● 586 In consequence, partly, of the scarcity value of wives, but more, no
doubt, of the conflict of loyalties and interests which has to be overcome,
587 marriage tends to be unstable in the initial stages. A young man rarely
settles down permanently with his first bride, and young women gene-
582 rally treat their first marriage as an experiment unless the husband is a
much older man to whom they have been married by formal negotiation. In the course of collecting census material I noted the marriages of over a hundred men. There is not one man over the age of 30, approximately (excluding a few physically or psychologically abnormal men), who has failed to experience one or more unsuccessful and usually short-lived marriages. Most men of 30 to 40 can give a history of five

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[582] [1] I have no demographic evidence suggesting that there was formerly or is now a marked deficiency of marriageable women as compared with men in Taleland. My own crude demographic inquiries suggest a sex ratio of about unity among the Tallensi. Polygynous marriage, therefore, inevitably means competition for wives, even though women are usually married by the age of 16 or 17, as near as one can guess, and men rarely succeed in finding a wife before the age of about 25. The natives maintain that the age of marriage for girls has been decreasing rapidly since the coming of the white man (cf. my paper, 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, xxv, 1943, 3-4).

or six abortive—or rather, to translate the native attitude into our own 586
terms, experimental—marriages. Men of over 50 say, with a laugh, that 587
they cannot remember all the women they have married who left them
after a short time. Women are more discreet about their marital history; 582
but observation leads to the conclusion that between 50 and 60 per cent.
of all married women have had more than one husband.[1]

A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, 586
generally the woman, or through that of the wife's guardian. The
Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get
rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by withholding the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or
he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman
decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because
she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects
her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women,
according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can [828]
seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays
longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man
or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable
dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.

Despite these initial pitfalls of marriage, families do get established 581
and remain stable. Though the idea of marriage as a lifelong and
irrevocable bond does not exist among the Tallensi, many couples do
settle down for life, and many other couples remain united for a long
enough stretch of years to produce one or more children.

Many complicated circumstances have an influence on this. Naturally, 581
the jural formalities must be properly complied with. That is to say, 583

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[1] Many of these experimental marriages are not marriages at all, according to the strict letter of custom, since they are sometimes dissolved before placation gifts have been made and often before any instalment of the bride-price has been paid. Some last only a few weeks. But they are always called marriages; for it is a fact that many marriages that begin in exactly this way do turn out to be stable in the end. Counting as 'wives' only those for whom bride-price was paid and who bore children to their husbands, I found, among a randomly chosen group of 20 men over 45, approximately, that only 2 had had 1 wife each; only 3 had had 2 wives each; the remaining 15 (= 75 per cent.) had all had more than 2 wives each. Altogether, these 20 men had had 71 wives (average 3·5 wives each); they had lost 21 (average 1 each) by death; and at the time of the census they had 45 wives (average 2·25 each). But most of them claimed to have 'married' from 10 to 20 times and were able to give a fairly complete history of these abortive 'marriages'.

Among a randomly chosen group of 20 women of child-bearing age—who were therefore not yet at the end of their matrimonial careers—6 (= 30 per cent.) had had only one husband each; 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had only 2 husbands each; the remaining 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had more than 2 husbands each, 4 of them having had more than 3 husbands each. Apart from the propensity to choose a final husband by trial and error, the custom of the levirate helps to increase the number of husbands a woman may have in her lifetime.

581 the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*)
583 to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the
[586] bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

582 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage. Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot
593 remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away, though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband, he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of
[789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

583 Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on
691 the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives of the lineage. Pukiehɔt's wife was taken from him five times because he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehɔt. The chief put it to her that Pukiehɔt was, in effect, treating both her and her guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehɔt saw he was in danger of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a really effective force in maintaining the marriage. 586

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond is of vital importance in this relationship. 581

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima, Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace, formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women. Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat during sleep is a grave mystical offence endangering the life of the husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent back to her parents. 581 586 [842] [685] [827]

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When 602 593

●586 684 We have previously said that the Tallensi have no institutionalized procedure for divorce. This needs to be qualified. A very drastic procedure to which we have referred in our earlier book[1] exists by which a man can get rid of an objectionable wife. It is usually described as 'blowing (on)' (*pɛbh*) a wife, for it consists in the man's blowing ashes over his wife. By this action he expels her utterly from his house with all her brood. He casts her off and disowns her children; and he forfeits the bride-price. Everybody knows of this custom, and it is held to be [613] entirely licit for any husband. The origins of attached lineages[2] are often attributed to clan sisters who were allegedly divorced in this way. But it is impossible to get a record of a single case that has occurred within the last forty or fifty years, or, indeed, within living memory. Though natives say that a man could, if he wished, 'blow on' his wife if she angered him continuously, or if she were dissolute, or were objectionable in any way, in fact her delinquencies would have to be of so grave a nature as to imperil his life and the welfare of the family for a man to cut through his marriage ties irrevocably at such enormous sacrifice.

The example of such a misdemeanour always quoted is concerned with their sexual relations. It is a taboo (*kihər*) for a woman to deny her husband's sexual rights over her. She would do so, by implication, if she were to kick him over in the act of coitus.[3] This is a sin of such gravity that the marriage must be dissolved at once or else disaster will come upon both partners. For it means that husband and wife have fallen out so badly with each other that they have come into sexual conflict.

This is implied, also, in a more symbolic way, if the disagreements between husband and wife come to a head in her attacking him with her stirring-stick (*vugər*) and his retaliating with his bow (*tap*). The stirring-stick, an indispensable implement for cooking porridge, is one of the emblems of femininity, and the bow, the principal weapon of the chase and of warfare, the chief emblem of manhood in Tale custom and ritual. Men are by convention excluded from the kitchen; women, both by convention and by ritual injunction, from the chase, and from contact with its magical and mechanical appurtenances when they are being [834] used for hunting. One of the very rare occasions on which sexual continence is ritually enjoined on men is when they are poisoning arrows for hunting or war. Thus, a fight between husband and wife with bow and stirring-stick is a fight in terms of their opposed sexuality, a repudiation of the fundamental bond of marriage. It is a sin, and the couple will die if they do not immediately sever their marital relationship completely.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] Ibid., p. 51.

[833] [3] The point lies in the postures adopted by the Tallensi in coitus. As in many other primitive cultures, the woman lies on her back, and the man squats on his haunches between her thighs. She can, therefore, easily push him over with a kick, the natives say.

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with 586
genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his 684
wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the 158
sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against 827
the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the 586
others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have 578
coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his
rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if 833
she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If 684
any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman 581
marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and
even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its 613
members as 'our wives (*ti pɔγaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman 618
trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛŋ ni i tau n-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛŋmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604 will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577 when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head 302 shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. 789] Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely, withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage. But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604 rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574 principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a 764 woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws. The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl [431] who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit. Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604 her father without having previously arranged to go to another man, she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. 586 ● There she is, so to speak, under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587 She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

604 which a father would never do. In theory, this means that the *ba-pɔk*
consents to the new marriage. In practice, her action has no binding
586 force on her brother. This rule applies also to an unmarried girl who is
587 given in marriage by her *ba-pɔk*. A woman might have one of her brother's daughters living with her as a nursemaid for her baby. She might promise the girl as a wife to one of her husband's brothers. But her brother need not consider himself bound by this promise if he has objections to the marriage.

604 A father's sister is, in short, a kind of female 'father', but without the jural and ritual attributes of fatherhood. A father's sister must be
571 treated with respect. It would be grossly improper, for example, to joke with her as one jokes with a wife's sister; and to strike or abuse her, even if she were much younger than oneself, would be a sin. But the respect accorded to her is only a pale reflection of the attitude implicit in filial piety. It is much more a matter of etiquette than of emotion, as if it were merely conventional and not evoked by a feeling of moral obligation.

604 A marked characteristic of a person's relations with his or her father's sister is the absence of specific mutual obligations. Just as a *ba-pɔk* has in reality no rights over her brother's children, so she has no specific duties of either a ritual or a secular kind towards them, or they to her. This is the chief contrast between this relationship and that of parent and child or that of mother's brother and sister's child. Only a shadow of a ritual sanction comes into the relationship, in the form of the belief that the curse of a *ba-pɔk* can harm her brother's child, and in the notion that she stands under the protection of the same ancestors as the latter. Hence, though she cannot demand services from her brother's child, it is felt that a request for help from her should be met, even at the cost of
[789] some inconvenience. If a person offends his father's sister and she reproaches him saying, 'I bore you (identifying herself with her brother) and this is how you treat me. My ancestors have seen it, my fathers have seen it (*Man dɔγi la k-i ɛŋəm là ŋwala; n-yaanam nyeya, m-banam nyeya*)', this has the force of a curse because she is invoking her ancestors who are also his ancestors. Such a curse would disturb a native, but not nearly so deeply as a father's curse or if a mother's brother refused to sacrifice on his behalf.

Because their relationship is devoid of a definite jural coefficient and is not subject to organized ritual sanctions; because, also, a father's sister stands outside the scheme of economic and domestic associations in which the relationship of parent and child is set, the relations of father's sister and brother's child are free of the undercurrent of tension found in those of father and child. A woman's bonds with her brother's children are fundamentally bonds of sentiment. That is why they seldom endure beyond one generation, or extend beyond the nuclear lineage.

The personal relations of father's sister and brother's child have much

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back [586]
the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows 614
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

607 603 648 *Privileged Familiarity*: 'A man may play and be familiar with his sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents, for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the Mampruse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat 607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's [587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.

[2] See p. 8.

[3] But see p. 508.

This summary statement follows closely the formulations of the 613
Tallensi themselves. They normally think of a lineage, a set of lineages, 618X
or a community, as a unit in relation to other units of a like sort, irrespec-
tive of its internal differentiation. Thus, Tongo people say: '*Tam ni* 574
Yamələgdəm ni Siedəm ni Biukdəm a la yaab yeni biis—We and the people of Yamələg, and the people of Sie and the people of Biuk are the children of one ancestor.' The place-name serves to designate the social group. Once, at Sie, some young men from Tongo, members of an assimilated lineage, called on me. 'We've only come on a visit', they said, '*daɣa ti mabiis n a Siedəm?*—Are not these people of Sie our kinsfolk?'

Such intercourse is constant amongst the three Talni-speaking branches of Mosuor's posterity (*tu'u*). Biuk, both because of its fusion with the Gəris and its geographical location, is somewhat isolated from regular contact with its Talni-speaking clansmen. But the ties which control this voluntary fraternization emerge more precisely in a number of critical norms and institutions.

The Critical Norms of Clanship

Most important of these is the rule of exogamy. Marriage is uncon- 618X
ditionally prohibited between the four branches of Mosuor's posterity— 582
i.e. between members of the authentic lineages of Tongo, Yamələg, Sie, and Biuk. The prohibition extends to the assimilated lineages as well, but not to all attached lineages, though the natives state it as if it applied to the entire sub-clan. They regard it as the inevitable corollary of their common ancestry. It is, therefore, the widest extension of the rule which prohibits marriage within the agnatic lineage. I discovered only one instance of the transgression of this rule at Tongo, and this occurred in abnormal circumstances.

A second critical norm always cited is: '*ti diit taaba pakoya*—We marry 587
one another's widows.' A Tongo man has the right to seek the hand of 618X
the widow of a Yamələg, a Sie, or a Biuk man; but in actual practice remarriage of widows is restricted by so many other conditions that this leviratic right is mainly significant as an ideological index of clanship. It is the correlative of the rule of exogamy and, like it, the widest extension of a right which holds primarily within the lineage. Occasionally this right is exercised in its widest sense. The Chief of Tongo, for example, has availed himself of it to solve the problem of accommodation for himself and his retinue when he is compelled to visit the Administrative Headquarters at Zuarungu. An elderly widow at Biuk is nominally his wife and he may therefore stay in her house without embarrassment. In another case a middle-aged Yamələg widow elected to marry a stalwart young man from Tongo in preference to any of her dead husband's closer kinsmen. It is extremely unlikely that either woman would have been permitted to marry so distant an agnate of her dead husband if she were still capable of child-bearing. Nevertheless, it is an essential consequence of the leviratic right that if a man from one of the sub-clans should succeed in marrying a young widow of a member of another, no reprisals could be publicly undertaken against him, whereas anyone outside the range of clanship would be courting armed vengeance by such an act.

587 When, some forty years ago, a Tongo man married a Zoo widow and his
x618 son was shot dead in revenge by a Zoo man, the Chief of Tongo forbade
a raid of retaliation. It was, my informants said, a just vengeance since
[682] 'we don't marry the widows of Zoo people'.

Again, it would be a serious breach of solidarity for a member of one of
x618 the sub-clans to abduct the wife of a member of any other, and I have
627 never heard of such a case. Warfare between them is inconceivable, so
the injured group would have to rely upon moral pressure through the
chief and elders of the offender's community. But these measures would
undoubtedly succeed, even in these days when rebellious young men can
flee to foreign lands.

x618 This is likewise the widest extension of a restriction which holds with
587 greatest force for the segments of a maximal lineage belonging to the
same sub-clan, e.g. for the segments of Tongo *inter se*. In a lesser degree
it applies also to ex-wives. A man who marries the former wife of another,
even if the marriage was severed for just and accepted reasons, incurs the
hostility of the first husband's entire lineage both towards himself personally
and towards his clansmen as a group. Reprisals will be taken when
an opportunity occurs. When the parties are clansmen, feelings about such
acts become very bitter, and the more so the closer the tie. Marriages of
this kind take place from time to time, producing conflicts and reprisals
but not disruption of clanship ties.

x618 Another proof of kinship (*mabiirət*) usually cited by the natives is that
721 warfare between the four sub-clans was forbidden. They were allies in
war in the old days. They did not all come to one another's help, nor
were they each other's sole allies. But they could call upon one another's
assistance in the name of kinship. The recollections of the oldest men go
back no farther than the time of their grandparents, four or five generations
ago. They tell of ancient fights in which Tongo, Sie, and Yamələg
supported one another; but Biuk, it seems, maintained an isolationist
policy in the wars and feuds of its Tale kinsmen. The greatest war still
remembered in tale and anecdote occurred forty or fifty years ago.
Yamələg became involved in it; and when Ba'ari raised the war-cry
against Yamələg, Sie and Tongo attacked Ba'ari on the flanks.

Mosuor biis: a Maximal Lineage

x618 These four branches of Mosuor's agnatic posterity (*tu'u*) constitute
what appears to be a single, dispersed clan—the only clan of this type in
Taleland; more accurately, it is a maximal lineage—the most inclusive
agnatic lineage to which any descendant of Mosuor in the male line (i.e.
any member of the four branches) can belong. In the eyes of the natives
an important qualification is that the four branches are of equal status
though graded in seniority. Tongo is the most senior because it remained
in possession of the original home of the clan—'*ti waabi daboog*, the
ancient home-site of all of us', they say—and has retained the custody of
Mosuor's grave and *bɔyar*, the shrine which symbolizes the perpetuity,
x618 identity, and common ancestry of the entire maximal lineage. Yamələg,
618 Sie, and Biuk follow in that order; but they no longer participate in
769 sacrifices to Mosuor. Each of them has its own ancestral *bɔyar*, enshrining

attached lineages, as well as for certain ritual and political ties between 618x
some groups. Thus, one segment of Tongo has a special ritual role as 811
intermediary in the politico-ritual relations of Tongo and Zoo, and this is
rationalized by the same fiction; but it does not involve ties of clanship
with Zoo.

There is a close parallelism between the inter-clan linkages we have 618x
described and the spatial relations of the groups concerned. Gbizugdem 621
are the nearest non-Namoo neighbours of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra on one side;
Ba'ari is contiguous with them on the other side; and Zoo-Yiraaŋ live
side by side with their clansfolk at Zubiuŋ-Yapaas. There is an asym-
metry in these clanship ties which appears to be mirrored in the fictions
accounting for them. Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are linked by clanship ties
in exactly the same way as they are linked with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, but
neither has ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ.

Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra has more frequent and closer relations and a stronger 618x
sense of fraternity with Gbizug than with its other two linked maximal 764
lineages at Zoo and at Ba'ari. This is fostered by proximity and by the
belief enshrined in their myth of origin. Thus, when a Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra
tendaana dies and his funeral ceremonies are performed, the heads of all
three linked maximal lineages have to send an obligatory contribution of
porridge, specially prepared 'to set out for the dead (*zien kpiim lɔ*)'. They
act, then, in the same way as the other two Zubiuŋ lineages, which are
also obliged to send this contribution. But Gbizugdem do more than make
a merely formal acknowledgement of their ties with the dead man's lineage;
they take part in the funeral to a much greater extent than Ba'at-Sakpar or
Zoo-Yiraaŋ. Their representatives never fail to attend all the important
ritual events of the funeral, whereas the representatives of the other two
linked maximal lineages appear only at the exoteric public ceremonies,
such as the final divination when the beer is distributed. The social
relations of Gbizug with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra give them a place, as it were,
half-way between the other Zubiuŋ maximal lineages and the other two
linked maximal lineages in point of intimacy and corporate cohesion.
Every Yakɔra man knows the wives of the men of Gbizug almost as well [587] ●
as the wives of his own clansmen. He speaks of them all as his 'wives',
for he has a right to inherit any of them if they remain widows. If he
meets one of them by chance he will chaff her, as if she were a Zubiuŋ
wife. Most of the wives of the men of Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ are
quite unknown to him, though formally he has the same rights in respect
of them.

The Gradation of Clanship Ties

What distinguishes the bonds of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra with Gbizug from 618x
their apparently identical bonds with their clansmen of Zubiuŋ is this:
the latter are bound to perform all the duties of close *sunzɔp*, the former
are under the much more limited obligation of giving expression to their
ties of clanship through one or two formal acts. The latter, for example,
are obliged to attend and to conduct all the important rites of a Yakɔra
tendaana's funeral, whereas Gbizugdem come voluntarily, and if they
undertake any task do so out of courtesy and friendliness. Similarly, the

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔɣar*, the married *pɔɣayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔɣayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔɣayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔɣayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

128 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔɣar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is the transfer
796 *of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his successor.*
[787] This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔɣayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination. Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔɣar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔɣar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
● 587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corellary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal 604
nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their 618x
cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four 587
generations back.

Though the *pɔγayabəlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a 764
single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are 571
often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of 562
the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔγayabəlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔγayabəlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member
of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and [252]
food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔγayabəlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubɛnib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔγayabəlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubɛnib* (from *dug*, room, and *bɛ*, to stay or lie) because they are identified with the *dugdɛm*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubɛnib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubɛnib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gore woman married to a Tenzugu man requires the help of *dubɛnib*, she calls upon all the other Gore wives, of whom there are very few, of Tenzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Goreland

613 where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent
621 group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of
621 residence, common interests, and common experience. The local con-
602 centration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its
[769] ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult
of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

613 In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with
621 local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her
571 relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance
with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with
whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the
nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the
[587] segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her
children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to
inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her
co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close
[602] agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as
effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will
help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking,
and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders, makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage. It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of interlineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not, the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway. This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves 224
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and 587
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head of her nuclear lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tendaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization ~~that~~ emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or subclan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

● 587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member of his lineage or clan, other than those whom he describes as his 'fathers' or 'sons'. 587

Every Tale clan is anchored to a particular locality from which it takes its name. In the central area of Taleland, around the Tong Hills, the present clan settlements appear to date back not less than eight to ten generations. But they have not been and are not territorially static. There are no strict territorial boundaries between adjacent settlements. The homesteads of a settlement merge with those of the adjacent settlements, and the boundaries between them are definable only in social terms, as a function of their ecological and politico-ritual relations at a given time. In the same way every segment of a clan—that is, each of its component maximal lineages—is anchored to a local subdivision of the clan settlement, though many of its members may be dispersed elsewhere. 361 621

A striking feature of Tale social organization is the system of inter-clan linkages which constitutes one of the principal forces of cohesion in the society. The genealogically and socially autonomous maximal lineage or clan is not a closed group. The component maximal lineages that form the segments of adjacent clans have ties of clanship identical with those that unite them to one another within their respective clans. Thus if two adjacent clans have segments A, B, C, and D, E, F, G, respectively, then A (but not B or C) may have clanship ties with D (but not with E, F, or G); B may have clanship ties only with E, and C with F. Each of these maximal lineages also has clanship ties with segments of other neighbouring clans. Thus each component maximal lineage of a clan has a field of clanship that includes the other segments of the clan as well as segments of other clans. This results in a network of interlocking clanship ties that embraces all the separate clans of Taleland. All the Talis clans and the main block of Namoo clans are interlocked in this way in two clusters which are in turn similarly connected at certain points. Moreover, this system of linkages ties the Tale aggregate on to adjacent clans of other neighbouring 'tribes'. Thus we observe that at this level of social structure—the skeletal level, so to speak—as in its territorial and cultural relationship to neighbouring 'tribes', Tale society is a segment of a greater society. The network of inter-clan linkages is one of the principal factors by which the socio-geographic region we have called Taleland is differentiated as a distinct segment of this greater society. 621 619 182

It is also one of the main factors of social equilibrium in Tale society. Dissension between neighbouring clans is kept in check by the mediation of maximal lineages linked by identical ties to both; and warfare is inhibited from disrupting the entire social order by the intervention of social and ritual obligations arising *inter alia* out of the fact that enemies are related directly or indirectly by clanship ties. It is this, in part, that gives Tale wars the complexion of acute family quarrels. 626

desirous of having, and are indulgent to, a young wife (*pɔɣabil*), not 596 only for sexual motives but also, and mainly, in order to have a strong young woman about the house to administer those creature comforts to which they are said to become more and more addicted as they grow older. Thus siblings by the same father (*ba ukɔla biis*) may differ in age by as much as a generation. A man's younger half-brother or sister may be younger than his own children though senior to them in generation. This has important effects on the lineage organization.

The custom of the levirate introduces a component of some signifi- 596 cance in the constitution of the joint family. In the 61 domestic families of our sample there were 111 married men, and no less than 21—more 587 than one in five—had one or more inherited wives. An inherited wife usually brings her young children by her first husband (if she has any) with her. They grow up side by side with her children by her second husband, who is responsible for their support. Tale kinship ideas make this a simple and self-evident arrangement; but it means, nevertheless, a division within what is normally the most compact and cohesive element of the domestic family, the matricentral *dug*, in accordance with the different paternity of the children. Generally a widow of child-bearing age marries a close agnate of her deceased husband—his brother or first cousin—who is, therefore, a close classificatory father of her children. This makes it easy for them to regard her second husband with some of the devotion and affection due from children to their own father, especially if they are still very young. Still, this is a weak place in the cohesion of a family, at which a split easily occurs; for no man, say the Tallensi, can wholly take the place of one's true father. If a widow marries a distant agnate of her late husband, the latter's heir may demand the custody of his children when they are old enough to do without a mother's care. This splits the *dug*. But it also creates com- [602] pensatory bonds of uterine (*soog*) kinship between her sons belonging to different lineage segments.

Sometimes a man's dependants include a deceased brother's children 596 whose mother has died or married out of the family. Such children are, for all practical purposes, his own children, but the sons frequently 736 secede when they have children. Much less commonly, a man may have an orphaned sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with him in as intimate a relationship, ostensibly, as if he were his son or brother. Actually, both jural and sentimental reservations hedge round a sister's son's position in the family, for his descent bars him, in the last resort, from ever acquiring real filial status.[1] It is significant that in the old settlements extremely few cases of this kind occur, and it is always assumed that the nephew will eventually return to his natal settlement—though he does not always do so. In the new settlements, where personal kinship ties largely replace lineage ties as the basis of local aggregation, not only sororal

[1] Cf. Ch. XI below.

581 or headman or important elder, backed as it often is by lavish gifts to
595 her parents, security of the bride-price, and the attraction of his wealth
622 and power or status. Few parents would hesitate to force their daughter to accept such an offer. Chiefs and headmen do in fact have an excessive number of wives. The five biggest chiefs and headmen of the Tongo district had between them about 160 wives of all ages in 1936. Their predecessors of a generation ago would have had perhaps 30 between them, at the utmost. The extra 130 wives they have means that probably 100 other men have been cheated of wives. This has no doubt diminished the chances of early marriage for a proportion of young men, but not so greatly as the men assert. All the evidence of Tale domestic institutions and of Tale genealogies goes to show that wives were always highly prized because they were always at a premium.[1] In consequence, no unmarried girl or woman of child-bearing age lacks suitors, and no wife of child-bearing age need endure an intolerable marriage. She can always find another husband. That women take advantage of their scarcity value is what one would expect; but they do so to a smaller extent than one anticipates. This is due partly to the strength and stability of the patrilineal lineage system, expressed in inter-personal relations in the power of the *patria potestas*, and partly to the great value women set upon wifehood and motherhood. Life is a failure to a Tale woman who never becomes a wife and mother.

The Stability of Marriage

586 In consequence, partly, of the scarcity value of wives, but more, no
587 doubt, of the conflict of loyalties and interests which has to be overcome,
582 marriage tends to be unstable in the initial stages. A young man rarely settles down permanently with his first bride, and young women generally treat their first marriage as an experiment unless the husband is a much older man to whom they have been married by formal negotiation. In the course of collecting census material I noted the marriages of over a hundred men. There is not one man over the age of 30, approximately (excluding a few physically or psychologically abnormal men), who has failed to experience one or more unsuccessful and usually short-lived marriages. Most men of 30 to 40 can give a history of five

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[582] [1] I have no demographic evidence suggesting that there was formerly or is now a marked deficiency of marriageable women as compared with men in Taleland. My own crude demographic inquiries suggest a sex ratio of about unity among the Tallensi. Polygynous marriage, therefore, inevitably means competition for wives, even though women are usually married by the age of 16 or 17, as near as one can guess, and men rarely succeed in finding a wife before the age of about 25. The natives maintain that the age of marriage for girls has been decreasing rapidly since the coming of the white man (cf. my paper, 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, xxv, 1943, 3–4).

or six abortive—or rather, to translate the native attitude into our own 586
terms, experimental—marriages. Men of over 50 say, with a laugh, that 587
they cannot remember all the women they have married who left them
after a short time. Women are more discreet about their marital history; 582
but observation leads to the conclusion that between 50 and 60 per cent.
of all married women have had more than one husband.[1]

A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, 586
generally the woman, or through that of the wife's guardian. The
Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get
rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by with-
holding the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or
he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman
decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because
she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects
her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women, [828]
according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can
seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays
longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man
or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable
dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.

Despite these initial pitfalls of marriage, families do get established 581
and remain stable. Though the idea of marriage as a lifelong and
irrevocable bond does not exist among the Tallensi, many couples do
settle down for life, and many other couples remain united for a long
enough stretch of years to produce one or more children.

Many complicated circumstances have an influence on this. Naturally, 581
the jural formalities must be properly complied with. That is to say, 583

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[1] Many of these experimental marriages are not marriages at all, according to the strict letter of custom, since they are sometimes dissolved before placation gifts have been made and often before any instalment of the bride-price has been paid. Some last only a few weeks. But they are always called marriages; for it is a fact that many marriages that begin in exactly this way do turn out to be stable in the end. Counting as 'wives' only those for whom bride-price was paid and who bore children to their husbands, I found, among a randomly chosen group of 20 men over 45, approximately, that only 2 had had 1 wife each; only 3 had had 2 wives each; the remaining 15 (= 75 per cent.) had all had more than 2 wives each. Altogether, these 20 men had had 71 wives (average 3·5 wives each); they had lost 21 (average 1 each) by death; and at the time of the census they had 45 wives (average 2·25 each). But most of them claimed to have 'married' from 10 to 20 times and were able to give a fairly complete history of these abortive 'marriages'.

Among a randomly chosen group of 20 women of child-bearing age—who were therefore not yet at the end of their matrimonial careers—6 (= 30 per cent.) had had only one husband each; 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had only 2 husbands each; the remaining 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had more than 2 husbands each, 4 of them having had more than 3 husbands each. Apart from the propensity to choose a final husband by trial and error, the custom of the levirate helps to increase the number of husbands a woman may have in her lifetime.

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔɣat
of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔɣat tried to lay hands
on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
581 spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripɛta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripɛta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries.
She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by
her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
[837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife,
whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

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succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife, and may 581
sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery. 585
Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that
of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was 587
pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried, but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology) of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy, he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's marriage with the woman had never been consummated.

It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with 581
her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by
her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this 585
line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how Baŋyɛlib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning, as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She was helpless, and Baŋyɛlib, who had purposely stayed in the room, 'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree.
Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time [842]
in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to procreation rather than to gratification.

Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, 595
she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the
support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must 578
divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say, somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the jealousy (*yuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for him in revenge.

613 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife,
implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most
581 precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however,
not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her
●587 husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

581 The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband
and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in
837 a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in
relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Un-
593 like the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extramarital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non*. Tallensi express contempt for the Gorisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeembii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbobis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbobis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbobis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

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replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

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We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kɔrih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

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What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly

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[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

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jectured that the taboo is connected with the fact that the rights over a woman's reproductive powers belong to her husband and must not be confounded with her parents' authority over her. If they came to the funeral of their daughter's child they would have to be received with respect, and it might seem as if they were on a par with the child's paternal grandparents. For the same reason, perhaps, a married woman's parents do not attend her funeral in person, but are represented by other members of her natal family and lineage.

For a man his son's children stand for the certainty that his line of descent will go on. The wheel of the generations has come full circle. When he and his wife die it will be announced to all the world. On the day of his or her funeral the youngest grandson will be placed before a drum with the drumsticks in his hands and the youngest granddaughter before a calabash with two pieces of cane in her hands. When the signal is given for the funeral to begin they will strike the drum and calabash and cry out, 'Oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather (*N-yaab yee*)'. And when the funeral is concluded [302] the son's children and the brothers' sons' children will have their heads shaved in mourning in the manner prescribed for grandchildren. Half the head will be shaved and half left unshaved.

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The equivalence of alternate generations is shown by the fact that a grandson may marry the widow of his paternal or maternal grandfather, or of any man whom he calls grandfather, other than his own grandmother. This rule is of practical significance when an old man dies leaving a young widow, and all the men of his inner lineage are either 'sons' or 'grandsons' to him. Then the grandsons who are old enough are encouraged to woo the widow, and the elders of the lineage put pressure on her to choose one of them so that she can remain a wife of that lineage. It was thus that Tiezien married his own paternal grandfather's youngest widow. At that time she had a young infant at the breast who was Tiezien's own father's half-brother. Tiezien was then about 18 or 19. He thus had the unusual experience of bringing up a child who was his proxy father. To-day Tiezien, a vigorous man of about 70, is ritual head of Kpata'ar; but his proxy father Nyaaŋzum, whom he reared, is the head of their inner lineage. Tiezien was made politico-religious head of the clan (*Kpata'ar na'ab*) over Nyaaŋzum's head according to the rule that 'begetting does not cross the *dug*';[1] but within their *dug* he is nominally subject to Nyaaŋzum's authority. This might lead to considerable friction between them if they were not as devoted to each other as they are. The marriage of a grandson with his grandfather's widow is, however, an uncommon occurrence, chiefly

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[1] Headship of the clan, in this case, goes by selection from amongst the eligible elders, but usually comes to the oldest man in the clan. Tiezien could, however, not have accepted the offer without the consent of his proxy father, Nyaaŋzum. [618]

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because it is not very usual for a man to have a grandson old enough to take a wife, when he dies, and also to leave a young widow.

The converse marriage of a grandfather with the widow of his 'grandson' of the same inner lineage is said to be permissible but not good. Tallensi think it is incongruous and therefore likely to be unlucky. I learnt of only one such case that has occurred in recent years, and my informants pointed out that all the children born of the marriage had died.

Old women make use of this rule when they are left widows. A widow must either remarry one of her husband's clansmen or else go home to her father's house and marry from there as if she were a spinster. For an old widow remarriage is a formality since she is past child-bearing, and will in any case live with her sons. So when she is asked to choose her new husband from amongst those of her late husband's clansmen who offer her marriage *pro forma*, she often announces, 'I choose a grandson (*man luogəra yaaŋ*)'. She thus satisfies the formal requirements and can go on living with her sons.

Within the lineage inter-personal relations of grandparent and grandchild are not extended beyond the inner lineage—that is, the range within which generation differences between individuals are recognized; but the term *yaab* is applied to any patrilineal ancestor except the father. On the mother's side only the mother's own parents and proxy parents are recognized as grandparents; but any lineage with which a person has matrilateral connexions is described as his *yaab yiri*. Thus any patrilineal ancestor's mother's lineage is a *yaab yiri*; and the letter of custom entitles a man to marry the widow of any member of his *yaab yiri*. In practice such marriages are exceedingly rare, for the widow's husband's lineage-brothers and clansmen resent them strongly. But there have been one or two instances in the past generation in which a young widow eloped with her deceased husband's classificatory *yaaŋ*. What the outraged members of the deceased husband's lineage most resent is that they cannot claim the return of the bride-price. The only sanction they can use is to refuse to sacrifice to their ancestors on behalf of the 'grandson' who has so flouted them; but this is a double-edged weapon. They may not use it, since the 'grandson' was within his formal rights in marrying one of their widows. Hence they would arouse the wrath of their ancestors if they sought to penalize their 'grandson' ritually. This extension of leviratic rights to matrilateral kin is associated with the notion that a woman might have been born a man but for the intervention of chance, and her descendants might therefore have been of the true agnatic line. It will be better understood when we have considered the relations of mother's brother and sister's son (Ch. XI below).

former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members 613
in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. 593
The token funeral performed for a woman by her father's people, after 562
her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔɣayabəlɔg-kpɛŋ* [766]
not by her own father's heirs but by the head of the inner or medial or even maximal lineage, her status-brother, so to speak. Tallensi say she belongs to the whole lineage not to her paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow 595
may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan
or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two 587 ●
principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', 595
and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint 613
leviratic rights is one of the critical norms of clanship,[1] implying that
all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither 593
absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to 587
them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

593 595 property it is good enough if she marries any one of them. In practice,
613 a widow of child-bearing age who has children by her late husband
●587 usually consents to remarry one of his close brothers.

Next to a brother of the nuclear lineage, a brother of the late husband's
587 inner lineage is considered to have a strong claim to his widow's hand.
613 If a man dies leaving two widows of child-bearing age it is considered
proper for one of them to be given to a member of her late husband's
595 nuclear lineage and for the other to go to another nuclear segment of
the same inner lineage. If a widow appears to be unwilling to marry her late husband's half-brother, for example, and is prepared to marry one of his 'brothers' of the same inner lineage, she is usually allowed to do so by the head of her husband's nuclear lineage. The new husband is still spoken of as having inherited the widow. In every case that came under my notice widows of child-bearing age married into their late husband's inner lineage if they had young children. But in a few cases, amounting to about three out of ten, these second marriages broke down after a time. Childless young widows often prefer to go back to their parental home and try their luck again on the marriage market.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage a 'brother' of the dead man has only the rights of a clansman. If the widow is of child-bearing age he will have to be very circumspect in courting her; for he can only marry her if she chooses him in preference to other claimants, and this means she must be courted. Hence it is more usual to speak of 'marrying' (*di*) a widow than of 'inheriting' (*vaa*) her in such cases. But it would be a very bold woman who, left a widow while still capable of bearing children, rejected a husband's brother of the same inner lineage in favour of a clansman of his. Only in exceptional cases would such an action not create ill feeling between the two clan segments concerned. Such an exceptional case occurred when Baroog died leaving nine widows. His father tried hard to persuade several distant clansmen of his to seek the widows in marriage. The reason was that Baroog had no adult brothers in his nuclear lineage and so few in his inner lineage that they would not be able to inherit all the widows. For few men wish to inherit more than one widow at a time. Rather than let them return to their fathers and be sought in marriage by men of other clans, Baroog's father preferred to see them marry distant clansmen of his.

587 Widows beyond the age of child-bearing have complete freedom of
choice in selecting a new husband from among their late husband's clansmen.
595 Often such marriages are merely nominal. The woman continues to live with a grown-up son and her new husband comes to visit her occasionally and sends her a little grain now and then. If the widow has no adult son she will live with her new husband, adding to the labour power of his household and to its indirect sources of income through the gifts she obtains from her patrilineal kin, for example, or any private property of her own, such as a couple of sheep or goats.

587 595 Inheritance of a grandfather's widow by a grandson, in the patrilineal line, is confined to the inner or at most the medial lineage for the simple reason that generation differences are not reckoned beyond those limits. Such marriages are not common because few men live long enough to have adult grandsons. The case of Tiezien, previously recorded, who married his grandfather Kuŋkoŋki's young widow is the only one of its kind I encountered. For at least another generation or two the custom of inheriting a grandfather's widow will probably survive in that lineage. For Nyaaŋzum, Tiezien's proxy father whom he brought up, is the last of his generation in that medial lineage, hence his widows will have to go to his own or classificatory grandsons.

A sister's son (*ahəŋ*) cannot marry his true mother's brother's (*ahəb*) widow. That would be incest, since he identifies his *ahəb* with his mother and therefore thinks of him as a quasi-father. He can marry his *ahəb*'s son's widow or his *ahəb*'s father's widow; for he regards the son as a 'brother', and the father is his grandfather. If the sister's son and mother's brother are uterine kin (*saarət*), marriage of the latter's son's widow to the former is generally approved of by the dead man's inner lineage—provided, of course, there are no better claimants among the dead man's brothers—for a uterine *ahəŋ*, as we shall see more fully presently, is considered to be almost as closely related to his mother's brother's nuclear lineage as a born member of it. Nevertheless, such marriages are rare, and the few instances I heard of all seemed to be due to special circumstances. In one case, in which I knew the parties personally, the woman was suspected of being sterile, and the sister's son was known to be a special favourite of his mother's brother; in others the women were apparently too old for child-bearing.

In theory any member of another clan who can trace kinship with the clan of a widow's late husband through an ancestress can be called a 'sister's son' or a 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' in the widest classificatory sense. I heard of two or three cases of such distant *ahəs* marrying the widows of members of their classificatory 'mother's brother's lineage', but the women were all elderly and the marriages were purely nominal. There was one case, however, in which a man eloped with the widow of a member of the inner lineage from which his paternal great-grandmother had come. This was widely spoken of as a scandal, and the pair were never forgiven by the first husband's nuclear lineage; but nothing could be done about it as the *ahəŋ* had the support of the letter of custom. The truth is that a 'sister's son' has no chance against the corporate solidarity of his 'mother's brother's' lineage. He can succeed only if they tacitly withdraw their claims or openly give him permission to court the widow.[1]

The levirate thus brings out clearly the social equivalence of siblings and shows how it is graded in accordance with genealogical distance. 593 595

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[1] Cf. p. 240 above, and Ch. XI below.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-hab dɔya bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604
will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked
why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each
other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577
when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head 302
shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, 789]
Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power
of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely,
withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having
done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage.
But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to
his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the
jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency
is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother
and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604
rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574
principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a 764
woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party
of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws.
The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman
calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these
young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young
men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the
girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the
young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the
visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl [431]
who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit.
Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers
of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in
the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is
giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this
declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody
knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604
her father without having previously arranged to go to another man,
she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, 586
under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587
She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathise with her and cannot in any
case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that
she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for
some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though
courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of
another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself
with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

604 which a father would never do. In theory, this means that the *ba-pɔk*
586 consents to the new marriage. In practice, her action has no binding force on her brother. This rule applies also to an unmarried girl who is
587 given in marriage by her *ba-pɔk*. A woman might have one of her brother's daughters living with her as a nursemaid for her baby. She might promise the girl as a wife to one of her husband's brothers. But her brother need not consider himself bound by this promise if he has objections to the marriage.

604 A father's sister is, in short, a kind of female 'father', but without the jural and ritual attributes of fatherhood. A father's sister must be
577 treated with respect. It would be grossly improper, for example, to joke with her as one jokes with a wife's sister; and to strike or abuse her, even if she were much younger than oneself, would be a sin. But the respect accorded to her is only a pale reflection of the attitude implicit in filial piety. It is much more a matter of etiquette than of emotion, as if it were merely conventional and not evoked by a feeling of moral obligation.

604 A marked characteristic of a person's relations with his or her father's sister is the absence of specific mutual obligations. Just as a *ba-pɔk* has in reality no rights over her brother's children, so she has no specific duties of either a ritual or a secular kind towards them, or they to her. This is the chief contrast between this relationship and that of parent and child or that of mother's brother and sister's child. Only a shadow of a ritual sanction comes into the relationship, in the form of the belief that the curse of a *ba-pɔk* can harm her brother's child, and in the notion that she stands under the protection of the same ancestors as the latter. Hence, though she cannot demand services from her brother's child, it is felt that a request for help from her should be met, even at the cost of
[789] some inconvenience. If a person offends his father's sister and she reproaches him saying, 'I bore you (identifying herself with her brother) and this is how you treat me. My ancestors have seen it, my fathers have seen it (*Man dɔγi la k-i tɛɔm là ŋwala; n-yaanam nyeya, m-banam nyeya*)', this has the force of a curse because she is invoking her ancestors who are also his ancestors. Such a curse would disturb a native, but not nearly so deeply as a father's curse or if a mother's brother refused to sacrifice on his behalf.

Because their relationship is devoid of a definite jural coefficient and is not subject to organized ritual sanctions; because, also, a father's sister stands outside the scheme of economic and domestic associations in which the relationship of parent and child is set, the relations of father's sister and brother's child are free of the undercurrent of tension found in those of father and child. A woman's bonds with her brother's children are fundamentally bonds of sentiment. That is why they seldom endure beyond one generation, or extend beyond the nuclear lineage.

The personal relations of father's sister and brother's child have much

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukok', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pokg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [184]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

x618 privileges of clanship have the force of rights in the case of *sunzɔp* belonging to the same clan, but are subject to a wider margin of flexibility and voluntary adjustment in the case of extra-clan *sunzɔp*. Some privileges which the former can claim are not held by the latter.

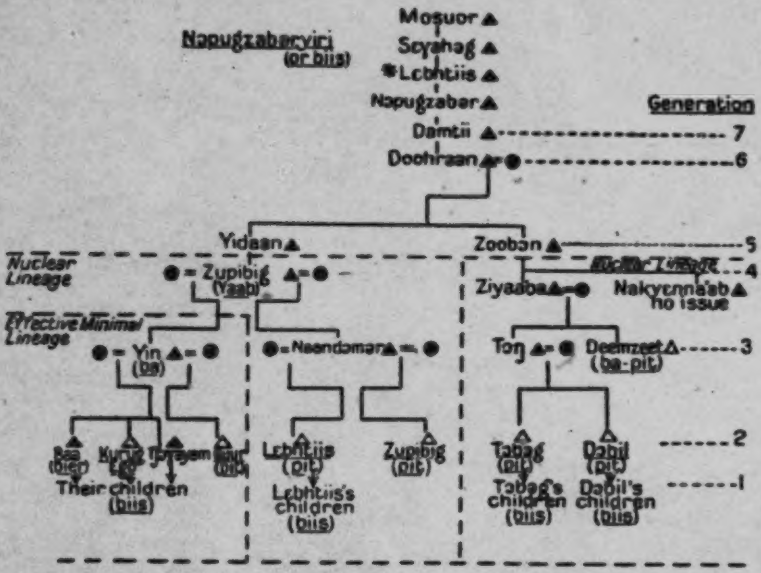
x618 764 In short, here, as with the Namoos, clanship, or more specifically the ties of clan brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) between lineages, is a matter of degree. An illustration will show how it works. We shall take again the example of a distribution made at a funeral ceremony, but the same rules apply in all other aspects of clan relationships. A food distribution of minor importance, usually managed by the younger men, with an accompaniment of considerable hilarity, occurs on the evening of *Kogbeda'ar*, about the middle of the funeral ceremony. It is an occasion on which one usually hears the claims and counter-claims of the different groups represented argued out with great fervour. On *Kogbeda'ar* of the late Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra tɛndaana's funeral the meat of the animals contributed was divided out among the *sunzɔp* lineages as follows: Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm, as the closest *sunzɔp*, received the share of greatest distinction, the hind leg of a sheep; Yapaasdɛm, the next closest *sunzɔp*, received the shoulder of a sheep; Gbizugdɛm, next in order of closeness, received the hind leg of a goat (for the Tallensi, unlike ourselves, regard the sheep as a nobler animal than the goat). Lastly came the Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm, whose share was the foreleg of a goat. Ba'at-Sakpardɛm were not present on this occasion; had they been they would have been entitled to a portion equivalent to the hind leg of a goat. The closest ties of clanship are those which entail the most definite and strict obligations and carry in compensation the most definite rights and superior privileges. These are the ties that bind the lineage to the other lineages which, with it, make up a single composite clan.

x618 The attached lineage of Pulien biis shares the extra-clan ties of clanship of the authentic lineage of the Yakɔradɛm, but it has in addition a tie of clanship independent of the authentic lineage. This links it to one of the segments of Sakpee, a Tɛnzugu clan. According to their tradition, their ancestor Pulien was begotten by a Sakpee man, who later divorced his wife, Pulien's mother, by blowing ashes on her. The recent history of this relationship throws an interesting light on the factors which keep alive the ties of clanship between linked maximal lineages, and on their dynamic characteristics.

x618 ●588 About a generation ago a Sakpee man married a daughter of Pulien biis in defiance of the exogamic ban. The protests of the elders of both lineages were fruitless. The drastic sanctions which might have been resorted to were out of the question; in theory, because the two lineages were related by ties of clanship; in practice, no doubt, because they were extremely difficult to apply on account of the political barriers between Zubiuŋ and Tɛnzugu. So the matter was allowed to slide, and left to the arbitrament of the ancestor spirits. The marriage, said the elders, would be sterile, or all the children would die. In the end, however, the offending couple reared a large and successful family; so apparently this breach of kinship (*dɔyam*) was not a sin after all.

In spite of this, Pulien biis continued to maintain their ties of clanship

6/3 Deemzeet's house (*yir*) has the following genealogical relationship to Zupibig yidɛm:


Moɣuor
Sɛyahəg
*Lɛbhtiis
Nəpugzabər
Damtii
Doohraan
Nəpugzaberyiri (or biis)
Generation
7
6
Yidaan
Zoobən
5
Nuclear Lineage
Zupibig (Yaab)
Nuclear Lineage
4
Ziyadba
Nakyɛnna'ab no issue
Effective Minimal Lineage
Yin (ba)
Naandəmər
Təŋ
Deemzeet (ba-pit)
3
Baa (bier)
Kurug
Tɔrajem
Guur
Lɛbhtiis (pit)
Zupibig (pit)
Təbəg (pit)
Dəbil (pit)
2
Their children (biis)
Lɛbhtiis's children (biis)
Təbəg's children (biis)
Dəbil's children (biis)
1

Taken by itself, Deemzeet's house has the same internal structure as Kurug's or Lɛbhtiis's; but Təbəg and Dəbil are men of mature years with grown children. Though still formally under the jural, economic, and ritual authority of Deemzeet, they have considerable autonomy in ritual, jural, and economic affairs that concern their own segment (Təŋ biis) of the nuclear lineage. If Deemzeet, a timid old bachelor, had any children, ● [589] the relative independence of Təŋ biis would be more obvious. The nuclear lineage of which Deemzeet is head has reached a more advanced phase of internal differentiation than that of which Kurug is head. This is due, partly, to its being an older lineage, which existed in its present form when Kurug and Guur were still minors under the tutelage of their own father, Yin, and Lɛbhtiis and Zupibig (II) were minors dependent on their father, Naandəmər. But Deemzeet's house is not the older lineage in the sense that its members are older than the members of the lineages with which we are contrasting it; it is older in that it represents an earlier phase of the segmentation of the inclusive lineage of which Kurug's house, Lɛbhtiis's house, and Deemzeet's house to-day form the constituent and co-ordinate segments. Its head is a generation superior to Kurug and Lɛbhtiis in terms of their common descent. Thus it is the senior of the two segments. The span of a lineage being a function of its internal genealogical constitution, a three-generation lineage has a wider span than a two-generation lineage. But the order of a lineage is determined by its segmentary relationship to other lineages which are complementary to it—brother (*ṇmɛ*) segments—in a greater, inclusive

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room. 596 362 576

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Talaŋa can keep his own counsel if need be. 593 596

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another. 593 581

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was 581 589● [158]

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

581 said, had never had the enterprise to find a wife. I heard of no woman •589 who had never married. Deformities which do not wholly incapacitate a person or arouse repulsion are not a bar to marriage. The blind, the deaf, and the lame find spouses if they are otherwise able-bodied and presentable.

Tallensi attach immense importance to marriage, not only because it is the sole means to the most ardently desired of all ends, the procreation of legitimate children, but also because no man or woman can adequately satisfy all his or her wants or lead a normal social life, after reaching maturity, without a spouse. Sooner or later a man must have a wife and a woman a husband. Hence 'finding a wife (*pɔya booga*)' is the most urgent preoccupation of unmarried men, apart from getting a living. Among unmarried young men it is an obsession, the most absorbing pursuit of their leisure and an interminable topic of conversation. A girl's life is entirely directed towards marriage from childhood onwards.

581 181 It is a common thing to find a group of men discussing the relative importance of farms and wives, the two basic practical interests of the natives. They seldom fail to come down to the fundamentals. I have heard an elder sum it up somewhat in this fashion: 'If you don't farm you will have no food; and if you have no food you die. Then what is the use of a wife without food? But if you have no wife you will have no children and your life is wasted.' In the end, however, it is usually agreed that farming is the more important, for the man who lives long enough will not lack a wife and without food one cannot support a family.

556 Land and wives have many features in common, as their juxtaposition in native thought shows. Both stand for the fulfilment of fundamental social needs. Both come under the jurisdiction of the lineage, though they are of direct service to individuals. But there are certain differences which show the special importance of wives. There is no intense competition for the possession of land. Owing to technical and economic limitations there is no inducement to accumulate land. Wealth—that is, property acquired by saving, or in exchange for surplus grain or cash—consists pre-eminently of livestock; and the use to which livestock is principally put is in acquiring wives, performing sacrifices, celebrating funerals, and, to a much lesser extent, competing for certain politico-ritual offices. Such wealth is, therefore, really equivalent to provision for delayed consumption or special forms of consumption arising out of ritual obligations or differences in status.[1] It has no durable productive value. Compared with livestock, the purchase of farm-land is insignificant

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[1] But Tale standards of wealth are extremely low. Except for a handful of chiefs and headmen—who have herds of cattle numbering from 20 to 50, and, in at least one case, apparently, over 100, as well as numbers of small stock—a man with a dozen sheep, a few goats, and three or four head of cattle is considered to be wealthy (*bondaan*).

583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul*. This sanction is very typical.

583 768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

584 585 ● 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

Kusase

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'. 591
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such, for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back, he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.' [664]

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-pog*) once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea-fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen* (*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones. When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child, for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).' 583 606 [769] [778] [764]

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

613 constituent parts. The simplest way of achieving this is for its internal differentiation into segments to be of a limited and balanced kind. That is why only the first order of segmentation, a division into major segments, is recognized in the corporate activities of a lineage. In Tale theory the source of this primary segmentation of the lineage is the minimal lineage, in which a group of brothers (two or more) are differentiated from one another as individuals each of whom is the potential founder of a new lineage, but are united through their common father. A pair of brothers by the same father (*sunzɔp*, sing. *sunzɔ*) are the potential originators of a pair of major segments of the lineage deriving from their father. So all major segments of a lineage of any span are visualized as being derived from brothers, sons of the lineage founder, and are described as *sunzɔp* to one another. Their lineage ties, summed up in the concept *sunzɔt* (brotherhood), are thought of as being founded on, and derived from, the ties that hold between brothers. By the rule of exogamy women members marry out of the lineage, so they do not contribute to its perpetuation and do not affect its organization.

613 The growing-point of the lineage, it will be seen, is the family. It is
595 always patrilocal; ideally, it is also polygynous. Thus children of the same
● [591] man are differentiated from one another as children of different mothers. This provides a further criterion of differentiation within the lineage. Like the sons of different mothers and the same father, segments of a lineage may, in certain situations, be distinguished from one another by reference to their different progenitrices. In other situations, like the sons of one mother, segments of a lineage may be grouped together by reference to a common progenitrix.

613 A maximal lineage cannot, by definition, have any *sunzɔp* identified strictly in terms of common agnatic descent. If it had it would be a segment of a more inclusive lineage. The ancestor who founded it must be unique, in retrospect. As we have seen, he may be accounted for by a myth; but his unique place in the genealogical tree can sometimes be naturalistically explained. If the formation of recent lineage segments is studied, it can be seen that segments sometimes disappear, owing to the extinction of a branch of the lineage. When this happens, the surviving segments reach a new equilibrium. The defunct collateral line is forgotten in due course, together with its genealogy; for this no longer has any structural significance. Thus an existing maximal lineage may be merely the surviving segment of what might have been a wider maximal lineage.

It is characteristic of Tale social organization, however, that maximal lineages do often have *sunzɔp*, either through ties of clanship, or by incorporating, or being joined to, lineages not strictly of the same agnatic descent.

A lineage is a temporal system. Continuity in time is its fundamental quality. Its constitution and dimensions at a given time represent a phase of a process which, as the natives see it, has been going on in exactly the same way from the beginning of their social order and is continuing into the future. The contemporary phase of a lineage is more than a product of its past; it embodies all the significant changes that have occurred in it

CHAPTER IX

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE CLAN ORGANIZATION

The Concept of a Clanswoman

We have occasionally referred to the role of women in the clan organization of the Tallensi, but this subject deserves further consideration. In a certain sense women illustrate the principle of the corporate unity and identity of lineage and clan more strikingly than men. On marriage women leave their paternal settlements to reside with their husbands. They never, however, lose their status as members of their own patrilineal lineage and clan. It is true that they have not the same jural rights and duties as their clan brothers and cannot exercise a responsible role in lineage or clan ritual; for, as we shall see in the second part of this study,[1] a woman is a minor in jural and ritual matters. Nevertheless, women are subject to the critical norms of clanship in the same way as men. They are bound by the same rules of exogamy as the men, and by the same ritual observances that distinguish maximal lineage from maximal lineage or clan from clan. They also have certain privileges as members of their patrilineal descent group. We deal with these points in outline here. The details will come more appropriately in our next volume. 562 618x [591]

The term *pɔɣayabələg* sums up the status of a woman as a member of her patrilineal maximal lineage and clan. It can best be translated as 'woman of the clan'; and it refers to a woman of the clan or maximal lineage whether she is residing at her father's house or living with her husband. *Pɔɣayabələg* denotes the general status of clanswoman irrespective of what segment of the clan she may belong to. At all funeral ceremonies, for instance, certain duties and tasks both of a ritual and non-ritual kind fall on *pɔɣayabəlis*. Some of these tasks, such as the gathering of firewood, are usually performed by young unmarried *pɔɣayabəlis*. The girls who volunteer for these tasks are treated as a single group, irrespective of what segment of the clan they belong to. Other tasks and ritual duties that have to be carried out by clanswomen fall upon older women, usually married women who return home specially for the funeral. Any woman of the clan who is qualified by her knowledge and seniority can perform these duties. If a married woman living with her husband is asked where she comes from, she always replies: 'I am a *pɔɣayabələg* of such-and-such a clan.'

It is a maxim that all *pɔɣayabəlis* are equal to one another in relation to their natal clan. 'No one owns a *pɔɣayabələg*, we all own her (*sɔ pu so pɔɣayabələg, ti waabi nso ka*)', is the native formula. The implication is that the clan as a whole is the primary unit claiming the allegiance of a

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[1] Forthcoming shortly under the title of *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

602 and Ɔndieso was one of the first to come to the help of his *soog* in his
578 sorrow. The other members of Ɔndieso's segment demonstratively
remained away.

602 Other ties of matrilateral kinship also create bonds of personal
attachment between members of the same maximal lineage, but none is so effective as that of uterine kinship.

The Dispersion of Uterine Kin

602 The majority of a person's uterine kin are, however, dispersed among
other clans than his own. This is a natural result of the rule of clan
582 exogamy. But Tallensi, as we shall see later,[1] tend to marry into nearby
591 clans rather than into distant clans. A woman of clan A marries into
the adjacent clan B; her daughters marry into the next clans C and D; their daughters marry into clans E and F; and so the process goes on. The result is, firstly, that with the passage of the generations the uterine line becomes more and more dispersed; and secondly, that any person's genealogically nearest uterine kin are also, generally, his spatially nearest uterine kin. In practice, it is these near *saarət* whom he knows and knows of; it is they who are concerned in witchcraft accusations or *tyuk* guilt. His more distant *saarət*—distant in both the genealogical sense and in residence—are often unknown to him. The main reason for this is that uterine kinship remains effective only through personal contact. The children of sisters know one another because their mothers have kept in touch, visited one another, and often helped one another all their lives. Similarly, the uterine grandchildren of sisters know one another, if they live near one another, because their mothers have kept in touch, though not so faithfully as true siblings. Often these contacts are maintained into the fourth generation of a woman's uterine descendants; rarely beyond the fourth generation; and a person does not, as a rule, know all his or her *saarət* whose link with him or her is a common great-grandmother. Some of them will, as likely as not, be Gɔrisi or Namnam and he will not even know of their existence.

602 In principle, however, uterine kinship is never extinguished, and it
often happens that people of different clans, who are strangers to one
[769] another, discover by chance that they are distant *saarət*. Supposing,
for instance, a man proposes to make an important sacrifice to a lineage ancestor. His agnatic co-descendants of this ancestor are bound to be present; but he will also send to tell the cognatic descendants through women of that ancestor and some of them will come. Two men of different clans may be present who now discover, for the first time, that they are cognatically related through the lineage of their host. They trace out their genealogical connexion (*tumh dəyam*) and find that they are distant *saarət*. I have seen this happen more than once, and the delight of the men concerned was a vivid testimony to the meaning

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI.

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth
regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive,
851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their
[783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that
has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded
and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which
593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are
593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults
571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best
exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should
591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her
571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

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854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs
of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins)
165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among 622 the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts. No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies, to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the 'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we [624] find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the *kambon na*, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly 622 twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. 554 It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named 'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his house- 592 hold among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief 593 and pawn (verb, *nme talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need 426 not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera*.)'

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[1] See Chapter XXVI.

Lineage Grouping and Local Grouping

613 We come now to the question of the connexion between lineage
621 grouping and locality. A lineage like Napugzabar yiri, though its span
596 is comparatively small, exhibits all the important principles of lineage
structure and will suffice as a crucial example.

In all the old-established settlements we find a very close correlation between lineage proximity and residential proximity among the members of the clan who live there. Close agnates tend to live near one another, so that residential proximity is almost a measure of lineage proximity. A segment of small span tends to be a close residential cluster, and segments of larger span, up to the major segments of a maximal lineage, tend to form residential blocks.

We can see this most readily if we look again at the residential dispersion of a group of agnatically related joint families, bearing in mind that the men of a joint family form a lineage. For as the homestead is the material integument of the living structure of the joint family, so is the localization of the lineage, growing out of the spatial arrangement of the homestead, the spatial counterpart of the lineage structure.

592 As will be remembered (see p. 199), the elementary case is that of two
602 full (*soog*) brothers, who often continue to occupy a single homestead
596 long after they have set up separate families. Each will have more or less
self-contained quarters, but the homestead will have only one gateway (*zanɔr*), one cattle-yard (*sapak*), and one room for the family head (*zɔŋ*), signifying that it is a single homestead. Half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) may share a homestead in this way, but they usually separate more distinctly when they have growing families. Each will have his own gateway, &c., and party walls divide his section of the homestead completely from those of his brothers, making it what may be called a semi-detached homestead. Such a set of semi-detached homesteads may house a man and his mature first-born son, or a man and his deceased brother's sons. Sometimes two or more ortho-cousins (brothers, in native terminology) live thus side by side.

613 More usually, however, men whose nearest common ancestor is a grand-
621 father occupy completely separate dwellings, often very near to one
another. Men whose nearest common ancestor is a great-grandfather never have permanent homes adjoining one another in this semi-detached way. These conditions of residence signalize successive stages of segmentation as the effective minimal lineage expands and splits into new effective minimal lineages. But what residential arrangements will prevail in a particular lineage segment depends, also, upon other circumstances, the most important of which are the economic and religious relations, and the character and disposition of the individuals concerned. Residential collocation is not a simple function of lineage relationship. There is a *tertium quid* linking them: the combined effect of land tenure, on which the whole economy of the household rests, and of the ancestor cult. For example, when a joint family splits, the man who leaves the ancestral home usually builds a homestead for himself on land belonging to the

CHAPTER III

THE HOMESTEAD AND THE JOINT FAMILY

Homestead and Family—a Single Social Entity

361 PHYSICALLY a Tale settlement is an aggregation of homesteads irregularly distributed at varying distances from one another.[1] A 592 homestead is the domicile of a domestic family. The edifice of pile and thatch, and its occupants, constitute a single entity. There is no word for either apart from the other. The native concept, *yir* (pl. *yea*), a house, means primarily the joint family as a coherent social unit residing in its own dwelling. An unoccupied homestead is a dead shell, left to crumble into ruins.

592 When a homestead is abandoned it becomes a *daboog* (pl. *dabaar*), a word applied both to an empty homestead in any stage of decay and to the site of a former homestead, and carrying two main and complementary implications that spring directly from the dominance of the lineage principle in Tale social values. *Daboog* stands for something good and worthy of praise when it refers to the site of a person's father's or grandfather's homestead, or, by extension, to the site or locality of an ancestor's homestead. A *daboog* in this sense is a symbol of the origins and a portent of the good fortune of an existing lineage; it is an object of personal attachment and religious reverence; though vacant it is not dead; the spirits of the ancestors still abide there, and it may be re-occupied some day; it is a symbol of the living continuity of a line of descent. *Daboog* can also be used to describe the site of a former human habitation left deserted and forlorn through the extinction of a line of descent. No ancestor spirits dwell there; it is an accursed spot, a monument of human sin, and a symbol of the most terrible mystical retribution that can befall a Taləŋ. A curse one sometimes hears uttered when a grave injury has been suffered at the hands of an unknown person is: 'May his house lie in ruins and tobacco be grown there (*K'u yir doon daboog ka ba cɛŋ taba waal nɛŋha*).' A ruined homestead provides an exceptionally fertile patch of soil, suitable for growing tobacco. If a man's line of descent is extinguished, there will be no one to claim ownership of his *daboog*, and anyone who wishes will come and plant tobacco there.

592
769 A homestead is always built for a particular family. From the day when the site is chosen it is the scene of human labour, of organized co-operation, and of religious and moral preoccupations. It must be lived in from the laying of the foundations, lest evil mystical agencies desecrate it. Ancestor shrines are immediately installed in it; for the spirits of a man's fathers and forefathers abide in his house, presiding

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

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769 over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities in their lifetime.

592 783 778 A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is consecrated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tendaana under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebeet*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yiř la pu disbame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them.

592 181 In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another.

592 571 In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

592 361 It is far truer of the Taləŋ than of the modern Englishman to say that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their homesteads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

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[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

no foundation in fact. The climate, the kind of raw material which is 592 361 plentifully at hand, the economic system, and the social organization of the natives rather than the alleged lawlessness of former times, determine their mode of house-building. In any case, homesteads very often stand closer than fifty paces together, the distance at which a mediocre shot can hit a tree—though I have seen an arrow carry four times that distance.

A Talaŋ's home is his castle in the psychological rather than the 592 181 material sense. It is the centre and fount of his major interests, his dominant purposes, his deepest emotional attachments, and his whole scheme of values; it is his shelter, his storehouse, the stage of his life's drama. The Tallensi, unlike many African peoples, have no age sets or initiation schools. A person grows up and receives his entire education at home. If he practises a craft, such as leatherwork, or is a diviner, his home is his workshop or consulting place.

As an adult, all his economic enterprise issues from his home and is devoted primarily to its upkeep. Unless he is one of the few *nouveaux riches* of to-day he keeps all his material possessions there, and houses all his livestock within its walls. His sex life, in maturity, is centred there. His children, the supreme object of his aspirations, are born and grow up in his home under his care and control. He worships his immediate forbears there. His personal destiny, past, present, and future, revolves about his home, its stages perpetuated in the many shrines and other ritual objects that are housed in it. He receives his friends and relatives at home, and dispenses hospitality there; and if he [461] has nothing to do would as lief recline under the shade tree at his own gateway as go making calls on others. Even the young men who like gallivanting about the markets spend much of their leisure at home.

592 181 626 The quintessence of his home, to a Taləŋ, resides in his children, and above all his sons, the vehicles of his immortality. That is the essential meaning of *mar yiri*, 'to have a house'. Ask any native what happens to a man who does not adequately expiate a sacrilege such as murder. '*U yiri ŋmaarəme*—his house will fall to pieces,' is the answer, given with emphatic and solemn conviction, and often with circumstantial illustrations from experience or hearsay. A parent curses an insubordinate child, a chief or tendaana curses a clansman who has grossly insulted him, '*u ku nye yiri*—he will not see (i.e. have) a house', that is, he will die without offspring to perpetuate his line and to sacrifice to his spirit; and this is an extremely serious matter. It never fails to bring the culprit to heel with humble apologies. On the other hand, '*i na nye yiri*—you will have a house', is the most propitious blessing a diviner can convey to a man from his ancestor spirits.

592 593 Patrilocal residence and the tendency for the lineage to be localized give a man's domestic life greater continuity than a woman's. His natal family and his conjugal family are both strung on the same

lineage. The latter grows directly out of the former and very often 592
occupies the same dwelling as, or one close to that of, the former. For 593
a woman marriage signifies a sharp break. As wife and mother she generally lives in a different, even if familiarly close, clan settlement from that of her birth. A man, living all his life side by side with the other members of his lineage, participating in the hierarchy of the corporate units that make up the lineage system, identifying himself with all its members through their common jural, economic, and ceremonial interests, makes an easy, self-evident, and gradual transition from the status of a minor (*tarəm*) under his father's control to that of a father and head of a household. The change in status and social role from that of a daughter and member of one lineage to that of a wife and mother in the settlement of another is more drastic and complex. A woman has no rights in or ties with the community[1] in which she spends the greatest part of her life, exercises her heaviest responsibilities, achieves her most cherished fulfilments, and acquires her strongest emotional attachments, except through her family by marriage, her husband, and her children. Thus a woman's life is fraught with many possibilities of conflict between the loyalties and sentiments towards her natal lineage and those which she gradually builds up in relation to her husband's lineage.

The effect of all this is to make the home of even greater importance for a woman than for a man. Her conjugal home is the supreme and almost the sole domain of her labour and life. Her children are the very hub of her existence. She is first and foremost a housewife and mother, toiling devotedly in the care of her children, in attending to her husband's needs, in giving her contribution of labour and skill to the economy of the household, and in the numerous household tasks that call for daily attention.

The Architecture of the Homestead in Relation to the Structure of the Domestic Family

Tale homesteads are solidly constructed of pile (puddled mud, *tan*), 342
and they are built to last. Erecting the circular walls tier by tier, 462
plastering them, roofing the rooms, stamping the floors, adding the small contrivances and the decorations that increase the comfort and attraction of the homestead, are all tasks requiring considerable skill, care, and co-operation. They are not the work of specialists, though some men and women have more skill in them than others, and many people have such poor skill that they never undertake them. The conventional division of labour involves both sexes equally in the building of a homestead. Building and thatching is men's work; plastering, drawing the crude lines and geometrical designs that

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[1] She may, and usually does, have cognatic kinsfolk there, but her ties with them are valid only for the particular individuals.

342 decorate the walls, and stamping the floors into smooth, hard surfaces
462 are all women's work. According to its size and the number of workers
available, from the commencement to the final touches, it takes from
three weeks to two months of intermittent but often strenuous labour
to build a homestead. This falls chiefly on its future occupants. All
[476] the members of the family, including the children, lend a hand. But
co-members of the owner's clan, especially of his own local segment
and their wives, as well as kinsmen, affines, and friends, lend their
services too, and this involves considerable expenditure of foodstuffs
to reward them.

356 Again, substantial as they are, Tale houses are not impervious to the
weather, with its drastic alternation of great heat and drought and heavy
rains. After a couple of years the soaking rains of July and August
begin to wear the walls away, rot the thatch, and pit the floors. A man
who wants to keep his homestead in trim condition must do some repairs
every dry season. New rooms may be added from time to time, if the
family grows in numbers, or old rooms allowed to fall in if it diminishes.
With such alterations and repairs, a homestead may stand for a generation.
In the older settlements many sites have been occupied for two
or three generations continuously, the homesteads having been completely
rebuilt, bit by bit, several times during this period.

Building a new homestead is an outstanding event in the life of its
592 owner and a matter of public attention. It always marks a significant
554 change in a man's status—his economic and jural emancipation from
minority, or his attainment of eldership high up in the lineage hierarchy.
Hence it requires moral sanction and ritual precautions. As we have
seen, it also mobilizes all the basic social ties a man has. The house
itself, embodying the labour and care of himself, his family, and many
of his relatives by blood and marriage, stands as a monument to the
efficacy of these social ties.

592 We can see why the Tale homestead, looked at merely from the
341 architectural aspect, is the material projection of the social relations
that make up the domestic family. All Tale homesteads have the same
architectural pattern, just as all Tale domestic families have the same
basic structure. Only in one point of style and construction do Tale
homesteads differ in type, and this is not a question of taste. The
Tallensi have two kinds of roofs, a conical thatched roof lashed on
to a frame of rafters, and a flat roof of beaten pile supported on a
ceiling of strong rafters. The thatch roof is the easier to make and
the most common. But nearly every thatched homestead has at least
one flat-roofed room (*pii*), as a matter both of convention and of
utility. It is the scene of many activities in the dry season. Men,
women, and children sit or sprawl on the roof to rest, to chat, or when
they are busy with some sedentary task such as sewing or spinning.
Grain, vegetables, and edible leaves are spread out to dry there. On

sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When 592
his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every 341
morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for
stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or [778
two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in
the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the 192]
alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something
untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is
needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the 341
cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihər*) of the
Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore 778
obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth shrines (*təŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout. This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and 341
condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and 554
experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gəlibdaana of
Tɛnzugu and the Yikpɛmdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular 592
room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White Fathers' Mission at Boləga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom, and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious, upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance. The Təŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration, but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. 592
A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or
lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense 356
relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing like Yɛlnaar of Təŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

[facing p. 49]

PLATE 4

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a. The central granary in the homestead of an elder. Note the array of ancestor shrines on the granary. The granary is about 10 ft. high and 5 ft. in diameter at the base

• 592
778

b. In the *Dendɔgo* of the senior woman of the family. The infant children of several wives of the family left in the care of one of them. (This is the homestead of the head of a medial lineage. Note the lineage *bɔyar* against the wall on the left, part of it supported on a tree-stump and part on the floor in shallow pottery dishes)

592 356 ashamed of it and exert himself to the utmost to have it repaired. But a poor man who has the energy and can himself build and thatch, or has a son or sons skilled in these crafts, will generally keep his homestead in a satisfactory condition. On the other hand, even men who own cattle and sheep are apt to wait until the thatch is rotted through and the walls collapse before undertaking essential repairs. The ingrained thrift of the natives, fostered by their narrow margin of sufficiency in food-supplies, induces them often to submit to discomfort which would tax less hardy folk to breaking-point rather than expend food and other resources to alleviate it.

356 Indoors, Tale homesteads are usually surprisingly tidy. A good housewife sees that her quarters are swept every morning. Litter indoors is a sign that the mistress of those rooms is a lazy or a sick woman, or one too harassed by family cares or poverty to look after her home properly. A good housewife has her floors regravelled and beaten almost every year to keep them hard and smooth.

592 But individual idiosyncrasies do not affect the layout of a homestead; for apart from minor variations this depends wholly on the constitution of the domestic unit. The layout of a homestead is an index to the structure of the domestic family occupying it.

The simplest domestic and procreative unit is the elementary family—a man, his wife, and their young children—occupying their own homestead. Often the man's mother (*ma*), either his own mother (*ma dɔɣarug*—the mother [of] bearing), or a surviving co-wife (*nentaa*) of his mother lives with him. The whole group constitutes one household, that is, a single economic unit all the members of which are mutually dependent on one another for the production of their common food-supply and the satisfaction of most other wants. Essentially this is a matter of pooling labour and skill, of utilizing land in common, of drawing on the food, livestock, and to some extent monetary resources built up by joint effort, for the benefit of any member of the unit, and of mutual assistance from any private resources that the members may have.

592 351 778 A good example of a domestic family of this kind is that of Ɔndieso of Tɔŋ-Guŋ, a man in the late thirties whose homestead stands on the border of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ and Gbizug. Outside his homestead, 10 or 12 yards from the gateway, stands the usual shade tree. Ɔndieso's tree is also, like almost all shade trees, an ancestor shrine. Between it and the gateway is a bare space, with the midden heap (*tampɔɣar*) on one side and a large, round, flat-topped ancestor shrine built of pile on the other. It is the shrine of his late father's *Yin*. One or more ancestor shrines stand thus at the entrance to every homestead. '*Ɔn nso yirla*—it owns the house', the natives say, meaning by this a spiritual and not material ascendancy in the affairs of the family. It stands outside, at the entrance, as a spiritual sentry guarding the welfare of the house.

If the head of the house is still junior in status in the lineage hierarchy, 592 ●
as Ɔndieso is, it will be the shrine dedicated to his father's Destiny 351
(*yin*), or it may be his father's divining (*bakologo*) shrine. The house is
still under the spiritual jurisdiction of Ɔndieso's dead father, though he 778
himself now owns it in the temporal sense. A man of greater social maturity, with grown children and higher lineage status, would very likely have his own *yin* or *bakologo* shrine at his gateway. His house is established; it is no longer the fulfilment of his father's destiny, as is the house of a young man, though it may still be known by his father's or grandfather's name. For as long as a homestead remains standing it is known by the name of the man who first built it.

A bird's-eye view would show a homestead as covering a roughly 592
circular or oval area (Figs. 2*a* and 2*b*). The space in front of the gateway
(*zanɔme*—at the gateway) belongs pre-eminently to the menfolk. The 593
public phases of funeral and mortuary ceremonies, which are corporate concerns of the lineage and are conducted by the men, take place there. When anything touching the rights, duties, or interests of the head of the family in his capacity as a member of a particular lineage calls for consultation with fellow members of the lineage, the *zanɔme* is the gathering place. It is the proper place for him to receive greetings, condolences, or congratulations, and to conduct formal negotiations in a matter such as the payment of bride-price owed to him or by him. In the dry season he often rests there, beneath the shade tree, during the sweltering afternoon, chatting with a friend or fondling an infant left in his charge while its mother is busy indoors. Women of the house come and go freely, and often sit or lounge about in front of the gateway; but when 'an affair of the men (*buraas yɛl*)' is in progress they keep away.

The gateway (*zanɔr*) always faces west to south-west, 'where the sun 351
sets (*nintaŋ nluut*)'. This is a convention never broken by the Tallensi, though they have neither a naturalistic explanation nor a mystical rationalization for it, and it is not subject to mystical sanctions.[1]

The gateway is a V-shaped opening, about a foot wide at the base and 3 to 4 feet wide on top, between two round pillars (*meelɔŋ*) forming part of the wall of the house. Large irregularly spaced holes are made in these pillars for short logs to be inserted at night as cross-bars against which a heavy, hollow board (*bɛluŋ*), cut from a tree-trunk, or a bundle of poles can be leaned to close the gateway. Tallensi say that they build the gateway thus in order to bar it the more securely against the ª

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[1] As the rain-bearing winds blow from the south-east, and the tornadoes that begin and end the rainy season come from an easterly direction, it is possible that the placing of the doorway on the western side of the house is an adaptation to this feature of the climate. Anyone who has experienced the discomfort of a tornado whirling straight into a room, or of a heavy rain, in this region will appreciate the usefulness of placing the only entrance into a homestead on the lee side. But no native has ever given me this obvious explanation, though this may be due to inadequate inquiries on my part. [132]

ª [Text is continued on p. 54,—Analyst]

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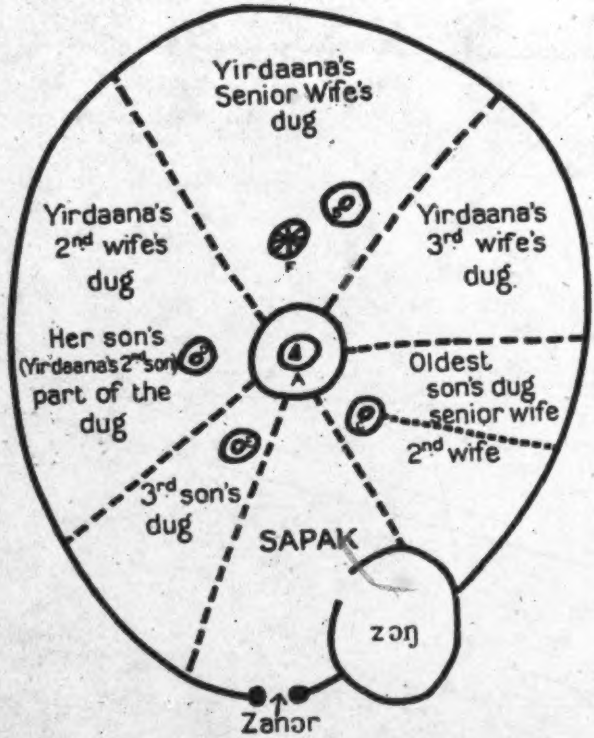
Yirdaana's
Senior Wife's
dug
Yirdaana's
2nd wife's
dug
Yirdaana's
3rd wife's
dug
Her son's
(Yirdaana's 2nd son)
part of the
dug
Oldest
son's dug
senior wife
2nd wife
3rd son's
dug
SAPAK
zɔŋ
Zanɔr
A
F

FIG. 2*a*. Diagram (not to scale) showing the layout of the different *dugɔt* in a large joint family homestead. The head of the homestead (*yirdaana*) has three living wives and three married sons, one with two wives.

A — Principal granary (*buur tenta'ar*) of the *yirdaana*
B — Small granary belonging to *yirdaana*
C — Oldest son's private small granary
D — Second son's private small granary
E — Third son's private small granary
F — *Yirdaana's Yin* shrine

[p. 52]

361
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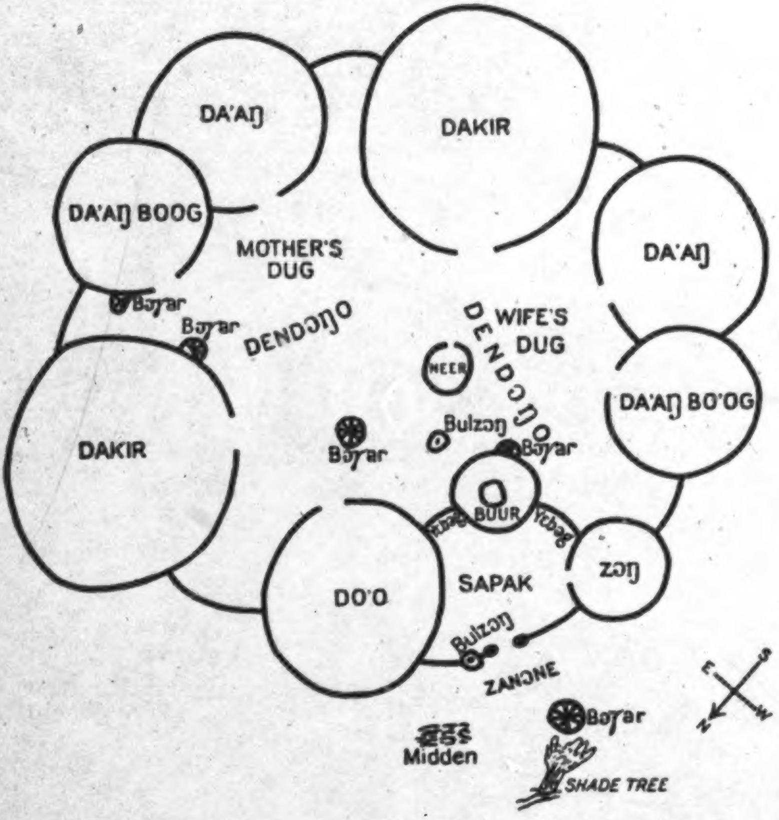
DA'AŊ
DAKIR
DA'AŊ BOOG
MOTHER'S DUG
DA'AŊ
Bɔɣar
Bɔɣar
DENDɔŊɔ
DENDɔŊɔ
WIFE'S DUG
NEER
DA'AŊ BO'OG
DAKIR
Bulzɔŋ
Bɔɣar
Bɔɣar
BUUR
Yɛbɔg
Yɛbɔg
DO'O
SAPAK
ZɔŊ
Bulzɔŋ
ZANɔNE
Bɔɣar
Midden
SHADE TREE
S
E
N
W

FIG. 2*b*. Diagram of Ɔndieso's homestead, showing the layout of the quarters and the rooms. (Scale: 1:45 approx.)

Glossary

Bɔɣar	Ancestor shrine
Buur	Granary
Bulzɔŋ	Shelter for hens
Da'aŋ	Unroofed dry-season kitchen
Da'aŋboog	Storeroom and wet-season kitchen
Dakir	Sleeping-room
Do'o	Room for adolescent boys
Dendɔŋo	Open courtyard
Sapak	Livestock yard
Zanɔne	Open space at the gateway where the men foregather
Zɔŋ	The homestead head's special room
Neer	Grinding-room
Yɛbɔg	Low dividing wall

[p. 53]

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
778 of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes
his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the
zɔŋ of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors,
is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr*
of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11
and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages
later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say,
transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery
she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*.
She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage
against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized
in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not
confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this
ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary
342 course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a
yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the
sapak. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and
6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One
suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more
numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more
smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with
a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
[351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a
Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the
domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters
and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the
smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and
guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this,
life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and
the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency
of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

volume.[1] The granary symbolizes all the sentiments and ideas, the apprehensions and joys which the struggle for food evokes in Taleland. It stands for the security of the domestic unit in this struggle. In the organization of the household its importance comes from the fact that it is the focus of the economic cohesion and stability of the domestic group. Into it goes the product of the joint labour of the household, from it comes their sustenance. In filling the granary and in the consumption of its contents, the labour of men, women, and children is equally essential, and the rights of all equally valid. When a joint family splits up, the commonest pretext is friction over grain supplies. The family which hives off does so on the ground that it needs its own, independent food-supply. 'They have each his own granary (*ba mara ba buur ba buur*)', is the formula summing up the economic relations of brothers occupying a single homestead but having separate households. 343 181 592 ● [578]

The granary belongs to the head of the house, the *yirdaana*. No one may enter it without his authorization, least of all his wife. A devoted and trusted wife may be allowed to descend (*sig*) into it to issue the grain (*loo ki*) for cooking if there is no suitable male within reach—Tale conventions are not rigidly complied with if doing so involves excessive and absurd inconvenience. But it would be scandalous if she did so on her own initiative. The contents of the granary are formally the property of the head of the household, to be distributed at his discretion. There is no other place in the homestead which is so rigorously private to him. Besides the grain for current consumption, he stores the seed for next year's crop there. He hides a particularly cherished object, or money which he wants to conceal from other members of the family, in his granary, secure in the knowledge that no one will dare to tamper with it there. 592 343

The *zɔŋ* enshrines—in both the physical and the ideal sense of this concept—the notion of the continuity of the lineage; the *buur* stands for the social personality of the *yirdaana*, as the centre of an independent domestic family, its economic fulcrum, its jural and ritual head, controller and representative. The position of the granary in the architectural pattern of the homestead corresponds to that of the head of the house in the structure of the family, as the unique link between its parts and the source of its unity. 343 181

Tallensi say that a man's soul (*sii*) is in his granary. Using the same phrase one says of a person, '*n siig mbɛ u ni*—my soul is in [drawn towards] him', meaning that one feels a special affinity with him. Among the Namoos the identification of a man with his granary is symbolized explicitly in the taboos that his first-born children have to observe.[2] A man's granary, his cap and tunic, his bow and quiver,

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix. 2, 1937.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. v.

343 181 are the emblems of his individuality. They participate in it, for they are imbued with his body 'dirt (*dayət*)'—a concept which has a physiological facet, meaning the exuviae adhering to a man's garments, quiver, or other objects constantly handled by him, and a mystical facet implying the quintessence of his individuality. The Talis also acknowledge this complex association between a man and his granary and other intimate possessions, expressing it in analogous customs, in the routine of family life and in their ideals of family relations.

351 To enter the living-quarters of a homestead one climbs over the low dividing wall (*yɛbəg*) at the back of the *sapak* by means of a step (*bimbimər*) and descends, by a similar step on the other side, into an irregular courtyard (*dɛndɔŋo*, pl. *dɛndɔma*) of beaten gravel, which is surrounded by a number of rooms. According to the wealth, rank, or status of the *yirdaana* this *dɛndɔŋo* varies in size from about 20 to about 6 square yards.

● 592 593 342 351 This *dɛndɔŋo* belongs to the principal woman (*dugdaana*) of the house. The *dɛndɔma* of junior wives are smaller. In Ɔndieso's house the senior woman is his mother's surviving co-wife, whom he calls his 'younger mother' (*mapit*, lit. 'mother's younger sister'), and who has remained with him since the death of his father. Her rooms occupy roughly the left half of the homestead, facing inwards from the *sapak*. From this *dɛndɔŋo*, turning right between a small room beside the granary and a larger room straight ahead, one enters a similar *dɛndɔŋo* in the middle of another set of rooms, those of Ɔndieso's wife. These take up roughly the right half of the homestead, facing inwards. The *yirdaana*'s mother's (own mother, or proxy-mother) rooms always occupy the position of honour in the centre of the arc; his senior wife's (*poɣakpeem*) rooms lie on the right-hand side of these; his second wife's, or his younger brother's senior wife's rooms lie on the left, looking inwards. The rooms of the other wives of the head of the family or of his brothers are distributed as convenience dictates. For example, wives who are clan sisters will usually have adjoining quarters; wives who get on badly will be put in well-separated rooms. If none of a man's father's widows is living with him, and he has more than one wife, his senior wife occupies the central group of rooms, his second wife those on her right, and so forth. Generally the women's apartments all communicate with one another. But if a woman has a quarrelsome disposition or gets on badly with her co-wives for any other reason, her quarters will be separated from those of the next-door wife by a low party wall, to prevent undue trespassing by her co-wives or their children.

342 593 A woman's apartments make up a self-contained section in the homestead. This is her *dug* (pl. *dugət*). Basically *dug* means a single room, but it is extended to mean the single set of rooms belonging to one wife. In the Tale family every woman with children is entitled to her own *dug*. Women guard this right jealously, and if a man has not built separate quarters for his wife by the time that she has had her first child,

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off 342 to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug* 593 and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately. The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person. A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife, mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family.

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments, but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, 595 the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in the case of the latter.

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that 778 are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman. 595 They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him.

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the 775 ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, 769 into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary rites, make this clear.

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. 592 Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights, after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing or gossiping or asking riddles.

● 592 A woman is entitled to have at least three rooms in her *dug*, a sleeping-room (*dakir*) a dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*) and a storeroom (*da'aŋboog*). Men of substance often allow their older wives a fourth room (*boog*), which always has a flat mud roof and serves as an extra storeroom and a guest-room, or as a room in which a daughter-in-law can be temporarily accommodated, or where the *yirdaana* can sit and talk to his visitors in the rainy season.

342 592 [352] The *dakir* is the largest room, usually 10 to 12 feet in diameter.[1] Here the woman sleeps with her young children; here her husband comes to her at night; here she is confined when she bears him a child; here she keeps her sleeping-mats and her few personal treasures; and here, if she is his senior wife, her husband's best cloth or tunic, his bow and quiver, and other personal belongings. Her husband and children have free access to her *dakir*. Other members of the family must generally ask her permission to enter it or a family quarrel will result. To enter a *dakir* one crawls through an arched doorway, 2 to 3 feet high and about the same in width. Inside darkness reigns, relieved only by the glimmer of light that enters under the eaves and through the doorway, or a small aperture high up in the wall.

343 592 A stretch of wall 2 or 3 feet long forms a shallow recess between the *dakir* and the unroofed dry-season kitchen (*da'aŋ*). Here one generally sees a bundle of firewood stacked in a corner, or, in the right season, a heap of shea nuts. The *da'aŋ* itself is horseshoe-shaped and smaller than a *dakir*—from 4 to 8 feet across the shorter axis and 6 to 9 feet across the longer axis. The doorway is usually about 4 feet high, so that one can go in and out easily, as domestic tasks require. As it is for use in dry weather only, it is open to the sky. After the harvest, millet and guinea-corn stalks are spread on top, partly as a shield from the sun but chiefly as a reserve of firewood. The cooking-hearth (*ɔɔrəg*), the water-pots (*kɔwoor*), the cooking-pots and dishes (*dɔyat* and *laas*), the stirring-stick (*vugər*), and ladles (*bies*), lying about in none too orderly a fashion, show well the uses to which this room is put.

Adjoining the *da'aŋ* is the larger, roofed *da'aŋboog*, the storeroom and larder. This room often has a doorway leading into the *da'aŋ* and not into the *dɛndɔŋo*, for the greater convenience of the housewife. Here the housewife keeps her stocks of foodstuffs—her dried vegetables and condiments, the odd piece of dried fish or meat she has hoarded, a pot of millet, perhaps, which she acquired by her own efforts, and so forth—as well as the utensils she is not using, and any bulky articles belonging to her or other members of the family. Here she also cooks in the wet season. At a pinch it may be used as a sleeping-room for a visitor

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[1] The diameters of a room are always discrepant, it may be by an inch or two or by as much as a foot, so that its base is never a perfect circle. The natives themselves do not notice this as it is due to their crude method of marking out the circle for the base with the foot.

or adolescent son. The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* also serve as a sort of drawing-room. 343
A guest who must be treated with respect is invited to step 592
round to the kitchen to have his meal there in private, a suitor is told
to go round to the girl's mother's kitchen to plead his suit with her.

The *da'aŋ* and *da'aŋboog* are the counterpart in the social sphere of 576
a woman of the *zɔŋ*, cattle yard (*sapak*), and granary (*buur*) in that of
a man. They mark off the economic field reserved for her and the social 592
sphere in which she is supreme. Etiquette and convention show this,
and, as in the case of the *zɔŋ* and the *buur*, ritual notions give expression to it and put the seal of mystical value on it. Women do not have ancestor shrines of their own. But in her storeroom an old woman keeps her *zaalɔŋ*. This is a long rope net, holding a neat pile of polished calabash dishes (*ŋman*) of all sizes which she has accumulated during her married life. One of these is her *kumpiog*, 'basket of death'. It is the symbol of her mortal existence.[1] When she dies it stands in her *dɛndɔŋo* and is eventually taken, with the most meticulous ceremonial care, to her eldest surviving daughter. In this room also she keeps her main storage pot (*dɔk*). It is to her what a man's granary is to him. One sign of this is the rule that her first-born daughter may never, in the mother's lifetime, open it. She does so ritually when her mother's funeral is completed.[2]

Lastly, there is the grinding-room (*neer*), a vastly important item in 343
the organization of the domestic economy, and in the personal relations
of the women of a family with one another. It is always a small, low 592
room, 3 or 4 feet in diameter, with a doorway barely large enough to admit a person on hands and knees. A hole under the eaves, the size of a soup plate, lets in a glimmer of light. A waist-high table built of mud, in the hollow surface of which two nether grindstones are embedded, takes up most of the interior. In a small homestead like Ɔndieso's one *neer* is enough, and his mother and wife share it, though the older woman seldom has occasion to use it as her daughter-in-law does most of the cooking for the family. If there are several women in
a household, more than one grinding-room is needed. One reason for [252]
this is purely mechanical. Grinding the grain for the main meal, in the evening, takes at least an hour, in the period of plenty. The women and girls do this at any time of the day, but prefer to do it in the afternoon.
Thus more than one woman may want to use the *neer* at the same time. 343
But there is another reason as well. Co-wives are apt to squabble over 592
the use of the grinding-room, especially if they do not get on harmoni- 578

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[1] The calabash is the commonest domestic utensil and it symbolizes a woman in many contexts. For instance, when a man's wife bears a child he will send to tell her parents; and the messenger reports, with the euphemism the Tallensi always resort to on such occasions, that the woman has born 'a calabash' (*ŋman*) if it is a girl, or a 'staff' (*duor*) if it is a boy—the staff being a hunting-weapon carried by men.

[2] Cf. Ch. VIII below.

343 ously, for it is connected with that precise equality of grain rations to 592 which co-wives ar[illegible]itled and about which they are extremely touchy. 578 To obviate [illegible] [illegible]uabbles, which sometimes kindle suppressed antagonisms in[illegible]us quarrels, a man usually provides a separate grinding-room [illegible] [illegible]e with a fractious disposition.

592 In a large [illegible] [illegible]red house there is a great deal of free and easy communicati[illegible] [illegible] the different *dugət.* Children in particular go about freely from [illegible]e woman's quarters (*dug*) to another's, since they are related to all by actual or derived filial ties. The men, too, are free of all the *dugət*, for the women are all either their 'mothers' (*manam*)—own mothers, or fathers' other wives, their wives (*pɔɣaba*)—own wives or brothers' wives, or daughters-in-law (*sampɔɣaba*)—own sons' or brothers' sons' wives. Men and their children, members of the same lineage, are the 'owners' of the homestead. They have determinate rights, duties, and sentiments towards all the women. The women are more circumspect, especially about the *dug* of a co-wife (*nentaa*) or husband's mother (*daŋaampɔk*) if their personal relations are not too cordial; for their social inter-relations are indirect and contingent on their marital ties, unless, as sometimes happens, they belong to the same or to linked clans and have, in consequence, a direct bond of solidarity. In spite of this, the general impression left by a visit to a large house is one of friendly co-operation unsullied by jealous distinctions.

The natives themselves have no illusions on this score. They do not take it for granted that all the women of a family will get on well with one another. They recognize clearly that the spatial differentiation of each *dug* in a house corresponds to its structural differentiation; and with this goes a certain degree of domestic privacy and a differentiation of sentiment and of emotional attachments that may become a source of friction. The *dug* (that is, a woman and her children by one man) constitutes the irreducible unit of Tale social structure, both jurally and morally, held together by the strongest social and emotional bonds conceivable to the Tallensi. The *dug* is the Taləŋ's conceptual model of infrangible solidarity, and his emotional symbol of unstinted nourishment, of complete security, and of parental devotion. It is the prototype, also, of the closely integrated matri-segment within the formally unified patrilineal lineage, as has been shown in our previous volume.[1]

In general, as the foregoing suggests, a man has no room of his own. He keeps his personal belongings in his wife's *dug* and eats and sleeps there, or in his various wives' rooms in turn, if he has more than one. Chiefs, old men, and rich men sometimes have rooms of their own, usually in their senior wives' *dɛndɔna*, where they keep their more bulky personal belongings and to which they can retire if they want privacy. The Gɔlibdaana and the Gorogo Yikpemdaana, as we have seen, make an exaggerated display of their private rooms. But as a matter of fact,

vanity apart, they do require ample storage-room for the large quantities 592 of clothes, the saddlery and trappings of their horses, the innumerable odds and ends of European origin, and many articles of native production which they have accumulated by purchase or gift. Their good fortune is exceptional. Others content themselves with small and modest private rooms. Leatherworkers and blacksmiths also often have private [282 rooms where they keep their tools and the materials of their craft. 326]

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

No special provision is made for young children or girls. They live in their mothers' rooms. An unmarried young man usually has a special room of his own, essentially a sleeping-room (*doo*), in his mother's *dug*; and if there are several adolescent boys in a family a *doo* may be built for them in one of the women's *dugət*.

The construction of the dwelling-house shows graphically the division 592 of the domestic family into two complementary spheres. On the one hand, we have the sphere in which the patricentral *yir* predominates; 611 on the other, that in which the matricentral *dug* has priority. It is the line of cleavage between descent from the father (*ba dɔɣam*) and descent from the mother (*ma dɔɣam*), principles which are antithetical in form but complementary in function in the domestic organization. Maternal origin supplies the canon of differentiation within the family, paternal descent the principle of integration. In the polygynous joint family, which is the natives' ideal domestic unit, the constituent *dugət* are relatively autonomous in relation to one another, and in certain respects even mutually opposed. The *yir* combines them into a single integral unit, but they are not swallowed up; they retain their specific identity according to maternal origin. The *yir*, then, is the complementary factor to the *dug*; it is also the synthesis of a group of *dugət* at a higher level of organization. This, as has been shown in our previous book, is both the structural model and the social matrix of the lineage system.

The Developmental Cycle of the Joint Family

We have found it convenient to fix our analysis of the Tale homestead 596 by reference to the simplest kind of independent domestic unit. But the elementary family, as we have already remarked, is neither the ideal nor the most common type of independent domestic unit in Taleland; for the typical substratum of a domestic group is not the individual breadwinner but an effective minimal lineage.[1] The domestic group grows, changes, and dissolves with the growth cycle of this lineage, and a particular elementary family is only an episode in this cycle. The structure of the Tale family cannot be divorced from its existence in time. We have to examine it as a process. At any given time we find domestic families at every stage of development in a Tale community.

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[1] Cf. p. 9 above for a definition of this unit. A full analysis of its constitution is given in *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

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affairs, their absence does not disturb jural or ritual relations centred in the family. It is like a tree which remains a tree morphologically and physiologically even if some of its minor branches have been lopped off.

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The foregoing is true of the great majority of Tale families. The structure of the normal family can still be accurately described without reference to contact influence, in spite of the fact that a few families can be found in every settlement which have been badly mutilated by the prolonged absence abroad of their male members. Admittedly the norms of family relations have not remained completely insulated from these influences. With the ease of modern communications and the openings for work abroad, young people have incentives and opportunities which their fathers never had for resisting the authority of their elders and for breaking away from the family for a longer or shorter time. But as yet these new incentives and opportunities appear only as modifying factors in the play of the culturally defined family relations. They do not represent a conflicting set of norms, creating divisions within Tale society. For instance, a young man who is still jurally a minor cannot at will leave the domestic family to which he belongs by birth and set up an independent household. He can do so only in compliance with the moral rules and social conventions that regulate the fission of families. In fact, the motive to break away will only arise when certain standard changes take place in the composition of the domestic unit to which he belongs, or when he reaches a stage of social maturity which precipitates certain standard tensions between him and the head of the unit. The alternative for a young man who, in these days, hankers after independence is to leave the community until such time as he is prepared to settle down. He has to seek work abroad, in Ashanti or the Colony, or in the service of the white man nearer home. He is assured of a cordial welcome home whenever he decides to return, whether it be for a few weeks only or permanently. But if he makes up his mind to settle down at home it can only be within the existing social framework, and this means complying with the norms of family organization. There is no other way by which he can get married or acquire a house site or farm-land in his natal settlement, let alone play his part in community affairs. Hitherto these norms have been so well maintained that no returned emigrant has been known to flout them.

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Summing up, we see that the Tale domestic system has three morphological strata. It consists of a segmentary economic formation—households of different dimensions and degrees of economic self-sufficiency—embraced within a segmentary jural and ceremonial formation—domestic units not necessarily congruent with households grouped under family heads—and this again contained within a system of residential grouping in which the changes of phase in domestic structure are crystallized.

in places like Kumasi, I can say with certainty that the great majority are under 30.

592 A domestic unit is most clearly identified by the fact that it has a single common gateway. Though the three domains of domestic organization are not absolutely congruent, the commonest residential unit is the single household, which is also a single though not necessarily completely independent jural and ceremonial unit.[1]

596 We have been considering the typical development of the joint family as a process of successive fission and dispersion. But the contrary process of reintegration also plays an important part in this development. The changes in the composition of the joint or expanded family that lead to changes in the status and social roles of its senior male members cause it to split up in the circumstances that have been indicated, but they lead to a fusion of independent units in other circumstances. The decisive factors are jural status in the lineage, with which go rights over patrimonial land, and economic capacity.

Let us take a sample case. When Katiŋoo died (see genealogy, p. 68) his eldest son Duun became head of the effective minimal lineage and joint family and inherited the patrimonial farm-land. Duun and his full brother Baa continued to occupy their father's homestead, using only one gateway. After a while—four or five years, perhaps—Baa asked to be allowed to farm for himself as his children were growing up. He still occupied the same homestead as Duun, but his quarters were separated from those of Duun by a high party wall (*bɛŋər*), he had his own granary, farmed for himself, and was solely responsible for supplying the food and other wants of his wives and children. The domestic family now consisted of two households.

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[1] The following table shows this clearly:

162 *Table showing the Distribution of Domestic Families (= Gateways) and Households (= Units of Food Economy) in relation to Homesteads*

Domestic families per homestead	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	34	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	44
No. of domestic families	34	10	12	0	5	0	0	0	61
Households per homestead	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	25	11	4	2	0	1	0	1	44
No. of households	25	22	12	8	0	6	0	8	81

(Mean number of persons: per homestead, 14·5; per domestic family, 10·4.)

The 61 domestic families of our sample occupy 44 homesteads. On the average there are 1·4 gateways (i.e. 1·4 domestic families) per homestead; but more than half of the 61 families occupy their own homesteads, with one gateway apiece. There are 81 households in the sample group, an average of 1·9 households per homestead and 1·3 households per domestic family. But nearly a third of these households are single domestic families dwelling in their own homesteads.

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

592 262 576 In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 574 521 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out, informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out *gafarra* ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dendɔyo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart [584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy. Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

581 which cannot be done without the assistance of women. He can command
593 other services from her. For instance, nowadays he can send her
to buy grain for him in distant markets and sell it for him in the home
market; and he can ask for many little services that make life more comfortable
for him. A man has a right to these services; but it is a right
limited by the principle of reciprocity.[1] In return a man is bound to
protect and care for his wife, in particular to provide her with a home,
with food, and with curative treatment if she is ill.

There is an obvious material basis for the economic reciprocity of
593 husband and wife. Primarily it is a function of the system of economic
●592 co-operation, by means of which the household satisfies its material
wants. The head of the family owns the land and the livestock from
which all draw their sustenance. The men do the heavy work of farming
and care for the livestock. The women perform the tasks already mentioned.
Within this subsistence unit the rule of reciprocity of economic
rights and duties governs the economic relations of parent and child, of
brother and brother, as well as those of husband and wife. For it is an
application of the wider principle that all those who pool their labour
in the common task of providing food and shelter for the household are
entitled, severally, to a just share in the product of their common labour.

The authority of husband over wife in the matter of economic duties
593 and services is tempered, also, by a principle that really follows as a
421 logical corollary upon the principle just stated. The products of individual
industry and enterprise belong to the individual, subject to the
nominal over-right of anyone who has authority over him or her, in
particular, of the head of the family. The rule applies to all property
relations between the members of the family. Thus, as soon as a wife
acquires a *dug* of her own she begins to have a certain degree of economic
autonomy, and this increases with the passage of time, as her children
become more and more able to do without her regular care. She has her
own vegetable plot allocated to her by her husband. She often has a
ground-nut plot of her own, which she cultivates herself. She has her
small private store of grain, obtained by gift from her father or brothers
or other kinsmen. Her vegetables, her ground-nuts, and her grain do
not go into the pool of family resources. They do, however, serve to
supplement these resources; for it is a woman's duty to provide the
vegetable food, and it would be unthinkable for her not to use other
supplies she may possess to feed her children and her husband in time of
scarcity. But if her private supplies are not required for this purpose
she can dispose of them as she pleases. She can exchange them for
money or goods, or use them to give hospitality to her own kin or guests.
The same rule holds for such things as shea fruit and shea butter, which
[437] it is a woman's duty to provide for the household. Thus, it is common
for women to barter surplus shea nuts for household utensils, and these
are entirely their own property.

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[1] Cf. p. 213 below.

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔɣadir yɛla*) involve the common interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*) brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son. But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action *vis-à-vis* non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224]
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal,
especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days 602
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

105 The Domestic Organization. Tale domestic institutions are very elaborate, and the organization of domestic life is subject to a considerable range of variation due to such factors as the economic position, size and age of the unit, the temperament and character of individuals, the social status of the senior male members, the distribution of economic and ritual specialization (craftsmen, diviners &c.), and so forth. To evaluate the full influence of these factors requires a mass of statistical information which we have not been able to obtain as yet; we must be content with merely indicating its range.

Tale society is essentially democratic; but differences of wealth are prominent. Chiefs and headmen, in virtue of the services they command, cultivate greater areas than any commoner, own much more live stock and have twice and three times as many wives. Both in its structure and in the organization of its domestic life, a chief's compound conforms to the same cultural pattern as the compound of the poorest plebeian; but it is economically entirely atypical. In every settlement, also, there are a few men of wealth considerably above the average. They always have a sufficiency of food, even in the leanest years. Chiefs, headmen, and wealthy men have therefore been excluded from the discussion in this paper.

592 596 341 Tale social organization has a well-defined spatial basis. The unit of residence is a mud compound (*yir*—house) inhabited by a joint family consisting of a group of men of close patrilineal kinship, their wives and children. Its architecture is significantly correlated to the structure and organization of the joint family at the particular phase it has reached in its development. One compound in three—14 out of 40, to be exact—has two or more entrance gateways (*zanɔr*),[1] each corresponding to a completely self-contained dwelling, and independent social unit consisting of one or more households. The plural entrance compound represents a stage in the process of segmentation through which the joint family passes in the course of about three generations, and which ends in complete fission and the setting up of several independent compounds.

592 596 The main gate is always owned by the head of the joint family (*yirdaan*, owner of the house) the most senior (*kpeem*) of the group of

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[1] Statistics quoted here and in subsequent paragraphs are derived from a sample of 40 compounds selected at random from a sociological census we made at Tongo.

male agnates. He is *yirdaan* by virtue of indisputable succession which 592
carries with it ritual responsibilities for the whole joint family, legal 596
and moral duties and rights and valuable economic privileges. His younger brothers and his sons share his dwelling as a rule, ortho-cousins or nephews occasionally. Everything depends on factors such as those previously enumerated when it comes to the constitution of a particular compound. But in general, genealogical distance imposes corresponding spatial and social arrangements. Thus, the secondary gate of a plural gate compound[1] is usually owned by an ortho-cousin or nephew (classificatory brother or son) of the *yirdaan*, except for the special case of a man's first-born son.[2]

The single dwelling or the single-gate compound is the habitation of one or more households, each consisting of an adult male, his wife (or wives), and his children. A householder may have younger unmarried brothers or sisters or an old mother dependent on him. Every married man is a householder, but households vary greatly in status according to their degree of social and economic differentiation within the joint family. This is determined not only by the stage of development it has reached, but also by kinship factors and by those individual social and psychological characteristics which we have referred to before. A newly married man, for example, is to all intents and purposes part of the household to which he was attached prior to his marriage, but he has a small degree of autonomy which increases from year to year.

A newly married wife has a room in the quarters of her husband's 596
mother, if she is alive, or of his senior wife. In due course, however, 342
whether it be a man's first or later wife, he must build her separate quarters. Hence, in a well-differentiated household every wife has her own quarters (*dug*) partitioned off from those of her co-wives or her mother-in-law. Here she and her children—the primary family—live, and here she is supreme mistress. A woman's quarters consists

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[1] Two gates are usual, three gates infrequent, and more than three gates found only in exceptional circumstances.

[2] It is taboo for the head of a compound and his first-born son to continue to [784]
use a single entrance after the latter has married and founded a family, though this taboo is never enforced until the younger man's children approach adolescence. But few men live long enough to see their first-born sons make their own gateways.

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own family. She may, as an act of grace, give some of this food to her husband or to a co-wife with whom she is on friendly terms; but she is not compelled to do so. A junior householder thus augments the food supply for his own wives and children. If he comes into possession [431] of a large amount of grain by his own exertions he will generally make a present of a small quantity to the head of the unit to which he belongs; but, again, this is an act of goodwill, not an obligation. A kind-hearted head of a compound may occasionally present a meagre dish of grain to the wife of a younger head of a self-supporting unit, if they are obviously on the verge of starvation; otherwise, self-supporting units in the same compound never assist one another with grain, in the ordinary course of events.

There are other more incalculable means by which food is brought 602
into the household and family. Cereals are sometimes obtained during 431
the hunger months by women from their paternal kinsmen. A 222
marriageable daughter, again, means a succession of suitors bringing 262
gifts of money, guinea-fowls, and various other comestibles to her mother. Wild sources of food are fully exploited. Fruits of the shea-tree (*ta'aŋ: butyrospermum parkii*) save many a family from the worst straits of hunger, as does the pulp of the dawa-dawa (*doo: parkia filicordea*) pods. These trees have an enormous economic value, as will be evident later. The baobab-tree (*to'o: adansonia digitata*) has a fruit with a floury, sweetish pulp which is relished much as sweetmeats are by ourselves, and its leaves are used to make soup. It is generally found as a shade-tree outside a compound, and women readily get permission from the head of the compound to pluck the leaves. Leaves of the local elm (*nuom: celtis integrifolia*) are also used for soup.[1] Some grasses and fungi serve this purpose too, and small children, who are adepts at foraging for themselves, can often be seen out in groups collecting them.

From the table[x] quoted above it will be seen that one man, on the 592
average, supports himself, 1·2 women, and 1·2 children, over the age of infancy—roughly 3·4 people; but it is clear from the sociological outline given above that any such estimates hold only very approximately in view of the many supplementary sources of grain supply,

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[1] We have seen elm-trees in *toŋhens* (sacred groves) and in the bush (where of course, any one can pluck the leaves) but not as shade trees in front of compounds.

[x] [See cat. 116, p. 241 — Analyst]

592 and also, as we shall see, the many unpredictable modes of consumption of the grain (e.g. in recompensing collective labour, *vide infra*).[1]

MEAT AND FISH. Meat (*nimit*) is subject to even greater fluctuations
231 of supply than grain owing to uncontrollable sources. Every com-
235 pound possesses some live stock, if it be only a few fowls and guinea-
262 fowls. A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely, to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never slaughtered specifically for food[2] by the average man. We heard of two donkeys being slaughtered in order to sell the meat by a couple of young men out for profit. This was vigorously denounced by the Chief, and was not repeated. As a rule beef is obtained from sacrifices
[782] to the ancestor spirits, always made by men of senior status, and from animals offered during funeral ceremonies, donkey-meat only from the latter offerings. The carcase is usually divided up among a large number of people in accordance with kinship status. An elder may obtain a whole leg of a bull, but he will sub-divide it among the compounds or households subordinate to him. Thus, in the long run, the share of a single household comes to a very small quantity, often only a few ounces. But nothing is wasted; the whole carcase, including all the viscera, is consumed.

Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again,
231 no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food. In addition
782 to sacrifices and funerals, there is a number of formal occasions on
262 which one of these animals must be killed, e.g. as an act of hospitality to a mother-in-law or a very great friend. Corresponding to their lesser value and much greater abundance, sheep and goats are sacrificed in larger numbers than cows, often by men of junior status. The

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[1] Mr. Lynn, *op. cit.* finds that 1 man supports 3·7 people on the average, on 2·03 acres of farmed land. In addition to the sources of error mentioned in the text, it should be noted that the simplicity of Tale agricultural technology makes it possible for quite small boys to be of occasional, if somewhat casual, assistance in the fields.

[2] The Chief of Tongo slaughtered a cow for his wives and elders at the New Year (*Daa*) Festival in 1934, the only case of the kind we came across.

184 867 463 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of Puvəlɔmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tale lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvəlɔmra.

● 592 622 861 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them—may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

184 867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten'dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere'* (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan'*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become
Ten'dan'.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyihir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

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[1] Nankane, *Kusodana*.

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among 622 the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts. No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies, to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the 'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we [624] find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the *kambon na*, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly 622 twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. 554 It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named 'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his house- 592 hold among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief 593 and pawn (verb, *sme talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need 426 not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera.*)'

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[1] See Chapter XXVI.

611 groups. Cognates have mutual bonds of sentiment and reciprocal obligations, but not necessarily common interests. All the members of a given 602 lineage have the same agnatic kin and therefore identical lineage ties; but only identical siblings—that is, brothers or sisters by the same parents—have the same cognatic kin.[1] By automatically making him a member of maximal lineage and clan, his agnatic descent fits the individual into the constituted framework of Tale society. It is this that gives him his political status in the society. It gives him also a special field of defined social relations with clear contours. Cognatic kinship creates a number of contingent social ties for the individual, valid for him only. Unlike lineage ties, they differ in quality; they multiply in the course of his lifetime; in theory their range is indeterminate, since there is no limit to the reckoning of cognatic kinship. Tallensi often discover cognates of whom they were previously ignorant, in the most unexpected places in their own country, even in their own clan. But it is extremely rare for anyone to discover a hitherto unknown agnate, even in these days of relatively great mobility.

602 The Tallensi maintain, and genealogies of individuals bear this out, that if enough were known of the genealogical relationships of the people of adjacent settlements, they would all be found to be related to one another. In the clan itself, under the surface of its strict patrilineal organization, the filaments of cognatic kinship bind individuals together by special personal bonds which operate independently of lineage ties. This complex and unlimited ramification of cognatic kinship gives these relations great fluidity, in contrast to the comparative fixity of lineage relations. Individuals are often connected by multiple cognatic ties which are differentially effective in different situations; and, as will be clearer later, cognatic ties make breaches in the barriers of lineage and clan exclusiveness, thus extending widely the flow of social relations.

593 The domestic family is the matrix of all the genealogical ties of the individual, the contemporary mechanism for ever spinning new threads 602 of kinship, and the focal field of social relations based on consanguinity. In it we can observe the working of the nuclear patterns of kinship and the formation of the ideas and values which steer the individual in all his genealogical relationships. In the domestic family we get the sharpest picture of the interaction between cognatic kinship and agnatic or lineage ties. We have there the elementary ties of cognatic kinship linking parent to child and sibling to sibling, and we have also the agnatic tie which

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[1] These are the kinsfolk whom Rivers called a man's *kindred*; vide *Kinship and Social Organization*, p. 80. I am avoiding this term as it is best used to refer to a defined social unit in Rivers's sense. Sibship among the Teutons and Celts was reckoned bilaterally on this principle, cf. Vinogradoff, P., *Outlines of Historical Jurisprudence*, vol. i, ch. viii. But the kindred as a defined social unit does not exist among the Tallensi.

sets apart the males as the nucleus of the lineage. We can see the centrifugal, sundering force of matrilateral kinship counterbalancing the centripetal, uniting pull of patriliny. In the context of family life we can see the play of conflict and compromise in the working out of the primary equilibrium of Tale social organization, due to the interaction of these two sectors of social life. 573 602

Through his primary relations of consanguinity in the domestic family the individual is linked to agnates in other families and to cognates in other families and clans. There is, however, one significant difference between intra-familial and extra-familial bonds of kinship. Unlike the latter, the former are necessarily ambivalent, each relationship containing within itself both an agnatic and a cognatic component. In a joint family of three generations, for example, a child's relationship with his father differs from his relationship with his grandfather or his mother. Though these are all cognatic relationships, the tension and latent rivalry in the relationship of father and son stand in marked contrast to the comradeship of grandfather and grandson. On the other hand, grandfather, father, and son belong to the same lineage segment; they are united by a common interest in patrimonial land and in the product of their joint labour, by a common ancestor cult, by rights and duties vested in that lineage in relation to like segments of a greater lineage, and by their common concern for the continuity of their line. These are part of the whole complex of common interests and values that mobilize corporate action and maintain corporate solidarity in the maximal lineage and clan of which they form a segment. The men of a joint family may be thrown into conflict with one another on account of their cognatic relationships, but they act in union and on behalf of one another and of the whole unit in virtue of their lineage ties. 596

There is another paradox in the structure of the Tale family that is of importance for our inquiry. Consanguineous relationships arise out of parenthood; but parenthood presupposes marriage, a union of a man and a woman who are, by definition, not kin. The bonds of kinship are rooted in a bond the very essence of which is the absence of kinship. Hence comes the ambivalence inherent in intra-familial cognatic relations. Hence comes, also, another category of social relations, both in the family and between members of different families and clans, relations of affinity. There are two axes, as it were, in the structure of the family, the axis of kinship and that of marriage. 593

Before we discuss kinship in the domestic family more fully, we must consider a few matters of more general import. For the constellation of ties and cleavages that makes up the focal field of kinship is conditioned by the formative principles and values that shape the greater society into which the domestic family fits and which it helps to knit together. All person-to-person relations in the family are biased by the values attached to patrilineal descent and maternal origin in the total social structure. 573 602

604 strictly differentiated from a son in jural terms. The kinship tie between sister's son and mother's brother is an important breach in the genealogical fence enclosing the agnatic lineage; it is one of the main gateways of an individual's social relations with members of other clans than his own.

611 But the recognition accorded to the mother's agnatic kin does not bring out the deeper implications of maternal origin as the complementary of paternal origin. These implications are contained in the concept *soog* (pl. *saarət* or *soorət*). This concept involves the idea of matrilineal descent in contrast to that of patrilineal descent. Both in its range of efficacy, its mode of operation, its jural and ritual value, and its emotional and sentimental connotation, matrilineal descent stands in contrast to patriliny.

593 For obvious physiological reasons the bond of consanguinity with one's mother is unique and unalterable, and it is a peculiarly personal bond. The fact that one's jural status is not derived from one's mother serves to emphasize the personal nature of this bond. A person's mother may desert his father and leave him to be reared (*ugh*) by another woman; he may feel some resentment over this all his life; but she remains his true mother, 'the mother who bore him (*ma dɔɣarug*)'. Nothing can alter this fact or extinguish the kinship ties that arise from it.

611 We postpone for a later chapter a consideration of the emotional ties of mother and child. The concept *soog* has definite emotional implications; but here we are concerned with its implications for the social 613 structure. *Soog* means a bond of consanguinity which excludes completely any reckoning with lineage affiliation. People who are *saarət* define themselves biologically as 'the offspring of one womb'—or, in the actual phraseology of the natives, 'to have come from one vagina (*yi pɛn yɛni*)'. This is the common way of stating it; occasionally, but far less commonly, one hears people defining themselves as patrilineally related by the corresponding phrase 'to be the children of one penis (*woor yɛni biis*)'.

611 *Saarət*, therefore, are uterine kin. Between mother and child there is a uterine bond corresponding to the agnatic bond between father and child; and children of one woman are *saarət*, irrespective of their pater- 593 nity. A woman may have children by different men of the same clan or of different clans; they are *saarət*, irrespective of their clan affiliations.

611 *Soog* is more than the bond of personal kinship between mother and child, and between siblings by the same mother. It is the bond of uterine descent perpetuated through the female line in the same way as the bond of agnatic descent is transmitted through the male line. Uterine siblings are *saarət*; uterine sisters' children are *saarət* (but not uterine brothers' children, for the children of men are not their father's *saarət*); uterine female cousins' children are *saarət*; and so on,

PLATE 2

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a. The domestic family is the matrix of kinship. A family party out lifting ground-nuts on the home farm. Their homestead is in the background. From right to left: the head of the family, his infant daughter, his adult son, the latter's wife and baby, the family head's wife and daughter

782

b. A domestic sacrifice: cleaning and apportioning the meat of the goat at the conclusion of the sacrifice. Baŋan-Teroog, his senior wife, and his junior wife's two children. The old woman is holding a chicken ready for the next sacrifice

[facing p. 33]

754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive
by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently
guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often
continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her
guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children
by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following
case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moɣaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman
of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold
porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush
with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this
instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp.
His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and
the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill
with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
787 reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the
old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the
cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality
and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt.
There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into
consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself
partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at
someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the
matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no
doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence.
The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock
(*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant,
as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the
theme of one of the dance songs of the Gɔlib Festival. 'Wherever she
goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance
at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public
ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted
on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

754 The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
[771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms
consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

592 361 no foundation in fact. The climate, the kind of raw material which is plentifully at hand, the economic system, and the social organization of the natives rather than the alleged lawlessness of former times, determine their mode of house-building. In any case, homesteads very often stand closer than fifty paces together, the distance at which a mediocre shot can hit a tree—though I have seen an arrow carry four times that distance.

592 181 A Taləŋ's home is his castle in the psychological rather than the material sense. It is the centre and fount of his major interests, his dominant purposes, his deepest emotional attachments, and his whole scheme of values; it is his shelter, his storehouse, the stage of his life's drama. The Tallensi, unlike many African peoples, have no age sets or initiation schools. A person grows up and receives his entire education at home. If he practises a craft, such as leatherwork, or is a diviner, his home is his workshop or consulting place.

As an adult, all his economic enterprise issues from his home and is devoted primarily to its upkeep. Unless he is one of the few *nouveaux riches* of to-day he keeps all his material possessions there, and houses all his livestock within its walls. His sex life, in maturity, is centred there. His children, the supreme object of his aspirations, are born and grow up in his home under his care and control. He worships his immediate forbears there. His personal destiny, past, present, and future, revolves about his home, its stages perpetuated in the many shrines and other ritual objects that are housed in it. He receives his friends and relatives at home, and dispenses hospitality there; and if he [461] has nothing to do would as lief recline under the shade tree at his own gateway as go making calls on others. Even the young men who like gallivanting about the markets spend much of their leisure at home.

592 181 626 The quintessence of his home, to a Taləŋ, resides in his children, and above all his sons, the vehicles of his immortality. That is the essential meaning of *mar yiri*, 'to have a house'. Ask any native what happens to a man who does not adequately expiate a sacrilege such as murder. '*U yiri ŋmaarəme*—his house will fall to pieces,' is the answer, given with emphatic and solemn conviction, and often with circumstantial illustrations from experience or hearsay. A parent curses an insubordinate child, a chief or tendaana curses a clansman who has grossly insulted him, '*u ku nye yiri*—he will not see (i.e. have) a house', that is, he will die without offspring to perpetuate his line and to sacrifice to his spirit; and this is an extremely serious matter. It never fails to bring the culprit to heel with humble apologies. On the other hand, '*i na nye yiri*—you will have a house', is the most propitious blessing a diviner can convey to a man from his ancestor spirits.

592 593 Patrilocal residence and the tendency for the lineage to be localized give a man's domestic life greater continuity than a woman's. His natal family and his conjugal family are both strung on the same

lineage. The latter grows directly out of the former and very often 592
occupies the same dwelling as, or one close to that of, the former. For 593
a woman marriage signifies a sharp break. As wife and mother she generally lives in a different, even if familiarly close, clan settlement from that of her birth. A man, living all his life side by side with the other members of his lineage, participating in the hierarchy of the corporate units that make up the lineage system, identifying himself with all its members through their common jural, economic, and ceremonial interests, makes an easy, self-evident, and gradual transition from the status of a minor (*tarəm*) under his father's control to that of a father and head of a household. The change in status and social role from that of a daughter and member of one lineage to that of a wife and mother in the settlement of another is more drastic and complex. A woman has no rights in or ties with the community[1] in which she spends the greatest part of her life, exercises her heaviest responsibilities, achieves her most cherished fulfilment, and acquires her strongest emotional attachments, except through her family by marriage, her husband, and her children. Thus a woman's life is fraught with many possibilities of conflict between the loyalties and sentiments towards her natal lineage and those which she gradually builds up in relation to her husband's lineage.

The effect of all this is to make the home of even greater importance for a woman than for a man. Her conjugal home is the supreme and almost the sole domain of her labour and life. Her children are the very hub of her existence. She is first and foremost a housewife and mother, toiling devotedly in the care of her children, in attending to her husband's needs, in giving her contribution of labour and skill to the economy of the household, and in the numerous household tasks that call for daily attention.

The Architecture of the Homestead in Relation to the Structure of the Domestic Family

Tale homesteads are solidly constructed of pile (puddled mud, *tan*), 342
and they are built to last. Erecting the circular walls tier by tier, 462
plastering them, roofing the rooms, stamping the floors, adding the small contrivances and the decorations that increase the comfort and attraction of the homestead, are all tasks requiring considerable skill, care, and co-operation. They are not the work of specialists, though some men and women have more skill in them than others, and many people have such poor skill that they never undertake them. The conventional division of labour involves both sexes equally in the building of a homestead. Building and thatching is men's work; plastering, drawing the crude lines and geometrical designs that

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[1] She may, and usually does, have cognatic kinsfolk there, but her ties with them are valid only for the particular individuals.

If the head of the house is still junior in status in the lineage hierarchy, 592
as Ɔndieso is, it will be the shrine dedicated to his father's Destiny 351
(*yin*), or it may be his father's divining (*bakologo*) shrine. The house is
still under the spiritual jurisdiction of Ɔndieso's dead father, though he 778
himself now owns it in the temporal sense. A man of greater social maturity, with grown children and higher lineage status, would very likely have his own *yin* or *bakologo* shrine at his gateway. His house is established; it is no longer the fulfilment of his father's destiny, as is the house of a young man, though it may still be known by his father's or grandfather's name. For as long as a homestead remains standing it is known by the name of the man who first built it.

A bird's-eye view would show a homestead as covering a roughly 592
circular or oval area (Figs. 2*a* and 2*b*). The space in front of the gateway
(*zanɔne*—at the gateway) belongs pre-eminently to the menfolk. The 593 ●
public phases of funeral and mortuary ceremonies, which are corporate concerns of the lineage and are conducted by the men, take place there. When anything touching the rights, duties, or interests of the head of the family in his capacity as a member of a particular lineage calls for consultation with fellow members of the lineage, the *zanɔne* is the gathering place. It is the proper place for him to receive greetings, condolences, or congratulations, and to conduct formal negotiations in a matter such as the payment of bride-price owed to him or by him. In the dry season he often rests there, beneath the shade tree, during the sweltering afternoon, chatting with a friend or fondling an infant left in his charge while its mother is busy indoors. Women of the house come and go freely, and often sit or lounge about in front of the gateway; but when 'an affair of the men (*buraas yɛl*)' is in progress they keep away.

The gateway (*zanɔr*) always faces west to south-west, 'where the sun 351
sets (*nintaŋ nluut*)'. This is a convention never broken by the Tallensi, though they have neither a naturalistic explanation nor a mystical rationalization for it, and it is not subject to mystical sanctions.[1]

The gateway is a V-shaped opening, about a foot wide at the base and 3 to 4 feet wide on top, between two round pillars (*meelɔŋ*) forming part of the wall of the house. Large irregularly spaced holes are made in these pillars for short logs to be inserted at night as cross-bars against which a heavy, hollow board (*bɛluŋ*), cut from a tree-trunk, or a bundle of poles can be leaned to close the gateway. Tallensi say that they build the gateway thus in order to bar it the more securely against the 1/A

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[1] As the rain-bearing winds blow from the south-east, and the tornadoes that begin and end the rainy season come from an easterly direction, it is possible that the placing of the doorway on the western side of the house is an adaptation to this feature of the climate. Anyone who has experienced the discomfort of a tornado whirling straight into a room, or of a heavy rain, in this region will appreciate the usefulness of placing the only entrance into a homestead on the lee side. But no native has ever given me this obvious explanation, though this may be due to inadequate inquiries on my part. [132]

1/A [Text is continued on p. 54.—Analyst]

343 are the emblems of his individuality. They participate in it, for they
181 are imbued with his body 'dirt (*daɣət*)'—a concept which has a physiological facet, meaning the exuviae adhering to a man's garments, quiver, or other objects constantly handled by him, and a mystical facet implying the quintessence of his individuality. The Talis also acknowledge this complex association between a man and his granary and other intimate possessions, expressing it in analogous customs, in the routine of family life and in their ideals of family relations.

351 To enter the living-quarters of a homestead one climbs over the low dividing wall (*yɛbəg*) at the back of the *sapak* by means of a step (*bimbimər*) and descends, by a similar step on the other side, into an irregular courtyard (*dɛndɔŋo*, pl. *dɛndɔna*) of beaten gravel, which is surrounded by a number of rooms. According to the wealth, rank, or status of the *yirdaana* this *dɛndɔŋo* varies in size from about 20 to about 6 square yards.

592 This *dɛndɔŋo* belongs to the principal woman (*dugdaana*) of the house.
The *dɛndɔna* of junior wives are smaller. In Ɔndieso's house the senior
● 593 woman is his mother's surviving co-wife, whom he calls his 'younger
342 mother' (*mapit*, lit. 'mother's younger sister'), and who has remained
351 with him since the death of his father. Her rooms occupy roughly the left half of the homestead, facing inwards from the *sapak*. From this *dɛndɔŋo*, turning right between a small room beside the granary and a larger room straight ahead, one enters a similar *dɛndɔŋo* in the middle of another set of rooms, those of Ɔndieso's wife. These take up roughly the right half of the homestead, facing inwards. The *yirdaana*'s mother's (own mother, or proxy-mother) rooms always occupy the position of honour in the centre of the arc; his senior wife's (*poɣakpeem*) rooms lie on the right-hand side of these; his second wife's, or his younger brother's senior wife's rooms lie on the left, looking inwards. The rooms of the other wives of the head of the family or of his brothers are distributed as convenience dictates. For example, wives who are clan sisters will usually have adjoining quarters; wives who get on badly will be put in well-separated rooms. If none of a man's father's widows is living with him, and he has more than one wife, his senior wife occupies the central group of rooms, his second wife those on her right, and so forth. Generally the women's apartments all communicate with one another. But if a woman has a quarrelsome disposition or gets on badly with her co-wives for any other reason, her quarters will be separated from those of the next-door wife by a low party wall, to prevent undue trespassing by her co-wives or their children.

342 A woman's apartments make up a self-contained section in the home-
stead. This is her *dug* (pl. *dugət*). Basically *dug* means a single room,
593 but it is extended to mean the single set of rooms belonging to one wife. In the Tale family every woman with children is entitled to her own *dug*. Women guard this right jealously, and if a man has not built separate quarters for his wife by the time that she has had her first child,

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off 342
to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug* 593
and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return
until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately. The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person. A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife, mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family.

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments, but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, 595
the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in the case of the latter.

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that 778
are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman. 595
They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him.

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the 775
ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, 169
into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary rites, make this clear.

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. 592
Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights, after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing or gossiping or asking riddles.

CHAPTER IV

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE FAMILY

The General and the Particular in the Pattern of Domestic Relations

611 IT is clear from Chapter II that *dɔɣam*, the fact of birth, the event that fixes one's descent immutably, takes precedence over all other conditions governing the social relations and the social roles of a Taləŋ. This principle comes out in all departments of Tale social life, and nowhere so plainly as in the organization of domestic life. We turn, therefore, to examine the working of kinship in the domestic family, which we have called the focal field of kinship.

593 It is important to bear in mind that kinship relations in the family group are inter-articulated in a single configuration, dominated by the *patria potestas* of the male head of the family. The relations of father and child are coloured by the relations of mother and child that coexist with them, and the relations of mother and child acquire a special accent in the context of the relations between co-wives. Particular domestic relationships appear in their true light only when they are considered as part of the total pattern. The polarity of *dug* and *yir* moulds them all; all play a part in the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces in the structure of the family. All, moreover, are subject to the pull and pressure of genealogical connexions and groupings outside the family circle.

593 606 The natives are very conscious of this, and take it into account in the management of their lives. They say, for instance, that a woman's parents continue to have great influence over her for some years after her marriage and that is why her husband must keep on the good side of his parents-in-law. 'Don't you know what in-lawship means?' said Bayankura, somewhat lugubriously, when I found him hard at work helping to rebuild his father-in-law's homestead. Again, Tiezien's family believed that he was much under the influence of his senior wife, Tanzoo. So when by various pretexts he caused both of his late brother's sons to lose the young wives they had recently taken, they ascribed it morosely to Tanzoo's jealousy of their mother, Tiezien's second wife.

181 We shall not attempt a full-dress study of Tale family life; here we are concerned only with the structurally significant norms. In a society as homogeneous and economically undifferentiated as that of the Tallensi, people of the same sex, age, and social standing tend to have the same life history; and organized units such as the lineage and the family tend to have a stereotyped structure and development. The common denominators of action stand out.

828 156 Yet it is a constantly reiterated assumption of the natives that no two

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate 596
association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, 362
and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and
her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. 576
Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room.

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can 593 ●
confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know
about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. 596
He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Taləŋa can keep his own counsel if need be.

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not 593
remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At 581
one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another.

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. 581
They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage
throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with 589
men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of
Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who
would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously [158]
mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

581 583 [586] the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*) to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

582 593 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage. Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away, though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband, he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of [789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

583 691 Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives of the lineage. Pukiehɔt's wife was taken from him five times because he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehɔt. The chief put it to her that Pukiehɔt was, in effect, treating both her and her guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehɔt saw he was in danger of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are 586
taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has
borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a
really effective force in maintaining the marriage.

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or 581
ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married
pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and
strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated
into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially
a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles
and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one
another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond
is of vital importance in this relationship.

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects 581
to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the
least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of 586
consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds
her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to
keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty
temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several
husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with
her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless
and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima,
Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands
and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her
brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may [842]
decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good
worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and
remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who
filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside [685]
by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace,
formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound
to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft
by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few
cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women.
Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, [827]
however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat
during sleep is a grave mystical offence endangering the life of the
husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent
back to her parents.

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. 602
The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are 593
of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When

602 593 a woman marries she does not forfeit her status as a daughter of her natal lineage (*pɔɣayabələg*) or lose her personal ties with her parents and siblings. We have discussed this, in its broader aspects, in our previous volume[1] and confine ourselves here to family ties. Throughout her life she keeps in close touch with her parents and siblings and other members of her clan, especially her close agnates. If, as is common, other daughters of her clan have married into her husband's clan, these will be the classificatory co-wives with whom she has most contact and to whom she gives and from whom she receives most help, kindness, and support. She visits her natal settlement, as well as her sisters married elsewhere, regularly, and is often visited by members of her parental family. She not only has emotional bonds with her natal family that time never erases, but she also retains certain privileges, which have almost the force of rights, in it and in her natal clan, as we have shown in our previous volume. Her natal family and clan also have claims on her all her life. This is strongly marked in the first two or three years of marriage, before motherhood, habit, and an increasing share in its routine have knit her firmly into her conjugal family.

574 593 In the early years of marriage a woman seldom lets an opportunity of visiting her natal family go by. She calls in to see how they are on her way to or from market. Now and then she comes to stay a few days. If she is ill she will generally come to stay with her mother, who will tend her much more carefully than her co-wives or in-laws. When Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan's daughter developed an asthmatic complaint she stayed with her parents for nearly a year. When Da'amo'o's wife went down with guinea-worm she took her three-months-old baby and went to her father's house until she was cured, though it is considered a risky thing to take so young an infant out of its father's house. At sowing or harvest time a man often sends for a young married daughter who has no child to come and help. At all times a married daughter is informed, and sometimes sent for, if there is serious sickness in her parental home. She must be sent for if a member of her parental family dies; and she will go even if it means leaving a tiny infant in the care of a co-wife for a day or two.

761 602 On this matter Tallensi are extremely sensitive, for death is the great test of all social ties among them. All relatives of the dead, and especially the principal mourners—parents, spouses, children, siblings—have defined ritual observances, ritual duties, and practical tasks in mortuary and funeral ceremonies. A death often comes as a shock to these close relatives, and especially the death of a parent or sibling to a married daughter of the family. Her mother-in-law or husband will break the news gently to her with a tactful periphrasis. But she must be told and sent for, else she—and, backing her up, her conjugal family—would be deeply offended. On her part, not to go when thus summoned would

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial ceremony.
Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tenzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live, expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yel*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence
of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care
613 of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One
769 of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛyər*), to whom her husband will have
to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as
her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually
released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors
takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate
and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties
to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage
founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is
[777] selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill
fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter
of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate
(*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors.
[761 If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an
789] evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of
exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her
husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated
to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and
worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic
funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be
received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is
completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

602 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship
ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the con-
593 trary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled
by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's
lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
602 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
627 for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle
with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It
is not until the formal placation gift (*sɛndaan*) is sent to the girl's father
with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not
until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace
appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

676 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument
by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
583 marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights
over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from
her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role
as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to
her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her
576 husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young
man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon
him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan.
The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
574 desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
●593 parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority.
Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her
parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is
not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for
her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return
to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young
wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as
we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling sus-
picion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two,
though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives
[837] run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for
the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against
the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes,
for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if
she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty
to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law,
his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side
with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of
marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an estab-
lished relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

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solve the conflict between these antithetic bonds in favour of her conjugal family. 593

Tallensi say that a woman is like a stranger or guest (both ideas are contained in the native word *saan*) in her husband's house during the first year or two of marriage. Standing outside the intimate life and vital concerns of the family, she cannot yet be relied upon. Gradually she grows accustomed (*malɔm*) to her conjugal family; and after some years, when she has several children, she becomes so far absorbed into the family that full trust can be reposed in her and she takes a full and self-confident part in family affairs. 593

It needs little observation to see how apt is this description of the gradual absorption of women into their husbands' families. On a visit to a homestead to which a newly wedded wife has just been added, one can easily observe the 'shyness (*valɔm*)', as the Tallensi call it, of the new wife (*pɔɣa*) and her husband (*sɛt*) towards each other. This goes farther than formal etiquette. Good manners require that a woman should always show respect to her husband in public. She walks behind him if they have to go anywhere together on a ceremonial occasion. She stoops or kneels whenever she offers him food or drink. But this behaviour is customary for a woman with all adult males other than her own children. It is a sign of the general attitude of respect due from women to men in a society so dominated in public social relations by the patriarchal principle. The 'shyness' of a newly married wife comes out in other ways. She tries to keep out of her husband's way as much as possible during the day, busying herself zealously with the household tasks given to her by her mother-in-law. She is submissive to all his requests. She speaks to him only when she is spoken to. She takes no initiative in anything. 593 576

This attitude is even more marked in her behaviour towards her parents-in-law (*daɣaam*, pl. *daɣaanam*), to whom she is bound to show formal deference at all times, and to her adult brothers-in-law, with whom she must always be circumspect because of the incest barrier which we shall discuss later. It often comes into her private relations with her husband if he is much older than she is. She will flirt and be more companionable with a young husband, in private, natives say; for he is probably like herself a *tarɔm*, junior, under authority, and connubial joys mean so much to him that he comes down to an equal footing with his wife for their sake. 606 593

The Relationships of a Wife with her Relatives-in-law

A woman does not avoid any of her relatives-in-law or her husband, nor are her relations with them regulated by strict prescription. She maintains a general attitude of deference, modesty, and complaisance towards them. A well-behaved young wife is industrious and obedient in helping her mother-in-law with her domestic work, and she will be self-effacing and deferential towards her father-in-law, her husband, 606 607

593 851 In the joint family it marks them off as a separate and potentially independent family segment. A mother of two children usually has her own quarters, or her own part of her mother-in-law's *dug*, if her husband's mother is one of several wives of her father-in-law. She is a *dugdaana*, mistress of her rooms, in a small way, with some freedom of action where its affairs are concerned. She begins to regard the work that falls to her share, not merely as her contribution to the economy of the household, but more as serving the needs of her children and husband. He, for his part, begins to think of the future in terms of his wife and children. He may still accept a position of dependence on his father or older brother as a matter of course; but the separate needs of his wife and children are recognized in the allocation of food-supplies. He makes an effort to extend his private farm plot in order to grow a little food to tide his own family segment over lean periods. It may be many years before he achieves independence, but his aspirations towards it have a definite channel and a clear objective.

593 The greater intimacy of husband and wife, after several years of marriage, is shown in their greater familiarity with each other in public. The woman does not hesitate to address her husband by his name or title, and he may use a nickname for her. By the time a woman has grown old with her husband she is on terms of comradeship and equality with him, for she now identifies herself completely with his interests. An old couple often show great devotion to and affection for each other. The man often has such confidence in his wife that he will discuss all his affairs with her, and she can exercise considerable influence on his decisions in family matters, though the last word still rests with him. Though she still shows deference to him in public, she no longer keeps in the background. She speaks her mind freely to him and before him. Often when I have talked to men about domestic organization, kinship, marriage, children, or even their private religious and magical shrines, their wives of senior standing have stopped to join in the conversation. I have seen a lineage head's senior wife listen to a group of lineage elders thresh out a domestic squabble and give her opinion without restraint. A suitor always tries to gain the favour of a girl's mother; for, though she lacks authority to give him the girl, she can sometimes be persuaded to connive at an elopement, or at least to say a good word for him with her husband, and this may sway the balance in his favour.

593 769 Nevertheless, it is a basic assumption of the Tallensi that a wife never ceases entirely to be a 'stranger' in her husband's clan. For she never, as we have learnt, loses the social identity conferred on her by birth as a member of a different clan. She does not adopt her husband's totemic taboos; and though her health and fertility, being essential for the satisfactory performance of her wifely role, come under the guardianship of his ancestors, she does not participate in the cult of his lineage ancestors. When she attends the sacrifices made to domestic shrines by the joint

family head, she does so as a privileged spectator. She has this privilege 593
because her welfare is bound up with that of her husband and children, 769
and theirs with hers. She remains outside the religious and moral solidarity of her husband's clan and maximal lineage, and, indeed, has only a contingent interest in the solidarity of his minimal lineage. It is noteworthy that women, both daughters and wives, are excluded from the esoteric ritual activities in which the moral sanctions of the unity and continuity of lineage and clan are embodied. In religious, jural, 593
and political matters—all of which are closely interconnected—Tale women have the status of minors. This exclusion is most stringent in 562
the case of the Earth cult and the cult of the lineage *bɔγar*. But the segregation is not so rigid as to keep women in entire ignorance of or wholly disinterested in these male monopolies. Their welfare depends upon the propitious outcome of these activities as much as that of their menfolk. They see, hear, and discuss among themselves and with their menfolk ritual affairs and jural actions that concern their husbands' lineages of which, indeed, wives and children often form the main subject. They grind the flour, brew the beer, and witness the preparations for esoteric religious rites. They see the public and semi-public phases of big religious ceremonies and overhear the endless consultations and discussions between the men which these ceremonies always produce. 593

A wife, therefore, can be in sympathy with the interests and can respect 578
the values that rule the actions of her husband and her sons as members 787
of their agnatic descent group, while being herself excluded from an effective public rôle in relation to them. But a cleavage remains. Thus in a conflict between her husband's clan and her father's clan she might very well take the side of the latter, not openly, it is true, but covertly. How strongly the natives feel this was shown at the divination ceremony following the death of Siiyɛlib of Tɔŋ-Seug. This divination was so cryptic and involved that I could make no sense of it. Fortunately I was able to get an explanation from one of my most trustworthy informants, a close agnate of the dead man. Siiyɛlib's death, it appeared, was a mystical retribution for a grave sin he had committed many years before. He had been one of the instigators of the white man's attack on the Hill Talis, and was an accessory, therefore, to the slaughter of many men. Now there were several Talis present at the funeral—kinsmen, affines, and, last but not least, wives of the dead man and his close agnates. If Siiyɛlib's sin were publicly brought out in the divination it would stir up all their hostile feelings. They would feel resentful towards Siiyɛlib's surviving agnates on account of his complicity in the destruction of their fathers and grandfathers. And this would produce strife between the men of Seug and their Talis wives, their Talis cognates, and their Talis affines.

The social and psychological cleavage which underlies all the rela- 593
tions of husband and wife is the structural kernel around which the 578

593 578 basic dichotomy of *dug* and *yir* crystallizes. The comradeship which grows up gradually between husband and wife with the lapse of time is the obverse, paradoxical as it may seem, of a process of gradual emancipation of the wife. As her children grow up, the centre of gravity of her life shifts more and more to them and away from her husband. If she has a grown-up son, her interests and emotions become centred more and more on him and his family by marriage. They constitute her *dug*, in which she is secure, honoured, and titularly, if not effectively, supreme. It is her son and grandson who will honour her spirit and commemorate her in worship after her death. Her son has become the effective breadwinner, and she looks to him for sustenance. If a young woman loses her husband, her grief is aggravated because she realizes that she has lost the head and pivot of her young family and must face uprooting and readjustment to a new partner. An old woman mourns the death of her husband greatly, too, but her grief is mitigated, if she has a son, by her feeling of security and of fulfilment. The death of an adult son, especially an only son, is an irreparable tragedy to her. 888

593 Thus it happens that a woman who has been twice married often lives, in her old age, with the oldest son of her first marriage, rather than with her husband. This was the case with Tiezien's old wife, Naaho; and the reason Tiezien and Naaho's son, Nyaaŋzum, gave for this brings out a point of the first importance. Laughing, they said, 'She is no use any longer as a wife, she can't cook; and she has no vulva now (*u le ka pɛn yaha*)—that is, her reproductive powers are finished. And they laid special stress on the last point.

A woman attains her fullest freedom in the family when she ceases to have sexual value, that is, from the native point of view, when she ceases to be reproductive.

The Sexual Relationship in Marriage

831 836 The sexual relationship is the corner-stone of Tale marriage. At first sight this is puzzling to the observer, for the Tallensi have a thoroughly matter-of-fact attitude about sex. They regard sex as a normal and natural appetite. Any aspect of the generative functions can be discussed without circumlocution in the presence of men, women, or children. A young woman, or a girl, may show signs of shyness or coyness, but no one ever shows any real embarrassment. Bawdy or salacious talk about sex is common amongst men; very rarely does it verge on the obscene. The Tallensi take it for granted that children will indulge in sexual play, and attach no value to prenuptial chastity. In the ritual of the Arrow Medicine (*Peentee*) for protection in war, the services of a virgin boy and virgin girl are required. These children are bound to the medicine by a taboo of chastity in early childhood; but they are released as soon as they approach puberty; for by that time, the natives say, they cannot be expected to resist sexual temptation. Tallensi say

that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since 831
the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriage-
able girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. 836
Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain
amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so
disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love 831
affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members
of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not con- 835
sidered to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan 836
does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual
penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them.
This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as
the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the
social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply con-
trasted with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in
marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox
is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will
be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction,
characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly
between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual
intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the 581
same thing (*Pɛn nyɛ̀bəg ni pɔɣadir, ba ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 831
'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for
the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be
fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is funda-
mental as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of
children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider 581
first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By
marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of 593
her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority
he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has
he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as [576]
a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he
bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately
to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority
over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in
the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth. She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

581 which cannot be done without the assistance of women. He can command other services from her. ●593 For instance, nowadays he can send her to buy grain for him in distant markets and sell it for him in the home market; and he can ask for many little services that make life more comfortable for him. A man has a right to these services; but it is a right limited by the principle of reciprocity.[1] In return a man is bound to protect and care for his wife, in particular to provide her with a home, with food, and with curative treatment if she is ill.

There is an obvious material basis for the economic reciprocity of 593 husband and wife. Primarily it is a function of the system of economic 592 co-operation, by means of which the household satisfies its material wants. The head of the family owns the land and the livestock from which all draw their sustenance. The men do the heavy work of farming and care for the livestock. The women perform the tasks already mentioned. Within this subsistence unit the rule of reciprocity of economic rights and duties governs the economic relations of parent and child, of brother and brother, as well as those of husband and wife. For it is an application of the wider principle that all those who pool their labour in the common task of providing food and shelter for the household are entitled, severally, to a just share in the product of their common labour.

The authority of husband over wife in the matter of economic duties 593 and services is tempered, also, by a principle that really follows as a 421 logical corollary upon the principle just stated. The products of individual industry and enterprise belong to the individual, subject to the nominal over-right of anyone who has authority over him or her, in particular, of the head of the family. The rule applies to all property relations between the members of the family. Thus, as soon as a wife acquires a *dug* of her own she begins to have a certain degree of economic autonomy, and this increases with the passage of time, as her children become more and more able to do without her regular care. She has her own vegetable plot allocated to her by her husband. She often has a ground-nut plot of her own, which she cultivates herself. She has her small private store of grain, obtained by gift from her father or brothers or other kinsmen. Her vegetables, her ground-nuts, and her grain do not go into the pool of family resources. They do, however, serve to supplement these resources; for it is a woman's duty to provide the vegetable food, and it would be unthinkable for her not to use other supplies she may possess to feed her children and her husband in time of scarcity. But if her private supplies are not required for this purpose she can dispose of them as she pleases. She can exchange them for money or goods, or use them to give hospitality to her own kin or guests. The same rule holds for such things as shea fruit and shea butter, which [437] it is a woman's duty to provide for the household. Thus, it is common for women to barter surplus shea nuts for household utensils, and these are entirely their own property.

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[1] Cf. p. 213 below.

are entirely their own property. A woman owns the sleeping-mats she 593 ●
makes. A potteress is in the same position as a blacksmith or leather- 421
worker. She keeps the money or natural products for which she exchanges her pots. Nowadays many women who live near a market carry
on a regular or intermittent petty trade in cooked food. Sometimes, [426]
borrowing the small capital (two or three shillings is sufficient) with which to start, they keep the profits of their trade. It is not uncommon for women to own livestock, mainly poultry but often sheep and goats, and occasionally a cow. They may be obtained by gift or purchase, in the case of small stock, or by exchanging the natural increase of small stock for more valuable stock. A woman's sheep, goat, or cow will be herded with the family livestock, but her 'ownership' (*soləm*, from *so*, to own) remains secure.

A woman's clothing, and her household utensils, most of which she 768
provides for herself, belong to her solely. They are distributed, on her 422
death, to her daughters, daughters-in-law, and sisters. Any money or
livestock she may possess passes to her sons on her death, these being 593
what might be called consumers' capital goods, the appropriate owners of which are men. They remain, therefore, in her *dug*, and do not accrete to the patrimonial property of her husband's effective minimal lineage. But it is an accepted principle that her husband has an over-right to them in her lifetime. For, as the natives put it, 'How can a man own his wife and not own the products of her labour?'

There is a quibble in this statement, the concept 'own' being used 593
first in the sense of 'to have authority over', and secondly to mean 426
'having full rights of disposal over'—rights *in personam* being equated with rights *in rem*, to speak in lawyer's language.[1] And the Tallensi are not blind to this. Theoretically a man is entitled to utilize his wife's property as he wishes. In practice, he would not dare to do so without her consent, and the transaction is looked upon as a loan (*samər*). True, like all loans within the domestic family, it is not subject to book-keeping. But just as the woman feels morally bound to put her possessions at her husband's disposal if he is in difficulties, so her husband feels in honour bound to repay her in time, and generously, if he has any self-respect. Similarly, if a woman contracts a debt without her husband's knowledge and explicit permission he cannot be held liable. But no 'man of sense' would publicly repudiate his wife's debt. He reserves his reproaches for the privacy of the home. Significantly, a man does not, as a rule, settle his wife's debt. He will try to temporize with the creditor—an art in which the Tallensi are past masters—until his wife succeeds in finding the wherewithal to satisfy him. Or, if the husband cannot avoid paying the debt, he considers this as an advance

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[1] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession', *Iowa Law Review*, xx. 2, Jan. 1935, for an illuminating discussion of the anthropological relevance of these legal concepts.

593 426 which, it is tacitly understood, his wife will one day make good. Often such debts between spouses are straightened out by mutual borrowings, tacitly understood to cancel one another. Very often, however, a man has to cajole his wife with definite promises to repay before she will lend him her property. But the natives are emphatic about one point: that all such transactions belong to the give and take of marital co-operation and solidarity. It is one of the ways in which a woman stands by her husband and a man by his wife.

The Husband's Authority over his Wife

593 578 As might well be expected, these rights and duties of spouse to spouse do not rest on anything in the nature of a formal compact. There is no jural machinery or sanction by means of which a husband or wife can be compelled to perform his or her duties to his or her partner. A man can, and sometimes does, chastise his wife for incorrigible laziness, disobedience, or a misdemeanour detrimental to the unity of the family. He does it usually in a fit of anger or exasperation, as one would strike a child, and not as a deliberate punishment. For though Tallensi think that such disciplinary measures are right and necessary sometimes (women being kittle cattle, who will not always listen to reason), they consider them to be a regrettable and undignified necessity not entirely in keeping with the relationship of marriage, and at bottom repugnant to a self-respecting man. That is why when a quarrel between husband and wife ends in blows, neighbours hearing the commotion rush in to separate the pair and calm the enraged husband. 'I often scold my wives', said a Tale friend to me, after a heated argument with one of them, 'but I have never, as I sit here, lifted a hand to them. How could I thrash my wife, seeing that she gave up her father and her mother to come and marry me?' To beat a wife, in short, shows a poor appreciation of her.

Women admit the right of a man to strike his wife, and they see it as a feature of the authority over her conferred on him by marriage. But in fact, cases of wife-beating are far from common. Judging by the cases I have heard of, they are least likely to occur at the two extremes of the marriage cycle. A young man fears that he may lose his wife if he beats her; an older man, as the statement quoted above shows, with a wife of long standing, feels that it is incompatible with their mutual trust and comradeship.

593 627 A woman will not, as a rule, bear a grudge for blows struck under provocation. But if she is excessively, or, in her opinion, unjustifiably thrashed, she will run away from her husband. She may go off with another man; or she may return to her father or brother, who, if he is a self-respecting man, will take her part and refuse to give her up until her husband apologizes and promises better behaviour in future. In any case, it is a troublesome affair for the husband. It is worth noting, also, that in her conjugal family only a woman's husband has the right

to strike her. Her parents-in-law, for instance, despite their authority 593
over her, would not do so. If anything, they would try to restrain their 627
son from beating her. Only her husband has that combination of [606]
authority and intimacy in relation to her which permits the use of physical force upon her.

But flight is not the only weapon a woman has in order to maintain 593
her rights and privileges in her conjugal family. Once she is fairly free
from the leading strings of her mother-in-law, she is the mistress of her 461
time and energies. It is an accepted axiom of married life, which no 578
man questions, that a wife is free to dispose of her time as she pleases, provided she does not hamper the essential economic activities of the household, or neglect her children, or remain away from home for unwarrantable periods or at times—e.g. during the Great Festivals—when all the members of the family should be together. The routine of domestic tasks, over which men have no control, is a strong line of defence against the interference of men in their wives' disposal of their time. But differences of opinion on this matter are a common cause of squabbles between husband and wife. A young woman dresses up to go to market; her husband objects, saying that other men will be paying court to her there, or that the children will be left hungry all day; she insists; and a heated argument ensues. Nine times out of ten the woman has her way. Occasionally the husband succeeds in stopping her, by persuasion or by force. It is only at sowing or harvest time, or when, for instance, preparations for an important ceremony are in hand, that a man has full control over his wife's time.

At all times a wife's freedom to arrange her work and her leisure as best suits her may subject her husband to inconvenience. If, at the end of the day, she is too preoccupied or too tired to cook, he can but grumble and go hungry. And if he annoys her she can make a point of being too busy to attend to some want of his or too tired to cook the evening meal. This, men say frankly, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of keeping on good terms with one's wife.

Tallensi regard these utilitarian rights and duties, services and atten- 593
tions of husband and wife towards each other as a most important
feature of marriage. But it is clear that they do not constitute the unique 581
relationship that distinguishes the marriage tie from other social ties of the Tallensi. Thus a woman performs much the same utilitarian services as daughter in her natal home, and as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law in her conjugal home. They are but a part of the whole configuration of co-operation, mutual help, reciprocal services, etiquette, and mutual tolerance that keep the wheels of family life running smoothly. And it is clear, also, that they imply the existence of common interests that create a sense of mutual moral obligation.

This underlying bond of mutual moral obligation is the basic sanction of reciprocity and co-operation in the domestic family. In the case of

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakəra and Nindəɣat of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindəɣat tried to lay hands on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
581 spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripeta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripeta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries. She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
[837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife, whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

613 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife,
implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most
581 precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however,
not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her
587 husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband
581 and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in
837 a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in
relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Un-
●593 like the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extramarital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non*. Tallensi express contempt for the Gɔrisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeembii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbɔbis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbɔbis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbɔbis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

684 Badiemaal, is this how you behave?
Zimbil-Badiemaal will never inherit the (lineage) *bɔyar*;
577 Why did you copulate with Naaho's wife?

539 *Badiemaal, pɛnzierug, woo-oo!*
Bakyɛlbanɔya a bumbarɔŋ.
Zimbil-Badiemaal, u a baa.

Badiemaal, i ɛŋa ŋwala?
Zimbil-Badiemaal ku vaa bɔyar;
I nyɛb Naah pɔya bo?

It was widely held that both of these men would take the first opportunity to get out of Taleland.

The Tallensi explain that such acts are so severely reprobated because 613 they cause deep and irreconcilable 'enmity' (*diuŋ*) between father and 684 son, brother and brother, and this is a mortal blow to the solidarity of the family and the lineage. They arouse the wrath of the ancestors. 577 If the injured father, brother, or son does not bring the matter up before the elders of his medial lineage or maximal lineage, he will be struck down by the ancestors. If he does, he must be ritually reconciled with his offending son, brother, or father. But in spite of such a formal reconciliation, 'the enmity remains within'. The sinner will never be able to offer sacrifice to his injured father with a clear conscience, or an injured son to the spirit of his father who so grievously sinned and offended him; nor may two brothers between whom this bitter inner discord prevails sacrifice together. Therefore, as the scornful song about Badiemaal declares, the sinner cannot, with a clear conscience, inherit the shrines common to the lineage; and since a man's sins spiritually taint his children and children's children, the sinner's whole line of agnatic descendants will be virtually outcast from the moral unity of the lineage, even if they are allowed to participate formally in the cult of its ancestors. Again, a man who has seduced his brother's wife cannot inherit her after his death, for he has broken the bond of brotherhood. The incestuous sexual act is sinful because it disrupts the moral relationship of father and son or brother and brother, and thus undermines the solidarity of the lineage at its core. There is a magical deterrent as well, which reflects this. If two men have sexual relations with the same woman and one of them gets ill, the other may not see him; it would cause him to sink and perhaps die; and to shun a sick parent, sibling, or child is the very negation of family solidarity.

573 A man's 'fathers', 'brothers', and 'sons' within the limits of the nuclear 613 lineage are the men who have the most direct interest in his wife, especially in her reproductive powers. They will all be concerned in, and one or other of them will be responsible for, the payment of her bride-price. His children mean almost as much to them as to him. They

593 613 [587] replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

613 835 577 We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kɔrih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

835 613 What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly

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[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

765 581 834 [768] a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

•593 562 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

602 562 The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602 606 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-operation and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the household. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 854 855 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir* is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family. A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the [292] first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children. This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing. Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 736 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

602 736 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things, we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest 736
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had
their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside
extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get
the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her children 602
from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for
the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to
co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives. 595
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost
anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who
resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite
common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's
child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between
co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out
of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave
carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife
of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and
therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the
women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past.
So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*)
and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations
of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most
of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or
death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association
between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft
brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the
male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been compelled 627
to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

CHAPTER V

PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LINEAGE

Some General Principles Recapitulated

ALL Tale genealogical connexions go back to the fact of procreation. 593 ● Hence the relations of parents and children are the focal point of the whole kinship system. Our task here is to investigate the notion of *dɔyam* in its primary social context.

We have emphasized elsewhere that the social structure of the 613 Tallensi is not intelligible if it is stripped of its temporal dimension.[1] The essence of the lineage system is its continuity in time; from this comes its strength and its stability. But it might have been otherwise. Such a system might well, with each generation, grow narrower and more rigid in all its parts, like an endogamous aristocratic caste. Or it might, as has happened with the Tallensi, spread itself more and more widely by continual ramification and so keep its strength without losing suppleness.

How has this come about? The central dynamic factor is the pattern 613 of relations between parents and children, especially between fathers and sons. The continuity of the lineage is a continuity of successive 593 generations, and this has two aspects. There is the straightforward, cumulative continuity of descent, epitomized in the notion of patrilineal descent; and there is the dialectical continuity of the filial generation ousting and replacing the paternal generation. In terms of patrilineal descent, father and son are identified with each other and united by common interests; in terms of the sequence of generations, they are not. Indeed, there comes a time in the lives of father and son when they almost seem to be rivals. In a lesser degree this holds also for mothers and daughters. We shall have a good deal to say on this topic in what follows.

The strength and stability of the Tale social system is in part a result of the institutionalized means the culture offers for the reconciliation of conflicting motifs in the focal field of social relations. They enable a balance to be struck between the common interests of successive patrilineal generations and their divergent interests due to the difference of generation, as well as between the centripetal pull of the agnatic line and the centrifugal drive of matrilateral kinship. The principle of reciprocity is of outstanding importance in this context; and the structural mould that makes these reconciliations possible is the ramifying form of the lineage.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii, and my paper 'Descent in the Social Structure of the Tallensi', *Africa*, July 1944.

●593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

861 [538] [431] Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of parenthood as *dɔyam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb, 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔyam*)', often quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a 'cow of rearing (*ughug na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian, and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure, only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it. It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and that is the hardest part.

593 855 In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly 78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 861 828 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

and conform to them. Extreme cases illustrate this best. There is the 593
harsh disciplinarian whose sons fret under his control and often take 861
the first opportunity of running away. Saɣəbazaa was said to have been 828
a man of this kind—puritanical, industrious, and inclined to be overstrict with his children. Four of his sons left him to seek work abroad. He made his daughters marry men he chose for them, and when one of them ran away with another man he whipped her and sent her back to her first husband. At the opposite extreme are men like Guna'ab and Yɛanbɔrigya. They are casual and irresponsible. Guna'ab's sons were often pointed out as an example of bad parental influence. They did not farm but tried to earn a living by trading in chickens; they were reputed to be lazy and extravagant, and showed no respect to their father or his brothers—'just like their father', people said.

Nevertheless, it is a fundamental axiom that the ties of rearing do 593
not wipe out the absolutely binding ties of procreation (*dɔɣam*). Whether 861
a person is reared by his own parents or not, whether he is badly or well brought up, nothing can erase the binding ties between parents and children. It is desirable for children to be brought up by their natural parents because then there will be no contradiction between the ties of *dɔɣam* and the adventitious ties of affection created by upbringing.

By Tale custom, if a woman leaves a husband by whom she has had a child and is properly married to another man, the child lives with her during its infancy. When it is five or six years old it can be claimed by its natural father. This is called 'separating (*pɔhɔg*)' it from its mother. Tallensi think it immoral to separate a child from its mother before it is well able to fend for itself. I once heard a group of elders expostulate angrily with a man for taking his two children, aged about 4 and 7, from their mother who had married another man. The elders said the children would not thrive in the care of another woman; their father was acting out of sheer malice. He would be well advised to leave them with their mother for another three or four years and then claim them. Their prophecy was right, for the children pined away and both died within a year. This is an extreme case. But it is a good illustration of a problem that often arises when men claim the custody of their children from an ex-wife. A compromise between the claims of natural parenthood and jural paternity has to be struck which will not endanger the child's life.

Rights and Duties of Parents

We shall have much to say about the rights and duties of parents and children in this book and it will be useful to list here briefly the most important of them. The central fact is the dominance of the father in all social relations; but this is balanced by the personal equality of the parents in the intimate domestic sphere. 593

A father's first duty to his children is to provide them with food.

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He is not bound to provide them with clothes, but a good father buys a loin-cloth for a small son and may give a daughter money to buy a waistband and the materials for her back-flap (*voog*). He should also allow his adult sons the time and opportunity to work a little for themselves and so earn enough to buy clothes. He may allow them to wear some of his clothes, on special occasions.

It is a father's duty to send for and pay someone who has the necessary medicine to treat his child in illness. He must consult a diviner to find out what the illness is due to and must perform the sacrifices prescribed by the diviner to help in the cure. This is one aspect of the father's responsibility for the general welfare of his children. Great importance is attached by the Tallensi to the father's duty of making sacrifices to the ancestors on behalf of his children.

A father is jurally responsible for his sons and unmarried daughters. This is not particularly significant or onerous until children reach adolescence. Little notice is taken of damage caused by a child. But if it is serious—for example, if small boys allow cattle they are herding to damage crops—the injured party can inflict condign punishment on the culprits. He will also protest to their fathers. A father's responsibility for his children is of chief importance in questions of marriage. Thus a father is responsible (within the limits of his lineage status) for his son's bride-price payments and for any breaches of custom, involving conflict with other lineages or clans, that his child commits. In theory a father is also responsible for a son's debts unless they are of a petty kind. If his son gets mixed up in a fight he must appear with him in court. He must take steps to effect a ritual reconciliation with a lineage or clan to which injury has been caused by his son or daughter.

A father's rights are more comprehensive. He 'owns' (*so*) his children. He has the right and the duty of disciplining them. Hence he has the right to inflict corporal punishment on them. In the old days he could, in theory, sell them into slavery if he wished, and a few cases are known of this having occurred. But such an act, like any action that endangers the child's life, is morally reprehensible. He has the right to pawn (*zien talɔma*) a son or daughter in return for a loan, and I know of several such cases that occurred before the coming of British rule. This practice has, however, become almost obsolete since it is feared that the Administrative Officers will prosecute anyone found to have pawned a child. A father has the right to dispose of a daughter in marriage as he pleases and to use her bride-price as he pleases. He can do it in such a way as to make her in effect a pawn for a loan which will later be reckoned as an instalment of her bride-price. Men often give a young daughter of 9 or 10 years and upwards to someone from whom they receive loans. The girl is virtually a pawn (*talɔma*), and the understanding is that when she is old enough she will marry a member of the lender's family. If, when the time comes, she refuses to do so, her father may marry her off to someone else and will repay the loan out of her bride-price. A father has the right to take his daughter away from a husband whom he objects to.

A father has full disposal over his son's labour and skill. He also has an over-right over any personal property his son may acquire by his private enterprise. He decides whether his son shall live and farm with him or set up his own household.

A father's rights and duties have no legal sanctions in Tale society. They rest on a moral basis being inherent in the form of economic co-operation and property relations, the jural and ritual customs, and the whole complex of mutual dependence in family and lineage. They are never stated as a formal code by the natives, as we have done here, though explicitly recognized by them.

A mother's rights and duties are less precisely defined. Though they have the same basis and sanctions, at bottom, as paternal rights and duties, this is not so overt in native thought or practice. The affective basis of the relations of mother and child has a different tone to that of the relations of father and child. Hence many of a mother's rights are, in practice, dormant. Thus she is entitled to thrash her children, but it would be considered unbecoming and even unnatural in a mother to do so except under extreme provocation.

A mother has the right to the obedience and the respect of her children. She controls her daughter's work in the domestic sphere in tasks such as cooking, fetching water and firewood, and so on, but not in extra-domestic productive activities. For women's work in agriculture (e.g. harvesting) daughters come under their father's orders. A mother is entitled to assistance from her sons in the cultivation of her private vegetable and ground-nut plots. If her son is married, a mother has the right to leave all her domestic chores to be done by her daughter-in-law. A mother has the right to receive small gifts, such as tobacco and guinea-fowls, from her daughter's suitors. She may accept more substantial gifts, such as money and hoes, and in return pledge herself to help the suitor to elope with her daughter, even if this is contrary to her husband's intentions. If her daughter is married by arrangement, the mother is entitled to certain formal gifts of guinea-fowls and grain from the bridegroom's people. She is entitled to ask for help from her daughter's husband in roofing her rooms and in other tasks that are of concern to herself only. She is entitled to gifts of guinea-fowls and yams or sweet potatoes from her daughters' husbands at the time of the Harvest Festival. But most important of all is a mother's right to be supported by her sons from the time that they become capable of farming. Whether she has a husband or not, she will generally live with a son after she gets past the age of child-bearing.

A mother's chief duties are to care for her children in childhood. She must cook for them and see that they are fed. She must nurse them

●593 in illness. She is mainly responsible for their training in habits of cleanliness. She also has to teach her daughters housekeeping skills.

This formal summary is interposed here as a means of orientating our analysis. The reality, we shall find, is not so simple.

Classificatory Parents and Own Parents

593 855 736 Tallensi affirm that no one can wholly take the place of a person's own parents. A child may be brought up by its dead father's brother or dead mother's co-wife. Outwardly there is nothing to distinguish the relationship of such a child, during its pre-adolescent years, to its proxy parent from that of a child living with its natural parent. Men or women point with pride and affection to orphans in their custody as 'my children'. They claim to care for them as conscientiously and devotedly as for their own children. But, the natives say, there is always something lacking; and observation shows that the affective ties of proxy parent and child are much weaker than those of natural parent and child. Sometimes, indeed, there is an acknowledged emotional barrier between them.

One can see this in young children like Gundaat, whose story is told in a previous chapter (p. 130). A young child is more restrained, more formal, with a proxy parent than with a natural parent. Boys seem to be less amenable to proxy parents than to own parents, especially as they approach adulthood. [167] When young men who have been abroad, working in Ashanti or the Colony for a period of years, are questioned about their motives for leaving home, the commonest reason they give is the death of a parent. 'My father (*ba*) died, and my junior father (*ba-pit*) took over the house (*die yir*) and so I went away', is the usual formula. One soon discovers that there was always some tension and often friction between the youth and his father's brother. The youth says that his *ba-pit* did not treat him properly; and when one questions his *ba-pit*, he usually says 'the boy did not respect (*nan*) me'. This is a modern development of what is a deeply ingrained feature of Tale social organization. A man will often continue to live and farm with his own father until the latter's death. I know men of 40 and over who are still living with their own fathers. But very rarely does this happen with a father's brother. A dead man's sons break away from the parental home when a father's brother inherits it as soon as they are able to. In such a case there is usually a convergence of different factors of segmentary differentiation in the lineage. The emotional cleavage serves as the catalyst that directs and accelerates the normal processes of splitting along economic and structural lines of cleavage.

This is the negative aspect of the idea that one's natural parents should be one's social parents, as it appears in the classificatory extension of the parent–child relationship. On the positive side it follows from this conception that all those who are socially identifiable with

one's parents and play a part in one's upbringing can, and in certain 593
circumstances must, stand to one in the relation of proxy parents. 855
The rule applies most directly to the men and women of the same 736
domestic unit who are identified with one's parents by generation and by social role—to one's father's brothers (*sunɔɔp*), including his full and half-brothers and first cousins on his father's side, who are his prospective successors; and to one's mother's co-wives (*nentaas*). If these men and women all belong to the same household they are directly concerned with the production of food, the provision of shelter, and the satisfaction of the other wants of the unit upon which the physical welfare and growth of a child depends. If the men belong to relatively autonomous economic units but to the same domestic unit, they will nevertheless have a common interest in the family patrimony, to the inheritance of which they all have rights, and a common ritual dependence on the immediate ancestors of the nuclear lineage. The women will sometimes help in caring for one another's children; the men will sometimes help one another in farming and always act as a unit in ritual and jural matters under the authority of the most senior of them. And the ritual care of a child is of as much importance as its physical care. A child will not thrive (*maan*) if it is not under the spiritual wing of its patrilineal ancestors, as we have learnt.

Outside the domestic unit the terms *ba* (father) and *ma* (mother) and 602
the distinctive modes of behaviour correlated with them, are not
extended beyond the expanded family (i.e. the family cluster built up 613
on the inner lineage) in normal circumstances. [illegible] only exception is in the case of a uterine kinsman or kinswoman of a parent, who is identified with the foundress of the uterine line and is therefore described as a 'father' or 'mother' irrespective of genealogical distance.[1]

Within the clan or maximal lineage it is a cardinal rule that generation differences are not recognized beyond the limits of the inner lineage. 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage—*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*' is the Tale maxim. This is correlated with the structural relations of the inner lineage to lineage segments of higher order. The inner lineage is likely to be the widest segment with a common interest in patrimonial land. In relation to the clan or the maximal lineage it is usually the smallest recognized corporate segment, whose members are significant for the clan only as members of the segment. As will be remembered, it is also the unit within which sexual relations with a co-member's wife are definitely sinful. In short, the inner lineage (and the family cluster which is its residential and familial correlate) marks the limit beyond which a person takes part in corporate activities not in his own right and in his personal capacity but as a member of the

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[1] Kinship terms without inverted commas stand for the primary meaning of the terms, e.g. (natural) father; those between inverted commas stand for the extended or derived meaning of the term, e.g. (classificatory) 'father'.

602 613 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidem*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. [736 768] Tallensi feel that a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 613 ●593 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements. There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. [601] We thus get a series beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma*, *bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

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[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Gɔris and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kema* and *yɛbəga* for senior and junior.

children of about the same age playing together who are classificatory 613
parent and child. A 9- or 10-year-old will explain that he calls his
companion 'father' or 'child' because 'my father begot (*dɔɣa*)—or was 602
begotten by—his father and calls him child—or father', using the 593
concept *dɔɣ* in its generalized sense of a recognized relationship of belonging to successive generations.

The decisive tests are in terms of the jural and ritual relations in which kinship comes into action, and not in terms of a count of generations. Thus paternal authority is an aspect of the organization of productive co-operation in the household; it accompanies defined property rights, and entails jural responsibilities in matters like marriages and deaths as well as ritual duties to the ancestors. These are the things that make up a father's social role. Postponing further consideration of this for the present, we may note that, broadly speaking, three zones can be discerned within the limits of the inner lineage. First, that of Ego's natural parents, who exercise the full social roles of parents; second, that of Ego's proxy parents, seldom more distantly related to the natural father than agnatic second cousins (and their wives), and distinguished by the fact that they share and may take over the social roles of the natural parents; and third, that of Ego's classificatory parents, who are most unlikely (for no rigid line of demarcation can be laid down) to take on the true parents' social roles. The authority and responsibility of a classificatory father is of a general nature, and a man is subject to it only in virtue of his lineage membership.

As we shall find later, these principles hold not only for the classificatory extension of parent–child relationships but also for siblings and matrilateral kin. The regulating mechanism is the lineage structure.

We are defining the gradations that can be observed in the tone and 593
emphasis of the parent–child relationship in the broadest terms. We
are speaking of norms; and as we have previously remarked, the norms 602
do not always emerge as simply as this in the actual relations of parents and children. They are subject to the distorting influence of many social and personal factors in this as in other departments of Tale life. Da'amo'o, who ran away from home as a boy when his mother died, must have had very little love for his old father, who was, by all accounts, a hard, arrogant, and demanding martinet. Baŋ, on the other hand, who lost his own father in early childhood and grew up under the care of a distant lineage-brother of his father, Tendaan Gieŋ, whom his widowed mother married, was deeply attached to the latter.

As in most primitive societies, there are always a number of people whom a Talaŋ, child or adult, will refer to as his 'father' or 'mother', or 'child', at any given time. But, as has already been suggested, a natural parent or own child is clearly distinguished from others to whom one stands in the same social relationship. It is enough to visit a large domestic family for half an hour, at a time when the whole

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602 family is at home, to see this, especially where young children are concerned. With adults the discrimination is not so obvious in the ordinary daily routine as with children. I have seen a babe of six months left in the care of its mother's co-wife, whimper and strain eagerly towards its mother when it saw her arrive at the homestead with a load of firewood in the company of two other women of the household. An older child will run to its own mother for protection, if it is frightened, clutching her knees and thrusting its face between her thighs. A small boy of 3 to 6 years of age will try to follow his own father about wherever he can; and a little girl of this age hangs around her own mother, as she gets on with the household tasks, in a way that would be impossible with her mother's co-wife. On the other side, one can easily notice the difference between the sympathy and often grief of a woman over the illness or death of a co-wife's child and the utter prostration into which a mother falls if such a misfortune strikes her own child. Similarly, a man shows deep concern over the sickness or death of his brother's child. He will abandon a visit he has planned to a relative, give up work for the day, shelve any plans he may have made; for next to a death, nothing is so upsetting to a Tale household as the illness of a child. But this is as nothing compared with his grief over the death, or his distress at the illness of his own child.

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602 This affective discrimination of own parents and own children is the psychological counterpart of the differentiation of descent lines within the lineage and of segments within the family. Sentiment and structural relationships go hand in hand and the ritual superstructure of Tale society mirrors both. This consistency of the total scheme of social relationships means that we can make inferences about aspects of the relationship between parents and children that are not expressed in their ordinary intercourse, from ritual ideas and practices and from the [782] changing pattern of co-operation and association between them. The fact that a man can only sacrifice directly to the spirits of his own parents and to antecedent ancestors through his own parents, and not to or through the spirits of proxy parents, is as important a factor in the unique bond of parent and child as the fact that a child is usually brought up by his own parents.

Structural arrangements and ritual ideas show that, in spite of the precise discrimination of own parents and own children, proxy and classificatory parents do have a parental role *even* during the lifetime of own parents. They take pride in these children, and speak of them as 'my children'. Everyone who is 'father' or 'mother' to a person must be treated with the respect due to a parent and has some degree of authority over him or her. I recall one day seeing Sinkawol, a young man of about 25, instructing Kyekambe, a lively boy of about 12, in a task connected with house-building. They both belonged to the inner lineage of which Nyaaŋzum of Kpata'ar was the head. This lineage

presents a remarkable jumble of ages and generations owing to the 613
longevity and protracted fertility of its founder, Kuŋkɔŋki. Because
a period of about fifty years elapsed between the birth of Kuŋkɔŋki's 602
first son and the birth of his youngest son, the latter's children are
'fathers' to his older brothers' children, some of whom are three or
four times their age. That is how Sinkawol came to be the classificatory
'son' of Kyekambɛ. Now and then Sinkawol had to speak sharply to
his pupil. I asked if he would hit the boy if he did not obey his instructions. 'Oh no', replied Sinkawol gravely, 'I cannot strike him. He begot
me. He is my father. If he were my brother or my son I wouldn't
hesitate to clout him.' Kyekambɛ could not exercise authority over
Sinkawol owing to his social immaturity and inexperience. But he would
take precedence of Sinkawol in matters of inheritance, and when he grew
up would be entitled to precede Sinkawol in rights of succession to ritual
office, if he wished to.

Proxy and classificatory parents also feel a responsibility for the 593 ●
welfare of their 'brothers' ' children. Thus if two brothers have separate
households, they are not obliged to assist each other with food in times 602
of shortage; and pride restrains a man from asking for help from a
brother who is economically independent of him. I have seen men
grow wan with hunger, through living for days on end on nothing but
wild herbs; but they would never ask for assistance from their better-off
brothers. It is up to the latter to offer a gift of grain voluntarily. And [431]
when such a gift is given (it is usually only 3 or 4 lb. of grain, enough
for a couple of meals) it is offered as a gift for the children and their
mothers. The giver will send a calabashful of grain to his brother's
wife, with a message that it is for the children. As the natives always
say, 'Your brother's children are your children. You cannot see them
growing thin with hunger and let them starve.' A woman, too, will
sometimes give food to the children of a co-wife of the same joint
family, if the two women get on well together.

A proxy parent's authority over his or her classificatory children during their own parent's life cannot be exactly defined. It depends on the situation in which authority is exercised, on the personalities and economic relationships of the people concerned, and especially on the genealogical closeness of own parent and proxy parent. Ɔmara and Saandi are agnatic first cousins (brothers, in native terms) occupying adjoining semi-detached homesteads. They do not farm together. Saandi has no direct responsibility for feeding Ɔmara's children or for educating them. He is, however, directly interested in their welfare and upbringing. For as the head of the nuclear lineage, he must be consulted, and will have an influential, though not the decisive voice in all matters of a jural or ritual kind affecting Ɔmara's children—such matters, for instance, as the marriage of a son or daughter, or the rites of placing a child under the ritual guardianship of an ancestor. If he

593 sees any of Ɔmara's children misbehaving he can stop them and punish them if necessary. But ordinarily, though he can scold Ɔmara's children,
602 he would cause grave offence to Ɔmara if he were to strike them. When, to quote a case that occurred in a similar structural setting, Pumaan's son threw a stone at Zaŋ's (Pumaan's younger brother's) wife, Zaŋ shouted anathemas at the boy and complained to the neighbours but dared not whip him; that was Pumaan's prerogative. For Zaŋ and Pumaan have separate households and are both sticklers for their rights. By contrast, Bɔyazie, who lives and farms with his older brother and gets on extremely well with him, can command obedience from and can discipline the latter's children by corporal punishment if need be. But even in such a case a man might hesitate to strike his brother's children if he and his brother were not on terms of the greatest mutual trust. If Saandi asks his brother's son to do an errand or a job for him the boy will usually obey, but he cannot be compelled to do so, as he can by his own father. Co-wives, as we know, are particularly cautious in dealing with one another's children.

There is, however, at any given time, only one man who has full
593 paternal authority over a person, child or adult. In the first instance it is the man who begot him or her; and if this man dies, it is the man who takes on his social role, that is his distinctive rights and duties, by inheritance. The critical rights and duties are those connected with the land and other patrimonial property which the child's father owned or was heir to, and those connected with the cult of the child's father's father. In practice this means the head of the household to which the child belongs, who is also the person who sacrifices to the child's grandfather's spirit; and this limits the range to the child's father's brothers by the same father.

During a child's minority a father's agnatic cousin (brother in native
429 terms) may act *in loco parentis* if the father's nearer male agnates are
428 lacking; but it is a position of trusteeship rather than of full paternal authority. The son will set up an independent household as soon as he
602 is able to farm for himself. He will then take possession of any land which his father acquired by his own efforts and will become the effective owner of, for example, bride-price cattle obtained for his own sister, though he cannot dispose of them without the formal consent of the head of the nuclear lineage. In relation to an adult, a father's cousin (or remoter classificatory 'brother' of the same inner lineage) retains only the ritual and jural attributes of a father; and this chiefly in virtue of being head of the inner or nuclear lineage to which the person belongs. Important as these attributes are, they represent a less direct and personal authority than that of one's own or one's proxy father.

603 We shall see later that the relations between grandchildren (*yaaŋ*, pl. *yaas*) and grandparents (*yaab-doog* or *ba-kpeem*, masc. *yaab-pɔk* or

ma-kpeem, fem.) are a foil to those of parents and children. It is convenient here to state the range within which grandparents are acknowledged. On both the mother's side and the father's side grandparents are primarily one's own parent's own parents. The terms are extended to own grandparents' siblings (in particular to a grandfather's brothers) and their wives, but rarely beyond that limit, and never, in my experience, beyond a grandfather's agnatic cousin. This is correlated with the cycle of development of the joint family. By the time a man has grandchildren he is not likely to be still sharing a homestead with his brother, let alone cousin, and his classificatory siblings will have only a formal interest in his grandchildren. 603

The diagram on p. 148 sums up this discussion of the range of parenthood acknowledged by the Tallensi.

The Significance of 'Having no Father alive'

Clearly the formula 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage' covers a complicated tissue of social relationships. Another aspect of it appears in the significance Tallensi attach to whether or not one's father is alive. 593●

This is a matter of considerable practical importance, more particularly for men, but also for women. A person's status in his clan, and in every segment of it to which he belongs, depends largely on whether 'his father is alive (*u ba be*)' or not (*u ba ka*). It is correlated with the distribution of jural and ritual authority and responsibility in the lineage. During his own father's lifetime a person's status is submerged in that of his father for jural and ritual purposes. He comes directly under his father's authority, as we shall see presently. He attains his first degree of independence only on the death of his own father. This is shown to some extent in every department of his life, but most significantly in the sphere of ritual. A man cannot make sacrifices to his patrilineal ancestors in his own right while his own father is alive. His father does this on his behalf. It is only when his father dies that a man can sacrifice directly to his ancestors; for such sacrifices can only be offered through the medium of his father's spirit. 593 885 [782]

This marks a very important stage in a man's social maturation, whatever his chronological age may be. Henceforth the responsibility for keeping the goodwill of his ancestors rests directly on his own shoulders. It will be he himself, for instance, not his father, who decides whether a sacrifice demanded by such-and-such an ancestor should be offered at once or postponed. And with this first stage of ritual responsibility usually goes some degree of autonomy in jural and economic matters, as we shall see presently. Nevertheless, no man attains full autonomy within the limits of the lineage system until he is altogether 'fatherless'. While he has a proxy or classificatory father alive he is still to some extent under paternal authority. It is worth

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight into the working of the classificatory principle. 593

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves. 764 784

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers. 613 602 [601]

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

613 602 or father's father's brother's son is still alive would not claim to be fatherless. For, in matters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in relation to other like units, he has no independent status. The unit is under the authority of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. Similarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved and the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

613 593 We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog. When Sebəg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bəɣabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sebəg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔɣar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔɣabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the [784] elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then Bəɣabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

782 593 [784] Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External *Bɔɣar* are known as 'tabooed fowls (*nɔkiha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten, by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

593 In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

father or proxy father alive. But let us take a more complicated as well as more commonplace case.

Ziŋgan biis form an inner lineage, one of the five inner lineages that together constitute the medial lineage of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri of Tɔŋ-Guŋ. The genealogy overleaf shows the agnatic relationships of the members of Ziŋgan biis we are concerned with here.

The head of the whole inner lineage is Kutɔbis. He is also the head of one major segment of the lineage, Pa'anbɔbis biis; the head of the other major segment, Zaɣahna'am biis, is Ɔndieso. Within his own segment of Ziŋgan biis Ɔndieso is master. He farms for himself; he sacrifices directly to his own father's and ancestors' spirits; he owns his sisters' bride-price cattle and can dispose of them as he pleases and is responsible for finding the bride-price for his own wives or his sons' wives. In these matters that concern his nuclear lineage primarily he does not acknowledge Kutɔbis as his 'father'. He looks upon Kutɔbis as only the head of the inner lineage. As such, he must be formally consulted by Ɔndieso in matters that involve jural or ritual relationships with other lineages or clans, such as arise through marriage. Thus, if Ɔndieso's daughter is sought in marriage, it is Kutɔbis who receives the emissary with the placation gifts from the bridegroom and keeps the fowl he brings, thus signifying his formal assent and regularizing the marriage. Nevertheless, it is a purely nominal authority that Kutɔbis exercises. The real decisions rest with Ɔndieso. Again, if Ɔndieso seduces the wife of, say, a Gbeog man, the injured man's lineage head will protest to Kutɔbis and negotiations for the reconciliation rites will be carried out by the latter. He will accept nominal responsibility for Ɔndieso in this matter and will take charge of the arrangements that concern Ziŋgan biis in the reconciliation rites. But the animals required for the rites must be supplied by Ɔndieso himself. To give a third example, Kutɔbis will be summoned at once if there is a death in Ɔndieso's family and will preside over the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. But, again, the animals and foodstuffs that have to be provided by the 'owner of the funeral'—the person actually responsible for its performance—must be supplied by Ɔndieso. Kutɔbis has, in fact, no power directly to order Ɔndieso to do anything; he has no claims, as of right, on Ɔndieso's services or material help; he has no responsibility for Ɔndieso's welfare, apart from the general moral responsibility he has for the welfare of the whole lineage. As the natives say, he 'owns' Ɔndieso 'with the mouth only (*nuoni maa*)'. All this is implied when Ɔndieso says: 'If it is a question of the (inner) lineage only, I have no father (*la a dug pooni maa, nka ba*).' Kutɔbis's relations with him arise from the fact that Kutɔbis is *dug kpeem*, head of the inner lineage, custodian of the founding ancestor's *bɔɣar* and of the lineage *zɔnɔr*. If he were Ɔndieso's classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather', it would make no difference to their relations. The symbolic expression

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Kutɔbis also inherited the lineage *bɔɣar* of Pa'anbɔbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and brother's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbɔbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutɔbis. With this *bɔɣar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbɔbis's homestead. If on Kutɔbis's death the present head of Baɣanlɔrəg biis, Na'abzɔ, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutɔbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Baɣana, Pa'ana, and Sɔmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Sɔmnam's line of descent. On Kutɔbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbɔbis II. Lastly, Kutɔbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Baɣana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Baɣana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutɔbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutɔbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutɔbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

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On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*ŋman*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

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[1] This was because Kutɔbis and Yidaan were *saarət*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have 613
a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a
mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser importance 593 ●
of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social 784
status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance
than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. The range within which classificatory 601
'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso 613
both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to 601
marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies,
Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites
of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head [765]
shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother 888
and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VI

THE MORAL BASIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF PARENT AND CHILD

The Fundamental Axiom of Parenthood

● 593 BEFORE we try to unravel further the complex strands that unite parents and children we must elucidate an idea which the Tallensi put forward as the fundamental axiom of parenthood. We have mentioned it already in our analysis of the notion of descent, but we have to examine it now from the point of view of the person-to-person relations of parents and children. It is the axiom, clearly stated by the natives and apparent also in Tale values and usages, that the fact of having begotten or borne a child creates an absolute moral bond between it and its parents. This idea is felt by them to be the real ultimate sanction behind right conduct in the relations of parents and children; and there is a very close agreement between ideals and actualities in this province of Tale social life.

593 888 855 Ignorance of hygiene and medicine, insufficiency of food and clothing, magical ideas, and Tale cultural standards in matters such as cleanliness or ventilation are undoubted handicaps to the child in its struggle to grow up. But sheer, callous neglect of a child by its parents, such as we sometimes hear of in more civilized societies, would be regarded with horror by all Tallensi and is unheard of. Similarly, a person who abandoned an aged parent to destitution would be regarded as a good for nothing (*boŋwari*). It happens occasionally, nowadays, when young men who find life irksome at home can so easily sneak off to foreign parts and stay away for many years. But it is a very rare thing and is universally reviled.

The Tribulations of Parenthood

593 If one asks a native why parents are and should be devoted to their children; or on what grounds they claim to 'own' (*so*) their children and to be entitled to their services, affection, gratitude, and respect; if one asks a girl who is keeping sullenly indoors, because she has been forcibly recovered from the lover she eloped with and beaten into the bargain, why she submitted passively to her father; or if one asks a young man nursing a bitter grievance against a father who has stopped him from marrying the girl he was courting why he does not defy the old man; if one asks any Talɔŋ, man or woman, such questions as these the answer invariably is, 'It is *dɔyam*'. 'Have you not begotten (or borne) them?' 'Has he not begotten you?' And then, almost always, comes the afterthought which contains the crux of the explanation, '*Dɔyam pu tɔ?*—Is not begetting (bearing) hard?' The phrase sounds

trite, especially after one has heard it fifty times. But it is charged with deep emotion for the native to whom it stands for all the tribulations and anxieties connected with the whole task of bringing up a child. 593

Men say that these tribulations begin with the act of sex itself. 831 Desired though it is for the pleasure it gives, sexual intercourse is debilitating. Ejaculation (*duun duurəm*, a term primarily used for micturition) is a giving up of something vital that is a source of strength and youth. That is why young, unmarried men are so much more vigorous than married men.

Then there is the strain under which a man lives during his wife's 843 pregnancy, particularly if it is a first pregnancy. Pregnancy, the creation of life, must not be brought into contact with death. Hence he, as the father of his wife's coming child, must not take direct part in mortuary or funeral rites. If he is one of the bereaved, the rites he is compelled to undergo are modified so as to eliminate contact with the corpse or objects symbolizing it. No particular evil is thought to follow on a breach of this taboo, which can, in fact, be magically purged if circumstances compel a man to it. But no man would be so callous as to flout the taboo deliberately.

Again, a man must not cut a new bush farm while his wife is pregnant, lest she miscarry. Both are critical events, affectively as well as socially, involving economic readjustments and the assumption of new responsibilities. Preparing a new bush farm absorbs you completely; it is, the natives say, 'a commotion of the heart (*suhkpɛləg*)'. But when your wife is pregnant you 'take heed only of her pregnancy (*i wona u puur la*)'. You cannot give attention, at the same time, to a new and vital economic enterprise like cutting a new bush farm. Apart from a wife's pregnancy only two other critical happenings are so obsessing as to be considered mystically incompatible with making a new bush farm—building a new house, a momentous undertaking, both materially and ritually, which marks an important change in a man's social personality; and taking a new wife, which also involves or portends big readjustments in one's social relations. It is significant that a man who is cutting a new bush farm or building a new house keeps away from funerals outside his own inner lineage since they are both emotionally disturbing and a distraction. All these critical events demand watchfulness and solicitude, for unknown dangers of both a physical and a mystical kind threaten their outcome. A man has to go about consulting diviners. He offers special sacrifices to his ancestors and puts the matter in their particular care.

Another sign of the concern that tempers a man's joy at his wife's pregnancy is the caution he must use in the chase. He must not kill certain mystically dangerous animals, else his wife may miscarry or bear a deformed child.

A man's close relatives are also concerned when his wife is pregnant, 602
especially if it is a first pregnancy. His mother and the older women of 843

the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846
wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are
near, might give some help too.[1] The younger women fetch water and 602
cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593●
begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of
a father's tribulations. Talking with men immediately after the birth 854
of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some
days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family [787
visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as 776]
a spiritual ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) to guard its life (*gur u ŋɔvɔr*) and watch over its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabɔlɔg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper [165]
'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, vol. xxxv, nos. 3 and 4, 1943.

water lowered. Tallensi think it is essential for the health of the mother 846 and babe, and one important item in it is forcing some of the decoction down the babe's throat. Whether or not it actually has a cleansing or invigorating effect must be left to medical judgement. For the native women it has the double significance of an ordeal, and a prescribed treatment that they would not dream of neglecting.

As we have seen, the care of the child on the ritual side falls on its 854 father. The much more exacting physical care of the child in its parlous passage through infancy is its mother's responsibility. This is stressed when Tallensi insist that it is not on account of a magical taboo but because a child is still partly dependent on the breast until it is about three, that sexual intercourse between a man and his nursing wife is discontinued. They say that a child requires the undivided care of its mother until it can run about and eat solid food by itself, and that it will wilt away through lack of nourishment if she conceives prematurely. Nursing mothers become pregnant only too often through lack of self-control, but this is never condoned by public opinion. The only time a Tale woman tries to induce an abortion is when such an [847] accident happens, for no sacrifice is too great to preserve her living child.

When Tale parents are asked what were the special difficulties they had to overcome in rearing their children, they always mention sickness 854 first. Mothers especially have a great dread of sickness in their children. 855 One does not notice this in the easy-going, placid atmosphere of a well-conducted family when there is no 'sleeplessness' (*gɔgiŋgara*), to use the apt native euphemism for sickness. But one sees it when a child gets ill. Minor ailments throw its mother into a state of anxiety. Serious illness puts her into a panic or prostrates her with grief. She refuses food—which is always regarded by the natives as a sign of severe illness or great emotional distress—and stops all her work. I have seen illness in adolescent or adult children have this effect on women; and the younger the child the more do they suffer.

It is easy to imagine what the death of a child in infancy or childhood 761 means to its mother. A man is expected to control his emotions, but a woman may express her grief freely. A father's grief is palliated, also, 593 ● by the active role he takes in the ritual by which the emotional shock is neutralized. A woman's part in this ritual is more passive and she feels the blow more acutely in consequence. A mother remains inconsolable for many days and even weeks over the loss of a child.

The way Tallensi think of a mother's grief over the death of her child was brought home to me when Diŋkaha's little girl of about three died after a lingering and horrible illness. He had been devoted to the child and was greatly distressed, but in a few days he had accepted the diviner's verdict philosophically and was his old bouncing self again. His wife, on the other hand, broke down completely. Then, a couple of weeks later, news came that an older child of hers by a former husband, with

761 whom it was living, had also died suddenly. Diŋkaha, greatly concerned
for his wife, warned all the members of his family not to say anything
•593 to her about it. If she heard of this calamity now, he said, she would
surely die. Later on, when she had settled down again he would himself
break the news to her.

Incidentally, fathers do not always get over the death of a child,
765 whether an infant or an adult, with ease. It is easier for a young man,
593 the Tallensi say, because he thinks to himself that his wife can still bear
children to him. But even young men have been known to abandon
[762] themselves to despair. An extreme case was that of Dɔɣayam, who
pierced himself with a poisoned arrow when his favourite child died;
and the average Talɔŋ, it must be remembered, speaks of suicide with
contempt. The grief of a father when a grown-up or adolescent son
dies is very moving. When Pumaan's son Kpeemi and Tinta'aləm's son
Suor, both fine young men in the twenties, died, it was as if a shock ran
through the whole community. On both occasions the men of the clan
gathered in full force to mourn at the bereaved house and the atmosphere
of tragedy was felt by all. I cannot forget the picture of Pumaan, as
taciturn and dour a man as one could meet anywhere, holding himself
tautly, his face ashen, his eyes staring ahead, stoically suppressing his
despair as an elder should do. Tendaan Teroog, an old man over seventy,
made no pretence of stoicism when his eldest and only adult son died
leaving a number of wives and children. He simply pined away and
followed his son to the grave in a couple of months.

When Tallensi say that it is hard to bring a child into the world, they
593 have in mind more than the physiological facts of birth, and the dangers
769 of infancy and childhood. They think of the whole gamut of social and
emotional relations between parents and children arising out of the fact
of birth. For a Talɔŋ, as we have seen, does not become altogether
independent of his parents until their death—nor, indeed, even after
their death. The pragmatic bonds of jural and economic dependence
become transformed into the equally strong, nay stronger bonds of ritual
dependence on the ancestor spirits of whom the parents are the immediate
prototypes and intermediaries. And in many ways the ritual relationships
of the Tallensi with the spirits of their parents give a truer
insight into the parent-child bond than their visible behaviour towards
one another. 'Fear the dead but do not fear the living (*Zom kpiim ka di
zo vopa*)', says one of their proverbs which enshrines their feeling that
a person is under a far more compelling bond with his parents when
they are dead than during their life. We shall return to this presently.

593 The gist of our analysis is that to the Tallensi parenthood means
responsibility that weighs heavily at times. This comes out both in the
notion that bearing or begetting a child is hard and in the correlated
notion of the importance of rearing. At the same time there is no native,
man or woman, who would not insist that a person has lived in vain if he

dies childless, and that children are the greatest source of joy and pride, comfort and support that anybody can have. The Tallensi are much like ourselves in this matter and do not think there is any inconsistency between these two aspects of parenthood. Their whole philosophy of life is like that. Realists as they are, they take it for granted that life has many risks and troubles, but, as they often put it, 'Does anybody desire death on that account?' When I told them that Europeans often refrain deliberately from having children, they were either sceptical or appalled. 593

The Parent-Child Bond as an Absolute Bond

Tallensi say that the bonds between parent and child can never be obliterated and may not be repudiated. This is a fundamental moral principle and it goes back to the notion that bearing or begetting children is hard. From it follows the duty of filial piety.

You cannot disown your child. 'Even if your child is a good-for-nothing, you have no alternative but to keep him,' said Loɣani, one of the most intelligent and upright men I knew. 'Have you not suffered to beget him?' he went on. 'How can you reject him? You are always thinking of your children's good, though they are often selfish and think only of their own advantage. Your child may be lazy or ill-behaved. But yet you cannot drive him away, you cannot harass him so that he quits you.'

Many examples could be quoted to illustrate the strength of this ideal. I sacked one of my servants for petty theft. A day or two later an elder who was known to be one of my friends came to intercede for him. He admitted that the man was a thief, but he was very disappointed when I declined to take him back. 'You are his father,' he said, 'and you ought to take him back.' Then, after a short silence, he added gravely, 'You white men! You are not like us. You do not understand the meaning of "to beg forgiveness".' 593 685

A better instance is an incident in which Loɣani himself was concerned some days after he made the comment quoted above. A youth of Loɣani's clan stole a fowl owned by another member of his own joint family, whom he called his older brother (*bier*). The theft, a despicable thing in any case, was made blacker by the youth's attempt to conceal it; and when it was discovered, the whole clan was agog with it. The culprit's father, in his shame and anger at the disgrace brought upon his family, struck and cursed him saying that he must never again set foot in the house. Thereupon the young man took refuge with Loɣani, whose son was his friend. Loɣani himself, like all respectable people, was shocked at the theft. 'Heaven save me from theft,' he said, when he told me the story. 'Death were better than that. It is shameful.' And he went on to describe how everybody scorns and derides a thief. Nevertheless, as soon as the boy arrived Loɣani went to the elders of the boy's lineage to get them to intercede with the father to withdraw his [577] [789]

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curse and take his son back. But meanwhile the boy sneaked away and went to his brother in Mampurugu for fear of public ridicule. 'But', said Loyani, 'one day he will return and his father will certainly take him back.' It is because a man cannot disown his child that a Tale father always stands by his son in what the natives call *pɔyadir yɛla*, marriage affairs, the test occasions of jural responsibility. A man may have strong private objections to his son's marriage and eventually cause it to be dissolved. He may criticize and scold his son for it. But in public he will support the boy if the marriage does not infringe some rule of kinship or convention of social relationships. This, it should be noted, is not the same thing as a man's responsibility for his son's bride-price which rests on a different principle. For the same reason a woman can never be denied refuge in her father's house if she has nowhere else to stay.

593 A woman, too, cannot disown her child. Indeed Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for a woman, bound as she is to her child by even stronger emotional bonds than a man. It happens, of course, that women desert, or are taken away from one husband to marry another and leave a child behind. But if the child is still too tiny to fend for itself it accompanies its mother until it is old enough to be separated (*pɔhəg*) from her. Tallensi are very critical of a woman who deserts a child when she leaves its father, though not without ulterior motives; for a runaway wife is a loss, whether she leaves children or not. As has been mentioned, they say that in such cases 'Rearing is more important than bearing'. And yet, they say, a woman yearns after her child no matter who has the custody of it. She might easily desert a later husband to return to an earlier husband with whom she has left a child; and if a woman who has been married more than once returns to her first husband, his rights take precedence of all the others' by Tale custom. That is why men object strongly to a wife's attempting to visit or even see a child she has left with a former husband. I have seen a man keep watch on his wife for days lest she make such an attempt. 'Do you know what bearing (a child) means to a woman?' he said, in explanation. In any case, her marital history makes no difference to the *soog* (uterine) tie between a woman and her child and to the social relationships arising out of it. As we have already learnt, there is no surer guarantee that a woman will [837] stay with a husband than if she has two or three children by him. If she has children, a woman who commits adultery almost invariably returns to her husband, risking the wrath of his ancestor spirits and enduring the shame of a semi-public confession. If she has none, she usually runs off with her paramour.

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The ideas we have been discussing are not thought to have a ritual sanction where own parents and children are concerned. But with proxy parents, as might be expected, a ritual sanction comes into the picture openly. A man who disowns or ill-treats or in other ways neglects the

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duties of a 'father' to a dead brother's children, especially minor children, incurs the anger of his paternal ancestors. Human nature being what it is, Tallensi say, it happens all too often that men behave disgracefully to a dead brother's children. Sometimes retribution comes in their lifetime. Sometimes, however, the sanction which re-establishes the moral law only comes into action after their death. Then the diviners who are consulted declare that they have not been 'accepted' (*die*) by the ancestors whom they have gone to join. Their own sons must make ritual amends to set the matter right, and so the moral principles they sinned against are vindicated.

Filial Piety

The counterpart of parental duty and devotion is filial piety. It is regarded by the Tallensi as an equally binding moral principle and an equally strong motive of individual conduct; and they trace it back, also, to the tribulations parents undergo in bringing a child into the world. It is not a formally elaborated doctrine, as among the Chinese, nor a dogma of faith, as among the ancient Hebrews, nor a legal principle, as in ancient Rome, but a diffused norm of conduct. The Tallensi would laugh at the idea of kowtowing to a parent, and their respect for parental authority is far from being blind obedience. For one of the significant characteristics of the relations of parents and children is their ambivalence. In everyday intercourse there is a freedom in these relations, verging on camaraderie. Yet they are full of tensions due to the self-assertion of children against their parents. It is the characteristic picture of the relations between successive generations in a patrilineal society—parents and children bound to one another by the strongest ties of sentiment and interest but latently pitted against one another, particularly in the case of fathers and sons. Filial piety among the Tallensi can be interpreted, in some of its expressions, as a bulwark against the disintegrative effects of these tensions or as a stabilizing mechanism of behaviour the main function of which is to close the gap between parents and children if it threatens to become too large.

We have seen how important it is for a man's status whether or not he has a father alive. If anything, his status is advanced by the death of his nearest fathers, and it is not until he is 'fatherless' within the nuclear lineage that he attains jural autonomy. In this, as in all aspects of the relations of father and son, Tale custom is ambivalent. After a certain stage of social maturity men desire to be free of paternal restraint, and yet they are glad to leave the bigger responsibilities for their lives in the hands of a father. It is not surprising that the affective stress, in Tale thought, is on the blessings of having a father alive.

Speaking conventionally, Tallensi say that one must obey one's father, respect him, work for him, take his side against everybody else—even

593 against one's mother—'*ɔn dɔyi la zugu*—because he begot you'. One's dependence on him increases one's attachment and sense of duty
577 towards him. Dependence on one's father is a good thing, a highly desirable and advantageous state of affairs, and the essence of filial piety is to accept this condition of dependence as the right thing in life. Tallensi say that a man has no cares while his father is alive. He looks after all one's affairs (*maal i yɪla*). He takes charge of the farming, attends to all ritual matters such as sacrifices to the ancestors and the consultation of diviners if one is ill, and assumes responsibility for such things as the payment of bride-price. He takes care of the house (*gur yiri*) both in the physical sense of always staying at home and in the jural and ritual sense of being its responsible head, leaving his sons free to go about as they please. The emphasis is on the father as the one who bears all responsibility for one's welfare in economic, jural, and ritual matters. That is why, the natives say, a man mourns the death of a father, for henceforth he must take on the burden of responsibility for himself. It means the end of protection and security in relation to society at large and to the spirits of the ancestors.

The picture is overdrawn but not inaccurate. The burden of social responsibility does not weigh so heavily as this statement implies. Siŋ and Gbana, both young men in the twenties, managed their households very well. But both often bemoaned their fate in having been left fatherless when still boys. 'If my father were alive I would have had a wife by now', said Siŋ, 'and Na'abzɔ (his proxy father) would not have used my sister's bride-price cattle for his own purposes.' The death of the father often means the uprooting of his sons. 'Now', said Kɛlibɔ, after his father's funeral ceremonies were over, 'we (he and his brothers) shall become poor men. When our father was alive we had a large home farm to cultivate. Now our junior father (*ba-pit*) will take that and we shall have to go and farm our bush farms. Soon the day will come when we shall move out, for who knows how a *ba-pit* will look after you?' I have heard boys of 9 or 10 talk in this way after the death of their father. It is easier for a woman who has her husband's protection. But even she suffers a sad loss in the death of her own father. His heirs, even her own brothers, will never have quite the same intimate and personal interest in her and her children.

[769] There is a direct connexion between this emphasis on the dependence of children on parents and the worship of the ancestors. Nor is the underlying feeling of a hidden antagonism between father and son, of which we shall have more to say presently, altogether incongruous with this overt stress on the security the father symbolizes. The social relations of father and son, at every stage of the latter's development, are always a compromise between the mutual dependence of father and son and the limited dependence enjoyed by the latter.

There is not the same degree of tension between mother and child or

even mother and daughter, and hence, perhaps, Tallensi do not have such a definite conventional rationalization of their attitudes towards the mother. They say you respect your mother and cherish her in old age because she bore and fed you. In childhood you were more attached to her than to your father; you ran to her whenever you were tired or hungry or ill and she comforted and fed you; as an adult you realize the importance of 'father's begetting' (*ba-dɔyam*) in jural, ritual, and economic matters such as marriage or landowning, and in crises like sickness or death; but your mother is still honoured as the centre of your domestic arrangements if you are a man, and if you are a woman, she is the one person you can always come to in sickness or trouble, in the certainty of loving attention. Comfort, emotional security, and food—these are the distinguishing qualities of a mother in Tale thought. It corresponds to the more personal character of the bonds between mother and child, by contrast with the jurally and ritually weighted ties with the father. 593 577

Tallensi say that one must respect one's living parents; but to one's dead parents one owes reverence and submission in surpassing degree. That is what the proverb 'Fear the dead and do not fear the living' means to them.[1] One can defy a living parent sometimes and rely on being forgiven; one cannot defy a dead parent. One can live without the help of a living parent, if necessary, but not without the mystical protection of one's dead parents. 769 577

In the religious practice of the Tallensi the ancestors exercise their powers without compunction. They punish and slay as arbitrarily as they bless. Every dry season men return to rebuild their parental homes which have been allowed to lie in decay for many years. They come from Mampurugu, from outlying parts of Taleland, or from Ashanti and the Colony. Some have been away for years. Pal of Zubiuŋ had a prosperous farm in Mampurugu, where he had gone to settle on being discharged from the regiment after the war of 1914–18. During his fifteen years in Mampurugu he had become fairly wealthy, with five wives, a horse, several head of cattle, and a quantity of good clothes. Dema of Tɛnzugu, who joined the regiment as far back as 1912 and had lived in Ashanti as a trader since his discharge after the war, was obviously a man of considerable wealth by Tale standards. Both returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads in 1935–6. They told the same story. Wives and children had died; there had been repeated bouts of sickness in the family; other misfortunes had piled up over the years; and all, as the diviners declared, because they had 'rejected (*zayah*) their fathers (*banam*)' by remaining in foreign parts. It did not matter much while there were older brothers at home to 'give water (*zaŋ kuom ti*)', that is, make sacrifices, to the ancestral shrines. But 769 577 167

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[1] The verb *zo*, to fear, has a wide range of meaning and here it means to show respect towards, to revere, to stand in awe of. [192]

769 when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come
577 home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not
167 done so. Dema is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own
people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to abandon in Mampurugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the same with Na'abzə, Kaɣar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

769 While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety
577 towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the
757 observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every
native owns some 'roots (*ŋaɣa*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you (to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔɣam la zug, nyɛn dɔɣəm la zugu*).'

Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for
577 a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities
593 and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan,
769 with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other
patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛyəraan*) of one of her paternal forbears and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance
[782] to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female
survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers. A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

of his dead mother's spirit; she is not tied to the lineage home in the 577
same way as a father's spirit is and can be 'given water' more easily 593
wherever the man happens to be. Nevertheless, his welfare and that of 769
his dependants rests as much on his maintaining good relations with her spirit as with his father's spirit.

Filial piety among the Tallensi is a great deal more than a customary 577
injunction to honour and respect one's parents. Psychologically it is
a very complex sentiment. Even during their lifetime parents have 593
quasi-mystical attributes, as we shall see more clearly when we consider
the relations of parents and first-born children, and these dominate the 789
sentiment. A parent can bless or curse a child. A parent's curse, in particular, is greatly dreaded, as we have previously noted, and, in consequence, only resorted to in case of gross affront or unforgivable defiance on the part of a child. If a parent expresses or merely feels resentment against a child, that is equivalent to a curse which may cause it illness or other harm. Thus one element in the sentiment of filial piety is respect for the blessing and fear of the curse of a parent. That is why, men say, it is sometimes embarrassing to have an old mother in one's house, though one is bound to keep her, both in duty and out of
affection. For old women become completely egoistic. All they think [888]
of is having enough to eat and being comfortable, and if they are crossed they are apt to curse anybody incontinently.

In a large joint family one often finds a young man with a growing family of his own torn between his devotion to his father and his desire to be economically independent so as to provide for his wife and children more satisfactorily. He cannot go out to farm on his own without his father's blessing and consent else his venture will surely fail. He begins to drop hints or makes a tentative approach to his father. But if the latter shows displeasure he retreats at once. I have seen this happen more than once. When Tɔɣalbɛrəgu wanted to go out to farm on his own, his father Naabdiya reproached him, saying that *he* had not deserted *his* father as Tɔɣalbɛrəgu now wished to desert *him*. Tɔɣalbɛrəgu apologized and withdrew. But, as Naabdiya told me, 'I still had resentment in my heart and he still secretly cherished his plan'. A couple of weeks later Tɔɣalbɛrəgu developed a large boil in the armpit. In panic he begged an elder to ask Naabdiya to forgive him and formally withdraw his implicit curse, which, he was certain, was the cause of the boil. It was the same with Yinyela's son Duun. Though as an eldest son he felt entitled to start farming on his own, he dared not ask that hard old man's permission for fear that it might arouse his resentment.

It is an interesting point that when a young man who has been living 577
and farming with his dead father's brother, for example, sets up in his 593
own homestead, the pretext for the separation is often not an economic one. It is commonly recognized that the young man moves out because he needs more land and freedom to provide for his family by himself.

577 But if the father's brother does not take the initiative of pointing out to his 'son' that he would be better off on his own, the latter cannot do so. 593 It would be like suggesting that his proxy father is not treating him as fairly as his own father. The usual course of events is that something goes wrong with the young man's affairs. It may be a trivial mishap, such as a hen being caught by a hyena, or something more serious, such as the sickness of wife or child. The young man goes with his proxy father to consult a diviner; and the diviner declares that the trouble was caused by the young man's own father, because the young man has not yet built his own homestead. The dead father lets it be known that he wants to go directly to his son's own house to accept sacrifices and not have to go to his brother's house as a mere guest. Thus the dictates of filial piety are subtly and doubly fulfilled.

577 593 769 Filial piety, as these examples show, is the psychological bridge between the relations of parents and children in life and in the ritual relationships of the living with the ancestors. All the ancestors are projections of the parents, different manifestations of the images Tale culture draws of certain aspects of the parents that do not appear in conventional, overt behaviour. This is clear, also, from the element of reverence that enters into the sentiment of filial piety.

577 593 Siŋ's father and Na'abzɔ were the sons of two brothers. When Siŋ's father died, Na'abzɔ married his widow and took charge of the children. But Na'abzɔ is a notoriously cantankerous person. So Siŋ took his younger brothers and mother and set up in his own homestead as soon as he was old enough. In jural and ritual matters, however, Na'abzɔ is still his 'father'. Passing Siŋ's house one day with an elder I heard sounds of violent quarrelling between him and Na'abzɔ. Na'abzɔ stood on the flat roof of a room in his house hurling abuse at Siŋ, who replied angrily, but politely, from his gateway 50 yards away. My companion and I turned aside to talk to Siŋ. It appeared that Na'abzɔ had as usual been nagging Siŋ and his brothers unreasonably. He demanded that they should leave their own farm-work to come and hoe his farm. When Siŋ asked for his help, which was indispensable, in an important ritual matter, he had refused out of petty spite; and now he had upset Siŋ's sister's marriage by arbitrary and inconsiderate demands on her husband. I asked Siŋ, 'Why don't you take hold of Na'abzɔ and thrash him? That should stop him.' He looked at me in dismay and said, 'No, no. I couldn't do that. It is forbidden. He is my father. He begot me.' My companion, almost as shocked, chimed in, 'No, you can't strike your father, you can't strike your mother. They have borne (*dɔɣa*) you. He who strikes his father or his mother is a good-for-nothing.' He went on to say that everybody knew what sort of a person Na'abzɔ was, but Siŋ 577 must be patient. It would all come right. For would not Na'abzɔ die 593 one day and Siŋ inherit all his property? Similar comments were made 627 by everybody I met about Dɛŋkumis's brother's son, Dmaarəb. The

young man was a lazy spendthrift and there was constant trouble 577
between the two. One day Dɛŋkumis forcibly stopped him from beating
his wife and he turned and struck Dɛŋkumis. There was an uproar, for 593
other men of the lineage set upon Dmaarəb with sticks and fists. Next 627
day Dɛŋkumis, followed by all the men of his lineage segment, dragged the delinquent to the chief. As it was a *dugni yɛl*, an affair of the inner lineage, the chief dealt with it as head of the clan. Trembling with anger and contempt he read the youth an excoriating homily on how a person ought to behave to his parents. Dɛŋkumis, ended the chief, had been too patient with the worthless scamp just because he was his brother's son. Let him beware. Another action of this kind, and Dɛŋkumis would be commanded to throw him out of his house.

Another story deserves recording as an example of the working of 577
filial piety. Kuŋaaŋba was born when his father was an old man. At 593
that time a famine swept the country. A distant clansman of his father
seized his mother and her babe to sell them into slavery and recoup [567]
himself for a debt owed to him by Kuŋaaŋba's father. But the woman managed to escape. When the famine was over she returned home to find her husband dead and his brother Gəlime at the head of the household. Gəlime, however, disregarding the rule that whoever inherits a man's property and status must take over his duties and liabilities, at first refused to have her back. She was like a corpse that had come to life again, he said. But his own wife, with an independence of spirit that Tale women often show, threatened to leave him if he did not take her co-wife and the child back, so he gave in. In due course Kuŋaaŋba's mother remarried one of her late husband's classificatory brothers, under whose care the boy grew up. Jurally and ritually Gəlime remained his 'father'. Then Kuŋaaŋba went to work for the white man at Kumasi. He returned with a quantity of clothes, a bag of salt, and three or four pounds in cash. He found Gəlime, now an old man in decline, left almost destitute, as his own sons, whom he had always treated with severity, had both run away to the Colony. Kuŋaaŋba at once took the old man to his own house. He gave him a cloth to wear, bought a supply of grain for him, and left him some money when he himself departed for another spell of work abroad. Thereafter Kuŋaaŋba took care of Gəlime as if he were his own father until the end of his life. 'For', said Kuŋaaŋba, as he concluded his simple tale, 'was he not my father? What did it matter that he had treated me badly in my childhood, since I am still alive and healthy? I couldn't leave my father to die of starvation just because his own sons were wastrels.' I asked Kuŋaaŋba if Gəlime had ever expressed remorse for having neglected his duty to him in his childhood. 'No,' was the answer, 'he would not do that. He would keep it to himself but his heart would be sore (*u suh ndum*). And now that he is dead he will (as a spirit) do good to me.' It was true, commented an elder who had listened to the story; a son who had

577 no charity (*ɔn ka sugəru*) would perhaps have done otherwise, but
•593 Kuŋaaŋba's way was the right way.
It is on the death of a parent that filial piety is most sharply evoked,
just as it is the death of a child that brings out most poignantly a parent's
love and devotion. We have referred to this previously. In this matter
filial sentiment and ritual sanctions converge.

The supreme act of filial piety sons owe to their parents is the per-
764 formance of their mortuary and funeral ceremonies. If a man or woman
577 dies leaving no sons then this duty falls upon his or her nearest proxy
sons. The initiative and chief responsibility rest with the oldest living
593 son. The burial rites must be carried out immediately; but when and
765 how the funeral ceremony is to be made is for the sons to decide. No
one can put pressure on them to hurry on the funeral if they wish to post-
pone it for several years. It is customary to delay the funeral of an elder,
an old woman, or a person holding a ritual office until the third year
after his or her death, ostensibly so as to enable the sons to collect the
large stock of grain and the livestock required for the ceremony. Mean-
while, in the case of a man the sons exercise the social role of the
[793] deceased. If he was a tɛndaana they will perform the duties and exercise
the rights of his office, and this may be a motive for delaying his funeral
beyond the customary period. The old men who are eligible for the
office can object and grumble; they cannot compel a dead man's son to
make his father's funeral. The issue lies between the dead man and his
sons. If they delay unduly they will incur their father's anger. For
until his funeral has been celebrated he dwells between the world of the
living and the world of the spirits. As the Tallensi say, his one leg is
in the earth (among the spirits) and his other on the surface of the earth
(among the living) (*u gbɛr dɛkɔ bɛ tɛŋni ka gbɛr dɛna bɛ doorni*). He cannot
'join his forefathers (*paag u banam*)' until he has been 'taken back into
the house (*kpɛɛh dugni*)' as a spirit. And the situation is the same with
a dead mother, though she is of less jural importance.

The duty of burying a parent and celebrating his or her funeral is
769 the first step in the most exacting of all filial duties, the cult of the dead
577 parents. Native thought and behaviour show that the Tallensi feel it as
an inescapable compulsion of conscience, and not as a mere act of pro-
764 priety. Tallensi are quite matter-of-fact about the corpse (*kum*) of a
dead parent. They describe it as the 'slough (*fɔrɔŋ*)' of the soul (*sii*).
What they are concerned about is the spirit (*kpiim*) of the dead parent.
A man cannot rest secure until he has assimilated his father's or mother's
spirit into the framework of his life, domesticated it, so to speak, as the
expression *kpɛɛh dugni* shows; and this is the function of the funeral
ceremony. For that reason Tallensi want to have the graves of their
parents near their dwellings. True, a man's ancestor spirits accompany
him wherever he goes, but they are most tangibly present in his house,
where he sacrifices to them. It often happens that a man has to be

577 765 relatives at home decide not to wait for them are the exceptions that prove the rule. In a few cases they are men who have struck root in their new environment after many years of living there and find it difficult to get away. Sometimes they find it easier to procrastinate because they originally left home through a quarrel with the deceased parent. But generally they tarry because the deceased is a proxy parent or because they have older brothers at home who will conduct the funeral. Later, perhaps, when the mantle of the lineage headship falls on their shoulders they will return, like Pal and Dema, to take over and end their lives in the ancestral home. It is a feature of Tale custom that natural human weaknesses are not unduly penalized by public opinion. As long as he lives a man can always try to make good his derelictions of filial duty. It lies between him and his ancestors. The community is neutral.

577 765 ●593 At funeral ceremonies of old people one also sees that filial piety includes pride in one's parents. The *koordaana*, owner of the funeral or chief mourner (that is, the deceased's oldest son), and his brothers strain their resources to the utmost to provide a lavish funeral. It is not uncommon for nearly the whole harvest of a household to be consumed in making the beer and providing the cooked food required. In addition, animals must be slaughtered in honour of the dead. A poor man may be able to give his father only a couple of sheep or goats which he has had to borrow for the purpose. On the other hand, when Doohraan, the head of Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, died, rich in years and in honour, his sons slaughtered a cow, a donkey, and about a dozen small stock for his spirit; and Sayawuob postponed his mother's funeral for two years so that he should be able to give her a cow. At a big funeral, when the war parade (*dee*) and the whole concourse of clansfolk, kinsfolk, neighbours, and friends of the dead stand milling at the gateway, the oldest son climbs on to the wall to address the crowd. [292] Wearing his ceremonial plumed helmet of straw, with a large red cock in his hand, he looks down haughtily upon the crowd and delivers his harangue. [537] His speech, spun out with all the tricks of rhetoric in the Tale repertoire, is proud almost to the point of arrogance. He is relating the great deeds of his dead father or mother. They may seem trivial, sometimes, to the cold-blooded ethnographer—so and so borrowed five cows and paid them back in two years; so and so was a redoubtable farmer who in one year sold enough grain to buy three cows; another man boldly carried off his wife from under the noses of Mamprusi who had seized her; and this old woman was a potteress who by her own efforts earned the money to buy two cows, and in addition had been faithful to her first and only husband until his death. But it is not the substance so much as the occasion of these funeral panegyrics that matter to the Tallensi. At the end of his speech the son beats the cock (or if he is a rich man it may be a goat) to death on the wall and flings it to the crowd with a challenge that any person who can claim equal achievements should take it. But

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can 593 match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so. 765

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride in one's parents among the Tallensi. 593 They always show off an old parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often 577 been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man 888 or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck [777] (*zusɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full? (*U pu di ŋɔvɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and senile, as Doohraan was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage, the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among 593 the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect, affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, 577 supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relationships. 577 A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from 613 his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion, and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

577 misfortunes and learns from a diviner that this is due to his dead father
613 who is angry with him for leaving his *daboog* site derelict. That was the
166 case with Pa'anbɔbis and Mambaŋya.

577 We have said previously that the sentiments, the rights, and the duties of parent and child to one another are traced back by the natives to the fact of birth; but in actual social usage they are fortified by strong
593 ritual sanctions. Tallensi have these in mind when they say that a
688 father's authority is irresistible because 'he sacrifices for you (to your ancestors)'. Your father 'owns (*so*)' you because he begot (*dɔɣa*) you; and he sacrifices (*kaab*) on your behalf because he begot you; you can only approach your ancestors through your father while he is alive, and if you do so after his death it is always through the intermediation of his spirit. It all goes back to the fact of birth, but the ritual sanctions are the most important instrument by which a father's authority is maintained, as our discussion has several times shown, particularly in the case of a proxy or classificatory father. Siŋ cannot defy his proxy father Na'abzɔ 'because', as he says, 'he sacrifices for me'; Da'amo'o chafes under the vexations Kutɔbis and his sons frequently put upon him, but he cannot, for the same reason, disregard Kutɔbis's authority over him as his late father's brother. It is very rarely indeed that a man in a paternal position will refuse to sacrifice on behalf of another who is in the position of a 'son' to him; but the fear of this sanction has a restraining influence in cases such as those of Siŋ and Da'amo'o. The whole hierarchy of authority in the lineage rests on this ritual office. Most of the men of Yinyɛla's inner lineage were opposed to his cutting himself off from the rest of Puhug, but they had to 'follow (*dɔl*)' him because he had custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* and 'sacrificed for them'.

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

TO complete our analysis of the norms governing the relations of 593 ●
parents and children we must now glance at their development in
the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at suc- 183
cessive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differentiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the surface.

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally 854
naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, 593
they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of
the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the [751/
sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or 515]
so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother.

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of 853
its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least
the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It 854
is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has

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[1] Tallensi distinguish different stages of infancy according to the feeding- [856]
habits and level of physical skill reached by the infant. They never count months or years, but a parent is often able to state roughly how many months or years have elapsed since the birth of the child, working it out, most commonly, by reference to harvest and sowing times or to the Great Festivals. A babe in arms is *bilie*; until it is weaned it is described as 'still suckling (*u na mɔɣarme*)'. If it is said to be still suckling but 'eating a little porridge (*u diit saɣabo biel-biel*)' one can infer that it is at least 2. The unweaned infant's stage of development is further specified by stating whether it is crawling (*u bɔɣarme*) or walking (*u kyenme*) or already talking (*u vɔlɛmrɔme*). When the child is weaned it is said to 'have left off milk (*u tuk biilim*)'. Lastly comes the stage, at between 3 and 4 years, when it is said to be old enough to have another immediately following sibling (*u saɣa nyeer marɔga*)—an idea we shall explain in a later chapter. The subject-matter of this chapter is supplemented by my paper, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, cit. supra.

[p. 187]

nothing else to do, her babe is at the breast, sucking hungrily or, if it
853 is replete, just playing with the breast with its mouth, its fingers, and its
854 toes. If the mother is away another woman of the household will give
the baby medicated water to drink when it cries or will put it to her breast for comfort. It may be any woman of the family, but will usually be a co-wife.

By the age of 18 months a baby's diet is being regularly supplemented
853 with small lumps of porridge, often pre-masticated by its mother. It is
gradually and usually painlessly weaned by increasing its solid food
862 (chiefly porridge), until it is eating the same food as the adults. The
only time Tale women have to wean a baby abruptly is if they become pregnant through lack of self-control during the nursing period. Tallensi say that this distresses the baby but that harsh measures are not required as a pregnant woman's milk disgusts a baby. They also say that the premature deprivation of its mother's milk prevents the child from thriving. In fact the premature pregnancy of its mother is probably more of a psychological deprivation for the child than a nutritional loss. By the time a child has its milk teeth and is able to run about, at the age of about 3, it gets no more nourishment from the breast. But its mother's breast is still its chief solace. If it is in pain, or frightened, or just tired and peevish, it cuddles into its mother's arms and clings to her breast for consolation, and a younger baby makes this impossible.

The completion of weaning marks the first stage in the child's physical
855 and psychological severance from its mother. It has learnt to do without
593 its mother for hours or days at a stretch. It remains contentedly in the
care of an elder sister or other member of the household or even its maternal grandmother, as long as it is well and not hungry. It runs about and plays with other children of the homestead and neighbouring homesteads. It can talk fluently and so communicate its wishes to others. And its independence is increased when its mother becomes pregnant again and it can no longer run to the breast for comfort. Its mother is still the centre of its universe—and will remain so for two or three years more, in the case of a boy, and until marriage, for a girl—but the toddler has begun to glimpse the wider social space into which it is growing. Since it began to crawl it has often been told to 'go to your mother (own mother)', 'go to your mother so-and-so (mother's co-wife)', 'go to your grandfather (or grandmother)', 'go to your father (own father)', 'go to your father so-and-so (father's brother)', 'go to Yin, Tee, Baa (a sibling)' by one or other member of the family. Thus it has learnt to divide the people who come into its social space into 'own mother', 'own father', 'other mothers and other fathers' (who take care of it now and then), and 'other children', those whom it plays with, or eats with, or sees about the house. Own parents stand out clearly to the infant—its mother for obvious reasons, its father, as one man put it, 'because she (his little daughter) is often told and because she sleeps with her mother and sees

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A 593
baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'.
I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its 751
mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking,
to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What
discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period
comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until
it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative [515]
from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is
an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain
water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a
decoction of roots (*ŋaɣa*), the generic term for any vegetable products
used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by
the child's spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). After its bath the mother lays the
child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth,
and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It
splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is
poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected 514
to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt
to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside 863
in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may
happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training
or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a
gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications
with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the
adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the 593
child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There 789
is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have
anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. 826
I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

● 593 (*Man daa nye fara dɔɣi ki cɣəm la ɣwala*)', this is a curse of the most
789 terrible kind. For that reason, no doubt, none of my informants could
quote an instance of a mother actually putting this curse on a child.
826 The symbolism is of interest, however, in view of the stress Tallensi lay on the mother as food-giver in their conventional picture of her.

Childhood

The next three or four years of a child's life are probably its freest and
857 happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the imme-
593 diate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in being with their parents too. They will hang around their mother in the kitchen and trot around or sit with their father when he is resting under the shade tree. They see and hear everything that is going on in the house and are tolerated at all domestic occasions. In this way, and through their mimetic play, they build up the rudimentary schemas[1] of ideas, manual dexterities, and sentiments out of which grow the skills, interests, and values of later life. Love and indulgence is still the keynote of their parents' and other close relatives' attitude to them. Tallensi say that small children at this stage are still more attached to their mother than to their father because it is she who feeds them. In fact, as we have already mentioned, throughout a Taləŋ's life he thinks of his mother as the one who gave him food without stint, going hungry herself, if need be, so that her child might be fed.

By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex;
857 and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it
868 reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it
still remains free to play for much of its time. But from the age of 7 or
593 so boys and girls are eager to participate in the adult routine of life and they become more and more involved in it. They begin by being given the simplest economic and household tasks such as scaring the birds from the fields of ripening grain, tethering the goats, rounding up the poultry—tasks which children of both sexes perform—or sweeping the house, carrying a tiny pot of water, gathering edible fungi or herbs for the pot, which girls only do. A very common task of both girls and boys at this stage is acting nursemaid to a baby. As this shows, there is very little social differentiation between them as yet.

857 By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division
of labour customary among the Tallensi, and with it the corresponding
593 division of social roles and ideals. Boys start following their older
462 brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any.
868 They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12
reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother

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[1] Cf. the discussion of this concept in my Memorandum just cited.

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857
own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home
farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593
chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462
of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of
9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868
plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a housewife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155
their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861
ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it
is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔya yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593
and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and
social maturity permit. Its parents will henceforth assert their authority 867
and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

861 through love and solicitude. Tallensi have a maxim. 'If you do not harass
your child it will not acquire sense (*Nyɛn pu mugh i bii la u ku ŋɔya yam*).'
593 They do not mean by this that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, as
867 I thought when I first heard it, but that a child must be kept in order
and made to conform to accepted standards or else it will not learn to
conduct itself properly. They think of this as being chiefly a father's
task. A mother, they say, will not thrash (*bo*) her child for misbehaving;
she will only scold and upbraid (*nuom*) it. A father has the strength of will
(*suhkpe'emər*) to thrash his child for misbehaving, and it is his duty to do so.

593 However, a father does not cease to be tolerant, kindly, and affectionate
when his child becomes old enough for discipline. I have never
861 seen a child actually being thrashed by its father, but I have had
many accounts of punishments received by children and by men and
women in their childhood, and I have often heard children scolded by
a father or mother. From what has been said in the early parts of this
chapter it can be surmised that Tallensi are very long-suffering with
their children. If they punish them it is in anger admitted by the child
to be justified. I have heard of children being punished for disobedience,
for neglecting or spoiling a task entrusted to them, for yielding to
temptation and breaking a food taboo, for stealing a mother's co-wife's
ground-nuts, and for other similar faults. They are punished, that is,
either for defying the authority of their parents, or for failing to conform
to moral or ritual custom or good manners, or for causing economic loss
or damage.

In fact Tale children are not often punished. By the time they are
593 considered to be mature enough to deserve punishment for faults they
867 have learnt to accept the control and authority of their parents and
seniors as a natural thing and have begun to develop an adult's conscientiousness
about the standards and values of their culture. It is
noteworthy, for instance, that Tale children are rarely disobedient.
Even adults rarely defy a parent's commands. A child of 7 or 8 usually
keeps totemic taboos as strictly as an adult.[1] A 9- or 10-year-old has
watched sacrifices to the ancestors often enough to have a good idea of
what they mean. He knows what a ritual sanction is even if he does not
yet understand it. His sense of property is well developed. He distinguishes
clearly between *tuum* and *meum*. He knows his father's hen or
sheep or cow and his father's brother's, and he can trace the boundaries
of his father's farm plots. He has begun to take a responsible part,
though but a very small one, in the scheme of domestic organization
pivoting around his father. This is the root of his submission to his
father's authority.

593 Two stories illustrate these points very well. When Naabdiya was
about 8 years old he was lying on a mat in his mother's *dɛndɔŋo* one
863 evening, half asleep, listening to the conversation of his parents. The

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

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desire to urinate overcame him and being drowsy he wetted the mat. His father saw this and flew into a rage. 'You, a big lad, and you do this,' he stormed. 'You yourself will wipe the mat with your body'; and he commanded the child to roll in the urine so as to wipe it up. 'I wept', said Naabdiya, 'and I was afraid, but I began to roll in the urine. Then my mother cried out to my father to leave me alone. "Do you want to kill the child? (she cried) I suffered to bear a child and you want to kill him. I myself will wipe it up." But my father did not allow her to do it. A woman's heart is soft because she has borne the child. Thus my father taught me wisdom (*paalɔm yam*).' The moral drawn by Naabdiya needs no comment.

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The other story shows the strength of paternal authority and the degree to which a boy of 10 or 11 has become imbued with the values of his culture. The boy is Yindɔl, the first-born son of Zaŋ. In 1936 his father went to Kumasi for some months. Before leaving he put aside a small quantity of grain for the family's needs and gave orders that on no account should anybody go into the granary to take any more grain until his return. The supplies he had put aside were soon exhausted. With the help of small gifts from her kinsfolk his wife managed to scrape a meal every other day for her three children. She herself lived almost entirely off wild vegetables which she cooked to supplement the children's porridge. But though they were practically starving neither she nor Yindɔl would go to the granary, because, as Yindɔl said when he told me of their plight, Zaŋ had forbidden it, and in any case he, as a first-born, could not go into his father's granary. Why did his mother not ask her husband's brother to get her some grain from Zaŋ's granary? I asked. 'Oh no', said the boy, speaking as if he were the head of the house in his father's absence, 'she dare not do that. Besides, we shall need that grain for the farming season.'

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But at the same time as the child is learning to take the authority of his father for granted and fitting himself into the configuration of domestic relations, a contrary process is emerging. This process springs from the psychological and social cleavage that underlies the strong ties of duty, affection, and common interest between parents and children, the universal cleavage between successive generations. The structure of the family gives this process its form; and it is expressed through the economic organization and in ritual values. The 12-year-old is becoming differentiated as a person in his or her own right. Indeed, with boys this process commences at an earlier age, and its first sign is a small boy's refusing to sleep in his mother's room. Girls often continue to sleep with their mother until they are approaching puberty, unless there is a grandmother in the house; then they will go to sleep with her when they are about 6 or 7. A boy, however, is ridiculed by his playmates if he still sleeps in his mother's room after the age of 7 or 8. Generally boys of that age sleep with a grandparent or with the older boys in their

593 *doo*, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep
in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children
866 over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come
to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older
children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night
when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the
[864] suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations
between their parents.

As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his
868 mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of
866 which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut
plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for
602 instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a
loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them
in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too,
as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be
given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already
has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition
by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize,
inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his
matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*)
or uncle (*ahəb*), but sometimes his father's *ahəb* or some other kinsman
of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal
uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Taləŋ
can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of
selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was
bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from
[782] the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to
take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage
bɔyar as a thank-offering.

The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as
866 a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition
593 to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the
yir in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at
animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation
of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads,
at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that
time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build
on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at
a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants
and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

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[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

The economic self-differentiation is both a sign of
his psycho-

logical and social self-differentiation from his father and a stimulus to it. 866
Naturally it results in conflict at times.[1] For example, Kpana-Tee took 593
his grandson, a boy of about 14, to live with him because the boy had
quarrelled with his father, Kpana-Tee's oldest son, who was farming on 578
his own in one of the peripheral settlements. The youngster had two
hens which he had bred from a hen given to him by his *dlab*. He wanted
to sell one in order to buy a loin-cloth for the Golib Festival. His father
said this was extravagance and forbade it. But the boy, supported by
his mother, insisted that he could do what he liked with his 'things'
(*bon*). This angered his father so much that he thrashed him. Thereupon
the boy ran away to his grandfather, who took his part, and told
him not to go back home for the present. As a man grows older the
chances of such conflicts due to the clash between paternal authority
and filial self-determination increase and are only kept in check by the
sanctions of filial piety.

The process of incipient self-differentiation at this stage is distinctive 866
of boys. It does not occur with girls before pubescence. Until that stage
their relations with their parents continue to have a more childish stamp 593
than is the case with their brothers. Whereas a 10-year-old boy would
be ashamed to be found hanging round his mother when she is busy in
the kitchen, a 10-year-old girl still enjoys sitting among the infants
listening to her father in conversation with other men at the *zanɔne*.
One notices that little girls of about this age are more quiet and docile
than boys. Attached as they are to their mothers, they do not yet show
that diffidence towards their fathers in public which another two or
three years will bring. They do not feel the weight of the father's
authority yet, beyond the ordinary discipline he exercises over their
manners and habits. But there is a rapid change as they get nearer to
puberty and at the same time become more proficient in women's work
and more absorbed in the social world of the women. A 12-year-old
girl shows more respect to her father in public than her brother does.
Like her mother she will always stoop or crouch to greet a male visitor
of her father's or when she is offering her father food. With her mother
she is to all appearances on intimate and friendly, almost sisterly, terms.
She may still be sleeping with her mother, especially if the latter is past
child-bearing age.

Between the age of about 7 and the beginning of pubescence at about 593
12 to 14 years of age, the pattern of parent–child relations crystallizes 867
out in the form it will have for the rest of the child's life. Proxy parents
and classificatory parents are correctly discriminated and set in proper
relation to own parents. Kinship sentiments are finally formed.

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[1] But this is not associated with overt signs of 'adolescent instability', nor is there an institutionalized group revolt of adolescents against the generation of the fathers. Cf. my previously cited Memorandum.

Parents and Children in Everyday Intercourse

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One of the most interesting things about the relations of parents and children among the Tallensi is their conduct to one another in the intercourse of everyday life. It brings out, incidentally, the distinction always clearly made between own parents and proxy parents. There is a familiarity, almost a camaraderie, between parent and child that makes the observer wonder how the authority of the parent can be as effective, and the respect and obedience of the child as sincere as the evidence of custom and belief show them to be. In this matter the Tallensi resemble us more closely than they do some other primitive peoples. It is most striking in the case of the father. From babyhood up, Tallensi address their father, both own father and classificatory father, by his name. The term *ba* (pl. *banam*), father, is used to refer to one's father or classificatory father but never in addressing him, while he is alive. After his death it is often used in addressing him in prayer as an expression of reverence. It is also used as a term of respect when addressing someone from whom one is begging a favour, or to show particular deference or courtesy, chiefly to old men. A passer-by greeting an old man not closely related to him or her, or a person of rank such as a chief's brother, addresses him as father; a person asking a small boy not closely related to him or her, for a drink, says, 'Bring me the water, oh my father'; a man who has come to intercede with a friend on behalf of the friend's son pleads, 'Desist, oh my father, desist'. Similarly, parents speak of a child as *m-bii*, 'my child', of a son as *n-dawoo* (pl. *dawoos*), 'my son', of a daughter as *m-pɔɣawoo* (pl. *pɔɣawoos*), 'my daughter', but always address a child by name.

With this mode of address goes great freedom of speech and behaviour towards a father, particularly one's own father. If children are asked about their attitudes to their parents they always say that they do not 'fear' (*zo*—in the sense of 'to stand in awe of') their own father as much as they 'fear' their father's older brother. Children will speak directly to their father, argue with him, contradict him politely, if necessary, laugh with him. No topic of conversation is tabooed or barred by etiquette.[1] No one can tell from the behaviour to each other in ordinary intercourse of a man and his adult son or married daughter that they are parent and child. In fact, the greater the apparent comradeship of a young adult with an old man, the more likely is it that they are own father and child.

One's mother, on the other hand, is never addressed by name but always as '*ma*, mother'; but a mother's co-wife is commonly addressed by the name used for her by her in-laws. There is also more restraint in the manner in which a person speaks to his mother than in his manner

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[1] Sex matters, for instance, are freely discussed between parents and adult children, subject only to the rules of polite conversation.

of speaking to his father. A boy might order his mother about when 593
the family is out harvesting, for instance, and a girl might argue with
her mother as spontaneously as if she were an equal. But the underlying 576
attitude of deference can always be detected.

This undertone of deference is also present in intercourse with the father, only less obviously than in relation to the mother. For instance, if a child is some distance away and its father or mother wants to call it, he or she will shout the child's name. But if a child, even when grown up, wishes to call a parent he will go up to him or her. A boy or a man will borrow his brother's cloth without asking permission. He will not take anything belonging to his father without permission. If two brothers or sisters or a sister and brother are eating together either will start first and both may be dipping their hands into the dish of porridge at the same time. If a child is eating with his parent he will wait for his parent to begin first and to tell him to eat, and will wait for his parent to finish and leave the dish to be 'cleaned out (*veeh*)' by him. In particular, the familiarity between parents and children never goes so far as mutual teasing, as in a joking relationship. If a native is asked about this he frowns and says that it would be most offensive for a son or daughter to tease or joke with (*kooh*) a parent or vice versa. You cannot tease or joke with your parent or your child, the Tallensi say, because you do so with your grandparent or grandchild. We shall return to this presently.

We see, again, that there is an apparent paradox in the relations of Tale parents and children. The natives cannot explain it and are puzzled if they are asked for explanations. But if we take into account the whole complex of parent–child relations an interpretation is possible. What we meet again is that ever-recurring principle of Tale social organization, the conjunction of polar forces, the synthesis of tendencies that work in opposite directions. The sense of continuity between the generations, which is so strong among the Tallensi, has to be reconciled with the sense of divergence due to differences of generation and of interests between them, if the relations of parents and children are to run smoothly. In terms of sentiments and attitudes the authority parents have over their children must be reconciled with their love for them; and children must be able to show respect for their parents, to bow to their control, without ceasing to love them and without foregoing their own independence. Children are the fulfilment of their parents' life—and at the same time felt to be in some way their parents' rivals. Parents suffer and spend themselves to give life to their child. They provide for him and fix his place in society. But he can never escape from their constraint. In all their relations with each other parents and children have to cope with actually or potentially conflicting motives and sentiments as well as with the pull and pressure of divergent social forces.

The familiarity and friendliness between parents and children in their everyday relations is one of the means by which these diverse

593 576 tendencies are reconciled. The liberty to address his father by name is a reassurance, to the child, of the love and solicitude that lie behind the authority his father exercises over him. Perhaps it is also an expression of the identification of father and child by the lineage principle. And the greater deference in his behaviour towards his mother than towards his father is a sign that he recognizes her control, though she seems to have only love and devotion for him. Familiarity in everyday intercourse compensates for the filial piety due to a parent in the more formal, particularly in the jural and ritual aspects, of parent–child relations. The greater overt freedom with the father compensates for the greater emphasis on respect and dependence in the child's relations with him; the franker signs of deference towards the mother compensate for the greater emphasis on her love for her child as against her authority over him.

593 Clearly there is a very high degree of consistency between the social images of the parents projected in the cultural norms of the Tallensi and the actual behaviour of children to parents. The mother is thought of as the food-giver. Her love for her children is subject to no limits or laws and her status in relation to them is almost sacrosanct. Her relations with them are based on love tempered with authority. The father is thought of as the source of discipline, the guardian of good conduct. He is strict without being harsh or tyrannous. His role is of special importance in the face of the community at large and in relation to the spiritual powers that govern human life. His relations with his children are based on his authority over them, his responsibility for them, and justice tempered with love.

Adolescence and the Principle of Reciprocity

883 For a Tale boy the years between about 13 and 20 bring changes in degree rather than in kind in his relations with his parents. There is no affective or social break to mark a transition from childhood to adulthood among the Tallensi. Even among the Hill Talis initiation into the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* is not associated with adolescence; it can take place at any age. A boy's social development is a process of gradual advance along lines laid down in early childhood.[1] As he grows older

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856 [1] Tallensi distinguish the main phases of a boy's development not by chronological age but by two criteria of a broader character, either separately or together, according to the situation. They have a physiological criterion and an economic one. Physiologically they distinguish three major phases, after babyhood, in a boy: (*a*) when he is still a 'small boy (*bumbil*)' with undescended testicles, showing, as they put it, only a 'pale scrotum (*lanzee*)'; (*b*) Pubescence, denoted by the verb *sol*, to mature physically, and marked by the testicles descending (*lana sigərəme*) and the emergence of pubic hair (*saŋkperuŋ kɔbət*). They say 'he has matured completely (*u sol ba'ahme*)' of a boy who has reached puberty and is entering manhood. (*c*) Lastly comes adulthood, when he is a 'grown man (*bonkɔrəg*)'. It is by reference to these physiological phases that men often date events in their life. The second criterion is that of advancing economic proficiency. A 'small boy' is capable only of scaring the birds from the newly

he grows more and more proficient in the economic skills he began to acquire in childhood and better versed in the details of his culture. By the time he is 20 or so he knows most of what is known to his people about farming and animal husbandry, hunting and fishing, and building. He is wholly imbued with the values of his culture and has a good working knowledge of its institutions and customs. It is enough to enable him to play his part as a young man in the life of his community, but there is still much to learn which only years of experience and responsibility will give him. He is, however, an active if unimportant participant in corporate activities of the lineage and clan, and in the management of family affairs, with a right to his own opinions. In step with his growing social maturity a boy's field of social relations increases in range and in depth. His father's authority begins to loom larger, but at the same time his father's responsibilities on his behalf also increase and his own self-differentiation advances; and a theme that was of minor effect in their relationship hitherto comes into prominence. This is the principle of reciprocity. 883

During this period the identification of father and son is greatly deepened. It grows out of the intimacies and co-operation of everyday life. As they work side by side on the farm the father teaches his son farming skills and lore. When he performs a sacrifice at home his son is his assistant, learning from him how to carry out such rites, and what doctrines and beliefs lie behind them. In such situations he learns the names of his ancestors and begins to understand the structure of the lineage system and where he fits into it. He makes the acquaintance of matrilateral and sororal kin who come to take part in rites of this sort. The division between the men of the lineage and the women of the lineage, and the distinction between the father's side of the family and the mother's side become of direct practical relevance to him. Sometimes a man will call his adolescent and adult sons to him and tell them various things they ought to know in case he gets ill or dies. He tells them about his farms and other property, about his debts and those who owe him debts, and, a most important matter, about his ancestor and medicine shrines. In doing this he is, in effect, telling them what he knows of the history and traditions of his lineage and clan. These are matters which a man does not speak about to his daughters or wives. If they learn of them it is only incidentally, through listening to the conversation of the men. Daughters and wives are present at domestic sacrifices to ancestor spirits, but only sons are allowed to share in the cult of a man's private medicine shrines. Most important of all is the responsible 593 ● 883 882

sown farms or from the ripening grain; a lad of 7 or 8 can be trusted to take care of sheep (*dɔl pihi*); older boys, up to the age of 14 or 15, are cattle herds (*kiem nigi*) and already help with the hoeing; after the age of pubescence a boy works on the farm side by side with the men—he farms (*u kɔɔrəme*). These phases are also used to date events, often in conjunction with the physiological criterion. 856

593 part an adolescent begins to play in the household economy. His work
883 becomes an essential contribution to its welfare and hence he has a voice in its management.

882 A man who grew up under his own father's direct tutelage and learnt the arts of life from him in this way is said to be one who 'reached' (*paa*)—that is, knew in person—his father. Tallensi perceive that this is a mechanism of primary importance not only for maintaining the cohesion of the family and the lineage, but also for the transmission of their culture to their offspring. A man quoting precedents from the past for instance, in support of a claim to a debt or to a right to succeed to a particular office, bases his argument on the statement, 'I reached my father and saw such and such things', or, 'I reached my father and he told me this or that'. A man well versed in the details of the social structure, of ceremonial activities, or of economic lore, or in the finer points of etiquette, morals, traditions, and beliefs, says proudly, in explanation of his knowledge, 'Did I not reach my father?'; and a common excuse offered for ignorance is that the person concerned 'did not reach his father'.

The identification of father and son becomes of considerable social importance at this stage and henceforth. Thus it is a very common thing for youths of 18 and upwards to represent their fathers in jural and ceremonial affairs that do not demand their fathers' personal presence. If a man is asked by a clansman to act as intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) in a marriage transaction, he will often send his son as his deputy. And if the intermediary chosen is a young lad, his father will act for him. So also a man sends his sons with the customary gifts he is obliged to contribute to his father-in-law's or mother-in-law's funeral. Old men always delegate their sons to act for them in political matters and often in jural affairs. In disputes about wives it is a common thing to see a man's son coming to the tribunal as his father's representative to answer for the actions of the brother whom he accompanies. In jural and ceremonial situations the identification of father and son is coextensive with the range of recognized generation differences within the inner lineage.

We have previously remarked that the identification of father and son is a fundamental element in the structure of the lineage. It is also, and more significantly from our present point of view, a fundamental feature of the normal personal relations of father and son. This is seen most simply in the affection and devotion so often found between father and son and in the strength of the sentiments and religious values associated with the father's original home.

The relationship of mother and son also changes during this phase, but again there is no abrupt break. As a boy approaches manhood he becomes more and more absorbed in the activities and interests of men and sees less of his mother in everyday intercourse. But his affec-

tion for her remains. He still helps her to cultivate her ground-nut plot, 543
if he has no younger brothers to take this on, and assists her in other 883
ways. Later on, when he marries, his intimacy with his mother will be
revived. It is to her *dug* that he brings his wife and in her care that he 882
places the girl.

[881] A girl grows away from her father as she approaches puberty. This is not due to physiological taboos, for there are none connected with a girl's puberty or with menstruation in general. There are no ceremonies to mark a girl's attainment of physiological maturity, nor is there any break in her affective relations with her parents. The only significant break in the steady process of social maturation for a girl is her first marriage. Her growing away from her father is due to the sexual division of labour and the corresponding division of interests in the family. Though there is no barrier to ordinary social intercourse between the sexes in a domestic family, there is the separation of interests and activities that we have mentioned before, and adolescent boys and girls are caught up in it.

A girl of 13 or 14 years and over does not run to her father and cuddle up to him as her 6- or 7-year-old sister might do. She is with her mother and the other women most of the day assisting with the more arduous domestic tasks. She helps to clean the house, to fetch water and collect shea fruit or firewood, to grind the millet, to cook, and to care for the younger children. At harvest time, or when they are beating the floors of their rooms, she does a full day's work with the other women. She is already adept in all these feminine skills and is well versed in all the gossip of the women. *A girl of 12 or 13 can be left in charge of the house* for a day or two while her mother is away. She goes to market by herself to buy or sell things for her mother; and also, a more important consideration for her personally, to display her charms and flirt with the young men. She accompanies older girls on firewood parties or when they go to dance at funerals.

[856] When a girl approaches puberty her mind is set upon marriage. Tallensi estimate a girl's stage of development before marriage by the appearance of her breasts. Leaving aside betrothal of a girl in childhood, which does not require her consent, a girl is not considered to be mature enough for serious courtship until her breasts are formed (*u biiha n-yi*). She is then called a maiden (*pɔɣasarət*). Before that stage, when her breasts are budding (*u biiha m-pukət*), suitors may already be coming to her or soliciting her parents. A girl may be married before she menstruates (*lu sie*), though it is not considered seemly for her husband to sleep with her until she is capable of child-bearing. When her suitors come to her, probably the only person who knows which of them she likes best is her mother; and if she and her lover decide to elope her mother may help them. As we know, the bonds of affection between mother and daughter remain as strong as ever after the latter's marriage

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and are kept alive by frequent interchange of visits and of gifts. Thus, in the shea fruit season it is a common sight to see a young woman carrying a basket of shea nuts to her mother or fetching one from her mother. Even if a girl marries someone her mother dislikes, this seldom estranges them. If a woman with a young child has to go away for a few days and her mother is near, she usually choose to leave the child with her mother rather than with a co-wife. Thus during pubescence a girl's intimacy and identification with her mother deepens both in terms of her social personality and on the affective level. This is the genetic basis in behaviour and sentiment of the social tie conceptualized in the notion of *soog*.

It must not be thought, though, that a father's affection for his daughter fades away as she approaches marriageable age. Far from it. But it is inevitably biased by the expectation that she will sooner or later leave his household to marry, bear children for another clan, and cease to be a daily care and concern to him. Hence the saying that girl children are of no profit (*ka yoori*). Tale women are as proud as their brothers of their paternal ancestry. As we know, they never lose their bonds with their lineage kin; but they come, in time, to identify themselves primarily with their husbands' interests and not with their fathers'. Her divided interests and sentiments bring it about that when a girl reaches womanhood the element of antagonism in her relations with her father may become prominent. I have never seen it overt in relation to the mother.

As we have already recorded, a father's authority over his daughter is most conspicuous in connexion with her marriage, and it is this that often creates conflict between them. This is due largely to the fact that self-differentiation for a woman, both in economic terms and in status, comes through marriage. In principle, as we know, a man can dispose of his daughter's hand as he pleases, resorting to corporal punishment, if need be, to force her to comply with his wishes. Principles and practice often coincide, but, as we have seen, a good father tempers his autocratic rights with consideration for his daughter's wishes and welfare, particularly if, as is frequent, she is supported by her mother.

593 Usually, however, a man has much affection for a married daughter, and a woman, particularly in the early years of marriage, often remains greatly attached to her father. For instance, Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan, perhaps because he had lost most of his children, was greatly attached to his two married daughters. When one of them was attacked by a mysterious lingering illness he himself went to fetch her home and insisted that she should stay with her mother until she became well again. But a man's attachment to his sons is very much greater as a rule. A man may be greatly distressed at the death of a young married daughter, but it is as nothing compared with his grief over the death of a young adult son. And this applies to women too, though they suffer great grief at the death of a married daughter.

These affective divergencies spring from the different social relations of father and son on the one hand, and father and daughter on the other. 593 Though a woman's ties with her paternal family are never severed, a man's jural responsibilities for his daughter cease with her marriage. He never loses the moral and religious authority of a father, however, or the corresponding ritual responsibilities for her. His curse is as potent as ever. The shrine of her spirit guardian is in his keeping and he sacrifices to it on her behalf when her husband requests him to do so. His chief ritual responsibility arises if she is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). [789] It is his duty to have the rites of exorcism performed so that she can bear children and fulfil satisfactorily her role as a wife. He is obliged to send ceremonial gifts to the funeral if she or his son-in-law dies; and he must 'fetch her funeral home (*die koor*)' and carry out the rites that bring her spirit back to her ancestral fold when she is dead. He has a very definite social and personal interest in her children too. When a woman bears her first child her husband must 593 send immediately to tell her parents and they demonstrate their continued affection and concern for her and her children by sending her 431 gifts of food and other necessaries as generous as their means allow. A poor man might send only a basket of unthreshed guinea corn or millet and a couple of guinea-fowls, while his wife sends some shea butter, vegetables, and firewood. A rich chief I knew, when his first-born daughter had her first baby sent a procession of his younger wives bearing an assortment of gifts, including a 25-lb. bag of salt, several baskets of grain, a sheep, six guinea-fowls, and various luxury articles. Throughout her life a woman has a right to substantial gifts of grain from her father's house at harvest time, and to a home if she is left homeless. Women make a special point of collecting these gifts of grain at harvest time whether they are in want or not. As Tanzoo, the wife of a well-to-do man with enough grain and to spare, said when she received a large basket of early millet from her brother, 'I should feel ashamed not to fetch this grain. My co-wives would scoff saying I have no brother, no father.' Thus it is a source of pride, a test of family solidarity and, most important, a recurrent demonstration of a right to share in the products of the patrimonial estate which they might have owned if they had been born men.[1] These duties that a man has towards his daughter are the nucleus of his relations with her children. They are socially prescribed and fall upon his heirs when he dies.

From Adolescence to Adulthood

Let us return to the relations of father and son during this phase of 593 the latter's growth and study it more closely. The son is a member of 882

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 178.

593 882 his father's household making an essential contribution to its economy by his labour and skill; he is his father's future heir; he will one day sacrifice to his father's spirit; above all, it is through him that his father's agnatic line is socially and physically perpetuated. And yet there is the cleavage of successive generations between them and the self-differentiation of the son which begins in childhood.

593 421 From adolescence onwards economic co-operation is the sheet anchor of the relationship between a youth and his father. The guiding principle is the rule that all those who work together to supply the needs of the household are entitled to a just share in the products of their common labour, and its corollary that the fruits of individual labour belong to the individual. But the working of this rule is complicated by the fact that the head of the household owns the land and 'owns' (that is, has authority over and responsibility for) his dependants. Thus a man 'owns' his son's labour and the products of it. Strictly speaking, a son cannot own property of any kind while his father is alive, and a father can dispose of a son's property as he pleases. By this rule a man does not even 'own' his children if his father is alive; and this means proxy father as well as own father. Tallensi assert this rule very emphatically, both in speech and in act, for they hold it to be the crucial sign of a father's authority. Though this authority arises automatically from the fact of begetting, its most concrete expression is found in the economic relations of father and son. When I asked the Chief of Tongo how many cattle he had he replied soberly that he had none; all his cattle belonged to his old father Nakyεna'ab. Though, in practice, Nakyεna'ab will not forbid the chief from doing what he pleases with these cattle, the chief never disposes of a cow, either in ritual or by sale or in jural transactions such as the payment of bride-price, without telling his father and obtaining the old man's formal consent.

The Tallensi regard the economic relations, the jural relations, and the moral and ritual relations of father and son as different aspects of the same thing. Each of these categories of relations has a binding force on the other categories. A man 'owns' his son because he begot him; but he sometimes says that he has authority over his son because the latter is dependent on him and that he has responsibilities for his son because the latter works for him. In the same way a son must work for his father as an obligation of filial piety; but his work is also the return he makes for his father's economic support and for the ritual and jural responsibility his father bears on his behalf. Just which factor is emphasized depends on the particular situation. The different elements of this configuration are linked together by the principle of reciprocity. Its essence is the idea that duties imply equivalent rights for the *tarəm*, the junior or inferior person, as well as for the *kpeem*, the senior or superior.

This configuration is not peculiar to the relations of own father and son. It is the general pattern prevailing between the head of a household

and any of his dependants—between husband and wife, proxy father and son, older brother and younger brother. And, as we have mentioned before, its elements often stand out more clearly where the consolidating effect of the emotional ties between own parent and own child is absent. They emerge clearly, also, when there is a divergence between a son's (or other dependant's) desire for independence and his father's (or the household head's) claims on his labour and loyalty. 593 421

By the time a young man marries he has advanced on the path to economic independence beyond the stage of breeding chickens for himself. He has his own ground-nut plot and generally also his *sensɛyar*. This is a plot of land allocated to him by his father, or the head of the household, where he can grow the ordinary cereal crops. It may be no more than a few hundred square yards or it may be up to an acre in size. The larger his father's home farm (*saman*) is and the fewer his brothers, the larger will a young man's *sensɛyar* be. A man allocates these private plots to his sons with an eye to the future. When, in course of time, the sons (or *their* sons) separate, each will keep the plot given to him by their father as the portion of the patrimonial land that henceforth belongs exclusively to his agnatic descendants.

A young man cultivates his private grain plot and ground-nut plot in the spare time left after he has done the work required of him on his father's farm, which always has the prior claim. There is no hard-and-fast arrangement. Much is left to the young man's own discretion. He knows very well that the first essential is to make sure of the common food-supply. At the same time his father manages to keep a discreet but sharp eye on his economic activities. It is a firm rule of etiquette that no member of a family should go anywhere without informing the head of the family. When a young man goes off to hoe his grain plot or ground-nut plot in the morning he will tell his father, in what seems to be a casual aside, what he is going to do, if he has not already told him the previous day. Then the father will either let him go or he will ask his son to leave it for a day or two until they have finished this or that job on the household farm. 593 461

In a well-run family, and at most times, this loose arrangement works perfectly smoothly. But there are times when clashes occur; and there are families in which friction over this issue is common between father and son. For instance, there was the tussle between Naabdiya and his younger son Mosuor. Mosuor wanted to lift his ground-nuts so as to sell them and buy a new cloth for the Giŋgaaŋ Festival. Naabdiya, however, insisted that *his* ground-nuts should be lifted first, before the dry weather hardened the ground and made the task more laborious. Mosuor protested that Naabdiya was being unfair to him; Naabdiya's wife and the other children could help him in the meanwhile; and Mosuor went off to his ground-nut plot. This incensed Naabdiya, who cried out that the boy was flouting his commands, and in his anger he 593

593 pronounced the ominous words, 'You will see'. In an hour or two Mosuor's temper cooled off and he began to feel uneasy over the enormity of his offence. His father had uttered what amounted to a curse; and before the day was out he had called on one of his father's oldest friends to ask him to go and beg Naabdiya's forgiveness for him.

593 421 We have seen in a previous chapter that as a son grows older and his conjugal family increases, his desire for independence grows stronger, owing to the increasing wants of his wife and children. But it is not easy for a son to obtain his father's permission to set up on his own. It may take five or six years of pressure on the son's part before the old man gives way. A son only desires to go out on his own if he has younger brothers who will remain at home to work for his father—there would be no motive if he were the only son. When these younger brothers marry the pressure on the common resources of the household grows and it becomes expedient to disperse temporarily. Economic separation does not remove a son from his father's authority. He can be and often is called upon to help with the work on his father's land; his property still belongs formally to his father. Indeed, any sheep, goats, and cattle he may acquire by his industry or receive for a daughter's bride-price are housed in his father's homestead and not in his.

593 167 Nowadays a common form of independent labour and enterprise by young men is to go south for a season or longer. The chief economic stimulus for this is the desire for money to buy clothes or to make certain of the payment of bride-price for a wife. A father is not bound to provide his sons—or any other dependant—with clothes. These young men go in the dry season carrying crates of fowls to sell or seeking 'white man's work'. The youths who go at other times of the year are often stealing away without permission. But in the dry season, when farm work is at a standstill, a man will often give his sons permission to go south until the rains commence. Some men do so very readily in the hope that the boys will bring back money and 'things'. Others are still reluctant to let their sons go off, even for a short while, lest they should be tempted to stay away for a long time. Tallensi say that the freedom of movement of to-day is undermining parental authority. They say that if a man is severe with his sons, as he has every right to be, they simply run away and go south. Hence the men who think that working abroad spoils a youth or who cherish the ideal of keeping the family together all through their life, and therefore try to restrain their sons from going south, have to be tactful in handling them. Observation shows that it is usually the wise and considerate father, the man who manages his family well, who succeeds in restraining his sons from making long sojourns abroad. Where there is much friction between father and son, the son is apt to find a way out by going south; and, as we have mentioned, the likelihood of a son's leaving home is increased if one or both of his own parents are dead and he is living with

a proxy parent. As is natural, fathers and sons take different views of this situation. Sons do not think that they are showing a lack of filial loyalty when they go abroad. For, they argue, it is only a temporary absence and the money they earn will eventually accrue, in part at least, to the family exchequer. As has been mentioned previously, no man ever turns away a son who comes home from abroad, whether he brings any goods and money or not; and a son who does bring back 'things' and money is doubly welcome. 593 167

We said earlier that a father owns all his son's property. This might seem to contradict what was said about the independent ownership by a son of the livestock he acquires by breeding from a gift hen or by other means. The Tallensi themselves do not admit a contradiction in this. They see it as an instance of the gradation of rights and duties that is distinctive of their whole social organization. A father's over-right entitles him to veto his son's using his own property in ways that seem extravagant; but it would be an injustice rightfully resented by the son if he were stopped from using his fowl or goat or sheep for purposes that public opinion considers legitimate. Thus everybody would agree that a father who forbade a son from using his own fowls and guinea-fowls in his courtship, or from selling his own ground-nuts in order to buy a cloth, would be acting unfairly. The case of Kpana-Tee's grandson (p. 195) illustrates this principle. 593 421

The rights of a father and the rights of a son in the son's property are reconciled by the principle of reciprocity. If a man makes use of his son's goat or sheep he should, in due course, make an equivalent return; for example, by using one of his own sheep or goats to do something for the son. This object is immediately achieved if the son's property is used for the son's benefit, as in the payment of bride-price. There is no book-keeping, but in the long run the son should feel that the gains he has received are commensurate with the amount of his own property that has been used up. A proxy father should be more careful in this regard than a man's own father. A proxy father is less concerned about the future of his 'son' than the latter's own father would be and is therefore sometimes inclined to take selfish advantage of his paternal authority. Though they have no alternative but to submit, young men deeply resent unfairness of this sort, whether on the part of their own father or on that of a proxy father; and this may be the first stimulus to their determination to set up on their own.

This is epitomized in one of the reasons Tallensi regularly produce when they are asked why young men secede from their paternal households. They say: 'It is because of hens and eggs.' Every man has at least a hen or two, even if he has nothing else, and, as we know, his hen symbolizes the starting-point of his accumulation of property. But hens lay their eggs anywhere and this gives rise to petty quarrels. Anybody who finds an egg claims it and another member of the family may dispute 593 596 422

593 the claim. But if the head of the family claims an egg no one can gainsay him, so a young man might find himself left without any eggs to breed
596 from. That is why he wishes to be independent. It is a kind of rudi-
422 mentary myth summing up the economic causes of family fission. The point of interest is the emphasis on the inequitable behaviour of the 'father'. He uses his economic authority to his own advantage without making an equivalent return and thus prevents the 'son' from getting a start on the road of economic independence.

593 The adjustment of father's rights and son's rights has an added subtlety where cash is concerned. Supposing a young man returns from abroad with four or five pounds in cash that he has saved. According to the letter of custom he should hand all of it over to his father. But money, unlike a cow or a sheep, can be easily concealed and does not require attention; our young man can retain a part of his savings without his father's knowing of it. If it is his own father he may keep only a few shillings, particularly if he has recently been, or is about to be married and the money is wanted to pay his wife's bride-price. If it is his proxy father he will probably hand over only a pound or two, unless, again, the money is required for the bride-price of his wife; and then he will try not to hand over the money until his father-in-law actually demands the bride-price. It is common knowledge that this is the regular practice of young men returning from abroad. Fathers have no power to stop it, though most of them would like to; for up to a point, the young men are within their rights. Have they not 'taken their own legs and gone to get their money' by labour that is always arduous and sometimes dangerous? Again conflicts are inevitable, though as yet not more frequent than over other forms of property. For some men are only too apt to fritter away the money entrusted to them by a dependant before the time comes for it to be used for the benefit of the latter.

As we have mentioned before, one of the heaviest responsibilities a
593 man bears on behalf of his son, or for a dependant standing in the same
584 economic and jural relationship to him, is in 'marriage affairs'. It is the bridegroom's father or proxy father who has to undertake the series of jural actions required from his paternal kin in order to legitimize the union. In marriage by arrangement (*pɔɣalak*) it is the bridegroom's father who starts the negotiations and carries them through. The young man himself hardly sees his bride, after his first few courting visits, until she is brought to his home. In marriage by elopement (*pɔɣazaɣər*) the bridegroom's father's consent is essential for the marriage to be properly concluded. While, as we have already indicated, a father never openly disapproves of a son's marriage, but on the contrary always displays apparent pleasure over it, he can easily cause it to break down by holding back the bride-price.

As we know already, the two significant jural acts in the conclusion of a marriage are the sending of the placation gifts (*lu sendaan*) and the

593 payment of at least a part of the fixed bride-price of three cows and a bull, or their equivalent. The essential responsibility for the per-
584 formance of these two acts lies with the bridegroom's father or father's heir, subject to the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Formally, the bride's paternal kin send their invitation to the bridegroom's paternal kin to *lu sɔndaan* through the head of the latter's nuclear or inner lineage, and make their demands for bride-price through the same channels; for no jural act takes place except in the framework of the lineage system. But actually the responsibility for satisfying the bride's kin falls on the bridegroom's father. He must 'find the things'—the fowls and guinea-fowls—for the placation gifts; he must send off the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) who carries them to the bride's family; he must furnish the animals or goods or money to pay the bride-price. 'Is it not his child? (*Pa u biiga*)' say the natives, implying that this is a duty arising out of the fact of parenthood. In part it is
593 a specific duty; in part it is an aspect of a general responsibility that a
672 man bears for his son's jural relations. Thus if his son's wife is abducted it is the father who calls on the other members of his inner lineage to
426 stand by him in taking action to recover the wife. If his son has abducted another man's wife the father is directly answerable. Strictly speaking a son cannot contract a debt involving heritable property such as cattle or large sums of money without his father's authorization. Even if the son is a man of substance, a wise creditor will insist that his father's (and also his brothers' of the same nuclear lineage) consent to the transaction be obtained first and made known to him. If this is not done the creditor's chances of recovery are small. It becomes a question of one man's word against another's and Tallensi are past masters in the art of putting off a creditor. The concurrence of the debtor's father and brothers fixes liability for ever, and if the debtor dies before settling the debt his father, or his heir, is liable. These rules do not apply to small sums of money, say a shilling or two, or things of small value such as a hen or a loin-cloth. But petty borrowing and lending rarely takes place between people who are not friends or close kin, and it is thus generally fitted into the scheme of reciprocal aid that obtains between friends and kinsfolk.

593 In their jural aspect these obligations of a father arise from the fact of 'begetting (*dɔɣam*)'; in their economic aspect they are greatly influ-
584 enced by the principle of reciprocity. Where obligations of such great social consequence are involved, the principle of reciprocity is not
577 limited to particular individuals but it binds their heirs and successors as well owing to the operation of the lineage principle. One or two cases will show how these two aspects are interwoven.

While Tampɔɣar was courting his wife he had very little recourse to his proxy father's help. The few shillings he had received from selling ground-nuts and a fowl or two sufficed to provide the occasional penny

593 584 577 he gave the girl whenever he saw her in the market and the gifts of tobacco and kola nuts he took to his prospective parents-in-law. He had some guinea-fowls of his own and his proxy father gave him a few more to take as presents to his prospective mother-in-law. Just when he thought the time was ripe to elope with the girl her father warned him not to attempt it as she was under a ritual taboo which prohibited her from marrying in this way. To his chagrin Tampɔɣar was therefore compelled to ask his proxy father Kurug to negotiate for the girl's hand. At this point Kurug began to temporize. Marriage by arrangement is an expensive business. Had not Tampɔɣar better wait a while until the guinea-fowl chicks were bigger? Tampɔɣar's answer was a fit of sulks, a warning to his 'father' that he felt injured. Had he not stayed at home to help with the farming when he could easily have followed some of his contemporaries to Kumasi? Then he would have earned enough to pay the expenses of his marriage himself. Why should he tire himself out in farming if this was the treatment he got in return?

Meanwhile Kurug had been talking to the other men of his inner lineage about the affair. He felt that it was high time Tampɔɣar had a wife, and he knew that if the young man were frustrated his work during the coming farming season would suffer. Moreover, he might take it into his head to run away to Kumasi. Kurug's lineage brothers shared his views. Besides, Kurug had enough cattle to pay the bride-price at once if need be and it was his duty to get a wife for the youth. It was his duty as the boy's proxy father; it was a return he owed the boy for the labour he had been contributing for several years to the household economy; it was, also, a return he owed to Tampɔɣar's dead father. When the latter died Kurug had inherited his wife and his property as well as his children. Kurug had benefited from this inheritance and must now repay it to the dead man's son. And so he at length agreed to arrange the marriage. He asked one of his neighbours and clansmen, whose grandfather had been a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) of the bride-to-be's clan, to act as intermediary and began to get together the fowls and guinea-fowls that would be needed for the ceremony by which the bride is given to her future husband's lineage representatives.

Kurug himself provided the bulk of the 'things' required for this ceremony, but Tampɔɣar gave a couple of his own guinea-fowls. Kurug provided the basket of millet with which the bride's mother's co-wife was 'seen off home (*beeh*)' when she paid her the customary formal visit shortly after the marriage, and he provided all but one of the fowls and guinea-fowls for the placation gifts, Tampɔɣar himself giving one fowl. Lastly, it was Kurug who gave the two cows which Tampɔɣar's father-in-law demanded as the first instalment of the bride-price. These were cows to the purchase of which Tampɔɣar's labour had contributed; and if Kurug had died before Tampɔɣar's marriage, Tampɔɣar would have inherited them.

This case, typical of dozens that occur every day among the Tallensi, 593
shows how the motif of duty and the motif of reciprocity are intertwined. 691
This appears still more clearly when 'father' and 'son' farm separately.
Thus Sayabo of Kpata'ar was Nyaaŋzum's late half-brother's son. He 577
occupied the same homestead as Nyaaŋzum, but separate quarters with an independent gateway and farm for himself. When Sayabo abducted a Gorogo man's wife, the injured husband, supported by his father-in-law, brought a case against Sayabo at the chief's court. Nyaaŋzum, together with Sayabo and almost all the other men of their inner lineage, went to answer the suit. Nyaaŋzum's defence was simple and straightforward. He knew of no bar to the marriage. They had no kinship ties with the girl's paternal kin, nor clanship ties with Gorogo. In former times Kpata'ar men and Gorogo men had not hesitated to abduct one another's wives. He was ready to pay the bride-price at once if the 'owner of the child (*biiraan*)'—that is the girl's jural guardian in this case, the father—agreed. The latter, however, refused to accept Sayabo as a son-in-law, so she was returned to her first husband and Nyaaŋzum forfeited his hearing fee of three shillings. Incidentally, this fee was made up of a shilling contributed by Sayabo, a shilling from Nyaaŋzum, and a shilling from another member of the inner lineage.

Why was Nyaaŋzum so ready to accept the responsibility for Sayabo's 593
marriage and to answer for him at court, seeing that Sayabo was not
farming with him? In the first place it was his duty as Sayabo's proxy 577
father; and being a man of principle he would not evade such a duty. Even if he disapproved of the young man's behaviour he must answer for it in public, and he was under a jural obligation to pay the bride-price for the youth's wife, from his own resources if need be. In fact, however, he would not have offered to pay the bride-price with such alacrity if it were a question of using his own resources, for he had his own sons to think of. Another factor came into the situation, as Nyaaŋzum himself explained to me.

When Sayabo's father, Nyaaŋzum's half-brother Galəmɔyar, died, Nyaaŋzum inherited a number of cattle from him. Some were cattle Galəmɔyar had received as bride-price for a younger sister of his and Nyaaŋzum's. These cattle accrued to the *faar*, the patrimonial property, in the strict sense; Nyaaŋzum was entitled to dispose of them as he pleased since he was the last of his father's sons. In addition, Galəmɔyar's herd included cattle he had himself bought or had received in payment of his daughters', Sayabo's sisters', bride-price. As Sayabo was still only a boy, Nyaaŋzum took possession of these cattle too. In theory he could dispose of them as he pleased. In practice Sayabo had a prior right to them, since they were his father's own earnings and his sisters' bride-price animals, and Nyaaŋzum had merely a nominal overright. Nyaaŋzum had utilized most of these cattle for his own purposes; but he considered himself morally bound to make an equivalent return

593 577 for them to Saɣabo. This was the main reason why he was ready to meet Saɣabo's bride-price debt immediately. There was also a religious sanction in the background. Had he refused to support the youth, Galəmɔɣar's spirit would have become angry. He would have gone to their father's spirit and protested against the ill-treatment his son was receiving at his brother's hands, and the father would have punished Nyaaŋzum.

593 672 In the same way the father is the person who bears the essential jural responsibility for his son if the latter commits adultery. Though the negotiations for the reconciliation with the offended lineage or clan are carried out through the head of the inner lineage or medial lineage or even wider lineage segment to which the wrongdoer belongs, the animals sacrificed in the reconciliation rites are provided by his father.

593 577 Similarly a father is responsible for his son in all ritual matters in which the son is concerned as a member of the lineage or as the person through whom his father's line is perpetuated. A man is responsible to the ancestor spirits for performing the rites by which his child, boy or girl, is placed under the mystical care of a spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). It is the father's duty to provide the flour, beer, fowls, guinea-fowls, or other animals needed for these rites. If a child gets ill, its father has the duty of consulting a diviner and is obliged to provide any money, animals, or other goods that may be needed for the sacrifices to the ancestors, the treatment, and the payment of the medicine owner. Of course, if it is his own child a man does not think of such obligations as a duty but rather feels them to be a natural action of love and solicitude. But I have known cases where a proxy child was concerned in which the proxy father was less moved by affection than by his sense of duty and fear of mystical retribution. Among the Hill Talis it is a father's duty to provide the animals, flour, and beer required for his son's initiation into the External *Bɔɣar* cult. And, to complete this catalogue of examples, a father must take the initiative and provide the 'things' needed for the rites of exorcism, if his son is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). If his daughter-in-law is the sufferer, he must request her father to come and perform the exorcism and must provide the contributions due from the girl's husband's family.

593 The mutual rights and duties of parents and children among the Tallensi have a feature of particular interest which has already been indicated in the course of our analysis, but deserves further notice. They can be used as weapons of coercion by one side against the other, the principle of reciprocity being turned into an *ad hoc* sanction. The case of Tampɔɣar illustrates how a son can make use of the fact that his working power is essential for the household economy to force his father to get him a wife. This sanction is openly admitted by fathers. One day at Yinduuri I came upon a group of men engaged in a vehement argument. In the middle of the group was a man whose leg was badly

swollen with guinea-worm. It appeared that he had recently inherited his late brother's widow and her two children, a boy of about 16 or 17 and a girl of about 15. He had given this girl in marriage to a Sii man, but she had taken a dislike to him and had the previous day run back home again. Now the Sii man was anxious to make sure that the girl would be regarded as his legitimate wife. He feared that she would either be kept at home now, or else take the first chance of eloping with someone else. So he at once sent an intermediary with the prescribed placation gifts, and this emissary had just arrived. But this procedure was quite contrary to custom. The placation gifts must not be sent or accepted if the bride is at her father's house. The group of men was discussing the situation. It was in the course of this discussion that the girl's proxy father said that he could not take any decision without consulting her brother. 'He is a youngster (*bii*)', he said, 'and I own him. But he is the girl's brother. And you see that I am laid up with a bad leg. If I don't consult him, will he help me on the farm and do my errands for me?'

In using these mutual rights and duties as a sanction parents have the advantage over children. Within the limits of the inner lineage a father's payment of his son's bride-price is thought of as an obligation to the son. But as against the society at large it has an extra nuance. A son has no jural *locus standi*. He cannot get a wife unless his father is prepared to accept responsibility for the bride-price, even if he himself provides the means of payment. Thus Naaho, who was earning good wages, paid all the expenses of his courtship. He bought all the 'things' needed for marrying his wife by arrangement, as well as the two cows asked for her, out of his own pocket. But he was powerless to arrange the marriage by himself. He had to appeal to his father's brother, under whose paternal authority he was, to undertake this. It is true that it would be a most unusual thing for any man to refuse to take formal responsibility for his son in such a situation. But the mere fact that the latter cannot do without his assistance reinforces his authority over his son. Again, this consideration is of more importance for a proxy-father's authority than for the natural father's. It is the same, as has been observed earlier, with the ritual sanctions a proxy father commands.

We have spoken of the principle of reciprocity in the preceding paragraphs without attempting to define it. To do so it is necessary to take into account a wider context than the relations of parents and children. 593 577

The principle of reciprocity or, more accurately, of equivalent returns[1] is implicit in the relations of parents and children. The natives see it as following on the mutual rights and duties of parents and children, and not as an explicit rule of conduct. There is a large voluntary element in

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[1] I am indebted to Professor Radcliffe-Brown for this concept and for stimulus in appreciating its significance. I owe much, also, to Malinowski's *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*, both here and elsewhere in this book.

593 577 its working, as we have seen. Moreover, it applies equally to all members of a household and is implicit in all kinship and affinal relations. It arises out of common interests, mutual rights, and mutual obligations and is a way of giving expression to them. As these interests, rights, and obligations are of different kinds and degrees, corresponding to the differences in quality and degree of the relations involved, so there are different kinds and degrees of reciprocity. But all forms of equivalent returns have the general purpose of keeping social relations on a stable and mutual footing. The greater the field of common interests between persons, the less does deliberate calculation enter into the working of this principle. Hence the closer and more personal the relationship between people, the less formal is the rendering of equivalent returns for services or loans. Mutual services, between lineage segments, as, for instance, in the performance of one another's funeral ceremonies, are highly stereotyped. A son-in-law's services to his father-in-law must be immediately recompensed with food and drink. But between father and son, brother and brother, or husband and wife there is a continual give-and-take on a basis of all-in reciprocity. Equivalent returns cannot be demanded; it depends upon the good sense of the person concerned as to when and how he makes them, even in situations where custom lays down a definite norm. Meanness or selfishness in this respect gives rise to ill feeling and so to disharmony.

593 577 426 Tallensi sum up the observance of the principle of equivalent returns under the idea of debt (*samər*). Debts are goods or services accepted or requested on the definite understanding that they will be repaid and it is a maxim that debts never die (*sama pu kpira*). A man's heirs are liable for his debts.[1] Where equivalent returns are the customary mode of recompense, accepting goods and services is not a debt. A man 'borrows' (*pɛŋ*) money or a cow from a distant clansman and that is a debt; he 'takes' (*zaŋ*) or 'accepts' (*die*) his son's or wife's belongings if he needs them, and it is not a debt (*la ka samər*).

The most important criterion determining whether or not a particular service or gift or loan creates a debt is kinship. Members of a nuclear lineage and of an expanded family do not incur debts by borrowing from one another. The same rule applies to cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of a nuclear lineage. If a man obtains something from his own mother's brother, for example, it is not a debt. This is definite. In theory there can be no debts either between members of the same inner lineage, or cognates whose kinship ties are as close as those of members of one inner lineage. What happens in practice

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[1] Unless, as has been mentioned, they were not made a party to the debts at the time they were incurred or were not told of them by the debtor himself. The question of the procedures and sanctions that can be used to secure payment of a debt do not concern us here. One of the chief sanctions is public opinion. A defaulter finds it very difficult to borrow again.

varies from case to case and from lineage to lineage. We have seen how
this works out among the members of Ziŋgan biis. Another instance is 593
that of Yinworəb and his 'son' (his grandfather's brother's great-grand- 577
son) Kadɛne. Yinworəb gave Kadɛne three shillings to pay the hearing
fee when he was summoned to the chief's tribunal. This was not a debt. 426
Three or four months later Yinworəb borrowed a goat from Kadɛne. Again, this was not a debt but it was tacitly understood to be an equivalent return for the loan of the three shillings. By contrast, Lɔyani used some sheep belonging to Maantiya, his father's half-brother's grandson and therefore his 'son'. This he regarded as a debt because the sheep were earmarked for the payment of Maantiya's wife's bride-price.

Outside the inner lineage, however, a debt is incurred by accepting goods or services from a clansman. The only exceptions are if the lender is also a matrilateral kinsman of the borrower—e.g. a uterine kinsman—or a close friend.

The principle of reciprocity, as seen in operation in the family and 613
lineage, ties on to a more general theory of social action in Tale society.
It is a particular application of the principle of equilibrium in the social 577
system. The idea that in the long run mutual services or favours should balance is inherent in Tale social organization. Canalized by the lineage system, it means that a son or grandson or later descendant can make or expect equivalent returns for an action of his father or grandfather or earlier ancestor. It is a matter of pride as well as of moral or jural obligation to see that one benefit is balanced by another. For example, it is a common thing at an elder's funeral to see a distant clansman of his, who is not obliged to do so, bring a sheep or goat as a valedictory offering to the dead. The donor explains that there is a special reason for this offering. The deceased had been a friend of his father. When his father died the deceased brought a goat as a valedictory offering to his father. His goat is a return gift. The maxim that 'debts do not die' springs from this principle; and it applies not only to the relations of the living among themselves but to their relations with their departed ancestors. A grandson may have to atone for his grandfather's sins, as happened with Kuwaas. Years of constant ill luck were attributed by a succession of diviners to the sins of his paternal grandfather, whose name he bore. Kuwaas I, as Chief of Tongo, had betrayed his office by abandoning his clan and seeking only his personal safety once when the
Hill Talis attacked Tongo. This was a grave sin against the ancestors, [688]
who demanded a large expiatory sacrifice, and until this was paid the sin would continue to lie heavily on the descendants of Kuwaas I. The right of self-help by raiding, and the notion that retaliatory warfare and retaliatory abduction of women are simply 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)',[1] belong to the same category of ideas. The principle of reciprocity underlies all these categories of social behaviour.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 236, 245.

The Duty of Supporting the Parents in Old Age

818 577 593 Parents retain their rights and authority over their children throughout their lives. A man may be so senile that he can take no active part in household or public affairs. He is still the father of his children and the head of the household, the owner of the farms and livestock that belong to the household. Any of his sons living with him is automatically bound to farm for him. On this basis alone, and apart from the dictates of filial piety, an old man who has a son need not lack economic support. It is the same with an old woman who has a son. In her case, however, the stress is on the duty—a duty which is felt to be in part a privilege—of a son to care for his old mother, since she does not own any land.

An old man who has no adult sons need not necessarily lack food or shelter. He either has land of his own or can obtain some from a kinsman, and it is a question then of securing labour to work it. This, however, is no easy matter. Sporadic assistance can be obtained from kinsmen and neighbours, but it is impossible to get regular full-time labour. No one would go and work another man's farms for a whole farming season, either for a wage or as a kinship obligation. Thus an old man in this position is not likely to have more than the minimum of food and other necessaries. Tendaan Teroog was in this position. His only adult son was not living with him and he was dependent on others for the cultivation of his land. When his neighbours and kinsmen were too busy with their own farms to help him, his wife did the weeding in a rough-and-ready way. If it were not for the gifts of grain sent to him by his adult son from Mampurugu, Teroog and his family would have lived at starvation level right through the year. As it is they were just managing to subsist.

Cases like that of Teroog are not numerous, simply because the number of old men who are incapable of doing some work for themselves is small. In the whole of Tongo I knew only six old men (apart from chronic invalids) who were completely incapable of work. Another ten or fifteen (according to the criterion of efficiency employed[1]) could work, but would probably not have been able to support themselves and their wives without assistance.

A somewhat different and less frequent case is that of Sabaalug. He is an old bachelor living with his half-brother. But he does not help with the farming and so is not entitled to be supported by his brother. He keeps himself by 'scrounging' (*bimh*) a bit of food or a basket of millet, a few pence or an old garment from his matrilateral kinsmen and friends. A childless old woman like Tɔŋ, who lives with a 'son' of her long dead husband ekes out a poor existence in the same way. Tallensi are very

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[1] Kuwaas, for example, might have done much more work if he had not had two adult sons; Vɔŋraan-Tee would certainly have worked less if he had had a son to help him; Ta'aŋ spent so much time on ritual and communal affairs that he did less work on his farms than he was capable of.

tolerant of such old folk, but they consider their mode of life a pitiable 988
one, not so much from the purely material aspect as from the social side. 577
'Who will mourn his death? Who will give him a proper funeral?' they 573
say. But such cases serve as examples for an argument they often put forward. I once heard it very well put in a comment on life in the coast towns. There, said the speaker, you starve if you have no money. Here, at home, no one need die of destitution. If he has no children he can always find a roof with a kinsman, either one of his close agnates or his mother's brother's people, and keep himself alive by the gifts of food he gets from kinsfolk and friends. Though a man is not bound to be over-generous, and he is not compelled to feed a kinsman living with him who does not contribute to the common pool, it is an offence against the ancestors to refuse food to a kinsman in straits.

Still rarer are instances of people who come to live with a daughter in their old age. I knew of only two cases, one that of an old man, the other of a woman. It is considered to be unbecoming for a man or woman to live with a married daughter. It is not compatible with 'in-lawship' (*deen*) and Tallensi say it causes friction. A married daughter contributes to her parents' material welfare indirectly. Her chief contribution is through the bride-price paid for her. A cow received for a daughter's bride-price may be the starting-point of the accumulation of more livestock. In times of severe shortage a bride-price animal may be used to purchase grain and so save the family from starvation. Most important, however, is the use of a daughter's bride-price to pay off bride-price debts of her natal family. It helps, therefore, to add to the woman-power of her father's household upon which a large part of the household's productivity depends. The occasional assistance given to a man by his daughter's husband in farming, house-building, thatching, and so forth is a small item relatively to the total labour required to maintain a household, but it is enough to turn the scales in a difficult year. Many of the homesteads that were being built on the Tong Hills in 1936 would not have been completed that dry season if the owners' sons-in-law from other parts of the country had not come to their aid.

In short, a native's chief economic asset in old age (and this applies to sickness too) lies in the possession of sons, best of all own sons, but also proxy sons, that is, all those who have an interest in the patrimonial land which is for the time being in his keeping. As we already know, more distant 'sons' than those of the nuclear lineage are very unlikely to live with and work for a man whom they recognize as a classificatory father. Tallensi say that one of the reasons why sons are preferred to daughters is because they will farm for one when one is old. Women are even more apt than men to emphasize the insurance value of sons just because they are more dependent on a son's sense of moral obligation to care for them.

Yet Tallensi do not explicitly state it as one of the duties of a son to

888 577 593 support an old father economically. They assume support of an old father to follow automatically from the economic and jural relations of parents and children and from the moral obligations of filial piety. It is simply an aspect of co-operative production and joint consumption in the household under the household head's management, and a result of the principle of reciprocity. If a man's only son, for example, were living in his native settlement and refused to have his father or proxy father in his homestead, it would be a monstrous breach of ethics. He would lay himself open to immediate punishment by the ancestors; he would, indeed, be unable to participate in the life of the community since he could not act for himself in ritual or jural affairs.

888 593 577 167 This is an hypothetical instance, for I know of no such case. But nowadays the question of supporting an aged parent does occasionally arise when men emigrate from their native settlements to seek work abroad or to farm outside Taleland. Cases are occurring of men who stay away abroad and postpone their return home from year to year, leaving an aged parent to struggle on alone. They are far from numerous —I knew of some six or seven only, counting two cases where the sons had genuine grounds for their absence.

Native opinion about these absentees is illuminating. They are not criticized for neglecting to send money home regularly. Tallensi do not expect regular remittances from relatives working abroad and still tend to regard the occasional remittances that are sent home as windfalls. Absentee sons are censured rather for deserting their parents, for leaving them without the companionship and the social support of a son. Tɛndaan Teroog's son used to send baskets of guinea corn and maize to his father from Mampurugu. Nevertheless, the old man kept pressing him to return home; and when the son died suddenly people said it was because he had 'rejected' (*zaɣah*) his father. He should have come home long ago to be his father's companion (*kɔɣal*, vb.), to act for him in jural matters, assist him in ritual activities, and manage the household for him. The same sentiment was uppermost in Maantiya's mind when he explained why he could not leave his proxy father Saantárəba, though the latter was able to support himself and his wife with occasional assistance from kinsmen. Maantiya went down to the coast every dry season carrying fowls to sell and usually stayed away three or four months. He was always home again before the rains began. He said: 'I cannot abandon my father. He has no one else.' When I was going home in 1937 a number of men asked me to find their absent sons in Kumasi or Accra or elsewhere in the south, and to try to persuade them to return home. 'Tell them', said one old man, 'that we do not care about the money or things, but we want them to come home.'

888 593 577 We have said that there is a more definite emphasis on the duty of a son to provide for his mother. There was an old woman at Kpata'ar whose only son had been abroad for some years. She sent him many

messages begging him to return, but to no avail. 'That good-for- 888
nothing', said Tiezien, contemptuously, telling me about this youth. 593
'He leaves his mother to starve here while he goes wandering abroad.
He is no person (*u ka nit*).'[1] 577

This feeling that it is a son's bounden duty to support an aged mother is strongly marked in the case of one's own mother. It sometimes happens that a woman is widowed while still young and is left with one or two young children. She remarries into her late husband's clan and has children by her second husband. When she gets past child-bearing age, even if her second husband is still alive, she usually goes to live with her oldest son of the first marriage. Tallensi say that the right person to support such a woman is this son, as her second husband has no further interest in her after she ceases to be able to bear children.

Any surviving widow of one's own father or proxy father (i.e. a close co-wife of one's own mother) is felt to be entitled to support, but in this case a ritual sanction enters the picture. Tallensi say a man is bound to support his own mother 'because she bore you (*ɔn n-dɔɣi la zugu*)' It is a direct moral duty to her. But one has to support a mother's widowed co-wife because she was one's father's wife and he would be angry if one did not. This rule applies only to widows of fathers of one's own nuclear lineage. Outside that range no obligation is felt to support an old widow whom one's mother would have called her co-wife. It now becomes a question of more abstract ethical values summed up in the concept *dulɔm*. There is no exact equivalent for this concept in English. According to Tale ethics, any act of deliberate malice or even thoughtlessness that causes trouble or suffering to another person through no fault of his own is immoral. For example, deliberately giving a person wrong information that leads him into trouble; or refusing to give or lend a person something that can well be spared, and so causing him to suffer a serious loss; or if one is in a position to prevent a person getting hurt and makes no effort to do so—all such actions come into this category of moral delinquency. They incur *dulɔm*. The concept covers both the sufferer's resentment and the ethical stigma attaching to the wrong done to him by allowing evil to befall him. The native phrase is 'it brings (or is) *dulɔm* (*de mar dulɔm*)'; and *dulɔm* bears mystical retribution in its track.

Tallensi say that if an old woman whom one calls 'mother' (either because she is the widow of a classificatory father, or out of courtesy, because she belongs to one's mother's generation of wives of the clan) has no one to support her and appeals to one, it is *dulɔm* to refuse her. *Dulɔm* is one of the reasons why one cannot refuse food to a kinsman in need. It was the reason Kuŋaaŋba gave for allowing his old 'mother'

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[1] This expression of contempt contains a wealth of meaning for the native. It means, broadly, someone who has no sense of decency or is oblivious of his social responsibilities.

888 Təŋ to stay with him. Banɔrəg furnished another instance. One after-
593 noon he looked in on his way home from the market and found two elders with me. He told us he was having some trouble with Ziba, a
577 young man of his inner lineage. Ziba had an old woman, whom he called 'mother', living with him; but he had suddenly decided to get rid of her. Banɔrəg told us how he had expostulated with the heartless young man. 'It is an evil thing to do', he concluded, amid murmurs of assent from the two elders. 'A man who drives out an old woman to starve becomes blameworthy before Heaven (*u kpera Naawun taale*); it is *duləm*.' Banɔrəg's efforts, in this case, were in vain since he had no paternal authority over Ziba. The intervention of an older kinsman does not always check disgraceful treatment of domestic relatives, and public opinion only takes notice of it after the event and then often has no power to make the culprit remedy it.

A Methodological Point

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181 The cases we have quoted in the preceding pages are précis of statements, opinions, and explanations given to me by Tallensi themselves. If space allowed, a score of cases could be quoted for each one I have recorded. I mention this because it might seem incredible, to anyone who has not lived amongst the Tallensi, that a people so primitive in their mode of livelihood should balance up rights and obligations in the most commonplace activities of their lives in so calculating a fashion. But the picture I have sketched is not a distortion. Description and analysis inevitably reduce human action to slow motion and men's motives to a seemingly mechanical pattern. In reality Tale parents commonly act as spontaneously and generously as parents in any other country and their children respond as spontaneously and sincerely. But even the most spontaneous actions and feelings of the natives occur within the framework of their social organization and subject to the values postulated in their culture. Social organization and cultural values allow of alternative forms of action and affect in any particular situation, but not of infinitely numerous alternatives. Where the relations of parents and children are involved these alternatives are not unlimited; and allowing for differences of personality and character, as the natives themselves do, we can say that the alternative that will be selected in a particular situation is determined by the structural relations of the individuals concerned. Men's motives and their social relations are closely integrated with one another among the Tallensi, as we have emphasized before. In their actual social behaviour Tallensi do not have to stop and think out every situation before they act. The individual's ideas and attitudes have been shaped by the social structure and the cultural norms. The framework of his social relations is as much a part of him as he is a part of it. He automatically evaluates every situation in terms of his social relations. To put it crudely, every Talɛŋ carries a set of

labels bestowed upon him by the social system and a set of ideas and attitudes implanted in him by his culture. In every situation he responds to the relevant labels borne by the other people who enter into it with action springing from his ideas and attitudes. What we have tried to do is to examine this process of response in slow motion and to show how the ideas and attitudes evoked by certain labels can be traced back to the structural relations of the people concerned.

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CHAPTER VIII

TENSIONS IN THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Rivalry between Parents and Children

593 578 PERHAPS the most extraordinary feature of Tale parents' relations with their children is the recognition, in custom and belief, of the latent antagonism behind their mutual identification and comradeship, their devotion and co-operation. We have already had some glimpses of this. A psycho-analyst might say that the Oedipus complex is apparently openly recognized in Tale culture. He would have to add that it is built into their social organization in such a way as to enable them to control it. The mystical ideas and ritual symbols in which the rivalry between successive generations is clothed form the cultural mechanism by which it is neutralized and made to serve socially useful ends.

784 [184] 578 593 We have discussed the taboos observed by first-born children among the Namoos in our previous book. We showed there[1] that the distinguishing mark of all Namoo clans as opposed to non-Namoo clans is the observance of these taboos. Among all Namoos a man's first-born son and daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, may not wear any of their father's garments or his quiver, or look into his granary during his lifetime. The latter taboos are connected with the fact that a man's clothes and quiver and granary are intimately identified with his social personality. As the natives put it, a man's clothes and quiver are imbued with his bodily exuviae from constant contact with his body, while his granary is associated with his unique status in the patricentral family. It is easy to see that these possessions are peculiarly apt symbols of a man's social self. It is not surprising, therefore, that though these taboos are not formally observed by non-Namoos analogous usages with the same symbolic significance occur among them.

In our previous book we studied the significance of these taboos as quasi-totemic symbols in the system of inter-clan relations; but they have other dimensions of meaning as well, like all Tale customs and ideas that give expression to fundamental elements in their social organization. For they go back to deep and universal tendencies in human psychology. These taboos have a particular meaning in the contemporary structure of Tale society as symbols of corporate units; but underlying this is the deeper meaning they have in the relations of successive generations and for the individual himself in the conduct of his life.

We are concerned here with these latter aspects of their meaning. We cannot attempt to unravel all that lies behind them, but their superficial symbolism is transparent. What they mean is that a child may not 593 be equated with his or her father while he is alive. As we have observed, though these taboos do not occur among non-Namoos, the ideas and 578 sentiments they express are as frankly admitted by them as by Namoos. It was a Tenzugu (Talis) man who gave me the clearest statement I obtained on the struggle between the Destinies (*Yina*) of father and son. I remember also being struck by this during the ceremony of exorcising the evil Predestiny of Sinkawol of Kpata'ar's wife. Just as the most important rite of all was begun somebody noticed that Tiezien, Sinkawol's proxy father, was absent. Nyaaŋzum, Sinkawol's proxy grandfather and Tiezien's proxy father, shouted for Tiezien to come out of the homestead. Tiezien shouted back, in some anger, 'No, I won't come. They are exorcising my daughter-in-law's *Yin* and I should be there? Oh no. Is she your (plural) wife or mine? No, it is not for me to be there.' There was a moment's pause and then Nyaaŋzum called back, 'Well, leave it then, you are right.' The point was that a man must not equate himself with his son, particularly where the latter's procreative status is concerned. But grandfather and grandson are equated with each other, as we shall see more fully later. And by the same principle a woman must not be equated with her daughter in her reproductive capacity. Thus when a man's daughter becomes a mother [784] for the second or third time he gives up sleeping with her mother even if she is still of child-bearing age. Tallensi call this an important taboo. It is significant also that among both Namoos and non-Namoos an analogous taboo to that of the father's granary holds between a mother and her first-born daughter. While her mother is alive a girl may not uncover her mother's chief storage-pot (*u pu sugəl u ma doko*). This taboo is not stressed so much as those that discriminate a child from its father, as might be expected in a society so thoroughly organized around the patrilineal line. But it does show that the tension between the generations among the Tallensi is not the product of *patria potestas* only, but arises out of the whole network of the relations between parents and children.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. v and viii.

The avoidances of first-born children are not the only customary 593 expression of the tension between the generations. A man and his oldest 264 child do not eat together. 'You and your oldest child do not dip your fingers into the same dish of food together,' the natives say, 'for if you did perhaps his finger-nail might scratch you and that would bring misfortune on both of you.' This prohibition is not subject to ritual sanctions, though the misfortune that would follow the symbolic act of aggression would be of a mystical character. Tallensi share a dish with the youngest child for preference; and it is not an uncommon sight to see a man eating with his youngest child while his oldest son is sitting near by eating separately.

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Then there are the restrictions we have already mentioned that must be

593 764 observed at funeral ceremonies by anyone who has a parent of the same sex as the deceased still living. Similarly an oldest son may not deputize for his father in making sacrifices to an ancestor shrine which is in the latter's custody; 'he is too near to inheriting the shrine', the Tallensi say. The implication is that if an oldest son deputizes for his father in relation to the ancestors he is anticipating his inheritance and this is tantamount to wishing his father dead. Even during the interval between the mortuary rites and the final funeral ceremony of a dead father it is his younger sons who make sacrifices in his name to the ancestor shrines that were in his possession and will be inherited by the oldest son.

All these customs indicate how strongly the Tallensi feel that there 593 578 is an underlying rivalry between parents and children that must not be allowed to drive a wedge between them. While his parent (particularly his father) is alive, a child (particularly a son) must not act in any way that suggests a desire to usurp the parent's place; and this holds vice versa for the parent too, as the incident between Tiezien and Nyaaŋzum shows. It is implicit in the Tǝle concept of incest. It can be summed up in the formula that father and son may not take each other's place in the procreative relationship, which is the fundamental relationship defining their positions in society relatively to each other; but this principle is extended to all social relations of father and son, particularly the first-born son. Tallensi state this quite openly, and it is worth quoting what Yarǝg of Gbizug, who is not a Namoo, said to me once in this connexion. There had been a ceremony the previous night at which the Gbizug tɛndaana had been represented by one of his younger sons. I asked Yarǝg why he did not sometimes deputize for the tɛndaana in these ceremonies, for surely he knew more about the rites than his younger classificatory brothers? 'No', he replied, 'that is impossible. I am like the tɛndaana's oldest son, for my father was his full (*soog*) brother; I cannot put on his cap and skin and perform these rites for him. We are Talis and it is not a taboo for us, but it would not be right, it would not be seemly.'

We have seen that the undercurrent of rivalry is most apparent in the relations of father and son. Marriage removes a daughter from the arena of possible conflict with her parents and her social role does not create interests and motives that bring her into competition with either of her parents. She cannot take the place of either her father or her mother. Removal from their control has the effect, if anything, of strengthening her uterine tie with her mother and her lineage tie with her father. The first-born daughter is associated with the first-born son in these taboos by the principle of sibling equivalence.[1] She is the first-born child of her sex, and stands for the filial generation as much as her brother does. It is their first child, whether it be son or daughter, that makes a married couple into parents. Moreover, we must not forget the Tale maxim that

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[1] This principle is discussed in Ch. X below.

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she might have been a son but for the accident of birth. A son's situation is entirely different, as we have shown in the preceding chapters. He remains a member of his parental family all his life. He does eventually take the place of his father in the life of the community and could be suspected of wanting to hurry on the day when this will happen. His desire for independence is liable, as we have seen, to run counter to his father's plans and demands. Every advance in his social and economic development might be interpreted as an added threat to his father's dominance. He will not be his own master until he has no father. The very principle of reciprocity which plays such an important part in their economic co-operation conceals mutual jealousy about property. And the social cleavage between his generation and his father's is emphasized by the wider context of fatherhood. A man's father's brothers, who are identified with his father both by generation and by birth, stand between him and his full independence as his father's heir. Even after his own father's death they retain authority over him. As we have seen, the cleavage between successive generations usually comes to a head more decisively with a proxy father than with one's own father.

Tallensi themselves make no bones about the matter. 'Your oldest son is your rival (*I bikpeem a i dataa*)', the men say bluntly. I have heard this phrase used by both Namoos and non-Namoos from every part of the country. 'Look at my oldest son', an elder once said to me. 'He would not care if I should die to-morrow. Then he would inherit all my possessions, he would own the *zɔŋ* and he could take his ease. The things connected with an oldest son are hard (*bikpeem yɛla ntɔ*).'

This candour in fathers is not matched by their sons, who never admit the rivalry. They laugh it off as 'an affair of custom (*de yɛl nla*)', or simply say that it is a ritual matter, a taboo (*kihər*) like any other taboo that one accepts without questioning. And they generally launch out, with obvious sincerity, into the kind of panegyric on the advantages of having a father that has been previously quoted (p. 172). This is as one might expect, for it is the fathers who feel the threat to their dominance; and they feel it the more strongly as they grow older and their powers decline.

The taboos of first-born children begin to be enforced in early childhood. By the age of 7 or 8 a child takes them as seriously as his parents.[1] But it is only after the son is married and has a growing family, when the father is getting on in years, that the opposition symbolized in ritual observances emerges as an opposition in practical life. It coincides with the son's increased striving to free himself from his father's economic control. This is expressly symbolized, among all the Tallensi, in a taboo which the first-born son begins to observe about the time he gets married. He and his father must not meet face to face in the gateway of their common homestead. This taboo is as scrupulously observed as

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

593 518 the other taboos of first-born children. Its meaning is plain if we bear in mind what the gateway and the *zɔŋ* symbolize in the structure of the family and the lineage.[1] Significantly enough, a first-born daughter does not observe it.

Eventually, when the son's older children are reaching adolescence, the opposition between his father and himself culminates in his formal separation from his parental family. We have noticed before that fission in the joint family is basically due to structural and economic factors. In the case of an eldest son's hiving off, Tallensi say that it is often brought about by the jealousies of the womenfolk. The son's wife or wives complain that they are not getting a fair deal in the distribution of food-supplies in the joint family. They are always nagging at their husband on that account. So when a son 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)' natives say it is in order the better to support his wives and children. But the separation is actually due as much to the relations between the man and his father as to the purely economic causes. It is an instance of the convergence and congruence of structural principles and economic necessities.

593 518 884 Most commonly an eldest son separates off formally by cutting a new gateway for himself in the family homestead. The native phrase is *bit u zanɔr* ('slit his gateway'), and it describes precisely what happens. The wall of the homestead is cut through so as to make an extra gateway leading into the son's quarters. Though he and his wife and children will very often use the main gateway, he is by status the owner of his own subsidiary gateway and cannot formally clash with his father. At the same time he achieves a considerable measure of economic independence. He will have his own bush farm and small home farm and be responsible for providing the bulk of the food required by his wife and children. But he still helps his father and younger brothers with their farm work, and receives some food-supplies from his father in return if his own supplies are insufficient for his needs. Sometimes, however, an eldest son moves out altogether. His father may let him build a homestead on a bush farm belonging to the family, or he may migrate to one of the peripheral settlements. As we have seen, it usually takes a few years for a son to achieve this step. I have heard young men who were pressing their claims for a separate gateway express impatience with an obstinate old father and even resentment against his apparent tyranny. But when the parting comes it is usually amicable, and father and son continue to be on excellent and intimate terms thereafter. The son is still under his father's final authority in jural and ritual matters.

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The Native Theory of the Tension between the Generations

Tallensi explain the rivalry between father and son by means of the

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[1] Cf. Ch. III above.

mystical concept of the *Yin* or personal Destiny.[1] There is, they say, 573
an inborn antagonism between the *Yin* of a father and the *Yin* of his
eldest son. While the son is still young his *Yin* is weak, but as he grows 578
older his *Yin* grows more powerful and wants to make him master of 777
his own affairs. The son's *Yin* wants to destroy the father's *Yin*; but the father's *Yin* desires the father to live and be well and remain master of the house. It wishes to continue to receive sacrifices from the father. Therefore it will try to destroy the son's *Yin*, and if it is the stronger *Yin* it will cause misfortune and perhaps death to the son. That is the reason why father and son must avoid meeting in the gateway of the homestead and why it is better for them to separate, after the son has reached a stage of maturity when his *Yin* begins to be as powerful as his father's. In the same way an oldest daughter's evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) is a threat to her mother's life and health. When Sinkawol's wife was waiting for her evil Predestiny to be exorcised she was not allowed to go and visit her sick mother for fear that her *Yinbe'er* might cause her mother to get worse.

To appreciate the profundity of this interpretation we need to understand the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is one of the most difficult of their 777
religio-psychological ideas to translate into our categories of thought. Indeed, it is not a precise notion but, like all Tale ritual ideas, a configuration of mutually overlapping ideas, beliefs, and values.

Yin is the shortened form of *Naawun* or *Naayin*, the Tale term which can best be translated as Heaven. But whereas *Naawun* is concerned with all mankind, each person's *Yin* belongs uniquely to that person. It is the symbol of his individuality, of what makes his life history different in his own eyes from that of every other person. If he falls ill he is enduring something that is the common human lot, and he tries to cope with his illness by the same measures that anybody else would take. But, he asks himself, why should he have fallen ill just at this time and not his brother or somebody else, for instance. When he kills an animal in the hunt, or buys a cow, or marries, or has a child he goes through experiences that every man has, and his social personality takes on attributes that are part of the social personality of every man of about the same stage of social maturity. Yet they are his own private experiences. They form part of the unique continuity of his personal development. None of them was inevitable. They are due to the intervention of chance in his life; or, as the Tallensi believe, to the action of the mystical agencies that dictate the course of human life.

These, very briefly, are the ideas, as nearly as one can translate them into our modes of thought, behind the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is a mystical notion because their ideas of causality are couched in a ritual idiom and are rooted in ritual beliefs; and it serves several ends. Tallensi do not

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 144, for a discussion of this concept from a different angle.

But a man's most important *Yin* is that with which certain of his 777
ancestors are associated. This too may come to him in childhood,
though it does so more commonly in early manhood. Usually it mani- 778
fests itself to him through an accident or a coincidence. Thus a young man falls ill shortly after he has bought a new hoe or killed an animal in the hunt. The diviners then declare that his illness was caused by his *Yin*; his ancestors so and so, and so and so, are thus revealing themselves as his *Yin*; the hoe or the animal is their vehicle; they brought illness on him because they demand that he should accept them as his *Yin* and sacrifice to them. The young man will then build a shrine dedicated to these ancestors placing the skull of the animal or the blade of the hoe on it, and will henceforth sacrifice to them on this shrine. This is his first and most intimately personal shrine, and it plays an enormous part in his life thereafter. As far as his own personal affairs are concerned, it will always be his most important link with his ancestors. It is through his *Yin* that they exercise the most direct influence upon his life and that he seeks to maintain their goodwill specifically for himself. When he becomes head of his joint family he will entrust most of the children born into the family to his *Yin* as spirit guardian. Every important step in his social development will be registered in his relations with his *Yin*; it may be by a special sacrifice, or it may be by a change in the location of the shrine, or the addition of an ancestor to the group of ancestors who have revealed themselves (*naam*) as his *Yin*. A man's *Yin* is both the chart of his life and the helm with which he steers his way through life.

All the ancestors and ancestresses of a man have a potential mystical 777
relevance for his life, but they have the same potential relevance for any
of their descendants. His *Yin* ancestors, on the other hand, are con- 769
cerned exclusively with him, for his own sake, so to speak. They form a particular combination, usually of very recent forebears, who do not belong together in just that grouping for any other of their descendants. They may be patrilateral or matrilateral ancestors or a combination of both lines. Thus a man might have as his *Yin* ancestors his father, father's father, father's father's mother, and her father, while his brother has their father, father's mother, and father's mother's father as his *Yin* ancestors. Of another pair of brothers, one's *Yin* ancestors may be their mother's father, maternal grandfather, and maternal great-grandfather; and the other's might be their mother's mother, her father, and his father (see Fig. 5, page 230).

Thus when a Talɔŋ says that his *Yin* and his eldest son's *Yin* are 593
mutually dangerous, he is saying that his son's successful growth and
development into and through manhood is a threat to his authority and 578
primacy in the family, a symbol of the inevitable decline in his physical 777
and mental power that comes with age, and a warning that he must in due course make way for the next generation; and yet it is also the

593 crowning achievement of his life, the most significant sign that his *Yin* has
777 prospered him (*maal*) well. The relations of father and son are a balance
578 between their ties of solidarity and mutual identification, which form the central link of the lineage system, and the cleavage due to their belonging to successive generations. Once more we encounter the fundamental principle of Tale social organization, that every constellation of social relationships is made up of a polar balance of ties and cleavages.

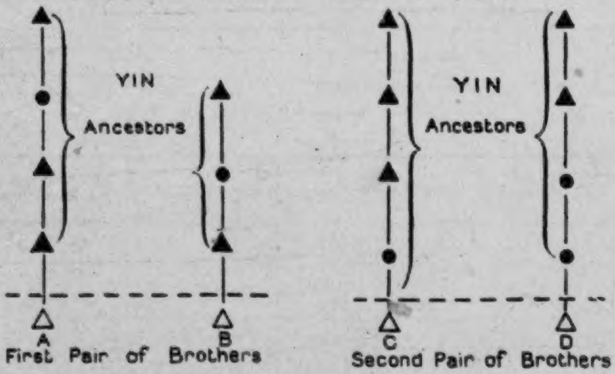

FIG. 5. *Yin* Ancestors.

The Discrimination between Oldest Children and Youngest Children

593 The cleavage between father and first son obviously plays an impor-
578 tant part in the cycle of development of the joint family and lineage. The oldest son's breakaway from the parental home is the first phase of fission of the joint family, and it is not until after his father's death that he and his brothers are likely to become reunited into a single domestic unit.

We have spoken sometimes as if the cleavage between successive generations lay solely between parents and their first-born children, at other times as if it were a gulf between parents and all their children. In practice, tension crops up between a parent and any of his or her adolescent or adult children, but one reason why it is always likely to be sharpest with oldest children is simply because they have gone farthest along the road of social and economic maturity and so symbolize the filial generation most effectively of all the children. Among
593 non-Namoos it does not seem to matter whether the oldest children
578 are first-born or merely the oldest surviving children. Among the
184 Namoos, however, there is the striking peculiarity of their fixing the ritual and affective bar between the generations on the first-born children. If a man's first-born son is dead, and even if he died in infancy, the oldest living son does not assume the taboos of the first-born. The

tension that develops between a father and his oldest surviving son is 593
never as great as that which occurs between a man and his first-born 578
son. An oldest surviving son may in time begin to farm on his own, but
he will very often stay in his father's homestead, for his *Yin* is not a 184
danger to his father's.

Tallensi have no explanation for this. Their only comment is to point 593
to the fact, which can often be observed, that parents discriminate 578
between their older children and their younger children, especially between the oldest and the youngest. Youngest children are the favourites, upon whom they lavish all their tenderness when they have long ceased to make a show of affection for the older children. A man's or a woman's last child (*bikpa'ar*) is the apple of its parent's eye. Tallensi say that a last child is always spoiled and pampered, and therefore grows up to be vain, lazy, and extravagant. Guna'ab was a man of this stamp, and his older brothers explained contemptuously that he had been their mother's *bikpa'ar* and they had been unable to discipline him after their father's death.

Tallensi say that a person's younger children, and in particular the youngest child, feel their dependence on their parents till the last. There is, as in so many aspects of the relations of parents and children, an element of reciprocity in this. For a man's youngest son, for instance, is still farming with him when his oldest son is farming either wholly or partly for himself—'thinking of how to feed his wife and children rather than of his parents', they often say. 'If I die to-day', men have said to me, 'do you think my oldest son will weep? Oh no; but my youngest son, he will shed bitter tears.' There is much truth in this. I have more than once seen a man's youngest son being harshly rated by an older brother for abandoning himself to grief over his father's death. Because older children no longer need their parents' care they do not inspire the same affection as young children. In the eyes of the natives, therefore, the discrimination between youngest and oldest children is a natural result of the process of upbringing. But I have heard women say, also, that a woman's love for her *bikpa'ar* is due to her seeing in him the sign of the end of her reproductive powers.

It is, however, not merely a matter of the vagaries of parental psycho- 593
logy. This discrimination runs deeply into the social structure of the 787
Tallensi. A curious but enlightening indication of this occurs with divining (*bakologo*) shrines. When a diviner dies, the clairvoyant power associated with his shrine sometimes passes on to one of his sons by a process which the Tallensi think of as a kind of mystical contagion (*lɔŋ*).
The son who is selected for this privilege is always a younger son. There 593
is more sympathy between father and younger son than between father 765
and oldest son. But the best indication of this is found at funeral cere-
monies, where the oldest and the youngest children of the deceased 578
have distinctive mourning duties. The oldest son and oldest daughter,

593 as the chief mourners, have the most arduous mourning duties. They
578 have to take part in almost every rite, both by day and by night, and
765 these rites are mystically dangerous to those who participate in them. Hence they have to be carried out very carefully. All the participants must, for instance, observe absolute silence throughout these rites. The youngest son and youngest daughter, on the other hand, wear the *dooluŋ* string as a special emblem of mourning. The *dooluŋ* string is decorated with four cowrie shells for a dead mother and three cowrie shells if the deceased is the mourner's father. The youngest son wears it on his hand, looped about his middle finger in a prescribed fashion; the youngest daughter wears it round the neck and waist and down the back.

The most important of these rites are those which conclude the funeral. The rites differ in content from clan to clan, as we have mentioned in our earlier book,[1] but their symbolism is the same for all clans. Everywhere they symbolize the removal of the social personality of the deceased from the world of the living and his or her incorporation among the ancestors. They symbolize also the emancipation of the children from the control of their living parent and the assumption by the oldest son or daughter of the father's or mother's position in society. This is evident from the rites by which the customs, taboos, and articles which stood for the cleavage between the generations are ritually annulled or transferred to the son or daughter. In the case of a woman, among all the Tallensi, the principal rites are 'the sealing of the store-pot (*bea dok*)' and the sending of the *kumpiog*.

The rite of 'sealing the store-pot' is the only ritual act performed solely by women for a woman. On the last day but one of an old woman's funeral a group of old women, her co-wives, sisters-in-law, and friends, together with her daughters, gather in her sleeping-room. They take one of her large store-pots, put inside it a ladle, a dish, and other articles characteristic of women's activities that belonged to her, and solemnly seal it with a potsherd plastered over with mud and cow-dung. Beer and porridge are offered on the pot to her spirit. Her oldest daughter takes part in these rites, and then the pot is hidden in a place where she is not likely to see it. She may not come near it until it is finally disposed of. Next day the pot is ritually opened by the old women and the oldest daughter, who thus symbolically discards the taboo which she had to observe all her life if she is a first-born, or since her mother's death if she is not. Later the pot is removed from the house and taken by one of the old women. The daughter must never see it again.

At the end of the funeral ceremonies a dead woman's *kumpiog*, the special pot and calabash which stand for her social personality as a woman and mother, is solemnly and extremely carefully carried to her oldest daughter's house and given to her, as we have noted before.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. viii.

For a man these final rites are more elaborate and variable. Among 765
the Namoos the high-water mark of the rites is the induction of the 593
first-born son and first-born daughter, if they survive, into those secret 578
and forbidden things which they have avoided since infancy. The first-born son is dressed in his father's cap and smock, turned inside out.[1] [292]
A stick with a loop of string, and a piece of hollow bamboo, specially prepared for the occasion and symbolizing the father's bow and quiver, are hung round his neck. Then a procession is formed of all the children of the dead man, his first-born daughter following immediately behind the first-born son and holding on to the smock. An old man leads them round the homestead three times. Then the first-borns are taken inside through their dead father's *zɔŋ*, and are taken up to look into his granary for the first time in their lives. The whole rite is felt by the onlookers [781]
to be overwhelmingly solemn and the 'showing of the granary (*paal buur*)' is for them an intensely dramatic moment. A hush comes over the crowd of spectators as the son ascends to the granary and his mentor puts a hand behind his head and pushes it forward so that he peers into this hitherto-forbidden place. The son himself appears quite unperturbed, though this is one of the decisive moments of his life. I have been told by men who have been through this rite that they felt quite calm and collected at the time. But Tallensi are that way, and this is perhaps a sign of the efficacy of their ritual practices.

Among the Talis and other non-Namoos, the parallel rite is that of sending the quiver (*ta'ah loko*) of the dead man to the External *Bɔγar*. When an old man dies, his quiver is hidden in his principal granary by one of the elders and his oldest son and daughter are thereafter forbidden to look into the granary until the end of the funeral ceremonies. 'If they did', a Yinduuri elder once explained to me, 'they would see the spirit of the dead man and die.' Younger sons and daughters are free to look into the granary. This is [illegible] particular interest as a parallel to the Namoo taboos; but with the Talis the ritual and affective expression of the tension between father and eldest son is concentrated in the period when its meaning is most significant to the son, the transition period between the extinction of his father's social personality and his assumption of his father's place. For the rite of 'sending the quiver', the 'quiver' (consisting of a real bow and a symbolical quiver exactly like that used by the Namoos) is taken from the granary by the oldest son. Followed by his father's senior surviving wife he is escorted by the clan elders to the External *Bɔγar*. Sacrifices are made to the ancestors and especially to the dead man, who now belongs to the realm of the ancestors, and his 'quiver' is left in the *Bɔγar* in token of his final departure
from the world of the living. 593

We must conclude that the distinction Tallensi make, both in custom 578

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[1] To distinguish the context of death from that of life and to symbolize the reversal of the taboo.

593 578 and in sentiment, between oldest children and youngest children is of more than casual significance. It is as if the two major aspects of parent-child relations are split apart and distributed so as to make them more easily reconcilable. The mutual identification, mutual love and devotion of parents and children are focused in the relations of parents with their youngest children; the cleavage between successive generations is focused in the relations between parents and oldest children; and we can easily see why this is so. For it is the latter who will take the place of the parents on their death, who seem to be standing on the threshold waiting for them to die. The emphasis of the Namoos on first-born children is, as we have noted, due to the fact that it is the first-born child which makes a man and woman parents. Hence, if a first-born dies, its parents have to undergo a special purification rite; and a wife who has not borne a child to her husband does not undergo the purification rites for a widow when he dies. Later children do not change the role and status of a person in the same way; they do not make him or her more of a parent. Nor does the sex of the first-born matter, though the agnatic principle makes a first-born son of greater importance to a man than a first-born daughter. This and the principle of the equivalence of siblings explain why both sons and daughters are subject to the taboos of the first-born among the Namoos.

The Ancestors as Parent Images

593 769 578 577 The ambivalence in the relations of parents and children is more dramatically expressed in the ancestor cult than in any other aspect of Tale culture. We cannot discuss this at length here. We can only note that there is a direct continuity between the relations of parents and children in life and their relations after the parents' death. The worship of the ancestors is a culturally standardized projection on to the mystical plane of the tangle of attachments, reciprocities, tensions, and submerged antagonisms that bind parents and children to one another in life. Anyone unfamiliar with the speech and customs of the Tallensi would often find it impossible to tell, in some situations, whether a man is speaking of his living father or his dead father. The dead parents are the prototypes of all the ancestors. Distinctions of name and generation conceal the same primary images. This is clear from the fact that no man can sacrifice to an ancestor or ancestress except through the medium of the spirit of the parent who links him to that ancestor or ancestress.

It will not surprise the psychologist, however, to learn that the attributes with which the spirits of the parents are invested differ in some respects markedly from those that are conventionally assumed for living parents. The disciplinary limitations imposed by the demands of economic and social adjustment and by the rationale of reality are no longer operative. The figures of the dead parents are clothed in qualities that are in part highly magnified versions of their most praiseworthy qualities

in real life and in part distorted reflections of the tensions that exist 593
between parents and children in reality. It is no misrepresentation to 769
describe them as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the
parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically 578
omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent and long-suffering;
but the emphasis is far more on the persecuting than on the protecting 577
attributes. The distortion is most striking in the case of a mother's spirit. All ancestor spirits are apt to reveal themselves more often by the misfortune they inflict than by the benefits they bring. They emerge as sanctions of conduct more by reason of the punishments they bring down on wrongdoers than because of the benefits they confer for right doing. But the spirits of female ancestors are believed to be specially hard, cruel, and capricious. This is remarkable when we consider the love and devotion a mother shows for her child throughout his life. As we have observed elsewhere,[1] there is a never-ending struggle between a man and his ancestors. It is psychologically rooted in the relations of parents and children during the lifetime of the parents. Sacrifices and prayers are reminiscent of the principle of reciprocity in the real relations of parents and children. They contain the same elements of acquiescence, justice, and hidden coercion. They show another aspect, though, in the propitiation, reverence, and gratitude they often express.[2]

We can see why filial piety towards the dead parents is more strongly stressed than towards the living. While he is alive a person's father has direct jural and ritual authority over him; when he dies, the father becomes the paramount sanction of moral conduct for him; and this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, in only a lesser degree to the mother. The oath 'by my father and his goatskin (or sheepskin) and his three cowries' discussed in our previous book[3] is one proof of this. The centre of gravity of the whole social system of the Tallensi is the relationship of father and son, and it is the idea of filial piety that keeps this relationship in balance in the face of all the forces that tend to divide father and son. In this as in other respects the Tallensi are typical of patrilineal and patriarchal societies of simple culture from many parts of the globe, both ancient and modern.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 145.

[2] As death, among the Tallensi, is always believed to be mystically caused by [761
a particular ancestor spirit or a group of ancestor spirits (material causes such as 682]
sickness being recognized as necessary but not sufficient without the mystical adjunct), it follows that a dead father or mother can kill (*ku*) his or her own child. The converse is impossible, since children, in life, have no jurisdiction over parents. I have asked Tallensi if patricide ever occurs or is known to have occurred. My most trusted informants said they had never heard of a case and thought the very idea abhorrent beyond measure. The idea of matricide they considered even more vile and unnatural.

[3] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 66.

CHAPTER X

SIBLINGS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Concept of 'mabiirət'

TALLENSI make a distinction between kinship that implies a difference of generation, summed up in the concept *dɔyam*, and kinship that implies identity or equality of generation, summed up in the concept *mabiirət*.[1] *Mabii* (lit. mother's child) is the general term for a sibling of either sex and of any degree of consanguinity, and it is extended, as we have shown in our previous volume, to corporate groups, linked by patrilineal descent, that are of equal status. Its primary reference is to a sibling by the same parents as the speaker's when only the fact of siblingship is relevant—that is, when difference of age or sex is not relevant to the situation. Tallensi sometimes use the term in contrast with *babii* (lit. father's child), a usage that indicates very neatly the underlying implications of the term *mabii*. Thus Tallensi say that a man's *mabiis* have first claim on the inheritance of his widows, but that his *babiis* are also entitled to marry the widows. To the native this means that a man's brothers of the same *dug* have a stronger claim than his clansmen of other *dugət*—*dug* here being a lineage segment defined relatively to the agnatic distance between a particular suitor for a widow's hand and the deceased. A man of the same inner lineage as the deceased will call himself a *mabii* of the latter by contrast with another suitor of a different inner lineage but the same medial lineage; and the latter will call himself a *mabii* of the deceased by contrast with a more distant clansman, whom he will describe as a *babii*. Thus the use of the term *mabii* implies a relationship between the parties as if they were agnates who have a common progenitrix over and above their patrilineal ties. When a native describes another as his *mabii*, however distant their genealogical ties, he is tacitly implying a close personal element in their relationship for that moment and in that situation, as if they were children of the same parents, by contrast with a pair of distant agnates. A man will speak of a matrilateral relative of a different clan in this way in some situations. Thus a Tongo man, telling me the story of his first visit to Kumasi, related how he had stayed with a *mabii*, a Ba'ari man, who had loaned him the money for his lorry fare. Abroad, in Kumasi or Accra, a Taləŋ speaks of any other Tallensi he meets there as his *mabiis* by contrast with all the foreigners amongst whom they live. And this is not merely a form of words. Abroad, Tallensi who have no ties of kinship or of locality, who would probably never have met or heard of each other at home, assist one another as if they were kinsmen.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii, p. 117.

[p. 241]

593 In the broadest sense, then, *mabiis* are cognates who are on terms of equality with one another and have a mutual interest in one another's welfare. In the narrowest and prototypical sense *mabiis* are siblings by the same parents. The emphasis is on their equality of status due to a common relationship with their parents.

The Equivalence of Siblings

The key to the social relations of siblings in Tale society and to the effects on the whole social structure of the sibling bond is the principle to which Radcliffe-Brown has given the name of 'the social equivalence of siblings'.[1] It is as true of the Tallensi as of the Australian aborigines that 'there is a very strong, intimate and permanent social bond between two brothers born and brought up in the same family', and that they 'occupy similar positions in the total social structure'. As we shall see, the latter proposition has to be translated into terms of the lineage organization to give it the appropriate connotation for the Tallensi. Siblings derive their social equivalence—that is, equivalence in jural, ritual, and economic relations, as opposed, for example, to private marital relations—from their common relationship with their parents. Outside the lineage range of strictly reckoned classificatory kinship, the recognition of siblingship implies not so much similar positions in the social structure as similar roles in certain situations due to membership of the same corporate groups, or, with matrilateral kin, to having common ascendants. We have, in fact, already had a good deal of evidence in preceding chapters of the social equivalence of siblings. We have seen also how the recognition of siblingship varies in significance according to the lineage context. What we wish to do now is to study the sibling relationship in its own right. By bringing the evidence together in a unitary picture we shall be able to see what constitutes the social equivalence of siblings. We shall find it useful for purposes of our analysis to distinguish between the solidarity of siblings and their equivalence.

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But before we examine the social equivalence of siblings more fully it is worth noting that there is, among the Tallensi, a correlated principle of social action of very wide application. Individuals who have the same social role or have had similar socially critical experiences are identified with one another whenever their role or these experiences come into a situation. The best instance is the case of co-wives who always speak of each other as sisters. All chiefs are regarded as 'brothers' (*mabiis*) because of their chiefship; so also are tendaanas. We have seen how men who have no father or mother alive are identified with one another at funeral ceremonies by the fact that only those who have undergone this social experience may take part in certain rites. Similarly only those who have themselves lost a wife or a husband may look after

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[1] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, 'The Social Organization of Australian Tribes', Part 3, *Oceania*, I, 1930–1, pp. 428–9.

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the widow (or widower) during a funeral, or assist in the rites of purifying the widow or share her meals. Tallensi assert that a breach of this rule is impossible as no man or woman who had not had the experience would take charge of a widow. It is a taboo (*kihər*), and anyone who [778] infringed it would die. Again, owners of diviners' shrines (*bakologo* shrines—the diviner is called *baγa*) are identified in certain situations, though they do not form a corporate body of any sort. Thus when a new diviner's shrine is being set up for a man certain portions of the beer used in the rites can be drunk only by men who already have such shrines, and it is they who carry out the final rites by which the actual power of divination is conferred on him. Similarly it is only men who [783] have themselves undergone the experience and the treatment who may assist in the ritual of purifying a homicide or a man who has slain a big game animal such as a bush cow. The list of illustrations could be extended, but this will suffice to show how deeply rooted the idea is. It is, however, only a determinant of individual conduct and sentiment, giving rise to *ad hoc* co-operation in certain situations, and not a principle of association in corporate units.

Factors modifying the Sibling Bond

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The solidarity and social equivalence of siblings are conditioned by a number of factors. Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure. Siblingship does not cancel out the uniqueness of the individual, as symbolized in the notion of the *Yin*, and socially crystallized in the precise differentiation of the lineage segment which he or she founds. This factor, with its counterpart in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with the years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and, consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin. Thus the sibling relationship, while itself an important constitutive factor of the lineage structure, is reciprocally moulded by that structure. The relationship of brothers among the Tallensi might very well have been different from what it is if their social organization provided for the continuous merging of collateral lines of descent in lineal lines,[1] so that lineage branches springing from brothers were not specifically recognized, but only the inclusive trunk-line deriving from a distant ancestor.

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[1] This appears to be the case with the Nuer at higher levels of lineage structure (cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, 1940, ch. v) and among some Southern Bantu tribes, such as the Zulu (cf. E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, 1936).

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The influence of these modifying factors is recognized in the kinship terms used for the sibling relationship. Most of these have already been recorded, but it is convenient to bring them together again in this place. Within the limits of recognized generation differences, siblings never address one another by kinship terms, but always by name. Outside that range it is also not customary to address people by the kinship terms for siblings, in the ordinary way. When the terms are used it is either as a gesture of courtesy or half in jest, to single out a person from a group; or they are used in addressing distant clansmen or members of linked clans with whom one is not well acquainted. The usage conforms to the rule that kinship terms—other than those for mother (*ma*) and parent-in-law (*deema*)—are not as a rule used in addressing close relatives and are chiefly used towards distant relatives as a sign of special respect or courtesy. On the other hand, the terms for siblings are regularly used in referring to or making statements about brothers and sisters.

Tau (pl. *tap*) is the term for a sibling of opposite sex to the speaker or the subject of a statement. A man will say '*N-tau n-ɛl Ba'arɔ*—My sister is married to this place Ba'ari'; and a woman, '*N-yɛa n-tau yiri*—I am going to my brother's homestead.' The term *tau* has no age significance, as age differences do not affect the social relations of opposite sex siblings, but the suffixes *-kpeem* (senior) and *-bil* (junior) can be added for descriptive clarity.

An elder sibling of the same sex is *bier* (pl. *biernam*), a younger is *pit* (pl. *pirəba*).

A sibling by the same mother (whether or not the father is the same) is called *soog* (pl. *saarət*) without reference to sex or age; but sex and relative age can be indicated by combining *soog* with the preceding terms. Thus *tasoog* is a *soog* of the opposite sex; *bier-soog* is an older *soog* sibling of the same sex; *pit-soog* is a younger *soog* sibling of the same sex. These terms, as we have seen,[1] are extended to all uterine kin.

A sibling of different maternal origin is described by the term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*). Anyone who can be regarded as a sibling by the rules of classificatory kinship may be referred to thus, and the term is also used in corporate relations to denote co-ordinate lineage segments.[2] By itself *sunzɔ* may indicate a patrilineal sibling of either sex, but the suffixes *-pɔk* (female) and *-doog* (male) are often added to indicate the sex of the person referred to.

The Solidarity of 'soog' Siblings

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The interplay of the various factors that mould the relations of siblings can best be understood by studying their genetic development. True siblings always grow up together in their natal family through the formative years of childhood, whether they remain together after adolescence or separate. Thus the mutual attachment and identity of

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[1] Cf. Ch. II above.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 201.

interests of siblings, particularly of brothers, is built up on common upbringing and a common body of affective experience. In the older settlements the children of an expanded family, or even of a group of families based on a medial lineage, grow up together. Hence one finds, as has already been recorded,[1] that any member of an inner lineage knows the life-history of every other member. 593 ●

This common background of siblings is illustrated in children's play-groups.[2] In the older settlements the play-groups of children under 8 or thereabouts rarely include children who belong to different medial lineages. It is the children of a group of adjacent homesteads, who are *ipso facto* members of the same inner or at most medial lineage, that form regular play-groups. Children of one sex of the same joint family or expanded family between whom there is not a wide age-gap always play together in the same group. Siblings of like sex learn together, and to an important extent from one another, the economic skills and practical knowledge they will need in order to get their livelihood. As nearly common a body of experience as is possible for separate individuals shapes their social personalities and directs their interests, ideals, and purposes towards culturally defined goals and values. In Tale society men or women of equal social maturity tend to think and feel alike in the same situation. Thus the similarity of character marking them out amongst their age-fellows which one very often observes in a pair of brothers or sisters is noteworthy,[3] the more so as differences of temperament and intelligence are not obliterated thereby. It is, indeed, just this uniformity of character that makes it difficult for some brothers and sisters to get on well with each other. 593 857

The ties of mutual attachment, loyalty, and solidarity in social matters that unite siblings are graded according to their genealogical closeness. They are closest for full (*soog*) siblings and progressively less close for those who have only a father in common, a paternal grandfather in common, a paternal great-grandfather in common, or more remote connexion. 593

These differences are laid down in earliest infancy. The intimacy and close mutual identification of full siblings is rooted in their common dependence on their mother in childhood. It is to her that they look for food and emotional security, and a mother's care is given to all her small children equally and in a group. In the hunger months if a woman gets hold of a little grain to cook some food for her children, she calls them all to eat of it and they all sit down together around the dish. The first lessons in sharing equally are learnt in this setting. The 6-year-

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 210.

[2] I have given a short description of these play-groups in my '*Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*', previously cited.

[3] The processes of education that lie behind the formation of social personality among the Tallensi are more fully discussed in the paper just cited.

● 593 old; admonished sometimes by his mother, tries not to eat too greedily lest his 2-year-old brother or sister eating with him should not have his fill. The 11- or 12-year-old, copying his parents, will take a mouthful or two and then say he has had enough, leaving the dish to be finished by his younger siblings. Thus are the seeds of the concern for each other's welfare commonly found between full siblings planted through the precept and example of the mother.

593 857 As we have seen, children sleep with their mother in infancy and early childhood. The feeling of emotional security this gives to a child thus becomes associated with his maternal siblings. Tarəmba, aged about 9, was playing with his usual companions of about the same age—four other boys and a little girl. All but one of these children came from the same expanded family. I stopped to chat to them. After a while we got on to the subject of parents. Yindubil said he preferred his father to his mother. Tarəmba interrupted, exclaiming, 'Hee! he 's telling fibs. It 's only because his mother has run away. My mother is dead and so I can't help it, I've got to like my father best. But if you have a mother it 's different. She is the one who gives you food; and when night comes you sleep beside her, and you don't have bad dreams. If [828] you sleep alone you have bad dreams.' For a Talɔŋ sleeping badly or having bad dreams is the arch symptom of a state of anxiety. Tarəmba's wistful remarks sum up vividly what a mother means to a Talɔŋ as the focus of his sense of security, and this affect adheres to a full sibling. It forms a strong motive in the reluctance of full brothers to part and set up separate households or separate homesteads. Tɔbɔg and Dɔbil were full brothers (*saarət*), both middle-aged men with adult children. They lived together and farmed together in great amity. I knew them well and had occasion more than once to discuss with them one of my stock subjects, why *soog* brothers do not, like half-brothers, separate when their families start growing up. 'No', they said, 'thus it is pleasant (*ŋwala m-mah*). Being together thus we help each other. We two sitting here, are we not the children of one mother? He and I, we come from one vulva (*ti yi la pɛn yɛnni na*).' This is the standard explanation given for the lifelong partnership of *soog* brothers.

Soog siblings are generally devoted to each other and always, as far as my observation goes, unquestioningly loyal to each other in relation to other people. One sees this very clearly in the behaviour of young children. Babies and infants are often left by their mothers in the care of older children. A woman may ask one of her co-wives' children to keep an eye on her infant for a little while, but it is not usual for an infant to be left for hours on end, or a whole day, in the care of a half-sibling. So if one sees an infant being carried about by a young girl of 10 or 11 one can be fairly certain that they are either full siblings or that the little nursemaid is the infant's mother's classificatory 'sister' or 'child', whom she has specially brought to live with her

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as nursemaid to the baby. If one sees a boy taking care of an infant one can be certain that the children are *saarət*. A boy will gladly keep an eye on a baby half-brother or half-sister for an hour or so, but he will refuse to take care of the baby for a longer period. Not so with his *soog* sibling. Boys delight in carrying their infant *saarət* about or having them with them in the same play-group. All children are very patient and affectionate with younger *saarət*. A homely sight is that of a little boy or girl of about 6 or 7 kneeling beside a baby sibling on the ground and caressing its face with slightly parted lips.

Tale children often squabble among themselves, with that mixture of earnestness and fantasy that runs through so many of their group activities; but I have never seen a child trying maliciously to hurt another. Between siblings, especially full siblings near to each other in age, squabbling is regarded as a normal habit. It is one of the signs of their equality and familiarity. So one sometimes sees a little boy or girl of 3 or 4 angrily pummelling a sibling of 7 or 8 and the older child playfully warding off the childish blows. Or one sees an infant howling in rage for something and his elder brother or sister patiently soothing him. Yindubil, aged about 8, whose mother had run away, was being brought up by his father's younger wife. Her little son, Mɔɣar-pu-la'at, aged about 4, was very fond of Yindubil and followed him about wherever he went. Said Yindubil, of his half-brother, with a grin, 'He 's quarrelsome, always wants to scrap with me. But I don't mind; he 's my *soog*[1] and besides he 's not greedy. If our mother prepares some food for us he always waits for me to come and join him.' Passing Bayankura's homestead one morning I found his children standing about in front of the gateway. As I came up, the youngest, a boy of about 3, ran to his brother, a lad of 11 or 12, and clung to him. Their half-sister, aged about 9, laughed and said to me: 'He (the infant) is afraid of you, so he runs to his *soog*.' I asked, 'Why didn't he run to you?'—for a small child runs to its mother or older sister more readily than to a brother or its father for protection. 'Oh', she replied, 'he likes his *soog* better than me.' I asked Kyekambe, aged about 11 or 12, whom he liked best, his small *soog* brother Badiwona, aged about 6, or his half-brothers who were his constant playmates. 'Badiwona', he said emphatically, 'we are one mother's children, and some day, when I move out to farm on my own, he will come with me, the others won't.' Similarly, Maeŋya, aged about 12, and his *soog*-brother Tɛndaanbon, aged about 8, were inseparable. They helped each other to hoe their respective ground-nut plots and always went about together. They ate together regularly out of the same dish; they went on errands together.

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[1] Not in the strict sense, of course. But this is a very good example of how being brought up by the same 'mother' creates sentiments of attachment similar to those of true *saarət*. I came across several instances of this.

593 857 [155] Once a smaller boy who was with them hit Maɛŋya. Maɛŋya turned furiously on the small boy; but it was somewhat comical to see Tɛndaanbon equally angry with the assailant. Like many full or half-siblings of about the same age and the same sex, these two boys were extraordinarily alike in character, modelling themselves obviously on their father. They had his blunt and honest habits of speech, his diligence and readiness to oblige, and a sense of responsibility beyond their years.

Until one of them reaches the age of about 9 or 10, and sometimes even after that age, *soog* siblings are frequently together irrespective of sex. That is why one often sees a little girl with a group of small boys, or a little boy with a group of small girls. Between the ages of about 9 and 12 the sexual dichotomy prevailing in Tale culture begins to have a strong influence on the children, as we have seen. Different economic activities divide boys and girls. One rarely finds girls accompanying the herd boys or boys going for firewood with their mothers and sisters. Boys are beginning to share the interests and activities of the men, girls those of the women. Boys go about with their 'mates' (*taab*, sing. *taraan*) or 'chums' (*dɔlɔntaas*, sing. *dɔlɔntaa*) of about the same age, and girls with their girl chums. Boys of 11 and 12 are apt to be rather scornful of girls, and girls of this age turn up their noses at their boy contemporaries. Overtly, their attitudes to one another remind one of the latency phase in European children. Children round about 11 to 13 do not play together much in groups except on special occasions. Girls, in particular, are at home a good deal.

593 572 This is the time, therefore, when the sex factor begins to exercise a strong influence on the relations of siblings; age differences also become significant; and with this emerges a distinction between the social aspect of siblingship and the affective, personal aspect. A boy of 11 to 13 may make a boon companion of a half-brother or a classificatory brother from a neighbouring homestead of about his own age, leaving his younger *soog* brother or sister to his or her own devices if the difference between them is considerable. When Kɔyatee came to see me it was always with one of his chums who belonged to a different branch of his medial lineage, never with his younger *soog* brother or sister.

It is the same with girls at this stage. Ba'anzee's best friend was her classificatory 'daughter' of about her own age from the next homestead. They used to come up to the camp to call on my wife, as they generally announced to me, their arms affectionately round each other's neck. Maanyeya's daily playmate was her classificatory sister of about the same age from a neighbouring homestead—until her mother had a baby who wholly absorbed Maanyeya's delighted attention.

This tendency to seek outside friendships, though still chiefly among siblings of the same inner lineage, increases with the approach of adolescence. From the age of about 14 to 16 up to about 18 to 20 many

boys are keenly learning the art of courtship and are experimenting 593
with sex. They have sweethearts (*gab*, pl. *gabnam*), most commonly 572
slightly younger girls of the same clan whom they call 'sisters' in the
widest sense. These girls may have serious suitors from other clans,
but not being quite ripe for marriage find much more pleasure and
excitement in their freer relations with their clan 'brothers'. With them [836]
they can indulge in sexual play, not always stopping short of intercourse,
without criticism. Now when boys go to visit their sweethearts they
often like to have the company of a friend (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) of about the
same age, who has a similar interest in such adventures. For this a boy
prefers a friend from another homestead, a not too near classificatory
brother, to a close brother. Later on such a pair of friends will help
each other in serious courtship, for one cannot carry on a serious courtship
without a friend to act as spokesman and go-between. And a
distant brother is preferable to a close brother as a friend in affairs of
the heart. It helps to keep them secret from the other members of one's
family, and that is desirable because it is a point of honour with every
young man to find a wife for himself. The same motives operate with
girls between the ages of about 13 and marriage at 16 to 18 years of age.
A girl likes going to market with a girl friend of about her own age who
is equally interested in the young men around. But if a girl is thinking
of eloping with a suitor she prefers to confide in her mother or her clan-brother
sweetheart. Having no rights in the bride-price they will—for
a bribe from the suitor—help her to get away, whereas her own brothers
will insist on a marriage by arrangement so as to make sure of the
bride-price.

But the divergence of interests and companionship in the years
immediately preceding and following adolescence does not disturb the 593
personal intimacy and attachment of *soog* siblings. Custom prescribes 264
that husband and wife should eat separately. So a man eats with one
or two of his younger children, and each of his wives eats with one of
her younger daughters or an infant. The other children are divided up,
one dish of porridge to this pair of boys or that pair of girls or even to
a girl and a boy. They may be full siblings or half-siblings, and the
porridge they are eating on a particular occasion may be of their mother's
co-wife's cooking. Nevertheless, every child continues to think of his
own mother as the food-giver and of his *saarət* as those with whom he
automatically shares food. A boy of 12 does not sleep in his mother's
room, yet he still regards her as the source of his sense of emotional
security. In a small and harmonious polygynous family the children
are almost equally at home in all the women's quarters, but in a large
joint family the children of one woman tend to be in her quarters for
most of the time that they are indoors.

Of many other signs of the lasting intimacy of full siblings and their 593
closer identification with each other than with their half-siblings, the 578

593 578 best is this. A 12-year-old is conscious of his seniority (*kpɛmət*) in relation to his younger siblings. He orders them about and pulls them up if they are not behaving properly. But whereas he would not hesitate for a moment to smack a younger *soog*, he will not go further than scolding a younger half-sibling for the same offence. Tallensi say that if you strike your younger *soog* it does not matter; your mother or your father may rebuke you afterwards and the affair is forgotten. But if you strike a half-sibling—even if the child has behaved so disgracefully that public opinion will be on your side—you cause friction in the family. The child's mother gets annoyed with you and with your mother and quarrels arise.

593 835 There is another interesting indication of this. As has been previously mentioned, Tallensi do not designate incest between brother and sister as sinful. When they say it is forbidden (*kih*), as they sometimes do, they mean it rather in the sense that it is disgraceful, scandalous, and unnatural than in the narrower ritual sense. If they are asked why then it is so uncommon, considering the many opportunities and temptations that surely offer, they explain it by the intimacy of siblings in childhood and adolescence. They deny that the temptation exists. 'Look', said Sinkawol, arguing this point with me, 'my sister, is she not marriageable? And here am I, however attractive she is, I do not even notice it; I am never aware that she has a vagina; she is just my sister and someone will one day come and marry her and I will give her to him and get my cows. You and your sister grow up together, you quarrel and make it up, how can you desire to have intercourse with her?' This is a stock argument with the Tallensi.

593 864 At the same time the natives are the first to point out that sexual play in childhood generally begins with a classificatory sibling. Family play is a regular thing in the under-8 play-groups; and the final realistic touch is for the 'husband' and 'wife' to pretend to have coitus. This is common knowledge, and adults laugh at it. A standing joke is to tease a small boy about his so-called sweethearts. As we have seen, Tallensi say that small children 'have no sense (*ha yam*)', and therefore it is not a breach of propriety or morals for them to play at coitus with a sibling. Every man I questioned on the subject told me, with a grin of amusement, that his first sweetheart was a 'sister', sometimes of the same expanded family, more often of the same inner or medial lineage. 'We were very small and didn't know better', they said.

But Tallensi maintain stoutly that even small boys of 6 or 7 do not play at coitus with their *soog* sisters or half-sisters. There are exceptions, of course, they readily admit. There are stupid children, precocious children, and badly brought up children. Among such children instances of brothers copulating with sisters are bound to occur. It has been known to happen even with adolescents, who are presumed to 'have sense'. If it is found out, the culprits are given a severe thrashing

593 864 and are taunted for months afterwards by their fellows. But these are not the reasons why children so rarely commit this impropriety. It is because of the intimacy, the closeness to each other in daily life, of brother and sister. Children do not need to be told that it is wrong to copulate with a sibling of the same joint family; they know it themselves. And, in fact, children from the age of 6 or 7 and upwards always say, with an expression of disgust, that sexual play with one's own siblings is wrong. Moreover, though they are not taught it as an avoidance, they are well aware of the conventional attitudes on the subject from listening to adult conversation.[1]

521 831 593 Incidentally, there are no taboos on conversation on sex matters among the Tallensi. Men, women, and children are all outspoken about sexual matters, though young women are apt to use euphemisms and to talk more circumspectly than men. Some men also say that it is embarrassing to talk about sexual subjects in front of young wives or female relatives-in-law. But no native hesitates to discuss these subjects in the presence of his sister.

593 761 These ties of mutual affection and devotion between *soog* siblings last throughout life and are extended to their children too. One sees this most dramatically in the grief people show, and especially women, over the death of a *soog* sibling. Tallensi say that very often the loss of a full brother is a greater shock to a woman than the death of her husband. A husband is replaceable, a full brother not, they add. When Kpe'emi died his wife fainted and afterwards sat about disconsolately, weeping at intervals for days. His *soog* sister also fainted, but, the men said, it had been much more difficult to revive her than her sister-in-law and she became ill with grief. Seeing the two young women together one could not doubt that it was the sister who felt the blow worst.

593 793 Another vivid demonstration of the strength of this tie between full siblings occurred when Tendaan Teroog performed the succession ceremony on succeeding to the custody of his maximal lineage *bɔɣar*. A large crowd had gathered, chiefly men—clansmen, and neighbours and matrilateral kinsmen of Teroog's maximal lineage. Amongst them my

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[1] The psychological undercurrents of these conventional attitudes do not concern us here, but it may be remarked that there is probably a strong and partly overt sexual component in the affective relations of brother and sister. I was struck by this when I once had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of Yamzooya (aged about 11) and his *soog* sister (aged about 8) who were playing together in a corner of the room where I was chatting to their father. The children, who were quite naked, stood embracing each other, the boy with his legs round his sister's, and they twisted and wriggled about as if they were engaged in a mixture of an orgiastic dance and a wrestling-match. They were both in a state of high excitement, panting and giggling and muttering to each other, with obvious sexual pleasure. They seemed to be oblivious of their surroundings. This game went on for about twenty minutes after which they separated and lolled back as if exhausted. These two children were most attached to each other.

593 793 eye was caught by an old woman who seemed to be particularly privileged, as she walked about giving orders, and greeting the guests. I was not surprised to learn that she was Teroog's only surviving full sister (*tasoog*). He presented her to me with great pride, holding her hand affectionately. She sat beside him throughout the rites, listening intently to his long invocation to their ancestors, prompting him once or twice, and helping him as if she and he were jointly succeeding to the ownership of the *bɔɣar*. One could see that the notion that any woman might well have been in her brother's place in the social system if it were not for an accident of birth has a very concrete meaning to the Tallensi.

593 Full (*soog*) siblings, as we have already related, constantly visit one another, bringing and taking away gifts. When a woman has a baby, her full sister hastens to her with a bundle of firewood or a dish of soup ingredients. If a person falls ill, his full siblings come running to see him. When Kuur fell and broke his ankle there was consternation among his immediate relatives. Two of his half-brothers rushed off at once to consult a diviner about the accident—no laughing matter, as they well realized, for a man in the fifties—while his full sister stayed behind to nurse him. His wife hovered about helplessly, only approaching him when his sister called for some more hot water. The sister came to him every day for the next week or so and was his most devoted nurse.

593 622 We have described before, also, how full brothers generally hold together, economically and residentially, longer than half-brothers and often throughout their lives. This is due, basically, to their close identification with and attachment to each other. One constantly comes across examples of this. Samane was the Chief of Tongo's right-hand man and probably the only person who had the chief's absolute trust. Why, I once asked Samane, did the chief not put the same trust in his own son Saa? 'Don't you see', said Samane, 'the chief and I are born of one father and one mother. We are as one. He will have no secrets from me or I from him. A man's brother is more to him than his son. Saa wouldn't care[1] if the chief died and he succeeded. I want my brother to live, for his being chief is just as if I were chief myself.' Again, one of the very few cases I knew of men working abroad sending home regular remittances of money was Sɔɣar's policeman brother. When I praised him, Sɔɣar said, as if in explanation, 'He is my *soog*'.

593 422 This comes out very clearly, too, in the property relations of full brothers. Men of the same joint family borrow one another's clothes freely, though the individual ownership of the clothes is never in doubt and the owner's permission is always necessary. But full brothers behave almost as if their clothes were their common property. Hence when a man dies his full brother often takes some of his clothes, instead of leaving all to his sons. There is also a specific ritual sanction in this relationship, the common subjection of full brothers to their mother's

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[1] He was the chief's first-born son. Cf. p. 225 above.

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spirit, perpetuating, on the religious plane, their common dependence on her in her lifetime. 422

It must not be thought, however, that friction between full siblings never occurs. That would be contrary to human nature, the natives often declare. As amongst most peoples, sibling solidarity conceals a strong element of rivalry. Indeed there is one circumstance in which it is taken for granted that *soog* siblings will be prone to quarrel all their lives, even if they do not set up separate homesteads. Two successive children of the same mother and father are regarded as born rivals. The second of the two children, irrespective of sex, is called the *nyeer* of the first. The first *nye* (verb = immediately precedes) the second, who *taɣal* (verb = immediately follows) the first in birth order. The definition applies strictly to birth sequence, not to survival order. A child is not its older *soog* sibling's *nyeer* if between them their mother had another child who died in infancy, or a miscarriage—for a miscarriage counts as a birth. The concept *nyeer* is regularly used to indicate an infant's degree of maturity. An infant that has a *nyeer*, or is old enough to have a *nyeer*, is entering the second conventionally recognized stage of social development, childhood proper. So if a native is asked about the stage of development reached by a particular child and says, 'It has a *nyeer* (*u mar nyeer*)' or 'It is fit to have a *nyeer* (*u saɣa nyeer marəga*)', one can infer that the child is between 3 and 5 years old—or, to keep to native categories of thought, that it is weaned, no longer needs the constant care of its mother or a nursemaid, and is beginning to fend for itself, to join in children's play-groups, and to become acquainted with the world outside the homestead walls. 593 578 856

A child and its *nyeer* are believed to be rivals almost from the day the *nyeer* is born. This predisposes them to be ill tempered with each other and wrangle on the most trivial provocation. Often when I have noticed two children bickering or annoying each other in some petty way, my companion—a man or an older child perhaps—has said with a laugh, 'There 's someone and his *nyeer* (*nit ni u nyeer nla*)'. Once at a funeral ceremony there was an argument between the two sons of the dead man. It ended with the older giving the younger a buffet across the mouth that drew blood. Relatives intervened and separated them. Then an old woman, their father's *soog* sister, with mingled pleading, protests, and sighs, dragged the younger brother away to attend to his cut lip. He was weeping with injured pride and humiliation, exclaiming, 'If he were not my older brother (*bier*) I would kill him'. The people sitting around commented scathingly on this shameless spectacle. Then someone remarked, 'Oh well, it 's a case of a man and his *nyeer*'. It had all begun, I learnt, from the younger lad's accusing the older of having appropriated something belonging to him and the older losing his temper with him for fussing about ridiculous trifles on such a solemn day. 593 578

593 518 If a person is ill tempered or unnecessarily sharp with him, or appears to dislike him, a Taləŋ retorts with 'Why do you dislike me? Am I your *nyeer*, or what? (*I yaagəm bo? Man a i nyeer bɛ?*)' This formula is always spoken half-mockingly; for the rivalry of successive children, though assumed to be in the very nature of their relationship, is not taken too seriously. It is not, like the underlying rivalry of father and first-born son, subject to ritual sanctions. It is simply an acute expression of the familiarity and equality of siblings and does not destroy their solidarity.[1] Tallensi themselves say that successive siblings often get on together admirably and stand together as staunchly as any other full siblings. I have never heard it said that *soog* brothers are quicker to set up separate households if they are successive siblings than if they are not.

518 593 595 Tale custom recognizes the rivalry of successive siblings in a number of other ways. Thus successive siblings (this applies chiefly to brothers) may not be buried in the same grave. If they are, their spirits will be continually quarrelling and persecuting their descendants until they are exhumed and separated. Again, successive sisters may not be married to the same man or even to the same clan. But this rule is, to my own knowledge, often broken. If they do happen to be married into the same clan the sisters must avoid being pregnant at the same time or, if they are, they must not see each other during their pregnancy. If they do one or both will miscarry. Here it is belief rather than practice that is a sign of the rivalry of successive siblings. Tallensi object to having two sisters married to the same man for prudential reasons. They say that it is obviously more difficult to get eight cows out of one man in payment of bride-price than it is to get four cows. Nevertheless it does sometimes occur. A well-to-do son-in-law who has his father-in-law's esteem can often persuade the old man to give him another daughter to wife. [789] If the girls are successive siblings, a very simple magical rite involving the burying of a hoe at the entrance of the husband's homestead serves to 'cut' their *nyeer* relationship.[2]

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[1] I do not know whether successive siblings quarrel more often than non-successive siblings. Tallensi say they do. Knowing the Tallensi, I have no doubt that conventional expectation itself acts as a stimulus to petty wrangling between successive siblings. Every time they have a disagreement not only onlookers but they themselves put the conventional interpretation on the situation, and this is bound to make them more touchy in relation to each other than to other siblings. In every aspect of Tale social life cultural definitions and expectations direct behaviour in this way. On the other hand, I knew several pairs of successive siblings who got on extremely well together and to all appearances never said a cross word to each other. Tallensi admit that this is quite common and explain it by the invariable stock phrase 'It 's all a matter of character'.

828 [2] A question that immediately suggests itself is, whence does the rivalry of successive siblings arise? I have put this question to many Tallensi. The usual answer is in terms of the cliché that 'it is in the nature of things (*de yɛl nla*)'.

To return to our main subject, squabbles between children, 573 whether they are successive siblings or not, are laughed away. When 578 adult brothers and sisters quarrel it is taken more seriously. The irresponsibility—as the men view it—of women in marriage often leads to family quarrels. A woman who runs away from a husband to whom she has been given, or obstinately returns to one from whom she has been taken, arouses her father's and her brothers' anger. There may be a temporary estrangement between them. But in the end they usually become reconciled again. If she does not give in, her father or brothers do. 'They have no alternative but to give in (*ba kɔŋ ka diegəra*)', the natives say. Before that happens, however, there may be a father's curse on the girl and hard words spoken to her and her husband by her brothers.

Adult *soog* brothers also fall out at times, but in contrast to disputes between half-brothers this seems very rarely to become either the pretext or the stimulus to their deciding to separate. Tallensi ascribe it to peculiarities of personality. The very fact that full brothers are often alike in character may be the cause of friction between them. To give one or two illustrations, there was the case of Zaŋ and his older *soog* brother Pumaan. They were both inclined to be solitary, egocentric, excessively touchy about their status, and suspicious of others. The strong competitive streak in them inevitably coloured their relations. So Zaŋ often complained that he found Pumaan's authority irksome. But there was never, as far as I could discover, an open quarrel between

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But one or two more thoughtful informants appeared to have an inkling of the deeper sources of this peculiarity. They connected it with the fact that the older 828 sibling is 'set aside' or 'left to itself (*bah*)' by the mother when she becomes pregnant with its *nyeer*. That is to say, the child's physical weaning is completed and simultaneously its affective attachment to its mother—a very possessive attachment with unweaned Tale babies—is brought to an end. A *nyeer* dispossesses its immediately preceding sibling of their mother's undivided care and devotion in both the physical and the psychological sense. This is a fact of observation and one which has a direct influence on family life. As we know, Tallensi maintain that it is very difficult for a woman to take care of two unweaned infants, hence the prohibition against a woman's becoming pregnant [843] again before her infant is old enough to do without her undivided attention. When this custom is broken, so that a premature pregnancy follows, the parents are said to *nye* their child. As this term, cognate with *nyeer*, suggests, and conventional opinion confirms, a premature *nyeer* is believed to endanger a child's life. On the analogy of what is known to happen in our society, it can be surmised that the open acknowledgement of rivalry between successive siblings is a culturally standardized safety-valve for the jealousy and resentment the older sibling has against the younger for robbing him of their mother's attention. This explains also why successive birth order is the significant feature and not survival order. The older child's resentment will be directed only against its immediately next-born sibling, the one on whose account it was 'set aside', whether that sibling lives or not. It is possible, moreover, that open acknowledgement of the rivalry of successive siblings prevents it from turning into a disruptive element in the relations of siblings.

593 578 them, and Zaŋ stood unswervingly by Pumaan, when the latter took sides against the head of their own medial lineage in the dispute over the succession to the clan *bɔyar*. Nindɔyat and Yintee, who, unlike Zaŋ and Pumaan, still farmed together, were cast in the same mould. Both were notorious for their instability and aggressiveness. They were known to quarrel frequently and on at least one occasion came to blows. But no one could have been more loyal to Nindɔyat than Yintee, in particular where the possessions of the family were concerned.

In short, though *soog* siblings come into conflict at times it does not undermine their solidarity. The reason for this is obvious. The crux of the sibling relationship lies in its social definition. Personal qualities may modify its content in particular cases; they cannot break up its structure; and this holds for every degree of sibling relationship. In the case of *soog* siblings the infrangible core is the relation of uterine siblings to and through their mother, as members of the matricentral *dug* in contraposition to the patricentral *yir*, first in the joint family and later in the lineage. The significance of this factor, the notion of maternal origin, can be judged from the relations of *soog* brothers who have different fathers. They may have no common economic interests and may grow up separately, after the early years of childhood. But they have very firm ties of affection and mutual loyalty, which are often expressed through mutual economic aid. Sie and Da'amo'o were *soog* brothers thus related, their mother having first been married to Sie's father and after his death to Da'amo'o's father, who belonged to a different medial lineage of the clan. Sie was the older of the two by ten or fifteen years. Whenever he was in trouble over something Da'amo'o went to seek Sie's advice rather than his proxy father's. This principle, as we have noted before, is of general validity in Tale social structure. It appears in the stronger cohesion and amity always found between individuals and lineages whose progenitors were *saarət* than between those who are only patrilineally connected. Nɛna'ab and Ɔndieso remained great friends in spite of the long-standing quarrel between their two inner lineages, because their mothers were full sisters. At the level of maximal lineage organization, Seug is a much more closely knit section of Tongo than the other three sections, because the founding ancestors of the two major segments of Seug were sons of one mother.[1]

Solidarity and Equality among sunzɔ Siblings

593 605 But the critical importance of the idea of their common parentage, bilaterally or unilaterally, in the relations of siblings is best shown in the differences between the relations of *soog* siblings and those of half-siblings and other paternal siblings (*sunzɔp*). Tallensi tend to draw a line between *soog* siblings and all other sibling relatives within the same nuclear lineage or inner lineage. Thus half-siblings (i.e. children of

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 213.

the same father by different mothers) and ortho-cousins (father's brothers' children) are all lumped together as *sunzɔp* of close degree, referred to by sibling terms. Though the exact degree of patrilineal kinship between a pair of siblings has a direct effect on their mutual and common interests and on their place in the family structure, Tallensi tend to feel the same way towards an ortho-cousin as towards a half-sibling. This is natural since brothers' children often grow up together in the same domestic family. 593 605

The social and personal relations of *sunzɔp* siblings of the same nuclear lineage are identical in pattern with those of *soog* siblings. But they differ, markedly at times, in degree; for the affective as well as social relations of siblings are a function of their genealogical distance from one another, and in particular of the cleavages fixed by differences of maternal parentage.

Many indications of this have been given in previous chapters and in the preceding paragraphs, for one cannot isolate the relations of *soog* siblings from the total context of family relations or from the total field of sibling relations. Having different mothers or different fathers creates significant differences in the social relations and personal intercourse of children with their parents and with each other. It stamps the child's experience of the common domestic environment and family history uniquely for himself and his full siblings. The structural correlate of this, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, is the distinctive field of cognatic kinship which goes with different maternal origin. Hence his social position in relation to his siblings is directly reflected in his sentiments and attitudes towards them. Differentiation in the field of genealogical ties carries with it differentiation of status, rights, and duties, and this has an immediate counterpart in affective behaviour. Thus, whereas it is assumed that full brothers will remain together for most of their lives, half-brothers are expected to separate in due course; and whereas discord between *soog* brothers is felt to require explanation by reference to personal idiosyncrasies, what is felt to call for such explanation in the case of half-brothers is their adhering to each other when most people would expect them to separate. 'It is only because we are on such good terms that Barimoda (his younger half-brother) still shares the homestead with me', said Naabdiya, when he was describing the organization of his domestic family. 593

In childhood and adolescence paternal siblings may be the greatest comrades in play and work. The affective cleavage between them comes out chiefly in the domestic circle—when they go off at night to sleep in their respective mothers' quarters; when they seek the solace of their own mothers in sickness or distress; when an older sibling merely scolds his younger *sunzɔ* for a fault for which he would have smacked his *soog*; and so forth. The relations of *sunzɔ* siblings are strongly coloured by the social and personal relations of their mothers. *Sunzɔ*

● 593 siblings whose mothers are or were classificatory or clan sisters have stronger bonds than those whose mothers were not kin. Such ties, intersecting those of patrilineal kinship, are very common. The children of a woman and her *pəɣasoog*[1] (a 'sister' or other kinswoman she brings into the family as a child to look after her baby, and who later marries her husband or another man of the family) feel almost as close to each other as if they were full sisters' children. Most common, however, are cases such as that of Naabdiya and Barimoda, who trace their long-lasting amicable association back to the excellent personal relations of their mothers.

After adolescence, with the attainment of greater economic responsibility, the cleavage between *sunzɔ* siblings becomes more apparent, though it is still largely masked by membership of the same domestic and economic unit. Paternal control and the common needs of the unit hold their divergent interests in check. Sex differences become significant in the same way as with *soog* siblings; but brothers are usually partners in work and often comrades in leisure.

At this time the pattern of their future relations emerges clearly. Its
593 keynote is a free-and-easy comradeship on terms of equality. Differ-
865 ences of age, formally recognized in the terminology of kinship and
socially significant as they are in the distribution of authority, rights, and duties, hardly influence the personal relations of brothers in young manhood, or even later. No Taləŋ, man, woman, or child, will submit to arbitrary authority without resistance. If any demand made on another person in virtue of superiority of generation, age, or sex is felt to be unreasonable or unjust it will be resisted. Quite small children, obedient as they are, jib at commands from parents or older siblings if they think them unreasonable or unfair.

593 This attitude is particularly strong among siblings. The basis of their social and personal relationships is the principle of sharing (*tɔt*). This principle underlies the social relations of siblings of any degree as well as of corporate units whose relative standing is assimilated to those of siblings, such as co-ordinate lineage segments. As we have noted earlier, it is one of the chief contrasts between the relations of father and son and those of brother and brother. It is summed up in the maxim: 'A man and his father do not share; a man and his brother share (*Nit ni u ba pu tɔta; nit ni u mabiig ntɔt*).'

As will be recollected, this maxim is most clearly illustrated in the
593 rules of inheritance. Brothers are coheirs, even though the effective
428 management of the lands and chattels they inherit from their father is
vested in the oldest of them at any given time. Hence if a man has
423 only 'sons' to consider in dealing with property that has come to him by
inheritance from his father or brother, he is in theory free to dispose of
it as he pleases. But if he is merely the oldest of a group of brothers

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[1] Cf. Ch. IV. above.

inheriting from their father he will be effectively restrained by his 593 brothers. This rule is constantly met with in discussions of the pledging 428 of property or the sale of land or cattle. Naabdiya summed up these rules very well in reference to the various farms held by the members 423 of his inner lineage of Kunduzoor biis. First there was the home farm originally inherited and left intact by Kunduzoor at the time of his death, now owned by the last of his and his brothers' sons, Na'am. Na'am could, if he wished, sell some or all of this land, since on his death it will pass to men whom he calls 'sons'. 'We (the sons) could protest but we could not restrain him', said Naabdiya, 'but Kunduzoor (i.e. his spirit) would be angry and would slay Na'am.' Then there was some land Kunduzoor had himself acquired and left intact, heritable only by his direct descendants. The largest part of this was now owned by Na'ampa'ahya, the oldest of his true grandsons. 'He cannot sell this land', said Naabdiya; 'we, his brothers (who will inherit after him) could restrain him. In the old days we should not hesitate to draw arrows in order to do so, but now we would drag him to the chief, who would forbid the sale.'

The records of land sales in the past which I collected at Tongo amply confirm Naabdiya's statement. When Na'ampa'ahya inherited this land from the last of Kunduzoor's own sons it was as oldest of a group of brothers. So he had to 'cut off (*ŋma*)' portions of it for his other brothers. These distributed portions are normally re-amalgamated with the main block of patrimonial land as the brothers inherit from one another and add their portions to the main block. But if friction develops between brothers over a serious issue, it may result in one of them refusing to let his portion revert to the patrimonial land. Such a case occurred in Naabdiya's inner lineage in his father's time. One of Kunduzoor's sons, having become his father's heir, took offence at an apparent slight put upon him by a son of his father's brother. So he took an oath that his portion of the patrimonial land should never revert to the brother who would inherit from him and made a bond with his brothers that they should act likewise. Such a compact could never have been made by a man with his 'sons'. Characteristically, the compact left uneasy consciences. A generation later deaths occurred in the lineage. Diviners said they were a punishment for certain actions that resulted [787] from this compact and Kunduzoor's grandsons were commanded to annul it. They could no longer do so in fact, but a token annulment and an expiatory sacrifice to their grandfather were considered sufficient.

In accordance with this principle we find that duties and rewards are 593 distributed among siblings on a basis of equality of status, though in proportion to such distinguishing personal attributes as age, ability, need, and in conformity with the demands of the situation. When brothers work together as a team in the production of the household's food resources, each is expected to contribute the maximum share he is

593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

593 578 584 Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *sunɔɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbəm. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbəm.

593 613 The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

593 867 This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood, first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

of distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have 593 seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this 867 pattern.

The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the 593 genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; 613 then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family.

As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic 593 of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course, in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally 602 relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action.

The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences, postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one 593 another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land.

We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full 593 economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no 884 inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity.

The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately 593 with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the 884 578

593 884 578 cleavages between *sunɔɔ* siblings, both on the level of jural and economic relations and in sentiment, more prominently to the fore. It is the starting-point of those intra-familial tensions that, according to native views, stir up jealousies between co-wives who are wives of brothers. As we know, these tensions are said to culminate, very often, in quarrels over alleged unfairness in the apportionment of food-supplies, or over the treatment of children, or other ostensible acts of discrimination between co-wives. This is one of the reasons most often adduced for a man's leaving the paternal homestead to farm on his own. From these tensions arise also those disagreements between brothers over petty trespasses on one another's property or independence, summed up in the conventional formula of 'quarrels about chickens and eggs'. The stage is thus set for the typical process of residential and economic fission in the joint family along the genealogical lines of cleavage inherent in it. The equality in status and rights of brothers in relation to one another within the lineage thus attains its maximum emphasis in the social structure. The natives are well aware of the economic pressures behind this process; but they also see that these pressures would not work out in just the way they do if it were not for the inherent dichotomy in the structure of the family and the lineage. These two factors mutually determine and reinforce each other.

This brings up a point of some importance. It is conceivable that 593 578 613 tension between brothers, whatever it is a symptom of, might result in young men separating after the death of their father, or after marriage, to take up land wherever they can find any. Thus a group of brothers would be scattered without respect to their lineage ties; and this process would in a few generations lead to the disintegration of the present highly localized lineage structure, and the emergence of a system of dispersed intermingled clans such as is found in many West African societies.[1] In fact, as previous chapters have shown, there is a slow process of dispersion in progress among the Tallensi all the time, but it has not led to a breakdown of the lineage system. The lineage ramifies, it does not break up into independent units that sever their genealogical ties with the main branch.

The basis of this is the fact that brothers separate but do not thereby relinquish membership of their maximal lineage. They do not sever their social and personal bonds with one another; which means that they do not forfeit any of their rights or relinquish any of their duties as sons and brothers. They are independent only within the bounds set by the corporate unity and the common interests of the lineage system. For it is only through his position in the lineage system that a Taləŋ is able satisfactorily to secure his rights and perform his duties as a

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[1] This would appear to be the case among the Ashanti (cf. R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, ch. viii) and the Jukun (cf. C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom*, ch. ii), to cite only two widely separated examples.

responsible member of his society. Of this we have had ample evidence.[1] 593
Again, there are strong economic elements in the individual's adhesion
to the lineage. There is the pressure due to the form and organization 578
of Tale economy as a whole, which tends to restrict excessive mobility.
As Tallensi themselves often put it, shrewdly picking on the key item 613
in their productive cycle, it is all a question of manure, including human excrement. A home farm in one of the old settlements kept at a high level of fertility by continuous manuring is not light-heartedly abandoned.[2] This fact, and the scarcity of unutilized and unowned farmland in the old settlements, puts a premium on the right to inherit land in them. To-day, it is true, the pressure of these forces has been relaxed by the opening up of an easily accessible external labour market and of facilities for trade both in Taleland and with other areas. These extraneous outlets have made life easier for the natives but they have not, as we have observed before, materially altered their traditional mode of livelihood. In fact they serve to emphasize the contention of the natives that economic motives are of secondary consequence in maintaining lineage unity.

It is not joint interest in, and equal rights to the inheritance of, 593
their patrimonial lands which alone hold a group of brothers together.
Men who leave their natal settlements on account of land shortage do not 577
return home eventually only because they have at last inherited their 764
patrimonial lands. The decisive sanction, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, lies in the obligation of filial piety and what it stands for in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage. The focus of unity for every lineage is the authority of the father, either the real authority of the living father or the mystical supremacy of the dead father or his surrogate, an ancestor spirit. Men like Yinworəb and Da'amo'o gave up wage labour in Kumasi very reluctantly to return home because the death of their fathers left them at the head of their respective joint families, and other similar cases have been quoted in an earlier chapter (p. 179). Similarly, a group of brothers may be scattered, some at home, some in a peripheral settlement, some in Mampurugu, some working abroad. On certain ritual occasions those who are near enough make a point of returning home. Family funerals, in particular, bring the scattered members of the family together. The three chief mourners at Tɛndaan Gieŋ's funeral were his brothers' sons Gikoo-Duun, who lived near Sameni in Mampurugu, Saanbuohba, who had been farming near Tola on the Red Volta for some years, and Baŋ-Duun who had been living at Biuŋ for nearly twenty years. They all

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[1] In preceding chapters as well as in *Dynamics of Clanship*, *passim*.

[2] We have touched on this subject in our earlier book, chapters i and xi. It is more fully considered in C. W. Lynn's report, *Agriculture in North Mamprussi* (Dept. of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Bulletin 34, 1937), and in M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936.

593 577 764 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its 593 psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its 613 validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 578 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zayahkpɛməre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zayahkpɛməre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zayahkpɛməre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zayahkpɛməre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 601 784 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another. As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pəɣa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

of the same inner lineage as 'our wife (*ti pɔγa*)' or even as 'my wife 593
(*m-pɔγa*)'; and, reciprocally, a woman speaks of her husband's brother
of the same inner lineage as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)' or, preferably, as 'my 681
husband's older (younger) brother (*n-sɛt-bier* or *n-sɛt-pit*)', but does not 784
address him thus. The proper reciprocal term of address is *n-kpee* ('my
neighbour'), or *n-dakii* ('my sibling-in-law'). The terms for husband
and wife are used in address only between a man and a distant clan-
brother's wife.

The penalty for breaking this taboo has both a literal and a figurative 593
meaning, in the sense that the brothers will never share anything again 784
or take part in corporate activities as co-members of the same lineage.
It amounts to social and religious ostracism for the sinner, and Tallensi 682
say he would not long survive or his line of descent would perish.
A similar penalty is said to follow the killing of a brother, whether it
happens by accident or design. As we know, incest with a brother's
wife is said to occur, though extremely rarely; fratricide by a brother
of the same inner lineage as the victim is felt to be so abhorrent as to
be likely to happen only by accident in exceptional circumstances. It
has happened once or twice in the past, informants say, when brothers
fought over the division of farm-land, but I have not heard of any
cases having occurred in the last thirty years or so.[1]

The strength of the sanction we are considering can be judged from 593
its incidence, in an attenuated degree, in cases of intra-clan homicide
where the parties are not brothers of the same inner lineage. If this 682
happens, whether intentionally or by accident, the maxim 'A cow has 784
trampled her calf to death (*naaf n-nɔ bu bii ku*)' applies—that is to say,
it is as if a cow had trampled its calf to death; so it is forbidden, on pain
of bringing down the wrath of the ancestors, for the victim's close
agnates to 'cancel the debt' by killing one of the slayer's close agnates.
This rule holds also for lineages or clans interlinked by clanship or
ritual ties. The guilty party offers expiatory sacrifices to the Earth and [783]
then a ritual reconciliation is effected between the two units concerned.
But thenceforth the close agnates of the slayer—members of his nuclear
lineage, usually—will not participate in a sacrifice in which the close
agnates of the victim take part. If the homicide was deliberate, this
taboo will even extend to all the patrilineal descendants of the two men.
Thus Wakii-Sagbarug yidɛm and Kuruugdɛm are adjacent maximal
lineages linked by clanship and ritual ties. On certain occasions they
meet to sacrifice together at an Earth shrine common to them. The
Kuruug people refrain from attending these sacrifices if the chief
officiant is a member of a particular segment of Sagbarug yiri. A Kuruug
man told me the reason for this in confidence. Some four or five

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[1] There is a legend that one of the early chiefs of Tongo slew his brother in order to get the chiefship. Tallensi say this was following the customs of the Mamprusi. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

593 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidem slew the
682 ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice
784 together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective
ancestors.

Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brother-
593 hood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact
578 that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties
602 to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one another.

In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings
593 sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classi-
602 ficatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Tɔŋ-Tɔbəg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzɔ* siblings.

As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests
593 involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible
602 guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few
613 examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will be much more likely to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔɣadir yɛla*) involve the common interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from
the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a
situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*)
brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main
actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is
not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son.
But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For
instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the
payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at
moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*)
acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but
of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody
understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain
the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment
and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action
vis-à-vis non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a
question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of
the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will
come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a
man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224]
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal,
especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days 602
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

593 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan
602 talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or
even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple
579 of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few
minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come
to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most
476 apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized
co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most
764 conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals
or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in
jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies.
The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)'
sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous
book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating
the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives
of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various
rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did
not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a
different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a
segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi
belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment,
who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened
by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of
[837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's
wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head
of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his
behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to
sunzɔp is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares
of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the
Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the
affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential
features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social
relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same
571 quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a
835 consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting
the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations
qua clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage
siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with
clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful,
and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered
to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their
inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were 593
non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but 571
may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's
wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's 835
wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength
of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between 593
brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office 622
is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete.
No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the 584
same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's
behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same
maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again,
Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of
suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men
of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a
vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally
the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social 593
equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists
between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with 554
the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features
of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

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[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

● 593 554 covers almost every standard social relationship of siblings in Tale society. Siblings are laterally identified with one another, so to speak; brothers can replace one another in the social structure in a way that gives rise to a minimum of readjustment in the social relations of any other people affected. This contrasts with the vertical identification of parent and child, which rests on the continuity of the descent line not on actual or potential identity of social roles. This is a generalized formula. It leaves out of account a very important item, the effect of the sexual dichotomy of Tale culture. The distinctive social roles imposed on men and women by this factor restrict the identification of brother and sister to a narrow sphere, and the functions of women limit the social equivalence of sisters to their relationship with each other's children.

593 855 577 In infancy and childhood the equivalence of siblings is of little consequence. It comes out chiefly in the rule that parents should not discriminate between their children (proxy children as well as own children). Tallensi say that, in practice, one cannot help preferring one son to another or one daughter to another. One child may be more obedient or industrious or better tempered than his brothers and sisters, so one will be inclined to favour him; and there is the admitted bias in favour of younger children, especially the youngest, as we have seen. Moreover, proxy children are rarely as dear to the heart of a parent as own children are. Even a mother, whose love for all her children (except the youngest) is proverbially without bias, sometimes has favourites among them. There is plenty of evidence for these admissions. The Chief of Tongo had well over two-score children; among them his favourites were a son and a daughter of about 18, born soon after he was appointed chief. Nor do such preferences stop with childhood. Tiezien reposed his trust in his late brother's two sons, who had grown up in his care. The only son he had of his own who was old enough to assist him in public affairs was, he said good humouredly, too stupid.

But, say the Tallensi, this is a matter of *feelings*—what 'your heart desires (*i suh mboot*)'. When it is a matter of *rights*, to discriminate between children is bad, almost sinful; it is like rejecting one child for the sake of another. It would be regarded as iniquitous for a man to let some of his children go hungry while others were well fed. With two adult sons, as we have seen, it is considered right for both of them to be assisted to marry before either is allowed to have two wives. It is the same with other things in which there is an element of right or duty; and the majority of natives are very conscientious in this matter, at least as far as their own children are concerned. Nowadays, in particular, as has often been emphasized to me, if a man has two sons and does not deal with them equally, the one who feels himself unjustly treated soon finds an opportunity for running away to seek work abroad. Sensible parents follow this rule conscientiously even in trivial matters. Ɔmara

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite
ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops
is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of
twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have
seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine
charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and
treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still
prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought
by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it
will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal
child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the
age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)]
and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is
a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

845 851 [783] ritually 'pegged (*ba*')'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive, the parents have to undergo a cou[illegible] ritual purification after their birth. This is believed to act a[illegible]l safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune beside[illegible]ing them of the ill luck that has occurred.

845 ● 593 In spite of this mystical bac[illegible]ns that survive are regarded and treated as ordinary human be[illegible] But there is one point on which very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

593 571 Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 591 571 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

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854 165 Artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins) were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

PLATE 13

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a. Children of a single domestic family. From left to right: Da'ano'o's child, his late father's child, his agnatic cousin's (i.e. classificatory brother's) child

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b. Four generations. From left to right: Nyaaŋzum, his own mother with his infant son, his older (deceased) half-brother's son, who married his mother after his father's death and brought him up

[facing p. 272]

593 571 583 voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

593 571 607 Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (***deem***)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

593 681 607 Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*sɛt*) in the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE 14

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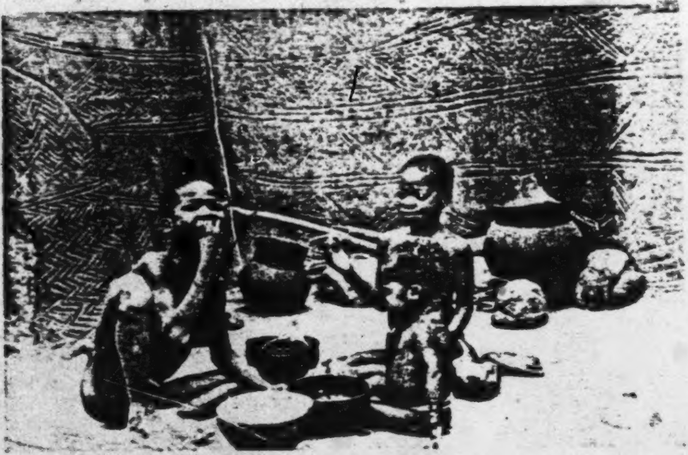

a. Siblings by the same parents have breakfast together. The bigger children are a boy and a girl. Note that they are eating out of the same dish

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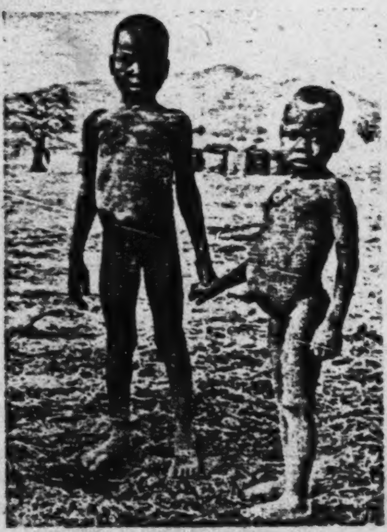

b. Successive (*nyeer*) *soog* brothers

[facing p. 273]

593 571 764 602 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Saɣawuob's mother's funeral Latarɔg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Saɣawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 593 562 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔɣayabɔlɔg-kpɛŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the [782] lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members 613
in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. 593 ●
The token funeral performed for a woman by her father's people, after 562
her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔɣayabəlɔg-kpɛŋ* [766]
not by her own father's heirs but by the head of the inner or medial or even maximal lineage, her status-brother, so to speak. Tallensi say she belongs to the whole lineage not to her paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow 595
may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan
or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two 587
principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', 595
and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint 613
leviratic rights is one of the critical norms of clanship,[1] implying that
all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither 593
absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to 587
them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

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595 property it is good enough if she marries any one of them. In practice,
613 a widow of child-bearing age who has children by her late husband
587 usually consents to remarry one of his close brothers.

Next to a brother of the nuclear lineage, a brother of the late husband's
587 inner lineage is considered to have a strong claim to his widow's hand.
613 If a man dies leaving two widows of child-bearing age it is considered proper for one of them to be given to a member of her late husband's
595 nuclear lineage and for the other to go to another nuclear segment of the same inner lineage. If a widow appears to be unwilling to marry her late husband's half-brother, for example, and is prepared to marry one of his 'brothers' of the same inner lineage, she is usually allowed to do so by the head of her husband's nuclear lineage. The new husband is still spoken of as having inherited the widow. In every case that came under my notice widows of child-bearing age married into their late husband's inner lineage if they had young children. But in a few cases, amounting to about three out of ten, these second marriages broke down after a time. Childless young widows often prefer to go back to their parental home and try their luck again on the marriage market.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage a 'brother' of the dead man has only the rights of a clansman. If the widow is of child-bearing age he will have to be very circumspect in courting her; for he can only marry her if she chooses him in preference to other claimants, and this means she must be courted. Hence it is more usual to speak of 'marrying' (*di*) a widow than of 'inheriting' (*vaa*) her in such cases. But it would be a very bold woman who, left a widow while still capable of bearing children, rejected a husband's brother of the same inner lineage in favour of a clansman of his. Only in exceptional cases would such an action not create ill feeling between the two clan segments concerned. Such an exceptional case occurred when Baroog died leaving nine widows. His father tried hard to persuade several distant clansmen of his to seek the widows in marriage. The reason was that Baroog had no adult brothers in his nuclear lineage and so few in his inner lineage that they would not be able to inherit all the widows. For few men wish to inherit more than one widow at a time. Rather than let them return to their fathers and be sought in marriage by men of other clans, Baroog's father preferred to see them marry distant clansmen of his.

587 Widows beyond the age of child-bearing have complete freedom of choice in selecting a new husband from among their late husband's clans-
595 men. Often such marriages are merely nominal. The woman continues to live with a grown-up son and her new husband comes to visit her occasionally and sends her a little grain now and then. If the widow has no adult son she will live with her new husband, adding to the labour power of his household and to its indirect sources of income through the gifts she obtains from her patrilineal kin, for example, or any private property of her own, such as a couple of sheep or goats.

Inheritance of a grandfather's widow by a grandson, in the patrilineal 587
line, is confined to the inner or at most the medial lineage for the simple 595
reason that generation differences are not reckoned beyond those limits. Such marriages are not common because few men live long enough to have adult grandsons. The case of Tiezien, previously recorded, who married his grandfather Kuŋkəŋki's young widow is the only one of its kind I encountered. For at least another generation or two the custom of inheriting a grandfather's widow will probably survive in that lineage. For Nyaaŋzum, Tiezien's proxy father whom he brought up, is the last of his generation in that medial lineage, hence his widows will have to go to his own or classificatory grandsons.

A sister's son (*ahəŋ*) cannot marry his true mother's brother's (*ahəb*) widow. That would be incest, since he identifies his *ahəb* with his mother and therefore thinks of him as a quasi-father. He can marry his *ahəb*'s son's widow or his *ahəb*'s father's widow; for he regards the son as a 'brother', and the father is his grandfather. If the sister's son and mother's brother are uterine kin (*saarət*), marriage of the latter's son's widow to the former is generally approved of by the dead man's inner lineage—provided, of course, there are no better claimants among the dead man's brothers—for a uterine *ahəŋ*, as we shall see more fully presently, is considered to be almost as closely related to his mother's brother's nuclear lineage as a born member of it. Nevertheless, such marriages are rare, and the few instances I heard of all seemed to be due to special circumstances. In one case, in which I knew the parties personally, the woman was suspected of being sterile, and the sister's son was known to be a special favourite of his mother's brother; in others the women were apparently too old for child-bearing.

In theory any member of another clan who can trace kinship with the clan of a widow's late husband through an ancestress can be called a 'sister's son' or a 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' in the widest classificatory sense. I heard of two or three cases of such distant *ahəs* marrying the widows of members of their classificatory 'mother's brother's lineage', but the women were all elderly and the marriages were purely nominal. There was one case, however, in which a man eloped with the widow of a member of the inner lineage from which his paternal great-grandmother had come. This was widely spoken of as a scandal, and the pair were never forgiven by the first husband's nuclear lineage; but nothing could be done about it as the *ahəŋ* had the support of the letter of custom. The truth is that a 'sister's son' has no chance against the corporate solidarity of his 'mother's brother's' lineage. He can succeed only if they tacitly withdraw their claims or openly give him permission to court the widow.[1]

The levirate thus brings out clearly the social equivalence of siblings 593
and shows how it is graded in accordance with genealogical distance. 595

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[1] Cf. p. 240 above, and Ch. XI below.

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We might mention here that the institution of the sororate, which is considered by some authorities[1] to be the natural complement of the levirate, only exists in a rudimentary—some might say vestigial—form among the Tallensi. It comes up if a man loses his only wife and is left a lone widower. Then his father-in-law sends a party of mourners to the funeral who take with them a young girl of his clan—perhaps one of his own daughters, perhaps the daughter of a 'brother' of his inner or medial lineage. This girl, a real or classificatory sister of the dead wife, is presented to the grief-stricken widower. She has been brought, the father-in-law's messengers say, 'to sit on your knees, to console you, to dry your tears, to be your wife' and so take the place of her dead sister. It is, however, more a gesture of condolence than a real offer of a substitute for the dead wife. Tallensi say that very occasionally the girl might stay on as the wife of the widower; most commonly she goes home immediately after the funeral or within a few weeks. Her deputy wifehood is purely ceremonial, for she is usually too young to do all the housekeeping or to be slept with.

428 The rules of inheritance among brothers also illustrate the gradation of their social equivalence in accordance with their genealogical distance. These rules have been considered from various angles in earlier contexts and little remains to be added. Their operation, as we have seen, depends on the conditions of economic co-operation to a very considerable extent. If two brothers farm together they automatically have joint rights in all lands, livestock, and other resources they possess. If one dies the other does not so much inherit his property and position in society as amalgamate it with his own. What was formerly managed by two men conjointly now becomes the concern of one man. There is practically no change, to begin with, in the social relations of their dependants as the result of the death of one brother. When Nindɔyat died his *soog* brother Yintee inherited the homestead they had both occupied. Nindɔyat's wives at first stayed on as Yintee's wives, his children naturally remained in the homestead. They had lost their own father, but there was no change in their social position or their economic condition as a result of his death. If brothers farm independently they inherit from each other in order of seniority and of degree of consanguinity. Patrimonial property, rights, and ritual objects that have been transmitted intact from their fathers are inherited strictly by seniority amongst the group of brothers who trace their descent to the original holder of these possessions. But property acquired by the deceased's own father goes only to his brothers by the same father, in order of seniority. And the custody of his children will pass to his genealogically nearest brother whether or not he is the heir to the patrimonial property.

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Here a revealing jural fiction deserves mention. Brothers are thought

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[1] Cf. Lowie, R., *Primitive Society*, p. 33.

to be closer to one another than father and son—this is one aspect of their social equivalence, as we have previously observed. In theory this holds for any brother of the same inner lineage, in practice it is only full or half-brothers who feel such close bonds. Now any land a man acquires by his own efforts goes to his sons, not to his brothers. There is no question about this. The sons have contributed by their labour to the acquisition of the land and this is their title to it. Cattle acquired by purchase also belong to the man's sons; but the heir to the patrimonial property, if he is a proxy father to or a father's brother's son older than the man's own sons, has titular control over the use to which they may wish to put any of their father's livestock. It is different with clothes and weapons; and here the fiction we have mentioned comes into the picture. Clothes are very intimately associated with a person; they are a sort of extension of his individuality, as was suggested in an earlier chapter. A man's bow, his quiver of arrows, his knife, and his spear are also thought of as symbols of himself as an individual in a way that land is not. The fiction is that such personal effects should be inherited by a man's brothers, not by his sons. Thus when a man's funeral is finished his brothers of the inner lineage assemble in his *zɔŋ*. His oldest son fetches all his personal effects in. But the brothers do not divide them amongst themselves. At most they might take an arrow apiece from the dead man's quiver. The other personal effects they will restore to the sons. 'We have seen it and now you keep it', they say. A full or half-brother, especially one who has farmed with the deceased, may, if he desires, take some garments. He may take all if the dead man's children are all too young to farm for themselves, as he then becomes their proxy father in fact as well as in name. Even then he might return some of the clothes to the sons when they are old enough to use them.

In the same way a woman's personal effects go to her daughters on her death, but her close sisters may claim some of them if they wish. For example, every woman accumulates a number of calabashes (*ŋman*, pl. *ŋmana*) during her lifetime. There is a good material reason for this, for there is hardly a more useful domestic utensil than the ubiquitous calabash dish. A woman will, however, store away her best calabashes for use on special occasions only. As she grows older she collects more and more of these select calabashes, and an old woman may have as many as forty or fifty. She keeps them in her large string bag (*zaalɔŋ*), hung up in the darkest corner of her sleeping-room. At the bottom of the *zaalɔŋ* bag is the largest and finest calabash. This will be part of her *kumpiog* (basket of death) when she dies. In it she keeps her particular treasures. Because of this an old woman's *zaalɔŋ* is as sacrosanct as a man's granary—to which, in fact, Tallensi compare it. No one but the old woman herself ever looks into the bottom calabash of the *zaalɔŋ*. When she dies an old woman's *kumpiog* is taken to her oldest daughter, who also gets the *zaalɔŋ* bag. But she does not get all

428 593 the calabashes. The old woman's close sisters have first pick of the calabashes and the remainder are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law.

Outside the inner lineage, as has been previously indicated, succession goes by age seniority. Succession to the custody of a maximal lineage *boyar* or to a politico-ritual office such as a chiefship or tendaanaship follows this rule. This, as we can now see, is in conformity with the principle that members of the same maximal lineage or clan who are not of the same inner lineage are titular 'brothers'.

593 602 It is in the usages of extended kinship, however, that the social equivalence of siblings is most apparent. We have already dealt at length with the extensions of parental roles within the lineage and it is necessary only to observe that they are based on the principle of the social equivalence of brothers. We shall find, in the next chapter, that it is an equally important factor in the web of matrilateral and sororal kinship ties, outside the agnatic lineage.[1] We shall see that, as in the ramification of lineage structure, so in extra-clan kinship bonds the tie of siblingship is the principal mechanism of their wide-spreading reticulation.

[1] This is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the chief mechanism responsible for classificatory kinship in primitive societies. Tale material amply supports him. See Radcliffe-Brown, 'Social Organisation of Australian Tribes', previously cited, and his articles on 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', *South African Journal of Science*, xxi, 1924, and on 'The Study of Kinship Systems', *J.R.A.I.*, lxxi, 1941.

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share
is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriage-
able age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people
before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of
an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
183 would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly,
they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

shrine they accompany us and listen to what we say. Will they not 869
[thus] get to know it?' His own small son Badiwona (6–7 years) is 861
extremely devoted to him. One day, affectionately patting the child, 828
he said: 'When we come out in the morning, and if he doesn't see [593]
me, he seeks about for me. If he doesn't find me he won't rest. That is why I had him initiated last year. Whatever I do he also sits and listens. Will he not get to know it thus? And when I am gone will he not say that when he was a child he used to go about with his father and used to see how his father did this and that? This is my child and I am teaching him uprightness. If he is about to do anything that is not seemly I tell him, so that when he grows up he will know upright ways.'[1]

Education, it is clear, is regarded as a joint enterprise in which 861
parents are as eager to lead as children to follow. In consequence of 856
this attitude adults are very tolerant of children's ways and especially about their learning. A child is never forced beyond its capacity. This is seen most clearly in relation to the pivotal economic activity, agriculture. However skilful a boy may be with his hoe, he will not be forced to do as much work as an adult. Men often restrain their sons of 12–14 from joining the adults in hoeing on the grounds that over-exertion is harmful. Again, women do not take daughters of 9–10 on firewood expeditions to the bush.

That skill comes with practice is realized by all. When adults are 868
asked about children's mimetic play they reply: 'That is how they learn.' Thus when a boy is 7 or 8 his father buys him a small bow so that he can go and learn marksmanship in play with his comrades. Yet the existence of individual differences in ability, both amongst children and amongst adults, is recognized and cited with reference to the acquisition of skill. Rapid learning or the acquisition of a new skill is explained by *u mar nini pam*, 'he has eyes remarkably', that is, he is very sharp. A friend of mine who was a cap-maker told me how he had learnt his craft, as a youth, from a Dagban by carefully watching him at work. When he was young, he explained, he had 'very good eyes'. This conception of cleverness is intelligible in a society where learning by looking and copying is the commonest manner of achieving dexterity both in crafts and in the everyday manual activities.

[1] He learns—*u bambira*, cognate with *bay*, to know; I teach him—*mpaasumi*.

571 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship
861 from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition
of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 *Age and mobility*. Infants still requiring care are often carried about
857 by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally
speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate-groups.

571 *Sex*. Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently
857 go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely,
462 accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and
interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 *The social situation*. Yet none of these children's groups resemble
857 gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize
out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

● 593 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is,
861 however, not that of children to children but of children to parents.
858 It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal
moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

economic and social activities there is co-operation, friendliness and 593
tolerance, almost equality. This is more marked between father and 861
child than between mother and child. A father is always addressed 858
by his personal name, a mother is always called *mma*, my mother.
Affectively, however, a powerful tension exists between parent and
child. A parent's authority may not be flouted, though he or she is
expected to be affectionate and indulgent. Sin, in Tale ideology, is [673]
primarily an offence against the person, status, or rights of the living
parents, or the parent-images—the ancestor spirits.

The structure of this relationship makes it possible for children 593
to acquiesce immediately in the commands and teachings of their 865
parents or parent-substitutes. Children are, as a rule, very obedient. If they refuse to carry out an order there is usually some very valid reason—acknowledged as such by both parents and children—such as that it is some one else's turn. But the parent-child relationship is educationally fundamental in another sense—it is the paradigm of all moral relationships.

It is worth noting, by contrast, that the relationship between grand- 603
parent and grandchild is the reverse of that between parent and child. In this case equality, compatibility and partisanship, as if in league against the generation between them, are emphasized, more particularly by the joking relationship—mutual ragging among the Tallensi—permitted between grandparent and grandchild.

The social space. How these relationships function in the educational 000
development of a Tale child is determined by its social space.[1] An individual's social space is a product of that segment of the social structure and that segment of the habitat with which he or she is in effective contact. To put it in another way, the social space is the society in its ecological setting seen from the individual's point of view. The individual creates his social space but is himself in turn formed by it. On the one hand, his range of experiences and behaviour are controlled by his social space, and on the other, everything he learns causes it to expand and become more differentiated. In the lifetime of the individual it changes *pari passu* with his psycho-physical and social development.

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[1] This term is employed here for want of an apter one. It has been used in a different sense by Simmel and others.

183 ing the correct observances has many points in common with learning 867 skills, but there is a significant difference. When a child is learning a skill he has the test of objective achievement to evaluate his progress and to stimulate him to further effort; when he is learning how to behave properly the only test of attainment is the reaction of other people and his own sense of the adequacy or inadequacy of his conduct. [626] One can observe, in consequence, that both children and adults are very sensitive to ridicule of a lapse in manners or morals but are fairly indifferent to ridicule of poor skill. The contrast between observances and skills is evident when we compare the way in which a child learns to model clay figures, gradually perfecting his technique, with the 'all or none' way, associated sometimes with corporal punishment, in which he is taught to respect other people's property, or the way he is taught his totemic taboos.

867 Among the Tallensi, as in many other primitive societies, manners and morals are acquired almost as a by-product of the normal social relations between the growing child and the people who constitute his or her social space. The unity of the social sphere and the expectation of normal behaviour have a correspondingly greater influence than in the acquisition of skills and interests. But the critical factor is the tension inherent in the fundamental educational relationships, the authority of parent over child and of senior over juniot.

861 In Tale ideology this is epitomized in the danger attributed to a 593 parent's resentment. If any one who has reached years of discretion behaves in such a way as to incur the resentment and hostility of a parent, some calamity will certainly befall him or her unless he comes formally to beg forgiveness and the injured parent ritually abjures his or her anger.[1] It very often happens that two children of about the same age and members of a single joint family are related as parent and child. They can be seen playing together amicably, squabbling at times, and working together. But when the 'child' is questioned about his playmate, he will say: *nzorumi, ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*, 'I fear (respect) him, because he begot me.' This is not merely a formula. Sinkawol (aged 23–5) used to order his 'father', Kyekambe (aged

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[1] The connexion between one particular aspect of Tale morality, their notion of incest, and the background of kinship has been discussed in my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

12–13) about when the lad was helping with the housebuilding and 861
even scold him if he bungled a task. This was legitimate technical 593
instruction. But he declared emphatically that he dare not strike the boy, *ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*. From the authority of parent over child is derived that of elder sibling over younger. It is equally absolute. A youth or girl has no hesitation in restraining or correcting a younger sibling with a cuff which often sends the latter off howling at the top of his voice. The authority of seniors in general over juniors is accepted by custom (e.g., among herdboys), though not so absolutely and unquestioningly. It is often maintained by force, or in virtue of superior skill. It is intelligible, therefore, why the Tallensi usually say *ti banam yɛl nla*, 'our forefathers' matter is this' when they are asked to account for an observance, and why their children say, *bunkɔra la yɛl ti la ŋwala*, 'the grown-ups have told us so'.

Just as all Tallensi, children or adults, recognize the force of 867
authority, even though they sometimes flout it, so they accept the 857
principle of equal rights for equals. One can see this, not only in standardized patterns of behaviour, but, e.g., in the spontaneity with which children share things and activities. When a small boy snares a bird or kills a mouse or lizard he will always share his catch with friends or siblings, apportioning it according to sex and age. A [526]
favourite pastime of boys of all ages, from 5 upwards, is wrestling. Sometimes bigger youths stand by to supervise, but always scrupulous fairness is insisted upon, and thus instilled. It is as correct and even praiseworthy to demand what one is entitled to as it is reprehensible to take what one has no right to. A nice illustration, showing incidentally how such principles are sometimes taught, came to my notice during an evening ceremony which had been unduly dragged out. A dozen or more small boys aged from 5 upwards had gathered at the ceremony to wait for a share of the feast which would follow the religious rites. The food was sent out and distributed by an adult, one or two boys of equal size to a dish. Suddenly an elder called out, 'Where is Zuur?' (a small boy of about 5) and rose to look for him. Zuur lay fast asleep in a corner. The old man shook the child roughly to awaken him, and dragged him towards a dish of food upbraiding him, 'Where do you think you will find food after it has all been eaten? You can't control yourself at all.' Zuur, still

613 constituent parts. The simplest way of achieving this is for its internal differentiation into segments to be of a limited and balanced kind. That is why only the first order of segmentation, a division into major segments, is recognized in the corporate activities of a lineage. In Tale theory the source of this primary segmentation of the lineage is the minimal lineage, in which a group of brothers (two or more) are differentiated from one another as individuals each of whom is the potential founder of a new lineage, but are united through their common father. A pair of brothers by the same father (*sunzɔp*, sing. *sunzɔ*) are the potential originators of a pair of major segments of the lineage deriving from their father. So all major segments of a lineage of any span are visualized as being derived from brothers, sons of the lineage founder, and are described as *sunzɔp* to one another. Their lineage ties, summed up in the concept *sunzɔt* (brotherhood), are thought of as being founded on, and derived from, the ties that hold between brothers. By the rule of exogamy women members marry out of the lineage, so they do not contribute to its perpetuation and do not affect its organization.

613 The growing-point of the lineage, it will be seen, is the family. It is
● 595 always patrilocal; ideally, it is also polygynous. Thus children of the same
[591] man are differentiated from one another as children of different mothers. This provides a further criterion of differentiation within the lineage. Like the sons of different mothers and the same father, segments of a lineage may, in certain situations, be distinguished from one another by reference to their different progenitrices. In other situations, like the sons of one mother, segments of a lineage may be grouped together by reference to a common progenitrix.

613 A maximal lineage cannot, by definition, have any *sunzɔp* identified strictly in terms of common agnatic descent. If it had it would be a segment of a more inclusive lineage. The ancestor who founded it must be unique, in retrospect. As we have seen, he may be accounted for by a myth; but his unique place in the genealogical tree can sometimes be naturalistically explained. If the formation of recent lineage segments is studied, it can be seen that segments sometimes disappear, owing to the extinction of a branch of the lineage. When this happens, the surviving segments reach a new equilibrium. The defunct collateral line is forgotten in due course, together with its genealogy; for this no longer has any structural significance. Thus an existing maximal lineage may be merely the surviving segment of what might have been a wider maximal lineage.

It is characteristic of Tale social organization, however, that maximal lineages do often have *sunzɔp*, either through ties of clanship, or by incorporating, or being joined to, lineages not strictly of the same agnatic descent.

A lineage is a temporal system. Continuity in time is its fundamental quality. Its constitution and dimensions at a given time represent a phase of a process which, as the natives see it, has been going on in exactly the same way from the beginning of their social order and is continuing into the future. The contemporary phase of a lineage is more than a product of its past; it embodies all the significant changes that have occurred in it

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔyar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country, recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
[595] agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

have no clear notion of witchcraft, no detailed theories of its mode of 754
operation, and no institutionalized means of combating or sterilizing it.
A witch (*sɔi*) is supposed to fly about (*u aɣarəme*) at night in the guise
of a ball of fire; she—for the Tallensi tend to think of a witch as a
woman, though they say that men may be witches too—is supposed to
be clairvoyant, to 'see (*nye*)' hidden things. She can recognize fellow
witches, foresee death coming to a particular person, prophesy an epidemic,
and so forth; she may be beneficent, able to impart luck to a
person in a mysterious way, or maleficent, killing people by eating (*ɔb*)
their souls (*sii*). This is the sum of Tale ideas about the nature of witches.
Actually, these qualities make up what is mainly an imaginary stereotype.
One never hears of particular individuals being credited with the
socially useful qualities or being suspected of possessing the anti-social
qualities attributed to witches. Witchcraft is only attributed to people
ex post facto, when an event occurs for which an explanation in terms of
witchcraft is sought.

Witchcraft is something on the fringe of Tale mystical thought and 754
ritual values. I have more than once heard elders of the most conser-
vative way of thinking, to whom the native scheme of ritual values is the 771
most important thing in life, declare roundly that there is no such thing
as a witch. Though the Tallensi do not put it into clear words, they
obviously feel that the idea of witchcraft is a mixture of superstition
and folk-lore, and not a part of the system of mystical and ritual values
that really matters for the conduct of life. Of course, superstition and
folk-lore are not wholly negligible. Circumstances occur, now and then,
in which people fall back on the idea of a witch's occult aggression in
order to cope with anxieties and frustrations that are normally neutralized
through the agency of the ancestor cult; and then a particular person
may be accused of being a witch. Significantly, in every case that has
come to my notice, some dating back twenty or thirty years and all of
them together numbering less than ten, the accused has been a woman.
Most accusations of this sort are in the first instance made by women [595]
against co-wives, and are symptomatic of the tensions inherent in the
joint family.

An accusation of being a witch is the private affair of the accused's 754
husband and his maximal lineage, her paternal family, and those of her 602
saarət who are in touch with her. In former days, if the accusation was
confirmed by a diviner, the accused might insist on undergoing the [787]
arrow ordeal (*kuh sɔ-peema*), or be compelled to do so by her husband's
lineage and her *saarət* in order to prove her innocence. She had to [627]
stab herself with a poisoned arrow in public at the same time as a branch
of a *keŋkaŋ* (Ficus) tree was plucked; and if she were guilty, it was
believed that she would die before the branch withered. But it is
characteristic of the Tale attitude to witches that a person who died
thus was accorded a proper funeral—unlike, for example, a person who

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off 342
to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug* 593
and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return
until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately.
The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the
domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the
domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person.
A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife,
mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family.

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments, but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, 595
the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more
esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household
have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is
the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than
actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in
the case of the latter.

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that 778
are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman.
They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is 595
custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these
shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often
taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and
out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him.

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the 775
ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, 169
into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la
dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary
rites, make this clear.

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. 592
Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked
outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A
woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies
learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests
and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops
are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being
stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a
leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there
when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights,
after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing
or gossiping or asking riddles.

occupying a single homestead. All the men of a joint family are therefore related to one another through a common father or grandfather or, infrequently, great-grandfather. A joint family may consist of two or more brothers (full or half-brothers or paternal cousins), with their wives and children, and perhaps an old mother; or a man and some or all of his married sons with their wives and children, together with unmarried sons and other dependants; or an old man, some or all of his married sons and grandsons, with their wives and children and other dependants —'sons' and 'grandsons' in the last two classes being understood in the native classificatory sense as including both own and deceased brothers' sons and grandsons. Joint families of the last-mentioned class are not very common. Here and there one meets a joint family combining features of two classes or having a rather wider range of agnates or other male kin; but these are unusual.

A joint family is obviously a composite unit. If the subordinate 596
families constituting it are taken separately, some or all may be monogynous, elementary families; but one or more of the male members may 595
have more than one wife, and there will thus be subordinate polygynous families within the joint family. For though a Talɔŋ starts his career as a family man with only one wife, his aim and ideal, throughout his life, is to have as many wives as he can afford. Actually, judging by the previously quoted sample,[1] the incidence of polygyny among the

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[1] The following table sets out the relevant figures:

Table showing the Distribution of Wives of 146 Men over 18 Years of Age, belonging to 61 Domestic Families 162

	Married men						*Single men*	
Estimated age of men	*Number of wives* 1	2	3	4	5	*Total men*	*Un-married*	*Widowers or deserted*
18–30	32	3	..	..	..	35	18 (most under 30)	17 (most over 30)
31–45	21	13	3	2	..	39		
46 and over	14	14	3	5	1	37		
Totals	67	30	6	7	1	111	18	17
							35	
Percentages							*Total 146 men*	
Of whole sample	46	20·5	4·1	4·8	0·7		76% married	24% single
Of married men	60·4	27	5·4	6·3	0·9			

The table shows the distribution of effective wives, i.e. wives who fulfil both the sexual and the economic duties due from a wife, or, in a few cases, at least the economic duties. There were 9 non-effective wives, in addition, in this group: 3 incapacitated by leprosy or other chronic disease; 1 senile; 3 elderly women nominally inherited by their late husbands' younger brothers but

596 Tallensi is only about 40 per 100 married men and two out of three
●595 polygynists have only two wives. The modal number of wives is one.

Moreover, plurality of wives is mainly the privilege of older men, because they have both more resources and a longer marital history than the young men. Three-quarters of the married men under 45 have only one wife each.

596 A joint family is an organized economic and jural unit forming a single household under the authority of the oldest by age or generation of the group of agnates upon which it is based. Its component families are its segments, ordered and articulated in conformity with the lineage relations binding this group of men to one another. This appears in the layout of the homestead. The head of the joint family is the hub of the whole house, as we have seen, and each wife has her own quarters. It is shown, for example, in the fact that a young married son with no children, or only one or two infant children, generally occupies one of the rooms in his mother's *dug*, or, if his mother is dead, in the senior *dugdaana*'s *dug*; for his conjugal family counts, as yet, only as a segment of this *dug* in the social and economic organization of the house.

Taken over a long enough period, the joint family is seen to be a transitory unit. As the younger male members grow up, marry, and have children of their own, inner tensions begin to assert themselves and a tendency to split up appears. If fission does not occur in the lifetime of the head of the joint family, it is almost invariably precipitated by his death. Some or all of the component families then set up in their own independent homesteads, though it may be some years before complete dispersion supervenes. Thus it happens that an elementary family, which was at one time a part of a joint family, comes to occupy its own

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162 residing with grown-up sons; 2 inherited wives who had not yet joined the menage of their new husbands and were unlikely to do so for a considerable time, if at all. Seven of these non-effective wives were the wives of men in the 46 *plus* group. If these are reckoned as well, the distribution is altered somewhat in favour of the polygynists. There would then, for instance, be 3 men with 5 wives each.

In addition to the 111 married men, this sample of domestic families includes 35 single men, 18 of whom, mostly young men, had never been properly married, and 17 of whom were single at the time of the census, owing to the death or desertion of their wives.

Estimates of age given here and elsewhere in this book are very approximate. The difficulties of guessing the age of Africans in societies where chronological age is taken no notice of are well known. In making the above estimates I took the Tong Hills Expedition of 1911 as a base-line. From what I was told of the appearance, size, and activities of a person at the time of that well-remembered event, a guess could be made at his or her probable age in 1934. If one person's approximate age was established in this way, others who were agreed to be his or her contemporaries could be put into the same age-group. For example, the age-group 18–30 includes a number of men who said they were babes in arms in 1911, and the age-group 46 *plus* includes all those who were young married men in 1911.

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of [432]
Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1]
Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by [578]
inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and
are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels
over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance
that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he
was deprived of.

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of 578
competition both between individuals and between corporate groups.
This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction 583
of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition
against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman,
kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that
such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days,
to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is
an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically
unconnected clans have no direct common interests.

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per 691
cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with 185
wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing 578
for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude
about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is
not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole
means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common
interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only
their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all
of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent
importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the
levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering
in this chapter.

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much 581
scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, 595
whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus
robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally 622
prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually
and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they
may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

581 •595 622 or headman or important elder, backed as it often is by lavish gifts to her parents, security of the bride-price, and the attraction of his wealth and power or status. Few parents would hesitate to force their daughter to accept such an offer. Chiefs and headmen do in fact have an excessive number of wives. The five biggest chiefs and headmen of the Tongo district had between them about 160 wives of all ages in 1936. Their predecessors of a generation ago would have had perhaps 30 between them, at the utmost. The extra 130 wives they have means that probably 100 other men have been cheated of wives. This has no doubt diminished the chances of early marriage for a proportion of young men, but not so greatly as the men assert. All the evidence of Tale domestic institutions and of Tale genealogies goes to show that wives were always highly prized because they were always at a premium.[1] In consequence, no unmarried girl or woman of child-bearing age lacks suitors, and no wife of child-bearing age need endure an intolerable marriage. She can always find another husband. That women take advantage of their scarcity value is what one would expect; but they do so to a smaller extent than one anticipates. This is due partly to the strength and stability of the patrilineal lineage system, expressed in inter-personal relations in the power of the *patria potestas*, and partly to the great value women set upon wifehood and motherhood. Life is a failure to a Tale woman who never becomes a wife and mother.

The Stability of Marriage

586 587 582 In consequence, partly, of the scarcity value of wives, but more, no doubt, of the conflict of loyalties and interests which has to be overcome, marriage tends to be unstable in the initial stages. A young man rarely settles down permanently with his first bride, and young women generally treat their first marriage as an experiment unless the husband is a much older man to whom they have been married by formal negotiation. In the course of collecting census material I noted the marriages of over a hundred men. There is not one man over the age of 30, approximately (excluding a few physically or psychologically abnormal men), who has failed to experience one or more unsuccessful and usually short-lived marriages. Most men of 30 to 40 can give a history of five

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[582] [1] I have no demographic evidence suggesting that there was formerly or is now a marked deficiency of marriageable women as compared with men in Taleland. My own crude demographic inquiries suggest a sex ratio of about unity among the Tallensi. Polygynous marriage, therefore, inevitably means competition for wives, even though women are usually married by the age of 16 or 17, as near as one can guess, and men rarely succeed in finding a wife before the age of about 25. The natives maintain that the age of marriage for girls has been decreasing rapidly since the coming of the white man (cf. my paper, 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, xxv, 1943, 3-4).

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581 585 587 succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife, and may sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery. Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried, but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology) of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy, he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's marriage with the woman had never been consummated.

581 585 It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how Baŋyɛlib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning, as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She was helpless, and Baŋyɛlib, who had purposely stayed in the room, 'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree. Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time [842] in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to procreation rather than to gratification.

595 578 Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say, somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the jealousy (*yuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for him in revenge.

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Finally, the prohibition of sexual relations between father and daughter or brother and sister in the expanded family also links up with this complex. Tallensi say that if a man's daughter becomes pregnant before marriage he will hasten to marry her off as soon as possible, if she does not elope with a suitor of her own accord. A man once told me that people do this for fear that it might be said of them, 'Oh, so-and-so is not marrying his daughter off because he wants to keep her for a wife for himself'. I do not know if this statement accurately represents the way men feel the pressure of public opinion in cases of this sort; but it is an accurate indication of the feeling that a woman's procreative powers are out of place in her father's home and belong properly to her husband's home.

The Adjustment of Co-Wives to One Another

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We have still to consider one of the main problems of adjustment that face a woman in her husband's family, her relations with her co-wives (*nentaa*, pl. *nentaas*). These include both her husband's other wives and his brothers' wives. A woman refers to a co-wife as 'younger (or older) sibling of the same sex (*pit* or *bier*)', and addresses her by her clan sobriquet, e.g. Namooga. A woman's children describe her co-wives as 'mother' (*ma*), with the suffix *pit* or *bier* according as she is junior or senior to their own mother, and address her as 'mother of such-and-such a clan', e.g. *ma Namooga*.

Women do not, as a rule, object to their husbands having other wives as well. Indeed, it often happens that a monogamist's wife presses him to marry again so that there should be someone to share the work of the household with her, or even takes the initiative in finding another wife for him. It is quite common for women to bring younger clan sisters, or a brother's daughter, a sister's daughter, or a daughter of a mother's brother's lineage, to live with them with a view to their eventually marrying their husbands or husbands' brothers. From such marriages spring cognatically related matri-segments of a lineage, with a special link through their progenitrices in addition to their agnatic ties.

Through this custom of fetching in (*pie na*) a kinswoman-wife (*poyasoog*) one often finds women related by kinship married into the same joint family or the same expanded family. But this is not a preferential marriage. It is due simply to the inertia of kinship. A woman who wants to bring a girl into her husband's house usually does so because she has need of someone to help her with the care of an infant or because she is ill or elderly and has no daughter or daughter-in-law to relieve her of the heaviest domestic tasks. And she looks naturally to her kinsfolk, upon whom she has claims by right of birth, to provide her with a suitable girl. Again, though the Tallensi do not like two full or half-sisters to marry the same man or to marry into the same joint family, it is not a taboo. A man who particularly likes his son-in-law and his people readily consents to another daughter's marrying into the same joint family; and this cordiality is easily extended to more distant clansmen on both sides. A Tenzugu man who has a son-in-law at Zubiuŋ with whom his relations are cordial will be pleased to see another daughter marry this son-in-law or one of his close agnates; and if the son-in-law himself or a member of his medial lineage comes to seek the hand of a daughter of the father-in-law's medial lineage, the men of that lineage would be favourably disposed to the suitor. 595

Another factor favouring successive marriages with women of the same lineage or clan is the preference of the natives for wives from a nearby rather than a distant clan. A man looking for an additional wife tends to turn his eyes first to the same neighbouring settlements in which he formerly sought a wife, and men of the same lineage tend to seek wives in the same settlements, as we shall find.

When co-wives refer to one another as 'sisters' they are using a kinship term in a metaphorical sense to indicate their social equivalence—that is, their identity of role and status in their conjugal home and settlement. But if they are kin they speak of one another as 'sisters' in a deeper sense. They have a bond of mutual attachment that holds independently of their relations as wives of the same man or the same lineage. As 'sisters' in the kinship sense they help each other more regularly and more altruistically; they share such things as foodstuffs and firewood more readily; they mother each other's children with more devotion and with a greater feeling of common interest in them; they live together more harmoniously, in general, than unrelated co-wives. This is especially true of a woman and a co-wife whom she has 'fetched in' as the term *poɣasoog*, literally a *soog* sister wife (that is, a wife who is like a *soog* sister to another wife), suggests. The older woman watches over the younger almost as if she were a younger full sister or her own daughter. [601]

Tallensi take it for granted that co-wives are apt to quarrel. 'Oh yes', both men and women say with a laugh, if they are asked about it, 'co-wives quarrel—but nevertheless they stay on.' The point is that quarrels between co-wives are taken as a matter of course and do not lead to a wife's desertion. These quarrels may be nothing more than the flaring up of frayed tempers; for among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, people who live so intimately together as the members of a family are prone to fall out over trifles. Or they may be real fights, beginning with taunts and insults and ending with blows. Neighbours, usually men of the husband's lineage, hearing the uproar, may rush in to separate the women, if the husband himself or other men of his family are not on the spot to do so. For there is no one among the women of a household with authority to discipline the others. The senior mistress of the home, whether she is the mother or the senior wife of the owner of the house, ranks above the rest of the women, but has no disciplinary authority over them. 595 578

595 578 According to the natives, quarrels between co-wives are often due to one or other of them having an intractable disposition. Men add that women lack self-control and are very prone to petty jealousy; they are apt to quarrel if they think they are being unfairly treated, if, for instance, one wife seems to receive more than a fair share of her husband's attention. But when actual cases of such quarrels are examined they are seen to be an expression of the tensions springing from the cleavages in the structure of the domestic family. They are temporary disturbances of the balance between the relatively autonomous matri-central *dug* and the inclusive patri-central *yir*. That is why they occur so rarely between women who are related by kinship or clanship, and who therefore think of their *dugət* as subdivisions of a single wider *dug*. Co-wives live in harmony as long as they act in the interests of the common *yir*; dissensions arise between them when they do not accept the paramountcy of the *yir*, and assert their relative autonomy in relation to one another. In the normal run of family life the interests of the common *yir* come first, for the sustenance of the family and the general welfare of all its members depend upon proper co-operation between them, resting on mutual loyalty and goodwill.

595 462 241 The women of the household, both those who are co-wives to one another, and those who are mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or mother and daughter to one another, usually work together harmoniously to perform their share of the productive labour of agriculture. They work under the direction of the head of the house, and the products of their labour accrue to the common food supply. This is a part of the co-operative economic organization of the household. Thus at sowing or harvest time one often sees a whole family working together in the fields. When a sowing party is at work one sees the men striding vigorously ahead, dibbling the holes with their long heavy dibbles cut from saplings, while the women follow behind, chattering and laughing amicably as they sow the grain. And when the harvest is in full swing, one sees similar cheerful family parties out on the field or homeward bound at dusk in Indian file, the men in front, perhaps carrying their pear-shaped wicker coops in which they have collected a brood of chickens that had been allowed to run in the fields during the day, the women sauntering close behind them, the heavy baskets of grain on their heads, and small boys and girls gambolling in the rear blowing their whistles and shaking their rattles (*kiŋkaɣah*) of serrated calabash disks. [534]

595 The independence of the *dug* comes out in the utilization of the food-supply. As the women have to supply the vegetables for cooking the relish which the natives regard as an indispensable accompaniment to their heavy porridge, each woman who has her own *dug* is entitled to a vegetable patch beside the wall of the homestead. Except for the senior woman of the house, who has a slightly larger vegetable patch

595 than the others, all the women must be allocated more or less equal plots for this purpose. Each woman, with the help of her daughters or a [222 263] daughter-in-law, collects and stores wild herbs and edible leaves, buys condiments and seasonings like salt, pepper, and locust bean balls, sometimes with the proceeds of her own petty trading in the markets, and collects shea nuts for the preparation of shea butter, the most important source of fat and the most prized emollient in the native cuisine, for the use of her own *dug*. If a man gives a penny or twopence to one wife for the purchase of seasonings, he must, either immediately or on subsequent market days, give some money to his other wives for this purpose. If he obtains some meat, he must either distribute it amongst all his wives or give all of it to his senior wife to use or preserve for the benefit [846] of the whole family. Only a wife in childbed is entitled to have extra luxuries, which it is the duty of her husband to provide.

595 252 Though each woman cooks for herself with an eye to the feeding of her own children and her husband, in the first place, co-wives are obliged to share food prepared with grain from the common supply. In times of plenty, if all the wives of a man have cooked a meal, each woman dishes out a portion of porridge and the accompanying relish for her husband, a portion for herself and her child or children eating with her, and a smaller portion for each of her co-wives. The husband should taste all the dishes sent in to him by his wives, and should pass on to the older children who do not eat with their mothers the dishes he does not want for himself. In times of scarcity a man's wives may cook in rotation for the whole family. But if a woman has a private supply of grain, obtained by trade or from her own relatives, she is entitled to use it for feeding her own children and the husband only; she need not give anything to her co-wives or their children.

596 In the production and utilization of food-supplies, as this brief sketch shows, the common interests of the *yir* are distinctly paramount. Co-wives co-operate most harmoniously, both among themselves and with the other women of the household, in this sphere of family life. In the organization of productive labour and of the domestic economy, and in the conventions regulating mutual help in this sphere, the dependence on one another of all the members of a household for their sustenance is constantly emphasized. But the relative autonomy of the *dug* is never wholly submerged. The women do not pool the products of their individual labour and enterprise. They do not pool their utensils, and family quarrels sometimes arise because one woman or one woman's child has borrowed and damaged a utensil belonging to another. They keep their firewood supplies, the accumulation of which is one of their most arduous tasks, jealously separate; and they do the same with vegetables and seasonings. There is sometimes friction between co-wives over the use of the grinding-room. But it is significant of the balance usually maintained between the centrifugal tendencies of the *dug* and the

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get the scraps. 602 736

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her children from every other woman and her children of the same domestic family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to co-wife. 602 593

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives. That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave carefully if they go into them. 593 595

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past. So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*) and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the male line or, consequently, the *yir*. 595 754 578

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been compelled to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 595 578 627 178

595 627 178 578 paternal kin and more strongly by her uterine kin (*saarət*), insist on doing so. If she survived, she and her children and other *soog* kin would never forgive her accuser. There would be chronic friction in the family. If she died, her children and other *soog* kin would still resent the imputation against them and would have a lifelong grievance against her accuser and her children. The accuser would in any case bear the ritual blame, and would be in danger of mystical retribution. Nowadays, to judge by one case that came to my notice, the accused woman and her kin insist on an oath by the *bɔɣar*, usually the *bɔɣar* of the husband's medial lineage. Both women swear to the justice of their case before the *bɔɣar*, and the one who suffers a serious misfortune soonest—a misfortune such as grave sickness or death in her own *dug* of the house—is deemed to be in the wrong. Whatever the outcome, it amounts to one member of the family invoking the *bɔɣar* which watches over the welfare of the whole group to injure another member of the unit; and this is a sacrilege, even if it is done in the name of justice. It must be atoned for by sacrifices to which both women and their husband (or husbands) have to contribute. But the *bɔɣar* is never wholly appeased; it may still bring misfortune on the family for the sacrilege. And, of course, both women and their *soog* kin might continue to harbour resentment. An accusation of witchcraft, itself the symptom of the conflicts latent in the structure of the polygamous family, breeds endless discord.

595 But it must be emphasized that such cases are rare. For the most part women rub along pretty well with their co-wives. In this the senior wife (*pɔɣakpeem*)—seniority being reckoned according to order of marriage—may exercise a great deal of influence, especially if, as is likely, she is older than the others. Though she has no disciplinary authority over her younger co-wives, she has considerable moral authority over them. As her husband's closest confidante among his wives she knows all the affairs of the family and has its interests close at heart. She stands for the common allegiance of the wives to their husband and the family. A wise and tactful senior wife will keep an eye on the household economy and on the children without seeming to interfere with the liberty of her younger co-wives. Looking up to her with respect and affection, her younger co-wives will accept advice and guidance from her that does much to make the routine of family life smooth and pleasant. The fiction that she is the real mistress of the house (*dugdaana*) and that all the children 'belong' to her in a special sense gives her a formal status that makes this easier. If a suitor calls to see a girl of the family he must pay his respects to the senior wife before he goes to greet the girl's own mother. [431] If a woman's son-in-law sends her gifts of sweet potatoes, yams, and guinea-fowls at the time of the Harvest Festival, she will call all her co-wives proudly to see the gifts, and will distribute some of the tubers among them; but in addition the senior wife will receive a guinea-fowl as a mark of special honour. In such ways is the mistress of the

house apprised of what is going on in the quarters of the younger women 595
and enabled to exercise benevolent supervision over them.

Her supervision is of special importance when any of the younger 595
women is confined. She sees to it that mother and child are properly
attended, that the rites of confinement and of emergence from seclusion 846
are properly performed, that mother and babe are bathed in the prescribed way, and that the mother is given nourishing food. I was passing Ɔmara's homestead one afternoon, about a fortnight after the birth of a child to one of his wives, and called in. The new baby's mother was just coming out of the gateway with an empty water-pot on her head, and I noticed that she was looking far from well. Ɔmara's senior wife, a woman of sterling character, unsoured even by the leprosy that was rapidly getting a hold on her, was sitting outside in the shade. 'Where are you going to?' asked the older woman. 'To the water-hole,' replied her young co-wife. 'Don't go alone,' said the senior wife, 'I'll come with you'; and she rose to accompany the girl. For the first few weeks after the birth of her child a woman must not go about alone outside the homestead. She is still suffering from 'the dreams of a parturient woman (*pɔɣarɔɣah za'ahug*)'; that is, she is weak and liable to hallucinations or attacks of terror—or, as the natives think of it, to attacks from evil trees and stones—which might drive her mad. That was why the older woman accompanied the young mother. Many such incidents could be quoted in illustration of the concern shown by a senior wife for the welfare of her juniors.

Of course, not all senior wives exercise their role in a wise and un- 595
selfish spirit. A woman with an overbearing disposition may make life [578]
difficult for her juniors. One result will be that each woman tends to keep strictly to her own *dug* so as to avoid clashing with the senior wife or the other women, and co-operation between co-wives tends to follow the letter of convention rather than the spirit of family unity. Again, there are families in which the senior wife has through age, infirmity, or weakness of character resigned the effective supervision of the household to a younger co-wife, though she still remains the titular senior. But observation shows that on the whole senior wives conform to the pattern we have outlined above. Their position in the family, their responsibilities and privileges, shape them to this pattern.

It must be remembered, also, that the size and stage of development 596
of a family have a great influence on the relations between co-wives. In a family like that of Da'amo'o of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ who has but recently set up in his own homestead, there are only three women, two being Da'amo'o's wives and the third his younger brother's wife. They are all young women round about the age of 20, two with an infant each and the other still a maiden (*pɔɣasarɔt*). In such a family the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* is rudimentary. The three girls work in co-operation and live together harmoniously like sisters and with no visible distinction

593 518 If a person is ill tempered or unnecessarily sharp with him, or appears to dislike him, a Taləŋ retorts with 'Why do you dislike me? Am I your *nyeer*, or what? (*I yaagəm bo? Man a i nyeer bɛ?*)' This formula is always spoken half-mockingly; for the rivalry of successive children, though assumed to be in the very nature of their relationship, is not taken too seriously. It is not, like the underlying rivalry of father and first-born son, subject to ritual sanctions. It is simply an acute expression of the familiarity and equality of siblings and does not destroy their solidarity.[1] Tallensi themselves say that successive siblings often get on together admirably and stand together as staunchly as any other full siblings. I have never heard it said that *soog* brothers are quicker to set up separate households if they are successive siblings than if they are not.

518 593 ● 595 Tale custom recognizes the rivalry of successive siblings in a number of other ways. Thus successive siblings (this applies chiefly to brothers) may not be buried in the same grave. If they are, their spirits will be continually quarrelling and persecuting their descendants until they are exhumed and separated. Again, successive sisters may not be married to the same man or even to the same clan. But this rule is, to my own knowledge, often broken. If they do happen to be married into the same clan the sisters must avoid being pregnant at the same time or, if they are, they must not see each other during their pregnancy. If they do one or both will miscarry. Here it is belief rather than practice that is a sign of the rivalry of successive siblings. Tallensi object to having two sisters married to the same man for prudential reasons. They say that it is obviously more difficult to get eight cows out of one man in payment of bride-price than it is to get four cows. Nevertheless it does sometimes occur. A well-to-do son-in-law who has his father-in-law's esteem can often persuade the old man to give [789] him another daughter to wife. If the girls are successive siblings, a very simple magical rite involving the burying of a hoe at the entrance of the husband's homestead serves to 'cut' their *nyeer* relationship.[2]

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[1] I do not know whether successive siblings quarrel more often than non-successive siblings. Tallensi say they do. Knowing the Tallensi, I have no doubt that conventional expectation itself acts as a stimulus to petty wrangling between successive siblings. Every time they have a disagreement not only onlookers but they themselves put the conventional interpretation on the situation, and this is bound to make them more touchy in relation to each other than to other siblings. In every aspect of Tale social life cultural definitions and expectations direct behaviour in this way. On the other hand, I knew several pairs of successive siblings who got on extremely well together and to all appearances never said a cross word to each other. Tallensi admit that this is quite common and explain it by the invariable stock phrase 'It 's all a matter of character'.

828 [2] A question that immediately suggests itself is, whence does the rivalry of successive siblings arise? I have put this question to many Tallensi. The usual answer is in terms of the cliché that 'it is in the nature of things (*de yɛl nla*)'.

former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members 613
in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. 593
The token funeral performed for a woman by her father's people, after 562
her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔγayabɔlɔg-kpɛŋ* [766]
not by her own father's heirs but by the head of the inner or medial or even maximal lineage, her status-brother, so to speak. Tallensi say she belongs to the whole lineage not to her paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow 595
may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan
or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two 587
principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', 595
and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint 613
leviratic rights is one of the critical norms of clanship,[1] implying that
all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither 593
absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to 587
them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

593 595 613 587 property it is good enough if she marries any one of them. In practice, a widow of child-bearing age who has children by her late husband usually consents to remarry one of his close brothers.

587 613 595 Next to a brother of the nuclear lineage, a brother of the late husband's inner lineage is considered to have a strong claim to his widow's hand. If a man dies leaving two widows of child-bearing age it is considered proper for one of them to be given to a member of her late husband's nuclear lineage and for the other to go to another nuclear segment of the same inner lineage. If a widow appears to be unwilling to marry her late husband's half-brother, for example, and is prepared to marry one of his 'brothers' of the same inner lineage, she is usually allowed to do so by the head of her husband's nuclear lineage. The new husband is still spoken of as having inherited the widow. In every case that came under my notice widows of child-bearing age married into their late husband's inner lineage if they had young children. But in a few cases, amounting to about three out of ten, these second marriages broke down after a time. Childless young widows often prefer to go back to their parental home and try their luck again on the marriage market.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage a 'brother' of the dead man has only the rights of a clansman. If the widow is of child-bearing age he will have to be very circumspect in courting her; for he can only marry her if she chooses him in preference to other claimants, and this means she must be courted. Hence it is more usual to speak of 'marrying' (*di*) a widow than of 'inheriting' (*vaa*) her in such cases. But it would be a very bold woman who, left a widow while still capable of bearing children, rejected a husband's brother of the same inner lineage in favour of a clansman of his. Only in exceptional cases would such an action not create ill feeling between the two clan segments concerned. Such an exceptional case occurred when Baroog died leaving nine widows. His father tried hard to persuade several distant clansmen of his to seek the widows in marriage. The reason was that Baroog had no adult brothers in his nuclear lineage and so few in his inner lineage that they would not be able to inherit all the widows. For few men wish to inherit more than one widow at a time. Rather than let them return to their fathers and be sought in marriage by men of other clans, Baroog's father preferred to see them marry distant clansmen of his.

587 595 Widows beyond the age of child-bearing have complete freedom of choice in selecting a new husband from among their late husband's clansmen. Often such marriages are merely nominal. The woman continues to live with a grown-up son and her new husband comes to visit her occasionally and sends her a little grain now and then. If the widow has no adult son she will live with her new husband, adding to the labour power of his household and to its indirect sources of income through the gifts she obtains from her patrilineal kin, for example, or any private property of her own, such as a couple of sheep or goats.

Inheritance of a grandfather's widow by a grandson, in the patrilineal line, is confined to the inner or at most the medial lineage for the simple reason that generation differences are not reckoned beyond those limits. Such marriages are not common because few men live long enough to have adult grandsons. The case of Tiezien, previously recorded, who married his grandfather Kuŋkɔŋki's young widow is the only one of its kind I encountered. For at least another generation or two the custom of inheriting a grandfather's widow will probably survive in that lineage. For Nyaaŋzum, Tiezien's proxy father whom he brought up, is the last of his generation in that medial lineage, hence his widows will have to go to his own or classificatory grandsons. 587 595

A sister's son (*ahəŋ*) cannot marry his true mother's brother's (*ahəb*) widow. That would be incest, since he identifies his *ahəb* with his mother and therefore thinks of him as a quasi-father. He can marry his *ahəb*'s son's widow or his *ahəb*'s father's widow; for he regards the son as a 'brother', and the father is his grandfather. If the sister's son and mother's brother are uterine kin (*saarət*), marriage of the latter's son's widow to the former is generally approved of by the dead man's inner lineage—provided, of course, there are no better claimants among the dead man's brothers—for a uterine *ahəŋ*, as we shall see more fully presently, is considered to be almost as closely related to his mother's brother's nuclear lineage as a born member of it. Nevertheless, such marriages are rare, and the few instances I heard of all seemed to be due to special circumstances. In one case, in which I knew the parties personally, the woman was suspected of being sterile, and the sister's son was known to be a special favourite of his mother's brother; in others the women were apparently too old for child-bearing.

In theory any member of another clan who can trace kinship with the clan of a widow's late husband through an ancestress can be called a 'sister's son' or a 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' in the widest classificatory sense. I heard of two or three cases of such distant *ahəs* marrying the widows of members of their classificatory 'mother's brother's lineage', but the women were all elderly and the marriages were purely nominal. There was one case, however, in which a man eloped with the widow of a member of the inner lineage from which his paternal great-grandmother had come. This was widely spoken of as a scandal, and the pair were never forgiven by the first husband's nuclear lineage; but nothing could be done about it as the *ahəŋ* had the support of the letter of custom. The truth is that a 'sister's son' has no chance against the corporate solidarity of his 'mother's brother's' lineage. He can succeed only if they tacitly withdraw their claims or openly give him permission to court the widow.[1]

The levirate thus brings out clearly the social equivalence of siblings and shows how it is graded in accordance with genealogical distance. 593 595

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[1] Cf. p. 240 above, and Ch. XI below.

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We might mention here that the institution of the sororate, which is considered by some authorities[1] to be the natural complement of the levirate, only exists in a rudimentary—some might say vestigial—form among the Tallensi. It comes up if a man loses his only wife and is left a lone widower. Then his father-in-law sends a party of mourners to the funeral who take with them a young girl of his clan—perhaps one of his own daughters, perhaps the daughter of a 'brother' of his inner or medial lineage. This girl, a real or classificatory sister of the dead wife, is presented to the grief-stricken widower. She has been brought, the father-in-law's messengers say, 'to sit on your knees, to console you, to dry your tears, to be your wife' and so take the place of her dead sister. It is, however, more a gesture of condolence than a real offer of a substitute for the dead wife. Tallensi say that very occasionally the girl might stay on as the wife of the widower; most commonly she goes home immediately after the funeral or within a few weeks. Her deputy wifehood is purely ceremonial, for she is usually too young to do all the housekeeping or to be slept with.

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The rules of inheritance among brothers also illustrate the gradation of their social equivalence in accordance with their genealogical distance. These rules have been considered from various angles in earlier contexts and little remains to be added. Their operation, as we have seen, depends on the conditions of economic co-operation to a very considerable extent. If two brothers farm together they automatically have joint rights in all lands, livestock, and other resources they possess. If one dies the other does not so much inherit his property and position in society as amalgamate it with his own. What was formerly managed by two men conjointly now becomes the concern of one man. There is practically no change, to begin with, in the social relations of their dependants as the result of the death of one brother. When Nindɔyat died his *soog* brother Yintee inherited the homestead they had both occupied. Nindɔyat's wives at first stayed on as Yintee's wives, his children naturally remained in the homestead. They had lost their own father, but there was no change in their social position or their economic condition as a result of his death. If brothers farm independently they inherit from each other in order of seniority and of degree of consanguinity. Patrimonial property, rights, and ritual objects that have been transmitted intact from their fathers are inherited strictly by seniority amongst the group of brothers who trace their descent to the original holder of these possessions. But property acquired by the deceased's own father goes only to his brothers by the same father, in order of seniority. And the custody of his children will pass to his genealogically nearest brother whether or not he is the heir to the patrimonial property.

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Here a revealing jural fiction deserves mention. Brothers are thought

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[1] Cf. Lowie, R., *Primitive Society*, p. 33.

264 Each family eats in its own close, while the man usually eats in that of his senior wife, and his other wives each send him in a dish of food.

252 595 As we have already mentioned, each woman in a polygynous household cooks for the husband and her own family. Their cooking is not synchronized, but as the evening meal is always made at sunset, there is no considerable discrepancy in the time of eating by the different families.

264 The man eats with his 'youngest' child, that is, the last one to have stopped suckling. If he has unmarried brothers dependent upon him they, too, eat with him. A few yards further off his sons—young men and boys—form another group, while the woman herself and the young girls eat apart at the kitchen door. Two women sharing a kitchen eat together. Men and women do not eat together except in circumstances which will be noted later.

A calabash of porridge, a dish of soup, a calabash of drinking-water and another for washing the hands are set down for each group. When the senior member of each group has taken his place the others settle in a circle round the food. In order of seniority each one washes his or her right hand perfunctorily. The eldest member is the first to begin eating, but he is also the first to stop. The youngest member finishes last and is usually encouraged to clear the dish; for an older member to continue eating with the youngest is to invite the ridicule of the others. The food is eaten with the right hand. A piece of porridge is broken off and dipped into the soup with cupped fingers. If meat is present each member breaks off a tiny morsel of it to taste. During the meal the water is passed round for every one to drink. Though each group seated round a dish of food acts independently, those sitting in the same close with the head of the household do not begin before him. Eating is a serious business; there is no conversation at meal-times, and as soon as a group has finished they disperse.

264 595 In addition to sending in food to her husband, a woman sends a dish of porridge with soup to her husband's mother, and a dish to each of her co-wives belonging to her own food economy unit. Thus, each woman has to cook enough for her husband and family and to exchange with every kitchen supplied from the same grain store. This rule, naturally, does not hold for food provided by a woman's

own efforts in time of scarcity. Each woman cares for her own 264
children only. She keeps food for an absent child, but will offer some 575
to a co-wife's child only if it asks her for it. But the man will give
food to all his children. As a rule, he eats the portion sent in by his
senior wife and tastes a little from each dish brought in by the others.
When he has had his fill he calls his children to come and eat the rest,
always remembering those who have not had enough. Thus the
discrepancy in the distribution of grain, where each woman gets the
same share irrespective of the number of mouths she has to feed, is
adjusted by the man in his fair re-distribution of the cooked food.

This general pattern is not a rigid one, but is adapted to the structure
of every household and to its special circumstances, e.g. a man would [576]
eat with his wife and small children from a common dish if they
happened to be alone in the compound. To do so if another wife were
present would cause envy and quarrelling between the women; these
arrangements are a matter of etiquette and not of taboo.

The natives account for the custom of a man's eating with his 264
'youngest' child on the grounds that a child must eat properly in order
to grow and must be taught to do so. They say, also, that it thus
learns to know its father, and not only its mother whom it is always
following about. We have not sufficient material to judge the validity
of this interpretation; it is quoted here to indicate the native valuation
of the sharing of food in the family.

Infants are given morsels of porridge as soon as they can swallow 853
solid food, and by the age of 18 months can feed themselves dexter-
ously. They are weaned by the age of three not by a forcible or harsh 862
separation from the breast, but by gradual habituation to adult food. 264
The emphasis on the adequate feeding of children is shown, also,
in the manner in which *sayakɔrət*, left-over porridge, is reserved for
them. Porridge remaining after the noon meal is stirred into the
porridge cooked at sunset; if it is left after the evening meal it is given
to children cold for breakfast next day. Only after they have eaten
their fill will adults have some. In the months of plenty children
often have a morning meal of *sayakɔrət*; at other times a handful of
ground-nuts, or a dish of flour-water or of dawa-dawa powder must
suffice.

Flour-water (*zɔmkuom*) deserves a note to itself. There are two ways 272

613 and duties vested in it. Nədeɣər yidem suffer no jural or ritual disabilities because they are so much inferior in numbers to their brother segments.

The Principle of Segmentation in the Lineage

There are two factors of great importance in the dynamics of the lineage system: the principle of segmentation in the lineage and the connexion between lineage aggregation and locality.

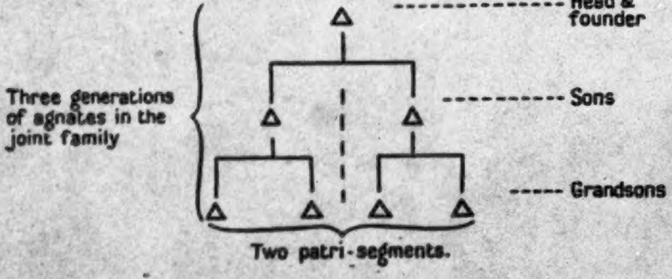
A striking characteristic of the Tale lineage is the rigorous precision with which its members fall into a set of hierarchically articulated segments, of homologous form but all exactly differentiated both genealogically and functionally (cf. Ch. III). This segmentary differentiation of the lineage follows the pattern of the family even to nomenclature. For the lineage grows out of, and through the medium of, the family, and throughout its existence a lineage develops uniformly, so that it preserves the form in which it was originally moulded.

To put it more accurately, a lineage grows by continuous internal differentiation in successive generations. It grows by the continuous multiplication of its parts, not by the mere accretion of new members. And this takes place by the splitting up of its cells, the minimal segments, into new minimal segments in successive generations. This process follows the lines of cleavage laid down in the joint family.

●596 The polygynous joint family forms an integral unit with respect to its male element, the group of agnates upon which it is based and which gives it stability and continuity. This unity of the joint family is summed up in the concept of the patricentral 'house' (*yir*). But it is a unity superimposed upon a strict cellular differentiation into matricentral 'rooms' (*dugət*), each centred upon a wife.

613
596 The group of male agnates in the joint family constitutes an effective minimal lineage at a given time. Each male is a potential agnatic line; a pair of brothers are two potential segments of a lineage. In terms of their common patrilineal descent this group of males forms a single corporate unit. This is the essential *yir*. But this unity contains within itself two sets of cleavages: firstly, a stratification by generations, and secondly, a differentiation by descent. The generation principle acts in this way (cf.

Hypothetical Genealogy, I

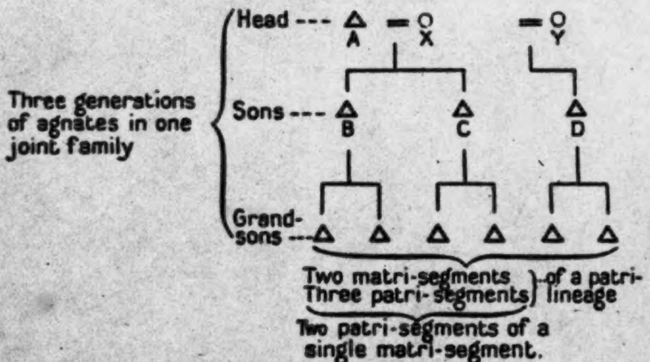


the hypothetical genealogy, I): Two brothers who are distinct as individuals are identified with reference to their common father; in all social activities in which they take part as the *sons* of their father they are, as it were, merged. During their father's lifetime they have, in fact, no independent jural status, but are, to speak figuratively again, submerged in his jural personality. Their sons, if the joint family survives as a unit for another generation, will be divided into two patrilateral groups with reference to their respective fathers, but fused into a single jural and economic as well as genealogical unit with reference to their grandfather. In this way the stratification of the effective minimal lineage into generations automatically splits it into patri-segments.[1]

Simultaneously, however, the centrifugal influence of the *dug* is at work. Brothers by the same father may have different mothers. Among the Tallensi this carries with it an emphatic affective discrimination. Half-brothers (*sunzɔ*, pl. *sunzɔp*) are divided by a wedge of sentiment which arises not only out of their independent emotional ties with their particular mothers, but also out of the structural, economic, and moral relations of the *dugət* within the *yir*. It reflects the social autonomy of the *dug* in relation to other *dugət* of the *yir* and the polarity of *dug* and *yir*. Conversely, full (*soog*) brothers have the most intimate bond in the whole gamut of Tale social relations, a bond implying an identity of interests, an emotional cohesion, and mutual loyalty so great as to override any kind of personal or social variance.[2] Thus, within the joint family, maternal origin (*ma dɔyam*, lit. 'mother's bearing') may divide the sons of one man in sentiment and by an additional index of descent. The patrilateral unit is segmented into incipient matrilateral segments.

What happens in the next generation can best be seen from the following hypothetical genealogy:

Hypothetical Genealogy. II


Head ---
A
X
Y
Three generations of agnates in one joint family
Sons ---
B
C
D
Grand-sons ---
Two matri-segments
Three patri-segments
of a patri-lineage
Two patri-segments of a single matri-segment.

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[1] This terminology is borrowed from Daryll Forde, *Marriage and the Family among the Yakö*, L. S. E. Monographs on Anthropology, No. 5.

[2] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *Africa*, xiv, 7, 1944, for a discussion of the concept of *soog*.

We assume a joint family containing three generations of male agnates—the head, his three sons, and his six grandsons, and we neglect the maternal origins of the latter. The six grandsons are divided into three equal patri-segments with reference to their respective fathers, and form a single corporate lineage with reference to their common grandfather. But they are genealogically split into two segments with reference to their respective *grandmothers*; and one of these matrilaterally defined segments (matri-segments) can be split into two patri-segments, of a lower order. Patrilateral origin and matrilateral origin work in polar opposition to each other. An agnatic group united by their patrilateral origin can be subdivided in accordance with their matrilateral origin; and vice versa, an agnatic group united by reference to their matrilateral origin can be subdivided by closer patrilateral origin.

Note that this is not a question of matriliny versus patriliny. Matrilateral origin works as a factor of cleavage only within a patrilineal group, in contradistinction to strict patriliny. Either focus may be the critical one in a given situation; but the other is not thereby obliterated; it merely becomes latent. The pattern operative here is that of the joint family. Patri-segment and matri-segment are related as *yir* and *dug* in the joint family, matri-segment and matri-segment as *dug* and *dug*. They are, indeed, nothing other than the parallel, in the structure of the unending lineage, of the balance of forces that characterizes the joint family. Members of one matri-segment are the offspring of one *dug*, members of one patri-segment may be the offspring of several *dugət*. The natives use the terms *yir* and *dug* to define the relations of lineage segments to one another. *Dug*, then, always bears the implication of a cohesive integral segment within the fissile *yir*. It stands for solidarity as opposed to the latent divisions in the *yir*, obviously reflecting its primary sense of the irreducible, uncleavable matricentral cell within the potentially divided *yir*.

Segmentation by matrilateral lines in the nuclear lineage plays a very important part in the development of both the joint family and the lineage. Economic, jural, and affective relations in the joint family are influenced by matrilateral (*dug*) affiliation; and when in course of time a joint family splits up, fission takes place in the first instance between matri-segments. Members of the same *dug* hold together longer than members of different *dugət*. Thus, two full brothers (*soog*, pl. *saarət*) continue to live in the same homestead, to farm together, to be jurally and ritually one, long after two half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) have found it necessary to separate. Often the split, which inevitably comes between separate lines in the nuclear lineage, is retarded in the case of *soog* brothers, and does not take place until their death. Children of *soog* brothers even after fission have closer ties than children of half-brothers.

These principles of segmentation are not merely a method of genealogical classification of individuals, but an indispensable regulator of corporate activities, operating at every level of lineage organization. This requires the preservation of the names of all relevant ancestors and ancestresses, but genealogical classification has no meaning except as a shorthand for the many and complex relations of individuals and groups.

The living members of a lineage are continually experiencing, in their

daily life, the antithesis between patrilateral and matrilateral ties in the 613 joint family. There is also the principle of the continuity and identity of 596● the lineage. Members of the same lineage are identified with one another and with their lineal ascendants. Tallensi think of a lineage as a continuous, even eternal, group, a unit persisting through time as well as existing at a given time. A particular lineage to-day is the same lineage that it was at its inception two, three, or *x* generations ago. Segments of a clan or maximal lineage have the same structural position relatively to one another as they had in the beginning, only on a different scale; and in the beginning segmentarily related lineages sprang from brothers. As these founding ancestors were related, so are their contemporary agnatic descendants related. Hence co-ordinate segments of a lineage are described as *sunzɔp* ('brothers by the same father'), and the bonds of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are the nucleus and prototype of the bonds between co-ordinate segments. Two co-ordinate segments whose founding ancestors were full (*soog*) brothers have closer ties than similar co-ordinate segments descended from a pair of half-brothers. The lineage is always growing, but can never break the unchanging frame laid down at its beginning. It is almost as if a single person has undergone a quantitative metamorphosis with the passage of generations.

Lineage ties cannot lapse or be renounced. A maximal lineage once 613 established can never split into two or more independent (i.e. mutually exogamous) maximal lineages, as in some other areas of Africa, and territorial dispersion does not break the lineage tie, even after many generations. In fact, the whole stream of Tale social life emphasizes and reinforces the sense of lineage continuity, and of the identification of members of a lineage with one another, with their predecessors, and with their prospective successors. This is the basis of the corporate unity and solidarity of the lineage, and of the lineal transmission of rights and duties, ritual observances, office, property, and debts; and for this reason any member of a lineage can represent any other member, living or dead, or the whole lineage, in relation to other lineages of a like sort. This, too, underlies the usage by which members of a lineage can refer to their founding ancestor either as their 'father' (*ba*) or as their 'ancestor' (*yaab*), a term which denotes any patrilineal ancestor beyond and including the grandfather. It explains the conception of the lineage progenitrix—the founding ancestor's mother—as the 'mother' (*ma*) of the lineage. It must be added that even when a lineage is envisaged as a *dug* deriving from its progenitrix, it takes its name from her son, as its agnatic founding ancestor as a branch of a more inclusive lineage.

The rules of lineage segmentation can be summed up as follows: 613 Whenever a lineage is envisaged as an inclusive corporate unit embracing 778 two or more subordinate segments, it is identified by reference to its founding *ancestor*, as the starting-point of its descent. It is thought of as a *yir*, house, 'the children of one father (*ba yɛni biis*)', on the model of the patricentral joint family (*yir* in the primary sense) in which the offspring form a single genealogical and social unit with reference to their common father. Its focal ancestor shrine is designated the '*bɔyar* of the fathers (*banam bɔyar*)', a notion that stresses the dominance of the father-figure

Lineage Grouping and Local Grouping

613 We come now to the question of the connexion between lineage
621 grouping and locality. A lineage like Nɔpugzabɔr yiri, though its span
596 is comparatively small, exhibits all the important principles of lineage
structure and will suffice as a crucial example.

In all the old-established settlements we find a very close correlation between lineage proximity and residential proximity among the members of the clan who live there. Close agnates tend to live near one another, so that residential proximity is almost a measure of lineage proximity. A segment of small span tends to be a close residential cluster, and segments of larger span, up to the major segments of a maximal lineage, tend to form residential blocks.

We can see this most readily if we look again at the residential dispersion of a group of agnatically related joint families, bearing in mind that the men of a joint family form a lineage. For as the homestead is the material integument of the living structure of the joint family, so is the localization of the lineage, growing out of the spatial arrangement of the homestead, the spatial counterpart of the lineage structure.

592 As will be remembered (see p. 199), the elementary case is that of two
full (*soog*) brothers, who often continue to occupy a single homestead
602 long after they have set up separate families. Each will have more or less
596 self-contained quarters, but the homestead will have only one gateway
(*zanɔr*), one cattle-yard (*sapak*), and one room for the family head (*zɔŋ*), signifying that it is a single homestead. Half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) may share a homestead in this way, but they usually separate more distinctly when they have growing families. Each will have his own gateway, &c., and party walls divide his section of the homestead completely from those of his brothers, making it what may be called a semi-detached homestead. Such a set of semi-detached homesteads may house a man and his mature first-born son, or a man and his deceased brother's sons. Sometimes two or more ortho-cousins (brothers, in native terminology) live thus side by side.

613 More usually, however, men whose nearest common ancestor is a grand-
621 father occupy completely separate dwellings, often very near to one
another. Men whose nearest common ancestor is a great-grandfather never have permanent homes adjoining one another in this semi-detached way. These conditions of residence signalize successive stages of segmentation as the effective minimal lineage expands and splits into new effective minimal lineages. But what residential arrangements will prevail in a particular lineage segment depends, also, upon other circumstances, the most important of which are the economic and religious relations, and the character and disposition of the individuals concerned. Residential collocation is not a simple function of lineage relationship. There is a *tertium quid* linking them: the combined effect of land tenure, on which the whole economy of the household rests, and of the ancestor cult. For example, when a joint family splits, the man who leaves the ancestral home usually builds a homestead for himself on land belonging to the

573 602 sets apart the males as the nucleus of the lineage. We can see the centrifugal, sundering force of matrilateral kinship counterbalancing the centripetal, uniting pull of patriliny. In the context of family life we can see the play of conflict and compromise in the working out of the primary equilibrium of Tale social organization, due to the interaction of these two sectors of social life.

596 Through his primary relations of consanguinity in the domestic family the individual is linked to agnates in other families and to cognates in other families and clans. There is, however, one significant difference between intra-familial and extra-familial bonds of kinship. Unlike the latter, the former are necessarily ambivalent, each relationship containing within itself both an agnatic and a cognatic component. In a joint family of three generations, for example, a child's relationship with his father differs from his relationship with his grandfather or his mother. Though these are all cognatic relationships, the tension and latent rivalry in the relationship of father and son stand in marked contrast to the comradeship of grandfather and grandson. On the other hand, grandfather, father, and son belong to the same lineage segment; they are united by a common interest in patrimonial land and in the product of their joint labour, by a common ancestor cult, by rights and duties vested in that lineage in relation to like segments of a greater lineage, and by their common concern for the continuity of their line. These are part of the whole complex of common interests and values that mobilize corporate action and maintain corporate solidarity in the maximal lineage and clan of which they form a segment. The men of a joint family may be thrown into conflict with one another on account of their cognatic relationships, but they act in union and on behalf of one another and of the whole unit in virtue of their lineage ties.

593 There is another paradox in the structure of the Tale family that is of importance for our inquiry. Consanguineous relationships arise out of parenthood; but parenthood presupposes marriage, a union of a man and a woman who are, by definition, not kin. The bonds of kinship are rooted in a bond the very essence of which is the absence of kinship. Hence comes the ambivalence inherent in intra-familial cognatic relations. Hence comes, also, another category of social relations, both in the family and between members of different families and clans, relations of affinity. There are two axes, as it were, in the structure of the family, the axis of kinship and that of marriage.

593 602 Before we discuss kinship in the domestic family more fully, we must consider a few matters of more general import. For the constellation of ties and cleavages that makes up the focal field of kinship is conditioned by the formative principles and values that shape the greater society into which the domestic family fits and which it helps to knit together. All person-to-person relations in the family are biased by the values attached to patrilineal descent and maternal origin in the total social structure.

vanity apart, they do require ample storage-room for the large quantities 592 of clothes, the saddlery and trappings of their horses, the innumerable odds and ends of European origin, and many articles of native production which they have accumulated by purchase or gift. Their good fortune is exceptional. Others content themselves with small and modest private rooms. Leatherworkers and blacksmiths also often have private [282 rooms where they keep their tools and the materials of their craft. 326]

No special provision is made for young children or girls. They live in their mothers' rooms. An unmarried young man usually has a special room of his own, essentially a sleeping-room (*doo*), in his mother's *dug*; and if there are several adolescent boys in a family a *doo* may be built for them in one of the women's *dugət*.

The construction of the dwelling-house shows graphically the division 592 of the domestic family into two complementary spheres. On the one hand, we have the sphere in which the patricentral *yir* predominates; 611 on the other, that in which the matricentral *dug* has priority. It is the line of cleavage between descent from the father (*ba dɔɣam*) and descent from the mother (*ma dɔɣam*), principles which are antithetical in form but complementary in function in the domestic organization. Maternal origin supplies the canon of differentiation within the family, paternal descent the principle of integration. In the polygynous joint family, which is the natives' ideal domestic unit, the constituent *dugət* are relatively autonomous in relation to one another, and in certain respects even mutually opposed. The *yir* combines them into a single integral unit, but they are not swallowed up; they retain their specific identity according to maternal origin. The *yir*, then, is the complementary factor to the *dug*; it is also the synthesis of a group of *dugət* at a higher level of organization. This, as has been shown in our previous book, is both the structural model and the social matrix of the lineage system.

The Developmental Cycle of the Joint Family

We have found it convenient to fix our analysis of the Tale homestead 596 by reference to the simplest kind of independent domestic unit. But the elementary family, as we have already remarked, is neither the ideal nor the most common type of independent domestic unit in Taleland; for the typical substratum of a domestic group is not the individual breadwinner but an effective minimal lineage.[1] The domestic group grows, changes, and dissolves with the growth cycle of this lineage, and a particular elementary family is only an episode in this cycle. The structure of the Tale family cannot be divorced from its existence in time. We have to examine it as a process. At any given time we find domestic families at every stage of development in a Tale community.

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[1] Cf. p. 9 above for a definition of this unit. A full analysis of its constitution is given in *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

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The characteristic domestic family of the Tallensi is the agnatic joint family, and other forms of domestic group appear as phases in the growth cycle of a joint family. In a random sample of sixty-one domestic families from Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it, recorded in 1934, forty-one, or about two-thirds of these, were joint families.[1] A joint family consists of two or more close agnates, members of a single effective minimal lineage in all but exceptional cases, and often comprising all the members of a particular effective minimal lineage, together with their wives, children, and other dependants, if any,

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[1] This sample of 61 domestic families which is cited throughout this chapter, includes domestic families from 5 clans, but the majority are from Tongo. A similar sample taken in the Sie district gave approximately the same results. As has been mentioned, about two-thirds of these families were joint families. The remainder were either elementary families (i.e. consisting of a man, his wife or wives, and his young children) which had been parts of joint families 5 or 10 years previously and would probably become joint families again in a decade or so; or they were joint families augmented by one or two close agnates of the family head and their dependants, or by other kinsmen. Such an augmented joint family functions in the same way as a joint family in the narrow sense. Thus if the time factor is taken into account all Tale domestic families can be described as joint families.

The composition of the joint family can be regarded from a slightly different angle, which supplements what has just been said. Considering the family from the point of view of the relationship of the head to the other male members, our sample breaks up as follows:

11 elementary families (1 man, wife or wives, occasionally his mother, and his young children).
22 families in which the head was the father of the other adult male(s).
25 families in which the head was the older brother of one or more of the other adult males.
3 families in which the head was the grandfather of one or all the other adult males.

The commonest type, it will be seen, is the joint family presided over by either a 'father' or the senior amongst a group of brothers.

The mean number of persons (men, women, and children) per domestic family of our sample is 10·4, distributed as follows:

[162]

Number of persons per family

	1–5	*6–10*	*11–15*	*16–20*	*21–5*	*Total*
Frequency	8	28	17	4	4	61

The mean number of adult males (i.e. over 18, approximately) per family is 2·6; of wives, including widows of deceased members, 3·4; of minors, including adolescent daughters, 4·4. The frequency distributions are as follows:

Number per family

Frequency of	*0*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*Total*
Adult males .	0	10	25	13	7	4	0	2	..	..	..	..	..	61
Wives . .	0	6	16	14	13	4	3	3	0	2	..	..	..	61
Minors . .	2	4	11	9	11	8	4	4	1	3	2	1	1	61

occupying a single homestead. All the men of a joint family are therefore related to one another through a common father or grandfather or, infrequently, great-grandfather. A joint family may consist of two or more brothers (full or half-brothers or paternal cousins), with their wives and children, and perhaps an old mother; or a man and some or all of his married sons with their wives and children, together with unmarried sons and other dependants; or an old man, some or all of his married sons and grandsons, with their wives and children and other dependants—'sons' and 'grandsons' in the last two classes being understood in the native classificatory sense as including both own and deceased brothers' sons and grandsons. Joint families of the last-mentioned class are not very common. Here and there one meets a *joint family* combining features of two classes or having a rather wider range of agnates or other male kin; but these are unusual.

A joint family is obviously a composite unit. If the subordinate 596
families constituting it are taken separately, some or all may be mono-
gynous, elementary families; but one or more of the male members may 595
have more than one wife, and there will thus be subordinate polygynous families within the joint family. For though a Taləŋ starts his career as a family man with only one wife, his aim and ideal, throughout his life, is to have as many wives as he can afford. Actually, judging by the previously quoted sample,[1] the incidence of polygyny among the

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[1] The following table sets out the relevant figures:

Table showing the Distribution of Wives of 146 Men over 18 Years of Age, belonging to 61 Domestic Families 162

	Married men						*Single men*	
Estimated age of men	*Number of wives*					*Total men*	*Un-married*	*Widowers or deserted*
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*			
18–30 . .	32	3	..	..	..	35	18 (most under 30)	17 (most over 30)
31–45 . .	21	13	3	2	..	39		
46 and over .	14	14	3	5	1	37		
Totals .	67	30	6	7	1	111	18	17
							35	
Percentages						*Total 146 men*		
Of whole sample	46	20·5	4·1	4·8	0·7	76% married	24% single	
Of married men	60·4	27	5·4	6·3	0·9			

The table shows the distribution of effective wives, i.e. wives who fulfil both the sexual and the economic duties due from a wife, or, in a few cases, at least the economic duties. There were 9 non-effective wives, in addition, in this group: 3 incapacitated by leprosy or other chronic disease; 1 senile; 3 elderly women nominally inherited by their late husbands' younger brothers but

596 Tallensi is only about 40 per 100 married men and two out of three
595 polygynists have only two wives. The modal number of wives is one.

Moreover, plurality of wives is mainly the privilege of older men, because they have both more resources and a longer marital history than the young men. Three-quarters of the married men under 45 have only one wife each.

596 A joint family is an organized economic and jural unit forming a single household under the authority of the oldest by age or generation of the group of agnates upon which it is based. Its component families are its segments, ordered and articulated in conformity with the lineage relations binding this group of men to one another. This appears in the layout of the homestead. The head of the joint family is the hub of the whole house, as we have seen, and each wife has her own quarters. It is shown, for example, in the fact that a young married son with no children, or only one or two infant children, generally occupies one of the rooms in his mother's *dug*, or, if his mother is dead, in the senior *dugdaana*'s *dug*; for his conjugal family counts, as yet, only as a segment of this *dug* in the social and economic organization of the house.

Taken over a long enough period, the joint family is seen to be a transitory unit. As the younger male members grow up, marry, and have children of their own, inner tensions begin to assert themselves and a tendency to split up appears. If fission does not occur in the lifetime of the head of the joint family, it is almost invariably precipitated by his death. Some or all of the component families then set up in their own independent homesteads, though it may be some years before complete dispersion supervenes. Thus it happens that an elementary family, which was at one time a part of a joint family, comes to occupy its own

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162 residing with grown-up sons; 2 inherited wives who had not yet joined the menage of their new husbands and were unlikely to do so for a considerable time, if at all. Seven of these non-effective wives were the wives of men in the 46 *plus* group. If these are reckoned as well, the distribution is altered somewhat in favour of the polygynists. There would then, for instance, be 3 men with 5 wives each.

In addition to the 111 married men, this sample of domestic families includes 35 single men, 18 of whom, mostly young men, had never been properly married, and 17 of whom were single at the time of the census, owing to the death or desertion of their wives.

Estimates of age given here and elsewhere in this book are very approximate. The difficulties of guessing the age of Africans in societies where chronological age is taken no notice of are well known. In making the above estimates I took the Tong Hills Expedition of 1911 as a base-line. From what I was told of the appearance, size, and activities of a person at the time of that well-remembered event, a guess could be made at his or her probable age in 1934. If one person's approximate age was established in this way, others who were agreed to be his or her contemporaries could be put into the same age-group. For example, the age-group 18–30 includes a number of men who said they were babes in arms in 1911, and the age-group 46 *plus* includes all those who were young married men in 1911.

homestead accompanied often by the family head's old mother. This is the usual history of the independent elementary family in Taleland; and about 1 in 8 of the domestic families of our sample have this constitution. Often, however, when a man secedes from the joint family he already has more than one wife, though his children are all still under marriageable age. Polygynous domestic families of this class occur in about the same proportion—1 in 8—in the sample. And thus the cycle begins again. As the children grow up and marry, each fraction of the dismembered joint family evolves into a new joint family, or at least has the possibility of doing so. 596

A joint family splits up—into family segments, be it noted, not into a number of dispersed individuals—if it has existed long enough to have reached an advanced stage of internal differentiation; but during its existence it is a remarkably cohesive unit. The fissiparous tendencies inherent in its structure are kept well in check until the pressure of economic needs, psychological friction, or a radical alteration in the constellation of the social relations, such as occurs when the family head dies, makes them irresistible. The split follows the lines of cleavage inherent in the structure of the effective minimal lineage on which a particular joint family is founded, and it takes place by stages.

We shall study the process of fission in the joint family later. Here only the results concern us. The simplest split occurs when the oldest son of the family head 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)',[1] or 'cuts his own gateway (*bit u zanɔr*)' in the family homestead, during his father's lifetime. He thus sets up an independent household, though perhaps living in a semi-detached part of the paternal homestead. But when the old man dies, he frequently returns to the parental home, and the joint family is reconstituted under his authority.

Permanent fission usually occurs between brothers (full, or half-brothers, or paternal cousins), or by the secession of the family head's deceased brother's sons. It begins, and may persist until the family head's death, as a purely economic division. Thus two full (*soog*) brothers—the older being the family head—may decide to farm independently because the growing economic wants of their respective families no longer permit them to maintain a common household. The bond of full brotherhood (*soog*) inhibits further fission altogether, or until such time as both men have adult children. Until then they generally continue to occupy the same homestead, using a single common gateway, cattle-yard (*zapak*), and *zɔŋ*. Their respective sections of the homestead, called their *dugɔt* by contraposition with the common *yir*, will be separated by a party wall with a ladder on either side, giving access for essential communication without a detour via the *sapak* but preventing trespass by their respective families. Each man is the head of his own, relatively independent, household, working its particular fields and having its own granary; but the older brother has authority over the whole *yir* in jural and ritual matters, exercises general supervision over the affairs of all its members, and, above all, controls the utilization of the patrimonial land and cattle and is the titular owner of all heritable, non-personal property of all its members. Pumaan and Zaŋ are full brothers sharing a house in this manner.

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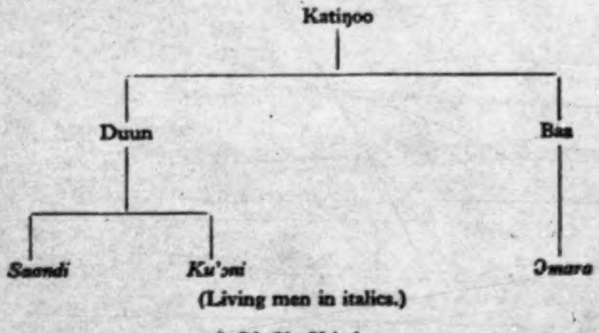
[1] The intra-family tensions which lead to the 'going out' of the eldest son will be discussed later. They are rationalized, and the secession of the eldest son is given a mystical sanction by the taboo which, among the Namoos, forbids a man ever meeting his first-born adult son face to face in his gateway after the latter has a family of adolescent children. Non-Namoos do not have the taboo, but the beliefs expressed in it are as strong among them as among the Namoos. Cf. below, Ch. VIII. [578 784]

Two half-brothers, or two first cousins (*sunzɔp*-brothers) whose fathers were full brothers (*saarət*) sometimes share a homestead thus, if they get on cordially, especially while the children of both or either are still too young for productive labour. Thus Naabdiya and Barimoda are half-brothers who occupy a single homestead with one gateway in this manner.

In time, however, the combined effects of economic needs, structural cleavages, and personal tensions lead to a further stage of separation. It takes longest, as we have noted, with full brothers whose genealogical equivalence,[1] mutual identification, and reciprocal affection are greatest, and occurs most readily with cousins, between whom the corresponding cleavages are more explicit. The younger man cuts another gateway for himself (*bit u zanɔr*), and henceforth has his own *zɔŋ* and *sapak*. The homestead now really consists of two separate, semi-detached dwellings, each occupied by one domestic family and household.

An example of this is Katiŋoo yiri at Zoo. This homestead is occupied by the three grandsons—Saandi, Ku'ɔni, and Ɔmara—of Katiŋoo, who died about a generation ago. Each of these men, who are all over 45, is the head of a joint family with grown-up children. Their lineage relationship is as follows:



(Living men in italics.)

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[1] Cf. Ch. X below.

This house illustrates an advanced stage of segmentation, involving a split between two full brothers (*saarət*) on the one hand, and between paternal cousins (*sunzɔp*) on the other. The three domestic families occupy three separate sections of the common *yir*, divided from one another by walls of the same height as the outer walls of the homestead, each with its own gateway, *zɔŋ*, and *sapak*, and communicating internally by means of ladders. They are described as the component *dugət* of the common *yir*. Saandi, the oldest of the three 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*), and head of the lineage of Katiŋoo biis, occupies the central section. Economically the three domestic families are wholly independent of one another, but Saandi exercises a certain degree of jural and ritual authority over the whole *yir*. As its spatial configuration implies, such a unit has less domestic solidarity than, for example, that of Pumaan and Zaŋ

Finally comes the stage of complete spatial segregation of the domestic families derived from segments of a single joint family. This occurs often between the families of half-brothers, and invariably, in due course, between the families of cousins. Thus Kurug and Lɛbhtiis of Təŋ-Puhug occupy separate homesteads, 100 yards or so apart, with their respective domestic families.[1] These homesteads were built by their fathers, Yin and Naandɔmə́r, who were half-brothers and decided to separate after the death of *their* father, Zupibig. It may happen also in a family like Naabdiya's, when the head of the homestead dies and is succeeded by his younger brother or half-brother. Then his oldest son, if he is a man of mature years with a growing family, may in due course move out to set up on his own with his family and younger siblings.

In this way a joint family evolves into an *expanded* family in the course of a generation or so. An *expanded* family generally forms a close local group. The heads of the several joint families comprising it are all members of one lineage segment of a low order, expanded from what was an effective minimal segment one or two generations before. They have intimate social and personal ties and their families, *pari passu*, have closer intercourse with one another and stronger mutual loyalties than any of them has with other neighbouring families. They retain, in an attenuated degree, many of the intimacies and conventions that normally prevail in the joint family. Their relations to one another are analogous to those of the *dugət* of a joint family, but the lineage of the family heads operates more formally as the basis of their cohesion than in the case of a group of families sharing a common residence. When such a group of domestic families is described collectively as a *yir* and severally as *dugət*, these terms refer to the lineage relationship of their male members. For there is no specific term for the expanded family, nor has it a precise social definition. It exists in the conduct of its members to one another, not as a demarcated social unit. It is the widest field of domestic relations for any joint family.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 193.

It is evident that the domestic families that make up a settlement at any given time exhibit various degrees of internal differentiation. It depends mainly on the length of time the particular domestic family has been in existence. At one extreme we find families like that of Baripɛta, a man of about 35, who in 1934 had one wife and one infant. With him lived also one of his late father's widows and his young unmarried full brother. We might describe this as a young family. It constitutes a single economic and jural unit.

At the other extreme is the family of a man like Yinyɛla, whose age in 1934 could not have been less than 75. His household comprised his adult sons (all of them married or old enough to have wives, and the oldest a man of about 40 with adolescent children), his three young children, varying in age from about 11 to 2 years, and his deceased brother's son with his wife and children. He had had many wives, three of whom were still surviving, two elderly women and one a young woman whom he had married six or seven years before. This joint family had reached such an advanced stage of internal differentiation that the competing interests of its component families (the family segments) were becoming difficult to keep in check. The common resources of the household did not satisfy all the wants of Yinyɛla's brother's son's and his own eldest son's families; and these two men began to cultivate supplementary farms for their own use. Yinyɛla's domestic family was, in fact, on the verge of breaking up, though it was still an economic and jural unit under his authority. Had he not died in 1937 his brother's son would have moved out and his eldest son would have 'cut his own gateway (*bit u zanɔr*)'. In between these extremes are families like that of Naɣabil of Kpata'ar, representing a stage of development to which a simple family like Baripɛta's may attain in a decade or so. Naɣabil has four wives. His children range in age from about 17 to infancy. His mother and younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) with his wife and child live with him. In twenty years, if all survive, this family will resemble that of Yinyɛla in 1934.

Broadly speaking, families of the first and third kinds are those of men under middle age, who have but little voice in the jural and ceremonial affairs of the community, and families of the second kind are those of the elders (*kpeem*, pl. *kpɛm*) and near-elders (*kpeemtaɣalis*), men past middle age, who have the dominant role in controlling and organizing social life. About half the domestic families in a settlement belong to each of these two broad divisions. In the highly differentiated joint families which have been in existence for a considerable time, the age range of the *yirdaana*'s children and grandchildren often runs from middle age to infancy. For a man goes on taking new wives, if he can, as long as his reproductive powers last. Old men are notoriously desirous of having, and are indulgent to, a young wife (*pɔyabil*), not 596 only for sexual motives but also, and mainly, in order to have a strong young woman about the house to administer those creature comforts to which they are said to become more and more addicted as they grow older. Thus siblings by the same father (*ba ukɔla biis*) may differ in age by as much as a generation. A man's younger half-brother or sister may be younger than his own children though senior to them in generation. This has important effects on the lineage organization.

The custom of the levirate introduces a component of some significance in the constitution of the joint family. 596 In the 61 domestic families of our sample there were 111 married men, and no less than 21—more 587 than one in five—had one or more inherited wives. An inherited wife usually brings her young children by her first husband (if she has any) with her. They grow up side by side with her children by her second husband, who is responsible for their support. Tale kinship ideas make this a simple and self-evident arrangement; but it means, nevertheless, a division within what is normally the most compact and cohesive element of the domestic family, the matricentral *dug*, in accordance with the different paternity of the children. Generally a widow of child-bearing age marries a close agnate of her deceased husband—his brother or first cousin—who is, therefore, a close classificatory father of her children. This makes it easy for them to regard her second husband with some of the devotion and affection due from children to their own father, especially if they are still very young. Still, this is a weak place in the cohesion of a family, at which a split easily occurs; for no man, say the Tallensi, can wholly take the place of one's true father. If a widow marries a distant agnate of her late husband, the latter's heir may demand the custody of his children when they are old enough to do without a mother's care. This splits the *dug*. But it also creates com- [602] pensatory bonds of uterine (*soog*) kinship between her sons belonging to different lineage segments.

Sometimes a man's dependants include a deceased brother's children 596 whose mother has died or married out of the family. Such children are, for all practical purposes, his own children, but the sons frequently 736 secede when they have children. Much less commonly, a man may have an orphaned sister's son (*ahɔŋ*) living with him in as intimate a relationship, ostensibly, as if he were his son or brother. Actually, both jural and sentimental reservations hedge round a sister's son's position in the family, for his descent bars him, in the last resort, from ever acquiring real filial status.[1] It is significant that in the old settlements extremely few cases of this kind occur, and it is always assumed that the nephew will eventually return to his natal settlement—though he does not always do so. In the new settlements, where personal kinship ties largely replace lineage ties as the basis of local aggregation, not only sororal

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI below.

•596 736 nephews but more distant cognatic and even affinal kin frequently live with a kinsman until they can set up in their own homesteads.

Sometimes, too, an unmarried sister's child (*tau-bii*) may grow up and live in its uncle's family. It may be an illegitimate child (*yi yeem bii*—a maiden's child), or one whose mother's bride-price was not paid, and who therefore belongs to her father unless or until it is redeemed (*pɔhəg*) by the payment of a cow by its genitor or his heir. A sister's child is to all intents and purposes a child of the family. But not being of the true agnatic line, it is subject to certain jural disabilities which have no consequence for a girl but handicap a boy, as we have previously seen.

596 622 The domestic families of chiefs and headmen are unusual only in respect of size. Their newly won riches enable chiefs and headmen to acquire numerous wives and to maintain households that appear enormous in the eyes of the ordinary man. A petty headman may have ten or more wives. The late Chief of Tongo, a chief of modest means compared with some of his peers in Taleland, had more than thirty. The Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu has at least eighty. The Chief of Datɔko is reputed to have a hundred, but he denies this and claims to have only a modest fifty. Except that their domestic economy and organization is more complex and that there is at times more friction between the womenfolk, these hypertrophied joint families have the same pattern of organization as those of ordinary folk.

596 177 167 It is noteworthy that this pattern has not been disturbed by the social changes which have, in recent years, followed the subjection of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast to European political, economic, and cultural influences. Family disorganization has barely begun to appear in Taleland. There is hardly a domestic family in the country—not one in our sample—which has wholly escaped the effects of these contact influences. One or more of their members is or has been abroad in Mampurugu, Ashanti, or the Colony, for longer or shorter periods of time, farming, working for wages, or trading. But the number of men abroad, at any given time, for very long periods is relatively small[1] compared with other parts of West and Southern Africa, and their absence has little effect on the structure of the residual family. Their labour is lost to the family, but as they are no longer a drain on its resources this does not upset its internal economy. Similarly, as they are mostly young men[2] with little or no responsibility for the management of family

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[1] Estimates based on my own census material and on Nominal Rolls drawn up by Administrative Officers for tax collection show that an average of just under 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were away from home and not likely to return in the immediate future, in the years 1936 to 1939. This estimate may be compared with the 60–80 per cent. of able-bodied adult males absent from tribal reserves in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland quoted by Lord Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 701.

[2] Reliable information on the ages of these absentees cannot be obtained. But from personal contact with many of them, both on their return home and

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affairs, their absence does not disturb jural or ritual relations centred 177
in the family. It is like a tree which remains a tree morphologically and 167
physiologically even if some of its minor branches have been lopped off.

The foregoing is true of the great majority of Tale families. The 596
structure of the normal family can still be accurately described without
reference to contact influence, in spite of the fact that a few families can 177
be found in every settlement which have been badly mutilated by the 183
prolonged absence abroad of their male members. Admittedly the norms of family relations have not remained completely insulated from these influences. With the ease of modern communications and the openings for work abroad, young people have incentives and opportunities which their fathers never had for resisting the authority of their elders and for breaking away from the family for a longer or shorter time. But as yet these new incentives and opportunities appear only as modifying factors in the play of the culturally defined family relations. They do not represent a conflicting set of norms, creating divisions within Tale society. For instance, a young man who is still jurally a minor cannot at will leave the domestic family to which he belongs by birth and set up an independent household. He can do so only in compliance with the moral rules and social conventions that regulate the fission of families. In fact, the motive to break away will only arise when certain standard changes take place in the composition of the domestic unit to which he belongs, or when he reaches a stage of social maturity which precipitates certain standard tensions between him and the head of the unit. The alternative for a young man who, in these days, hankers after independence is to leave the community until such time as he is prepared to settle down. He has to seek work abroad, in Ashanti or the Colony, or in the service of the white man nearer home. He is assured of a cordial welcome home whenever he decides to return, whether it be for a few weeks only or permanently. But if he makes up his mind to settle down at home it can only be within the existing social framework, and this means complying with the norms of family organization. There is no other way by which he can get married or acquire a house site or farm-land in his natal settlement, let alone play his part in community affairs. Hitherto these norms have been so well maintained that no returned emigrant has been known to flout them.

Summing up, we see that the Tale domestic system has three morpho- 592
logical strata. It consists of a segmentary economic formation—households of different dimensions and degrees of economic self-sufficiency—embraced within a segmentary jural and ceremonial formation—domestic units not necessarily congruent with households grouped under family heads—and this again contained within a system of residential grouping in which the changes of phase in domestic structure are crystallized.

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in places like Kumasi, I can say with certainty that the great majority are under 30.

592 A domestic unit is most clearly identified by the fact that it has a single common gateway. Though the three domains of domestic organization are not absolutely congruent, the commonest residential unit is the single household, which is also a single though not necessarily completely independent jural and ceremonial unit.[1]

596 We have been considering the typical development of the joint family as a process of successive fission and dispersion. But the contrary process of reintegration also plays an important part in this development. The changes in the composition of the joint or expanded family that lead to changes in the status and social roles of its senior male members cause it to split up in the circumstances that have been indicated, but they lead to a fusion of independent units in other circumstances. The decisive factors are jural status in the lineage, with which go rights over patrimonial land, and economic capacity.

Let us take a sample case. When Katiŋoo died (see genealogy, p. 68) his eldest son Duun became head of the effective minimal lineage and joint family and inherited the patrimonial farm-land. Duun and his full brother Baa continued to occupy their father's homestead, using only one gateway. After a while—four or five years, perhaps—Baa asked to be allowed to farm for himself as his children were growing up. He still occupied the same homestead as Duun, but his quarters were separated from those of Duun by a high party wall (*bɛŋər*), he had his own granary, farmed for himself, and was solely responsible for supplying the food and other wants of his wives and children. The domestic family now consisted of two households.

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[1] The following table shows this clearly:

162 *Table showing the Distribution of Domestic Families (= Gateways) and Households (= Units of Food Economy) in relation to Homesteads*

Domestic families per homestead .	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	34	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	44
No. of domestic families . .	34	10	12	0	5	0	0	0	61
Households per homestead .	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Totals*
No. of homesteads	25	11	4	2	0	1	0	1	44
No. of households	25	22	12	8	0	6	0	8	81

(Mean number of persons: per homestead, 14·5; per domestic family, 10·4.)

The 61 domestic families of our sample occupy 44 homesteads. On the average there are 1·4 gateways (i.e. 1·4 domestic families) per homestead; but more than half of the 61 families occupy their own homesteads, with one gateway apiece. There are 81 households in the sample group, an average of 1·9 households per homestead and 1·3 households per domestic family. But nearly a third of these households are single domestic families dwelling in their own homesteads.

Five or six years passed and Duun died. Baa was now head of the 576 lineage and family. The patrimonial land passed to him. For a short time Duun's two sons, Saandi and Ku'ɔni, continued to occupy their late father's section of the homestead and farmed in partnership, independently of Baa. But they soon decided to move out. They went to build at Gbambee, on their late father's bush farm. At first they shared a homestead and farmed together. Then Ku'ɔni began to farm for himself and, a little later, wished to have his own gateway. At this stage the expanded family sprung from Katiŋoo consisted of two homesteads, one at Zoo, occupied by Baa and his sons with their families, who together made up a single household, and the other at Gbambee, consisting of two semi-detached parts occupied by Saandi and Ku'ɔni respectively, with their families, and constituting two separate households.

A little later Ku'ɔni separated altogether from Saandi and went to build his homestead at Zoo on a piece of land that had been their father's personal farm. This site proved to be mystically unpropitious and soon Ku'ɔni moved again. This time he returned to his father's (and grandfather's) original home (*daboog*) and built semi-detached quarters for himself adjoining Katiŋoo's old homestead, still occupied by Baa. He remained economically independent of Baa; but both he and Saandi were still under Baa's jural and ritual jurisdiction, as his brother's sons. A process of partial reintegration had, however, occurred.

Then Baa died and Saandi became head of the lineage and heir to the patrimonial land. So he moved back to Zoo, where he built semi-detached quarters for himself adjoining the group's original home. This happened quite recently; and the distribution of Katiŋoo yir is as we have described on p. 69. Saandi, Ku'ɔni, and Baa's son Ɔmara have each their separate, semi-detached quarters and their separate gateways; they are economically independent of each other; but jural and ritual jurisdiction over the unit is in Saandi's hands.

But this is not the end of the story. If Saandi were to die suddenly, 576 none of his sons would be old enough to farm for himself and support Saandi's widows and children. So they would all join Ku'ɔni's house- 736 hold, and remain in his custody—the widows as his wives (unless they remarried other men, when they would fade out of the picture altogether), the children as his children—until Saandi's oldest boy was old enough to set up an independent household. The process of gradual dispersion would then start again. If, Saandi being dead, Ɔmara were also to die suddenly, leaving no son old enough to support his household, his children would also join Ku'ɔni, and thus all the branches of Katiŋoo's family would be reconstituted into a single unit for the time being. The whole cycle would take from twenty to thirty years.

Our illustration has been in part hypothetical so as not to confuse the 576 reader with too many genealogies. But this is not a fanciful case. A dozen family histories that have followed the pattern outlined above

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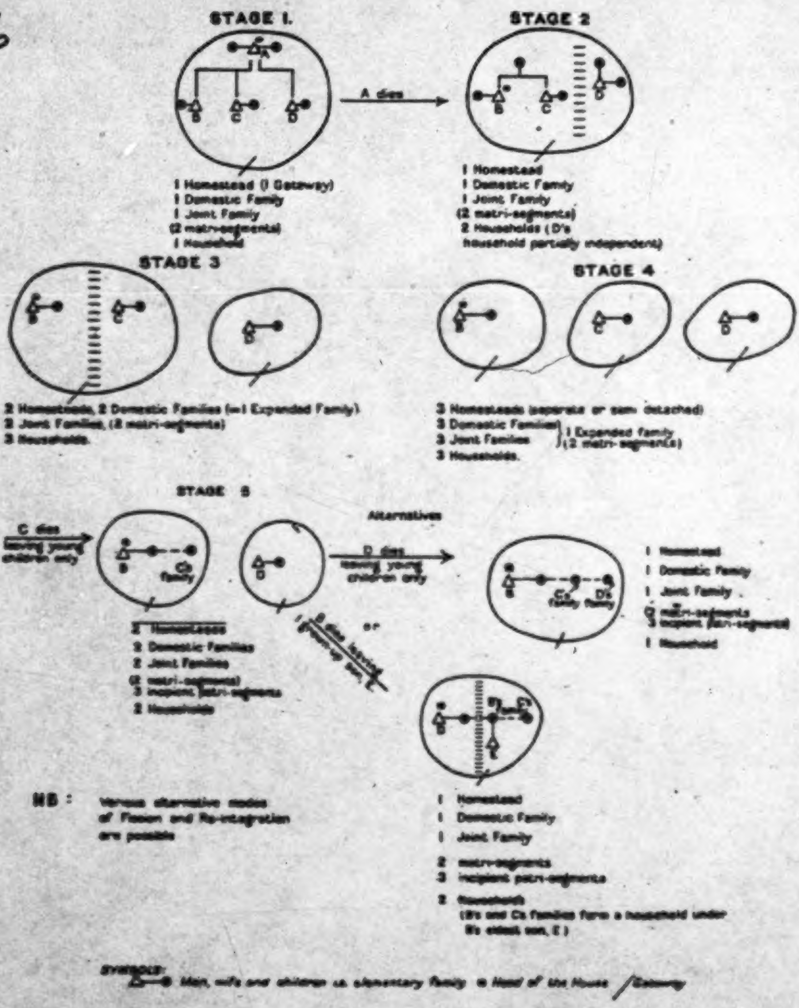
STAGE I.
A
B
C
D
1 Homestead (1 Gateway)
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
(2 matri-segments)
1 Household
A dies
STAGE 2
B
C
D
1 Homestead
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
(2 matri-segments)
2 Households (D's
household partially independent)
STAGE 3
B
C
D
2 Homesteads, 2 Domestic Families (=1 Expanded Family).
2 Joint Families, (2 matri-segments)
3 Households.
STAGE 4
B
C
D
3 Homesteads (separate or semi detached)
3 Domestic Families
3 Joint Families
1 Expanded family
(2 matri-segments)
3 Households.
STAGE 5
C dies
leaving young
children only
B
C's
family
D
2 Homesteads
2 Domestic Families
2 Joint Families
(2 matri-segments)
3 incipient patri-segments
2 Households
Alternatives
D dies
leaving young
children only
B
C's
family
D's
family
1 Homestead
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
(2 matri-segments
3 incipient patri-segments)
1 Household
or
B dies leaving
grown-up son, E
D
B's
family
C's
family
E
1 Homestead
1 Domestic Family
1 Joint Family
2 matri-segments
3 incipient patri-segments
2 Households
(B's and C's families form a household under
B's eldest son, E)
NB: Various alternative modes
of Fission and Re-integration
are possible
SYMBOLS:
Man, wife and children i.e. elementary family
Head of the House
Gateway

FIG. 3. Diagram showing the developmental cycle of the Joint Family.

[p. 76]

could be cited. Such a history explains why Tiezien of Kpata'ar, for instance, has the sons of two of his late brothers living and working with him; and why Yinworəb of Təŋ-Kuorəg has both a brother's widows and young children, and his own young half-brothers, as members of his household.

We shall consider the main factors that determine this cycle of development in a later chapter. We shall see that economic needs and structural cleavages are chiefly responsible for fission in the joint family and religious and jural sanctions for the reintegration of an expanded family.

people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships. People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experiences, his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees in families like those of Kutɔbis of Tɔŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of Tɔŋ-Puhug. 828 156 123

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevitable, some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas an erratic man like Kutɔbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor in the cycle of changes that a family passes through. 596● 156 578

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance, and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common 602

Within the joint family, though its members maintain a very intimate association with one another, make free of one anothers' possessions, and go freely in and out of every woman's quarters, each woman and her children are ensured a certain amount of privacy in their own *dug*. Husband and wife form a precisely distinguished unit. They have complete privacy in their sexual relations and a great deal of privacy in other relations. It would be the grossest breach of manners for anyone but their own infant child to intrude on a man and his wife in their own sleeping-room. 596 ● 362 576

In their own home, therefore, a family has much privacy. A man can confide in his wife or his son things that he does not want others to know about—things about his debts, his property, or his ritual possessions. He can talk over with them problems concerning the household or matters of public import. There are ritual activities, such as sacrifices to a medicine shrine, in which only a man and his sons or the members of the joint family share. Sometimes such domestic secrets have to be divulged, especially after a man's death. It may be necessary to clear up a question of a debt he owed or to carry out special rites for one of his medicine shrines. But until then they are usually faithfully guarded. The Taləŋa can keep his own counsel if need be. 593 596

The Significance of Marriage[1]

As the preceding chapters suggest, Tale domestic relations do not remain perpetually fixed. They change and develop with the years. At one time the ties of economic co-operation, of reciprocal sentiment and mutual loyalties, of reciprocal and shared rights and duties, are uppermost; at another the underlying cleavages and competing interests push through. This appears very clearly in the relations of husband and wife, the central pillar of the domestic organization. We shall discuss the marital relationship in some detail, for it is a nodal relationship in Tale social life. It is not only the starting-point of the family, but the starting-point of the kinship ties that run across and between genealogically independent clans and lineages. Through marriage the mutually exclusive corporate units of Tale society become interlaced with one another. 593 581

The Tallensi regard marriage as the normal state of life for every adult. They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage throughout life. There is something wrong, by native standards, with men and women who never marry; and they are few. In the whole of Tongo I knew only five men who had never been married and who would, according to common belief, never marry. One was obviously mentally defective; another was an invert; two were said to be so ugly that no woman would accept them, but both were also definitely unbalanced and eccentric; and the last was a gentle old man, who, it was 581 589 [158]

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[1] A preliminary account of Tale marriage customs is given in my pamphlet, *Marriage Law among the Tallensi*, Government Press, Gold Coast, 1935.

595 than the others, all the women must be allocated more or less equal plots for this purpose. Each woman, with the help of her daughters or a [222-263] daughter-in-law, collects and stores wild herbs and edible leaves, buys condiments and seasonings like salt, pepper, and locust bean balls, sometimes with the proceeds of her own petty trading in the markets, and collects shea nuts for the preparation of shea butter, the most important source of fat and the most prized emollient in the native cuisine, for the use of her own *dug*. If a man gives a penny or twopence to one wife for the purchase of seasonings, he must, either immediately or on subsequent market days, give some money to his other wives for this purpose. If he obtains some meat, he must either distribute it amongst all his wives or give all of it to his senior wife to use or preserve for the benefit [846] of the whole family. Only a wife in childbed is entitled to have extra luxuries, which it is the duty of her husband to provide.

595 Though each woman cooks for herself with an eye to the feeding of her own children and her husband, in the first place, co-wives are 252 obliged to share food prepared with grain from the common supply. In times of plenty, if all the wives of a man have cooked a meal, each woman dishes out a portion of porridge and the accompanying relish for her husband, a portion for herself and her child or children eating with her, and a smaller portion for each of her co-wives. The husband should taste all the dishes sent in to him by his wives, and should pass on to the older children who do not eat with their mothers the dishes he does not want for himself. In times of scarcity a man's wives may cook in rotation for the whole family. But if a woman has a private supply of grain, obtained by trade or from her own relatives, she is entitled to use it for feeding her own children and the husband only; she need not give anything to her co-wives or their children.

596 In the production and utilization of food-supplies, as this brief sketch shows, the common interests of the *yir* are distinctly paramount. Co-wives co-operate most harmoniously, both among themselves and with the other women of the household, in this sphere of family life. In the organization of productive labour and of the domestic economy, and in the conventions regulating mutual help in this sphere, the dependence on one another of all the members of a household for their sustenance is constantly emphasized. But the relative autonomy of the *dug* is never wholly submerged. The women do not pool the products of their individual labour and enterprise. They do not pool their utensils, and family quarrels sometimes arise because one woman or one woman's child has borrowed and damaged a utensil belonging to another. They keep their firewood supplies, the accumulation of which is one of their most arduous tasks, jealously separate; and they do the same with vegetables and seasonings. There is sometimes friction between co-wives over the use of the grinding-room. But it is significant of the balance usually maintained between the centrifugal tendencies of the *dug* and the

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-operation and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the household. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 854 855 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir* is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family. A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the [292] first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children. This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing. Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 736 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

602 736 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things, we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

house apprised of what is going on in the quarters of the younger women 595
and enabled to exercise benevolent supervision over them.

Her supervision is of special importance when any of the younger 595
women is confined. She sees to it that mother and child are properly
attended, that the rites of confinement and of emergence from seclusion 846
are properly performed, that mother and babe are bathed in the prescribed way, and that the mother is given nourishing food. I was passing Ɔmara's homestead one afternoon, about a fortnight after the birth of a child to one of his wives, and called in. The new baby's mother was just coming out of the gateway with an empty water-pot on her head, and I noticed that she was looking far from well. Ɔmara's senior wife, a woman of sterling character, unsoured even by the leprosy that was rapidly getting a hold on her, was sitting outside in the shade. 'Where are you going to?' asked the older woman. 'To the water-hole,' replied her young co-wife. 'Don't go alone,' said the senior wife, 'I'll come with you'; and she rose to accompany the girl. For the first few weeks after the birth of her child a woman must not go about alone outside the homestead. She is still suffering from 'the dreams of a parturient woman (*pɔɣarɔɣah za'ahug*)'; that is, she is weak and liable to hallucinations or attacks of terror—or, as the natives think of it, to attacks from evil trees and stones—which might drive her mad. That was why the older woman accompanied the young mother. Many such incidents could be quoted in illustration of the concern shown by a senior wife for the welfare of her juniors.

Of course, not all senior wives exercise their role in a wise and un- 595
selfish spirit. A woman with an overbearing disposition may make life [578]
difficult for her juniors. One result will be that each woman tends to keep strictly to her own *dug* so as to avoid clashing with the senior wife or the other women, and co-operation between co-wives tends to follow the letter of convention rather than the spirit of family unity. Again, there are families in which the senior wife has through age, infirmity, or weakness of character resigned the effective supervision of the household to a younger co-wife, though she still remains the titular senior. But observation shows that on the whole senior wives conform to the pattern we have outlined above. Their position in the family, their responsibilities and privileges, shape them to this pattern.

It must be remembered, also, that the size and stage of development 596
of a family have a great influence on the relations between co-wives. In a family like that of Da'amo'o of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ who has but recently set up in his own homestead, there are only three women, two being Da'amo'o's wives and the third his younger brother's wife. They are all young women round about the age of 20, two with an infant each and the other still a maiden (*pɔɣasarɔt*). In such a family the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* is rudimentary. The three girls work in co-operation and live together harmoniously like sisters and with no visible distinction

● 596 of status or role. In another family of this kind the mistress of the house may be the family head's mother, and then she will exercise the role we have attributed to the senior wife in the preceding pages. In a joint family that has reached an advanced stage of development the women will be related to one another in a more complex scheme. Any particular woman may have one or more close co-wives, the other wife or wives of her husband; there may be, in addition, her co-wives at a remove, the wives of her husband's brothers; her own mother-in-law and perhaps a co-wife of this woman who is her mother-in-law by extension; and possibly daughters of the family. In such a family the wives of one man often feel a strong bond of solidarity in contradistinction to the wives of the other men of the family. The cleavages between the component family segments of the joint family are sharper than those between the wives of one man. As their children increase and get older, the women of each family segment aline themselves more strongly with their husband in his efforts to separate off. They begin to find the communal commissariat irksome and pressure from them often has a decisive influence on their husband's wish to 'go out on his own'.

a proxy parent. As is natural, fathers and sons take different views of 593
this situation. Sons do not think that they are showing a lack of filial
loyalty when they go abroad. For, they argue, it is only a temporary 167
absence and the money they earn will eventually accrue, in part at least, to the family exchequer. As has been mentioned previously, no man ever turns away a son who comes home from abroad, whether he brings any goods and money or not; and a son who does bring back 'things' and money is doubly welcome.

We said earlier that a father owns all his son's property. This might 593
seem to contradict what was said about the independent ownership by
a son of the livestock he acquires by breeding from a gift hen or by other 421
means. The Tallensi themselves do not admit a contradiction in this. They see it as an instance of the gradation of rights and duties that is distinctive of their whole social organization. A father's over-right entitles him to veto his son's using his own property in ways that seem extravagant; but it would be an injustice rightfully resented by the son if he were stopped from using his fowl or goat or sheep for purposes that public opinion considers legitimate. Thus everybody would agree that a father who forbade a son from using his own fowls and guinea-fowls in his courtship, or from selling his own ground-nuts in order to buy a cloth, would be acting unfairly. The case of Kpana-Tee's grandson (p. 195) illustrates this principle.

The rights of a father and the rights of a son in the son's property are reconciled by the principle of reciprocity. If a man makes use of his son's goat or sheep he should, in due course, make an equivalent return; for example, by using one of his own sheep or goats to do something for the son. This object is immediately achieved if the son's property is used for the son's benefit, as in the payment of bride-price. There is no book-keeping, but in the long run the son should feel that the gains he has received are commensurate with the amount of his own property that has been used up. A proxy father should be more careful in this regard than a man's own father. A proxy father is less concerned about the future of his 'son' than the latter's own father would be and is therefore sometimes inclined to take selfish advantage of his paternal authority. Though they have no alternative but to submit, young men deeply resent unfairness of this sort, whether on the part of their own father or on that of a proxy father; and this may be the first stimulus to their determination to set up on their own.

This is epitomized in one of the reasons Tallensi regularly produce 593
when they are asked why young men secede from their paternal house- 596
holds. They say: 'It is because of hens and eggs.' Every man has at
least a hen or two, even if he has nothing else, and, as we know, his hen 422
symbolizes the starting-point of his accumulation of property. But hens lay their eggs anywhere and this gives rise to petty quarrels. Anybody who finds an egg claims it and another member of the family may dispute

593 the claim. But if the head of the family claims an egg no one can gainsay
him, so a young man might find himself left without any eggs to breed
●596 from. That is why he wishes to be independent. It is a kind of rudi-
422 mentary myth summing up the economic causes of family fission. The point of interest is the emphasis on the inequitable behaviour of the 'father'. He uses his economic authority to his own advantage without making an equivalent return and thus prevents the 'son' from getting a start on the road of economic independence.

593 The adjustment of father's rights and son's rights has an added subtlety where cash is concerned. Supposing a young man returns from abroad with four or five pounds in cash that he has saved. According to the letter of custom he should hand all of it over to his father. But money, unlike a cow or a sheep, can be easily concealed and does not require attention; our young man can retain a part of his savings without his father's knowing of it. If it is his own father he may keep only a few shillings, particularly if he has recently been, or is about to be married and the money is wanted to pay his wife's bride-price. If it is his proxy father he will probably hand over only a pound or two, unless, again, the money is required for the bride-price of his wife; and then he will try not to hand over the money until his father-in-law actually demands the bride-price. It is common knowledge that this is the regular practice of young men returning from abroad. Fathers have no power to stop it, though most of them would like to; for up to a point, the young men are within their rights. Have they not 'taken their own legs and gone to get their money' by labour that is always arduous and sometimes dangerous? Again conflicts are inevitable, though as yet not more frequent than over other forms of property. For some men are only too apt to fritter away the money entrusted to them by a dependant before the time comes for it to be used for the benefit of the latter.

As we have mentioned before, one of the heaviest responsibilities a
593 man bears on behalf of his son, or for a dependant standing in the same
584 economic and jural relationship to him, is in 'marriage affairs'. It is the bridegroom's father or proxy father who has to undertake the series of jural actions required from his paternal kin in order to legitimize the union. In marriage by arrangement (*pɔɣalak*) it is the bridegroom's father who starts the negotiations and carries them through. The young man himself hardly sees his bride, after his first few courting visits, until she is brought to his home. In marriage by elopement (*pɔɣazaŋər*) the bridegroom's father's consent is essential for the marriage to be properly concluded. While, as we have already indicated, a father never openly disapproves of a son's marriage but on the contrary always displays apparent pleasure over it, he can easily cause it to break down by holding back the bride-price.

As we know already, the two significant jural acts in the conclusion of a marriage are the sending of the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) and the

CHAPTER IX

GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN

603 WE have mentioned earlier that the relations of grandparents and grandchildren can be regarded as a foil to those of parents and •596 children. Tallensi themselves often draw the contrast. It is particularly striking with the paternal grandparents. For in a three-generation joint family the head is a grandfather and the senior *dugdaana* a grandmother. As head of the family the grandfather holds jural, economic, and ritual authority over all its members, including those whom he calls grandchildren, and there is a contrast between his authority and his familiarity in personal relations with his grandchildren. It reflects the contrast between the cleavage due to difference of status and role in terms of the lineage principle and the ties of cognatic kinship between grandchildren and paternal grandparents. This contrast does not occur with the maternal grandparents, in whose relations with a daughter's child the question of authority does not arise. When Tallensi say that a person can die happily if he or she has 'reached grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' they refer primarily to paternal grandparent and grandchild.

603 A grandchild of either sex refers to a grandfather of either line as *ba-kpeem*, literally 'older father', or more formally as *yaab*, and to a 601 grandmother of either line as *ma-kpeem*, literally 'older mother', or more formally as *yaab-pɔk*. Grandparents are addressed by personal name or, in the case of grandmothers, by the clan name used for them by their affines. A grandchild is described as *yaaŋ* by any of its grandparents and addressed by his or her own name.

The essential feature of the relationship between grandchild and 603 grandparent is that they can tease and joke with each other and each other's spouses. As we have seen, between parent and child this would be almost equal to sacrilege. A grandchild can tweak his grandparent's ear—hence the diviner's sign for grandparent, pointing to the ear—or pretend to mock him or her as 'an old baggage (*bonkɔrəga*)' or play practical jokes on them such as snatching at their food. Grandparents, reciprocally, tease their grandchildren, calling them 'you ugly thing (*bonlɔrəga*)', or by similar epithets that would be insults in another genealogical context. This joking relationship holds for both sets of grandparents, and serves the purpose of reconciling the potentially conflicting elements in their relationship.[1]

With it goes an intimacy and mutual trust, more particularly between

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[1] Cf. the similar usage between siblings-in-law, p. 120. Joking in the present case reconciles the familiarity permissible on the grounds of personal interest and the social equivalence of alternate generations, with the respect due to grandparents because of their age and their lineage status.

105 THE DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION. Tale domestic institutions are very elaborate, and the organization of domestic life is subject to a considerable range of variation due to such factors as the economic position, size and age of the unit, the temperament and character of individuals, the social status of the senior male members, the distribution of economic and ritual specialization (craftsmen, diviners &c.), and so forth. To evaluate the full influence of these factors requires a mass of statistical information which we have not been able to obtain as yet; we must be content with merely indicating its range.

Tale society is essentially democratic; but differences of wealth are prominent. Chiefs and headmen, in virtue of the services they command, cultivate greater areas than any commoner, own much more live stock and have twice and three times as many wives. Both in its structure and in the organization of its domestic life, a chief's compound conforms to the same cultural pattern as the compound of the poorest plebeian; but it is economically entirely atypical. In every settlement, also, there are a few men of wealth considerably above the average. They always have a sufficiency of food, even in the leanest years. Chiefs, headmen, and wealthy men have therefore been excluded from the discussion in this paper.

592 ● 596 341 Tale social organization has a well-defined spatial basis. The unit of residence is a mud compound (*yir*—house) inhabited by a joint family consisting of a group of men of close patrilineal kinship, their wives and children. Its architecture is significantly correlated to the structure and organization of the joint family at the particular phase it has reached in its development. One compound in three—14 out of 40, to be exact—has two or more entrance gateways (*zanɔr*),[1] each corresponding to a completely self-contained dwelling, and independent social unit consisting of one or more households. The plural entrance compound represents a stage in the process of segmentation through which the joint family passes in the course of about three generations, and which ends in complete fission and the setting up of several independent compounds.

592 596 The main gate is always owned by the head of the joint family (*yirdaan*, owner of the house) the most senior (*kpeem*) of the group of

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[1] Statistics quoted here and in subsequent paragraphs are derived from a sample of 40 compounds selected at random from a sociological census we made at Tongo.

male agnates. He is *yirdaan* by virtue of indisputable succession which 592
carries with it ritual responsibilities for the whole joint family, legal 596
and moral duties and rights and valuable economic privileges. His younger brothers and his sons share his dwelling as a rule, ortho-cousins or nephews occasionally. Everything depends on factors such as those previously enumerated when it comes to the constitution of a particular compound. But in general, genealogical distance imposes corresponding spatial and social arrangements. Thus, the secondary gate of a plural gate compound[1] is usually owned by an ortho-cousin or nephew (classificatory brother or son) of the *yirdaan*, except for the special case of a man's first-born son.[2]

The single dwelling or the single-gate compound is the habitation of one or more households, each consisting of an adult male, his wife (or wives), and his children. A householder may have younger unmarried brothers or sisters or an old mother dependent on him. Every married man is a householder, but households vary greatly in status according to their degree of social and economic differentiation within the joint family. This is determined not only by the stage of development it has reached, but also by kinship factors and by those individual social and psychological characteristics which we have referred to before. A newly married man, for example, is to all intents and purposes part of the household to which he was attached prior to his marriage, but he has a small degree of autonomy which increases from year to year.

A newly married wife has a room in the quarters of her husband's 596
mother, if she is alive, or of his senior wife. In due course, however, 342
whether it be a man's first or later wife, he must build her separate quarters. Hence, in a well-differentiated household every wife has her own quarters (*dug*) partitioned off from those of her co-wives or her mother-in-law. Here she and her children—the primary family—live, and here she is supreme mistress. A woman's quarters consists

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[1] Two gates are usual, three gates infrequent, and more than three gates found only in exceptional circumstances.

[2] It is taboo for the head of a compound and his first-born son to continue to [784]
use a single entrance after the latter has married and founded a family, though this taboo is never enforced until the younger man's children approach adolescence. But few men live long enough to see their first-born sons make their own gateways.

596 of sleeping-rooms and kitchens (to be described later) distributed
342 roughly in a semicircle round an open space, 10 to 15 feet across, bounded on one side by a co-wife's quarters or a low partitioning wall. This little close (*dendɔŋo*) is the central place in the life of the family. Here it takes its meals in the dry season; here friends are received;
[778] here most of the routine of family life goes on. A man's principal ancestor shrines are kept in his mother's or senior wife's *dendɔŋo*; and there he performs many of the frequently recurring rites of the ancestor cult. The women of a single household have adjacent quarters. Their husband's mother or the senior wife occupies the central quarters; junior wives or son's wives are on either side of her, forming altogether a rough circle or segment of a circle. A householder who is not also head of the compound has no room of his own. He keeps his private possessions in his senior wife's sleeping-room. Apart from this, it is the cardinal principle of family life that a man must divide his time, his affection, and his supplies of food with absolute impartiality between his wives.

Within the compound two other kinds of rooms are of special
343 importance for our theme, the granaries and the grinding-rooms.
778 Every independent agricultural unit has its own granaries which are
784 said to belong to the head of the unit. His granary (*boor*) is a man's most private and personal possession. No woman may enter it, nor any man not directly authorized by the owner. Ritual prohibitions associated with it closely identify a man's granary with his social personality. As one informant put it, with a flash of insight, 'Your granary is like your soul'.

343 One or more grinding-rooms (*neer*) belongs to every well-differentiated household. These are discussed later.

The family structure thus outlined is the basis of a domestic
596 economy and of a configuration of moral, legal, religious, and personal
182 relationships which can best be described as a compromise between strong centralizing or integrating tendencies and powerful differentiating tendencies. In the domestic economy of food, our sole concern in this paper, every unit in the system is completely autonomous in some respects and dependent upon a more comprehensive unit in others. It is a fluctuating compromise, slowly changing. Births, deaths, marriages, and their social consequences, even the mere lapse

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of time reflected in the growing up of children and the aging of parents, bring about changes which materially affect the food economy.

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THE UNIT OF FOOD ECONOMY. Food is produced and consumed by what we shall call the unit of food economy. The following table, derived from the data for the 40 randomly selected compounds mentioned previously, shows the relation between this unit and those we have already described.

Compounds		*Gateways*	*Units of food economy*	*Households*	*Primary families*	*Productive men*	*Women*
Total .	40	56	58	77	114	107	124
Ratio .		1	·1	1·4	2·0	1·9	2·2
							Children
Total .							132
Ratio .							2·4

A unit of food economy thus corresponds, generally, to a single gateway,[1] and comprises more than one household. The man at the head of this unit holds the land from which it derives the major part of its sustenance and organizes the exploitation of this land. The productive men (i.e. those capable of agricultural labour, including boys over 15) jointly cultivate this land; the women and children jointly assist in sowing it and in such duties as scaring birds from the standing crops. At harvest time the men and boys cut the grain, women and girls carry it home in baskets. The head of the unit supervises the sorting of the grain, and is responsible for the selection and preservation of seed. He sees to the storage of the grain—the seed separately and specially carefully, the grain for consumption in the granary. [476] The ground-nut crop is similarly handled by co-operative labour. It is a maxim that those who work together share the products of their labour. This applies not only to joint labour in the fields, but to the division of labour between the sexes and generations. 596 462 Upon the men falls the most arduous agricultural labour, but the women have equally exacting duties connected with the preparation of food

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[1] The two units of food economy in excess of the number of gateways represent pairs of full brothers who were economically independent of each other, but continued to occupy the same compound for kinship reasons. Four other units of food economy were in process of splitting up at the time the census was taken.

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for consumption. This division of labour runs through the whole of Tale domestic economy and is equally well evinced, e.g. in the organization of house-building and repairing. Boys and girls, too, have their duties in connexion with the care of the live stock and in the house.

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The head of such a self-supporting unit has his own granary or granaries. Just as he is the final arbiter in agricultural matters, so he alone controls the distribution to the women of the grain jointly produced. In theory he could even sell the grain if he wished without consulting the men dependent on him; in practice, he dare not do so, for they would leave the compound at the first opportunity.

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The entire unit of food economy thus draws its main supply of grain, the staple foodstuff, from a common source. But every household, every primary family, and indeed every individual other than young children has a degree of economic independence which is limited only by the obligations to the bigger unit. An industrious householder usually possesses some poultry and perhaps sheep and goats of his own, supplies a good deal of the minor crops consumed by his own wives and children, and even some grain to augment his wives' rations from the main store. Every woman, again, adds to the food supply of her primary family by her own efforts. If she is a market trader or a potteress, for example, she will have money of her own, will sometimes purchase extra foodstuffs and may invest in live stock which will eventually go to her sons. Her husband has no powers of disposal over her property. If he uses any of it, by her permission, it is a debt which must be repaid.

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DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION IN RELATION TO AGRICULTURE AND CROPS. This system can best be understood in relation to Tale agriculture. The staple crop is millet (generically, *ki*) of which there are three kinds, early millet (*naara: pennisetum typhoideum*); guinea-corn (*ki* specifically, each variety being known by a special term, e.g. *kutɔk*, *kazii* &c.: *sorghum vulgare*); and late millet (*za: pennisetum spicatum*). These with a small amount of rice (*mui: oryza sativa*) occupy 92 per cent. of the area cultivated in the Zuarungu district.[1] The seasonal

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[1] According to Mr. Lynn, who reports observations on 29 compounds in Zuarungu district, five being in Tale settlements. Four were somewhat larger and

variations in the ripening of crops makes it essential, as will be clear 243 later, for a self-supporting unit to have a supply of every type of cereal, or face starvation at certain times of the year. Early millet is grown only on the compound farms (*saman*), land immediately surrounding the compounds and kept fertile by human and animal manure and by spreading the detritus of the kitchen midden. The 243 compound farms at the disposal of a joint family consist of irregular 311 patches of greatly varying size scattered throughout the area of settlement of their lineage. They are acquired by inheritance, succession, 425 or gift from the head of one's joint family or lineage. How much of it a man has depends, thus, upon his seniority within the joint family and the lineage. The head of a joint family may cultivate 6 or 8 acres of compound farm; his younger brother and prospective heir, as head of an independent unit of food economy, may have only two acres or less allotted to him.[1] The compound farm is so precious that it is regarded as sacrilege to sell or abandon it.

Guinea-corn or late millet, which ripen several months after 243 the early millet, are grown both on compound farms and on bush 311 farms (*poog*) from one to four miles distant from the settlements of 425 those who cultivate them. Bush farms also descend in the line of 596 inheritance; but they can be bought or borrowed for a term of years. If the bush land belonging to his own joint family is limited, a man can always borrow as much as he requires. A head of a joint family may require no bush farm at all if he has a large compound farm; junior men, on the other hand, depend the more upon their bush farms the less compound land they have.[2] Compound land is the most fertile and most easily worked owing to its proximity. Those who have large compound farms (e.g. elders) are less liable to food shortage than those who have mainly bush farms (i.e. younger men).

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richer than the average Tale compound, as they belonged to headmen or elders. Botanical names are taken from Mr. Lynn's report.

[1] Rough calculations based on a survey of farms made for us by Mr. D. S. Commey. Mr. Lynn's records show that the Tale compound farms he measured vary from nearly 7 acres to under an acre; the average being 3·36 acres.

[2] Mr. Lynn found bush farms to vary from about 5 to 10 acres in extent. How much bush farm is cultivated depends, of course, upon the number of men cooperating and upon the food requirements of the unit, as well as upon the amount of *saman* they have.

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table‡ given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalaŋ*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

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[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

‡ [See cat. 116, p241 — Analyst.]

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not required at the time, and always borrowed specifically for this 596 purpose from kinsmen and friends. Women rarely obtain their 422 ground-nut fields from their husbands. They prefer to beg land from their own cognatic kinsmen, thus emphasizing their absolute independence of their husbands as regards this crop.

For this reason they never receive assistance from their husbands with the hoeing and planting of their ground-nut fields. A son often assists his mother; or young women 'invite' (*pooh*) a couple of young kinsmen of their husband to hoe their ground-nut fields in return for a very good meal, the grain for which the woman generally provides from her own resources. Many, again, have simply to rely upon their own skill with the hoe. The ground-nut crop thus gained is the woman's to consume or sell, as she pleases.

Of the remaining subsidiary crops, the most important—though 244 less important than ground-nuts—are the legumes, Bambara beans (*suma: voandzeia subterranea*), cow-peas (*tia: vigna sinensis*) and geocarpa beans (*sulempie: kerstingiella geocarpa*); and the root crops, frafra potatoes (*peeha: coleus dysentericus*) and sweet potatoes (*yumhma'ala: ipomea batatas*). Bambara beans and frafra potatoes are grown by the more energetic younger men on borrowed strips of compound farm after the millet is cut. Cow-peas are planted along the edges of compound farm by the head when he sows his early millet.

Vegetables are the concern and the property of women. The head 244 of a unit of food economy every year allots a small patch of land, some 462 100 square yards or less, immediately beside the compound wall to each woman with a kitchen of her own. Here she sows her *naŋgena* (*gynandropsis pentaphylla*), some ocro (*ma'ana: hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*h. sabdariffa*), *beris* (*h. cannabinus*). The latter three vegetable plants are also grown like cow-peas and *neri* (*cucumis melo*), alongside the paths which border the compound farm. Thus as they grow and ripen the women can get at them easily without injuring the millet. A woman's vegetable patch is always hoed for her by her husband as the produce is for their common use. The leaves of the cow-pea plant (*tia: vide supra*) are used as a vegetable known as *beŋit*, and are plucked for this purpose by the wives of the man who planted the *tia*; and the same rule applies to the use of the *neri* seed as a soup ingredient.

OTHER SOURCES OF FOOD SUPPLY. A particular household at a 437 particular time may have quite a number of sources of food supply besides the fields of the unit of food economy to which it belongs. Next to their farms the most important source of food supply for the Tallensi is the market, especially in the lean months. A completely empty granary imposes upon the head of the self-supporting unit the duty of finding grain. This is when he falls back on his live stock and sells or barters them for grain.[1] As long as he has some grain to ration out, however frugally, he will not buy for common consumption. Each household and each primary family must exert itself to make up the deficient grain supply. The junior householders and the women—the keenest and most inveterate market traders—exploit the resources [439] of the grain market. Those who have a little money go as far as Nabte or Mampuru land, countries rich in grain two or three days' march away, to buy guinea-corn, late millet, or maize. They bring back the grain in bags of roughly 20 to 40 lb. weight. The usual procedure is for the purchaser to bring home his or her grain, set aside a small portion—perhaps 5 to 10 lb.—for his or her own consumption and retail the rest at the local market so as to realize the original outlay or a few pence more. The principal profit consists in the small quantity eaten. Many women turn the grain or pulse they buy into cooked food, a small proportion of which goes to feed their husbands and children, but most of which is sold in the market at a profit and the proceeds re-invested in grain. But very many people have to be content with purchasing small quantities in the local markets. A man may sell a few chickens or guinea-fowl or a goat or something he has made, like an adze-shaft or a bow; a woman sells some ground-nuts, dried vegetables, shea nuts, shea butter or some dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) to buy the grain. In this way does the market help to eke out the domestic supply of grain.

This source of grain supply is wholly subject to the principle of • 596 differentiation of subordinate units within the unit of food economy. A woman's market-purchases, like her ground-nuts, go to feed her

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[1] [435] A bull is usually reckoned as worth about 30*s.*, a heifer £2, a sheep from 3*s.* to 6*s.*, a goat from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* Prices depend on the season, and the age and condition of the animal. A bull exchanges for about 40 large baskets of unthreshed grain, sheep, and goats in proportion.

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own family. She may, as an act of grace, give some of this food to her husband or to a co-wife with whom she is on friendly terms; but she is not compelled to do so. A junior householder thus augments the food supply for his own wives and children. If he comes into possession [431] of a large amount of grain by his own exertions he will generally make a present of a small quantity to the head of the unit to which he belongs; but, again, this is an act of goodwill, not an obligation. A kind-hearted head of a compound may occasionally present a meagre dish of grain to the wife of a younger head of a self-supporting unit, if they are obviously on the verge of starvation; otherwise, self-supporting units in the same compound never assist one another with grain, in the ordinary course of events.

There are other more incalculable means by which food is brought 602
into the household and family. Cereals are sometimes obtained during 431
the hunger months by women from their paternal kinsmen. A 222
marriageable daughter, again, means a succession of suitors bringing 262
gifts of money, guinea-fowls, and various other comestibles to her mother. Wild sources of food are fully exploited. Fruits of the shea-tree (*ta'aŋ: butyrospermum parkii*) save many a family from the worst straits of hunger, as does the pulp of the dawa-dawa (*doo: parkia filicordea*) pods. These trees have an enormous economic value, as will be evident later. The baobab-tree (*to'o: adansonia digitata*) has a fruit with a floury, sweetish pulp which is relished much as sweetmeats are by ourselves, and its leaves are used to make soup. It is generally found as a shade-tree outside a compound, and women readily get permission from the head of the compound to pluck the leaves. Leaves of the local elm (*nnom: celtis integrifolia*) are also used for soup.[1] Some grasses and fungi serve this purpose too, and small children, who are adepts at foraging for themselves, can often be seen out in groups collecting them.

From the table[2] quoted above it will be seen that one man, on the 592
average, supports himself, 1·2 women, and 1·2 children, over the age of infancy—roughly 3·4 people; but it is clear from the sociological outline given above that any such estimates hold only very approximately in view of the many supplementary sources of grain supply,

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[1] We have seen elm-trees in *toŋbana* (sacred groves) and in the bush (where of course, any one can pluck the leaves) but not as shade trees in front of compounds.

[2] [See cat. 116, p. 241 — Analyst]

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The meat, already putrescent, is nevertheless enjoyed despite its stench. 262 Fresh eggs, being potential chickens, are never eaten; but addled eggs are much appreciated by children, who bake them in ashes. Children also eat field and domestic mice, a species of toad, and harmless snakes, all of which they shoot with miniature bows and arrows [224 in the later months of the dry season. These things are despised by 857] adolescents and adults who, however, appreciate bigger rodents like moles and water voles. In short, meat supplies are a matter of chance, vary greatly with the season, as will be clearer later, and though much desired, form but a small part of the bulk of food consumed.

Fats and Seasonings. Fats and seasonings have a very important 262 place in Tale cookery, and, like vegetables, are the woman's respon- 263 sibility. But they are mainly market commodities and a man will 252 frequently give his wife money to purchase them. The only fat used is shea butter (*kpaam*). It is obtainable all the year round. It is made of the nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) which are carefully preserved after the fruits have been eaten.

Dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) are made by boiling the seeds of the dawa-dawa fruits. The balls are sold at prices varying from a tenth of a penny for one the size of a large marble to threepence for one the size of a cricket ball.

The laborious processes of manufacture involved prevent many women from making their own shea-butter and dawa-dawa seed balls. Others, who can command the assistance, e.g. of daughters, often prepare enough to have a surplus for sale.

Red pepper (*nanzuuh*) is grown in small quantities by a few men for sale in the market, and much is imported. It is sold at about a halfpenny for a handful.

Rock salt (*yaarem*) is sold in the market by regular traders who fetch it from the south, a small heap (about ¼lb.) for a halfpenny.

Ziem, the ash of valley grasses, and *bakaa*, the ash of early millet stalks, are prepared by the women and are stored in large baskets or calabashes for their own use and for sale. They are used as salt substitutes.

The Productive Cycle and the Food Cycle. We have seen how 596 the domestic organization of the Tallensi works in relation to the supply of grain and the other main raw materials of their diet. We

596 must now consider how these raw materials are consumed by the unit of food economy. It will be impossible in the scope of this paper to discuss every social situation affecting the domestic economy of food, since there is hardly a social act in which something edible or masticable does not participate, be it only a piece of kola-nut or a plug of tobacco. We shall refer briefly, therefore, to the most conspicuous types of situations in which food plays a part, and discuss more fully the domestic consumption of food in the ordinary routine of family life. We emphasize again that our purpose is to give an ethnographic account of these facts, as we have been able to observe them in a single year. We have not the quantitative information to allow us to venture upon a deeper sociological analysis.

Tale food economy has a marked seasonal periodicity, as is to be
262 expected in an agricultural society. It is this seasonal rhythm which
433 links the supply of foodstuffs with their distribution and consumption.
241 This correlation emerges readily from a calendrical tabulation in which the agricultural and other productive activities are set down side by side with the facts pertaining to the utilization of the food supply. Agriculture in Tale-land is a hazardous enterprise, chiefly because of the uncontrollable natural phenomena upon which a successful crop depends, above all, the correct distribution of rainfall. Good harvests and bad harvests succeed one another erratically and the natives can never predict from one year to the next. Their primitive methods of farming, too, mean that they extract only half as much out of the land as it is capable of producing. 'Nevertheless,' says Mr. Lynn,[1] 'in a good season . . . nobody is short of food. The area of land cultivated is adequate and the system of farming is successful.' But the margin of security for the average householder is extremely small, at any time. We have no means of estimating how representative the observations made by us in 1934 may be; the natives considered it to be a fair year. For our purpose, however, it chanced fortunately, since we were able to observe more easily the relations between supply and consumption of foodstuffs in the average household than might have been possible in either a very good or a very bad year.

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[1] *Op. cit.* Mr. Lynn records that in both 1930 and 1931 the harvest was bad owing to locusts and adverse rains. In 1934 the neighbouring areas were worse off than Tale-land.

312 natives regard this water as unsuitable for their own consumption, but use it as drinking-water for fowls, for building purposes, and to wash in. There are no special rights of use attached to water-holes, but as a rule each water-hole serves a group of compounds within a radius of not more than 300 yards.

262 A proper meal, according to Tale values, must consist of cooked food; and two meals a day are considered to be necessary for the satisfaction of ordinary needs. When the granaries are full and the women are given grain liberally this standard can be reached, but not in the lean months.

● 596 261 264 The owner of the granary distributes grain periodically to all his wives and those of the householders dependent upon him. He never descends into the granary himself, but appoints a young man, preferably unmarried, to do so, lest the women complain of favouritism. Each woman receives the same measure regardless of her status or of the size of her family. Absolute equality is stressed. Even a young wife without a kitchen receives an equal share. The measure, a small basket or calabash, remains the same throughout the seasons, but the period for which the housewife must make it last varies. When grain is plentiful they receive the measure daily. They will cook food at noon and at sunset, and some will make enough to suffice for the next morning's breakfast. In times of scarcity the same amount of grain has to last two or three days. It is left now to the individual household and family to supplement its food resources as best it can. If a noon meal is cooked at this time, it is made of grain obtained from the ancillary sources we have previously described. Every woman carefully considers her supply, limiting the number of meals so that the family may be assured of the evening meal as regularly as possible.

562 264 252 However, shortage of food is not alone responsible for the uncertainty of meals. Woman is the pivot of the whole domestic life. She carries on her duties throughout pregnancy till the moment of labour approaches, and again as soon as her period of confinement is over (three or four days). But she is also absolute mistress of her home, and when she refuses to cook her husband cannot compel her to. Nevertheless, a woman will miss cooking a meal only for very good reasons, e.g. when she has been working in the fields late, sowing or harvesting, or beating the floors of the compound, or has been away

for firewood. A woman with a small child never omits to cook a little 562
for it, whatever the circumstances. The cooking routine also becomes 264
upset under the stress of seasonal activities. When a whole family 252
goes to work at a bush farm or to a fishing expedition, some groundnuts or dry guinea-corn is taken along to chew, and no cooking will be done until evening.

Each woman is responsible for the provision of meals for her 596
husband and family. In certain situations co-wives co-operate for the
common good. Thus when building operations take place, or a man 476
has hired or 'invited' labour the co-wives cook in turn to provide 264
food for the men. On such occasions the owner of the granary allots a special share of grain for the labourers' porridge to the woman whose turn it is to cook for them.

Mutual assistance between co-wives occurs only when a woman is 596
confined or ill. Then her co-wife (a wife of her husband or his 252
brother) cooks for her and her family. The confined woman provides her own produce and firewood and the cooking is done in her kitchen. This is the duty and prerogative of co-wives. Only as a last resort would the husband's mother or sister cook for her in those circumstances. When a young wife shares her mother-in-law's quarters she does all the household tasks; but when she shares those of a senior wife, they assist each other and cook in turn.

The standard meal of the Tallensi is *sayab ni ziet*, meal porridge and 262
soup. Porridge is prepared of flour and, depending upon the season and what a man has in his grain-store, it is made of early millet, guinea-corn or late millet. Sometimes also maize (generally purchased) or cow-peas or rice is used. When root crops are in season they are cooked instead of porridge, but not because porridge becomes monotonous to the Tallensi, or they wish to vary the diet (see Appendix), it is done in order to make the grain last longer. 'Porridge is food, it makes you strong', and there can never be too much of it is the Tale point of view. 'But if you eat too much of the other things they spoil your belly'.[1]

The preparation of porridge is very simple. Flour is not preserved 252

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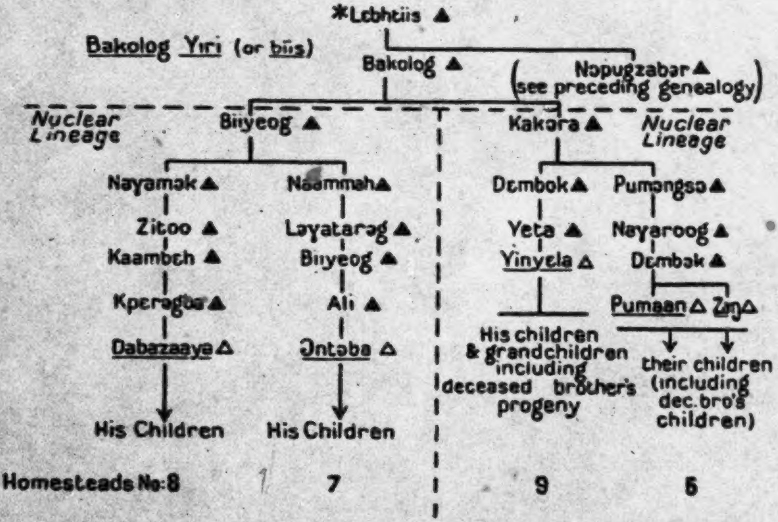
[1] A Tale friend enquired what kind of food he would be given in our country, and when told that he would eat meat, fish, bread, and eggs, he exclaimed, 'What, no porridge? I call that starvation.'

lineage. Lineages are differentiated in terms of their genealogical distance 613
from one another within their common agnatic descent.

The whole lineage we have been analysing is often designated Doohraan yidem (or biis), by reference to its ancestor, Doohraan; but it is more frequently described as Nəpugzabər yidem (or biis), going back to Doohraan's putative grandfather. This lineage is the skeleton of what may be called an expanded family, each of its component effective minimal segments being the foundation, similarly, of a domestic family.[1] [597]

Nəpugzabər yidem constitute a major segment of a wider lineage. Homesteads 5, 7, 8, and 9, the closest neighbours of the homesteads of Nəpugzabər yidem, are occupied by the various branches of a lineage of the same order as Nəpugzabər yiri. Its genealogical structure is briefly as follows:


*Lɛbhtiis ▲
Bakolog Yɪri (or bīis)
Bakolog ▲
(Nəpugzabər ▲ see preceding genealogy)
Nuclear Lineage
Biiyeog ▲
Kakɔra ▲
Nuclear Lineage
Nayamək ▲
Naammah ▲
Dɛmbok ▲
Pumɔngsɔ ▲
Zitoo ▲
Ləyatarəg ▲
Yeta ▲
Nəyaroog ▲
Kaambɛh ▲
Biiyeog ▲
Yinyɛla △
Dɛmbək ▲
Kpɛrəgba ▲
Ali ▲
Pumaan △
Ziŋ △
Dabazaaya △
Ɔntəba △
His children & grandchildren including deceased brother's progeny
their children (including dec. bro's children)
His Children
His Children
Homesteads No: 8
7
9
5

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[1] Tale domestic organization is analysed in our next volume. Here it is sufficient to say that the modal family unit is the polygynous, agnatic joint family occupying its own homestead. This is the prototypical *yir*, house (pl. *yea*). Its typical substratum is an effective minimal lineage of two, or less commonly, three generations. Thus it may consist of two or more brothers (half or full brothers or cousins); or a man and some or all of his sons, and, occasionally, grandsons, together with the wives and young children of all the males. The joint family always constitutes a single jural unit; most often, but not always, it is also a single economic unit. The pivot of this *yir* is its male head (*yirdaana*, owner of the house). He represents the continuity of the patrilineal line in the structure of the family. He is the (patricentral) focus of co-operation and of jural and ritual unity in the family. This is symbolized by the position of the granary in the centre of the homestead and by the reservation of the space in front of the gateway (*zanɔr*) for the affairs of the men. Complementarily, each woman has her own separate quarters in the homestead where her children live under her care, and where she is mistress in domestic affairs. This is her *dug* (lit. room, pl. *dugət*); and this is the prototype of the lineage *dug*. Thus the children of the family—that is, the lineage growing out

6/3 We have set down only the agnatic affiliation of the heads of the effective minimal segments of the lineage, for the relations of these segments with one another are determined by these ties, not by their respective internal constitutions. The head of this lineage (Bakolog yiri) was Yinyɛla; he died in 1937—a hoary ancient and one of the oldest men in Tongo, at least 75 years of age. He called Ɔntəba *yaaŋ* (grandson), and Dabazaaya *yaaŋkalee* (great-grandson), and Pumaan, a man in the late forties or early fifties, *bii* (child).

Mutatis mutandis, Bakolog yir has the same internal organization and residential distribution as Nɔpugzabər yir, though it is more differentiated.

Nɔpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm are two co-ordinate segments (*dugət*) of the wider lineage (*yir*) Lɛbhtiis[1] yidɛm. From Deemzeet to Lɛbhtiis inclusively seven generations are reckoned. From Yinyɛla to Lɛbhtiis only six generations are reckoned. This is not fortuitous, for Yinyɛla claims to belong to the generation of Deemzeet's father.

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm include three more *dugət*, segments co-ordinate with Nɔpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm. These are:—

(*a*) Nɔdɛɣər yir, the only surviving branch of which comprises but a single segment of narrow span consisting of three full brothers and their children who live in homestead No. 12.

(*b*) Pɔɣasɔŋ yir, whose members occupy homesteads 17, 22, 28, 29, and 33.

(*c*) Gben yir, in homesteads 18, 19, 20, 23, 24.

As with Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, a count of seven generations, inclusive, separates the heads of these three lineages from their ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. All these segments preserve the names of what appear to be redundant ancestors, like Damtii in the genealogical chart of Nɔpugzabər yidɛm. For, in conformity with their structural relations as co-ordinate segments of a single lineage, their particular genealogies must be congruent (see Ch. III). Bakolog yidɛm, with one ascendant generation less in their pedigree, fit into the set on the assumption—which they uphold vigorously—that their head belongs to the generation of the *fathers* of the other segment heads.

We need not analyse the internal organization of these last-mentioned segments of Lɛbhtiis yir. With variations of detail they duplicate the plan of Nɔpugzabər yir. The segments are homologous with one another; their sub-segments are constructed on the same plan; and so, on a bigger scale, is the greater lineage which embraces all of them. Bakolog yidɛm within Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, like Zoobən yidɛm within Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, is relatively senior to its brother-segments, and Nɔdɛɣər biis, though a segment of a very narrow span compared with the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yir, is nevertheless co-ordinate with them.

● [597] of it—are genealogically and socially united by reference to the patricentral *yir* and the patrilineal line, and similarly divided into distinct segments by reference to their respective matricentral *dugət*. This is the pattern on which lineage segmentation is based. Again, what is a joint family in one generation generally splits, as the children grow up, into two or more joint families in the next generation. They then constitute what we have called an expanded family.

[1] The founding ancestor, Lɛbhtiis, of this lineage should not be confused with his living descendant of the same name, previously mentioned. In the genealogies given in this chapter Lɛbhtiis the ancestor is distinguished by an asterisk.

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pretext. The point was that he did not wish this land to be lost to his sons altogether; and he therefore took the precaution of getting it back in his own lifetime.

If a man gives land over which he has full rights of disposal to his own sister's son, this amounts to an outright gift. The land belongs to the sister's son and his heirs in perpetuity. This is always explained by the jural fiction that the *ahəb* (identifying himself with his sister) has, like a father, bestowed a portion of his own land on 'his child'. When the *ahəb* dies the *ahəŋ* has the same rights in respect of the share of the patrimonial land allocated to him as the *ahəb*'s own sons have in respect of any shares he might have given them. It is an application of the rule that siblings are equals. Barimoda and Kpelimɛrəme both had farms given to them on these terms by their mothers' brothers and both said they would never part with their farms. Wherever a branch of one clan is found settled on land coming under the ritual jurisdiction of a neighbouring clan, the origin of the relationship is traced back to such a gift of land. Thus Nəŋsuur yidem of Tongo occupy and own land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zubiuŋ-Yakəra Tɛndaana.[1] They ascribe their rights in their land and the fact that they are living on Zubiuŋ land to their founding ancestor's having been a true sister's son of the Zubiuŋ-Yakəra Tɛndaana of his time. He was given a very large piece of land by the tɛndaana and came to live there. It is this land that his descendants now occupy.

The Status of an Ahəŋ as a Foster-child in his Ahəb's Family

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We have mentioned before that a boy who loses his own parents and cannot settle down with a proxy father sometimes goes to live with his mother's brother. A few cases of this sort are found in every settlement. As a rule the boy eventually goes back to his natal home to settle down there; occasionally he settles permanently in his mother's brother's settlement. In any case, he never loses touch with his natal home and never forfeits his rights and status in his own lineage and clan. He does not, as we know, become a member of the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*. This brings us back to the question of the jural relations of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*.

A boy who grows up in his mother's brother's household is treated exactly like a son and is indistinguishable from a son of the family, to the outsider. Thus it was many months before I discovered that Puvolimra was not the Gbizug Tɛndaana's son but his sister's son. He was probably in his late twenties and had lived with the tɛndaana since boyhood. He continued to farm with the tɛndaana after the latter's oldest son had established his own household. He was, indeed, the tɛndaana's right-hand man, more trusted by him, in some ways, than

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 59.

604 his own sons. More surprising, Puvəlimra was admitted to all the
esoteric rites of the Earth cult and often represented the tɛndaana in
597 ritual activities. He was permitted to do this because he belonged to a lineage holding a tɛndaana-ship allied to that of Gbizug. Had he been a Namoo, he would have been excluded from all but the domestic religious rites of the tɛndaana.

604 He was a great favourite, too, with the tɛndaana's children. But one
of the sons once made a revealing comment on Puvəlimra's position.
605 He spoke in a slightly patronizing tone, though not offensively so. 'Puvəlimra', he said, 'is our child (*u a ti bii*). We like him to stay with us and we may not deny him anything. But one day he may decide to go home and we can't restrain him; or if he offends us we can tell him to go. He is not our person (as a member of the lineage is). However much the tɛndaana may like him he cannot inherit our ancestor shrines or our farms or our homestead. It is because he gets on so well with the tɛndaana that he stays.'

604 This comment is typical of conventional opinion on the position of
an *ahəŋ* in the family of his *ahəb*. Puvəlimra himself, Gikoo-Duun, and
602 Bayana, three young men who either lived or had lived with their mothers' brothers, defined their position in exactly the same terms. It would be an offence against the ancestors to deny an *ahəŋ* a home, but he has none of the fundamental rights of a son; his position depends on the personal attachment to him, and concern for him, of his mother's brother. An *ahəŋ* in Puvəlimra's position, it is sometimes suggested, is apt to be more compliant than a son, so as to ingratiate himself with his *ahəb*. He cannot make demands as of right, as a son may do. Said Gikoo-Duun: 'I was a small boy when I went to live with my *ahəb-soog* at Saamər (in Mampurugu). Later I went out on my own to build my homestead and farm for myself near him. It was not because of a quarrel. But my mother's brother will not take care of (i.e. take responsibility for) my affairs (*u ku maal n-yɛla*). He will not marry a wife for me. If he does give me one cow to help pay my wife's bride-price and we should some day quarrel, he will say I must pay it back. He is not of my people. My people are here at Zubiuŋ. Even though I am far away, they (the Zubiuŋ people) will look after my affairs. If I were to die to-day they would make my funeral and inherit my things. Do you not see that I come here (to Zubiuŋ) regularly to sacrifice to my ancestors?'

As we know, one of the major jural responsibilities of a father for his son is in marriage affairs. Hence the fact that a sister's son has no claim, as of right, on his mother's brother's assistance in this important matter is a good test of their jural relations. Puvəlimra's marriage created the first rift between him and his mother's brother. The marriage was beset with difficulties. The girl's father feared that he would never get the bride-price as Puvəlimra's proxy father was a blind old man who lived

on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tendaana 604
refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvəlimra
succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the 602
girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at
Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made
to the head of Puvəlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it
to Puvəlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it.
It was then that the Gbizug Tendaana made Puvəlimra a present of a
bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over
to Puvəlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time
being; but that dry season Puvəlimra went, for the first time in his life,
to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull
to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for 597 ●
the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his
foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopting 602
the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb.* It is as if his mother's
bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a
son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son.
And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the
care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors
instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of
inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the
clan settlement of his *ahəb.* He retains only ritual ties with his paternal
clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded
in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb.* At Gbeog, for instance,
there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a
Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled
there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual
matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos
and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families
their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral.
When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen
in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite
possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage
of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not 602
forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care
of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For 613
example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day 577
killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own
nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home
to his *ahəb.* The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent
segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's
'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share
is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriage-
able age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of
an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
183 would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly,
they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

829 relations; for him they are all contained within a single frame of social
602 reference, determined, at bottom, by his parentage. He cannot connect the rules and conditions that govern his own social behaviour with the general principles of Tale social structure. He has no means of ascertaining these, since the Tallensi do not make a systematic study of their own society. Every native knows only a limited sector of the social system, and the picture he has of it is built up out of his direct experience of the way in which it acts upon the day to day conduct of his life. Individuals who have the same or nearly the same field of social relations tend to have the same picture of their society; and individuals who have different fields of social relations tend to interpret their social behaviour and the structure of their society by the same concepts and along the same lines in so far as the same principles determine Tale social structure in every sector of the society. When we speak of Tale social philosophy or Tale thought, we do not mean that the natives have a systematic body of objective knowledge about their own society. We mean only the common denominators in the knowledge of their society that they have individually. Such knowledge, though partially inaccurate and transmitted only in face to face contact, is necessary for the existence of every society. For men employ their social notions in their relations with others and adapt their concepts to those of their fellows in carrying on collective life. Common notions emerge out of corporate and co-operative social action for common ends. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi this knowledge is widespread and tends to be uniform; hence the common denominators stand out.

829 When a native harks back to kinship in order to explain or interpret
602 any social tie that directs his corporate or co-operative activities, he is
x618 putting forward a common point of view, but not an objectively accurate one. The outside student, seeing Tale social life on a wider scale than any native, can see differences in the significance of kinship for the individual, and of clanship for a corporate unit. Thus, matrilateral kinship has a different value for the individual from what it has in the sphere of clanship. In the former case, matrilateral kinship confers definite privileges and obligations on an individual in relation to other individuals or to defined groups, and it has the same value for everybody. In the latter case, it is one of several fictions used to rationalize ties of a
●[601] particular kind between corporate units. For example, the sister's son (*ahəŋ*) of a Ba'ari man is not entitled by right of matrilateral kinship to participate in sacrifices at Ba'at Da'a; but Ba'at-Lakum yidem exercise this right in virtue of clanship ties accounted for by the fiction of descent from a sororal nephew. Similarly, it is evident to the sociologist that the exogamic barrier by which ties of clanship are distinguished from other social ties has a different structural value from the prohibition against marrying a maternal kinsman; for the former is a factor of solidarity between corporate units, and the latter the index of a particular tie between certain individuals. But the natives lump them together.

829 Thus it comes about that the Tallensi describe and discuss the social
602 relations of corporate units in terms of kinship, using such concepts as
*618 *sunzɔ*, *mabii*, and *dɔyam*. The primary significance of these concepts will
601

be discussed in our next volume. It will be useful, however, to sum up 829
the meanings attached to them in the context of the structural relations 602
between corporate units. 618x

The term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*) means literally sibling by the same father. 601
It is applied by the members of a particular lineage or clan to another lineage or clan with which they have a defined structural relationship, involving reciprocal rights, duties, and interests, identical with or analogous to those that obtain between segments of a single lineage. The natives visualize this relationship, which they describe by the abstract noun *sunzɔt*, as modelled on the social relationship of brothers.

Mabii (pl. *mabiis*), literally mother's child, and the abstract noun *mabiirət*, are more loosely used and have a wider range of reference. In its primary sense *mabii* denotes a kinsman of the same generation, in particular a sibling, as distinguished from kinsmen of a preceding or succeeding generation. Its emphasis, however, is not on the reciprocal rights, duties, and interests of siblings, but on their equality of status and on the sentiments of brotherhood based on common descent. A man can speak appropriately of his brother as his *mabii*, but not of his son. Lineages of the same order of segmentation can be described as *mabiis*, but not a segment of a lineage in relation to the whole lineage. Related clans, or even clans that have some distinctive usage in common, can speak of one another as *mabiis*. In certain circumstances all the Tallensi may be described as *mabiis* by contrast with non-Tallensi. *Mabiirət* means 'to be akin to one another in some way'—by kinship in the narrow sense, in a kinship context; by local propinquity, political or ritual association, common custom, or merely common race, in other contexts. It is reminiscent of our own phrase 'kith and kin', which we apply to our actual kinsmen in one context, and to our 'cousins', the Australians or Canadians, in another. We have tried to convey this by translating *mabiirət* by 'kinship in the wide sense'.

Lastly, there is the concept *dɔyam*, derived from the verb *dɔγ-*, to bear or beget a child. Its primary reference is to kinship by consanguinity; hence it is most appropriately used to refer to a structural tie based on a known or accepted genealogical connexion. It serves to distinguish such ties from apparently similar ties for which no genealogical connexion or at most a very general community of stock is postulated. Thus, a Tongo man will describe the people of Yamələg as 'our *dɔyam*', but not the people of Zoo; they are merely 'our *mabiis*'. *Dɔyam* has no reference to the relative status of the parties or to their precise jural relationship. Father and son, uncle and nephew, a person and his distant cognate, clansfolk, members of linked lineages, are all *dɔyam* to one another. The term refers to the tie of consanguinity itself.

All three terms are frequently used in a metaphorical way to express attitudes of amity, solidarity, or goodwill, such as are taken for granted amongst kinsfolk, even where the parties concerned have no social ties based on genealogical connexion. To give an instance, Soog and Zubiuŋ were estranged from each other for a long time. At length they were compelled for ritual reasons to meet and become reconciled. Pledging their clans to everlasting amity and goodwill in the future, the two spokes-

829 men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no
602 one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so,
x 618 let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used
601 here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana ɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

648 The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the
x 618 Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the
171 country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔləga, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔləga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which

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[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deen*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

128 THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

613 The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and
ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural
● 601 basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow
121 sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

602 The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

of *soog* kinship to the Tallensi. Each of them has found a new friend 602 who will be to him as a brother. If he has business in his *soog*'s clan he will be able to go there with an easy mind; for he will be assured of an hospitable welcome in his *soog*'s house and of his *soog*'s assistance in his suit. Moreover, through this *soog* he will be introduced to other distant *saarət* unknown to him but known to his *soog*.

Saarət discover one another in other ways too. One evening I met Banɔrəg's wife coming from my boys' quarters. She told me that she had taken some food to one of the boys, Ayɛltiga, a native of Zuarungu, who, she had just learnt, was her *soog*. She had been to see her maternal grandmother's sister's son, at Gbambibug (she herself is a Sakpee woman), and he had told her that Ayɛltiga was their common *soog*. So she had hastened home to call on her newly found *soog* and had cooked a meal for him to show him the hospitality due from a *soog*. She told me this with many expressions of pleasure.

The following genealogy shows the connexion between Banɔrəg's 601● wife and Ayɛltiga. It is typical of the genealogical range within which 602 uterine kinship is usually effective.

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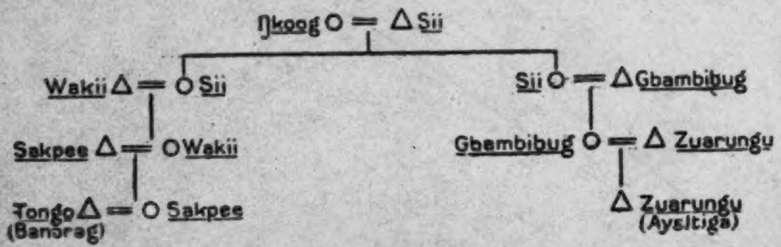

(Clan name of each person beside the sex symbol; personal names in parenthesis)

As this genealogy shows, the uterine line can be thought of as 'travelling' from clan to clan with the generations; and that is how the natives visualize it. 'Our mother' (the progenitrix of the line), said Banɔrəg's wife 'went forth from Ŋkoog (*yi Ŋkoog ŋa*) and married into Sii; and then his (Ayɛltiga's) grandmother (*ma kpeem*) married Gbambibug and my grandmother married Wakii; and then his mother (*ma*) married Zuarungu and my mother married Sakpee.' The *soog* line is visualized as a continuous entity. *Saarət* often refer to each other by kinship terms, but in a very loose way. A person is inclined to speak of a *soog* as, for instance, 'my elder sibling', simply because he or she is senior in age, though possibly junior in generation. More commonly a *soog* is simply 'my *soog*'; and if it is a woman, she tends to be identified with the uterine line as a whole and is described as 'mother (*ma*)', irrespective of her generation status, especially if she is older than the speaker. A relationship similar to that of parent and child often exists between *saarət* who differ considerably in age.

606 607 and his adult brothers. The only relaxation of this attitude occurs with her sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakie*, pl. *pɔɣakies*). With them, often her equals in years and her companions in work, she can laugh and play and joke. Like herself, they are already, or are fated to be, married out of their natal families to 'strangers'. This is a bond of fellowship superadded to that of sex and often age. But they also belong to the opposite camp. Identifying themselves with their brothers and their lineage, they sometimes speak of her as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)', and she sometimes refers to them as 'my husbands (*n-sɛrib*)'. They will take the side of their brother if she comes into conflict with her husband or deserts him. Her relationship with them is typical of the ambivalence that underlies the joking relationship among the Tallensi.

● 601 576 In the first year or so of marriage a woman tries to avoid having to address her male in-laws and her husband directly in public. If they address her it will be in a somewhat formal and courteous way, her husband and his brothers using her clan name, her father-in-law addressing her as 'mother (*ma*)'. She is most at home—but in a very deferential manner—with her mother-in-law, in whose rooms and under whose care she lives, whose domestic duties she largely takes over, and who also addresses her as 'mother (*ma*)'. To any member of the family she speaks of her father-in-law as 'father (*ba*)' and of her mother-in-law as 'mother (*ma*)', and she addresses the latter by this term. Outside the family a woman speaks of her husband as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)'; of his brothers as 'my older' or 'my younger husband (*n-sɛt-bier*, or *n-sɛt-pit*)'; and of his parents as 'my father (mother)-in-law (*n-daŋaamdoog*, masc.—*n daŋaampɔk*, fem.)'. Her husband speaks of her as 'my wife (*mpɔɣa*)'; his brothers as 'my older or younger brother's wife (*m-bier* or *m-pit pɔɣa*)', or in some situations as 'our (i.e. the lineage's) wife'; her parents-in-law as *sampɔɣa*.

606 The status of a woman in her conjugal family is most sharply focused in her relations with her parents-in-law. For it is they who form the axis around which the family revolves. Its unity, its independence, the management of its material affairs, and the maintenance of its well-being all reside in them. Though the general impression one receives of a woman's relationship with her parents-in-law is one of affability and ease, it is potentially anomalous, particularly in the early years. As their son's wife she is in the position of a daughter to them. She will give valuable and indispensable service in the economy of the household. She will produce children to augment the family and the lineage. But, as she herself knows and feels, she is an intruder. She is made to feel this in the early years of marriage even if, as so often happens, she belongs to an adjacent clan, and was personally well known to her conjugal family before marriage. For marriage creates entirely new associations between individuals and families. If she was married by elopement she knows that she is on trial, perhaps the object of a

606 578 ter-in-law towards one another, and the terminology of address associated with them, put a protective fence between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. 'My mother', or 'my father', in this context means 'a person to whom I owe punctilious respect'. The relation is one of reciprocal respect, because it is based on something in the nature of a contract. The daughter-in-law's attitude is an exaggeration of one aspect of filial respect towards the parents. This aspect is more prominent in kinship relations outside the focal field and in ceremonial relations patterned on, but structurally different from, true parent-child relations, than in the latter. It is reminiscent of the behaviour of his clansmen to a chief or tendaana on formal occasions, when his symbolic position as father (*ba*) of the clan is most apparent.

Naturally the barrier between father-in-law and daughter-in-law is stricter than between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law owing to the difference of sex, though it is not obvious to an outsider. Once she is accepted, a man usually treats his daughter-in-law with kindness and affability. In public he treats her with a familiar friendliness, in the same way as if she were his daughter. But whereas he scolds his daughter without hesitation, he does not scold or criticize his daughter-in-law directly. It would offend and hurt her, and upset their amicable relations. The barrier between them—and this applies in a lesser degree to the mother-in-law too—can be maintained only on the basis of mutual courtesy and affability. Where the barrier is most sharply emphasized is not in their public intercourse but in their relations as [835] members of opposite sexes. For a man to have sexual relations with, or even sit on the same mat as, his daughter-in-law is a sin of the first magnitude. '*Dɛn n-kih pam!* (that is an extreme taboo)', say the natives, with every sign of repugnance. It is a sin that can never be wholly atoned for. Sooner or later the culprits will be slain by the ancestor spirits; for, like incest with a father's wife of which it is the counterpart, it destroys irreparably the moral and religious bonds of father and son. I heard of an old man who died some years ago who used to have his daughters-in-law sit on his lap, and 'play' with them. This, my informants said scoffingly, was just the ill manners of an old dotard. But Gunyaam's seduction of his daughter-in-law was revealed to me with bated breath. It was no wonder, my informant said, that he died soon after, and that misfortunes crowded on his family.

The relations of daughter-in-law to parents-in-law are well summed up in the statement always made by Tallensi if they are asked for an explanation of the terminology of address used between these relatives. They say: 'We stand in awe of them (parents-in-law or daughters-in-law)', (*ti zootbame*, lit. 'we fear them').[1]

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601 [1] This terminology of address is of considerable theoretical interest. Rattray (op. cit., p. 6) attributes the custom of addressing a daughter-in-law as 'mother' (customary also amongst the Gorisi, Namnam, and other peoples adjacent to

The Relationship of Husband and Wife

The closest bonds a woman has with any member of the family into which she marries are her bonds with her husband. Habit, economic co-operation, and the jural authority of husband over wife bring them closer and closer together as the years pass. But these mutual interests are insufficient by themselves. The true cement of their union is the birth of children. Children give the union its *raison d'être.* They become the focus of the common interests, common pride, and common devotion of the partners, without which their economic co-operation or the other satisfactions they get from marriage would be meaningless. As we have already seen, one thing Tallensi never tire of stressing is that the object of marriage is to have children. When she has borne two or three living children to him a woman will be most unwilling to leave her husband, however hard her life with him may be.

The arrival of children not only forges closer the emotional bonds of husband and wife, but it also unites them socially in a firmer compact.

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the Tallensi) to the 'horror of a father having intercourse with a son's wife'. He 601 does not take into account the fact that mother-in-law and daughter-in-law also address each other reciprocally as 'mother'. As is mentioned above, the Tallensi themselves have no complete explanation for this usage, and this applies to the neighbouring 'tribes'. Many informants amplified the conventional formula 'We fear them' by pointing out that it was a degree of respect similar to that due to a mother. As we shall see later, the respect due to one's mother is almost a sacrosanct norm. The natives do not explicitly associate the mode of address [835] with the horror of incest between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, but they do stress the latter in discussing the relationship of father-in-law and daughter-in-law. We shall see later that incest with a daughter-in-law is coupled with incest with one's mother as among the most serious kinship sins conceivable to the Tallensi. Rattray's inference, therefore, probably isolates one element in the usage, but it is a suppressed element. The incest barrier is a factor of importance in the relations of father-in-law and daughter-in-law in very many patrilineal African societies. Logically, however, it would seem to be more in keeping with the relationship of parent-in-law and daughter-in-law for the former to address the latter as his or her daughter, as is customary in a number of African societies. Here, however, a combination of circumstances arising out of the lineage principle comes into the picture. A daughter-in-law is not under her parents-in-law's authority and control in the same sense as their daughter is. She is not a substitute daughter, but their son's wife and a potential mother of their grandchildren of the same lineage. She is a stranger in theory, standing outside the scheme of lineage loyalties and sanctions, yet at the same time the one person on whom the whole future of the lineage depends. Again no Tallensi ever suggested that a daughter-in-law is called 'mother' by her parents-in-law because she is a future mother of lineage members. It is rather her ambiguous position as a stranger tied to the lineage that is uppermost in their thought. Her being addressed as 'mother' by her parents-in-law may be a means of stressing this and of over-emphasizing the respect due to her from them, the usage being a metaphoric derivation from the mode of address used to one's mother and, by extension, in an honorific sense to old women in general. In short, this usage aptly symbolizes the tensions in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law, in respect to which the latter is almost on an equal footing with the former.

readily consents to another daughter's marrying into the same joint family; and this cordiality is easily extended to more distant clansmen on both sides. A Tɛnzugu man who has a son-in-law at Zubiuŋ with whom his relations are cordial will be pleased to see another daughter marry this son-in-law or one of his close agnates; and if the son-in-law himself or a member of his medial lineage comes to seek the hand of a daughter of the father-in-law's medial lineage, the men of that lineage would be favourably disposed to the suitor. 595

Another factor favouring successive marriages with women of the same lineage or clan is the preference of the natives for wives from a nearby rather than a distant clan. A man looking for an additional wife tends to turn his eyes first to the same neighbouring settlements in which he formerly sought a wife, and men of the same lineage tend to seek wives in the same settlements, as we shall find.

When co-wives refer to one another as 'sisters' they are using a kinship term in a metaphorical sense to indicate their social equivalence—that is, their identity of role and status in their conjugal home and settlement. But if they are kin they speak of one another as 'sisters' in a deeper sense. They have a bond of mutual attachment that holds independently of their relations as wives of the same man or the same lineage. As 'sisters' in the kinship sense they help each other more regularly and more altruistically; they share such things as foodstuffs and firewood more readily; they mother each other's children with more devotion and with a greater feeling of common interest in them; they live together more harmoniously, in general, than unrelated co-wives. This is especially true of a woman and a co-wife whom she has 'fetched in' as the term *poγasoog*, literally a *soog* sister wife (that is, a wife who is like a *soog* sister to another wife), suggests. The older woman watches over the younger almost as if she were a younger full sister or her own daughter. [601] ●

Tallensi take it for granted that co-wives are apt to quarrel. 'Oh yes', both men and women say with a laugh, if they are asked about it, 'co-wives quarrel—but nevertheless they stay on.' The point is that quarrels between co-wives are taken as a matter of course and do not lead to a wife's desertion. These quarrels may be nothing more than the flaring up of frayed tempers; for among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, people who live so intimately together as the members of a family are prone to fall out over trifles. Or they may be real fights, beginning with taunts and insults and ending with blows. Neighbours, usually men of the husband's lineage, hearing the uproar, may rush in to separate the women, if the husband himself or other men of his family are not on the spot to do so. For there is no one among the women of a household with authority to discipline the others. The senior mistress of the home, whether she is the mother or the senior wife of the owner of the house, ranks above the rest of the women, but has no disciplinary authority over them. 595 578

602 613 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidem*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that [736 768] a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 613 593 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements. There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series ●[601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma*, *bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

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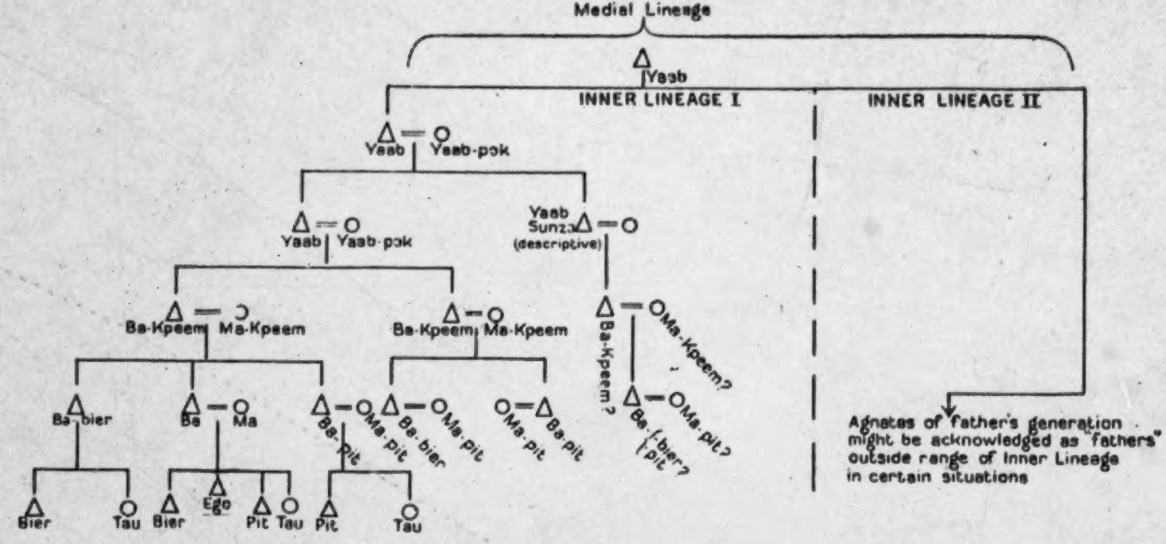
[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Gɔris and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kɛma* and *yɛbəga* for senior and junior.


Medial Lineage
Yaab
INNER LINEAGE I
INNER LINEAGE II
Yaab
Yaab-pok
Yaab
Yaab-pok
Yaab Sunzo (descriptive)
Ba-Kpeem
Ma-Kpeem
Ba-Kpeem
Ma-Kpeem
Ba-Kpeem?
Ma-Kpeem?
Ba-bier
Ba
Ma
Ba-pit
Ma-pit
Ba-bier
Ma-pit
Ma-pit
Ba-pit
Ba-bier? -pit
Ma-pit?
Bier
Tau
Bier
Ego
Pit
Tau
Pit
Tau
Agnates of father's generation might be acknowledged as "fathers" outside range of Inner Lineage in certain situations

Terms:

Ba = *Father*
Ma = *Mother*
Yaab = *Grandparent & Ancestor*
Ba-Kpeem = *Grandfather*
Ma-Kpeem = *Grandmother*

Kpeem = *senior*
bier = *older like sex sibling*
pit = *younger like sex sibling*
tau = *opposite sex sibling*
pok = *female*
? = *Acknowledged in certain situations only*

FIG. 4. The range of parenthood.

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight 593 into the working of the classificatory principle.

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. 764 A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat 784 or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions 613 of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. 602 At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits [601] of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

613 622 554 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed, some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔɣa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

778 554 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔne*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a [888] house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

●601 613 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 554 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

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[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without 613
first obtaining Kutɔbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his 554
own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutɔbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only.

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. 613
Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutɔbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10s. He showed it to Kutɔbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutɔbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bɔyayiedɔt yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutɔbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30s. to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutɔbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutɔbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutɔbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutɔbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutɔbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutɔbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutɔbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them.

Our discussion of what it means to a Talɔŋ to have a father alive or 613
not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross
the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken 178
of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly 601 ●
changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them.

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

601 613 178 the lineage often leads to conflict and it is in these conflicts that the process of fission is often completed. They arise chiefly in connexion with the inheritance of widows and the succession to the lineage *bɔγar* (that is, to the headship of the lineage)—the two situations in which consistency between the corporate unity of the inner lineage and the recognition of generation differences is most severely tested. What happens is that the heads of what were previously regarded as the component segments of an inner lineage advance contradictory claims to the custody of the lineage *bɔγar*. One may claim it on the grounds of seniority of generation—being the classificatory father of the other—while his opponent refuses to admit this and claims seniority by age. It is a conflict between 'seniority of begetting (*dɔγam kpɛmət*)' (i.e. by generation) and 'seniority of predestiny' or, as we might say, chance (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*) (i.e. by age). The long-drawn-out quarrel between Yinyɛla and the other elders of Tɔŋ-Puhug turned on a point of this kind. Yinyɛla claimed to be a generation superior to the heads of all the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri,[1] but the other elders would not admit the validity of this claim. The genealogical evidence supported Yinyɛla, and the precedents he quoted from the days of his father and grandfather were probably accurate. But that was not the question; the relations of the segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri had changed in the last two generations and, as the elders put it, 'begetting has died out (*dɔγam kpiya*)'.

An earlier stage in the fading out of classificatory kinship appeared in the controversy over Baroog's widows. Nindɔγat's eldest son was discovered to be secretly courting one of the women and Baroog's father immediately raised an outcry. Nindɔγat, he protested, was his 'son' and Baroog's 'brother', hence Nindɔγat's son would be committing incest if he married Baroog's widow, his classificatory mother. But Nindɔγat stood by his son, arguing that they were no longer members of a single inner lineage but of two separate inner lineages. 'We are each our own *dug* (*ti a ti dug ti dug*),' he said. The weight of public opinion in the clan was against him, however, and the woman in the case took fright. But a split in the lineage is inevitable, though it may take a generation to complete.

Change of Status Due to Death of 'Father' Shown in Property Relations

613 485 There is more to be said about the social consequences of having or not having a father alive, and we shall revert to the subject later from another point of view. What is so far clear is that a man's social status, particularly in jural and ritual matters, but also in economic affairs, advances step by step with the dying off of his fathers. Strictly speaking, he is not altogether autonomous until he has no more fathers within the range of the inner lineage, but in practice he is free of effective

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 196.

613 428 Kutɔbis also inherited the lineage *bɔɣar* of Pa'anbɔbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and brother's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbɔbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutɔbis. With this *bɔɣar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbɔbis's homestead. If on Kutɔbis's death the present head of Baɣanlɔrəg biis, Na'abzɔ, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutɔbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Baɣana, Pa'ana, and Sɔmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Sɔmnam's line of descent. On Kutɔbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbɔbis II. Lastly, Kutɔbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Baɣana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Baɣana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutɔbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutɔbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutɔbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

613 593 784 ● 601 On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*ŋman*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

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[1] This was because Kutɔbis and Yidaan were *saarɔt*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have 613
a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a 593
mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser im-
portance of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social 784
status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance
than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. The range within which classi- 601
ficatory 'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso 613
both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to 601
marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies,
Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites
of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head [765]
shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother 888
and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER IX

GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN

603 596 WE have mentioned earlier that the relations of grandparents and grandchildren can be regarded as a foil to those of parents and children. Tallensi themselves often draw the contrast. It is particularly striking with the paternal grandparents. For in a three-generation joint family the head is a grandfather and the senior *dugdaana* a grandmother. As head of the family the grandfather holds jural, economic, and ritual authority over all its members, including those whom he calls grandchildren, and there is a contrast between his authority and his familiarity in personal relations with his grandchildren. It reflects the contrast between the cleavage due to difference of status and role in terms of the lineage principle and the ties of cognatic kinship between grandchildren and paternal grandparents. This contrast does not occur with the maternal grandparents, in whose relations with a daughter's child the question of authority does not arise. When Tallensi say that a person can die happily if he or she has 'reached grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' they refer primarily to paternal grandparent and grandchild.

603 601 A grandchild of either sex refers to a grandfather of either line as *ba-kpeem*, literally 'older father', or more formally as *yaab*, and to a grandmother of either line as *ma-kpeem*, literally 'older mother', or more formally as *yaab-pɔk*. Grandparents are addressed by personal name or, in the case of grandmothers, by the clan name used for them by their affines. A grandchild is described as *yaaŋ* by any of its grandparents and addressed by his or her own name.

603 The essential feature of the relationship between grandchild and grandparent is that they can tease and joke with each other and each other's spouses. As we have seen, between parent and child this would be almost equal to sacrilege. A grandchild can tweak his grandparent's ear—hence the diviner's sign for grandparent, pointing to the ear—or pretend to mock him or her as 'an old baggage (*bonkɔrəga*)' or play practical jokes on them such as snatching at their food. Grandparents, reciprocally, tease their grandchildren, calling them 'you ugly thing (*bonkɔrəga*)', or by similar epithets that would be insults in another genealogical context. This joking relationship holds for both sets of grandparents, and serves the purpose of reconciling the potentially conflicting elements in their relationship.[1]

With it goes an intimacy and mutual trust, more particularly between

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[1] Cf. the similar usage between siblings-in-law, p. 120. Joking in the present case reconciles the familiarity permissible on the grounds of personal interest and the social equivalence of alternate generations, with the respect due to grandparents because of their age and their lineage status.

CHAPTER X

SIBLINGS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Concept of 'mabiirət'

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TALLENSI make a distinction between kinship that implies a difference of generation, summed up in the concept *dɔyam*, and kinship that implies identity or equality of generation, summed up in the concept *mabiirət*.[1] *Mabii* (lit. mother's child) is the general term for a sibling of either sex and of any degree of consanguinity, and it is extended, as we have shown in our previous volume, to corporate groups, linked by patrilineal descent, that are of equal status. Its primary reference is to a sibling by the same parents as the speaker's when only the fact of siblingship is relevant—that is, when difference of age or sex is not relevant to the situation. Tallensi sometimes use the term in contrast with *babii* (lit. father's child), a usage that indicates very neatly the underlying implications of the term *mabii*. Thus Tallensi say that a man's *mabiis* have first claim on the inheritance of his widows, but that his *babiis* are also entitled to marry the widows. To the native this means that a man's brothers of the same *dug* have a stronger claim than his clansmen of other *dugət*—*dug* here being a lineage segment defined relatively to the agnatic distance between a particular suitor for a widow's hand and the deceased. A man of the same inner lineage as the deceased will call himself a *mabii* of the latter by contrast with another suitor of a different inner lineage but the same medial lineage; and the latter will call himself a *mabii* of the deceased by contrast with a more distant clansman, whom he will describe as a *babii*. Thus the use of the term *mabii* implies a relationship between the parties as if they were agnates who have a common progenitrix over and above their patrilineal ties. When a native describes another as his *mabii*, however distant their genealogical ties, he is tacitly implying a close personal element in their relationship for that moment and in that situation, as if they were children of the same parents, by contrast with a pair of distant agnates. A man will speak of a matrilateral relative of a different clan in this way in some situations. Thus a Tongo man, telling me the story of his first visit to Kumasi, related how he had stayed with a *mabii*, a Ba'ari man, who had loaned him the money for his lorry fare. Abroad, in Kumasi or Accra, a Taləŋ speaks of any other Tallensi he meets there as his *mabiis* by contrast with all the foreigners amongst whom they live. And this is not merely a form of words. Abroad, Tallensi who have no ties of kinship or of locality, who would probably never have met or heard of each other at home, assist one another as if they were kinsmen.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii, p. 117.

593 •601 The influence of these modifying factors is recognized in the kinship terms used for the sibling relationship. Most of these have already been recorded, but it is convenient to bring them together again in this place. Within the limits of recognized generation differences, siblings never address one another by kinship terms, but always by name. Outside that range it is also not customary to address people by the kinship terms for siblings, in the ordinary way. When the terms are used it is either as a gesture of courtesy or half in jest, to single out a person from a group; or they are used in addressing distant clansmen or members of linked clans with whom one is not well acquainted. The usage conforms to the rule that kinship terms—other than those for mother (*ma*) and parent-in-law (*deema*)—are not as a rule used in addressing close relatives and are chiefly used towards distant relatives as a sign of special respect or courtesy. On the other hand, the terms for siblings are regularly used in referring to or making statements about brothers and sisters.

Tau (pl. *tap*) is the term for a sibling of opposite sex to the speaker or the subject of a statement. A man will say '*N-tau n-ɛl Ba'arɔ*—My sister is married to this place Ba'ari'; and a woman, '*N-yɛa n-tau yiri*—I am going to my brother's homestead.' The term *tau* has no age significance, as age differences do not affect the social relations of opposite sex siblings, but the suffixes *-kpeem* (senior) and *-bil* (junior) can be added for descriptive clarity.

An elder sibling of the same sex is *bier* (pl. *biernam*), a younger is *pit* (pl. *pirəba*).

A sibling by the same mother (whether or not the father is the same) is called *soog* (pl. *saarət*) without reference to sex or age; but sex and relative age can be indicated by combining *soog* with the preceding terms. Thus *tasoog* is a *soog* of the opposite sex; *bier-soog* is an older *soog* sibling of the same sex; *pit-soog* is a younger *soog* sibling of the same sex. These terms, as we have seen,[1] are extended to all uterine kin.

A sibling of different maternal origin is described by the term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*). Anyone who can be regarded as a sibling by the rules of classificatory kinship may be referred to thus, and the term is also used in corporate relations to denote co-ordinate lineage segments.[2] By itself *sunzɔ* may indicate a patrilineal sibling of either sex, but the suffixes *-pɔk* (female) and *-doog* (male) are often added to indicate the sex of the person referred to.

The Solidarity of 'soog' Siblings

593 The interplay of the various factors that mould the relations of siblings can best be understood by studying their genetic development. True siblings always grow up together in their natal family through the formative years of childhood, whether they remain together after adolescence or separate. Thus the mutual attachment and identity of

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[1] Cf. Ch. II above.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 201.

577 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni
764 yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years
later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its
593 psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its
613 validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the
total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers
occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic
578 and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes
clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zaγahkpɛmərə inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zaγahkpɛmərə was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zaγahkpɛmərə; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zaγahkpɛmərə would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds
of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another.
● 601 As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the
784 wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens,
the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔγa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

of the same inner lineage as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' or even as 'my wife 593
(*m-pɔɣa*)'; and, reciprocally, a woman speaks of her husband's brother 681
of the same inner lineage as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)' or, preferably, as 'my
husband's older (younger) brother (*n-sɛt-bier* or *n-sɛt-pit*)', but does not 784
address him thus. The proper reciprocal term of address is *n-kpee* ('my
neighbour'), or *n-dakii* ('my sibling-in-law'). The terms for husband
and wife are used in address only between a man and a distant clan-brother's wife.

The penalty for breaking this taboo has both a literal and a figurative 593
meaning, in the sense that the brothers will never share anything again 784
or take part in corporate activities as co-members of the same lineage.
It amounts to social and religious ostracism for the sinner, and Tallensi 682
say he would not long survive or his line of descent would perish.
A similar penalty is said to follow the killing of a brother, whether it happens by accident or design. As we know, incest with a brother's wife is said to occur, though extremely rarely; fratricide by a brother of the same inner lineage as the victim is felt to be so abhorrent as to be likely to happen only by accident in exceptional circumstances. It has happened once or twice in the past, informants say, when brothers fought over the division of farm-land, but I have not heard of any cases having occurred in the last thirty years or so.[1]

The strength of the sanction we are considering can be judged from 593
its incidence, in an attenuated degree, in cases of intra-clan homicide 682
where the parties are not brothers of the same inner lineage. If this
happens, whether intentionally or by accident, the maxim 'A cow has 784
trampled her calf to death (*naaf n-nɔ bu bii ku*)' applies—that is to say, it is as if a cow had trampled its calf to death; so it is forbidden, on pain of bringing down the wrath of the ancestors, for the victim's close agnates to 'cancel the debt' by killing one of the slayer's close agnates. This rule holds also for lineages or clans interlinked by clanship or
ritual ties. The guilty party offers expiatory sacrifices to the Earth and [783]
then a ritual reconciliation is effected between the two units concerned. But thenceforth the close agnates of the slayer—members of his nuclear lineage, usually—will not participate in a sacrifice in which the close agnates of the victim take part. If the homicide was deliberate, this taboo will even extend to all the patrilineal descendants of the two men. Thus Wakii-Sagbarug yidem and Kuruugdem are adjacent maximal lineages linked by clanship and ritual ties. On certain occasions they meet to sacrifice together at an Earth shrine common to them. The Kuruug people refrain from attending these sacrifices if the chief officiant is a member of a particular segment of Sagbarug yiri. A Kuruug man told me the reason for this in confidence. Some four or five

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[1] There is a legend that one of the early chiefs of Tongo slew his brother in order to get the chiefship. Tallensi say this was following the customs of the Mamprusi. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

593 voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head
571 of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark
583 at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in
593 the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman
571 with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another
607 indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (*deem*)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

593 Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters
● 601 speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our
607 wife (*ti pɔγa*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*sɛt*) in the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

602 differences; the principle of lineage continuity. It is because all three principles enter into it that the relationship of mother's brother and sister's son has a jural and ritual coefficient.

Kinship Terms

601 Before we go any farther it will be convenient to list all the kinship terms used in this context by the Tallensi (see diagram, p. 285). As 602 usual, they are primarily terms of reference, rarely used as terms of address between direct relatives of the particular classes. A man never addresses his own mother's brother as *ahəb*, but always by his name, and vice versa. These terms are used as terms of address only in speaking to distant relatives of that class who are not personally well known to the speaker and therefore have to be addressed somewhat formally, or as a special gesture of courtesy. Thus Kpanaraana, during a case at the chief's court, said to the girl whose marriage was in dispute: 'My grandmother (*m-ma-kpeema*), tell us your story.' This was a gesture of courtesy because the girl was a clanswoman of his paternal grandmother. Similarly Ga'ab always addressed my clerk Naaho, who was probably his junior by twenty-five years, as *n-qhəba*, because his mother was a clanswoman of Naaho, and his relationship with the latter was purely formal.

A person describes his or her mother's brother as his or her *ahəb* (pl. *ahəbnam*), and is described as *ahəŋ* (pl. *ahəs*) irrespective of sex. There is, significantly, no term for mother's brother's wife. She may be described as 'the wife of my *ahəb* (*n-ahəb pɔɣa*)', and be addressed by her clan name; or she may be described metaphorically, and addressed respectfully, as 'mother (*ma*)'. Similarly, there is no term for the spouse of an *ahəŋ*. I have heard men speak of a sister's son's wife as *ahəŋ*—by identifying her with her husband—and as *deema* (in-law), or *bii* (child)—by the speaker identifying himself with his sister. By a similar identification a man may address his sister's son's wife as *ma* (mother), just as if he were her husband's father, or he may use her clan name. Corresponding usages apply in speaking of and addressing a sister's daughter's husband.

A mother's father is referred to as 'grandfather' (*yaab* or *ba-kpeem*) and a mother's mother as 'grandmother' (*ma-kpeem*). The reciprocal term is *yaaŋ*, grandchild of either sex. But grandparents and grandchildren address each other by name.

The mother's brother's children are described and referred to as 'mother's brother's children (*ahəb biis*)' or as 'siblings of the same (or opposite) sex (*bier*, *pit*, *tau*)'. But, as we shall observe presently, there are many significant situations in which a mother's brother's son is identified with his father and called *ahəb*. Mother's brother's child and father's sister's child address each other by name. They describe one

another's spouses as siblings-in-law (*dakii*) and address them by name, 601
or by the kinship term if they wish to be specially courteous. But as
Tallensi often point out, all such terms transferred by metaphor from 602
the lineage context to a matrilateral context are used in a figurative sense. 'It is a figure of speech only (*la a nuoni maa*—lit. it is only of the mouth)', they say.

The father's sister, it should be added, is described as *ba-pɔk* (pl. *ba-pɔknam*) (female father)—an apt description of her social position in relation to Ego—and is addressed by her name. Another term of reference for the father's sister is *pugərəba*.[1] It is not commonly used for the father's own sister, however, but for a classificatory father's sister or father's father's sister. The father's sister's husband is referred to descriptively or metaphorically as *ba* (father) and is addressed by his name, or as 'father', as a mark of special courtesy. A woman refers to her brother's children as her 'children (*biis*)', identifying herself, as this suggests, in sentiment and behaviour with their father. She and their spouses call one another *deema* (in-law). She may use this term in addressing them and they in speaking to her, if they are not well acquainted; or the father's sister may address her brother's son's wife by her clan name or as 'mother', as if she were the girl's parent-in-law; and she will usually address a brother's daughter's husband by his name.

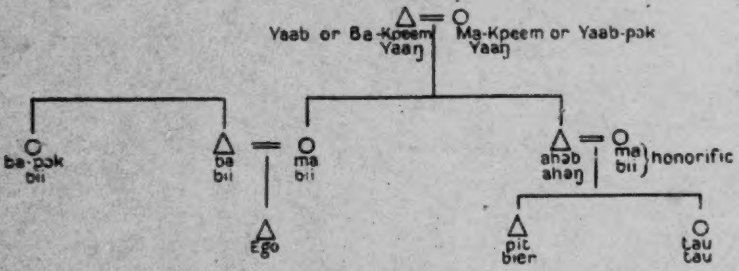

FIG. 6. Kinship terms used by Ego (top) and their reciprocals (bottom).

An incidental point of interest emerges from a consideration of the kinship terminology used in this context. It appears, and observation shows this to be a fact, that the spouses of matrilateral and sororal kin do not come into the picture directly. A man is only interested in his mother's brother's wife, for instance, in so far as her welfare and behaviour affect his mother's brother's and his children's welfare. He has no direct social relationship with her.

The classificatory extensions of these terms will be considered later.

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[1] This is the Mampele variant of *ba-pɔk*, commonly used instead of the latter term among the Mamprusi. Etymologically *ba-pɔk* is 'father-female' and *pugərəba* is probably compounded of 'woman (*puγ*)' and 'father (*ba*)'.

the basic rules of inter-personal sentiment and conduct for extra-clan 602
kin and for members of one clan or lineage. As in the lineage, so among 582
extra-clan kin, the pattern of sentiment and conduct we have sketched has greater force with close than with distant kin. The differences between kinship within the lineage and kinship outside the lineage lie less in the sphere of individual sentiment and conduct than in the different structural implications of the two kinds of social ties.

The Classificatory Extension of Extra-clan Kinship

At the outset of this chapter we referred to the classificatory extension 602
of extra-clan kinship ties. This requires further elucidation. In the 601
early stages of my field-work this aspect of Tale kinship seemed to me extraordinarily confused. The natives seemed to label any extra-clan kinsman a 'mother's brother (*ahəb*)' or 'sister's child (*ahəŋ*)' quite indiscriminately. The only distinction they appeared to make was in terms of generation differences. A person was apparently labelled a 'sister's son' if he was related to the speaker through any ancestress who was a member of the latter's clan, and he was described as a 'mother's brother' if the woman forming the link was the speaker's mother or ancestress and a member of the other person's clan.

This apparent confusion soon resolves itself into an orderly picture if the three principles in accordance with which kinsfolk are identified with one another are applied. In addition we must take into account the socio-spatial distribution of these kinship ties, and, especially, the time dimension without which no aspect of Tale social structure can be understood. Naturally the natives themselves do not consciously use such general conceptions in sorting out their kinship bonds; to them it is simply a question of spontaneous adjustment within the everlasting stream of social relations.

The most important of these factors is the lineage principle. An indication of this is found in the constant reference made by natives to their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yiri*) or maternal grandfather's lineage (*yaab yiri*). If a native is asked about his matrilateral kin the first thing he mentions is his *ahəb yiri*—the clan and perhaps clan segment of his mother's brother. The interpretation given to the concept *yiri* varies according to the situation, and follows the rules that govern its usage within the clan or lineage. For instance, I went to Tɛnzugu one day accompanied by two Tongo men. When we reached Kpata'ar one of them said 'This is my *ahəb yiri*', and explained that his mother was a Kpata'ar woman (*pɔɣayabələg*). A little later he stopped and broke off a couple of heads of ripe millet in a farm through which the path wound. I twitted him with stealing other people's crops. 'No', he replied, 'this is my *ahəb yiri*. This is La'ab's farm and I am an *ahəŋ* of his *dug*. They won't object to my taking a few heads of millet.' Thus at first he was using *ahəb yiri* to refer to the clan and later he used it for the inner lineage of his mother's brother.

In keeping with the principles of lineage structure, a man visualizes his relationship with his mother's patrilineal kin as having three degrees. There is, firstly, his bond with his 'true *ahəb* (*ahəb ni yɛlmɛŋər*)'—his mother's full (*soog*) brother, if she has one, or her oldest paternal half (*sunzɔ*) brother. This is the man who will sacrifice on his sister's son's behalf (if *his* father is dead). Apart from this there is no distinction between the 'true *ahəb*' and his brothers of the same nuclear lineage. The next level is that of the mother's brother's *dug*, his inner or at most medial lineage. A sister's son describes this *dug* collectively as his *ahəb yiri*, or, by contraposition with the clan, as his *ahəb dug*. Like any member of this inner lineage he distinguishes between its members in accordance with the rules of classificatory kinship. That is, the men whom his *ahəb* calls 'father' he calls 'grandfather', and he jokes with them; the men and women whom his *ahəb* calls siblings he calls *ahəb* or mother; and he describes those whom his *ahəb* calls his children as brothers and sisters. He may not marry a daughter of this inner lineage, and if he has sexual relations with one it is as disgraceful as if she were his close agnatic sister. He may not court a widow of any man of this inner lineage whom he calls *ahəb*, and if he seduces the wife of such a man it is incest. He may in theory court the widow of a member of this *dug* whom his mother's brother calls 'son' and whom he, therefore, regards as a sort of brother.

Finally, there is the level of his mother's brother's clan beyond the range of his inner lineage. Again the rules of classificatory kinship in the clan context apply. Beyond the range of his mother's brother's inner lineage a man does not distinguish between members of his mother's brother's lineage (his *ahəb yidɛm*) by generation. He can marry a daughter of the clan, or court a widow of any man of the clan, at this range.

Reciprocally, a man calls a child of a daughter of his inner lineage 'an *ahəŋ* of our *dug* (*ti dug ahəŋ*)', and a child of a daughter of a different inner lineage of the clan 'an *ahəŋ* of our lineage (or clan) (*ti yir ahəŋ*)'. There are a number of ritual ceremonies at which all the segments of a clan or maximal lineage must be present. Funerals of politico-ritual functionaries such as tɛndaanas, and the ceremony by which a man takes over the custody of a lineage *bɔɣar* shrine, are ceremonies of this kind. *Ahəs* of every branch of the clan usually attend such ceremonies. Then they are divided into two groups: *dugni ahəs*, those who are linked through their mother or an ancestress to the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony; and *yɛŋha ahəs*, outside *ahəs*, whose mothers or ancestresses came from other segments of the clan.

The lineage principle operating in relation to the flux of time introduces a new feature. A man dies and in due course his social roles pass

to one of his sons. The son now assumes the duties his father had as a mother's brother. He now sacrifices on behalf of his father's sister's sons and becomes their *ahəb* in function. So a mother's brother's son is, in certain situations, called *ahəb* by identification with his father in accordance with the lineage principle, even while his father is still alive—in anticipation, as it were, of the role he will one day have. On the same principle a sister's son's son may be identified with his father in relation to the latter's mother's brother's sons and lineage. Thus Ɔmara once introduced a young man from Gorogo to me as his *ahəb*. I expressed surprise, as I knew his mother came from Woo. He then explained that the young man was really his father's *ahəb* (*ba ahəb*)—not, of course, his father's true mother's brother, but the grandson and successor of the latter.

Through the operation of the lineage principle such a relationship can, in theory, go on for ever. The mother's brother's role—progressively attenuated, as we shall see presently—passes from one generation of the original mother's brother's agnatic descendants to the next. And this brings out a point of importance. The crucial element in the mother's brother's role is his duty to sacrifice to his ancestors on his sister's son's behalf whenever the latter requests it. By the lineage principle the latter cannot sacrifice to his maternal ancestors directly at their original home. The mother's brother is bound to perform this duty or else suffer the wrath of his ancestors. He can refuse only if his *ahəŋ* has very gravely offended him. Then this duty becomes a right which he uses as a sanction. He receives no recompense for this other than his prescribed share of the animal sacrificed, which must always be provided by the sister's son. The mother's brother's role goes with this right of sacrificing to his lineage ancestors' spirits. Hence, after the death of all of the grandfather's sons—all the true mother's brothers—it is in fact vested in the head of the lineage descended from the grandfather.

Now let us glance for a moment at the other side of the relationship, the sister's son's position. A man has no interest in or bonds with any of his sister's children's agnates except her children. They are not his kin through his sister. In theory he or his son can marry any of his sister's children's female agnates if they are not related to one another by another link. In practice such marriages with a woman member of the sister's husband's inner lineage are not countenanced. One objection is that the girl might be a proxy or classificatory daughter of the sister, which would make the marriage seem incestuous. A stronger objection is that such a marriage would amount to exchanging one woman for another. This the Tallensi disapprove of on the grounds that it must inevitably breed discord between the two lineages concerned. It is incongruous for the same inner lineages to be both sons-in-law and fathers-in-law to one another. You cannot, as the natives put it, both owe bride-price to and claim bride-price from the same man, or owe filial respect to and

be entitled to filial respect from the same person. The objection does not hold outside the range of the sister's husband's inner lineage. An *ahəb* is concerned only with his sister's own children; and *his* agnatic descendants are genealogically related and socially concerned only with *their* descendants—that is to say, with the matri-segment (sprung from the sister of the original *ahəb*) of the lineage sprung from her husband. Such is the history—or, more frequently, the putative history—lying behind the *ahəb–ahəŋ* relationships of lineages of different clans with one another. Every lineage and every segment of a lineage has its *ahəb yiri* in this sense. When the relationship (whether real or putative) is assumed to be remote it may have only a ceremonial function or may serve as an explanation of clanship linkage; when it is not too remote it emerges from time to time in ritual or jural activities. And it follows from the structure of the lineage that the farther back by number of generations the relationship is located, the wider will be the span of the lineages concerned.

There is a further complication. A woman's children have a tie, through her, with her *ahəb yiri*—their mother's mother's brother's lineage (*ma ahəb yiri*). This is a bond of a rather limited and formal significance; nevertheless it is kinship (*dɔɣam*); it prohibits marriage between a man and a woman who are directly related by such a route, and it often emerges in ritual relations. Indeed a man and his sister's, or father's sister's, daughter's son may be on terms of friendship and special intimacy, if, as is quite possible, they are clansmen or neighbours. The friendship of Pumaan and Saɣəbazaa, both of Tongo, went back to a relationship of this kind; and Saɣəbazaa, who was in the mother's father's position, spoke of Pumaan as his 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)'. By the lineage principle a relationship of this kind can be sustained for several generations, but it tends to fade out with the passage of the generations. Still more roundabout extra-clan genealogical connexions are recognized in special circumstances, the parties being linked by various combinations of male and female antecedents.

A relationship such as that of Saɣəbazaa and Pumaan is assimilated to the pattern of mother's father–daughter's son relationship. As this shows, there are two categories of extra-clan extended kinship ties. One type is assimilated to the *ahəb–ahəŋ* (mother's brother–sister's child) tie, and the other to the *yaab–yaaŋ* (mother's father–daughter's child) tie. The criterion is simple. If two individuals or lineages are linked through one woman (i.e. at a remove of one generation) only, they are *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* to each other: if the chain of genealogical connexions includes more than one woman (i.e. more than one female generation—a woman and her mother), making it a secondary matrilateral tie, the parties are *yaab* and *yaaŋ* to each other. Thus Lɔɣani called himself, in various contexts, an *ahəŋ* of Tɔŋ-Puhug, because his own mother came from there; an *ahəŋ* of Gorogo because his father's mother came from that place; and

also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Tɔŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal 601
ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining 602
his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sɔk—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sɔk; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence.

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in 604
the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1]

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u ŋman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u ŋman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends 604
a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her 843
pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl 421
with a perineal band (*suol voog*). This is a proud moment for her, as [884]
the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have entered the ranks of the matrons (*pɔɣaŋaaŋ*, pl. *pɔɣaŋaas*). Then, before [2]

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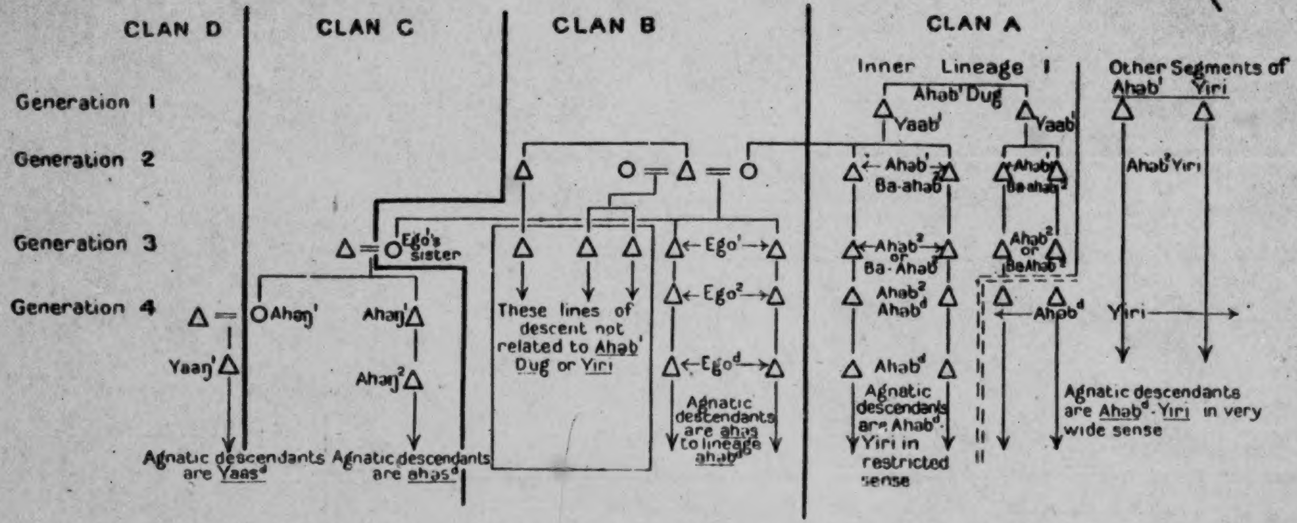
[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

[2] [Text continued on p. 301.-Analyst]

[p. 300]


CLAN D
CLAN C
CLAN B
CLAN A
Inner Lineage I
Other Segments of Ahəb¹ Yiri
Ahəb¹Dug
Yaab¹
Yaab¹
Generation 1
Generation 2
Generation 3
Generation 4
Ego¹'s sister
Ahəŋ¹
Ahəŋ¹
Ahəŋ²
Yaaŋ¹
Ego¹
Ego²
Ego^d
Ahəb¹ Ba-ahəb²
Ahəb¹ Ba-ahəb²
Ahəb² or Ba-Ahəb³
Ahəb² or Ba-Ahəb³
Ahəb² Ahəb^d
Ahəb^d
Ahəb^d
Ahəb²Yiri
Yiri
These lines of descent not related to Ahəb¹ Dug or Yiri
Agnatic descendants are Yaas^d
Agnatic descendants are ahəs^d
Agnatic descendants are ahəs to lineage ahəb^d
Agnatic descendants are Ahəb^d-Yiri in restricted sense
Agnatic descendants are Ahəb^d-Yiri in very wide sense

↓ = Agnatic descendants of indicated ancestor ←→ = pointers

FIG. 8. The extension of *Ahəb–Ahəŋ* relations.

The diagram reads as follows: Ego^{1}'s true mother's brothers are designated *Ahəb*^{1}, Ego^{1} calls them *Ahəb*, Ego^{2} (Ego's son) calls these men *Ba-ahəb*, hence they are also designated *Ba-ahəb*^{2}. Ego^{d} (Ego^{1}'s agnatic descendant) calls *Ahəb*^{1}*'s* agnatic descendants *ahəb*, hence they are designated *Ahəb*^{d}. Similarly with all the other relationships placed on the diagram. The index figure or letter shows what the Ego bearing the same index calls that person or group.

CHAPTER XII

THE FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

601 OUR study has made it clear that the recognition of genealogical relationships in the ordering of social life has an extremely wide range of application among the Tallensi. To be sure, some classes of social relations in which individuals or organized groups normally participate do not necessarily imply cognizance of genealogical connexions. There are the activities of buyers and sellers in the market-place, for example. These are transactions in which kinship may, but for the most part does not, play a critical part. If it comes into the picture it does so as an adventitious factor, not as an intrinsic constitutive element. Even between kinsfolk transactions in the market are ruled by considerations of price, costs, profits, supply, and demand. A man who goes to market to buy a cap will not patronize a kinsman who has caps for sale if he can get one cheaper from a stranger. But it may happen that a seller of caps will be satisfied with a slightly smaller margin of profit if the buyer is his kinsman than if he is a stranger.

572 Apart from such ephemeral inter-personal relations, there are lasting social ties, such as those of friendship (*zoot*), which do not necessarily presuppose genealogical connexions. It is a common thing for Tallensi, especially for men, to have friends (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) in other clans than their own, and nowadays in neighbouring tribes. Friends visit one another occasionally, help one another sometimes, and give one another gifts. A man may also have a woman friend (*sɔm*), usually the wife of one of his clansmen. The man takes small gifts to his *sɔm* from time to time and she reciprocates by cooking a meal for him. She may assist him to find a wife from among her clan sisters. But if friends are not necessarily kinsmen, they very often have common kin. In fact friendships between unrelated Tallensi are most often formed through one of the parties visiting a kinsman of the other party and so making his acquaintance. Many friendships arise from contacts at funeral ceremonies or when hoeing or building parties come to help a father- or brother-in-law. In any case, the commonest and most prized form of friendship is friendship with a clansman or a neighbour of a related clan. Many such friendships go back to childhood and are the more highly prized because they are voluntary, personal, and not subject to hard-and-fast rules.

561 462 In the same way, though the Tallensi do not have institutionalized age-grades, men or women of about the same degree of social maturity are often grouped together in situations in which many people of all ages play a part. One sees this very clearly on ceremonial occasions. At funeral ceremonies, for example, there is first of all the usual separation

[p. 337]

561 462 of the spheres of the two sexes. The sphere of the women is within the homestead. There they stay most of the time and there they carry out the duties that fall to them. The sphere of the men is outside, in front of the gateway, in the cattle yard and the *zɔŋ* (cf. p. 53). All the public rites take place outside. But in addition there is a distribution of tasks, duties, and privileges in accordance with a broad stratification by seniority. The oldest people in both spheres are spoken of as the elders (*kpɛm*). They have the seats of honour. For the most part they merely advise, and if hitches arise exercise a somewhat distant supervision over the activities. If they take an active part it is only in the most important of the rites. But they have the highest privileges. When food or meat or beer is distributed it is the elders who receive the portions due to the lineage units they represent and take the largest share of these portions. It is the old women, too, who take the lion's share of the gifts and obligatory contributions of foodstuffs handed over to the womenfolk. The burden of managing the ceremonies, performing the complicated series of rites, and attending to the many practical tasks involved, such as digging the grave, slaughtering sacrificial animals, and preparing food and beer, falls on the men who 'come after the elders (*kpɛm tayalis*)' and their female counterparts. The *kpɛm tayalis* are the men of mature experience but still able-bodied, men in the late forties and early fifties, the corresponding stratum among the women being those who have adolescent children. The young men and women, assisted by the adolescent boys and girls, do the fetching and carrying and give any casual help that may be required. The boys have the privilege of plucking and roasting any fowls that are slaughtered and keep some of the titbits for themselves. The girls surfeit themselves with frequent tasting of porridge and oily bean stew while they are cooking. This pattern can be observed in any collective activity.

601 Such arrangements, informal products though they are of the pragmatic requirements of the situation, are so stereotyped that they can be called customary. They arise without reference to genealogical connexions. But it is characteristic of Tale social life that they do so in situations whose structure is determined by kinship and clanship institutions. In fact the ideology of kinship is so dominant in Tale society, and the web of genealogical connexions so extensive, that no social relationships or events fall completely outside the orbit of kinship. In this respect the Tallensi resemble very many other primitive societies among whom, as Firth puts it,[1] kinship is the articulating principle of social organization. Just because kinship acts as a major determinant of social behaviour in every aspect and department of social life, it is the basis of the machinery of social integration in societies of this type, as many studies in Africa, Oceania, and America have shown. The result, as we have seen, both in this book and in the first part of our study, is that

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[1] Raymond Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, 1936, p. 577.

the concept of kinship is the primary category of Tale thought about the social relations of individuals and the structure of the society.

Firth has stated (op. cit., p. 575) that kinship institutions can be studied from many different angles. But clearly, all kinship institutions have only two major facets or, if we like, functions. They serve as a mechanism of organizing social activities and co-ordinating social relations, either in a limited sector of the social life or in relation to all social interests; and they at the same time constitute the primary mould of the individual's psycho-social development. To assert, as Malinowski virtually does,[1] that the latter aspect gives the master-key to the understanding of primitive kinship institutions is as one-sided as to deny its relevance for their sociological study altogether. Much futile controversy has turned on a confusion of these two aspects of social relations. It is true that the affective relations of parents and children during the latters' infancy, the sentiments, habits, and emotional attachments acquired in the setting of the domestic family in childhood, and the deeper-lying factors of personality, all colour the behaviour of kinsfolk of every degree to one another. But it is equally true that the socially effective ties of kinship and the values correlated with them, which exist as a part of the social system at a given time irrespective of the individual, have a powerful selective influence in the shaping of his psychological environment and, consequently, on his eventual personality. We are concerned with two distinct levels of organization and expression in the structure of human social behaviour, and neither can be reduced to the other.

A complete understanding of the significance of its institutions for a particular society calls for an investigation on both levels. That is not what we have attempted in this book. Our study has been focused on the function of kinship as the articulating principle of Tale social structure. We have taken into account the genetic development in the individual of the modal patterns of thought, action, sentiment, and emotion which emerge in kinship relations, only in so far as this development is a dynamic factor in the social structure or can be directly correlated with the operation of kinship in standard and recurrent social relations. We have, for example, given little space to the genetic development of speech habits in the child, though this is relevant for the understanding of how kinship terminology is learnt, because this would shed little light on our main inquiry.

Among the Tallensi kinship relations are a major determinant of the pattern of organization of all activities through which the ruling interests of the people are satisfied. This holds for all departments of Tale social life—for the activities concerned with the production and consumption of food and all other material goods, for those involved in the reproduction and rearing of offspring, for those concerned with maintaining the rights and duties of individuals and corporate units towards one another,

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[1] See his article s.v. 'Kinship', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed.

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and for religious and ceremonial activities. By abstracting the constant features in the patterns of organization of all the activities in which a particular kinship relation is significant, we arrive at a formulation of that relation as an element of the social structure. Tale kinship relations are embedded in social activities, but they are not coterminous with any one category of social activities. They are not reducible to economic relations either in their technological or in their social aspects; nor can they be derived exclusively from Tale jural concepts, or ritual beliefs, or political institutions. They are expressed and maintained by all these elements of the social system, but they exist in their own right. And the evidence of comparative studies, which show that similar kinship systems are found in different economic, jural, and ritual contexts bears this out. It is as plausible to argue that kinship ideas lie behind the economic or jural or religious customs of the natives as the other way round. Nor can the Tale kinship system be accounted for on the grounds of utility. Kinship relations are useful to the individual and serve the ends of social well-being for the society as a whole. But they are also very often extremely onerous for the individual; and their social utility springs simply from the fact that they play a vital part in the organization of all the activities that make up and maintain the social system.

Kinship, in short, among the Tallensi as among many other primitive peoples, is one of the irreducible principles on which their organized social life depends. Another irreducible factor in their social life is their traditional economy; and a third is their system of ritual beliefs and values. In the Tale social system these three categories of social facts are so closely interdependent that they cannot be satisfactorily understood in isolation from one another. They appear as functions of one another in the structure of society. But kinship taken as a system of values, a body of rules of conduct, and a scheme of social relations, is unique in that it is the master principle of organization both for particular activities and for the social structure as a whole. Thus we find that there cannot, for example, be gross divergence between the rules governing the ownership and use of land or other productive property, and those governing the application of labour to production or the consumption of the products of labour, since both sets of rules are aspects of the jural relations of a specific group of kinsfolk by birth and marriage. Similarly, the religious beliefs of the natives cannot be grossly inconsistent with their actual social behaviour since they have a common context of social organization in relationships determined by kinship. The wrongdoings or aberrations of individuals do not alter this fact; sooner or later the norms are vindicated and their consistency *inter se* is reaffirmed.

We have been speaking of kinship in the broadest sense of all socially recognized genealogical ties. In this sense Tale social structure is, fundamentally, kinship writ large. But we have found that it is essential to distinguish two aspects of kinship relations, that of lineage organization and that of inter-personal kinship ties. We have particularly stressed the major distinction between these two aspects. The lineage system is built up exclusively on the recognition of the agnatic line of descent and provides the framework of corporate groupings upon which Tale political and jural institutions are founded, whereas inter-personal kinship ties are recognized between cognates of all degrees through either or both parents. These two aspects fuse in what we have called the focal field of kinship, the domestic family. All kinship ties, for the individual, are created in the domestic family; and the family is the mechanism by which the genealogical basis of the social system is continually renewed.

Tale society is an organic society. That is to say, social organization is governed by the same principles at all levels and in every sector of the social structure. The different configurations of social relationships characteristic of different sectors of the social structure are the result of different ways of combining and elaborating the basic principles. The focal field of kinship shows us the basic principles of social structure at work in their simplest and prototypical form.

The structure of this field is determined by the interaction of two categories of social ties, those of parentage and those of marriage. Their interaction gives rise to two concepts of descent that operate as polar principles in the structure of this field.[1] The concept of paternal origin is counterpoised by the concept of maternal origin in every aspect of family life. The structural equilibrium of the domestic organization depends on their complementary functions. At the level of corporate social relations we find a similar structural equilibrium in the lineage system and also in the politico-ritual system that embraces the whole society.[2] At every level the structural equilibrium depends on the mechanism of polarity. It is the play of polar social forces organized round institutions like the chiefship and the tɛndaanaship, conceptualized in the ancestor cult and the Earth cult, and crystallized in the segmentary structure of the lineage, that gives the equilibrium of Tale society its dynamic character.

The polarity of patrilateral and matrilateral kinship regulates the development of kinship relations in time, as well as their configuration at a given time. If we consider the polarity of patrilateral and matrilateral descent as it works over a stretch of time—e.g. in relation to the cycle of development of the domestic family—a significant generalization emerges. We see, then, that the patrilineal principle is the primary factor of stability and continuity in the organization of the family and

[1] Malinowski brought this out in his writings on kinship theory (e.g. in his essay on *The Father in Primitive Psychology*, Psyche Miniatures, 1926) though he stated it in different terms.

[2] This is described in the *Dynamics of Clanship*.

hence of the entire social structure. Conversely, the recognition of kinship ties through the mother is the primary factor of dispersion and segmentation in the family and the social structure. The values symbolized in the concept of patrilineal descent constitute the chief centripetal force, those summed up in the concept of matrilateral kinship the chief centrifugal force in the structure both of the family and of the society at large.

If we visualize the social structure as a sum of processes in time, then the lineage system, which embodies the patrilineal principle, emerges as the source of the enduring pattern, the relatively fixed form of Tale social organization, and matrilateral kinship is seen to be the source of the variability and flexibility in the groups or in the standard interpersonal relations that make up the social structure. The lineage system unites the ancestors, the living, and the yet unborn in a uniform integrated sequence actualized at a given time in determinate corporate groups.[1] The emphasis of matrilateral kinship is on the peculiar social ties of individuals with individuals, living or dead; and every generation brings a shift in the web of matrilateral kinship bonds for the members of a particular lineage. Thus it is the polarity of these two basic concepts of kinship that brings about the striking balance between stability and continuity on the one hand, and segmentary differentiation with its tendencies towards the splitting up and dispersion of social units on the other.

We have spoken of the lineage *system* and the kinship *system* of the Tallensi. The hypothesis that the various features of any particular people's kinship institutions have a 'complex relation of interdependence' and constitute 'an organized whole' has been specially stressed by Radcliffe-Brown.[2] Our study has brought forward ample evidence in support of this hypothesis, as far as the Tallensi are concerned. What it means for the practical life of the individual is that there are no irreconcilable contradictions between the different institutions in which any one category of kinship bonds is effective, and no insoluble conflicts of loyalties arising out of incompatible rights, obligations, or sentiments, based on kinship ties.

This is partly a question of the kind of kinship ties recognized for particular social purposes and partly of the accepted order of differentiation (both as to quality and as to degree) among these ties. We have seen, for example, how the Tale notion of incest is related to the segmentation of the lineage, and how a sister's son never acquires true filial rights in his mother's brother's lineage.

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[1] This has frequently been stressed by Radcliffe-Brown in (unpublished) lectures. See also his papers, 'The Study of Kinship Systems', *J.R.A.I.*, vol. lxxi, 1941, and 'Religion and Society' (Henry Myers Lecture, 1945), ibid., vol. lxxiii, 1943.

[2] Cf., for example, his previously cited paper, *J.R.A.I.*, vol. lxxi, 1941, from which the above quotations are taken.

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The pivot of the system is the dominance of the patrilineal line in Tale thought and custom. We thus get a systematic interdependence of all recognized kinship ties, with the bond between father and son as the focal point.

The interrelation of all Tale kinship institutions in a coherent system is shown in another way. Our study has shown that the lineage is the basis of a widespread and close-knit network of clanship and politico-ritual ties that embraces the whole socio-geographic region we have called Taleland[1] and even spreads over the frontiers of the region. There is nothing fortuitous about this system of social and political relationships. It is precisely organized in accordance with what we have called the field principle. In the same way we have found that the extra-clan kinship ties of a given Tale community form a close-knit web the pattern of which follows the field principle. In any defined sector of the society the network of clanship and politico-ritual ties is congruent with the web of extra-clan kinship ties. The two systems reinforce each other as unifying media in the social structure, on the level of corporate group organization, and on the level of inter-personal ties of amity, respectively. Simultaneously, they also counterbalance each other in the total flow of social life and so strengthen the general social equilibrium.

Taking Tale social structure as a whole, it can be visualized as a complex structure of different categories of social relations, correlated to different kinds of social and individual interests, rights, duties, sentiments, and values. The lineage system primarily serves jural, ritual, and political interests. The rights and duties of individuals appear as elements of corporate rights and duties. The solidarity of the unit is stressed at the expense of the individual's private interests and loyalties. The submergence of the individual's interests in those of the corporate unit is even more noticeable in the clan organization. Corporate rights, duties, and interests, however, serve not only to unite maximal lineages but also to differentiate them sharply. The cleavages between corporate units loom as large as their ties. At a higher level of the system the network of ritual collaboration and interdependence between corporate units serves as the most powerful control on the autarchic tendencies of the lineage and the resulting danger of the cleavages between lineages becoming too strong for the common good. The politico-ritual system takes care of the common good of the whole society. The interests of the individual are entirely subordinate to those of the community.

Ties of cognatic kinship, both within and across lineage boundaries, form the lowest level of social relations in the hierarchy. They differ from the social relations that exist between corporate groups in one important respect. They are ties of amity and mutual interest between individuals. Private rights and duties and personal loyalties prevail as against corporate rights, duties, and interests. Ties of cognatic kinship

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

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breach the barriers between individuals erected by the lineage system. They represent the recognition by the society that the direct social bonds of individual with individual are as vital for the well-being of the society as the fixed framework of corporate groupings. The intricate, ever-changing web of inter-personal kinship creates a diffused sense of mutual interest and dependence among the people of neighbouring communities. This sense of the interdependence of men as individuals in the hard struggle of ordinary living, thus canalized by kinship, not only transcends the more rigid solidarities of family, lineage, and local clan, but also counteracts the frictions and disturbances that constantly spring up in the relations of individuals with one another. Inter-personal kinship ties thus act both as a diffuse force of social cohesion in opposition to the sectional bias of the lineage structure, and as a moral sanction of conformity to custom. The concept of kinship amity as a basic premiss of the relations of kinsfolk of every degree reflects this aspect of kinship.

Consideration of the significance of kinship for the individual brings up the most difficult problem in the study of primitive kinship systems. In psychological terms kinship for the individual means a system of habits, sentiments, and affective ties gradually acquired in childhood. In sociological terms it means a system of rights and obligations, privileges, and duties of various degrees of definiteness, in relation to other people, a code of conduct also varying in precision from item to item and geared to a body of moral values and religious beliefs, and embracing all this, in a sense, a concept of the person himself as occupying a definite status and position in society.

What lies behind all this? What makes kinship an irreducible principle of Tale social organization? The economic and cultural homogeneity of the Tallensi to which we have frequently referred does not account for this quality of their kinship institutions. It is true that their society exists on one plane, so to speak—that is to say it exists solely in the living contemporaneity of their social life; for as we have shown in the first part of this study the Tallensi have no conscious historical perspective stretching beyond living memory. In such a society only those principles of social organization can remain valid which require no historical foundations or sanctions but are carried in the day-to-day life of the people. Again, the exiguous range of material goods, productive skills, means of communication, and empirical knowledge, all serve to keep the social division of labour down to a minimum and the range of social relations within correspondingly narrow limits. This, too, puts a premium on principles of social organization that can be maintained in action by direct inter-personal relationships. These factors undoubtedly form essential prerequisites for the existence of an all-embracing scheme of genealogical relationships as the articulating principle of social organization. But comparative research shows that they do not wholly account for the irreducible

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character of the norms of social organization based on the recognition of kinship, in any human society. We know from comparative studies that kinship bears a similar stress (though its scope is often more limited) in the social organization of peoples with far more highly differentiated social systems than that of the Tallensi.[1]

The usual solution to this question, explicitly stated by Malinowski, Firth, and others,[2] and implicit in the descriptive work of most social scientists who write on kinship, puts the emphasis on the facts of sex, procreation, and the rearing of offspring. There is obvious truth in this view. But like all attempts to explain one order of organic events by invoking a simpler order of events necessarily involved in the first, it borders on over-simplification. It is like trying to explain human thinking by the anatomy of the brain, or modern capitalist economy by the need for food and shelter. Such explanations, which indicate the necessary pre-conditions of phenomena, are apt to short-circuit the real work of science, which is the elucidation of the sufficient causal or functional determinants involved in the observed data of behaviour. They are particularly specious in social science. It is easy and tempting to jump from one level of organization to another in the continuum of body, mind, and society when analysis at one level seems to lead no farther. As regards primitive kinship institutions, the facts of sex, procreation, and the rearing of offspring constitute only the universal raw material of kinship systems. Our study has shown that economic techniques and religious values have as close a connexion with the Tale lineage system, for example, as the reproductive needs of the society. Indeed, comparative and historical research leaves no doubt that radical changes in the economic organization or the religious values of a society like that of the Tallensi might rapidly undermine the lineage structure; but some form of family organization will persist and take care of the reproductive needs of the society. The postulate we have cited overlooks the fact that kinship covers a greater field of social relations than the family.

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[1] Including, of course, our own social system. As is well known to students of Roman Law, the Romans had a kinship system comparable in many respects with those found amongst primitive peoples to-day (cf. Sir Henry Maine, *Ancient Law*). Similar kinship systems were found among the tribes of central and northern Europe in antiquity. The patrilineal joint family system, in fact, survived in parts of eastern Europe until the latter half of the nineteenth century (cf. Vinogradoff, op. cit., vol. i). A lineage system having many analogies to that of the Tallensi is found amongst Arab villages of to-day (cf. Hilma Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village*, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Helsingfors, 1931), among the Chinese (cf. Hsiao-Tung Fei, *Peasant Life in China*), and amongst the Hindu (cf. H. S. Gour, *The Hindu Code*, ch. viii).

[2] Cf. Malinowski's article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica, cit. supra*, and Firth, op. cit., p. 577. Historically this view owes much to Westermarck's *History of Human Marriage*, and has been strongly reinforced in recent years by psychological theory as expressed, for example, in J. C. Flugel's book, *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Family*. It is the current view amongst most sociologists. (Cf. for a clear and succinct recent statement of it, R. MacIver, *Society*, ch. xi.

The problem we have raised cannot be solved in the context of an analytical study of one society; it requires a great deal of comparative research. We can, however, justifiably suggest an hypothesis on the basis of our limited inquiry. One of the striking things about Tale kinship institutions is the socially acknowledged sanctions behind them. When we ask why the natives so seldom, on the whole, transgress the norms of conduct attached to kinship ties, we inevitably come back either to the ancestor cult or to moral axioms regarded as self-evident by the Tallensi. To study Tale kinship institutions apart from the religious and moral ideas and values of the natives would be as one-sided as to leave out the facts of sex and procreation. On the other hand, our analysis has shown that it is equally impossible to understand Tale religious beliefs and moral norms apart from the context of kinship. A very close functional interdependence exists between these two categories of social facts. The relevant connecting link, for our present problem, is the axiom, implicit in all Tale kinship institutions, that kinship relations are essentially moral relations, binding in their own right. Every social system presupposes such basic moral axioms. They are implicit in the categories of values and of behaviour which we sum up in concepts such as rights, duties, justice, amity, respect, wrong, sin. Such concepts occur in every known human society, though the kind of behaviour and the content of the values covered by them vary enormously. Modern research in psychology and sociology makes it clear that these axioms are rooted in the direct experience of the inevitability of interdependence between men in society. Utter moral isolation for the individual is not only the negation of society but the negation of humanity itself.[1] Our suggestion is that the essence of a highly elaborated kinship system like that of the Tallensi lies in its function as the primary mechanism through which the basic moral axioms of a society of the type represented by the Tallensi are translated into the concrete give and take of social life. This is perhaps more obvious if we remember that the experience of the inevitability of human interdependence is implanted in the individual in the initial situation of kinship (as Malinowski called it), the dependence of the child on its parents. The focal field of kinship is also the focal field of moral experience; and the psychological and social factors that generate it are symbolically projected in religious beliefs. The hypothesis that all kinship institutions derive from the facts of sex, procreation, and child-rearing is acceptable if the emphasis is laid not on their biological or

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[1] Vide Fromm, E., *The Fear of Freedom*, London, 1941, for a recent exposition, on the basis of modern psychological and sociological findings, of this ancient thesis of moral philosophers.

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utilitarian value but on the moral values attached by society to these facts, and perpetuated through the social relationships brought into being by their conjunction.

This inference is strengthened when we consider the evidence of comparative studies. Patrilineal societies, for example, are found in many parts of the world, including our own culture area. Lineage systems similar to that of the Tallensi occur in a large number of patrilineal societies in Africa, Asia Minor, and the Far East. There is wide variation in the conventions and customs governing sex relations, procreation, and child-rearing in these societies. But there appear to be certain basic features common to all patrilineal societies in the form of the moral values attached to social relationships within the focal field of kinship. Incest taboos; the stress on sexual fidelity in marriage; the supremacy of the husband-father; filial piety counteracting the suppressed antagonism between father and son and mother and daughter—these are some of the main features common to the schemes of moral values found in all patrilineal societies.

These values embody the fundamental moral axioms of the society; and it is this that makes kinship, regarded as a mechanism for the ordering of social relationships within a given society, one of the irreducible principles of social structure in such a society.

[p. 348 is blank]

discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with 867
other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total 155
pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's 868
learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants 535
just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same 867
way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected 601
in the 3-4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non- 602
kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the 601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and 602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 856 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning —mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 828 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

837 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood 783 drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the 765 woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'. There she is given new waist-strings.

765 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow 768 out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother. The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother, ● 602 and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives, my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos (*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and children shave at the *ku-kwosem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankan[illegible]

carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764
or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602 ●
When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya* (sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man, he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it, may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept, as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-fowl they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave. It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*) for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one, even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given
to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561
ku-kweem just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834
his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765
'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768
would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171]
custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem* funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane *kaleŋa*), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*), and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gorisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Ŋkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*baŋ*) by one major segment of Bayana yidəm at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

[p.66]

lineage is also a region where different fields of clanship overlap. This is what gives it its intercalary functions (see Diagram on p. 86). 618x

Quasi-Clanship: Joking Partnership

Beyond the lineage's field of clanship lies a zone of social relations with which it has no constituted ties. For example, Zubiuŋ has no constituted ties with Zandoya. When Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the young wife of a Zandoya man, this was his justification for an act which would have been considered an outrage if she had been the wife of a Ba'ari man. Again, when Sayabo of Kpata'ar clandestinely brought home the wife of a Gorogo man, the elders of his lineage were ready to shield him. A few months later another youth of the same lineage eloped with the wife of a man belonging to a linked lineage, and the same elders peremptorily sent her home to her former husband.

Somewhere between clanship and potential enmity come two other 618x
kinds of ties belonging to the same class of structural relations as clanship 602●
and generally accounted for as arising out of some form of kinship (*mabiirət*). Each clan among the Talis, and in some cases a particular maximal lineage, has one or more joking partnerships with other clans or lineages. Thus Ba'ari has a joking partnership with Gorogo, Zubiuŋ with Sakpee and Gundaat, Kpata'ar with Wakii, Degal with Samiit, and so forth. The natives describe these relationships in the following terms. They say, 'We tease one another (*ti kiehət ni taaba*)', or 'We abuse one another (*ti turc taaba*)'. If they are asked for an explanation they say, 'It is laughter (*la'at*)', 'it is brother-in-lawship (*dakiirət*)'. Talking of it always raises a grin.

The joking partnership has two conventional modes of expression. When, for example, a Ba'ari man meets a Gorogo man or woman on a path by chance they abuse each other with impunity, in such terms as 'you ugly thing (*bɔmbrəga*)', or 'you good for nothing (*boŋwari*)', or some similar objurgation. Spoken in anger, these are deadly insults. Between joking partners, who shout them out with mock seriousness, they arouse only a roar of laughter. As we have noted, the natives compare them with the joking relationship of affines of the same generation. A man will tease his wife's brother (*dakii*) or sister (*dakii-pɔk*) or his sister's husband (*dakii*) or a clansman's wife in this way, and a woman her brother's wife (*pɔyakii*) or her husband's sister (*pɔyakii*), to the amusement of both.[1]

The other gesture of privileged aggression which is a convention of the 618x
joking partnership I once observed at a Zubiuŋ funeral. A cow had been 764
slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and the elders were distributing 602
the meat. A huge crowd of people had gathered, as is usual, for the occasion, and the tumult was indescribable. The division of the meat was still in progress. This process is always accompanied by loud and what appears to be truculent argument. Suddenly a youth sprang forward from the middle of the crowd, snatched the leg of a sheep, and sprinted off at top speed. There was a moment's consternation, and then an uproar. Laughing and shouting taunts and mockery at the top of their voices, the crowd looked on as one of the most respected elders of Zubiuŋ dashed off

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[1] But marriage is not prohibited between joking partners.

[582]

seizing it by violence, almost as if they were hostile intruders. *Sunzɔp* 602
have *a priori* no need of force to assert their privileges; if they did resort 618x
to it the affront would be so grave as to rupture the ties of clanship with 602
them. Unrelated strangers could only get one of the shares due to *sunzɔp* if they had the temerity to seize it—but they would be fortunate if they escaped with their lives, even in these days of curbed passions. The mock aggression of a joking partner is a caricature blending these contradictory ways of behaviour.

Joking partners are not obliged to tease one another. They do so spontaneously when the situation seems appropriate. People who are greatly unequal in years or status, or personally related by cognatic kinship, will not act in this way. The joking partnership merely fixes the group with whose members such behaviour is appropriate in appropriate circumstances; a casual encounter, for instance, where anybody but a joking partner or a close kinsman would be met with the customary greeting—'*ni i tooma*', lit. 'with your work'. It is also appropriate, as we have seen, in situations such as funeral ceremonies, where there is a very strict determination of attendance and behaviour by clearly defined social ties. But even there joking partners turn up largely by chance. They happen to be passing, or a few young men, hearing of the funeral and knowing that there will be dancing and girls, go for the lark of it. For distant *sunzɔp*, too, attendance at funeral ceremonies is very often a matter of chance, but it is also very often the result of a decision by responsible elders.

Such institutionalized joking partnerships do not appear to exist among 602
the Namoos. This may be correlated with the less elaborate interlocking 618x
of constituted ties and cleavages among them than among the Talis. An
analogous practice which throws light on the ideas implicit in standardized 184
joking partnership was, however, in vogue among the several branches of 602
Mosuor biis until recently. When there was a funeral at Yamələg a party of relatives-in-law (*deenam*) would sometimes pass through Tongo from Wakii or Tenzugu carrying the obligatory food contributions consisting of a basket of porridge and a whole sheep or goat cut up and cooked. Tongo youths would then, if they had a chance, intercept them and compel them to give up most of the food, leaving only a small portion to prove to the Yamələg people that their relatives-in-law had discharged their obligations. The Yamələg people would naturally be indignant; they would denounce the Tongo youths as thieves and rascals, and upbraid their relatives-in-law for yielding so timorously. Then they would wait for an opportunity to recoup themselves in kind. Next time a similar party of relatives-in-law bound for Tongo from Nabərug passed through Yamələg they would be waylaid and robbed in the same way. It was thought of as a practical joke, and accepted as such by the victims. The annoyance it caused soon blew over and did not leave a lasting grudge, for it was understood to be an exaggerated enforcement of the rights of *sunzɔp* to a prescribed share of such contributions if they happened to turn up at the funeral.

In the same way, twenty years ago, a Tongo man who chanced to be 602
passing through Yamələg when the guinea corn was ripening or the 602
618x

602 608 x618 ground-nuts ready for harvesting, might pluck a few twigs of guinea corn or pull up a bunch of ground-nuts to stay his hunger. He would shout out, 'Whose corn is this, yo-o-o? I am going to pluck some.' The owner, standing on his flat roof, would probably remonstrate and swear, but he would not raise a hue and cry, for this was not theft but an exaggerated assertion of clanship ties. Nowadays, since the political [578] jealousies between the chiefs of Tongo and of Yamələg have brought about a state of chronic hostility between the two places, this pleasant custom has fallen into disuse. It is impossible to tease people with whom one has open or suppressed enmity; it would certainly provoke a fight.

x618 Such liberties, it is of interest to note, could never be taken with the people of Sie or Biuk, though they, too, are the clan *sunzɔp* of Tongo. For, as my informants explained, 'they are too far away, and therefore they would resent it'. On the other hand, while any Tongo man can pluck a handful of guinea corn or a bunch of ground-nuts from a clansman's field at Tongo if the two men are on good terms, no one would dare to intercept the food contribution of another Tongo section's relatives-in-law. A serious quarrel would inevitably result. 'We are too near each other, we are like the members of a single family', explained my informants. Every segment of Tongo is likely to be represented at the funeral ceremony at which these contributions from relatives-in-law are shared, to claim the share due to it. For any segment to anticipate this by violence would be a gratuitous insult implying that the other segments do not respect its rights. The people of Yamələg and of Sie used to act in the same way towards each other before the political jealousies that to-day poison their relationship arose.

184 x618 All Tallensi think alike on matters of this sort, which fall within the ambit of their common culture, whatever their particular structural affiliations may be. This Namoo custom and its recent obsolescence fit the pattern we have established for the more conventionalized joking partnerships of the Talis.

x618 602 578 Yet another kind of joking which I have several times witnessed adds confirmation to our analysis, the more so because it is entirely informal. This occurs between the members of two maximal lineages which are bound to one another by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence. They are usually maximal lineages which have complementary politico-ritual offices, such as a chiefship and the tɛndaanaship complementary to it. A large element of tension is necessarily involved in these relationships. Mutual loyalty and solidarity in situations involving common interests are counterbalanced by mutual suspicion in matters concerning the private interests and possessions of each lineage. Behind a strong sense of amity and interdependence lurks a jealous vigilance in regard to reciprocal rights and duties.

When, therefore, representatives of the two groups meet in a ceremonial or jural situation, the more aggressive among the elders often taunt one another playfully at moments when ceremonial formality is relaxed. Gbizug and Tongo men, for example, have a habit of doing this. The Chief of Tongo and the Gbizug tɛndaana, on the rare occasions when they meet in public, will interrupt a long and ceremonious discussion with a

jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual 602 coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tendaana's brother, who often deputizes for 618x him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of 578 the tendaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true, but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, [789] you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohəg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiirət*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations 184 which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also 571 confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of 571 clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, 577 but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihər*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*ba yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

182 796 to declare, is not a matter of expediency or calculation but the essence of life for the individual and the community. It is a sacred necessity; and men must be in harmony amongst themselves and with the mystical powers that control their lives if they desire to gain the beneficence of these powers for this end. The ritual, the sacrifices, and the prayers to the ancestors and to the Earth, pleading for the fruitfulness of the land, of women, and of the flocks and herds, for health, prosperity, and peace, and offering thanks at the end of the agricultural year for these boons, eloquently express the Tale conception of the common good. In the rites of the Great Festivals the widest community that has social relevance for any Talaŋ emerges, not as a hard-and-fast political unit, but as a temporary synthesis of all the forces of social integration operative in Tale society. This is an expression of the fact that, though they have no centralized government, the Tallensi do form a single body politic, albeit one without defined territorial boundaries. This unit is built up on the widely ramifying structural ties which knit the independent corporate units together. But its ultimate basis is a body of moral and jural norms and values accepted as binding by all Tallensi, and defended from the disruptive action of conflicting sectional interests by the most solemn ritual sanctions of Tale religion. The function of ritual collaboration between clans and lineages is to maintain the unchallengeable validity of these norms and values; for upon their observance the attainment of the common good ultimately depends.[1]

Native Thought and the Realities of Social Structure

582 We have digressed to survey the scope and function of ritual collaboration among the Talis in order to see what truth there is in the maxim that 'those who sacrifice together do not intermarry'. As a generalization it is obviously inaccurate; but it is valid for particular instances of linkage by clanship ties, though only as an *a posteriori* inference.

829 Tale elders do not fall into this error of deduction through lack of intelligence or ignorance of their social organization. Among the Tallensi, as among most primitive peoples, what appears to us to be defective logic usually proves to be a product of the social organization as it is apprehended by native thought. When an individual Talaŋ applies the maxim we have criticized to his own particular field of social relations—not to that of his lineage or clan—it is perfectly apposite. For an individual in his personal capacity can only sacrifice together with other individuals if they are his kinsfolk or clansfolk; and this implies automatically that he cannot marry their daughters or sisters.

829 602 In the social philosophy of the Tallensi, as will be shown in the next volume of this study, kinship is the model of all social ties between individuals and groups. The ties of clanship, ritual collaboration, or local contiguity are visualized as so many different extensions and transformations of the fundamental patterns of kinship. For the individual this is accurate to a very large extent. There is a kinship element in all his social

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[1] This aspect of Tale political organization and its wider sociological implications are discussed in *African Political Systems*, cit. supra.

829 relations; for him they are all contained within a single frame of social
602 reference, determined, at bottom, by his parentage. He cannot connect the rules and conditions that govern his own social behaviour with the general principles of Tale social structure. He has no means of ascertaining these, since the Tallensi do not make a systematic study of their own society. Every native knows only a limited sector of the social system, and the picture he has of it is built up out of his direct experience of the way in which it acts upon the day to day conduct of his life. Individuals who have the same or nearly the same field of social relations tend to have the same picture of their society; and individuals who have different fields of social relations tend to interpret their social behaviour and the structure of their society by the same concepts and along the same lines in so far as the same principles determine Tale social structure in every sector of the society. When we speak of Tale social philosophy or Tale thought, we do not mean that the natives have a systematic body of objective knowledge about their own society. We mean only the common denominators in the knowledge of their society that they have individually. Such knowledge, though partially inaccurate and transmitted only in face to face contact, is necessary for the existence of every society. For men employ their social notions in their relations with others and adapt their concepts to those of their fellows in carrying on collective life. Common notions emerge out of corporate and co-operative social action for common ends. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi this knowledge is widespread and tends to be uniform; hence the common denominators stand out.

829 When a native harks back to kinship in order to explain or interpret
602 any social tie that directs his corporate or co-operative activities, he is
x618 putting forward a common point of view, but not an objectively accurate one. The outside student, seeing Tale social life on a wider scale than any native, can see differences in the significance of kinship for the individual, and of clanship for a corporate unit. Thus, matrilateral kinship has a different value for the individual from what it has in the sphere of clanship. In the former case, matrilateral kinship confers definite privileges and obligations on an individual in relation to other individuals or to defined groups, and it has the same value for everybody. In the latter case, it is one of several fictions used to rationalize ties of a
[601] particular kind between corporate units. For example, the sister's son (*ahəŋ*) of a Ba'ari man is not entitled by right of matrilateral kinship to participate in sacrifices at Ba'at Da'a; but Ba'at-Lakum yidəm exercise this right in virtue of clanship ties accounted for by the fiction of descent from a sororal nephew. Similarly, it is evident to the sociologist that the exogamic barrier by which ties of clanship are distinguished from other social ties has a different structural value from the prohibition against marrying a maternal kinsman; for the former is a factor of solidarity between corporate units, and the latter the index of a particular tie between certain individuals. But the natives lump them together.

829 Thus it comes about that the Tallensi describe and discuss the social
602 relations of corporate units in terms of kinship, using such concepts as
*618 *sunsɔ*, *mabii*, and *dɔyam*. The primary significance of these concepts will
601

be discussed in our next volume. It will be useful, however, to sum up the meanings attached to them in the context of the structural relations between corporate units. 829 602 618x 601

The term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*) means literally sibling by the same father. It is applied by the members of a particular lineage or clan to another lineage or clan with which they have a defined structural relationship, involving reciprocal rights, duties, and interests, identical with or analogous to those that obtain between segments of a single lineage. The natives visualize this relationship, which they describe by the abstract noun *sunzɔt*, as modelled on the social relationship of brothers.

Mabii (pl. *mabiis*), literally mother's child, and the abstract noun *mabiirət*, are more loosely used and have a wider range of reference. In its primary sense *mabii* denotes a kinsman of the same generation, in particular a sibling, as distinguished from kinsmen of a preceding or succeeding generation. Its emphasis, however, is not on the reciprocal rights, duties, and interests of siblings, but on their equality of status and on the sentiments of brotherhood based on common descent. A man can speak appropriately of his brother as his *mabii*, but not of his son. Lineages of the same order of segmentation can be described as *mabiis*, but not a segment of a lineage in re[illegible]ion to the whole lineage. Related clans, or even clans that have some distinctive usage in common, can speak of one another as *mabiis*. In certain circumstances all the Tallensi may be described as *mabiis* by contrast with non-Tallensi. *Mabiirət* means 'to be akin to one another in some way'—by kinship in the narrow sense, in a kinship context; by local propinquity, political or ritual association, common custom, or merely common race, in other contexts. It is reminiscent of our own phrase 'kith and kin', which we apply to our actual kinsmen in one context, and to our 'cousins', the Australians or Canadians, in another. We have tried to convey this by translating *mabiirət* by 'kinship in the wide sense'.

Lastly, there is the concept *dɔɣam*, derived from the verb *dɔɣ-*, to bear or beget a child. Its primary reference is to kinship by consanguinity; hence it is most appropriately used to refer to a structural tie based on a known or accepted genealogical connexion. It serves to distinguish such ties from apparently similar ties for which no genealogical connexion or at most a very general community of stock is postulated. Thus, a Tongo man will describe the people of Yamələg as 'our *dɔɣam*', but not the people of Zoo; they are merely 'our *mabiis*'. *Dɔɣam* has no reference to the relative status of the parties or to their precise jural relationship. Father and son, uncle and nephew, a person and his distant cognate, clansfolk, members of linked lineages, are all *dɔɣam* to one another. The term refers to the tie of consanguinity itself.

All three terms are frequently used in a metaphorical way to express attitudes of amity, solidarity, or goodwill, such as are taken for granted amongst kinsfolk, even where the parties concerned have no social ties based on genealogical connexion. To give an instance, Soog and Zubiuŋ were estranged from each other for a long time. At length they were compelled for ritual reasons to meet and become reconciled. Pledging their clans to everlasting amity and goodwill in the future, the two spokes-

829 men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no
602 one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so,
x618 let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used
601 here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana ɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

648 The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the
x618 Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the
171 country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔləga, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔləga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which

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[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deen*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔɣayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔɣayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔɣayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔɣayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
562 A *pɔɣayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[252] to join. A *pɔɣayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔɣayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

x618 Lastly, a married *pɔɣayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔɣasama*—a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔɣayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

means of which the lineage acquires wives. But what is more important, 613
the women carry the descent of the clan into other clans, and thus build 562
up that network of interclan kinship ties which breaks down the rigid 602
exclusiveness of the lineage and clan, interweaves clan with clan, and is one of the factors that restrain strife between clans and prevent Tale society from splitting into anarchic fragments. Since the tie of descent is indestructible, women members of the lineage and clan have definite rights and duties in all those practical and ritual institutions which bring out most precisely the solidarity and corporate identity of the lineage through the passage of time and the mutability of generations.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688
with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471
corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays
there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*walәg*) such 432
difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471
punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's depen- 688
dants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613
thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471
and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426
now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the
significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782]
act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471
always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426
ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

471 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the
426 process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation
in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the
602 household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit
471 of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

621 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is
471 security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage
182 security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of the *teŋ* as a community. The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

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[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

Lineage Grouping and Local Grouping

613 We come now to the question of the connexion between lineage
621 grouping and locality. A lineage like Nɔpugzabər yiri, though its span
596 is comparatively small, exhibits all the important principles of lineage
structure and will suffice as a crucial example.

In all the old-established settlements we find a very close correlation between lineage proximity and residential proximity among the members of the clan who live there. Close agnates tend to live near one another, so that residential proximity is almost a measure of lineage proximity. A segment of small span tends to be a close residential cluster, and segments of larger span, up to the major segments of a maximal lineage, tend to form residential blocks.

We can see this most readily if we look again at the residential dispersion of a group of agnatically related joint families, bearing in mind that the men of a joint family form a lineage. For as the homestead is the material integument of the living structure of the joint family, so is the localization of the lineage, growing out of the spatial arrangement of the homestead, the spatial counterpart of the lineage structure.

592 As will be remembered (see p. 199), the elementary case is that of two
full (*soog*) brothers, who often continue to occupy a single homestead
602 long after they have set up separate families. Each will have more or less
596 self-contained quarters, but the homestead will have only one gateway
(*zanɔr*), one cattle-yard (*sapak*), and one room for the family head (*zɔŋ*),
signifying that it is a single homestead. Half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) may share
a homestead in this way, but they usually separate more distinctly when
they have growing families. Each will have his own gateway, &c., and
party walls divide his section of the homestead completely from those of
his brothers, making it what may be called a semi-detached homestead.
Such a set of semi-detached homesteads may house a man and his
mature first-born son, or a man and his deceased brother's sons. Sometimes
two or more ortho-cousins (brothers, in native terminology) live
thus side by side.

613 More usually, however, men whose nearest common ancestor is a grand-
621 father occupy completely separate dwellings, often very near to one
another. Men whose nearest common ancestor is a great-grandfather
never have permanent homes adjoining one another in this semi-detached
way. These conditions of residence signalize successive stages of segmentation
as the effective minimal lineage expands and splits into new
effective minimal lineages. But what residential arrangements will prevail
in a particular lineage segment depends, also, upon other circumstances,
the most important of which are the economic and religious relations, and
the character and disposition of the individuals concerned. Residential
collocation is not a simple function of lineage relationship. There is a
tertium quid linking them: the combined effect of land tenure, on which
the whole economy of the household rests, and of the ancestor cult. For
example, when a joint family splits, the man who leaves the ancestral
home usually builds a homestead for himself on land belonging to the

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613
and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621
on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778
tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding [557]
ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes
possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But
many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive
the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members
stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors,
Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became
the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other
shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage
zanɔr. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [423]
by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership
of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding
the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members
of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the
hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless,
to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie
there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social
purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head
actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of
the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the
lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [104]
organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits 613
on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 621
life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 602
and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, ●
and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather
together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in
affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality
where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings
and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is
carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with
men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a
man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility
in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication,
have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for
help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing
his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or
solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies [191]
are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*,
house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be
translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

613 where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent
621 group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of
residence, common interests, and common experience. The local con-
●602 centration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its
[769] ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult
of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

613 In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with
621 local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her
571 relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance
with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the
[587] segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her
children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close
[602] agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as
effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

Structure of Peripheral Settlements

In the newer settlements there are no lineages of large span. Where 613
segments of maximal lineages, whose homes are in the old settlements, 621
have been settled for more than a generation, those of their members
remaining in the peripheral settlements do not always live in close 166
proximity to one another. People shift readily to take up new land, and spread widely so as to have a large area for cultivation immediately around the homestead, as we have learnt. But the tendency for a lineage to become locally stabilized on the land of its ancestors, near their graves and original home, operates strongly too, and has been strengthened in recent years.

Many men at Woo, Biuŋ, and Datɔk now live on land originally broken for cultivation by their fathers, grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers. A powerful incentive to remain there is the fact that they now hold this land by right of inheritance. An irresistible sanction binding them to these new settlements is the fact that their fathers and grandfathers lie buried there. Born and bred in these settlements, they look upon them as their homes, while maintaining strong ties with their original clan settlements, which they regard as the clan homes.

The effect is to establish new, permanent, local nuclei for minor branches of lineages anchored in the old settlement. Around these nuclei we sometimes find a small cluster of homesteads, the heads of which are all members of a lineage segment of two, three, or at the most four generations. But this is far from common. As we have mentioned before, these settlements have been, and are being, occupied by people of very diverse genealogical origin from all parts of Taleland and neighbouring areas. This is particularly marked in the case of Datɔk. Biuŋ and Woo have been settled chiefly by people from Tongo and the places immediately adjacent to or socially connected with Tongo. In addition to the bonds of local cohesion the inhabitants of these places have also the ties of political and ritual interdependence which they bring with them from their original clan settlements. At Datɔk no such bonds are carried over into the new community. A Gban man may have as his nearest neighbours a man from Ba'ari, a man from Bɔlɔga, a man from Yamɔlɔg, and a man from Bongo. The basis of political unity is locality rather than lineage. The sections of Datɔk, for example, are local units, wards, or quarters, not genealogical-cum-local units.

But it is characteristic of Tale social organization that the bonds of local association never stand alone and are never sufficient in themselves to generate bonds of solidarity. Mere contiguity requires some degree of mutual accommodation. It does not, in a society without a constituted legal system or territorially organized political units, create mutual legal obligations, or provide a basis for corporate relations between individuals. Hence it must be reinforced by, and indeed founded on, more fundamental ties which are morally and jurally binding in their own right. In
the older settlements lineage ties have this function; in new settlements [602]
kinship ties take their place.

The following excerpt from a census of a part of Datɔk illustrates this.

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are 166
linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round
men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original
settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who
built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample
land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this
land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at 602
Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not
related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more
finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settlements. 571
Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔɣaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

613 price;[1] and conversely, it is he who is directly responsible for the payment
582 of bride-price for the wives of members of the nuclear lineage, and for
any other outlay entailed by the marriage formalities. But for all these
transactions the formal consent (which is in fact never withheld) of the
medial lineage head is required. This has the force of a blessing. When
613 the bridegroom's people send the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) by which the
583 marriage is regularized, the messenger goes first to the head of the girl's
medial or maximal lineage, and gives him a live cock, the most important
item among the placation gifts.[2] By accepting the live cock the lineage
head signifies the acquiescence of the whole lineage in the marriage and
the blessing of the ancestors thereon. Whether or not bride-price is paid,
the girl is thereafter the jurally recognized wife of the bridegroom. As
a rule it is perfectly safe for the lineage head to accept the cock, as placation gifts are only sent when the head of the girl's nuclear lineage consents. But cases do occur in which they are sent without the knowledge of the latter as a dodge by which to compel him to acquiesce in the marriage. Then if the head of the medial lineage accepts the live cock, the head of the girl's nuclear lineage must perforce acquiesce. This makes the marriage binding but does not secure it against dissolution through action taken by the head of the girl's nuclear lineage.

In the same way, when a woman's father's people come to demand the payment of bride-price from her husband's nuclear lineage, they go first to the head of the husband's medial lineage. He conducts the messengers to the head of the husband's nuclear lineage and formally presides over the negotiations.

Marriage transactions illustrate a very important principle of Tale jural relations. They are always relations between lineage units. Even when they appear to involve only particular individuals the lineage framework is implicit in the transaction. But this does not mean that all Tale jural relations are based on the concept of collective responsibility. On the contrary, jural responsibility is precisely fixed on particular individuals or exactly defined corporate units. This is graphically summed up in many Tale maxims. Thus they say 'A pipe sounds best in its owner's mouth (*Yiig m-mah ka daana nuoni*)'—that is, an action should be answered for by the person directly responsible for it. What we find, rather, is that all jural relations involve a configuration of rights on one side and a configuration of responsibilities on the other, both corresponding to the range of lineage segments involved. And no jural transaction is complete until the whole configuration of rights and responsibilities, on both sides, is brought into action. Though marriage formalities involve primarily the nuclear lineage and medial lineage, they presuppose the entire framework of maximal lineage and clan relations; and this is the case with most other jural relations among the Tallensi.

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[1] Subject to limitations that will be detailed in our next volume.

● [602] [2] In many clans there is an arrangement between pairs of medial or maximal lineages that have some special tie of kinship by which the *sɛndaan* cock for a girl of one lineage is delivered to the *kpeem* of the other lineage and vice versa. E.g. this arrangement obtains between Lɛbhtiis yidɛm and Kabuu yidɛm at Tɔŋ-Puhug and is a sign of their close kinship as lineages sprung from one original progenitrix (see p. 212).

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so ~~as to~~ make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment
holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary
politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments
that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are
subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and
kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations
between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in
every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though
corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties
to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit
are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very
careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen
who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage
for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might
descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored
grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the
enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would
be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder
or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the
cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have
seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely [462
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights.
As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very
heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men,
fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a
general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out
between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was
told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have
been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of
the wound.

CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

128 THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and
613 ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural
601 basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow
121 sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

602 The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

602 the social structure as a whole kinship is the fundamental binding element. It furnishes the primary axioms of all categories of inter-personal and inter-group relations.

From the standpoint of the indivi[illegible] the norms and conditions that govern his social behaviour fall w[illegible] single, syncretic frame of reference; and kinship forms the b[illegible]m which this frame of reference is projected. This is a co[illegible] of the syncretic structure of Tale society, based as it is on genea[illegible] connexion. The alinement of individuals and groups for all social purposes follows genealogical lines; with few exceptions, social relations always have a genealogical coefficient. And because they have a common foundation in the genealogical structure of the society, Tale institutions interlock with one another in a consistent scheme. For the same reason Tale social relations do not fall into distinct categories with only adventitious connexions between them. Economic relations serve jural, political, and religious ends as well; political relations are at the same time religious relations; jural rights and duties are aspects of economic, religious, and political bonds.

602 578 The extent to which the idiom of kinship dominates Tale thought about human affairs is shown by the tendency of the people to explain conduct that conforms to the norms by appealing to kinship. The late Chief of Tongo, for example, justified his conciliatory tactics with the Gɔlibdaana, in spite of the latter's provocations, on the grounds of their ties of cognatic and affinal kinship. On the other hand, departure from normal standards of conduct is apt to be ascribed to personal idiosyncrasies. Thus when Zaɣahkpemɔre fought with his older brother over the division of their late father's land, the elders of his lineage ascribed it to his violent temper and lack of intelligence. In keeping with this idiom of thought, a gross breach of kinship duty is the prototype of the Tale notion of sin.

Cognatic and Agnatic Kinship

602 611 It is essential to distinguish two kinds of genealogical ties among the Tallensi. There are, firstly, cognatic ties, that is, ties of actual or assumed physical consanguinity and of the social relations entailed by them, which link person to person or an individual to a lineage or one lineage to another in a specifically defined and particular bond. Such ties may be traced through males only, through females only, or through both males and females. Secondly, there are lineage ties, social relations based on the tie of common agnatic descent.

Cognatic kinship and agnatic kinship have different, in some situations even opposed, functions in Tale collective life. The distinction turns on the principle that lineage ties always unite people in or relate them to corporate groups serving common interests and held together by common values, whereas cognates do not necessarily form corporate

611 groups. Cognates have mutual bonds of sentiment and reciprocal obligations, but not necessarily common interests. All the members of a given
602 lineage have the same agnatic kin and therefore identical lineage ties; but only identical siblings—that is, brothers or sisters by the same parents—have the same cognatic kin.[1] By automatically making him a member of maximal lineage and clan, his agnatic descent fits the individual into the constituted framework of Tale society. It is this that gives him his political status in the society. It gives him also a special field of defined social relations with clear contours. Cognatic kinship creates a number of contingent social ties for the individual, valid for him only. Unlike lineage ties, they differ in quality; they multiply in the course of his lifetime; in theory their range is indeterminate, since there is no limit to the reckoning of cognatic kinship. Tallensi often discover cognates of whom they were previously ignorant, in the most unexpected places in their own country, even in their own clan. But it is extremely rare for anyone to discover a hitherto unknown agnate, even in these days of relatively great mobility.

602 The Tallensi maintain, and genealogies of individuals bear this out, that if enough were known of the genealogical relationships of the people of adjacent settlements, they would all be found to be related to one another. In the clan itself, under the surface of its strict patrilineal organization, the filaments of cognatic kinship bind individuals together by special personal bonds which operate independently of lineage ties. This complex and unlimited ramification of cognatic kinship gives these relations great fluidity, in contrast to the comparative fixity of lineage relations. Individuals are often connected by multiple cognatic ties which are differentially effective in different situations; and, as will be clearer later, cognatic ties make breaches in the barriers of lineage and clan exclusiveness, thus extending widely the flow of social relations.

The domestic family is the matrix of all the genealogical ties of the
593 individual, the contemporary mechanism for ever spinning new threads
602 of kinship, and the focal field of social relations based on consanguinity. In it we can observe the working of the nuclear patterns of kinship and the formation of the ideas and values which steer the individual in all his genealogical relationships. In the domestic family we get the sharpest picture of the interaction between cognatic kinship and agnatic or lineage ties. We have there the elementary ties of cognatic kinship linking parent to child and sibling to sibling, and we have also the agnatic tie which

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[1] These are the kinsfolk whom Rivers called a man's *kindred*; vide *Kinship and Social Organization*, p. 80. I am avoiding this term as it is best used to refer to a defined social unit in Rivers's sense. Sibship among the Teutons and Celts was reckoned bilaterally on this principle, cf. Vinogradoff, P., *Outlines of Historical Jurisprudence*, vol. i, ch. viii. But the kindred as a defined social unit does not exist among the Tallensi.

sets apart the males as the nucleus of the lineage. We can see the centrifugal, sundering force of matrilateral kinship counterbalancing the centripetal, uniting pull of patriliny. In the context of family life we can see the play of conflict and compromise in the working out of the primary equilibrium of Tale social organization, due to the interaction of these two sectors of social life. 573 602

Through his primary relations of consanguinity in the domestic family the individual is linked to agnates in other families and to cognates in other families and clans. There is, however, one significant difference between intra-familial and extra-familial bonds of kinship. Unlike the latter, the former are necessarily ambivalent, each relationship containing within itself both an agnatic and a cognatic component. In a joint family of three generations, for example, a child's relationship with his father differs from his relationship with his grandfather or his mother. Though these are all cognatic relationships, the tension and latent rivalry in the relationship of father and son stand in marked contrast to the comradeship of grandfather and grandson. On the other hand, grandfather, father, and son belong to the same lineage segment; they are united by a common interest in patrimonial land and in the product of their joint labour, by a common ancestor cult, by rights and duties vested in that lineage in relation to like segments of a greater lineage, and by their common concern for the continuity of their line. These are part of the whole complex of common interests and values that mobilize corporate action and maintain corporate solidarity in the maximal lineage and clan of which they form a segment. The men of a joint family may be thrown into conflict with one another on account of their cognatic relationships, but they act in union and on behalf of one another and of the whole unit in virtue of their lineage ties. 596

There is another paradox in the structure of the Tale family that is of importance for our inquiry. Consanguineous relationships arise out of parenthood; but parenthood presupposes marriage, a union of a man and a woman who are, by definition, not kin. The bonds of kinship are rooted in a bond the very essence of which is the absence of kinship. Hence comes the ambivalence inherent in intra-familial cognatic relations. Hence comes, also, another category of social relations, both in the family and between members of different families and clans, relations of affinity. There are two axes, as it were, in the structure of the family, the axis of kinship and that of marriage. 593

Before we discuss kinship in the domestic family more fully, we must consider a few matters of more general import. For the constellation of ties and cleavages that makes up the focal field of kinship is conditioned by the formative principles and values that shape the greater society into which the domestic family fits and which it helps to knit together. All person-to-person relations in the family are biased by the values attached to patrilineal descent and maternal origin in the total social structure. 573 602

The Generic Concept of Kinship

602 Among the Tallensi the generic concept of kinship, *dɔɣam*, subsumes all kinds and degrees of genealogical relationship, however remote, through one or more progenitors or progenetrices. But its primary reference is to procreation. One might perhaps translate it by the word 'generation' in its etymological sense. Its root, the verb *dɔɣ*—to bear or beget a child—signifies both the male and the female function in procreation. *Dɔɣam*, the abstract noun, describes the process, or the act, or the physiological capacity, of bringing a child into the world, as well as the ties thus created. The logic behind this generalized concept of kinship is plain. Every genealogical relationship goes back, eventually, to one pair of parents. Both in fact and in Tale kinship theory the parent-child bond is the nodal bond of kinship.

Though the Tallensi see every genealogical relationship as a tie of physical consanguinity, this is not the thing that matters most. What matters most is the social relations entailed by consanguinity. A genealogical tie between two people or two genealogically defined units comes into action in the palpable facts of economic life, jural relations, moral values, ceremonial duties, and ritual ideas and performances. Genealogical ties very often have economic or political utility and are sustained by powerful moral and religious sanctions. But behind all this lies a general notion which the natives themselves do not need to formulate but which is implicit in all their kinship behaviour. A great deal of Tale kinship custom is specific. In ceremonial situations different categories of kin often behave in prescribed ways which sharply distinguish them from one another. At a funeral ceremony, for example, one can tell at once, from the kind of gifts they bear and the attitudes they display, whether a party of mourners are relatives-in-law (*deenam*), clansmen (*yidɛm*), or sisters' children (*ahəs*), of the bereaved. But in the routine of ordinary life the intercourse of kinsfolk has no such formal precision, and is often indistinguishable from the intercourse of friends, neighbours, or other associates. Not even the native, attuned as he is to the fine nuances of his cultural idiom, could tell whether two women working and chatting amicably together are co-wives, mother and daughter, or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The general notion we have mentioned corresponds to this indeterminate and elastic manifestation of kinship.

582 The Tallensi indicate it most clearly in connexion with the rules governing a proper marriage. They draw a sharp distinction between
602 *dɔɣam*, kinship, and *deen*, in-lawship. The crux of the rule of clan exogamy and of the collateral prohibition of marriage with consanguineous kin of any degree (and the natives do not distinguish these two classes of restrictions) is the principle that *dɔɣam* and *deen* are irreconcilably contradictory. They must not be 'mixed' (*gyɛt*).

A striking illustration of this antithesis occurred at a sacrifice that Diŋkaha made to one of his ancestors. An ambitious and none too scrupulous braggart of considerable intelligence and drive, Diŋkaha had been very useful to me and had made the most of his connexion with me. One of the objects of this ceremony was to show off his friendship with me to his clansmen, and his prestige among them to me. It was, therefore, a specially lavish occasion. In the middle of the ceremony Diŋkaha's father-in-law called in. The old man was respectfully received and ushered into his daughter's rooms. Diŋkaha finished the sacrifice and began to distribute the meat. Various members of his lineage and clan received the portions due to them. And then, intoxicated with conceit at having his white friend in his house and at the obvious appreciation of his stock, in consequence, in the eyes of his clansmen, a rash impulse overcame him. Holding up a goat's foreleg—one of the ritually prescribed portions that should be reserved for those entitled by birth to share in the sacrifice—he launched out into a speech, the gist of which was that he desired his father-in-law to accept it in order to mark this special occasion. A sombre look came upon the old man's face. He was visibly shocked. Speaking gravely but curtly, he refused the gift. *Deenam*, he said, do not sacrifice together; it is an unheard-of thing; he could not accept the gift. Diŋkaha retired in discomfiture behind a smoke-screen of apologies. 602 577

Marriage implies the absence of kinship ties between the parties; kinship, the impossibility of marriage. Kinship ties exist in their own right; *deen* is an artificial alliance of a contractual nature. The parties to a marriage deliberately and voluntarily enter into a bond, the bride's guardian permitting her to marry in return for a promise on the part of the bridegroom's guardian to pay him four head of cattle. Kinship ties are not voluntary and are automatically binding. The parties to a marriage are bound by rights and duties which did not exist before. Kinship automatically entails moral, jural, and ritual bonds, whereas there is an avowed element of mutual coercion, and therefore potential tension, in the relations of in-laws. They rely upon a special, impartial jural instrument, the bride-price, for the adjustment of their rival claims on the woman. 581 602

Tallensi think of *deen* as a relationship for ever fraught with the possibility of conflict over these claims. Nearly all their litigation nowadays, like much inter-clan fighting in former days, concerns bride-price debts or the rival claims over a woman or her children of father-in-law and son-in-law. Such quarrels are incompatible with kinship. They would cut to pieces the solidarity of kinsfolk—that is why, say the Tallensi, kinsfolk do not marry. *Dɔɣam*, in short, presupposes some degree of identification of the parties concerned, mutual or common interests, and especially a bond of amity that excludes strife which might fix a permanent gulf between them. 602 578

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These norms of kinship the Tallensi regard as axiomatic, one might say as the *a priori* moral premisses of their social behaviour. Behind the utility of kinship in practical life and the jural and ritual sanctions that buttress kinship ties stands the notion of kinship as the rock-bottom category of social relations, inviolable in its own right. The root of this notion lies in the bond between parent and child and it reflects the fact that genealogical relationship is the binding medium of Tale social structure. The Tallensi are outspoken sceptics about human nature. They take it for granted that the ideal norms of kinship will often be violated. They know well, however, that they are usually effective and cannot be destroyed by the transgressions of individuals; for these, in the end, always bring their own revenge and are compensated for in the total flow of collective life. In any case, the lapses of individuals, and the fact that strong sanctions exist to check them, do not diminish the absolute, *a priori* character of kinship.

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It is worth noting that economic reciprocity—which is a conspicuous element in kinship, especially among close kin—and jural rights and duties have a much less direct connexion with this fundamental assumption of kinship than religious bonds have. This is connected with the important place of ancestor worship in Tale society. To trace genealogical relationship it is necessary to recollect common ancestors; and if these have religious value, ritual allegiance to a common ancestor or ancestress inevitably forms an intrinsic feature of kinship ties and their most powerful sanction. The more distant a genealogical tie is, the more does it become a matter of moral and ritual, rather than of jural or economic, relations. We shall see this in more detail when we come to compare social relations within the domestic family with the relations of kinship outside the domestic family.

Two Classes of Kinship Relations

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Any relation of kinship belongs to one of two classes. If people say 'We are *dɔyam*', the basic analogy they have in mind is that of siblings. Two men who are cognatically related to the same lineage—e.g. two men who have a common maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yir*) or whose fathers or grandfathers had a common maternal uncle's lineage—describe themselves thus. They visualize their relationship primarily as one of common though independent religious allegiance to a particular line of common ancestors, in sacrifices to whom they may both partake. By the operation of the lineage principle two lineages might consider themselves to be related in such a manner. Kɔnbameŋ and Pudiniba, two young men of the same clan but of different sections of the clan, were good friends. When I asked them how their friendship had arisen, they resorted, characteristically, to the idiom of kinship. Being members of the same clan is not a sufficient reason for so personal a relationship as friendship. The reason they adduced was that they were both sister's

sons (*ahəs*) of the same Tɛnzugu clan. This had brought them together. 602 Similarly, there is a much closer bond between Ziŋgan biis and Tambil biis, two of the five segments of Bɔɣayiedət yidɛm of Tongo, than between either of these segments and the other three segments, because their founding ancestors were sister's sons of the same clan.[1]

The other and more important class of kinship ties presupposes the analogy of the parent–child relationship. When a person says of another '*n-dɔɣume*—I have begotten (born) him', or, speaking of lineages, '*ti dɔɣabame*—We (my lineage) have begotten (born) them (their lineage)', what is meant is that the latter can trace a line of descent to the former or to the former's lineage. A man refers to a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) or to a classificatory *ahəŋ* in these terms. When I was staying at Kpata'ar, my servants received unusually generous hospitality and were obviously much more at ease than they had been at some places we had previously visited. I was several times told in explanation (on one occasion by some Kpata'ar children) that my two local boys were *dɔɣa* by the Kpata'ar na'ab's lineage. The father of one and the paternal grandfather of the other had been sister's sons of Kpata'ar. Again, two lineages can be related in this way, as, for instance, Nayasaa yidɛm of Kpata'ar and Dmanpiog yidɛm of Gbeog are. The most important feature of such a relationship to the natives is that the lineage or individual of the senior generation sacrifices to their or his ancestors on behalf of the lineage or individual of the junior generation.

The idiom of kinship has such a dominant place in Tale thought that all social relations implying mutual or common interests tend to be assimilated to those of kinship. This happens, as has been shown in our previous volume, with ties of local contiguity and of politico-ritual interdependence between lineages and clans.

The Native Theory of Conception

The Tallensi, we have said, take cognizance of a very wide range of 842 genealogical relationships, and they regard all such relationships as based on the physical fact of consanguinity. The starting-point for this lies in their notions about the physiology of conception. In their view man and woman have equally vital roles in the act of conception. Hence kinship through one's mother, and, consequently, through her ascendants, counts equally with—though admittedly less influentially than, and differently from—kinship through one's father and paternal line.

Dɔɣam is the power of procreation. In women it is connected with 841 menstruation, the external signs and periodicity of which are known to everybody, and the nature of which man, woman, or child readily refers 842 to without the slightest squeamishness. A girl is said to be fit for childbearing (*u saɣa dɔɣam* [*or dɔɣabu*]) when her monthly courses become established, her breasts develop, and her body takes on womanly

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 211 ff.

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842 has a medicine which enables women to conceive without the participation of a male.

The notion of a procreative essence as distinct from the sexual fluid, however vaguely formulated it is, is of importance. Tallensi distinguish between sexual vigour or desire and the power of procreation. They know that people who are sterile (*kundɔγar*) lack the latter but are not necessarily deficient in the former. Na'abzɔ, gossip said, was sterile because in his wild young days as a soldier he had lived with a Dagban woman who had maliciously caused him by some magical means to 'pour away all his power of begetting (*kpaa u dɔγam waabi bah*)' in excessive intercourse with her. The uncharitable believed that he was impotent to boot, but others were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

842 [837] The Tallensi regard *dɔγam* as, above all, a very precious human function, quite apart from the pleasures of sex. Thus, when Zikihib's young wife was left a grass widow for three years by her vagabond husband and had a child by a lover, it was unanimously condoned. Was she, it was argued, to cast away her powers of child-bearing for nothing (*zaŋ u dɔγam bah wari*) just because she had a faithless husband and was herself too devoted to her children by him to run off with another man?

842 781 Lastly, the notion of the *ŋaamis* is the point at which mystical beliefs enter into the theory of conception. The obvious physiological facts of parenthood are summed up in the maxim, 'A man and a woman unite to procreate a child'. But behind plain physiology lies a mystery. Sometimes a man sleeps with his wife on a single occasion and she becomes pregnant (*u ŋɔγa puur*—lit. she seizes a belly). At other times a man has relations with his wife regularly for months and she fails to conceive. Thus conception depends, in the last resort, on Heaven (*Naawun*), the Final Cause by which the Tallensi rationalize chance and which they invoke when empirical or less recondite mystical explanations fail. There is an essential mystical factor in procreation; and if a man or a woman fails to beget or bear a child, appeals can be made to the ancestor spirits and other mystical powers that intervene directly in human destiny. That is why a barren woman in her heart of hearts never gives up hope of having a child as long as she is still of child-bearing age, though the Tallensi know that barrenness is often a fact of nature beyond cure by either empirical or mystical agencies.

The Significance of Paternity and Patriliny

602 A person's genealogical ties are fixed by his parentage. Among the Tallensi these are the ties that plot the trajectory of the individual's life. The rights and duties that are critical for his role and status in society all stem, in the last resort, from the fact of birth. A person cannot divest himself, or be divested, of the bonds created by his birth and yet remain a member of the society; nor can he fully and unconditionally acquire

● 602 these bonds except by birth. No other ties can wholly supersede them in linking person to person and affiliating individuals to defined social groups.

We have noted, however, that not all genealogical ties have an equal
602 value. Though a person acquires significant social ties through both
611 parents, his agnatic relationships have an outstanding importance; and this is particularly so for a man. For not only is patrilineal descent the vertebral principle of Tale social organization and the vehicle of the continuity and stability of the social structure, but men hold the reins of authority, direct economic life, control the political organization, and are supreme in religious and ceremonial thought and action. From his father a man derives his rights to inherit land and other property, his clan membership and the political rights and ritual obligations that go with it, and his ritual relations with his most important ancestors. A woman does not inherit land or other property of value, nor does she succeed to political or ritual office. But clan membership and the concomitant totemic observances,[1] as well as her ritual allegiance to her patrilineal ancestors, mean a great deal for her social destiny and for her children. In short, paternity is the predominant side of parentage in this conspicuously patriarchal society.

842 Like many other primitive societies, the Tallensi recognize a distinction between physiological paternity and jural paternity—between
848 *genitor* and *pater*, as Radcliffe-Brown puts it. However, the Tallensi feel very strongly that a person's physiological father is his or her right jural father. The assumption is that all the social attributes that come to one from one's father should come from a father who both begot one and recognizes one as his legitimate offspring. Thus there is an inevitable tendency for conflict to arise if a person's physiological and jural paternity do not coincide. Such a person tends to be penalized in respect of his social status, for jural paternity by itself cannot altogether take the place of physiological cum jural paternity.

848 The conflict is least in the case of an adulterine child, who is always accepted as the rightful child of its mother's husband. No difficulties at all arise in the case of a daughter, who marries out of the lineage as soon as she is nubile. An adulterine son has complete and unreserved filial status. He has full rights of inheritance, of succession, and of ritual access to his putative patrilineal ancestors. Nevertheless, the blot on the scutcheon is not without effect. The story of Saɣəbazaa's first-born son, Kologo, illustrates this.

848 Some years before my first visit to Tongo, Kologo had left his father to go and farm near Datɔk. There seemed to be no adequate motive for
578 this in his case. But when Saɣəbazaa died, in 1936, and Kologo as chief mourner had to be summoned for the mortuary rites, I was able to piece together how it had occurred, from guarded hints and veiled comments

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

567 insulted or molested; for it was held to be both good policy and a moral duty to treat a slave no differently from a son. As the ward of the lineage ancestors, he had a place and a moral status in the lineage; but, Tallensi say, he was bound to harbour some resentment at his invidious social position, and would certainly try to abscond if he were ill-used.

These ideas are as active as ever among the Tallensi; for a few ex-slaves still survive, and there are one or two sons, grandsons, and remoter agnatic descendants of slaves in many settlements, who, by the lineage principle, retain their ancestors' social status in a much attenuated form. These people have exactly the same place in society that they would have occupied in former times. To judge by their participation in social activities, both profane and ceremonial, there is no obvious distinction between them and other members of the clan. They are as loyal and patriotic members of the clan as any other members of it. Wɔla of Zoo always took a leading part in the public affairs and ceremonial activities of Zoo. I was surprised to discover accidentally that he was an ex-slave. I was told on excellent authority that he is still often teased about his slave status, but that he takes it in good part, saying that since the coming of the white man a slave is as good a man as his neighbour. Usually no one would so affront a man and his quasi-relatives as to refer pointedly to his slave status or descent if he did not provoke it by offensive conduct. Wrongly to accuse a person of slave descent, if only by implication, is a deadly insult. And even those of whom it is true never voluntarily betray it. Not everyone has Wɔla's aggressive sense of humour, and good manners require that tact and discretion be exercised in such delicate matters of social standing.

Analogously, a slave girl's (*da'abpɔk*) status resembled that of an illegitimate daughter. She was taken in marriage like any other girl, so her children had no disabilities in respect of their patrilineal connexions. They regarded their mother's quasi-paternal kin as their maternal uncle's lineage. But I have records of cases in which the descendants of a slave woman have sought out her true paternal kin in a distant land in order to establish correct ritual ties with them.

567 602 All the men with whom I discussed the question affirmed without hesitation that it would be disgraceful and immoral to treat a slave, or an illegitimate son or brother, differently from true agnatic kin. But they all emphasized, nevertheless, that a slave or an illegitimate son cannot possibly become a son or a brother in the full sense of these terms. He can be to you *in loco filii* or *fratris* but not *filius* or *frater*, since he cannot sacrifice directly to his quasi-father's spirit or inherit, [842] as of right, his patrimony. The principle at issue is that physical father and social father, *genitor* and *pater*, must be the same person. The vicissitudes of marriage illustrate the same point.

611 842 It often happens that a young woman becomes the bride of one man, is later married to another man, by whom she conceives or has a

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The 611 second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father 842 a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so much importance to having children that they generally make every effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony, or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When 611 she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the 583 cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law (or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted 611 as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare, when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours, sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted 613 into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without 618 any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt 602 to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance of his father's estate, but was elected tendaana over the heads of men who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow of redemption.

The Ritual Coefficient of Patriliny

602 769 All these cases of irregular paternity bring out a point of central importance in native thought. As we shall see in more detail later, the bonds of physical consanguinity and the concomitant social ties created by parenthood are *ipso facto* spiritual and moral bonds. They have a ritual coefficient in which the natives see their deepest meaning and value. One's bonds with one's lineage imply a ritual bond with one's patrilineal ancestors and other mystical forces associated with the existence and well-being of the lineage. They are the chief mystical powers governing the life of the individual. Legitimate paternity is a *sine qua non* for a right relationship with one's agnatic ancestor spirits who watch over one's whole life from the moment of birth. There is a spiritual hiatus between an illegitimate son or a slave's son and his adoptive lineage ancestors. Being only indirectly under their tutelage, and unable to gain direct contact with them by offering sacrifices himself, he cannot use them to master the vicissitudes and frustrations of life as freely as a true scion of their line. Also, as we have seen, the ancestor spirits are the principal sanction enforcing a man's rights to full filial status in his physical father's lineage. As we have observed, political and ritual office can be held only by men who are legitimate members of the lineage in which these offices are vested; and the sanction for this lies in the key functions of these offices in the cult of the ancestors and of the other mystical powers coupled with the lineage.

834 842 769 All social relations in which agnatic descent has a decisive function have this ritual coefficient. Legitimate paternity is bound up with a man's exclusive rights over his wife's reproductive powers, conferred on him by marriage. A child's legitimate paternity is jeopardized if it is conceived or born in a situation in which its father's marital rights do not prevail. Hence, sexual intercourse between a man and his wife (and by extension between any man of the husband's medial lineage and a woman of the wife's medial lineage) at her paternal home is rigorously tabooed; it is a ritual 'pollution of the room (*sayam dug*)'—i.e. an outrage against the lineage identity—of the girl's father; for a woman has the status of a daughter in her father's house, where she comes under her father's authority and the tutelage of his ancestors.

611 769 In keeping with this, a child must not be born in its mother's father's, or brother's house. Its ties with its maternal kin must not be confounded with its bonds with its paternal kin. These represent opposed forces in its social world, and matrilateral kinship ties must not be allowed to become a threat to lineage ties. A woman bears a child to her husband, an additional member of his lineage and clan. When she conceives, it is the right and duty of her husband and his family to care for her. His ancestor spirits must guard her and the unborn child. In the perilous hour of childbirth she must be cared for by her husband and his family,

611 theoretically, without limit. In short, people of common uterine descent are socially identified with one another; but they do not form a corporate group.

611 The social recognition of the uterine line entails not only that *saarət* have defined ways of behaving towards one another, but also that the
602 fact of matrilineal descent is given an institutional embodiment. Matrilineal descent confers distinctive social attributes on people. In this Tale culture follows the rule found in most West African cultures that recognize both lines of descent.[1] The dominant line of descent confers the overtly significant attributes of social personality—jural status, rights of inheritance and succession to property and office, political allegiance, ritual privileges and obligations; and the submerged line confers certain spiritual characteristics. Among the Tallensi it is easy to see that this is a reflex of the fact that the bond of uterine descent is maintained as a purely personal bond. It does not subserve common interests of a material, jural, or ritual kind; it unites individuals only by ties of mutual interest and concern not unlike those that prevail between close collateral kin in our culture. While it constitutes one of the factors that counterpoise the exclusiveness of the agnatic line, it does not create corporate groups competing with the agnatic lineage and clan. Carrying only a spiritual attribute, the uterine tie cannot undermine the jural and politico-ritual solidarity of the patrilineal lineage.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Witchcraft

754 The critical spiritual attribute carried by the *soog* line is the potentiality of being a witch (*sɔi*, pl. *soob*—a term evidently cognate with
602 *soog*). This potentiality adheres only to the female line and defines that line in social terms. 'This is my *soog*' a person usually says when introducing a uterine relative. 'If he (or she) flies magically (*aɣat*) I, too, fly magically; if he sees magically (*nye*) I, too, see magically.' The potentiality of being a witch is hereditary in the female line. A woman's son and daughter may both become witches if she is a witch. If a person is accused of being a witch, all his or her *saarət* are automatically suspect of this inborn mystical vice. His agnatic kin are not implicated, not even his own father or his half-siblings by the same father. These are the points Tallensi invariably stress, both among themselves and in answer to an inquirer, if they are asked to define the meaning of *soog*.

754 It is significant that witchcraft occupies a minor place in Tale mystical thought and ritual action, and that is one reason why the Tallensi make no secret of its hereditary transmission in the female line. They

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[1] Cf., e.g., R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti*; C. D. Forde, 'Kinship in Umor—Double Unilateral Organization in a Semi-Bantu Society', *American Anthropologist*, xli, 1939.

have no clear notion of witchcraft, no detailed theories of its mode of 754 operation, and no institutionalized means of combating or sterilizing it. A witch (*sɔi*) is supposed to fly about (*u ayarəme*) at night in the guise of a ball of fire; she—for the Tallensi tend to think of a witch as a woman, though they say that men may be witches too—is supposed to be clairvoyant, to 'see (*nye*)' hidden things. She can recognize fellow witches, foresee death coming to a particular person, prophesy an epidemic, and so forth; she may be beneficent, able to impart luck to a person in a mysterious way, or maleficent, killing people by eating (*ɔb*) their souls (*sii*). This is the sum of Tale ideas about the nature of witches. Actually, these qualities make up what is mainly an imaginary stereotype. One never hears of particular individuals being credited with the socially useful qualities or being suspected of possessing the anti-social qualities attributed to witches. Witchcraft is only attributed to people *ex post facto*, when an event occurs for which an explanation in terms of witchcraft is sought.

Witchcraft is something on the fringe of Tale mystical thought and 754 ritual values. I have more than once heard elders of the most conservative way of thinking, to whom the native scheme of ritual values is the 771 most important thing in life, declare roundly that there is no such thing as a witch. Though the Tallensi do not put it into clear words, they obviously feel that the idea of witchcraft is a mixture of superstition and folk-lore, and not a part of the system of mystical and ritual values that really matters for the conduct of life. Of course, superstition and folk-lore are not wholly negligible. Circumstances occur, now and then, in which people fall back on the idea of a witch's occult aggression in order to cope with anxieties and frustrations that are normally neutralized through the agency of the ancestor cult; and then a particular person may be accused of being a witch. Significantly, in every case that has come to my notice, some dating back twenty or thirty years and all of them together numbering less than ten, the accused has been a woman. Most accusations of this sort are in the first instance made by women [595] against co-wives, and are symptomatic of the tensions inherent in the joint family.

An accusation of being a witch is the private affair of the accused's 754 husband and his maximal lineage, her paternal family, and those of her 602 *saarət* who are in touch with her. In former days, if the accusation was confirmed by a diviner, the accused might insist on undergoing the [787] arrow ordeal (*kuh sɔ-peema*), or be compelled to do so by her husband's lineage and her *saarət* in order to prove her innocence. She had to [627] stab herself with a poisoned arrow in public at the same time as a branch of a *heŋkaŋ* (Ficus) tree was plucked; and if she were guilty, it was believed that she would die before the branch withered. But it is characteristic of the Tale attitude to witches that a person who died thus was accorded a proper funeral—unlike, for example, a person who

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754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive
by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
● 602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently
guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often
continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her
guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children
by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following
case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moɣaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman
of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold
porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush
with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this
instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp.
His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and
the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill
with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
787 reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the
old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the
cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality
and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt.
There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into
consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself
partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at
someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the
matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no
doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence.
The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock
(*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant,
as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the
theme of one of the dance songs of the Golib Festival. 'Wherever she
goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance
at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public
ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted
on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

754 The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
[771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms
consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

It is analogous to the way in which a man's agnatic descendants 783
become liable for his sins, though it is not so rigorous and consequential
in action as the responsibility for sins and delicts that adheres to the 611
male line. *Tyuk* is connected primarily with males; though it is of
minor significance in the social definition of uterine kinship, compared
with witchcraft, it obviously fits in with the principles of Tale social
organization in the same way.[1]

Uterine Kinship as a Personal Bond

As we have observed, the fundamental distinction between uterine 611
kinship and agnatic descent is that the former does not give rise to
corporate units of social structure. *Soog* is essentially a personal bond, 602
a bond of mutual interest and concern uniting individual to individual.
Witchcraft, similarly, is an individual act of mystical aggression due
to personal malice against an individual. The model of the relations
between *saarət* is the affection, devotion, and strong feeling of mutual
identification that prevails between parent and child or between full
siblings of the same sex. Its keynote is mutual trust as between equals.
It is never thought of as a matter of rights and duties but as a matter
of sentiment, of spontaneous goodwill and intimate, personal confidence.
Hence the term *soog* is often loosely used to refer to someone with
whom one has a relationship of a similar sort, or to denote a very close
relative of a class of relatives, whether or not they are true *saarət*. An
intimate and trusted friend is like your *soog*, the Tallensi say. Two
daughters of the same lineage, but of unrelated mothers, married into
a single joint family feel themselves to be particularly closely related
and identified with each other by contrast with their conjugal family,
and thus speak of each other as 'my *soog*'. The children of two men
who were uterine kin, keeping up the friendship of their fathers, talk of
themselves as *saarət*. Two men of the same lineage, whether they are
close or distant agnates, who have a common maternal uncle's lineage
(*ahəb yiri*)—i.e. whose mothers' brothers belong to a single segment of
a maximal lineage—feel a bond of personal kinship distinguishing their
relationship with each other from their relationships with their co-members
of the lineage. In contexts where they wish to emphasize
their personal bonds in contrast to their common membership of the
lineage they might describe each other as 'my *soog*'. And I once heard 611
a man refer to his son-in-law as 'my *soog* son-in-law (*n-deem-soog*)'. This 606
is a contradiction in terms, for marriage being prohibited between kin
of any degree, a man cannot be both a son-in-law and a *soog*. But the 602
speaker explained that he was using this term in order to distinguish

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[1] There is an interesting psychological problem here, but it lies outside our present scope. *Tyuk* and witchcraft might be regarded as the male and female aspects, respectively, of deep-seated vindictive impulses connected with the mother.

606 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man
611 was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the
husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was
● 602 as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own
children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no
confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*;
they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine
835 kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

582 Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of
the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to
602 be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of
uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*.
[586] If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext
for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bək*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than
his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm of Təŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'aləm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpemdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpemdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'aləm, are well known. Tinta'aləm

never undertakes anything of importance without consulting Yikpɛmdaan; Yikpɛmdaan need never be in want of a sheep or goat to sacrifice if there are sheep and goats in Tinta'alɔm's house. If any member of the lineage segment of which Tinta'alɔm is the head gets into difficulty, he goes at once to Yikpɛmdaan for counsel and help. 602

A more telling case is that of Lɔɣani and Gai. They belong to different segments of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra.[1] Many years ago Gai quarrelled with the elders of the maximal lineage over the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar*. The Yakɔra Tɛndaana of the time took an oath binding all the people of Yakɔra to have nothing to do with Gai in jural and ritual matters until he apologized and a ritual reconciliation was made. Gai and his family keep aloof from all corporate activities of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. He has obstinately rejected several indirect advances made to him suggesting a reconciliation. One day there was a funeral at Gai's house, and I called to see how a man who is virtually ostracized by his clan would manage an affair that is usually a corporate activity of the whole clan. Finding no other Yakɔra people at the funeral, I went round to Lɔɣani's house afterwards. We discussed Gai and his affairs; and Lɔɣani, with that blunt candour that has won him general esteem, told me the whole story. Gai's conduct, Lɔɣani concluded, was specially distressing to him. 'For', said he, with a trace of bitterness, 'Gai is my *soog*. I should be the one to go to his help immediately and to support him in all his troubles. But if I did, would not the people of Zubiuŋ say that I was breaking faith? Would I not be rejecting the oath of the late (Yakɔra) Tɛndaana? And so I can do nothing.' 602 626 578

In this case Lɔɣani's position of influence and responsibility in the maximal lineage compels him to put the interests of lineage unity before those of his *soog*, and Gai's obduracy makes it more difficult for him to compromise. The case of Ɔndieso and Nɛna'ab, who are also *saarɔt* belonging to different segments of the same maximal lineage, is more usual. They 'borrow (*pɛŋ*)' things from each other on the same principle as do members of an expanded family. Normally, if a man borrows something from a member of a lineage segment other than his own, it is a debt that must be repaid in due course. Eight or nine years ago, Ɔndieso borrowed a goat from Nɛna'ab's son. No request was ever made for repayment; but about three years later, Nɛna'ab borrowed three shillings from Ɔndieso; and this was tacitly understood, by both, to have cancelled the debt of the goat. In 1936 an ancient quarrel between Ɔndieso's segment and Nɛna'ab's segment that had been dormant for years flared up again owing to a dispute over the inheritance of a widow. For some months the two segments were completely estranged, the more so as the head of Nɛna'ab's segment had taken the dispute to the chief and so brought the slur of publicity on the head of Ɔndieso's segment. Just then there was a death in Nɛna'ab's family; 602 578 [426]

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi, passim.

602 and Ɔndieso was one of the first to come to the help of his *soog* in his
578 sorrow. The other members of Ɔndieso's segment demonstratively
remained away.

602 Other ties of matrilateral kinship also create bonds of personal attachment between members of the same maximal lineage, but none is so effective as that of uterine kinship.

The Dispersion of Uterine Kin

The majority of a person's uterine kin are, however, dispersed among
602 other clans than his own. This is a natural result of the rule of clan
582 exogamy. But Tallensi, as we shall see later,[1] tend to marry into nearby
591 clans rather than into distant clans. A woman of clan A marries into the adjacent clan B; her daughters marry into the next clans C and D; their daughters marry into clans E and F; and so the process goes on. The result is, firstly, that with the passage of the generations the uterine line becomes more and more dispersed; and secondly, that any person's genealogically nearest uterine kin are also, generally, his spatially nearest uterine kin. In practice, it is these near *saarət* whom he knows and knows of; it is they who are concerned in witchcraft accusations or *tyuk* guilt. His more distant *saarət*—distant in both the genealogical sense and in residence—are often unknown to him. The main reason for this is that uterine kinship remains effective only through personal contact. The children of sisters know one another because their mothers have kept in touch, visited one another, and often helped one another all their lives. Similarly, the uterine grandchildren of sisters know one another, if they live near one another, because their mothers have kept in touch, though not so faithfully as true siblings. Often these contacts are maintained into the fourth generation of a woman's uterine descendants; rarely beyond the fourth generation; and a person does not, as a rule, know all his or her *saarət* whose link with him or her is a common great-grandmother. Some of them will, as likely as not, be Gɔrisi or Namnam and he will not even know of their existence.

602 In principle, however, uterine kinship is never extinguished, and it
often happens that people of different clans, who are strangers to one
[769] another, discover by chance that they are distant *saarət*. Supposing, for instance, a man proposes to make an important sacrifice to a lineage ancestor. His agnatic co-descendants of this ancestor are bound to be present; but he will also send to tell the cognatic descendants through women of that ancestor and some of them will come. Two men of different clans may be present who now discover, for the first time, that they are cognatically related through the lineage of their host. They trace out their genealogical connexion (*tumh dɔyam*) and find that they are distant *saarət*. I have seen this happen more than once, and the delight of the men concerned was a vivid testimony to the meaning

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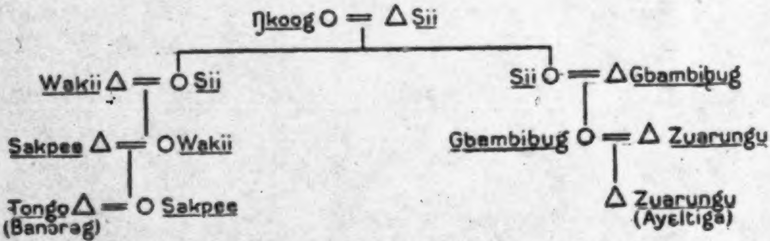
[1] Cf. Ch. XI.

of *soog* kinship to the Tallensi. Each of them has found a new friend who will be to him as a brother. If he has business in his *soog*'s clan he will be able to go there with an easy mind; for he will be assured of an hospitable welcome in his *soog*'s house and of his *soog*'s assistance in his suit. Moreover, through this *soog* he will be introduced to other distant *saarət* unknown to him but known to his *soog*. 602

Saarət discover one another in other ways too. One evening I met Banərəg's wife coming from my boys' quarters. She told me that she had taken some food to one of the boys, Ayɛltiga, a native of Zuarungu, who, she had just learnt, was her *soog*. She had been to see her maternal grandmother's sister's son, at Gbambibug (she herself is a Sakpee woman), and he had told her that Ayɛltiga was their common *soog*. So she had hastened home to call on her newly found *soog* and had cooked a meal for him to show him the hospitality due from a *soog*. She told me this with many expressions of pleasure.

The following genealogy shows the connexion between Banərəg's wife and Ayɛltiga. It is typical of the genealogical range within which uterine kinship is usually effective. 601 602 611



(Clan name of each person beside the sex symbol; personal names in parenthesis)

As this genealogy shows, the uterine line can be thought of as 'travelling' from clan to clan with the generations; and that is how the natives visualize it. 'Our mother' (the progenitrix of the line), said Banərəg's wife 'went forth from Ŋkoog (*yi Ŋkoog ŋa*) and married into Sii; and then his (Ayɛltiga's) grandmother (*ma kpeem*) married Gbambibug and my grandmother married Wakii; and then his mother (*ma*) married Zuarungu and my mother married Sakpee.' The *soog* line is visualized as a continuous entity. *Saarət* often refer to each other by kinship terms, but in a very loose way. A person is inclined to speak of a *soog* as, for instance, 'my elder sibling', simply because he or she is senior in age, though possibly junior in generation. More commonly a *soog* is simply 'my *soog*'; and if it is a woman, she tends to be identified with the uterine line as a whole and is described as 'mother (*ma*)', irrespective of her generation status, especially if she is older than the speaker. A relationship similar to that of parent and child often exists between *saarət* who differ considerably in age.

602 The usual range of effective uterine kinship is a good illustration of the correlation between spatial relationships and genealogical relationships in the social space of the individual. The physical range of the individual's social contacts and communication with others is, as we have already noted, a function of his range of social relations, which is determined principally by his genealogical connexions. In the days before the establishment of the British peace, matrilateral, and especially uterine kinship, played a very important part in enabling people to travel outside their normal range of social contacts, and so to build up social relations with members of clans usually inaccessible to their own clansmen. A story will illustrate how this occurred.

602 574 484 When the Gorogo-Yikpemdaana was a young man of 17 or 18, sometime during the first decade of this century, a food shortage approaching famine, such as periodically swept the country, descended on the Tallensi. He decided to make a journey to Gbimis, in Mampurugu, across the White Volta, in order to barter some livestock for grain. But such a journey was full of peril. A Taləŋ wandering in Mampurugu would be set upon and killed or taken as a slave by any armed Mamprusi who encountered him. So he went, first, to a *soog* at Pwalagu. This man escorted him across the river to another *soog* living in a small village there, and this *soog* conducted him to Gbimis. Under the safe conduct of his Mampuru *saarət* he was able to carry out his project. In later years he often made this trip to Mampurugu to buy things for resale in the small markets of Taleland.

Though people can travel where they will in freedom and security nowadays, it is still usual for anyone having business of a ritual or jural kind with a distant or unfamiliar clan to follow the web of uterine kinship thither. The route is much curtailed, but the principle remains. If Banɔrəg's wife's brother, a Sakpee man, has such business at Bongo, he will probably go to his *saarət* at Zuarungu, stay the night with them, go on next morning to a *soog* at Yaraga, and find out from him or her if they have a *soog* at Bongo with whom he could stay and who will guide him and act as his spokesman with *his* clansmen.

602 476 431 In the same way uterine kin assist one another in economic matters. A man who loses time in his farming programme through illness will often ask a *soog* from a neighbouring settlement to come and do a day's hoeing for him where he would not ask for such help from a clansman. Again, crops do not ripen at the same time throughout Taleland. There may be an interval of several days or several weeks between the harvest at Sii and the harvest at Datɔk. It is the custom, at harvest time, especially at the time of the early millet harvest after the hungry months, for people living in areas that have a late harvest to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts of grain from relatives living in early harvesting areas. Later, when the early harvesting settlements have exhausted their supplies, people will go to kinsfolk in later harvesting areas to beg for grain to tide them

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over. Such reciprocal gifts pass between kinsmen of all categories. 476
But the giving is specially generous and cordial between *soog* kin. 431

In keeping with the unrestricted range of cognatic kinship among the
Tallensi, the close ties of kinship between male *saarət* are extended to 602
their children and sometimes to their grandchildren. With men whose
fathers were *saarət*, whether they belong to the same clan or not, the
formal ties of kinship are often mellowed by the affection and trust of
a friendship like that of their fathers. This is rarer with grandsons of
male *saarət*, but not unknown. I have seen a man break down with grief
over the death of a clansman who was his father's *soog*'s son. He would
have felt no sense of personal loss at all if this extra bond had not
existed between him and his dead clansman. Again, there was Tiezien of
Kpata'ar's lifelong friendship with his father's *soog*'s son at Zuarungu—
a friendship which would not normally have arisen between a Taləŋ
and a Gərəŋ living eight miles apart.

A link of uterine kinship is often used to define the relations of 602
individuals who are not themselves directly related by kinship. A typical
case that shows how far the classificatory principle can be pressed, if 582
there is a *soog* link in the chain of relationships connecting two people,
is the following. Zaawɔmya of Bunkiuk began courting the young
widow of a Wakii man. But in the course of making inquiries he discovered
that the girl's late husband's father's mother and his own
mother had been distant *saarət*. Zaawɔmya concluded, therefore, that
the girl's late husband's father would have stood to him in the relationship
of an 'older brother' (*bier*), since he would have called the latter's
mother his 'mother' (*ma*). Hence the girl's husband would have been
his 'son' (*bii*) and the girl herself his 'daughter-in-law' (*sampɔya*).
'Well just think of it', he said to me, when he told me the story,
'how can a man marry his daughter-in-law? So I gave it up.' When
Mansami, Ɔmara's own father's brother's son ran away with the wife [578]
of Ɔmara's father's *soog*'s son at Ŋkoog, there was a bitter quarrel
between them. Ɔmara accused Mansami of disgracing his (Ɔmara's)
kinship ties and ordered him either to give up the girl or leave the
homestead. Mansami, obstinately insisting that he and the girl's husband
were not related, made this the pretext for keeping her and
went off to stay with his mother's brother. Such roundabout connexions
through a *soog* link are often exploited for ulterior motives.
A common trick of fathers who object to a daughter's marrying a
particular man is to allege a remote kinship tie of this sort between the
girl and her suitor. The latter and his family head may be sceptical
of the alleged evidence for this but they can do nothing about it.

desirous of having, and are indulgent to, a young wife (*pɔɣabil*), not 596
only for sexual motives but also, and mainly, in order to have a strong
young woman about the house to administer those creature comforts
to which they are said to become more and more addicted as they grow
older. Thus siblings by the same father (*ba ukɔla biis*) may differ in
age by as much as a generation. A man's younger half-brother or sister
may be younger than his own children though senior to them in
generation. This has important effects on the lineage organization.

The custom of the levirate introduces a component of some signifi- 596
cance in the constitution of the joint family. In the 61 domestic families
of our sample there were 111 married men, and no less than 21—more 587
than one in five—had one or more inherited wives. An inherited wife
usually brings her young children by her first husband (if she has any)
with her. They grow up side by side with her children by her second
husband, who is responsible for their support. Tale kinship ideas make
this a simple and self-evident arrangement; but it means, nevertheless,
a division within what is normally the most compact and cohesive ele-
ment of the domestic family, the matricentral *dug*, in accordance with
the different paternity of the children. Generally a widow of child-
bearing age marries a close agnate of her deceased husband—his brother
or first cousin—who is, therefore, a close classificatory father of her
children. This makes it easy for them to regard her second husband
with some of the devotion and affection due from children to their own
father, especially if they are still very young. Still, this is a weak place
in the cohesion of a family, at which a split easily occurs; for no man,
say the Tallensi, can wholly take the place of one's true father. If a
widow marries a distant agnate of her late husband, the latter's heir may
demand the custody of his children when they are old enough to do
without a mother's care. This splits the *dug*. But it also creates com- [602]
pensatory bonds of uterine (*soog*) kinship between her sons belonging
to different lineage segments.

Sometimes a man's dependants include a deceased brother's children 596
whose mother has died or married out of the family. Such children are,
for all practical purposes, his own children, but the sons frequently 736
secede when they have children. Much less commonly, a man may have
an orphaned sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with him in as intimate a relation-
ship, ostensibly, as if he were his son or brother. Actually, both jural
and sentimental reservations hedge round a sister's son's position in the
family, for his descent bars him, in the last resort, from ever acquiring
real filial status.[1] It is significant that in the old settlements extremely
few cases of this kind occur, and it is always assumed that the nephew
will eventually return to his natal settlement—though he does not always
do so. In the new settlements, where personal kinship ties largely
replace lineage ties as the basis of local aggregation, not only sororal

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI below.

people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, 828
they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships. 156
People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experiences,
his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same
sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the
life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history
of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the
life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew 123
intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for
many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and
spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to
perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient
of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey
the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a
family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary
impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees
in families like those of Kutɔbis of Tɔŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of
Tɔŋ-Puhug.

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but 596
there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevitable,
some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the 156
structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain 578
dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends
very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate
family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his
family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas
an erratic man like Kutɔbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever
at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the
structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of
Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual
social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor
in the cycle of changes that a family passes through.

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life 602
of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It
is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours
are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to
consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance,
and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage
grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as
youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves
with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they
know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is
not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the
lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a
thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common

602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

592 262 576 In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimh*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 574 521 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out, informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out *gafarra* ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dɛndɔŋo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart
[584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy. Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are 586 taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a really effective force in maintaining the marriage.

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or 581 ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond is of vital importance in this relationship.

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects 581 to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of 586 consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima, Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may [842] decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who [685] filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace, formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women. Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, [827] however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat during sleep is a grave mystical offence endangering the life of the husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent back to her parents.

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. 602● The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are 593 of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When

602 593 a woman marries she does not forfeit her status as a daughter of her natal lineage (*pɔɣayabələg*) or lose her personal ties with her parents and siblings. We have discussed this, in its broader aspects, in our previous volume[1] and confine ourselves here to family ties. Throughout her life she keeps in close touch with her parents and siblings and other members of her clan, especially her close agnates. If, as is common, other daughters of her clan have married into her husband's clan, these will be the classificatory co-wives with whom she has most contact and to whom she gives and from whom she receives most help, kindness, and support. She visits her natal settlement, as well as her sisters married elsewhere, regularly, and is often visited by members of her parental family. She not only has emotional bonds with her natal family that time never erases, but she also retains certain privileges, which have almost the force of rights, in it and in her natal clan, as we have shown in our previous volume. Her natal family and clan also have claims on her all her life. This is strongly marked in the first two or three years of marriage, before motherhood, habit, and an increasing share in its routine have knit her firmly into her conjugal family.

574 593 In the early years of marriage a woman seldom lets an opportunity of visiting her natal family go by. She calls in to see how they are on her way to or from market. Now and then she comes to stay a few days. If she is ill she will generally come to stay with her mother, who will tend her much more carefully than her co-wives or in-laws. When Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan's daughter developed an asthmatic complaint she stayed with her parents for nearly a year. When Da'amo'o's wife went down with guinea-worm she took her three-months-old baby and went to her father's house until she was cured, though it is considered a risky thing to take so young an infant out of its father's house. At sowing or harvest time a man often sends for a young married daughter who has no child to come and help. At all times a married daughter is informed, and sometimes sent for, if there is serious sickness in her parental home. She must be sent for if a member of her parental family dies; and she will go even if it means leaving a tiny infant in the care of a co-wife for a day or two.

761 602 On this matter Tallensi are extremely sensitive, for death is the great test of all social ties among them. All relatives of the dead, and especially the principal mourners—parents, spouses, children, siblings—have defined ritual observances, ritual duties, and practical tasks in mortuary and funeral ceremonies. A death often comes as a shock to these close relatives, and especially the death of a parent or sibling to a married daughter of the family. Her mother-in-law or husband will break the news gently to her with a tactful periphrasis. But she must be told and sent for, else she—and, backing her up, her conjugal family—would be deeply offended. On her part, not to go when thus summoned would

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial cere-
mony. Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tɛnzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live, expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

613 769 Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛγər*), to whom her husband will have to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is [777] selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate (*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors. [761 789] If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

● 602 593 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the contrary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

members of two mutually exclusive corporate groups. That is why the lineages of husband and wife are implicated in the marriage and have a lasting interest in its course and in the offspring that come from it. Tale speech and etiquette reveal this, and the classificatory extension of affinal kinship depends on this. Thus if your friend's son or daughter has recently married, you do not ask him 'Whom did he (she) marry?', but 'Where (i.e. which clan) did he (she) marry?', and 'A child of whose house (i.e. what segment of the clan) did he (she) marry?'. We shall take up this thread again at a later stage of our analysis. At present we are concerned with the consequences for the relations of husband and wife of their divergent lineage ties. 602

The tension due to these opposing sets of social ties appears most acutely in the early stages of marriage, obviously as a result of the fact that marriage is an alliance between two genealogically independent corporate units with rival interests in the protagonists. Every marriage in which the husband is a young man begins as a struggle, carried on with many wiles, stratagems, pretexts, and even threats of or recourse to force. Firstly, the suitor has to compete with other young men whom his would-be bride and in-laws often play off astutely against him. The largest part of his courtship consists in winning over the girl's parents with frequent presents and soft words. To elope with her he must buy the secret connivance of her mother or brother, for her father will always stand out for a negotiated marriage. This is not only an acknowledgement of the father's right to dispose of his daughter's hand, but a guarantee of the consent of the bridegroom's guardian and lineage elders and hence of the payment of the bride-price on demand. It is a defeat for the bridegroom, who has to bow to the will of his father-in-law. 578 582

The real struggle begins, however, only after a man succeeds in carrying off his bride by elopement. If the elders on both sides tacitly accept the match as a good one, it becomes a matter of mere formality; but all the conventions of the jural transactions necessary to make a legitimate marriage are couched in the idiom of a struggle between hostile groups. That is why they must take place through an intermediary, the *pɔγasama*, a clansman of the bridegroom and a cognatic kinsman of the bride, bound to hold an even balance between the two parties by reason of his kinship with both.[1] But often enough the struggle turns into a genuine and sometimes acrimonious battle for the girl which may go on for weeks or months. It is then that the lack of a constituted legal system in Tale political organization makes itself felt. The girl's father resorts to all sorts of devices to coerce her abductors. He may use ritual pretexts, exploit ties of cognatic kinship with the abductors' lineage or clan, even, in extremity, threaten to kill himself on their doorstep, or, in the old days, to stir up war against their clan. I have been present at several violent altercations between a party of men 578 602 628

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[1] Cf. pp. 317-18 below.

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
•602 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
627 for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It is not until the formal placation gift (*sendaan*) is sent to the girl's father with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

676 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
583 marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
576 maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan. The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
574 desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
593 parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority. Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two, though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
[837] have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes, for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law, his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

PLATE 6

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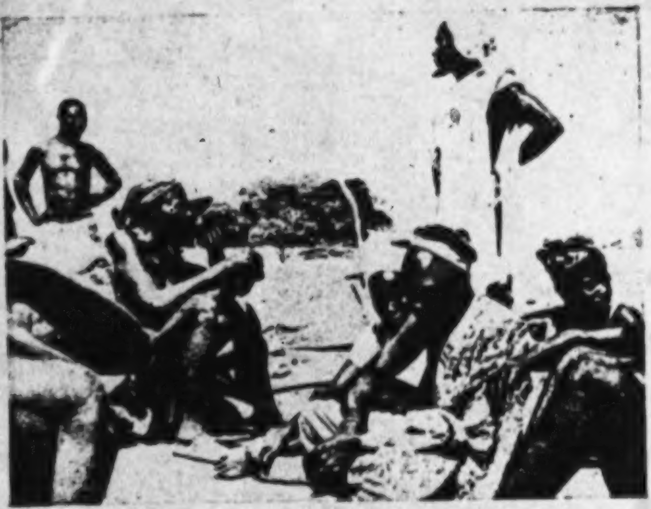

a. Kinship *versus* affinal relationships: sons-in-law, sitting in the customary posture of respect, on the right, come to offer condolences to their father-in-law's family and lineage on the occasion of a death

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b. A husband goes to inform his parents-in-law of the birth of his wife's first child. He carries a hen as a gift and a thick stick of Shea wood on which four notches have been cut, which shows that the baby is a girl

[Facing p. 113]

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies
are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without
581 infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of
834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually
bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized.
Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities,
continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his
[768] funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his
social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir,
his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

593 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the
562 critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with
her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

●602 The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's
parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in
562 a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between
these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexi-
602 bility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to
606 one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship.
I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

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will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires, and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law.

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On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical to *dɔɣam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never obliterates this.

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A man must show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pɔt nɔba*), bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual functionary, or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement.

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Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well-defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his

602 parents-in-law, particularly in the early years while he is not quite sure of his wife. If his father-in-law sends for him to help with the hoeing, 606 or with house building, or his mother-in-law requests him to help thatch her rooms, he must respond with alacrity and bring as large a party of his clansmen to assist him as he can manage. In this way a man shows honour to, ingratiates himself with (*giem*), his affines; for these services are not enforceable obligations, and usually cease to be asked for after the marriage has become stabilized. They bear no relation to the bride-price, and are lavishly recompensed. A visiting work-party brought by a son-in-law expects generous hospitality, and the father-in-law, if he is a reputable man, would feel that he had lost dignity if he did not feed and entertain the work-party well. But though these services cannot be enforced, no man would risk offending his parents-in-law by refusing them. These material demonstrations of respect, gratitude, and goodwill are essential for the smooth working of a relationship artificially established by a jural compact. Parents-in-law praise and like an obliging son-in-law, even if he has not paid the bride-price, the natives say.

602 This is one side of the affinal relationship. It also has an aspect of friendliness and familiarity, as we have seen, which comes out most 607 conspicuously in a man's relations with his siblings-in-law. A man has a joking relationship with his siblings-in-law similar to that of his wife with his sisters and distant clansmen. It goes so far that a man may sleep with an unmarried sister-in-law (*dakiipɔk*) who is visiting his house, and is therefore in that situation identified with his wife. A man's siblings-in-law belong to the familiar and friendly generation of his wife. They are identified with her. But they also belong to the potentially hostile lineage of her father, whose heir a brother-in-law will one day be. In very many ways a man's siblings-in-law are sympathetically drawn to him; but their rights in relation to his wife may pit them against him. The convention of joking serves to reconcile these two potentially discordant elements of their relationship. But when the marriage has lasted many years, and the possibility of a conflict of rights disappears, the element of friendliness in the relationship can assert itself without prejudice to its jural aspect. Thus, conventional teasing usually drops out of the intercourse of siblings-in-law of long standing.

606 The formal distance between affines is further shown in the duties and obligations to which a man is liable on the death of a son-in-law or 764 parent-in-law. On the death of a parent-in-law a man is obliged to 431 attend the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. He should come escorted by a large party of clansmen and their wives, and the mourning party should wear their finest clothes and be led by drummers and musicians. A son-in-law should provide the gravestone for a parent-in-law. He should distribute money freely to the grave-diggers, to the drummers, singers, and musicians, whose raucous noise stimulates the crowd

606 754 431 574 fully repaid in the bestowal of his daughter as a wife. A similar sanction to that mentioned in the case of a son-in-law operates here.

764 ●602 If one watches the behaviour of men at the funeral of an affine, one can see that they feel themselves to be under strong constraint. They and their clansmen accompanying them keep together, and when there are no ceremonies or festivities in progress they stay apart from the rest of the crowd. In former days a mourning party of affines always carried arms, and it is said that fighting sometimes broke out at funerals. When Tallensi comment on the ceremonial obligations of affines, they emphasize the feeling of constraint associated with them. One is impressed by the contrast between this attitude and the attitudes associated with the ceremonial obligations that follow on the death of a clansman or cognatic kinsman. It is as if the native feels his ceremonial obligations to an affine to be forced on him from outside, without his choice, whereas he seems to accept his duties and obligations on the death of a kinsman willingly and from within.

602 431 It is evident that reciprocity between affines is different in character from that which prevails between people who have a bond of common interests, such as members of the same family. There is not the same free give and take. When gifts or services pass between affines, whether they are prescribed or ostensibly spontaneous, there is a deliberate effort to counterbalance them. A sort of book-keeping occurs. This appears most clearly in the jural formalities of marriage, but it comes out quite plainly in the apparently voluntary services and reciprocal hospitality of son-in-law and father-in-law. The side that benefits feels impelled to make an equivalent return in order not to give the other party grounds for a grudge. And people who flout this convention not only upset their good relations with their affines and so provide pretexts for conflict with them, but also incur the censure of public opinion.

606 431 One incident will illustrate this. Banorəg asked his son-in-law, a member of an adjacent clan, to come and help him finish the hoeing of his home farm. The young man brought a couple of his clansmen and they worked with zeal from early morning till sunset. Then they went home, politely refusing Banorəg's invitation to come home with him for the evening meal. Had they come as a formal hoeing party they would have been entitled to a good meal as a reward at the end of the day. But they had come informally, and their own homes were near enough for them to get back in time for the evening meal. They spoke of their day's work for Banorəg as a simple act of courtesy to a father-in-law. As we watched them saunter homewards, Banorəg said to me 'Sons-in-law are shy (*deenam mmar vi*). They can't come home with you (their father-in-law) and eat with your children (as if they were your kin)'. But next day Banorəg sent a large basket of millet flour to his daughter with orders to cook a generous meal for her husband and his friends. He would feel ashamed, he told me, if he did not 'thank' the young men

thus; and besides, people would say he was mean. This attitude does not occur with the true reciprocity that prevails in the domestic family or between near kin. 606 431

Sex in the Relationship of Affines

While, therefore, the relations of affines assume the existence of a formal distance between them, they are not encumbered by avoidances or other social barriers that make friendliness impossible or ordinary social intercourse a burden. There is amity as well as opposition in their relationship. In one matter only is there a rigorous barrier between affines. In respect to sex and procreation they are strictly separate. The emphasis is on the deed, not the word; there is no prohibition against talking to or in the presence of an affine about sexual matters. 602●

One aspect of this ban on bringing sex into the relationship of affinity is the native attitude about a sexual offence against an affine. For a man to seduce the wife of an affine is almost as heinous a transgression as intercourse with the wife of a man of one's own expanded family, though it is not regarded as incest; and the offence is nearly as bad if the culprit is a close agnate of the woman's husband's affine or the woman the wife of a close agnate of the affine concerned. It is a grave offence, also, if a man or his close agnate abducts the wife of an affine or his close agnate. There are no explicit mystical sanctions against either of these wrongs, but Tallensi describe them as 'a thing of enormous evil (*yɛlbiog tenta'ar*)' bound to bring ill fortune on the wrongdoer, and in any case involving such serious social consequences that no man in his senses would descend to them. They think of the possible culprit as being the son-in-law, and they say that the father-in-law would take away his daughter and the bride-price be forfeited. Affines are bound to fall out with one another now and then. Usually apologies proffered through an intermediary lead to their making it up again. But in the case of a sexual offence against a father-in-law, it is quite impossible to beg or receive pardon. For it is a sin; it 'pollutes the room (*saɣam dug*)' of the injured man.[1] 602 577 [783]

'Pollution of the room' in this sense is very rare among the Tallensi. But it is not unknown for a man to abduct the wife of the father- or brother-in-law (true or classificatory) of one of his own clansmen. The elders of both the abductor's medial lineage and the wronged husband's medial lineage are then extremely indignant. The latter demand the return of 'their' wife; and in all the cases I have come across the former see to it at once that the woman is sent back to her husband.

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[1] Cf. p. 28 above. *Saɣam dug* has the double sense of a mystical defilement of the sleeping-room—the inner sanctuary of family and of reproductive life—and of an irreparable infringement of lineage rights. If the offender is a distant clansman of the true son-in-law, a ritual reconciliation between the two lineages might be allowed after the defilement has been ritually removed.

606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman,
●602 anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house.
Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's
837 wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement.
If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces
577 the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one
of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or
someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of
606 his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and
837 on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking
thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a
577 father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own
wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly
[576] within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet
his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though
not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition
434 against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's
paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for
instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few
574 days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A
434 man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-operation and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the household. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir*
is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of
854 *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most
855 significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the
children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his
brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually
help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This
commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient
woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family.
A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by
another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person
to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a
co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to
be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are
reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the
[292] first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty
of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives
often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children.
This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing.
Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being
herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the
children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and
child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child
736 as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her
co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi
say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan
never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be
given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the
sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

●602 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent
to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to
736 fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met
Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things,
we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest 736
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her chil- 602
dren from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives.
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her 595
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past. So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*) and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been com- 627
pelled to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

one's parents and play a part in one's upbringing can, and in certain 593 circumstances must, stand to one in the relation of proxy parents. 855 The rule applies most directly to the men and women of the same domestic unit who are identified with one's parents by generation and 736 by social role—to one's father's brothers (*sunzɔp*), including his full and half-brothers and first cousins on his father's side, who are his prospective successors; and to one's mother's co-wives (*nentaas*). If these men and women all belong to the same household they are directly concerned with the production of food, the provision of shelter, and the satisfaction of the other wants of the unit upon which the physical welfare and growth of a child depends. If the men belong to relatively autonomous economic units but to the same domestic unit, they will nevertheless have a common interest in the family patrimony, to the inheritance of which they all have rights, and a commen ritual dependence on the immediate ancestors of the nuclear lineage. The women will sometimes help in caring for one another's children; the men will sometimes help one another in farming and always act as a unit in ritual and jural matters under the authority of the most senior of them. And the ritual care of a child is of as much importance as its physical care. A child will not thrive (*maan*) if it is not under the spiritual wing of its patrilineal ancestors, as we have learnt.

Outside the domestic unit the terms *ba* (father) and *ma* (mother) and 602 the distinctive modes of behaviour correlated with them, are not 613 extended beyond the expanded family (i.e. the family cluster built up on the inner lineage) in normal circumstances. The only exception is in the case of a uterine kinsman or kinswoman of a parent, who is identified with the foundress of the uterine line and is therefore described as a 'father' or 'mother' irrespective of genealogical distance.[1]

Within the clan or maximal lineage it is a cardinal rule that generation differences are not recognized beyond the limits of the inner lineage. 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage—*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*' is the Tale maxim. This is correlated with the structural relations of the inner lineage to lineage segments of higher order. The inner lineage is likely to be the widest segment with a common interest in patrimonial land. In relation to the clan or the maximal lineage it is usually the smallest recognized corporate segment, whose members are significant for the clan only as members of the segment. As will be remembered, it is also the unit within which sexual relations with a co-member's wife are definitely sinful. In short, the inner lineage (and the family cluster which is its residential and familial correlate) marks the limit beyond which a person takes part in corporate activities not in his own right and in his personal capacity but as a member of the

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[1] Kinship terms without inverted commas stand for the primary meaning of the terms, e.g. (natural) father; those between inverted commas stand for the extended or derived meaning of the term, e.g. (classificatory) 'father'.

602 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with
613 the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidɛm*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that
[736 a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of
768] one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants
613 perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements.
593 There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series
[601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma*, *bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

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[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Gɔris and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kɛma* and *yɛbəga* for senior and junior.

children of about the same age playing together who are classificatory 613
parent and child. A 9- or 10-year-old will explain that he calls his 602
companion 'father' or 'child' because 'my father begot (*dɔɣa*)—or was
begotten by—his father and calls him child—or father', using the 593
concept *dɔɣ* in its generalized sense of a recognized relationship of belonging to successive generations.

The decisive tests are in terms of the jural and ritual relations in which kinship comes into action, and not in terms of a count of generations. Thus paternal authority is an aspect of the organization of productive co-operation in the household; it accompanies defined property rights, and entails jural responsibilities in matters like marriages and deaths as well as ritual duties to the ancestors. These are the things that make up a father's social role. Postponing further consideration of this for the present, we may note that, broadly speaking, three zones can be discerned within the limits of the inner lineage. First, that of Ego's natural parents, who exercise the full social roles of parents; second, that of Ego's proxy parents, seldom more distantly related to the natural father than agnatic second cousins (and their wives), and distinguished by the fact that they share and may take over the social roles of the natural parents; and third, that of Ego's classificatory parents, who are most unlikely (for no rigid line of demarcation can be laid down) to take on the true parents' social roles. The authority and responsibility of a classificatory father is of a general nature, and a man is subject to it only in virtue of his lineage membership.

As we shall find later, these principles hold not only for the classificatory extension of parent-child relationships but also for siblings and matrilateral kin. The regulating mechanism is the lineage structure.

We are defining the gradations that can be observed in the tone and 593
emphasis of the parent-child relationship in the broadest terms. We
are speaking of norms; and as we have previously remarked, the norms 602
do not always emerge as simply as this in the actual relations of parents and children. They are subject to the distorting influence of many social and personal factors in this as in other departments of Tale life. Da'amo'o, who ran away from home as a boy when his mother died, must have had very little love for his old father, who was, by all accounts, a hard, arrogant, and demanding martinet. Baŋ, on the other hand, who lost his own father in early childhood and grew up under the care of a distant lineage-brother of his father, Tendaan Gieŋ, whom his widowed mother married, was deeply attached to the latter.

As in most primitive societies, there are always a number of people whom a Talaŋ, child or adult, will refer to as his 'father' or 'mother', or 'child', at any given time. But, as has already been suggested, a natural parent or own child is clearly distinguished from others to whom one stands in the same social relationship. It is enough to visit a large domestic family for half an hour, at a time when the whole

593 family is at home, to see this, especially where young children are
concerned. With adults the discrimination is not so obvious in the
602 ordinary daily routine as with children. I have seen a babe of six months
left in the care of its mother's co-wife, whimper and strain eagerly
towards its mother when it saw her arrive at the homestead with a load
of firewood in the company of two other women of the household. An
older child will run to its own mother for protection, if it is frightened,
clutching her knees and thrusting its face between her thighs. A small
boy of 3 to 6 years of age will try to follow his own father about wherever
he can; and a little girl of this age hangs around her own mother, as
she gets on with the household tasks, in a way that would be impossible
with her mother's co-wife. On the other side, one can easily notice the
difference between the sympathy and often grief of a woman over the
illness or death of a co-wife's child and the utter prostration into which
a mother falls if such a misfortune strikes her own child. Similarly,
a man shows deep concern over the sickness or death of his brother's
child. He will abandon a visit he has planned to a relative, give up
work for the day, shelve any plans he may have made; for next to a
death, nothing is so upsetting to a Tale household as the illness of a
child. But this is as nothing compared with his grief over the death,
or his distress at the illness of his own child.

613 This affective discrimination of own parents and own children is the
psychological counterpart of the differentiation of descent lines within
602 the lineage and of segments within the family. Sentiment and structural
relationships go hand in hand and the ritual superstructure of Tale
society mirrors both. This consistency of the total scheme of social
relationships means that we can make inferences about aspects of the
relationship between parents and children that are not expressed in
their ordinary intercourse, from ritual ideas and practices and from the
[782] changing pattern of co-operation and association between them. The
fact that a man can only sacrifice directly to the spirits of his own parents
and to antecedent ancestors through his own parents, and not to or
through the spirits of proxy parents, is as important a factor in the
unique bond of parent and child as the fact that a child is usually
brought up by his own parents.

Structural arrangements and ritual ideas show that, in spite of the precise discrimination of own parents and own children, proxy and classificatory parents do have a parental role even during the lifetime of own parents. They take pride in these children, and speak of them as 'my children'. Everyone who is 'father' or 'mother' to a person must be treated with the respect due to a parent and has some degree of authority over him or her. I recall one day seeing Sinkawol, a young man of about 25, instructing Kyekambɛ, a lively boy of about 12, in a task connected with house-building. They both belonged to the inner lineage of which Nyaaŋzum of Kpata'ar was the head. This lineage

presents a remarkable jumble of ages and generations owing to the 613
longevity and protracted fertility of its founder, Kuŋkɔŋki. Because
a period of about fifty years elapsed between the birth of Kuŋkɔŋki's 602
first son and the birth of his youngest son, the latter's children are 'fathers' to his older brothers' children, some of whom are three or four times their age. That is how Sinkawol came to be the classificatory 'son' of Kyekambɛ. Now and then Sinkawol had to speak sharply to his pupil. I asked if he would hit the boy if he did not obey his instructions. 'Oh no', replied Sinkawol gravely, 'I cannot strike him. He begot me. He is my father. If he were my brother or my son I wouldn't hesitate to clout him.' Kyekambɛ could not exercise authority over Sinkawol owing to his social immaturity and inexperience. But he would take precedence of Sinkawol in matters of inheritance, and when he grew up would be entitled to precede Sinkawol in rights of succession to ritual office, if he wished to.

Proxy and classificatory parents also feel a responsibility for the 593
welfare of their 'brothers' ' children. Thus if two brothers have separate
households, they are not obliged to assist each other with food in times 602
of shortage; and pride restrains a man from asking for help from a brother who is economically independent of him. I have seen men grow wan with hunger, through living for days on end on nothing but wild herbs; but they would never ask for assistance from their better-off
brothers. It is up to the latter to offer a gift of grain voluntarily. And [431]
when such a gift is given (it is usually only 3 or 4 lb. of grain, enough for a couple of meals) it is offered as a gift for the children and their mothers. The giver will send a calabashful of grain to his brother's wife, with a message that it is for the children. As the natives always say, 'Your brother's children are your children. You cannot see them growing thin with hunger and let them starve.' A woman, too, will sometimes give food to the children of a co-wife of the same joint family, if the two women get on well together.

A proxy parent's authority over his or her classificatory children during their own parent's life cannot be exactly defined. It depends on the situation in which authority is exercised, on the personalities and economic relationships of the people concerned, and especially on the genealogical closeness of own parent and proxy parent. Ɔmara and Saandi are agnatic first cousins (brothers, in native terms) occupying adjoining semi-detached homesteads. They do not farm together. Saandi has no direct responsibility for feeding Ɔmara's children or for educating them. He is, however, directly interested in their welfare and upbringing. For as the head of the nuclear lineage, he must be consulted, and will have an influential, though not the decisive voice in all matters of a jural or ritual kind affecting Ɔmara's children—such matters, for instance, as the marriage of a son or daughter, or the rites of placing a child under the ritual guardianship of an ancestor. If he

593 sees any of Ɔmara's children misbehaving he can stop them and punish them if necessary. But ordinarily, though he can scold Ɔmara's children, 602 he would cause grave offence to Ɔmara if he were to strike them. When, to quote a case that occurred in a similar structural setting, Pumaan's son threw a stone at Zaŋ's (Pumaan's younger brother's) wife, Zaŋ shouted anathemas at the boy and complained to the neighbours but dared not whip him; that was Pumaan's prerogative. For Zaŋ and Pumaan have separate households and are both sticklers for their rights. By contrast, Bɔyazie, who lives and farms with his older brother and gets on extremely well with him, can command obedience from and can discipline the latter's children by corporal punishment if need be. But even in such a case a man might hesitate to strike his brother's children if he and his brother were not on terms of the greatest mutual trust. If Saandi asks his brother's son to do an errand or a job for him the boy will usually obey, but he cannot be compelled to do so, as he can by his own father. Co-wives, as we know, are particularly cautious in dealing with one another's children.

There is, however, at any given time, only one man who has full 593 paternal authority over a person, child or adult. In the first instance it is the man who begot him or her; and if this man dies, it is the man who takes on his social role, that is his distinctive rights and duties, by inheritance. The critical rights and duties are those connected with the land and other patrimonial property which the child's father owned or was heir to, and those connected with the cult of the child's father's father. In practice this means the head of the household to which the child belongs, who is also the person who sacrifices to the child's grandfather's spirit; and this limits the range to the child's father's brothers by the same father.

During a child's minority a father's agnatic cousin (brother in native 429 terms) may act *in loco parentis* if the father's nearer male agnates are 428 lacking; but it is a position of trusteeship rather than of full paternal authority. The son will set up an independent household as soon as he 602 is able to farm for himself. He will then take possession of any land which his father acquired by his own efforts and will become the effective owner of, for example, bride-price cattle obtained for his own sister, though he cannot dispose of them without the formal consent of the head of the nuclear lineage. In relation to an adult, a father's cousin (or remoter classificatory 'brother' of the same inner lineage) retains only the ritual and jural attributes of a father; and this chiefly in virtue of being head of the inner or nuclear lineage to which the person belongs. Important as these attributes are, they represent a less direct and personal authority than that of one's own or one's proxy father.

603 We shall see later that the relations between grandchildren (*yaaŋ*, pl. *yaas*) and grandparents (*yaab-doog* or *ba-kpeem*, masc. *yaab-pɔk* or

considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight 593
into the working of the classificatory principle.

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the
funeral of any man of one's father's generation. A man whose 'father' 764
is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat 784
or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions 613
of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constella-
tion of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand 602
matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of
the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits [601]
of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

613 or father's father's brother's son is still alive would not claim to be
602 fatherless. For, in matters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in relation to other like units, he has no independent status. The unit is under the authority of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. Similarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved and the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

613 We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how
593 the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog. When Sɛbɔg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bɔɣabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sɛbɔg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔɣar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔɣabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the
[784] elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then Bɔɣabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

782 Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain
593 of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External *Bɔɣar* are known as 'tabooed fowls (*nɔkiha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten,
[784] by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

593 In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

593 trite, especially after one has heard it fifty times. But it is charged with deep emotion for the native to whom it stands for all the tribulations and anxieties connected with the whole task of bringing up a child.

831 Men say that these tribulations begin with the act of sex itself. Desired though it is for the pleasure it gives, sexual intercourse is debilitating. Ejaculation (*duun duurəm*, a term primarily used for micturition) is a giving up of something vital that is a source of strength and youth. That is why young, unmarried men are so much more vigorous than married men.

843 Then there is the strain under which a man lives during his wife's pregnancy, particularly if it is a first pregnancy. Pregnancy, the creation of life, must not be brought into contact with death. Hence he, as the father of his wife's coming child, must not take direct part in mortuary or funeral rites. If he is one of the bereaved, the rites he is compelled to undergo are modified so as to eliminate contact with the corpse or objects symbolizing it. No particular evil is thought to follow on a breach of this taboo, which can, in fact, be magically purged if circumstances compel a man to it. But no man would be so callous as to flout the taboo deliberately.

Again, a man must not cut a new bush farm while his wife is pregnant, lest she miscarry. Both are critical events, affectively as well as socially, involving economic readjustments and the assumption of new responsibilities. Preparing a new bush farm absorbs you completely; it is, the natives say, 'a commotion of the heart (*suhkpɛlɔg*)'. But when your wife is pregnant you 'take heed only of her pregnancy (*i wona u puur la*)'. You cannot give attention, at the same time, to a new and vital economic enterprise like cutting a new bush farm. Apart from a wife's pregnancy only two other critical happenings are so obsessing as to be considered mystically incompatible with making a new bush farm—building a new house, a momentous undertaking, both materially and ritually, which marks an important change in a man's social personality; and taking a new wife, which also involves or portends big readjustments in one's social relations. It is significant that a man who is cutting a new bush farm or building a new house keeps away from funerals outside his own inner lineage since they are both emotionally disturbing and a distraction. All these critical events demand watchfulness and solicitude, for unknown dangers of both a physical and a mystical kind threaten their outcome. A man has to go about consulting diviners. He offers special sacrifices to his ancestors and puts the matter in their particular care.

Another sign of the concern that tempers a man's joy at his wife's pregnancy is the caution he must use in the chase. He must not kill certain mystically dangerous animals, else his wife may miscarry or bear a deformed child. 602

843 A man's close relatives are also concerned when his wife is pregnant, especially if it is a first pregnancy. His mother and the older women of

602 843 the family keep an eye on the girl lest she overstrain herself or break one of the dietary taboos. If his father is alive it is he who visits diviners and appeals to the ancestors.

The woman's paternal family, too, are concerned, especially in a first pregnancy. When they have been informed of it, her father appeals to his ancestors to bless her in her coming ordeal, and her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood, as her time approaches. It is also her mother's duty, round about the fourth or fifth month, to send one of [292] her co-wives to 'gird the girl with a perineal band (*suol u voog*)', the garb of a matron; for until she has a child a woman wears no genital covering.

The prohibition against giving or accepting bride-price during a woman's pregnancy expresses this general solicitude too. Bride-price transactions involve tension and possible conflict between her father's people and her husband's; and this is not only distressing to her but dangerous to the unborn child. If, for instance, her father, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, as some men are heartless enough to do, takes her from her husband because the bride-price is not paid, the child's legitimate paternity may be prejudiced, as we have noted before, and its health suffer, or the woman herself have a difficult labour.

843 844 846 The solicitude for a woman with child reaches its peak at her confinement and during the subsequent three or four weeks, until she has regained her strength and resumes her normal activities. Many men have described to me their feelings in the hour of a wife's labour. 'You sit listening to her cries and groans of agony. You can't sleep. Your heart is clenched with fear and pity. You do not know how it will end. Do not women die in childbirth or become ill? Do not children die or get injured at birth?' A man's relief and happiness when his wife has passed safely (*saləg*) through her confinement is written plainly in his voice and gait. Zaŋ, one of the most morose men I have known, was all smiles and affability on the morning after his wife's confinement. [777] When friends and neighbours congratulate a man on his good luck (*zusɔŋ*, lit. good head) it is as much on account of his wife's safety as on the child's arrival.

846 During the days of seclusion—three for a boy and four for a girl—and for the next week or so, it is the husband's duty to provide sustaining food and appetizing condiments for his wife. He will go out to fetch large logs for the fire that must be kept going day and night in the woman's room while she and the babe are still weak and liable to catch cold. Every morning he will go out or send someone to collect the leaves and herbs to infuse in the hot water with which mother and child are bathed. And if necessary he will himself carry water from the water-hole or do other services for her comfort that men usually consider to be beneath their dignity.

846 602 A confinement also involves extra labour and the dislocation of routine for the womenfolk of the husband's family. The care of the woman and

the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846
wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are
near, might give some help too.[1] The younger women fetch water and 602
cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593
begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of
a father's tribulations. Talking with men immediately after the birth 854
of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some
days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family [787
visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as
a spiritual ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) to guard its life (*gur u ŋɔvɔr*) and watch over 776]
its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabɔlɔg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper
'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, [165]
vol. xxxv, nos. 3 and 4, 1943.

593 *doo*, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep
in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children
866 over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come
to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older
children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night
when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the
[864] suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations
between their parents.

As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his
868 mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of
866 which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut
plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for
● 602 instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a
loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them
in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too,
as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding
from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be
given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already
has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition
by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize,
inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his
matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*)
or uncle (*ahɔb*), but sometimes his father's *ahɔb* or some other kinsman
of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal
uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Talaŋ
can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of
selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was
bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from
the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to
[782] take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage
bɔyar as a thank-offering.

The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as
866 a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition
593 to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral
kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the
yir in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at
animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation
of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads,
at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that
time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build
on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at
a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants
and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psychoof distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have 593 seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are 867 sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this pattern.

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[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the 593 genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is 613 into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family.

As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic 593 of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course, 602 in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action.

The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences, 593 postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land.

We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full 593 economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his 884 self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity.

The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately 593 with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the 884 578

593 682 784 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidem slew the ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective ancestors.

593 578 ●602 Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brotherhood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one another.

593 602 In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classificatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Tɔŋ-Tɔbəg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzɔ* siblings.

593 602 613 As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will be much more likely to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔɣadir yɛla*) involve the common interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from
the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a
situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*)
brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main
actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is
not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son.
But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For
instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the
payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at
moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*)
acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but
of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody
understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain
the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment
and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action
vis-à-vis non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a
question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of
the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will
come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a
man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224]
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal,
especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of 602
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

593 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan
602 talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or
even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple
579 of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most
476 apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized
co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most
764 conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of
[837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's
wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social
571 relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same
quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a
835 consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting
the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

593 571 764 602 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Saɣawuob's mother's funeral Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Saɣawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 593 562 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔɣaɣabələgkpeŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the lineage. [782] If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

428 593 the calabashes. The old woman's close sisters have first pick of the calabashes and the remainder are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law.

Outside the inner lineage, as has been previously indicated, succession goes by age seniority. Succession to the custody of a maximal lineage *bɔɣar* or to a politico-ritual office such as a chiefship or tɛndaanaship follows this rule. This, as we can now see, is in conformity with the principle that members of the same maximal lineage or clan who are not of the same inner lineage are titular 'brothers'.

593 602 It is in the usages of extended kinship, however, that the social equivalence of siblings is most apparent. We have already dealt at length with the extensions of parental roles within the lineage and it is necessary only to observe that they are based on the principle of the social equivalence of brothers. We shall find, in the next chapter, that it is an equally important factor in the web of matrilateral and sororal kinship ties, outside the agnatic lineage.[1] We shall see that, as in the ramification of lineage structure, so in extra-clan kinship bonds the tie of siblingship is the principal mechanism of their wide-spreading reticulation.

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[1] This is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the chief mechanism responsible for classificatory kinship in primitive societies. Tale material amply supports him. See Radcliffe-Brown, 'Social Organisation of Australian Tribes', previously cited, and his articles on 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', *South African Journal of Science*, xxi, 1924, and on 'The Study of Kinship Systems', *J.R.A.I.*, lxxi, 1941.

CHAPTER XI

THE WEB OF EXTRA-CLAN KINSHIP

Some General Points Restated

WE propose now to bring together and amplify a number of lines of argument that have been introduced in previous chapters concerning the place of matrilateral and sororal kinship ties in Tale social structure. 602-

According to our argument in Chapter II, there is a distinction of primary significance between agnatic bonds and those kinship relations that unite members of different maximal lineages and clans. The former constitute the foundation of corporate social units; they cannot be understood except within the framework of such units. The latter are personal, linking individual to individual or an individual to a corporate unit with which his or her agnates have not necessarily any genealogical relationships. Thus they do not form the basis of corporate associations. They may and often do, in fact, entail loyalties that run counter to those evoked by membership of the agnatic lineage. They imply different kinds of interests from those that unite members of a lineage. They are, as we have previously learnt, widely diffused, both for the individual and for the members of a particular lineage; and they are, in theory, without limit, both in respect of geographical range and of generation distance. In practice only a limited number and a limited range of a person's matrilateral and sororal kin ever become socially relevant for him. Geographical proximity, genealogical proximity, and the nature of the situations in which extra-clan kin normally play a part determine this.

We can describe these kinship ties as matrilateral and sororal ties because the crucial link in the genealogical chain is always a woman, whom Ego calls either his mother or his sister or father's sister, using these terms sometimes in the primary sense, sometimes in a derived, classificatory sense. Tallensi, speaking of this subject, have a saying: 'It is women who cause kinship to spread widely (*Bumpɔɣas nkye ka dɔɣam ɛŋ yalɔŋa*)'.

There are two types of extra-clan kinship ties, as we know from previous chapters. There are the ties of uterine kinship (*soog*) which we have described in Chapter II. These are symmetrical relationships derived from the genealogical and social equivalence of sisters. Uterine kinship unites individuals on a basis of equality, as if they were siblings. Their friendship, mutual affection, and mutual interests are modelled on the relations of uterine sisters. There is no compulsion about these ties; they are not visualized in terms of binding rights and duties, but as being at bottom voluntary.

The characteristic example of the other type of extra-clan kinship ties is the relationship of mother's brother (*ɔhəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*). In a broad sense it is true to say that all matrilateral-sororal kinship ties except those of *saarət* have the same form as the relations of mother's brother and sister's son. This is a reciprocal relationship of the same class as that of parent and child. Thus Tallensi always say of any sororal kinsman 'I (or we) begot him (*man* [or *tam*] *dɔɣuwa*)', and of any matrilateral kinsman 'he (or they) begot me (*u* (*ba*) *dɔɣəma*)'. This phraseology is reminiscent of the way in which the relationship of successive generations within the agnatic lineage is defined. It points to an aspect of the mother's brother–sister's son relationship which is absent in that of *saarət* linked through their mothers only. A mother's brother, being a man, has jural and ritual rights, duties, and powers in virtue of his membership of his patrilineal lineage, and they condition his social relations with all his kinsmen. Moreover, they are not extinguished by his death. They pass to his heirs and descendants as part of the network of rights and duties embodied in the structure of the lineage. A man's relationship to his sister's son, as we shall see presently, necessarily has a jural and ritual coefficient. It is not a voluntary relationship and it is necessarily extended to include, in different degrees, the whole of the mother's brother's inner lineage. Being thus tied to the lineage structure it is perpetuated in accordance with the lineage principle.

The statement that extra-clan kinship ties are relationships between individuals, or between individuals and corporate groups, has therefore to be qualified in one particular. As the preceding paragraph implies, and as evidence cited in our earlier book shows,[1] lineages can be related as 'mother's brother' to 'sister's son'. We have seen that this is the relationship assumed to exist between accessory and authentic lineages in some clans, and between some linked lineages of different clans.[1] But conceptually in all cases, and, no doubt, historically in some, these linkages between corporate units go back to a mother's brother–sister's son bond between individuals, perpetuated in accordance with the lineage principle.

This description represents native thought and behaviour more accurately than generalizations about the classificatory extensions of the primary relationship. The chief criterion by which a native identifies his mother's brother or a lineage standing in the relationship of a 'mother's brother' to his lineage is that 'he sacrifices on my behalf (*ɔn nkaabət tirəma*)' or 'they sacrifice on our behalf (*bam nkaabət tiit tam*)'. This implies a specific ritual duty and privilege vested in a particular person or lineage, not a vague general relationship with a certain class of relatives.

We shall find that the structure of all extra-clan kinship relationships of the form we are discussing is the product of three factors: the principle of the social equivalence of siblings; the principle of generation

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

● 602 differences; the principle of lineage continuity. It is because all three principles enter into it that the relationship of mother's brother and sister's son has a jural and ritual coefficient.

Kinship Terms

601 602 Before we go any farther it will be convenient to list all the kinship terms used in this context by the Tallensi (see diagram, p. 285). As usual, they are primarily terms of reference, rarely used as terms of address between direct relatives of the particular classes. A man never addresses his own mother's brother as *ahəb*, but always by his name, and vice versa. These terms are used as terms of address only in speaking to distant relatives of that class who are not personally well known to the speaker and therefore have to be addressed somewhat formally, or as a special gesture of courtesy. Thus Kpanaraana, during a case at the chief's court, said to the girl whose marriage was in dispute: 'My grandmother (*m-ma-kpeema*), tell us your story.' This was a gesture of courtesy because the girl was a clanswoman of his paternal grandmother. Similarly Ga'ab always addressed my clerk Naaho, who was probably his junior by twenty-five years, as *n-ahəba*, because his mother was a clanswoman of Naaho, and his relationship with the latter was purely formal.

A person describes his or her mother's brother as his or her *ahəb* (pl. *ahəbnam*), and is described as *ahəŋ* (pl. *ahəs*) irrespective of sex. There is, significantly, no term for mother's brother's wife. She may be described as 'the wife of my *ahəb* (*n-ahəb pɔɣa*)', and be addressed by her clan name; or she may be described metaphorically, and addressed respectfully, as 'mother (*ma*)'. Similarly, there is no term for the spouse of an *ahəŋ*. I have heard men speak of a sister's son's wife as *ahəŋ*—by identifying her with her husband—and as *deema* (in-law), or *bii* (child)—by the speaker identifying himself with his sister. By a similar identification a man may address his sister's son's wife as *ma* (mother), just as if he were her husband's father, or he may use her clan name. Corresponding usages apply in speaking of and addressing a sister's daughter's husband.

A mother's father is referred to as 'grandfather' (*yaab* or *ba-kpeem*) and a mother's mother as 'grandmother' (*ma-kpeem*). The reciprocal term is *yaaŋ*, grandchild of either sex. But grandparents and grandchildren address each other by name.

The mother's brother's children are described and referred to as 'mother's brother's children (*ahəb biis*)' or as 'siblings of the same (or opposite) sex (*bier*, *pit*, *tau*)'. But, as we shall observe presently, there are many significant situations in which a mother's brother's son is identified with his father and called *ahəb*. Mother's brother's child and father's sister's child address each other by name. They describe one

another's spouses as siblings-in-law (*dakii*) and address them by name, 601
or by the kinship term if they wish to be specially courteous. But as
Tallensi often point out, all such terms transferred by metaphor from 602
the lineage context to a matrilateral context are used in a figurative sense.
'It is a figure of speech only (*la a nuoni maa*—lit. it is only of the mouth)',
they say.

The father's sister, it should be added, is described as *ba-pɔk* (pl. *ba-pɔknam*) (female father)—an apt description of her social position in relation to Ego—and is addressed by her name. Another term of reference for the father's sister is *pugərəba*.[1] It is not commonly used for the father's own sister, however, but for a classificatory father's sister or father's father's sister. The father's sister's husband is referred to descriptively or metaphorically as *ba* (father) and is addressed by his name, or as 'father', as a mark of special courtesy. A woman refers to her brother's children as her 'children (*biis*)', identifying herself, as this suggests, in sentiment and behaviour with their father. She and their spouses call one another *deema* (in-law). She may use this term in addressing them and they in speaking to her, if they are not well acquainted; or the father's sister may address her brother's son's wife by her clan name or as 'mother', as if she were the girl's parent-in-law; and she will usually address a brother's daughter's husband by his name.

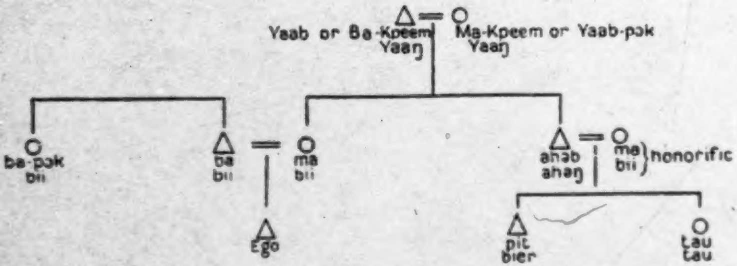

FIG. 6. Kinship terms used by Ego (top) and their reciprocals (bottom).

An incidental point of interest emerges from a consideration of the kinship terminology used in this context. It appears, and observation shows this to be a fact, that the spouses of matrilateral and sororal kin do not come into the picture directly. A man is only interested in his mother's brother's wife, for instance, in so far as her welfare and behaviour affect his mother's brother's and his children's welfare. He has no direct social relationship with her.

The classificatory extensions of these terms will be considered later.

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[1] This is the Mampele variant of *ba-pɔk*, commonly used instead of the latter term among the Mamprusi. Etymologically *ba-pɔk* is 'father-female' and *pugərəba* is probably compounded of 'woman (*puɣ*)' and 'father (*ba*)'.

The Socio-spatial Aspect of Extra-clan Kinship

• 602 From the point of view of the total social structure the most important function of extra-clan kinship is to make a number of breaches for the individual in the rigid genealogical boundary of the maximal lineage and clan. It creates bonds of amity and loyalty for him with members of other clans, irrespective of the corporate, political relations that may prevail between his clan and those other clans. The individual is not confined within the boundaries of his clan for social purposes. He has not only channels of communication with other clans, but sources of material aid and moral support outside his own clan. In the past this was of great practical importance. As we saw in the case of uterine kin, it meant that people could move about the country with some security, in spite of the absence of centralized government and in spite of the tendency for each local clan to be politically self-contained and on terms of latent hostility with other geographically near clans. Under the safe-conduct of a mother's brother or sister's son or other relative of these classes a Tongo Namoo, for instance, could go among the Hill Talis. He could rely on receiving hospitality from his Talis kinsfolk and on assistance from them in carrying through the business that took him amongst his clan's potential enemies.

In theory, it will be remembered, kinship ties are never extinguished. This has a bearing on our present topic. If the extra-clan kinship ties of any native are investigated one finds that they spread, like the spokes of a wheel, to most of the clans in the neighbourhood of his own clan. Naabdiya of Tong-Seug, for example, had his mother's brother at Wakii, his father's mother's brother at Ba'ari, more distant matrilateral kinsmen at Kpata'ar, Gorogo, and Yinduuri, and uterine kin in the Sie district (see map on p. 282). He had his own sister's sons at Wakii and father's sister's children in the Sie district. Every native has such a constellation of cognatic kin among neighbouring clans. This is one reason, perhaps, why all Tale rules of hospitality can be summed up in the single rule of obligatory hospitality to kinsfolk. Everybody has close cognates in five or six neighbouring settlements, and more distant kin, most perhaps unknown to him, in half a dozen more settlements. As the natives themselves say, if a person knew all his extra-clan kinsfolk, he would find a kinsman in every settlement in Taleland. The trite observation so often made by European travellers in Africa, that natives seem to have 'brothers' in every village, is only too true of the Tallensi.

The consequence is that a continuous and vigorous flow of interpersonal social relations between clans and beneath the surface, as it were, of the constituted lineage structure, goes on all the time. Disputes between members of different clans can be adjusted through the mediation of common kinsmen without setting in motion the organs of corporate political life. This is one of the chief functions of the *pɔyasama* (see p. 318) in marriage affairs, for example. However the lineage system separates individuals and corporate groups from one another, or sets them against one another, this underlying network of extra-clan bonds knits them together; and this is a very powerful factor in maintaining the equilibrium of Tale society. In the social structure as a whole it has a complementary function to that of clanship. In the old days it acted as an unseen brake on the tendency of clans to resort to fighting as a means of settling their differences; and if fighting did break out it gave an extra stimulus to any efforts directed towards making peace. For, as likely as not, every man on either side had relatives among the enemy and was swayed by divided loyalties. These bonds probably helped to keep down the number of casualties in inter-clan fighting. For it is a sin to slay a kinsman in war. 'If you saw a kinsman on the other side', said Tiezien, 'you shouted to him to get away lest your arrows hit him by mistake; or else, you yourself moved away to another place.' One could not shoot off one's arrows at random but had to pick out an enemy, making certain that he was not a kinsman. 602

These extra-clan kinship ties are not indiscriminately distributed. They fall into an order in accordance with the field principle which our investigation of clanship brought to light.[1] That is why they reinforce the forces of social integration in the society at large rather than the forces that encourage clan isolation. Though every member of a clan has his own particular bonds of extra-clan kinship, the tendency is for most members to have extra-clan kinship ties with the same clans. Thus members of one clan tend to have a common field of extra-clan kinship ties; and as the lineage principle encourages the attachment to a whole lineage or clan of sentiments and interests directed towards one of its members, the result is that members of one clan all tend to have personal sentiments of amity and loyalty for the same neighbouring clans. In accordance with the field principle this means that members of any particular clan will have more and closer extra-clan kinship ties with adjacent clans than with more distant clans, and with clans linked to theirs by special ties rather than with clans with which theirs has no political or ritual ties.

This appears quite plainly if a distribution map is made for a sample of the wives of men of a clan, showing the natal clans of these women. Since it is through marriages that extra-clan kinship ties are woven into the lineage fabric, such a map shows the distribution of the most important ties of matrilateral kinship for a particular clan, the ties they have with their mothers' brothers. 602
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We reproduce here a diagram (Fig. 7) constructed for a sample of wives of Tongo men. Similar diagrams for a sample of Kpata'ar wives

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

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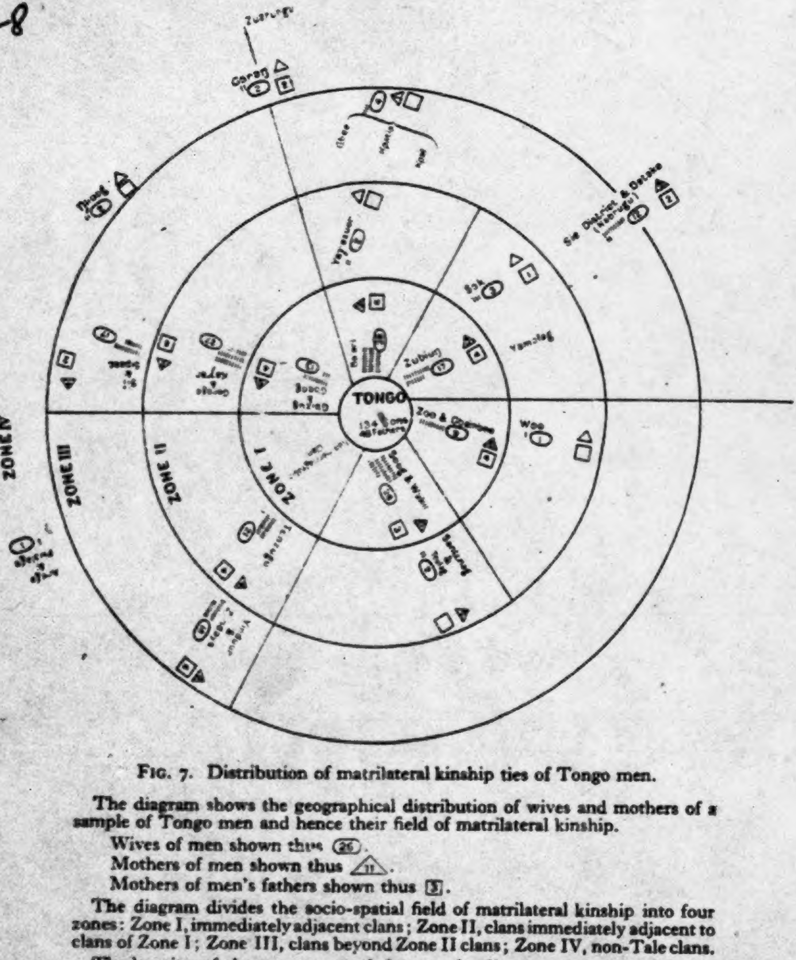

FIG. 7. Distribution of matrilateral kinship ties of Tongo men.

The diagram shows the geographical distribution of wives and mothers of a sample of Tongo men and hence their field of matrilateral kinship.

Wives of men shown thus ㉖.
Mothers of men shown thus △11.
Mothers of men's fathers shown thus □3.

The diagram divides the socio-spatial field of matrilateral kinship into four zones: Zone I, immediately adjacent clans; Zone II, clans immediately adjacent to clans of Zone I; Zone III, clans beyond Zone II clans; Zone IV, non-Tale clans.

The location of clans or groups of clans on the diagram corresponds to their territorial relations to one another; but the zones are socio-spatial not territorial regions. Most clans of Zone I are within 2 miles of Tongo; most clans in Zone II are between 2 and 5 miles of Tongo; most clans of Zone III between 4 and 7 miles of Tongo. But some clans in Zone III are spatially nearer to Tongo than some clans in Zone II, and vice versa, and one or two non-Tale clans are spatially nearer than some clans in Zone III. Though there is a high positive correlation between social distance and territorial distance, the correspondence is not perfect. The emphasis of the diagram is on the social distance from Tongo of the clans included.

[p. 288]

● 602 and a sample of Sie wives have exactly the same form and show that the same principles operate throughout Taleland.[1]

178 A sample of 134 men from all four sections of Tongo, who were living at Tongo at the beginning of 1934, was chosen for this test. The distribution according to their natal clans of all their wives—living, dead, or separated—who had borne children to them was marked on a map. The distribution by clan of origin of the mothers of these men was plotted on the same map. As a number of the men were brothers and some were polygynous the total number of mothers recorded is smaller than the number of wives. Lastly, the distribution by clan of origin of these men's fathers' mothers was plotted on the same map; and as their fathers were fewer than they are and some were polygynous, the total number of their paternal grandmothers recorded is less than the number of their mothers and much less than the number of their wives. The diagram therefore shows the socio-geographic distribution of (*a*) these men's fathers' mothers' brothers' (*ba ahəbnam*) clans; (*b*) of their own mothers' brothers' (*ahəbnam*) clans; (*c*) of their children's mothers' brothers clans.

Table showing the Field of Extra-clan Kinship Ties

Total number of men, all sections of Tongo	134
Total number of their wives	205
Total number of their mothers	64
Total number of their father's mothers	46

Zonal Distribution of Kinship Ties

	Incidence		
	Mothers' brothers of		
Zone	*Men's children*	*Men themselves*	*Men's fathers*
Zone I	93	33	21
Zone II	56	12	13
Zone III	47 } 56	18 } 19	9 } 12
Zone IV	9	1	3
	205	64	46

It will be seen that the total field of extra-clan kinship ties for Tongo is directly complementary to the total field of clanship ties, and largely congruent with the field of politico-ritual ties we have previously established for this clan.[2] Within this field there are four zones of density graded in accordance with spatial and social distance from Tongo. Thus

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[1] They also operate among the Gɔrisi, as a sample of marriages collected in one of the sections of Bolɔga showed.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv and v.

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● 602
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Tongo people, individually, have closer and more numerous kinship ties with the immediately adjacent clans of Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Wakii, and Zoo than with clans in the next zone, such as the Tenzugu clans. On the other hand the incidence of such relationships with Yinduuri is markedly greater than with any other clans of Zone III, because Tongo and Yinduuri have a bond of friendship through the chiefship of Sii, as has been explained in our previous book.[1]

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It will be seen, moreover, that the field of extra-clan kinship is relatively constant for a particular clan through several generations. For its form is approximately the same for children, fathers, and grandfathers. This suggests a regular tendency in the social structure rather than a chance result of the random choices of individuals. As we have previously stated, men seek for wives preferably amongst the nearest eligible women—that is amongst the women of clans that are spatially or socially nearest to their clan. The whole weight of the social structure lies behind this tendency. The restrictions on mobility in the past encouraged it. But the most important factor was, and is, the circular relationship that exists between marriage and extra-clan kinship ties. Marriages create extra-clan kinship ties; social contacts between members of different clans are largely canalized by extra-clan kinship ties; and these ties lead to contacts that in turn bring about new marriages. The modifications that are coming into this sequence nowadays are proof of this argument. The freedom of movement now possible has led to a great expansion of the social space of the younger men. They are beginning to take wives from distant parts, very often outside Taleland, in increasing numbers.

As every Tale clan has a similar field of extra-clan kinship ties, the fields of adjacent clans overlap. The bonds of extra-clan kinship between any two adjacent clans are not only reciprocal but bilateral. Just as many Tongo people, for example, have mothers' brothers at Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, and Wakii, so many Wakii, Ba'ari, and Zubiuŋ people have mothers' brothers at Tongo. Lɔyani of Zubiuŋ Yakɔra provides a good instance of multiple bilateral ties between men of adjacent clans. His mother was a woman of one segment of Tɔŋ-Puhug; one of his sisters married into another segment of Puhug; one of his daughters married a member of yet a third segment of Puhug. If we multiply such cases by the total population of Taleland we can get some impression of the intricacy of the web of extra-clan kinship ties. I have never yet been in a situation where a group of natives have gathered for some activity, whether secular or ceremonial, in which it was impossible for any person present to establish some genealogical (or, if it came to the worst, affinal) link with the lineage principally concerned. Merely being sisters' sons—actual or classificatory—of the same clan can become an effective bond of amity in certain circumstances. The following is a trivial illustration of this.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 89 and 121.

Early one morning I met Baripeta. His hoe on one shoulder, and a 602 chicken coop suspended from the other, showed that he was bound for his bush farm. But he was not taking the path that led there. I asked him where he was going. 'Oh', he said, 'I am going to congratulate Tinta'aləm on his succession to their lineage *bɔɣar*. He and I are both Yinduuri *ahɔs* and so his good fortune naturally makes me happy.'

The result of this overlapping of the fields of extra-clan kinship of adjacent clans is that these ties are interwoven to form an elaborate mesh, parallel, on the level of individual relationships, to the mesh of clanship on the level of corporate group relationships.[1] Hence the native thinks of his matrilateral kinship bonds as linking him to such-and-such a person of a different clan, who is himself linked similarly to someone in yet another clan, and so on to the limits of his social horizon. Nor are these connexions confined to Taleland. Tallensi often emphasize their [186] cultural and social distinction from Gɔrisi, Builsa, Namnam, and other neighbouring peoples. But they are quite likely to end a discourse on this theme by saying, 'However, our kinsfolk are among them (*ka ti dɔɣam le bɛ nɛŋha*)'.

It must be remembered, though, that most of these ties are only potential for a person for most of his life. He does not, as a rule, know of his more remote extra-clan kinsfolk until they become relevant for him on some special ritual occasion. This may happen once or twice in a lifetime. But when the need arises he can always trace them by following out (*tumh*) his kinship ties step by step, as we shall see presently. On account of this, and of the complex interweaving of these kinship ties, it is a common thing for individuals to be connected by more than one route, or to be distant kin without knowing it. Thus when I asked Puɛŋyii why he had formerly attached himself to the Gɔlibdaana, whom he now professed to regard as the arch-enemy, his answer was 'because we are kin (*ti a dɔɣam la zugu*)'. He went on to explain that, firstly, the Gɔlibdaana was a distant 'sister's son' of his (Puɛŋyii's) inner lineage, and, secondly, he and the Gɔlibdaana 'both come from Gorogo' on the maternal side. Puɛŋyii's mother's mother and the Gɔlibdaana's mother were both daughters of the same inner lineage of Gorogo. 'If my mother's mother's brother's (*ma ahəb*) people make a sacrifice to their lineage *bɔɣar*, the Gɔlibdaana and I both go to it', he said. This is a simple instance. More complicated multiple relationships are very common, cases in which, as the natives put it, 'they have begotten each other (*ba dɔɣa taaba*)'. That is to say, two persons may be related in such a way that by one route A calls himself a 'sister's son' of B and by another reckoning the relationship is reversed. The relationship of Puɛŋyii and the Gɔlibdaana can, in fact, be interpreted in this way. Identifying himself with his inner lineage, Puɛŋyii can say, 'I have begotten the Gɔlibdaana'—since the Gɔlibdaana looks upon

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. iv, v, vi.

602 Puɛŋyii's inner lineage as his distant 'mother's brother's lineage'. On the other hand, the Gɔlibdaana can make the same claim in regard to Puɛŋyii by identifying himself with his 'sister', Puɛŋyii's mother. In the ordinary intercourse of daily life it is immaterial which relationship is stressed. The blanket concept of kinship (*dɔɣam*) covers all. But in special ritual situations a specific relationship emerges as the decisive one. For example, if the head of Puɛŋyii's inner lineage were to die, the Gɔlibdaana might, if he were on good terms with the deceased, as a gesture of respect, send a gift of millet flour and a fowl as a contribution to the funeral, on the grounds that he is a 'sister's son' of the lineage.

Many instances could be quoted of people discovering hitherto unknown extra-clan kin by chance, as it is a common occurrence. It was on a chance visit to Tɛnzugu that Kuŋaanba learnt that Nyaaŋzum was the head of his father's mother's brother's inner lineage. Since then Kuŋaanba has become a regular visitor to and a great personal friend of Nyaaŋzum's family. In the same way it happens that people get married and discover later that they are kin. Tallensi say this probably happens very often but seldom becomes known. It is only if the couple lose several children one after another that it comes out. A diviner then reveals it as the cause of their misfortunes. Thus apprised of it, they consult the elders of their lineages and try to 'trace out (*tumh*)' their kinship. Whether they are successful or not—and they usually are— [789]
they then perform the rite of splitting kinship (*bɔk dɔɣam*), and this makes it permissible for their marriage to continue. It happened thus with Pukiɛhɔt, and this was one of the reasons why his in-laws were so angry with him for not paying his wife's bride-price. It was bad enough, they complained, that their daughter's marriage should be a breach of kinship; but, on top of that, here was her husband for ever hedging over the payment of the bride-price.

The natives know very well that they have closer and more numerous matrilateral and sororal kinsfolk among adjacent clans than among more distant clans. We have seen (Ch. II) how they visualize this situation for uterine kin (*saarɔt*). They tend to think of their close matrilateral kin as being spatially near and their more remote extra-clan kin as being far away geographically as well. But they do not of course, realize that all the extra-clan kinship ties of a lineage or clan, taken together, fall into a regular and definite socio-spatial order. They think of these relationships from the individual angle always. At the same time they are very conscious of the mutual reaction on one another of the clanship and lineage structure and these extra-clan kinship ties. Thus Tongo people say that it is much more satisfactory to have one's mother's brother at Zubiuŋ or Zoo than at Ba'ari or Wakii. The local and political cohesion of Zubiuŋ and Zoo with Tongo make it easier to keep in touch with one's mother's brother, make one readier to accept and be accepted

by his clansmen as a classificatory kinsman, and predispose *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* to greater mutual confidence, than if one's *ahəb* belongs to the traditionally hostile Talis. On the other hand, a man whose mother's brother is at Wakii does not wish evil to befall that clan, and he may find himself in an embarrassing position if there is conflict between his own clan and that clan. 602

Kinship Amity

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Outside situations in which specific extra-clan kinship ties correlated to defined modes of conduct emerge, the social relations of kin are governed by a general rule of amity. A kinsman of any degree is a person in whose welfare one is interested and whom one is under a moral obligation to help in difficulties, if possible. A good illustration of this occurred one day when I was on a visit to Kpata'ar. Nyaaŋzum asked, in the customary way, what was the news from Tongo. I ran through the conventional items—the chief, the crops, current gossip, births, marriages, and deaths. When I told him that Gbɛn-Tɔŋ's mother had died he exclaimed, 'Eee! And why haven't I been told? I'll have it out with Gbɛn-Tɔŋ next time I see him. This is his maternal ancestors' home (*u yaab yir nla*). I sacrifice on his behalf so that he may sleep peacefully; and now that he is not sleeping well (i.e. has trouble), if he does not send to tell me, is that as it should be?' Thus also Banɔrəg complained that he had given away about twenty baskets of grain in a period of one month after his harvest to kinsfolk who had come to 'beg (*soh*)' gifts to tide them over a time of food shortage. But, he concluded, 'you can't refuse a kinsman (*i ku tuo nzayah i dɔyam la*). One day I myself may have to go and ask my kinsmen for some grain.' A kinsman in need of hospitality cannot be refused, though there is no obligation to go out of one's way to persuade him to accept it. In the old days if a person saw anyone wantonly molesting a kinsman of his from another clan, it was his duty to intervene. It is wrong to seek a kinsman's harm and a sin that will bring down the wrath of the ancestors to cause his death. In 1936 the Tɔŋraana and the Gɔlibdaana were compelled to meet in order to try to settle one of the latter's grievances against the former. At the end of the long and fruitless discussion the Tɔŋraaña burst out, with scarcely veiled vexation, 'You and I, Gɔlibdaana, are kin. We have begotten each other. Why do you seek my enmity always?'

As we have previously learnt, one of the most important duties of kinship in the old days was to protect a kinsman in one's own clan territory. A typical example is the story of Baŋam-Teroog's journey to Sandema in the Builsa country, some fifty or sixty years ago. Had he gone openly by himself he would certainly have been caught and sold into slavery by the Builsa. He had been commanded by an ancestress, through a diviner, to go to her home in Builsa country and perform the

602 577 rites of setting up a shrine dedicated to her. For safety's sake all the travelling on such journeys was always done at night. During the day the traveller lay low in a kinsman's house. So Teroog set off one night. He went first to his father's mother's brother's home at Gorogo. Thence he was escorted to his father's mother's mother's natal home at Sii. The Sii people took him to a more remote kinsman at Balung and from there he was conducted, by similar stages, to Sandema. His return journey was made in the same way. The whole trip took nearly a month. The same journey can be done on foot, nowadays, in three or four days each way.

Similarly Zubiuŋ men relate how in the old days their Tongo neighbours, being of a different and unconnected clan,[1] used sometimes to raid their livestock to recover bride-price debts. As the people of Tongo were much more numerous than those of Zubiuŋ resistance was generally impossible. But if a Zubiuŋ man had a close matrilateral or affinal kinsman at Tongo, this afforded him some protection. His kinsman would intercede to get any livestock of his that had been seized restored to him, or, if the debtor were a very close agnate of his, to arrange a settlement between creditor and debtor. Often the head of an intercalary lineage, such as Nɔŋsuur yidem,[2] undertook this on behalf of his classificatory mother's brother's lineage.

602 782 Nowadays the most important obligations extra-lineage kin have towards one another are in ritual matters, and these are unavoidable obligations. This applies especially to kin of a senior generation in relation to those of a junior generation. A person owes ritual allegiance to his matrilateral ancestors as well as to his paternal ancestors. In fact, in the strictly personal affairs of the individual, his matrilateral ancestors have as decisive a role in his life as his patrilineal ancestors. This accords with the recognition given to maternal origin in the social structure and with the rule that kinship never dies out. Hence there are many occasions in the life of a man when he has to go to his mother's brother or to someone standing in that order of relationship to him to ask him to sacrifice on his behalf. For it must be remembered that the canon of agnatic descent prohibits anyone other than a true patrilineal descendant from sacrificing to an ancestor or ancestress. Thus if a man wants to sacrifice to his mother's spirit guardian he has to go to her natal home and ask her father (or his heir) to perform the sacrifice. Herein lies the force of the statement commonly used to define extra-clan kinship ties, 'I sacrifice on his behalf', or 'he sacrifices on my behalf'. The whole weight of the ancestor cult stands behind these and other ritual obligations of extra-clan kin to one another and no Taləŋ would violate them.

602 582 If we add to this the rule that marriage between extra-clan kin of any degree is forbidden, we can see that there is much in common between

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

[2] Cf. ibid., pp. 59 and 78.

the basic rules of inter-personal sentiment and conduct for extra-clan 602
kin and for members of one clan or lineage. As in the lineage, so among 582
extra-clan kin, the pattern of sentiment and conduct we have sketched has greater force with close than with distant kin. The differences between kinship within the lineage and kinship outside the lineage lie less in the sphere of individual sentiment and conduct than in the different structural implications of the two kinds of social ties.

The Classificatory Extension of Extra-clan Kinship

At the outset of this chapter we referred to the classificatory extension 602
of extra-clan kinship ties. This requires further elucidation. In the
early stages of my field-work this aspect of Tale kinship seemed to me 601
extraordinarily confused. The natives seemed to label any extra-clan kinsman a 'mother's brother (*ahəb*)' or 'sister's child (*ahəŋ*)' quite indiscriminately. The only distinction they appeared to make was in terms of generation differences. A person was apparently labelled a 'sister's son' if he was related to the speaker through any ancestress who was a member of the latter's clan, and he was described as a 'mother's brother' if the woman forming the link was the speaker's mother or ancestress and a member of the other person's clan.

This apparent confusion soon resolves itself into an orderly picture if the three principles in accordance with which kinsfolk are identified with one another are applied. In addition we must take into account the socio-spatial distribution of these kinship ties, and, especially, the time dimension without which no aspect of Tale social structure can be understood. Naturally the natives themselves do not consciously use such general conceptions in sorting out their kinship bonds; to them it is simply a question of spontaneous adjustment within the everlasting stream of social relations.

The most important of these factors is the lineage principle. An indication of this is found in the constant reference made by natives to their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yiri*) or maternal grandfather's lineage (*yaab yiri*). If a native is asked about his matrilateral kin the first thing he mentions is his *ahəb yiri*—the clan and perhaps clan segment of his mother's brother. The interpretation given to the concept *yiri* varies according to the situation, and follows the rules that govern its usage within the clan or lineage. For instance, I went to Tɛnzugu one day accompanied by two Tongo men. When we reached Kpata'ar one of them said 'This is my *ahəb yiri*', and explained that his mother was a Kpata'ar woman (*pəyayabələg*). A little later he stopped and broke off a couple of heads of ripe millet in a farm through which the path wound. I twitted him with stealing other people's crops. 'No', he replied, 'this is my *ahəb yiri*. This is La'ab's farm and I am an *ahəŋ* of his *dug*. They won't object to my taking a few heads of millet.' Thus at first he was using *ahəb yiri* to refer to the clan and later he used it for the inner lineage of his mother's brother.

In keeping with the principles of lineage structure, a man visualizes his relationship with his mother's patrilineal kin as having three degrees. There is, firstly, his bond with his 'true *ahəb* (*ahəb ni yɛlmɛŋər*)'—his mother's full (*soog*) brother, if she has one, or her oldest paternal half (*sunzɔ*) brother. This is the man who will sacrifice on his sister's son's behalf (if *his* father is dead). Apart from this there is no distinction between the 'true *ahəb*' and his brothers of the same nuclear lineage. The next level is that of the mother's brother's *dug*, his inner or at most medial lineage. A sister's son describes this *dug* collectively as his *ahəb yiri*, or, by contraposition with the clan, as his *ahəb dug*. Like any member of this inner lineage he distinguishes between its members in accordance with the rules of classificatory kinship. That is, the men whom his *ahəb* calls 'father' he calls 'grandfather', and he jokes with them; the men and women whom his *ahəb* calls siblings he calls *ahəb* or mother; and he describes those whom his *ahəb* calls his children as brothers and sisters. He may not marry a daughter of this inner lineage, and if he has sexual relations with one it is as disgraceful as if she were his close agnatic sister. He may not court a widow of any man of this inner lineage whom he calls *ahəb*, and if he seduces the wife of such a man it is incest. He may in theory court the widow of a member of this *dug* whom his mother's brother calls 'son' and whom he, therefore, regards as a sort of brother.

Finally, there is the level of his mother's brother's clan beyond the range of his inner lineage. Again the rules of classificatory kinship in the clan context apply. Beyond the range of his mother's brother's inner lineage a man does not distinguish between members of his mother's brother's lineage (his *ahəb yidem*) by generation. He can marry a daughter of the clan, or court a widow of any man of the clan, at this range.

Reciprocally, a man calls a child of a daughter of his inner lineage 'an *ahəŋ* of our *dug* (*ti dug ahəŋ*)', and a child of a daughter of a different inner lineage of the clan 'an *ahəŋ* of our lineage (or clan) (*ti yir ahəŋ*)'. There are a number of ritual ceremonies at which all the segments of a clan or maximal lineage must be present. Funerals of politico-ritual functionaries such as tendaanas, and the ceremony by which a man takes over the custody of a lineage *bɔγar* shrine, are ceremonies of this kind. *Ahəs* of every branch of the clan usually attend such ceremonies. Then they are divided into two groups: *dugni ahəs*, those who are linked through their mother or an ancestress to the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony; and *yɛŋha ahəs*, outside *ahəs*, whose mothers or ancestresses came from other segments of the clan.

The lineage principle operating in relation to the flux of time introduces a new feature. A man dies and in due course his social roles pass

to one of his sons. The son now assumes the duties his father had as 601 a mother's brother. He now sacrifices on behalf of his father's sister's sons and becomes their *ahəb* in function. So a mother's brother's son 602 is, in certain situations, called *ahəb* by identification with his father in accordance with the lineage principle, even while his father is still alive—in anticipation, as it were, of the role he will one day have. On the same principle a sister's son's son may be identified with his father in relation to the latter's mother's brother's sons and lineage. Thus Ɔmara once introduced a young man from Gorogo to me as his *ahəb*. I expressed surprise, as I knew his mother came from Woo. He then explained that the young man was really his father's *ahəb* (*ba ahəb*)—not, of course, his father's true mother's brother, but the grandson and successor of the latter.

Through the operation of the lineage principle such a relationship can, in theory, go on for ever. The mother's brother's role—progressively attenuated, as we shall see presently—passes from one generation of the original mother's brother's agnatic descendants to the next. And this brings out a point of importance. The crucial element in the mother's brother's role is his duty to sacrifice to his ancestors on his sister's son's behalf whenever the latter requests it. By the lineage principle the latter cannot sacrifice to his maternal ancestors directly at their original home. The mother's brother is bound to perform this duty or else suffer the wrath of his ancestors. He can refuse only if his *ahəŋ* has very gravely offended him. Then this duty becomes a right which he uses as a sanction. He receives no recompense for this other than his prescribed share of the animal sacrificed, which must always be provided by the sister's son. The mother's brother's role goes with this right of sacrificing to his lineage ancestors' spirits. Hence, after the death of all of the grandfather's sons—all the true mother's brothers—it is in fact vested in the head of the lineage descended from the grandfather.

Now let us glance for a moment at the other side of the relationship, the sister's son's position. A man has no interest in or bonds with any of his sister's children's agnates except her children. They are not his kin through his sister. In theory he or his son can marry any of his sister's children's female agnates if they are not related to one another by another link. In practice such marriages with a woman member of the sister's husband's inner lineage are not countenanced. One objection is that the girl might be a proxy or classificatory daughter of the sister, which would make the marriage seem incestuous. A stronger objection is that such a marriage would amount to exchanging one woman for another. This the Tallensi disapprove of on the grounds that it must inevitably breed discord between the two lineages concerned. It is incongruous for the same inner lineages to be both sons-in-law and fathers-in-law to one another. You cannot, as the natives put it, both owe bride-price to and claim bride-price from the same man, or owe filial respect to and

601 be entitled to filial respect from the same person. The objection does
not hold outside the range of the sister's husband's inner lineage. An
602 *ahəb* is concerned only with his sister's own children; and *his* agnatic
descendants are genealogically related and socially concerned only with
their descendants—that is to say, with the matri-segment (sprung from
the sister of the original *ahəb*) of the lineage sprung from her husband.
Such is the history—or, more frequently, the putative history—lying
behind the *ahəb–ahəŋ* relationships of lineages of different clans with one
another. Every lineage and every segment of a lineage has its *ahəb yiri*
in this sense. When the relationship (whether real or putative) is
assumed to be remote it may have only a ceremonial function or may
serve as an explanation of clanship linkage; when it is not too remote it
emerges from time to time in ritual or jural activities. And it follows
from the structure of the lineage that the farther back by number of
generations the relationship is located, the wider will be the span of the
lineages concerned.

There is a further complication. A woman's children have a tie, through her, with her *ahəb yiri*—their mother's mother's brother's lineage (*ma ahəb yiri*). This is a bond of a rather limited and formal significance; nevertheless it is kinship (*dɔyam*); it prohibits marriage between a man and a woman who are directly related by such a route, and it often emerges in ritual relations. Indeed a man and his sister's, or father's sister's, daughter's son may be on terms of friendship and special intimacy, if, as is quite possible, they are clansmen or neighbours. The friendship of Pumaan and Sayəbazaa, both of Tongo, went back to a relationship of this kind; and Sayəbazaa, who was in the mother's father's position, spoke of Pumaan as his 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)'. By the lineage principle a relationship of this kind can be sustained for several generations, but it tends to fade out with the passage of the generations. Still more roundabout extra-clan genealogical connexions are recognized in special circumstances, the parties being linked by various combinations of male and female antecedents.

A relationship such as that of Sayəbazaa and Pumaan is assimilated to the pattern of mother's father–daughter's son relationship. As this shows, there are two categories of extra-clan extended kinship ties. One type is assimilated to the *ahəb–ahəŋ* (mother's brother–sister's child) tie, and the other to the *yaab–yaaŋ* (mother's father–daughter's child) tie. The criterion is simple. If two individuals or lineages are linked through one woman (i.e. at a remove of one generation) only, they are *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* to each other: if the chain of genealogical connexions includes more than one woman (i.e. more than one female generation—a woman and her mother), making it a secondary matrilateral tie, the parties are *yaab* and *yaaŋ* to each other. Thus Lɔyani called himself, in various contexts, an *ahəŋ* of Tɔŋ-Puhug, because his own mother came from there; an *ahəŋ* of Gorogo because his father's mother came from that place; and

also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Təŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sɔk—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sɔk; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence. 601 602

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1] 604

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u ŋman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u ŋman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl with a perineal band (*suol voog*). This is a proud moment for her, as the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have entered the ranks of the matrons (*pɔyaŋaaŋ*, pl. *pɔyaŋaas*). Then, before[2] 604 843 421 [884]

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[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

[2] [Text continued on p. 301.—Analyst]

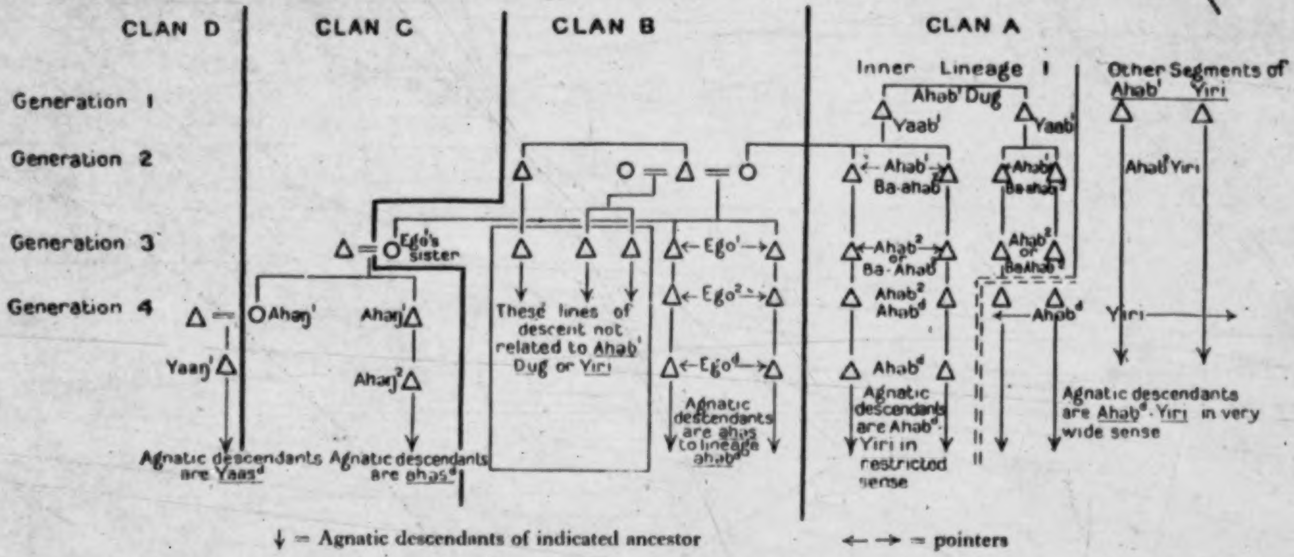
CLAN D
CLAN C
CLAN B
CLAN A
Generation 1
Generation 2
Generation 3
Generation 4
Inner Lineage I
Ahab^1 Dug
Yaab^1
Yaab^1
Other Segments of Ahab^1 Yiri
Ahab^1 Yiri
Ahab^1 Ba-ahab^2
Ahab^1 Ba-ahab^2
Ahab^2 or Ba-Ahab^2
Ahab^2 or Ba-Ahab^2
Ahab^2 Ahab^d
Ahab^d
Ahab^d
Yiri
Agnatic descendants are Ahab^d-Yiri in restricted sense
Agnatic descendants are Ahab^d-Yiri in very wide sense
Ego^1
Ego^2
Ego^d
Agnatic descendants are ahas to lineage ahab^d
These lines of descent not related to Ahab^1 Dug or Yiri
Ego^1's sister
Ahaŋ^1
Ahaŋ^1
Ahaŋ^2
Yaaŋ^1
Agnatic descendants are Yaas^d
Agnatic descendants are ahas^d
↓ = Agnatic descendants of indicated ancestor
←→ = pointers

Fig. 8. The extension of *Ahəb–Ahaŋ* relations.

The diagram reads as follows: Ego^1's true mother's brothers are designated *Ahəb^1*, Ego^1 calls them *Ahab*, Ego^2 (Ego's son) calls these men *Ba-ahəb*, hence they are also designated *Ba-ahəb^2*. Ego^d (Ego^1's agnatic descendant) calls *Ahəb^1's* agnatic descendants *ahəb*, hence they are designated *Ahəb^d*. Similarly with all the other relationships placed on the diagram. The index figure or letter shows what the Ego bearing the same index calls that person or group.

604 his own sons. More surprising, Puvɔlimra was admitted to all the
esoteric rites of the Earth cult and often represented the tɛndaana in
597 ritual activities. He was permitted to do this because he belonged to a
lineage holding a tɛndaana-ship allied to that of Gbizug. Had he been
a Namoo, he would have been excluded from all but the domestic
religious rites of the tɛndaana.

604 He was a great favourite, too, with the tɛndaana's children. But one
of the sons once made a revealing comment on Puvɔlimra's position.
605 He spoke in a slightly patronizing tone, though not offensively so.
'Puvɔlimra', he said, 'is our child (*u a ti bii*). We like him to stay with
us and we may not deny him anything. But one day he may decide to
go home and we can't restrain him; or if he offends us we can tell him to
go. He is not our person (as a member of the lineage is). However much
the tɛndaana may like him he cannot inherit our ancestor shrines or our
farms or our homestead. It is because he gets on so well with the
tɛndaana that he stays.'

604 This comment is typical of conventional opinion on the position of
an *ahɔŋ* in the family of his *ahɔb*. Puvɔlimra himself, Gikoo-Duun, and
602 Bayana, three young men who either lived or had lived with their
mothers' brothers, defined their position in exactly the same terms. It
would be an offence against the ancestors to deny an *ahɔŋ* a home, but
he has none of the fundamental rights of a son; his position depends
on the personal attachment to him, and concern for him, of his mother's
brother. An *ahɔŋ* in Puvɔlimra's position, it is sometimes suggested,
is apt to be more compliant than a son, so as to ingratiate himself with
his *ahɔb*. He cannot make demands as of right, as a son may do. Said
Gikoo-Duun: 'I was a small boy when I went to live with my *ahɔb-soog*
at Saamɔr (in Mampurugu). Later I went out on my own to build my
homestead and farm for myself near him. It was not because of a
quarrel. But my mother's brother will not take care of (i.e. take responsibility for) my affairs (*u ku maal ŋ-yɛla*). He will not marry a wife for
me. If he does give me one cow to help pay my wife's bride-price and
we should some day quarrel, he will say I must pay it back. He is not
of my people. My people are here at Zubiuŋ. Even though I am far
away, they (the Zubiuŋ people) will look after my affairs. If I were to
die to-day they would make my funeral and inherit my things. Do
you not see that I come here (to Zubiuŋ) regularly to sacrifice to my
ancestors?'

As we know, one of the major jural responsibilities of a father for his son is in marriage affairs. Hence the fact that a sister's son has no claim, as of right, on his mother's brother's assistance in this important matter is a good test of their jural relations. Puvɔlimra's marriage created the first rift between him and his mother's brother. The marriage was beset with difficulties. The girl's father feared that he would never get the bride-price as Puvɔlimra's proxy father was a blind old man who lived

on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tendaana 604
refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvəlimra
succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the 602
girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made to the head of Puvəlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it to Puvəlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it. It was then that the Gbizug Tendaana made Puvəlimra a present of a bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over to Puvəlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time being; but that dry season Puvəlimra went, for the first time in his life, to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for 597
the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his
foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopt- 602
ing the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb*. It is as if his mother's bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son. And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the clan settlement of his *ahəb*. He retains only ritual ties with his paternal clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*. At Gbeog, for instance, there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral. When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not 602
forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care
of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For 613
example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day 577
killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home to his *ahəb*. The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's 'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

● 602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share
is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of
an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly,
183 they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

The Ritual Relations of Matrilateral and Sororal Kin

We have previously observed that the distinguishing attribute of an *ahəb* in Tale thought is that he sacrifices on behalf of his *ahəŋ*; and *ahəŋ* 604
in this context includes all sororal kin, both those who are strictly *ahəs* 602
and those who are strictly *yaas*. This is an indication of the importance attached to the ritual relations of extra-clan kin.

As with all the social relations of mother's brother and sister's son, their ritual relations vary in frequency and degree according to their genealogical distance. Thus a male *ahəŋ* is obliged to send a ready cooked fowl to be 'set out (*zien*)' in commemoration of his *ahəb* when the latter's funeral is being celebrated. A child of 3 or 4 will have the fowl sent in his name by his parents; a man of substance might, as a special gesture of affection and respect, send a sheep instead of a fowl. No *ahəŋ* would fail in this duty where his true mother's brother is concerned. I have known men who were small children when a mother's brother died, and whose parents omitted to send fowls to the funeral in their name, make up for it years later on the occasion of a funeral in the family of their *ahəb*. Not infrequently, men will voluntarily send a fowl or a sheep as a tribute to the funeral of a father's mother's brother. But it is exceptional for such a tribute to be offered at the funeral of a more remote 'mother's brother'.

When a man sacrifices to an ancestor spirit, any descendant of that 602
ancestor has the right to be present and to share in the sacrament. The
only exceptions are the cult of the clan or maximal lineage *bɔɣar* and, 604
among the real Talis, the cult of the Earth and of the External *Bɔɣar*. 769
It would be incompatible with the functions of these cults as foci of social integration on the highest level of corporate structure to allow non-members of the lineage concerned to take part in them. But an *ahəŋ* may attend domestic sacrifices to any of his matrilateral ancestors and sacrifices to the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔɣar*) of the lineage of his true or classificatory mother's brother.

If a man proposes to make a sacrifice to one of his immediate antecedents (say, his father or grandfather), and if he is going to sacrifice anything larger than a fowl or guinea-fowl (say, a goat or a sheep or a cow), he is in duty bound to inform his sisters. He is not bound to tell his deceased sister's sons, but he generally does so, particularly if it is so important a sacrifice as a cow. A cow is seldom sacrificed to a shrine of lesser standing than a lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence when such a sacrifice is planned, the man who is making it should, in theory, inform all the sororal descendants of the lineage. He does not actually do so; he informs his own sisters' sons and his father's sisters' sons and leaves it to the other members of the lineage (who will, of course, automatically be present) to inform their close *ahəs* if they wish to. But news of such a sacrifice travels fast owing to the complex interweaving of kinship ties,

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604 and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance.
769 It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are in-
[764] formed; distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

604 782 An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bɔyar*, there are always *ahəs* present: perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

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[778 769] [1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

604 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The
764 funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public
interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the
571 beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of
a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally
571 taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage
● 602 head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the
lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of
782 the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head
after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly
793 appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan
kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated
602 clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

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778 will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And
787 if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his bene-
769 factress. The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing menace.

613 As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man
it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the domi-
769 nant ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo*
778 ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grand-
father, and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the
791 group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔɣar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahəŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔɣar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔɣar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔɣar* is tangibly symbolized.

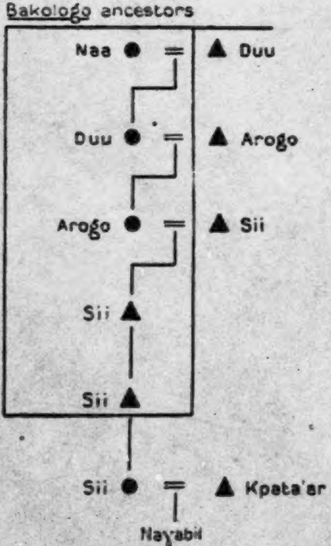
Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahəŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahəs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

769 The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple
combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's
602 father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who
came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

lineage, and thence he was escorted to his maternal grandfather's mother's 769
mother's brother's lineage. At each place he had to sacrifice a fowl and
a guinea-fowl to the lineage *bɔɣar*. Naɣabil's *bakologo* ancestors were 602
his mother's father, *his* father, *his* mother, *her* mother, and *her* mother.
Zɔŋ knew of the ancestress who was the dominant figure in his *bakologo*.
He had been to Gbambee to attend sacrifices to the lineage *bɔɣar* as an
ahɔŋ, both as a child, accompanying his father, and as an adult by himself.
Naabdiya and Naɣabil had never heard of the ancestresses who
dominated their *bakologo* shrines before they revealed themselves as
bakologo ancestresses. They had never before been to the natal clan
settlements of these women; and once their divining shrines were established
would probably never go there again.

One reason for this difference is spatial proximity. Zɔŋ lives about three miles from the Gbambee Tɛndaana; the matrilateral kinsmen who set up Naabdiya's shrine live about twelve miles from him, and those who set up Naɣabil's shrine nearly fifteen miles from his clan settlement. But more important is the genealogical distance involved. Zɔŋ is considered to be a fairly close *ahɔŋ* of the Gbambee Tɛndaana, Naabdiya and Naɣabil count themselves distant 'grandsons' (*yaas*) of the matrilateral kinsmen who thus almost accidentally became socially relevant for them.[1]

Though matrilateral ancestors are particularly conspicuous in con- 602
nexion with the *bakologo* complex, they can be associated with many 769
types of ancestor shrines. Hence few men pass through life without 778
having at least one such experience as that of Naabdiya and Naɣabil. Tiezien, for instance, had a magnificent baobab tree outside the entrance to his homestead. It was a stalwart sapling when Tiezien was born and



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[1] Naɣabil is a Kpata'ar man, and the matrilateral kinsmen who came to set up his *bakologo* were not Tallensi but Mamprusi from beyond the White Volta. This is an interesting illustration of how extra-clan kinship in this part of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast cuts across 'tribal' and political boundaries. As the attached genealogy, showing Naɣabil's genealogical connexion with his *bakologo* ancestors and ancestresses, indicates, it is also a beautiful illustration of how matrilateral kinship 'travels' (*kyɛŋ*) through intermarriage between adjacent clans. The result is that genealogical distance by matrilateral ties is closely correlated with socio-geographical distance, as in this instance.

602 could not have been less than 80 years old. This tree was the centre of
769 the communal life of the neighbourhood. It was, as every native would
769 automatically expect, also an important ancestor shrine. A few years after
778 it sprouted Tiezien's paternal grandfather discovered through a diviner that his mother's father and *his* mother, a Pusunamoo woman, had chosen the baobab as their shrine. The Pusunamoo woman's maximal lineage consecrated it for Tiezien's grandfather. Thereafter sacrifices were regularly offered on the tree. In due course Tiezien succeeded to
[164] the custody of this shrine. Then came the influenza epidemic of 1918. Many people died at Kpata'ar, including members of Tiezien's inner lineage and wives and children of the lineage. A diviner revealed that these deaths were being inflicted by the Pusunamoo ancestress in retaliation for long neglect. She demanded that Tiezien should collect a large number of fowls from all the members of his inner lineage and take them to Pusunamoo to be sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* of her medial lineage as an atonement. This was Tiezien's first and last contact with his matrilateral kin at Pusunamoo up to 1936.

602 It is evident, from these examples, as has been previously suggested, that the majority of a man's remote matrilateral kin are not socially relevant for him. All, however, are potentially so and may become so at some time or another; and when they do enter his field of social relations it is chiefly in their ritual capacity.

602 We said that the most important ancestor shrines linking a man to a matrilateral lineage are *bakologo* and *bɔɣar* shrines. Of the two the *bɔɣar*
778 shrine is, in fact, the more important. As we have shown in our earlier
769 book,[1] the ancestor cult of the Tallensi culminates in the conception and cult of the *bɔɣar*. This notion and the cult that expresses it form the centre of gravity of the lineage system. Hence it seems strange, at first sight, to find that every *bɔɣar* must necessarily be derived from a matrilateral lineage. We can understand this, however, if we consider the significance of the *bɔɣar* in the lineage system.

A *bɔɣar* is the shrine consecrated to the founding ancestor of a lineage
602 and his mother. It symbolizes the identity of that lineage and its dif-
778 ferentiation from other lineages of the same order within a more inclusive
769 lineage or within a clan. A lineage expands by a process of internal segmentation and differentiation that follows the lines of cleavage in-
613 herent in the structure of the joint family.[2] The component segments of a lineage are differentiated from one another primarily by reference to their descent from different 'mothers'—that is different wives of their common founding ancestor. But a woman does not sever her ties with her lineage when she marries and becomes a mother; and in kinship questions Tale thought is dominated by the lineage concept. Hence Tallensi think of a lineage progenitrix not only as such-and-such a

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 137.

[2] Ibid. ch. xii.

named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such 602
a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a 778
maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of 769
the several 'mothers' of its segments.

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it re- 613
quires a *bɔɣar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔɣar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔɣar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔɣar* symbolizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔɣar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the signi- 602
ficance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. 613
According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by
divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The 766
physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person [761]
may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his
death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ṅinvoo*)'—that is a full social
being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

602 613 766 he does not join his forefathers, he does not become an ancestor spirit. This shows that it is not the fact of death that turns a person into an ancestor spirit but the fact that, as Tallensi believe, he is summoned (*buol*) by his ancestors and goes to join them.

769 613 Thus when a lineage progenitrix becomes an ancestor spirit, she does so as the bearer of mystical powers and attributes that reside in the collective body of her lineage ancestors, symbolized and made accessible to man in their lineage *bɔɣar*. Looked at in this way, too, the *bɔɣar* consecrated to her and her son must be an offshoot of her lineage *bɔɣar*.[1]

778 613 In addition, there is the obvious point that a segment of a lineage cannot symbolize its distinctness by means of a *bɔɣar* derived from their own lineage *bɔɣar*, which is the symbol of the genealogical and social unity of the lineage, not of its internal differentiation. The lineage *bɔɣar*, as is evident, is the most esoteric symbol of the principle that runs right through Tale social structure, that social differentiation within the lineage framework springs from maternal origin. This principle operates in lineage structure;[2] and we have seen how, at the other end of the scale, it constitutes the springboard of individual differentiation in the structure of the joint family.[3] This is a further instance of the consistency of Tale social structure at all levels conferred upon it by the kinship system.

A new segment of a lineage begins to crystallize out as a recognized corporate unit in the time of its founding ancestor's grandsons. For it is not until then that the process of fission in the lineage has gone far enough to separate his grandchildren and his brothers' grandchildren into distinct nuclear lineages. Thus it is a man's grandson or great-grandson who sets up a *bɔɣar* consecrated to him and his mother. According to the idiom of Tale religious thought, the ancestor demands that a *bɔɣar* be set up for him and his mother. A day is appointed for the ceremony, and all the descendants of the progenitrix, through both males and females, are informed. In the morning or early afternoon the head of the new segment takes a fowl, a goat or sheep, and a pot of beer to the head of his grandmother's inner lineage, or in some clans, medial lineage. The men of that lineage assemble so that all of its branches are represented and the animals are sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* on behalf of the *ahəŋ*. Then the *bɔɣar* is 'scooped' for him, in the same way as was described in the case of the diviner's shrine. The *ahəŋ* goes straight

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[1] In theory, obviously, the only lineage *bɔɣar* that need not be derived from another *bɔɣar* is the *bɔɣar* of a maximal lineage. Actually most maximal lineage *bɔɣa* conform to the pattern we have described. The only truly sovereign *bɔɣa*—i.e. *bɔɣa* not derived from other *bɔɣa*—are the External *Bɔɣa* of the Talis and their congeners. And it is significant that the component maximal lineages of these clans generally have two *bɔɣa*, one the domestic representative of the External *Bɔɣar*, the other a distinctive *bɔɣar* derived from their founder's mother's lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

[2] Ibid., ch. xii.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. III.

home, where in the meantime the other members, both men and women, of the new segment and the 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the segment who have been able to come have gathered. The head of the new segment arrives, followed, as the Tallensi think, by the spirits of his grandmother's ancestors. He now performs the sacrifices by which the new *bɔɣar* is consecrated. He himself offers a sheep. All the other male members of the new segment bring a fowl each to be sacrificed on their behalf and *ahɔs* and *yaas* all do so too. A large pot or earthenware dish, inside which the small pot containing the sediment 'scooped' from the grandmother's lineage *bɔɣar* pot is placed, forms the altar. Henceforth this will be the *bɔɣar* of the new lineage segment; and there will be a similar communion rite embracing all the descendants of the founding ancestor and his mother whenever the *bɔɣar* is inherited by a new lineage head.[1] 778 613

We have now considered the most important ritual services matrilateral kin render to their sororal kin. The ritual services rendered by sororal kin to matrilateral kin are, as might be expected, of far less consequence. In funeral ceremonies, for example, there are a number of rites in which it is necessary to have the participation of an *ahɔŋ* of the deceased. The rite of cooking 'the porridge of sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', which has been previously mentioned, is typical of these rites; and it is typical of them, also, that anybody who can, by any stretch of the term, be described as *ahɔŋ* can serve in them. All these rites express the fact that a person's death is of concern to his or her sororal kin as well as to his or her patrilineal kin, and affects the field of social relations of the former as well as that of the latter. Hence in all funeral rites a special portion of the meat, cooked food, and beer used is allocated to the 'sisters' children', whether few or many are present. Matrilateral and sororal kin do not, however, undergo mourning rites. 602 764

Apart from funerals, there are one or two other special ceremonies in which the services of an *ahɔŋ* are needed. Thus in the ceremony of exorcising an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) an *ahɔŋ* is required to perform the final act of sympathetic magic. This consists in collecting the magical paraphernalia used in the ceremony—all of which symbolize the wish that the evil Predestiny may depart and conceal itself for ever—and throwing them away in some barren spot. A 'sister's son' is called upon 602 789

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[1] There is a point of religious doctrine that cannot be fully discussed here but must be mentioned to avoid confusion. Every important ancestor shrine is a means of making a whole line of ancestors accessible to its possessor. Now the collective mystical power of a patrilineal line of ancestors reposes in the lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence every important shrine has to be linked up with the lineage *bɔɣar* of the dominant spirit to which it is consecrated. That is why when a *bakologo* is set up, the *bɔɣar* of the matrilateral lineage from which it is derived is 'scooped' for inclusion in the new shrine. Broadly speaking, the ritual validity of every ancestor shrine goes back to a *bɔɣar*. But the setting up of a new lineage *bɔɣar* is a very special ritual landmark.

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to do this service because, as a kinsman of the sufferer, he naturally wishes to see him free of his evil fate. He is held to desire this the more strongly because his *ahəb* sacrifices on his behalf. Hence his welfare depends on the continued life and the perpetuation of the lineage of the *ahəb*, both of which are threatened by the evil Predestiny. Lastly, he is specially suitable because a complete stranger might use the opportunity to do the sufferer magical harm, while a patrilineal kinsman of his might be contaminated by the evil Predestiny. Again, anybody who can be identified as an *ahəŋ*, in however remote a classificatory sense, may be asked to perform this service.

The Father's Sister

604 We have left the discussion of the relationship of father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) and brother's child (*bii*) for this chapter, although it is not a relationship of extra-clan kinship. Father's sister and brother's child are members of the same clan and lineage. But Tallensi associate the father's sister with relatives outside the clan. This is due to her marrying out of the clan, to her having no significant public voice in the affairs of the lineage, [429] and to her being unable to inherit lineage property or ancestor shrines.[1] Thus a native usually compares his relationship with his father's sister to his relationship with his mother's brother, not to his relationship with his parents. It is thought of more as the opposite of the relationship between sister's son and mother's brother than as an item in the scheme of intra-familial or intra-lineage relationships.

As in the case of mother's brother and sister's child, the bond between father's sister and brother's child tends to be more effective for brother's sons than for brother's daughters. In the case of the brother's sons it is reinforced by the ties a woman has with her paternal lineage and by the ties her children have with their mother's brother and his sons. In the case of brother's daughters, it is attenuated because the daughters tend to be dispersed by marriage and their relationship with their father's sister is much more a purely personal affair.

Compared with the mother's brother, the father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) counts for little in the web of extra-clan kinship. Tallensi say this is because she is a woman. 'It is not she who sacrifices for you but you (her brother's son) may one day sacrifice on her behalf.' At the same time they declare that 'she is your father'. I have several times had an old woman introduced to me by a man or a woman as 'my father'. Eŋwala, explaining her affection for her full brother's son, Anaaho, said in the stock phraseology, 'Is he not my child? If you and your brother together have a child, is he not also your child [as much as your brother's]?

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[1] Except, as has been mentioned before if she is the last surviving member of the lineage. Even then she does not inherit the ancestor shrines but merely sacrifices to them, as if she were acting on behalf of her deceased father. She can never inherit lineage land.

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own family. She may, as an act of grace, give some of this food to her husband or to a co-wife with whom she is on friendly terms; but she is not compelled to do so. A junior householder thus augments the food
supply for his own wives and children. If he comes into possession [431]
of a large amount of grain by his own exertions he will generally make a present of a small quantity to the head of the unit to which he belongs; but, again, this is an act of goodwill, not an obligation. A kind-hearted head of a compound may occasionally present a meagre dish of grain to the wife of a younger head of a self-supporting unit, if they are obviously on the verge of starvation; otherwise, self-supporting units in the same compound never assist one another with grain, in the ordinary course of events.

There are other more incalculable means by which food is brought 602
into the household and family. Cereals are sometimes obtained during 431
the hunger months by women from their paternal kinsmen. A 222
marriageable daughter, again, means a succession of suitors bringing 262
gifts of money, guinea-fowls, and various other comestibles to her mother. Wild sources of food are fully exploited. Fruits of the shea-tree (*ta'aŋ: butyrospermum parkii*) save many a family from the worst straits of hunger, as does the pulp of the dawa-dawa (*doo: parkia filicordea*) pods. These trees have an enormous economic value, as will be evident later. The baobab-tree (*to'o: adansonia digitata*) has a fruit with a floury, sweetish pulp which is relished much as sweetmeats are by ourselves, and its leaves are used to make soup. It is generally found as a shade-tree outside a compound, and women readily get permission from the head of the compound to pluck the leaves. Leaves of the local elm (*nuom: celtis integrifolia*) are also used for soup.[1] Some grasses and fungi serve this purpose too, and small children, who are adepts at foraging for themselves, can often be seen out in groups collecting them.

From the table[2] quoted above it will be seen that one man, on the 592
average, supports himself, 1·2 women, and 1·2 children, over the age of infancy—roughly 3·4 people; but it is clear from the sociological outline given above that any such estimates hold only very approximately in view of the many supplementary sources of grain supply,

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[1] We have seen elm-trees in *toŋbana* (sacred groves) and in the bush (where of course, any one can pluck the leaves) but not as shade trees in front of compounds.

[2] [See cat. 116, p. 241 — Analyst]

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discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with 867 other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total 155 pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's 868 learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants 535 just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same 867 way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected 601 in the 3–4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non- 602 kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

867 601 602 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 856 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning—mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 828 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of 226
his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated 789
with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a
little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus 782
symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in
closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its 226
highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round
him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. [533]
On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was taken of sending four good swimmers in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

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[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognized. Members 602
of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

The principal disputes, however, concern the tribute due to the owner of the pool. 226
Morally his rights are beyond question and are never denied. But except for members 578
of the owner's immediate family, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute, 651
a moral obligation of this sort counts for nothing in practice without effective sanctions. 602
Hence the owner sees to it that members of his family are dispersed amongst the crowd in the water. These young men keep a sharp watch and do not hesitate to take by force the fish which they regard as their rightful tribute. The owner himself often enters the pool to assist in the police work. Those who contest the confiscation of their fish do so in vain. Not only will public opinion not support them, but the owner's "policemen" would not hesitate to give them a drubbing. A maternal kinsman, sister's son, or in-law relation of the owner is, however, allowed to keep his first fish, unless his catch is large, in virtue of kinship. This is a concession which the owner might also make to his personal friends, and not a right.

One obligation, by contrast, is never evaded. Young crocodiles are sometimes caught, 651
and the owner of the fetish is entitled to the hind legs and tail of every crocodile caught. 226
This is the perquisite of his *bayar* one part of which, the hoe shaft, will be covered with
the skin of a crocodile tail thus delivered to him. Not only is it very difficult to conceal 626
the capture of a crocodile, but the supernatural penalties of evasion—certain injury from a crocodile in a future fishing expedition being the least of them—dare not be risked.

Fishing continues thus from about 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m., or in a well stocked pool, 226
to 5 p.m. The exodus commences sporadically. People who had earlier in the day been cutting hoe shafts or rafters, collecting firewood, or medicinal herbs, come out first to complete these tasks. Finally, when only a few remain in the pool, the owner of the fetish goes down to pull up his *bayar*. As he does this, he shouts to those remaining to come out. The removal of the axe shaft is the signal that the fishing is over.

The catch in such expeditions varies greatly. The tribute received by the owner of the pool may be taken as a rough index of the catch. In the three expeditions in which I participated the owner's tribute varied from six to fifteen medium and large fish. The last pool was exceptionally prolific and was fished on two successive days. I estimated the number of men—men only fished on the first day—at about four hundred ; on this occasion the catch was declared to be enormous, surpassing all expectations. Few people left empty handed. But on the other hand, nobody had more than four medium or large fish, which would be taken home and divided up within each man's immediate family. The best proof of the paucity of the catch relative to the population fishing and of the valuation of fish as a delicacy rather than as an addition to the food supply, was that throughout the fishing month fish caught on these expeditions never appeared for sale at the market.

Clearly too, communal fishing does not benefit the owner of the pool much materially. 226
However large his tribute, the net gain to himself is small since he distributes much of 651
it to others—men of rank and elders who attend the fishing as an expression of clan loyalty

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

607 *Privileged Familiarity*: 'A man may play and be familiar with his sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents,
● 603 for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the
648 Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the Mamprusе and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat
607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's
[587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.

[2] See p. 8.

[3] But see p. 508.

593 sees any of Ɔmara's children misbehaving he can stop them and punish them if necessary. But ordinarily, though he can scold Ɔmara's children,
602 he would cause grave offence to Ɔmara if he were to strike them. When, to quote a case that occurred in a similar structural setting, Pumaan's son threw a stone at Zaŋ's (Pumaan's younger brother's) wife, Zaŋ shouted anathemas at the boy and complained to the neighbours but dared not whip him; that was Pumaan's prerogative. For Zaŋ and Pumaan have separate households and are both sticklers for their rights. By contrast, Bɔyazie, who lives and farms with his older brother and gets on extremely well with him, can command obedience from and can discipline the latter's children by corporal punishment if need be. But even in such a case a man might hesitate to strike his brother's children if he and his brother were not on terms of the greatest mutual trust. If Saandi asks his brother's son to do an errand or a job for him the boy will usually obey, but he cannot be compelled to do so, as he can by his own father. Co-wives, as we know, are particularly cautious in dealing with one another's children.

593 There is, however, at any given time, only one man who has full paternal authority over a person, child or adult. In the first instance it is the man who begot him or her; and if this man dies, it is the man who takes on his social role, that is his distinctive rights and duties, by inheritance. The critical rights and duties are those connected with the land and other patrimonial property which the child's father owned or was heir to, and those connected with the cult of the child's father's father. In practice this means the head of the household to which the child belongs, who is also the person who sacrifices to the child's grandfather's spirit; and this limits the range to the child's father's brothers by the same father.

During a child's minority a father's agnatic cousin (brother in native
429 terms) may act *in loco parentis* if the father's nearer male agnates are
428 lacking; but it is a position of trusteeship rather than of full paternal authority. The son will set up an independent household as soon as he
602 is able to farm for himself. He will then take possession of any land which his father acquired by his own efforts and will become the effective owner of, for example, bride-price cattle obtained for his own sister, though he cannot dispose of them without the formal consent of the head of the nuclear lineage. In relation to an adult, a father's cousin (or remoter classificatory 'brother' of the same inner lineage) retains only the ritual and jural attributes of a father; and this chiefly in virtue of being head of the inner or nuclear lineage to which the person belongs. Important as these attributes are, they represent a less direct and personal authority than that of one's own or one's proxy father.

•603 We shall see later that the relations between grandchildren (*yaaŋ*, pl. *yaas*) and grandparents (*yaab-doog* or *ba-kpeem*, masc. *yaab-pɔk* or

603 *ma-kpeem*, fem.) are a foil to those of parents and children. It is convenient here to state the range within which grandparents are acknowledged. On both the mother's side and the father's side grandparents are primarily one's own parent's own parents. The terms are extended to own grandparents' siblings (in particular to a grandfather's brothers) and their wives, but rarely beyond that limit, and never, in my experience, beyond a grandfather's agnatic cousin. This is correlated with the cycle of development of the joint family. By the time a man has grandchildren he is not likely to be still sharing a homestead with his brother, let alone cousin, and his classificatory siblings will have only a formal interest in his grandchildren.

The diagram on p. 148 sums up this discussion of the range of parenthood acknowledged by the Tallensi.

The Significance of 'Having no Father alive'

593 Clearly the formula 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage' covers a complicated tissue of social relationships. Another aspect of it appears in the significance Tallensi attach to whether or not one's father is alive.

593 885 This is a matter of considerable practical importance, more particularly for men, but also for women. A person's status in his clan, and in every segment of it to which he belongs, depends largely on whether 'his father is alive (*u ba be*)' or not (*u ba ka*). It is correlated with the distribution of jural and ritual authority and responsibility in the lineage. During his own father's lifetime a person's status is submerged in that of his father for jural and ritual purposes. He comes directly under his father's authority, as we shall see presently. He attains his first degree of independence only on the death of his own father. This is shown to some extent in every department of his life, but most significantly in the sphere of ritual. [782] A man cannot make sacrifices to his patrilineal ancestors in his own right while his own father is alive. His father does this on his behalf. It is only when his father dies that a man can sacrifice directly to his ancestors; for such sacrifices can only be offered through the medium of his father's spirit.

This marks a very important stage in a man's social maturation, whatever his chronological age may be. Henceforth the responsibility for keeping the goodwill of his ancestors rests directly on his own shoulders. It will be he himself, for instance, not his father, who decides whether a sacrifice demanded by such-and-such an ancestor should be offered at once or postponed. And with this first stage of ritual responsibility usually goes some degree of autonomy in jural and economic matters, as we shall see presently. Nevertheless, no man attains full autonomy within the limits of the lineage system until he is altogether 'fatherless'. While he has a proxy or classificatory father alive he is still to some extent under paternal authority. It is worth

PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

[facing p.209]

CHAPTER IX

GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN

603 596 WE have mentioned earlier that the relations of grandparents and grandchildren can be regarded as a foil to those of parents and children. Tallensi themselves often draw the contrast. It is particularly striking with the paternal grandparents. For in a three-generation joint family the head is a grandfather and the senior *dugdaana* a grandmother. As head of the family the grandfather holds jural, economic, and ritual authority over all its members, including those whom he calls grandchildren, and there is a contrast between his authority and his familiarity in personal relations with his grandchildren. It reflects the contrast between the cleavage due to difference of status and role in terms of the lineage principle and the ties of cognatic kinship between grandchildren and paternal grandparents. This contrast does not occur with the maternal grandparents, in whose relations with a daughter's child the question of authority does not arise. When Tallensi say that a person can die happily if he or she has 'reached grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' they refer primarily to paternal grandparent and grandchild.

603 601 A grandchild of either sex refers to a grandfather of either line as *ba-kpeem*, literally 'older father', or more formally as *yaab*, and to a grandmother of either line as *ma-kpeem*, literally 'older mother', or more formally as *yaab-pɔk*. Grandparents are addressed by personal name or, in the case of grandmothers, by the clan name used for them by their affines. A grandchild is described as *yaaŋ* by any of its grandparents and addressed by his or her own name.

603 The essential feature of the relationship between grandchild and grandparent is that they can tease and joke with each other and each other's spouses. As we have seen, between parent and child this would be almost equal to sacrilege. A grandchild can tweak his grandparent's ear—hence the diviner's sign for grandparent, pointing to the ear—or pretend to mock him or her as 'an old baggage (*bonkɔrəga*)' or play practical jokes on them such as snatching at their food. Grandparents, reciprocally, tease their grandchildren, calling them 'you ugly thing (*bonlɔrəga*)', or by similar epithets that would be insults in another genealogical context. This joking relationship holds for both sets of grandparents, and serves the purpose of reconciling the potentially conflicting elements in their relationship.[1]

With it goes an intimacy and mutual trust, more particularly between patrilineal grandparent and grandchild of the same sex, such as is not 603 found between any other kinsfolk, close or distant. Its nearest parallel is the relationship of full siblings. And as a grandchild grows older this aspect of its relations with its grandparent becomes stronger. Nothing delights grandparents so much as to take care of their grandchildren in babyhood or early childhood. Children often sleep with a grandparent, as we have noted. A woman whose father- or mother-in-law is alive always has someone with whom to leave her baby. Joking is one of the ways in which the grandparent shows his or her joy in the child. But as the grandchild grows older and begins to associate on more adult terms with its grandparents, these demonstrations of affection become unnecessary. Occasionally, as mood and situation dictate, a grandfather or grandmother will throw out a jest at a grandchild. Thus I once heard an old man call out to his grandson's wife with a laugh, as she sauntered past, that she ought to get a wider back *voog* [291] (the decorated flap worn by women over the intergluteal fold) as the one she was wearing was immodest. But it is more likely to be the grandchild who occasionally throws a jest at the grandparent.

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[1] Cf. the similar usage between siblings-in-law, p. 120. Joking in the present case reconciles the familiarity permissible on the grounds of personal interest and the social equivalence of alternate generations, with the respect due to grandparents because of their age and their lineage status.

There is, then, a kind of freedom and equality between grandparents and grandchildren which could not exist between parents and children. A grandparent does not normally discipline a grandchild. A paternal grandmother has no command over her son's children. I have heard a crotchety old grandmother complain of her grandchildren's noisy habits and lack of obedience but have never heard of a grandmother punishing her grandchildren. The gifts given to her by a granddaughter's suitors are brought as a gesture of respect for the senior woman of the house, but she cannot, as a rule, influence her granddaughter's choice. A paternal grandfather often gives an order to a grandchild or administers a scolding. Tallensi, however, think of a grandfather's scolding as something quite different from a father's discipline. They regard it as a friendly correction. If serious disciplinary action against a grandson is necessary, a grandfather leaves it to his son. A grandfather's jural and ritual authority over a grandson or granddaughter follows from his being the head of the joint family, 'owning' all its members. Thus he can override his son in such matters as the marriage of the latter's son or daughter. But if there is a conflict of wills between him and his grandchild in such a matter he will rely on his son to enforce his decision.

I remember the occasion when Maanlɛrəg eloped with his sister's husband's younger sister in defiance of the veto of the elders of the inner lineage. Nyaaŋzum, Maanlɛrəg's own late paternal grandfather's half-brother, as head of the nuclear lineage, stormed and raged but he could do nothing directly. 'Why don't you control your sons?' he shouted at his 'sons' (his late brothers' sons) Tiezien and Bɔyaraam, the culprit's 'fathers'. In fact, it is notorious that grandparents spoil their grandchildren, especially their oldest grandchildren, those whose birth makes

603 them into grandparents. Again, this is especially marked with the paternal grandparents. The first-born son among Namoos, in whom the cleavage between parents and children is focused, is his grandparents' particular favourite. His grandmother will always have some titbit for him to eat, his grandfather tries to shield him from his father's authority. 'Look at Nobya', said Samane of his first-born son, 'he spends his time in play [that is, having a good time]. He never lacks for anything. He does not want to work. That is because he is the oldest grandchild. When he was a child he used to be with his grandparents always and they spoilt him. Now he goes to his grandfather if he wants anything.' The story of Kpana-Tee and his grandson, which we have previously related, is typical of many cases in which father and son disagree and even quarrel over the latter's treatment of his son. The alternate generations seem to be in league against the generation between them.

Maternal grandparents spoil their daughter's children in the same way, but there is not the feeling that they are acting in opposition to the parents. Maternal grandparents do not see so much of their daughter's children as paternal grandparents of their son's children. But from infancy a child is often taken to visit its maternal grandparents, and children over 4 or 5 are sometimes left in the care of their mother's mother for days or weeks on end. This is a kind of holiday for the child and is generally greatly enjoyed. Also, as we have mentioned before, a motherless child, especially a little girl, is often sent to her maternal grandmother and may grow up with her.

603
765 The death of a grandchild is felt as a heavy blow by grandparents of both lines. But they do not have to undergo special mourning rites as parents have to. Curiously enough, it is the maternal grandparents, and in particular the grandmother, who is singled out by custom as the greatest sufferer by the loss of a grandchild. The maternal grandparents may not attend the funeral of their grandchild, though their children may. They must grieve alone at home. And if it is a daughter's first-born dying in babyhood a special rite of consolation has to be performed at the maternal grandparents' home. After the infant's mother has been ritually purified she goes to her mother's house accompanied by one or two co-wives and carrying gifts from her husband. When she arrives a simple and very moving rite is carried out symbolizing the consolation offered by the child's father's people to its grandmother, almost as if the father's people were apologizing for the child's death. Then mother and daughter weep together and the daughter remains for a few days to keep her mother company. Tallensi say that this is done because the grandmother has lost her *soog*.[1] They have no explanation for the taboo against maternal grandparents attending a grandchild's funeral. It can be con-

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[1] Cf. Ch. II above. The rite is a reflection of the recognition of the uterine tie as a personal tie. It symbolizes, also, the recognition of a woman's parents, in particular of her mother, as the source of her reproductive powers.

jectured that the taboo is connected with the fact that the rights over a 603 woman's reproductive powers belong to her husband and must not be 765 confounded with her parents' authority over her. If they came to the funeral of their daughter's child they would have to be received with respect, and it might seem as if they were on a par with the child's paternal grandparents. For the same reason, perhaps, a married woman's parents do not attend her funeral in person, but are represented by other members of her natal family and lineage.

For a man his son's children stand for the certainty that his line of descent will go on. The wheel of the generations has come full circle. When he and his wife die it will be announced to all the world. On the day of his or her funeral the youngest grandson will be placed before a drum with the drumsticks in his hands and the youngest granddaughter before a calabash with two pieces of cane in her hands. When the signal is given for the funeral to begin they will strike the drum and calabash and cry out, 'Oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather (*N-yaab yee*)'. And when the funeral is concluded [302] the son's children and the brothers' sons' children will have their heads shaved in mourning in the manner prescribed for grandchildren. Half the head will be shaved and half left unshaved.

The equivalence of alternate generations is shown by the fact that a 603 grandson may marry the widow of his paternal or maternal grandfather, or of any man whom he calls grandfather, other than his own grand- 587 mother. This rule is of practical significance when an old man dies leaving a young widow, and all the men of his inner lineage are either 'sons' or 'grandsons' to him. Then the grandsons who are old enough are encouraged to woo the widow, and the elders of the lineage put pressure on her to choose one of them so that she can remain a wife of that lineage. It was thus that Tiezien married his own paternal grandfather's youngest widow. At that time she had a young infant at the breast who was Tiezien's own father's half-brother. Tiezien was then about 18 or 19. He thus had the unusual experience of bringing up a child who was his proxy father. To-day Tiezien, a vigorous man of about 70, is ritual head of Kpata'ar; but his proxy father Nyaaŋzum, whom he reared, is the head of their inner lineage. Tiezien was made politico-religious head of the clan (*Kpata'ar na'ab*) over Nyaaŋzum's head according to the rule that 'begetting does not cross the *dug*';[1] but within their *dug* he is nominally subject to Nyaaŋzum's authority. This might lead to considerable friction between them if they were not as devoted to each other as they are. The marriage of a grandson with his grandfather's widow is, however, an uncommon occurrence, chiefly

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[1] Headship of the clan, in this case, goes by selection from amongst the eligible elders, but usually comes to the oldest man in the clan. Tiezien could, however, not have accepted the offer without the consent of his proxy father, Nyaaŋzum. [618]

603 because it is not very usual for a man to have a grandson old enough to take a wife, when he dies, and also to leave a young widow.

587 The converse marriage of a grandfather with the widow of his [777] 'grandson' of the same inner lineage is said to be permissible but not good. Tallensi think it is incongruous and therefore likely to be unlucky. I learnt of only one such case that has occurred in recent years, and my informants pointed out that all the children born of the marriage had died.

Old women make use of this rule when they are left widows. A widow must either remarry one of her husband's clansmen or else go home to her father's house and marry from there as if she were a spinster. For an old widow remarriage is a formality since she is past child-bearing, and will in any case live with her sons. So when she is asked to choose her new husband from amongst those of her late husband's clansmen who offer her marriage *pro forma*, she often announces, 'I choose a grandson (*man luogəra yaaŋ*)'. She thus satisfies the formal requirements and can go on living with her sons.

Within the lineage inter-personal relations of grandparent and grandchild are not extended beyond the inner lineage—that is, the range within which generation differences between individuals are recognized; but the term *yaab* is applied to any patrilineal ancestor except the father. On the mother's side only the mother's own parents and proxy parents are recognized as grandparents; but any lineage with which a person has matrilateral connexions is described as his *yaab yiri*. Thus any patrilineal ancestor's mother's lineage is a *yaab yiri*; and the letter of custom entitles a man to marry the widow of any member of his *yaab yiri*. In practice such marriages are exceedingly rare, for the widow's husband's lineage-brothers and clansmen resent them strongly. But there have been one or two instances in the past generation in which a young widow eloped with her deceased husband's classificatory *yaaŋ*. What the outraged members of the deceased husband's lineage most resent is that they cannot claim the return of the bride-price. The only sanction they can use is to refuse to sacrifice to their ancestors on behalf of the 'grandson' who has so flouted them; but this is a double-edged weapon. They may not use it, since the 'grandson' was within his formal rights in marrying one of their widows. Hence they would arouse the wrath of their ancestors if they sought to penalize their 'grandson' ritually. This extension of leviratic rights to matrilateral kin is associated with the notion that a woman might have been born a man but for the intervention of chance, and her descendants might therefore have been of the true agnatic line. It will be better understood when we have considered the relations of mother's brother and sister's son (Ch. XI below).

604 Our discussion has been concerned with the relationship of a person to his or her own father's sister, and we have noted that the bonds of sentiment between father's sister and brother's child seldom extend beyond the nuclear lineage of the latter. A person recognizes the sister of any man in the inner lineage or medial lineage whom he calls 'father' as his *ba-pɔk*. But whereas a woman has a strong personal interest in and often affection for her full or half-brother's children, and generally also takes a personal interest in her father's brothers' sons' children, the tendency is for the relationship to become more formal beyond that range. This is largely due to the fact that contacts between a woman and the children of her distant brothers of the same inner or medial lineage are usually rare, as compared with her contacts with children of her own nuclear lineage. But the appropriate norms of behaviour hold to the limits of the range of recognized generation differences and may be evoked in suitable circumstances. Beyond the range of the inner, or at most medial lineage, a woman of a person's father's generation is not recognized as a *ba-pɔk*, but is described as a 'sister' (*tau*) and thus classed with all the non-specifically related clanswomen.

● 603 604 A woman calls her brothers' children's children her grandchildren (*yaas*), and she may be very fond of them, if she has opportunities of seeing them often. Gɛlima, a childless old widow who had come to live out the last few years of her life at her oldest brother's house, was often teased good-humouredly by her brothers and brothers' sons because of her attachment to the latter's small children. In theory the joking relationship holds for grandchild and grandfather's sister. In practice it is modified by the tendency to class together father's sisters and agnatic grandfather's sisters, who are usually described by the term *ba-pɔk* or its equivalent *pugərəba*. A person identifies himself (or herself) with his father in relation to the latter's father's sister, not only on account of the dominance of the lineage principle, but also, and mainly, because he does so in relation to the woman's husband and children. He thinks of the woman's husband as an 'in-law (*deema*)' and of her children as *ahəs*. And this is facilitated by residential separation and the identification of an old woman with the affairs and interests of her husband's lineage and clan. Thus cases like that of Gɛlima are the exception. The majority of old women see so little of their brothers' grandchildren that their relationship with them is purely formal and perfunctory.

economic and social activities there is co-operation, friendliness and 593
tolerance, almost equality. This is more marked between father and 861
child than between mother and child. A father is always addressed 858
by his personal name, a mother is always called *mma*, my mother.
Affectively, however, a powerful tension exists between parent and
child. A parent's authority may not be flouted, though he or she is
expected to be affectionate and indulgent. Sin, in Tale ideology, is [673]
primarily an offence against the person, status, or rights of the living
parents, or the parent-images—the ancestor spirits.

The structure of this relationship makes it possible for children 593
to acquiesce immediately in the commands and teachings of their 865
parents or parent-substitutes. Children are, as a rule, very obedient.
If they refuse to carry out an order there is usually some very valid
reason—acknowledged as such by both parents and children—
such as that it is some one else's turn. But the parent-child relation-
ship is educationally fundamental in another sense—it is the paradigm
of all moral relationships.

It is worth noting, by contrast, that the relationship between grand- 603
parent and grandchild is the reverse of that between parent and child.
In this case equality, compatibility and partisanship, as if in league
against the generation between them, are emphasized, more parti-
cularly by the joking relationship—mutual ragging among the Tal-
lensi—permitted between grandparent and grandchild.

The social space. How these relationships function in the educational 000
development of a Tale child is determined by its social space.[1] An individual's social space is a product of that segment of the social structure and that segment of the habitat with which he or she is in effective contact. To put it in another way, the social space is the society in its ecological setting seen from the individual's point of view. The individual creates his social space but is himself in turn formed by it. On the one hand, his range of experiences and behaviour are controlled by his social space, and on the other, everything he learns causes it to expand and become more differentiated. In the lifetime of the individual it changes *pari passu* with his psycho-physical and social development.

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[1] This term is employed here for want of an apter one. It has been used in a different sense by Simmel and others.

583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul*. This sanction is very typical.

583 768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

584 585 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

Kusase

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'. 591
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such, for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [664]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back, he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-* 583
pog) once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law [764]
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones. When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child, for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔyar*, the married *pɔyayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔyayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a
prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔyayabəlis*.
This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the
vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of
various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔyayabəlis*,
both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of
a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is
the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual
has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔyar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive
succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a
lineage *bɔyar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the
lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do
so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute
fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates
by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are
invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for
the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the
descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women,
participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his successor.
[787] This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔyayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination.
Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the
bɔyar to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of
the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the
equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the
bɔyar, and the rights of women members and their descendants to
the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

●604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent
through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give
only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever,
that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan
in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated
with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the
right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*)
on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak,
exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal 604 nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their 618x cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four 587 generations back.

Though the *pɔɣayabəlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a 764 single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are 571 often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of 562 the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔɣayabəlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and [252] food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔɣayabəlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubɛnib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔɣayabəlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubɛnib* (from *dug*, room, and *bɛ*, to stay or be) because they are identified with the *dugdɛm*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubɛnib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubɛnib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gɔre woman married to a Tɛnzugu man requires the help of *dubɛnib*, she calls upon all the other Gɔre wives, of whom there are very few, of Tɛnzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Gɔreland

844 783 769 gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be performed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

842 613 The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔyam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔyam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

604 One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahɔb*) and sister's son (*ahɔŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

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[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

strictly differentiated from a son in jural terms. The kinship tie between 604 sister's son and mother's brother is an important breach in the genealogical fence enclosing the agnatic lineage; it is one of the main gateways of an individual's social relations with members of other clans than his own.

But the recognition accorded to the mother's agnatic kin does not 611 bring out the deeper implications of maternal origin as the complementary of paternal origin. These implications are contained in the concept *soog* (pl. *saarət* or *soorət*). This concept involves the idea of matrilineal descent in contrast to that of patrilineal descent. Both in its range of efficacy, its mode of operation, its jural and ritual value, and its emotional and sentimental connotation, matrilineal descent stands in contrast to patriliny.

For obvious physiological reasons the bond of consanguinity with 593 one's mother is unique and unalterable; and it is a peculiarly personal bond. The fact that one's jural status is not derived from one's mother serves to emphasize the personal nature of this bond. A person's mother may desert his father and leave him to be reared (*ugh*) by another woman; he may feel some resentment over this all his life; but she remains his true mother, 'the mother who bore him (*ma dɔɣarug*)'. Nothing can alter this fact or extinguish the kinship ties that arise from it.

We postpone for a later chapter a consideration of the emotional ties 611 of mother and child. The concept *soog* has definite emotional implications; but here we are concerned with its implications for the social 613 structure. *Soog* means a bond of consanguinity which excludes completely any reckoning with lineage affiliation. People who are *saarət* define themselves biologically as 'the offspring of one womb'—or, in the actual phraseology of the natives, 'to have come from one vagina (*yi pɛn yɛni*)'. This is the common way of stating it; occasionally, but far less commonly, one hears people defining themselves as patrilineally related by the corresponding phrase 'to be the children of one penis (*woor yɛni biis*)'.

Saarət, therefore, are uterine kin. Between mother and child there is 611 a uterine bond corresponding to the agnatic bond between father and child; and children of one woman are *saarət*, irrespective of their paternity. 593 A woman may have children by different men of the same clan, or of different clans; they are *saarət*, irrespective of their clan affiliations.

Soog is more than the bond of personal kinship between mother and 611 child, and between siblings by the same mother. It is the bond of uterine descent perpetuated through the female line in the same way as the bond of agnatic descent is transmitted through the male line. Uterine siblings are *saarət*; uterine sisters' children are *saarət* (but not uterine brothers' children, for the children of men are not their father's *saarət*); uterine female cousins' children are *saarət*; and so on,

also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Tɔŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal 601
ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining 602
his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sɔk—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sɔk; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence.

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in 604
the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1]

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u ŋman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u ŋman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends 604
a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her 843
pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl 431
with a perineal band (*zuol vɔɔg*). This is a proud moment for her, as [884]
the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have entered the ranks of the matrons (*pɔŋaŋaaŋ*, pl. *pɔŋaŋaas*). Then, before [2A]

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[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

[2A] [Text continued on p. 301.-Analyst]

the child is due, her husband sends a sacrifice for her spirit guardian to 604
her father, to secure the blessing of her patrilineal ancestors on the 843
ordeal she is soon to undergo. When the child is born, a messenger is
again dispatched to announce its birth to the girl's parents. He is 431
received with the hospitality due to a bearer of particularly glad tidings.
Now the girl's mother sends her four new calabashes. These are the [854]
infant's toilet-vessels—one for giving the infant its daily medicated water to drink, one as a dipper for use when bathing it, one as a slop basin, one for scooping up its excrement. These private toilet utensils are in part a magical protection for the baby. The occasion is also marked, as we have learnt, by a special gift of foodstuffs to the new mother from her father. All these formalities are not necessary for children after the first; it is enough to send a message on the birth of the child. But the woman's paternal relatives are no less interested in these later children than in her first child.

A child makes the acquaintance of its mother's paternal family very 604
early in life. Its mother's sisters and mother's mother, if she is not too old, are frequent visitors to its mother. Its mother's brothers may be frequent visitors too, especially if they are on friendly terms with its father. But it is not till the child reaches the age of about 5 or 6, when it begins to be taken on visits to its *ahəb yiri*, that it clearly distinguishes these relatives. The person who matters most to a small child at its mother's brother's house is its maternal grandmother (*ma-kpeem*), in
whose quarters and under whose care the child lives.[1] Old people, both [574]
men and women, love to have their daughters' young children to stay with them, and pet and spoil them quite as much as their sons' children. As will be remembered, grandchildren joke with their maternal grandparents. At harvest time, in particular, old women often have daughters' children to stay for a week or two, so that they can enjoy the good food available at that time. Playing and eating and sleeping with the children of the house, a child learns to regard them as siblings, and partly through imitating them, partly through coming directly under the discipline of his mother's brother, a child thus visiting its *ahəb yiri* learns to think of its *ahəb* as a 'sort of father'. He hears all the gossip of the family. When a domestic sacrifice is performed he is present and receives the portion of the animal—the neck (*naŋgoor*)—prescribed for an *ahəŋ*. I have more than once seen a small boy of perhaps 8 receive the neck of a sacrifice, amid an amused chuckle from his mother's brothers. If a woman dies leaving a young child of less than 5 or 6 years old it is a common thing for the child to be sent to live with its maternal grandmother for a year or two until it is old enough to need only a minimum of maternal care.

Thus, a child learns to think of its *ahəb yiri*, in the strict sense of its mother's brother's homestead, at first, in the more extended sense, later, as a place where it is given food, shelter, affectionate attention, and

status in almost the same way as in its own home. It is not surprising to find that most Tallensi know almost as much about the affairs of their mother's brother's family as they do about their own family, and that they often have a very good knowledge of the distinctive ritual practices and ideas of their mother's brother's clan. For though a sister's child is not admitted to the esoteric ritual ceremonies of his maternal kinsmen's clan, he often hears them discuss the less sacred aspects of these ceremonies and takes part in the domestic rites that are interspersed with them.

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[1] This follows directly from the constitution of the joint family.

A great attachment may thus grow up between mother's brother and sister's child, in particular, the sister's son. This is especially the case when *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* are uterine kin (*saarət*), that is when the mother's brother is the full brother of the mother of the *ahəŋ*. The sentiments and attitudes a person has towards his mother are extended in a modified form towards her brother, and the latter extends to the sister's child the attachment he has to his sister. When I first met Barimoda at Baŋgam-Teroog's house the latter said, pointing to Barimoda, 'This is my child (*m-biig nla*).' Knowing that Barimoda and Teroog belonged to different clans, I demurred. Whereupon Teroog said: 'He is my full (*soog*) sister's son; ~~and if you~~ and your *soog* sister together have a child, is he not your child too? (*N ta-soog biig n-a-u; ka nyɛn ni i ta-soog n-kab dɔɣa bii, daɣa i biiga?*).' Barimoda was as much at home in Teroog's house as in his own. Seldom a day passed without his visiting the old man. Since Teroog's only adult son lived far away, Barimoda did for him many of the things a son would have done. He enlisted the help of his brother's sons to get Teroog's small home farm hoed and was his counsellor in all his problems, as sons usually are to a father enfeebled with years. Being an old man and head of his lineage, Teroog very often had to make sacrifices to his ancestors. On these occasions he always sent for Barimoda. Once, through a trifling disagreement with Teroog's younger wife, Barimoda refused to attend a sacrifice at Teroog's house. Naabdiya, Barimoda's half-brother and a friend of Teroog's, and I happened to be present. After the sacrifice Teroog offered the neck of the goat sacrificed to Naabdiya. Another man, able, like Naabdiya, to claim a distant matrilateral connexion with Teroog's clan, would have considered himself a 'sister's son' in this situation and have accepted the prescribed portion. But Naabdiya refused. No, he said, everybody knew that Barimoda was Teroog's favourite *ahəŋ* and always came to such sacrifices. If he, Naabdiya, now accepted the sister's son's portion Barimoda would resent it. In a few days his sulky mood would pass and he would resume his usual relations with Teroog. Teroog agreed and added that he would send the goat's neck to Barimoda with a conciliatory message. Everybody in Zubiuŋ knew of Barimoda's devotion to his *ahəb-soog* and spoke highly of him for this. So when Teroog's son died and he insisted that Barimoda should be allowed to inherit one of the widows, it met with general approval among the men of Zubiuŋ. 604

The relationship of Kpɛlimɛrəme and his mother's full brother Kuur was similar. One incident may be quoted as a particularly forcible illustration of the intimacy and attachment that often exist between *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*. Kuur was suffering from a very painful and repulsive skin disease which had finally attacked his genitals, turning them into a disgusting, ulcerated area. When Ləyani, Kuur's younger paternal brother, came to ask me for some medicine to treat this sickness, he said that the mere sight of it made him vomit—and, as he remarked, he was known to be a man of stout heart (*suhkpeemərdaan*) in dealing with sickness or death. I gave Ləyani some disinfectant, and advised cleansing and bathing the affected parts with it. Ləyani looked dubious and then explained that Kuur was in too great pain to carry out the treatment himself, Kuur's children were all too young to do it, and his disease was so revolting that none of his more distant relatives would undertake the task. Then an idea struck him. There was someone who would do it—Kpɛlimɛrəme. And in fact Kpɛlimɛrəme did undertake the unpleasant task and performed it faithfully for several weeks. 'Do you think,' said Kpɛlimɛrəme to me, 'I would let my *ahəb* die if I knew of any way of saving him?' 604 757

Such a relationship is common between sister's son and mother's full brother. As a rule there is not such great intimacy and devotion between a man and his half-sister's son. It is, however, only a matter of degree. Ɔmara was very attached to his half-sister's children, especially to her eldest daughter. He was as proud of her marriage to the Chief of Bongo as her own father was. Yɛanbərigya, like most Tallensi, was a constant visitor to his *ahəb* at Samiit. Once at a public sacrifice at which he was the only non-member of Samiit present, his mother's brother's clansmen teased him saying that he might as well come and join them for good. Anyhow, they chaffed him, he was really a son of Samiit since his mother's bride-price had not been fully paid.[1] He rejoined, jokingly, that he belonged both to Samiit and to his own clan. 604

As a rule, too, a sister's daughters do not after marriage have such constant and close contacts with their mother's brother's people as a sister's sons. Any interest a woman has in relatives other than her husband's people is chiefly directed towards her parental family, and she keeps in touch with her mother's brother's people through her mother and brothers. A woman lacks the bond of common interests due to identity of sex that reinforces the ties of mother's brother and sister's son. A woman also has no need to maintain ritual relations with her

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[1] If a woman dies leaving adult sons before the fourth cow of her bride-price is claimed, her paternal kin are normally obliged to waive it in favour of her sons. This is interpreted as a sign of their quasi-parental interest in the sons' welfare and marriages.

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604 *ahəb*. Nevertheless she has much the same attitude to him as her brothers have and will, if need arises, go to him for help as if he were her father. A woman will go to her mother's brother for a basket of grain at harvest time if her husband's grain supplies are very low and she knows that her father or brother has none to spare.

These personal bonds are transferred, in accordance with the principles we have previously made clear, to sons and grandsons and collateral relatives, as well as to the lineages, of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*. Yarəg of Gbizug was a close friend of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's family at Puhug. Saɣəbazaa, who was both a neighbour and a distant classificatory *ahəŋ* of Zubiuŋ (since both the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage and one of his inner lineage forbears were sister's sons of a Zubiuŋ lineage), took great pride in being the *ahəŋ-kpeem*, most senior of the 'sisters' sons' of that clan. He took a keen interest in its affairs and never missed attending important ceremonies anywhere in Zubiuŋ. The elders of the clan spoke of him with respect as 'our elder brother (*ti bier*)'. But naturally, the more distant the relationship is, the less intimate and the more formal do the mutual interests of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* tend to become.

604 765 Death is the key test of kinship sentiments. The day after Kpe'emi's death I happened to call at the house of his mother's full brother, Lɔɣani. I found Lɔɣani and his brother sitting listlessly at their gateway and the house was as quiet as if there were a person on his death-bed inside. The women, who should have been out collecting firewood, were at home, and the children, usually playing boisterously at that time of the day, sat in corners, talking in subdued voices. When I asked what was the matter, Lɔɣani said mournfully, 'Have you not heard of our child Kpe'emi's death? That is our grief (*ti suhkpɛləg nla*). We sitting here, our bodies are prostrate (*ti nɛŋgbina nkpi*—lit. our bodies are dead). We have no thought for food or drink or work.' Barimoda was deeply affected when his *ahəb* Teroog died, though he was then a very old man. Barimoda could not publicly manage the funeral but he did in fact manage it behind the scenes. As we shall see later, an *ahəŋ* has certain customary obligations to fulfil at the funeral of his *ahəb*. [578] The feud between the Gɔlibdaana's faction and the Kpata'arna'ab's supporters at Tɛnzugu placed many men in the camp opposed to that of their *ahəb* or *ahəs*. Kpata'ar men and Bunkyiuk men stopped having any contacts with each other. But just then the mother's brother of Naɣabil of Kpata'ar died. I was with the Kpata'arna'ab, the head of the maximal lineage, when Naɣabil came to tell him of this. 'I want to tell you', he said, 'because he (the dead man) is my true *ahəb* (i.e. mother's full brother) and if I do not go to the funeral to mourn his death it would be unseemly (*de ku maali*). Besides', he went on, turning to me, 'if I don't go my mother (also dead) would be angry because I was scorning her brother's funeral.' The Kpata'arna'ab at once gave Naɣabil permis-

sion to go, saying that the quarrel between the two clans had nothing 604
to do with the question of personal kinship ties. As this example shows, 765
there is a strong element of moral (but not jural) compulsion in the [577]
respect owed by a sister's son to his mother's brother, and the sanction behind it is the allegiance every man owes to his maternal ancestors.

On the level of sentiment and affective attitudes there is clearly a 604
close resemblance between the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child and that of father and child. The difference, and it is a fundamental difference, lies in the fact that *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* have no common economic or jural interests. Thus a man can be familiar with all the affairs of his *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* and be keenly concerned that they should go well, but he is under no responsibility for their satisfactory outcome. The tension underlying the relationship of father and son is absent, and in this important respect the relationship of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* resembles that of mother and child more closely. An *ahəb* must be respected by and he has considerable moral authority over his *ahəŋ*; but he cannot demand obedience from him as of right. This will be clearer from what follows.

Here it is pertinent to ask why the mother's brother and not her father—though he is the head of her natal family—holds the key position in the network of social relations that bind a person to his mother's patrilineal kin. As our analysis makes clear, it follows from the interaction of the principle of the equivalence of siblings and the principle of the cleavage between successive generations. A person cannot identify himself with his mother in relation to her father. He cannot have the status of a son and the status of a grandson in relation to the same person. On the other hand, as the preceding discussion makes clear, it is in conformity both with the logic of the social structure and with the pattern of sentiments uniting parent and child, for a person to extend to his mother's brother the filial attitude he has towards his mother. He can consistently be his mother's son and at the same time have a quasi-filial status in relation to her brother.

The Place of Gifts in the Relations of Ahəb and Ahəŋ

An *ahəb* demonstrates his interest in his sister's son's well-being by 604
the gifts (*püim*) he occasionally gives him. The theory is that they are
given freely out of kinship amity. By the rule of reciprocity there should 431
be a similar freely-given flow of gifts and services from *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*, but the emphasis lies on the generosity of the *ahəb*. A man is under no jural or ritual obligation to give things to his sister's child; he does so voluntarily as a quasi-paternal gesture. And though an *ahəŋ* has no property rights in the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*, he is, in theory, allowed certain liberties with things belonging to them, as if he were a kind of son of the clan. This is explained by the formula that but for the accident of

● 604 431 birth his mother might have been an owner of these things. In the past, when people moved about less freely than now, a man passing through the clan settlement of his *ahəb* could seize any guinea-fowl he saw and collect any guinea-fowl eggs he came across[1] irrespective of which member of his mother's brother's clan they belonged to. Nowadays this custom is objected to. Tallensi say that with people moving about so freely and frequently as they do now, it would soon lead to the destruction of all their flocks of guinea-fowl. But an *ahəŋ* is still at liberty to cut himself a few heads of guinea corn or millet from any farm when walking through the settlement of his *ahəb*, if he is feeling hungry.

Women *ahəs* have an analogous privilege of much more practical value. As we have learnt, if a woman has a small baby she often gets a young sister of her own inner lineage or clan to come and live with her and be the infant's nursemaid. If there is no suitable girl in her father's lineage, she is entitled to ask her *ahəb* or her father's *ahəb* to give her a little girl. This is a very common practice.

604 426 Sister's son and mother's brother cannot contract debts towards each other. If a man borrows money or livestock from an *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* repayment cannot be demanded. It rests with the borrower to make an equivalent return in due course. Ɔndieso provided an amusing illustration of this rule. He borrowed three shillings from Naambuləg, a member of the lineage of his paternal grandfather's *ahəb*, and a friend of his. For about a year nothing was said about this loan and the friendship of the two men continued as before. Then a disagreement developed between Kutəbis, head of Ɔndieso's inner lineage, and the head of Naambuləg's clan, for which the latter was in part responsible. As it was a question of a right vested in the inner lineage, Ɔndieso supported and indeed instigated Kutəbis. He was particularly angry with Naambuləg. Thereupon the latter immediately demanded repayment of the loan, thus symbolically relegating Ɔndieso to the class of non-relatives, and Ɔndieso ostentatiously repaid two shillings. Repaying Naambuləg in kind, he had deducted one shilling for two fowls Naambuləg had borrowed from his brother two or three years previously.

604 431 When Bontuya died his son Ba'andoog had to sacrifice a white bull to the dead man's *Yin* shrine before starting the funeral ceremonies. Ba'andoog went to his father's sister's son, who, he knew, had a white bull, and asked for the animal. Very reluctantly the *ahəŋ* parted with his bull. As he explained to me afterwards, it was a very fine young bull. 'But', he said, 'Bontuya begot me and I have no power to refuse him anything.' Several months later the father-in-law of the *ahəŋ* came to him demanding a cow of his daughter's bride-price. The young man promptly went

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[1] Guinea-fowl are only semi-domestic birds. They live out of doors and are very difficult to catch alive. They also lay their eggs out of doors. The privilege of an *ahəŋ* therefore had more of a token value than any practical worth. But I know several men who claim to have used their privilege at least once.

to his mother's brother's house and Ba'andoog gave him a cow of somewhat greater value than the white bull to give to his father-in-law. But such exchanges are exceptional. A fowl, a sixpence, a slab of tobacco, a few kola nuts, these are the more usual kinds of gifts that pass between extra-clan kin. 604 431

There are two gifts from a mother's brother to which great significance is attached. One of these is the gift of a hen to a lad from his *ahəb* when he becomes capable of productive labour. This is almost a universal custom among the Tallensi. As we have shown in an earlier chapter, its importance lies in that it marks the beginning of the economic (and, therefore, in due course, social) self-differentiation of a boy within the joint family. It symbolizes, and in many cases actually serves as, the starting-point of the accumulation of wealth by individual effort. It was the proud boast of Barimoda that starting as a small boy with a fowl given to him by his father's *ahəb* he had eventually 'achieved' (*paa*) a cow from which he had had several calves. In every settlement one can find two or three men who have matched this achievement, but it is more common to find men who have 'achieved' a goat or a sheep in this way. And though Tallensi always speak as if they began with one hen this is not strictly true. A boy may receive fowls from two or three matrilateral kinsmen, and he may be given more than one fowl by an *ahəb* who is specially attached to him. Kəyatee was unlucky with the first hen his true mother's brother gave him. When it died he told his *ahəb*, who gave him another. He successfully bred a brood of chickens from this hen and was given yet another hen by the same mother's brother. 604 431 556

An *ahəb* has no claims on livestock bred in this way by his sister's son. Very often, if a man needs a fowl for a sacrifice and has none that is suitable, he will send to ask his sister's son for one; but this is not connected with the gift of a hen he may have made to the latter many years before. The equivalent return for the mother's brother's hen is made in another way. As has been previously mentioned, when a man 'achieves' a cow, after starting with his mother's brother's hen, he owes this cow to his mother's brother's lineage ancestor shrine (*bəɣar*). He keeps the cow until it is too old to calve and then takes it to his mother's brother's lineage as a thank-offering to his maternal ancestors. For, say the natives, it must surely have been their beneficence that gave him prosperity, since the hen came from their son. 604 431 769

Far more important is the gift of land by an *ahəb* to an *ahəŋ*. There are degrees of finality about such a gift. It is a very common practice for both men and women to beg a plot of land from an *ahəb*—or any other extra-clan matrilateral kinsman—living in an adjacent settlement to plant with ground-nuts or sweet potatoes. The land given for these purposes generally lies on the outskirts of the donor's settlement, near that of the recipient. As often as not, it is land too exhausted for grain crops; or else it is land not required by the *ahəb* that season. Use of the land 604 426

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is granted for one season only, but the *ahəŋ* is often allowed to retain it for several years with the tacit understanding that it must be surrendered whenever the donor asks for it, as he will do a season in advance when he wishes to resume cultivation of it. The gift is made without any special ceremony and the recipient pays no rent. If he gets a good crop he usually gives his *ahəb* a basket of ground-nuts or sweet potatoes as a token of gratitude. But this is entirely optional. A person may borrow a ground-nut plot in the same way from a uterine or other matrilateral or sororal kinsman in his or her own clan and the same rules apply. Women also borrow plots for ground-nuts from their own kinsmen belonging to their husbands' clans. This practice is so common that it can be described as the normal thing for young men, especially if they are unmarried and farming with their fathers. Nor is it shortage of land that makes young men ask an *ahəb* for a ground-nut plot rather than their fathers. Naɣabaal, Nalɛbseug, and Mosuor, all youths aged between 15 and 20, had borrowed ground-nut and sweet potato plots from their mothers' brothers' people, but the fathers of all three had ample land. Indeed Naɣabaal's father allowed two of his *ahəs* to grow ground-nuts on a distant piece of fallow land belonging to him. A strong motive is the knowledge that a youth's father will, as a rule, not interfere with the manner in which the youth may wish to dispose of a crop grown on his mother's brother's land as he might if it were grown on land belonging to the nuclear lineage. There is always the feeling that anything obtained through the use of lineage resources must be at the disposal of the whole domestic group if it is required. Thus borrowing a ground-nut plot from one's mother's brother reflects the association we have previously stressed of individual self-differentiation in economic and social terms with maternal origin. But there is also a more important jural reason. A man cannot refuse his son or brother's son if the latter asks for some land to use for himself and the father has spare land. But then he cannot take possession of the land again without very good reason. The result is that if a man obtains a plot of land from his father or the head of his nuclear lineage for growing ground-nuts he tends, in due course, to establish *de facto* possessory rights over it and it never reverts to the patrimonial land. Unless, therefore, a man wishes deliberately to endow a son or brother's son with land, to be held in perpetuity by the latter's agnatic descendants, he prefers not to grant such a dependant a plot for his private use. He cannot make such a grant to one son or brother's son only; he would have to give similar plots to his other sons and proxy sons. Resort to matrilateral kin avoids this dilemma.

This arises also in the more serious business of borrowing land to cultivate as a regular bush-farm for a period of years. A man who wants a new bush-farm commonly tries to get one from a matrilateral or sororal kinsman or lineage. It is very rare for land to be borrowed from a clansman who is not also a matrilateral or sororal kinsman, for permanent

cultivation. It is felt to be incompatible with clanship ties. Clansmen 604
form a corporate unit, in theory made up of a vastly expanded group
of brothers. In theory, every member of a clan or maximal lineage has 426
an interest in and a potential right to inherit the property of any other member of the clan. Hence if a lineage segment dies out all the land formerly owned by its members passes into the ownership of the next higher lineage of which it forms a segment, and is vested in the head of that lineage. Thus if a man were to lend land for permanent farming to a clansman he would never be able to demand its return. The lender, moreover, would not give the land with that feeling of personal interest in the recipient's welfare and desire for his prosperity that an *ahəb* has towards his sister's son or an *ahəŋ* towards his mother's brother. A matrilateral kinsman gives freely, solely out of consideration for the needs of his kinsman, not because the latter has a right to what he asks for; and the spirit in which the gift is made carries with it the blessings of the giver's ancestors. There is an advantage to the giver in that what is voluntarily given can be taken back without affecting the relationship of the parties, and an advantage to the recipient in that restoring the borrowed land to its owner does not mean a surrender of a right.

I have recorded the ownership of a large number of bush-farms. They 471
fall into three approximately equal groups: those which are said to have
belonged to the lineage from time immemorial; those which it is claimed 425
were bought by an ancestor; and those which, it is said, were obtained by an ancestor by gift from a mother's brother or other matrilateral kinsman. The latter explanation is so common and so stereotyped that it may well be mythical in many cases. But cross-checking and the fact that such gifts are still commonly made show that the claim is true for most cases. I witnessed the whole procedure twice, when two men well known to me obtained gifts of bush-farms from matrilateral kinsmen. Ɔmara, a Zoo man, obtained his from the head of the inner lineage at Zubiuŋ to which his paternal great-grandfather's *ahəb* had belonged; and Sɔmbura from Ba'ari obtained his from his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage at Tongo. These cases are the more significant in that it has been the practice, for several generations, for Tongo people to get land from their matrilateral kinsmen at Zoo, and for Ba'ari people to resort to their kinsmen at Yaɣazoor for grants of bush-farms.

The procedure is as follows. A man looking for a new bush-farm 604
sees a suitable piece of land which he knows belongs to his true or to a
classificatory mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*). He ascertains that 425
it has not been cultivated for the last ten or fifteen years, which suggests that the owners are not hard pressed for land. He then goes to 'beg' (*soh*) the land from his *ahəb yidɛm*. The land Ɔmara desired belonged to his lineage *ahəb*[1] Dawoog's inner lineage; and partly for this reason,

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[1] i.e. the progenitrix of Ɔmara's medial lineage had been a daughter of Dawoog's inner lineage.

● 604 425 partly because Ɔmara's relationship was with the whole inner lineage, not with Dawoog personally, the request had to be placed before the assembled elders of the inner lineage. The land could not have been granted without their unanimous consent. This having been obtained, a day was fixed for handing over the land. Early in the morning of the appointed day Ɔmara, followed by his oldest son, arrived bringing a fowl and a guinea-fowl and a large basket of guinea corn. Dawoog then [782] summoned all the men of his inner lineage, and proceeded to sacrifice the birds to his lineage ancestors at the lineage *bɔɣar*. Addressing the ancestors he explained all the circumstances of their 'grandson' Ɔmara's request and exhorted them to bless his labour and to grant that the new farm might bring him prosperity. It was a long prayer detailing exactly how Ɔmara was related to Dawoog's lineage and promising that he would bring further offerings in gratitude to the *bɔɣar* whenever the new farm produced good crops. The flesh of the birds was divided amongst all present, including Ɔmara, in accordance with the customary rules.

Ɔmara and his son, accompanied by two young men and an elder of the *ahəb yiri* deputed by Dawoog, then repaired to the bush-farm. The elder showed Ɔmara the boundaries of the farm and the young men hoed a strip along one boundary to symbolize marking them out (*kyie*). They then set to, with the aid of Ɔmara and his sons, to hoe a small patch, and so symbolically to hand over the right of working the farm. This was symbolized, also, in a simple rite in which the elder handed Ɔmara a large pellet of soil from the farm, mixed with a handful of the flour used in the sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, to eat.

The procedure was identical in the case of Sɔmbura, with one exception. The land belonged to his *ahəb* Saɣamane's nuclear lineage, so there was no need to obtain the consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Saɣamane did, however, inform them because, as he put it, 'you cannot [577] undertake so important a transaction without the knowledge of your "brothers" and "fathers", and besides, telling them makes them witnesses to the act'. It means that there will always be some member of the inner lineage who knows the circumstances and conditions of the gift.

604 577 425 Tallensi attach very great importance to the ritual steps in this transaction. They secure the blessing of his matrilateral ancestors for the recipient of the land. Without this, they believe, failure and even disaster would overtake him when he starts farming the new bush-farm; for, they say, the land really belongs to the ancestors who first cultivated it. Moreover, the ritual formalities also have an explicitly stressed jural function. It is a solemn covenant between the parties, made in the presence of the ancestors, in which all those who have rights in the land avow their consent to the gift and the recipient pledges himself to abide by the implicit conditions of the tenure of the land. The arrangement

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has the sanctions of the ancestor cult behind it, and the guarantee of 577
having been made with the public consent of all who have an interest 425
in the land.

The recipient pays no rent or dues for the land. During the first three 604
or four years he must give a basket of guinea corn or millet to the
grantors after every harvest. If he has had good crops it will be a large 427
basketful; if he has had a poor season it will be a small basket. In subse- 425
quent years he need only bring a gift of grain if his crops are good and if he wishes to do so. Some of this grain will be ground into flour and a libation poured to his matrilateral ancestors at their *bɔɣar*, expressing thanks for their beneficence. This serves also to reaffirm the ownership of the land by the grantors. Occasionally, too, he may bring a fowl to offer at the ancestral *bɔɣar* of his *ahəb* lineage in gratitude for the beneficence of the ancestors whose land he is working.

In principle, the lineage that grants the land can recover use of it at 604
any time by giving the recipient a year's notice. But this right would only
be exercised, in practice, if the latter offends them in any way—for 425
instance, by withholding the gifts of grain in spite of having excellent crops. As a rule, therefore, the *ahəŋ* retains the use of the land until he no longer requires it. It then reverts automatically to its proper owners. If the original recipient dies, his son may continue to use the land without specially renewing the arrangement with his *ahəb yidem*.

Now supposing the farm is so large that the recipient need not cultivate all of it at one time. By cultivating and fallowing different portions of the farm in rotation he and his sons after him may keep it in use continually. If this goes on for two generations, by which time all the individuals who were present in person at the original transaction are probably dead, the land passes into the effective ownership of the original recipient's lineage, in the third generation. The successors of the original grantor no longer have the right of recovering the land but they are still the nominal owners of the land. If it is wholly abandoned they may resume occupation; the users may not sell the land; and if they grossly offend the nominal owners, the latter can, in theory, turn them off it.

This right is most emphatically claimed, though it is, by all accounts, very rarely exercised. An incident concerning Ɔndieso is suggestive of what might happen. Ɔndieso quarrelled with his neighbour and the head of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. The latter, in his anger, ordered Ɔndieso to leave the land he was farming. This land had been given to Ɔndieso's grandfather by his mother's brother, the then Gbizug Tɛndaana. Ɔndieso, previously defiant, was filled with dismay. Not to comply with the tɛndaana's demand meant risking both the wrath of his matrilateral ancestors and the vengeance of the Earth whose cult is so closely bound up with Gbizug. So he went across to Deemzeet, the head of Puhug section of

Tongo and therefore the senior lineage head of all Tongo, and begged him to intercede. As Deemzeet was also the head of the Gbizug Tɛndaana's grandfather's mother's brother's lineage, the choice was doubly fortunate. Deemzeet thereupon sent two of his sons to plead with the tɛndaana, who consented to withdraw his demand if Ɔndieso would bring a fowl and a guinea-fowl to sacrifice to the ancestor who had originally made the gift of the land, in sign of contrition.

Though Ɔndieso climbed down for fear of mystical retribution, both he and others maintained that the tɛndaana had exceeded his rights. The land Ɔndieso's grandfather had been given was no longer a bush-farm. Ɔndieso's father's brother had been given leave to build on it and the homestead had stood there for two generations. This, they considered, gave Ɔndieso a title amounting to complete ownership of the land. Had his *ahəb* been an ordinary person and not a tɛndaana, whose ritual position gives his fulminations the force of a curse, Ɔndieso could have ignored his demand.

It has always been and still is a frequent practice for men to solicit a site for a homestead and a piece of land to make a home farm, from a matrilateral kinsman, if they wish to set up an independent homestead. As we have recorded in our earlier book, this is how many Tongo people have come to live at Zoo and this is how many immigrants into the peripheral settlements find sites for their homes.[1] We mentioned there that it is considered to be morally wrong to refuse such a request if one has land to spare.[2] The rules of tenure are the same as for a bush-farm borrowed from a matrilateral kinsman. But if the house site and home farm have been continuously occupied by the same nuclear lineage for two or three generations, their ownership is considered to be entire. Their title rests not only on the passage of the generations but on the fact that they have begun to bury their dead there and to transmit the land in accordance with the rules of inheritance. Indeed, Tallensi say that only the person who originally granted the land can really recover it. Even his immediate heir could not compel the recipient to surrender the land. The latter could, if he wished, refuse to go. He would invoke the common ancestors of his hosts and himself and this would be sufficient—unless he had committed some particularly heinous breach of kinship amity against his hosts. Pa'anbobis furnishes a case in point. Many years ago, owing to a quarrel with his older half-brother he went to build his homestead on a bush-farm he had borrowed from his matrilateral kinsman and clansman Mambaŋya. There he lived for perhaps twenty years. Then Mambaŋya asked him to relinquish the land. He said his sons were growing up and wanted more land to cultivate. So Pa'anbobis went back to his original home. Both men understood and admitted in private that Mambaŋya's story was a polite pretext. The point was that he did not wish this land to be lost to his sons altogether; and he therefore took the precaution of getting it back in his own lifetime. 604 425

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 161, 221.

[2] Ibid., p. 163.

If a man gives land over which he has full rights of disposal to his own sister's son, this amounts to an outright gift. The land belongs to the sister's son and his heirs in perpetuity. This is always explained by the jural fiction that the *ahəb* (identifying himself with his sister) has, like a father, bestowed a portion of his own land on 'his child'. When the *ahəb* dies the *ahəŋ* has the same rights in respect of the share of the patrimonial land allocated to him as the *ahəb*'s own sons have in respect of any shares he might have given them. It is an application of the rule that siblings are equals. Barimoda and Kpɛlimɛrəme both had farms given to them on these terms by their mothers' brothers and both said they would never part with their farms. Wherever a branch of one clan is found settled on land coming under the ritual jurisdiction of a neighbouring clan, the origin of the relationship is traced back to such a gift of land. Thus Nəŋsuur yidem of Tongo occupy and own land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra Tɛndaana.[1] They ascribe their rights in their land and the fact that they are living on Zubiuŋ land to their founding ancestor's having been a true sister's son of the Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra Tɛndaana of his time. He was given a very large piece of land by the tɛndaana and came to live there. It is this land that his descendants now occupy.

The Status of an Ahəŋ as a Foster-child in his Ahəb's Family

We have mentioned before that a boy who loses his own parents and cannot settle down with a proxy father sometimes goes to live with his mother's brother. A few cases of this sort are found in every settlement. As a rule the boy eventually goes back to his natal home to settle down there; occasionally he settles permanently in his mother's brother's settlement. In any case, he never loses touch with his natal home and never forfeits his rights and status in his own lineage and clan. He does not, as we know, become a member of the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*. This brings us back to the question of the jural relations of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*. 604 597

A boy who grows up in his mother's brother's household is treated exactly like a son and is indistinguishable from a son of the family, to the outsider. Thus it was many months before I discovered that Puvolimra was not the Gbizug Tɛndaana's son but his sister's son. He was probably in his late twenties and had lived with the tɛndaana since boyhood. He continued to farm with the tɛndaana after the latter's oldest son had established his own household. He was, indeed, the tɛndaana's right-hand man, more trusted by him, in some ways, than

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 59.

604 597 his own sons. More surprising, Puvəlimra was admitted to all the esoteric rites of the Earth cult and often represented the tɛndaana in ritual activities. He was permitted to do this because he belonged to a lineage holding a tɛndaana-ship allied to that of Gbizug. Had he been a Namoo, he would have been excluded from all but the domestic religious rites of the tɛndaana.

604 605 He was a great favourite, too, with the tɛndaana's children. But one of the sons once made a revealing comment on Puvəlimra's position. He spoke in a slightly patronizing tone, though not offensively so. 'Puvəlimra', he said, 'is our child (*u a ti bii*). We like him to stay with us and we may not deny him anything. But one day he may decide to go home and we can't restrain him; or if he offends us we can tell him to go. He is not our person (as a member of the lineage is). However much the tɛndaana may like him he cannot inherit our ancestor shrines or our farms or our homestead. It is because he gets on so well with the tɛndaana that he stays.'

604 602 This comment is typical of conventional opinion on the position of an *ahəŋ* in the family of his *ahəb*. Puvəlimra himself, Gikoo-Duun, and Bayana, three young men who either lived or had lived with their mothers' brothers, defined their position in exactly the same terms. It would be an offence against the ancestors to deny an *ahəŋ* a home, but he has none of the fundamental rights of a son; his position depends on the personal attachment to him, and concern for him, of his mother's brother. An *ahəŋ* in Puvəlimra's position, it is sometimes suggested, is apt to be more compliant than a son, so as to ingratiate himself with his *ahəb*. He cannot make demands as of right, as a son may do. Said Gikoo-Duun: 'I was a small boy when I went to live with my *ahəb-soog* at Saamər (in Mampurugu). Later I went out on my own to build my homestead and farm for myself near him. It was not because of a quarrel. But my mother's brother will not take care of (i.e. take responsibility for) my affairs (*u ku maal n-yɛla*). He will not marry a wife for me. If he does give me one cow to help pay my wife's bride-price and we should some day quarrel, he will say I must pay it back. He is not of my people. My people are here at Zubiuŋ. Even though I am far away, they (the Zubiuŋ people) will look after my affairs. If I were to die to-day they would make my funeral and inherit my things. Do you not see that I come here (to Zubiuŋ) regularly to sacrifice to my ancestors?'

As we know, one of the major jural responsibilities of a father for his son is in marriage affairs. Hence the fact that a sister's son has no claim, as of right, on his mother's brother's assistance in this important matter is a good test of their jural relations. Puvəlimra's marriage created the first rift between him and his mother's brother. The marriage was beset with difficulties. The girl's father feared that he would never get the bride-price as Puvəlimra's proxy father was a blind old man who lived

on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tendaana 604
refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvɔlimra
succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the 602
girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made to the head of Puvɔlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it to Puvɔlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it. It was then that the Gbizug Tendaana made Puvɔlimra a present of a bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over to Puvɔlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time being; but that dry season Puvɔlimra went, for the first time in his life, to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for 597
the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his
foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopting 602
the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb*. It is as if his mother's bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son. And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the clan settlement of his *ahəb*. He retains only ritual ties with his paternal clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*. At Gbeog, for instance, there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral. When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not 602
forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care 613
of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For
example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day 577
killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home to his *ahəb*. The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's 'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
622 another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
183 would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly, they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tendaana. In addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahəŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office. 622 183

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an *ahəŋ* or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a particular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yεa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tenzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahəŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman. 425 622

Certain powers normally held by tendaanas only are sometimes vested in lineages that do not have tendaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyεbəg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahəŋ* of the tendaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tendaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors. 793 604

The Ahəŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahəŋ* forms a link between his father's lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahəŋ* is always chosen as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the 604 584

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

604 584 *pɔɣasama*. As has been previously stated, he is a clansman of the bridegroom who is also an *ahəŋ* of the bride's clan—*ahəŋ* being understood to include any sororal kinsman of whatever degree. The reason for this choice was well put by a group of elders with whom I discussed this subject. 'He (the *pɔɣasama*) is our (the bridegroom's clan's) person and is also their (the bride's clan's) person. He may not deceive us nor may he deceive them. If he deceives either of us the ancestors will not permit it.'[1]

604 584 764 The *pɔɣasama* appears in every transaction between the two parties to a marriage. He takes the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) to the bride's father. When, later, the bride's father sends messengers (*duondɛm*) to demand the bride-price, the *pɔɣasama* conducts them to the person responsible for paying the bride-price and assists in the negotiations. Many a marriage is saved by the skill and patience of a *pɔɣasama* in persuading the bride's people and the bridegroom's people to a compromise on the question of bride-price payments. He must be present whenever bride-price payments are made; for if, at any subsequent time, a dispute should arise as to what was paid, his word is final. The *pɔɣasama* also acts as intermediary in all the formal claims, services, and duties that arise between the parties as a result of the marriage. He is the messenger who goes to announce the birth of her first child to the bride's parents. If a woman's father or mother dies, the *pɔɣasama* conducts the party sent by her husband with his obligatory food contributions to the funeral, and he hands these contributions over to his 'mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*)'. In this and similar jural or ritual relations between the husband's people and the wife's people, the *pɔɣasama* has to be present both as a witness of the transaction and as a mediator, in case the recipients object to the quantity or quality of the food contributions or the payments offered. For though the obligations of the parties in such situations are clearly defined by custom, there is room for much quibbling over details. Custom declares that a man must kill and cook a goat or a sheep to send to his father-in-law's funeral at a certain stage. But one man will, out of generosity or as a special sign of respect, kill a large goat, whereas another will be mean and choose a puny animal. I have seen violent arguments arise between a son-in-law's messengers and his late father-in-law's lineage over a point of this sort. The mere presence of the *pɔɣasama*, even if he is but a young lad, has a conciliatory influence. As will be remembered, the *pɔɣasama*'s role does not come to an end on his death. It passes to his brothers and sons, like any other attribute of his social personality.

604 778 There are other situations in which an *ahəŋ* acts as intermediary between the members of his paternal clan and his matrilateral clan. For example, the setting up of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine for a man is done

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[1] *'U a tam nit ba le'a bam nit; u ku too m-paah tam, u ku too m-paah bam-mi; ɔn paah ti sɔ kpiinam la ku saɣi.'*

for him by the lineage of the ancestress who has demanded the erection of the shrine. The diviner-to-be is himself a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' or 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' of the men who come to perform the ceremony of establishing the shrine. But in addition, a member of his clan who is also an *ahəŋ* of the visitors' clan is deputed to act as intermediary. He goes out to meet the visitors when they approach and escorts them to the homestead of the diviner-to-be; and he acts as spokesman for the latter throughout the ceremony. Thus he formally 'shows' (*paal*) the visitors the beer and the fowls and the goat that have been provided for the ceremony and acts as mediator if there is a disagreement about the amount or quality of these provisions. In the ritual situations that make up the ceremony the visitors sit together in a group and the diviner-to-be and his clansmen sit together in a group. Between the two groups sits the selected *ahəŋ*. As is customary in all such situations, the two parties do not address one another directly. They address the intermediary, who 'passes on (*zaŋ ti*)' what was said to the other party. 604 778

Similarly, if a dispute occurs between segments of different clans, for instance over the abduction of a wife, the injured group might send one of their members who is a 'sister's son' of the abductor's clan, with a message of protest and a demand for the return of the wife. An *ahəŋ* is the appropriate person to act as go-between in negotiations between different clans. In the system of clanship ties, it will be remembered, intercalary lineages are sometimes credited with being the agnates of one clan and the 'sister's sons' of the other.[1] 604 627

As has been suggested, Tallensi maintain that an *ahəŋ* acting as an intermediary in inter-clan transactions is bound to be equally faithful to both parties. This does not mean that an *ahəŋ* is always equally loyal in sentiment to both his patrilineal and his matrilateral—especially his immediate maternal—kin. Tallensi say that when there is a clash of interests a man will always side with his patrilineal kin while endeavouring, if possible, to refrain from bringing harm on his maternal kin. The behaviour of an *ahəŋ* in war between his and his mother's brother's clan is a case in point. 604 613

But there is a belief which suggests that the loyalty of an *ahəŋ* to his mother's brother's lineage may, in some circumstances, outweigh his loyalty to his own clan. In the old days of warfare, it is said, if a man was killed in fighting, there was a way of taking vengeance on the slayer by means of sorcery. The arrow that slew the victim was extracted, and the clan and lineage of the slayer were ascertained. This was easy. Every inner or medial lineage of a clan usually has a distinctive mark (*daan*). One lineage, for example, may tie a tiny guinea-fowl feather at the base of the arrow-head, another may use a particular species of grass. By inquiring from their sororal kinsmen in the enemy clan the victim's lineage brothers soon discovered which lineage the slayer 604 613 754

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 44 ff.

● 604 belonged to and who he was. The method of sorcery was to dip this
'evil arrow (*peembier*)' secretly into some food or drink the slayer was
613 about to take. If this was done he would die. The problem then was
754 to find someone who would carry out this task. It could not be done by
any of the victim's clansmen since it required intimate contact with the
slayer's family.

If there was a daughter of the victim's clan, or better still, inner
578 lineage married to a member of the slayer's inner lineage, she might be
604 persuaded to do it. Such an action would be a grave sin, for which the
613 woman's husband's ancestors would punish her with death. But some-
754 times women hate their husbands so much in their hearts, Tallensi say,
that they will risk anything to injure them and their clan. And if the dead man was a close agnate of the woman, she might put vengeance for his death above her duty to her husband's clan. Alternatively, an *ahəŋ* of the victim's inner lineage or clan, who is a member of the slayer's inner lineage or clan, might be persuaded to undertake the commission. Only a man who had a deep grudge against the slayer would undertake so wicked an action for which the clan ancestors would certainly punish him with death. But enmity between clansmen, even between brothers of the same inner lineage, is not unknown; and as Tallensi often assert, the belief that the ancestors may punish an action with death does not always restrain an unscrupulous man. Whether or not this act of sorcery was ever carried out I cannot tell. It is impossible to obtain verifiable information on a point of this sort. But what is of interest is the belief itself. Assuming that it is founded on fantasy, it still suggests that the loyalties of an *ahəŋ* are felt to be more evenly divided than is conventionally admitted.

604 There is other evidence for this view. The Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu
earned the hostility of most of the maximal lineage and clan heads of the
578 Tongo district by his high-handed drive to aggrandize himself.[1] In
public his opponents had the support of practically all their clan or lineage elders. But amongst them there were, in every clan, one or two private sympathizers of the Gɔlibdaana. The usual explanation was that these men were 'sisters' sons' or 'grandsons' of his inner lineage or clan. One of the Chief of Tongo's most trusted and devoted elders used to visit the Gɔlibdaana regularly. Another elder of the chief pointed out to me, in explanation, that the first was an *ahəŋ* of the Gɔlibdaana's inner lineage. He quoted several other men who were *ahəs* of the Gɔlibdaana's inner lineage and maintained close contact with him. It was through them, he added, that the Gɔlibdaana kept himself so well informed of everything that happened at Tongo, even of matters that should not be known outside the chief's family. He admitted that the Chief of Tongo probably had similar contacts with the Gɔlibdaana's faction and kept himself informed of the Gɔlibdaana's activities in the same way.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 251 ff.

The Ritual Relations of Matrilateral and Sororal Kin

We have previously observed that the distinguishing attribute of an 604
ahəb in Tale thought is that he sacrifices on behalf of his *ahəŋ*; and *ahəŋ*
in this context includes all sororal kin, both those who are strictly *ahəs* 602
and those who are strictly *yaas*. This is an indication of the importance attached to the ritual relations of extra-clan kin.

As with all the social relations of mother's brother and sister's son, their ritual relations vary in frequency and degree according to their genealogical distance. Thus a male *ahəŋ* is obliged to send a ready cooked fowl to be 'set out (*zien*)' in commemoration of his *ahəb* when the latter's funeral is being celebrated. A child of 3 or 4 will have the fowl sent in his name by his parents; a man of substance might, as a special gesture of affection and respect, send a sheep instead of a fowl. No *ahəŋ* would fail in this duty where his true mother's brother is concerned. I have known men who were small children when a mother's brother died, and whose parents omitted to send fowls to the funeral in their name, make up for it years later on the occasion of a funeral in the family of their *ahəb*. Not infrequently, men will voluntarily send a fowl or a sheep as a tribute to the funeral of a father's mother's brother. But it is exceptional for such a tribute to be offered at the funeral of a more remote 'mother's brother'.

When a man sacrifices to an ancestor spirit, any descendant of that 602
ancestor has the right to be present and to share in the sacrament. The
only exceptions are the cult of the clan or maximal lineage *bɔɣar* and, 604
among the real Talis, the cult of the Earth and of the External *Bɔɣar*. 769
It would be incompatible with the functions of these cults as foci of social integration on the highest level of corporate structure to allow non-members of the lineage concerned to take part in them. But an *ahəŋ* may attend domestic sacrifices to any of his matrilateral ancestors and sacrifices to the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔɣar*) of the lineage of his true or classificatory mother's brother.

If a man proposes to make a sacrifice to one of his immediate antecedents (say, his father or grandfather), and if he is going to sacrifice anything larger than a fowl or guinea-fowl (say, a goat or a sheep or a cow), he is in duty bound to inform his sisters. He is not bound to tell his deceased sister's sons, but he generally does so, particularly if it is so important a sacrifice as a cow. A cow is seldom sacrificed to a shrine of lesser standing than a lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence when such a sacrifice is planned, the man who is making it should, in theory, inform all the sororal descendants of the lineage. He does not actually do so; he informs his own sisters' sons and his father's sisters' sons and leaves it to the other members of the lineage (who will, of course, automatically be present) to inform their close *ahəs* if they wish to. But news of such a sacrifice travels fast owing to the complex interweaving of kinship ties,

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604 769 [764] and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance. It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are informed, distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

604 782 An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bɔɣar*, there are always *ahəs* present; perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

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[1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

ahəs, representing perhaps five or six clans, over the division of the 604 cow's neck amongst themselves. It is on such occasions that the *ahəs* 782 divide into two groups, the *dugni ahəs*, who are sisters' sons of the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony, and the *yɛŋha* (outside) *ahəs*, whose matrilateral links are with other segments of the clan. Etiquette dictates that the choicest and largest part of the meat apportioned to the *ahəs* should be given to the 'outside *ahəs*'. The *dugni ahəs*, it is argued, have many more opportunities of attending ceremonies of this inner lineage and receiving their shares of the sacrificial meat.

There are certain ceremonial occasions on which sisters' children of 604 all degrees usually turn up in large numbers.[1] They include not only 764 *ahəs* of the lineage immediately responsible for the ceremony but also remote *ahəs* and 'grandsons (*yaas*)' of the clan. The death of a senior elder or of the holder of a politico-ritual office brings 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' from a wide range to the funeral. They are present at all stages of the funeral, but the largest number usually come on the day of the burial, on the day the funeral proper (as opposed to the burial rites) commences, and on the two occasions when a diviner is consulted to ascertain the mystical author of the death. These are all occasions when animals are slaughtered as offerings and tributes to the dead, or else food or beer is used in the rites and shared amongst all present. The meat and the drink form a big attraction to all who have kinship ties with the lineage celebrating the funeral. It is no mean attraction either, considering that at a big funeral, such as that of the head of a section (*yizug*) of a clan or of a maximal lineage, two or three big beasts (cows and donkeys) and from twenty to forty small stock (sheep and goats) will be slaughtered, not to speak of innumerable fowls. In addition there will be great quantities of porridge and other cooked food. And *ahəs* have prescribed shares of all these items. Similar prodigality is shown in the brewing of beer for a big funeral.

But greed is far from being the chief motive that brings matrilateral and sororal kin to an important funeral. The profusion of food and beer—both of which are distributed only on specific ritual occasions—serves chiefly to create and maintain the right atmosphere of pride and kinship amity. For it must be remembered that most of the 'sisters' sons' will bring a gift, if it is only a meagre chicken and a small basket of grain; and if there are twenty or thirty 'sisters' sons' present the share of meat and beer each will receive is of less value than the things 604 he brings. 764

A 'sister's son' or a 'grandson', like everybody else who attends such 571

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[1] As these ceremonies are almost always conducted by men and belong to the ritual and jural spheres of activity dominated by the men, the *ahəs* who come are principally males; but often one or two female *ahəs* come as well. The neck of the animal sacrificed belongs in theory to the *ahəs* of both sexes, but I have never seen it given to a woman.

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funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

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For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend, and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

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It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

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This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

and 'grandsons'. There is another, and in some ways more important, 604
aspect. Every man sacrifices to both his agnatic ancestors and his
maternal ancestors, as we have seen. He has shrines consecrated to 769
ancestors of both lines in his homestead. The ancestors who constitute
his *Yin* are very often matrilateral or include matrilateral ancestors. 778
Indeed this is so common that a *Yin* that has no matrilateral ancestors is somewhat unusual. Knowing the significance of the *Yin* shrine as a symbol of a man's individuality, we can see why his connexion with his mother's side is apt to be stressed in it. Again, every man erects a shrine to his mother when she dies, which in the course of time may develop into a very important shrine for him. There are other shrines, too, which are consecrated to matrilateral ancestors. The most important of these are divining shrines (*bakologo*) and *bɔyar* shrines.

A *bakologo* shrine is, by definition, a 'female (*bumpɔk*)' shrine. That 778
is to say, the ancestors associated with it come, by definition, from a
matrilateral lineage of the diviner; and the dominant figure among them 787
is usually a woman, a 'mother'. It is a point of striking significance in
the social psychology of the Tallensi that the spirits through whom a 769
diviner makes contact with the ancestors of his clients should constitute a 'feminine' group,[1] the more so when the character of the *bakologo* complex is understood. The *bakologo*[2] is the very incarnation of the vindictive and jealous aspect of the ancestors. It persecutes the man in whose life it has intervened relentlessly, until he finally submits and 'accepts (*die*)' it—that is, until he undertakes to set up a shrine to the *bakologo* spirits in his own home so that he can sacrifice to them regularly. He then promises, also, to use the shrine for divining. But not every man has a talent for divining, so most men simply have the shrine and do not use it for divination. It is interesting to note that nine out of ten men over 40 have *bakologo* shrines. Every man, and not only those who have suffered exceptional misfortunes, is directed by the religious system of the Tallensi to project his deeper feelings of guilt and insecurity largely on to the mother image embodied in the *bakologo* complex. Usually, also, a man does not immediately yield to the demands of the *bakologo* ancestors. He temporizes, evades, and resists, perhaps for years, until he is at last forced to submit and accept the *bakologo*. This 'cools (*maa*)' or subdues the *bakologo*. By giving the spirits a home in his own house, where they can be cared for, their victim transforms their hate into love. They may still inflict misfortunes on him, but he has a means of placating them since he can sacrifice to the shrine. In return for the sacrifices they

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[1] Cf. what was said on p. 235 above about the cruelty attributed to female ancestor spirits.

[2] As with all religious terms of this class among the Tallensi, *bakologo* is used both for the shrine (*baɣɔr*)—the tall, conical object built of mud and smeared with the dried blood and feathers of sacrifices—and for the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated. It signifies also the whole configuration of ideas and beliefs associated with the shrine.

602 to do this service because, as a kinsman of the sufferer, he naturally wishes to see him free of his evil fate. He is held to desire this the more 789 strongly because his *ahəb* sacrifices on his behalf. Hence his welfare depends on the continued life and the perpetuation of the lineage of the *ahəb*, both of which are threatened by the evil Predestiny. Lastly, he is specially suitable because a complete stranger might use the opportunity to do the sufferer magical harm, while a patrilineal kinsman of his might be contaminated by the evil Predestiny. Again, anybody who can be identified as an *ahəŋ*, in however remote a classificatory sense, may be asked to perform this service.

The Father's Sister

604 We have left the discussion of the relationship of father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) and brother's child (*bii*) for this chapter, although it is not a relationship of extra-clan kinship. Father's sister and brother's child are members of the same clan and lineage. But Tallensi associate the father's sister with relatives outside the clan. This is due to her marrying out of the [428] clan, to her having no significant public voice in the affairs of the lineage, and to her being unable to inherit lineage property or ancestor shrines.[1] Thus a native usually compares his relationship with his father's sister to his relationship with his mother's brother, not to his relationship with his parents. It is thought of more as the opposite of the relationship between sister's son and mother's brother than as an item in the scheme of intra-familial or intra-lineage relationships.

As in the case of mother's brother and sister's child, the bond between father's sister and brother's child tends to be more effective for brother's sons than for brother's daughters. In the case of the brother's sons it is reinforced by the ties a woman has with her paternal lineage and by the ties her children have with their mother's brother and his sons. In the case of brother's daughters, it is attenuated because the daughters tend to be dispersed by marriage and their relationship with their father's sister is much more a purely personal affair.

Compared with the mother's brother, the father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) counts for little in the web of extra-clan kinship. Tallensi say this is because she is a woman. 'It is not she who sacrifices for you but you (her brother's son) may one day sacrifice on her behalf.' At the same time they declare that 'she is your father'. I have several times had an old woman introduced to me by a man or a woman as 'my father'. Eŋwala, explaining her affection for her full brother's son, Anaaho, said in the stock phraseology, 'Is he not my child? If you and your brother together have a child, is he not also your child [as much as your brother's]?

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[1] Except, as has been mentioned before if she is the last surviving member of the lineage. Even then she does not inherit the ancestor shrines but merely sacrifices to them, as if she were acting on behalf of her deceased father. She can never inherit lineage land.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604 will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577 when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head 302 shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, 789] Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely, withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage. But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604 rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574 principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party 764 of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws. The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the visitors. [431] The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit. Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604 her father without having previously arranged to go to another man, she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. 586 There she is, so to speak, under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587 She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

604 which a father would never do. In theory, this means that the *ba-pɔk*
586 consents to the new marriage. In practice, her action has no binding
force on her brother. This rule applies also to an unmarried girl who is
587 given in marriage by her *ba-pɔk*. A woman might have one of her brother's daughters living with her as a nursemaid for her baby. She might promise the girl as a wife to one of her husband's brothers. But her brother need not consider himself bound by this promise if he has objections to the marriage.

604 A father's sister is, in short, a kind of female 'father', but without the jural and ritual attributes of fatherhood. A father's sister must be
577 treated with respect. It would be grossly improper, for example, to joke with her as one jokes with a wife's sister; and to strike or abuse her, even if she were much younger than oneself, would be a sin. But the respect accorded to her is only a pale reflection of the attitude implicit in filial piety. It is much more a matter of etiquette than of emotion, as if it were merely conventional and not evoked by a feeling of moral obligation.

604 A marked characteristic of a person's relations with his or her father's sister is the absence of specific mutual obligations. Just as a *ba-pɔk* has in reality no rights over her brother's children, so she has no specific duties of either a ritual or a secular kind towards them, or they to her. This is the chief contrast between this relationship and that of parent and child or that of mother's brother and sister's child. Only a shadow of a ritual sanction comes into the relationship, in the form of the belief that the curse of a *ba-pɔk* can harm her brother's child, and in the notion that she stands under the protection of the same ancestors as the latter. Hence, though she cannot demand services from her brother's child, it is felt that a request for help from her should be met, even at the cost of
[789] some inconvenience. If a person offends his father's sister and she reproaches him saying, 'I bore you (identifying herself with her brother) and this is how you treat me. My ancestors have seen it, my fathers have seen it (*Man dɔɣi la k-i ɛŋəm lá ŋwala; n-yaanam nyeya, m-banam nyeya*)', this has the force of a curse because she is invoking her ancestors who are also his ancestors. Such a curse would disturb a native, but not nearly so deeply as a father's curse or if a mother's brother refused to sacrifice on his behalf.

Because their relationship is devoid of a definite jural coefficient and is not subject to organized ritual sanctions; because, also, a father's sister stands outside the scheme of economic and domestic associations in which the relationship of parent and child is set, the relations of father's sister and brother's child are free of the undercurrent of tension found in those of father and child. A woman's bonds with her brother's children are fundamentally bonds of sentiment. That is why they seldom endure beyond one generation, or extend beyond the nuclear lineage.

The personal relations of father's sister and brother's child have much

in common with those of mother's brother and sister's child. They 604
are similarly influenced by the closeness of the sibling tie between the brother and the sister, as is to be expected. There is this difference, however, that the contacts between *ba-pɔk* and brother's child are chiefly maintained by the *ba-pɔk*'s visits to her parental home, and not by the brother's child's being taken, or going on visits to her. They are largely a by-product of the woman's contacts with her parental home, and they diminish as she grows older. A man has no occasion to visit his *ba-pɔk* regularly, and a woman is apt to do so only if she lives near her. Opportunity and disposition count for more than in the personal relations of true mother's brother and sister's child. Thus a *ba-pɔk* sometimes has a brother's child to live with her, but this is rarer than for children to stay with an *ahɔb*, and there is usually a utilitarian motive on the side of the *ba-pɔk*. Ɔmara's sister had their late brother's two sons staying with her for two or three years each, in succession. She had them to stay with her so that they could look after her son's horse, and they went home again as soon as they were big enough to farm. If a girl stays with a *ba-pɔk* it is almost always as a nursemaid to her baby. A boy does not go to live with a *ba-pɔk* and grow up in her household, as he might with an *ahɔb*. There is an obvious reason for all this. A *ba-pɔk* does not 'own' her household as an *ahɔb* does. She cannot have her brother's child living with her except with her husband's consent; and though he would, out of consideration for her, not withhold his consent, he might demur against the burden of supporting another man's child, who is no kin of his, for a long time. A woman cannot give her brother's son a place in the household economy as an *ahɔb* can to his sister's son.

With these limitations, the personal relations of father's sister and 604
brother's child are often extremely cordial. Anaaho was a constant 431
visitor to his father's sister's house when he was working near where she lived. He often went there for meals and sought her advice about his affairs. Da'amo'o was welcomed with open arms by his *ba-pɔk* when he travelled with me to her husband's clan settlement. She gave him some presents for his wife who had just had a baby and got permission from her husband for him to take away a large log of a tree that had fallen down near their homestead. A *ba-pɔk* shows her interest in her brother's children by giving or sending them gifts. A person visiting his or her *ba-pɔk* seldom leaves without some such token of her interest and affection. It may be a chicken or a few pence for a nephew, or a basket of shea nuts, a dish of dried vegetables, or a new back-flap to wear at the next festival dance for a niece. The death of her brother's child, especially of a young adult son or daughter, is often a great shock to a *ba-pɔk*. A *ba-pɔk*'s death, on the other hand, seldom grieves her brother's children as much as the death of a favourite *ahɔb*, and they have no formal obligations to attend the funeral with prescribed gifts, or to undergo mourning rites other than the head-shaving of the eldest son.

•604 Our discussion has been concerned with the relationship of a person to his or her own father's sister, and we have noted that the bonds of sentiment between father's sister and brother's child seldom extend beyond the nuclear lineage of the latter. A person recognizes the sister of any man in the inner lineage or medial lineage whom he calls 'father' as his *ba-pɔk*. But whereas a woman has a strong personal interest in and often affection for her full or half-brother's children, and generally also takes a personal interest in her father's brothers' sons' children, the tendency is for the relationship to become more formal beyond that range. This is largely due to the fact that contacts between a woman and the children of her distant brothers of the same inner or medial lineage are usually rare, as compared with her contacts with children of her own nuclear lineage. But the appropriate norms of behaviour hold to the limits of the range of recognized generation differences and may be evoked in suitable circumstances. Beyond the range of the inner, or at most medial lineage, a woman of a person's father's generation is not recognized as a *ba-pɔk*, but is described as a 'sister' (*tau*) and thus classed with all the non-specifically related clanswomen.

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604 A woman calls her brothers' children's children her grandchildren (*yaas*), and she may be very fond of them, if she has opportunities of seeing them often. Gɛlima, a childless old widow who had come to live out the last few years of her life at her oldest brother's house, was often teased good-humouredly by her brothers and brothers' sons because of her attachment to the latter's small children. In theory the joking relationship holds for grandchild and grandfather's sister. In practice it is modified by the tendency to class together father's sisters and agnatic grandfather's sisters, who are usually described by the term *ba-pɔk* or its equivalent *pugərəba*. A person identifies himself (or herself) with his father in relation to the latter's father's sister, not only on account of the dominance of the lineage principle, but also, and mainly, because he does so in relation to the woman's husband and children. He thinks of the woman's husband as an 'in-law (*deema*)' and of her children as *ahəs*. And this is facilitated by residential separation and the identification of an old woman with the affairs and interests of her husband's lineage and clan. Thus cases like that of Gɛlima are the exception. The majority of old women see so little of their brothers' grandchildren that their relationship with them is purely formal and perfunctory.

593 578 them, and Zaŋ stood unswervingly by Pumaan, when the latter took sides against the head of their own medial lineage in the dispute over the succession to the clan *bɔɣar*. Nindɔɣat and Yintee, who, unlike Zaŋ and Pumaan, still farmed together, were cast in the same mould. Both were notorious for their instability and aggressiveness. They were known to quarrel frequently and on at least one occasion came to blows. But no one could have been more loyal to Nindɔɣat than Yintee, in particular where the possessions of the family were concerned.

In short, though *soog* siblings come into conflict at times it does not undermine their solidarity. The reason for this is obvious. The crux of the sibling relationship lies in its social definition. Personal qualities may modify its content in particular cases; they cannot break up its structure; and this holds for every degree of sibling relationship. In the case of *soog* siblings the infrangible core is the relation of uterine siblings to and through their mother, as members of the matricentral *dug* in contraposition to the patricentral *yir*, first in the joint family and later in the lineage. The significance of this factor, the notion of maternal origin, can be judged from the relations of *soog* brothers who have different fathers. They may have no common economic interests and may grow up separately, after the early years of childhood. But they have very firm ties of affection and mutual loyalty, which are often expressed through mutual economic aid. Sie and Da'amo'o were *soog* brothers thus related, their mother having first been married to Sie's father and after his death to Da'amo'o's father, who belonged to a different medial lineage of the clan. Sie was the older of the two by ten or fifteen years. Whenever he was in trouble over something Da'amo'o went to seek Sie's advice rather than his proxy father's. This principle, as we have noted before, is of general validity in Tale social structure. It appears in the stronger cohesion and amity always found between individuals and lineages whose progenitors were *saarɔt* than between those who are only patrilineally connected. Nɛna'ab and Ɔndieso remained great friends in spite of the long-standing quarrel between their two inner lineages, because their mothers were full sisters. At the level of maximal lineage organization, Seug is a much more closely knit section of Tongo than the other three sections, because the founding ancestors of the two major segments of Seug were sons of one mother.[1]

Solidarity and Equality among sunzɔ Siblings

593 605 But the critical importance of the idea of their common parentage, bilaterally or unilaterally, in the relations of siblings is best shown in the differences between the relations of *soog* siblings and those of half-siblings and other paternal siblings (*sunzɔp*). Tallensi tend to draw a line between *soog* siblings and all other sibling relatives within the same nuclear lineage or inner lineage. Thus half-siblings (i.e. children of

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 213.

the same father by different mothers) and ortho-cousins (father's brothers' children) are all lumped together as *sunzɔp* of close degree, referred to by sibling terms. Though the exact degree of patrilineal kinship between a pair of siblings has a direct effect on their mutual and common interests and on their place in the family structure, Tallensi tend to feel the same way towards an ortho-cousin as towards a half-sibling. This is natural since brothers' children often grow up together in the same domestic family. 593 609

The social and personal relations of *sunzɔp* siblings of the same nuclear lineage are identical in pattern with those of *soog* siblings. But they differ, markedly at times, in degree; for the affective as well as social relations of siblings are a function of their genealogical distance from one another, and in particular of the cleavages fixed by differences of maternal parentage.

Many indications of this have been given in previous chapters and in the preceding paragraphs, for one cannot isolate the relations of *soog* siblings from the total context of family relations or from the total field of sibling relations. Having different mothers or different fathers creates significant differences in the social relations and personal intercourse of children with their parents and with each other. It stamps the child's experience of the common domestic environment and family history uniquely for himself and his full siblings. The structural correlate of this, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, is the distinctive field of cognatic kinship which goes with different maternal origin. Hence his social position in relation to his siblings is directly reflected in his sentiments and attitudes towards them. Differentiation in the field of genealogical ties carries with it differentiation of status, rights, and duties, and this has an immediate counterpart in affective behaviour. Thus, whereas it is assumed that full brothers will remain together for most of their lives, half-brothers are expected to separate in due course; and whereas discord between *soog* brothers is felt to require explanation by reference to personal idiosyncrasies, what is felt to call for such explanation in the case of half-brothers is their adhering to each other when most people would expect them to separate. 'It is only because we are on such good terms that Barimoda (his younger half-brother) still shares the homestead with me', said Naabdiya, when he was describing the organization of his domestic family. 593

In childhood and adolescence paternal siblings may be the greatest comrades in play and work. The affective cleavage between them comes out chiefly in the domestic circle—when they go off at night to sleep in their respective mothers' quarters; when they seek the solace of their own mothers in sickness or distress; when an older sibling merely scolds his younger *sunzɔ* for a fault for which he would have smacked his *soog*; and so forth. The relations of *sunzɔ* siblings are strongly coloured by the social and personal relations of their mothers. *Sunzɔ*

604 his own sons. More surprising, Puvolimra was admitted to all the
597 esoteric rites of the Earth cult and often represented the tɛndaana in ritual activities. He was permitted to do this because he belonged to a lineage holding a tɛndaana-ship allied to that of Gbizug. Had he been a Namoo, he would have been excluded from all but the domestic religious rites of the tɛndaana.

604 He was a great favourite, too, with the tɛndaana's children. But one of the sons once made a revealing comment on Puvolimra's position.
●605 He spoke in a slightly patronizing tone, though not offensively so. 'Puvolimra', he said, 'is our child (*u a ti bii*). We like him to stay with us and we may not deny him anything. But one day he may decide to go home and we can't restrain him; or if he offends us we can tell him to go. He is not our person (as a member of the lineage is). However much the tɛndaana may like him he cannot inherit our ancestor shrines or our farms or our homestead. It is because he gets on so well with the tɛndaana that he stays.'

604 This comment is typical of conventional opinion on the position of an *ahəŋ* in the family of his *ahəb*. Puvolimra himself, Gikoo-Duun, and
602 Bayana, three young men who either lived or had lived with their mothers' brothers, defined their position in exactly the same terms. It would be an offence against the ancestors to deny an *ahəŋ* a home, but he has none of the fundamental rights of a son; his position depends on the personal attachment to him, and concern for him, of his mother's brother. An *ahəŋ* in Puvolimra's position, it is sometimes suggested, is apt to be more compliant than a son, so as to ingratiate himself with his *ahəb*. He cannot make demands as of right, as a son may do. Said Gikoo-Duun: 'I was a small boy when I went to live with my *ahəb-soog* at Saamər (in Mampurugu). Later I went out on my own to build my homestead and farm for myself near him. It was not because of a quarrel. But my mother's brother will not take care of (i.e. take responsibility for) my affairs (*u ku maal n-ycla*). He will not marry a wife for me. If he does give me one cow to help pay my wife's bride-price and we should some day quarrel, he will say I must pay it back. He is not of my people. My people are here at Zubiuŋ. Even though I am far away, they (the Zubiuŋ people) will look after my affairs. If I were to die to-day they would make my funeral and inherit my things. Do you not see that I come here (to Zubiuŋ) regularly to sacrifice to my ancestors?'

As we know, one of the major jural responsibilities of a father for his son is in marriage affairs. Hence the fact that a sister's son has no claim, as of right, on his mother's brother's assistance in this important matter is a good test of their jural relations. Puvolimra's marriage created the first rift between him and his mother's brother. The marriage was beset with difficulties. The girl's father feared that he would never get the bride-price as Puvolimra's proxy father was a blind old man who lived

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'.
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I 591
asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been
arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth
would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such,
for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom
would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner
would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible
for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants
a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [604]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows
for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back,
he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back
by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-pog*) 583
once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears
him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking
out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every
new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and
go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep
and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral [764]
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his
village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones.
When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an
egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law
they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne
a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets
of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child,
for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

Privileged Familiarity: 'A man may play and be familiar with his
607 sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents,
603 for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the
648 Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the
Mampruse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat
607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's
[587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.

[2] See p. 8.

[3] But see p. 508.

613 It will be seen that both affinal and cognatic kinship ties regulate the collocation of homesteads.

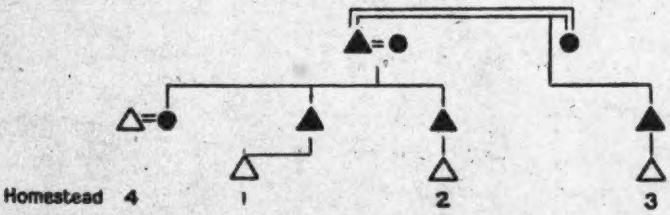
621 *Section: Zalɔnwuuri.* (A local subdivision of Datɔk, named after the
166 stream forming one of its boundaries.)

Homestead 1. This belongs to Latammi, a man of about 55, whose father, a Gar man, came to build his house and to farm here about fifty years ago. He died and was buried at his new home. Latammi, his eldest son, then inherited the homestead and the surrounding farm-land, and remained living there.

Homestead 2. About 200 yards away, is owned by Latammi's father's younger brother's (*pit soog*) son. This young man formerly shared Latammi's homestead but recently moved out to set up in his own.

Homestead 3. About 250 yards away from 1. Latammi's father's half-brother (*sunzɔ*) built this homestead, having come to settle here shortly after Latammi's father. This man died recently and the homestead and surrounding farm-land now belong to his son.

The following genealogy shows how the heads of these three homesteads are related:



Together they constitute a lineage of small span, a segment of a greater lineage whose home is at Gar. Their residential collocation is exactly the same as it would be if they were living at Gar or in any of the older settlements.

Homestead 4. About 200 yards from 1. This is the homestead of a Ba'ari man who migrated to Datɔk about three years ago. He is a brother-in-law (sister's husband) (*dakii*) of Latammi's late father (see genealogy above), and was, on this account, given land on which to build and settle by the latter's half-brother's son of Homestead 3.

Homestead 5. About a quarter of a mile from 1. This belongs to Naambɔn, whose father, a man from Bɔlɔga, came to build and settle here some forty years ago. This man had first migrated from Bɔlɔga to Kosabɔlɔg, on the outskirts of Duusi. While he was living there Teroog (now an old man), a member of the same maximal lineage as Latammi's father, who lives in another section of Datɔk, married one of the Bɔlɔga man's daughters. The land he held at Duusi proved to be unsatisfactory, so Naambɔn's father decided to move to Datɔk. Through the good offices
[606] of his son-in-law, Teroog, he was introduced to Latammi's father, who (as a son-in-law (*deem*) in the classificatory sense) gave him land to settle on near the fringe of the huge area he had marked out as a farm for himself.

It is analogous to the way in which a man's agnatic descendants 783
become liable for his sins, though it is not so rigorous and consequential 611
in action as the responsibility for sins and delicts that adheres to the
male line. *Tyuk* is connected primarily with males; though it is of
minor significance in the social definition of uterine kinship, compared
with witchcraft, it obviously fits in with the principles of Tale social
organization in the same way.[1]

Uterine Kinship as a Personal Bond

As we have observed, the fundamental distinction between uterine 611
kinship and agnatic descent is that the former does not give rise to
corporate units of social structure. *Soog* is essentially a personal bond, 602
a bond of mutual interest and concern uniting individual to individual.
Witchcraft, similarly, is an individual act of mystical aggression due
to personal malice against an individual. The model of the relations
between *saarət* is the affection, devotion, and strong feeling of mutual
identification that prevails between parent and child or between full
siblings of the same sex. Its keynote is mutual trust as between equals.
It is never thought of as a matter of rights and duties but as a matter
of sentiment, of spontaneous goodwill and intimate, personal confidence.
Hence the term *soog* is often loosely used to refer to someone with
whom one has a relationship of a similar sort, or to denote a very close
relative of a class of relatives, whether or not they are true *saarət*. An
intimate and trusted friend is like your *soog*, the Tallensi say. Two
daughters of the same lineage, but of unrelated mothers, married into
a single joint family feel themselves to be particularly closely related
and identified with each other by contrast with their conjugal family,
and thus speak of each other as 'my *soog*'. The children of two men
who were uterine kin, keeping up the friendship of their fathers, talk of
themselves as *saarət*. Two men of the same lineage, whether they are
close or distant agnates, who have a common maternal uncle's lineage
(*ahəb yiri*)—i.e. whose mothers' brothers belong to a single segment of
a maximal lineage—feel a bond of personal kinship distinguishing their
relationship with each other from their relationships with their co-members
of the lineage. In contexts where they wish to emphasize
their personal bonds in contrast to their common membership of the
lineage they might describe each other as 'my *soog*'. And I once heard 611
a man refer to his son-in-law as 'my *soog* son-in-law (*n-deem-soog*)'. This 606 ●
is a contradiction in terms, for marriage being prohibited between kin
of any degree, a man cannot be both a son-in-law and a *soog*. But the 602
speaker explained that he was using this term in order to distinguish

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[1] There is an interesting psychological problem here, but it lies outside our present scope. *Tyuk* and witchcraft might be regarded as the male and female aspects, respectively, of deep-seated vindictive impulses connected with the mother.

606 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man
611 was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the
husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was
602 as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*; they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine
835 kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

582 Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of
the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to
602 be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of
uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*.
[586] If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bək*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm of Təŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'aləm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpemdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpemdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'aləm, are well known. Tinta'aləm

CHAPTER IV

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE FAMILY

The General and the Particular in the Pattern of Domestic Relations

611 IT is clear from Chapter II tha[illegible]*ɔyam*, the fact of birth, the event that fixes one's descent immutably, takes precedence over all other conditions governing the social relations and the social roles of a Talɔŋ. This principle comes out in all departments of Tale social life, and nowhere so plainly as in the organization of domestic life. We turn, therefore, to examine the working of kinship in the domestic family, which we have called the focal field of kinship.

593 It is important to bear in mind that kinship relations in the family group are inter-articulated in a single configuration, dominated by the *patria potestas* of the male head of the family. The relations of father and child are coloured by the relations of mother and child that coexist with them, and the relations of mother and child acquire a special accent in the context of the relations between co-wives. Particular domestic relationships appear in their true light only when they are considered as part of the total pattern. The polarity of *dug* and *yir* moulds them all; all play a part in the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces in the structure of the family. All, moreover, are subject to the pull and pressure of genealogical connexions and groupings outside the family circle.

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●606 The natives are very conscious of this, and take it into account in the management of their lives. They say, for instance, that a woman's parents continue to have great influence over her for some years after her marriage and that is why her husband must keep on the good side of his parents-in-law. 'Don't you know what in-lawship means?' said Bayankura, somewhat lugubriously, when I found him hard at work helping to rebuild his father-in-law's homestead. Again, Tiezien's family believed that he was much under the influence of his senior wife, Tanzoo. So when by various pretexts he caused both of his late brother's sons to lose the young wives they had recently taken, they ascribed it morosely to Tanzoo's jealousy of their mother, Tiezien's second wife.

181 We shall not attempt a full-dress study of Tale family life; here we are concerned only with the structurally significant norms. In a society as homogeneous and economically undifferentiated as that of the Tallensi, people of the same sex, age, and social standing tend to have the same life history; and organized units such as the lineage and the family tend to have a stereotyped structure and development. The common denominators of action stand out.

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156 Yet it is a constantly reiterated assumption of the natives that no two

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solve the conflict between these antithetic bonds in favour of her con- 593 jugal family.

Tallensi say that a woman is like a stranger or guest (both ideas are 593 contained in the native word *saan*) in her husband's house during the first year or two of marriage. Standing outside the intimate life and vital concerns of the family, she cannot yet be relied upon. Gradually she grows accustomed (*maləm*) to her conjugal family; and after some years, when she has several children, she becomes so far absorbed into the family that full trust can be reposed in her and she takes a full and self-confident part in family affairs.

It needs little observation to see how apt is this description of the 593 gradual absorption of women into their husbands' families. On a visit 576 to a homestead to which a newly wedded wife has just been added, one can easily observe the 'shyness (*valəm*)', as the Tallensi call it, of the new wife (*pɔɣa*) and her husband (*sɛt*) towards each other. This goes farther than formal etiquette. Good manners require that a woman should always show respect to her husband in public. She walks behind him if they have to go anywhere together on a ceremonial occasion. She stoops or kneels whenever she offers him food or drink. But this behaviour is customary for a woman with all adult males other than her own children. It is a sign of the general attitude of respect due from women to men in a society so dominated in public social relations by the patriarchal principle. The 'shyness' of a newly married wife comes out in other ways. She tries to keep out of her husband's way as much as possible during the day, busying herself zealously with the household tasks given to her by her mother-in-law. She is submissive to all his requests. She speaks to him only when she is spoken to. She takes no initiative in anything.

This attitude is even more marked in her behaviour towards her 606 parents-in-law (*daŋaam*, pl. *daŋaanam*), to whom she is bound to show formal deference at all times, and to her adult brothers-in-law, 593 with whom she must always be circumspect because of the incest barrier which we shall discuss later. It often comes into her private relations with her husband if he is much older than she is. She will flirt and be more companionable with a young husband, in private, natives say; for he is probably like herself a *tarəm*, junior, under authority, and connubial joys mean so much to him that he comes down to an equal footing with his wife for their sake.

The Relationships of a Wife with her Relatives-in-law

A woman does not avoid any of her relatives-in-law or her husband, 606 nor are her relations with them regulated by strict prescription. She maintains a general attitude of deference, modesty, and complaisance 607 towards them. A well-behaved young wife is industrious and obedient in helping her mother-in-law with her domestic work, and she will be self-effacing and deferential towards her father-in-law, her husband,

606 607 and his adult brothers. The only relaxation of this attitude occurs with her sisters-in-law (*pɔγakie*, pl. *pɔγakies*). With them, often her equals in years and her companions in work, she can laugh and play and joke. Like herself, they are already, or are fated to be, married out of their natal families to 'strangers'. This is a bond of fellowship superadded to that of sex and often age. But they also belong to the opposite camp. Identifying themselves with their brothers and their lineage, they sometimes speak of her as 'our wife (*ti pɔγa*)', and she sometimes refers to them as 'my husbands (*n-sɛrib*)'. They will take the side of their brother if she comes into conflict with her husband or deserts him. Her relationship with them is typical of the ambivalence that underlies the joking relationship among the Tallensi.

601 576 In the first year or so of marriage a woman tries to avoid having to address her male in-laws and her husband directly in public. If they address her it will be in a somewhat formal and courteous way, her husband and his brothers using her clan name, her father-in-law addressing her as 'mother (*ma*)'. She is most at home—but in a very deferential manner—with her mother-in-law, in whose rooms and under whose care she lives, whose domestic duties she largely takes over, and who also addresses her as 'mother (*ma*)'. To any member of the family she speaks of her father-in-law as 'father (*ba*)' and of her mother-in-law as 'mother (*ma*)', and she addresses the latter by this term. Outside the family a woman speaks of her husband as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)'; of his brothers as 'my older' or 'my younger husband (*n-sɛt-bier*, or *n-sɛt-pit*)'; and of his parents as 'my father (mother)-in-law (*ŋ-daŋaamdoog*, masc.—*n daŋaampɔk*, fem.)'. Her husband speaks of her as 'my wife (*mpɔγa*)'; his brothers as 'my older or younger brother's wife (*m-bier* or *m-pit pɔγa*)', or in some situations as 'our (i.e. the lineage's) wife'; her parents-in-law as *sampɔγa*.

606 The status of a woman in her conjugal family is most sharply focused in her relations with her parents-in-law. For it is they who form the axis around which the family revolves. Its unity, its independence, the management of its material affairs, and the maintenance of its well-being all reside in them. Though the general impression one receives of a woman's relationship with her parents-in-law is one of affability and ease, it is potentially anomalous, particularly in the early years. As their son's wife she is in the position of a daughter to them. She will give valuable and indispensable service in the economy of the household. She will produce children to augment the family and the lineage. But, as she herself knows and feels, she is an intruder. She is made to feel this in the early years of marriage even if, as so often happens, she belongs to an adjacent clan, and was personally well known to her conjugal family before marriage. For marriage creates entirely new associations between individuals and families. If she was married by elopement she knows that she is on trial, perhaps the object of a

hidden struggle between her husband and her father-in-law. Though 606 she is in the position of a daughter to her parents-in-law, she cannot feel for them nor they for her the love and devotion that moderate the strictness of parental authority and give a tone of easy-going friendliness to the normal intercourse of parents and children. One side of the parent-child relationship, the authority of parents over their children, looms foremost for her. The cleavage between successive generations and the tension that holds them apart, are underlined at the expense of the mutual devotion and identification of parents and children.

Parents-in-law, for their part, have ambivalent feelings towards their 606 daughter-in-law. Behind their ostensible pride and pleasure in their son's marriage lurks the shadow of resentment. A man realizes that his 578 son's marriage is the first step in his eventual emancipation. It is the seed from which grow responsibilities and interests that compete with those he owes to his natal family and threaten his loyalties to them. A woman sees in her son's marriage a sign that her reproductive life is over. Tallensi hold that it is improper, and to some extent mystically [843] dangerous, for mother-in-law and daughter-in-law to bear at the same time. Hence parents often, though covertly, try to prevent a first son marrying young, or else, in self-defence, display exaggerated conceit at a son's early marriage. Only the coming of grandchildren, coinciding as it does with the habituation of the daughter-in-law to her conjugal family, and itself a distinction inspiring great pride and joy in the grandparents, compensates for the renunciations implicitly required of a man's parents when he takes a wife.

Inevitably, therefore, there is an element of tension in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. The fact that the daughter-in-law is under the power of her husband's family, particularly of her father-in-law, and that they are formally, if not openly, opposed to her paternal family, to which, however, she is still attached by the strongest ties of duty and sentiment, may add to the strain. It may be quite superficial in a well-regulated family or in the case of an approved marriage, apparent only in the conventions of speech and etiquette. In an ill-managed family, or if there is opposition to the marriage, it often comes out openly. Parents-in-law complain of their daughter-in-law's manners or actions, or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law have petty squabbles. As time passes the strain is mitigated with the gradual absorption of the daughter-in-law into her conjugal family. It is never wholly erased. Even in so well organized a family as Ɔmara's, there was a standing feud between his younger wives and his mother. The old woman, half-sunk in the hebetude of senility, complained ceaselessly of the neglect of her daughters-in-law; and they often quarrelled with her vehemently on account of what they regarded as her exorbitant demands on their firewood, their labour, and their food-supply.

The conventions of behaviour followed by parents-in-law and daugh-

606 578 ter-in-law towards one another, and the terminology of address associated with them, put a protective fence between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. 'My mother', or 'my father', in this context means 'a person to whom I owe punctilious respect'. The relation is one of reciprocal respect, because it is based on something in the nature of a contract. The daughter-in-law's attitude is an exaggeration of one aspect of filial respect towards the parents. This aspect is more prominent in kinship relations outside the focal field and in ceremonial relations patterned on, but structurally different from, true parent-child relations, than in the latter. It is reminiscent of the behaviour of his clansmen to a chief or tendaana on formal occasions, when his symbolic position as father (*ba*) of the clan is most apparent.

Naturally the barrier between father-in-law and daughter-in-law is stricter than between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law owing to the difference of sex, though it is not obvious to an outsider. Once she is accepted, a man usually treats his daughter-in-law with kindness and affability. In public he treats her with a familiar friendliness, in the same way as if she were his daughter. But whereas he scolds his daughter without hesitation, he does not scold or criticize his daughter-in-law directly. It would offend and hurt her, and upset their amicable relations. The barrier between them—and this applies in a lesser degree to the mother-in-law too—can be maintained only on the basis of mutual courtesy and affability. Where the barrier is most sharply emphasized is not in their public intercourse but in their relations as members of opposite sexes. [835] For a man to have sexual relations with, or even sit on the same mat as, his daughter-in-law is a sin of the first magnitude. '*Dɛn n-kih pam!* (that is an extreme taboo)', say the natives, with every sign of repugnance. It is a sin that can never be wholly atoned for. Sooner or later the culprits will be slain by the ancestor spirits; for, like incest with a father's wife of which it is the counterpart, it destroys irreparably the moral and religious bonds of father and son. I heard of an old man who died some years ago who used to have his daughters-in-law sit on his lap, and 'play' with them. This, my informants said scoffingly, was just the ill manners of an old dotard. But Gunyaam's seduction of his daughter-in-law was revealed to me with bated breath. It was no wonder, my informant said, that he died soon after, and that misfortunes crowded on his family.

The relations of daughter-in-law to parents-in-law are well summed up in the statement always made by Tallensi if they are asked for an explanation of the terminology of address used between these relatives. They say: 'We stand in awe of them (parents-in-law or daughters-in-law)', (*ti zootbame*, lit. 'we fear them').[1]

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601 [1] This terminology of address is of considerable theoretical interest. Rattray (op. cit., p. 6) attributes the custom of addressing a daughter-in-law as 'mother' (customary also amongst the Gorisi, Namnam, and other peoples adjacent to

to strike her. Her parents-in-law, for instance, despite their authority 593
over her, would not do so. If anything, they would try to restrain their 627
son from beating her. Only her husband has that combination of [606] ●
authority and intimacy in relation to her which permits the use of physical force upon her.

But flight is not the only weapon a woman has in order to maintain 593
her rights and privileges in her conjugal family. Once she is fairly free
from the leading strings of her mother-in-law, she is the mistress of her 461
time and energies. It is an accepted axiom of married life, which no 578
man questions, that a wife is free to dispose of her time as she pleases, provided she does not hamper the essential economic activities of the household, or neglect her children, or remain away from home for unwarrantable periods or at times—e.g. during the Great Festivals—when all the members of the family should be together. The routine of domestic tasks, over which men have no control, is a strong line of defence against the interference of men in their wives' disposal of their time. But differences of opinion on this matter are a common cause of squabbles between husband and wife. A young woman dresses up to go to market; her husband objects, saying that other men will be paying court to her there, or that the children will be left hungry all day; she insists; and a heated argument ensues. Nine times out of ten the woman has her way. Occasionally the husband succeeds in stopping her, by persuasion or by force. It is only at sowing or harvest time, or when, for instance, preparations for an important ceremony are in hand, that a man has full control over his wife's time.

At all times a wife's freedom to arrange her work and her leisure as best suits her may subject her husband to inconvenience. If, at the end of the day, she is too preoccupied or too tired to cook, he can but grumble and go hungry. And if he annoys her she can make a point of being too busy to attend to some want of his or too tired to cook the evening meal. This, men say frankly, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of keeping on good terms with one's wife.

Tallensi regard these utilitarian rights and duties, services and atten- 593
tions of husband and wife towards each other as a most important
feature of marriage. But it is clear that they do not constitute the unique 581
relationship that distinguishes the marriage tie from other social ties of the Tallensi. Thus a woman performs much the same utilitarian services as daughter in her natal home, and as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law in her conjugal home. They are but a part of the whole configuration of co-operation, mutual help, reciprocal services, etiquette, and mutual tolerance that keep the wheels of family life running smoothly. And it is clear, also, that they imply the existence of common interests that create a sense of mutual moral obligation.

This underlying bond of mutual moral obligation is the basic sanction of reciprocity and co-operation in the domestic family. In the case of

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without
581 infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of
834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his
[768] funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

593 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the
562 critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's
602 parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in
562 a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to
● 606 one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another 602
regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires, 606 ●
and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the
relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); [572]
and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live
near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law.

On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even 602
conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical to *dɔɣam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never obliterates this.

A man must show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their 606
representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in
ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits 264
down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pɔt nɔba*), 574
bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual functionary, or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they 576
in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement.

Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well- 602
defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links
them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that 606
a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his

602 606 parents-in-law, particularly in the early years while he is not quite sure of his wife. If his father-in-law sends for him to help with the hoeing, or with house building, or his mother-in-law requests him to help thatch her rooms, he must respond with alacrity and bring as large a party of his clansmen to assist him as he can manage. In this way a man shows honour to, ingratiates himself with (*giem*), his affines; for these services are not enforceable obligations, and usually cease to be asked for after the marriage has become stabilized. They bear no relation to the bride-price, and are lavishly recompensed. A visiting work-party brought by a son-in-law expects generous hospitality, and the father-in-law, if he is a reputable man, would feel that he had lost dignity if he did not feed and entertain the work-party well. But though these services cannot be enforced, no man would risk offending his parents-in-law by refusing them. These material demonstrations of respect, gratitude, and goodwill are essential for the smooth working of a relationship artificially established by a jural compact. Parents-in-law praise and like an obliging son-in-law, even if he has not paid the bride-price, the natives say.

602 607 This is one side of the affinal relationship. It also has an aspect of friendliness and familiarity, as we have seen, which comes out most conspicuously in a man's relations with his siblings-in-law. A man has a joking relationship with his siblings-in-law similar to that of his wife with his sisters and distant clansmen. It goes so far that a man may sleep with an unmarried sister-in-law (*dakiipɔk*) who is visiting his house, and is therefore in that situation identified with his wife. A man's siblings-in-law belong to the familiar and friendly generation of his wife. They are identified with her. But they also belong to the potentially hostile lineage of her father, whose heir a brother-in-law will one day be. In very many ways a man's siblings-in-law are sympathetically drawn to him; but their rights in relation to his wife may pit them against him. The convention of joking serves to reconcile these two potentially discordant elements of their relationship. But when the marriage has lasted many years, and the possibility of a conflict of rights disappears, the element of friendliness in the relationship can assert itself without prejudice to its jural aspect. Thus, conventional teasing usually drops out of the intercourse of siblings-in-law of long standing.

606 764 431 The formal distance between affines is further shown in the duties and obligations to which a man is liable on the death of a son-in-law or parent-in-law. On the death of a parent-in-law a man is obliged to attend the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. He should come escorted by a large party of clansmen and their wives, and the mourning party should wear their finest clothes and be led by drummers and musicians. A son-in-law should provide the gravestone for a parent-in-law. He should distribute money freely to the grave-diggers, to the drummers, singers, and musicians, whose raucous noise stimulates the crowd

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and adds prestige to the occa[illegible] the widows, to the old women 764
tending the corpse, and to th[illegible]cing extravagantly in honour of 431
the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These [576] duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand [554] opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law.

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of 606
prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small 754
contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This 431
consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a 574
large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samər*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*laɣapieləb*, pl. *laɣapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *laɣah*, pl. *ligəri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown. [436]

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fully repaid in the bestowal of his daughter as a wife. A similar sanction to that mentioned in the case of a son-in-law operates here.

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If one watches the behaviour of men at the funeral of an affine, one can see that they feel themselves to be under strong constraint. They and their clansmen accompanying them keep together, and when there are no ceremonies or festivities in progress they stay apart from the rest of the crowd. In former days a mourning party of affines always carried arms, and it is said that fighting sometimes broke out at funerals. When Tallensi comment on the ceremonial obligations of affines, they emphasize the feeling of constraint associated with them. One is impressed by the contrast between this attitude and the attitudes associated with the ceremonial obligations that follow on the death of a clansman or cognatic kinsman. It is as if the native feels his ceremonial obligations to an affine to be forced on him from outside, without his choice, whereas he seems to accept his duties and obligations on the death of a kinsman willingly and from within.

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It is evident that reciprocity between affines is different in character from that which prevails between people who have a bond of common interests, such as members of the same family. There is not the same free give and take. When gifts or services pass between affines, whether they are prescribed or ostensibly spontaneous, there is a deliberate effort to counterbalance them. A sort of book-keeping occurs. This appears most clearly in the jural formalities of marriage, but it comes out quite plainly in the apparently voluntary services and reciprocal hospitality of son-in-law and father-in-law. The side that benefits feels impelled to make an equivalent return in order not to give the other party grounds for a grudge. And people who flout this convention not only upset their good relations with their affines and so provide pretexts for conflict with them, but also incur the censure of public opinion.

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One incident will illustrate this. Banorəg asked his son-in-law, a member of an adjacent clan, to come and help him finish the hoeing of his home farm. The young man brought a couple of his clansmen and they worked with zeal from early morning till sunset. Then they went home, politely refusing Banorəg's invitation to come home with him for the evening meal. Had they come as a formal hoeing party they would have been entitled to a good meal as a reward at the end of the day. But they had come informally, and their own homes were near enough for them to get back in time for the evening meal. They spoke of their day's work for Banorəg as a simple act of courtesy to a father-in-law. As we watched them saunter homewards, Banorəg said to me 'Sons-in-law are shy (*deenam mmar vi*). They can't come home with you (their father-in-law) and eat with your children (as if they were your kin)'. But next day Banorəg sent a large basket of millet flour to his daughter with orders to cook a generous meal for her husband and his friends. He would feel ashamed, he told me, if he did not 'thank' the young men

thus; and besides, people would say he was mean. This attitude does 606
not occur with the true reciprocity that prevails in the domestic family 431
or between near kin.

Sex in the Relationship of Affines

While, therefore, the relations of affines assume the existence of a 602
formal distance between them, they are not encumbered by avoidances or other social barriers that make friendliness impossible or ordinary social intercourse a burden. There is amity as well as opposition in their relationship. In one matter only is there a rigorous barrier between affines. In respect to sex and procreation they are strictly separate. The emphasis is on the deed, not the word; there is no prohibition against talking to or in the presence of an affine about sexual matters.

One aspect of this ban on bringing sex into the relationship of affinity 602
is the native attitude about a sexual offence against an affine. For a man
to seduce the wife of an affine is almost as heinous a transgression as 577
intercourse with the wife of a man of one's own expanded family, though it is not regarded as incest; and the offence is nearly as bad if the culprit is a close agnate of the woman's husband's affine or the woman the wife of a close agnate of the affine concerned. It is a grave offence, also, if a man or his close agnate abducts the wife of an affine or his close agnate. There are no explicit mystical sanctions against either of these wrongs, but Tallensi describe them as 'a thing of enormous evil (*yelbiog tenta'ar*)' bound to bring ill fortune on the wrongdoer, and in any case involving such serious social consequences that no man in his senses would descend to them. They think of the possible culprit as being the son-in-law, and they say that the father-in-law would take away his daughter and the bride-price be forfeited. Affines are bound to fall out with one another now and then. Usually apologies proffered through an intermediary lead to their making it up again. But in the case of a sexual [583]
offence against a father-in-law, it is quite impossible to beg or receive pardon. For it is a sin; it 'pollutes the room (*sayam dug*)' of the injured man.[1]

'Pollution of the room' in this sense is very rare among the Tallensi. But it is not unknown for a man to abduct the wife of the father- or brother-in-law (true or classificatory) of one of his own clansmen. The elders of both the abductor's medial lineage and the wronged husband's medial lineage are then extremely indignant. The latter demand the return of 'their' wife; and in all the cases I have come across the former see to it at once that the woman is sent back to her husband.

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[1] Cf. p. 28 above. *Sayam dug* has the double sense of a mystical defilement of the sleeping-room—the inner sanctuary of family and of reproductive life—and of an irreparable infringement of lineage rights. If the offender is a distant clansman of the true son-in-law, a ritual reconciliation between the two lineages might be allowed after the defilement has been ritually removed.

606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman,
602 anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house.
Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's
837 wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement.
If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces
577 the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one
of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible
form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily
divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and
the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I
have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or
someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of
606 his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and
837 on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking
thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a
577 father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own
wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married
couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from
her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before,
if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her
status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and
daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his
status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not
abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict
would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations.
So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's
lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly
[576] within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet
his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his,
if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this
would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though
not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition
434 against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's
paternal home (and *viz*. home, in this context includes the whole settlement),
or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the
husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children
borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done,
disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited
by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for
574 instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few
days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A
834 man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They 584
expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations
with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about 574
as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are 834
more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep in separate rooms.

These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry 574
season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the
rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which 834
a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her 606
father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of 783
the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we
have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous 844
position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his 606
father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will 783
not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in
the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. 827
The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

Kusase

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

607 603 648 *Privileged Familiarity*: 'A man may play and be familiar with his sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents, for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the Mamprse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat 607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's [587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.

[2] See p. 8.

[3] But see p. 508.

574

solve the conflict between these antithetic bonds in favour of her conjugal family. 593

Tallensi say that a woman is like a stranger or guest (both ideas are 593 contained in the native word *saan*) in her husband's house during the first year or two of marriage. Standing outside the intimate life and vital concerns of the family, she cannot yet be relied upon. Gradually she grows accustomed (*maləm*) to her conjugal family; and after some years, when she has several children, she becomes so far absorbed into the family that full trust can be reposed in her and she takes a full and self-confident part in family affairs.

It needs little observation to see how apt is this description of the 593 gradual absorption of women into their husbands' families. On a visit 576 to a homestead to which a newly wedded wife has just been added, one can easily observe the 'shyness (*valəm*)', as the Tallensi call it, of the new wife (*pɔɣa*) and her husband (*sɛt*) towards each other. This goes farther than formal etiquette. Good manners require that a woman should always show respect to her husband in public. She walks behind him if they have to go anywhere together on a ceremonial occasion. She stoops or kneels whenever she offers him food or drink. But this behaviour is customary for a woman with all adult males other than her own children. It is a sign of the general attitude of respect due from women to men in a society so dominated in public social relations by the patriarchal principle. The 'shyness' of a newly married wife comes out in other ways. She tries to keep out of her husband's way as much as possible during the day, busying herself zealously with the household tasks given to her by her mother-in-law. She is submissive to all his requests. She speaks to him only when she is spoken to. She takes no initiative in anything.

This attitude is even more marked in her behaviour towards her 606 parents-in-law (*daŋaam*, pl. *daŋaanam*), to whom she is bound to show formal deference at all times, and to her adult brothers-in-law, 593 with whom she must always be circumspect because of the incest barrier which we shall discuss later. It often comes into her private relations with her husband if he is much older than she is. She will flirt and be more companionable with a young husband, in private, natives say; for he is probably like herself a *tarəm*, junior, under authority, and connubial joys mean so much to him that he comes down to an equal footing with his wife for their sake.

The Relationships of a Wife with her Relatives-in-law

A woman does not avoid any of her relatives-in-law or her husband, 606 nor are her relations with them regulated by strict prescription. She maintains a general attitude of deference, modesty, and complaisance 607 towards them. A well-behaved young wife is industrious and obedient in helping her mother-in-law with her domestic work, and she will be self-effacing and deferential towards her father-in-law, her husband,

606 and his adult brothers. The only relaxation of this attitude occurs with her sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakie*, pl. *pɔɣakies*). With them, often her equals 607 in years and her companions in work, she can laugh and play and joke. Like herself, they are already, or are fated to be, married out of their natal families to 'strangers'. This is a bond of fellowship superadded to that of sex and often age. But they also belong to the opposite camp. Identifying themselves with their brothers and their lineage, they sometimes speak of her as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)', and she sometimes refers to them as 'my husbands (*n-sɛrib*)'. They will take the side of their brother if she comes into conflict with her husband or deserts him. Her relationship with them is typical of the ambivalence that underlies the joking relationship among the Tallensi.

601 In the first year or so of marriage a woman tries to avoid having to address her male in-laws and her husband directly in public. If they 576 address her it will be in a somewhat formal and courteous way, her husband and his brothers using her clan name, her father-in-law addressing her as 'mother (*ma*)'. She is most at home—but in a very deferential manner—with her mother-in-law, in whose rooms and under whose care she lives, whose domestic duties she largely takes over, and who also addresses her as 'mother (*ma*)'. To any member of the family she speaks of her father-in-law as 'father (*ba*)' and of her mother-in-law as 'mother (*ma*)', and she addresses the latter by this term. Outside the family a woman speaks of her husband as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)'; of his brothers as 'my older' or 'my younger husband (*n-sɛt-bier*, or *n-sɛt-pit*)'; and of his parents as 'my father (mother)-in-law (*n-daŋaamdoog*, masc.—*n daŋaampɔk*, fem.)'. Her husband speaks of her as 'my wife (*mpɔɣa*)'; his brothers as 'my older or younger brother's wife (*m-bier* or *m-pit pɔɣa*)', or in some situations as 'our (i.e. the lineage's) wife'; her parents-in-law as *sampɔɣa*.

606 The status of a woman in her conjugal family is most sharply focused in her relations with her parents-in-law. For it is they who form the axis around which the family revolves. Its unity, its independence, the management of its material affairs, and the maintenance of its well-being all reside in them. Though the general impression one receives of a woman's relationship with her parents-in-law is one of affability and ease, it is potentially anomalous, particularly in the early years. As their son's wife she is in the position of a daughter to them. She will give valuable and indispensable service in the economy of the household. She will produce children to augment the family and the lineage. But, as she herself knows and feels, she is an intruder. She is made to feel this in the early years of marriage even if, as so often happens, she belongs to an adjacent clan, and was personally well known to her conjugal family before marriage. For marriage creates entirely new associations between individuals and families. If she was married by elopement she knows that she is on trial, perhaps the object of a

602 606 parents-in-law, particularly in the early years while he is not quite sure of his wife. If his father-in-law sends for him to help with the hoeing, or with house building, or his mother-in-law requests him to help thatch her rooms, he must respond with alacrity and bring as large a party of his clansmen to assist him as he can manage. In this way a man shows honour to, ingratiates himself with (*giem*), his affines; for these services are not enforceable obligations, and usually cease to be asked for after the marriage has become stabilized. They bear no relation to the bride-price, and are lavishly recompensed. A visiting work-party brought by a son-in-law expects generous hospitality, and the father-in-law, if he is a reputable man, would feel that he had lost dignity if he did not feed and entertain the work-party well. But though these services cannot be enforced, no man would risk offending his parents-in-law by refusing them. These material demonstrations of respect, gratitude, and goodwill are essential for the smooth working of a relationship artificially established by a jural compact. Parents-in-law praise and like an obliging son-in-law, even if he has not paid the bride-price, the natives say.

602 607 This is one side of the affinal relationship. It also has an aspect of friendliness and familiarity, as we have seen, which comes out most conspicuously in a man's relations with his siblings-in-law. A man has a joking relationship with his siblings-in-law similar to that of his wife with his sisters and distant clansmen. It goes so far that a man may sleep with an unmarried sister-in-law (*dakiipɔk*) who is visiting his house, and is therefore in that situation identified with his wife. A man's siblings-in-law belong to the familiar and friendly generation of his wife. They are identified with her. But they also belong to the potentially hostile lineage of her father, whose heir a brother-in-law will one day be. In very many ways a man's siblings-in-law are sympathetically drawn to him; but their rights in relation to his wife may pit them against him. The convention of joking serves to reconcile these two potentially discordant elements of their relationship. But when the marriage has lasted many years, and the possibility of a conflict of rights disappears, the element of friendliness in the relationship can assert itself without prejudice to its jural aspect. Thus, conventional teasing usually drops out of the intercourse of siblings-in-law of long standing.

606 764 431 The formal distance between affines is further shown in the duties and obligations to which a man is liable on the death of a son-in-law or parent-in-law. On the death of a parent-in-law a man is obliged to attend the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. He should come escorted by a large party of clansmen and their wives, and the mourning party should wear their finest clothes and be led by drummers and musicians. A son-in-law should provide the gravestone for a parent-in-law. He should distribute money freely to the grave-diggers, to the drummers, singers, and musicians, whose raucous noise stimulates the crowd

593 voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head
571 of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different
claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark
583 at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use
in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in
593 the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman
571 with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another
indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this
● 607 before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by
which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (*deem*)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

593 Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between
siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters
601 speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our
607 wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*sɛt*) in
the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

173 them back to differences of origin. Everyone knows that all Namoos came originally from Mampurugu, how long ago nobody can tell. The tradition of Tongo, as it was related to me on many occasions, is as follows: The ancestor who founded Tongo was Mosuor. He was the Paramount Chief (*na'ab*) of Mampurugu, but had to flee the country after being vanquished in a fight for the chiefship. When he reached Tongo the Gbizug tɛndaana, Gɛnɔt, was living there. Mosuor came to the house but found nobody there; for Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt had seen him coming and had sought refuge in the nearby hills. Now, there is a watercourse a little distance off and there he found a shallow pit beside which stood a *kiŋkaŋ* (*Ficus*) tree which was shedding its leaves. A path led from this water-hole towards the Hills and someone had been carrying water which had spilled over on to this path. 'Thereupon', to quote the version of one of my Tongo informants, 'our ancestor said, "There is someone in these hills who comes to fetch water here". So he caused the dry fig leaves to be scattered on the path and went to hide quietly. In due course he saw Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt stepping along the path, while the leaves crunched *kaya, kaya,* coming to fetch water. Thereupon our ancestor Mosuor, having seen him, caught him and asked him what he was afraid of. Why did he run away and hide? Gɛnɔt replied that he had seen him wearing a gown and that there was something on his head all red, and fear took hold of him.[1] So Mosuor brought him back and asked, "Who owns this house?" He said that it was his house, and Mosuor brought him home thither and said that he himself would settle down here and Gɛnɔt as well. He said that Gɛnɔt would be his tɛndaana to carry out the sacrifices on his behalf.'

Gbizug elders told the story of Mosuor in much the same way but omitting the trick by which Mosuor caught their ancestor, adding that it was the horses and guns of Mosuor that inspired fear in Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt.
173 They say, also, that having accepted Mosuor as a settler and having
608 allotted land to him close beside his own homestead, he told Mosuor what were the taboos of the country (*tɛŋɔn-kiha*), and entered into a solemn pact of blood-brotherhood with him. They *ŋma pɔlɔŋ*, cut wrists. A cut was made on the wrist of each, and each licked the blood of the other. Thus '*ba lɛeba mabiih, ba lɛeba soog,* they became brethren, they became uterine brothers' and pledged themselves and their descendants to perpetual peace. This was a unique instance of blood-brotherhood, which is not practised in Taleland to-day.

773 According to this tradition, Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt told Mosuor of his kinsmen, the Ba'at-Sakpar Tɛndaana, the Wakii Tɛndaana, the Degal tɛndaana, and the Ka'ar tɛndaana. These five were the original inhabitants of the country. They sprang from the Earth itself, say their descendants. At Gbizug they declare that Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's ancestor Bumbiogta'adug sprouted from the earth (*u bulme na*), he had no father or mother (*u ka ba u ka ma*). Pressed further they say, '*u yi Naawun zug sig na*—he descended from Heaven'. Heaven and Earth are one, they contend; they have the same mystical value. At Wakii they call their first

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[292] [1] A red fez and a cloth tunic are the distinctive costume of chiefs of Mampuru origin. Tɛndaanas may not wear garments of cloth. They are ritually obliged to wear skins only. Chiefs and their clansmen may ride horses, tɛndaanas not.

x618 tɛndaanaship and in other religious cults. Each segment has its own tɛndaana, the Gbizug tɛndaana being the senior of the two, and in addition the Gbeogdɛm have the cult of the External *Bɔγar*, like Zubiuŋ and the Hill Talis, whereas the Gbizugdɛm do not participate in this cult. This cleavage comes into operation also in the political and jural relations of the two segments, so that in very many situations Gbeog emerges as an independent settlement.

Both segments have ties of clanship with Soog, the Talis clan sandwiched between Tongo and Wakii. But there is an additional bond between Gbeog and Soog, which is not shared by Gbizug, for one-half of Gbeog is associated with Soog in a common cult of an External *Bɔγar*, in the same way as the three sections of Zubiuŋ are associated in the cult of their External *Bɔγar*, Duunkpaləg. The other half of Gbeog has a separate External *Bɔγar*. Gbizug has ties of clanship also with Degal, the Tɛnzugu clan, in virtue of the alleged 'brotherhood' of the four primordial tɛndaanas. Yet Wakii and Ka'ar, the clans sprung from the other two primordial tɛndaanas, are merely the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of Gbizug, though both, and especially Wakii, have closer spatial, jural, and ritual relations with it than Degal has.

● [608] Soogdɛm have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ, but regard them as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. They are linked by a ritual relationship which comes into effect whenever a Zubiuŋ tɛndaana dies. There was for a long time an estrangement between the two clans, because some years ago a Zubiuŋ youth married the ex-wife of a Soog man. A ceremonial reconciliation [627] under somewhat dramatic circumstances took place recently when ritual necessity compelled the elders of the offender's lineage to send a deputation to beg the pardon of the Soog elders. Apart from this intermittent and very limited ritual collaboration, the clanship-by-courtesy of Soog and Zubiuŋ is very weak. One of the standing jokes in Zubiuŋ concerned two [735] of the lineage heads of Soog. These two old men are notoriously poor through bodily infirmity, and therefore make use of every opportunity of getting free food or drink. Thus, whenever there is a funeral at Zubiuŋ they appear as representatives of their clan to claim their share of beer and meat as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy; but Zubiuŋdɛm have long ceased to go to Soog funerals.

From Ba'ari the mesh of clan linkages continues across the dialectal boundary with the Gərisi. Ba'at-Sakpar has clanship ties with Sanaab biis, a section of Bələga. 'They are our kinsmen', said the Ba'at-Sakpar tɛndaana-elect, 'even though they have become Gərisi.' Another Bələga section are similarly related to Ba'at-Lakum yiri. Ba'at-Guŋ, on the other hand, have ties of clanship with Tamboog on Tɛnzugu, and Ba'at-Dun biis have ties of clanship with Samiit on Tɛnzugu. Yayazuor and Gbee are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy to all sections of Ba'ari.

The internal constitution of Ba'ari is interesting, in that the whole clan is grouped around Ba'at-Sakpar. Thus, Ba'at-Lakum yiri has the status of an attached lineage of Sakpar. Their founding ancestor was said to have been a sororal nephew of Sakpar, begotten by a Zubiuŋ man—hence also their ties with Zubiuŋ; and Ba'at-Guŋ is similarly an attached lineage of Lakum yiri. Being related to Sakpar by a remove, Guŋ is allowed to

x618 621 Kpɔləg (Pwɔləg), Sipaat has no ties of clanship with either of these places. Yinduuri, a clan whose inner constitution is a miniature replica of the whole system of interlacing clanship ties which we have been describing, is contiguous with Zandoya but has no ties of clanship with it. Zandoya's clanship ties link it with Gorogo, which in turn is linked with a group of Gɔrisi, who live in the Bɔləga district.

This is but one series of concatenated clan linkages running from end to end of the Tongo district and even, like those of the Namoos, extending across to the Gɔrisi. Similar chains of clanship ties link the other Talis clans to one another and to this series; and the whole forms an elaborately reticulated system which stretches beyond the linguistic and cultural frontiers of Taleland. By these chains of clanship ties the Talis are linked on to peoples outside Taleland who live quite beyond the boundaries of their regular interests and concerns.

x618 We have been discussing clanship in the narrow sense—that is, ties implying the prohibition of marriage, joint leviratic rites, the reciprocal privileges and duties of *sunzɔp*, and such things as the liability in former times to be raided for one another's debts. As a rule, every constituent maximal lineage of every clan has such ties with one or more territorially contiguous lineages of neighbouring clans. Most of them also have clanship ties with some lineages of clans not adjacent to them, but not very far away, reckoning the distance in terms of the number of unrelated clans intervening and not by geographical criteria. There is no fixed rule; but within this cluster of settlements it is always a safe prediction that the greater the distance separating two clans the less likely are they to be linked by clanship.

x618 ●608 In addition, every clan recognizes one or more clans in its vicinity as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. Soog and Wakii; Gundaat, Kpatà'ar, and Bunkiuk; Yinduur and Zandoya; Sii and Gorogo: these consider one another to be *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, and they generally appear at one another's funerals in this capacity.

x618 [183] As with Zubiuŋ and the clans adjacent to it, so among the Hill Talis, the ties which make up the field of clanship of any maximal lineage are not all of equal strength. The critical norms have an absolute value. Clanship prohibits intermarriage, vests defined rights and obligations in each lineage, and implies a solidarity which is incompatible with hostile acts like war or abducting one another's wives, or raiding one another's cattle. If these norms are infringed, as inevitably happens now and then, they are not thereby invalidated. The infringement tends to provoke processes which cancel out its effects and either re-establish the invulnerability of the norms or bring about a new alinement of structural ties, which neutralizes the breach. At the same time spatial distribution has a selective influence on the extent and frequency of the intercourse between lineages linked by ties of clanship. Proximity encourages more frequent and regular co-operation in situations which mobilize ties of clanship. Other factors, too, influence the gradation of clanship ties, the most important of these being the fact that solidarity, co-operation, and mutual dependence are greater within the clan than between linked lineages of different clans. Besides having a specific field of clanship, each maximal

x618 in pursuit. The youth zigzagged through the crowd, flourishing his leg of
764 mutton, and threw it to a companion as the old man reached and grappled
602 with him. For a few minutes they wrestled on the refuse heap, the old man pretending fury with the most realistic mimicry, as he cried out, 'you thief, you scoundrel', and his opponent making a pretence of resisting vigorously. A horde of small boys pranced around them with joy, and the elders at the gateway shook with laughter. Then it was all over, and everybody's attention reverted to the serious business of dividing the meat. 'Those young fellows are Sakpeedɛm', an elder explained to me; 'we and Sakpee abuse each other, it is brother-in-lawship, and not fighting.' This incident was a striking instance of how a social definition steers a situation. Anyone but a Sakpee man acting thus would have been set upon and manhandled; even a Zubiuŋ man, if he were to commit such an unthinkable act, would have been severely mauled.

x618 When the natives speak of this as brother-in-lawship, they make it clear
● 608 that they are speaking figuratively. A clan's joking partners are usually
602 clans that live just beyond the range of its effective ties of clanship. They are clans who actually are or might be the *sunzɔp* of its *sunzɔp* by clanship or by courtesy. Thus they lie on the border between two zones. On the one side lies the zone in which the clan has precisely defined social ties implying specific rights and obligations and resting on the assumption of amity and solidarity. Serious conflict with these clans is regarded as incompatible with the basic axioms of social relations, and when it occurs it always precipitates action designed to re-establish normal social relations. On the other side live people with whom no direct structural ties exist; they may be friendly if they wish, but they can be hostile with impunity. They are clans whose wives can be abducted or seduced, if one is bold enough, without infringing the loyalty of clanship or necessarily incurring instant reprisals.

Joking partners lie between these two sets of clans, and are likely to be connected with both by structural ties of one kind or another. Thus the joking partners of my clan are not our *sunzɔp* nor our possible but inaccessible enemies. They are the *sunzɔp* of our *sunzɔp*, in relation to whom both my clan and theirs have similar rights, obligations, and sentiments. This is a bond of friendliness between us. But they are also the *sunzɔp* of our possible enemies, who may side with them against us, and this is a source of latent opposition between us. The conventions of the joking relationship symbolize piquantly the interstitial status of joking partners between friends, who have rights, duties, and loyalties to one another, and potential enemies. Their privileged aggression reconciles the conflicting definitions of *sunzɔp*, whose right to a share of the meat symbolizes reciprocal bonds, and non-*sunzɔp* who have no right to it because of the absence of reciprocal obligations; of people who are near (*pɔrəga*)—a significant concept in Tale political thought indicating both spatial and social proximity—and those who are far (*zaa ha*); of people whose friendliness can be relied upon, and those who are incalculable.

This is obvious both in the custom of mock abuse and in the snatching of meat or other food at a funeral ceremony. The joking partners obtain a share of the meat almost as if they were *sunzɔp*—but by a burlesque of

seizing it by violence, almost as if they were hostile intruders. *Sunzɔp* 608
have *a priori* no need of force to assert their privileges; if they did resort 618x
to it the affront would be so grave as to rupture the ties of clanship with 602
them. Unrelated strangers could only get one of the shares due to
sunzɔp if they had the temerity to seize it—but they would be fortunate
if they escaped with their lives, even in these days of curbed passions.
The mock aggression of a joking partner is a caricature blending these
contradictory ways of behaviour.

Joking partners are not obliged to tease one another. They do so spontaneously when the situation seems appropriate. People who are greatly unequal in years or status, or personally related by cognatic kinship, will not act in this way. The joking partnership merely fixes the group with whose members such behaviour is appropriate in appropriate circumstances; a casual encounter, for instance, where anybody but a joking partner or a close kinsman would be met with the customary greeting—'*ni i tooma*', lit. 'with your work'. It is also appropriate, as we have seen, in situations such as funeral ceremonies, where there is a very strict determination of attendance and behaviour by clearly defined social ties. But even there joking partners turn up largely by chance. They happen to be passing, or a few young men, hearing of the funeral and knowing that there will be dancing and girls, go for the lark of it. For distant *sunzɔp*, too, attendance at funeral ceremonies is very often a matter of chance, but it is also very often the result of a decision by responsible elders.

Such institutionalized joking partnerships do not appear to exist among 608
the Namoos. This may be correlated with the less elaborate interlocking 618x
of constituted ties and cleavages among them than among the Talis. An
analogous practice which throws light on the ideas implicit in standardized 184
joking partnership was, however, in vogue among the several branches of 602
Mosuor biis until recently. When there was a funeral at Yamələg a party
of relatives-in-law (*deenam*) would sometimes pass through Tongo from
Wakii or Tenzugu carrying the obligatory food contributions consisting
of a basket of porridge and a whole sheep or goat cut up and cooked.
Tongo youths would then, if they had a chance, intercept them and compel
them to give up most of the food, leaving only a small portion to
prove to the Yamələg people that their relatives-in-law had discharged
their obligations. The Yamələg people would naturally be indignant;
they would denounce the Tongo youths as thieves and rascals, and upbraid
their relatives-in-law for yielding so timorously. Then they would
wait for an opportunity to recoup themselves in kind. Next time a similar
party of relatives-in-law bound for Tongo from Nabərug passed through
Yamələg they would be waylaid and robbed in the same way. It was
thought of as a practical joke, and accepted as such by the victims. The
annoyance it caused soon blew over and did not leave a lasting grudge,
for it was understood to be an exaggerated enforcement of the rights of
sunzɔp to a prescribed share of such contributions if they happened to
turn up at the funeral.

In the same way, twenty years ago, a Tongo man who chanced to be 608
passing through Yamələg when the guinea corn was ripening or the 602
618x

602 ground-nuts ready for harvesting, [illegible] might pluck a few twigs of guinea corn
608 or pull up a bunch of ground-[illegible]s to stay his hunger. He would shout
x618 out, 'Whose corn is this, yo-o-o? I am going to pluck some.' The
owner, standing on his flat roof, would probably remonstrate and swear,
but he would not raise a hue and cry, for this was not theft but an
exaggerated assertion of clanship ties. Nowadays, since the political
[578] jealousies between the chiefs of Tongo and of Yamələg have brought
about a state of chronic hostility between the two places, this pleasant
custom has fallen into disuse. It is impossible to tease people with whom
one has open or suppressed enmity; it would certainly provoke a fight.

x618 Such liberties, it is of interest to note, could never be taken with the people of Sie or Biuk, though they, too, are the clan *sunzɔp* of Tongo. For, as my informants explained, 'they are too far away, and therefore they would resent it'. On the other hand, while any Tongo man can pluck a handful of guinea corn or a bunch of ground-nuts from a clansman's field at Tongo if the two men are on good terms, no one would dare to intercept the food contribution of another Tongo section's relatives-in-law. A serious quarrel would inevitably result. 'We are too near each other, we are like the members of a single family', explained my informants. Every segment of Tongo is likely to be represented at the funeral ceremony at which these contributions from relatives-in-law are shared, to claim the share due to it. For any segment to anticipate this by violence would be a gratuitous insult implying that the other segments do not respect its rights. The people of Yamələg and of Sie used to act in the same way towards each other before the political jealousies that to-day poison their relationship arose.

184 All Tallensi think alike on matters of this sort, which fall within the
x618 ambit of their common culture, whatever their particular structural
affiliations may be. This Namoo custom and its recent obsolescence fit
the pattern we have established for the more conventionalized joking
partnerships of the Talis.

x618 Yet another kind of joking which I have several times witnessed
602 adds confirmation to our analysis, the more so because it is entirely
578 informal. This occurs between the members of two maximal lineages
which are bound to one another by inescapable ties of politico-ritual inter-
dependence. They are usually maximal lineages which have comple-
mentary politico-ritual offices, such as a chiefship and the tɛndaanaship
complementary to it. A large element of tension is necessarily involved in
these relationships. Mutual loyalty and solidarity in situations involving
common interests are counterbalanced by mutual suspicion in matters
concerning the private interests and possessions of each lineage. Behind
a strong sense of amity and interdependence lurks a jealous vigilance in
regard to reciprocal rights and duties.

When, therefore, representatives of the two groups meet in a ceremonial or jural situation, the more aggressive among the elders often taunt one another playfully at moments when ceremonial formality is relaxed. Gbizug and Tongo men, for example, have a habit of doing this. The Chief of Tongo and the Gbizug tɛndaana, on the rare occasions when they meet in public, will interrupt a long and ceremonious discussion with a

bɔγar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the 618x
External *Bɔγar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it 778
symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that 769
particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔγar*, that is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpalɔg in ritual homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔγar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage, as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia, and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔγar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure— 618x
on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the 769
clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship 618x
never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpalɔg or at any of the Zubiuŋ 782
Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ 769
maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in the ceremonies of inducting a new tɛndaana into his office, or in the funeral rites of a deceased tɛndaana—members of the linked lineages of that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari.* The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component 618x
units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the 778
principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. 782
Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and
obligations of close *sunzɔp*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔγar*, [794]
and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔγar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔγar* and a focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yaγazuor,
who are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties [608]
of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

x618 general ritual bond in the tendaanaship and the special ritual relationship
778 with the Earth which this office imposes on a group that has the preroga-
782 tive of it, and they have a specific ritual bond that comes into action during the Great Festivals.

x618 At the level of these ritual relations, Ba'ari, Gbizug, Wakii, and
608 Yaɣazuor are brethren (*mabiis*) to one another. Gbizug, it will be remembered, is also linked to Ba'ari by clanship ties; through it, therefore, the scheme of linkage by clanship ties is interlocked with the scheme of linkage through ritual ties; and the myth in which the social relations of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are symbolically pictured expresses this double-sided interdependence. As will be clearer presently, the organization of ritual ties between corporate units, like that of clanship ties, follows the field principle. Working at different levels of the social structure in the service of different interests, the two systems are interlocked but not congruent. They reinforce each other by counterbalancing each other; and both kinds of ties are translated into the basic idiom of Tale social relations, the idiom of genealogical connexion.

C. *Gbizug*. We shall see this more clearly if we consider the role of Gbizug in this configuration. As we have noted before, linked maximal lineages have the right to participate in exoteric ceremonies (such as funeral ceremonies) in which the corporate identity of the particular Ba'ari lineage with which they have clanship ties emerges; but clanship ties do not give them the right to take part in the religious cults in which the corporate unity and identity of the whole clan emerges. They have no bonds with the clan as a whole, but only with the relatively autonomous segments of the clan. Gbizug, however, is bound to a segment of the clan by clanship ties and to the whole clan by ritual ties, and the bridge between these two sets of ties is Ba'at-Sakpar. Gbizug has no loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari, other than Ba'at-Sakpar, on the level of clanship; in this respect Gbizug is a threat to the stability of Ba'at-Sakpar's field of clanship. The latter's loyalties to Gbizug might in certain circumstances clash with its loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari. Compromise and adjustment are made possible by the scheme of ritual ties. The partly independent fields of clanship of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are adjusted to one another at a different level of social organization. In the frame of ritual relations, Gbizug is, as it were, assimilated to the whole clan of Ba'ari, drawn into the field of clanship of Ba'at-Sakpar.

It follows that on this plane of ritual relations Gbeog and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra are indirectly bound to the whole of Ba'ari, for Gbizug represents its whole field of clanship in its corporate ritual relationship with Ba'ari. At a further remove Zubiuŋ Yakɔra is the bridge between the whole of Zubiuŋ and the whole of Ba'ari through Gbizug; and this rule extends, by a series of removes, to all the Talis.

The Underlying Principles of Ritual Collaboration

x618 We must try to see clearly the principles underlying this bewildering
182 hierarchy of social ties between corporate units in Taleland. It is as difficult to state this principle simply and precisely as it was for the writer to elicit it from the confusing and, at first sight, inconsistent welter of

of any of the Hill Talis clans. Each of the two maximal lineages that 618X
constitute Kpata'ar, Kpata'arna'ab yiri and Nakyeet yiri, has its own 769
private lineage *bɔyar*. Though bound by all the reciprocal duties and privileges that make them the closest clan *sunzɔp* of each other, the genealogical cleavage between them is somewhat more strongly emphasized than it is between the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ, for example. The head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is the head of the clan, and *eo ipso* the senior ritual functionary and principal custodian of the Bona'ab *Bɔyar*. The head of Nakyeet yiri has a complementary role in relation to him in political, ritual, and jural affairs that concern the whole clan.

The politico-ritual office held by the head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is symbolized in a shrine that is ancillary to the External *Bɔyar*. It is in the sole custody of Kpata'arna'ab yiri. But when sacrifice is offered at it on prescribed occasions Nakyeet yiri must also be represented; and in addition Dakuor yiri, the component maximal lineage of Bunkiuk with which Kpata'arna'ab yiri has ties of clanship, must be represented and share in the sacrament. Thus, both Nakyeet yiri and Dakuor yiri, though they themselves have no ties of clanship, take part in a common sacrifice with Kpata'arna'ab yiri because of their clanship ties with the latter. In this case the central region of the field of clanship of Kpata'arna'ab yiri becomes actualized in a sacrament that symbolizes the exclusive rights to a particular politico-ritual office held by that maximal lineage.

But what about the worship of the External *Bɔyar*, Bona'ab? As its senior custodians, the men of Kpata'arna'ab yiri can sacrifice there alone or accompanied by Nakyeet yiri, if they desire the intercession of the *Bɔyar* in matters that concern them only. When the Great Festivals come round, however, it is obligatory for the whole congregation of the *Bɔyar* to join together in the performance of the ceremonies. The other communicants, beside the two segments of Kpata'ar, are Gundaat, Samiit and two of its linked lineages, together counting as a single unit, and Sakpee II.

The cult of the *Bɔyar* Bona'ab is the central force uniting this group 122
of maximal lineages. It is, we must emphasize, not a permanent bond of 618X
union that operates at all times and under all conditions, but a synthesis 769
that emerges chiefly in the context of the Great Festivals. During the [796]
festivals their interdependence in the cult of the *Bɔyar* imposes mutual amity and solidarity on this group of maximal lineages. At other times this is not always an effective sanction of amity and goodwill. For these ties of ritual collaboration are not homogeneous. Underneath them run other ties which reinforce them in the context of the *Bɔyar* cult but might act against them outside of this context. There are first the ties of clanship linking Kpata'arna'ab yiri with Nakyeet yiri, Nakyeet yiri with Sakpee, Sakpee with Gundaat, in a chain, as it were. Then there are the [608]
ties of clanship-by-courtesy which link all these lineages with one another. Samiit and Sakpee have bonds of local contiguity because they 'sit together on the same land' under the ritual jurisdiction of the Sakpee tɛndaana. Gundaat and Samiit are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, bound by a covenant of mutual amity which they trace back to the alleged kinship ties of their mythological founding ancestors. Gundaat and Kpata'ar

leopard taboo of Dkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of 776 the Talis. 784

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems 184 is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛyər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛyər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔyar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛyər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔyar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔyar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔyar* and the *Bɔyar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that 608 sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be 776 called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔyar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔyar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔyar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔyar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with 608 lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when 769 the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔya* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔyar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding 182 pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

621 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here [778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔyar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔyar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field [608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

618 one another in funerals and similar ceremonial events. These ceremonial
[608] reciprocities do not prevail between Tongo or Zoo and any of the Hill Talis clans adjacent to them.

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Nevertheless, a palpable social boundary still prevails between Tongo and Zubiuŋ, but one far less determinate than that between Tongo and its other Talis neighbours. No Zubiuŋ homesteads are so situated as to be surrounded on all sides by Tongo homesteads, and vice versa; there is no indiscriminate mingling of the homesteads of the two clans. Looked at from within, both Zubiuŋ and Tongo are self-contained spatial units within their respective social circumferences. This is correlated with their contrasting totemic observances, clan cults, and politico-ritual offices; their mutual exclusiveness by the canon of agnatic descent and the liberty to intermarry that goes with this; and their consequent divergent jural interests as distinct corporate units; the people of Tongo are Namoos, the Zubiuŋdem Talis. The observer is constantly apprised of this in the attitudes and opinions of individuals, in economic activities, and in jural and ritual events, the very activities and events which reveal the close bonds of the two groups. Tongo people never scrupled to raid their weaker Zubiuŋ neighbours for cattle owed to them, as many old men relate from personal experience. On the other hand, responsible elders and chiefs of Tongo, in those days, disapproved strongly of resort to violent self-help against Zubiuŋ by their people, though they could not always prevent it—an attitude they would never adopt in regard to the other Talis. To-day Tongo and Zubiuŋ people regard one another with a certain amount of suspicion and good-natured superiority, tempered with a tolerance which the former never show towards the other Talis.

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A similar, but more elastic, social boundary exists between Tongo and Zoo. There are no Zoo people living inside Tongo, but no less than 11 of the 39 homesteads situated on the land under the ritual jurisdiction of Zoo-Yiraaŋ, within the social circumference of Zoo, are the homes of permanent immigrants from Tongo. The bond of common stock (*buurət*) between these two locally allied and politically associated Namoo clans blurs the cleavages between them. Tongo people find it the more congenial to live amongst Zoo people in considerable numbers because they have the same ritual observances, mortuary and funeral customs, and politico-ritual offices and values. It is mainly cultural differences of this kind that deter them from settling amongst the people of Zubiuŋ.

The one-sided filtration of Tongo people into Zoo, and the absence of the reverse process, are due mainly to the density of habitation—which is so great as to preclude immigration—and the obvious excess of population at Tongo. Zoo people who wish to emigrate, temporarily or permanently, move farther afield, to Gbambee or Biuŋ. In any case, the flow of migration from Tongo to Zoo has apparently reached saturation, for it has now practically stopped. But this movement, though at bottom an ecological readjustment, has been canalized by the social structure; and while it brings out the affinities of Tongo with Zoo, it also emphasizes their separateness. Because they are structurally independent of each other, Tongo people only migrate to Zoo if they have matrilateral kin there who will grant them land to build on and farm. By contrast,

593 In the broadest sense, then, *mabiis* are cognates who are on terms of equality with one another and have a mutual interest in one another's welfare. In the narrowest and prototypical sense *mabiis* are siblings by the same parents. The emphasis is on their equality of status due to a common relationship with their parents.

The Equivalence of Siblings

The key to the social relations of siblings in Tale society and to the effects on the whole social structure of the sibling bond is the principle to which Radcliffe-Brown has given the name of 'the social equivalence of siblings'.[1] It is as true of the Tallensi as of the Australian aborigines that 'there is a very strong, intimate and permanent social bond between two brothers born and brought up in the same family', and that they 'occupy similar positions in the total social structure'. As we shall see, the latter proposition has to be translated into terms of the lineage organization to give it the appropriate connotation for the Tallensi. Siblings derive their social equivalence—that is, equivalence in jural, ritual, and economic relations, as opposed, for example, to private marital relations—from their common relationship with their parents. Outside the lineage range of strictly reckoned classificatory kinship, the recognition of siblingship implies not so much similar positions in the social structure as similar roles in certain situations due to membership of the same corporate groups, or, with matrilateral kin, to having common ascendants. We have, in fact, already had a good deal of evidence in preceding chapters of the social equivalence of siblings. We have seen also how the recognition of siblingship varies in significance according to the lineage context. What we wish to do now is to study the sibling relationship in its own right. By bringing the evidence together in a unitary picture we shall be able to see what constitutes the social equivalence of siblings. We shall find it useful for purposes of our analysis to distinguish between the solidarity of siblings and their equivalence.

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But before we examine the social equivalence of siblings more fully it is worth noting that there is, among the Tallensi, a correlated principle of social action of very wide application. Individuals who have the same social role or have had similar socially critical experiences are identified with one another whenever their role or these experiences come into a situation. The best instance is the case of co-wives who always speak of each other as sisters. All chiefs are regarded as 'brothers' (*mabiis*) because of their chiefship; so also are tendaanas. We have seen how men who have no father or mother alive are identified with one another at funeral ceremonies by the fact that only those who have undergone this social experience may take part in certain rites. Similarly only those who have themselves lost a wife or a husband may look after

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[1] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, 'The Social Organization of Australian Tribes', Part 3, *Oceania*, I, 1930–1, pp. 428–9.

the widow (or widower) during a funeral, or assist in the rites of purifying the widow or share her meals. 593 608 Tallensi assert that a breach of this rule is impossible as no man or woman who had not had the experience would take charge of a widow. It is a taboo (*kihər*), and anyone who infringed it would die. [778] Again, owners of diviners' shrines (*bakologo* shrines—the diviner is called *baya*) are identified in certain situations, though they do not form a corporate body of any sort. Thus when a new diviner's shrine is being set up for a man certain portions of the beer used in the rites can be drunk only by men who already have such shrines, and it is they who carry out the final rites by which the actual power of divination is conferred on him. Similarly it is only men who have themselves undergone the experience and the treatment who may assist in the ritual of purifying a homicide or a man who has slain a big game animal such as a bush cow. [783] The list of illustrations could be extended, but this will suffice to show how deeply rooted the idea is. It is, however, only a determinant of individual conduct and sentiment, giving rise to *ad hoc* co-operation in certain situations, and not a principle of association in corporate units.

Factors modifying the Sibling Bond

The solidarity and social equivalence of siblings are conditioned by a number of factors. 593 613 Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure. Siblingship does not cancel out the uniqueness of the individual, as symbolized in the notion of the *Yin*, and socially crystallized in the precise differentiation of the lineage segment which he or she founds. This factor, with its counterpart in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with the years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and, consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin. Thus the sibling relationship, while itself an important constitutive factor of the lineage structure, is reciprocally moulded by that structure. The relationship of brothers among the Tallensi might very well have been different from what it is if their social organization provided for the continuous merging of collateral lines of descent in lineal lines,[1] so that lineage branches springing from brothers were not specifically recognized, but only the inclusive trunk-line deriving from a distant ancestor.

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[1] This appears to be the case with the Nuer at higher levels of lineage structure (cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, 1940, ch. v) and among some Southern Bantu tribes, such as the Zulu (cf. E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, 1936).

177 167 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 872 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi. A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 636 648 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 636 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and
local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves, in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people. Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters, and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 636
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the 175
embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared, but some of the values connected with it remain. The other institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of economic development was started, and social services were multiplied. The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619
to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101
reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are
identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621
This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101
the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648
is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be
quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101
settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gorni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common.
The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191]
Gorni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with
Goris. Gorni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197]
them and their Gore neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101
The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609
Garəŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, pro-
pinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101
is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into com-
[551] munion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
[582] sex or birth order—Təndoog or Tənpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
648 whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-
Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi;
and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of
the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts
and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the
benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace,
and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the
totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
● [609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured
kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe con-
duct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client
lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛyəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic
avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's
lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will
have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and
as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between
the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of
sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus
he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to
inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the
agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of
maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes
have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who
observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the
totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo
of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that
it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl
in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer
remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary
totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

as if the name could have a character moulding, — a soul shaping, as he might put it, — effect. Such names, moreover, make up a living record of notable events or persons or achievements in the father's life. 121

It is in this sense, mainly because of what they symbolise and record, that names and naming customs can be said to be part of a people's oral literature. There is no better testimony to this than in one of Professor WESTERMANN's own linguistic explorations, the enchanting life story which he recorded of the Ewe Bonifatius Foli[3]). It will be remembered that the story opens with Foli's explanation of how he came by his name. Had he been born a commoner, he says, he would have been called Kofi, the day name for a male born on Friday. But he was of chiefly descent and so received the corresponding aristocratic name, a name which no commoner would normally bear.

The ethnographical and linguistic writings on Africa abound with examples pertinent to my theme, but I want to illustrate it from my own field work among the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast[4]). All Tallensi are curious and alert in the matter of personal names. Early in my stay among them I once asked a young man what was the point of name giving. This is what he answered: "(The reason) why they give names is that you may know so-and-so and the other one, and know what he looks like; for if they did not confer names on you they would not know you." The name stands for the individual, is part of what marks him out from others. This feeling about the individuality of a name is shown in the delight with which Tallensi meet someone bearing the same name as themselves. Two persons with the same name call each other "*n-wu'uri*", (my name-sake) and exchange friendly banter. 551 [609] ●

The Tallensi have a technical term for the giving of a name, *pit wu'uri*, to confer a name; and this term has a cognate which, we shall see, is very revealing, *pot wu'uri* to utter or announce a name. Let us consider, first, the giving of names. This is quite a complex matter. I realised this shortly after arriving among the Tallensi, on the occasion of Ma'an-ɔb's funeral. Just before any burial, an elder offers a red cock to the dead with an invocation that he may depart and join his ancestors. I was struck by the fact that the elder, in this case, addressed the dead man as Yin, not as Ma'an-ɔb; and this led to a train of enquiries. 553

I thus discovered that a person can have, and very commonly does have two given names. One is his *wu'ur-zoo*, his open or everyday name; the other is his *seyraan wu'uri*, his spirit-guardian name. It is the latter name that is invoked at death and on other ritual occasions in which a person's well being is at issue. It is the name used, for instance, when a person's evil Pre-destiny is exorcised[7]). It is not a secret name. Though it is not usually known outside the circle of his close kin, those who normally share with him in sacrifices to common ancestors of 551

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[3]) D. WESTERMANN, "Kindheitserinnerung des Togonegers Bonifatius Foli". *Mitt. d. Sem. f. Orient. Sprachen*, XXXIV, iii, 1931.

[4]) I have described much of the life and social organisation of the Tallensi in my two books *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (1945) and *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, (1949).

[7]) For a fuller account of this notion and of the notion of the *seyer* see op. cit., *The Web of Kinship*, passim. See also R. S. RATTRAY, *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, vol. II. passim.

ashes) was blind, when a *sakur* and *mey* came and asked him what was 173
the matter. He replied, "Sickness." They said, "Open your eyes," and 784
he could see.'

In one of the tribal histories recorded above we again have an 784
example of the violation of a taboo after death—dressing the dead 766
body in a goat-skin. With regard to what we may call the 'royal clan', i.e. lion clan, I was told: 'In olden times, if any one killed a lion, the skin was sent to the Chief of Kurugu, who then sent it on to the Chief of Mampurugu. There a funeral ceremony was held for it.'

Blood Relationship: Relationship, transmitted through the female 611
line, is called *soog'* (compare the Nankanse *sõõ*). The *soog'* groups are well known, but, as far as I could discover, do not bear any special names. The *soog'* exhibits all the characteristics already noted with regard to the Nankanse *sõõ*.[1] A male cannot transmit a taint of witchcraft, inherited from his mother. 'If your mother can fly (*ak*) (that is, is a witch), you can fly.' (*Soe* is a witch in Talene).

'My sister's child is my *soog'*, my brother's child is not; he is my son.' Again, *ziim* (blood) and *soog'* are synonymous terms.

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[1] See Chapter XVIII.

103 614 Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa).

614 My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

611 754 The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

173 622 793 *Traditions of the Kusase*: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe tey*) and that person would

The Chain of Sub-clans

x618 613 Thus came into being this chain of four patrilineal sub-clans (Tongo, Yamɔlag, Sie, and Biuk), each the skeleton of a community. From these primary nuclei colonies have continually hived off to settle in neighbouring areas, particularly at Gbambee, Gorogo, Ba'ari, Woo, and Datɔk. Each sub-clan is itself a composite system of lineages: authentic lineages constituted by the direct line of agnatic descent from the clan founder, Mosuor; attached lineages, linked to these usually by the dogma of [611] sister-descent; and assimilated lineages. The attached lineages are identified as *ti tau biis*—our sister's children—descendants in the direct male line of a female member of one of the authentic lineages. The stereotyped formula attributes the origin of such a lineage either to a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) who came to live in his mother's brother's (*ahəb*) [586] community, or to a sister who was divorced by her husband by the irrevocable procedure of blowing ash on her (*pɛbh*), and returned to the shelter of her parental home with her children. By this form of divorce a man renounces his rights in his children, who henceforth become members of their maternal lineage, as if they had been illegitimately begotten by a lover. The agnatic posterity of such children, as of any spinster's son, becomes a lineage attached to that of their ancestor's mother.

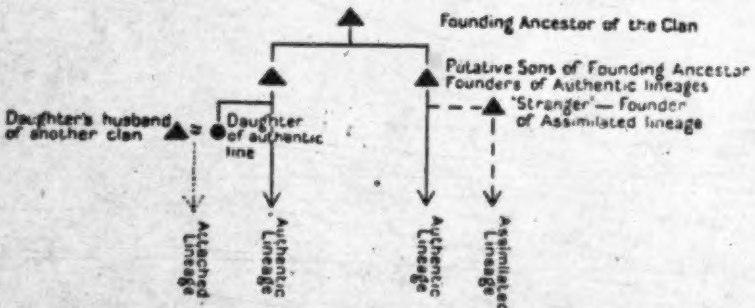
Founding Ancestor of the Clan
Putative Sons of Founding Ancestor
Founders of Authentic lineages
'Stranger'— Founder of Assimilated lineage
Daughter's husband of another clan
Daughter of authentic line
Attached Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Assimilated Lineage

Diagram showing Relationship of Accessory Lineages to Authentic Line

We shall call these 'attached lineages' because they are linked to the authentic lineages by actual or putative cognatic ties. An attached lineage maintains its continuity and distinctness, like any other lineage, even if its patrilineal progenitor is alleged to have repudiated its ancestress and his own progeny.

The existence of the assimilated lineages is often traced to an ancestor who was a 'kinsman' (*mabii*) accompanying the founder of the authentic lineage when he first arrived. Of some such lineages, however, it is whispered that they sprang from slaves of the authentic lineage with which they are connected, or from foreign refugees who sought their protection. The term used for these lineages is intended to convey that they are incorporated in the sub-clan by virtue of their dependence on and participation in the life of an authentic lineage. We shall also describe these two kinds of lineages collectively as accessory lineages.

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them
as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
●611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

784 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

182

been discussing have a deeper meaning to the natives than merely as convenient indices of social differentiation. It is on account of their deeper meaning that they serve also, in certain contexts, to identify corporate units. The very casualness with which Tallensi speak of their totemic taboos; the unquestioning way in which they take their funeral customs for granted; and at the other extreme, the connexion of these ritual observances with the supreme religious institution of the Hill Talis, whose influence pervades their whole social life, all show that we are dealing with something that goes down to the axiomatic ideas and values that underpin the social structure.

182 •611 These ritual institutions, with their common pattern of injunction, oath, and determination by descent or quasi-descent, form part of an interlocked system of religious values that springs directly out of the social structure. Their common focus is the notion of dependence on the ancestors determined by the fact of descent. But it is not descent in its physiological sense that they refer to. They symbolize the fact that descent, to the Tallensi, axiomatically creates bonds of moral and ritual interdependence and obligation. It is because, as we have previously seen, Tallensi tend to read into all ritual relations, whatever their derivation, corresponding genealogical relationships; because the relations of mutual amity and co-operation, even though only in a limited sphere of conduct, imposed by ritual ties are of the same type as those imposed by ties of kinship; because all the rights and duties determined by descent are kept in force by the sanction of the ancestor spirits, that the values appropriate to the sphere of kinship and descent merge with those expressed in religious cult and doctrine. There is a syncretism in the Tale system of ideas and values that images their syncretic social structure. Lineage system and ancestor cult interfuse and at the same time mirror each other.

613 Our analysis can be carried farther if we consider what lineage membership means. It is created by the bare physiological fact of patrilineal descent. But the physiological links between the individual and his ancestors and between all the living members of the lineage have no social significance except as the kernel of the social relations and bonds that come out in economic affairs such as the ownership and use of land; in the exercise of moral and jural rights and duties, as in marriage or parenthood; in ritual belief and practice, as in the ancestor cult. This is the stuff of individual and collective life for the native wherever—and this applies to almost everything he does—the fact of descent is relevant. Membership of his lineage, or his clan, or of a religious community means, to the individual, a particular collection of people taken severally in some situations, collectively in others, with whom he has certain kinds of known and regular social relations reflecting their common interests, and based on the continuity and integrity of the group; and he submits to a number of restraints on word and deed in order to maintain his relations with them. A man experiences this in a multitude of particular actions and events, day after day.

As a member of a particular lineage a man has definite rights and duties and enters into a stream of social relations from which all who do not

belong to that agnatic line are excluded. It is a fact that marks him off 613 from a great many people who come into his range of contact. It determines, for example, whom he may or may not marry, what social roles he may or may not exercise, who will support him in his troubles, where he will make his farms, and especially which named ancestors ritually accessible at certain definite, material shrines govern his life. Of course lineage membership, as we know, isolates only the central area of a person's field of social relations, as this is determined by his birth. Lineage membership, clan membership, and membership of the wider [61] community of the Hill Talis, or of a *Bɔyar* congregation, are all primarily determined by the fact of birth; and the social relations by which one zone is distinguished from the next in the total field all belong to the same category.

All the members of the lineage are equally members of it, irrespective of age, sex, or status. The social bonds that define the limits of the lineage and mark its social identity for its members are equally binding on all its members. They all share the sentiments engendered by membership of the lineage. They all feel themselves to be embraced within its corporate unity. These are matters of everyday practical experience. But behind them lies the deep sense of the continuity of the agnatic line. This takes the form, in the individual, of a great pride in his ancestry and a strong feeling of identification with the other members of the lineage and with the lineage as a unit in their common dependence on their ancestors.

At their simplest, the totemic and funeral taboos of the Talis are symbolic expressions of the irrevocable and supremely important fact of lineage membership. But if that were all, they might not have taken a ritual form. Among the Talis we can see more plainly than among the Namoos why these symbols of the social identity conferred on individuals and groups by agnatic descent take the form of ritual observances.

Agnatic descent, as we have pointed out, automatically puts one under moral bonds to certain other people. There is no choice about membership of one's lineage. And there can be no questioning or choosing in the matter of the basic norms of lineage relations. One has rights and duties towards one's co-members of the lineage, amity for them, interest in them, common concerns with them, simply and solely because they are of the same agnatic line. Lineage norms are absolutely binding, and the sanction for this is the common ritual dependence of all the members on their ancestors. This is crystallized in the cult of the lineage *bɔyar*, the thing in which the spiritual jurisdiction of the ancestors over all the lineage members is made tangible and accessible to human thought and action. The lineage as a social entity is founded on moral and ritual imperatives. This is how the natives feel it: we need not here concern ourselves with possible scientific explanations of this fact. What matters is that this sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage relations, explicitly brought out as it is in the cult of the ancestors, is also diffused through all the relations of lineage members. The function of totemic taboos is to crystallize in a clear-cut, concrete, external object of no intrinsic significance this diffused sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage bonds. The taboos are simple and definite to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole 182 social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line. 771

One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' 182 with the cult of the External *Bɔγar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔγar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔγar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔγar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔγar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔγar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔγar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔγar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔγar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔγar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔγar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest.

It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic 794 taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the 611 External *Bɔγar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔγar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔγar* is the pivot.

In sum, then, the totem stands for the relative autonomy of the maximal 182 lineage, the External *Bɔγar* for the interdependence of lineages in a single 184 religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔγar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have the social structure as a whole kinship is the fundamental binding element. It furnishes the primary axioms of all categories of inter-personal and inter-group relations. 602

From the standpoint of the individual, all the norms and conditions that govern his social behaviour fall within a single, syncretic frame of reference; and kinship forms the base line from which this frame of reference is projected. This is a consequence of the syncretic structure of Tale society, based as it is on genealogical connexion. The alinement of individuals and groups for all social purposes follows genealogical lines; with few exceptions, social relations always have a genealogical coefficient. And because they have a common foundation in the genealogical structure of the society, Tale institutions interlock with one another in a consistent scheme. For the same reason Tale social relations do not fall into distinct categories with only adventitious connexions between them. Economic relations serve jural, political, and religious ends as well; political relations are at the same time religious relations; jural rights and duties are aspects of economic, religious, and political bonds.

The extent to which the idiom of kinship dominates Tale thought about human affairs is shown by the tendency of the people to explain conduct that conforms to the norms by appealing to kinship. The late Chief of Tongo, for example, justified his conciliatory tactics with the Gɔlibdaana, in spite of the latter's provocations, on the grounds of their ties of cognatic and affinal kinship. On the other hand, departure from normal standards of conduct is apt to be ascribed to personal idiosyncrasies. Thus when Zaɣahkpɛmɔre fought with his older brother over the division of their late father's land, the elders of his lineage ascribed it to his violent temper and lack of intelligence. In keeping with this idiom of thought, a gross breach of kinship duty is the prototype of the Tale notion of sin. 602 578

Cognatic and Agnatic Kinship

It is essential to distinguish two kinds of genealogical ties among the Tallensi. There are, firstly, cognatic ties, that is, ties of actual or assumed physical consanguinity and of the social relations entailed by them, which link person to person or an individual to a lineage or one lineage to another in a specifically defined and particular bond. Such ties may be traced through males only, through females only, or through both males and females. Secondly, there are lineage ties, social relations based on the tie of common agnatic descent. 602 611

Cognatic kinship and agnatic kinship have different, in some situations even opposed, functions in Tale collective life. The distinction turns on the principle that lineage ties always unite people in or relate them to corporate groups serving common interests and held together by common values, whereas cognates do not necessarily form corporate

•611 groups. Cognates have mutual bonds of sentiment and reciprocal obligations, but not necessarily common interests. All the members of a given
602 lineage have the same agnatic kin and therefore identical lineage ties; but only identical siblings—that is, brothers or sisters by the same parents—have the same cognatic kin.[1] By automatically making him a member of maximal lineage and clan, his agnatic descent fits the individual into the constituted framework of Tale society. It is this that gives him his political status in the society. It gives him also a special field of defined social relations with clear contours. Cognatic kinship creates a number of contingent social ties for the individual, valid for him only. Unlike lineage ties, they differ in quality; they multiply in the course of his lifetime; in theory their range is indeterminate, since there is no limit to the reckoning of cognatic kinship. Tallensi often discover cognates of whom they were previously ignorant, in the most unexpected places in their own country, even in their own clan. But it is extremely rare for anyone to discover a hitherto unknown agnate, even in these days of relatively great mobility.

602 The Tallensi maintain, and genealogies of individuals bear this out, that if enough were known of the genealogical relationships of the people of adjacent settlements, they would all be found to be related to one another. In the clan itself, under the surface of its strict patrilineal organization, the filaments of cognatic kinship bind individuals together by special personal bonds which operate independently of lineage ties. This complex and unlimited ramification of cognatic kinship gives these relations great fluidity, in contrast to the comparative fixity of lineage relations. Individuals are often connected by multiple cognatic ties which are differentially effective in different situations; and, as will be clearer later, cognatic ties make breaches in the barriers of lineage and clan exclusiveness, thus extending widely the flow of social relations.

The domestic family is the matrix of all the genealogical ties of the
593 individual, the contemporary mechanism for ever spinning new threads
602 of kinship, and the focal field of social relations based on consanguinity. In it we can observe the working of the nuclear patterns of kinship and the formation of the ideas and values which steer the individual in all his genealogical relationships. In the domestic family we get the sharpest picture of the interaction between cognatic kinship and agnatic or lineage ties. We have there the elementary ties of cognatic kinship linking parent to child and sibling to sibling, and we have also the agnatic tie which

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[1] These are the kinsfolk whom Rivers called a man's *kindred*; vide *Kinship and Social Organization*, p. 80. I am avoiding this term as it is best used to refer to a defined social unit in Rivers's sense. Sibship among the Teutons and Celts was reckoned bilaterally on this principle, cf. Vinogradoff, P., *Outlines of Historical Jurisprudence*, vol. i, ch. viii. But the kindred as a defined social unit does not exist among the Tallensi.

602 these bonds except by birth. No other ties can wholly supersede them in linking person to person and affiliating individuals to defined social groups.

602 611 We have noted, however, that not all genealogical ties have an equal value. Though a person acquires significant social ties through both parents, his agnatic relationships have an outstanding importance; and this is particularly so for a man. For not only is patrilineal descent the vertebral principle of Tale social organization and the vehicle of the continuity and stability of the social structure, but men hold the reins of authority, direct economic life, control the political organization, and are supreme in religious and ceremonial thought and action. From his father a man derives his rights to inherit land and other property, his clan membership and the political rights and ritual obligations that go with it, and his ritual relations with his most important ancestors. A woman does not inherit land or other property of value, nor does she succeed to political or ritual office. But clan membership and the concomitant totemic observances,[1] as well as her ritual allegiance to her patrilineal ancestors, mean a great deal for her social destiny and for her children. In short, paternity is the predominant side of parentage in this conspicuously patriarchal society.

842 848 Like many other primitive societies, the Tallensi recognize a distinction between physiological paternity and jural paternity—between *genitor* and *pater*, as Radcliffe-Brown puts it. However, the Tallensi feel very strongly that a person's physiological father is his or her right jural father. The assumption is that all the social attributes that come to one from one's father should come from a father who both begot one and recognizes one as his legitimate offspring. Thus there is an inevitable tendency for conflict to arise if a person's physiological and jural paternity do not coincide. Such a person tends to be penalized in respect of his social status, for jural paternity by itself cannot altogether take the place of physiological cum jural paternity.

848 The conflict is least in the case of an adulterine child, who is always accepted as the rightful child of its mother's husband. No difficulties at all arise in the case of a daughter, who marries out of the lineage as soon as she is nubile. An adulterine son has complete and unreserved filial status. He has full rights of inheritance, of succession, and of ritual access to his putative patrilineal ancestors. Nevertheless, the blot on the scutcheon is not without effect. The story of Sayəbazaa's first-born son, Kologo, illustrates this.

848 578 Some years before my first visit to Tongo, Kologo had left his father to go and farm near Datok. There seemed to be no adequate motive for this in his case. But when Sayəbazaa died, in 1936, and Kologo as chief mourner had to be summoned for the mortuary rites, I was able to piece together how it had occurred, from guarded hints and veiled comments

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

837 his friend's children. Tale sentiment takes no cognizance of physical paternity in this situation. No kinship tie is recognized between the physiological father and the child he was deputed to beget. One might almost describe it as, from their point of view, a kind of artificial insemination.

The case of an unmarried woman's child (*yi-yeem-bii*) is different.
848 It is brought up as the foster-child of her father or brother. If it is
611 a girl, no difficulties occur, as she will eventually marry and Tale kinship ideas permit *her* children to regard her mother's lineage as their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yir*). She will even be allowed to marry into her mother's clan provided it is a different major segment of the clan. Several instances of this are on record; for no stigma attaches to anybody concerned, since an illegitimate child is not a true clan member.

An illegitimate boy's circumstances are not so easy. The evidence of two cases I was acquainted with amply confirms conventional opinion on this subject. Such a boy will grow up to all intents and purposes as a child of his mother's father's or brother's family and as a full member of the clan. He will be treated exactly like other sons of the family, whom he will call his brothers. His quasi-father will, for example, provide the cattle and take the responsibility for his marriage, as would not be done for a legitimate sister's son (*ahəŋ*) growing up in his maternal uncle's (*ahəb*) home. But he has two fundamental disabilities, which nothing can overcome and which pass, by the principle of the corporate identity of the lineage, to his agnatic male descendants. He
[428 has no right to inherit his quasi-father's patrimonial estate, though he may be permitted to do so if there are no other heirs; and he has no
769] right to sacrifice directly to his spirit, or consequently, to the lineage ancestors. He cannot, therefore, succeed to the custody of lineage ancestors' shrines or hold an office vested in the lineage. The tie of true agnatic descent, which alone confers these rights, cannot be fabricated.

An illegitimate boy's status in the lineage is in fact, therefore, inferior
848 to that of his quasi-brothers. He is always liable to a certain amount of covert contempt, though good manners forbid the mention of his irregular descent in the normal course of events. But if he gets involved in a quarrel with his quasi-siblings or quasi-clansmen, even as a child, they might well taunt him as an interloper (*zaŋkuomər*). His lot may be harder, if he has an intractable character, than that of a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with his mother's brother (*ahəb*); for the latter has a home of his own to fall back upon, where he is entitled, by right of legitimate descent, to his patrimonial inheritance, protection, and communion in the ancestor cult. In no circumstances, however, can an illegitimate son be deprived of those rights that belong to him. His quasi-father's home is his home, his mother's clan his clan. From him may spring an accessory lineage of the clan. In theory, incidentally, he may marry a daughter of a different major segment of his adoptive clan, but I know

567 insulted or molested; for it was held to be both good policy and a moral duty to treat a slave no differently from a son. As the ward of the lineage ancestors, he had a place and a moral status in the lineage; but, Tallensi say, he was bound to harbour some resentment at his invidious social position, and would certainly try to abscond if he were ill-used.

These ideas are as active as ever among the Tallensi; for a few ex-slaves still survive, and there are one or two sons, grandsons, and remoter agnatic descendants of slaves in many settlements, who, by the lineage principle, retain their ancestors' social status in a much attenuated form. These people have exactly the same place in society that they would have occupied in former times. To judge by their participation in social activities, both profane and ceremonial, there is no obvious distinction between them and other members of the clan. They are as loyal and patriotic members of the clan as any other members of it. Wɔla of Zoo always took a leading part in the public affairs and ceremonial activities of Zoo. I was surprised to discover accidentally that he was an ex-slave. I was told on excellent authority that he is still often teased about his slave status, but that he takes it in good part, saying that since the coming of the white man a slave is as good a man as his neighbour. Usually no one would so affront a man and his quasi-relatives as to refer pointedly to his slave status or descent if he did not provoke it by offensive conduct. Wrongly to accuse a person of slave descent, if only by implication, is a deadly insult. And even those of whom it is true never voluntarily betray it. Not everyone has Wɔla's aggressive sense of humour, and good manners require that tact and discretion be exercised in such delicate matters of social standing.

Analogously, a slave girl's (*da'abpɔk*) status resembled that of an illegitimate daughter. She was taken in marriage like any other girl, so her children had no disabilities in respect of their patrilineal connexions. They regarded their mother's quasi-paternal kin as their maternal uncle's lineage. But I have records of cases in which the descendants of a slave woman have sought out her true paternal kin in a distant land in order to establish correct ritual ties with them.

567 602 All the men with whom I discussed the question affirmed without hesitation that it would be disgraceful and immoral to treat a slave, or an illegitimate son or brother, differently from true agnatic kin. But they all emphasized, nevertheless, that a slave or an illegitimate son cannot possibly become a son or a brother in the full sense of these terms. He can be to you *in loco filii* or *fratris* but not *filius* or *frater*, since he cannot sacrifice directly to his quasi-father's spirit or inherit, [842] as of right, his patrimony. The principle at issue is that physical father and social father, *genitor* and *pater*, must be the same person. The vicissitudes of marriage illustrate the same point.

611 842 It often happens that a young woman becomes the bride of one man, is later married to another man, by whom she conceives or has a

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The 611 second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father 842 a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so much importance to having children that they generally make every effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony, or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When 611 she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the 583 cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law (or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted 611 as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare, when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours, sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted 613 into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without 618 any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition 602 to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance of his father's estate, but was elected tendaana over the heads of men who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow of redemption.

The Ritual Coefficient of Patriliny

602 769 All these cases of irregular paternity bring out a point of central importance in native thought. As we shall see in more detail later, the bonds of physical consanguinity and the concomitant social ties created by parenthood are *ipso facto* spiritual and moral bonds. They have a ritual coefficient in which the natives see their deepest meaning and value. One's bonds with one's lineage imply a ritual bond with one's patrilineal ancestors and other mystical forces associated with the existence and well-being of the lineage. They are the chief mystical powers governing the life of the individual. Legitimate paternity is a *sine qua non* for a right relationship with one's agnatic ancestor spirits who watch over one's whole life from the moment of birth. There is a spiritual hiatus between an illegitimate son or a slave's son and his adoptive lineage ancestors. Being only indirectly under their tutelage, and unable to gain direct contact with them by offering sacrifices himself, he cannot use them to master the vicissitudes and frustrations of life as freely as a true scion of their line. Also, as we have seen, the ancestor spirits are the principal sanction enforcing a man's rights to full filial status in his physical father's lineage. As we have observed, political and ritual office can be held only by men who are legitimate members of the lineage in which these offices are vested; and the sanction for this lies in the key functions of these offices in the cult of the ancestors and of the other mystical powers coupled with the lineage.

834 842 769 All social relations in which agnatic descent has a decisive function have this ritual coefficient. Legitimate paternity is bound up with a man's exclusive rights over his wife's reproductive powers, conferred on him by marriage. A child's legitimate paternity is jeopardized if it is conceived or born in a situation in which its father's marital rights do not prevail. Hence, sexual intercourse between a man and his wife (and by extension between any man of the husband's medial lineage and a woman of the wife's medial lineage) at her paternal home is rigorously tabooed; it is a ritual 'pollution of the room (*sayam dug*)'—i.e. an outrage against the lineage identity—of the girl's father; for a woman has the status of a daughter in her father's house, where she comes under her father's authority and the tutelage of his ancestors.

● 611 769 In keeping with this, a child must not be born in its mother's father's, or brother's house. Its ties with its maternal kin must not be confounded with its bonds with its paternal kin. These represent opposed forces in its social world, and matrilateral kinship ties must not be allowed to become a threat to lineage ties. A woman bears a child to her husband, an additional member of his lineage and clan. When she conceives, it is the right and duty of her husband and his family to care for her. His ancestor spirits must guard her and the unborn child. In the perilous hour of childbirth she must be cared for by her husband and his family, and watched over by his ancestors. If she or the child dies in childbirth 611 the responsibility falls on her husband. A child should be born under 769 its father's roof, literally into the lineage to which it comes as a profit (*ŋoor*) and a responsibility, and under the auspices of its patrilineal ancestors, the spiritual arbiters of its destiny, to whom it will later in life bring sacrifices. Its life will depend on these ancestors, one of whom [776] will immediately demand to be made its spiritual guardian, charged with preserving its life (*mar u ŋɔvɔr*).

Not only should a child be born under its father's roof, but it should, 854 ideally, be reared, or at least be brought through the first dangerous months of infancy, in its father's house. Circumstances occasionally 769 compel a child to be entrusted to the care of its mother's family, and the Tallensi are practical enough to accept this necessity with equanimity. But they are extremely reluctant to let a young infant pass out of the direct tutelage of its paternal kin and ancestors even for a short while. Thus strong objection is raised if a young wife takes her infant and goes to stay at her parents' house for some time. Here, again, practical necessity may leave no alternative, but there is always a feeling of uneasiness, as can be seen from the following case. When Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ died, his youngest wife went home to her father's house at Tɔŋ-Seug, about a quarter of a mile from her late husband's house, taking her infant of some six months with her. Nindɔyat's brother and prospective heir tried to prevent her going, but she was not well, and they had to admit that she would be better cared for by her mother than by her co-wives. So they allowed her to go. A couple of weeks later, however, the baby fell ill, and though the young mother was staying only a few minutes' walk from her late husband's house, she returned to it immediately. 'She came running back home', her late husband's brother told me, 'because the child was ill. Its (dead) father had not agreed for it to be taken away (that is, the dead father, now a spirit, had mystically caused the child's illness as a sign of his displeasure). And supposing the child were to die at its maternal uncle's house? Should we not say that they had caused the death of our child?' The proper ritual measures to cure the child, without which practical leechcraft could not avail, could only be taken by its father or his representative in its father's house. The young mother believed this as firmly as her late husband's heir.

For all these reasons it is a taboo (*kihɔr*) for a child to be born in its 844 mother's father's house. His ancestor spirits cannot watch over mother and child, for they do not 'own (*so*)' the child. It is, therefore, dangerous 783 for the child's health and chances of survival. Of course, such a thing 769 may, and sometimes does happen by accident. Then the child's father must, whenever he can afford it, erase the pollution by the ceremony of 'removing the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the birth from his father-in-law's house. He sends a sheep and beer to his father-in-law as a placation

strictly differentiated from a son in jural terms. The kinship tie between 604
sister's son and mother's brother is an important breach in the genealogical fence enclosing the agnatic lineage; it is one of the main gateways of an individual's social relations with members of other clans than his own.

But the recognition accorded to the mother's agnatic kin does not 611
bring out the deeper implications of maternal origin as the complementary of paternal origin. These implications are contained in the concept *soog* (pl. *saarət* or *soorət*). This concept involves the idea of matrilineal descent in contrast to that of patrilineal descent. Both in its range of efficacy, its mode of operation, its jural and ritual value, and its emotional and sentimental connotation, matrilineal descent stands in contrast to patriliny.

For obvious physiological reasons the bond of consanguinity with 593
one's mother is unique and unalterable; and it is a peculiarly personal bond. The fact that one's jural status is not derived from one's mother serves to emphasize the personal nature of this bond. A person's mother may desert his father and leave him to be reared (*ugh*) by another woman; he may feel some resentment over this all his life; but she remains his true mother, 'the mother who bore him (*ma dɔɣarug*)'. Nothing can alter this fact or extinguish the kinship ties that arise from it.

We postpone for a later chapter a consideration of the emotional ties 611
of mother and child. The concept *soog* has definite emotional implications; but here we are concerned with its implications for the social 613
structure. *Soog* means a bond of consanguinity which excludes completely any reckoning with lineage affiliation. People who are *saarət* define themselves biologically as 'the offspring of one womb'—or, in the actual phraseology of the natives, 'to have come from one vagina (*yi pen yeni*)'. This is the common way of stating it; occasionally, but far less commonly, one hears people defining themselves as patrilineally related by the corresponding phrase 'to be the children of one penis (*woor yeni biis*)'.

Saarət, therefore, are uterine kin. Between mother and child there is 611
a uterine bond corresponding to the agnatic bond between father and
child; and children of one woman are *saarət*, irrespective of their paternity. 593
A woman may have children by different men of the same clan or of different clans; they are *saarət*, irrespective of their clan affiliations.

Soog is more than the bond of personal kinship between mother and 611
child, and between siblings by the same mother. It is the bond of uterine descent perpetuated through the female line in the same way as the bond of agnatic descent is transmitted through the male line. Uterine siblings are *saarət*; uterine sisters' children are *saarət* (but not uterine brothers' children, for the children of men are not their father's *saarət*); uterine female cousins' children are *saarət*; and so on,

●611 theoretically, without limit. In short, people of common uterine descent are socially identified with one another; but they do not form a corporate group.

611 The social recognition of the uterine line entails not only that *saarət*
have defined ways of behaving towards one another, but also that the
602 fact of matrilineal descent is given an institutional embodiment. Matrilineal descent confers distinctive social attributes on people. In this Tale culture follows the rule found in most West African cultures that recognize both lines of descent.[1] The dominant line of descent confers the overtly significant attributes of social personality—jural status, rights of inheritance and succession to property and office, political allegiance, ritual privileges and obligations; and the submerged line confers certain spiritual characteristics. Among the Tallensi it is easy to see that this is a reflex of the fact that the bond of uterine descent is maintained as a purely personal bond. It does not subserve common interests of a material, jural, or ritual kind; it unites individuals only by ties of mutual interest and concern not unlike those that prevail between close, collateral kin in our culture. While it constitutes one of the factors that counterpoise the exclusiveness of the agnatic line, it does not create corporate groups competing with the agnatic lineage and clan. Carrying only a spiritual attribute, the uterine tie cannot undermine the jural and politico-ritual solidarity of the patrilineal lineage.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Witchcraft

754 The critical spiritual attribute carried by the *soog* line is the potentiality of being a witch (*sɔi*, pl. *soob*—a term evidently cognate with
602 *soog*). This potentiality adheres only to the female line and defines that line in social terms. 'This is my *soog*' a person usually says when introducing a uterine relative. 'If he (or she) flies magically (*ayat*) I, too, fly magically; if he sees magically (*nye*) I, too, see magically.' The potentiality of being a witch is hereditary in the female line. A woman's son and daughter may both become witches if she is a witch. If a person is accused of being a witch, all his or her *saarət* are automatically suspect of this inborn mystical vice. His agnatic kin are not implicated, not even his own father or his half-siblings by the same father. These are the points Tallensi invariably stress, both among themselves and in answer to an inquirer, if they are asked to define the meaning of *soog*.

754 It is significant that witchcraft occupies a minor place in Tale mystical thought and ritual action, and that is one reason why the Tallensi make no secret of its hereditary transmission in the female line. They

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[1] Cf., e.g., R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti*; C. D. Forde, 'Kinship in Umor—Double Unilateral Organization in a Semi-Bantu Society', *American Anthropologist*, xli, 1939.

The idea of witchcraft is not
easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is 754
by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based 613
on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not 827
connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas.
Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from 754
the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of 611
witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the 761
slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical
responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical 783
blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

It is analogous to the way in which a man's agnatic descendants 783
become liable for his sins, though it is not so rigorous and consequential
in action as the responsibility for sins and delicts that adheres to the 611
male line. *Tyuk* is connected primarily with males; though it is of
minor significance in the social definition of uterine kinship, compared
with witchcraft, it obviously fits in with the principles of Tale social
organization in the same way.[1]

Uterine Kinship as a Personal Bond

As we have observed, the fundamental distinction between uterine 611
kinship and agnatic descent is that the former does not give rise to
corporate units of social structure. *Soog* is essentially a personal bond, 602
a bond of mutual interest and concern uniting individual to individual.
Witchcraft, similarly, is an individual act of mystical aggression due
to personal malice against an individual. The model of the relations
between *saarət* is the affection, devotion, and strong feeling of mutual
identification that prevails between parent and child or between full
siblings of the same sex. Its keynote is mutual trust as between equals.
It is never thought of as a matter of rights and duties but as a matter
of sentiment, of spontaneous goodwill and intimate, personal confidence.
Hence the term *soog* is often loosely used to refer to someone with
whom one has a relationship of a similar sort, or to denote a very close
relative of a class of relatives, whether or not they are true *saarət*. An
intimate and trusted friend is like your *soog*, the Tallensi say. Two
daughters of the same lineage, but of unrelated mothers, married into
a single joint family feel themselves to be particularly closely related
and identified with each other by contrast with their conjugal family,
and thus speak of each other as 'my *soog*'. The children of two men
who were uterine kin, keeping up the friendship of their fathers, talk of
themselves as *saarət*. Two men of the same lineage, whether they are
close or distant agnates, who have a common maternal uncle's lineage
(*ahəb yiri*)—i.e. whose mothers' brothers belong to a single segment of
a maximal lineage—feel a bond of personal kinship distinguishing their
relationship with each other from their relationships with their co-
members of the lineage. In contexts where they wish to emphasize
their personal bonds in contrast to their common membership of the
lineage they might describe each other as 'my *soog*'. And I once heard 611
a man refer to his son-in-law as 'my *soog* son-in-law (*n-deem-soog*)'. This 606
is a contradiction in terms, for marriage being prohibited between kin
of any degree, a man cannot be both a son-in-law and a *soog*. But the 602
speaker explained that he was using this term in order to distinguish

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[1] There is an interesting psychological problem here, but it lies outside our present scope. *Tyuk* and witchcraft might be regarded as the male and female aspects, respectively, of deep-seated vindictive impulses connected with the mother.

606 •611 602 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*; they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

835 The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

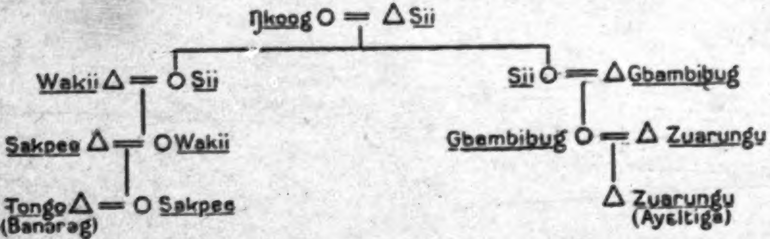
582 602 Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*. [586] If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bək*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm of Təŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'aləm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpemdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpemdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'aləm, are well known. Tinta'aləm

of *soog* kinship to the Tallensi. Each of them has found a new friend who will be to him as a brother. If he has business in his *soog*'s clan he will be able to go there with an easy mind; for he will be assured of an hospitable welcome in his *soog*'s house and of his *soog*'s assistance in his suit. Moreover, through this *soog* he will be introduced to other distant *saarət* unknown to him but known to his *soog*. 602

Saarət discover one another in other ways too. One evening I met Banərəg's wife coming from my boys' quarters. She told me that she had taken some food to one of the boys, Ayɛltiga, a native of Zuarungu, who, she had just learnt, was her *soog*. She had been to see her maternal grandmother's sister's son, at Gbambibug (she herself is a Sakpee woman), and he had told her that Ayɛltiga was their common *soog*. So she had hastened home to call on her newly found *soog* and had cooked a meal for him to show him the hospitality due from a *soog*. She told me this with many expressions of pleasure.

The following genealogy shows the connexion between Banərəg's wife and Ayɛltiga. It is typical of the genealogical range within which uterine kinship is usually effective. 601 602 611



(Clan name of each person beside the sex symbol; personal names in parenthesis)

As this genealogy shows, the uterine line can be thought of as 'travelling' from clan to clan with the generations; and that is how the natives visualize it. 'Our mother' (the progenitrix of the line), said Banərəg's wife 'went forth from Ŋkoog (*yi Ŋkoog ŋa*) and married into Sii; and then his (Ayɛltiga's) grandmother (*ma kpeem*) married Gbambibug and my grandmother married Wakii; and then his mother (*ma*) married Zuarungu and my mother married Sakpee.' The *soog* line is visualized as a continuous entity. *Saarət* often refer to each other by kinship terms, but in a very loose way. A person is inclined to speak of a *soog* as, for instance, 'my elder sibling', simply because he or she is senior in age, though possibly junior in generation. More commonly a *soog* is simply 'my *soog*'; and if it is a woman, she tends to be identified with the uterine line as a whole and is described as 'mother (*ma*)', irrespective of her generation status, especially if she is older than the speaker. A relationship similar to that of parent and child often exists between *saarət* who differ considerably in age.

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342 partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778 room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔγar*) always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*; the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard. Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ* must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there and the lineage *bɔγar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it. The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the *zɔŋ*, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622] of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623 deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most 554 conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 764 subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his 778 own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose. But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tɛbhɔm nla*—This is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me. The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt, an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*, when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611 dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
778 of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the *zɔŋ* of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors, is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr* of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11 and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say, transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*. She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

342 Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary course of domestic life, the women and children [illegible]ong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbɔg*) a yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the *sapak*. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and 6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
[351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this, life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

vanity apart, they do require ample storage-room for the large quantities of clothes, the saddlery and trappings of their horses, the innumerable odds and ends of European origin, and many articles of native production which they have accumulated by purchase or gift. Their good fortune is exceptional. Others content themselves with small and modest private rooms. Leatherworkers and blacksmiths also often have private rooms where they keep their tools and the materials of their craft. 592 [282 326]

No special provision is made for young children or girls. They live in their mothers' rooms. An unmarried young man usually has a special room of his own, essentially a sleeping-room (*doo*), in his mother's *dug*; and if there are several adolescent boys in a family a *doo* may be built for them in one of the women's *dugət*.

The construction of the dwelling-house shows graphically the division of the domestic family into two complementary spheres. On the one hand, we have the sphere in which the patricentral *yir* predominates; on the other, that in which the matricentral *dug* has priority. It is the line of cleavage between descent from the father (*ba dɔyam*) and descent from the mother (*ma dɔyam*), principles which are antithetical in form but complementary in function in the domestic organization. Maternal origin supplies the canon of differentiation within the family, paternal descent the principle of integration. In the polygynous joint family, which is the natives' ideal domestic unit, the constituent *dugət* are relatively autonomous in relation to one another, and in certain respects even mutually opposed. The *yir* combines them into a single integral unit, but they are not swallowed up; they retain their specific identity according to maternal origin. The *yir*, then, is the complementary factor to the *dug*; it is also the synthesis of a group of *dugət* at a higher level of organization. This, as has been shown in our previous book, is both the structural model and the social matrix of the lineage system. 592 611●

The Developmental Cycle of the Joint Family

We have found it convenient to fix our analysis of the Tale homestead by reference to the simplest kind of independent domestic unit. But the elementary family, as we have already remarked, is neither the ideal nor the most common type of independent domestic unit in Taleland; for the typical substratum of a domestic group is not the individual breadwinner but an effective minimal lineage.[1] The domestic group grows, changes, and dissolves with the growth cycle of this lineage, and a particular elementary family is only an episode in this cycle. The structure of the Tale family cannot be divorced from its existence in time. We have to examine it as a process. At any given time we find domestic families at every stage of development in a Tale community. 596

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[1] Cf. p. 9 above for a definition of this unit. A full analysis of its constitution is given in *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

CHAPTER IV

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE FAMILY

The General and the Particular in the Pattern of Domestic Relations

●611 IT is clear from Chapter II that *dɔyam*, the fact of birth, the event that fixes one's descent immutably, takes precedence over all other conditions governing the social relations and the social roles of a Talɔŋ. This principle comes out in all departments of Tale social life, and nowhere so plainly as in the organization of domestic life. We turn, therefore, to examine the working of kinship in the domestic family, which we have called the focal field of kinship.

593 It is important to bear in mind that kinship relations in the family group are inter-articulated in a single configuration, dominated by the *patria potestas* of the male head of the family. The relations of father and child are coloured by the relations of mother and child that coexist with them, and the relations of mother and child acquire a special accent in the context of the relations between co-wives. Particular domestic relationships appear in their true light only when they are considered as part of the total pattern. The polarity of *dug* and *yir* moulds them all; all play a part in the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces in the structure of the family. All, moreover, are subject to the pull and pressure of genealogical connexions and groupings outside the family circle.

593 606 The natives are very conscious of this, and take it into account in the management of their lives. They say, for instance, that a woman's parents continue to have great influence over her for some years after her marriage and that is why her husband must keep on the good side of his parents-in-law. 'Don't you know what in-lawship means?' said Bayankura, somewhat lugubriously, when I found him hard at work helping to rebuild his father-in-law's homestead. Again, Tiezien's family believed that he was much under the influence of his senior wife, Tanzoo. So when by various pretexts he caused both of his late brother's sons to lose the young wives they had recently taken, they ascribed it morosely to Tanzoo's jealousy of their mother, Tiezien's second wife.

181 We shall not attempt a full-dress study of Tale family life; here we are concerned only with the structurally significant norms. In a society as homogeneous and economically undifferentiated as that of the Tallensi, people of the same sex, age, and social standing tend to have the same life history; and organized units such as the lineage and the family tend to have a stereotyped structure and development. The common denominators of action stand out.

828 156 Yet it is a constantly reiterated assumption of the natives that no two

XXXIV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

The Clan Settlement. The Family Compound. The Section-head (Yi-zut-kyɛma). *The* Ten'dan'. *The Territorial Ruler*

621 THE constitution of a Talense *tey* is identical with that of the
613 Nankanse. The *tey* (Nankane *teya*) is divided into sections, all the inhabitants of which trace descent from a common ancestor, but each, again, has, as its own more intimate ancestral spirit, a less remote ancestor, from which that particular section takes its name and to whom 'section-', as opposed to '*tey*-', sacrifices, are offered. A section is *yi-zug* (Nankane *yi-zuo*). A section-head is *Yi-zug-kpwem* (Nankane *yi-zuo kyɛma*).

At Tongo there are four sections, known as (*a*) Pusega, (*b*) Guŋa, (*c*) Korega, (*d*) Seug. The post of section-head of Pusega was vacant; as 'the funeral custom of the late *yi-zut-kpwem* had not yet been held, his successor could not be appointed'.

The section-head of Guŋa is *Sayezaa* (my informant, see Fig. 63); of Korega, a certain *Basego*; of Seug, vacant, for the same reason as (*a*).

Election of New Section-head.—Heads of other sections met and con-
613 sulted the *bay* (Nankane *baga*) to find out why the late head of the
[761] section had died. The soothsayer might say, 'It was because he did not give one of the cows, *sull* (Nankane, *sulle*), which he received for his eldest daughter, to his ancestor.' After the funeral custom his successor was appointed. 'The man who had the right to take the deceased's *bagere* (here ancestral shrine) was the one to succeed. This man was already known; the *bay* was only consulted about the funeral.'

The successor to the section-head was the 'senior' man in that section, but he was not necessarily the oldest: e.g. *A* marries a wife, *C*, by whom he has three sons, *D*, *E*, *F*, and three grandsons *G*, *H*, *I*, sons of *D*, *E*, and *F*; *A*, in his old age, marries a young wife, *B*, by whom he has a son, *J*. This son may be twenty years or more younger than *G*, *H*, *I*, but if *A*'s brothers are all dead and also *D*, *E*, and *F*, then *J* will become section head before *G*, *H*, or *I*, 'because *G*, *H*, and *I* call *J* father.'[1]

613 The tendency here, as almost everywhere in the Northern Terri-
178 tories, is for these hereditary section-leaders, who were really the back-

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[1] See p. 279. [i.e. reference to similar practice among the Nankanse - A]
[p. 346]

●613 178 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

793 *The Ten'dan'*: Among the Talense an investigation into the former status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 783 627 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs; this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die, except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*teŋ*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man teŋ*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

782 783 If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person, he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Golibdaana, in his
overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Golibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

● 613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
576 building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

CHAPTER III

PARADIGM OF THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

● 613 182 Tale society is built up round the lineage system. It is no exaggeration to say that every sociological problem presented by the Tallensi hinges on the lineage system. It is the skeleton of their social structure, the bony framework which shapes their body politic; it guides their economic life and moulds their ritual ideas and values. The social life of the Tallensi cannot be understood without a knowledge of the principles that govern their lineage organization.

128 These principles will be briefly and formally stated in the present chapter. This will give us a paradigm by which to orient our analysis. Something of this sort, though less systematic and abstract, is in the mind's eye of every well-informed native when he discusses the structure of his society or takes his part in public affairs. The schematic analysis given here will be amplified in later chapters and some repetition is therefore unavoidable. In studying a society of this type we cannot avoid traversing the same ground repeatedly from different directions. For the same basic units, relations, and principles of structure lie behind all forms of association and all organized social activities.

A preliminary bird's-eye view of the lineage system is important, also, in another respect. A lineage always functions as a whole. Whenever a lineage emerges in social action it does so as a product of its component parts and of the relations between them; when a part of a lineage emerges in social action it does so relatively to other parts of it and to the whole. Anyone wishing to understand the way a Tale lineage functions must think of it as a field system, in which the behaviour of the part is regulated by its relation to the whole and the behaviour of the whole is a product of the relations of the parts.

613 From the Tale point of view a lineage is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the known descendants by a known genealogy of a single known and named ancestor in an unbroken male line. From the sociologist's point of view it is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the recognized descendants by an accepted genealogy of a single named ancestor in a putatively continuous male line. It is, in other words, a strictly unilineal, agnatic descent group.

Lineages vary in *span* proportionately to the number of generations accepted as having intervened between their living members and the founding ancestor from whom they trace their descent. The lineage of minimum span, which we shall call the minimal lineage, consists of the children of one father. The lineage of maximum span, which we shall call the maximal lineage, is the lineage of widest span to which any of its members belongs. It consists of all the descendants in the male line of the remotest common patrilineal ancestor known to the members of the lineage. Whenever we speak of a lineage without qualification to indicate its span, we use the term in the generalized sense of a lineage of any span

and any order of segmentation. What is meant by *order of segmentation* is defined below.

The number of antecedent generations reckoned to the point of convergent ascent varies slightly from one maximal lineage to another in Taleland. It is, as will be clearer later, proportional to, and an index of, the range of segmentary differentation in the existing maximal lineage. Eight to ten ascendant generations are usually reckoned between contemporary minimal lineages and the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage of which they are part. Genealogies are not remembered for their own sake by the Tallensi. They are relevant, primarily, as the mnemonics of the lineage system. They are bound up with the institutions which demonstrate and make overt the formal unity, or the internal differentiation of a lineage. Among the social events in which this occurs most conspicuously and frequently are sacrifices to ancestor spirits and mortuary and funeral ceremonies. The latter, especially, epitomize the entire social structure and enable one to see precisely how the lineage system is constituted.

All Tale lineages are hierarchically organized between the limits of the minimum span, i.e. the minimal lineage, on the one hand, and the maximum span, i.e. the maximal lineage, on the other. Thus every minimal lineage is a segment of a more inclusive lineage defined by reference to a common grandfather, and this, in turn, is a segment of a still wider lineage defined by reference to a common great-grandfather; and so on, until the limit is reached—the maximal lineage, defined by reference to the remotest agnatic ancestor of the group. But a minimal lineage crystallizes out, as we shall see, only on the death of its founder. Until then it is submerged in a wider lineage.

Within a lineage of whatever span each grade of segmentation is functionally significant. Each segment has its focus of unity, and an index of its corporate identity, in the ancestor by reference to whom it is differentiated from other segments of the same order in the hierarchically organized set of lineages. Sacrifices to the shrine of this ancestor require the presence of representatives of every segment of the next lower order; and this rule applies to all corporate action of a ceremonial or jural kind of any lineage. This is the fundamental rule of the lineage organization.

The solidarity of a lineage is a function of the co-operation of its major segments, i.e. the segments of the highest order. In matters that concern the lineage as a whole, and in situations which express its corporate unity, members of the lineage co-operate as representatives of its major segments. The lesser segments constituting each major segment receive explicit recognition only in relation to the major segment. They emerge, then, as major segments of a major segment, and their segments, again, emerge only in relation to them; and so on down to the minimal segments. In these affairs of common concern, rights and duties, privileges and obligations are distributed equally amongst the major segments of a lineage. This emphasizes their equality of status.

A lineage of any span emerges in any of its activities as a system of aliquot parts, not as a mere collection of individuals of common ancestry. It represents an equilibrium, maintained by the relations between its

613 constituent parts. The simplest way of achieving this is for its internal differentiation into segments to be of a limited and balanced kind. That is why only the first order of segmentation, a division into major segments, is recognized in the corporate activities of a lineage. In Tale theory the source of this primary segmentation of the lineage is the minimal lineage, in which a group of brothers (two or more) are differentiated from one another as individuals each of whom is the potential founder of a new lineage, but are united through their common father. A pair of brothers by the same father (*sunzɔp*, sing. *sunzɔ*) are the potential originators of a pair of major segments of the lineage deriving from their father. So all major segments of a lineage of any span are visualized as being derived from brothers, sons of the lineage founder, and are described as *sunzɔp* to one another. Their lineage ties, summed up in the concept *sunzɔt* (brotherhood), are thought of as being founded on, and derived from, the ties that hold between brothers. By the rule of exogamy women members marry out of the lineage, so they do not contribute to its perpetuation and do not affect its organization.

613 The growing-point of the lineage, it will be seen, is the family. It is
595 always patrilocal; ideally, it is also polygynous. Thus children of the same
[591] man are differentiated from one another as children of different mothers. This provides a further criterion of differentiation within the lineage. Like the sons of different mothers and the same father, segments of a lineage may, in certain situations, be distinguished from one another by reference to their different progenitrices. In other situations, like the sons of one mother, segments of a lineage may be grouped together by reference to a common progenitrix.

613 A maximal lineage cannot, by definition, have any *sunzɔp* identified strictly in terms of common agnatic descent. If it had it would be a segment of a more inclusive lineage. The ancestor who founded it must be unique, in retrospect. As we have seen, he may be accounted for by a myth; but his unique place in the genealogical tree can sometimes be naturalistically explained. If the formation of recent lineage segments is studied, it can be seen that segments sometimes disappear, owing to the extinction of a branch of the lineage. When this happens, the surviving segments reach a new equilibrium. The defunct collateral line is forgotten in due course, together with its genealogy; for this no longer has any structural significance. Thus an existing maximal lineage may be merely the surviving segment of what might have been a wider maximal lineage.

It is characteristic of Tale social organization, however, that maximal lineages do often have *sunzɔp*, either through ties of clanship, or by incorporating, or being joined to, lineages not strictly of the same agnatic descent.

A lineage is a temporal system. Continuity in time is its fundamental quality. Its constitution and dimensions at a given time represent a phase of a process which, as the natives see it, has been going on in exactly the same way from the beginning of their social order and is continuing into the future. The contemporary phase of a lineage is more than a product of its past; it embodies all the significant changes that have occurred in it

throughout its past; and it is, at the same time, the embryo of its future 613
organization. A Tale lineage cannot be dissociated from its temporal
extension.

A maximal lineage is fixed with reference to its founding ancestor, who 613
is the focus of its unity and the symbol of its corporate identity. From 769
time to time its unity and identity become explicit in the common cult of this ancestor and in the regulation of intra-lineage relations which hinges on it. The ancestor cult is the calculus of the lineage system, the mechanism by means of which the progressive internal differentiation of a lineage is ordered and is fitted into the existing structure. It is also the principal ideological bulwark of the lineage organization.

Every maximal lineage is continually expanding and proliferating 613
through the fission of its minor segments. But though its span is thus constantly increasing, its form does not alter. It has a fixed centre and a fixed locus we might say. In theory it always remains the same lineage, and new maximal lineages cannot arise through the splitting up of an existing maximal lineage. It is a unit of common agnatic descent, and no branch of it can ever repudiate this. In theory ties of descent can never
lapse. A maximal lineage is also an exogamous unit, and no branch of it [582]
can contract out of this bond.

To the contemporary observer the Tale lineage system appears as a stable and finally established factor of the constituted social structure, the ground plan of which was laid down in the distant past by processes which are still going on. In any maximal lineage, therefore, the fission of minor segments does not alter the equilibrium of the major segments at any given time. Changes in minimal lineages, in fact, cannot alter the equilibrium of any segment greater than the minimal. This is reflected in the naming of lineages and their segments. Every lineage is named after its founder, and as long as a lineage persists it bears the same name. Thus the names of segments greater than the minimal may be regarded as fixed once for all. A lineage is called the 'children (*biis*) of so-and-so' or 'the house (*yir*) or people of the house (*yidɛm*) of so-and-so'. These ways of denoting a lineage are interchangeable. A lineage may also be described as a 'room' (*dug*) of a superordinate lineage. This indicates that it is being thought of as a segment of the latter.

This formal analysis will be more easily understood from the diagram which follows. It shows, in a simplified way, the structure of a major segment of a maximal lineage which is assumed to have only two major segments. The major segment not included must be homologous with the major segment shown here since a lineage necessarily divides into segments of equal order. Similarly, the relations of the two major segments of our hypothetical maximal lineage to each other are repeated, at a lower order of segmentation, in the relations of the major segments of each major segment to one another. In the diagram the relations of subsegments X and Y to each other, within the framework of Major Segment I, are identical in form with those of Major Segment I and its brother (*sunzɔ*) segment, Major Segment II, and this rule holds for every subsequent order of segmentation. We shall later on study the interests, rights, and obligations associated with such an ordered series

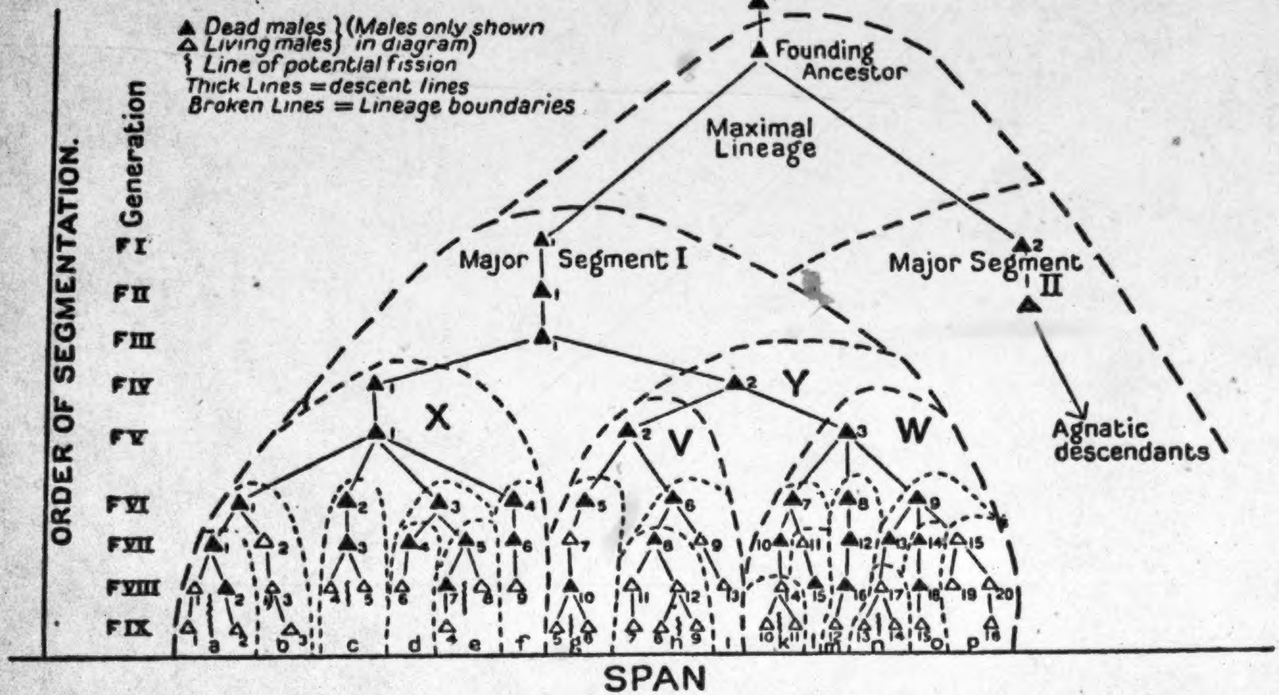
▲ Dead males } (Males only shown
△ Living males } in diagram)
} Line of potential fission
Thick Lines = descent lines
Broken Lines = Lineage boundaries
ORDER OF SEGMENTATION.
Generation
F I
F II
F III
F IV
F V
F VI
F VII
F VIII
F IX
Founding Ancestor
Maximal Lineage
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
X
Y
V
W
Agnatic descendants
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
h
i
k
l
m
n
o
p
SPAN

Diagram illustrating the Paradigm of the Lineage System

613

of homologous inter-segment relations, and see, then, how they vary in kind and are graded in precision.

If we describe a major segment of a maximal lineage as a primary segment, then segments of the order of X and Y in the diagram can be called secondary segments, and Y is split into two subsegments (tertiary segments) of the next lower order V and W. These have, respectively, two (g and $h+i$) and three ($k+l$, m, and $n+o+p$) segments of still lower order; and some of these consist, as the diagram shows, of subordinate segments of the lowest order, i.e. minimal segments. X has no segments co-ordinate with V and W, but has four segments of the next lower order ($a+b$, c, $d+e$, and f), some of which are subdivided into minimal segments.

These are all various ways of grouping the same thirty-five males in a set of lineages of common agnatic descent. Women members are excluded from the diagram for the reason previously stated. In some situations each grouping emerges as a lineage in its own right; in others it acts as a segment of a lineage of higher order. When, for example, the 'house' (*yir*) of F.VI.1 (i.e. $a+b$) assembles to sacrifice to his spirit, it acts as a self-contained corporate unit, a lineage. Both its segments, *a* and *b*, must be represented and the animal sacrificed is divided equally between them. The portion given to *a* is then equally shared, again, between F.VIII.1 and his brother's son F.IX.2—i.e. the two nascent segments of the house of F.VII.1. Actually, during the lifetime of F.VII.2, the head of the house of F.VI.1, *a* remains only a potential lineage, submerged in $a+b$.

The same rule holds for the higher orders of segmentation. The house of F.VI.1 is a segment—a 'room' (*dug*)—of the house of F.V.1—i.e. of the lineage X. When sacrifice is made to F.V.1, all the four segments of X must be represented and the animal slaughtered is divided equally amongst them, to be redistributed by each segment amongst its subsegments. F.VII.2 is head of lineage $a+b$ and sacrifices on their behalf to their immediate founder F.VI.1. He is also head of X sacrificing, on behalf of all its four segments, to F.V.1 and F.IV.1.

The minimum differentiation of X requires the recognition of the same four segments of equal status, whether F.IV.1 or F.V.1 be considered as the focus of the lineage, since there are no intermediate segments derived from F.IV.1. Contrast lineage Y, the minimal differentiation of which recognizes two segments of a higher order than the four which constitute X—i.e. of an intermediate order between the segments derived from F.III.1 (X and Y) and those derived from F.V.1, 2, and 3. The constitution of lineage X has the same form as that of the whole lineage, the agnatic posterity of F.III.1, of which it is a major segment.

In lineages thus constituted an ancestor who has no significance as a focus of differentiation from other co-ordinate lineages loses his structural relevance and has no distinct ancestor-shrine. He is merged with a predecessor who still symbolizes the focus of differentiation of the lineage, and often no doubt fades into oblivion. In this way genealogies get telescoped and the ranking of structurally insignificant ancestors gets confused. Thus Major Segment I would probably be named the house of F.I.1 after the ancestor who symbolizes their differentiation from the co-ordinate major segment derived from his 'brother', F.I.2. The tendency is to retain the ancestor to whose generation the fission of the segments can be most appropriately attributed. The naming, here, would fit in with the relations of the two major segments as representing the primary differentiation of the maximal lineage one generation nearer than the founding ancestor. Though F.II.1 and F.III.1 are still invoked in sacrifices, their order of succession tends to be confused. F.II.1 will lapse more easily than F.III.1, who will be remembered as the actual father of F.IV.1 and F.IV.2.

Similarly, lineage X will be described as the house of F.IV.1 when its status as a major segment of the house of F.I.1, co-ordinate with Y, is the main issue. But members of its constituent segments might also describe themselves collectively as the house of F.V.1, after the most recent ancestor from whom their lines of descent diverge, when stressing their connexion as 'rooms' of a single lineage. Which nomenclature is used depends on the situation and on the range of the lineage concerned in it.

These usages illustrate again the natives' inveterate habit of naming social units by contraposition. They explain, also, why no historical validity can be attached to their genealogies, beyond the time of their great-grandfathers. A genealogy maps out a particular set of lineage relations; it is not a true record. Thus it is impossible to ascertain, as it is from the Tale point of view irrelevant to ask, whether or not any ancestors intervened between the founder of a maximal lineage such as is here sketched and the originators of its existing major segments. If there were any, it is quite possible that they have been dropped from the genealogy because they are redundant, in terms of the structure of the lineage. Similarly, the ancestor whose name is preserved as the founder of the maximal lineage may have been preceded by others whose names have lapsed from tradition for the same reason.

Lineages of the same order of segmentation are not all of equal span. Though lineage span and order of segmentation overlap, they are not interchangeable categories. Lineage *c*—the house of F.VI.2—is co-ordinate with (i.e. of the same order of segmentation as) lineage *a*+*b*—the house of F.VI.1—but of a lesser span. Lineage X, similarly, has a lesser span than lineage Y. The span of a lineage is a measure of its internal differentiation, whereas its order of segmentation defines its relations, as a corporate unit, with other units of a like sort.

The distinction is important in the conduct of lineage and community affairs. Co-ordinate segments are brothers (*sunzɔp*) to one another, irrespective of span; but a lineage of small span is more closely integrated than one of large span. Thus the major segments of our diagrammatic maximal lineage are *sunzɔp*, being descended, as it is thought, from a pair of brothers by the same father; so are X and Y; so are V and W; so are the four constituent segments of X, the two constituent segments of V, and the three constituent segments of W; and the same rule holds for the lesser lineages down to a pair of brothers, like lineage *c*, who are also *sunzɔp*.

It is evident that brothers (*sunzɔp*) can be graded according to their genealogical distance from one another. The natives say '*ti a ba yeni*

613 *biis*—we are the children of one father', when they want to stress recent common ancestry, or '*ti a yaab yɛni biis*—we are the children of one ancestor', whenever they emphasize remote common ancestry. The same contrast is expressed in the appellations *dug* (room) and *yir* (house). Members of lineage V, for example, will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* (members of one room) by contrast with members of lineage W, whom they would describe as *ti yidɛm* (people of our house). Members of X will say 'We, the children of so and so (F.IV.1), are four rooms', but they will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* in contrast to Y, who would be called their *yidɛm*, e.g. at funeral ceremonies. Thus the segments of X or of Y are closer *sunzɔp* than are X and Y, which, again, are closer *sunzɔp* than are the major segments of the maximal lineage. A specially close tie is acknowledged also between lineages of common agnatic ancestry which have a common ancestress. Thus, if F.V.1 had three wives, from whom have sprung, respectively, segments $a+b$ and c, $d+e$, and f, then the first two segments regard each other as closer *sunzɔp* than either of the other two.

613 764 Genealogical distance and the tie of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are most palpable in situations which bring out the structural equilibrium of the set of lineages. When, for instance, a funeral occurs in lineage g, contributions of cooked food will be made by the *sunzɔp* as follows: by the head of $h+i$, the closest *sunzɔ* segment, on behalf of that segment; by the head of W on behalf of the whole lineage, not by its constituent segments, the contribution being given to its *sunzɔ* V, not to the segment g; and by the head of X, if it is the funeral of an elder, on behalf of the whole of X, when the recipient unit is considered to be Y, not g. If the other half of the maximal lineage, Major Segment II, sends a contribution, it will be given by the head of the segment on behalf of the whole unit as an obligation owed to the *sunzɔ* segment, the house of F.I.1. Cooked food, beer, and the meat of ceremonially slaughtered animals are distributed according to the same scale of genealogical distance, and the allocation of ritual duties, though less strictly regulated, depends on it, too. Hence any members of W who may be present at the funeral are regarded as representing W, however many segments of W they may individually represent. They are entitled only to those portions of food, beer, and meat which are the due share of W. An identical share can be claimed by members of X who may be present, whether they come from one of its segments or from all; and the same holds for the major segments of the maximal lineage. *Sunzɔt* here implies duties and privileges vested in the lineage as a corporate unit and exercised on its behalf by any representatives of that unit in relation to other units of a like sort.

613 There are many other institutions and situations in which the tie of *sunzɔt* operates in the same way and receives precise and formal recognition according to the same rules. It operates thus in all corporate actions and in relation to all corporate interests of a lineage. It dictates the manner in which every activity associating people in groups is organized. Hoeing and building teams organize their work broadly along the lines [476] of the lineage structure and distribute the food they receive in reward in accordance with it. In a hunting party lineage *sunzɔp* have the right to

'pull out' (*fɔ*) a foreleg of any animal killed by a member of a *sunɔɔ* lineage. But for the present we are concerned only with the paradigm of the lineage system, a mere definition, though necessarily a somewhat lengthy one, of the fundamental concept of Tale social organization. The principal interests which direct the life and activities of a lineage, the critical jural norms which regulate the relations of its members and subdivisions to one another, the chief doctrines, myths, ceremonial usages, and ritual observances in which its structure is conceptualized and its existence and coherence invested with value for its members, will be considered at later stages of our inquiry.

The Chain of Sub-clans

x618 Thus came into being this chain of four patrilineal sub-clans (Tongo,
● 613 Yamələg, Sie, and Biuk), each the skeleton of a community. From these primary nuclei colonies have continually hived off to settle in neighbouring areas, particularly at Gbambee, Gorogo, Ba'ari, Woo, and Datɔk. Each sub-clan is itself a composite system of lineages: authentic lineages constituted by the direct line of agnatic descent from the clan founder, Mosuor; attached lineages, linked to these usually by the dogma of
[611] sister-descent; and assimilated lineages. The attached lineages are identified as *ti tau biis*—our sister's children—descendants in the direct male line of a female member of one of the authentic lineages. The stereotyped formula attributes the origin of such a lineage either to a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) who came to live in his mother's brother's (*ahəb*)

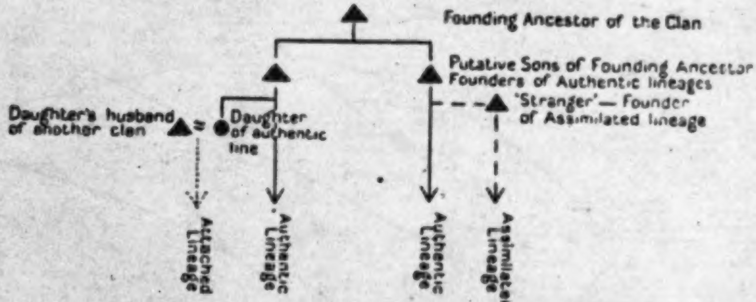
Founding Ancestor of the Clan
Putative Sons of Founding Ancestor
Founders of Authentic lineages
'Stranger'— Founder of Assimilated lineage
Daughter's husband of another clan
Daughter of authentic line
Attached Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Authentic Lineage
Assimilated Lineage

Diagram showing Relationship of Accessory Lineages to Authentic Line

[586] community, or to a sister who was divorced by her husband by the irrevocable procedure of blowing ash on her (*pɛbh*), and returned to the shelter of her parental home with her children. By this form of divorce a man renounces his rights in his children, who henceforth become members of their maternal lineage, as if they had been illegitimately begotten by a lover. The agnatic posterity of such children, as of any spinster's son, becomes a lineage attached to that of their ancestor's mother.

We shall call these 'attached lineages' because they are linked to the authentic lineages by actual or putative cognatic ties. An attached lineage maintains its continuity and distinctness, like any other lineage, even if its patrilineal progenitor is alleged to have repudiated its ancestress and his own progeny.

The existence of the assimilated lineages is often traced to an ancestor who was a 'kinsman' (*mabii*) accompanying the founder of the authentic lineage when he first arrived. Of some such lineages, however, it is whispered that they sprang from slaves of the authentic lineage with which they are connected, or from foreign refugees who sought their protection. The term used for these lineages is intended to convey that they are incorporated in the sub-clan by virtue of their dependence on and participation in the life of an authentic lineage. We shall also describe these two kinds of lineages collectively as accessory lineages.

This summary statement follows closely the formulations of the 613
Tallensi themselves. They normally think of a lineage, a set of lineages, 618X
or a community, as a unit in relation to other units of a like sort, irrespective
of its internal differentiation. Thus, Tongo people say: '*Tam ni* 574
Yamələgdɛm ni Siedɛm ni Biukdɛm a la yaab yɛni biis—We and the people of Yamələg, and the people of Sie and the people of Biuk are the children of one ancestor.' The place-name serves to designate the social group. Once, at Sie, some young men from Tongo, members of an assimilated lineage, called on me. 'We've only come on a visit', they said, '*daɣa ti mabiis n a Siedɛm?*—Are not these people of Sie our kinsfolk?'

Such intercourse is constant amongst the three Talni-speaking branches of Mosuor's posterity (*tu'u*). Biuk, both because of its fusion with the Gəris and its geographical location, is somewhat isolated from regular contact with its Talni-speaking clansmen. But the ties which control this voluntary fraternization emerge more precisely in a number of critical norms and institutions.

The Critical Norms of Clanship

Most important of these is the rule of exogamy. Marriage is uncon- 618X
ditionally prohibited between the four branches of Mosuor's posterity— 582
i.e. between members of the authentic lineages of Tongo, Yamələg, Sie, and Biuk. The prohibition extends to the assimilated lineages as well, but not to all attached lineages, though the natives state it as if it applied to the entire sub-clan. They regard it as the inevitable corollary of their common ancestry. It is, therefore, the widest extension of the rule which prohibits marriage within the agnatic lineage. I discovered only one instance of the transgression of this rule at Tongo, and this occurred in abnormal circumstances.

A second critical norm always cited is: '*ti diit taaba pakoya*—We marry 587
one another's widows.' A Tongo man has the right to seek the hand of 618X
the widow of a Yamələg, a Sie, or a Biuk man; but in actual practice remarriage of widows is restricted by so many other conditions that this leviratic right is mainly significant as an ideological index of clanship. It is the correlative of the rule of exogamy and, like it, the widest extension of a right which holds primarily within the lineage. Occasionally this right is exercised in its widest sense. The Chief of Tongo, for example, has availed himself of it to solve the problem of accommodation for himself and his retinue when he is compelled to visit the Administrative Headquarters at Zuarungu. An elderly widow at Biuk is nominally his wife and he may therefore stay in her house without embarrassment. In another case a middle-aged Yamələg widow elected to marry a stalwart young man from Tongo in preference to any of her dead husband's closer kinsmen. It is extremely unlikely that either woman would have been permitted to marry so distant an agnate of her dead husband if she were still capable of child-bearing. Nevertheless, it is an essential consequence of the leviratic right that if a man from one of the sub-clans should succeed in marrying a young widow of a member of another, no reprisals could be publicly undertaken against him, whereas anyone outside the range of clanship would be courting armed vengeance by such an act.

the paramount moral values of the Namoos. The oath a Namoo swears 577
by his father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells to rebut an
accusation or assert his honesty is evidence of this.

The natives think of these rules as coeval with their social order. 613
They are axioms of conduct, which men accept without questioning as 577
they accept the fact that one is born a Namoo. Since they are binding on
and restricted to the patrilineal line of descent, these avoidances serve
to express the ultimate and unconditional validity of agnatic descent,
through which the individual's place in a corporate unit is irrevocably
fixed at birth, and by which his whole social and spiritual destiny is
largely controlled. Through ignorance or stupidity, irreverence or lack of
self-control, individuals sometimes, though very rarely, break these
taboos. Such lapses will bring down mystical retribution on the sinner's
head; that is his affair. They cannot impair the intrinsic validity of these
rules or undermine their obligatory character.

It would be inconceivable for a Namoo to flout the taboo of the 688
goatskin loin-cover for the dead. To do so would be a sacrilege so gratuitous
and so lunatic as to lie beyond the bounds of sane human behaviour.
Actually a situation in which such a sacrilege would be possible would
never occur, for the simple reason that a death is an affair of the clan.
The clan elders conduct all mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and the
inviolability of the prescribed ritual is thus safeguarded by the mechanics
of its performance.

It is otherwise with the fowl taboo. This too the natives consider to 688
be something so fundamental and axiomatic that it requires no sanction 673
against possible breach except by accident. The danger of a breach occurs
only with children. The first-born child who eats a fowl or even a hen's
egg, either through inadvertence, through greed, or through childish
recklessness, may sink into a decline (*u burəmrəme*), or at the least will
break out in a rash on the head (*u zug koorəme*). But such a transgression
by a child is venial, and the antidote is simple. The child is given an
infusion of fowl droppings in water to drink which makes him vomit and
so purges him.

Observation and questioning show that breaches of this taboo are 688
as rare as the natives assert them to be. I have often seen a first-born 613
man (*nɔ-kihir*, pl. *-kihib*, one who taboos the fowl) sacrificing fowls to his
ancestor spirits and leaving them to others to consume. After such a rite
a *nɔ-kihir* always washes his hands carefully lest he contaminate his food
at the next meal with the blood of the fowl. Not only do parents, siblings,
and other relatives take care to prevent children from breaking the taboo,
but the children who have to observe it have a horror of doing so.
By the time they are five or six years old children will tell an inquirer
with great emphasis, 'I am an eldest child, and I don't eat fowl'. Though
they do not know the myth that accounts for the taboo, they appreciate
its obligatory character.

We have spoken of these taboos as symbols of moral values because, 577
though binding on all Namoos, they do not imply specific ties either 784
political or ceremonial, and are obligatory on individuals. Their observance
is in the last resort a matter of conscience and belief. In the widest

577 784 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

●613 428 627 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔyar*) of the founding ancestor of Bɔyada biis at Tongo was a case in point. Saŋgbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'aləm, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'aləm, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔyar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋgbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔyada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'aləm, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*mieŋ*), and the crocodile (*baŋ*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pehug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋgbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Puliebər yidem, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'aləm and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋgbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle. [787] A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

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No one was surprised when Tinta'aləm gained the verdict. Thus the 613 ancestors themselves vouched for the legitimate status of Yidaan biis. [787]

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Other Namoo Clans

The most important of the Namoo clans that come within the political 618x orbit of Tongo, though not related to it by ties of clanship, is the contiguous clan of Zoo. 166 A number of Tongo families live on Zoo land, which was not so densely populated as Tongo 50 or 60 years ago and could therefore accommodate some of its overflow population. In the same way, a number of Zoo families have overflowed into the neighbouring locality of Gbambee, where they live among Tongo people. These ecological adjustments are facilitated, though not solely determined, by the structural ties between Zoo and Tongo, and by the fact that both are Namoo settlements. Ten out of the thirty-nine homesteads at Zoo belong to Tongo people, and they are members of all but one of the major segments of Tongo. By contrast, Tongo people are reluctant to move out to vacant parts of Zubiuŋ, where the people, though their neighbours and cognatic kinsfolk, are Talis in their ritual beliefs and practices. In recent years only one Tongo man has done this as a temporary measure.

The people of Zoo (Zoodɛm) comprise two maximal lineages. One of 618x these, Zoo proper, is a maximal lineage of three segments, to one of which is attached a 'sister's son's' lineage. Their founding ancestor, Yikpɛmdaan, is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*) of Mosuor, whom he accompanied from Mampurugu. As Zoodɛm marry any of the descendants of Mosuor, the fiction of original kinship (*mabiirət*) here emphasizes the cultural and political solidarity of the two groups, not a genealogical connexion.

Living side by side with Zoodɛm proper (Yikpɛmdaan biis) is another maximal lineage known as Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm. These two maximal lineages exclude one another from the cults of their respective founding ancestors and from the ritual observances connected with them. Indeed, Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are affiliated to the Talis by ritual observance and cult. Nevertheless, Zoodɛm proper and Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm have all the ties of clanship that hold between constituent lineages of the same clan who consider themselves to be *sunzɔp*. The explanation they give is that 'it is because we live together side by side (*tin kab ziin ni taaba la zugu*)'. Here clanship is attributed to local coalescence. These clanship ties are shown in all ceremonial matters that concern either of the lineages as well as in their co-operative enterprises. Though they do not take part in the esoteric ritual of one another's funeral ceremonies, they act as *sunzɔp* to one another in the public and exoteric phases of the ceremonies. If a party of Zoodɛm proper set out to pay their respects to a deceased relative-in-law, they will always be supported by some young men from Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm; and if a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is summoned to take a working party to help his father-in-law, he will always be accompanied by a few young men of the other lineage.

Zoo-Yiraaŋ is linked by ties of clanship to one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ.[1] Zoodɛm proper have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ or with any other clan. Yet they are often described as 'our

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[1] See ch. VI.

*618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tendaana, both receive sacrifices.
182 But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a
771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

774 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both
769 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve
182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages.
●613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar* (*dugni bɔyar*), the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpaləg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tendaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tendaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tendaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

*618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of
182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[773] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one
178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar
182 tendaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders
578 to Duunkpaləg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdem did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tendaana-elect to Duunkpaləg. The Yapaasdem, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔya* 782
of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of 794
the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual 619
community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of 794
every Talɔŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔyar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔyar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔyar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) 794
are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social 171
groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔyar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔyar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔyar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkɔra*)'.

Bɔyar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage 182
associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious 794
conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of 613
loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔyar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

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[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
●613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field.
Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔɣar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔɣar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔɣar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
184 single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine
769 (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to
assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the
[793] Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a
Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[778] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
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been discussing have a deeper meaning to the natives than merely as convenient indices of social differentiation. It is on account of their deeper meaning that they serve also, in certain contexts, to identify corporate units. The very casualness with which Tallensi speak of their totemic taboos; the unquestioning way in which they take their funeral customs for granted; and at the other extreme, the connexion of these ritual observances with the supreme religious institution of the Hill Talis, whose influence pervades their whole social life, all show that we are dealing with something that goes down to the axiomatic ideas and values that underpin the social structure.

182 611 These ritual institutions, with their common pattern of injunction, oath, and determination by descent or quasi-descent, form part of an interlocked system of religious values that springs directly out of the social structure. Their common focus is the notion of dependence on the ancestors determined by the fact of descent. But it is not descent in its physiological sense that they refer to. They symbolize the fact that descent, to the Tallensi, axiomatically creates bonds of moral and ritual interdependence and obligation. It is because, as we have previously seen, Tallensi tend to read into all ritual relations, whatever their derivation, corresponding genealogical relationships; because the relations of mutual amity and co-operation, even though only in a limited sphere of conduct, imposed by ritual ties are of the same type as those imposed by ties of kinship; because all the rights and duties determined by descent are kept in force by the sanction of the ancestor spirits, that the values appropriate to the sphere of kinship and descent merge with those expressed in religious cult and doctrine. There is a syncretism in the Tale system of ideas and values that images their syncretic social structure. Lineage system and ancestor cult interfuse and at the same time mirror each other.

•613 Our analysis can be carried farther if we consider what lineage membership means. It is created by the bare physiological fact of patrilineal descent. But the physiological links between the individual and his ancestors and between all the living members of the lineage have no social significance except as the kernel of the social relations and bonds that come out in economic affairs such as the ownership and use of land; in the exercise of moral and jural rights and duties, as in marriage or parenthood; in ritual belief and practice, as in the ancestor cult. This is the stuff of individual and collective life for the native wherever—and this applies to almost everything he does—the fact of descent is relevant. Membership of his lineage, or his clan, or of a religious community means, to the individual, a particular collection of people taken severally in some situations, collectively in others, with whom he has certain kinds of known and regular social relations reflecting their common interests, and based on the continuity and integrity of the group; and he submits to a number of restraints on word and deed in order to maintain his relations with them. A man experiences this in a multitude of particular actions and events, day after day.

As a member of a particular lineage a man has definite rights and duties and enters into a stream of social relations from which all who do not

belong to that agnatic line are excluded. It is a fact that marks him off from a great many people who come into his range of contact. It determines, for example, whom he may or may not marry, what social roles he may or may not exercise, who will support him in his troubles, where he will make his farms, and especially which named ancestors ritually accessible at certain definite, material shrines govern his life. Of course lineage membership, as we know, isolates only the central area of a person's field of social relations, as this is determined by his birth. Lineage membership, clan membership, and membership of the wider [611] community of the Hill Talis, or of a *Bɔɣar* congregation, are all primarily determined by the fact of birth; and the social relations by which one zone is distinguished from the next in the total field all belong to the same category.

All the members of the lineage are equally members of it, irrespective of age, sex, or status. The social bonds that define the limits of the lineage and mark its social identity for its members are equally binding on all its members. They all share the sentiments engendered by membership of the lineage. They all feel themselves to be embraced within its corporate unity. These are matters of everyday practical experience. But behind them lies the deep sense of the continuity of the agnatic line. This takes the form, in the individual, of a great pride in his ancestry and a strong feeling of identification with the other members of the lineage and with the lineage as a unit in their common dependence on their ancestors.

At their simplest, the totemic and funeral taboos of the Talis are symbolic expressions of the irrevocable and supremely important fact of lineage membership. But if that were all, they might not have taken a ritual form. Among the Talis we can see more plainly than among the Namoos why these symbols of the social identity conferred on individuals and groups by agnatic descent take the form of ritual observances.

Agnatic descent, as we have pointed out, automatically puts one under moral bonds to certain other people. There is no choice about membership of one's lineage. And there can be no questioning or choosing in the matter of the basic norms of lineage relations. One has rights and duties towards one's co-members of the lineage, amity for them, interest in them, common concerns with them, simply and solely because they are of the same agnatic line. Lineage norms are absolutely binding, and the sanction for this is the common ritual dependence of all the members on their ancestors. This is crystallized in the cult of the lineage *bɔɣar*, the thing in which the spiritual jurisdiction of the ancestors over all the lineage members is made tangible and accessible to human thought and action. The lineage as a social entity is founded on moral and ritual imperatives. This is how the natives feel it: we need not here concern ourselves with possible scientific explanations of this fact. What matters is that this sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage relations, explicitly brought out as it is in the cult of the ancestors, is also diffused through all the relations of lineage members. The function of totemic taboos is to crystallize in a clear-cut, concrete, external object of no intrinsic significance this diffused sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage bonds. The taboos are simple and definite

613 imperatives symbolizing those other more fundamental imperatives. The very fact that they are trivial in themselves and can be easily remembered and kept without hardship by young and old make them the more effective as social symbols.[1] The natives, of course, cannot formulate such an explanation of their totemic taboos. It can only be inferred from their attitudes and actions just as we infer from our economic actions and attitudes that coins and notes are the symbols of goods and services.

Totemic taboos, it must be remembered, are not the only ritual observances through the medium of which the Talis mark the fact of lineage membership. Lineage membership has many facets, as we have seen, and sometimes one facet is uppermost in thought or action, sometimes another. Two of these facets have principally concerned us here. A person's membership of the lineage emerges in its corporate activities as a unit of social structure; common interests and concerns prevail and the individual counts only as a component of the group. It is as a corporate unit that the lineage has its ritual focus in the lineage *bɔγar*. Though each member stands under the governance of the *bɔγar*, he cannot approach it except through the lineage head and in association with representatives of every branch of the lineage. On the other hand, every member of the lineage carries his lineage membership about with him, as it were, even on his private occasions; it is an abiding attribute of his social personality. We see this most plainly in the case of a woman member who is debarred by her sex from sharing completely in the corporate unity of the lineage. Yet she retains her membership of it all her life as a birthright.

It is this aspect of his lineage membership that is symbolically projected in the totemic taboos for the individual himself. They are to him a sign of his lineage membership and all that it means, a constant reminder of his moral bonds with his fellow members and his ancestors. Through them he expresses his pride in his ancestry and the deep value he attaches to the body of custom bequeathed to him and his fellows by his ancestors.

We can see, now, how the totemic equivalence of distinctive funeral customs comes about. Everything symbolized by totemic avoidances comes ultimately from the fact of birth, as a gift from one's father. On his death he goes to join the ancestors. The rites that transform him into an ancestor spirit express recognition of his role as transmitter of the unique agnatic line, and of the ritual sanctions he represents for the correct conduct of his son as a member of the lineage.

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x618 But membership of the lineage by birth makes one also a member of the clan. And this entails obligatory social relations with members of

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[1] The connotation given to the word *symbol* in this argument will strike the reader as a cross between Freudian usage and Durkheimian usage. We mean by it (*a*) a complex of a material object, together with the ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and conventional actions associated with it, which (*b*) has no self-evident utilitarian or logical significance to the observer or even to the natives but (*c*) can be understood as explained in the text above. The point of importance for us is that the symbol carries a strong emotional charge and has the value of a direct moral imperative. If this were lacking we should have preferred to call Tale totems emblems or distinguishing devices.

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618x
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is
through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social
order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community
of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and
looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one
belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based
on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by
common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social
personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and
of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant.
In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual
fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the
lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔyar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618x
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the
Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔyar*.

The External *Bɔyar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔyar*, parallel to 618x
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and 778
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794
each External *Bɔyar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔyar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of
maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental
common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social
identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been
initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Taləŋ
(*u pana baŋ Taləŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Taləŋ
has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child';
now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to
indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member
of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider
community.

The *Bɔyar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔyar*, and often
invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical,
anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔyar* symbolizes the ritual value of
the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis
to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It
symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought
into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

symbols. It may be a domestic animal peculiarly associated with the man 182
because he reared it. But far more significance is attached to a bush 776
animal killed in the hunt, or an aquatic animal caught in a fish drive. Encountering such an animal is a matter of luck. Overcoming it demands skill and has an element of danger; and this singles out the successful hunter or fisherman from his fellows. It is a sign of the intervention of his *Yin* ancestors in his life and the animal is an obvious choice as a symbol for them. It should be stressed that the question of economic value does not come in at all. Bush and aquatic animals have very little economic value. It is as symbols of personal achievement and luck that they have meaning.

But what is the common psychological theme in these different categories of animal symbolism? The relations between men and their ancestors among the Tallensi are a never-ceasing struggle. Men try to coerce and placate their ancestors by means of sacrifices. But the ancestors are unpredictable. It is their power to injure and their sudden attacks on routine well-being that make men aware of them rather than their beneficent guardianship. It is by aggressive intervention in human affairs that they safeguard the social order. Do what they will, men can never control the ancestors. Like the animals of the bush and the river, they are restless, elusive, ubiquitous, unpredictable, aggressive. The relations of men with animals in the world of common-sense experience are an apt symbolism of the relations of men with their ancestors in the sphere of mystical causation.

It is an interesting point that the commonest and most widely respected 182
totem or quasi-totem animals are what Tallensi call 'teeth-bearers' 613
(*nyindem*)—reptiles and carnivores, whose weapons are their teeth and who live and defend themselves by attacking other animals or even men. The symbolical link with the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors is patent.[1] This is, no doubt, the chief reason why other species of earth-dwelling animals are not selected as Earth taboos.

To sum up, animals are peculiarly apt symbols for the livingness—the immortality—of the ancestors as this emerges in the various functionally differentiated aspects of the social life. They symbolize, in particular, the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors as the supreme sanction of Tale cultural values. They serve to crystallize in simple, concrete, unequivocal imperatives and images the notion of the binding force of the moral code which is not clearly apparent in the diffused and particularized imperatives that make up the day-to-day experience of it. Different animal symbols stand for different aspects of the moral code, but they all form a connected series corresponding to the unitary basis of that code and the all-embracing sanctions of the ancestor cult. The principles of right and wrong, of duty and justice, of what is permissible and what is prohibited in social life fall into a consistent scheme among the Tallensi. And as the existence of the society depends on the maintenance of this code, its ultimate sanctions are necessarily of mystical form.

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[1] Teeth are a common symbol of aggression among many peoples. The association is familiar to psychologists. We have it ourselves—witness our expression 'to show one's teeth'.

562 *pɔγayabələg*, particularly of one who is living at her husband's house.
x618 To be sure, her kinship ties with her own family and with the segment of the maximal lineage to which her father belongs are not severed; indeed, a woman's relations with her paternal clan are largely regulated and mediated by these ties. The concept of *pɔγayabələg* implicitly stresses the fact that it is a woman's fate to be married out of the clan and to be cut off from its routine corporate activity; and it contains the idea that a woman thus separated from her parental home is felt to belong primarily to the widest corporate unit that stands in contraposition to her husband's, where his relations with her are concerned.

Thus outside the range of the lineage segment in which generation differences are recognized, a *pɔγayabələg* is referred to as 'our sister (*ti tau*)' by any of her clansmen, and she speaks of them as *ntap*, 'my brothers'. A man visiting the settlement of another clan makes himself at home in the rooms of any *pɔγayabələg* of his clan. When the cow-peas are ripening, a *pɔγayabələg* visiting her clan settlement—her 'father's house' (*ba yiri*), as it is described by extension of the concept of the father's house or lineage in the narrowest sense—may pluck cow-pea leaves (*bɛŋət*) for herself anywhere in the settlement. A Yamələg or Sie *pɔγayabələg* can do this at Tongo, for instance, if she is merely passing
[578] through on her way elsewhere. No one would resent it; but if the wife of a member of a segment of the clan other than his own were to pluck a man's cow-pea leaves without his express permission, it would lead to a quarrel. Similarly, it is customary for women to come and collect a basket of grain from the men of their parental family after the harvest. A *pɔγayabələg*, however, is permitted to ask any of her clansmen for a gift of this kind. Thus it sometimes happens that a Yamələg or Sie woman married to a man at Yinduuri comes to a clansman at Tongo after the harvest for a gift of grain, or a Tongo woman married to a man at Datɔk or Duusi calls on a clansman at Sie for such a gift. As these examples indicate, a *pɔγayabələg* of a linked maximal lineage counts as a *pɔγayabələg* of the clan.

562 When a woman's funeral is celebrated by her husband's people the
764 last act is 'to send her home (*kulh*)' to her father's house. For this ceremony a large party of men and women in their gayest clothes, led by the nearest agnates of the dead woman and escorted by drummers and musicians, sets out for her husband's settlement to 'receive her funeral (*die koor*)'. When such a party is being assembled, messages are sent to the heads of all the constituent lineages of the clan, and representatives are generally sent from all the lineages to accompany the party. It is partly a matter of duty, and partly an act of courtesy and a voluntary demonstration of clan solidarity. Sometimes young people of linked lineages join the party, knowing that it will be lavishly entertained by the affinal clan and that there will be dancing and girls to flirt with. Fetching the funeral of a *pɔγayabələg* is an affair of the whole clan.

562 The *pɔγayabələg* has a formal status in the lineage and clan, and this
●613 status is recognized as an intrinsic element in the structure of the lineage and clan. The fiction behind this is the idea often explicitly stated by the natives that but for an accident of birth she might have been a man

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562
of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613
relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔɣayabəlis*, deprived by
an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan.
This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784]
pɔɣayabələg of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives, of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔɣayabələg* might, in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔɣayabələg* as 562
an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854
example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan. Usually she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to
carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787]
will be a suitable *pɔɣayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a *pɔɣayabələg* is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task; it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being. Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔɣar* is significant in 562
this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793
shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769
case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔɣayabəlis* have the right to take part

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔyar*, the married *pɔyayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔyayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a
prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔya-*
yabəlis. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the
vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of
various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔya-*
yabəlis, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of
a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is
the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or indivi-
dual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
●613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔyar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive
succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a
lineage *bɔyar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the
lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do
so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute
fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates
by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are
invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for
the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the
descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women,
participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his succes-
[787] sor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔyayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination.
Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the
bɔyar to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of
the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the
equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the
bɔyar, and the rights of women members and their descendants to
the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent
through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give
only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever,
that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan
in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated
with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the
right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*)
on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak,
exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely 571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with 562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔɣayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of 764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform 571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for 562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔɣayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of 252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔɣayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔɣayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them, 571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites. A *pɔɣayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacri- 562 fices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about [292] to join. A *pɔɣayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔɣayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*daɣat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

x618 Lastly, a married *pɔɣayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and 728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which 584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔɣasama*—a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔɣayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

●613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members. 562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation 602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

means of which the lineage acquires wives. But what is more important, 613
the women carry the descent of the clan into other clans, and thus build 562
up that network of interclan kinship ties which breaks down the rigid 602
exclusiveness of the lineage and clan, interweaves clan with clan, and is one of the factors that restrain strife between clans and prevent Tale society from splitting into anarchic fragments. Since the tie of descent is indestructible, women members of the lineage and clan have definite rights and duties in all those practical and ritual institutions which bring out most precisely the solidarity and corporate identity of the lineage through the passage of time and the mutability of generations.

of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. 621
To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet 577
closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by 621
territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one 613 ●
locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. 571
Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counterpart in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section, both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them
and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent [578]
hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the 621
territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of 618x
ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point emphasized by the Yinduurns'ab in the case previously quoted. Tongo stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the Gbizug tɛndaana's ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpemdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect. The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaana's clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth (*tɛŋən kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dispossessed
471 without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut' (*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important
● 613 part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*) what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-
577 existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
[686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to
471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688
with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471
corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays
there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*walɔg*) such 432
difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471
punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's depen- 688
dants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613
thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471
and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426
now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common.
I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his
right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the
significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782]
act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471
always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426
ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

471 426 602 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 471 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

621 471 182 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of the *teŋ* as a community. The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

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[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

CHAPTER XII

THE LINEAGE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

General Features

A CENTRAL factor in the continuity and stability of a Tale settlement 613 ● is the economic organization; but the persistent morphological framework, the factor that gives its peculiar stamp to the form of a Tale community, is its lineage skeleton. The critical feature is the congruence of local aggregation and continuity with lineage aggregation and continuity.

To observe the operation of the lineage principle in the structure of a 613 Tale settlement, we must isolate for consideration its male population. 618x '*Bumpɔk pu meet yiri*—a woman does not build a house', say the natives, in words reminiscent of the Roman formula, *mulier finis familiae est*. That is to say, a lineage is not perpetuated by its women members, but only by its male members. We have previously studied the Tale lineage system in its macroscopic structure, from the outside, as it were. We proceed, now, to study it from within.

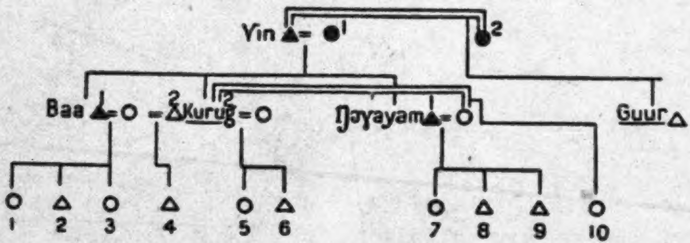
We shall keep Tongo as our model. Tongo is the *tɛŋ* of the senior of the four branches of the clan of Mosuor biis, each of which has the form of a maximal lineage though it is in reality only a major segment of a maximal lineage. In addition, there are at Tongo several accessory lineages linked to the authentic line of Mosuor biis by some genealogical fiction or other. If allowance is made for the special linkage of these accessory lineages to the authentic line of Mosuor biis, we can place all the men of Tongo on a single, patrilineal, chart. All their lines of ascent converge in Mosuor. They all belong to the same set of lineages, graded in segments of increasing span and rising order of segmentation and contained within the lineage limits fixed by their unilineal ancestry.

Births and deaths among its members continually change the composition of the sub-clan. Deaths of male members often cause further segmentation in the lineages of smallest span. They do not affect the lineage equilibrium of the sub-clan as a whole, for this is a function of the relations between the segments of highest order. The structural relations of all segments of an order higher than the minimal segments are finally fixed. If we take any one of these supra-minimal segments by itself, its place in the whole system can be altered only by the extinction of a coordinate segment of a lineage of greater span of which it forms a part. Hence the point of time chosen for an analysis of the system is immaterial.

Analysis of a Lineage from Within

Since all the men of Tongo can be included in a single genealogical 613 tree, it is immaterial whom we choose as the starting-point for our

613 analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody
[142] else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a
man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the
[487] rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of
[177] some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*)
and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayəlis*). But one would have to know
[515] the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb
of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body-
[577] cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious
farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his
section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map
at end of book.)



[*NB: Double lines (=) show marriages*]

[128] *in all genealogies the following conventions will be followed*

- Living men △
- Living women ○
- Dead men ▲
- Dead women ●

The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Dɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

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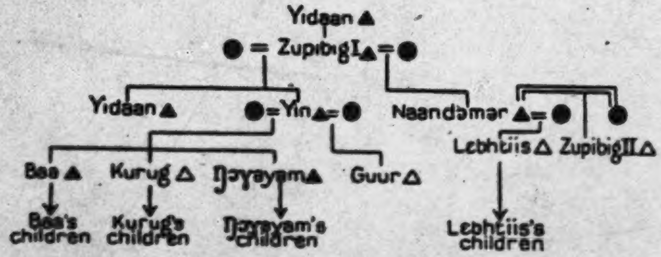
[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

germs of a further segmentation by agnatic lines is present in this unit. Baa's children and Dɔγayam's children, being minors, still form part of Kurug's joint family; they are economically, jurally, and ritually dependent on him. But they have different fathers from Kurug's children. The effective minimal lineage, which is functionally the corporate unit of lowest order, may, and here does, comprise several morphologically lower minimal lineages.[1]

By the canon of agnatic descent Baa's children form one segment of the effective minimal lineage, Kurug and his children another, Dɔγayam's children a third, and Guur a fourth. As, however, they have no functional autonomy at this phase of their development, they may be regarded as minimal lineages submerged in the effective minimal lineage identified by reference to their immediate common progenitor, Yin. Eventually each of these submerged segments will become segregated as a relatively autonomous effective minimal lineage.

About 80 yards from Kurug (homestead No. 11), live Lɛbhtiis and Zupibig (II), whom he describes as his *pirib* (sing. *pit*), younger brothers, with their families. They have the following genealogical relationship to each other and to Kurug:



Lɛbhtiis is the head of an effective minimal lineage (Naandəmər yidɛm) of exactly the same span and order as that (Yin yidɛm) of which Kurug is head. They are segments of the inclusive lineage of greater span and next higher order, Zupibig yidɛm, named after their common grandfather (*yaab*), or, more usually, Yidaan yidɛm, after their common great-grandfather (*yaab*). Kurug, the oldest of the four brothers (*sunzɔp*), is the head of this lineage, which we shall call a nuclear lineage.

Next door to Lɛbhtiis (homestead No. 10) live Deemzeet, whom Kurug and his brothers refer to as *ti ba* (our father), and his deceased brother's two sons (*biis*), Təbəg and Dəbil, whom Kurug describes as *mpirib* (my younger brothers), and Lɛbhtiis as *mbiernam* (my older brothers).

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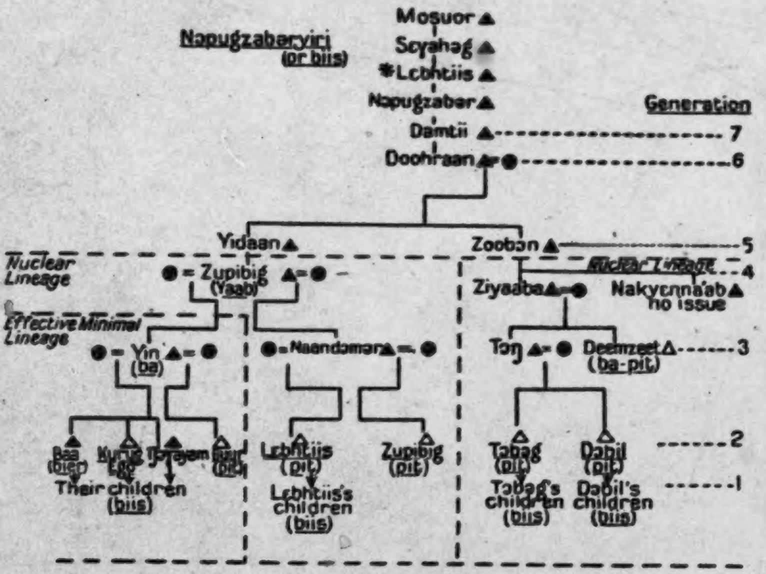
[1] The introduction of so many indicator terms for the different grades of lineage segments requires an apology, but experience has shown that some such artificial device is necessary if the Tale lineage system is to be made clear to the English reader. The distinction here drawn between the *effective minimal lineage* (or segment) as the functional unit of lowest order, and the *minimal lineage* (or segment) as the morphological unit of lowest order, is important. An effective minimal lineage is usually the framework of a domestic family and includes women members.

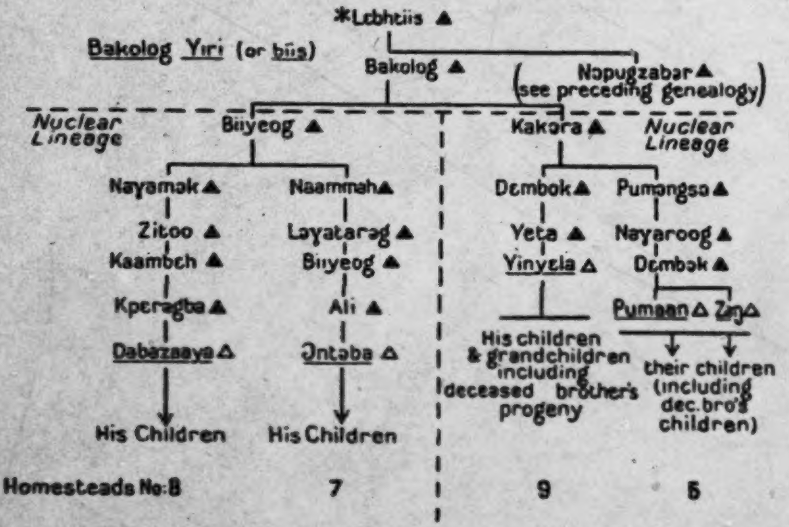
613 Deemzeet's house (*yir*) has the following genealogical relationship to Zupibig yidɛm:


Mosuor
Napugzabaryiri (or biis)
Sɛyahəg
*Lɛbhtiis
Napugzabər
Generation
Damtii
7
Doohraan
6
Yidaan
Zoobɔn
5
Nuclear Lineage
Zupibig (Yaab)
Nuclear Lineage
4
Ziyaaba
Nakyɛnna'ab no issue
Effective Minimal Lineage
Yin (ba)
Naandɔmɔr
Tɔŋ
Deemzeet (ba-pit)
3
Baa (biɛr)
Kurug
Ego
Tɔrayam
Guur (pit)
Lɛbhtiis (pit)
Zupibig (pit)
Tɔbəg (pit)
Dɔbil (pit)
2
Their children (biis)
Lɛbhtiis's children (biis)
Tɔbəg's children (biis)
Dɔbil's children (biis)
1

Taken by itself, Deemzeet's house has the same internal structure as Kurug's or Lɛbhtiis's; but Tɔbəg and Dɔbil are men of mature years with grown children. Though still formally under the jural, economic, and ritual authority of Deemzeet, they have considerable autonomy in ritual, jural, and economic affairs that concern their own segment (Tɔŋ biis) of the nuclear lineage. [589] If Deemzeet, a timid old bachelor, had any children, the relative independence of Tɔŋ biis would be more obvious. The nuclear lineage of which Deemzeet is head has reached a more advanced phase of internal differentiation than that of which Kurug is head. This is due, partly, to its being an older lineage, which existed in its present form when Kurug and Guur were still minors under the tutelage of their own father, Yin, and Lɛbhtiis and Zupibig (II) were minors dependent on their father, Naandɔmɔr. But Deemzeet's house is not the older lineage in the sense that its members are older than the members of the lineages with which we are contrasting it; it is older in that it represents an earlier phase of the segmentation of the inclusive lineage of which Kurug's house, Lɛbhtiis's house, and Deemzeet's house to-day form the constituent and co-ordinate segments. Its head is a generation superior to Kurug and Lɛbhtiis in terms of their common descent. Thus it is the senior of the two segments. The span of a lineage being a function of its internal genealogical constitution, a three-generation lineage has a wider span than a two-generation lineage. But the order of a lineage is determined by its segmentary relationship to other lineages which are complementary to it—brother (*sunzɔ*) segments—in a greater, inclusive lineage. Lineages are differentiated in terms of their genealogical distance 613 from one another within their common agnatic descent.

The whole lineage we have been analysing is often designated Doohraan yidɛm (or biis), by reference to its ancestor, Doohraan; but it is more frequently described as Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm (or biis), going back to Doohraan's putative grandfather. This lineage is the skeleton of what may be called an expanded family, each of its component effective minimal segments being the foundation, similarly, of a domestic family.[1] [597]

Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm constitute a major segment of a wider lineage. Homesteads 5, 7, 8, and 9, the closest neighbours of the homesteads of Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm, are occupied by the various branches of a lineage of the same order as Nɔpugzabɔr yiri. Its genealogical structure is briefly as follows:


*Lɛbhtiis ▲
Bakolog Yiri (or biis)
Bakolog ▲
Nɔpugzabɔr ▲ (see preceding genealogy)
Nuclear Lineage
Biiyeog ▲
Kakɔra ▲
Nuclear Lineage
Nayamɔk ▲
Naammah ▲
Dɛmbok ▲
Pumɔngsɔ ▲
Zitoo ▲
Layatarəg ▲
Yeta ▲
Nayaroog ▲
Kaambɛh ▲
Biiyeog ▲
Yinyɛla △
Dɛmbɔk ▲
Kpɛragba ▲
Ali ▲
Pumaan △
Zinɔ △
Dabazaaya △
Ɔntɔba △
His children & grandchildren including deceased brother's progeny
their children (including dec. bro's children)
His Children
His Children
Homesteads No: 8
7
9
5

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[1] Tale domestic organization is analysed in our next volume. Here it is sufficient to say that the modal family unit is the polygynous, agnatic joint family occupying its own homestead. This is the prototypical *yir*, house (pl. *yea*). Its typical substratum is an effective minimal lineage of two, or less commonly, three generations. Thus it may consist of two or more brothers (half or full brothers or cousins); or a man and some or all of his sons, and, occasionally, grandsons, together with the wives and young children of all the males. The joint family always constitutes a single jural unit; most often, but not always, it is also a single economic unit. The pivot of this *yir* is its male head (*yirdaana*, owner of the house). He represents the continuity of the patrilineal line in the structure of the family. He is the (patricentral) focus of co-operation and of jural and ritual unity in the family. This is symbolized by the position of the granary in the centre of the homestead and by the reservation of the space in front of the gateway (*zanɔr*) for the affairs of the men. Complementarily, each woman has her own separate quarters in the homestead where her children live under her care, and where she is mistress in domestic affairs. This is her *dug* (lit. room, pl. *dugɛt*); and this is the prototype of the lineage *dug*. Thus the children of the family—that is, the lineage growing out

613 We have set down only the agnatic affiliation of the heads of the effective minimal segments of the lineage, for the relations of these segments with one another are determined by these ties, not by their respective internal constitutions. The head of this lineage (Bakolog yiri) was Yinyɛla; he died in 1937—a hoary ancient and one of the oldest men in Tongo, at least 75 years of age. He called Ɔntɔba *yaaŋ* (grandson), and Dabazaaya *yaaŋkalee* (great-grandson), and Pumaan, a man in the late forties or early fifties, *bii* (child).

Mutatis mutandis, Bakolog yir has the same internal organization and residential distribution as Nɔpugzabər yir, though it is more differentiated.

Nɔpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm are two co-ordinate segments (*dugət*) of the wider lineage (*yir*) Lɛbhtiis[1] yidɛm. From Deemzeet to Lɛbhtiis inclusively seven generations are reckoned. From Yinyɛla to Lɛbhtiis only six generations are reckoned. This is not fortuitous, for Yinyɛla claims to belong to the generation of Deemzeet's father.

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm include three more *dugət*, segments co-ordinate with Nɔpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm. These are:—

(*a*) Nɔdɛɣər yir, the only surviving branch of which comprises but a single segment of narrow span consisting of three full brothers and their children who live in homestead No. 12.

(*b*) Pɔɣasɔŋ yir, whose members occupy homesteads 17, 22, 28, 29, and 33.

(*c*) Gbɛn yir, in homesteads 18, 19, 20, 23, 24.

As with Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, a count of seven generations, inclusive, separates the heads of these three lineages from their ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. All these segments preserve the names of what appear to be redundant ancestors, like Damtii in the genealogical chart of Nɔpugzabər yidɛm. For, in conformity with their structural relations as co-ordinate segments of a single lineage, their particular genealogies must be congruent (see Ch. III). Bakolog yidɛm, with one ascendant generation less in their pedigree, fit into the set on the assumption—which they uphold vigorously—that their head belongs to the generation of the *fathers* of the other segment heads.

We need not analyse the internal organization of these last-mentioned segments of Lɛbhtiis yir. With variations of detail they duplicate the plan of Nɔpugzabər yir. The segments are homologous with one another; their sub-segments are constructed on the same plan; and so, on a bigger scale, is the greater lineage which embraces all of them. Bakolog yidɛm within Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, like Zoobɔn yidɛm within Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, is relatively senior to its brother-segments, and Nɔdɛɣər biis, though a segment of a very narrow span compared with the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yir, is nevertheless co-ordinate with them.

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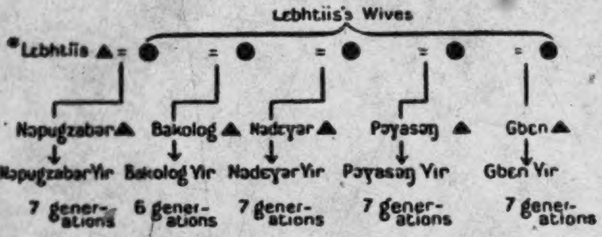
[597] of it—are genealogically and socially united by reference to the patricentral *yir* and the patrilineal line, and similarly divided into distinct segments by reference to their respective matricentral *dugət*. This is the pattern on which lineage segmentation is based. Again, what is a joint family in one generation generally splits, as the children grow up, into two or more joint families in the next generation. They then constitute what we have called an expanded family.

[1] The founding ancestor, Lɛbhtiis, of this lineage should not be confused with his living descendant of the same name, previously mentioned. In the genealogies given in this chapter Lɛbhtiis the ancestor is distinguished by an asterisk.

Diagrammatically, the agnatic filiation of the branches of Lɛbhtiis yir 613
(or biis) can be represented as follows:



These five segments form a set of co-ordinate segments, all except Bakolog yidɛm reckoning seven generations inclusively between their present lineage heads and their common ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. Their corporate unity and common interests are symbolized by the ancestor shrine dedicated to the 'fathers' (*banam*) of the lineage, culminating in Lɛbhtiis. This is the *bɔɣar* of Lɛbhtiis, the *banam bɔɣar* (shrine of the forefathers) held by the head (*kpeem*) of the whole lineage, who may be a member of any of the five *dugət*. In 1934 the head of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, Naandɔmər, who was also head of his own segment of Nɔpugzabər yiri died, and as his final funeral rites were not immediately performed, the *banam bɔɣar* remained in the custody of his son, who carried out the duties of head of the whole lineage in his late father's name. Naandɔmər's prospective successor as *kpeem* of Lɛbhtiis yir was Yinyɛla, the *kpeem* of Bakolog yir.

Each segment also has its particular *dugni bɔɣar* (shrine of the 'room'). 613
This, as will be explained presently, is known as its 'mothers'' *bɔɣar* 778
(*manam bɔɣar*)—the shrine of its eponymous founding ancestor among the sons of Lɛbhti[illegible] and his mother—the symbol of its differentiation, by reference to mate[illegible]al origin, from its brother (*sunzɔ*) segments of the same descent, and of its specific corporate unity and identity in contraposition to those other segments.

Each segment tends to form a coherent residential cluster, situated on 613
land which has been owned by its members for several generations, and in 361
close proximity to the graves of their ancestors. The lineage as a whole 167
tends to form a local aggregate, though a somewhat looser one than any of its segments. But not all the members of the lineage reside in Puhug, or at Tɔngo, at a given time. There are its married *pɔɣayabəlis* (women members) and absent male members. In Nɔpugzabər yiri two young men were away in 1934, one farming in Mampurugu, another working somewhere in the colony; three of the younger 'sons' of Bakolog yir were away at Kumasi, where they had been for several years. One sub-segment of Pɔyasəŋ yidɛm has been established at Yaməlag for a generation or so; and several members of the other two segments were away in Mampurugu and Ashanti.

Numerically Nɔdɛyər yir is exceptionally small, for it has only eleven 613
male members. The other segments have between twenty and thirty male members each, counting infants as well. Numbers, we must again emphasize, do not in any way affect the status of a lineage or the rights

613 and duties vested in it. Nɔdeɣɔr yidem suffer no jural or ritual disabilities because they are so much inferior in numbers to their brother segments.

The Principle of Segmentation in the Lineage

There are two factors of great importance in the dynamics of the lineage system: the principle of segmentation in the lineage and the connexion between lineage aggregation and locality.

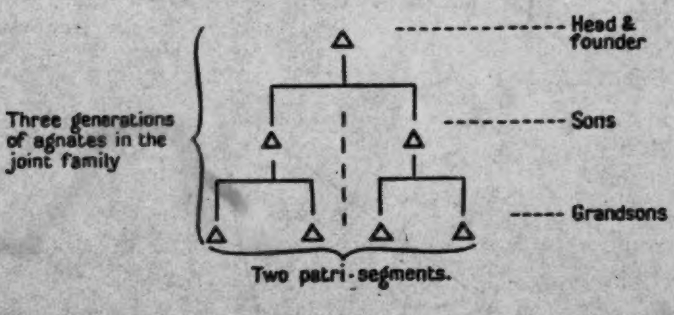
A striking characteristic of the Tale lineage is the rigorous precision with which its members fall into a set of hierarchically articulated segments, of homologous form but all exactly differentiated both genealogically and functionally (cf. Ch. III). This segmentary differentiation of the lineage follows the pattern of the family even to nomenclature. For the lineage grows out of, and through the medium of, the family, and throughout its existence a lineage develops uniformly, so that it preserves the form in which it was originally moulded.

To put it more accurately, a lineage grows by continuous internal differentiation in successive generations. It grows by the continuous multiplication of its parts, not by the mere accretion of new members. And this takes place by the splitting up of its cells, the minimal segments, into new minimal segments in successive generations. This process follows the lines of cleavage laid down in the joint family.

596 The polygynous joint family forms an integral unit with respect to its male element, the group of agnates upon which it is based and which gives it stability and continuity. This unity of the joint family is summed up in the concept of the patricentral 'house' (*yir*). But it is a unity superimposed upon a strict cellular differentiation into matricentral 'rooms' (*dugɔt*), each centred upon a wife.

613 596 The group of male agnates in the joint family constitutes an effective minimal lineage at a given time. Each male is a potential agnatic line; a pair of brothers are two potential segments of a lineage. In terms of their common patrilineal descent this group of males forms a single corporate unit. This is the essential *yir*. But this unity contains within itself two sets of cleavages: firstly, a stratification by generations, and secondly, a differentiation by descent. The generation principle acts in this way (cf.

Hypothetical Genealogy, I

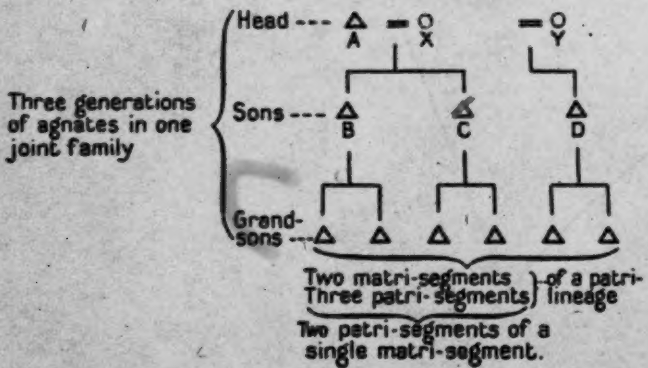


the hypothetical genealogy, I): Two brothers who are distinct as individuals are identified with reference to their common father; in all social activities in which they take part as the *sons* of their father they are, as it were, merged. During their father's lifetime they have, in fact, no independent jural status, but are, to speak figuratively again, submerged in his jural personality. Their sons, if the joint family survives as a unit for another generation, will be divided into two patrilateral groups with reference to their respective fathers, but fused into a single jural and economic as well as genealogical unit with reference to their grandfather. In this way the stratification of the effective minimal lineage into generations automatically splits it into patri-segments.[1]

Simultaneously, however, the centrifugal influence of the *dug* is at work. Brothers by the same father may have different mothers. Among the Tallensi this carries with it an emphatic affective discrimination. Half-brothers (*sunzɔ*, pl. *sunzɔp*) are divided by a wedge of sentiment which arises not only out of their independent emotional ties with their particular mothers, but also out of the structural, economic, and moral relations of the *dugət* within the *yir*. It reflects the social autonomy of the *dug* in relation to other *dugət* of the *yir* and the polarity of *dug* and *yir*. Conversely, full (*soog*) brothers have the most intimate bond in the whole gamut of Tale social relations, a bond implying an identity of interests, an emotional cohesion, and mutual loyalty so great as to override any kind of personal or social variance.[2] Thus, within the joint family, maternal origin (*ma dɔyam*, lit. 'mother's bearing') may divide the sons of one man in sentiment and by an additional index of descent. The patrilateral unit is segmented into incipient matrilateral segments.

What happens in the next generation can best be seen from the following hypothetical genealogy:

Hypothetical Genealogy, II


Three generations of agnates in one joint family
Head ---
A
X
Y
Sons ---
B
C
D
Grand-sons ---
Two matri-segments
Three patri-segments
of a patri-lineage
Two patri-segments of a single matri-segment.

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[1] This terminology is borrowed from Daryll Forde, *Marriage and the Family among the Yakö*, L. S. E. Monographs on Anthropology, No. 5.

[2] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *Africa*, xiv, 7, 1944, for a discussion of the concept of *soog*.

613 596 We assume a joint family containing three generations of male agnates—the head, his three sons, and his six grandsons, and we neglect the maternal origins of the latter. The six grandsons are divided into three equal patri-segments with reference to their respective fathers, and form a single corporate lineage with reference to their common grandfather. But they are genealogically split into two segments with reference to their respective *grandmothers*; and one of these matrilaterally defined segments (matri-segments) can be split into two patri-segments, of a lower order. Patrilateral origin and matrilateral origin work in polar opposition to each other. An agnatic group united by their patrilateral origin can be subdivided in accordance with their matrilateral origin; and vice versa, an agnatic group united by reference to their matrilateral origin can be subdivided by closer patrilateral origin.

Note that this is not a question of matriliny versus patriliny. Matrilateral origin works as a factor of cleavage only within a patrilineal group, in contradistinction to strict patriliny. Either focus may be the critical one in a given situation; but the other is not thereby obliterated; it merely becomes latent. The pattern operative here is that of the joint family. Patri-segment and matri-segment are related as *yir* and *dug* in the joint family, matri-segment and matri-segment as *dug* and *dug*. They are, indeed, nothing other than the parallel, in the structure of the unending lineage, of the balance of forces that characterizes the joint family. Members of one matri-segment are the offspring of one *dug*, members of one patri-segment may be the offspring of several *dugət*. The natives use the terms *yir* and *dug* to define the relations of lineage segments to one another. *Dug*, then, always bears the implication of a cohesive integral segment within the fissile *yir*. It stands for solidarity as opposed to the latent divisions in the *yir*, obviously reflecting its primary sense of the irreducible, uncleavable matricentral cell within the potentially divided *yir*.

Segmentation by matrilateral lines in the nuclear lineage plays a very important part in the development of both the joint family and the lineage. Economic, jural, and affective relations in the joint family are influenced by matrilateral (*dug*) affiliation; and when in course of time a joint family splits up, fission takes place in the first instance between matri-segments. Members of the same *dug* hold together longer than members of different *dugət*. Thus, two full brothers (*soog*, pl. *saarət*) continue to live in the same homestead, to farm together, to be jurally and ritually one, long after two half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) have found it necessary to separate. Often the split, which inevitably comes between separate lines in the nuclear lineage, is retarded in the case of *soog* brothers, and does not take place until their death. Children of *soog* brothers even after fission have closer ties than children of half-brothers.

These principles of segmentation are not merely a method of genealogical classification of individuals, but an indispensable regulator of corporate activities, operating at every level of lineage organization. This requires the preservation of the names of all relevant ancestors and ancestresses, but genealogical classification has no meaning except as a shorthand for the many and complex relations of individuals and groups.

The living members of a lineage are continually experiencing, in their

613 596 daily life, the antithesis between patrilateral and matrilateral ties in the joint family. There is also the principle of the continuity and identity of the lineage. Members of the same lineage are identified with one another and with their lineal ascendants. Tallensi think of a lineage as a continuous, even eternal, group, a unit persisting through time as well as existing at a given time. A particular lineage to-day is the same lineage that it was at its inception two, three, or *x* generations ago. Segments of a clan or maximal lineage have the same structural position relatively to one another as they had in the beginning, only on a different scale; and in the beginning segmentarily related lineages sprang from brothers. As these founding ancestors were related, so are their contemporary agnatic descendants related. Hence co-ordinate segments of a lineage are described as *sunzɔp* ('brothers by the same father'), and the bonds of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are the nucleus and prototype of the bonds between co-ordinate segments. Two co-ordinate segments whose founding ancestors were full (*soog*) brothers have closer ties than similar co-ordinate segments descended from a pair of half-brothers. The lineage is always growing, but can never break the unchanging frame laid down at its beginning. It is almost as if a single person has undergone a quantitative metamorphosis with the passage of generations.

613 Lineage ties cannot lapse or be renounced. A maximal lineage once established can never split into two or more independent (i.e. mutually exogamous) maximal lineages, as in some other areas of Africa, and territorial dispersion does not break the lineage tie, even after many generations. In fact, the whole stream of Tale social life emphasizes and reinforces the sense of lineage continuity, and of the identification of members of a lineage with one another, with their predecessors, and with their prospective successors. This is the basis of the corporate unity and solidarity of the lineage, and of the lineal transmission of rights and duties, ritual observances, office, property, and debts; and for this reason any member of a lineage can represent any other member, living or dead, or the whole lineage, in relation to other lineages of a like sort. This, too, underlies the usage by which members of a lineage can refer to their founding ancestor either as their 'father' (*ba*) or as their 'ancestor' (*yaab*), a term which denotes any patrilineal ancestor beyond and including the grandfather. It explains the conception of the lineage progenitrix—the founding ancestor's mother—as the 'mother' (*ma*) of the lineage. It must be added that even when a lineage is envisaged as a *dug* deriving from its progenitrix, it takes its name from her son, as its agnatic founding ancestor as a branch of a more inclusive lineage.

613 778 The rules of lineage segmentation can be summed up as follows: Whenever a lineage is envisaged as an inclusive corporate unit embracing two or more subordinate segments, it is identified by reference to its founding *ancestor*, as the starting-point of its descent. It is thought of as a *yir*, house, 'the children of one father (*ba yɛni biis*)', on the model of the patricentral joint family (*yir* in the primary sense) in which the offspring form a single genealogical and social unit with reference to their common father. Its focal ancestor shrine is designated the '*bɔyar* of the fathers (*banam bɔyar*)', a notion that stresses the dominance of the father-figure

613 778 in the unity of the patrilineal descent group and in the coherence of the family. But when a lineage is visualized as a set of segments, these are differentiated by reference to their respective *progenitrices*, just as in the joint family the offspring can be subdivided in accordance with their maternal origins. The focal ancestor shrine of each segment is then called 'the *bɔɣar* of the mothers (of the segment) (*manam bɔɣar*)'. It is identical in form with the 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' but complementary to it in function. Its name stresses the predominance of matrilateral origin in the differentiation of the segments of a lineage, by contrast with the patricentral lineage as a whole. Tallensi speak of a 'mothers' *bɔɣar*' as being the shrine of the segment's founding ancestor and his mother, by contrast with the 'fathers' *bɔɣar*', which they say is the shrine of the founding ancestor of the lineage only. But they recognize that a 'mothers' *bɔɣar*' will in the course of time become a 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' when the segment undergoes internal differentiation into sub-segments, and may function as a 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' if the segment is already so differentiated. When a segment of a lineage is thus distinguished from co-ordinate segments of the same lineage, it is also implicitly contrasted with the whole lineage. It is thought of as a matri-segment, though named after its founding ancestor, and is described as a 'room', *dug*—'the children of one mother (*ma yeni biis*)'—of the 'house', *yir*, on the model of the joint family in which the matricentral *dug* is a segment of the patricentral *yir*.

613 Maternal origin (*ma dɔɣam*) thus has significance only within the frame of patrilineal descent, as the polar opposite of paternal origin (*ba dɔɣam*). Taken by itself, every lineage, no matter what its span or order may be, has only one founding ancestor and one progenitrix, this man's mother. The progenitrix of a lineage becomes significant only when it is considered in conjunction with other lineages of the same descent. Both morphologically and functionally every lineage represents an equilibrium based on the polarity of maternal filiation and patrilineal descent which runs through the whole genealogical structure of Tale society.

[778] Obviously any segment of a lineage which comprises two or more sub-segments can function as a *dug* in one context or situation and as a *yir* in another. Its focal ancestor shrine thus functions as a *manam bɔɣar* in one context and as a *banam bɔɣar* in another. In principle a maximal lineage of wide span must always act as a *yir*—and hence its focal ancestor shrine is always a *banam bɔɣar*; but by a stretch of the term it may be referred to as a *dug* when someone wishes to lay special stress on its genealogical unity and corporate solidarity in contrast to other similar units. The
[682] murder of a fellow member of the same maximal lineage is, for instance, always dealt with as 'an affair of the room (*dugni yɛl*)', which stringently excludes reprisals.

A few maximal lineages have so narrow a span, due, no doubt, to the extinction of collateral lines, that they function as medial or inner lineages (wide *dugɔt*), a distinction that will be clearer presently. Thus the maximal lineage of Gundaat is not subdivided into ritually and jurally differentiated major segments. Its head, the Gundaat-Bɔɣarna'ab, explained this in a manner which shows how clearly many Tale elders grasp the mechanics of their own social structure. 'We have not yet achieved *sunzɔt* (division into brother (patri-) segments)', he said, 'but we shall 613 eventually do so. Our line of descent has not yet gone far enough, for we are all the children of one woman (i.e. the descendants of a common progenitrix not very far back). A woman's offspring do not split up, it is a man's offspring that split (*Bumpɔk dɔɣam pu bɔkəra, buraa dɔɣam m-bɔkət*).' In fact, Gundaatdɛm form a lineage of rather narrow span considering the number of ascendant generations which they reckon to their founding ancestor.

Incidentally the Bɔɣarna'ab's statement brings out vividly the native conception of a lineage as a perpetual entity, 'going on (*kyɛŋ sa*)' for ever, unitary and identical beneath the surface of its changing personnel, the 'children of one woman (or one man)' as long as it lasts.

According to this scheme, in the set of lineages we have been analysing, Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, the agnatic descendants of Nɔpugzabər, constitute one of the five *dugət* of the *yir*, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, which in turn is a *dug* of the section (*yizug*) of Puhug, and this in its turn is a *dug* of the sub-clan of Tongo. Nɔpugzabər yir, again, may in certain situations be regarded as consisting of two *dugət*, Yidaan biis and Zoobɔn biis; and as Tɔbɔg and Dɔbil are *soog* brothers, their agnatic descendants will form a single matricentral segment, with greater cohesion than Yidaan biis.

Though *dug* and *yir* are relative concepts—relative both to each other and to the particular situation in which a given order of lineage segmentation is critical—there is a sense in which *dug* has a more precise connotation. As usual in Tale social organization no rigorous criterion can be found for this. It can be defined only in dynamic terms. Tallensi tend to think of the field of lineage relations as made up of three broad zones: the zone of clanship,[1] as when a man says, 'I am a Tongo man'; within this zone, the zone of section (*yizug*) relations, as when a Tongo man says, 'I am a Puhug man'; and within this zone, the zone of *dug* relations, which lies between the limits of the major segment of the *yizug* to which the individual belongs, on the one hand, and a level of segmentation of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm—that is, with a common ancestor placed about five generations back, on the other. Thus, if a man says of another member of his clan, 'We are *dugdɛm* (members of the same *dug*)', one can infer that he is thinking of a lineage segment of an order between that of Doohraan yidɛm and that of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug, though the exact genealogical extension of the lineage intended will vary from clan to clan.

This notion of the *dug*, to which we have given a purely morphological 571 formulation, is a reflex of the configuration of social interests that regulate 613 the corporate functions of the lineage. The zone of clanship is correlated with interclan and intersettlement political and ritual relations, and with the maximum extension of the rule of exogamy. The zone of *yizug* relations is correlated with intra-clan political and ritual relations, with the aliquot distribution between segments of the clan of rights to politico-ritual offices, and with the complementary rights and duties of the major segments of the clan, upon which the maintenance of its structural equilibrium depends. The zone of *dug* relations corresponds to a field

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[1] Cf. Chapter IV.

571 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the 613 clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage 613 segment of the order of Lεbhtiis yidεm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lεbhtiis yidεm of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but [578] this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of [835] one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not [837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidεm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

sexual relations with a brother's or father's wife is a grave sin. What is 613 more important, the solidarity of this *dug* very often rests on a common economic interest in patrimonial land, to which every male member of the lineage is a potential heir. This common interest in land gives the cohesion of the narrow *dug* a foundation upon which its moral solidarity, reinforced by the close bonds of sentiment its members have with one another, rests so firmly as to make it almost infrangible. The narrow *dug* is the widest lineage unit that always stands together like one man, right or wrong. Dissensions between its members are regarded [578] as personal quarrels even when they follow the lines of genealogical cleavage within it. However acrimonious they may be, they are not permitted to divide the unit into mutually hostile segments.

Neither the wide nor the narrow limits of the *dug* can be fixed by a count of ascendant generations. The narrow *dug* may place its founding ancestor from four to six generations up the tree of ascent, the wide *dug* from five to seven generations back, reckoning from its present living head inclusively. It varies from clan to clan, the dimensions of the *dug* being always relative to the span and the degree of internal segmentation of the maximal lineage of which it forms a segment. As we have seen, there are maximal lineages like Gundaat which are so little segmented that they still function as wide *dugət*. Furthermore, a unit that is counted as a *dug* to-day may in a generation or two segment into two or more *dugət*. And it must be remembered also that in composite clans the section [618]x (*yizug*) is genealogically a maximal lineage, so that the *dug* constitutes a major segment of a maximal lineage.[1]

Thus the *dug* is a flexible unit and more difficult to visualize than the maximal and minimal lineages. It cannot, like them, be isolated by a morphological criterion; we identify the *dug* only when it emerges in social action.

It will simplify our analysis and save some confusion if we give a name to the *dug* in the context of the lineage structure. This is justifiable as well as expedient, for in a particular clan the *dug* has a determinate lineage span and segmentary order at any given time. We shall therefore use the terms 'medial lineage or segment' for what we have called the wide *dug*, and 'inner lineage or segment' for the *dug* in its narrow limits. We thus have a hierarchy of lineage segments: the effective minimal lineage or segment, the nuclear lineage or segment, the inner lineage or segment, the medial lineage or segment, the section or major segment, the maximal lineage.

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[1] In many maximal lineages we find an intermediate grade of *dug* which is less closely integrated than the narrow *dug*, but more so than the wide *dug*. In diachronic terms it readily falls into place as a phase in the process of internal differentiation by which the narrow *dug* develops into a wide *dug*. In the set of lineages we have been considering the segment of Bakolog yidɛm of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm behaves like a *dug* of this sort. It has a somewhat wider span than Doohraan yidɛm, but a powerful contributory cause has been the personality of the *dug* head, Yinyɛla, whose actions have led the heads of the effective minimal lineages to reject his headship on several occasions and to stress the relative autonomy of their sub-segments in consequence.

×618
●613

[p.206]

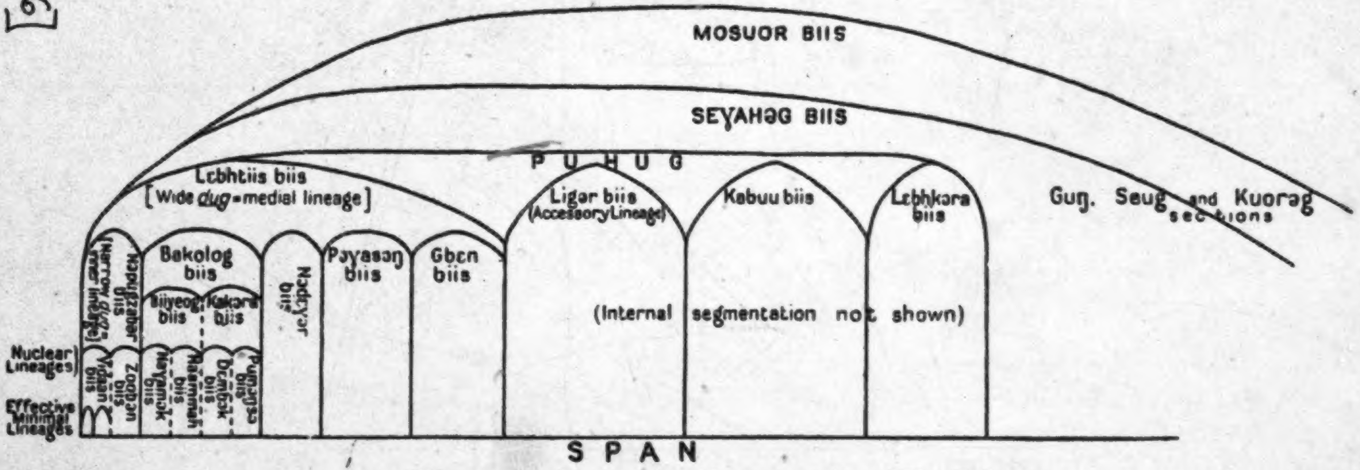
MOSUOR BIIS
SEƔAHƏG BIIS
PUHUG
Lɛbhtiis biis
[Wide dug = medial lineage]
Ligar biis
(Accessory Lineage)
Kabuu biis
Lɛbhkora biis
Guŋ. Seug and Kuorag sections
[Narrow dug = inner lineage]
Napuŋzaber biis
Bakolog biis
Biiyeog biis
Kakɔra biis
Nɔdɛyɔr biis
Pɔyasɔŋ biis
Gbɛn biis
(Internal segmentation not shown)
Nuclear Lineages
Effective Minimal Lineages
Vidaan biis
Zoopɔn biis
Nayamɔk biis
Raamnah biis
Dɛmbɔk biis
Pumɔŋɔ biis
SPAN

Diagram showing the internal segmentation of Tɔŋ-Puhug

Lineage Grouping and Local Grouping

613 We come now to the question of the connexion between lineage
621 grouping and locality. A lineage like Nɔpugzabɔr yiri, though its span
596 is comparatively small, exhibits all the important principles of lineage
structure and will suffice as a crucial example.

In all the old-established settlements we find a very close correlation between lineage proximity and residential proximity among the members of the clan who live there. Close agnates tend to live near one another, so that residential proximity is almost a measure of lineage proximity. A segment of small span tends to be a close residential cluster, and segments of larger span, up to the major segments of a maximal lineage, tend to form residential blocks.

We can see this most readily if we look again at the residential dispersion of a group of agnatically related joint families, bearing in mind that the men of a joint family form a lineage. For as the homestead is the material integument of the living structure of the joint family, so is the localization of the lineage, growing out of the spatial arrangement of the homestead, the spatial counterpart of the lineage structure.

592 As will be remembered (see p. 199), the elementary case is that of two
full (*soog*) brothers, who often continue to occupy a single homestead
602 long after they have set up separate families. Each will have more or less
596 self-contained quarters, but the homestead will have only one gateway
(*zanɔr*), one cattle-yard (*sapak*), and one room for the family head (*zɔŋ*), signifying that it is a single homestead. Half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) may share a homestead in this way, but they usually separate more distinctly when they have growing families. Each will have his own gateway, &c., and party walls divide his section of the homestead completely from those of his brothers, making it what may be called a semi-detached homestead. Such a set of semi-detached homesteads may house a man and his mature first-born son, or a man and his deceased brother's sons. Sometimes two or more ortho-cousins (brothers, in native terminology) live thus side by side.

613 More usually, however, men whose nearest common ancestor is a grand-
621 father occupy completely separate dwellings, often very near to one
another. Men whose nearest common ancestor is a great-grandfather never have permanent homes adjoining one another in this semi-detached way. These conditions of residence signalize successive stages of segmentation as the effective minimal lineage expands and splits into new effective minimal lineages. But what residential arrangements will prevail in a particular lineage segment depends, also, upon other circumstances, the most important of which are the economic and religious relations, and the character and disposition of the individuals concerned. Residential collocation is not a simple function of lineage relationship. There is a *tertium quid* linking them: the combined effect of land tenure, on which the whole economy of the household rests, and of the ancestor cult. For example, when a joint family splits, the man who leaves the ancestral home usually builds a homestead for himself on land belonging to the

613 nuclear lineage; but this land may be some distance from the ancestral
621 home, owing to the scattering of holdings.

Looking at it from the native point of view, we should say, not that individuals tend to live near one another because they are agnatic kin, but that all lineages down to the effective minimal lineage tend to be tied to localities; and the more closely lineages are related, the greater is the spatial propinquity of their dwelling areas. The distribution of households is not rigidly parallel to the lineage structure at a given time. Mere spatial proximity cannot be directly translated into terms of lineage proximity. There is a diachronic element as well. Kurug's homestead (No. 6), for example, is nearer to Pumaan's (No. 5) in yards and feet than to Lɛbhtiis's; but Kurug is closer to Lɛbhtiis than to Pumaan in lineage. This is due chiefly to changes in the internal structure of their respective nuclear lineages in the last twenty or thirty years. The spatial relations of homesteads to one another reflect lineage relations in their diachronic aspect.

The Concept of the Lineage Home

613 Lineages tend to be tied to specific localities even if many of their
621 members are permanently or temporarily away from the lineage home.
778 Some representatives of the lineage will generally continue to reside near the ancient home where the spirits of the ancestors still dwell. The *daboog*, the site of the original home of the lineage, the first dwelling-place of its founding ancestor, is a hallowed spot. It is identified by reference to ancestral land and to the graves of the ancestors. These are the fixed things. Homesteads are not eternal. Their collocation reflects the structure of the lineage at a given time; but it changes as the composition and segmentation of the lineage alters. Whenever an alteration of this sort occurs, there is a corresponding reshuffle in the housing arrangements. New homesteads are erected, old homesteads replanned and rebuilt or abandoned. A lineage being an organic unit has, in native eyes, but one home (*yir*), though the material embodiment of this home is distributed at any given time. The *daboog* of the lineage of Nɔpugzabər yidem, the original homestead site of their ancestor Nɔpugzabər, is on what was in 1934 the home farm of the head of the lineage, Deemzeet, a stone's throw from his gateway. The graves of Nɔpugzabər and his sons, and a tree which sprouted on Nɔpugzabər's grave and is believed, therefore, to enshrine his spirit, mark the spot where his gateway (*zanɔr*) stood.

From this arises the concept of the lineage *zanɔr*. All the homesteads of its members together make up the lineage home (*yir*), and this home has its single gateway (*zanɔr*), the lineage *zanɔr*. The notion is pre-eminently symbolical, but its material embodiment is the homestead of the lineage head, and therefore, specifically, the gateway of his homestead. It applies to all levels of lineage organization, up to the maximal lineage. In a maximal lineage the site of the founding ancestor's homestead is generally a sacred spot, often marked by the erection on or near it of a
[554] miniature room to represent the ancestral *zɔŋ*. This room is one of the shrines connected with the lineage *bɔyar*, and its custody is vested in a

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613 and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621 on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778 tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding [557] ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [423] by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [184] organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits 613 on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 621 life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 602 and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies [191] are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

613 621 602 [769] where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of residence, common interests, and common experience. The local concentration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

613 621 571 [587] [602] In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to 613
their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with 621
the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant 571
agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round
her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the
range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, 182
religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties 613
with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and 621
the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's
central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of
spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others
is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to
intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation
of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted,
most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has
often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face
communication and association in the organization of their collective life.
Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by
their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the [212
absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, 401
communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of 371]
Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular
the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of
political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system
and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are
the most important factors in the situation.

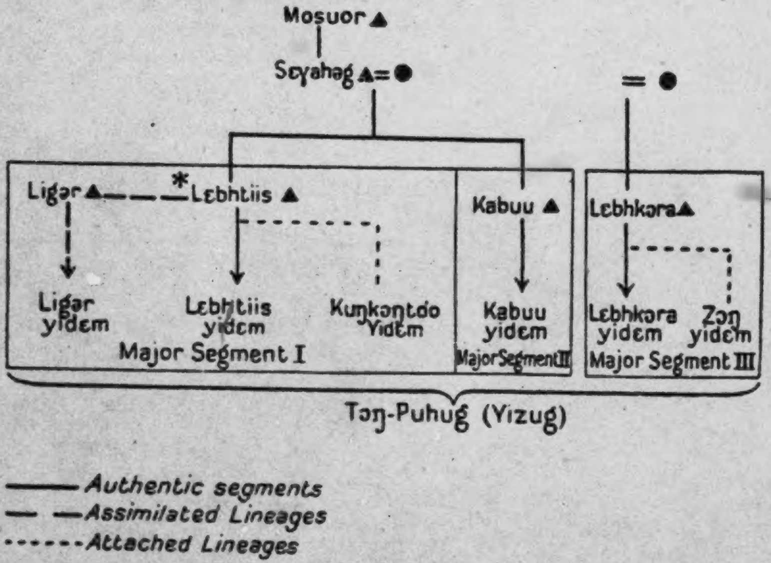
The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo. 613

Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster 621
of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligər yidɛm (see above, p. 57),
homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic
lineage with which Ligər yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as
segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another
cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkəŋto'o yidɛm,
the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son
(*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number
of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

●613 it forms a segment, is the structure of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm writ large. Dis-
621 counting the accessory lineages, Puhug comprises three major segments. It has two more lineages of the same order of segmentation as Lɛbhtiis yidɛm: Kabuu yidɛm and Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm. One segment of the former occupies the south-west or topmost (*zugni*) corner of Puhug (homesteads Nos. 25, 26, 27), abutting on the mass of great boulders that lies between Puhug and the watercourse that separates it from Wakii. The other
[166] segment occupies the group of homesteads at Kumpɛɣalɔɣat. A minor branch, including the head of this segment, migrated to Yamələg some twenty years ago, and other members of it are settled at Gbambee, Woo, and in the outlying parts of Taleland, while some are abroad. Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm, together with their attached lineage, Zɔŋ yidɛm, live in the group of homesteads—Nos. 30, 31, 32, 34—adjacent to Kuorəg. These three major segments of Puhug (reckoned as *dugət*, medial lineages, in this context) are agnatically related as follows:


Mosuor ▲
Sɛɣahəg ▲ = ●
= ●
Ligər ▲
*
Lɛbhtiis ▲
Kabuu ▲
Lɛbhkɔra ▲
Ligər yidɛm
Lɛbhtiis yidɛm
Kuŋkoŋtdo Yidɛm
Kabuu yidɛm
Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm
Zɔŋ yidɛm
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
Major Segment III
Tɔŋ-Puhug (Yizug)
—— Authentic segments
— — Assimilated Lineages
------ Attached Lineages

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm and Kabuu yidɛm are *soog* (full brother) segments, it will be noted, and though they are not considered to form a single *dug* within Puhug, they have somewhat closer ties than either has with their *sunzɔ* segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis, while Ligər yidɛm have closer ties with Lɛbhtiis yidɛm than with the others, on account of their special connexion with the former. In the economic, ritual, and jural concerns of the section all the segments have the same status and the same degree of relative autonomy. But Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are recognized as the senior branch, and so rank above the others. The head (*kpeem*) of Lɛbhtiis yir is *ipso facto* the *kpeem* of Puhug.

The lineage structure of the other three *yizugət* of Tongo follows the same

plan; and the architecture of the sub-clan as a whole is that of the *yizug* 613 on a larger scale. A skeleton genealogy (see p. 214) will suffice to show this. 621

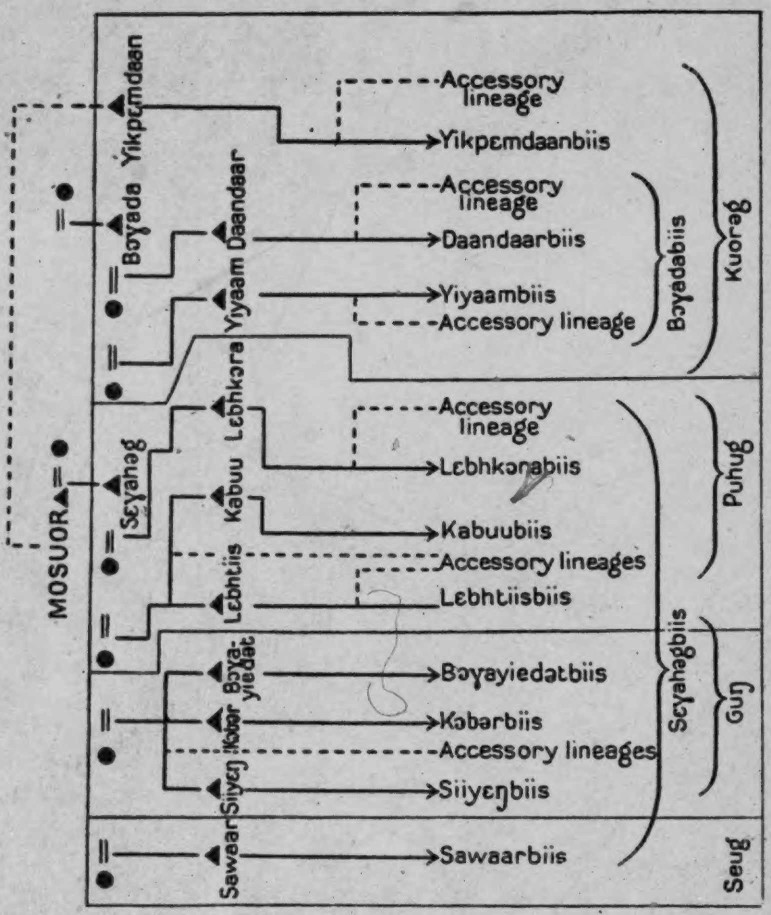
Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg are constituted according to the same general plan as Puhug. But each section has features peculiar to itself, specializations of the general principles of *yizug* structure due to the particular genealogical constitution of each, and to the demographic and structural relations with one another of the four sections. This is characteristic of Tale social organization. Like the maximal lineages of a composite clan, co-ordinate segments of a maximal lineage are homologous with one another in structure, but frequently different in genealogical composition.

Viewed in terms of its own diachronic and local constitution, each is unique, its present form the precipitate of its own peculiar history. Thus Guŋ, as we have seen, is not a single local aggregate like Puhug. But the principle that lineage proximity and residential proximity go together prevails. Leaving aside those who have settled permanently or temporarily in outlying places, the Guŋdɛm at Guŋ proper are almost all Kɔbər yidɛm. The centre of settlement of Siiyɛŋ biis is Dekpieŋ. Bɔɣayiedət yidɛm are most scattered; but each of its segments tends to be a small local aggregate, and wherever in outlying places a cluster of homesteads belonging to Guŋ men is formed—at Zoo, at Gbambee, and at Woo—these men are almost invariably members of a single minor segment of the lineage.

The three segments of Guŋ (excluding Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, the assimilated lineage) are considered to be more closely united than the segments of Puhug because they have a single common progenitrix. They speak of themselves as 'members of one *dug* (*dug yɛni dɛm*)' in contraposition to the other sections of Tongo. Seug is the most homogeneous section of Tongo, both residentially and genealogically, for it consists of only one segment, of the same order as the component segments of the other *yizugət*. The members of Seug, too, speak of themselves as members of one *dug* in contraposition to the other three sections. Kuorəg is the most heterogeneous, genealogically, of the four sections. Its members are also more widely dispersed, most of them having moved to Gbambee in the past [166] thirty or forty years.

Puhug and Kuorəg both show clearly how local association is a factor of section organization in a maximal lineage in the same way as it is a factor of clanship in composite clans. Genealogically, Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm of Puhug are a lineage of the same order of segmentation as Seugdɛm; yet they do not, like the latter, constitute a separate *yizug*. Close local association with Puhug makes them a part of that section. Similarly, Yikpɛmdaan yir of Kuorəg on genealogical reckoning alone should rank as a section. Its founding ancestor is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*), possibly a 'brother' but certainly not a son, of Mosuor, who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu. The head of this lineage, who has the hereditary title of Yikpɛmdaan, has a position of special dignity at Tongo. He is in one sense the senior elder (*kpeem*) among all the elders of the sub-clan. Yikpɛmdaan's high status is due to his hereditary ownership of a special shrine (*bɔɣar*), Zoonkpaləg, which is both his lineage *bɔɣar* (*banam bɔɣar*) and a clan *bɔɣar*, analogous to the External *Bɔɣar* of the Talis, for the whole of Tongo. It is the shrine

●613
621


MOSUOR
Sɛɣahəg
Bɔɣada
Yikpɛmdaan
Sawaar
Siiyɛŋ
Kɔbər
Bɔɣa-yiedat
Lɛbhtiis
Kabuu
Lɛbhkɔra
Yiyaam
Daandaar
Sawaarbiis
Siiyɛŋbiis
Accessory lineages
Kɔbarbiis
Bɔɣayiedatbiis
Lɛbhtiisbiis
Accessory lineages
Kabuubiis
Lɛbhkɔrabiis
Accessory lineage
Yiyaambiis
Accessory lineage
Daandaarbiis
Accessory lineage
Yikpɛmdaanbiis
Accessory lineage
Sɛɣahəgbiis
Bɔɣadabiis
Seug
Guŋ
Puhug
Kuorəg

Note: Daandaar biis are often referred to as Yidaan biis, after a title held by their founding ancestor

[p.214]

613 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes 621 the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔɣar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔɣada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛɣahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔɣada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛɣahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔɣada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zɔŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seɣahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zɔŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contraposition [782] between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zɔŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often 613 emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yɔrug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated, 621 contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yɔrug Yin had been the head of Bɔɣada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates [273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm [554] and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Saɣawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔak*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

764 quarters) for the other three sections of Tongo, since one of the hind
● 613 quarters (*gbɛr*) remains with the 'owner of the funeral', the man who is
621 celebrating it. Thus the genealogical cleavage between Kuorəg and the rest of Tongo asserted itself. Kuorəg was treated as the *sunzɔp* of the rest of Tongo and received a forequarter, the remaining hind quarter going to the other three sections. There are stories of intra-clan quarrels in the
[578] old days in which Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug banded themselves together against Kuorəg.

613 Nevertheless, in the corporate affairs of Tongo as a whole Kuorəg
621 emerges as a segment of the same order as the other three sections. It is one of the four co-ordinate sections (*yizugət*). A significant index of this is the fact that in all four sections nine generations of ascendants are reckoned inclusively between the present section heads (*yizug kpeem*) and Mosuor. No Tongo man, however profoundly versed in the traditions and customs of his clan, is aware of this, however. Tallensi never have occasion to work out the genealogical relations of all the minimal segments of a maximal lineage with one another.

A man's genealogical knowledge is built up gradually and piecemeal in the give and take of social life, by participation in jural, ritual, and ceremonial activities. But a man of wide experience knows the lineage ancestry of the component segments of his own *dug* as far as its founding ancestor; he will know who were the putative brothers of this man, the founding ancestors of the other major segments of his section, and their sons, the founding ancestors of large sub-segments like Nɔpugzabər yidem, in his section; and he will know the founding ancestors of the other *yizugət* of the clan, and possibly their sons; but he will not know the whole descent of other major segments of other sections.

The nine-generation ladder of ascent found at Tongo is an index of the structural differentiation and internal equilibrium of the clan. As we have already observed, the maximal lineage (and Tongo functions as a maximal lineage, though strictly speaking it is not one) is unalterably fixed. Its major segments cannot be altered in relation to one another by further segmentation of its minimal segments. Its internal equilibrium is a function of the relations between its major segments; and the same principle applies to each major segment. This is symbolized in the tree of ascent of the people of Tongo. The structure of the maximal lineage does not permit of the recognition of more than one generation between Mosuor and his nine putative grandsons. Following the simplest possible pattern of symmetrical lineage segmentation, all Mosuor's progeny are first divided into two major (matri-)segments in accordance with the stereotyped scheme of differentiation by reference to their progenitrices; and each of these is again segmented on the same principle. Kuorəg counts as a section of the same order as Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug in the corporate affairs of the whole sub-clan, because this is necessary for the equilibrium of the sub-clan. The internal differentiation of Sɛyahəg biis has reached an advanced stage. The relative autonomy of the three sections that constitute it is now so great that they can only act together as equal partners. Each of these three sections has a corporate unity and common interests that sometimes bring it into conflict with the other two

or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them 613
in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in 621
the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this
necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and
responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and
Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, 613
though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal 621
lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and 161
children), including members of the section and their families who live
at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less
than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and
barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller
area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the 613
effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments 621
of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare 182
it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counterthrust
of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the
elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled
by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same
principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment
of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has
been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other
three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate
to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of
Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural
equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a
ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and
Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also
grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things.
When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or ceremonially [782]
slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section,
as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their
younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the
left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the
perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides.
Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and [787]
Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the
other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*,
that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug
on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and 613
solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range 621
of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them
is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which
there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated
with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

●613 sex, station in life, character, and reputation of the deceased all influence the reactions of people to a death and the range of participation
613 in the funeral ceremonies. Every death is the corporate concern of the
621 deceased's medial lineage—his *dug* of the *yizug*. It is less stringently the
764 corporate concern of the whole *yizug*. Funerals of old and important men evoke the participation of the whole clan or sub-clan, but it is clan solidarity and corporate obligation on the level of the section that draw *sunzɔ* sections to the ceremonies. Only the death of a chief, a tendaana, or other politico-ritual functionary, is the obligatory concern of every segment of the clan or maximal lineage. Funerals of women and young people or children impose no obligations on *sunzɔ* sections of the deceased's (or her husband's) section. Whether or not their representatives come to condole with the bereaved household or to take part in the burial and funeral ceremonies rests entirely with the individual members of these sections and depends on individual ties of neighbourhood, kinship, or friendship with the deceased's family and *dug*. A funeral, even that of a politico-ritual officer, is primarily the direct concern of every member of the deceased's segment of the clan or maximal lineage. It concerns *sunzɔ* segments only at the level of corporate relations, because every event that affects the existence and constitution of one part of the clan or maximal lineage impinges on its common interests.

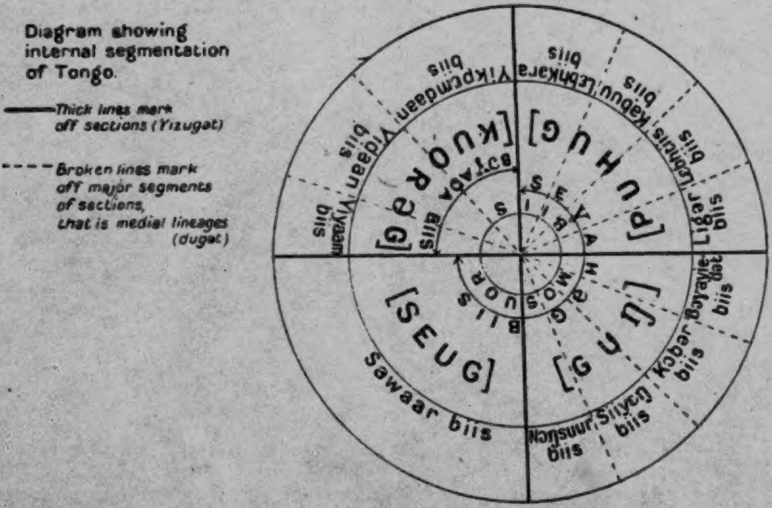


Diagram showing internal segmentation of Tongo.

——Thick lines mark off sections (Yizugat)

----Broken lines mark off major segments of sections, that is medial lineages (dugat)

622 We may contrast with this a corporate activity in a wider sense, such
621 as the sacrifice to Mosuor at Tongo, to which we have several times
613 referred, the Harvest Festival, or the communal hoeing of the chief's
[24II] bush farm, which has become an established custom under British rule. The pivot of these activities is always the chief, who stands for the whole sub-clan and its common interests and values, and whose office transcends the cleavages inherent in its lineage segmentation. In these activities the

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔγar*, Duunkpalɔg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔγar* and Sɛγahɔg's grave and *bɔγar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Genɔt, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Genɔt, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛγahɔg, and Bɔγada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are 461
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour-water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bayar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

778 The graves of Sɛγahəg and Bɔγada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔγada's grave is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly Siiyɛŋ, Kəbər, and Bɔγayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakəradɛm, Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔγada's grave is proof to the natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans
the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo clans living in the vicinity of Yaməlɔg and Sie—the group of clans which the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos —a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔγar* takes the place of the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

Structure of Peripheral Settlements

In the newer settlements there are no lineages of large span. Where 613
segments of maximal lineages, whose homes are in the old settlements, 621
have been settled for more than a generation, those of their members 166
remaining in the peripheral settlements do not always live in close proximity to one another. People shift readily to take up new land, and spread widely so as to have a large area for cultivation immediately around the homestead, as we have learnt. But the tendency for a lineage to become locally stabilized on the land of its ancestors, near their graves and original home, operates strongly too, and has been strengthened in recent years.

Many men at Woo, Biuŋ, and Datɔk now live on land originally broken for cultivation by their fathers, grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers. A powerful incentive to remain there is the fact that they now hold this land by right of inheritance. An irresistible sanction binding them to these new settlements is the fact that their fathers and grandfathers lie buried there. Born and bred in these settlements, they look upon them as their homes, while maintaining strong ties with their original clan settlements, which they regard as the clan homes.

The effect is to establish new, permanent, local nuclei for minor branches of lineages anchored in the old settlement. Around these nuclei we sometimes find a small cluster of homesteads, the heads of which are all members of a lineage segment of two, three, or at the most four generations. But this is far from common. As we have mentioned before, these settlements have been, and are being, occupied by people of very diverse genealogical origin from all parts of Taleland and neighbouring areas. This is particularly marked in the case of Datɔk. Biuŋ and Woo have been settled chiefly by people from Tongo and the places immediately adjacent to or socially connected with Tongo. In addition to the bonds of local cohesion the inhabitants of these places have also the ties of political and ritual interdependence which they bring with them from their original clan settlements. At Datɔk no such bonds are carried over into the new community. A Gban man may have as his nearest neighbours a man from Ba'ari, a man from Bɔlɔga, a man from Yamɔlɔg, and a man from Bongo. The basis of political unity is locality rather than lineage. The sections of Datɔk, for example, are local units, wards, or quarters, not genealogical-cum-local units.

But it is characteristic of Tale social organization that the bonds of local association never stand alone and are never sufficient in themselves to generate bonds of solidarity. Mere contiguity requires some degree of mutual accommodation. It does not, in a society without a constituted legal system or territorially organized political units, create mutual legal obligations, or provide a basis for corporate relations between individuals. Hence it must be reinforced by, and indeed founded on, more fundamental ties which are morally and jurally binding in their own right. In
the older settlements lineage ties have this function; in new settlements [602]
kinship ties take their place.

The following excerpt from a census of a part of Datɔk illustrates this.

613 It will be seen that both affinal and cognatic kinship ties regulate the collocation of homesteads.

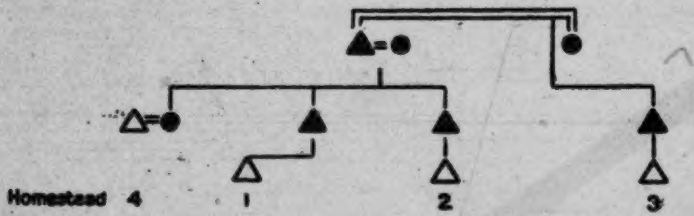
621 *Section: Zaləmwaari.* (A local subdivision of Datok, named after the
166 stream forming one of its boundaries.)

Homestead 1. This belongs to Latammi, a man of about 55, whose father, a Gar man, came to build his house and to farm here about fifty years ago. He died and was buried at his new home. Latammi, his eldest son, then inherited the homestead and the surrounding farm-land, and remained living there.

Homestead 2. About 200 yards away, is owned by Latammi's father's younger brother's (*pit soog*) son. This young man formerly shared Latammi's homestead but recently moved out to set up in his own.

Homestead 3. About 250 yards away from 1. Latammi's father's half-brother (*saməə*) built this homestead, having come to settle here shortly after Latammi's father. This man died recently and the homestead and surrounding farm-land now belong to his son.

The following genealogy shows how the heads of these three homesteads are related:



Together they constitute a lineage of small span, a segment of a greater lineage whose home is at Gar. Their residential collocation is exactly the same as it would be if they were living at Gar or in any of the older settlements.

Homestead 4. About 200 yards from 1. This is the homestead of a Ba'ari man who migrated to Datok about three years ago. He is a brother-in-law (sister's husband) (*dakii*) of Latammi's late father (see genealogy above), and was, on this account, given land on which to build and settle by the latter's half-brother's son of Homestead 3.

Homestead 5. About a quarter of a mile from 1. This belongs to Naambon, whose father, a man from Bologa, came to build and settle here some forty years ago. This man had first migrated from Bologa to Kossbolog, on the outskirts of Duusi. While he was living there Teroog (now an old man), a member of the same maximal lineage as Latammi's father, who lives in another section of Datok, married one of the Bologa man's daughters. The land he held at Duusi proved to be unsatisfactory, so Naambon's father decided to move to Datok. Through the good offices
[606] of his son-in-law, Teroog, he was introduced to Latammi's father, who (as a son-in-law (*deem*) in the classificatory sense) gave him land to settle on near the fringe of the huge area he had marked out as a farm for himself.

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are 166
linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round
men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original
settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who
built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample
land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this
land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at 602
Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours
because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not
related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more
finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settlements. 571
Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically
dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at
Mɔɣaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages
can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of
the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no
clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position.
In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt
with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers
a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a
dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the
elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action
required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate
assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes
part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk
neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by
ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people.
In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

621 loyal to the interests of these clan settlements. But the political structure
613 of the newer settlements is rapidly crystallizing out, on the basis of a
177 territorial unity reinforced by inter-individual kinship ties. This process has been greatly accelerated under the influence of British rule, with its stress on the territorial definition of political units and the support it gives to chiefs and headmen in the exercise of administrative and judicial functions.

Seniority and Authority in the Lineage

613 In the course of our morphological analysis of the lineage system from
182 within, we have made many references to the corporate activities in which this system emerges. As in our study of clanship, it has been convenient to speak as if the lineage structure exists and persists apart from the activities in which it emerges. But this is only an analytical device which we shall consider more fully presently. The implied distinction between the structure of the lineage and its functions does, however, bring out the important fact that the lineage structure is more than any of its functions. It is the integral of what is common to all Tale institutions in which the patrilineal line operates as an organizing principle. It is the general factor of consistency, coherence, and continuity in the social structure.

613 The concept of social structure essentially implies ordered extension *in time* as well as ordered articulation *at a given time*. This is often overlooked in the study of primitive society. Among the Tallensi the lineage system enables us to see the operation of the time factor in social structure in a very concrete way.[1] We see how the lineage structure at a given time incapsulates[2] all that is structurally relevant of its past phases and at the same time continually thrusts its growing-points forward. The dynamic equilibrium of a lineage is an equilibrium in time.

The key position, whenever a lineage emerges in function—and this applies to lineages of any span and all orders of segmentation—is that of the lineage head (*kpeem*). He is, to revert to an analogy previously used, the keystone of the arch. He does not stand above the lineage; he is part of it. *Kpeem* literally means 'senior': a *kpeem* is a senior, an elder. The head of the lineage is the most senior male of the group. The head of a lineage and his age or generation equals in the lineage are collectively designated 'the elders (*kpem*)'. They are for the most part the heads of the component segments of the lineage.

613 The rule of seniority, as might be expected in so homogeneous and
888 equalitarian a society, plays an important part in all Tale social relations. When a group of boys are out herding cattle the oldest among them are in charge. The women of a household defer to the most senior by generation, age, or marital status among them. In all collective activities of men the places of honour are taken by the most senior men, the *kpem*. Seniority commands deference at all times.

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[1] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *cit. supra*; also Forde, op. cit. and his previous papers cited there; and a brilliant discussion of this point in E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, ch. 3.

[2] I owe this valuable concept to R. G. Collingwood's *Autobiography*.

613 561 Seniority (*kpɛmət*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

613 [564] No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Toŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*cŋ yaləŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔyar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

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[1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next volume of this study. [648]

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tendaana says of another 'I gave

613 Tallensi say that lineage headship is conferred by inheritance of, or succession to (the same term, *vaa*, vb. is used for both), firstly, the custody of the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔɣar*), and secondly the patrimonial property (*faar*), in particular the home farm (*saman*) of the lineage. Within the nuclear lineage, or at most the inner lineage, both conditions apply; beyond that limit lineage headship does not confer title to land, except in a few special cases; it is determined solely by succession to the custody of the *bɔɣar*. The rules of inheritance and succession are backed by the most powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and supported by the whole fabric of the social system. Within the medial lineage inheritance disputes occur so rarely as to be negligible. This is a reflection of the strong solidarity of this unit, and of the recognition of classificatory fatherhood within it. Beyond that range succession disputes are settled either by the arbitration of the maximal lineage head or by an appeal to the ancestors through divination or an oracle test.

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577 The range of application of the two conditions of *kpɛmət* define the gradation of powers and functions discharged by lineage heads. Within the nuclear (or at most inner) lineage the head has paternal authority[1] associated with his control of the farm-land and of the labour of his dependants. He has corresponding jural and ritual responsibilities for the junior members of the lineage. Formally, his is the decisive voice in all matters in which the lineage emerges as a corporate unit—for example, in the disposal of the daughters in marriage and in the payment of bride-price for sons' wives. Beyond the nuclear lineage the lineage head's powers and authority are purely moral and ritual. He cannot, for instance, command the services of any member of the lineage (outside his nuclear lineage) as of right, nor is he responsible for any of them in such matters as bride-price payments. And the degree to which he commands the loyalty of his lineage co-members depends considerably on his personality. They will always support him unhesitatingly where the common interests of the lineage are concerned, but they might not, in private matters, treat him with the confidence due to his status if he lacks tact or tries to be dictatorial. A lineage head represents the lineage. He is the pivot of its corporate unity. Everything he does as lineage head is for and on behalf of the lineage. Hence he never takes action in corporate affairs without consulting and obtaining the consent of the heads of all the component segments of the lineage. In fact a lineage head very rarely takes action in corporate matters without the presence of all the senior male members of the lineage. Thus it is common for the initiative and drive in corporate activities to come from younger men of intelligence and forceful personality, though they are carried out by, or in the name of, the lineage head. This is especially the case when, as often happens, lineage heads are old and infirm. Tinta'alǝm's senility did not diminish the respect and affection in which he was held by all the people

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[648] him land to dwell on and therefore I am his superior' he must not be taken literally. He is referring to a tradition of settlement going back to the founding ancestors of their lineages.

[1] We analyse the function of classificatory fatherhood and of paternal authority in the lineage more fully in the second volume of this study.

of Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the 769
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 182
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage 182
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is 782
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of
daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same
as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, but all who participate feel them to
be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and
fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing
out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads
that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The
religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion
and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief
representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the
ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is
concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage
head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual
or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted
to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage),
and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar
situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he
receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔyar* of his
medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as
well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a
new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of
a sacrifice to the *bɔyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of
being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat
in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the
responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's*
duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their
goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
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of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders, makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage. It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of interlineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not, the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway. This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting 224
out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and 587
the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head of her nuclear lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

613 582 price;[1] and conversely, it is he who is directly responsible for the payment of bride-price for the wives of members of the nuclear lineage, and for any other outlay entailed by the marriage formalities. But for all these transactions the formal consent (which is in fact never withheld) of the medial lineage head is required. This has the force of a blessing. 613 583 When the bridegroom's people send the placation gifts (*lu sendaan*) by which the marriage is regularized, the messenger goes first to the head of the girl's medial or maximal lineage, and gives him a live cock, the most important item among the placation gifts.[2] By accepting the live cock the lineage head signifies the acquiescence of the whole lineage in the marriage and the blessing of the ancestors thereon. Whether or not bride-price is paid, the girl is thereafter the jurally recognized wife of the bridegroom. As a rule it is perfectly safe for the lineage head to accept the cock, as placation gifts are only sent when the head of the girl's nuclear lineage consents. But cases do occur in which they are sent without the knowledge of the latter as a dodge by which to compel him to acquiesce in the marriage. Then if the head of the medial lineage accepts the live cock, the head of the girl's nuclear lineage must perforce acquiesce. This makes the marriage binding but does not secure it against dissolution through action taken by the head of the girl's nuclear lineage.

In the same way, when a woman's father's people come to demand the payment of bride-price from her husband's nuclear lineage, they go first to the head of the husband's medial lineage. He conducts the messengers to the head of the husband's nuclear lineage and formally presides over the negotiations.

Marriage transactions illustrate a very important principle of Tale jural relations. They are always relations between lineage units. Even when they appear to involve only particular individuals the lineage framework is implicit in the transaction. But this does not mean that all Tale jural relations are based on the concept of collective responsibility. On the contrary, jural responsibility is precisely fixed on particular individuals or exactly defined corporate units. This is graphically summed up in many Tale maxims. Thus they say 'A pipe sounds best in its owner's mouth (*Yiig m-mah ka daana nuoni*)'—that is, an action should be answered for by the person directly responsible for it. What we find, rather, is that all jural relations involve a configuration of rights on one side and a configuration of responsibilities on the other, both corresponding to the range of lineage segments involved. And no jural transaction is complete until the whole configuration of rights and responsibilities, on both sides, is brought into action. Though marriage formalities involve primarily the nuclear lineage and medial lineage, they presuppose the entire framework of maximal lineage and clan relations; and this is the case with most other jural relations among the Tallensi.

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[1] Subject to limitations that will be detailed in our next volume.

602 [2] In many clans there is an arrangement between pairs of medial or maximal lineages that have some special tie of kinship by which the *sendaan* cock for a girl of one lineage is delivered to the *kpeem* of the other lineage and vice versa. E.g. this arrangement obtains between Lebhtiis yidem and Kabuu yidem at Tɔŋ-Puhug and is a sign of their close kinship as lineages sprung from one original progenitrix (see p. 212).

682 x618 Some sixty years ago a Tamboog man was killed by a group of Yamələg men with whom he quarrelled at a dance. Two or three years later a couple of Tamboog men met a Yamələg man alone in the bush and slew him in revenge. The Yamələg people understood that this was a case of 'wiping out a debt' and the matter was regarded as closed.

x618 431 The principle of representative status enhances the sense of lineage or clan solidarity. We have seen how, in ceremonial situations, any member of a lineage or clan is regarded as representing the whole unit. I have often seen men refuse gifts of meat or food at ceremonies because these had no precedent and accepting them would be equivalent to committing their lineage or clan to reciprocate in the same way at some future time.

●613 764 x618 Co-operation in ceremonies, especially in funerals, brings to light the institutional machinery of lineage and clan solidarity. Its basis is the distribution of duties and privileges among the different segments of the lineage or clan concerned in the situation, in accordance with their segmentary relationship to the group principally affected. Thus in funerals, in accordance with the maxim 'Brother lineages take charge of one's affairs (*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*)', members of a close brother lineage of the bereaved lineage supervise the ceremonies. In addition, all the segments of the maximal lineage or clan concerned send prescribed food contributions and receive prescribed shares of beer, meat, and food distributed during the ceremonies. Funerals are important because the death of a person may entail a rearrangement of social relations in a segment and this is a matter of common interest to the whole clan.

x618 These obligatory reciprocal services and privileges constantly remind the individual of his dependence on his clansmen for the proper management of the critical events of his life. In consequence the obligation of reciprocity is strongly felt, in both secular and ritual matters, the strength of the feeling being relative to the lineage relationship of the parties. When a man invites a collective hoeing party (*pɔɔh kpa'arəp*) it is always co-members of his medial lineage who turn up in largest force. Distant clansmen only come if they have ties of personal matrilateral kinship with him. And the motive usually given for responding to such an invitation is 'To-morrow I may need the help of a hoeing party'. Public opinion is critical of those who do not conform to the conventions of mutual assistance, and when they find themselves compelled to call for assistance in collective hoeing or housebuilding or some similar activity, they are left in the lurch.

578 x618 Intra-clan disputes involving lineages of a higher order than the nuclear lineage very rarely arise over economic affairs—that is, in effect, over the ownership of land or live-stock. Disputes in higher order lineages arise over the inheritance of widows or marriage with a woman who was formerly the wife of a member of a different segment of the clan. Members of the deceased husband's medial lineage feel they have a prior claim to a widow's hand and sometimes object to her marrying a man of a different branch of the clan. And if a marriage is dissolved, no matter what the reason may be, it is regarded as a grave breach of clan solidarity for any other member of the husband's clan to take her to wife. It arouses suspicion of collusion between the woman and the second

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578
demanded that Gbaləg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787]
among his forefathers. This meant that Gbaləg's sons should beg the
Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors. But Gbaləg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578
At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x
of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the
recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783]
behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation. Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbaləg's defection was thus erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613
solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x
source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display
of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577]
of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen, the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a consideration 182
of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage membership. 183
There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife. Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan. These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms. This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife, the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 613 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 182 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 175 578 622 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 578 622 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and
their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate
units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the
ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is
not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead
man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the
Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own
matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced
that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors,
for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for
the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of
which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which
they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these
ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through
which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the
lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor
have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's
maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in
opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up
cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will
not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out
of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when
the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tɛnzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been
regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations
of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana
of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar*
as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control
of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief
of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia
and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount
Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high
status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[77] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of
Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and
unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that
they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly.
Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as
a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through
the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals.
The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

POSTSCRIPT

THIS book has dealt with the constitution and interrelations of the 613
corporate groupings found in Tale society. But this is only one major 621
aspect of Tale social structure. There is another major aspect of no less 182
importance, the system of interpersonal social bonds that constitutes the Kinship System in the strict sense. The lineage and clan organization forms the permanent framework of social relations in Taleland. But it is based on certain fundamental categories of thought and axioms of conduct that derive from a different cross-section of Tale social life, the domestic organization. The well-worn simile of the warp and the woof is apposite here. We can think of the lineage and clan organization as the warp of the social fabric of the Tallensi. Interwoven with it, sustaining it, and in turn shaped and regulated by it, is the intricate web of interpersonal relations we have described as the Kinship System in the strict sense. Kinship ties grow directly out of the biological, psychological, and social relations of men, women, and children in the domestic nucleus of Tale social life, the agnatic joint family. Unlike lineage ties, they involve the equal and parallel recognition of descent through both parents; and because of this bilateral criterion of social identification in kinship relations, they cut across the lineage structure.[1]

This second major aspect of Tale social structure, the Kinship System, 121
is the subject of our next volume, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*. Our aim will be not a detailed analysis of all Tale interpersonal relationships through all the levels of social behaviour, but an investigation of their place in the social structure in relation to the lineage and clan organization.

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[1] Cf. my previously cited paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure'.

[p. 259]

[p. 260 is blank]

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105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tɛndaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization that emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or subclan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member

613 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also
ipso facto an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differen-
769 tiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as
well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult
778 of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine (*bɔɣar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a composite clan has its lineage *bɔɣar*, distinguishing it from the other segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se* by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors. The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔɣar* known as an External *Bɔɣar*. An External *Bɔɣar* is usually a sacred grove, or a shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

771 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor
of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult
794 of the External *Bɔɣar* is another important factor of cohesion and
182 equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of
the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It repre-
769 sents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those
of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not associated in the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, collaborate in the rites of
the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally
[778] in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social relations in terms of the External *Bɔɣar* cult, and yet a third field of corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity. Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all, moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and the tɛndaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

maximal lineage emerges as a corporate unit irrespective of its internal constitution. The main characteristics of the latter can now be briefly summarized.

A *maximal lineage* is divided into a number of segments all of the same form as the whole lineage but of regularly diminishing order of segmentation. Each segment is identified by reference to its founding ancestor. He marks the point on the genealogical tree of the whole maximal lineage at which that segment's line of descent connects with the other lines of descent sprung from the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage. Thus every maximal lineage is divisible, in the first instance, into two or more Major Segments. This is the highest order of segmentation. Each Major Segment embraces (or is believed to embrace) all the agnatic descendants of one of the sons of the founder of the maximal lineage. At the next level each Major Segment is itself divisible into Major Segments, each embracing the agnatic descendants of one putative son of a son of the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage; and this formula holds at every generation level of the maximal lineage structure (see Fig. 1). The lowest order of segmentation, at the opposite end of the lineage scale to that represented by the maximal lineage, is that of the *minimal lineage* or *minimal segment*, which we define as the group comprising only the children of one man. This is the narrowest agnatic group to which a person can belong.

It is clear from the above that every person belongs to a hierarchy of lineage segments lying between the minimal and the maximal limits of his maximal lineage. Different orders of segmentation become relevant for his conduct in different degrees and in accordance with variations in the social situation. As a farmer, for instance, his productive activities are mainly determined by his membership of his minimal lineage. If he wishes to marry, membership of his maximal lineage is one of the factors limiting his choice of a bride; but the completion of the jural formalities is governed by his membership of a segment of intermediate order. At the same time a very important aspect of the lineage organization is the fact that even when only a segment of a lineage emerges in any corporate activity its status and functions are influenced by the total lineage field including, at the limit, the field of clanship. A lineage segment emerges in action only as a relatively autonomous unit. Its activity is regulated by its relationship to other like segments of the lineage and to the whole. Conversely, a lineage or lineage segment always functions as a combination of segments, not as a collection of individuals of common descent. Every lineage or lineage segment, in fact, represents a dynamic equilibrium of mutually balancing segments.

To the contemporary observer a maximal lineage is fixed in form and dimensions, and all its segments except the minimal segments are fixed in relation to one another. Only the complete extinction of a segment can alter the balance. But the degree of relative autonomy which the segments

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3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

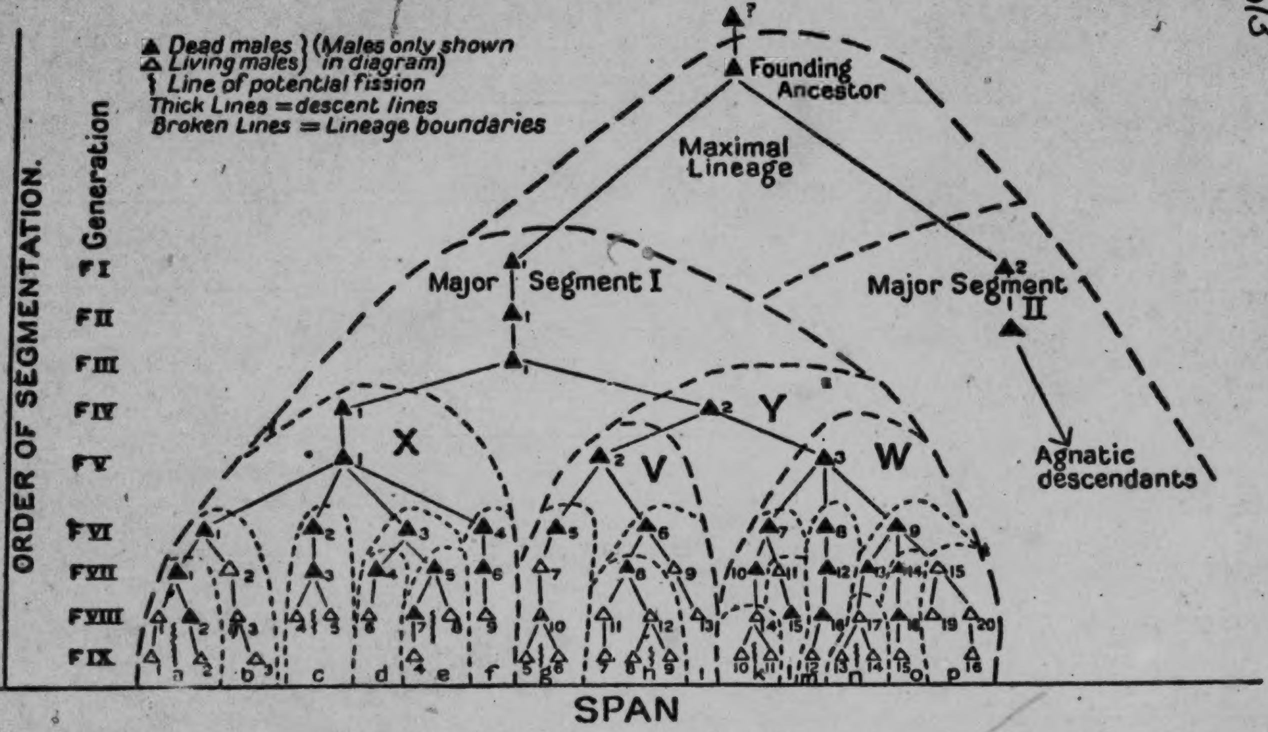
▲ Dead males } (Males only shown
△ Living males } in diagram)
⌇ Line of potential fission
Thick Lines = descent lines
Broken Lines = Lineage boundaries
ORDER OF SEGMENTATION.
Generation
F I
F II
F III
F IV
F V
F VI
F VII
F VIII
F IX
Founding Ancestor
Maximal Lineage
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
X
Y
V
W
Agnatic descendants
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
h
i
k
m
n
o
p
SPAN

FIG. 1. (Reproduced from *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 34.)

of a particular order have in ritual, jural, and economic affairs gradually alters with each generation. Thus, while their father is alive, two or more brothers have no jural or ritual or economic autonomy, either severally or as a group. The minimal segment of which they are the nucleus is submerged in the more inclusive lineage segment of which their father is the head. If their grandfather is still alive they and their father come under his jurisdiction and have no autonomy as a lineage segment independently of the segment of higher order of which the grandfather is the head. Thus the *effective minimal lineage*, as we have labelled it in order to simplify our analysis (that is, the narrowest lineage segment which is recognized in corporate activities), is not the same as the morphological minimal lineage. It may include two or three generations of agnates.[1] But the group that constitutes an effective minimal lineage in one generation may, in the next generation, split into two or more effective minimal segments.

In the same way, to simplify our exposition, we have distinguished three other grades of segmentation in the maximal lineage,[2] the *nuclear* lineage or segment, the *inner* lineage or segment, and the *medial* lineage or segment. These grades of segmentation vary in dimensions from one maximal lineage to another and from one generation to the next in the same maximal lineage. They cannot be precisely defined by morphological criteria, for they are distinguishable only in functional terms, by the incidence of jural, ritual, and economic rights, duties, and privileges.

The effective minimal lineage is marked by the fact that it commonly forms the basis of a domestic family which usually constitutes a single unit of food production and consumption.

The nuclear lineage generally forms the basis of what we shall later designate the expanded family. Its male members have a common interest in, and joint rights of inheritance to particular patrimonial farm-lands; and the head of the lineage bears the formal jural responsibility for any of the members in such matters as the payment of bride-price. The founding ancestors of such a lineage may be placed from four to six generations back, reckoning from contemporary minimal lineages. A nuclear lineage may include two or more effective minimal lineages.

The inner lineage, which may include two or more nuclear lineages, may, but does not necessarily, have a common interest in patrimonial land. Like the nuclear lineage, it is not the basis of a unit of production or consumption. Its characteristic feature is that it is the widest lineage within which generation differences are socially recognized. From this it follows that incest with a woman member of the same inner lineage is strongly reprobated and sexual intercourse with the wife of any other

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[1] Very rarely four generations; never, to my knowledge, more.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

613 member of the lineage is regarded as a grave sin. The head of the inner lineage still bears jural and ritual responsibility for all junior members of the lineage but to a lesser extent than the head of the nuclear lineage. The founding ancestor of an inner lineage may be placed five to seven generations back.

A medial lineage includes two or more inner lineages. It may be a major segment of a maximal lineage or a major segment of a major segment. Its founding ancestor may be placed from six to eight or nine generations back. Its segments do not, as a rule, have a common interest in patrimonial land. The seduction of a co-member's wife is not invariably considered to be a sin. If it is a lineage of wide span, embracing several sub-segments, and the parties are distant agnates, this might be treated simply as a jural offence.

Generation differences are usually no longer recognized for jural purposes at this range of patrilineal connexion, and the lineage head has no jural responsibility for or ritual obligations on behalf of individual members who are not of his nuclear or, at most, inner lineage. A significant index of the medial lineage is that it marks the limits within which a man is prohibited from marrying a patrilineal kinswoman of his mother. He cannot, as a rule, marry a woman of his mother's maximal lineage who belongs to her medial lineage; he is almost always allowed to marry one who falls outside this range of agnatic kinship with his mother.

It must be emphasized that these distinctions are not made by the natives. The lineage units thus identified are often fairly clearly defined in practice in certain maximal lineages at a given time. But what holds for one maximal lineage does not hold for another of the same clan or for the same maximal lineage at another time. And borderline cases are common, so that a lineage which functions as an inner lineage in one situation may be treated as a medial lineage in another. These distinctions are based on the gradation of rights and duties observed in Tale jural and ritual relations in which lineage segments emerge as corporate units. Hence in considering the incidence of jural or ritual rights and duties, or in determining the scope of kinship sentiments, we cannot always lay down exact limits within which they apply, in accordance with this set of labels. In function as in form the different grades of lineage segments tend to merge into one another; and distinctions that hold at one period will not do so a generation later. As a lineage ramifies, the relative autonomy of its component segments tends to increase in proportion; so that a segment that functioned as a nuclear lineage at one time may, twenty or thirty years later, exhibit all the characteristics of an inner lineage, in corporate activities.

Finally, it should be noted that the Tallensi have no term for the lineage. A lineage of any order is designated the 'house' (*yir*) or the children (*biis*) of the founding ancestor, as in most West African societies

which utilize the lineage principle in social organization. In contexts 613
where the emphasis is on the lineage considered as a segment of a more inclusive lineage, it is commonly described as a 'room' (*dug*) of the more inclusive 'house' (*yir*). But when Tallensi speak of a *dug* without further specification they generally mean a segment of the order of an inner or medial lineage.

As this nomenclature shows, the internal constitution of the lineage is modelled on that of the polygynous joint family. The standard pattern is that the segments of a lineage trace their descent from the sons by different wives of their common founding ancestor. We shall consider this subject more fully in this book. In consequence, co-ordinate segments of a lineage are referred to as 'brother' (*sunzɔ*) lineages, and their reciprocal rights and obligations, as well as the conventional patterns of sentiments holding between them, are modelled on the mutual relations of brothers.

At the end of our previous book we pointed out that our study of the 121
structure of corporate groups and their interrelations in Tale society covered only one aspect of the total social structure. We spoke of the first part of this study as an analysis of the warp of the social fabric. Our task now is to examine what might be called the woof of the social fabric. Our starting-point, this time, is not the organized corporate group or the framework of continuity and stability in the social structure, but the individual. Our main interest will be in the standard forms and processes of person-to-person relationships and their connexion with the large-scale framework of the society. Our subject, in other words, is Tale kinship in the narrow sense, viewed in relation to the lineage system.

CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

128 THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

613 601 121 The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

602 The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The 611
second husband (or his heir) then has ~~the right~~, at any time during its
life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father 842
a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so much importance to having children that they generally make every effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony, or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the
care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When 611
she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the 583
cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law (or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted 611
as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare, when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours, sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted 613
into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without 618
any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt
to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition 602
to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance of his father's estate, but was elected tendaana over the heads of men who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow of redemption.

844 783 769 gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be performed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

842 •613 The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔɣam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔɣam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

604 One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

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[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

strictly differentiated from a son in jural terms. The kinship tie between 604
sister's son and mother's brother is an important breach in the genealogical fence enclosing the agnatic lineage; it is one of the main gateways of an individual's social relations with members of other clans than his own.

But the recognition accorded to the mother's agnatic kin does not 611
bring out the deeper implications of maternal origin as the complementary of paternal origin. These implications are contained in the concept *soog* (pl. *saarət* or *soorət*). This concept involves the idea of matrilineal descent in contrast to that of patrilineal descent. Both in its range of efficacy, its mode of operation, its jural and ritual value, and its emotional and sentimental connotation, matrilineal descent stands in contrast to patriliny.

For obvious physiological reasons the bond of consanguinity with 593
one's mother is unique and unalterable; and it is a peculiarly personal bond. The fact that one's jural status is not derived from one's mother serves to emphasize the personal nature of this bond. A person's mother may desert his father and leave him to be reared (*ugh*) by another woman; he may feel some resentment over this all his life; but she remains his true mother, 'the mother who bore him (*ma dɔγarug*)'. Nothing can alter this fact or extinguish the kinship ties that arise from it.

We postpone for a later chapter a consideration of the emotional ties 611
of mother and child. The concept *soog* has definite emotional implica-
tions; but here we are concerned with its implications for the social 613
structure. *Soog* means a bond of consanguinity which excludes completely any reckoning with lineage affiliation. People who are *saarət* define themselves biologically as 'the offspring of one womb'—or, in the actual phraseology of the natives, 'to have come from one vagina (*yi pɛn yɛni*)'. This is the common way of stating it; occasionally, but far less commonly, one hears people defining themselves as patrilineally related by the corresponding phrase 'to be the children of one penis (*woor yɛni biis*)'.

Saarət, therefore, are uterine kin. Between mother and child there is 611
a uterine bond corresponding to the agnatic bond between father and
child; and children of one woman are *saarət*, irrespective of their pater- 593
nity. A woman may have children by different men of the same clan or of different clans; they are *saarət*, irrespective of their clan affiliations.

Soog is more than the bond of personal kinship between mother and 611
child, and between siblings by the same mother. It is the bond of uterine descent perpetuated through the female line in the same way as the bond of agnatic descent is transmitted through the male line. Uterine siblings are *saarət*; uterine sisters' children are *saarət* (but not uterine brothers' children, for the children of men are not their father's *saarət*); uterine female cousins' children are *saarət*; and so on,

The idea of witchcraft is not
easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is 754
by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based 613
on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not 827
connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas. 754
Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of 611
witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the 761
slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical 783
responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

●613 769 Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One of them is her spirit guardian (*sεɣər*), to whom her husband will have to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is [777] selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate (*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors. [761 789] If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

602 593 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the contrary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

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We have previously said that the Tallensi have no institutionalized procedure for divorce. This needs to be qualified. A very drastic procedure to which we have referred in our earlier book[1] exists by which a man can get rid of an objectionable wife. It is usually described as 'blowing (on)' (*pebh*) a wife, for it consists in the man's blowing ashes over his wife. By this action he expels her utterly from his house with all her brood. He casts her off and disowns her children; and he forfeits the bride-price. Everybody knows of this custom, and it is held to be entirely licit for any husband. The origins of attached lineages[2] are [613] often attributed to clan sisters who were allegedly divorced in this way. But it is impossible to get a record of a single case that has occurred within the last forty or fifty years, or, indeed, within living memory. Though natives say that a man could, if he wished, 'blow on' his wife if she angered him continuously, or if she were dissolute, or were objectionable in any way, in fact her delinquencies would have to be of so grave a nature as to imperil his life and the welfare of the family for a man to cut through his marriage ties irrevocably at such enormous sacrifice.

The example of such a misdemeanour always quoted is concerned with their sexual relations. It is a taboo (*kihər*) for a woman to deny her husband's sexual rights over her. She would do so, by implication, if she were to kick him over in the act of coitus.[3] This is a sin of such gravity that the marriage must be dissolved at once or else disaster will come upon both partners. For it means that husband and wife have fallen out so badly with each other that they have come into sexual conflict.

This is implied, also, in a more symbolic way, if the disagreements between husband and wife come to a head in her attacking him with her stirring-stick (*vugər*) and his retaliating with his bow (*tap*). The stirring-stick, an indispensable implement for cooking porridge, is one of the emblems of femininity, and the bow, the principal weapon of the chase and of warfare, the chief emblem of manhood in Tale custom and ritual. Men are by convention excluded from the kitchen; women, both by convention and by ritual injunction, from the chase, and from contact with its magical and mechanical appurtenances when they are being [834] used for hunting. One of the very rare occasions on which sexual continence is ritually enjoined on men is when they are poisoning arrows for hunting or war. Thus, a fight between husband and wife with bow and stirring-stick is a fight in terms of their opposed sexuality, a repudiation of the fundamental bond of marriage. It is a sin, and the couple will die if they do not immediately sever their marital relationship completely.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] Ibid., p. 51.

[833] [3] The point lies in the postures adopted by the Tallensi in coitus. As in many other primitive cultures, the woman lies on her back, and the man squats on his haunches between her thighs. She can, therefore, easily push him over with a kick, the natives say.

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with 586
genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his 684
wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the 158
sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against 827
the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the 586
others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have 578
coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if 833
she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If 684
any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman 581
marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and
even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its 613
members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman 618
trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

613 581 587 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife, implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however, not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

581 837 593 The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Unlike the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extramarital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non*. Tallensi express contempt for the Gɔrisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeembii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbɔbis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbɔbis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbɔbis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

684 Badiemaal, is this how you behave?
Zimbil-Badiemaal will never inherit the (lineage) *bɔɣar*;
577 Why did you copulate with Naaho's wife?

539 *Badiemaal, pɛnzierug, woo-oo!*
Bakyɛlbanɔya a bumbarəŋ.
Zimbil-Badiemaal, u a baa.

Badiemaal, i ɛŋa ŋwala?
Zimbil-Badiemaal ku vaa bɔɣar;
I nyɛb Naah pɔɣa bo?

It was widely held that both of these men would take the first opportunity to get out of Taleland.

The Tallensi explain that such acts are so severely reprobated because 613 they cause deep and irreconcilable 'enmity' (*diuŋ*) between father and 684 son, brother and brother, and this is a mortal blow to the solidarity of the family and the lineage. They arouse the wrath of the ancestors. 577 If the injured father, brother, or son does not bring the matter up before the elders of his medial lineage or maximal lineage, he will be struck down by the ancestors. If he does, he must be ritually reconciled with his offending son, brother, or father. But in spite of such a formal reconciliation, 'the enmity remains within'. The sinner will never be able to offer sacrifice to his injured father with a clear conscience, or an injured son to the spirit of his father who so grievously sinned and offended him; nor may two brothers between whom this bitter inner discord prevails sacrifice together. Therefore, as the scornful song about Badiemaal declares, the sinner cannot, with a clear conscience, inherit the shrines common to the lineage; and since a man's sins spiritually taint his children and children's children, the sinner's whole line of agnatic descendants will be virtually outcast from the moral unity of the lineage, even if they are allowed to participate formally in the cult of its ancestors. Again, a man who has seduced his brother's wife cannot inherit her after his death, for he has broken the bond of brotherhood. The incestuous sexual act is sinful because it disrupts the moral relationship of father and son or brother and brother, and thus undermines the solidarity of the lineage at its core. There is a magical deterrent as well, which reflects this. If two men have sexual relations with the same woman and one of them gets ill, the other may not see him; it would cause him to sink and perhaps die; and to shun a sick parent, sibling, or child is the very negation of family solidarity.

593 A man's 'fathers', 'brothers', and 'sons' within the limits of the nuclear lineage are the men who have the most direct interest in his wife, espe- 613 cially in her reproductive powers. They will all be concerned in, and one or other of them will be responsible for, the payment of her bride-price. His children mean almost as much to them as to him. They

593 ●613 [587] replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

613 835 577 We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kɔrih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

835 613 What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly

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[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a distant clan-sister (*pɔyəyabəlɔg*) do not clash with the habits, morals, and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships. Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen. Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the latter's settlement.

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A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own. The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation. There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives to stay long at their parents' homes.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

837 684 613 577 By contrast, sex relations with the wife of a member of the same lineage or clan outside the range of the inner lineage is a wrong. It is not incest, but the most reprehensible form of adultery. It does not bear the same moral stigma as the corresponding form of incest, nor does it carry religious penalties for the adulterer. Unless the two men concerned have personal cognatic ties, which makes the offence more serious, they are related to each other only as members of related lineage segments. Their personal identity is submerged in the corporate unit, and the offence is interpreted as an injury to the husband's segment by the culprit's segment of a like order. What is a moral and ritual offence in the inner lineage shades over into a misdemeanour or jural injury in the wider lineage. The shift of evaluation is correlated with a change in the intensity though not in the kind of interests involved, and a widening of the span of the unit. The wider lineage has similar but less direct interests in a man's wife than his inner lineage; its unity and solidarity are of the same order as, but less intimate than that of the inner lineage. It has a jural and political unity and solidarity, primarily associated with formal sentiments of amity and mutual loyalty; whereas the cohesion of the inner lineage (based as it is on common economic interests, co-operation and consultation in the everyday affairs of life, contiguous residence, and minimal internal segmentation for jural purposes such as marriage arrangements with other lineages) is primarily moral, and associated with strong emotions of person-to-person amity and loyalty. Thus, beyond the range of the inner lineage, when the customary ritual reconciliation between the segment of the adulterer and the segment of the husband has been completed, the matter is over and done with so far as the public relations of the parties are concerned. No material compensation is made to the husband, and, in the absence of a judicial system, there is no one who can inflict a penalty on the adulterer. The wronged husband may harbour resentment against his wife's seducer; the magical danger inherent in their seeing each other if either is ill remains as a barrier between them; but the corporate unity of the lineage and clan to which they both belong is restored.

Still, adultery with the wife of a clansman or of a member of a linked maximal lineage[1] (to which the same rules apply) creates dissension in the corporate body. It violates the principle that all men of the clan have a formally equal interest in the wife of a fellow member. It leaves [626] behind rankling animosity that hinders united action. For these reasons it usually arouses an outburst of anger against the wrongdoer. Public opinion is a strong sanction against it therefore. Though cases are far from common, they occur more frequently than the corresponding form of incest. I was able to obtain details of a few cases that occurred immediately before and during my stay in Taleland. In one case the husband and his brothers were so outraged that they fell upon the offender in his

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613 ●
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of 837
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence 577
compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the
ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrəg samər*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets
a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*dayət*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔyambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill
Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔyar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few 765
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

CHAPTER V

PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LINEAGE

Some General Principles Recapitulated

ALL Tale genealogical connexions go back to the fact of procreation. 593
Hence the relations of parents and children are the focal point of the whole kinship system. Our task here is to investigate the notion of *dɔyam* in its primary social context.

We have emphasized elsewhere that the social structure of the 613●
Tallensi is not intelligible if it is stripped of its temporal dimension.[1] The essence of the lineage system is its continuity in time; from this comes its strength and its stability. But it might have been otherwise. Such a system might well, with each generation, grow narrower and more rigid in all its parts, like an endogamous aristocratic caste. Or it might, as has happened with the Tallensi, spread itself more and more widely by continual ramification and so keep its strength without losing suppleness.

How has this come about? The central dynamic factor is the pattern 613
of relations between parents and children, especially between fathers and sons. The continuity of the lineage is a continuity of successive 593
generations, and this has two aspects. There is the straightforward, cumulative continuity of descent, epitomized in the notion of patrilineal descent; and there is the dialectical continuity of the filial generation ousting and replacing the paternal generation. In terms of patrilineal descent, father and son are identified with each other and united by common interests; in terms of the sequence of generations, they are not. Indeed, there comes a time in the lives of father and son when they almost seem to be rivals. In a lesser degree this holds also for mothers and daughters. We shall have a good deal to say on this topic in what follows.

The strength and stability of the Tale social system is in part a result of the institutionalized means the culture offers for the reconciliation of conflicting motifs in the focal field of social relations. They enable a balance to be struck between the common interests of successive patrilineal generations and their divergent interests due to the difference of generation, as well as between the centripetal pull of the agnatic line and the centrifugal drive of matrilateral kinship. The principle of reciprocity is of outstanding importance in this context; and the structural mould that makes these reconciliations possible is the ramifying form of the lineage.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii, and my paper 'Descent in the Social Structure of the Tallensi', *Africa*, July 1944.

[p. 135]

one's parents and play a part in one's upbringing can, and in certain 593
circumstances must, stand to one in the relat[illegible]of proxy parents. 855
The rule applies most directly to the me[illegible]men of the same
domestic unit who are identified with one's p[illegible]by generation and 736
by social role—to one's father's brothers ([illegible]cluding his full and half-brothers and first cousins on hi[illegible]e, who are his prospective successors; and to one's moth[illegible]ves (*nentaas*). If these men and women all belong to the sa[illegible] household they are directly concerned with the production of food, the provision of shelter, and the satisfaction of the other wants of the unit upon which the physical welfare and growth of a child depends. If the men belong to relatively autonomous economic units but to the same domestic unit, they will nevertheless have a common interest in the family patrimony, to the inheritance of which they all have rights, and a common ritual dependence on the immediate ancestors of the nuclear lineage. The women will sometimes help in caring for one another's children; the men will sometimes help one another in farming and always act as a unit in ritual and jural matters under the authority of the most senior of them. And the ritual care of a child is of as much importance as its physical care. A child will not thrive (*maan*) if it is not under the spiritual wing of its patrilineal ancestors, as we have learnt.

Outside the domestic unit the terms *ba* (father) and *ma* (mother) and 602
the distinctive modes of behaviour correlated with them, are not
extended beyond the expanded family (i.e. the family cluster built up 613
on the inner lineage) in normal circumstances. The only exception is in the case of a uterine kinsman or kinswoman of a parent, who is identified with the foundress of the uterine line and is therefore described as a 'father' or 'mother' irrespective of genealogical distance.[1]

Within the clan or maximal lineage it is a cardinal rule that generation differences are not recognized beyond the limits of the inner lineage. 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage—*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*' is the Tale maxim. This is correlated with the structural relations of the inner lineage to lineage segments of higher order. The inner lineage is likely to be the widest segment with a common interest in patrimonial land. In relation to the clan or the maximal lineage it is usually the smallest recognized corporate segment, whose members are significant for the clan only as members of the segment. As will be remembered, it is also the unit within which sexual relations with a co-member's wife are definitely sinful. In short, the inner lineage (and the family cluster which is its residential and familial correlate) marks the limit beyond which a person takes part in corporate activities not in his own right and in his personal capacity but as a member of the

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[1] Kinship terms without inverted commas stand for the primary meaning of the terms, e.g. (natural) father; those between inverted commas stand for the extended or derived meaning of the term, e.g. (classificatory) 'father'.

602 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with
613 the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidɛm*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that
[736 a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of
768] one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship
613 of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements.
593 There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series
[601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma*, *bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

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[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Gɔris and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kɛma* and *yɛbəga* for senior and junior.

children of about the same age playing together who are classificatory 613 parent and child. 602 A 9- or 10-year-old will explain that he calls his companion 'father' or 'child' because 'my father begot (*dɔɣa*)—or was 593 begotten by—his father and calls him child—or father', using the concept *dɔɣ* in its generalized sense of a recognized relationship of belonging to successive generations.

The decisive tests are in terms of the jural and ritual relations in which kinship comes into action, and not in terms of a count of generations. Thus paternal authority is an aspect of the organization of productive co-operation in the household; it accompanies defined property rights, and entails jural responsibilities in matters like marriages and deaths as well as ritual duties to the ancestors. These are the things that make up a father's social role. Postponing further consideration of this for the present, we may note that, broadly speaking, three zones can be discerned within the limits of the inner lineage. First, that of Ego's natural parents, who exercise the full social roles of parents; second, that of Ego's proxy parents, seldom more distantly related to the natural father than agnatic second cousins (and their wives), and distinguished by the fact that they share and may take over the social roles of the natural parents; and third, that of Ego's classificatory parents, who are most unlikely (for no rigid line of demarcation can be laid down) to take on the true parents' social roles. The authority and responsibility of a classificatory father is of a general nature, and a man is subject to it only in virtue of his lineage membership.

As we shall find later, these principles hold not only for the classificatory extension of parent–child relationships but also for siblings and matrilateral kin. The regulating mechanism is the lineage structure.

We are defining the gradations that can be observed in the tone and 593 emphasis of the parent–child relationship in the broadest terms. We are speaking of norms; 602 and as we have previously remarked, the norms do not always emerge as simply as this in the actual relations of parents and children. They are subject to the distorting influence of many social and personal factors in this as in other departments of Tale life. Da'amo'o, who ran away from home as a boy when his mother died, must have had very little love for his old father, who was, by all accounts, a hard, arrogant, and demanding martinet. Baŋ, on the other hand, who lost his own father in early childhood and grew up under the care of a distant lineage-brother of his father, Tɛndaan Gieŋ, whom his widowed mother married, was deeply attached to the latter.

As in most primitive societies, there are always a number of people whom a Talɔŋ, child or adult, will refer to as his 'father' or 'mother', or 'child', at any given time. But, as has already been suggested, a natural parent or own child is clearly distinguished from others to whom one stands in the same social relationship. It is enough to visit a large domestic family for half an hour, at a time when the whole

593 602 family is at home, to see this, especially where young children are concerned. With adults the discrimination is not so obvious in the ordinary daily routine as with children. I have seen a babe of six months left in the care of its mother's co-wife, whimper and strain eagerly towards its mother when it saw her arrive at the homestead with a load of firewood in the company of two other women of the household. An older child will run to its own mother for protection, if it is frightened, clutching her knees and thrusting its face between her thighs. A small boy of 3 to 6 years of age will try to follow his own father about wherever he can; and a little girl of this age hangs around her own mother, as she gets on with the household tasks, in a way that would be impossible with her mother's co-wife. On the other side, one can easily notice the difference between the sympathy and often grief of a woman over the illness or death of a co-wife's child and the utter prostration into which a mother falls if such a misfortune strikes her own child. Similarly, a man shows deep concern over the sickness or death of his brother's child. He will abandon a visit he has planned to a relative, give up work for the day, shelve any plans he may have made; for next to a death, nothing is so upsetting to a Tale household as the illness of a child. But this is as nothing compared with his grief over the death, or his distress at the illness of his own child.

613 602 This affective discrimination of own parents and own children is the psychological counterpart of the differentiation of descent lines within the lineage and of segments within the family. Sentiment and structural relationships go hand in hand and the ritual superstructure of Tale society mirrors both. This consistency of the total scheme of social relationships means that we can make inferences about aspects of the relationship between parents and children that are not expressed in their ordinary intercourse, from ritual ideas and practices and from the [782] changing pattern of co-operation and association between them. The fact that a man can only sacrifice directly to the spirits of his own parents and to antecedent ancestors through his own parents, and not to or through the spirits of proxy parents, is as important a factor in the unique bond of parent and child as the fact that a child is usually brought up by his own parents.

Structural arrangements and ritual ideas show that, in spite of the precise discrimination of own parents and own children, proxy and classificatory parents do have a parental role even during the lifetime of own parents. They take pride in these children, and speak of them as 'my children'. Everyone who is 'father' or 'mother' to a person must be treated with the respect due to a parent and has some degree of authority over him or her. I recall one day seeing Sinkawol, a young man of about 25, instructing Kyekambe, a lively boy of about 12, in a task connected with house-building. They both belonged to the inner lineage of which Nyaaŋzum of Kpata'ar was the head. This lineage presents a remarkable jumble of ages and generations owing to the 613● longevity and protracted fertility of its founder, Kuŋkɔŋki. Because a period of about fifty years elapsed between the birth of Kuŋkɔŋki's 602 first son and the birth of his youngest son, the latter's children are 'fathers' to his older brothers' children, some of whom are three or four times their age. That is how Sinkawol came to be the classificatory 'son' of Kyekambɛ. Now and then Sinkawol had to speak sharply to his pupil. I asked if he would hit the boy if he did not obey his instructions. 'Oh no', replied Sinkawol gravely, 'I cannot strike him. He begot me. He is my father. If he were my brother or my son I wouldn't hesitate to clout him.' Kyekambɛ could not exercise authority over Sinkawol owing to his social immaturity and inexperience. But he would take precedence of Sinkawol in matters of inheritance, and when he grew up would be entitled to precede Sinkawol in rights of succession to ritual office, if he wished to.

Proxy and classificatory parents also feel a responsibility for the 593 welfare of their 'brothers' ' children. Thus if two brothers have separate households, they are not obliged to assist each other with food in times 602 of shortage; and pride restrains a man from asking for help from a brother who is economically independent of him. I have seen men grow wan with hunger, through living for days on end on nothing but wild herbs; but they would never ask for assistance from their better-off brothers. It is up to the latter to offer a gift of grain voluntarily. And [431] when such a gift is given (it is usually only 3 or 4 lb. of grain, enough for a couple of meals) it is offered as a gift for the children and their mothers. The giver will send a calabashful of grain to his brother's wife, with a message that it is for the children. As the natives always say, 'Your brother's children are your children. You cannot see them growing thin with hunger and let them starve.' A woman, too, will sometimes give food to the children of a co-wife of the same joint family, if the two women get on well together.

A proxy parent's authority over his or her classificatory children during their own parent's life cannot be exactly defined. It depends on the situation in which authority is exercised, on the personalities and economic relationships of the people concerned, and especially on the genealogical closeness of own parent and proxy parent. Ɔmara and Saandi are agnatic first cousins (brothers, in native terms) occupying adjoining semi-detached homesteads. They do not farm together. Saandi has no direct responsibility for feeding Ɔmara's children or for educating them. He is, however, directly interested in their welfare and upbringing. For as the head of the nuclear lineage, he must be consulted, and will have an influential, though not the decisive voice in all matters of a jural or ritual kind affecting Ɔmara's children—such matters, for instance, as the marriage of a son or daughter, or the rites of placing a child under the ritual guardianship of an ancestor. If he

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight 593
into the working of the classificatory principle.

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the
funeral of any man of one's father's generation. A man whose 'father' 764
is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat 784
or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions 613●
of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constella-
tion of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand 602
matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of
the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits [601]
of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

● 613 or father's father's brother's son is still alive would not claim to be
602 fatherless. For, in matters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in
relation to other like units, he has no independent status. The unit is under the authority of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. Similarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved and the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

613 We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how
the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog
593 one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major
segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog. When Sɛbɔg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bɔɣabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sɛbɔg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔɣar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔɣabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the
[784] elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then
Bɔɣabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

782 Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain
593 of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External *Bɔɣar* are known as
'tabooed fowls (*nɔkɔha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten,
[784] by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of
these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

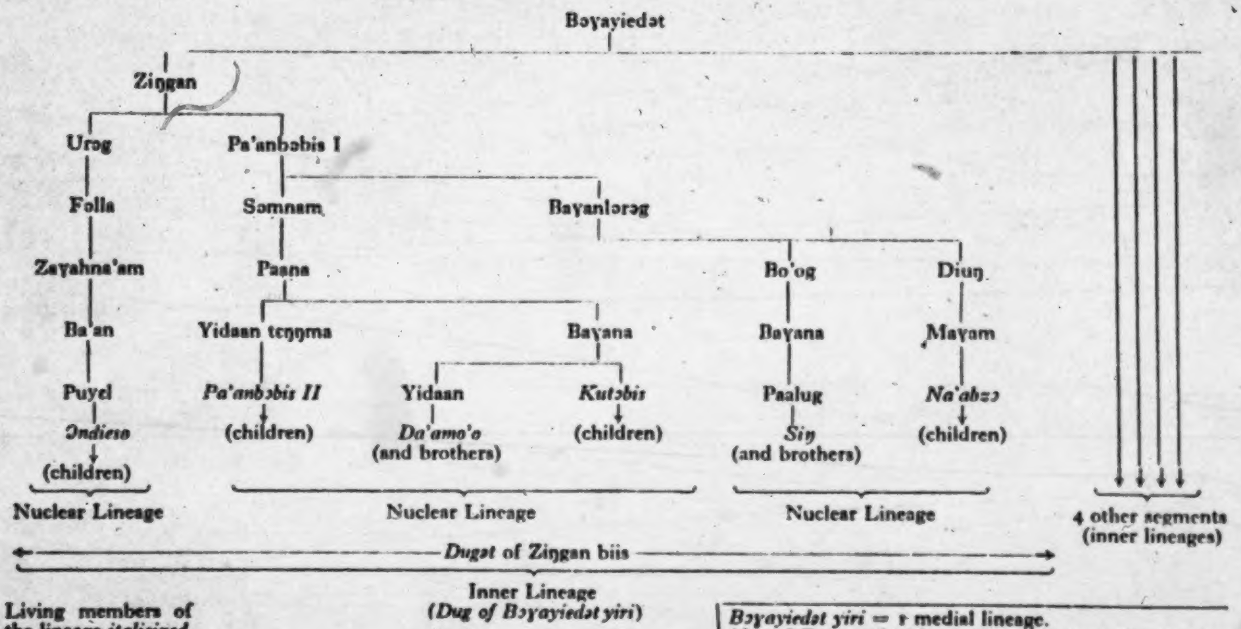
593 In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

father or proxy father alive. But let us take a more complicated as well as more commonplace case.

Ziŋgan biis form an inner lineage, one of the five inner lineages that together constitute the medial lineage of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri of Tɔŋ-Guŋ. The genealogy overleaf shows the agnatic relationships of the members of Ziŋgan biis we are concerned with here.

The head of the whole inner lineage is Kutɔbis. He is also the head of one major segment of the lineage, Pa'anbɔbis biis; the head of the other major segment, Zaɣahna'am biis, is Ɔndieso. Within his own segment of Ziŋgan biis Ɔndieso is master. He farms for himself; he sacrifices directly to his own father's and ancestors' spirits; he owns his sisters' bride-price cattle and can dispose of them as he pleases and is responsible for finding the bride-price for his own wives or his sons' wives. In these matters that concern his nuclear lineage primarily he does not acknowledge Kutɔbis as his 'father'. He looks upon Kutɔbis as only the head of the inner lineage. As such, he must be formally consulted by Ɔndieso in matters that involve jural or ritual relationships with other lineages or clans, such as arise through marriage. Thus, if Ɔndieso's daughter is sought in marriage, it is Kutɔbis who receives the emissary with the placation gifts from the bridegroom and keeps the fowl he brings, thus signifying his formal assent and regularizing the marriage. Nevertheless, it is a purely nominal authority that Kutɔbis exercises. The real decisions rest with Ɔndieso. Again, if Ɔndieso seduces the wife of, say, a Gbeog man, the injured man's lineage head will protest to Kutɔbis and negotiations for the reconciliation rites will be carried out by the latter. He will accept nominal responsibility for Ɔndieso in this matter and will take charge of the arrangements that concern Ziŋgan biis in the reconciliation rites. But the animals required for the rites must be supplied by Ɔndieso himself. To give a third example, Kutɔbis will be summoned at once if there is a death in Ɔndieso's family and will preside over the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. But, again, the animals and foodstuffs that have to be provided by the 'owner of the funeral'—the person actually responsible for its performance—must be supplied by Ɔndieso. Kutɔbis has, in fact, no power directly to order Ɔndieso to do anything; he has no claims, as of right, on Ɔndieso's services or material help; he has no responsibility for Ɔndieso's welfare, apart from the general moral responsibility he has for the welfare of the whole lineage. As the natives say, he 'owns' Ɔndieso 'with the mouth only (*nuoni maa*)'. All this is implied when Ɔndieso says: 'If it is a question of the (inner) lineage only, I have no father (*la a dug pooni maa, nka ba*).' Kutɔbis's relations with him arise from the fact that Kutɔbis is *dug kpeem*, head of the inner lineage, custodian of the founding ancestor's *bɔɣar* and of the lineage *zanɔr*. If he were Ɔndieso's classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather', it would make no difference to their relations. The symbolic expression

[p. 152]


Bɔγayiedət
Ziŋgan
Urɔg
Pa'anbɔbis I
Folla
Sɔmnam
Baγanlɔrəg
Zaγahna'am
Paana
Bo'og
Diuŋ
Ba'an
Yidaan tɛŋŋma
Baγana
Baγana
Maγam
Puγel
Pa'anbɔbis II
Yidaan
Kutɔbis
Paalug
Na'abzɔ
Ɔndiesɔ
(children)
Da'amo'o
(and brothers)
(children)
Siŋ
(and brothers)
(children)
(children)
Nuclear Lineage
Nuclear Lineage
Nuclear Lineage
4 other segments
(inner lineages)
Dugət of Ziŋgan biis
Inner Lineage
(*Dug of Bɔγayiedət yiri*)

Living members of the lineage *italicized.*

Bɔγayiedət yiri = a medial lineage.
(*dug* of Guŋ section) comprising five inner lineages.

of this is clearest in funeral customs. If Paanbɔbis II, Kutɔbis's brother, were to die, Ɔndieso would take part in all the rites prohibited to men whose fathers are still alive. He would not refrain out of respect for Kutɔbis. 613 ●

But in matters which involve Ziŋgan biis as a segment of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri, Ɔndieso acknowledges Kutɔbis as his 'father'. Thus when Bontuya, who belonged to one of the other four inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt biis, died, Ɔndieso went to the funeral as one of the representatives of Ziŋgan biis. He then refused to take part in the rites tabooed to men who have fathers alive, saying that if he did it would be an insult to Kutɔbis.

Ziŋgan biis also appear as a unit in reckoning prohibited degrees of kinship for purposes of marriage. As we have mentioned before, the inner lineage is the widest corporate group that is a jural unit in marriage. A distant 'sister's son' (*ahəŋ*) of Kutɔbis would not be allowed to marry a daughter of Ɔndieso. And this criterion applies also to the inheritance of widows. If Kutɔbis were to die, Ɔndieso could not seek any of his widows in marriage, because they are his classificatory 'mothers'. On the other hand, he could do so if Kutɔbis were his classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather'. He can court the widow of any member of any of the four other inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri since generation differences are not recognized beyond the boundaries of Ziŋgan yiri. 613 582

In spite of the ambiguities lurking in his relationship to Kutɔbis, the predominant affective tone it has for Ɔndieso is that he is a 'son' and will remain a 'child' (*bii*) in public affairs that involve the whole clan as long as Kutɔbis or any of his brothers is alive. Until they are dead there will always be a living if shadowy representative of paternal authority standing between Ɔndieso and his remote ancestors—and that means between him and the world at large, as it impinges on him through the corporate activities of the whole clan. This influences Ɔndieso's attitude to life considerably. He feels that he has not yet reached full social maturity, though he is much more intelligent and better informed than many of the clan elders. One sees and feels this vividly enough in one's intercourse with the natives, but it is not easy to pin down. It came out, for instance, in Ɔndieso's behaviour whenever he accompanied me to the Chief's court. He always took a back seat then, as befits a 'youngster'. It came out also in his attitude to Kutɔbis whom he despised for his uncouth ways and all-round incompetence, but yet deferred to with the modicum of respect that is correct in one's relations with a 'father'. 613 554

A man who can say 'I no longer have any fathers' associates himself with the elders, the *kpem*, in thought and action even if he is younger in years than some men whom he calls 'sons'. He thinks of himself as a 'father', in particular in relation to the ancestors, as one who has the duty of watching over the welfare of others. It is most marked among 613 622 554

●613 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their
622 predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed,
554 some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the
Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔγa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in
778 the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully
554 established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔne*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps
the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a
[888] house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

601 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend
the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in
613 the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a
moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is
554 Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

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[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without 613
first obtaining Kutɔbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his 554
own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutɔbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only.

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. 613
Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutɔbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10*s*. He showed it to Kutɔbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutɔbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bɔyayiedɔt yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutɔbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30*s*. to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutɔbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutɔbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutɔbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutɔbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutɔbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutɔbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutɔbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them.

Our discussion of what it means to a Talɔŋ to have a father alive or 613
not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross
the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken 178
of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly 601
changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them.

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

601 613 178 the lineage often leads to conflict and it is in these conflicts that the process of fission is often completed. They arise chiefly in connexion with the inheritance of widows and the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar* (that is, to the headship of the lineage)—the two situations in which consistency between the corporate unity of the inner lineage and the recognition of generation differences is most severely tested. What happens is that the heads of what were previously regarded as the component segments of an inner lineage advance contradictory claims to the custody of the lineage *bɔɣar*. One may claim it on the grounds of seniority of generation—being the classificatory father of the other—while his opponent refuses to admit this and claims seniority by age. It is a conflict between 'seniority of begetting (*dɔɣam kpɛmət*)' (i.e. by generation) and 'seniority of predestiny' or, as we might say, chance (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*) (i.e. by age). The long-drawn-out quarrel between Yinyɛla and the other elders of Təŋ-Puhug turned on a point of this kind. Yinyɛla claimed to be a generation superior to the heads of all the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri,[1] but the other elders would not admit the validity of this claim. The genealogical evidence supported Yinyɛla, and the precedents he quoted from the days of his father and grandfather were probably accurate. But that was not the question; the relations of the segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri had changed in the last two generations and, as the elders put it, 'begetting has died out (*dɔɣam kpiya*)'.

An earlier stage in the fading out of classificatory kinship appeared in the controversy over Baroog's widows. Nindɔɣat's eldest son was discovered to be secretly courting one of the women and Baroog's father immediately raised an outcry. Nindɔɣat, he protested, was his 'son' and Baroog's 'brother', hence Nindɔɣat's son would be committing incest if he married Baroog's widow, his classificatory mother. But Nindɔɣat stood by his son, arguing that they were no longer members of a single inner lineage but of two separate inner lineages. 'We are each our own *dug* (*ti á ti dug ti dug*),' he said. The weight of public opinion in the clan was against him, however, and the woman in the case took fright. But a split in the lineage is inevitable, though it may take a generation to complete.

Change of Status Due to Death of 'Father' Shown in Property Relations

613 885 There is more to be said about the social consequences of having or not having a father alive, and we shall revert to the subject later from another point of view. What is so far clear is that a man's social status, particularly in jural and ritual matters, but also in economic affairs, advances step by step with the dying off of his fathers. Strictly speaking, he is not altogether autonomous until he has no more fathers within the range of the inner lineage, but in practice he is free of effective

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 196.

paternal control when he has no more fathers in the nuclear lineage. 613
The death of his own father marks the beginning of what might be
called this process of emancipation, though it is not overtly felt to be 885
that by the natives. As previous references have shown, this is usually the thin end of the wedge that in due course splits the joint family economically and eventually gives the sons jural and ritual independence. It is not too much to say that the cycle of fission and reintegration in the joint family, with its co-ordinate processes of ramification in the lineage, is kept in motion by the deaths of fathers. That is one reason why the relations of successive generations are most conspicuously symbolized in funeral rites and ceremonies.

Underlying all changes in status due to the extinction of particular social relationships are changes in property relations which include, for 421
the Tallensi, both rights over people and rights over material objects and economic resources. These rights pass from one generation to the next by inheritance or succession. There are rights over farm-land, the basic capital resource of the natives, and over homesteads; rights of disposal over livestock and other valuables, as well as over services and social bonds that have been created in exchange for valuables; rights over the working power and allegiance of men, women, and children; and last but not least, rights to the custody of ancestor shrines and other religious objects and to the politico-ritual offices that go with some of them.

All these property relations are tied directly to the lineage structure; 613
they are graded and interlocked with one another in conformity with
that structure. They fall into two major categories: patrimonial rights 421
and property, for which the Tallensi have a specific term, *faar*; and individual rights and property, for which there is no specific term. Looking at it through native eyes, in terms of the continuity of the lineage and the march of the generations, we can see why this is so. *Faar* belongs to the lineage—it may be only the nuclear lineage or it may be the maximal lineage. All the members of the lineage are potential heirs to it. But the man who is in possession at a given time has complete freedom in using it—though not in disposing of it. On the other hand, individually acquired property and rights belong to the individual. A 'fatherless' man is free to use, dispose of, or destroy his individually acquired property—be it a piece of land, an animal, a garment, money, or whatnot—as he wishes. A man subject to some degree of paternal authority is in theory obliged to be ruled by his 'father' in the use and disposal of his individual property, though in practice he has a very large measure of freedom in this matter. But the crucial point is this. Individual property becomes patrimonial property when, as inevitably happens on the death of the original owner, it is inherited. In this way it comes about that every segment of a lineage tends to have its own transmissible *faar*.

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The general rules governing inheritance and succession are simple. Because they are so closely tied up with the lineage structure and come under the strongest sanctions of the ancestor cult, they are seldom, to my knowledge, deliberately violated. But they leave room for adjustments and compromises, to some extent also for arbitrary action bordering on injustice, that seem, on the surface, to contradict them. Inheritance and succession follow the lineage and go from fathers to sons in order of seniority by generation or by age.[1] Within the inner lineage, that is, within the range in which classificatory kinship is recognized, seniority by generation (*dɔɣam kpɛmət*) takes precedence over seniority by age (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*), beyond that range it is entirely a matter of seniority by age. This is what the maxim 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage' implies. Since a 'son' cannot take precedence over a 'father' in the inner lineage, it follows that a man's next senior 'brother' inherits before his oldest 'son'. But Tallensi say 'A father's property is heritable; a brother's property is not (*Ba bon nɛvaagət; mabii bon pu vaagəra*)'. A 'brother' inherits from a 'brother' only what came to the latter from their 'father' (plus what has accrued to it by natural increase or improvement), not what the latter acquired by his own effort. Theoretically all 'brothers' are coheirs and the senior is merely the manager with first pick of the inherited property. It is this which leads to apparent anomalies. Thus when Kurug died his oldest brother Sawɔŋba inherited the *faar* land. But he preferred to stay on in his homestead at Gbambee rather than move back to the lineage *daboog* at Kuorəg. This homestead and the *faar* land surrounding it therefore remained in the hands of Kurug's sons. When Sawɔŋba died there were no more 'fathers' and the oldest generation of men in the inner lineage were all 'brothers'. Again the heir preferred to stay at Gbambee. If the next heir of Sawɔŋba's branch also refuses to go back to the lineage *daboog*, the chances are that the *faar* land there will cease to be regarded as patrimonial property of the whole inner lineage and will become *de facto* the *faar* of the branch that stayed on at Kuorəg.

The point of this is that whereas 'brothers' are equal to one another 'fathers' and 'sons' are not. A 'brother' inheriting lineage *faar* is not on the same footing as a 'father'; he cannot exercise all the rights and the authority of a 'father' which belong intrinsically and exclusively to a 'father's' social status, 'because of begetting (*dɔɣam la zugu*)'. A proxy father who has no brothers alive is at liberty to use his rights over *faar*

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[1] The private property of women is an exception, but it is of relatively small importance in the total economy and its mode of transmission is, in fact, quite consistent with this principle. A woman's household utensils and garments are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law on her death. Any livestock she has acquired by her own efforts or through her cognatic kin go to her sons and become their joint private property. The reason for this is that livestock, unlike utensils and clothes, can breed and so become *faar*, which is not transmissible by descent from or through women.

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in an arbitrary manner and to his personal advantage. If he wishes, he can, for example, pawn *faar* land or consume *faar* cattle in spite of the protests of his 'sons'. They have no redress. Or a father may use his position to distribute parts of the patrimonial land among his sons and proxy sons so that they should all have some good land to work for themselves after his death. The 'son' who inherits cannot cancel such gifts. A 'brother' would arouse fierce opposition from his junior 'brothers' if he attempted to use or dispose of *faar* arbitrarily without their consent. When disputes occur over the division of patrimonial lands or other property that passes by inheritance, it is always amongst a group of 'brothers', never between 'father' and 'sons'.

The difference of emphasis due to difference of generation appears most plainly in the inheritance of rights over people. Tallensi say that 'an older brother (who succeeds to headship of the household or lineage) is like a father (in relation to his juniors) (*Bier ŋman ni ba la*)'. But they also add that he is nevertheless not a father. An oldest brother, as senior son, steps into the shoes of his 'father' in relation to society at large. He does not acquire paternal status within the lineage *vis-à-vis* his 'brothers'. The rights he exercises over dependants are shared by them. And when he is succeeded by a 'brother' the latter does not assume new rights over these dependants but merely extends his existing rights.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage, where generation differences no longer count, questions of inheritance and succession turn chiefly on rights to the custody of the shrines of founding ancestors. The moral and ritual authority of heads of lineages beyond the range of the inner lineage rests on their custody of these shrines. Sometimes, ritual offices like the tɛndaanaship go with the succession to the custody of maximal lineage shrines; and in many cases this also confers rights to control the use of or to have sole use of certain farm-lands vested in the head of the maximal lineage.

It follows from the foregoing that when a 'father' dies there very often is a wide rearrangement of property relations in the whole hierarchy of lineage segments to which he belonged. To take an actual case, let us return to Ziŋgan biis (p. 152). When Yidaan, the head of the inner lineage, died in 1933 he was succeeded by his brother Kutɔbis as head of the domestic family. As Kutɔbis was oldest by generation in the inner lineage he succeeded to the custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* of Ziŋgan.[1] He would not have done so if, say, Ɔndieso had been senior to him by generation, though younger in years.

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[1] About a generation ago, as is still the case with many lineages of this order, there was a tract of low-lying (*bo'og*) land that went with the *bɔɣar*, and the head of the inner lineage automatically had control over it. Any member of the lineage could, however, farm part of it with his nominal permission. After Pa'ana's death this land was divided into three parts, one part going to Ɔndieso's grandfather, another to Bayanlɔrag's descendants, and the third to Pa'ana's sons.

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Kutəbis also inherited the lineage *bəɣar* of Pa'anbəbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and [illegible]other's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbəbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutəbis. With this *bəɣar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbəbis's homestead. If on Kutəbis's death the present head of Baɣanlərəg biis, Na'abzə, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutəbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Baɣana, Pa'ana, and Səmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Səmnam's line of descent. On Kutəbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbəbis II. Lastly, Kutəbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Baɣana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Baɣana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutəbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutəbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutəbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

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On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*ŋmaŋ*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

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[1] This was because Kutəbis and Yidaan were *saarət*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser importance of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. The range within which classificatory 'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows. 613 593 784 601

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies, Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies. 613 601 [765]

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII. 888

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can 593
match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so. 765

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride
in one's parents among the Tallensi. They always show off an old 593
parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often 577
been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man 888
or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old
people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck [777]
(*zusɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full? (*U pu di ŋɔvɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and senile, as Doohraan was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage, the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among 593
the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect, 577
affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relation-
ships. A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from 577
his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from 613●
his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion, and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

577 613 is usually land that has come to him by inheritance from his father.[1] It is hallowed land because it has come to him thus. This land is the basis of his local and economic ties with his lineage and clan. In psychological terms it stands for the most significant aspects of his own development and of his relationship with his father. It was here that he learnt to farm, working side by side with his father and thus coming to know every inch of it. His father's social personality is for him closely associated with this land, with the homestead which stands on it somewhere, and with the family graves including, in time, those of his parents, that lie there. When he inherits this land it is the principal sign that he has at length stepped into his father's shoes.

577 613 166 The cycle of development through which the nuclear lineage regularly passes shows the working of filial piety very clearly. A typical history is that of Ba'ahug's house. When Ba'ahug inherited the homestead and the home farms of his nuclear lineage, at Tɔŋ-Kuorəg, about thirty years ago, he had living with him his son Saŋgbɔŋ and his full brother Zɔŋ. Then Ba'ahug died and his brother Zɔŋ inherited the homestead and the patrimony. In due course Saŋgbɔŋ moved out to build his homestead on his own father's part of the patrimonial bush farm at Gbambee, and there he brought up his family. In 1934 Zɔŋ died and Saŋgbɔŋ inherited the homestead and patrimony. He remained at Gbambee, however, until 1936. There had been illness and other mishaps in his family, and the diviners declared that his father, who was buried beside the original homestead at Kuorəg, was demanding that he (Saŋgbɔŋ) should go back there. So in 1936 he handed over the homestead at Gbambee and some of the land there to his oldest son and returned to take up his abode in the ancestral homestead. For him the cycle of development from the domestically unitary joint family through the phase of its dispersion and back to a phase of unity was completed. The unity would have been more obvious still if he had made his oldest son accompany him to the old homestead, and if his late 'father' Zɔŋ's children had remained with him. Actually Zɔŋ's sons, finding that the land that would now be available for their use was insufficient, decided to move to Biuŋ; and there was no need for Saŋgbɔŋ to summon his own oldest son to come and live with him as the homestead at Gbambee is regarded merely as an outpost of the ancestral home. There is this advantage, also, about keeping up the Gbambee outpost, that when Saŋgbɔŋ dies Zɔŋ's oldest son will be the heir and will return to resume the ancestral home and lands. This will mean that Saŋgbɔŋ's sons will probably have to move out to their father's land at Gbambee, so the homestead might as well be kept up. If Saŋgbɔŋ had died at Gbambee before inheriting the ancestral home he would have been brought home to Kuorəg for burial beside his father and forefathers.

In the next generation there will be a new development. For Saŋgbɔŋ's

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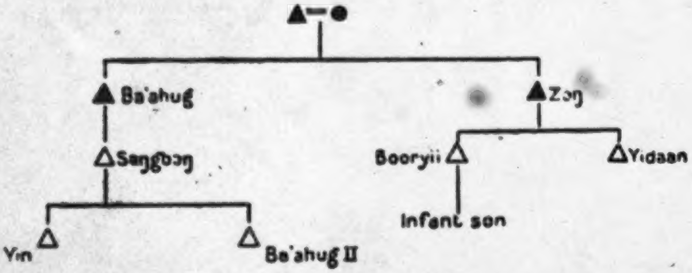
[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

sons their father's home and land has a double location. In terms of 577
their own experience and immediate attachments it is the home and land 613 ●
at Gbambee; in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage it
is the home and land at Kuorəg. The oldest of them may go back to 166
Kuorəg when he inherits the patrimony. The younger may prefer to stay at Gbambee when he becomes head of the lineage and leave the Kuorəg homestead and land to the other branch of the lineage. He will be living in what is to him his father's homestead and on what is to him his father's land in the most intimate and personal sense. And when he dies his kinsmen will probably be informed by the diviner consulted on the day he is buried that he desires to be buried at Gbambee and not at Kuorəg. Thenceforth a new home is established for one of the lines of agnatic descent sprung from Saŋgbɔŋ. This branch will still maintain close jural, economic, and religious ties with the other branches of the same segment established at Kuorəg and will act together with those branches in all corporate affairs, but it will be independently localized. Thus filial piety which has drawn Saŋgbɔŋ back into the local orbit of his ancestral lineage, and will keep him there even after death, will be the ostensible incentive that will make one of his sons establish a new home for his posterity at Gbambee.

The following genealogy shows the agnatic relationship of the individuals that have been mentioned:



And the table on p. 184 shows the cycle of development of this nuclear lineage as we have sketched it.

The natives are well aware, of course, that these processes of dispersion and reintegration in the nuclear lineage arise directly out of the genealogical cleavages and economic needs of its component segments. But the chief sanction for each defined stage in the process is, in their eyes, filial piety. Objectively, it appears to the anthropologist as a socially accepted rationalization or pretext covering a rearrangement of property and jural relations made necessary by economic needs and the logic of the social structure; subjectively, it is felt by those concerned as an irresistible ritual sanction, crystallized as a command from the father's spirit. It works consistently in the direction of keeping the lineage intact [1]

[1] [Text continued on p. 185.—Analyst]

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[p.184]

Date	*At Kuorəg*	*At Gbambee*	*Elsewhere*
c. 1920	Ba'ahug Zəŋ Saŋgbəŋ Booryii		
1933	Zəŋ Booryii Yidaan	Saŋgbəŋ Yin Ba'ahug II	
1936	Saŋgbəŋ Ba'ahug II (and other sons)	Yin	Booryii Yidaan (At Biuŋ)
19—?	Booryii Yidaan and their children	Yin Ba'ahug II and their children	
19—?	Yin [Yidaan and/or Zəŋ's grandsons in separate homestead?]	Ba'ahug II (Ba'ahug II establishes new home at Gbambee)	[Zəŋ's surviving sons and/or grandsons may have a homestead of their own at *Kuorəg*, or at *Gbambee* or at *Biuŋ*]

in relation to its local and spiritual focus. Economic necessity is undoubtedly the chief incentive to fission in the joint family, but the process of reintegration is as much or more the result of ritual and affective forces. 577 613 166

This is the essence of the pull exercised on every Taləŋ by his father's original home (*dàboog* pl. *dabaar*), and on lineages in their corporate existence by the *daboog* of their founding ancestor. We have already recorded several cases of men who returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads after many years of absence. As these instances show, it often involves an economic loss when a man gives up fertile land in a peripheral settlement to return to one of the ancient settlements where the soil is less productive. There are many men who in their young days farmed at Biuŋ or Gbambee or Datɔk and had many cattle, sheep, and goats then but now have no more than their neighbours. Their explanation is that they had to give up their farms in the peripheral settlements to come and rebuild their fathers' original homesteads, thus exchanging plenty for poverty. This was the story of Saɣəbazaa and Na'ampaahya, of Saandi, Loobuol-Kugər, and of Saɣawuob, and of many more than need be mentioned here, in addition to those already referred to. It was the religious and affective associations of their ancestral homes that drew the Hill Talis back to the hills in 1936 after twenty-five years of exile, in spite of the economic sacrifice this meant for a great many of them. Down on the plains most of them had all the land they needed immediately around their homesteads. It was fertile land, too, won from the uncultivated bush. They were better off for food than they had been on the hills. But they gladly gave up their temporary homes and farms to return to their exiguous stony patches and strips on their hilltops, the crops of which have to be supplemented by farming bush farms three or four miles away. For all their rationalizations about the better climate and pleasanter surroundings of the hills, the truth was that it was a matter of faith. On the hills they were back among their fathers and forefathers, and this gave them a sense of religious security they had lacked on the plains. It meant, also, that they were back in the right local setting of their clan and lineage relationships.

The return of the Hill Talis to their ancestral homes is a striking case because it involved the building of between 250 and 300 homesteads[1] in two dry seasons and the movement of over 2,000 people. But every dry season, within a settlement, one finds men rebuilding homesteads on the long-deserted sites of their fathers' homesteads. This happens when a man at length succeeds to the position his father held in the lineage structure. So Deemzeet built a new homestead on the site of his own father's homestead when he became head of the section of Puhug at Tongo. Or it may be simply that a man has a series of

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[1] A minimum estimate. The total number of homesteads built or rebuilt was probably nearer 500, but I was not able to check this.

577 misfortunes and learns from a diviner that this is due to his dead father
●613 who is angry with him for leaving his *daboog* site derelict. That was the
166 case with Pa'anbɔbis and Mambaŋya.

We have said previously that the sentiments, the rights, and the duties
577 of parent and child to one another are traced back by the natives to the
fact of birth; but in actual social usage they are fortified by strong
593 ritual sanctions. Tallensi have these in mind when they say that a
688 father's authority is irresistible because 'he sacrifices for you (to your
ancestors)'. Your father 'owns (*so*)' you because he begot (*dɔɣa*) you; and he sacrifices (*kaab*) on your behalf because he begot you; you can only approach your ancestors through your father while he is alive, and if you do so after his death it is always through the intermediation of his spirit. It all goes back to the fact of birth, but the ritual sanctions are the most important instrument by which a father's authority is maintained, as our discussion has several times shown, particularly in the case of a proxy or classificatory father. Siŋ cannot defy his proxy father Na'abzɔ 'because', as he says, 'he sacrifices for me'; Da'amo'o chafes under the vexations Kutɔbis and his sons frequently put upon him, but he cannot, for the same reason, disregard Kutɔbis's authority over him as his late father's brother. It is very rarely indeed that a man in a paternal position will refuse to sacrifice on behalf of another who is in the position of a 'son' to him; but the fear of this sanction has a restraining influence in cases such as those of Siŋ and Da'amo'o. The whole hierarchy of authority in the lineage rests on this ritual office. Most of the men of Yinyɛla's inner lineage were opposed to his cutting himself off from the rest of Puhug, but they had to 'follow (*dɔl*)' him because he had custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* and 'sacrificed for them'.

PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

[facing p.209]

varies from case to case and from lineage to lineage. We have seen how
this works out among the members of Ziŋgan biis. Another instance is 593
that of Yinworəb and his 'son' (his grandfather's brother's great-grand-
son) Kadɛne. Yinworəb gave Kadɛne three shillings to pay the hearing 577
fee when he was summoned to the chief's tribunal. This was not a debt. 426
Three or four months later Yinworəb borrowed a goat from Kadɛne. Again, this was not a debt but it was tacitly understood to be an equivalent return for the loan of the three shillings. By contrast, Ləyani used some sheep belonging to Maantiya, his father's half-brother's grandson and therefore his 'son'. This he regarded as a debt because the sheep were earmarked for the payment of Maantiya's wife's bride-price.

Outside the inner lineage, however, a debt is incurred by accepting goods or services from a clansman. The only exceptions are if the lender is also a matrilateral kinsman of the borrower—e.g. a uterine kinsman—or a close friend.

The principle of reciprocity, as seen in operation in the family and 613●
lineage, ties on to a more general theory of social action in Tale society.
It is a particular application of the principle of equilibrium in the social 577
system. The idea that in the long run mutual services or favours should balance is inherent in Tale social organization. Canalized by the lineage system, it means that a son or grandson or later descendant can make or expect equivalent returns for an action of his father or grandfather or earlier ancestor. It is a matter of pride as well as of moral or jural obligation to see that one benefit is balanced by another. For example, it is a common thing at an elder's funeral to see a distant clansman of his, who is not obliged to do so, bring a sheep or goat as a valedictory offering to the dead. The donor explains that there is a special reason for this offering. The deceased had been a friend of his father. When his father died the deceased brought a goat as a valedictory offering to his father. His goat is a return gift. The maxim that 'debts do not die' springs from this principle; and it applies not only to the relations of the living among themselves but to their relations with their departed ancestors. A grandson may have to atone for his grandfather's sins, as happened with Kuwaas. Years of constant ill luck were attributed by a succession of diviners to the sins of his paternal grandfather, whose name he bore. Kuwaas I, as Chief of Tongo, had betrayed his office by abandoning his clan and seeking only his personal safety once when the
Hill Talis attacked Tongo. This was a grave sin against the ancestors, [688]
who demanded a large expiatory sacrifice, and until this was paid the sin would continue to lie heavily on the descendants of Kuwaas I. The right of self-help by raiding, and the notion that retaliatory warfare and retaliatory abduction of women are simply 'cancelling a debt (*icrəg* [illegible])',[1] belong to the same category of ideas. The principle of reciprocity underlies all these categories of social behaviour.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 236, 245.

CHAPTER X

SIBLINGS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Concept of 'mabiirət'

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TALLENSI make a distinction between kinship that implies a difference of generation, summed up in the concept *dɔɣam*, and kinship that implies identity or equality of generation, summed up in the concept *mabiirət*.[1] *Mabii* (lit. mother's child) is the general term for a sibling of either sex and of any degree of consanguinity, and it is extended, as we have shown in our previous volume, to corporate groups, linked by patrilineal descent, that are of equal status. Its primary reference is to a sibling by the same parents as the speaker's when only the fact of siblingship is relevant—that is, when difference of age or sex is not relevant to the situation. Tallensi sometimes use the term in contrast with *babii* (lit. father's child), a usage that indicates very neatly the underlying implications of the term *mabii*. Thus Tallensi say that a man's *mabiis* have first claim on the inheritance of his widows, but that his *babiis* are also entitled to marry the widows. To the native this means that a man's brothers of the same *dug* have a stronger claim than his clansmen of other *dugət*—*dug* here being a lineage segment defined relatively to the agnatic distance between a particular suitor for a widow's hand and the deceased. A man of the same inner lineage as the deceased will call himself a *mabii* of the latter by contrast with another suitor of a different inner lineage but the same medial lineage; and the latter will call himself a *mabii* of the deceased by contrast with a more distant clansman, whom he will describe as a *babii*. Thus the use of the term *mabii* implies a relationship between the parties as if they were agnates who have a common progenitrix over and above their patrilineal ties. When a native describes another as his *mabii*, however distant their genealogical ties, he is tacitly implying a close personal element in their relationship for that moment and in that situation, as if they were children of the same parents, by contrast with a pair of distant agnates. A man will speak of a matrilateral relative of a different clan in this way in some situations. Thus a Tongo man, telling me the story of his first visit to Kumasi, related how he had stayed with a *mabii*, a Ba'ari man, who had loaned him the money for his lorry fare. Abroad, in Kumasi or Accra, a Taləŋ speaks of any other Tallensi he meets there as his *mabiis* by contrast with all the foreigners amongst whom they live. And this is not merely a form of words. Abroad, Tallensi who have no ties of kinship or of locality, who would probably never have met or heard of each other at home, assist one another as if they were kinsmen.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii, p. 117.

[p.241]

the widow (or widower) during a funeral, or assist in the rites of purifying the widow or share her meals. Tallensi assert that a breach of this rule is impossible as no man or woman who had not had the experience would take charge of a widow. It is a taboo (*kihər*), and anyone who infringed it would die. Again, owners of diviners' shrines (*bakologo* shrines—the diviner is called *baɣa*) are identified in certain situations, though they do not form a corporate body of any sort. Thus when a new diviner's shrine is being set up for a man certain portions of the beer used in the rites can be drunk only by men who already have such shrines, and it is they who carry out the final rites by which the actual power of divination is conferred on him. Similarly it is only men who have themselves undergone the experience and the treatment who may assist in the ritual of purifying a homicide or a man who has slain a big game animal such as a bush cow. The list of illustrations could be extended, but this will suffice to show how deeply rooted the idea is. It is, however, only a determinant of individual conduct and sentiment, giving rise to *ad hoc* co-operation in certain situations, and not a principle of association in corporate units.

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Factors modifying the Sibling Bond

The solidarity and social equivalence of siblings are conditioned by a number of factors. Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure. Siblingship does not cancel out the uniqueness of the individual, as symbolized in the notion of the *Yin*, and socially crystallized in the precise differentiation of the lineage segment which he or she founds. This factor, with its counterpart in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with the years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and, consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin. Thus the sibling relationship, while itself an important constitutive factor of the lineage structure, is reciprocally moulded by that structure. The relationship of brothers among the Tallensi might very well have been different from what it is if their social organization provided for the continuous merging of collateral lines of descent in lineal lines,[1] so that lineage branches springing from brothers were not specifically recognized, but only the inclusive trunk-line deriving from a distant ancestor.

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[1] This appears to be the case with the Nuer at higher levels of lineage structure (cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, 1940, ch. v) and among some Southern Bantu tribes, such as the Zulu (cf. E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, 1936).

593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

593 578 584 Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *sunzɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbɔm. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbɔm.

593 613 The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

593 867 This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood, first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

593 867 of distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this pattern.

593 613 The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family.

593 602 As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course, in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action.

593 The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences, postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land.

593 884 We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity.

593 884 578 The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the

593 884 578 cleavages between *sunzɔ* siblings, both on the level of jural and economic relations and in sentiment, more prominently to the fore. It is the starting-point of those intra-familial tensions that, according to native views, stir up jealousies between co-wives who are wives of brothers. As we know, these tensions are said to culminate, very often, in quarrels over alleged unfairness in the apportionment of food-supplies, or over the treatment of children, or other ostensible acts of discrimination between co-wives. This is one of the reasons most often adduced for a man's leaving the paternal homestead to farm on his own. From these tensions arise also those disagreements between brothers over petty trespasses on one another's property or independence, summed up in the conventional formula of 'quarrels about chickens and eggs'. The stage is thus set for the typical process of residential and economic fission in the joint family along the genealogical lines of cleavage inherent in it. The equality in status and rights of brothers in relation to one another within the lineage thus attains its maximum emphasis in the social structure. The natives are well aware of the economic pressures behind this process; but they also see that these pressures would not work out in just the way they do if it were not for the inherent dichotomy in the structure of the family and the lineage. These two factors mutually determine and reinforce each other.

593 578 ●613 This brings up a point of some importance. It is conceivable that tension between brothers, whatever it is a symptom of, might result in young men separating after the death of their father, or after marriage, to take up land wherever they can find any. Thus a group of brothers would be scattered without respect to their lineage ties; and this process would in a few generations lead to the disintegration of the present highly localized lineage structure, and the emergence of a system of dispersed intermingled clans such as is found in many West African societies.[1] In fact, as previous chapters have shown, there is a slow process of dispersion in progress among the Tallensi all the time, but it has not led to a breakdown of the lineage system. The lineage ramifies, it does not break up into independent units that sever their genealogical ties with the main branch.

The basis of this is the fact that brothers separate but do not thereby relinquish membership of their maximal lineage. They do not sever their social and personal bonds with one another; which means that they do not forfeit any of their rights or relinquish any of their duties as sons and brothers. They are independent only within the bounds set by the corporate unity and the common interests of the lineage system. For it is only through his position in the lineage system that a Talɔŋ is able satisfactorily to secure his rights and perform his duties as a

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[1] This would appear to be the case among the Ashanti (cf. R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, ch. viii) and the Jukun (cf. C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom*, ch. ii), to cite only two widely separated examples.

responsible member of his society. Of this we have had ample evidence.[1] 593
Again, there are strong economic elements in the individual's adhesion
to the lineage. There is the pressure due to the form and organization 578
of Tale economy as a whole, which tends to restrict excessive mobility.
As Tallensi themselves often put it, shrewdly picking on the key item 613
in their productive cycle, it is all a question of manure, including human excrement. A home farm in one of the old settlements kept at a high level of fertility by continuous manuring is not light-heartedly abandoned.[2] This fact, and the scarcity of unutilized and unowned farmland in the old settlements, puts a premium on the right to inherit land in them. To-day, it is true, the pressure of these forces has been relaxed by the opening up of an easily accessible external labour market and of facilities for trade both in Taleland and with other areas. These extraneous outlets have made life easier for the natives but they have not, as we have observed before, materially altered their traditional mode of livelihood. In fact they serve to emphasize the contention of the natives that economic motives are of secondary consequence in maintaining lineage unity.

It is not joint interest in, and equal rights to the inheritance of, 593
their patrimonial lands which alone hold a group of brothers together.
Men who leave their natal settlements on account of land shortage do not 577
return home eventually only because they have at last inherited their 764
patrimonial lands. The decisive sanction, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, lies in the obligation of filial piety and what it stands for in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage. The focus of unity for every lineage is the authority of the father, either the real authority of the living father or the mystical supremacy of the dead father or his surrogate, an ancestor spirit. Men like Yinworəb and Da'amo'o gave up wage labour in Kumasi very reluctantly to return home because the death of their fathers left them at the head of their respective joint families, and other similar cases have been quoted in an earlier chapter (p. 179). Similarly, a group of brothers may be scattered, some at home, some in a peripheral settlement, some in Mampurugu, some working abroad. On certain ritual occasions those who are near enough make a point of returning home. Family funerals, in particular, bring the scattered members of the family together. The three chief mourners at Tɛndaan Gieŋ's funeral were his brothers' sons Gikoo-Duun, who lived near Sameni in Mampurugu, Saanbuohba, who had been farming near Tola on the Red Volta for some years, and Baŋ-Duun who had been living at Biuŋ for nearly twenty years. They all

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[1] In preceding chapters as well as in *Dynamics of Clanship*, *passim*.

[2] We have touched on this subject in our earlier book, chapters i and xi. It is more fully considered in C. W. Lynn's report, *Agriculture in North Mamprussi* (Dept. of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Bulletin 34, 1937), and in M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936.

577 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni*
764 *yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its
593 psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its
validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the
● 613 total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic
578 and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zayahkpɛmɔre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zayahkpɛmɔre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zayahkpɛmɔre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zayahkpɛmɔre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds
of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another.
601 As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the
784 wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔγa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

593 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidem slew the
682 ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice
784 together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective
ancestors.

593 Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brother-
hood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact
578 that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties
602 to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons
or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one
another.

In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings
593 sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classi-
602 ficatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for
siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Təŋ-Təbəg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzə* siblings.

593 As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests
involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible
602 guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few
613 examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will [illegible] much more likely
to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzə* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzə* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

other way round. These involve not individual economic or social 593
interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer
a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for 602
the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, 613
his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round
him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔɣadir yɛla*) involve the common interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*) brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent 593
in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks
a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my 592
older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerəme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother 613
enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son. But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned 593
beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this
range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen 602
who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries 578
are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action *vis-à-vis* non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case.
This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common [224]
thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal, especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then
the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns 593
into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of
hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days 602
began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a 579
man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

593 571 764 602 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔγakiis saγabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Saγawuob's mother's funeral Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Saγawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 593 562 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔγayabələg-kpeŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the [782] lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members 613
in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. 593
The token funeral performed for a woman by her father's people, after 562
her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔɣayabələg-kpɛŋ* [766]
not by her own father's heirs but by the head of the inner or medial or even maximal lineage, her status-brother, so to speak. Tallensi say she belongs to the whole lineage not to her paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow 595
may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan
or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two 587
principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', 595
and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint 613
leviratic rights is one of the critical norms of clanship,[1] implying that
all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither 593
absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to 587
them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

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595 property it is good enough if she marries any one of them. In practice,
● 613 a widow of child-bearing age who has children by her late husband
587 usually consents to remarry one of his close brothers.

Next to a brother of the nuclear lineage, a brother of the late husband's
587 inner lineage is considered to have a strong claim to his widow's hand.
613 If a man dies leaving two widows of child-bearing age it is considered
proper for one of them to be given to a member of her late husband's
595 nuclear lineage and for the other to go to another nuclear segment of the same inner lineage. If a widow appears to be unwilling to marry her late husband's half-brother, for example, and is prepared to marry one of his 'brothers' of the same inner lineage, she is usually allowed to do so by the head of her husband's nuclear lineage. The new husband is still spoken of as having inherited the widow. In every case that came under my notice widows of child-bearing age married into their late husband's inner lineage if they had young children. But in a few cases, amounting to about three out of ten, these second marriages broke down after a time. Childless young widows often prefer to go back to their parental home and try their luck again on the marriage market.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage a 'brother' of the dead man has only the rights of a clansman. If the widow is of child-bearing age he will have to be very circumspect in courting her; for he can only marry her if she chooses him in preference to other claimants, and this means she must be courted. Hence it is more usual to speak of 'marrying' (*di*) a widow than of 'inheriting' (*vaa*) her in such cases. But it would be a very bold woman who, left a widow while still capable of bearing children, rejected a husband's brother of the same inner lineage in favour of a clansman of his. Only in exceptional cases would such an action not create ill feeling between the two clan segments concerned. Such an exceptional case occurred when Baroog died leaving nine widows. His father tried hard to persuade several distant clansmen of his to seek the widows in marriage. The reason was that Baroog had no adult brothers in his nuclear lineage and so few in his inner lineage that they would not be able to inherit all the widows. For few men wish to inherit more than one widow at a time. Rather than let them return to their fathers and be sought in marriage by men of other clans, Baroog's father preferred to see them marry distant clansmen of his.

587 Widows beyond the age of child-bearing have complete freedom of
choice in selecting a new husband from among their late husband's clans-
595 men. Often such marriages are merely nominal. The woman continues to live with a grown-up son and her new husband comes to visit her occasionally and sends her a little grain now and then. If the widow has no adult son she will live with her new husband, adding to the labour power of his household and to its indirect sources of income through the gifts she obtains from her patrilineal kin, for example, or any private property of her own, such as a couple of sheep or goats.

on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tɛndaana 604
refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvɔlimra
succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the 602
girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made to the head of Puvɔlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it to Puvɔlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it. It was then that the Gbizug Tɛndaana made Puvɔlimra a present of a bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over to Puvɔlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time being; but that dry season Puvɔlimra went, for the first time in his life, to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for 597
the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his
foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopt- 602
ing the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb*. It is as if his mother's bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son. And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the clan settlement of his *ahəb*. He retains only ritual ties with his paternal clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*. At Gbeog, for instance, there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral. When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not 602
forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care
of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For 613
example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day 577
killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home to his *ahəb*. The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's 'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of
773 an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
183 would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly,
they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

for him by the lineage of the ancestress who has demanded the erection of the shrine. The diviner-to-be is himself a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' or 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' of the men who come to perform the ceremony of establishing the shrine. But in addition, a member of his clan who is also an *ahəŋ* of the visitors' clan is deputed to act as intermediary. He goes out to meet the visitors when they approach and escorts them to the homestead of the diviner-to-be; and he acts as spokesman for the latter throughout the ceremony. Thus he formally 'shows' (*paal*) the visitors the beer and the fowls and the goat that have been provided for the ceremony and acts as mediator if there is a disagreement about the amount or quality of these provisions. In the ritual situations that make up the ceremony the visitors sit together in a group and the diviner-to-be and his clansmen sit together in a group. Between the two groups sits the selected *ahəŋ*. As is customary in all such situations, the two parties do not address one another directly. They address the intermediary, who 'passes on (*zaŋ ti*)' what was said to the other party. 604 778

Similarly, if a dispute occurs between segments of different clans, for instance over the abduction of a wife, the injured group might send one of their members who is a 'sister's son' of the abductor's clan, with a message of protest and a demand for the return of the wife. An *ahəŋ* is the appropriate person to act as go-between in negotiations between different clans. In the system of clanship ties, it will be remembered, intercalary lineages are sometimes credited with being the agnates of one clan and the 'sister's sons' of the other.[1] 604 627

As has been suggested, Tallensi maintain that an *ahəŋ* acting as an intermediary in inter-clan transactions is bound to be equally faithful to both parties. This does not mean that an *ahəŋ* is always equally loyal in sentiment to both his patrilineal and his matrilateral—especially his immediate maternal—kin. Tallensi say that when there is a clash of interests a man will always side with his patrilineal kin while endeavouring, if possible, to refrain from bringing harm on his maternal kin. The behaviour of an *ahəŋ* in war between his and his mother's brother's clan is a case in point. 604 613

But there is a belief which suggests that the loyalty of an *ahəŋ* to his mother's brother's lineage may, in some circumstances, outweigh his loyalty to his own clan. In the old days of warfare, it is said, if a man was killed in fighting, there was a way of taking vengeance on the slayer by means of sorcery. The arrow that slew the victim was extracted, and the clan and lineage of the slayer were ascertained. This was easy. Every inner or medial lineage of a clan usually has a distinctive mark (*daan*). One lineage, for example, may tie a tiny guinea-fowl feather at the base of the arrow-head, another may use a particular species of grass. By inquiring from their sororal kinsmen in the enemy clan the victim's lineage brothers soon discovered which lineage the slayer 604 613 754

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 44 ff.

604 613 754 belonged to and who he was. The method of sorcery was to dip this 'evil arrow (*peembier*)' secretly into some food or drink the slayer was about to take. If this was done he would die. The problem then was to find someone who would carry out this task. It could not be done by any of the victim's clansmen since it required intimate contact with the slayer's family.

578 604 613 754 If there was a daughter of the victim's clan, or better still, inner lineage married to a member of the slayer's inner lineage, she might be persuaded to do it. Such an action would be a grave sin, for which the woman's husband's ancestors would punish her with death. But sometimes women hate their husbands so much in their hearts, Tallensi say, that they will risk anything to injure them and their clan. And if the dead man was a close agnate of the woman, she might put vengeance for his death above her duty to her husband's clan. Alternatively, an *ahəŋ* of the victim's inner lineage or clan, who is a member of the slayer's inner lineage or clan, might be persuaded to undertake the commission. Only a man who had a deep grudge against the slayer would undertake so wicked an action for which the clan ancestors would certainly punish him with death. But enmity between clansmen, even between brothers of the same inner lineage, is not unknown; and as Tallensi often assert, the belief that the ancestors may punish an action with death does not always restrain an unscrupulous man. Whether or not this act of sorcery was ever carried out I cannot tell. It is impossible to obtain verifiable information on a point of this sort. But what is of interest is the belief itself. Assuming that it is founded on fantasy, it still suggests that the loyalties of an *ahəŋ* are felt to be more evenly divided than is conventionally admitted.

604 578 There is other evidence for this view. The Gəlibdaana of Tɛnzugu earned the hostility of most of the maximal lineage and clan heads of the Tongo district by his high-handed drive to aggrandize himself.[1] In public his opponents had the support of practically all their clan or lineage elders. But amongst them there were, in every clan, one or two private sympathizers of the Gəlibdaana. The usual explanation was that these men were 'sisters' sons' or 'grandsons' of his inner lineage or clan. One of the Chief of Tongo's most trusted and devoted elders used to visit the Gəlibdaana regularly. Another elder of the chief pointed out to me, in explanation, that the first was an *ahəŋ* of the Gəlibdaana's inner lineage. He quoted several other men who were *ahəs* of the Gəlibdaana's inner lineage and maintained close contact with him. It was through them, he added, that the Gəlibdaana kept himself so well informed of everything that happened at Tongo, even of matters that should not be known outside the chief's family. He admitted that the Chief of Tongo probably had similar contacts with the Gəlibdaana's faction and kept himself informed of the Gəlibdaana's activities in the same way.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 251 ff.

604 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The
764 funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public
571 interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the
beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of
a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally
571 taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage
head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the
602 lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of
782 the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

793 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly
appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan
602 kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'
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778 will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And
787 if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his benefactress.
769 The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing
menace.

As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man
● 613 it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the dominant
769 ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo*
778 ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather,
and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the
791 group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔγar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahəŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔγar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔγar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔγar* is tangibly symbolized.

Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahəŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahəs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

769 The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple
combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's
602 father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

602 could not have been less than 80 years old. This tree was the centre of
769 the communal life of the neighbourhood. It was, as every native would
automatically expect, also an important ancestor shrine. A few years after
778 it sprouted Tiezien's paternal grandfather discovered through a diviner
that his mother's father and *his* mother, a Pusunamoo woman, had
chosen the baobab as their shrine. The Pusunamoo woman's maximal
lineage consecrated it for Tiezien's grandfather. Thereafter sacrifices
were regularly offered on the tree. In due course Tiezien succeeded to
[164] the custody of this shrine. Then came the influenza epidemic of 1918.
Many people died at Kpata'ar, including members of Tiezien's inner
lineage and wives and children of the lineage. A diviner revealed that
these deaths were being inflicted by the Pusunamoo ancestress in retalia-
tion for long neglect. She demanded that Tiezien should collect a large
number of fowls from all the members of his inner lineage and take them
to Pusunamoo to be sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* of her medial lineage
as an atonement. This was Tiezien's first and last contact with his
matrilateral kin at Pusunamoo up to 1936.

It is evident, from these examples, as has been previously suggested,
602 that the majority of a man's remote matrilateral kin are not socially
relevant for him. All, however, are potentially so and may become
so at some time or another; and when they do enter his field of social
relations it is chiefly in their ritual capacity.

We said that the most important ancestor shrines linking a man to a
602 matrilateral lineage are *bakologo* and *bɔɣar* shrines. Of the two the *bɔɣar*
778 shrine is, in fact, the more important. As we have shown in our earlier
769 book,[1] the ancestor cult of the Tallensi culminates in the conception and
cult of the *bɔɣar*. This notion and the cult that expresses it form the
centre of gravity of the lineage system. Hence it seems strange, at first
sight, to find that every *bɔɣar* must necessarily be derived from a matri-
lateral lineage. We can understand this, however, if we consider the
significance of the *bɔɣar* in the lineage system.

A *bɔɣar* is the shrine consecrated to the founding ancestor of a lineage
602 and his mother. It symbolizes the identity of that lineage and its dif-
778 ferentiation from other lineages of the same order within a more inclusive
769 lineage or within a clan. A lineage expands by a process of internal
segmentation and differentiation that follows the lines of cleavage in-
613 herent in the structure of the joint family.[2] The component segments
of a lineage are differentiated from one another primarily by reference
to their descent from different 'mothers'—that is different wives of their
common founding ancestor. But a woman does not sever her ties with
her lineage when she marries and becomes a mother; and in kinship
questions Tale thought is dominated by the lineage concept. Hence
Tallensi think of a lineage progenitrix not only as such-and-such a

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 137.

[2] Ibid. ch. xii.

named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such 602
a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a 778
maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of
the several 'mothers' of its segments. 769

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it re- 613
quires a *bɔɣar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔɣar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔɣar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔɣar* symbolizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔɣar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the signi- 602
ficance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. 613
According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by
divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The 766
physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person [761]
may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ninvoo*)'—that is a full social being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

602 he does not join his forefathers, he does not become an ancestor spirit. 613 This shows that it is not the fact of death that turns a person into an 766 ancestor spirit but the fact that, as Tallensi believe, he is summoned (*buol*) by his ancestors and goes to join them.

769 613 Thus when a lineage progenitrix becomes an ancestor spirit, she does so as the bearer of mystical powers and attributes that reside in the collective body of her lineage ancestors, symbolized and made accessible to man in their lineage *bɔyar*. Looked at in this way, too, the *bɔyar* consecrated to her and her son must be an offshoot of her lineage *bɔyar*.[1]

778 613 In addition, there is the obvious point that a segment of a lineage cannot symbolize its distinctness by means of a *bɔyar* derived from their own lineage *bɔyar*, which is the symbol of the genealogical and social unity of the lineage, not of its internal differentiation. The lineage *bɔyar*, as is evident, is the most esoteric symbol of the principle that runs right through Tale social structure, that social differentiation within the lineage framework springs from maternal origin. This principle operates in lineage structure;[2] and we have seen how, at the other end of the scale, it constitutes the springboard of individual differentiation in the structure of the joint family.[3] This is a further instance of the consistency of Tale social structure at all levels conferred upon it by the kinship system.

A new segment of a lineage begins to crystallize out as a recognized corporate unit in the time of its founding ancestor's grandsons. For it is not until then that the process of fission in the lineage has gone far enough to separate his grandchildren and his brothers' grandchildren into distinct nuclear lineages. Thus it is a man's grandson or great-grandson who sets up a *bɔyar* consecrated to him and his mother. According to the idiom of Tale religious thought, the ancestor demands that a *bɔyar* be set up for him and his mother. A day is appointed for the ceremony, and all the descendants of the progenitrix, through both males and females, are informed. In the morning or early afternoon the head of the new segment takes a fowl, a goat or sheep, and a pot of beer to the head of his grandmother's inner lineage, or in some clans, medial lineage. The men of that lineage assemble so that all of its branches are represented and the animals are sacrificed to the lineage *bɔyar* on behalf of the *ahəŋ*. Then the *bɔyar* is 'scooped' for him, in the same way as was described in the case of the diviner's shrine. The *ahəŋ* goes straight

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[1] In theory, obviously, the only lineage *bɔyar* that need not be derived from another *bɔyar* is the *bɔyar* of a maximal lineage. Actually most maximal lineage *bɔya* conform to the pattern we have described. The only truly sovereign *bɔya*—i.e. *bɔya* not derived from other *bɔya*—are the External *Bɔya* of the Talis and their congeners. And it is significant that the component maximal lineages of these clans generally have two *bɔya*, one the domestic representative of the External *Bɔyar*, the other a distinctive *bɔyar* derived from their founder's mother's lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

[2] Ibid., ch. xii.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. III.

home, where in the meantime the other members, both men and women, 778 of the new segment and the 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the segment 613 who have been able to come have gathered. The head of the new segment arrives, followed, as the Tallensi think, by the spirits of his grandmother's ancestors. He now performs the sacrifices by which the new *bɔɣar* is consecrated. He himself offers a sheep. All the other male members of the new segment bring a fowl each to be sacrificed on their behalf and *ahɔs* and *yaas* all do so too. A large pot or earthenware dish, inside which the small pot containing the sediment 'scooped' from the grandmother's lineage *bɔɣar* pot is placed, forms the altar. Henceforth this will be the *bɔɣar* of the new lineage segment; and there will be a similar communion rite embracing all the descendants of the founding ancestor and his mother whenever the *bɔɣar* is inherited by a new lineage head.[1]

We have now considered the most important ritual services matri- 602 lateral kin render to their sororal kin. The ritual services rendered by 764 sororal kin to matrilateral kin are, as might be expected, of far less consequence. In funeral ceremonies, for example, there are a number of rites in which it is necessary to have the participation of an *ahɔŋ* of the deceased. The rite of cooking 'the porridge of sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', which has been previously mentioned, is typical of these rites; and it is typical of them, also, that anybody who can, by any stretch of the term, be described as *ahɔŋ* can serve in them. All these rites express the fact that a person's death is of concern to his or her sororal kin as well as to his or her patrilineal kin, and affects the field of social relations of the former as well as that of the latter. Hence in all funeral rites a special portion of the meat, cooked food, and beer used is allocated to the 'sisters' children', whether few or many are present. Matrilateral and sororal kin do not, however, undergo mourning rites.

Apart from funerals, there are one or two other special ceremonies in 602 which the services of an *ahɔŋ* are needed. Thus in the ceremony of exorcising an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) an *ahɔŋ* is required to perform the 789 final act of sympathetic magic. This consists in collecting the magical paraphernalia used in the ceremony—all of which symbolize the wish that the evil Predestiny may depart and conceal itself for ever—and throwing them away in some barren spot. A 'sister's son' is called upon

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[1] There is a point of religious doctrine that cannot be fully discussed here but must be mentioned to avoid confusion. Every important ancestor shrine is a means of making a whole line of ancestors accessible to its possessor. Now the collective mystical power of a patrilineal line of ancestors reposes in the lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence every important shrine has to be linked up with the lineage *bɔɣar* of the dominant spirit to which it is consecrated. That is why when a *bakologo* is set up, the *bɔɣar* of the matrilateral lineage from which it is derived is 'scooped' for inclusion in the new shrine. Broadly speaking, the ritual validity of every ancestor shrine goes back to a *bɔɣar*. But the setting up of a new lineage *bɔɣar* is a very special ritual landmark.

Kusase

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which
131 inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern
161 Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the
clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure
171 from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate
the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its
totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen
trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan
taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later
632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in
certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement'
rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following
table illustrates the above.

	Town.	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
103			
614	Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetaṽ* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
	Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
	Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur*. (The heart of any animal).
	Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
	Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

103 614 Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa).

614 My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

611 754 The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

173 622 793 *Traditions of the Kusase*: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwoe teŋ*) and that person would

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his
father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally
used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they
must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any
man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings"
(*ɔkoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon
will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has
ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut
them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know
they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some
one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's
widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these [586]
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back
the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then
remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have
been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the
clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new
payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two
widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives
the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise
they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows
and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries 614
outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first
husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

553 776 778 head and the python skull were placed on the shrine that was eventually consecrated to the *bakologo* spirit and my informant's name was a reference to the arrow head. One of *his* sons taken in guardianship by the same shrine was named WAAFO, snake.

[775] This case is interesting from another angle, too. The Tallensi have no belief in reincarnation. There is no special bond between a person and his ancestral namesake. He is not supposed to resemble or expected to emulate his ancestor. His name is a display of pride in ancestry, on the one hand, and a sign of submission to the religious supremacy of the ancestors, on the other. Thus he has no special ritual observances, on account of his name, if he is the ward of a patrilineal ancestor. ● [614] But if his *sɛγər* is a matrilateral ancestor, this person might have belonged to a clan different from his own. In that case he is often obliged to keep the totemic taboos of the clan of this ancestor. Thus in the above case it is not altogether an accident that the slain python turned out to be a manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor whose clan have a taboo against killing and eating this animal. Children taken in spirit-guardianship by this ancestor have therefore to observe the same taboo, whether or not it is followed by other members of their family and clan.

553 776 I do not want to follow further the complex ramifications of this aspect of Tale naming customs. One more detail must suffice. The greatest renown, that is the most respected *wu'uri*, comes from election to an office. A chief (*Na'ab*) or Custodian of the Earth (*Tɛndaana*) is always addressed and referred to by his title. After his death he is certain to have descendants through his sons, grandsons, and daughters, placed under his spiritual guardianship. They will be named either by the name he took to himself on election to his office, which I shall describe presently, or by his title. NA'AB, NA'ABPƆK, TENDAANA, etc. are common names among descendants of such dignitaries.

And here it is pertinent to add that certain forms of disgrace which are associated with ritual danger result in the suppression of ancestral names. Thus if a man dies of smallpox, or is killed in war, his name is never given to a descendant. He will be remembered in sacrifices if he has descendants but not in their names.

551 553 I want to turn now to the open names. Their variety is extraordinary. A few refer to accidental or conventional circumstances connected with the birth of the bearer and are therefore fairly frequent. ZIBA, knows not father, is the name always given to a posthumous child. SAMANE, the home farm, is a common name. It is given to a child whose mother was overcome by labour pains while engaged on some task on the home farm. SUOR, path, has the same origin. TAMPƆƔAR, the garbage heap, may be the name given to a child born after the onset of labour pains at the ash heap. But it also arises in this way. A woman has had several children all of whom have died soon after birth. This is failure or malevolence on the part of the various ancestors who claimed these children as wards. When her next child is born the father says: "I give this child's life to be watched over by the garbage heap. My ancestors have failed me, for all that my children are good for is to be buried (as babies that die are so buried) in the garbage heap." This is a well tried magical idea, found also elsewhere in West Africa and in many other parts of the world.

1: Rattray
618

FE11 Tallensi FE11
Kusase

[Information concerning the groups which Rattray calls "clans" will be found in category 614.]

2: Fortes
618

FE11 Tallensi FE11

[For information on clan-barrios, see category 116, pp. 40-65, 71-75, 78-105, 108-113, 116-120, 125-128, 136-137, 147-148, 150-152 160-161, 165-166, 169-170, 189-191, 205-206, 241, 245-249]

173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
[304] forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez
from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows
565 these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

●618 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—
128 is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *tey* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *tey* (town, Nankanse *teya*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Mey* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan),
784 but I also taboo *sakur* and *mey*. My ancestor *Tamperypeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

NAMNAM

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618 ●
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab* 624
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under th Chief of Nangode.

105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tendaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization ~~that~~ emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

● 618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or subclan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The 611
second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its
life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father 842
a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or
has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right
rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so
much importance to having children that they generally make every
effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony,
or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the
care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When 611
she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the 583
cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense
of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three
head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law
(or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's
children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established
as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted 611
as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory
he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In
practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in
the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of
his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when
he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare,
when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours,
sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came
across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and
eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite
an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted 613
into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without
any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt 618●
to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition 602
to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more
important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship
and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the
new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one
would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old
man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance
of his father's estate, but was elected tendaana over the heads of men
who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's
jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either
his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do
so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow
of redemption.

586 684 Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

158 827 586 Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

578 833 It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pen tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

684 A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

581 613 618 To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

jectured that the taboo is connected with the fact that the rights over a 603
woman's reproductive powers belong to her husband and must not be 765
confounded with her parents' authority over her. If they came to the funeral of their daughter's child they would have to be received with respect, and it might seem as if they were on a par with the child's paternal grandparents. For the same reason, perhaps, a married woman's parents do not attend her funeral in person, but are represented by other members of her natal family and lineage.

For a man his son's children stand for the certainty that his line of descent will go on. The wheel of the generations has come full circle. When he and his wife die it will be announced to all the world. On the day of his or her funeral the youngest grandson will be placed before a drum with the drumsticks in his hands and the youngest granddaughter before a calabash with two pieces of cane in her hands. When the signal is given for the funeral to begin they will strike the drum and calabash and cry out, 'Oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather (*N-yaab yee*)'. And when the funeral is concluded [302]
the son's children and the brothers' sons' children will have their heads shaved in mourning in the manner prescribed for grandchildren. Half the head will be shaved and half left unshaved.

The equivalence of alternate generations is shown by the fact that a 603
grandson may marry the widow of his paternal or maternal grandfather,
or of any man whom he calls grandfather, other than his own grand- 587
mother. This rule is of practical significance when an old man dies leaving a young widow, and all the men of his inner lineage are either 'sons' or 'grandsons' to him. Then the grandsons who are old enough are encouraged to woo the widow, and the elders of the lineage put pressure on her to choose one of them so that she can remain a wife of that lineage. It was thus that Tiezien married his own paternal grandfather's youngest widow. At that time she had a young infant at the breast who was Tiezien's own father's half-brother. Tiezien was then about 18 or 19. He thus had the unusual experience of bringing up a child who was his proxy father. To-day Tiezien, a vigorous man of about 70, is ritual head of Kpata'ar; but his proxy father Nyaaŋzum, whom he reared, is the head of their inner lineage. Tiezien was made politico-religious head of the clan (*Kpata'ar na'ab*) over Nyaaŋzum's head according to the rule that 'begetting does not cross the *dug*';[1] but within their *dug* he is nominally subject to Nyaaŋzum's authority. This might lead to considerable friction between them if they were not as devoted to each other as they are. The marriage of a grandson with his grandfather's widow is, however, an uncommon occurrence, chiefly

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[1] Headship of the clan, in this case, goes by selection from amongst the eligible elders, but usually comes to the oldest man in the clan. Tiezien could, [618]
however, not have accepted the offer without the consent of his proxy father, Nyaaŋzum.

and convergence, every clan puts an egocentric interpretation upon its relations with other clans. These interpretations are compounded of prejudice, conventional opinions, traditional attitudes, and personal values; but they conform to a pattern nevertheless. Lacking a central machinery of government and a common allegiance, the Tale settlements have no permanent political relations with one another. Even the Administration has been able to impose only a limited and superficial degree of coördination. Traditionally and to this day the heads of clans coöperate in certain contingencies or in certain periodically recurrent ritual situations only. For the rest local autonomy is absolute. The upshot is that the political relations of the Tallensi are a sum of the political relations of each settlement with its neighbors. This means first, that geography is an important factor in their politics, and second, that rigid political frontiers do not exist. 621

A glance at the political geography of the clans with which the present paper is mainly concerned is therefore essential. 618

These Tale settlements fall into two major groups. On the one hand are the clans known as the Namoos, on the other the Tallis clans. The principal settlement of the Namoos is at Tongo, which was founded, according to the tradition stereotyped throughout Taleland, by Mosur, who fled thither from the Mampuru country in the south, probably over two centuries ago. Mosur was the ancestor of all the people of Tongo and of several settlements colonized from there. Later immigrants from Mampuru established co-clans of Tongo.

The Tallis (i.e. the "real Tallensi") can be subdivided into two groups, those living north of Tongo, the principal settlement of whom is at Baari; and those living on and around the Tong Hills, whom I call the Hill Tallis. The Gbizug lineage is in a special category, as we shall see. Tallis traditions attribute diverse origins to their clans. Four clans, including Baari, Gbizug, and Wakyi, claim primacy of rank in virtue of the fact that their ancestors emerged from the earth or descended from heaven, and were there when Mosur arrived. The other clans are offshoots of these, or of immigrant origin. The Tallis have an ingenious system of clan concatenation, based on a fiction of kinship. Broadly speaking, every lineage of every clan is linked to a lineage of every neighboring Tallis clan by a fiction of half-brotherhood which binds them to reciprocity of certain privileges and obligations, prohibits intermarriage, and especially unites them in a common religious cult. The Namoos clans conform in all respects to the classical definition of a clan; the others must be designated thus for brevity's sake and for want of a term which will convey how they deviate from the prototype.

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

101 ● 619 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

167 619 648 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes comprise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[113] [1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF 'TALLENSI'

Tribal Divisions

101 TALELAND is, as we have seen, merely a portion of a far greater, ecologically uniform region, marked off only by an artificial boundary. The same kind of subsistence farming is practised throughout the whole region of which Taleland forms a part. The culture of its inhabitants likewise represents a far more widely spread type. Before we embark on our sociological analysis we must know what sort of a unit we are dealing with. Have the people of Taleland any form of cultural or structural unity and singularity that differentiates them from neighbouring socio-geographical areas? Or are they a fraction of a greater society arbitrarily circumscribed to suit the convenience of the field worker?

101 619 The question is not so easy to answer as might be expected. For the natives of Taleland, like the other so-called 'tribes' north of the Gambaga scarp, have no obvious political unity distinguishing them from like political units. In terms of their own political and social organization there is no single government exercising authority over all the people of Taleland, and only over them, within their own defined territory. This has been the most serious obstacle confronting British administration in this area.[1] We must approach the problem from a different angle.

197 101 In the literature and in administrative practice the inhabitants of Taleland are called the Tallensi[2] and are distinguished as a 'tribe' from neighbouring 'tribes', the Kusaasi on the east, the Namnam or Nabdam on the north, the Nankansi or Gorənsi (in Talni, *Gɔrisi*) on the west, the Mamprusi on the south of them. All these groups speak dialects of Mole-Dagbane. But Kusal, Nabte, and Gɔrni are closely akin to Mole, whereas Talni and Mampurule have closer affinities with Dagbane. These dialect areas have no strict boundaries. At the frontiers one passes through [191] intermediate zones where the people speak intermediate dialects or are equally familiar with two contiguous dialects. But it is clearly recognized, both by the natives and by outside observers, that the tribes enumerated above have more in common with one another linguistically than any of them have with the peoples of the same cultural type farther away, such as the Woolisi (usually called the Kassena in the literature and by the

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[1] For an outline of Tale political organization and a discussion of some of the theoretical problems raised by it, see *African Political Systems*, edited by M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Oxford, 1940.

[2] *Sc.* Talense (Rattray), Talansi (Cardinall), sing. Talenga, Talanga. This form, correctly Talənsi, sing. Taləŋa, is taken from the dialect of the Zuarungu district (Gorəni, or in the dialect of the Tallensi, Gɔrni). The artificial spelling I use has been adopted to show that the Tallensi regard this phonetic form as a foreigners' version of the name by which they designate themselves. In their own dialect (Talni) they call themselves Talis, sing. Taləŋa. Talni forms will henceforth be used for all vernacular words in the text. [p. 14]

197 Administration) of Navrongo or the Bulisi (Builsa) of Kanjaga district,
101 whose tongues are not intelligible to Mole or Dagbane speakers.

In the same way it is well known that the Kusaasi, Namnam, Gorənsi,
171 and Tallensi are more closely allied in culture *inter se* than they are with
101 other neighbouring 'tribes'. In this part of West Africa one can often tell
[304] where a person comes from by his facial cicatrizations.[1] People of these four groups all have the same facial marks, a slashed scar (*bɛn*) running diagonally downwards from the bridge of the nose across one or both cheeks, which are, in addition, often embellished with a neat tracery of tiny incisions (*yiis*) spreading in herring-bone lines over the forehead and down to the neck. These markings are an emblem of their cultural uniformity, as compared with neighbouring groups. Mamprusi and Mossi, frankly contemptuous of their nakedness and poverty, lump them all together under the sobriquet 'Gorənsi'. Since the coming of the white man they have been called 'the Farafaras' and they are beginning to accept this appellation, which is said to be derived from one of their customary expressions of greeting, *ni i fara-fara-fara*.

197 There are, in short, no precise linguistic or cultural boundaries between
101 these four groups. Nor are there precise political or structural boundaries
between them. They overlap with one another in every way; and further
171 research would, I am certain, show that the Kusaasi, Namnam, and
619 Gorənsi also overlap to some extent with their neighbours other than the Tallensi. At the same time, each of these four groups is considered by members of the other three and by its own members to be in some way a distinct territorial, linguistic, and cultural group. It is, however, a distinction of degree, not of kind. Each group comprises a cluster of communities which have more in common among themselves, linguistically and in the details and nuances of custom, belief, and values, than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. They have closer social ties among themselves than any of them have with their other neighbours, though they have no apparent political unity and never, in the past, combined for war against external enemies or for common defence.

619 This largely implicit feeling of their difference from neighbouring
101 dialect areas which prevails amongst such a cluster of communities is not
based on a conception of tribal unity. Sharp distinctions of custom,
621 belief, and values, as well as of structural relationships, are recognized within the cluster. They are, indeed, of fundamental importance for the social interrelations of the communities making up the cluster. On the same principle as before, the cluster is subdivided into smaller constellations of communities which have more in common, closer bonds, *inter se*, than any of them have with other communities. Culturally, and structurally, as we shall discover in the course of our study, society in the Volta region is built up on a segmentary principle. The degree of unity, coherence, autonomy, or singularity of a socio-geographic segment of

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[1] These distinguishing facial marks were noted by the first European traveller who visited the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the Frenchman Binger. Cf. Binger, Capitaine, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, 1893, vol. ii, pp. 34–7. For diagrams of these markings see Armitage, C. H., *The Tribal Markings and Marks of Adornment of the Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1924, especially figs. 4, 6, 26.

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619
to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101
reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are
identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621
This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101
the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648
is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101
settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gɔrni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common.
The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191]
Gɔrni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with
Gɔris. Gɔrni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197]
them and their Gɔre neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101
The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609
Gɔrəŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, propinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101
is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

upheld. I have heard the Chief of Tongo upbraid a young man of his 618x
own segment of the sub-clan for abducting the wife of a Sɛk man. The chief denounced this breach of *mabiirɔt* as a depravity possible only since the coming of the white man, and ordered the girl to be sent back.

Other Namoo communities are found at Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, and 621
Kpɔlɔg (or Pwɔlɔg), beyond Ŋkoog. For practical purposes these Namoo groups are almost entirely cut off from Tongo. Culturally they are Gɔrisi, but Tongo people describe them as 'our kinsfolk (*ti mabiis*)'; and there is even a myth to the effect that Pusunamoo was founded by a kinsman of Mosuor who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu but parted company from him before he reached Tongo. As, however, these places lie beyond the horizon of the regular social relations of Tongo, their 'kinship' with Tongo becomes effective only by chance. They have no ceremonial relationship with Tongo. They do not attend Tongo funerals except as individuals drawn thither by personal cognatic ties, and they would not easily obtain redress if one of their wives were abducted by a Tongo man. Nevertheless, their 'kinship' with Tongo, nominal though it seems to be, forms an essential element, in all the Namoo communities mentioned, of the natives' view of their society and its structure. To some extent also the chain principle holds. Pusunamoo and Baluŋ have a good deal of social intercourse and regular social relations with Ŋkoog, and the latter serves as a link between them and Tongo. They are thus linked with Tongo loosely and by a relay, but more substantially than merely by a fiction, and through Tongo with the other branches of Mosuor's descendants.

In the Sie district, as we have seen, of the Namoo clans not held to be 621
connected by origin with the children of Mosuor, Gban has the closest 619
links with the latter. In the social perspective of a Tongo man, however, its identity tends to be masked by Sie. Gban is thought of as a satellite clan of Sie, in the same way as Zoo is regarded as a satellite clan of Tongo by the people of the Sie district. Spatial and political relations give rise to this point of view, and the habit of classifying social groups by contraposition gives it ready expression. This is the case also with Namɔɣalug and Gar, which are connected with Sie in much the same way as Zoo is with Tongo. There are other Namoo clans or Namoo segments of composite clans in this district which fall within the political orbit of Gbee. Some are linked by ties of clanship to adjacent settlements of Gɔrisi or Namnam. Some have so far assimilated the customs and dialectal peculiarities of their Gɔrisi or Namnam neighbours that people from the centre of Taleland hardly consider them to be Tallensi, though they themselves claim to have closer social affinities with the Tallensi than with the Gɔrisi or Namnam. In this interstitial area the mosaic of micro-cultural variations and the pattern of clan organization, though similar in principle to what is found in the vicinity of Tongo, are very intricate.

Namoos from this area marry extensively with Sie and Yamɔlɔg and more frequently with Tongo than the peripheral Namoo communities on the other side, viz. Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, and Kpɔlɔg. Thus, any Tongo man is far more likely to have cognatic ties with a place like Namɔɣalug

619 or Kpatia than with Baluŋ. He has more frequent social contact and 621 closer economic relations with the former places than with the inhabitants of the latter. In the past the people of Sie sometimes took up arms to aid Gbee or Kpatia, and Tongo people might have been drawn in to aid Sie. A Tongo man therefore thinks of Gbee and Kpatia (and this applies to the other Namoo communities in their vicinity as well) as potential war allies of his clan in former times. He never thinks of Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, or Kpoləg in this way. In spite of this, Tongo people insist that the people of Pusunamoo, at any rate, are closer kin to them than, say, the Namoos of Gbee or Kpatia, since their founding ancestor was a relative of Mosuor himself. There seems to be a contradiction between the actualities of social relations and the formal ties of putative genealogy. Other things being equal spatial proximity exercises a stronger pull than assumed genealogical proximity. This principle has a general application in Taie social structure.

The Meaning of 'Namoo'

621 The meaning of the appellation 'Namoo' in the social structure of the Tallensi has now become clear. We have examined it from the vantage point of Tongo. Had we elected to start from Gbee, for example, we should have obtained a picture built on the same principles but with a different perspective. Gorni-speaking Namoos beyond Kpatia, who have so remote and occasional a relevance for the normal life of Tongo that even nowadays hardly anything is known of them, are a significant element in the social frame of reference of the people of Gbee. Their community of stock and of distinctive custom which all Namoos in Taleland and the adjacent areas recognize, is not thought of as confined within territorial or political boundaries. But for every maximal lineage and clan their fellow Namoos are distributed on a graded scale of relevance according to their structural ties with them. Several factors affect the relevance of one Namoo group for another: ties of clanship; political ties; the ties of spatial contiguity or proximity; the belief in a special tie, closer than that of general kinship (*mabiirət*), by which Namoos are grouped together, and which, though assimilated to the tie of clanship on mythical grounds, is not so close as true clanship ties. All these, taken together, map out the main structural ties of any Namoo maximal lineage. These ties fall in a series of concentric zones, as it were, by which all the Namoo communities are arranged on a scale of diminishing social relevance for the unit that forms the centre of the given network of structural relations. Theoretically they extend 'from the land of the Dagomba (Dagbəŋ) to the land of the Mossi (Mooga)', but the greater their distance in space from the central unit, the less likely are they to be actualized in the ordinary life of any of its members. In fact, outside a geographical radius of some five or six miles the farther zones of Namoo connexions have hardly any relevance for the central unit.

The pattern of social relations arising out of clanship ties in the narrow sense holds for other structural ties assimilated to them in form but founded on different factors. In respect of these ties, too, every Namoo clan or maximal lineage may be regarded as the centre of a field of

'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔya* 782
of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of 794
the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual 619 ●
community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of 794
every Taləŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔyar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔyar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔyar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) 794
are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social 171
groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔyar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔyar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔyar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkəra*)'.

Bɔyar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage 182
associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious 794
conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of 613
loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔyar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

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[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

CHAPTER VIII

TOTEMISM AMONG THE TALIS AND OTHER NON-NAMOOS

The Unity of all the Talis

It is commonly said, everywhere in Taleland, that the Talis are 'all one' (*bonyeni*). The Talis themselves, in spite of their elaborate differentiation by clanship ties, always picture themselves as a cohesive group. As might be expected, the implications of this idea vary considerably as between the Talis adjacent to Tongo and the Hill folk. For any of the latter, with the exception of Yinduur and Sii, it meant in the old days, among other things, mutual assistance in war against the Namoos. Yinduur and Sii, however, never fought against Tongo, and sometimes took the side of Tongo on account of their ties with it through the chiefship held by the clan head of Sii. Yet nobody would be more indignant than a Sii man if it were seriously suggested that this indicated closer bonds between his clan and the Tongo Namoos than between his clan and the other Talis; for in a fight between the Talis and any settlement other than Tongo, Sii and Yinduuri would rally unhesitatingly to the side of their 'kin', the Talis. The people of Zubiuŋ, again, invariably took the side of Tongo in war, whereas the people of Ba'ari generally ranged themselves with the Hill clans. Gbizug, bound by equally strong politico-ritual ties to the other Talis and to Tongo, was ritually prohibited from taking part in war between them at all. In keeping with its function of maintaining the political balance between the Namoos and the Talis, it was the traditional peace-maker. But Gbeog fought with its Talis kin and might even attack Zubiuŋ. Thus by the crucial test of warfare the Talis do not form a single, permanently cohesive group. But at the same time, clans that stood outside the Hill Talis cluster, or opposed them in warfare, never infringed their specific ties of clanship by doing this. Zubiuŋ, for instance, would fight against the Hill Talis in a general war, but not against Ba'ari, with which it has clanship ties. For the same reason Sii, coming to the aid of Tongo, would attack Gorogo or Gbeog but not a Tenzugu clan. 619

These divergent loyalties in war are indices of divergent social and political ties springing from the internal structural differentiation and local relationships of the Talis. They are an aspect of the interlocking of Talis and non-Talis in the social system. They do not invalidate the claim of the Talis to be a cohesive group. Their unity is based on the network of structural ties binding them to one another. It is symbolized, in native thought, by a number of ritual observances that are closely correlated with their social ties and cleavages; and its most significant expression is the cycle of the Great Festivals.

Funeral Customs as Criteria of Social Alinement among Talis Clans

For a Namoo, the social definition of the Talis is primarily 'those who

619 gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pehug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tendaana.

764 [884] Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*waləg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teeləg lineages, use only a piece of string

619 184 The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

173 Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Wooləga country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teeləg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

577 764 The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihər*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihər*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

Funeral rites have a twofold symbolic value for the Tallensi. They 764
symbolize the corporate unity and identity of the lineage and clan and 182
its ties with other clans; but they also symbolize the group's dependence on and moral responsibility to their ancestors, collectively and individually. This is shown very well in the custom of each clan's using a particular kind of loin cover for the dead and in the associated custom of swearing an oath by the father's loin cover. They show that ritual symbols of social differentiation and association among the Tallensi are not mere emblems of intergroup differences. They are emotionally charged symbols of the fact that the corporate unity and identity of the group is created by the moral bonds of its members among themselves and of each member with the ancestors of the group. We shall return to this presently.

In spite of their deviant mortuary customs, the people of Gorogo, 619 ●
Ka'ar, and Teelɔg consider themselves to be, and are considered to be, as 171
much a part of the Talis aggregate as any other Talis clans. Conversely 184
it is known among the Talis that some clans of Gɔrisi and Namnam, as well as many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, dress their dead in a sheepskin loin cover. The Talis do not on this account acknowledge any of these groups as Talis or as being kin to them. Again, some clans in the Sie district gird their dead with an oribi skin. But they deny having any ties with Ka'ar. Indeed, their elders are quite unaware that they have this custom in common with Ka'ar, and are not in the least interested in hearing of it. This is a significant difference between the Namoos, all of whom have the same mortuary observances, and the Talis and their congeners. This difference extends to other manifest ritual usages that serve to differentiate corporate units from one another.

Certain other funeral rites are also stressed as rigorously distinctive 764
of the Talis and as common to all of them. All Talis, it is said, conclude 184
a funeral by the rite of *ŋma ma'ala*. Members of the deceased's maximal lineage, and the heads of the other lineages of the clan, contribute a large number of fowls, which are slaughtered as a sacrifice to mark the final departure of the dead person from the social sphere of the living and his aggregation to the ancestors. In reality, almost every clan has its own modifications in the details of the rite. In some clans it is performed for all males who have begotten children, in others for lineage heads only, in others for both men and women; and the people of Kpata'ar omit the rite altogether. The rite is found also among many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, with diverse local variations.

Similar local variations from clan to clan appear in the other parts of the funeral ceremonies where the usages of the Talis contrast with those of the Namoos, and many, if not most, of these distinct customs are found among the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie district.

These variations in ritual observances, and their correlation with structural ties and cleavages, are constantly brought to an observer's attention. They form a common topic of discussion and comment at funeral ceremonies. One is often reminded of them by the behaviour of women at these ceremonies. A woman's husband's clan very often has different ritual practices from those of her father's clan. Now, married

184 182 extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more distinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

● 619 It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Taləŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tɛndaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔɣar* cult, which extends as far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

182 771 But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos, funeral rites, and *Bɔɣar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

784 171 The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

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[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134-5.

621 comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Degal tɛndaana, the ritual
578 'owner' of the land of Bunkiuk, the Gɔlibdaana's clan. As the head of
423 Bunkiuk and headman of Tenzugu, which includes Degal, he held political
authority over all the territory under the ritual jurisdiction of the latter. Hence this strip of territory, as far as the watercourse, belonged to him. The people dwelling there were no concern of his; let them go elsewhere if they wished.

The Yinduurna'aba, a simple and inarticulate old man, who has never mastered the wiles of modern headmanship, protested vehemently. The Gɔlibdaana's arguments were untenable. The ritual jurisdiction of tɛndaanas had nothing to do with the matter. In any case the Zandoya tɛndaana would contest the Degal tɛndaana's claim. Everybody knows that tɛndaanas acknowledge no boundaries. The group in question was a segment of Zandoya. How could they belong to any other political unit than the latter? To talk of their abandoning the land on which their ancestors had dwelt was preposterous. Indeed, the whole situation was something quite unheard of; it could never have occurred before the coming of the white man, when everyone had his acknowledged place in the society. The truth was that the Gɔlibdaana was deliberately trying to entice his people away from him.

There the matter rested. The case was widely discussed and public opinion, except for the Gɔlibdaana's supporters, sided unanimously with the Yinduurna'aba. Five other cases of the same kind came to my notice; and in all of them the verdict of native custom is unequivocal; social affiliation and not alleged territorial boundaries define the extent of a community. Even the new settlements, though they sprawl more widely than the old settlements and are usually surrounded by considerable tracts of uninhabited land, have no defined geographical boundaries. They can and do go on expanding.

The Concept of the Tɛŋ

621 A Tale settlement can only be identified as a unit by reference to the lineage relationships, politico-ritual ties and cleavages, and jural rights and duties, prevailing within it and between it and its neighbours. That is why we have avoided the word 'village', which conjures up the image of a neatly isolated, compact territorial unit. *Tɛŋ* (pl. *tɛs*) is the native concept denoting a settlement; but no English translation can convey its exact sense. In some ways it is reminiscent of the deme of ancient Greece, a coalescence of local association, lineage organization, common religious cult, and political solidarity. None of these factors serves to demarcate a *tɛŋ* absolutely from adjacent *tɛs*; all of them link together neighbouring *tɛs* or parts of *tɛs* as closely in respect of that one category of social relations as they unite segments of the same *tɛŋ*. A settlement is only a relatively autonomous community. One might perhaps define it as the region of maximum overlap of all the categories of social relations found among the Tallensi.

621 Native linguistic usage reflects this, for *tɛŋ* has a width of reference
619 varying with the situation. A man beginning a discourse on marriage
829 with '*ti tɛŋɔ, nyɛn di pɔɣa* . . .—In this our land, if you marry a wife . . .'

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage 621 customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. 619 They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to 829 themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one another. Tɛnzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized; but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on [578] between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*', but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to native custom.

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as 621 a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the Tɛnzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted, is the keel of Talɛ social organization.

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual 621 significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in 182 the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and 771 its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu sayat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character).

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we 621 may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settle- 618 ment name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages 551 whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name of a well-known *tɛŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are called Saniiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her

of his lineage or clan, other than those whom he describes as his 'fathers' 587
or 'sons'.

Every Tale clan is anchored to a particular locality from which it 361
takes its name. In the central area of Taleland, around the Tong Hills, 621
the present clan settlements appear to date back not less than eight to ten generations. But they have not been and are not territorially static. There are no strict territorial boundaries between adjacent settlements. The homesteads of a settlement merge with those of the adjacent settlements, and the boundaries between them are definable only in social terms, as a function of their ecological and politico-ritual relations at a given time. In the same way every segment of a clan—that is, each of its component maximal lineages—is anchored to a local subdivision of the clan settlement, though many of its members may be dispersed elsewhere.

A striking feature of Tale social organization is the system of inter- 621
clan linkages which constitutes one of the principal forces of cohesion 619
in the society. The genealogically and socially autonomous maximal
lineage or clan is not a closed group. The component maximal lineages 182
that form the segments of adjacent clans have ties of clanship identical with those that unite them to one another within their respective clans. Thus if two adjacent clans have segments A, B, C, and D, E, F, G, respectively, then A (but not B or C) may have clanship ties with D (but not with E, F, or G); B may have clanship ties only with E, and C with F. Each of these maximal lineages also has clanship ties with segments of other neighbouring clans. Thus each component maximal lineage of a clan has a field of clanship that includes the other segments of the clan as well as segments of other clans. This results in a network of interlocking clanship ties that embraces all the separate clans of Taleland. All the Talis clans and the main block of Namoo clans are interlocked in this way in two clusters which are in turn similarly connected at certain points. Moreover, this system of linkages ties the Tale aggregate on to adjacent clans of other neighbouring 'tribes'. Thus we observe that at this level of social structure—the skeletal level, so to speak—as in its territorial and cultural relationship to neighbouring 'tribes', Tale society is a segment of a greater society. The network of inter-clan linkages is one of the principal factors by which the socio-geographic region we have called Taleland is differentiated as a distinct segment of this greater society.

It is also one of the main factors of social equilibrium in Tale society. 626
Dissension between neighbouring clans is kept in check by the mediation of maximal lineages linked by identical ties to both; and warfare is inhibited from disrupting the entire social order by the intervention of social and ritual obligations arising *inter alia* out of the fact that enemies are related directly or indirectly by clanship ties. It is this, in part, that gives Tale wars the complexion of acute family quarrels.

XXXIV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

The Clan Settlement. The Family Compound. The Section-head (Yi-zut-kyɛma). *The* Ten'dan'. *The Territorial Ruler*

621 613 THE constitution of a Talense *teŋ* is identical with that of the Nankanse. The *teŋ* (Nankane *teŋa*) is divided into sections, all the inhabitants of which trace descent from a common ancestor, but each, again, has, as its own more intimate ancestral spirit, a less remote ancestor, from which that particular section takes its name and to whom 'section-', as opposed to '*teŋ*-', sacrifices, are offered. A section is *yi-zug* (Nankane *yi-zuo*). A section-head is *Yi-zug-kpwem* (Nankane *yi-zuo kyɛma*).

At Tongo there are four sections, known as (*a*) Pusega, (*b*) Guŋa, (*c*) Korega, (*d*) Seug. The post of section-head of Pusega was vacant; as 'the funeral custom of the late *yi-zut-kpwem* had not yet been held, his successor could not be appointed'.

The section-head of Guŋa is *Sayezaa* (my informant, see Fig. 63); of Korega, a certain *Basego*; of Seug, vacant, for the same reason as (*a*).

613 [761] *Election of New Section-head*: Heads of other sections met and consulted the *bay* (Nankane *baga*) to find out why the late head of the section had died. The soothsayer might say, 'It was because he did not give one of the cows, *sull* (Nankane, *sulle*), which he received for his eldest daughter, to his ancestor.' After the funeral custom his successor was appointed. 'The man who had the right to take the deceased's *bagere* (here ancestral shrine) was the one to succeed. This man was already known; the *bay* was only consulted about the funeral.'

The successor to the section-head was the 'senior' man in that section, but he was not necessarily the oldest: e.g. *A* marries a wife, *C*, by whom he has three sons, *D*, *E*, *F*, and three grandsons *G*, *H*, *I*, sons of *D*, *E*, and *F*; *A*, in his old age, marries a young wife, *B*, by whom he has a son, *J*. This son may be twenty years or more younger than *G*, *H*, *I*, but if *A*'s brothers are all dead and also *D*, *E*, and *F*, then *J* will become section head before *G*, *H*, or *I*, 'because *G*, *H*, and *I* call *J* father.'[1]

613 178 The tendency here, as almost everywhere in the Northern Territories, is for these hereditary section-leaders, who were really the back-

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[1] See p. 279 [i.e. reference to similar practice among the Nankanse -A] [p. 346]

197 Administration) of Navrongo or the Bulisi (Builsa) of Kanjaga district,
101 whose tongues are not intelligible to Mole or Dagbane speakers.

In the same way it is well known that the Kusaasi, Namnam, Gorənsi,
171 and Tallensi are more closely allied in culture *inter se* than they are with
101 other neighbouring 'tribes'. In this part of West Africa one can often tell
[304] where a person comes from by his facial cicatrizations.[1] People of these four groups all have the same facial marks, a slashed scar (*bɛn*) running diagonally downwards from the bridge of the nose across one or both cheeks, which are, in addition, often embellished with a neat tracery of tiny incisions (*yiis*) spreading in herring-bone lines over the forehead and down to the neck. These markings are an emblem of their cultural uniformity, as compared with neighbouring groups. Mamprusi and Mossi, frankly contemptuous of their nakedness and poverty, lump them all together under the sobriquet 'Gorənsi'. Since the coming of the white man they have been called 'the Farafaras' and they are beginning to accept this appellation, which is said to be derived from one of their customary expressions of greeting, *mi i fara-fara-fara*.

197 There are, in short, no precise linguistic or cultural boundaries between
101 these four groups. Nor are there precise political or structural boundaries
between them. They overlap with one another in every way; and further
171 research would, I am certain, show that the Kusaasi, Namnam, and
619 Gorənsi also overlap to some extent with their neighbours other than the Tallensi. At the same time, each of these four groups is considered by members of the other three and by its own members to be in some way a distinct territorial, linguistic, and cultural group. It is, however, a distinction of degree, not of kind. Each group comprises a cluster of communities which have more in common among themselves, linguistically and in the details and nuances of custom, belief, and values, than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. They have closer social ties among themselves than any of them have with their other neighbours, though they have no apparent political unity and never, in the past, combined for war against external enemies or for common defence.

619 This largely implicit feeling of their difference from neighbouring
101 dialect areas which prevails amongst such a cluster of communities is not
based on a conception of tribal unity. Sharp distinctions of custom,
621 belief, and values, as well as of structural relationships, are recognized within the cluster. They are, indeed, of fundamental importance for the social interrelations of the communities making up the cluster. On the same principle as before, the cluster is subdivided into smaller constellations of communities which have more in common, closer bonds, *inter se*, than any of them have with other communities. Culturally, and structurally, as we shall discover in the course of our study, society in the Volta region is built up on a segmentary principle. The degree of unity, coherence, autonomy, or singularity of a socio-geographic segment of

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[1] These distinguishing facial marks were noted by the first European traveller who visited the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the Frenchman Binger. Cf. Binger, Capitaine, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, 1893, vol. ii, pp. 34-7. For diagrams of these markings see Armitage, C. H., *The Tribal Markings and Marks of Adornment of the Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1924, especially figs. 4, 6, 26.

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619
to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101
reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are
identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621
This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101
the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648
is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101
settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gɔrni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common.
The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191]
Gɔrni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with
Gɔris. Gɔrni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197]
them and their Gɔre neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101
The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609
Gɔrəŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, propinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101
is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

101 in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

101 Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Taləŋ
304 in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Gɔris (*Tam Talis pu ɛt lan—Gɔris tuomər nla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

361 To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale
103 settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial
133 relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map, p. 15), one of the
621 most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gəre neighbours, on the other is Yaɣazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sək and Yaməlɔg, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tɛnzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Ŋkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santɛŋ, Teeləg, Syɛk, and Wɔɣar, separated from Tɛnzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawaləg. Between Zoo and Yaməlɔg lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yaməlɔg occupies a shallow depression between hillocks.
361 Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before
103 the homesteads of Sawaləg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can
621

continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Naməɣalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia 361 or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with 103 scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement. 621

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a popula- 161 tion of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient 174 habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrəg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are con- 101 sidered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around 186 the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tenzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tenzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔməra Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔɣaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔɣaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yaməlɔg and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔməra namoorət*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawaləg, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbəra Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət*.)[1]

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[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

SIE-DATƆK

Two maximal lineages constituting a relatively autonomous corporate unit	each has ties of clanship with	one authentic lineage of Sie, but not with the others 618x
	no ties of clanship with	the other three branches of Mosuor biis
One lineage (D) (Daaŋ yidɛm)	has ties of clanship with	one lineage (F) Dabierugyaɣardɛm of Gban

By extension of the clanship ties between Daaŋ yidɛm (D) of Sie-datɔk and Dabierugyaɣardɛm (F) of Gban, both lineages of Sie-datɔk have ties of clanship with all Gban.

GBAN

Three maximal lineages not claiming convergent ascent. (A composite local clan)	have ties of clanship with	Sie-datɔk
	but no ties of clanship with	Mosuor biis.

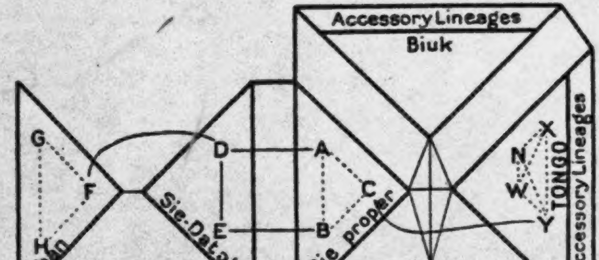

Diagram showing the Nexus of Clanship Ties from Gban to Tongo
Clanship Ties are shown thus ————
A. etc. = *Major segments of clan or sub-clan.*

The Field of Clanship

To avoid circumlocution we may speak of this system of linked lineages 618x as a clan organization. We can describe Mosuor biis collectively as a clan, 621 and each of the four locally distinct branches of this agnatically defined grouping as a sub-clan—overlooking, for the sake of simplicity, the peculiar association of accessory lineages within each sub-clan. We can, more appropriately, subsume the principles which determine the connexion between lineage and lineage in the chain, both within the clan or sub-clan and across clans, under the concept of clanship. This would be isolating a special sense of the associated Tale concepts *mabiirət* (kin), *dɔyam* (consanguinity), and *sunzɔt* (brotherhood), which emerges quite clearly when these terms of wider meaning are applied to relations

x618 between corporate units. We may define a clan, then, as a set of locally
●621 united lineages, each of which is linked with all or most of the others by ties of clanship, which act together in the service of certain common interests indicated by the bond of exogamy, by reciprocal rights and duties in events such as the funeral of a member of any one of them, and by the ban on intestine war or feud; and which act as a corporate unit in respect of these common interests in relation to other such units. We must stress the point that the clan, as here defined, is a local unit, occupying a specified locality from which it takes its name.

This definition applies to the ideal type of the Tale local clan. It does not exhaust all the attributes of social relations based on clanship ties among the Tallensi. In the case of Mosuor biis, we should substitute 'sub-clan' for 'clan' in this definition, though the natives would contend that it is merely a matter of degree. They would say that the four branches of Mosuor biis represent a particularly wide dispersal of what is really a single local clan of the more usual kind. Many other Tale clans have colonial offshoots, but as they are not so well differentiated, either genealogically or spatially, as Mosuor biis they are not reckoned as separate units of clan organization. Again, there is a difference between a sub-clan like Tongo, all the component lineages of which are segments of a single inclusive lineage and have a common founding ancestor, and a clan like Gban, the component lineages of which are genealogically independent maximal lineages. Gban is an example of what might be called a composite clan. Lastly there are units such as Sie-datɔk, which has the corporate structure of a composite clan, but with so much less local and lineage autonomy than is characteristic of a clan that it is regarded by the natives as an appendage of Sie.

x618 Tale clans, as these few examples show, are very varied in their constitution. But the ground-plan of all is the same. The core of every clan is a maximal lineage. In the special case of Mosuor biis, a major segment of the maximal lineage is the foundation of each sub-clan, but these major segments are functionally homologous with the maximal lineages of composite clans. The maximal lineage, everywhere, is a clearly defined structural unit. It is the only irreducible unit of the clan organization.

Tale clan organization can best be understood if we realize that every maximal lineage is the centre of a field of specific social relations marked out by the ties and cleavages established by the principles of clanship. The dimensions of the field of clanship of a lineage, in the narrow sense, are determined by the fundamental principle of clanship, the canon of agnatic descent, applied directly, fictionally, or by a compromise through the assumption of a cognatic link. Even clanship ties which seem to be rooted in local contiguity are translated so as to fit in with this principle. It is the organizing principle of social relations on the plane of clanship. All corporate units tend to be modelled on the agnatic lineage; all social ties and cleavages between corporate units tend to operate in accordance with the norms premised by the patrilineal principle.

Clanship ties and cleavages mark out, for each lineage, one or more other lineages in relation to whose members its own members are automatically subject to the rule of exogamy, and have, in theory, the unconx618 *sunzɔp*' by Tongo people, and they take the part of distant *sunzɔp* in their corporate relations with Tongo. Thus, an important funeral at Tongo x618 always attracts a large contingent of Zoo people, and vice versa. When 764 Doohraan, one of the senior elders of Tongo, died, Zoo turned out in full force to join in the celebrations that inaugurated the funeral. A cow was slaughtered as an offering to the departed, and when it was divided up the Zoodem proper received half a foreleg, as distant *sunzɔp*, the other half going to Zubiuŋ, as the closest unrelated neighbours of the Tongo lineage which was celebrating the funeral. On this occasion Zoo-Yiraaŋ sent a number of young men to swell the ranks of their *sunzɔp*, the Zoodem proper, so that they could make as grand a display as possible. They themselves cannot take part in a Tongo funeral as an independent unit.

618 At the same time it is explicitly recognized that Zoodem proper are the 621 *sunzɔp* of Tongo only by courtesy. They do not have the rights and duties of true clan *sunzɔp*. Tale social structure, highly determinate as it is, is flexible, and allows of such extensions of its basic principles. It allows the translation into the idiom of kinship and clanship of the ties of contiguity or of ceremonial or political solidarity. For the ties of clanship-by-courtesy recognized between Zoo and Tongo rest upon their spatial contiguity and political interdependence. The maximal lineage of Zoo proper has the custody of a special shrine connected with the chiefship of Tongo. According to their myth of origin, their founding ancestor performed the ritual services associated with this shrine for Mosuor when he was Chief of the Mamprusi and followed him to Tongo. These ritual services still vested in Zoodem proper form a strong bond between them and Tongo.

On the other hand, the fact that both groups are Namoos is an essential factor of their clanship-by-courtesy. By contrast the people of Zubiuŋ, who are as closely associated with Tongo spatially, politically, and by reciprocal ritual services, and, like the people of Zoo, always fought on the side of Tongo in the old days, are Talis, properly speaking; thus there is a stricter social separation between them and Tongo. They are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy by the latter; they refrain from the ritual or ceremonial activities of the people of Tongo in which Zoodem proper can and do take a part greater than that of mere spectators.

At the same time the genealogical and corporate independence of the people of Zoo proper, in relation to Tongo, is precisely marked. Neither group takes part in the cult of the lineage ancestors of the other; and if, for instance, in a funeral ceremony men of Zoo proper perform ritual services for a Tongo lineage, or vice versa, they do so because true clan *sunzɔp* are not present.

x618 One infallible test of their differentiation from the clan of Mosuor biis
621 is the fact that the two groups intermarry. Another is the rule about
628 raiding. A generation ago, before the white man imposed the rule of his law, raiding (*ŋɔk*) was a common method of self-help in Taleland. It was the final resource of a man who wished to retrieve a debt owed to him by a member of another clan. If, for instance, a Tongo man owed a Wakii maŋ cattle for a marriage he had contracted, and withheld payment unduly long or in bad faith, the latter would resort to self-help.

He would set out one day with some of his close agnates, fully armed, and 618x
they would try to seize by stealth and drive off as many cattle and sheep 621●
belonging to any clansman of their debtor as they could lay their hands on. 628
Thus they could seize live-stock belonging to any Tongo man. Or if the chance presented itself they could seize live-stock belonging to people of Yamələg or Sie, and would answer protests by 'pointing to' (*paal*) their Tongo debtor. This was legitimate, but they could not legitimately seize cattle belonging to a Zoo man in settlement of a debt due to them from a Tongo man. The Zoo people would be entitled to take severe reprisals, for Zoo and Tongo have no ties of clanship. They 'marry one another's children (*ba diit taàba biis*)'. Men who were youths in those days, and who themselves took part in such adventures, usually cite these rules of *ŋɔk* when they are explaining the nature and ramifications of clanship ties.

The people of Zoo proper have not the same local, political, and ceremonial ties with Yamələg or Sie, and are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of these two communities. But Yamələg and Sie feel more closely akin to Zoo than to their non-Namoo neighbours.

The ties between Tongo and Zoo influence their relations in innumer- 618x
able ways. A census of Zoo shows that every Zoo family (including Zoo-Yiraaŋ) is related to Tongo either by cognatic or by affinal ties. Zoo men show a preference in marriage for women from Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie, rather than women from other equally near settlements. Thirty-five (29 per cent.) of a large and representative sample (120) of Zoo wives are Tongo women; and if the Yamələg and Sie women are added they make up together 56 (47 per cent.) of Zoo wives. I once heard a group of elders discuss this fact, of which the people of Zoo and Tongo are well aware. A Zoo man said, 'Tongo girls like marrying us because we are such diligent farmers and always have plenty of food'. The Tongo elders denied this, and protested that they gave their daughters to Zoo rather than to men of Wakii or Tɛnzugu because of the bonds between them. 'Would we not rather', said one of them, 'marry our daughters to you, or even to Zubiuŋ, or the more distant places that used to fight on our side, than to nearer settlements which were our enemies?' Because of these ties, too, it is a grave affront for a Zoo man to abduct a Tongo man's wife or vice versa, or for a member of one clan to marry the former wife of a man of the other.

Again, the people of Zoo proper through their political head, the Chief 618x
of Biuŋ, control the great annual hunt in the Kparəg bush. They are less 224
strict in enforcing their rights to animals which fall to the weapon of a Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie man, than to those killed by men from other places. There is greater co-operation and camaraderie between hunting parties from Zoo, Tongo, Yamələg, and Sie than between any of them and parties from other settlements. When the Chief of Biuŋ sends round to announce the hunt, his messengers go to all the other Namoo chiefs in Taleland, who pronounce a blessing on the enterprise and send back fowls as a contribution to the sacrifices that will have to be made. Among them the blessing and contribution of the Chief of Tongo are regarded as the most important.

These relations between Tongo and Zoo are always a matter of degree

upheld. I have heard the Chief of Tongo upbraid a young man of his 618x
own segment of the sub-clan for abducting the wife of a Sɛk man. The chief denounced this breach of *mabiirət* as a depravity possible only since the coming of the white man, and ordered the girl to be sent back.

Other Namoo communities are found at Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, and 621 ●
Kpələg (or Pwələg), beyond Dkoog. For practical purposes these Namoo groups are almost entirely cut off from Tongo. Culturally they are Gərisi, but Tongo people describe them as 'our kinsfolk (*ti mabiis*)'; and there is even a myth to the effect that Pusunamoo was founded by a kinsman of Mosuor who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu but parted company from him before he reached Tongo. As, however, these places lie beyond the horizon of the regular social relations of Tongo, their 'kinship' with Tongo becomes effective only by chance. They have no ceremonial relationship with Tongo. They do not attend Tongo funerals except as individuals drawn thither by personal cognatic ties, and they would not easily obtain redress if one of their wives were abducted by a Tongo man. Nevertheless, their 'kinship' with Tongo, nominal though it seems to be, forms an essential element, in all the Namoo communities mentioned, of the natives' view of their society and its structure. To some extent also the chain principle holds. Pusunamoo and Baluŋ have a good deal of social intercourse and regular social relations with Dkoog, and the latter serves as a link between them and Tongo. They are thus linked with Tongo loosely and by a relay, but more substantially than merely by a fiction, and through Tongo with the other branches of Mosuor's descendants.

In the Sie district, as we have seen, of the Namoo clans not held to be 621
connected by origin with the children of Mosuor, Gban has the closest 619
links with the latter. In the social perspective of a Tongo man, however, its identity tends to be masked by Sie. Gban is thought of as a satellite clan of Sie, in the same way as Zoo is regarded as a satellite clan of Tongo by the people of the Sie district. Spatial and political relations give rise to this point of view, and the habit of classifying social groups by contraposition gives it ready expression. This is the case also with Naməɣalug and Gar, which are connected with Sie in much the same way as Zoo is with Tongo. There are other Namoo clans or Namoo segments of composite clans in this district which fall within the political orbit of Gbee. Some are linked by ties of clanship to adjacent settlements of Gərisi or Namnam. Some have so far assimilated the customs and dialectal peculiarities of their Gərisi or Namnam neighbours that people from the centre of Taleland hardly consider them to be Tallensi, though they themselves claim to have closer social affinities with the Tallensi than with the Gərisi or Namnam. In this interstitial area the mosaic of micro-cultural variations and the pattern of clan organization, though similar in principle to what is found in the vicinity of Tongo, are very intricate.

Namoos from this area marry extensively with Sie and Yaməlәg and more frequently with Tongo than the peripheral Namoo communities on the other side, viz. Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, and Kpələg. Thus, any Tongo man is far more likely to have cognatic ties with a place like Naməɣalug

619 621 or Kpatia than with Baluŋ. He has more frequent social contact and closer economic relations with the former places than with the inhabitants of the latter. In the past the people of Sie sometimes took up arms to aid Gbee or Kpatia, and Tongo people might have been drawn in to aid Sie. A Tongo man therefore thinks of Gbee and Kpatia (and this applies to the other Namoo communities in their vicinity as well) as potential war allies of his clan in former times. He never thinks of Pusunamoo, Baluŋ, or Kpɔləg in this way. In spite of this, Tongo people insist that the people of Pusunamoo, at any rate, are closer kin to them than, say, the Namoos of Gbee or Kpatia, since their founding ancestor was a relative of Mosuor himself. There seems to be a contradiction between the actualities of social relations and the formal ties of putative genealogy. Other things being equal spatial proximity exercises a stronger pull than assumed genealogical proximity. This principle has a general application in Taie social structure.

The Meaning of 'Namoo'

621 The meaning of the appellation 'Namoo' in the social structure of the Tallensi has now become clear. We have examined it from the vantage point of Tongo. Had we elected to start from Gbee, for example, we should have obtained a picture built on the same principles but with a different perspective. Gɔrni-speaking Namoos beyond Kpatia, who have so remote and occasional a relevance for the normal life of Tongo that even nowadays hardly anything is known of them, are a significant element in the social frame of reference of the people of Gbee. Their community of stock and of distinctive custom which all Namoos in Taleland and the adjacent areas recognize, is not thought of as confined within territorial or political boundaries. But for every maximal lineage and clan their fellow Namoos are distributed on a graded scale of relevance according to their structural ties with them. Several factors affect the relevance of one Namoo group for another: ties of clanship; political ties; the ties of spatial contiguity or proximity; the belief in a special tie, closer than that of general kinship (*mabiirət*), by which Namoos are grouped together, and which, though assimilated to the tie of clanship on mythical grounds, is not so close as true clanship ties. All these, taken together, map out the main structural ties of any Namoo maximal lineage. These ties fall in a series of concentric zones, as it were, by which all the Namoo communities are arranged on a scale of diminishing social relevance for the unit that forms the centre of the given network of structural relations. Theoretically they extend 'from the land of the Dagomba (Dagbɔŋ) to the land of the Mossi (Mooga)', but the greater their distance in space from the central unit, the less likely are they to be actualized in the ordinary life of any of its members. In fact, outside a geographical radius of some five or six miles the farther zones of Namoo connexions have hardly any relevance for the central unit.

The pattern of social relations arising out of clanship ties in the narrow sense holds for other structural ties assimilated to them in form but founded on different factors. In respect of these ties, too, every Namoo clan or maximal lineage may be regarded as the centre of a field of

effective structural relations with other Namoo clans and lineages. The fields of neighbouring clans and lineages overlap one another in series, cutting across the blurred boundaries of dialect and of variations in custom. Thus Tongo's field of effective structural relations includes Biuk and Dkoog. These units lie in the Gɔrni-speaking area and have

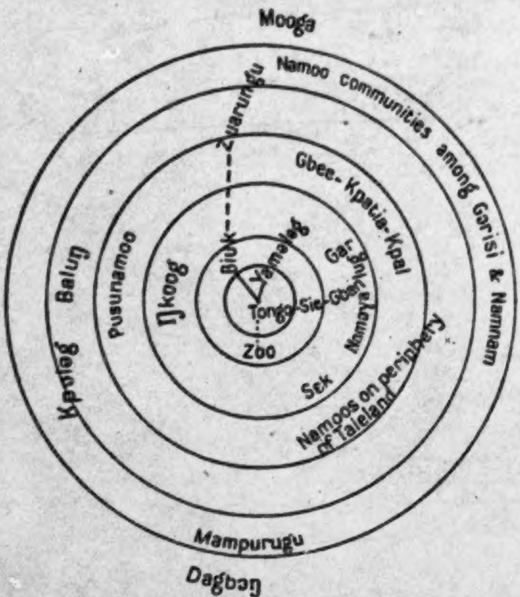
Mooga
Namoo communities among Gɔrisi & Namnam
Zuarungu
Gbee-Kpatia-Kpal
Biuk
Yamalog
Gar
Kumbahug
Tongo
Sie
Gbenyag
Namoya
Zoo
Sek
Namoos on periphery of Taleland
Ŋkoog
Pusunamoo
Baluŋ
Kpatog
Mampurugu
Dagbɔŋ

Diagram showing the Field of Clanship Relations of the Namoos of Tongo

effective structural relations with Gɔrisi who are only of peripheral relevance for Tongo. Tongo's field of effective structural relations overlaps that of Dkoog and that of Biuk. The latter includes the Namoos of Zuarungu, who are Gɔrisi, and whose field of effective structural relations overlaps that of Kumbahug. So one could trace out a series of overlapping fields of structural relations right across the country 'from Dagbɔŋ to Mooga', and running in every direction from any chosen starting-point. This constitutes the apparently limitless social ambit that corresponds to the notion of the common stock of all Namoos.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUCTURAL RELATIONS OF THE TALIS

A General Point

162 A NUMERICAL estimate of the Namoos in Taleland cannot be made from the published census figures. In the Tongo district alone they would include, on a rough reckoning, over a third of the population; the rest are the Talis.

184 The Talis, as we have seen, are distinguished by name and by myths of origin from the Namoos. Close neighbours though they are, Talis and Namoos are distinctly segregated from one another by locality, and this is associated with clear-cut structural cleavages. It is necessary, however, to emphasize that Talis and Namoos are also inseparably bound to one another by ceremonial and politico-ritual ties. In addition, all Talis and all Namoos are connected with one another as individuals by an elaborate network of cognatic and affinal ties. In the present chapter we are concerned with the constituted social relations of the Talis amongst themselves, treated in isolation from the background of their social relations with the Namoos, but this background must be borne in mind.

The Clan Structure of Zubiuŋ

X618 The clans and lineages of the Talis form corporate units of the same kind as those of the Namoos. They are connected with one another by a network of constituted ties of the same type as those that link Namoo clans and lineages in a chain system, but more elaborately distributed and articulated. Again, the paradigm applies generally, but the perspective of each clan and lineage is peculiar to itself. To keep the parallel with the Namoos we shall take as our starting-point the group of Talis most intimately associated with Tongo, the people of Zubiuŋ (Zubiuŋdem).[1]

● 621 As we have previously mentioned, the people of Zubiuŋ live in such close contiguity with the Tongo Namoos that anyone ignorant of the structure of the community would be unable to draw a line between the homesteads of one group and those of the other. Investigation shows that Zubiuŋ homesteads form an irregular but continuous aggregate, quite distinct, spatially, from Tongo. The nearest Tongo neighbours of Zubiuŋ are the accessory Tongo lineage of Nɔŋsuur yidem. Consistently with the basic principles of Tale clanship, Nɔŋsuur yidem have an intercalary status between Tongo and Zubiuŋ. The legend which relates that the ancestor of Nɔŋsuur yidem was a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of Zubiuŋ is the rationalization of their intercalary role. But though they mediate between Tongo and Zubiuŋ in political matters, for example, they have no ties of clanship with the latter, as we have previously seen.

*618 Zubiuŋ consists of three maximal lineages, residentially distributed in a way that exactly parallels their structural relations. The homesteads of

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[162] [1] Total male members, at home and abroad, about 250.

attached lineages, as well as for certain ritual and political ties between 618x
some groups. Thus, one segment of Tongo has a special ritual role as 811
intermediary in the politico-ritual relations of Tongo and Zoo, and this is rationalized by the same fiction; but it does not involve ties of clanship with Zoo.

There is a close parallelism between the inter-clan linkages we have 618x
described and the spatial relations of the groups concerned. Gbizugdɛm 621 ●
are the nearest non-Namoo neighbours of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra on one side; Ba'ari is contiguous with them on the other side; and Zoo-Yiraaŋ live side by side with their clansfolk at Zubiuŋ-Yapaas. There is an asymmetry in these clanship ties which appears to be mirrored in the fictions accounting for them. Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are linked by clanship ties in exactly the same way as they are linked with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, but neither has ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ.

Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra has more frequent and closer relations and a stronger 618x
sense of fraternity with Gbizug than with its other two linked maximal 764
lineages at Zoo and at Ba'ari. This is fostered by proximity and by the belief enshrined in their myth of origin. Thus, when a Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra tendaana dies and his funeral ceremonies are performed, the heads of all three linked maximal lineages have to send an obligatory contribution of porridge, specially prepared 'to set out for the dead (*zien kpiim lɔ*)'. They act, then, in the same way as the other two Zubiuŋ lineages, which are also obliged to send this contribution. But Gbizugdɛm do more than make a merely formal acknowledgement of their ties with the dead man's lineage; they take part in the funeral to a much greater extent than Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ. Their representatives never fail to attend all the important ritual events of the funeral, whereas the representatives of the other two linked maximal lineages appear only at the exoteric public ceremonies, such as the final divination when the beer is distributed. The social relations of Gbizug with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra give them a place, as it were, half-way between the other Zubiuŋ maximal lineages and the other two linked maximal lineages in point of intimacy and corporate cohesion.
Every Yakɔra man knows the wives of the men of Gbizug almost as well [587]
as the wives of his own clansmen. He speaks of them all as his 'wives', for he has a right to inherit any of them if they remain widows. If he meets one of them by chance he will chaff her, as if she were a Zubiuŋ wife. Most of the wives of the men of Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ are quite unknown to him, though formally he has the same rights in respect of them.

The Gradation of Clanship Ties

What distinguishes the bonds of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra with Gbizug from 618x
their apparently identical bonds with their clansmen of Zubiuŋ is this: the latter are bound to perform all the duties of close *sunzɔp*, the former are under the much more limited obligation of giving expression to their ties of clanship through one or two formal acts. The latter, for example, are obliged to attend and to conduct all the important rites of a Yakɔra tendaana's funeral, whereas Gbizugdɛm come voluntarily, and if they undertake any task do so out of courtesy and friendliness. Similarly, the

marry with them, though it is politically and ritually part of the clan of Ba'ari. 618x

Apart from these variations the pattern of clanship at Ba'ari is the same as at Zubiuŋ, the pattern common to all the clans mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. Local relationships run parallel with clanship ties, so that spatially contiguous lineages are more closely linked than spatially distant lineages. The component maximal lineages of each clan have a well-defined autonomy in relation to one another, organized in each case around a ritual office (either the tɛndaanaship or some other office associated with the cult of the Earth or the cult of the External *Bɔyar*) which is exclusively vested in a particular lineage. Each maximal lineage has its distinctive field of clanship within which 'brotherhood' (*sunzɔt*) varies in degrees of closeness from that which prevails within the clan to that of *sunzɔt*-by-courtesy. The field of clanship of any one maximal lineage overlaps, but is not congruent with, that of any other maximal lineage of the same clan; and the unity and corporate identity of the clan are focused in the cult of the *Bɔyar*, the common shrine of all the ancestors, and the cult of the Earth. Lastly, every maximal lineage has an intercalary function corresponding to its local and clanship ties.

The further extensions of this mesh of clanship ties can be rapidly 618x
summarized. Soog is locally and structurally intercalary between the 621●
cluster of clans we have been discussing and Tɛnzugu. Internally constituted like Zubiuŋ, it has ties of clanship with Sakpee, Gundaat, and Kpata'ar, all three Tɛnzugu clans, and with Wopo'ohug near Gbambee. Gundaat and Tamboog are clansfolk as well as neighbours. Though they are more autonomous in relation to each other than two segments of the same clan, their reciprocal privileges and obligations are closer than those of linked lineages of different clans. They have similar ties to those of Gbizug and Gbeog, though their origins are said to be diverse. Both have ties of clanship with one segment of Sakpee but not with the other, and Gundaat also has ties of clanship with an attached lineage at Wakii and with Wɔyar.

Kpata'ar, contiguous with Gundaat but not related to it by ties of clanship, comprises three maximal lineages. It is the senior of these, Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, who have ties of clanship with Soog; and they also have such ties with Degal and with one section of Sɛk, the Namoo group at the foot of the hills, as well as with their next-door neighbours Dakuor yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The second maximal lineage, Nakyeet yidɛm, is linked with Sakpee—but not with the lineages of other clans to which the other sections of Kpata'ar are linked. The third lineage of Kpata'ar is on the point of extinction, and its clanship ties need not be enumerated.

Bunkiuk, besides being linked with Kpata'ar through Dakuor yidɛm, includes two more maximal lineages, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm and Yiraan yidɛm, which have no ties of clanship with Kpata'ar. Gɔlibdaan yidɛm have clanship ties with one of the constituent lineages of Yinduuri but not with the rest of Yinduuri, and Yiraan yidɛm are the *sunzɔp* of Sipaat. The closest extra-clan *sunzɔp* of the latter are the people of Sii, from whose founding ancestor they also claim to be descended. But whereas Sii has clanship ties with Yinduuri, their neighbours on one side, and with a section of

*618 Kpɔlɔg (Pwɔlɔg), Sipaat has no ties of clanship with either of these
621 places. Yinduuri, a clan whose inner constitution is a miniature replica of the whole system of interlacing clanship ties which we have been describing, is contiguous with Zandoya but has no ties of clanship with it. Zandoya's clanship ties link it with Gorogo, which in turn is linked with a group of Gɔrisi, who live in the Bɔlɔga district.

This is but one series of concatenated clan linkages running from end to end of the Tongo district and even, like those of the Namoos, extending across to the Gɔrisi. Similar chains of clanship ties link the other Talis clans to one another and to this series; and the whole forms an elaborately reticulated system which stretches beyond the linguistic and cultural frontiers of Taleland. By these chains of clanship ties the Talis are linked on to peoples outside Taleland who live quite beyond the boundaries of their regular interests and concerns.

*618 We have been discussing clanship in the narrow sense—that is, ties implying the prohibition of marriage, joint leviratic rites, the reciprocal privileges and duties of *sunzɔp*, and such things as the liability in former times to be raided for one another's debts. As a rule, every constituent maximal lineage of every clan has such ties with one or more territorially contiguous lineages of neighbouring clans. Most of them also have clanship ties with some lineages of clans not adjacent to them, but not very far away, reckoning the distance in terms of the number of unrelated clans intervening and not by geographical criteria. There is no fixed rule; but within this cluster of settlements it is always a safe prediction that the greater the distance separating two clans the less likely are they to be linked by clanship.

*618 In addition, every clan recognizes one or more clans in its vicinity as
608 *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. Soog and Wakii; Gundaat, Kpata'ar, and Bunkiuk; Yinduur and Zandoya; Sii and Gorogo: these consider one another to be *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, and they generally appear at one another's funerals in this capacity.

*618 As with Zubiuŋ and the clans adjacent to it, so among the Hill Talis,
[183] the ties which make up the field of clanship of any maximal lineage are not all of equal strength. The critical norms have an absolute value. Clanship prohibits intermarriage, vests defined rights and obligations in each lineage, and implies a solidarity which is incompatible with hostile acts like war or abducting one another's wives, or raiding one another's cattle. If these norms are infringed, as inevitably happens now and then, they are not thereby invalidated. The infringement tends to provoke processes which cancel out its effects and either re-establish the invulnerability of the norms or bring about a new alinement of structural ties, which neutralizes the breach. At the same time spatial distribution has a selective influence on the extent and frequency of the intercourse between lineages linked by ties of clanship. Proximity encourages more frequent and regular co-operation in situations which mobilize ties of clanship. Other factors, too, influence the gradation of clanship ties, the most important of these being the fact that solidarity, co-operation, and mutual dependence are greater within the clan than between linked lineages of different clans. Besides having a specific field of clanship, each maximal

CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A SETTLEMENT

Introduction

621 A TALE settlement is a miniature of the whole society, and reveals all the basic principles of the social structure. No two settlements are identical in topography, shape, size, or social composition; but all have the same social form, based on the same principles. Yet it is no easy task to describe a settlement as the natives see it. It cannot be isolated from neighbouring units of the same kind by inspection; for though it is locally fixed it is not territorially circumscribed. Its structure is unintelligible without reference to the lineage system, but ecological exigencies and political and ritual ties and cleavages play an important part in it as well.

361 221 The anatomy of a settlement appears in fullest relief during the dry season. Then the homesteads stand out starkly against the dun background of bare earth or the glare of rocks and boulders piled up in red-grey masses in the hilly areas. The foot-paths winding between the homesteads scar the land as if etched into it by generations of feet. Every shade tree in front of a homestead is an inviting landmark. Sacred groves, looking temptingly cool when the sun is high, are unmistakable. The water-holes, pits, and ditches, flooded beyond recognition in the latter part of the rainy season, can easily be distinguished. The boundaries of farm-plots, overgrown with crops and weeds during the rains, are now clearly visible. The landscape is a map of the social relations of the people. This is the season, too, when life goes on largely in the open. There is leisure for gossip and conversation; for paying visits, strolling in the market, going a-courting, making long journeys, dancing in the moonlight; for hunting and fishing drives; there is time also, and the necessary supplies, for the performance of funeral ceremonies and other ritual activities. It is in such events that the structure of Tale society is most vividly actualized.

Types of Settlement and Distribution of Population

361 Two main types of settlements are found: those of ancient habitation (*tɛŋkɔrəg*, old country), covering all the centre of the country, especially on and around the Tong Hills, and including the majority of the Tallensi; and those of recent foundation (*tɛŋpaaləg*, new country), towards the periphery of this area. Though the basic plan is the same, the principles on which a settlement is built operate with different emphasis in each type.

361 621 Neither territorial extent nor density of aggregation affects the basic plan of a settlement. The range of variation is very great. Moreover, processes of expansion and contraction continuously alter the extent of a settlement. Thus, Yamələg and Tɔngo are ancient settlements of the same general structure, though the latter is four or five times the size of

the former; and Biuŋ, with 25 homesteads and less than 400 inhabitants, 361
is a peripheral settlement of the same type as Datɔk, which has over 621
600 homesteads and between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. The whole of Biuŋ can be seen from one of the hummocks on which it stands, but it takes an hour's ride on horseback to get round the whole of Datɔk.

The density and distribution of habitation varies somewhat from one 361
part of the country to another. The broad undulating plain on the north 161
side of the Tong Hills permits of dense settlement, whereas the plain stretching south and south-east of the hills carries a relatively sparse population.[1]

Differences of altitude and of drainage probably explain this. During 361
the rains a large part of the southern plain becomes too waterlogged for 132
cultivation or for human habitation. Many of the Hill Talis went to live 166
there when they were dispersed in 1911.[2] Though they have always cultivated bush farms there, wherever the lie of the land is suitable, they look back on their exile as a doubly miserable interlude on account of the uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in which they had perforce to live. Accustomed to their well-drained hills, they hated the interminable swamp, as it seemed to them, into which the plain is transformed during the rains; and hardened though they are, they found the mosquitoes and other noxious insects that swarm there during this season an intolerable plague.

From the top of the Tong Hills, looking northwards, one has a view 361
of what seems to be an endless plain, dotted meagrely with trees, and studded closely, as far as the eye can reach, with homesteads. They are [342]
identical in appearance, squat, circular, drab-grey or red, like the soil itself, mostly thatch-roofed, and seem to be scattered indiscriminately, some close together, others farther apart. There is nothing to indicate where one settlement ends and the next begins. Homesteads here, in the old settlements, are often no more than 20 yards apart.

The density of population is greater in the old than in the new settle- 361
ments, and greater in the vicinity of the Tong Hills than in settlements 161
nearer to the periphery. [illegible] cannot state how great the difference is, as I had neither the time nor the training for a comprehensive demographic survey. Sociological observation suggests that the amount of arable land available is an important factor, though not the only one, determining density of population in the older areas of settlement. This is as one would expect of a sedentary population of subsistence farmers. In the new settlements there is ample land, and men have large home farms immediately adjoining their homesteads, which are therefore often as

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[1] I have no exact figures. From the statistics given in the census of 1931 [162]
(*Appendices containing Comparative Returns and General Statistics of the 1931 Census, Gold Coast*, Government Printer, 1932) it appears that the large area lying between Pwəlag (Kpɔlɔg), the centre of the Tong Hills, and a straight line from there to the Red and White Volta—that is, this southern plain—had about 5,000 inhabitants in 1931, only one-seventh of the total population of Taleland. This included many people who were then in exile and now live on and around the Tong Hills.

[2] By order of the British Administration, after the punitive expedition against them. Cf. p. 12 above.

pression liable to flooding in the rainy season. The people of the Tong 361
Hills consider themselves to be particularly fortunate in this respect. 133
Their homesteads stretch densely across the slopes of the hills, and amid the great boulders and rocky piles of the summit. Singing the praises of their tiny fastness, they contrast it with the plain, where one is always ankle-deep in mud and slush during the rains and scorched by the sun in the dry season. On the hills, they say, a sheltered nook can always be found among the rocks, shady when the sun is most cruel, dry in the severest storm, where the children can play or the grown-ups sit and talk.

The Stability and Continuity of a Settlement

Stability and continuity are essential characteristics of a settlement. 621
They are implied in the native concept of a *tɛŋ* (settlement) as both a 361
definite locality and a fixed community. The ancient settlements have attained a very high degree of stability and continuity. The peripheral settlements are rapidly ceasing to be mere economic apanages to the older centres of habitation, and are taking on the form of permanent and stable units. Being still in process of organization, their structure is fluid compared with that of the ancient settlements, and the dynamic factors of Tale social structure sometimes appear more conspicuously in them than in the latter.

But the older settlements are by no means static. The bounds, the layout, and the internal constitution of a settlement alter continuously, if very slowly. Even in a single year one can see how processes of expansion and contraction, of segmentation and incorporation, are at work all the time. Whenever land changes hands by inheritance, or an office passes by succession, or a man achieves economic independence, a minor reshuffle in the collocation of homesteads takes place. The cumulative effects of these processes of slow but progressive readjustment are clearly exhibited in the contemporary structure of a settlement. They are documented in its constitution and layout, in the location of ancestral graves, the ownership of farm plots, and in ceremonial and political relations. Fixity of location and of the structural plan ensure the stability and continuity of a Tale settlement.

Topographical Distinctions and the Natives' Knowledge of Natural History

Precise local orientation is essential in the economic activities and 823
social relations of the Tallensi. Place-names are often derived from 103
prominent topographical or geographical features. Thus, Tɛnzugu means the head (*zug*) or highest part of the country (*tɛŋ*), Yayazuor means 'perched on a hill', and many other place-names are popularly believed to be corruptions of topographical or spatial metaphors. Within a settlement topographical variations are distinguished by terms like *tɛŋr*, the lower part (the locative of *tɛŋ*, here in the sense of 'ground'), and *saazugu*, the higher part (lit. head-high, or high up). Conspicuous patches of low-lying land, hillocks, rock piles, ditches, water-holes, streams, &c., are named, and are very often sacred spots. The name may indicate peculiar qualities of the soil, prominent trees, or other landmarks formerly or still

In marked contrast is the average person's ignorance of settlements, 823
even near at hand, with which his clan has no close social bonds or with which he has no personal links of kinship or friendship. Tallensi acquire their knowledge of geography and natural history gradually in childhood, by direct experience. It is already well established by the age of 9 or 10, and grows *pari passu* with the expansion of the child's social space. The basis of this is the child's natal settlement, where, except for occasional visits to kinsfolk elsewhere, it spends its entire childhood. But even adults had little liberty of movement in the past, since they could hardly go unmolested in settlements unrelated to theirs by clanship or political ties or where they had no kinsfolk. Most of the older people have never [484]
been outside Taleland, and many of them have never, or only rarely, visited some of the settlements within an hour's walk of their own.

A Taləŋ inevitably has a profound emotional attachment to his native 186
settlement. It is striking how many Tale emigrants return home eventually after years of absence, casting aside the flesh-pots of Ashanti or the rich fields of Mampurugu. '*Kpala m-mah*—Here it is pleasant', they say, in spite of the penury of existence; for here are your kith and kin, here is the scene of your childhood joys and sorrows, and above all, the abode of your forefathers. The Taləŋ's empirical knowledge of his habitat is the precipitate in his thought and experience of the economic and structural facts that determine the local fixity of his native settlement. His affective attachment to it finds an institutionalized expression and support in the ancestor cult.

Settlement Boundaries

The hub of Taleland is Tongo (see map on p. 15). This ancient 621 ●
settlement, geographically central and politically nodal in the network of interclan relations, provides a very good model of the structure of a typical Tale settlement.

As we know, the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis live in such close spatial 101
and social propinquity with Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and Zoo that these clans are 621
often spoken of collectively as 'the people of Tongo (Təŋdem)'. For precision, Tongo proper is referred to as Təŋ-Nayiri—the Chief's House of Tongo—all over Taleland. Throughout the Mole-Dagbane-speaking region clans which hold a chiefship are thus identified by reference to it. Those which have tɛndaanas are sometimes called Tɛndaaŋ, on the same principle. Thus outsiders distinguish between Sie-Nayiri and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ.

Təŋ-Nayiri, Tongo proper, forms an irregular block of homesteads, 101
somewhat less than three square miles in area and is one of the largest 161
settlements in Taleland. It comprised, in 1934, 192 homesteads and a 621
total population of about 2,400.[1] This does not include Tongo people

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[1] Calculations, based on my own census samples and on figures kindly supplied to me by the A.D.C. Zuarungu, show that in Taleland the average number of people of both sexes and all ages occupying a homestead is 12 to 14. Owing to the variation in the constitution of homesteads this figure must be accepted with reserve; but it is sufficient for a rough estimate of population in a country where accurate statistics do not exist.

62 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here [778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔyar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔyar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field [608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

618 [608] one another in funerals and similar ceremonial events. These ceremonial reciprocities do not prevail between Tongo or Zoo and any of the Hill Talis clans adjacent to them.

621 184 Nevertheless, a palpable social boundary still prevails between Tongo and Zubiuŋ, but one far less determinate than that between Tongo and its other Talis neighbours. No Zubiuŋ homesteads are so situated as to be surrounded on all sides by Tongo homesteads, and vice versa; there is no indiscriminate mingling of the homesteads of the two clans. Looked at from within, both Zubiuŋ and Tongo are self-contained spatial units within their respective social circumferences. This is correlated with their contrasting totemic observances, clan cults, and politico-ritual offices; their mutual exclusiveness by the canon of agnatic descent and the liberty to intermarry that goes with this; and their consequent divergent jural interests as distinct corporate units; the people of Tongo are Namoos, the Zubiuŋdem Talis. The observer is constantly apprised of this in the attitudes and opinions of individuals, in economic activities, and in jural and ritual events, the very activities and events which reveal the close bonds of the two groups. Tongo people never scrupled to raid their weaker Zubiuŋ neighbours for cattle owed to them, as many old men relate from personal experience. On the other hand, responsible elders and chiefs of Tongo, in those days, disapproved strongly of resort to violent self-help against Zubiuŋ by their people, though they could not always prevent it—an attitude they would never adopt in regard to the other Talis. To-day Tongo and Zubiuŋ people regard one another with a certain amount of suspicion and good-natured superiority, tempered with a tolerance which the former never show towards the other Talis.

621 184 166 A similar, but more elastic, social boundary exists between Tongo and Zoo. There are no Zoo people living inside Tongo, but no less than 11 of the 39 homesteads situated on the land under the ritual jurisdiction of Zoo-Yiraaŋ, within the social circumference of Zoo, are the homes of permanent immigrants from Tongo. The bond of common stock (*buurət*) between these two locally allied and politically associated Namoo clans blurs the cleavages between them. Tongo people find it the more congenial to live amongst Zoo people in considerable numbers because they have the same ritual observances, mortuary and funeral customs, and politico-ritual offices and values. It is mainly cultural differences of this kind that deter them from settling amongst the people of Zubiuŋ.

The one-sided filtration of Tongo people into Zoo, and the absence of the reverse process, are due mainly to the density of habitation—which is so great as to preclude immigration—and the obvious excess of population at Tongo. Zoo people who wish to emigrate, temporarily or permanently, move farther afield, to Gbambee or Biuŋ. In any case, the flow of migration from Tongo to Zoo has apparently reached saturation, for it has now practically stopped. But this movement, though at bottom an ecological readjustment, has been canalized by the social structure; and while it brings out the affinities of Tongo with Zoo, it also emphasizes their separateness. Because they are structurally independent of each other, Tongo people only migrate to Zoo if they have matrilateral kin there who will grant them land to build on and farm. By contrast,

621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ,
which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us,
and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo.
This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of
Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time;
but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their
families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be
living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription
of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that
boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential
distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this
rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to
those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *tɛŋ* is not a *tɛŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the contradiction [578]
between the conception of a defined territorial boundary
fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the
native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties, ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations. But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tɛnzugu, in particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit sub-communities within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Gɔlibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Adminis- 578
tration as headman of Tɛnzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source
of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially
defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tɛnzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Gɔlibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for
arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Gɔlibdaana,
crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding
temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong,
took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such
disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

621 comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Degal tɛndaana, the ritual
578 'owner' of the land of Bunkiuk, the Gɔlibdaana's clan. As the head of
423 Bunkiuk and headman of Tɛnzugu, which includes Degal, he held political authority over all the territory under the ritual jurisdiction of the latter. Hence this strip of territory, as far as the watercourse, belonged to him. The people dwelling there were no concern of his; let them go elsewhere if they wished.

The Yinduurna'aba, a simple and inarticulate old man, who has never mastered the wiles of modern headmanship, protested vehemently. The Gɔlibdaana's arguments were untenable. The ritual jurisdiction of tɛndaanas had nothing to do with the matter. In any case the Zandoya tɛndaana would contest the Degal tɛndaana's claim. Everybody knows that tɛndaanas acknowledge no boundaries. The group in question was a segment of Zandoya. How could they belong to any other political unit than the latter? To talk of their abendoning the land on which their ancestors had dwelt was preposterous. Indeed, the whole situation was something quite unheard of; it could never have occurred before the coming of the white man, when everyone had his acknowledged place in the society. The truth was that the Gɔlibdaana was deliberately trying to entice his people away from him.

There the matter rested. The case was widely discussed and public opinion, except for the Gɔlibdaana's supporters, sided unanimously with the Yinduurna'aba. Five other cases of the same kind came to my notice; and in all of them the verdict of native custom is unequivocal; social affiliation and not alleged territorial boundaries define the extent of a community. Even the new settlements, though they sprawl more widely than the old settlements and are usually surrounded by considerable tracts of uninhabited land, have no defined geographical boundaries. They can and do go on expanding.

The Concept of the Tɛŋ

621 A Tale settlement can only be identified as a unit by reference to the lineage relationships, politico-ritual ties and cleavages, and jural rights and duties, prevailing within it and between it and its neighbours. That is why we have avoided the word 'village', which conjures up the image of a neatly isolated, compact territorial unit. *Tɛŋ* (pl. *tɛs*) is the native concept denoting a settlement; but no English translation can convey its exact sense. In some ways it is reminiscent of the deme of ancient Greece, a coalescence of local association, lineage organization, common religious cult, and political solidarity. None of these factors serves to demarcate a *tɛŋ* absolutely from adjacent *tɛs*; all of them link together neighbouring *tɛs* or parts of *tɛs* as closely in respect of that one category of social relations as they unite segments of the same *tɛŋ*. A settlement is only a relatively autonomous community. One might perhaps define it as the region of maximum overlap of all the categories of social relations found among the Tallensi.

621 Native linguistic usage reflects this, for *tɛŋ* has a width of reference
619 varying with the situation. A man beginning a discourse on marriage
829 with '*ti tɛŋɔ, nyɛn di pɔɣa* . . .—In this our land, if you marry a wife . . .'

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage 621
customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. 619
They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to 829
themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one
another. Tɛnzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and
close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized;
but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated
as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on [578]
between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of
both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*',
but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right
and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to
native custom.

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as 621
a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a
lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the
width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of
corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the
Tɛnzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them
might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of
local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted,
is the keel of Tale social organization.

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual 621
significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in 182
the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and 771
its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but
often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects
to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the
sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy
of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one
aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes
both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu
sayat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive
reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of
another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty
of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of
the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement
farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native
beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari
to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character).

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we 621
may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settlement 618x
name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages 551
whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that
of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most
often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name
of a well-known *tɔŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are
called Saniiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a
name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her

621 clan from her husband's, e.g. Namooga, the appellation used by Talis for
x618 their Tongo wives. Lastly, it may be a name taken from some politico-
551 ritual office vested in her clan or maximal lineage, e.g. Bɔɣaraan, for Sii women, Tɛndaan-bii for Gbizug women. This shows how, without explicit formulation, the notions of locality, lineage, sacred attributes of the Earth, distinctive customs, and politico-ritual office—the major themes of Tale social and political organization—are linked together in a single ideological configuration.

The Section—Yizug

621 With the exception of the settlements of a few small clans not divided into maximal lineages of independent descent, all clan settlements are further divided into sections. The principles that regulate the structure of the settlement as a whole also determine the structure of its sections and of segments of these sections. This rests on the fact that the different orders of segmentation in the maximal lineage are serially homologous. An old-established settlement is the home of a clan or sub-clan. It is built up on the lineage system. All groupings and alinements that emerge in corporate affairs tend to follow lineage ties and cleavages. Thus, a section is a local subdivision of the *tɛŋ* occupied by a defined segment of the clan or maximal lineage. *Yizug* (pl. *yizugət*), the native term here translated by 'section', means literally 'Superior House',[1] and shows that the genealogical criterion predominates in the native definition of a section. Occasionally people speak of a *yizug* or part of a *yizug* as a *faaŋ* (quarter, pl. *fɔna*), using a term more common among the Mamprusi, when they are thinking of it primarily as a residential unit.

In the new settlements, however, the *yizug* is predominantly a local subdivision. This is due to their genealogical heterogeneity and political immaturity. At Datɔk, for example, one finds Gɔrisi, Tallensi, and Namnam from many different clans, drawn thither by the need for land, and connected with one another not by lineage but by ties of extra-clan kinship and affinity. Moreover, before British rule brought security and gave the titular chief of Datɔk real authority over it, its population was small and largely temporary, and constituted a group of loosely associated neighbours, not a political community. In these circumstances the subdivision of the settlement on strictly local lines is inevitable, the more so as the present-day administrative organization is based on territorial groupings.

Primarily, a *yizug* is a localized lineage segment of a clan settlement. But, characteristically, the Tallensi often extend its reference to denote a whole clan, considered as a member of an interlocking group of adjacent clans that have a greater degree of political solidarity and social cohesion *inter se* than any of them have with other clans. Tɛnzugu, as we have seen, is the outstanding instance of such a community. Tɛnzugu elders often describe the six clans dwelling there as 'our six *yizugət*' when they recapitulate stories of fights with Tongo in the days of long ago. It is a phrase constantly heard in the invocations to the ancestor spirits and the Earth when representatives of the various clans gather to perform 621 one of the great annual ceremonies, as their ritual obligations compel them to, even though they are nowadays divided into two hostile camps. For these are the occasions when the essential unity of Tɛnzugu—a unity in relation to which the six clans rank merely as *yizugət*—can rightly be insisted upon, when frank reproaches verging on warnings of spiritual retribution can be directed against the destroyers of this unity.

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[1] *Yir*, 'house', or, in this context, 'lineage', and *zug*, 'head', or by extension, 'superior, supreme'.

Yet in other situations the component maximal lineages of a particular Tɛnzugu clan are referred to as its *yizugət*. Thus, in connexion with their distinct ritual offices in the cult of the External *Bɔyar* or their divergent clanship linkages, the three maximal lineages of Bunkiuk are always described as *yizugət*. For, like the clan in relation to its neighbour clans, the maximal lineage forms a distinct genealogical and residential unity within the clan settlement. Looked at from within, each maximal lineage is a relatively autonomous integral unit, the majority of whose members live close together inside its social boundaries, which are defined in relation to the other lineages of the clan in the same way as those of the clan settlement are defined in relation to neighbouring clans. The difference is one of degree only, the social boundaries of a lineage within a clan being more fluid than those of a clan. The stability of a settlement rests on the equilibrium of its sections with one another, and this depends upon their being precisely differentiated from one another.

The Sections of Tongo

Tongo proper (Tɔŋ-Nayiri) has four *yizugət*—Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and [491] Kuorəg. Two roads, laid down some years ago by the Administration, 621 which intersect almost at right angles where the Resthouse stands (see map at end of book), by chance afford a convenient set of co-ordinates for 101 describing its layout. Puhug occupies most of the south-western quadrant and a corner of the south-eastern quadrant, most of which is Kuorəg. Seug is an irregular block in the north-eastern quadrant. Guŋ is divided: part of it, Guŋ proper, lies across the watercourse to the west of Puhug; but the majority of its members live in the north-western quadrant, in a broad wedge between Zubiuŋ and Gbizug known as Dekpieŋ. A few Guŋ homesteads also lie on the border between Seug and Zoo. Nevertheless, scattered as it is, Guŋ constitutes a single *yizug* in all corporate affairs except those connected with modern administrative demands. In the latter the local criterion prevails, Dekpieŋ having its own headman and the Guŋ homesteads at Seug coming under the supervision of the Seug headman. Members of all four sections live at Zoo and at Gbambee, but they always act with their respective sections in matters of common concern.

The names of these sections are typical of section and settlement names 621 all over the country. Puhug gets its name from an ancient *puhug* or *pusəga* 101 (*Tamarindus Indica*) tree, which is said to have stood at the edge of the 137 sacred dancing-ground in the centre of the section from time immemorial. It died long ago, but old men still remember seeing its stump. Guŋ is called after the silk-cotton tree (*Ceiba Pentendra*; Talni, *guŋ*) so common in the country. Trees of all kinds, and especially those as tall as the

101 137 silk-cotton, are prominent landmarks in a country of monotonous plains; hence settlements and sections often bear the names of species of trees found there.

621 101 Kuorəg was thus named, according to popular etymology, because the Soog Yikpɛmdaana, who holds the ritual jurisdiction over the land on which the homesteads of Kuorəg stand, ritually allocated or 'cut' (*kuo*) the sites for all these homesteads when Tongo men first settled there. In the same way popular etymology explains the name Dekpieŋ ('it is hard') as derived from the hardness (*kpeoŋ*) of the soil in that part of the settlement as compared with that of Puhug or Seug. Seug literally means 'the rainy season', but no one in Tongo was ever able to suggest how this section acquired its name; and this is characteristic of very many settlement and section names in Taleland.

621 173 To the people of Tongo their present residential constellation is the visible deposit, as it were, of the continuous expansion of the sub-clan through many generations within the limits of its geographical environment and social boundaries. They read the spatial disposition of the four sections as a record of their structural evolution, as a map of the contemporary constitution, and as proof of the chronological retrospect of the sub-clan. Mosuor came to settle at Puhug, where his grave still marks the site of his homestead. As his posterity increased in numbers, they began to move outwards in the same way as young men migrate to Zoo, Gbambee, and farther, nowadays, and for the same reason, shortage of farm-land. Thus Guŋ, Kuorəg, and Seug were occupied. Later, the descendants of those who founded Guŋ became too numerous for the land available there, and, prevented from expanding into Wakii by the social barriers between Tongo and that clan, filtered gradually into the area that is now Dekpieŋ. Arguing from what may be observed nowadays, they say that this was largely a process of occupying hitherto vacant land at a time when the population was very small. But it was partly, also, a process of dispossessing and pushing out to their present location the people of Zubiuŋ and of Gbizug, who claim to have lived at Puhug originally. In proof of this they cite their myths of origin, the fact that the dancing-ground in Puhug is sacred because it is the site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət's homestead, and the ritual jurisdiction exercised over part of the land of Puhug by Gbizug and over the remainder by Zubiuŋ. Indeed, there are Zubiuŋ graves on land now occupied by Dekpieŋ men which are said to date back only three to five generations. This proves that the people of Zubiuŋ were still yielding ground to the Təndem, as they themselves admit, when elders alive to-day were 'already born'.

621 577 There is nothing derogatory in such a retreat. On the contrary, Gbizug and Zubiuŋ elders boast of it as additional evidence of the dependence of the people of Tongo on their ritual benevolence and bounty. It is a cardinal rule of Tale ethics that a request for land to build on and farm—especially if it comes from a kinsman, friend, or neighbour—may not be refused if it can be granted without hardship. There was formerly, and there still is to a small extent, land to spare at Gbizug and at Zubiuŋ. Tongo people have innumerable ties of kinship and neighbourhood with Gbizug and Zubiuŋ, which are the more effective on account of the ties

of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. 621
To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet 577
closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by 621
territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one 613
locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. 571
Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counterpart in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section, both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them
and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent [578]
hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the 621
territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of 618x
ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point emphasized by the Yinduurna'ab in the case previously quoted. Tongo stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the Gbizug tɛndaana's ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpɛmdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect. The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaana's clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth (*tɛŋən kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

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×618

representative capacity; they attend funerals elsewhere in Tongo only in a personal capacity as kin or affines of the bereaved family. Similarly, when the Gbizug tendaana invited the men of Tongo to a collective hoeing—an invitation to which his politico-ritual relations with Tongo gave the weight of a command—it was to Puhug mainly that he directed the invitation, and the elders of Puhug saw to it that their sons turned out in full force. For, as they explained: 'We stand in awe of the Gbizug tendaana, he sacrifices (to the Earth) on our behalf.' From Dekpieŋ, the [202] neighbours of Gbizug, came only three young men, and the other sections merely sent messengers to convey their good wishes for a fruitful day's work. Such ties, however, are only effective as long as amicable relationships prevail between Tongo as a whole and the particular tendaana's clan.

This brings us back to our starting-point: the social boundaries of Tongo. It is evident that they are largely a function of the social and political relations which each section has with its immediate neighbours, and which differ slightly from section to section.

CHAPTER XI

LAND, LOCALITY, AND THE EARTH

Definition of the Bonds between People and the Land

As we have already seen, there is in Tale social organization an intrinsic 621
connexion between every defined social group or part of a social group and a specific locality. Now there are, as yet, no communities in Taleland consisting of aggregations of individuals or families of completely heterogeneous cultural or genealogical origin, whose sole common interest in the locality they occupy is utilitarian, and whose sole bond with one another is their common subjection to a single political authority. As we shall see, even in the new peripheral settlements, which are now, under the pressure of land shortage, being permanently occupied by mixed populations, the decisive bonds of association are ties of consanguineous and affinal kinship. It could hardly be otherwise in a society so homogeneous and also lacking centralized government.

The connexion between community and locality has the three aspects found in all Tale social institutions. It is utilitarian—for men build their homes on the land and get their livelihood from it; it is also morphological, particular units of the social structure being tied to defined localities so that the social unit and its locality form a single entity; and it has a moral and ritual coefficient. Men have moral and ritual relations with one another and with the land in virtue of their occupancy or utilization of particular portions of its surface. We have touched on this in our preliminary remarks on the Tale concept of *tɛŋ*. We return, here, to the further elucidation of this concept.

The bonds between a community and a locality, or between an indivi- 621
dual or a lineage and land, are summed up in the idea of 'ownership' 421
(*solɔm*). This concept, which occurs in various contexts, has certain general implications. Where it is a matter of property such as land, or where persons or localities associated with social groups are concerned, to 'own' (*so*) them means to have responsibilities towards and for them, rights over and on behalf of them, privileges and duties in relation to other individuals or corporate groups in virtue of being the 'master' (*daana* or *-raana*) of the land, locality, or person in question. In every case, there is no such thing as purely utilitarian ownership. Utilitarian ownership exists within a framework of the relations of a defined social group to the land, the person, the locality; and this framework, in turn, is held together by a scheme of moral and ritual values and sanctions.

Thus, in the case of land, exercising or acquiring 'ownership' for productive purposes is regulated by clanship and kinship ties and limited by the moral and ritual values of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. In some circumstances clanship or kinship may be the more important determinant, in others ritual considerations may be the vital factor. The three aspects of 'ownership' may be vested in the same individual or group, or in different individuals or groups. But they are always there.

621 421 The natives cannot imagine any tract of land or territory being totally unconnected with a human group. Most tracts of uninhabited bush are 'owned' by chiefs, who have ritual jurisdiction over hunting rights. But some tracts of untilled and uninhabited land (e.g. between Biuŋ and the river) appear to have no 'owners', either secular or ritual. The natives say the 'owners' have died out. The land did at one time have a connexion, perhaps only a ritual connexion, with a human group, and this connexion remains mystically effective still. Such areas of *wasak*, as the natives call them, are economically a free good. Anyone can come and build or cultivate there. But a man who does so will try to find some person or some clan to offer sacrifice to the Earth on his behalf, as the residuary legatee of the defunct 'owners', through local or clanship ties with them. If he fails to find anyone, he will consult a diviner to find out for himself where the sacred spots are in this stretch of *wasak* and make the sacrifices himself, thus creating a moral bond with it. Nowhere is the Earth inert; and its mystical powers are a reflex of its relations with human groups.

The three functionally differentiated aspects of man's relations to territory in Taleland are interconnected in Tale thought and custom in a rather complex way, and local differences blur the general principles. The simplest approach will be from the starting-point of land used for agricultural purposes. This is by far the most important economic use of land, but not the only one. There are few products of nature on the earth's surface that the natives do not make some economic use of, or rely on for other practical purposes. It is easy to see, therefore, why the natural environment is built into the social organization and invested with values and meaning in the social philosophy and ritual beliefs of the Tallensi. Our analysis would lead to the same conclusions if we started from uncultivated bush (*moog*), for instance, the source of essential products such as firewood, wild fruits, shea nuts, thatching grass, reeds for mat-making, rafters, medicine roots, and so forth, as well as of game and wild fowl.

Farm-land and Subsistence

311 Land means many things to the Tale farmer. He distinguishes, firstly, between the soil (*tam*) and the arable, or tilled land (*kuob*). He recognizes and takes into account different kinds and qualities of soil. This is something independent of the tillage of the land; and, conversely, cultivation (*kuo*, from *kɔ*, to hoe) turns any kind of soil (*tam*) into arable (*kuob*). Tilled land, again, is classified, without reference to soil qualities, by its location and by the kind of crops grown on it. Thus, every farmer has one or more home farms (*saman*) in the settlement and one or more bush farms (*poog*) in an area free of human habitations. In addition, a particular farm is merely a parcel of land, a bit carved out of a *tɛŋ*. In this context a *tɛŋ* is a stretch of territory in its useful, material aspect. One can speak of such and such a *tɛŋ* as being very fertile, or as having a sandy soil (*tambiihug*).

241 731 Farming is the basis of the Taləŋ's livelihood. A failure of crops, nowadays, spells widespread privation. Thirty years ago it would have brought famine. Tallensi often talk of this, especially when unpropitious

471 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the
426 process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the
602 household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit
471 of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

● 621 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is
471 security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage
182 security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of the *teŋ* as a community. The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

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[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621
not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471
loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182
the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends.
There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral
norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity,
and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the
Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farmland. 577
It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a groundnut 471
plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of
it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them.
And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's
land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred
in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167]
twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again
of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there
was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled
the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge
of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days.
Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries
of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it
is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621
use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471
is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands 182
of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership
over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious.
This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing
on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of.
For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural
ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent
clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at
its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *tɛŋ* at its widest extent,
symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent
politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different
maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure,
of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power
acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependants, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tendaanaship

The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico- 622
ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages. 793

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793 Like the tɛndaanas all the *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, and even beyond Tale-
779 land, are described as 'kin' (*mabiis*) to one another. In principle, *tɛŋ*, the Earth, cannot be divided up; it is the tɛndaanaship which is distributed.

471 This explains the diversity and lack of precision one finds in the
793 boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs*. Like settlement boundaries they are determined by social rather than physical facts, though here and there conspicuous topographical features may be fixed upon as landmarks from which to take a bearing. Doo *tɛŋ*, the area immediately surrounding and including the supreme *tɔŋgban* Doo of Tɛnzugu, is an example of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* that can easily be distinguished.
[341] Homesteads on Doo *tɛŋ* may not have roofs of thatch (*mopin*) but must have flat roofs (*bɛa*, vb.) of mud. This is a quasi-totemic taboo of this *tɛŋ* (cf. p. 142). Standing on the wall of granite boulders that overlooks this part of Tɛnzugu one can see where the mud roofs end and the thatched roofs begin. I was very reluctantly told about, and later shown, what purported to be the fixed physical boundaries of Doo *tɛŋ* by men of Kpata'ar, the clan which has ritual jurisdiction over it. A ditch, a line of large boulders, a prominent tree, a path, such were the landmarks by which they went. But the striking thing about this boundary was that, almost all the way, it followed the social boundaries between Kpata'ar and Gundaat on the one side, and between Bunkiuk and Samiit on the other. In the closely settled parts of the country, wherever *tɛndaanditib* clans are in occupation of the areas under their ritual jurisdiction, there is a noticeable tendency for the alleged physical boundaries of *tɛs* to coincide with social boundaries between clans or maximal lineages.

621 Settlements like Tongo, where people believed to be of immigrant
471 descent occupy land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans, are
793 instructive. Tongo, like many other Tale settlements, stretches over the ritual territories of several tɛndaanas (cf. p. 169). The alleged boundaries between the *tɛs* of the Gbizug, Soog, and Zubiuŋ tɛndaanas run through Tongo. As the people of Tongo put it, these clans at various times allotted portions of their own land for Tongo people to build and farm on. Physical landmarks are pointed out as indicating these boundaries. But if they are examined it will be seen that they tend to coincide with the social boundaries between sections (*yizugɔt*) or between segments of sections (*dugɔt*). (See map at end of book.) Wherever part of a tɛndaana's boundary runs between homesteads of men of the same segment (*dug*), the homesteads (rarely more than one or two) on the wrong side of the boundary have not been sited there for more than a generation. The continual slow shifting about of homestead sites in a settlement through the course of generations is paralleled by a shifting of the boundaries between farm plots; for they pass through alternate phases of being divided up, wholly or in part, among the segments of a nuclear lineage that has reached a phase of fission, and of being reconstituted, wholly or in part, at a later stage of lineage integration. These internal adjustments often result in a spilling over of one section of a clan into what was till then regarded as the area of a neighbouring unit of like sort.

178 We lack historical documents; but we can infer from the contemporary dynamics of Tale social life that the boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* shift

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his *àhəb* (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage, the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)' ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

Lineage Grouping and Local Grouping

613 ●621 596 We come now to the question of the connexion between lineage grouping and locality. A lineage like Nɔpugzabɔr yiri, though its span is comparatively small, exhibits all the important principles of lineage structure and will suffice as a crucial example.

In all the old-established settlements we find a very close correlation between lineage proximity and residential proximity among the members of the clan who live there. Close agnates tend to live near one another, so that residential proximity is almost a measure of lineage proximity. A segment of small span tends to be a close residential cluster, and segments of larger span, up to the major segments of a maximal lineage, tend to form residential blocks.

We can see this most readily if we look again at the residential dispersion of a group of agnatically related joint families, bearing in mind that the men of a joint family form a lineage. For as the homestead is the material integument of the living structure of the joint family, so is the localization of the lineage, growing out of the spatial arrangement of the homestead, the spatial counterpart of the lineage structure.

592 602 596 As will be remembered (see p. 199), the elementary case is that of two full (*soog*) brothers, who often continue to occupy a single homestead long after they have set up separate families. Each will have more or less self-contained quarters, but the homestead will have only one gateway (*zanɔr*), one cattle-yard (*sapak*), and one room for the family head (*zɔŋ*), signifying that it is a single homestead. Half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) may share a homestead in this way, but they usually separate more distinctly when they have growing families. Each will have his own gateway, &c., and party walls divide his section of the homestead completely from those of his brothers, making it what may be called a semi-detached homestead. Such a set of semi-detached homesteads may house a man and his mature first-born son, or a man and his deceased brother's sons. Sometimes two or more ortho-cousins (brothers, in native terminology) live thus side by side.

613 621 More usually, however, men whose nearest common ancestor is a grandfather occupy completely separate dwellings, often very near to one another. Men whose nearest common ancestor is a great-grandfather never have permanent homes adjoining one another in this semi-detached way. These conditions of residence signalize successive stages of segmentation as the effective minimal lineage expands and splits into new effective minimal lineages. But what residential arrangements will prevail in a particular lineage segment depends, also, upon other circumstances, the most important of which are the economic and religious relations, and the character and disposition of the individuals concerned. Residential collocation is not a simple function of lineage relationship. There is a *tertium quid* linking them: the combined effect of land tenure, on which the whole economy of the household rests, and of the ancestor cult. For example, when a joint family splits, the man who leaves the ancestral home usually builds a homestead for himself on land belonging to the

613 nuclear lineage; but this land may be some distance from the ancestral home, owing to the scattering of holdings.

●621 Looking at it from the native point of view, we should say, not that individuals tend to live near one another because they are agnatic kin, but that all lineages down to the effective minimal lineage tend to be tied to localities; and the more closely lineages are related, the greater is the spatial propinquity of their dwelling areas. The distribution of households is not rigidly parallel to the lineage structure at a given time. Mere spatial proximity cannot be directly translated into terms of lineage proximity. There is a diachronic element as well. Kurug's homestead (No. 6), for example, is nearer to Pumaan's (No. 5) in yards and feet than to Lɛbhtiis's; but Kurug is closer to Lɛbhtiis than to Pumaan in lineage. This is due chiefly to changes in the internal structure of their respective nuclear lineages in the last twenty or thirty years. The spatial relations of homesteads to one another reflect lineage relations in their diachronic aspect.

The Concept of the Lineage Home

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778 Lineages tend to be tied to specific localities even if many of their members are permanently or temporarily away from the lineage home. Some representatives of the lineage will generally continue to reside near the ancient home where the spirits of the ancestors still dwell. The *daboog*, the site of the original home of the lineage, the first dwelling-place of its founding ancestor, is a hallowed spot. It is identified by reference to ancestral land and to the graves of the ancestors. These are the fixed things. Homesteads are not eternal. Their collocation reflects the structure of the lineage at a given time; but it changes as the composition and segmentation of the lineage alters. Whenever an alteration of this sort occurs, there is a corresponding reshuffle in the housing arrangements. New homesteads are erected, old homesteads replanned and rebuilt or abandoned. A lineage being an organic unit has, in native eyes, but one home (*yir*), though the material embodiment of this home is distributed at any given time. The *daboog* of the lineage of Nɔpugzabɔr yidem, the original homestead site of their ancestor Nɔpugzabɔr, is on what was in 1934 the home farm of the head of the lineage, Deemzeet, a stone's throw from his gateway. The graves of Nɔpugzabɔr and his sons, and a tree which sprouted on Nɔpugzabɔr's grave and is believed, therefore, to enshrine his spirit, mark the spot where his gateway (*zanɔr*) stood.

From this arises the concept of the lineage *zanɔr*. All the homesteads of its members together make up the lineage home (*yir*), and this home has its single gateway (*zanɔr*), the lineage *zanɔr*. The notion is pre-eminently symbolical, but its material embodiment is the homestead of the lineage head, and therefore, specifically, the gateway of his homestead. It applies to all levels of lineage organization, up to the maximal lineage. In a maximal lineage the site of the founding ancestor's homestead is generally a sacred spot, often marked by the erection on or near it of a miniature room to represent the ancestral *zɔŋ*. This room is one of the

554 shrines connected with the lineage *bɔyar*, and its custody is vested in a

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613
and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621
on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778
tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding [557]
ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabər. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [423]
by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [104]
organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits 613
on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 621
life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 602
and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'. [191]

613 where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent 621 group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of residence, common interests, and common experience. The local con- 602 centration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its [769] ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

613 In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with 621 local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her 571 relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the [587] segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close [602] agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to 613
their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with 621
the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant 571
agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round
her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the
range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, 182
religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties 613
with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and 621
the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's
central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of
spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others
is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to
intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted,
most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

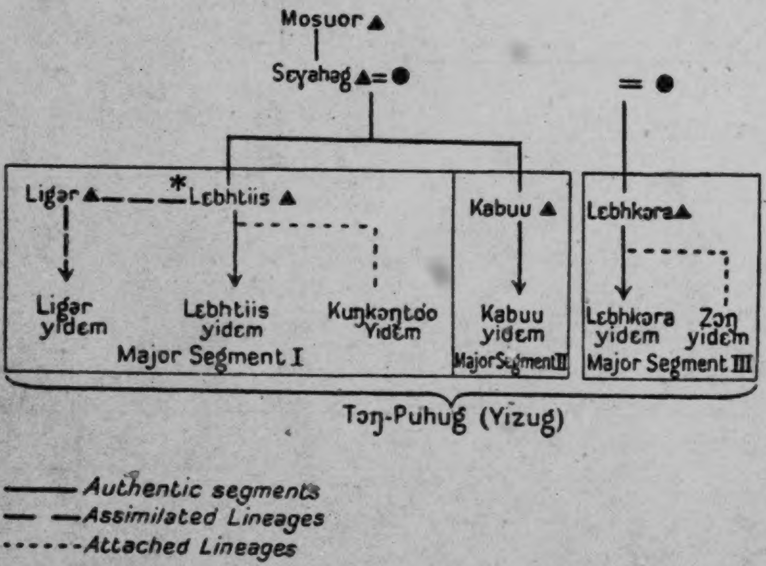
In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has
often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face
communication and association in the organization of their collective life.
Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by
their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the [212
absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, 401
communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of 371]
Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular
the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of
political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system
and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are
the most important factors in the situation.

The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo. 613
Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster 621
of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligar yidɛm (see above, p. 57),
homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic
lineage with which Ligar yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as
segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another
cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm,
the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son
(*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number
of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

613 it forms a segment, is the structure of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm writ large. Discounting the accessory lineages, Puhug comprises three major segments. ●621 It has two more lineages of the same order of segmentation as Lɛbhtiis yidɛm: Kabuu yidɛm and Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm. One segment of the former occupies the south-west or topmost (*zugni*) corner of Puhug (homesteads Nos. 25, 26, 27), abutting on the mass of great boulders that lies between Puhug and the watercourse that separates it from Wakii. The other [166] segment occupies the group of homesteads at Kumpɛyalɔyat. A minor branch, including the head of this segment, migrated to Yamələg some twenty years ago, and other members of it are settled at Gbambee, Woo, and in the outlying parts of Taleland, while some are abroad. Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm, together with their attached lineage, Zɔŋ yidɛm, live in the group of homesteads—Nos. 30, 31, 32, 34—adjacent to Kuorəg. These three major segments of Puhug (reckoned as *dugət*, medial lineages, in this context) are agnatically related as follows:


Mosuor ▲
Sɛyahəg ▲ = ●
= ●
Ligər ▲
*
Lɛbhtiis ▲
Kabuu ▲
Lɛbhkɔra ▲
Ligər yidɛm
Lɛbhtiis yidɛm
Kuŋkɔŋtɔo Yidɛm
Kabuu yidɛm
Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm
Zɔŋ yidɛm
Major Segment I
Major Segment II
Major Segment III
Tɔŋ-Puhug (Yizug)
——— Authentic segments
— — Assimilated Lineages
------ Attached Lineages

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm and Kabuu yidɛm are *soog* (full brother) segments, it will be noted, and though they are not considered to form a single *dug* within Puhug, they have somewhat closer ties than either has with their *sunzɔ* segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis, while Ligər yidem have closer ties with Lɛbhtiis yidɛm than with the others, on account of their special connexion with the former. In the economic, ritual, and jural concerns of the section all the segments have the same status and the same degree of relative autonomy. But Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are recognized as the senior branch, and so rank above the others. The head (*kpeem*) of Lɛbhtiis yir is *ipso facto* the *kpeem* of Puhug.

The lineage structure of the other three *yizugət* of Tongo follows the same

plan; and the architecture of the sub-clan as a whole is that of the *yizug* 613 on a larger scale. A skeleton genealogy (see p. 214) will suffice to show this. 621

Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg are constituted according to the same general plan as Puhug. But each section has features peculiar to itself, specializations of the general principles of *yizug* structure due to the particular genealogical constitution of each, and to the demographic and structural relations with one another of the four sections. This is characteristic of Tale social organization. Like the maximal lineages of a composite clan, co-ordinate segments of a maximal lineage are homologous with one another in structure, but frequently different in genealogical composition.

Viewed in terms of its own diachronic and local constitution, each is unique, its present form the precipitate of its own peculiar history. Thus Guŋ, as we have seen, is not a single local aggregate like Puhug. But the principle that lineage proximity and residential proximity go together prevails. Leaving aside those who have settled permanently or temporarily in outlying places, the Guŋdɛm at Guŋ proper are almost all Kɔbər yidɛm. The centre of settlement of Siiyɛŋ biis is Dekpieŋ. Bɔyyiedət yidɛm are most scattered; but each of its segments tends to be a small local aggregate, and wherever in outlying places a cluster of homesteads belonging to Guŋ men is formed—at Zoo, at Gbambee, and at Woo—these men are almost invariably members of a single minor segment of the lineage.

The three segments of Guŋ (excluding Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, the assimilated lineage) are considered to be more closely united than the segments of Puhug because they have a single common progenitrix. They speak of themselves as 'members of one *dug* (*dug yɛni dɛm*)' in contraposition to the other sections of Tongo. Seug is the most homogeneous section of Tongo, both residentially and genealogically, for it consists of only one segment, of the same order as the component segments of the other *yizugət*. The members of Seug, too, speak of themselves as members of one *dug* in contraposition to the other three sections. Kuorəg is the most heterogeneous, genealogically, of the four sections. Its members are also more widely dispersed, most of them having moved to Gbambee in the past [166] thirty or forty years.

Puhug and Kuorəg both show clearly how local association is a factor of section organization in a maximal lineage in the same way as it is a factor of clanship in composite clans. Genealogically, Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm of Puhug are a lineage of the same order of segmentation as Seugdɛm; yet they do not, like the latter, constitute a separate *yizug*. Close local association with Puhug makes them a part of that section. Similarly, Yikpɛmdaan yir of Kuorəg on genealogical reckoning alone should rank as a section. Its founding ancestor is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*), possibly a 'brother' but certainly not a son, of Mosuor, who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu. The head of this lineage, who has the hereditary title of Yikpɛmdaan, has a position of special dignity at Tongo. He is in one sense the senior elder (*kpeem*) among all the elders of the sub-clan. Yikpɛmdaan's high status is due to his hereditary ownership of a special shrine (*bɔyar*), Zoonkpaləg, which is both his lineage *bɔyar* (*banam bɔyar*) and a clan *bɔyar*, analogous to the External *Bɔyar* of the Talis, for the whole of Tongo. It is the shrine

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

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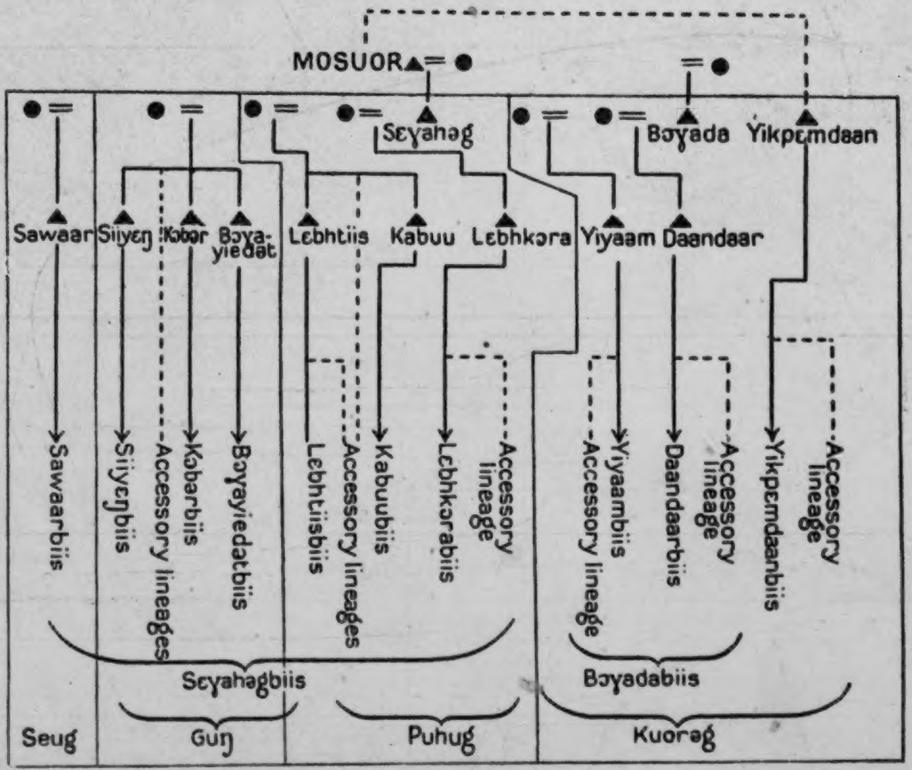
621


MOSUOR
Sɛɣahəg
Bɔɣada
Yikpɛmdaan
Sawaar
Siiyɛŋ
Kɔbər
Bɔɣa-yiedat
Lɛbhtiis
Kabuu
Lɛbhkɔra
Yiyaam
Daandaar
Sawaarbiis
Siiyɛŋbiis
Accessory lineages
Kɔbarbiis
Bɔɣayiedatbiis
Lɛbhtiisbiis
Accessory lineages
Kabuubiis
Lɛbhkɔrabiis
Accessory lineage
Accessory lineage
Yiyaambiis
Daandaarbiis
Accessory lineage
Yikpɛmdaanbiis
Accessory lineage
Sɛɣahəgbiis
Bɔɣadabiis
Seug
Guŋ
Puhug
Kuorəg

Note: Daandaar biis are often referred to as Yidaan biis, after a title held by their founding ancestor

[p.214]

613 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes
621 the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔɣar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔɣada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛɣahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔɣada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛɣahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔɣada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zɔŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seɣahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zɔŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contra-
[782] position between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zɔŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often
613 emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yɔrug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated,
621 contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yɔrug Yin had been the head of Bɔɣada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates
[273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large
[554] pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Saɣawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔah*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

764 quarters) for the other three sections of Tongo, since one of the hind
613 quarters (*gbɛr*) remains with the 'owner of the funeral', the man who is
● 621 celebrating it. Thus the genealogical cleavage between Kuorəg and the rest of Tongo asserted itself. Kuorəg was treated as the *sunzɔp* of the rest of Tongo and received a forequarter, the remaining hind quarter going to the other three sections. There are stories of intra-clan quarrels in the
[578] old days in which Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug banded themselves together against Kuorəg.

613 Nevertheless, in the corporate affairs of Tongo as a whole Kuorəg
621 emerges as a segment of the same order as the other three sections. It is one of the four co-ordinate sections (*yizugət*). A significant index of this is the fact that in all four sections nine generations of ascendants are reckoned inclusively between the present section heads (*yizug kpeem*) and Mosuor. No Tongo man, however profoundly versed in the traditions and customs of his clan, is aware of this, however. Tallensi never have occasion to work out the genealogical relations of all the minimal segments of a maximal lineage with one another.

A man's genealogical knowledge is built up gradually and piecemeal in the give and take of social life, by participation in jural, ritual, and ceremonial activities. But a man of wide experience knows the lineage ancestry of the component segments of his own *dug* as far as its founding ancestor; he will know who were the putative brothers of this man, the founding ancestors of the other major segments of his section, and their sons, the founding ancestors of large sub-segments like Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, in his section; and he will know the founding ancestors of the other *yizugət* of the clan, and possibly their sons; but he will not know the whole descent of other major segments of other sections.

The nine-generation ladder of ascent found at Tongo is an index of the structural differentiation and internal equilibrium of the clan. As we have already observed, the maximal lineage (and Tongo functions as a maximal lineage, though strictly speaking it is not one) is unalterably fixed. Its major segments cannot be altered in relation to one another by further segmentation of its minimal segments. Its internal equilibrium is a function of the relations between its major segments; and the same principle applies to each major segment. This is symbolized in the tree of ascent of the people of Tongo. The structure of the maximal lineage does not permit of the recognition of more than one generation between Mosuor and his nine putative grandsons. Following the simplest possible pattern of symmetrical lineage segmentation, all Mosuor's progeny are first divided into two major (matri-)segments in accordance with the stereotyped scheme of differentiation by reference to their progenitrices; and each of these is again segmented on the same principle. Kuorəg counts as a section of the same order as Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug in the corporate affairs of the whole sub-clan, because this is necessary for the equilibrium of the sub-clan. The internal differentiation of Sɛɣahəg biis has reached an advanced stage. The relative autonomy of the three sections that constitute it is now so great that they can only act together as equal partners. Each of these three sections has a corporate unity and common interests that sometimes bring it into conflict with the other two

or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them 613
in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in 621
the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this
necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and
responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and
Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, 613
though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal 621
lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and 161
children), including members of the section and their families who live
at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less
than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and
barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller
area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the 613
effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments 621
of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare 182
it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural
equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a
ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and
Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also
grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things.
When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or cere- [782]
monially slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section,
as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their
younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the
left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the
perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides.
Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and [787]
Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the
other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*,
that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug
on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and 613
solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range 621
of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them
is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which
there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated
with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

613 sex, station in life, character, and reputation of the deceased all influence the reactions of people to a death and the range of participation
613 in the funeral ceremonies. Every death is the corporate concern of the
621 deceased's medial lineage—his *dug* of the *yizug*. It is less stringently the
764 corporate concern of the whole *yizug*. Funerals of old and important men evoke the participation of the whole clan or sub-clan, but it is clan solidarity and corporate obligation on the level of the section that draw *sunzɔ* sections to the ceremonies. Only the death of a chief, a tendaana, or other politico-ritual functionary, is the obligatory concern of every segment of the clan or maximal lineage. Funerals of women and young people or children impose no obligations on *sunzɔ* sections of the deceased's (or her husband's) section. Whether or not their representatives come to condole with the bereaved household or to take part in the burial and funeral ceremonies rests entirely with the individual members of these sections and depends on individual ties of neighbourhood, kinship, or friendship with the deceased's family and *dug*. A funeral, even that of a politico-ritual officer, is primarily the direct concern of every member of the deceased's segment of the clan or maximal lineage. It concerns *sunzɔ* segments only at the level of corporate relations, because every event that affects the existence and constitution of one part of the clan or maximal lineage impinges on its common interests.

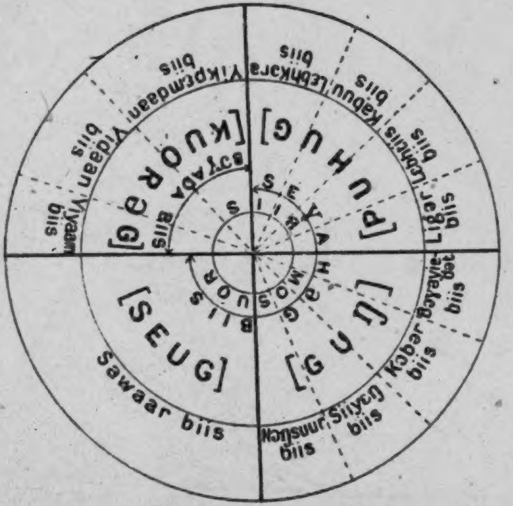


Diagram showing internal segmentation of Tongo.

——Thick lines mark off sections (Yizugət)

- - - - Broken lines mark off major segments of sections, that is medial lineages (dugət)

622 We may contrast with this a corporate activity in a wider sense, such
621 as the sacrifice to Mosuor at Tongo, to which we have several times
613 referred, the Harvest Festival, or the communal hoeing of the chief's
[24I] bush farm, which has become an established custom under British rule. The pivot of these activities is always the chief, who stands for the whole sub-clan and its common interests and values, and whose office transcends the cleavages inherent in its lineage segmentation. In these activities the

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a
sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar*
and Sɛɣahəg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose
section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and
officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Genət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however
widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for
ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and
consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ
Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Genət, and nearby are the graves of the
first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahəg, and Bɔɣada—marking
the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological
focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule
applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart,
the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have
tendaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the
consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour- 461
water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk
with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade
tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come
and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from
the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older
children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of
the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in
this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The
tree is sacred, it is a *Baɣăr*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance
is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with
appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which
are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such
neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know
exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however,
being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is
more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

778 The graves of Sɛyahəg and Bɔyada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔyada's grave
is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested
in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly
Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbər, and Bɔyayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie
buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority
of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or
diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through
the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus
Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted
as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival
and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading
of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakɔradɛm,
Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that
remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by
Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔyada's grave is proof to the
natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants
to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans
the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the
segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The
correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of
the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo
clans living in the vicinity of Yamələg and Sie—the group of clans which
the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos
—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate
forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small
cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔyar* takes the place of
the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of
the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most
important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is
often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession
also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the
maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the
actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought
into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office
of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds
known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

Structure of Peripheral Settlements

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In the newer settlements there are no lineages of large span. Where segments of maximal lineages, whose homes are in the old settlements, have been settled for more than a generation, those of their members remaining in the peripheral settlements do not always live in close proximity to one another. People shift readily to take up new land, and spread widely so as to have a large area for cultivation immediately around the homestead, as we have learnt. But the tendency for a lineage to become locally stabilized on the land of its ancestors, near their graves and original home, operates strongly too, and has been strengthened in recent years.

Many men at Woo, Biuŋ, and Datɔk now live on land originally broken for cultivation by their fathers, grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers. A powerful incentive to remain there is the fact that they now hold this land by right of inheritance. An irresistible sanction binding them to these new settlements is the fact that their fathers and grandfathers lie buried there. Born and bred in these settlements, they look upon them as their homes, while maintaining strong ties with their original clan settlements, which they regard as the clan homes.

The effect is to establish new, permanent, local nuclei for minor branches of lineages anchored in the old settlement. Around these nuclei we sometimes find a small cluster of homesteads, the heads of which are all members of a lineage segment of two, three, or at the most four generations. But this is far from common. As we have mentioned before, these settlements have been, and are being, occupied by people of very diverse genealogical origin from all parts of Taleland and neighbouring areas. This is particularly marked in the case of Datɔk. Biuŋ and Woo have been settled chiefly by people from Tongo and the places immediately adjacent to or socially connected with Tongo. In addition to the bonds of local cohesion the inhabitants of these places have also the ties of political and ritual interdependence which they bring with them from their original clan settlements. At Datɔk no such bonds are carried over into the new community. A Gban man may have as his nearest neighbours a man from Ba'ari, a man from Bɔləga, a man from Yaməlɔg, and a man from Bongo. The basis of political unity is locality rather than lineage. The sections of Datɔk, for example, are local units, wards, or quarters, not genealogical-cum-local units.

But it is characteristic of Tale social organization that the bonds of local association never stand alone and are never sufficient in themselves to generate bonds of solidarity. Mere contiguity requires some degree of mutual accommodation. It does not, in a society without a constituted legal system or territorially organized political units, create mutual legal obligations, or provide a basis for corporate relations between individuals. Hence it must be reinforced by, and indeed founded on, more fundamental ties which are morally and jurally binding in their own right. In the older settlements lineage ties have this function; in new settlements kinship ties take their place. [602]

The following excerpt from a census of a part of Datɔk illustrates this.

613 It will be seen that both affinal and cognatic kinship ties regulate the collocation of homesteads.

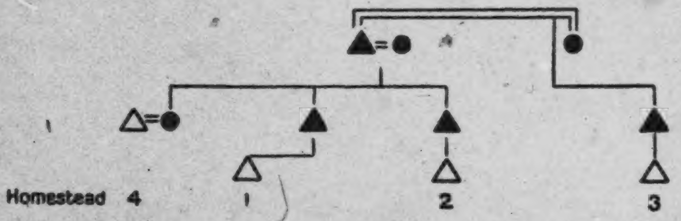
621 *Section: Zalɔmvuuri.* (A local subdivision of Datɔk, named after the
166 stream forming one of its boundaries.)

Homestead 1. This belongs to Latammi, a man of about 55, whose father, a Gar man, came to build his house and to farm here about fifty years ago. He died and was buried at his new home. Latammi, his eldest son, then inherited the homestead and the surrounding farm-land, and remained living there.

Homestead 2. About 200 yards away, is owned by Latammi's father's younger brother's (*pit soog*) son. This young man formerly shared Latammi's homestead but recently moved out to set up in his own.

Homestead 3. About 250 yards away from 1. Latammi's father's half-brother (*sunzɔ*) built this homestead, having come to settle here shortly after Latammi's father. This man died recently and the homestead and surrounding farm-land now belong to his son.

The following genealogy shows how the heads of these three homesteads are related:



Together they constitute a lineage of small span, a segment of a greater lineage whose home is at Gar. Their residential collocation is exactly the same as it would be if they were living at Gar or in any of the older settlements.

Homestead 4. About 200 yards from 1. This is the homestead of a Ba'ari man who migrated to Datɔk about three years ago. He is a brother-in-law (sister's husband) (*dakii*) of Latammi's late father (see genealogy above), and was, on this account, given land on which to build and settle by the latter's half-brother's son of Homestead 3.

Homestead 5. About a quarter of a mile from 1. This belongs to Naambɔn, whose father, a man from Bɔlɔga, came to build and settle here some forty years ago. This man had first migrated from Bɔlɔga to Kosabɔlɔg, on the outskirts of Duusi. While he was living there Teroog (now an old man), a member of the same maximal lineage as Latammi's father, who lives in another section of Datɔk, married one of the Bɔlɔga man's daughters. The land he held at Duusi proved to be unsatisfactory, so Naambɔn's father decided to move to Datɔk. Through the good offices
[606] of his son-in-law, Teroog, he was introduced to Latammi's father, who (as a son-in-law (*deem*) in the classificatory sense) gave him land to settle on near the fringe of the huge area he had marked out as a farm for himself.

This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours 613
at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, 621
numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which 361
have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle 166
there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their 613
lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but 621
drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such 166
clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ŋma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between 581
neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans 621
are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry 602
people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and 621
this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of 613
mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settle- 571
ments. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔyaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate.
They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements 621
from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are 613
still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still 177

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[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

621 loyal to the interests of these clan settlements. But the political structure
613 of the newer settlements is rapidly crystallizing out, on the basis of a
177 territorial unity reinforced by inter-individual kinship ties. This process has been greatly accelerated under the influence of British rule, with its stress on the territorial definition of political units and the support it gives to chiefs and headmen in the exercise of administrative and judicial functions.

Seniority and Authority in the Lineage

613 In the course of our morphological analysis of the lineage system from
182 within, we have made many references to the corporate activities in which this system emerges. As in our study of clanship, it has been convenient to speak as if the lineage structure exists and persists apart from the activities in which it emerges. But this is only an analytical device which we shall consider more fully presently. The implied distinction between the structure of the lineage and its functions does, however, bring out the important fact that the lineage structure is more than any of its functions. It is the integral of what is common to all Tale institutions in which the patrilineal line operates as an organizing principle. It is the general factor of consistency, coherence, and continuity in the social structure.

613 The concept of social structure essentially implies ordered extension *in time* as well as ordered articulation *at a given time*. This is often overlooked in the study of primitive society. Among the Tallensi the lineage system enables us to see the operation of the time factor in social structure in a very concrete way.[1] We see how the lineage structure at a given time incapsulates[2] all that is structurally relevant of its past phases and at the same time continually thrusts its growing-points forward. The dynamic equilibrium of a lineage is an equilibrium in time.

The key position, whenever a lineage emerges in function—and this applies to lineages of any span and all orders of segmentation—is that of the lineage head (*kpeem*). He is, to revert to an analogy previously used, the keystone of the arch. He does not stand above the lineage; he is part of it. *Kpeem* literally means 'senior': a *kpeem* is a senior, an elder. The head of the lineage is the most senior male of the group. The head of a lineage and his age or generation equals in the lineage are collectively designated 'the elders (*kpεm*)'. They are for the most part the heads of the component segments of the lineage.

613 The rule of seniority, as might be expected in so homogeneous and
888 equalitarian a society, plays an important part in all Tale social relations. When a group of boys are out herding cattle the oldest among them are in charge. The women of a household defer to the most senior by generation, age, or marital status among them. In all collective activities of men the places of honour are taken by the most senior men, the *kpεm*. Seniority commands deference at all times.

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[1] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *cit. supra*; also Forde, op. cit. and his previous papers cited there; and a brilliant discussion of this point in E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, ch. 3.

[2] I owe this valuable concept to R. G. Collingwood's *Autobiography*.

631 171 Rhodesia,[1] or the Ashanti of the Gold Coast.[2] These peoples have a pyramidal social structure corresponding to their pyramidal form of government. From the village to the tribal unit we find a hierarchy of territorial-political units, the greater made up of a collection of the lesser, and culminating in the whole tribal unit. This is associated with a corresponding hierarchy of political offices, from the village headman to the paramount chief at the apex. Among the Tallensi[3] there is no single person or body of persons vested with supreme executive and administrative authority over the whole of Taleland. Government is laterally distributed amongst all the corporate units that make up the society, instead of being vertically distributed as in pyramidal societies. All the corporate units are, broadly speaking, politically equal; all are segments of the same structural order.

621 This is one aspect of what is meant by describing Tale society as segmentary in form. But the concept has further implications. The corporate units that compose Tale society are not a casual agglomerate of discrete bodies, but are socially articulated and interconnected with one another; and they are thus interrelated in a segmentary series. This principle of association between defined social units runs right through the structure of Tale society. It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system. This rule holds whether the associations are temporary, for a particular end, or form permanent groupings. Furthermore, the principles according to which the associations occur are either uniform for a whole series of segments of increasing dimension or are so related to one another that principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.

128 This is an architectural way of looking at the structure of Tale society. It is the line we have largely followed in the preceding chapters, where we have been concerned with the largest corporate units into which the Tallensi are organized. Our attention has been fixed mainly on the permanent edifice in which social relations and activities are congealed rather than on their emergence in process. We have been analysing the product of social segmentation rather than the process itself. To distinguish between product and process is, however, merely an analytic convenience in dealing with social facts. In reality what we denote as a product is a set of regularities and recurrences of process. A corporate unit is really the sum total of corporate relations and activities occurring amongst a defined group of individuals. We can think of a maximal lineage as an architectural segment of a composite clan in the same way as we can picture one storey of a modern building as a lateral segment of the whole. A maximal lineage, however, differs from a part of a building of brick and wood in that it is not always 'there', tactually and visibly.

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[1] Cf. Richards, Audrey I., 'The Political System of the Bemba Tribe', in *African Political Systems*, and *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, 1939.

[2] Cf. Rattray, R. S., *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, 1929.

[3] A fuller analysis will be found in the 'Introduction' and in my article on 'The Political System of the Tallensi' in *African Political Systems*.

It emerges when certain social processes and activities are in play; it is 188 potential when they are not in play. Difficult as it is to convey this to a reader, it is something which the observer is constantly aware of. A maximal lineage emerges only in relation to other maximal lineages, and a clan in relation to other clans. When we speak of lineages being segmentarily related to one another and to the composite clan embracing them, we mean that their relations are mutual, symmetrical, and summative. A is related to B in the same way as B is related to A and the sum of their interrelations gives us a set of relations of the same kind but of higher order.

Putting it thus abstractly, however, leaves out a point of the utmost importance. The relations between individuals and between groups in which corporate units like the maximal lineage emerge are social relations. They are subject to jural, moral, and ritual norms; they are the means of achieving human purposes, of getting a livelihood, of marrying and procreating, of expressing emotional attitudes, organizing the intercourse of people, and so forth. A maximal lineage emerges in terms of jurally, morally, and ritually defined ties and cleavages that exist between it and other specified maximal lineages. A segmentary relationship between lineages or any other social units implies the existence of specific ties and cleavages which have the effect of making each unit a determining factor in the emergence of the other units. This is the basis of the concept of a field of social relations which we have used to describe the way in which lineages are differentiated from and articulated with one another.

The concept of a field of social relations has enabled us to see how 121 clanship acts as a factor of social integration. Through the overlapping of the fields of clanship of adjacent maximal lineages chains of clanship ties interlinking a whole group of lineages are established. Thus each lineage can be regarded as the centre of a series of zones of clanship of increasing amplitude and diminishing integration. The clan is the central region of such a system, a wider community like that of the Hill Talis constitutes the next region, and beyond that lie still wider regions of diminishing importance for the members of the lineage that is taken as the starting-point.

We have seen that there are three major sub-regions within the socio- 621 geographic region we have called Taleland, within each of which there is a greater degree of interarticulation of lineages and clans, and therefore closer integration, than there is between them. But the three sub-regions overlap with each other and with adjacent non-Tale regions. They have a particularly important connecting system in the chain of sub-clans of Mosuor biis.

This system of regions or communities constituted primarily by the 621 operation of the ties and cleavages of clanship is the foundation of a 182 scheme of ritual values and relationships which serves to reinforce the clanship organization by means of mystical sanctions and by co-ordinating the interrelations of lineages and clans at a higher level. Among the Tallensi the web of clanship and the web of ritual relationships take the place, as mechanisms of social integration, of a constituted governmental

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and
by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old
men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-
aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[538] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of
funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who
wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the
warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

728 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire when its allied clan made peace.

727 721 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 721 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

● [621] [182] 726 411 [701] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows, their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

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[1] A clan-head could initiate a just war of revenge, with the consent of all the clan elders, and after consulting a diviner, in theory without incurring mystical blood-guilt. And yet, in after years, misfortunes falling on his descendants might be ascribed to this act.

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621 ●
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was [462
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights. As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of the wound.

621 511 291 [465] and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 311 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land; but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 433 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 721 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth 471
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar 794
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔɣar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔɣa* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔɣar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

621 622 177 578 lineages inherent in the native social structure. The majority of the Gɔlibdaana's own maximal lineage share in the profits of his monopoly and are solidly behind him; the maximal lineages of the leaders of the opposition are solidly against him; but many of the maximal lineages that have clanship or ritual links with both sides are split. Many of the young men of these lineages side with the Gɔlibdaana—enticed, their elders say bitterly, by his lavish gifts. The older men are uneasily neutral or tacitly opposed to the Gɔlibdaana because he has brought dissension to the Hills and has flouted some of the ancient ritual customs. Both parties try to manœuvre the opposition into a position which will set the Administration in motion against them; the leaders of both parties say that the white man's authority is the only force that will help them to victory. And they feel particularly bitter because the vigilance of Administrative officers has frustrated all their efforts to exploit this potent sanction.

At the same time they try to use the sanctions of their own social structure to gain their aims. For outside the struggle for control of the pilgrim traffic, the ties of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration remain valid as before. During the Great Festivals the feud sinks into temporary abeyance. The Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab speak with hatred of each other when it is a question of political power or the pilgrim traffic; they continue to perform those rites of the Great Festivals and of the Earth cult in which they are ritually obliged to collaborate, with apparent cordiality. This is a 'separate thing' they declare. It would be an appalling sin bringing catastrophe on the whole country, they say, if they threw over these bonds.

But the new alinements in the pecuniary struggle and the traditional social structure cannot be kept apart in watertight compartments. The Kpata'arna'ab and the Gɔlibdaana try to coerce each other through their mutual ritual obligations. They try to put pressure on each other through maximal lineages that are intercalary between their lineages; and to win over the other maximal lineages with which they have clanship or ritual ties.

Experienced elders maintain, with the sceptical candour that is one of the few charms Tallensi have for an ethnographer, that this can never decide the issue. Putting it at its highest, the bonds of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration are a double-edged weapon. If Kpata'ar tries to coerce Samiit to side with it by refusing to collaborate with Samiit in the rites of their common External *Bɔyar*, the ancestors might well blame Kpata'ar and punish them. Tallensi are not—so the old men say—restrained from doing something to their personal advantage by the fear of mystical penalties. 'Who fears death before death comes upon you?' It is only after a death occurs that the survivors see in it signs and omens referring to their social relations with one another.

578 764 Whenever a death occurs in any of the Hill clans, especially if it is the death of an important person, the chronic discord between them is openly recollected. It is both a symptom of the general feeling of uneasiness and a move in the game of attempted mutual coercion by mystical sanctions. A funeral almost inevitably causes this feeling to be ventilated. For people of all the Tɛnzugu and many other clans are present, as kinsfolk, affines,

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors, for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tɛnzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar* as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[177] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly. Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals. The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

622 Chiefship of Tongo, to which the Gɔlibdaana's office has a politico-ritual
578 relationship.

621 The point that must be stressed, however, is that the Gɔlibdaana's
182 monopoly has not yet thrown the existing scheme of structural alinements
621 into complete disorder. It is a factor of disequilibrium and may, in the
578 course of a few more years, make serious rents in the complex fabric of
the social and politico-ritual relationships of the Hill Talis. Up to the present the native social structure, and in particular the web of ritual collaboration, has resisted the corruption and kept in check, to a very considerable extent, the dissensions due to this new force. This might well go on as long as the Administration keeps the ring impartially, and as long as the Gɔlibdaana and his maximal lineage accept the politico-ritual values on which the integration of the Hill Talis rests, and abide by the principal jural and moral norms of the society. So far the struggle has not given rise to new corporate associations running counter to those of the existing social structure. In fact, it has on the whole been canalized along the lines of cleavage laid down in that structure. It has deepened some of the existing cleavages and sharpened some of the inherent tensions of the system; but it has also accentuated some of the ties and enhanced the dominant values of the system. Thus the only section of Kpata'ar that has vacillated, at times, in its loyalty is Nak-y-eet yidem, the assimilated lineage. They have been influenced by their lineage differentiation from Kpata'ar proper, their consequent subsidiary interest in the politico-ritual status of the head of Kpata'ar proper, their clanship ties with the Sakpee section that has gone over to the Gɔlibdaana, and the greed of their lineage head. But their intercalary structural position between the two factions is shown in their divided counsels. Some of the older men are whole-heartedly for Kpata'ar, one or two adhere publicly to the Gɔlibdaana, several try to keep on good terms with both parties. When they have to take a stand as a corporate unit, their bias is towards the Kpata'arna'ab in ritual and intra-clan affairs, and towards the Gɔlibdaana in matters of law and government coming within his purview as a headman under the Administration. On the other hand, the ancient ties between Kpata'ar and Gundaat have been greatly strengthened, the bond of goodwill between Kpata'ar and Tongo, based on their politico-ritual interdependence, given a new meaning, and moves to defend the traditional social order stimulated.

POSTSCRIPT

THIS book has dealt with the constitution and interrelations of the 613
corporate groupings found in Tale society. But this is only one major 621
aspect of Tale social structure. There is another major aspect of no less 182
importance, the system of interpersonal social bonds that constitutes the Kinship System in the strict sense. The lineage and clan organization forms the permanent framework of social relations in Taleland. But it is based on certain fundamental categories of thought and axioms of conduct that derive from a different cross-section of Tale social life, the domestic organization. The well-worn simile of the warp and the woof is apposite here. We can think of the lineage and clan organization as the warp of the social fabric of the Tallensi. Interwoven with it, sustaining it, and in turn shaped and regulated by it, is the intricate web of interpersonal relations we have described as the Kinship System in the strict sense. Kinship ties grow directly out of the biological, psychological, and social relations of men, women, and children in the domestic nucleus of Tale social life, the agnatic joint family. Unlike lineage ties, they involve the equal and parallel recognition of descent through both parents; and because of this bilateral criterion of social identification in kinship relations, they cut across the lineage structure.[1]

This second major aspect of Tale social structure, the Kinship System, 121
is the subject of our next volume, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*. Our aim will be not a detailed analysis of all Tale interpersonal relationships through all the levels of social behaviour, but an investigation of their place in the social structure in relation to the lineage and clan organization.

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[1] Cf. my previously cited paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure'.

[p. 259]

[p. 260 is blank]

2: Fortes
131, 133, 361, 487, 778, 764, 621

[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

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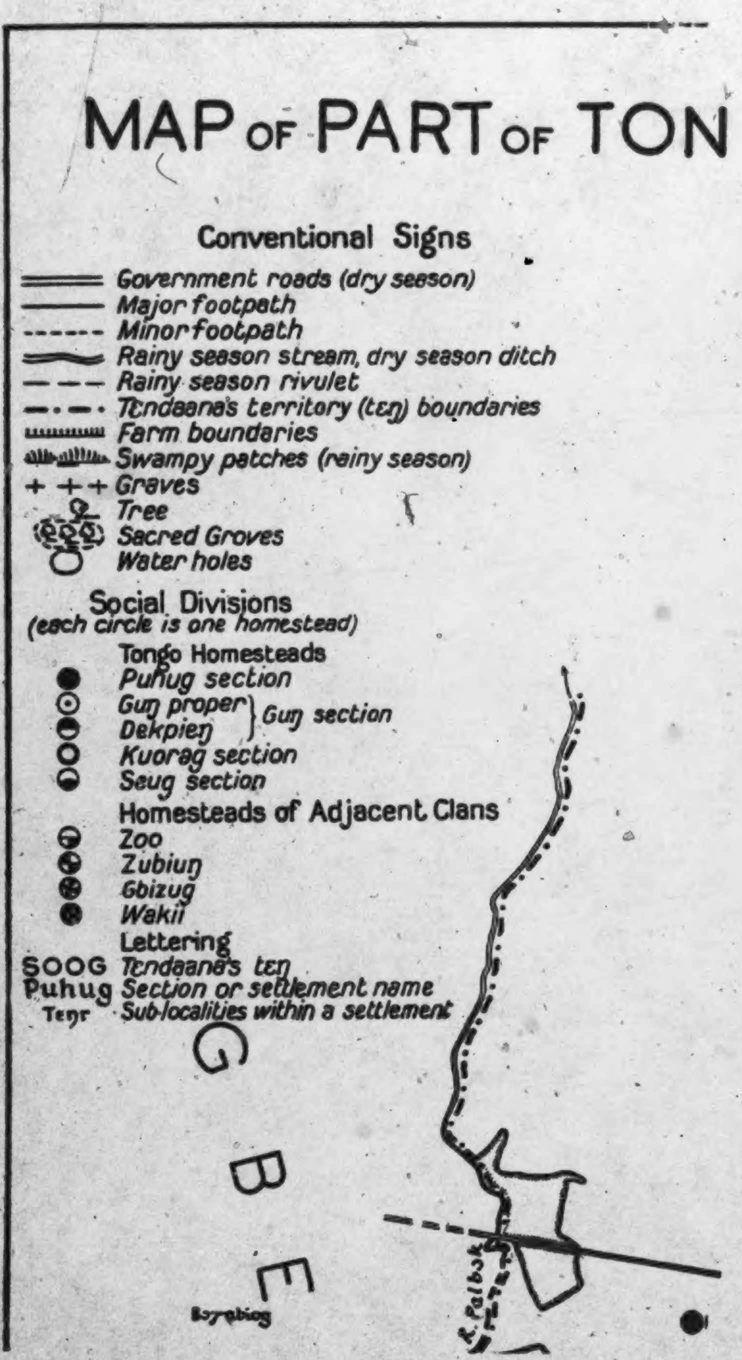
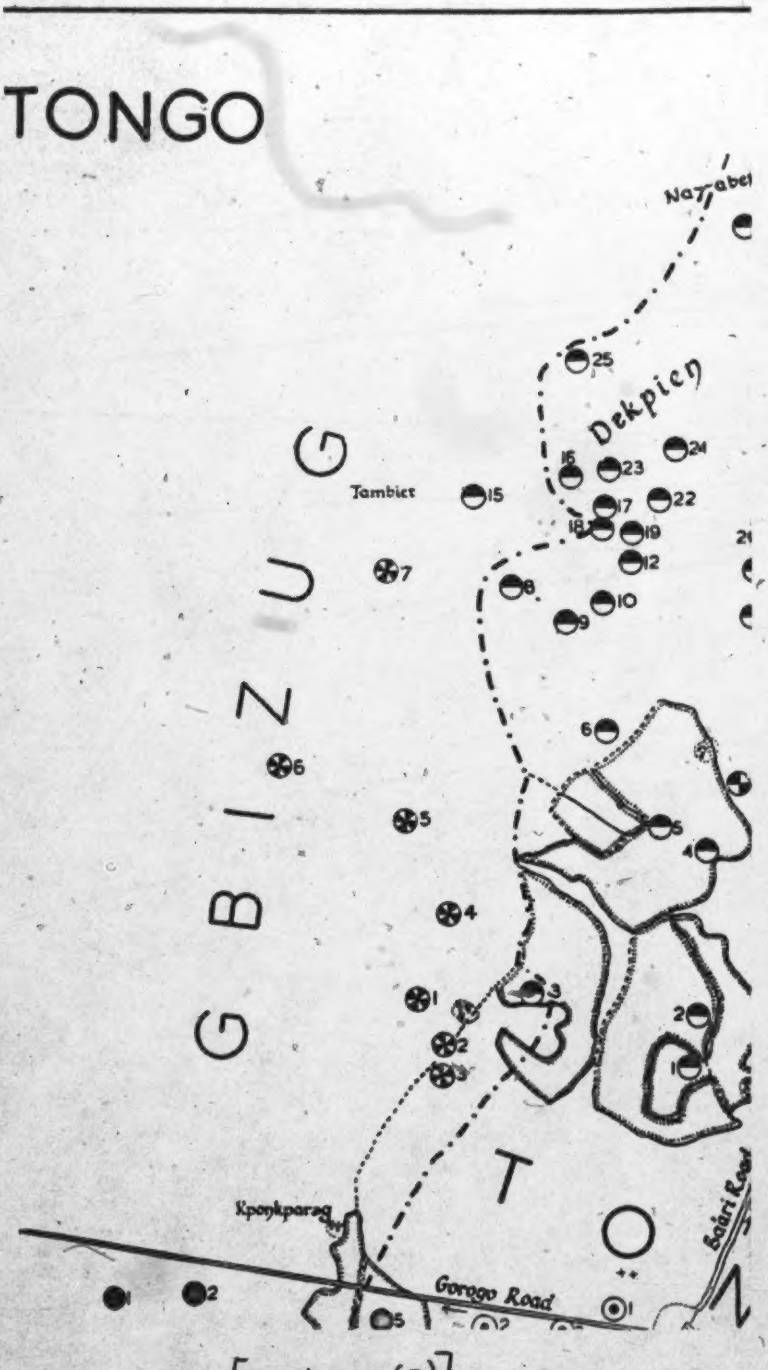
621
487
778
131
764
133
361

MAP OF PART OF TON


Conventional Signs
Government roads (dry season)
Major footpath
Minor footpath
Rainy season stream, dry season ditch
Rainy season rivulet
Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries
Farm boundaries
Swampy patches (rainy season)
+ + + Graves
Tree
Sacred Groves
Water holes
Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)
Tongo Homesteads
Puhug section
Guŋ proper
Dekpieŋ
Guŋ section
Kuorag section
Seug section
Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
Zoo
Zubiuŋ
Gbizug
Wakii
Lettering
SOOG Tɛndaana's tɛŋ
Puhug Section or settlement name
Tɛŋr Sub-localities within a settlement
G
B
E
Bɔyabiog
R. Palbɔk

[End-MAP (A)]

● 621
487
778
131
764
133
361


TONGO
Nay'abel
25
Dekpieŋ
16
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Tambiet
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17
22
18
19
12
7
8
10
9
GBIZUG
6
6
5
5
4
4
3
1
2
3
2
1
T
O
N
Kpoŋkparəg
1
2
Gorogo Road
5
1
2
Baiari Road

[End-map (B)]

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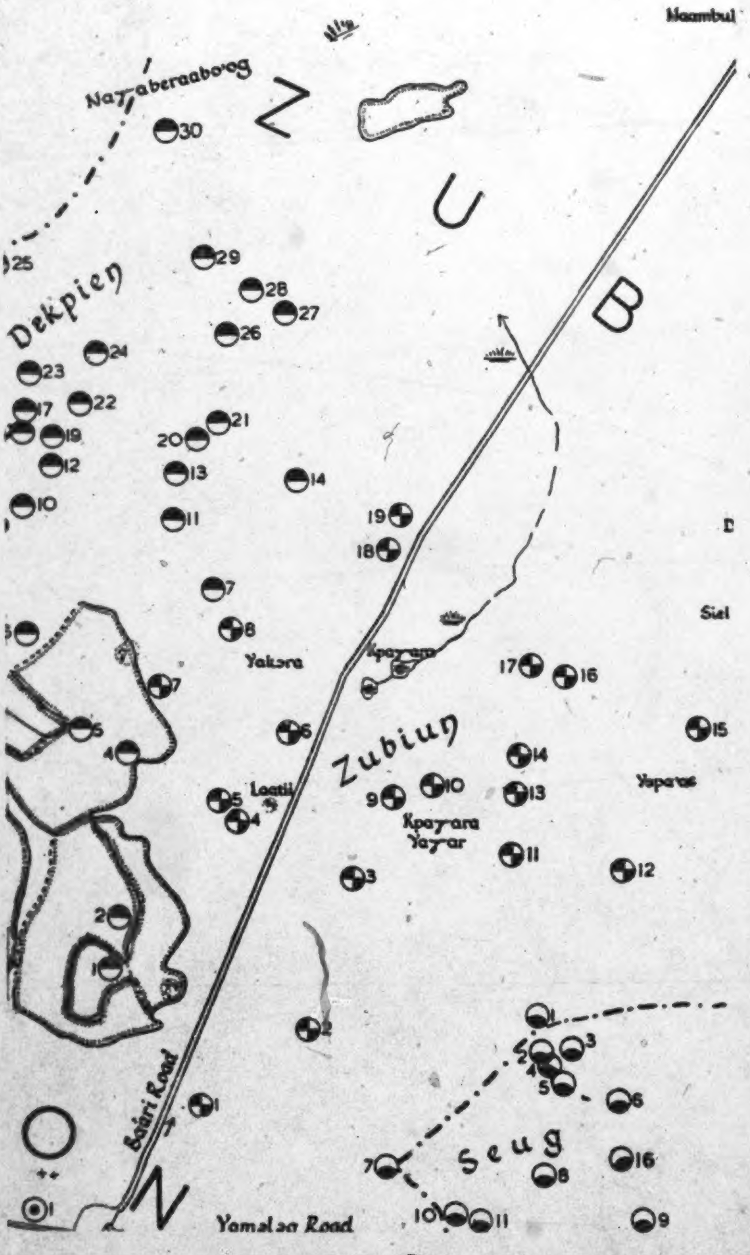
Naambul
Naŋaberaaboog
Z
U
B
Dekpien
25
30
29
28
27
26
24
23
22
17
19
21
20
12
13
14
10
11
19
18
7
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Yakɔra
Kpaŋaru
17
16
15
7
5
4
6
Zubiun
Loatii
5
4
9
10
14
13
Kpaŋ-ara
Yaŋar
11
12
Yaparas
Siel
3
2
1
2
1
Bairi Road
1
3
2
4
5
6
Seug
7
8
16
10
11
9
1
N
Yamalaa Road

[End-MAP (C)]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945

FE11 Tallensi FE11

● 621
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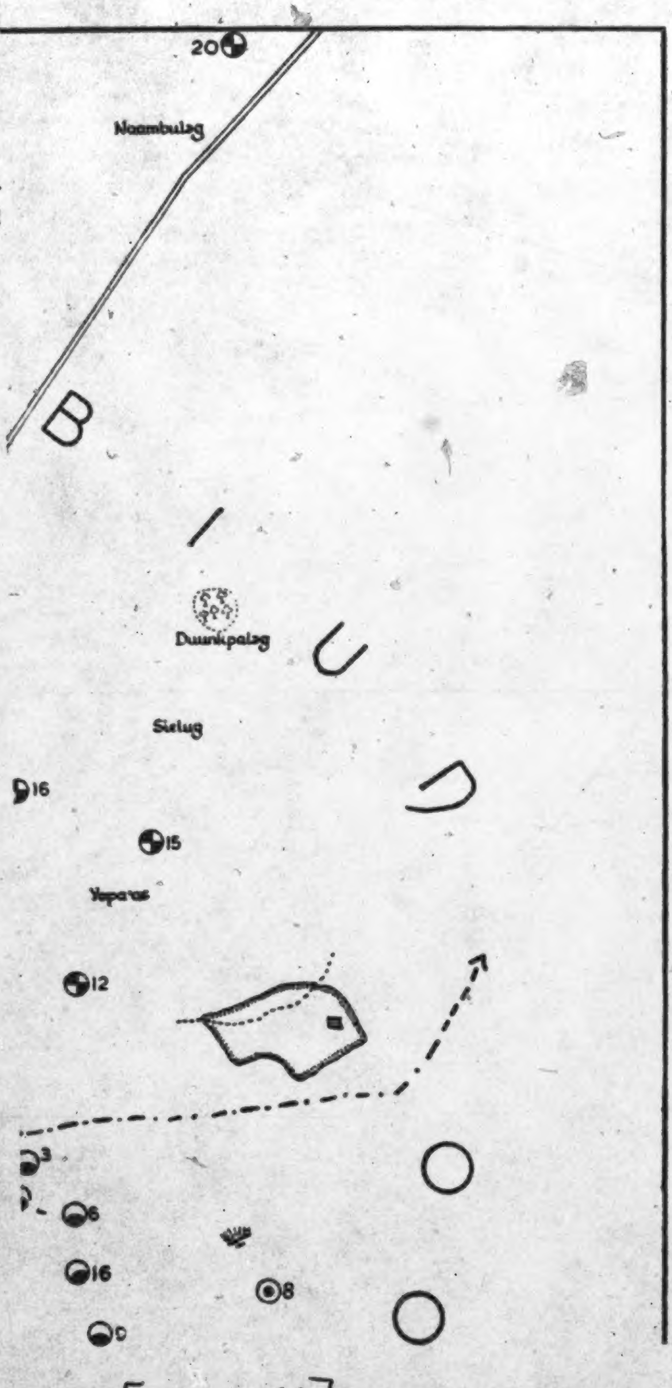
20
Naambuləg
B
I
Duunkpaləg
U
Siilug
16
D
15
Yaparas
12
3
6
16
8
D
O
O

[End-MAP (D)]

●621
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764
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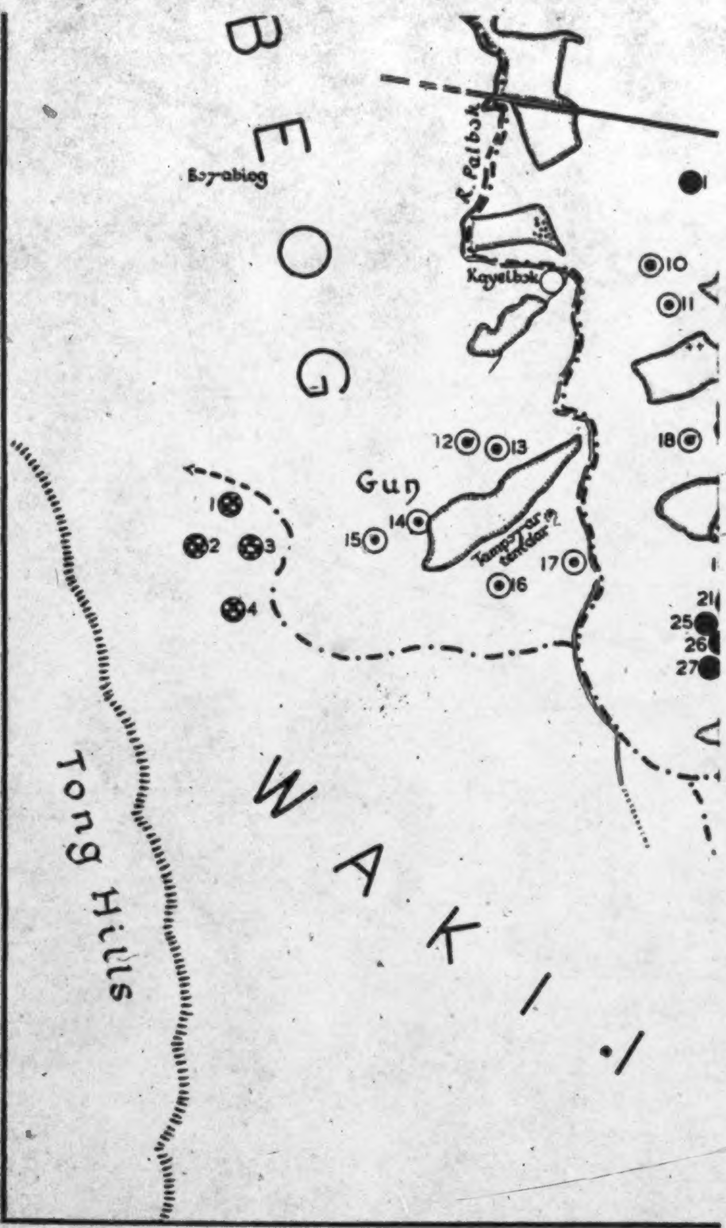
B E O G
Bɔŋ-abiog
R. Palbok
Kayelbok
Gun
Tampɔr
1
2
3
4
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
21
25
26
27
W A K I
Tong Hills

SK

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Naŋ*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakəra sec

[End-Map(E)]

● 621
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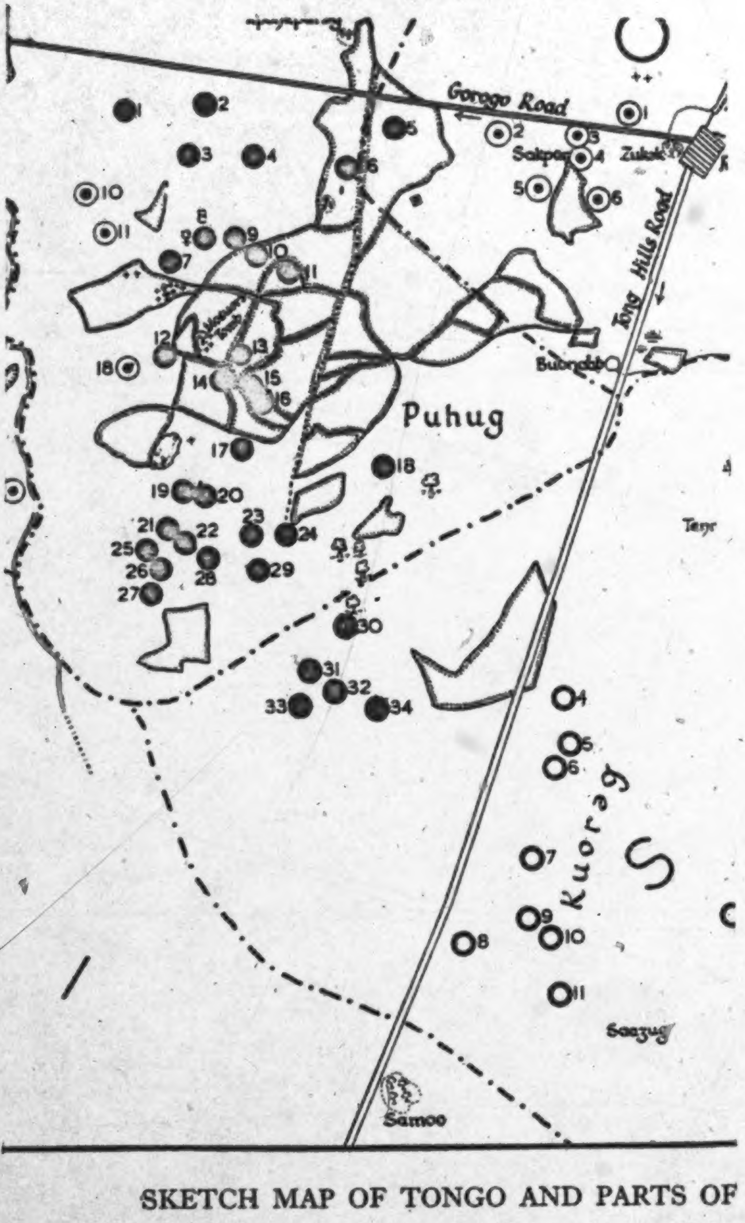
Gorogo Road
Sakpee
Zukok
Tong Hills Road
Buongbb
Puhug
Kuorəg
Saazug
Samoo
Teŋr

SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Tɔŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social
n and Gúŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen
Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).
d of the Yakəra section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpayar
few Wal
The
covering

[End-MAP (F)]

● 621
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778
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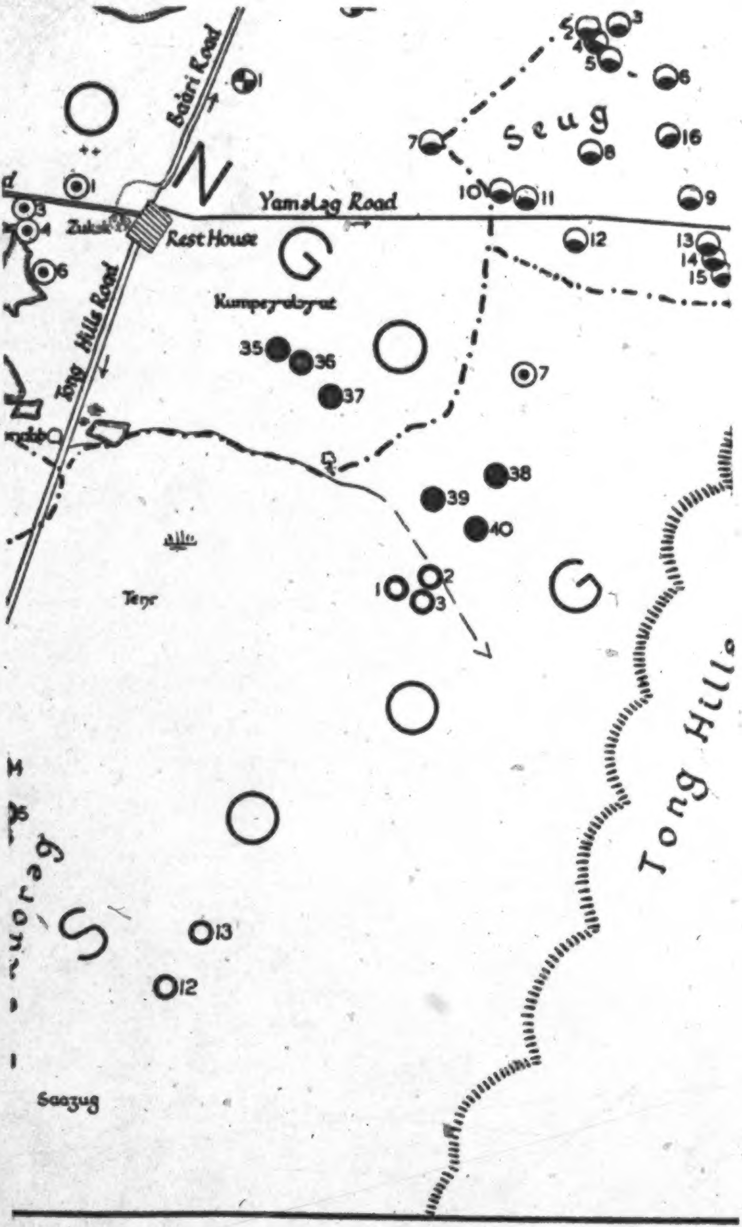
764
133
361


Bairi Road
N
Yamalag Road
Rest House
Tong Hills Road
Kumpeyaloyat
Seug
Tong Hills
Tenr
Saazug
1
3
4
6
35
36
37
38
39
40
7
1
2
3
12
13
2
3
4
5
6
7
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15
16

PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

sal Kpayara yayar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
en few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
ŋ- covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' gı

[End-MAP (G)]

●621
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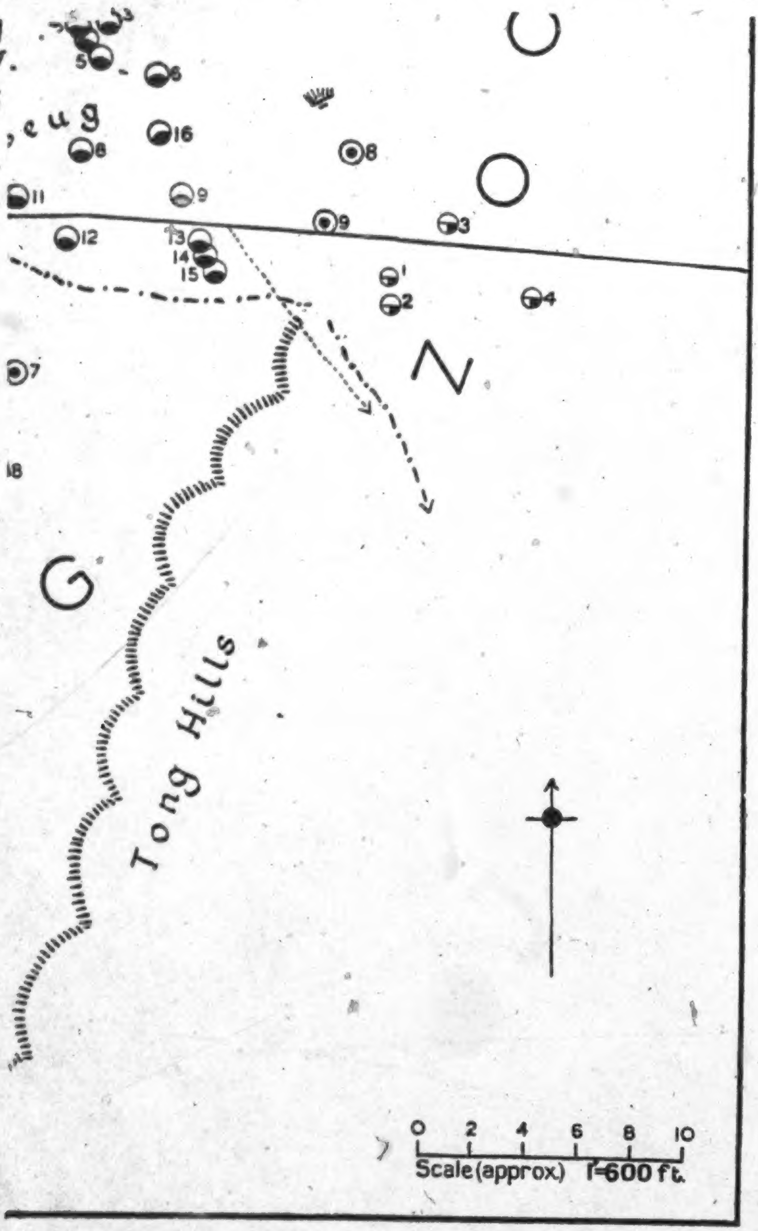
778
131, eug
764
133
361


3
5
6
16
8
8
11
9
9
3
12
13
14
15
1
2
4
7
18
Tong Hills
0 2 4 6 8 10
Scale (approx) 1"=600 ft.

ITS

r three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a

ituation of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid
he founding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-map (H)]

of his lineage or clan, other than those whom he describes as his 'fathers' 587
or 'sons'.

Every Tale clan is anchored to a particular locality from which it 361
takes its name. In the central area of Taleland, around the Tong Hills, 621
the present clan settlements appear to date back not less than eight to ten generations. But they have not been and are not territorially static. There are no strict territorial boundaries between adjacent settlements. The homesteads of a settlement merge with those of the adjacent settlements, and the boundaries between them are definable only in social terms, as a function of their ecological and politico-ritual relations at a given time. In the same way every segment of a clan—that is, each of its component maximal lineages—is anchored to a local subdivision of the clan settlement, though many of its members may be dispersed elsewhere.

A striking feature of Tale social organization is the system of inter- 621
clan linkages which constitutes one of the principal forces of cohesion
in the society. The genealogically and socially autonomous maximal 619
lineage or clan is not a closed group. The component maximal lineages 182
that form the segments of adjacent clans have ties of clanship identical with those that unite them to one another within their respective clans. Thus if two adjacent clans have segments A, B, C, and D, E, F, G, respectively, then A (but not B or C) may have clanship ties with D (but not with E, F, or G); B may have clanship ties only with E, and C with F. Each of these maximal lineages also has clanship ties with segments of other neighbouring clans. Thus each component maximal lineage of a clan has a field of clanship that includes the other segments of the clan as well as segments of other clans. This results in a network of interlocking clanship ties that embraces all the separate clans of Taleland. All the Talis clans and the main block of Namoo clans are interlocked in this way in two clusters which are in turn similarly connected at certain points. Moreover, this system of linkages ties the Tale aggregate on to adjacent clans of other neighbouring 'tribes'. Thus we observe that at this level of social structure—the skeletal level, so to speak—as in its territorial and cultural relationship to neighbouring 'tribes', Tale society is a segment of a greater society. The network of inter-clan linkages is one of the principal factors by which the socio-geographic region we have called Taleland is differentiated as a distinct segment of this greater society.

It is also one of the main factors of social equilibrium in Tale society. 626
Dissension between neighbouring clans is kept in check by the mediation of maximal lineages linked by identical ties to both; and warfare is inhibited from disrupting the entire social order by the intervention of social and ritual obligations arising *inter alia* out of the fact that enemies are related directly or indirectly by clanship ties. It is this, in part, that gives Tale wars the complexion of acute family quarrels.

significance. From childhood on a person's relation to the economic 861
system is chiefly determined by sex. In the kinship system sex operates
as a differentiating factor from an equally early age, from the time,
in fact, when a child learns to designate like-sex siblings by different
terms from opposite-sex siblings. Local, lineage, or family institutions
also act as differentiating factors, though not in the same way. This
is a consequence in part of the peculiarities of Tale political structure.
Local groupings, clans and lineages are asymmetrically linked *inter se* 621
and with communities outside the Tale area proper by political, genea- 648
logical, territorial, or ritual ties. The most striking case of this sort
is presented by the Hill Talis who have immemorial ritual links with
villages and genealogical groups among Dagomba, Mamprussi, Bulisi
(Builsa), Woolisi (Kassena), Mossi, and other neighbouring peoples.
Each of the Hill communities has its exclusive associates in these
foreign areas. The people of Sii were traditionally associated with the
Bulisi, the people of Gorogo with the Woolisi, the Kpata'ar clan with
certain villages of Black Dagomba, and so forth. There was in former
times, and is even more so now, a constant traffic between the Tong Hills
and the outside areas linked with the clans dwelling there—pilgrims
coming to the Fertility Shrines in the Hills and Talis paying ceremonial
visits to their associates. But the economic and political by-products of
this traffic were most important. In this way a range of geographical
and social contacts was, and is, available to a member of the Hill clans
which no Namoos had, and among the Hill clans themselves the
actual contacts varied from clan to clan. The Namoos again have their
traditional political associates among the Mamprussi. It is especially
interesting to note that the Mamprussi associates of the Hill Talis and
the Mamprussi associates of the Namoos belonged to a single political
structure; yet the latter would not, a generation ago, have hesitated to
overpower and enslave any Hill Talis they encountered defenceless.

Factors of this sort become significant only after adolescence and 574
more so in the life of men than of women; but they are operative even 191
in childhood. The Black Dagomba guests at a Kpata'ar elder's home-
stead are familiar figures to his children; and one sign of the interest
taken in them by the children is the fact that most Kpata'ar youths
understand and easily speak the dialect of the Black Dagomba, whereas
other Tallensi do not.

226 651 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions ? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor [622] of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this [685] affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. Besides, such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[554] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practice and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

RITUAL FESTIVALS AND SOCIAL COHESION IN THE HINTERLAND OF THE GOLD COAST

By M. FORTES

621

SOCIAL cohesion, or some equivalent concept, has gained an honorable place in anthropological literature as a labor saving-device. To an ethnographer working with an Australian horde, a nomadic Beduin tribe, or even a people with a strong centralized government, it may seem a self-evident concept; a first law of social life like Newton's first law of motion, by which everything else can be explained. In the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, however, there is nothing self-evident about it. In the limited area north of the White Volta and east of 1° W. long. we find a congeries of peoples speaking different dialects of the Mossi-Dagomba language family with an ostensibly uniform culture, but lacking a centralized political organization. There are no villages in this country, but for miles and miles, continuously, one mud compound follows on another. There is often nothing to mark the boundary between one settlement and another, nor can exact frontiers between dialect areas be established. A short ethnographic residence in the country shows that a notion of a fixed and demarcated tribal unit, either as a linguistic grouping or as a political grouping owing a common allegiance, does not exist. There seems, in fact, to be no structural unit larger than the clan-settlement capable of exhibiting social cohesion.

The observations presented here[1] refer to the small corner of this area occupied by the Tale settlements. The Tallensi are well-known to their neighbors for the ritual festivals which they celebrate. These festivals occur between the cessation of the rainy season in September and the commencement of the next rainy season in April. In this paper I shall deal only with a single facet of the festivals, their significance as a mechanism of social cohesion. To appreciate this, some knowledge, however over-simplified, of Tale social and political structure is necessary.

The Tallensi, being anciently settled agriculturalists, are inexorably bound to place. Local group and kinship group tend to be coterminous, hence the social classification of people is primarily in terms of the settlements. Intra-clan social relationships are of a uniform type all over the country. Relations between settlements, that is political relations, however, are of a different order. In keeping with the dominant trend of Tale social life towards decentralization and divergence, rather than centralization and convergence, every clan puts an egocentric interp[illegible] its 621 relations with other clans. These interpretations are comp[illegible] prejudice, conventional opinions, traditional attitudes, and pers[illegible]l values; but they conform to a pattern nevertheless. Lacking a central machinery of government and a common allegiance, the Tale settlements have no permanent political relations with one another. Even the Administration has been able to impose only a limited and superficial degree of coördination. Traditionally and to this day the heads of clans coöperate in certain contingencies or in certain periodically recurrent ritual situations only. For the rest local autonomy is absolute. The upshot is that the political relations of the Tallensi are a sum of the political relations of each settlement with its neighbors. This means first, that geography is an important factor in their politics, and second, that rigid political frontiers do not exist.

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[1] The present paper is based on material collected during a field expedition carried out in 1934–35 under the auspices of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

A glance at the political geography of the clans with which the present 618 paper is mainly concerned is therefore essential.

These Tale settlements fall into two major groups. On the one hand are the clans known as the Namoos, on the other the Tallis clans. The principal settlement of the Namoos is at Tongo, which was founded, according to the tradition stereotyped throughout Taleland, by Mosur, who fled thither from the Mampuru country in the south, probably over two centuries ago. Mosur was the ancestor of all the people of Tongo and of several settlements colonized from there. Later immigrants from Mampuru established co-clans of Tongo.

The Tallis (i.e. the "real Tallensi") can be subdivided into two groups, those living north of Tongo, the principal settlement of whom is at Baari; and those living on and around the Tong Hills, whom I call the Hill Tallis. The Gbizug lineage is in a special category, as we shall see. Tallis traditions attribute diverse origins to their clans. Four clans, including Baari, Gbizug, and Wakyi, claim primacy of rank in virtue of the fact that their ancestors emerged from the earth or descended from heaven, and were there when Mosur arrived. The other clans are offshoots of these, or of immigrant origin. The Tallis have an ingenious system of clan concatenation, based on a fiction of kinship. Broadly speaking, every lineage of every clan is linked to a lineage of every neighboring Tallis clan by a fiction of half-brotherhood which binds them to reciprocity of certain privileges and obligations, prohibits intermarriage, and especially unites them in a common religious cult. The Namoos clans conform in all respects to the classical definition of a clan; the others must be designated thus for brevity's sake and for want of a term which will convey how they deviate from the prototype.

184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

621 622 793 Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

784 184 Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

173 have been the original inhabitants of these parts for a much longer
167 period than can be claimed for their aristocracy.

The chief Talense 'towns', in the sense with which we are now
103 familiar, are as follows: Tɔngo, Bade, Gorogo, Si, Winduri, Ten'zugu,
101 Tilega, Yamdiga, Biuŋ, Siega, Duse, Datoko, Gbee, Kpantia, Kpale, Wakyiga, Gbeogo, Zandoya, and Gbea. These settlements, including the subjects of the Chief of Kurugu, now constitute the Talense tribe.

173 *History of Tɔngo* (as told me by the present Chief, Kpama): 'We (i.e. his ancestors) came from Mampurugu, which we left owing to a
● 622 quarrel between *Misore* and his younger brother—whose name we do not know—about the Chieftainship. *Misore* left Mampurugu in consequence and came first to Boŋo, thence to Saamere; from there he passed through a dense bush and came to the hills. (The Tɔng hills.) At the foot of these hills we found a people whom our ancestors called Gundugo or Talense. We intermarried with these people and have all become Talense. *Misore* died here; his grave is marked by a big baobab tree. He was succeeded by his son, *Seyene*, who, now that his father was dead, returned to Mampurugu[1] and received from the Chief the Chieftainship of Tɔngo. *Seyene* died, and was succeeded by his brother, *Nambogeda*, who also returned to Mampurugu to ask for the Chieftainship. He died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, *Bɔyayeret*, a son of *Seyene*. About this time, the Chief of Mampurugu made one of his son's Chief of Kurugu, and placed Tɔngo under Kurugu. *Bɔyayeret* was succeeded by his "brother" *Sayepele*, a son of *Seyene*, who reported to Kurugu and held his Chieftainship from that ruler. *Sayepele* was succeeded by his brother *Nodeyene* (lit. Short-fowl). *Nodeyene* was succeeded by his younger brother, *Lebsekora* (Old-things-change). He, in turn, was succeeded by *Kusii* (Worn-out-hoe), a son of *Bɔyayaret*. He was succeeded by *Bileu*, who was succeeded by *Lobsaab* (Throw-away-food), his brother, who, in turn, was succeeded by *Belemsale*, his half-brother, who was succeeded by *Belemboo*, a son of *Kusii*. In his time a great famine came, and many people were sold (to the Dagomba). He was succeeded by *Kabu*, a son of *Lobsaab*. *Lobsaab* was succeeded by *Sapelega* (White-clouds), a half-brother of *Kabu*. *Sapelega* was succeeded by *Kakora*, a son of *Bileu*. He was followed by *Nekaŋ*, a son of *Kusii*; followed by *Paheban*, son of *Belemsale*; *Sagbon* (Dark-cloud), *Lebenwana*, *Bupaa*, son of *Kusii*;

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[1] Mampurugu, as we shall see later, was the seat of the Head of the foreign element, who, coming somewhere from the eastward, had founded the empires of Mampruse, Moshi, and Dagomba.

Lebzure, *Kunwase* (You-do-not-stroke-a-snake), son of *Lebkura*. In his time we fired arrows at the people on the Tɔng hills; there was a famine and we used to rob them. All the people, except Winkoŋo and Sia, rose against us, saying we were too proud. *Kunwase* was succeeded by *Kundizore* (Water-cannot-pull-down-a-hill), a son of *Sapelega*. There was also a war in his time which arose out of a quarrel during a hunting expedition, in which Bade and Yazore had taken part. Small-pox (called *Naba*, the Chief) also broke out in his time. *Kundizore* was succeeded by *Nalebseyo* (It-will-change-to-the-wet-season), son of *Kabu*. He was succeeded by *Pilibazaa* (Cover-them-all), son of *Bupaa*. During his time the Europeans came. *Pilibazaa* was taken by the white men to Gambaga and asked to pay two hundred cows because the Tɔng people had fired arrows at them (the Europeans). He died at Gambaga and was succeeded by *Kunbanbeo* (Cannot-know-to-morrow), a son of *Kundizore*. He was succeeded by *Yirisano* (Destroyer-of-compounds), alias *Dentele*, a son of *Lebenwana*. In his time the Europeans came and asked the Hill-people (Teŋ-zugu) to come and see them, but they refused. He was succeeded by myself, *Kpama*, son of *Pilibazaa*. I brought my father's bones from Gambaga, and they were buried outside his compound.' 173 622 [177]

The above list comprises twenty-eight names, and, with other similar genealogies, supplies us with an approximate estimate of the time when the foreigners from Mampurugu first extended their influence to embrace this area. The names of these Chiefs as here given are their titles only; it is forbidden to mention their real names. Such nicknames are called *sam-wur* in Talene, *saan-yure* in Nankane. 551 173 622

The ruling house at Tɔngo belongs to the *gwegmere* (lion) clan. When I recorded the above and the other histories which follow I had not as yet grasped the full significance of what I came to discover later, namely, that in recording the history of these migrations as supplied by the Chiefs, I was really only tracing the origins of a minute section of the population, i.e. of those who formed the upper ruling class, and not of their subjects, who formed the mass of the people. In consequence I am unable, in the present instance, to specify the clans to which the majority of the inhabitants of the 'towns', already given, really belong. In my notebooks I find these clans, in nearly every case, recorded as 'the lion clan'. This is only due, however, to my having fallen into the error of failing to distinguish between rulers and ruled, and imagining the histories told me by Chiefs and their following to be applicable also to their subjects. I do not make any apology however, 128 622 565

128 623 565 for the inclusion here of such records, as, once their limitations and significance are realized, they, equally with other information recorded, go to form part of the composite picture which I am attempting to draw of the traditions of these people.

173 622 *History of Siega* (as told me by the Chief Zoaga): 'We came from Mampurugu at the same time as *Misore* (see previous history). The Winkoŋo people are related to us (he refers, I believe, to the Chief of that place). My clan is lion; I am the seventeenth Chief of Siega. The Chieftainship is under (the patronage of) Kurugu and can descend to any one of the lion clan. My first-born also taboos a fowl. We have had a Chief, distinct from *Ten'dan'*, since ancient times. The first Chief of Siega was *Kukye*.'

History of Datoko (as told me by the present Chief, Borezina): 'We came from Mampurugu, but not with *Misore*. We travelled by way of Nuŋ (Nungo); from Nuŋ to Tula; from Tula to Kumbule; from Kumbule to Datoko. We met the Kusase people in the land, but drove them across the river (Volta). We marry the Kusase. We are of the lion clan. Chiefs of Datoko are appointed by Kurugu. The man who gives most presents becomes the new Chief, and on obtaining the Chieftainship will try to recover what he has paid. Now Chiefs are made by Government, but still go to Kurugu to receive the *muŋ'* (red fez). I am the son of the late Chief, and am ninth of my line. Datoko has six sections (*Yi-zug'*); each section, since Europeans came, is in charge of a *kambon-nab* (head gunman). Since ancient times we have had *Ten'dan'*. Their work and the Chiefs' work are separate. I settle all cases. The *Ten'dan'* performs the ceremonies when the rain does not fall, unless it is at my own *tengzan* (Nankane, *tingane*), when I perform the sacrifices.' (Here, it will be noticed, the *kambon-nab*, appointed by the Chief (who, when a vacancy occurs, bids with the 624 other applicants for the post), are ousting the old time section-heads, called in Talone, *yi-zug-kpaem*, who have been forced into the background. The *Ten'dan'* (Nankane, *Ten'dana*) has also become more or less a nonentity.)

History of Ten'zugu (as told me by Ten'goli): 'My ancestor came from Nasia; he was called *Sumri* and was a son of the Chief of Mampurugu. When his father died he wished to succeed him, but was driven away and came to Bulbi. His enemies followed him there, and again he fled and came to Daa, at the foot of the Tong hills. Later he went on top of the hill and settled there. He found some people called Dagali. They were Talense. We married with them. The Dagali people

belong to the *Sensereg* (squirrel) clan. We were told by them that the hill did not permit "arrows on the arms," i.e. war. We, too, said we did not want bloodshed. When the *gologo* festival came, we all met on top of the hill and danced. At this festival, the *Ten'dan'* of Dagoli and myself made beer and sacrificed to the land. A month later we sowed.' (I had purposely allowed the Chief to digress from the subject; he now continued.) 'When we came from Nasia we did not see any one here, except the Dagoli people. The Tongo people (see history) had not yet arrived from Mampurugu (near Gambaga). The Dagali had no Chiefs, only *Ten'dan'*; they wore skins. *Sumri* did not become a *Na* (Chief), because he never went back to receive his Chieftainship from Mampurugu. He became *golog'dana* (owner of the drums). The first of my ancestors to go to Mampurugu to get the Chieftainship was *Kumalbeo*; he went to *Na Paya*, the "grandfather" of the present Chief of Mampurugu. He was succeeded by *Atabea*, called after the Chief of Mampurugu, who was his *seyr'* (guardian spirit); Nankane, *segere*.) He was afraid to go to Gambaga because the Europeans were there; he fought with the Europeans because he was told that they had come to take away our land. I am Atabea's son. I was made Chief by the Europeans, but have not yet been confirmed by *Naleregu* (i.e. by the Chief of Mampruse).' 173 622

With reference to the title 'owner of the drums', I asked this informant if a man could not become a Chief in a new country independently of Mampurugu. He replied he could not do so unless 'he went to Mampurugu (near the present town of Naleregu, the former capital of the Mampruse State) whence spread all the black race.' 622

History of Yamdiga (as told me by the Chief): 'We came from Mampurugu; my *Yaba* (ancestor) was *Misore*, as was that of Tongo, Beug, and Siega. My ancestor was *Kamuni*, the eldest son of *Misore*; he was of the lion clan. The Chiefs of Yamdiga have been the following: *Gyenkaret*, *Nantog*, *Nakpeleg*, *Gingano*, *Mwampark*, *Nabsobug*, *Lebbaba*, *Na-kaba*, *Kungazur*, *Kunzerpuk*, *Kunoyokurt*, *Kosom*, *Lebdo*, and *Yinsagbeg* (lit. God's food, the present Chief). We have now become Talense; we no longer circumcise, because the local people would not marry us. The Chief of Kurugu, our "father," still speaks Mampelle, but we no longer do so.' 173 622 [304]

History of Biun: 'We came from Naleregu (Mampruse), with *Misore*. Our clan is the lion clan; we also taboo goat, and our first-born do not eat a fowl, and women, after reaching puberty, do not eat fowls. We eat goat's flesh, but do not wear its skin until death, when we are [262]

173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
● 622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
304 forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173
565 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have bu[illegible]ned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618
128 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173
784 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan), but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tamperypeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among 622
the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when
discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or
nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to
Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble
among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the
post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method
of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save
that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts.
No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies,
to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the
'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized
and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head
Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we [624]
find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the
kambon na, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the
positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly 622
twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. 554
It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named
'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any
one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of
their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to
assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no
historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day
as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his house- 592
hold among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we
are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief 593
and pawn (verb, *nwe talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need 426
not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder
brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for
from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If
the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man
to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat
or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera.*)'

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[1] See Chapter XXVI.

764 793 white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the grave-side. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

764 ●622 Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

778 [171] 782 724 *Shrines*: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan'* of Tongo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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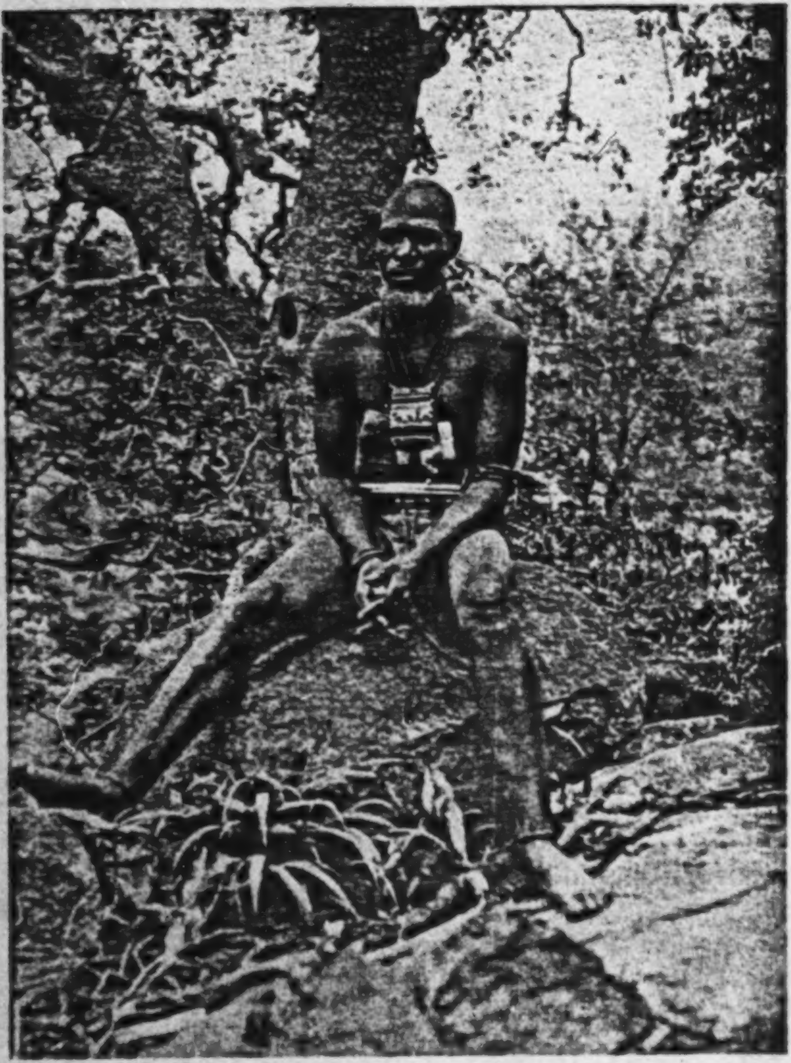

Fig. 73. The Chief of Teŋ'zugu

[facing p. 362]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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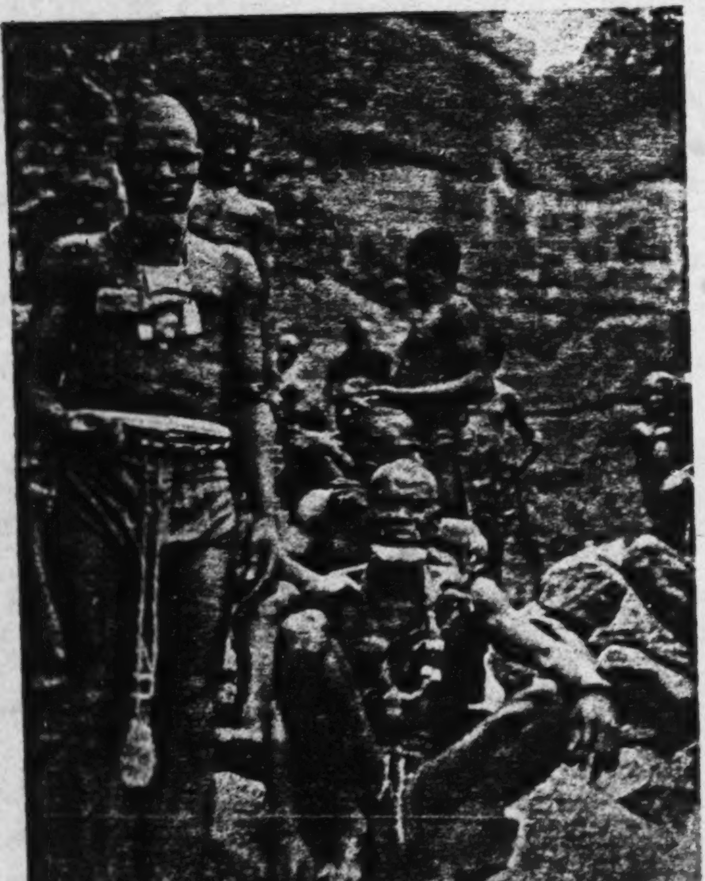

FIG. 74. 'The Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived'

[facing p. 363]

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teŋa*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief: 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
●622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'* is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

[p. 366]

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwɛma* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab*
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine 624

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under th Chief of Nangode.

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
●622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge
of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1]
report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed,
informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
[783] given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

J: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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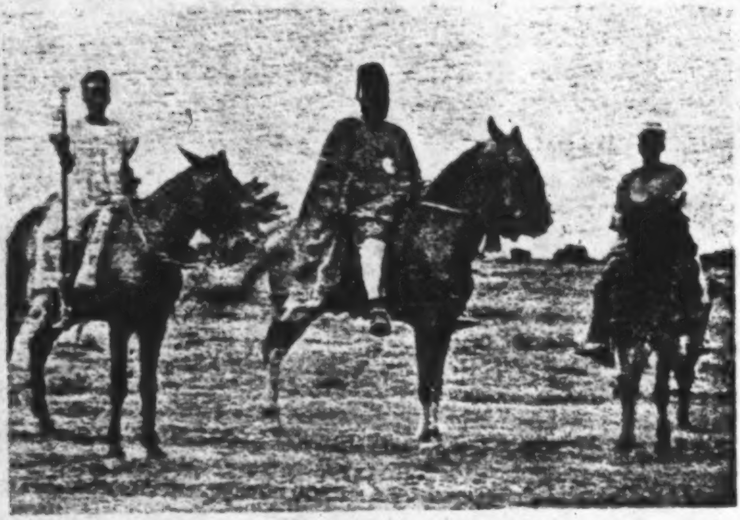

Fig. 79. The Chief of the Namnam

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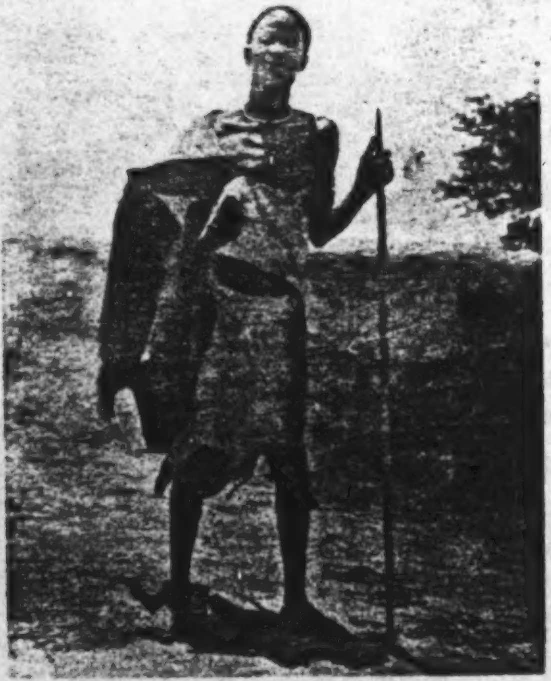

Fig. 80. A Namnam *Ten'dan'* [facing p. 368]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

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NAMNAM

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[3] have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
● 622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned
would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

[3] [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over, but he would bring cows and purify the land.

622 'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
793 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike, even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep, and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains, a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622 624 793 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and section-heads.

793 *Succession to Ten'dan'*: 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders, but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

NAMNAM

793

kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan'*, also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan'*. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan'* to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).' 793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan'* must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan'* has to be so careful not to eat new crops
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his 173
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan'* of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

103

Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa). 614

My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba. 614

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.' 611 754

Traditions of the Kusase: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe teŋ*) and that person would 173 622 793

173 622 793 die. He would tap the land with his fingers and say, "*Teŋ ya be, zagala saam ka nees teŋ la okom*" (If such a thing as the land really is, (here is) So-and-so who has offended and treated you as of no account, may you kill him).[1] The land will break his compound; his fowls, goats, sheep, children, wives will die. The offender would approach an Elder and "beat his hands" and ask him to intercede with the *Tenedan'* on his behalf. Chiefs now own the people, but *Tenedan'* still own the land. The first Chief of Kagbiri was my father. He was *Tenedan'* at the time when the Germans made him Chief. The present Chief is Ati, he is my father's child (i.e. son of the speaker's father's brother). My father, after the Germans made him Chief, used to delegate the work of *Tenedan'* to me, so when he died and Ati was made Chief we continued to do the same.'

177 793 622 171 At this place (Kagbiri) so far as I could see, we find the Territorial Ruler (who is not a foreigner, but one of the family of the former *Tenedan'*), and the *Tenedan'*, 'his brother', working in complete harmony. The Germans, it will be noted, whether by accident or design, had made the *Tenedan'* also the Territorial Ruler. The significance of the rather curious and suggestive procedure—which I have also noted elsewhere—whereby a *Tenedan'* who, by chance, has become Chief, delegates the religious part of his duties to another, should not be overlooked. The multifarious administrative and executive duties, which the Territorial Ruler is asked by us to undertake, cannot be wholly responsible for this. This may be proved by an examination of the position of a Chief in Ashanti, where these two functions—religious and secular—are combined in one person. Perhaps the bad example set by the majority of foreign Chiefs in these parts, who were always unconcerned with local land-gods, may partly account for this. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked, that by far the most important religious duties performed by Ashanti Chiefs for their people are the ceremonies in connexion with their own ancestral spirits, in which their subjects now join, and not those rites in connexion with the land, which has tended to become alienated, although theoretically they still belong to the Stool. Many Northern Territory Rulers, while ignoring land gods, would, nevertheless, lay claim to the land. The following are some further notes on the duties and privileges of the *Tenedan'* among the Kusase.

793 [787] 'When the rain does not fall, the Elders consult the soothsayer and report to the *Tenedan'* what the *baa* (soothsayer) has told them. The

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[1] Compare p. 370. (i.e. different practice among Namnam)

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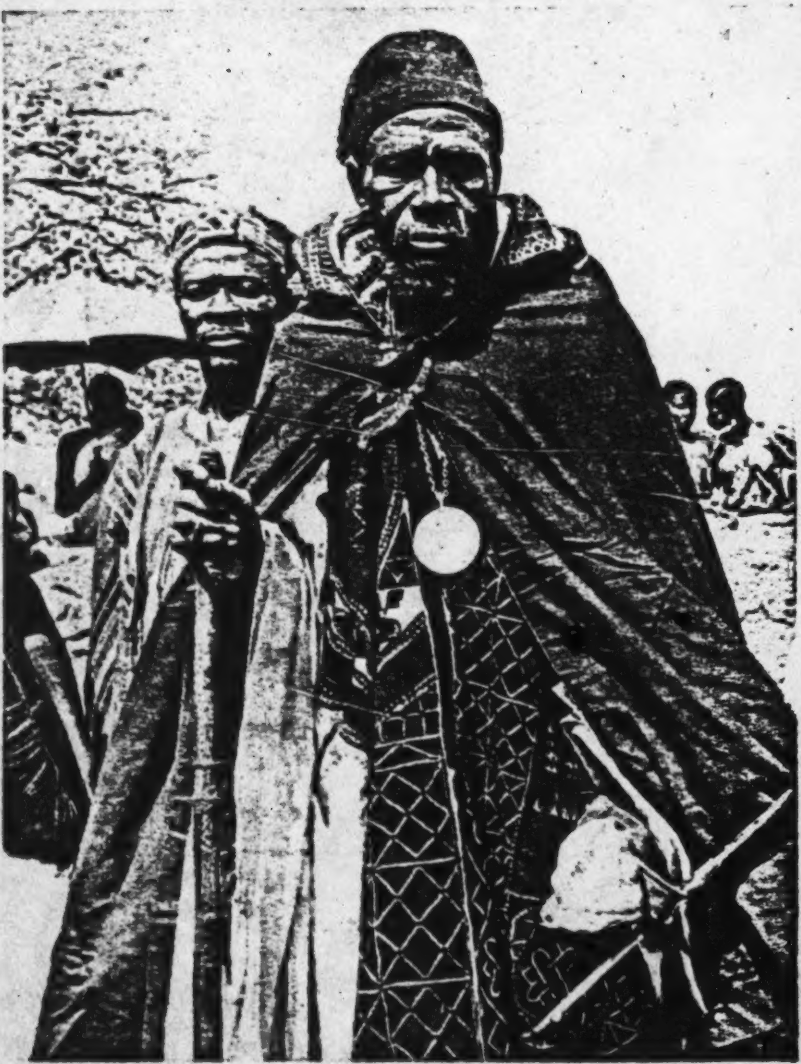

Na Naam Bioŋ, Chief of Tongo (d. 1941), wearing his red fez (*muŋ*) the chief emblem of his office, and clad in his finest ceremonial robes.

[Frontispiece]
[facing p. iii]

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and
local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest
houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out
justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves, in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people. Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters, and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient 636
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 175
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the
embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared, but some of the values connected with it remain. The other institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of economic development was started, and social services were multiplied. The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

173 ideological significance as a counterweight to the Mosuor legend and
811 as a dogma of prior habitation.

[171] In the Sie district the Sawalɔg people, whose political and ceremonial relations with the Sie Namoos are exactly parallel to those of Gbizug with Tongo, also declare that their ancestor came into being miraculously, self-generated. In the identical phraseology of the people of Gbizug and Wakii, they say, 'Our ancestor descended from Heaven', or 'Our ancestor sprouted from the earth'. I once challenged the clan-head of Sawalɔg to prove how this was possible. His answer, shrewdly rationalistic, deserves to be recorded. 'We have not heard that our ancestor came from any other land. We have no other land to return to as the Sie people (immigrant Namoos) have. If they desecrate (*sayɔm*, lit. spoil) the land here, they return to their (original) land yonder (at Tongo). That is why we say that we have descended from Heaven'—an interpretation which coincides with that of Sayɔbazaa, the Namoo.

173 The covenant between Mosuor and Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, again, accords
177 well with a myth which is but a projection into the unchallengeable past
622 of the present-day relationships between Gbizug and Tongo. The amorphous and unstandardized myths of origin with which the Hill Talis are satisfied symbolize the remarkable social integration they had achieved before their subjugation by the British in 1911. For nowadays the Hill Talis are rent by factions and by an intestine struggle for power amongst the various ritual office-holders. Rival claims are validated by citing established custom, by appealing to the memories of men, or, in the last resort, by the fabrication or distortion of myths of origin. The Administration recognizes as chiefs only those clan heads whose title is derived directly or indirectly from the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi. Hence we find the Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu justifying his pretensions to recognized chiefship by concocting, for the benefit of a white inquirer, a story of how the founder of his lineage migrated thither from Mampurugu—a story which his enemies scoff at. The Sii Bɔyaraan, on the other hand, tries to strengthen his claim to precedence by alleging not only a Mampuru origin for his ancestors, but also that they were the very first to come and settle on the Hills.

173 These new myths are part of the defensive ideologies engendered by social conflict, but they follow the axioms of Tale thought. The Tallensi have no conception of a mythological or historical past of their society when people lived and behaved differently from to-day. The past is but an extension into the days of their forefathers of the life of to-day on the same rational plane of existence. Their history is to them not a sequence of events or a progression but a continuity. All that matters of the past, which lies beyond the span of man's recollection, lives on in the social structure, the ideology, the morality, and institutions of to-day. These are the palpable proofs of things that happened '*oh ho, ti banam ni ti yaanam ni*—in the days of our forefathers and ancestors'; one can infer from them what must have been the state of society in those far-off times. Conversely, the social arrangements which prevail to-day are valid, sensible, and appropriate not only because they achieve desired ends but also because *banam ni yaanam ndaa piil na*—the forefathers and ancestors

its founding ancestors and its own differential line of agnatic descent. 618x
Each sub-clan sacrifices separately to its own founding ancestor. Mosuor 769
is regarded as the common ancestor of all the sub-clans, but the cult of his shrine is the sole prerogative and duty of the Tongo branch of his posterity. According to Tale interpretation, a long period of territorial separation, bringing about political independence of one another, has inevitably resulted in the corresponding religious autonomy of each unit. A *bɔɣar* cannot be separated from the grave and the home-site (*daboog*) of the ancestor it enshrines. Though the custody and cult of Mosuor's *bɔɣar* are the exclusive province of the Tongo branch of the clan, because residence, lineage, and ancestor cult must have a concurrent continuity, these rights and duties are held to be exercised on behalf of the whole clan.

An unusual incident showed how the cult of Mosuor's *bɔɣar* is related to the constitution of the clan. It was on the occasion of the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other early ancestors of Tongo described below (pp. 53–4). When the beer was being distributed, a man called out that there was a young man from Yamələg present. This was quite unprecedented. The elders began to discuss the situation vigorously. The people of Yamələg had no right to attend such a sacrifice; but they were Mosuor's agnatic descendants, and if one of them turned up by chance, could he be excluded? 'Is not Mosuor their ancestor as well as ours?' At this point the Yamələg man stepped forward. He said that the question was of no importance; he was not a complete outsider intruding on the ritual of people not connected with him, neither was he there as a representative of Yamələg; he had come solely in his personal capacity, to 'scrounge' some of the beer and meat, and not to take part in the sacrifice. In short, though he could not be turned away from the sacrifice (as, say, a Zubiuŋ or Zoo man would have been) without offence to the clan ancestors, his presence there did not signify a claim by Yamələg to be represented at such rites, nor would it establish a precedent for the future. On this understanding, so amicably reached, he was given a courtesy portion of beer and meat.

As with the ancestor cult, so with the chiefship. Each sub-clan has 618x
its own chiefship (*na'am*), in keeping with its territorial and political 622
autonomy, but the prototypical chiefship is that of Tongo, since it was established by Mosuor. Just as the four sub-clans are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) to one another, so their chiefs are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) equal in status but graded in seniority of rank, Tongo being the most senior and Biuk the most junior.

The equality of status of the four sub-clans is paralleled in the structure 618x
of the maximal lineage which they constitute. In their relations of clan- 554
ship they are distant 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*), treating one another as relatively autonomous lineages. A Tongo man, when his conduct is determined by the norms of clanship, thinks of Yamələg, Sie, or Biuk as a corporate unit. Its internal structure is of no relevance to him. At any of these places, in any relations of clanship, he represents Tongo, taken as a unit, irrespective of his position in its internal structure.

The children of Mosuor think of their maximal lineage as finally and 618x

x618 769 a cow, and by all the segments of the sub-clan—the heads bringing a sheep each, the elders next in seniority in each segment a goat each, and the junior elders bringing fowls. It was noticeable that assimilated and attached lineages also brought contributions of fowls, by express command of the chief. Never before in the memory of the oldest men had so many animals been slaughtered in sacrifice to the ancient ancestors (*yaabkɔrəg*, pl. *yaakɔrəb*) of the sub-clan on one day; and a great concourse of men of all ages, such as had never in living memory gathered for such a sacrifice, assembled for the occasion. Among them were several members of assimilated and attached lineages, but, surprisingly, none of the senior elders of these lineages. The authentic segments were there in full force, their senior elders acting as their formal representatives and taking the lead in the rites. In the days of their youth, some of the old men murmured with disapproval, only the heads of the authentic lineages used to be present at sacrifices to Mosuor. A noisy crowd of men of all ages would have been considered altogether out of keeping with so sacred and esoteric a *bɔyar* as that of the founding ancestor. But times [622] have changed; these are the chief's orders; and if it is obligatory for every authentic lineage to be represented at such a sacrifice, it is also the right of any of their male members to participate if they wish. There were whispers, also, about 'strangers' (*saam*) being present, and I thought, at first, that they must be referring to me.

The ceremony proceeded with the usual alternation of reverential solemnity and conviviality and lasted far into the night. But for two incidents one might have forgotten the presence of those men who by the strict canon of agnatic descent were intruders. There was a long delay at the outset while the elders of the segment which has the custody of the graves and shrines of the clan founders (Lɛbhtiis yidɛm) held a private conference at the house of their lineage head. This aroused the suspicion of some of the better informed men amongst the crowd waiting impatiently for their arrival. Next day we learnt that these suspicions were justified. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm had been debating with some acrimony, though inconclusively, what was the right line to take about the presence of members of accessory lineages.

Later, there was another hitch just before the culminating rite, the actual sacrifice to Mosuor's *bɔyar*. There were whispered consultations. An impetuous member of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm protested that the intruders should be shut out, but he was overruled by an elder who counselled moderation in view of the chief's wishes.

Next day these incidents were threshed out by the chief when all the elders met to congratulate him on the success of the sacrifices. He rated Lɛbhtiis yidɛm scathingly for their reactionary conduct. 'Times have changed', he said in the course of a long harangue, 'and you must disregard those old tales. Anyhow, you are only my deputies. It is I who really own Mosuor's *bɔyar*, and it is I who will suffer the penalties if Mosuor is offended by what I am doing. And what if some people are of slave descent? They won't steal the *bɔyar* from you. If a man has a slave he calls him to come and join in sacrifices to his ancestors; his slave is like his son. Mosuor established (*naam*, lit. created) all of us, he owns

182 Every functionally differentiated aspect of the social life carries specific norms of conduct. It implies specific social obligations, jural rights, and, very often, economic relationships. It usually has a morphological correlate, as offices are vested in particular lineages, localities are associated with lineages, and social roles are transmitted by descent or determined by kinship. Hence every functionally differentiated aspect of social life tends to be subject to specific ritual sanctions within the general frame of the ancestor cult and to be identified by particular ritual symbols. In terms of the individual's place in the social system, this means that Tale religious ideology recognizes the fact that a man's social personality is compounded of many roles corresponding to the different functional aspects of social life in which he takes part. But this multiplicity of social roles does not obliterate the individual. Though he is a microcosm of his society he is always, also, uniquely himself. At times this is the prime determinant of his behaviour, at others a particular social role or membership of a corporate group is decisive. Totemic and other ritual symbols are the ideological landmarks that keep the individual on his course.

622 We see this very well in the case of a chief or other politico-ritual
182 functionary. The man himself with his personal qualities, his career, his good or ill fortune is one thing. He also belongs to his lineage, and is subject to the code of lineage rights and duties. His title to his office rests on this. Then he is also a chief, with the special ritual and secular privileges and responsibilities of his office. Each facet of his social personality corresponds to a different functional aspect of social life—the aspect of private relationships, of lineage membership, of politico-ritual office representing common or corporate interests. Each aspect has its ritual imprimatur, made explicit largely in the form of symbolic actions or taboos, especially animal taboos. Chiefs, for instance, may not eat the bush-pig (*dee*) and the dog (*baa*); the natives say that is because they are scavengers and therefore unclean in both the physical and the mystical sense.

182 The use of ritual symbolism in this context is not fortuitous. It reflects the supremacy of the ancestors as the sanction of the social order. Men cannot visualize their ancestors, but they experience their intervention in human affairs; and this gives a clue to the importance of animal symbolism in Tale religion.

182 As a member of a corporate group, a man comes under the spiritual
776 jurisdiction of the common ancestors of the group, focused in the lineage *bɔɣar*. This relationship is symbolized, *inter alia*, by his totemic taboos. As a unique individual his immediate ancestors have most relevance for him. The pattern of his life is broadly the same as that of his contemporaries. But particular events such as an illness, or the birth of a child, have a personal significance in his own biography. The Tallensi sum this up in the notion of Personal Destiny (*Yin*). Certain ancestors of his become a man's *Yin*. They are revealed to him gradually in the course of years. The process begins with some stroke of good or, more usually, ill fortune that singles him out. He builds a shrine to his *Yin* ancestors in which are incorporated material symbols of the occasions on which they were revealed to him. And animals play a big part in these

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, 166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti 167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of
Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time;
but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their
families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be
living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription
of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that
boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential
distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this
rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to
those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *tɛŋ* is not a *tɛŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the contradiction
between the conception of a defined territorial boundary [578]
fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the
native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking
of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties,
ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused
solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually
supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries
divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both
spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations.
But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo
and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same
extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tɛnzugu, in
particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit subcommunities
within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Gɔlibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Administration 578
as headman of Tɛnzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source
of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially
defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tɛnzugu. It was at length, after many
evasions on the Gɔlibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for 691]
arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Gɔlibdaana,
crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding
temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong,
took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such
disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

779 the earth (*tɛŋənpiima*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray 425 animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *tɛŋənpiimər*. It must be 688 handed to a tɛndaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

714 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 774 793 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but [567 he is given to a chief and not to a tɛndaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified to sell a human being into slavery; a tɛndaana would commit a sacrilege 622] against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *ya-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621
not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471
loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182
the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends. There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity, and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farm- 577
land. It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a ground- 471
nut plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them. And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred
in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167]
twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days. Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621
use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471
is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands
of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership 182
over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious. This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of. For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *tɛŋ* at its widest extent, symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure, of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependants, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tendaanaship 622

The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico- 793
ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages.

622 793 [184] These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External *Bɔyar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

622 793 554 Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*) ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

622 793 As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔyar* cult function as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

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[177] [1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

tern still prevails. Their function is 'to prosper the community (*maal tɛŋ*)'. 622
Overtly and most conspicuously this is a ritual function. By their con- 793
scientious observance of the ritual rules of conduct that symbolize their respective offices, their responsibilities for the community to the mystical powers, and their mutual relationships, as well as by taking the lead in ritual acts calculated to preserve or restore the goodwill of these mystical powers, they maintain the well-being of the community. Actually, these ritual attributes symbolize the fact that chief or tɛndaana is the hub of clan unity and solidarity, the representative of the common interests and of the common values that enable men to visualize and to hold fast to this common interest.

The polar conjunction of chiefship and tɛndaanaship is expressed in 622
the obligatory ritual collaboration, with complementary roles, of chiefs 793
and tɛndaanas. It mirrors the fusion of the two principles that shape 182
the total social field which ultimately determines the prosperity of the individual. One is the principle that the fate of the individual and of the community is determined by the practical and utilitarian concerns and needs that bind man to the earth and put him at the mercy of natural phenomena. The other is the principle that the attainment of prosperity and security, both for the individual and the community, depends upon the integration of the community. The two principles fuse in the notion that the prosperity of the land (*tɛŋ*)—that is, of the community dwelling on its territory—depends on the united strength of the chiefship and the tɛndaanaship, in the last resort. When drought or an epidemic threatens, chiefs and tɛndaanas meet together to decide on ritual measures to be undertaken to avert it. When war temporarily cuts through the tissue of structural ties that holds the clans of Taleland together, the social equilibrium is finally restored by the ritual collaboration, according to
ancient custom, of chief and tɛndaana. The death of a chief or tɛndaana [787]
leaves 'the land empty (*tɛŋvoog*)', as if its sentinel has departed, until his successor is installed. The death of a chief, Tallensi say, portends want—at best a scarcity of food in his own clan, at the worst a famine throughout the whole country. 'The land dies (*tɛŋ la kpiirəme*)', the people starve, and social life breaks up. This always happens when a Chief of Tongo dies. It is the one disaster, Tallensi declare, which even the white man's rule cannot avert. The death of an important tɛndaana is also ominous, but not likely to be so disastrous, since there is usually at least one other tɛndaana in the same clan and there are a great many tɛndaanas in the country.

The principles underlying the structure of a society are never embodied in a perfectly unambiguous way in its social institutions. Social life, even in the most stable and unprogressive of societies, demands continual reshufflings, readjustments, and revaluations of social relationships. Though the distant past has no record among the Tallensi, their society exists in time like every human society. Events leave a deposit in its structure, though they themselves vanish into the limbo of oblivion. Thus, in some clans the two principles we have been examining are very clearly brought out in the precise separation by office, ritual observances, and genealogical limitation of the functions of chiefship and tɛndaanaship.

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622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

779 Everywhere in Tɑleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
778 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
471 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of
Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men
who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg
is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors
was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his
ahəb (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidem of
Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most
of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases
the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one
living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as
at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been
carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they
undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he
constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in
order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build
a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)'
ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed
portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the
dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead
is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is
fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual
and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and con- 793
siderable moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the
formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations
of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say
gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed
ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.'
The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the state-
ment implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But
this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's
curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term
'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply
a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties,
privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community
with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to
the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The
material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine
or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to
be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major
emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the
earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to 784
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is
sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be
sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and
is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction
between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common
and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a
Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of
their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis
on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship.
And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as
the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises
an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

425 of his own sub-clan. This is the central field of integrated social relations
471 pivoting on this chiefship. But his ritual status also affects the prosperity
× 618 and welfare of Zubiuŋ and Zoo directly and that of the Hill Talis in-
directly. In fact, in the last resort, it affects all the clans of Taleland that
● 622 have a place in the cycle of the Great Festivals. 'The community (*tɛŋ*)
784 cannot be subdivided (*bɔk*)', the Chief of Tongo once told me in explana-
773 tion of the ritual significance of his office. Famine, pestilence, war cannot
be dammed and confined to one place. And so if the Chief of Tongo dies
the whole country suffers, though his own clan will perhaps suffer most
and the remoter zones of his politico-ritual influence least.

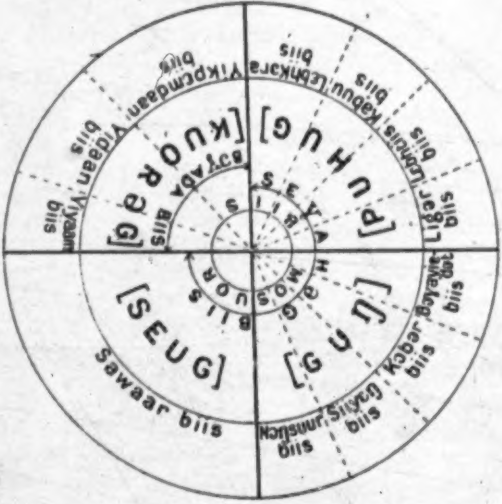
182 The bonds between man and land, community and locality that are so fundamental in the structure of Tale society cannot be understood apart from this context of ritual values and moral norms. Difficult as they are to grasp and pin down in exact language, they are as ever present to the native's mind as his sentiment of attachment to his native soil. They cause men who have been away from home for many years to give up splendid farms in Mampurugu or good jobs in Kumasi to return to take up their patrimonial land.

613 sex, station in life, character, and reputation of the deceased all influence the reactions of people to a death and the range of participation 613 in the funeral ceremonies. Every death is the corporate concern of the 621 deceased's medial lineage—his *dug* of the *yizug*. It is less stringently the 764 corporate concern of the whole *yizug*. Funerals of old and important men evoke the participation of the whole clan or sub-clan, but it is clan solidarity and corporate obligation on the level of the section that draw *sunzɔ* sections to the ceremonies. Only the death of a chief, a tendaana, or other politico-ritual functionary, is the obligatory concern of every segment of the clan or maximal lineage. Funerals of women and young people or children impose no obligations on *sunzɔ* sections of the

Diagram showing internal segmentation of Tongo.

——Thick lines mark off sections (Yizugət)

- - - - Broken lines mark off major segments of sections, that is medial lineages (dugət)



deceased's (or her husband's) section. Whether or not their representatives come to condole with the bereaved household or to take part in the burial and funeral ceremonies rests entirely with the individual members of these sections and depends on individual ties of neighbourhood, kinship, or friendship with the deceased's family and *dug*. A funeral, even that of a politico-ritual officer, is primarily the direct concern of every member of the deceased's segment of the clan or maximal lineage. It concerns *sunzɔ* segments only at the level of corporate relations, because every event that affects the existence and constitution of one part of the clan or maximal lineage impinges on its common interests.

●622 We may contrast with this a corporate activity in a wider sense, such 621 as the sacrifice to Mosuor at Tongo, to which we have several times 613 referred, the Harvest Festival, or the communal hoeing of the chief's [241] bush farm, which has become an established custom under British rule. The pivot of these activities is always the chief, who stands for the whole sub-clan and its common interests and values, and whose office transcends the cleavages inherent in its lineage segmentation. In these activities the

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a
sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duuŋkpalɔg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar*
and Sɛɣahɔg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose
section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and
officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahɔg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour- 461
water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bɔɣar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

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(*a*) Yikpemdaana of Tongo, the *kpeem* of Toŋ-Kuorəg.

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(*b*) Loyani, a highly respected junior elder of Zubiuŋ.

[facing p.240]

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and
613 lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political
182 circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British
175 rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the
578 substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system
● 622 of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of
578 the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-
622

pensation sink into the background, the sanctions inherent in the native 177
social structure prevail, and the traditional ties of politico-ritual collaboration 578
come into force. But when the new interests brought into being 622
by the influence of the British Administration come to the fore, the traditional social ties and the sanctions associated with them no longer prevail. For among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, such ties and sanctions do not function at all times and in all circumstances. They work in the context of the scheme of social relationships of which they form a part and not in other contexts. These new interests mobilize the existing corporate units of Tale society. Thus they tend to deepen some of the cleavages that exist, and to weaken the countervailing ties, between lineages and clans. It is noteworthy that rivalry for the rewards of political power under the British Administration is most acute between clans that have close ties in the native social system. As was the case with war in former days, clans and maximal lineages that are widely separated from one another, either locally or in terms of their fields of social relations, cannot come into conflict or competition with one another. Thus political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and his 'younger brother' the Chief of Yaməlɔg is severe and has led to estrangement between these two branches of Mosuor biis. But there is no political rivalry between the Chief of Tongo and the Chief of Datɔk. Competition for politico-ritual office within clans is fiercer than it was in the past and less scrupulous, though it still follows the lines of cleavage in the lineage structure.

At the same time some chiefs have used their new powers to weld their clans into closer unity on the political plane than existed in the old days. This has happened at Tongo and at Sie. But it has not been to the benefit of the social balance in the greater society. By strengthening the autocratic ambitions of these chiefs, the closer unity of their clans has tended to aggravate the antagonisms between clans.

B. *Pecuniary Competition among the Hill Talis*

A new factor of disequilibrium that has had a very disturbing influence 177
among the Hill Talis is pecuniary competition which has become 434
associated with certain traditional institutions. Many families nowadays 438
obtain driblets of money through members of the family working abroad, 578
or by petty trade. But the pecuniary competition we are referring to concerns money on a scale unprecedented in Tale history; and its disruptive influence is due to its association with a traffic in ritual benefits comparable to that of the notorious Southern Nigerian oracles.

The centre of this traffic is the Tong Hills, and its disruptive influence 178
has been greatest among the Hill Talis, where it has brought violent 438
competition into the sphere of the common ritual interests and values 578
which form the bulwark of their cohesion. The integration of the Hill Talis in the native social structure depends, as we have seen, on a meticulous balance of local, clanship, and ritual ties and cleavages focused in the politico-ritual offices vested in the heads of maximal lineages. So nicely calculated is the distribution of these politico-ritual functions amongst the various maximal lineages that none can claim

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been 471
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar 794
claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622 ●
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

621 lineages inherent in the native social structure. The majority of the
622 Gɔlibdaana's own maximal lineage share in the profits of his monopoly
● and are solidly behind him; the maximal lineages of the leaders of the
177 opposition are solidly against him; but many of the maximal lineages that
578 have clanship or ritual links with both sides are split. Many of the young men of these lineages side with the Gɔlibdaana—enticed, their elders say bitterly, by his lavish gifts. The older men are uneasily neutral or tacitly opposed to the Gɔlibdaana because he has brought dissension to the Hills and has flouted some of the ancient ritual customs. Both parties try to manœuvre the opposition into a position which will set the Administration in motion against them; the leaders of both parties say that the white man's authority is the only force that will help them to victory. And they feel particularly bitter because the vigilance of Administrative officers has frustrated all their efforts to exploit this potent sanction.

At the same time they try to use the sanctions of their own social structure to gain their aims. For outside the struggle for control of the pilgrim traffic, the ties of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration remain valid as before. During the Great Festivals the feud sinks into temporary abeyance. The Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab speak with hatred of each other when it is a question of political power or the pilgrim traffic; they continue to perform those rites of the Great Festivals and of the Earth cult in which they are ritually obliged to collaborate, with apparent cordiality. This is a 'separate thing' they declare. It would be an appalling sin bringing catastrophe on the whole country, they say, if they threw over these bonds.

But the new alinements in the pecuniary struggle and the traditional social structure cannot be kept apart in watertight compartments. The Kpata'arna'ab and the Gɔlibdaana try to coerce each other through their mutual ritual obligations. They try to put pressure on each other through maximal lineages that are intercalary between their lineages; and to win over the other maximal lineages with which they have clanship or ritual ties.

Experienced elders maintain, with the sceptical candour that is one of the few charms Tallensi have for an ethnographer, that this can never decide the issue. Putting it at its highest, the bonds of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration are a double-edged weapon. If Kpata'ar tries to coerce Samiit to side with it by refusing to collaborate with Samiit in the rites of their common External *Bɔyar*, the ancestors might well blame Kpata'ar and punish them. Tallensi are not—so the old men say—restrained from doing something to their personal advantage by the fear of mystical penalties. 'Who fears death before death comes upon you?' It is only after a death occurs that the survivors see in it signs and omens referring to their social relations with one another.

578 Whenever a death occurs in any of the Hill clans, especially if it is the
764 death of an important person, the chronic discord between them is openly
recollected. It is both a symptom of the general feeling of uneasiness and a move in the game of attempted mutual coercion by mystical sanctions. A funeral almost inevitably causes this feeling to be ventilated. For people of all the Tenzugu and many other clans are present, as kinsfolk, affines,

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and
their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate
units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the
ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is
not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead
man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the
Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own
matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors,
for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for
the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔγar* of
which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which
they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these
ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through
which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the
lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor
have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in
opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up
cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will
not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out
of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when
the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

● 622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tɛnzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been
regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations
of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔγaraana
of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔγar*
as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control
of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief
of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia
and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount
Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high
status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[177] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of
Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and
unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that
they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly.
Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔγar* cult as
a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through
the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals.
The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

622 Chiefship of Tongo, to which the Gəlibdaana's office has a politico-ritual
578 relationship.

621 The point that must be stressed, however, is that the Gəlibdaana's
182 monopoly has not yet thrown the existing scheme of structural alinements
621 into complete disorder. It is a factor of disequilibrium and may, in the
578 course of a few more years, make serious rents in the complex fabric of
the social and politico-ritual relationships of the Hill Talis. Up to the present the native social structure, and in particular the web of ritual collaboration, has resisted the corruption and kept in check, to a very considerable extent, the dissensions due to this new force. This might well go on as long as the Administration keeps the ring impartially, and as long as the Gəlibdaana and his maximal lineage accept the politico-ritual values on which the integration of the Hill Talis rests, and abide by the principal jural and moral norms of the society. So far the struggle has not given rise to new corporate associations running counter to those of the existing social structure. In fact, it has on the whole been canalized along the lines of cleavage laid down in that structure. It has deepened some of the existing cleavages and sharpened some of the inherent tensions of the system; but it has also accentuated some of the ties and enhanced the dominant values of the system. Thus the only section of Kpata'ar that has vacillated, at times, in its loyalty is Nak-y-eet yidem, the assimilated lineage. They have been influenced by their lineage differentiation from Kpata'ar proper, their consequent subsidiary interest in the politico-ritual status of the head of Kpata'ar proper, their clanship ties with the Sakpee section that has gone over to the Gəlibdaana, and the greed of their lineage head. But their intercalary structural position between the two factions is shown in their divided counsels. Some of the older men are whole-heartedly for Kpata'ar, one or two adhere publicly to the Gəlibdaana, several try to keep on good terms with both parties. When they have to take a stand as a corporate unit, their bias is towards the Kpata'arna'ab in ritual and intra-clan affairs, and towards the Gəlibdaana in matters of law and government coming within his purview as a headman under the Administration. On the other hand, the ancient ties between Kpata'ar and Gundaat have been greatly strengthened, the bond of goodwill between Kpata'ar and Tongo, based on their politico-ritual interdependence, given a new meaning, and moves to defend the traditional social order stimulated.

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish
hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and
unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every
[622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief
of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining
the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the
privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its
members.

351 Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the
sapak or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary
556 spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish
231 and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any.
[514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and
sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even
by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his
homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor
goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less
than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug
tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has
cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls
and guinea-fowls.

[361] From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out
and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the
342 homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through
the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*,
and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the
room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed
between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities
are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable posses-
[556] sions, his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth,
the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that
to the Taləŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated
with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which
[782] wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the
principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain
their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers.
In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the
zɔŋ, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to
nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two
chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber
is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber,
communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey,
for the night.

342 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality.
778 It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342 partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778 room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔɣar*) always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*; the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard. Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ* must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there and the lineage *bɔɣar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it. The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the *zɔŋ*, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622] ● of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623 deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most 554 conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 764 subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his 778 own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose. But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tɛbhɔm nla*—This is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me. The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt, an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*, when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611 dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

596 nephews but more distant cognatic and even affinal kin frequently live
736 with a kinsman until they can set up in their own homesteads.

Sometimes, too, an unmarried sister's child (*tau-bii*) may grow up and live in its uncle's family. It may be an illegitimate child (*yi yeem bii*—a maiden's child), or one whose mother's bride-price was not paid, and who therefore belongs to her father unless or until it is redeemed (*pɔhəg*) by the payment of a cow by its genitor or his heir. A sister's child is to all intents and purposes a child of the family. But not being of the true agnatic line, it is subject to certain jural disabilities which have no consequence for a girl but handicap a boy, as we have previously seen.

596 The domestic families of chiefs and headmen are unusual only in
respect of size. Their newly won riches enable chiefs and headmen to
622 acquire numerous wives and to maintain households that appear enormous in the eyes of the ordinary man. A petty headman may have ten or more wives. The late Chief of Tongo, a chief of modest means compared with some of his peers in Taleland, had more than thirty. The Golibdaana of Tenzugu has at least eighty. The Chief of Datɔko is reputed to have a hundred, but he denies this and claims to have only a modest fifty. Except that their domestic economy and organization is more complex and that there is at times more friction between the womenfolk, these hypertrophied joint families have the same pattern of organization as those of ordinary folk.

596 It is noteworthy that this pattern has not been disturbed by the social
changes which have, in recent years, followed the subjection of the
177 Northern Territories of the Gold Coast to European political, economic,
167 and cultural influences. Family disorganization has barely begun to
appear in Taleland. There is hardly a domestic family in the country—not one in our sample—which has wholly escaped the effects of these contact influences. One or more of their members is or has been abroad in Mampurugu, Ashanti, or the Colony, for longer or shorter periods of time, farming, working for wages, or trading. But the number of men abroad, at any given time, for very long periods is relatively small[1] compared with other parts of West and Southern Africa, and their absence has little effect on the structure of the residual family. Their labour is lost to the family, but as they are no longer a drain on its resources this does not upset its internal economy. Similarly, as they are mostly young men[2] with little or no responsibility for the management of family

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[1] Estimates based on my own census material and on Nominal Rolls drawn up by Administrative Officers for tax collection show that an average of just under 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were away from home and not likely to return in the immediate future, in the years 1936 to 1939. This estimate may be compared with the 60–80 per cent. of able-bodied adult males absent from tribal reserves in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland quoted by Lord Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 701.

[2] Reliable information on the ages of these absentees cannot be obtained. But from personal contact with many of them, both on their return home and

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1] Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of. [432] [578]

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of competition both between individuals and between corporate groups. This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests. 578 583

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of conflict between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter. 691 185 578

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief 581 595 622

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

581 or headman or important elder, backed as it often is by lavish gifts to
595 her parents, security of the bride-price, and the attraction of his wealth
and power or status. Few parents would hesitate to force their daughter
622 to accept such an offer. Chiefs and headmen do in fact have an excessive number of wives. The five biggest chiefs and headmen of the Tongo district had between them about 160 wives of all ages in 1936. Their predecessors of a generation ago would have had perhaps 30 between them, at the utmost. The extra 130 wives they have means that probably 100 other men have been cheated of wives. This has no doubt diminished the chances of early marriage for a proportion of young men, but not so greatly as the men assert. All the evidence of Tale domestic institutions and of Tale genealogies goes to show that wives were always highly prized because they were always at a premium.[1] In consequence, no unmarried girl or woman of child-bearing age lacks suitors, and no wife of child-bearing age need endure an intolerable marriage. She can always find another husband. That women take advantage of their scarcity value is what one would expect; but they do so to a smaller extent than one anticipates. This is due partly to the strength and stability of the patrilineal lineage system, expressed in inter-personal relations in the power of the *patria potestas*, and partly to the great value women set upon wifehood and motherhood. Life is a failure to a Tale woman who never becomes a wife and mother.

The Stability of Marriage

586 In consequence, partly, of the scarcity value of wives, but more, no
doubt, of the conflict of loyalties and interests which has to be overcome,
587 marriage tends to be unstable in the initial stages. A young man rarely
settles down permanently with his first bride, and young women gene-
582 rally treat their first marriage as an experiment unless the husband is a much older man to whom they have been married by formal negotiation. In the course of collecting census material I noted the marriages of over a hundred men. There is not one man over the age of 30, approximately (excluding a few physically or psychologically abnormal men), who has failed to experience one or more unsuccessful and usually short-lived marriages. Most men of 30 to 40 can give a history of five

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[582] [1] I have no demographic evidence suggesting that there was formerly or is now a marked deficiency of marriageable women as compared with men in Taleland. My own crude demographic inquiries suggest a sex ratio of about unity among the Tallensi. Polygynous marriage, therefore, inevitably means competition for wives, even though women are usually married by the age of 16 or 17, as near as one can guess, and men rarely succeed in finding a wife before the age of about 25. The natives maintain that the age of marriage for girls has been decreasing rapidly since the coming of the white man (cf. my paper, 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, xxv, 1943, 3-4).

of this is clearest in funeral customs. If Paanbɔbis II, Kutɔbis's 613 brother, were to die, Ɔndieso would take part in all the rites prohibited to men whose fathers are still alive. He would not refrain out of respect for Kutɔbis.

But in matters which involve Ziŋgan biis as a segment of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri, Ɔndieso acknowledges Kutɔbis as his 'father'. Thus when Bontuya, who belonged to one of the other four inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt biis, died, Ɔndieso went to the funeral as one of the representatives of Ziŋgan biis. He then refused to take part in the rites tabooed to men who have fathers alive, saying that if he did it would be an insult to Kutɔbis.

Ziŋgan biis also appear as a unit in reckoning prohibited degrees of 613 kinship for purposes of marriage. As we have mentioned before, the inner lineage is the widest corporate group that is a jural unit in marriage. 582 A distant 'sister's son' (*ahaŋ*) of Kutɔbis would not be allowed to marry a daughter of Ɔndieso. And this criterion applies also to the inheritance of widows. If Kutɔbis were to die, Ɔndieso could not seek any of his widows in marriage, because they are his classificatory 'mothers'. On the other hand, he could do so if Kutɔbis were his classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather'. He can court the widow of any member of any of the four other inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri since generation differences are not recognized beyond the boundaries of Ziŋgan yiri.

In spite of the ambiguities lurking in his relationship to Kutɔbis, the 613 predominant affective tone it has for Ɔndieso is that he is a 'son' and will remain a 'child' (*bii*) in public affairs that involve the whole clan 554 as long as Kutɔbis or any of his brothers is alive. Until they are dead there will always be a living if shadowy representative of paternal authority standing between Ɔndieso and his remote ancestors—and that means between him and the world at large, as it impinges on him through the corporate activities of the whole clan. This influences Ɔndieso's attitude to life considerably. He feels that he has not yet reached full social maturity, though he is much more intelligent and better informed than many of the clan elders. One sees and feels this vividly enough in one's intercourse with the natives, but it is not easy to pin down. It came out, for instance, in Ɔndieso's behaviour whenever he accompanied me to the Chief's court. He always took a back seat then, as befits a 'youngster'. It came out also in his attitude to Kutɔbis whom he despised for his uncouth ways and all-round incompetence, but yet deferred to with the modicum of respect that is correct in one's relations with a 'father'.

A man who can say 'I no longer have any fathers' associates himself 613 with the elders, the *kpɛm*, in thought and action even if he is younger 622 in years than some men whom he calls 'sons'. He thinks of himself as a 'father', in particular in relation to the ancestors, as one who has the 554 duty of watching over the welfare of others. It is most marked among

613 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their
●622 predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed,
554 some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the
Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood
over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔγa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief).
Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in
common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of
their own clans.

778 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in
the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully
554 established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary
and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices
for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs
to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains
the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that
he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin*
is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to
the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the
zanɔne, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is
taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has
reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps
the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a
[888] house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and
can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

601 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend
the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in
613 the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as
'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as
'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all
courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner
lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but
he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a
moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is
554 Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same
homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically
independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances
can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis;
but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis
succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is
his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's
attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that
concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply
'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

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[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

593 eye was caught by an old woman who seemed to be particularly privileged, as she walked about giving orders, and greeting the guests. I was
793 not surprised to learn that she was Teroog's only surviving full sister (*tasoog*). He presented her to me with great pride, holding her hand affectionately. She sat beside him throughout the rites, listening intently to his long invocation to their ancestors, prompting him once or twice, and helping him as if she and he were jointly succeeding to the ownership of the *bɔɣar*. One could see that the notion that any woman might well have been in her brother's place in the social system if it were not for an accident of birth has a very concrete meaning to the Tallensi.

593 Full (*soog*) siblings, as we have already related, constantly visit one another, bringing and taking away gifts. When a woman has a baby, her full sister hastens to her with a bundle of firewood or a dish of soup ingredients. If a person falls ill, his full siblings come running to see him. When Kuur fell and broke his ankle there was consternation among his immediate relatives. Two of his half-brothers rushed off at once to consult a diviner about the accident—no laughing matter, as they well realized, for a man in the fifties—while his full sister stayed behind to nurse him. His wife hovered about helplessly, only approaching him when his sister called for some more hot water. The sister came to him every day for the next week or so and was his most devoted nurse.

We have described before, also, how full brothers generally hold
593 together, economically and residentially, longer than half-brothers and
622 often throughout their lives. This is due, basically, to their close identification with and attachment to each other. One constantly comes across examples of this. Samane was the Chief of Tongo's right-hand man and probably the only person who had the chief's absolute trust. Why, I once asked Samane, did the chief not put the same trust in his own son Saa? 'Don't you see', said Samane, 'the chief and I are born of one father and one mother. We are as one. He will have no secrets from me or I from him. A man's brother is more to him than his son. Saa wouldn't care[1] if the chief died and he succeeded. I want my brother to live, for his being chief is just as if I were chief myself.' Again, one of the very few cases I knew of men working abroad sending home regular remittances of money was Soɣar's policeman brother. When I praised him, Soɣar said, as if in explanation, 'He is my *soog*'.

593 This comes out very clearly, too, in the property relations of full
422 brothers. Men of the same joint family borrow one another's clothes freely, though the individual ownership of the clothes is never in doubt and the owner's permission is always necessary. But full brothers behave almost as if their clothes were their common property. Hence when a man dies his full brother often takes some of his clothes, instead of leaving all to his sons. There is also a specific ritual sanction in this relationship, the common subjection of full brothers to their mother's

[1] He was the chief's first-born son. Cf. p. 225 above.

to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were 593
non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but 571
may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's
wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's 835
wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between 593
brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office
is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. 622●
No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the 584
same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social 593
equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists
between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with 554
the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

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[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

602 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting
613 of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the
577 two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise.
This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found
582 in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal
relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the
597 placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriage-
able age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with
593 her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

773 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of
an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how
604 certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to
another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard
622 myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and
183 would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly,
they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great 622
lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tɛndaana. In 183
addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahɔŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office.

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an 425
ahɔŋ or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a par-
ticular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in 622
former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yɛa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tɛnzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahɔŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman.

Certain powers normally held by tɛndaanas only are sometimes vested 793
in lineages that do not have tɛndaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of
Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo 604
Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyɛbɔg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahɔŋ* of the tɛndaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tɛndaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors.

The Ahɔŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahɔŋ* forms a link between his father's 604
lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to
every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahɔŋ* is always chosen 584
as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

184 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In
867 the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of
463 Puvələmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was
a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tāle lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvələmra.

592 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period
622 of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members
861 of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them
—may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

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867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔyar*, "river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the river banks on both sides. 133 226

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general blessing than of specifically efficacious magic. 796 226 [789]

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied three of these expeditions. 226

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market. Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas. 226 203

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised. [622] ●

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush. The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along 226 [441] [482]

226 651 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor ● [622] of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. Besides, [685] such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[654] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practice and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

scattered compounds, or whether closer building between compounds, 241
on land previously available for farming, enforced the system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation, as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously.

Land Tenure.

The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of 793
land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land
is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to 622●
deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana" 425
(Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs command people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs' and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide.

To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. The question
of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agricultural [427]
land has no value in the economic sense; there are a number of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the land, through the tindana.

In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, 428
water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason
for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been conveyed 423
through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the requirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible, either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land

184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

621 •622 793 Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

784 184 Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784
agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again 184
may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425]
over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows, dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious
practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778]
(tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186
political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and
Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764
vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793
barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction. The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. 622
Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

793 •622 [789] the prosperity of the land. Though it is housed in his compound, neither the Chief nor any of his clansmen may set eyes on it; only the Gbizug Tendaana and his lineage may. The Chief speaks of it with an awe which is almost terror. The balance is adjusted by the Chief's rainmaking powers. Only Namoos may own rain medicine, which was brought to Taleland by their ancestor. When drought is prolonged, all the Tendaanas, led by the Gbizug Tendaana, formally call upon and implore the Chief to see to it that rain falls. So great is his rainmaking power that rain will fall at once if he merely declares, in the name of his ancestors, that their wishes will be satisfied. Such, in fact, proved to be the case in 1934.

Again, this ritual polarity is paralleled in social and personal attitudes. The Chief and the Gbizug Tendaana, in private conversation, comment with a mixture of pride, scorn, and fear each upon his opposite number.

796 Among the most striking mechanisms of this equilibrium are the ritual festivals. The various settlements are always classified in terms of them, and the natives never tire of dilating enthusiastically upon them.

Ritual and dance are the two components of every festival; the former usually esoteric, the latter public though exclusive. During the rainy season, which lasts roughly from April to September, ritual and group activities are almost completely ousted by agriculture. In July-August the early millet is harvested, but the major crops, the guinea corn and late millet, [805] still stand.[2] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, and the last month of the rains is called the "Moon of Waters" (Kuom ŋmarig). An ethnologist cannot, alas, be in two places at the same time. I was living among the Namoos in September, 1934, and shall therefore describe the events of this and the next month from their point of view.

Weeks in advance the approaching festivals are the dominant theme of conversation for man, woman, and child. The ceremonial cycle is inaugurated by the Baari Tendaana, who ritually "throws away the water," i.e. abolishes the rains on the first day of the new month. This is announced by a burst of hallooing, which commences at Baari and sweeps across the country, the signal that the festivals have come round again.

That night the people of Baari begin their celebrations. At Tongo, on the next day, the youths and maidens are putting finishing touches to their festive costumes. On the fourth day of the moon a deputation of elders waits on the Chief, to remind him of his traditional obligation to summon a diviner on the following day.

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[2] The calendrical incidence of the ritual festivals and their relation to the annual productive cycle are more fully set out in M. and S. L. Fortes, Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi (Africa, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1936).

As to the following, their meanings are known but the context of circumstances 551
can only be guessed.

N-Nye-Fara, I have seen sorrow; ɔn-Ti-Wari, who gives something for nothing? Saγa-Ti-Ba, submit to them; ɔn-Die-Sɔ, he who accepts (humbly) is better; Zi-Kihib, men who know no taboos; Ku-ŋaaŋ-Ba, will not overwhelm them; Ba-Eŋ-Ka-Mi, let them do it and find out.

As I have already noted, the same names are used for both males and females, occasionally with a suffix to indicate the sex of the person. But there is one respect in which women's names differ from men's. When they marry they are known in their husband's home only by a nominal form of the name of their natal settlement or clan, never by their given name. The given name is used only when they are at home among their own family and clan. This is one of the ways in which the strict separation of a woman's role in life as wife and mother, on the one hand, and as daughter and sister, on the other, is symbolised. I have described these ideas more fully in *The Dynamics of Clanship*, CH. IX, and in *The Web of Kinship*, CH. IV, and therefore say no more about them here.

One more topic must be briefly discussed. The naming customs I have 553
described all belong to what Tallensi call "conferring names" — *pit wu'uri*. It is clear that names so given do serve very precisely to distinguish individuals. What about the other naming process, the uttering or announcing of names — *pɔt wu'uri?*

This takes place whenever a man is elected to a politico-ritual office as a chief 553
(*na'ab*) among Namoo clans or as a tɛndaana or *bɔyar* officiant among the Talis[11]). 622
The installation ceremonies include a short period of seclusion in a room where 793
the clan and Earth shrines are housed. Then, following the common pattern of such *rites de passage*, the new chief or priest announces the names by which he wishes to be henceforth known. He has put aside his former social personality and the new one he assumes must be symbolised by an appropriate name. From his chamber of seclusion he announces his new names through the elder whose traditional duty it is to proclaim them. As a rule, three names are proclaimed, and as the last is given out the people assembled for the ceremonies shout in acclamation. The new chief or priest then comes out himself. Hereafter it is a taboo for his given name to be mentioned and he goes down to posterity by his new name, or rather by that one of them for which he shows most preference. I might add that it is impressive to see what a profound change a man seems to undergo when he is elected to a politico-ritual office. It is the supreme honour to which a man and all his kin can aspire, the greatest renown that can come to a name. Yet it is also a heavy burden. The new name stands for constant watchfulness and responsibility. Among the Tallensi, these duties are largely expressed in religious concepts and observances, though they are related to vital necessities such as the regularity of rainfall, peace and the absence of disease. To ensure this, chiefs and tɛndaanas have to keep ritual taboos, make sacrifices to the ancestors, arbitrate honestly in disputes, in short, watch over the welfare of the land and the people. The new names stand for this.

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[11]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship*, passim, for details.

553 551 The Tallensi call these accession names *na'am wu'uri*, chiefship name, or *tɛndaan wu'uri*, tɛndaana name, or more generally *saam-wu'uri*, a term colloquially used for what we call nick-names, but meaning the name by which a person is publicly acclaimed. Accession names are, of course, "thought up" by the office-holder elect and so resemble the ordinary open names, which indeed they parallel in function. But they are interesting because they reflect not only the circumstances of the individual's achieving the honour of office, but his ideas about himself, his political role, and his historical position. In the legendary history of Tale clans the names of leaders often sum up the significance of the clan in the total social organisation. Thus an early Gbizug Tɛndaana is said to have been named GERIBAZAA, to mix all together, a name that well represents the present social and ritual functions of this tɛndaana as the intermediary between the Namoos and the Talis[12]).

553 551 A few examples only are needed to illustrate what I have said. I take, first, some well known chiefs' accession names.

●622 One of the famous chiefs of Tongo was NAMBƆƔADA, still crawling. This name was taken by a young chief who announced that he was, as yet, but an infant in chiefship, "still a crawler", but would soon grow up as a chief and do great things. A more recent chief called himself DEŊ-TIES, short for *Dɛŋ-ties-kunkɔŋ-na'am*, first to think of what to do will not lack a chiefship. He had acted quickly to seek election, before anybody else had thought of it, and implied that this was a promise of how he would act in the future. KU-NDU-ZOOR, cannot climb a hill, was the proud name taken by a chief whom I have previously mentioned. The reference was to the fact that water cannot run up-hill. Had he not excelled his competitors he would have been like water, unable to rise superior to the rest. Alas, his short chiefship was saddened by famine and his successor took to himself the name of NA-LEB-SEUG, it will turn to the rainy season. However long and hard a dry season may seem, he declared, it must give way to the rains at length. Coming after a famine — a long dry season, as it were — he proclaimed himself as the bringer of rain and so of food. The list can be extended but I will give only one more example. The Chief of Tongo, when I was there in 1935—37, had the given name of KPA'AMA, and this is how he is named, in breach of native ideas of propriety, in some Administrative records of the time[13]). His chiefly name was NA-NAAM-BIUŊ, will change into a lake. This is short for *Bul-sɔŋ-na-naam-biuŋ*, a good spring (rising in a small pool) will change into a lake. He meant that he was as yet only a small pool, an inexperienced and young chief, but given time to grow he would change into a lake, a great and beneficent chief — — beneficent, because water, being scarce in Taleland, is thought of as a very valuable thing.

551 553 793 The accession names of tɛndaanas and other holders of priestly offices follow the same pattern. One tɛndaana I saw installed proclaimed his new name as DOƔ-BAZAA, begetter of all. He wished everybody to know that he regarded himself in his new role as the father of all his people, watching over their welfare as a father watches over that of his children.

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[12]) See my previously cited books for details of this division.

[13]) Cf. also RATTRAY, op. cit. vol. II, ch. 33.

Tenedan' will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good 793
crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good
harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, 793
and the *Tenedan'* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) 782
where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a *Tenedan'* is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to the land. The land is not a human spirit.' The *Tenedan'* will say:

'"*We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating,* we cannot
refuse you yours, receive this beer." We pour out the beer and then [273]
kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow (through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan'* will then ask every one to give him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a cow. Every one in the *teya* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan'* will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan'* and eats of this
sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan'* and the *Tey-kpeem* (Elders of the *teya*) [623] ●
always discussed town affairs together.'

Succession to the Tenedan'ship: 'When a *Tenedan'* dies, his next eldest 793
brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest "son"; that means the eldest of all the "sons" among the *Tenedan'* and his brothers. In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan'*, but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan'* had power to drive a man out of the *teya*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would remain until he lost everything.'

Tenedan' and the Land: 'A *Tenedan'* is in charge of all uncultivated 793
land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan'*, 423
saying, "*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I 425
wish to make a farm upon it". The *Tenedan'* will send a boy to look 782
at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the
farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and [273]
take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan'* to sacrifice to the land. This he will do in his own compound, giving it to his father's *bagr* (shrine) to give to the land, saying: "Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give to the land that the farmer may get crops". The remainder of the beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan'* will also send his son to pour some on the land and say:

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342
partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778
room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like
Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck
into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather
tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be
incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s
lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold live-
stock there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in
Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds
his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔγar*)
always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*;
the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard.
Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ*
must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there
and the lineage *bɔγar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it.
The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the
zɔŋ, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the
Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622]
of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in
which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great
Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623 ●
deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most 554
conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social
personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 764
subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his 778
own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave
through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose.
But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole
specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tɛbhəm nla*—This
is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me.
The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman
who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and
to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt,
an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint
of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and
I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is
unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*,
when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried
out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about
the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is
finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611
dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

128 622 565 for the inclusion here of such records, as, once their limitations and significance are realized, they, equally with other information recorded, go to form part of the composite picture which I am attempting to draw of the traditions of these people.

173 622 *History of Siega* (as told me by the Chief Zoaga): 'We came from Mampurugu at the same time as *Misore* (see previous history). The Winkoŋo people are related to us (he refers, I believe, to the Chief of that place). My clan is lion; I am the seventeenth Chief of Siega. The Chieftainship is under (the patronage of) Kurugu and can descend to any one of the lion clan. My first-born also taboos a fowl. We have had a Chief, distinct from *Ten'dan'*, since ancient times. The first Chief of Siega was *Kukye*.'

History of Datoko (as told me by the present Chief, Borezina): 'We came from Mampurugu, but not with *Misore*. We travelled by way of Nuŋ (Nungo); from Nuŋ to Tula; from Tula to Kumbule; from Kumbule to Datoko. We met the Kusase people in the land, but drove them across the river (Volta). We marry the Kusase. We are of the lion clan. Chiefs of Datoko are appointed by Kurugu. The man who gives most presents becomes the new Chief, and on obtaining the Chieftainship will try to recover what he has paid. Now Chiefs are made by Government, but still go to Kurugu to receive the *muŋ'* (red fez). I am the son of the late Chief, and am ninth of my line. Datoko has six sections (*Yi-zug'*); each section, since Europeans came, is in charge of a *kambon-nab* (head gunman). Since ancient times we have had *Ten'dan'*. Their work and the Chiefs' work are separate. I settle all cases. The *Ten'dan'* performs the ceremonies when the rain does not fall, unless it is at my own *tengzan* (Nankane, *tingane*), when I perform the sacrifices.' (Here, it will be noticed, the *kambon-nab*, appointed by the Chief (who, when a vacancy occurs, bids with the other applicants for the post), are ousting the old time section-heads, C [624] called in Talone, *yi-zug-kpɛɛm*, who have been forced into the background. The *Ten'dan'* (Nankane, *Ten'dana*) has also become more or less a nonentity.)

History of Ten'zugu (as told me by Ten'goli): 'My ancestor came from Nasia; he was called *Sumri* and was a son of the Chief of Mampurugu. When his father died he wished to succeed him, but was driven away and came to Bulbi. His enemies followed him there, and again he fled and came to Daa, at the foot of the Tong hills. Later he went on top of the hill and settled there. He found some people called Dagali. They were Talense. We married with them. The Dagali people

land. The *Ten'dan'* of Bade also told *Misore* about the festival of the 'bad water-moon.'[1]

The Territorial Ruler: The position of the territorial rulers among 622 the Talense appears to be so similar to that already described when discussing the neighbouring tribe, the Nankanse, as to leave little or nothing to add to what has been recorded. The Talense Chiefs go to Kurugu for their 'red fez.' When a vacancy occurs, there is a scramble among those eligible to fill the vacancy, one vying with another for the post, which, as likely as not, falls to the highest bidder. This method of selection would appear to have very little to recommend it, save that it appears to have been in vogue before our advent in these parts. No doubt it does not 'pay' the Chief, in whose hands the selection lies, to appoint a man who is wholly unacceptable to the people, and the 'presents' tendered on these occasions seem to have been a recognized and not unimportant portion of the revenues accruing to a head Chief. The custom becomes, perhaps, more subject to abuse when we [624]● find it practised in turn by the lesser Chiefs in the appointment of the *kambon na*, who, as I have already stated, often seem to usurp the positions which should by right be held by the section-leaders.

In an old 'District Record Book,' at Zuargu, under a date of nearly 622 twenty years ago, I found a note, of which the following is an extract. 554 It refers, I think, more especially to those Chiefs whom I have named 'Government-made-Chiefs': 'The people look with suspicion on any one who prospers and becomes the owner of property, or on any of their so-called 'Chiefs,' who, backed up by us, "put on airs," and try to assume control over the people. The Chiefs have no prestige, no historical names to quote as their predecessors.' This is as true to-day as it was twenty years ago.

The position of the head of a family and of other members of his house- 592 hold among the Talense does not exhibit any features with which we are not already familiar. The following is an additional note on pawns.

Talem (pawns): A man may want to get money to become a Chief 593 and pawn (verb, *nwe talema*) his son. If he is head of a house, he need 426 not ask any one's permission; if not, he will consult his father or elder brother. 'A pawn's head is not shaved as is a slave's.' A boy is pawned for from one to four cows. The debtor is *sandan*, the creditor *bondam*. If the *talem* dies, the *sandan* still has to pay. Famine might cause a man to pawn or sell his son. 'If you sell any one, you give the *Ten'dan'* a goat or a fowl because the land does not agree to that (*tey npu sayera.*)'

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[1] See Chapter XXVI.

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab*
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine 624

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under th Chief of Nangode.

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1] report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed, informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
[783] lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[1]‡ have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

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● 624 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not formerly a Chief's concern.'

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624 *Theft*: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

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793
628 *Murder*: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

‡ [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral
custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which
the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family
would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed
to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has
destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and
give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit.
that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and
marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike,
even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family
and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to
return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

●622 624 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
793 section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders,
but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one
might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A
brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

793
423 '"Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm.
425 Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache
782 and belly-ache."

'When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan'* a large
793 bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a
423 guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his "sons", but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan'* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan'* still "owns" the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'*, even if growing on a man's land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man's own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan'* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.'

793 *Lost Animals*: 'Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tenedan'*.
425 I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries. Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. 'No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.'

'In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are "*Wen*" (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan'*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan'* only received a hind leg.'

224 *Go-dan*: 'We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost
624 a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan'* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

not own the land, but is in charge of the hunting party for the time that they are away in the bush. 224 624

'The *Tenedan*' would separate people fighting by spreading ashes on the land between the combatants; no man may shoot an arrow over this line. It is taboo to the land to have sexual intercourse in the bush. Any one who found people doing so will collect a heap of leaves and branches at that spot, and every one who passed there must add more. Such a place is called *pey bok* (vagina hole). 793 834

'A woman may not become a *Tenedan*.'[1] *Tenedan*' have not any distinctive dress from that of any Elder. There is no difference between the funeral custom for a *Tenedan*' and that of an Elder.' 793 462 764

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[1] But see p. 371. [i.e. The opposite is true among the Nam Nam — Analyst.]

796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within
182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many
sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from
breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they
625 always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out
during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater
solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies
throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It
swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of
lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one
month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare
681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the
obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity,
arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity
possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political
life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the
extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments;
on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of
the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of
721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from
the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its
effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus
it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels
182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in
769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within
clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal
tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend
to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the
form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider
solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy
of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts
in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically
unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social
structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence
in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the
long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate
membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating
the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage
and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual
restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck
between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the
centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the
ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Gɔlibdaana, in his
overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Gɔlibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
578 building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

of his lineage or clan, other than those whom he describes as his 'fathers' 587
or 'sons'.

Every Tale clan is anchored to a particular locality from which it 361
takes its name. In the central area of Taleland, around the Tong Hills, 621
the present clan settlements appear to date back not less than eight to ten generations. But they have not been and are not territorially static. There are no strict territorial boundaries between adjacent settlements. The homesteads of a settlement merge with those of the adjacent settlements, and the boundaries between them are definable only in social terms, as a function of their ecological and politico-ritual relations at a given time. In the same way every segment of a clan—that is, each of its component maximal lineages—is anchored to a local subdivision of the clan settlement, though many of its members may be dispersed elsewhere.

A striking feature of Tale social organization is the system of inter- 621
clan linkages which constitutes one of the principal forces of cohesion 619
in the society. The genealogically and socially autonomous maximal 182
lineage or clan is not a closed group. The component maximal lineages that form the segments of adjacent clans have ties of clanship identical with those that unite them to one another within their respective clans. Thus if two adjacent clans have segments A, B, C, and D, E, F, G, respectively, then A (but not B or C) may have clanship ties with D (but not with E, F, or G); B may have clanship ties only with E, and C with F. Each of these maximal lineages also has clanship ties with segments of other neighbouring clans. Thus each component maximal lineage of a clan has a field of clanship that includes the other segments of the clan as well as segments of other clans. This results in a network of interlocking clanship ties that embraces all the separate clans of Taleland. All the Talis clans and the main block of Namoo clans are interlocked in this way in two clusters which are in turn similarly connected at certain points. Moreover, this system of linkages ties the Tale aggregate on to adjacent clans of other neighbouring 'tribes'. Thus we observe that at this level of social structure—the skeletal level, so to speak—as in its territorial and cultural relationship to neighbouring 'tribes', Tale society is a segment of a greater society. The network of inter-clan linkages is one of the principal factors by which the sociogeographic region we have called Taleland is differentiated as a distinct segment of this greater society.

It is also one of the main factors of social equilibrium in Tale society. 626
Dissension between neighbouring clans is kept in check by the mediation of maximal lineages linked by identical ties to both; and warfare is inhibited from disrupting the entire social order by the intervention of social and ritual obligations arising *inter alia* out of the fact that enemies are related directly or indirectly by clanship ties. It is this, in part, that gives Tale wars the complexion of acute family quarrels.

754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moɣaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp. His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
787 reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt. There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence. The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock (*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant, as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the theme of one of the dance songs of the Golib Festival. 'Wherever she goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
●[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
754 mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
[771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

never undertakes anything of importance without consulting Yikpɛmdaan; Yikpɛmdaan need never be in want of a sheep or goat to sacrifice if there are sheep and goats in Tinta'alɔm's house. If any member of the lineage segment of which Tinta'alɔm is the head gets into difficulty, he goes at once to Yikpɛmdaan for counsel and help. 602

A more telling case is that of Lɔɣani and Gai. They belong to different segments of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra.[1] Many years ago Gai quarrelled with the elders of the maximal lineage over the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar*. The Yakɔra Tɛndaana of the time took an oath binding all the people of Yakɔra to have nothing to do with Gai in jural and ritual matters until he apologized and a ritual reconciliation was made. Gai and his family keep aloof from all corporate activities of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. He has obstinately rejected several indirect advances made to him suggesting a reconciliation. One day there was a funeral at Gai's house, and I called to see how a man who is virtually ostracized by his clan would manage an affair that is usually a corporate activity of the whole clan. Finding no other Yakɔra people at the funeral, I went round to Lɔɣani's house afterwards. We discussed Gai and his affairs; and Lɔɣani, with that blunt candour that has won him general esteem, told me the whole story. Gai's conduct, Lɔɣani concluded, was specially distressing to him. 'For', said he, with a trace of bitterness, 'Gai is my *soog*. I should be the one to go to his help immediately and to support him in all his troubles. But if I did, would not the people of Zubiuŋ say that I was breaking faith? Would I not be rejecting the oath of the late (Yakɔra) Tɛndaana? And so I can do nothing.' 602 626 578

In this case Lɔɣani's position of influence and responsibility in the maximal lineage compels him to put the interests of lineage unity before those of his *soog*, and Gai's obduracy makes it more difficult for him to compromise. The case of Ɔndieso and Nɛna'ab, who are also *saarət* belonging to different segments of the same maximal lineage, is more usual. They 'borrow (*pɛŋ*)' things from each other on the same principle as do members of an expanded family. Normally, if a man borrows something from a member of a lineage segment other than his own, it is a debt that must be repaid in due course. Eight or nine years ago, Ɔndieso borrowed a goat from Nɛna'ab's son. No request was ever made for repayment; but about three years later, Nɛna'ab borrowed three shillings from Ɔndieso; and this was tacitly understood, by both, to have cancelled the debt of the goat. In 1936 an ancient quarrel between Ɔndieso's segment and Nɛna'ab's segment that had been dormant for years flared up again owing to a dispute over the inheritance of a widow. For some months the two segments were completely estranged, the more so as the head of Nɛna'ab's segment had taken the dispute to the chief and so brought the slur of publicity on the head of Ɔndieso's segment. Just then there was a death in Nɛna'ab's family; 602 578 [426]

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi, passim.

592 no foundation in fact. The climate, the kind of raw material which is plentifully at hand, the economic system, and the social organization 361 of the natives rather than the alleged lawlessness of former times, determine their mode of house-building. In any case, homesteads very often stand closer than fifty paces together, the distance at which a mediocre shot can hit a tree—though I have seen an arrow carry four times that distance.

A Taləŋ's home is his castle in the psychological rather than the 592 material sense. It is the centre and fount of his major interests, his 181 dominant purposes, his deepest emotional attachments, and his whole scheme of values; it is his shelter, his storehouse, the stage of his life's drama. The Tallensi, unlike many African peoples, have no age sets or initiation schools. A person grows up and receives his entire education at home. If he practises a craft, such as leatherwork, or is a diviner, his home is his workshop or consulting place.

As an adult, all his economic enterprise issues from his home and is devoted primarily to its upkeep. Unless he is one of the few *nouveaux riches* of to-day he keeps all his material possessions there, and houses all his livestock within its walls. His sex life, in maturity, is centred there. His children, the supreme object of his aspirations, are born and grow up in his home under his care and control. He worships his immediate forbears there. His personal destiny, past, present, and future, revolves about his home, its stages perpetuated in the many shrines and other ritual objects that are housed in it. He receives his friends and relatives at home, and dispenses hospitality there; and if he [461] has nothing to do would as lief recline under the shade tree at his own gateway as go making calls on others. Even the young men who like gallivanting about the markets spend much of their leisure at home.

The quintessence of his home, to a Taləŋ, resides in his children, 592 and above all his sons, the vehicles of his immortality. That is the 181 essential meaning of *mar yiri*, 'to have a house'. Ask any native what 626 happens to a man who does not adequately expiate a sacrilege such as ● murder. '*U yiri ŋmaarəme*—his house will fall to pieces,' is the answer, given with emphatic and solemn conviction, and often with circumstantial illustrations from experience or hearsay. A parent curses an insubordinate child, a chief or tendaana curses a clansman who has grossly insulted him, '*u ku nye yiri*—he will not see (i.e. have) a house', that is, he will die without offspring to perpetuate his line and to sacrifice to his spirit; and this is an extremely serious matter. It never fails to bring the culprit to heel with humble apologies. On the other hand, '*i na nye yiri*—you will have a house', is the most propitious blessing a diviner can convey to a man from his ancestor spirits.

592 Patrilocal residence and the tendency for the lineage to be localized 593 give a man's domestic life greater continuity than a woman's. His natal family and his conjugal family are both strung on the same

684 577 man does not even have sexual desire for a sister or a daughter. This is the standard, conscious, sexual attitude to a sister and it is in keeping with the conscious attitude about incest with a sister or daughter. Such an act is spoken of as tabooed (*kih*), but it is neither a crime nor a sin. It is simply despicable conduct that the culprits ought to be ashamed of as unworthy of grown persons. Even children talk of copulation with a sibling as something beneath contempt, though, in fact, it is common knowledge that up to the age of about 8 or 9 boys often try to have sexual intercourse with a small girl playmate in their play and for the most part playmates are close lineage siblings. Adults reprove the children if they discover them in this kind of play, but dismiss it as due to childish irresponsibility.[1] This, indeed, is the essence of the general attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter. It is disreputable, because it does not conform to the accepted standards of responsible adult conduct. Only in the case of incest with a full (*soog*) sister is there a feeling of horror. It is felt to be unlucky in a vague way. She is the person of the opposite sex with whom a man is most fully identified. What is more important, she perpetuates their mother's uterine line and therefore stands for the indestructibility of the unique bond between mother and child. Sexual intercourse with her would be almost like incest with one's own mother; and this feeling is extended to distant female uterine kin (*saarət*) as well.

Incest with a mother, a brother's wife, or a daughter-in-law is in a different class of reprehensible acts. It is a taboo for a man even to sit on the sleeping-mat of a woman related to him in any of these ways (and thus, we may presume, symbolically betraying a wish to seduce her). To have intercourse with her is a very grievous sin. It is utterly repugnant to Tale morality.

684 577 539 Incest with one's own mother the natives regard as a thing of such monstrous iniquity that it is ridiculous to conceive of anyone who is not mentally deranged committing it. Incest with a father's wife, other than one's own mother, or a brother's or son's wife is almost as heinous a sin and is regarded with little less horror; but it is known to happen sometimes. In one of the cases that occurred during my stay in Taleland, a man raped his father's elderly wife (his own dead mother's co-wife), whom he called '*ma-pit* (younger mother)'; in the other, a notoriously dissolute young man seduced his father's brother's wife, whom he would ● [626 533] also describe as '*ma-pit*'. Both were publicly derided in the songs sung during the dances of the Great Festivals. One of the songs about the second man went as follows:

> Badiemaal (his name) you who rape vaginas, Oh!
> Bakyɛlbanɔya (the woman) is a slut.
> Zimbil-Badiemaal is a dog.

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[1] Cf. my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, Memorandum XVII, International African Institute, 1938.

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By contrast, sex relations with the wife of a member of the same lineage or clan outside the range of the inner lineage is a wrong. It is not incest, but the most reprehensible form of adultery. It does not bear the same moral stigma as the corresponding form of incest, nor does it carry religious penalties for the adulterer. Unless the two men concerned have personal cognatic ties, which makes the offence more serious, they are related to each other only as members of related lineage segments. Their personal identity is submerged in the corporate unit, and the offence is interpreted as an injury to the husband's segment by the culprit's segment of a like order. What is a moral and ritual offence in the inner lineage shades over into a misdemeanour or jural injury in the wider lineage. The shift of evaluation is correlated with a change in the intensity though not in the kind of interests involved, and a widening of the span of the unit. The wider lineage has similar but less direct interests in a man's wife than his inner lineage; its unity and solidarity are of the same order as, but less intimate than that of the inner lineage. It has a jural and political unity and solidarity, primarily associated with formal sentiments of amity and mutual loyalty; whereas the cohesion of the inner lineage (based as it is on common economic interests, co-operation and consultation in the everyday affairs of life, contiguous residence, and minimal internal segmentation for jural purposes such as marriage arrangements with other lineages) is primarily moral, and associated with strong emotions of person-to-person amity and loyalty. Thus, beyond the range of the inner lineage, when the customary ritual reconciliation between the segment of the adulterer and the segment of the husband has been completed, the matter is over and done with so far as the public relations of the parties are concerned. No material compensation is made to the husband, and, in the absence of a judicial system, there is no one who can inflict a penalty on the adulterer. The wronged husband may harbour resentment against his wife's seducer; the magical danger inherent in their seeing each other if either is ill remains as a barrier between them; but the corporate unity of the lineage and clan to which they both belong is restored.

[626] Still, adultery with the wife of a clansman or of a member of a linked maximal lineage[1] (to which the same rules apply) creates dissension in the corporate body. It violates the principle that all men of the clan have a formally equal interest in the wife of a fellow member. It leaves behind rankling animosity that hinders united action. For these reasons it usually arouses an outburst of anger against the wrongdoer. Public opinion is a strong sanction against it therefore. Though cases are far from common, they occur more frequently than the corresponding form of incest. I was able to obtain details of a few cases that occurred immediately before and during my stay in Taleland. In one case the husband and his brothers were so outraged that they fell upon the offender in his

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

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Finally, the prohibition of sexual relations between father and daughter or brother and sister in the expanded family also links up with this complex. Tallensi say that if a man's daughter becomes pregnant before marriage he will hasten to marry her off as soon as possible, if she does not elope with a suitor of her own accord. A man once told me that people do this for fear that it might be said of them, 'Oh, so-and-so is not marrying his daughter off because he wants to keep her for a wife for himself'. I do not know if this statement accurately represents the way men feel the pressure of public opinion in cases of this sort; but it is an accurate indication of the feeling that a woman's procreative powers are out of place in her father's home and belong properly to her husband's home.

The Adjustment of Co-Wives to One Another

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We have still to consider one of the main problems of adjustment that face a woman in her husband's family, her relations with her co-wives (*nentaa*, pl. *nentaas*). These include both her husband's other wives and his brothers' wives. A woman refers to a co-wife as 'younger (or older) sibling of the same sex (*pit* or *bier*)', and addresses her by her clan sobriquet, e.g. Namooga. A woman's children describe her co-wives as 'mother' (*ma*), with the suffix *pit* or *bier* according as she is junior or senior to their own mother, and address her as 'mother of such-and-such a clan', e.g. *ma Namooga*.

Women do not, as a rule, object to their husbands having other wives as well. Indeed, it often happens that a monogamist's wife presses him to marry again so that there should be someone to share the work of the household with her, or even takes the initiative in finding another wife for him. It is quite common for women to bring younger clan sisters, or a brother's daughter, a sister's daughter, or a daughter of a mother's brother's lineage, to live with them with a view to their eventually marrying their husbands or husbands' brothers. From such marriages spring cognatically related matri-segments of a lineage, with a special link through their progenitrices in addition to their agnatic ties.

Through this custom of fetching in (*pie na*) a kinswoman-wife (*poγa-soog*) one often finds women related by kinship married into the same joint family or the same expanded family. But this is not a preferential marriage. It is due simply to the inertia of kinship. A woman who wants to bring a girl into her husband's house usually does so because she has need of someone to help her with the care of an infant or because she is ill or elderly and has no daughter or daughter-in-law to relieve her of the heaviest domestic tasks. And she looks naturally to her kinsfolk, upon whom she has claims by right of birth, to provide her with a suitable girl. Again, though the Tallensi do not like two full or half-sisters to marry the same man or to marry into the same joint family, it is not a taboo. A man who particularly likes his son-in-law and his people

commits a *faux pas*, or shows lack of understanding, or misbehaves 577
morally the comment is *u ka yam*, 'he has no sense'. The concept
is used to refer both to qualities of personality and to attributes of
behaviour. It is applied also in a genetic sense to describe the social
development of the child. A normal child between the ages of about 856
6 and 9 years is said to 'have sense at length'. It knows how to 577
behave in the social situations which confront it, whereas an infant of
3 or 4 years old does not. Yet a 4-year-old having learned bladder and
bowel control is said to 'have sense' as compared with a 2-year-old.
Similarly Nindɔyat, (17–18 years) telling me of his sweethearting,
waxed scornful about his own boyish friendship with girls two years
before. 'I still had no sense then', he explained. The concept, it
will be seen, is generally used relatively to a particular situation.

Children's attitude to education. In Tale society every pupil becomes 861
in some situations a teacher. At the one extreme there are specialized
ritual performances which some men do not learn till they are grey,
and at the other, the toddler leaning over to play with his nursling
brother is teaching the latter something about his environment. This
holds right through the age-scale. Considering also the unity of the
social sphere, one is not surprised to find that children have the same
attitudes about education as their elders. Hence children are rarely
unwilling to learn. As a rule, too, they are not ashamed of confessing
failure, ignorance, or inability to do or make something. Conversely,
children laugh good-humouredly at one another's deficiencies in skill
or knowledge, they never jeer. Ridicule is reserved for the correction [626]
of uncouth manners, disgraceful morals, or aberrant interests.

Fundamental educational relationships. It will be evident from the 861
preceding analysis that Tale children receive their education not only 571
from the adults but also from older children and adolescents who are
always transmitting what they know of the cultural heritage to their
younger brothers and sisters and cousins. From the age of 5 or 6 years
until they become fully absorbed into the economic system children
often go about in small groups. These groups[1] usually consist of

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King*, 1936, for ancillary information about these groups. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix, 1936, for an outline of their structural context.

183 ing the correct observances has many points in common with learning 867 skills, but there is a significant difference. When a child is learning a skill he has the test of objective achievement to evaluate his progress and to stimulate him to further effort; when he is learning how to behave properly the only test of attainment is the reaction of other people and his own sense of the adequacy or inadequacy of his conduct. ●[626] One can observe, in consequence, that both children and adults are very sensitive to ridicule of a lapse in manners or morals but are fairly indifferent to ridicule of poor skill. The contrast between observances and skills is evident when we compare the way in which a child learns to model clay figures, gradually perfecting his technique, with the 'all or none' way, associated sometimes with corporal punishment, in which he is taught to respect other people's property, or the way he is taught his totemic taboos.

867 Among the Tallensi, as in many other primitive societies, manners and morals are acquired almost as a by-product of the normal social relations between the growing child and the people who constitute his or her social space. The unity of the social sphere and the expectation of normal behaviour have a correspondingly greater influence than in the acquisition of skills and interests. But the critical factor is the tension inherent in the fundamental educational relationships, the authority of parent over child and of senior over junior.

861 In Tale ideology this is epitomized in the danger attributed to a 593 parent's resentment. If any one who has reached years of discretion behaves in such a way as to incur the resentment and hostility of a parent, some calamity will certainly befall him or her unless he comes formally to beg forgiveness and the injured parent ritually abjures his or her anger.[1] It very often happens that two children of about the same age and members of a single joint family are related as parent and child. They can be seen playing together amicably, squabbling at times, and working together. But when the 'child' is questioned about his playmate, he will say: *nzorumi, ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*, 'I fear (respect) him, because he begot me.' This is not merely a formula. Sinkawol (aged 23–5) used to order his 'father', Kyekambe (aged

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[1] The connexion between one particular aspect of Tale morality, their notion of incest, and the background of kinship has been discussed in my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

867 amused. When the child's mother tried to soothe her she first
856 struggled and struck at her, venting her chagrin on her mother. It was
861 fully ten minutes before her mother was able to quieten her by playing
with her and distracting her by making her a toy of wet clay. 'They will laugh at him (or her)' or 'His comrades will laugh at him' is the commonest motive alleged for correct behaviour. If you ask a boy of 6 or 7 why he no longer plays with the little girls he says, 'If I do my comrades will laugh at me'; and little girls say the same. Adolescents, talking about their sweethearts, who are usually clan
● [626] 'sisters', explain why they avoid the girls of their own section—
'because our comrades will find out and laugh at us'; and the adult is equally sensitive to public opinion.

183 *The total pattern and its genetic development.* We have seen that these categories of social behaviour are not learnt in isolation one from the other but as patterns in which interests, elements of skill, and observances are combined. The Tale housewife, going several miles into the bush to collect firewood, is using knowledge of the bush tracks and of the best places for firewood acquired over a period of years; but she is impelled also by the sense of duty to her family and her own self-esteem. The Tale farmer's devotion to his agricultural pursuits is due to a passionate interest in land and crops and to a sense of moral responsibility towards his family and his ancestor spirits. His skill is but one of the factors that affect his general efficiency.

183 These total patterns which constitute the texture of Tale cultural
867 behaviour are not built up bit by bit, by addition, during the course
156 of a child's life. They are present as *schemas*[1] from the beginning.
My observations suggest that the course of development is somewhat as follows: at first the child acquires a well-defined interest associated with a postural diagram of the total pattern. The postural diagram is, as it were, a contour map, extremely simplified and crude but comprehending the essential elements and relations of the full pattern. Further experience strengthens and amplifies the interest at the same time as it causes the details of the postural diagram to be filled out, making it more and more adaptable and controllable, producing more

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[1] I have taken this concept from Prof. F. C. Bartlett's *Remembering*, pp. 199 ff., though its bald application here hardly does justice to the significance given to it by Prof. Bartlett, and to its value for an understanding of primitive education.

The principal disputes, however, concern the tribute due to the owner of the pool. 226
Morally his rights are beyond question and are never denied. But except for members 578
of the owner's immediate family, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute, 651
a moral obligation of this sort counts for nothing in practice without effective sanctions. 602
Hence the owner sees to it that members of his family are dispersed amongst the crowd in the water. These young men keep a sharp watch and do not hesitate to take by force the fish which they regard as their rightful tribute. The owner himself often enters the pool to assist in the police work. Those who contest the confiscation of their fish do so in vain. Not only will public opinion not support them, but the owner's "policemen" would not hesitate to give them a drubbing. A maternal kinsman, sister's son, or in-law relation of the owner is, however, allowed to keep his first fish, unless his catch is large, in virtue of kinship. This is a concession which the owner might also make to his personal friends, and not a right.

One obligation, by contrast, is never evaded. Young crocodiles are sometimes caught, 651
and the owner of the fetish is entitled to the hind legs and tail of every crocodile caught. 226
This is the perquisite of his *bayar* one part of which, the hoe shaft, will be covered with
the skin of a crocodile tail thus delivered to him. Not only is it very difficult to conceal 626
the capture of a crocodile, but the supernatural penalties of evasion—certain injury from a crocodile in a future fishing expedition being the least of them—dare not be risked.

Fishing continues thus from about 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m., or in a well stocked pool, 226
to 5 p.m. The exodus commences sporadically. People who had earlier in the day been cutting hoe shafts or rafters, collecting firewood, or medicinal herbs, come out first to complete these tasks. Finally, when only a few remain in the pool, the owner of the fetish goes down to pull up his *bayar*. As he does this, he shouts to those remaining to come out. The removal of the axe shaft is the signal that the fishing is over.

The catch in such expeditions varies greatly. The tribute received by the owner of the pool may be taken as a rough index of the catch. In the three expeditions in which I participated the owner's tribute varied from six to fifteen medium and large fish. The last pool was exceptionally prolific and was fished on two successive days. I estimated the number of men—men only fished on the first day—at about four hundred; on this occasion the catch was declared to be enormous, surpassing all expectations. Few people left empty handed. But on the other hand, nobody had more than four medium or large fish, which would be taken home and divided up within each man's immediate family. The best proof of the paucity of the catch relative to the population fishing and of the valuation of fish as a delicacy rather than as an addition to the food supply was that throughout the fishing month fish caught on these expeditions never appeared for sale at the market.

Clearly too, communal fishing does not benefit the owner of the pool much materially. 226
However large his tribute, the net gain to himself is small since he distributes much of 651
it to others—men of rank and elders who attend the fishing as an expression of clan loyalty

513 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed
178 aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these
minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

The Ten'dan': Among the Talense an investigation into the former
793 status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the
answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs;
783 this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land
●627 from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die,
except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*tey*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man tey*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

782 If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a
783 cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person,
he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
●[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku* ‡ have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
629 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

‡ [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike,
even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622 624 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
793 section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders,
but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

587 When, some forty years ago, a Tongo man married a Zoo widow and his
x618 son was shot dead in revenge by a Zoo man, the Chief of Tongo forbade
a raid of retaliation. It was, my informants said, a just vengeance since
[682] 'we don't marry the widows of Zoo people'.

Again, it would be a serious breach of solidarity for a member of one of
x618 the sub-clans to abduct the wife of a member of any other, and I have
● 627 never heard of such a case. Warfare between them is inconceivable, so the injured group would have to rely upon moral pressure through the chief and elders of the offender's community. But these measures would undoubtedly succeed, even in these days when rebellious young men can flee to foreign lands.

x618 This is likewise the widest extension of a restriction which holds with
587 greatest force for the segments of a maximal lineage belonging to the same sub-clan, e.g. for the segments of Tongo *inter se*. In a lesser degree it applies also to ex-wives. A man who marries the former wife of another, even if the marriage was severed for just and accepted reasons, incurs the hostility of the first husband's entire lineage both towards himself personally and towards his clansmen as a group. Reprisals will be taken when an opportunity occurs. When the parties are clansmen, feelings about such acts become very bitter, and the more so the closer the tie. Marriages of this kind take place from time to time, producing conflicts and reprisals but not disruption of clanship ties.

x618 Another proof of kinship (*mabiirət*) usually cited by the natives is that
721 warfare between the four sub-clans was forbidden. They were allies in war in the old days. They did not all come to one another's help, nor were they each other's sole allies. But they could call upon one another's assistance in the name of kinship. The recollections of the oldest men go back no farther than the time of their grandparents, four or five generations ago. They tell of ancient fights in which Tongo, Sie, and Yaməlɔg supported one another; but Biuk, it seems, maintained an isolationist policy in the wars and feuds of its Tale kinsmen. The greatest war still remembered in tale and anecdote occurred forty or fifty years ago. Yaməlɔg became involved in it; and when Ba'ari raised the war-cry against Yaməlɔg, Sie and Tongo attacked Ba'ari on the flanks.

Mosuor biis: a Maximal Lineage

x618 These four branches of Mosuor's agnatic posterity (*tu'u*) constitute what appears to be a single, dispersed clan—the only clan of this type in Taleland; more accurately, it is a maximal lineage—the most inclusive agnatic lineage to which any descendant of Mosuor in the male line (i.e. any member of the four branches) can belong. In the eyes of the natives an important qualification is that the four branches are of equal status though graded in seniority. Tongo is the most senior because it remained in possession of the original home of the clan—'*ti waabi daboog*, the ancient home-site of all of us', they say—and has retained the custody of Mosuor's grave and *bɔyar*, the shrine which symbolizes the perpetuity,
x618 identity, and common ancestry of the entire maximal lineage. Yaməlɔg,
Sie, and Biuk follow in that order; but they no longer participate in
769 sacrifices to Mosuor. Each of them has its own ancestral *bɔyar*, enshrining

577 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with
784 non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

613 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔyar*)
428 of the founding ancestor of Bɔyada biis at Tongo was a case in point.
627 Saŋgbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'aləm, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'aləm, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔyar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋgbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔyada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'aləm, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*mieŋ*), and the crocodile (*baŋ*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pɛhug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋgbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Puliebər yidem, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'aləm and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋgbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle.
[787] A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

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No one was surprised when Tinta'alɔm gained the verdict. Thus the 613 ancestors themselves vouched for the legitimate status of Yidaan biis. [787]

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Other Namoo Clans

The most important of the Namoo clans that come within the political 618 x orbit of Tongo, though not related to it by ties of clanship, is the contiguous 166 clan of Zoo. A number of Tongo families live on Zoo land, which was not so densely populated as Tongo 50 or 60 years ago and could therefore accommodate some of its overflow population. In the same way, a number of Zoo families have overflowed into the neighbouring locality of Gbambee, where they live among Tongo people. These ecological adjustments are facilitated, though not solely determined, by the structural ties between Zoo and Tongo, and by the fact that both are Namoo settlements. Ten out of the thirty-nine homesteads at Zoo belong to Tongo people, and they are members of all but one of the major segments of Tongo. By contrast, Tongo people are reluctant to move out to vacant parts of Zubiuŋ, where the people, though their neighbours and cognatic kinsfolk, are Talis in their ritual beliefs and practices. In recent years only one Tongo man has done this as a temporary measure.

The people of Zoo (Zoodɛm) comprise two maximal lineages. One of 618 x these, Zoo proper, is a maximal lineage of three segments, to one of which is attached a 'sister's son's' lineage. Their founding ancestor, Yikpɛmdaan, is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*) of Mosuor, whom he accompanied from Mampurugu. As Zoodɛm marry any of the descendants of Mosuor, the fiction of original kinship (*mabiirət*) here emphasizes the cultural and political solidarity of the two groups, not a genealogical connexion.

Living side by side with Zoodɛm proper (Yikpɛmdaan biis) is another maximal lineage known as Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm. These two maximal lineages exclude one another from the cults of their respective founding ancestors and from the ritual observances connected with them. Indeed, Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm *are affiliated to the Talis by ritual observance and cult.* Nevertheless, Zoodɛm proper and Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm have all the ties of clanship that hold between constituent lineages of the same clan who consider themselves to be *sunzɔp*. The explanation they give is that 'it is because we live together side by side (*tin kab ziin ni taaba la zugu*)'. Here clanship is attributed to local coalescence. These clanship ties are shown in all ceremonial matters that concern either of the lineages as well as in their co-operative enterprises. Though they do not take part in the esoteric ritual of one another's funeral ceremonies, they act as *sunzɔp* to one another in the public and exoteric phases of the ceremonies. If a party of Zoodɛm proper set out to pay their respects to a deceased relative-in-law, they will always be supported by some young men from Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm; and if a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is summoned to take a working party to help his father-in-law, he will always be accompanied by a few young men of the other lineage.

Zoo-Yiraaŋ is linked by ties of clanship to one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ.[1] Zoodɛm proper have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ or with any other clan. Yet they are often described as 'our

[1] See ch. VI.

*618 tɛndaanaship and in other religious cults. Each segment has its own tɛndaana, the Gbizug tɛndaana being the senior of the two, and in addition the Gbeogdɛm have the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, like Zubiuŋ and the Hill Talis, whereas the Gbizugdɛm do not participate in this cult. This cleavage comes into operation also in the political and jural relations of the two segments, so that in very many situations Gbeog emerges as an independent settlement.

Both segments have ties of clanship with Soog, the Talis clan sandwiched between Tongo and Wakii. But there is an additional bond between Gbeog and Soog, which is not shared by Gbizug, for one-half of Gbeog is associated with Soog in a common cult of an External *Bɔyar*, in the same way as the three sections of Zubiuŋ are associated in the cult of their External *Bɔyar*, Duunkpaləg. The other half of Gbeog has a separate External *Bɔyar*. Gbizug has ties of clanship also with Degal, the Tɛnzugu clan, in virtue of the alleged 'brotherhood' of the four primordial tɛndaanas. Yet Wakii and Ka'ar, the clans sprung from the other two primordial tɛndaanas, are merely the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of Gbizug, though both, and especially Wakii, have closer spatial, jural, and ritual relations with it than Degal has.

[608] Soogdɛm have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ, but regard them as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. They are linked by a ritual relationship which comes into effect whenever a Zubiuŋ tɛndaana dies. There was for a long time an estrangement between the two clans, because some years ago a Zubiuŋ youth married the ex-wife of a Soog man. A ceremonial reconciliation
●[627] under somewhat dramatic circumstances took place recently when ritual necessity compelled the elders of the offender's lineage to send a deputation to beg the pardon of the Soog elders. Apart from this intermittent and very limited ritual collaboration, the clanship-by-courtesy of Soog and Zubiuŋ is very weak. One of the standing jokes in Zubiuŋ concerned two
[735] of the lineage heads of Soog. These two old men are notoriously poor through bodily infirmity, and therefore make use of every opportunity of getting free food or drink. Thus, whenever there is a funeral at Zubiuŋ they appear as representatives of their clan to claim their share of beer and meat as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy; but Zubiuŋdɛm have long ceased to go to Soog funerals.

From Ba'ari the mesh of clan linkages continues across the dialectal boundary with the Gɔrisi. Ba'at-Sakpar has clanship ties with Sanaab biis, a section of Bɔləga. 'They are our kinsmen', said the Ba'at-Sakpar tɛndaana-elect, 'even though they have become Gɔrisi.' Another Bɔləga section are similarly related to Ba'at-Lakum yiri. Ba'at-Guŋ, on the other hand, have ties of clanship with Tamboog on Tɛnzugu, and Ba'at-Dun biis have ties of clanship with Samiit on Tɛnzugu. Yayazuor and Gbee are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy to all sections of Ba'ari.

The internal constitution of Ba'ari is interesting, in that the whole clan is grouped around Ba'at-Sakpar. Thus, Ba'at-Lakum yiri has the status of an attached lineage of Sakpar. Their founding ancestor was said to have been a sororal nephew of Sakpar, begotten by a Zubiuŋ man—hence also their ties with Zubiuŋ; and Ba'at-Guŋ is similarly an attached lineage of Lakum yiri. Being related to Sakpar by a remove, Guŋ is allowed to

other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos 784 are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in 184 many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans, no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to violate (*galəm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence. It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu ɔbət*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals [262 prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages, 853] when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness, not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners 784 in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But 771 like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage 184 totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example, call a totem a sacred object (*bayər*). The emphasis is on the avoidance, the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, 784 though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch 184 these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them; for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their 627● congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear 184 an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in 618x this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath, uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence,

627 I was told. I have never heard it used by anybody, and this itself shows
184 how seriously it is taken.

x618 The oath by the totem is not quite so serious a matter, though it could not be uttered with impunity. The formula is: '*Pakur ni nnuoni*—the tortoise and inside my mouth', if the totemic animal is the tortoise, or, in free translation: 'By the tortoise which I may not eat.' This oath might be used in trivial circumstances. Thus, if a man were wrongly accused of adultery he might swear by his father. But if he were accused of having appropriated something belonging to a friend or relative without permission, though admittedly without intending to steal it, he would swear to his innocence with an oath by his totem. It is the sort of oath, too, informants said, that one might use to assert one's truthfulness in an argument. A person who swears falsely by his totem would decline in health and begin to waste away (*burəm*), but he could probably be saved by atoning sacrifices. A person who swears one of the greater oaths, including the oath by one's father, falsely, will probably die. That is how the natives distinguish the degrees of sacredness they attach to these oaths. Again, I have never heard a totemic oath used, but I have discussed the matter with many people, both young and old, and their views are unanimous. Tallensi are reluctant to swear an oath except in an issue of real importance, and then they resort to the most solemn oath that is appropriate in the situation.

784 There is nothing secret about these totemic avoidances. Knowledge of them is public and widespread, though not always accurate where the totems of other clans than one's own are concerned. People become acquainted with the totemic avoidances of other clans through their ties of extra-clan kinship, and women spread the knowledge of the totemic avoidances of their paternal clans among the clans into which they marry. An amusing instance of the way in which this knowledge spreads occurred with one of my own boys. He was a Namoo, and one day bought a live water-tortoise from a Tɛnzugu youth. This is a great delicacy, but, as he told me afterwards, the cooking of it cost him almost more trouble than it was worth. For he had to cook it himself, out of doors in a borrowed pot, because his wife, a Tɛnzugu woman, was prohibited from eating this animal and refused to let him contaminate her kitchen or her cooking utensils with it.

It is never necessary for Tallensi to ask one another what their totemic avoidances are. When a person is required, for ritual reasons, to observe the taboos of another clan, the people of that clan who come to perform the rites that impose these taboos on him tell him about them. But one can ask a person, 'What do you (i.e. such and such a clan or lineage) taboo? (*ya kiha lani*)', or, 'What do you swear by? (*ya pɔta lani*)', in order to ascertain a group's totemic avoidances.

784 The animals most widely avoided among the Talis are the tortoise
184 (*pakur*) and the water tortoise (*mieŋ*). Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and most of the
x618 Hill clans taboo both these animals. But there are several exceptions. None of the clans on the Degal side of the Hills keep these avoidances, nor do the people of Tamboog, and only the senior maximal lineage of the three constituent lineages of Soog has them. The people of Degal,

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping [illegible] determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them
as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

774 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

769 778 881 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order bequeathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 794 881 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 627 881 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial) fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 771 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—*i.e.* line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ŋmaarəme*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

●627 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against
682 a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide
577 may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or
682 between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of
471 a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for
[461] a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed
431 or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*) —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tendaana any the less a chief or tendaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627 ●
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tendaana has, in addition, the sanction of the
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 769
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody 182
of the lineage *bɔγar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔγar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔγar* is 182
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes 782
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of
daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same
as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, but all who participate feel them to
be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and
fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing
out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads
that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The
religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion
and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief
representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the
ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is
concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage
head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual
or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted
to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage),
and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar
situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he
receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔyar* of his
medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as
well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a
new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of
a sacrifice to the *bɔyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of
being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat
in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the
responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's*
duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their
goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
627

of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head
of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders,
makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit
himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the
head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal
lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage.
It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are
performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of interlineage
jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not,
the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway.
This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is
one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of
the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted
at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—
cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting 224
out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be
faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service
for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every
animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and 587
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and
the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits
adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be
informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage
of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in
theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's
nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right
generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his
medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late
husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that
lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The
right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head
of her nucleur lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

have no clear notion of witchcraft, no detailed theories of its mode of 754
operation, and no institutionalized means of combating or sterilizing it.
A witch (*sɔi*) is supposed to fly about (*u ayarəme*) at night in the guise
of a ball of fire; she—for the Tallensi tend to think of a witch as a
woman, though they say that men may be witches too—is supposed to
be clairvoyant, to 'see (*nye*)' hidden things. She can recognize fellow
witches, foresee death coming to a particular person, prophesy an epidemic,
and so forth; she may be beneficent, able to impart luck to a
person in a mysterious way, or maleficent, killing people by eating (*ɔb*)
their souls (*sii*). This is the sum of Tale ideas about the nature of witches.
Actually, these qualities make up what is mainly an imaginary stereotype.
One never hears of particular individuals being credited with the
socially useful qualities or being suspected of possessing the anti-social
qualities attributed to witches. Witchcraft is only attributed to people
ex post facto, when an event occurs for which an explanation in terms of
witchcraft is sought.

Witchcraft is something on the fringe of Tale mystical thought and 754
ritual values. I have more than once heard elders of the most conser-
vative way of thinking, to whom the native scheme of ritual values is the 771
most important thing in life, declare roundly that there is no such thing
as a witch. Though the Tallensi do not put it into clear words, they
obviously feel that the idea of witchcraft is a mixture of superstition
and folk-lore, and not a part of the system of mystical and ritual values
that really matters for the conduct of life. Of course, superstition and
folk-lore are not wholly negligible. Circumstances occur, now and then,
in which people fall back on the idea of a witch's occult aggression in
order to cope with anxieties and frustrations that are normally neutralized
through the agency of the ancestor cult; and then a particular person
may be accused of being a witch. Significantly, in every case that has
come to my notice, some dating back twenty or thirty years and all of
them together numbering less than ten, the accused has been a woman.
Most accusations of this sort are in the first instance made by women [595]
against co-wives, and are symptomatic of the tensions inherent in the
joint family.

An accusation of being a witch is the private affair of the accused's 754
husband and his maximal lineage, her paternal family, and those of her 602
saarət who are in touch with her. In former days, if the accusation was
confirmed by a diviner, the accused might insist on undergoing the [787]
arrow ordeal (*kuh sɔ-peema*), or be compelled to do so by her husband's
lineage and her *saarət* in order to prove her innocence. She had to [627]
stab herself with a poisoned arrow in public at the same time as a branch
of a *keŋkaŋ* (Ficus) tree was plucked; and if she were guilty, it was
believed that she would die before the branch withered. But it is
characteristic of the Tale attitude to witches that a person who died
thus was accorded a proper funeral—unlike, for example, a person who

754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive
by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following
case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moyaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp. His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill
with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
● 627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
787 reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt. There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence. The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock (*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant, as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the theme of one of the dance songs of the Gɔlib Festival. 'Wherever she goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public
ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

754 The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
[771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms
consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master 778 of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the *zɔŋ* of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors, is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr* of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11 and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for [782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins 837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and ●627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say, transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely 778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*. She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

342 Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to 343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the *sapak*. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and 6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental [351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly 181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that 592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this, life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's
lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
602 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
●627 for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle
with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It
is not until the formal placation gift (*sɛndaan*) is sent to the girl's father
with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not
until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace
appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

675 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument
by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
583 marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights
over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from
her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role
as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to
her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
576 maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her
husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young
man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon
him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan.
The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
574 desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
593 parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority.
Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her
parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is
not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for
her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return
to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young
wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as
we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion
which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two,
though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives
[837] run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for
the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against
the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes,
for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if
she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty
to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law,
his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side
with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of
marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established
relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

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which, it is tacitly understood, his wife will one day make good. Often such debts between spouses are straightened out by mutual borrowings, tacitly understood to cancel one another. Very often, however, a man has to cajole his wife with definite promises to repay before she will lend him her property. But the natives are emphatic about one point: that all such transactions belong to the give and take of marital co-operation and solidarity. It is one of the ways in which a woman stands by her husband and a man by his wife.

The Husband's Authority over his Wife

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As might well be expected, these rights and duties of spouse to spouse do not rest on anything in the nature of a formal compact. There is no jural machinery or sanction by means of which a husband or wife can be compelled to perform his or her duties to his or her partner. A man can, and sometimes does, chastise his wife for incorrigible laziness, disobedience, or a misdemeanour detrimental to the unity of the family. He does it usually in a fit of anger or exasperation, as one would strike a child, and not as a deliberate punishment. For though Tallensi think that such disciplinary measures are right and necessary sometimes (women being kittle cattle, who will not always listen to reason), they consider them to be a regrettable and undignified necessity not entirely in keeping with the relationship of marriage, and at bottom repugnant to a self-respecting man. That is why when a quarrel between husband and wife ends in blows, neighbours hearing the commotion rush in to separate the pair and calm the enraged husband. 'I often scold my wives', said a Tale friend to me, after a heated argument with one of them, 'but I have never, as I sit here, lifted a hand to them. How could I thrash my wife, seeing that she gave up her father and her mother to come and marry me?' To beat a wife, in short, shows a poor appreciation of her.

Women admit the right of a man to strike his wife, and they see it as a feature of the authority over her conferred on him by marriage. But in fact, cases of wife-beating are far from common. Judging by the cases I have heard of, they are least likely to occur at the two extremes of the marriage cycle. A young man fears that he may lose his wife if he beats her; an older man, as the statement quoted above shows, with a wife of long standing, feels that it is incompatible with their mutual trust and comradeship.

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A woman will not, as a rule, bear a grudge for blows struck under provocation. But if she is excessively, or, in her opinion, unjustifiably thrashed, she will run away from her husband. She may go off with another man; or she may return to her father or brother, who, if he is a self-respecting man, will take her part and refuse to give her up until her husband apologizes and promises better behaviour in future. In any case, it is a troublesome affair for the husband. It is worth noting, also, that in her conjugal family only a woman's husband has the right

593 627 [606] to strike her. Her parents-in-law, for instance, despite their authority over her, would not do so. If anything, they would try to restrain their son from beating her. Only her husband has that combination of authority and intimacy in relation to her which permits the use of physical force upon her.

593 461 578 But flight is not the only weapon a woman has in order to maintain her rights and privileges in her conjugal family. Once she is fairly free from the leading strings of her mother-in-law, she is the mistress of her time and energies. It is an accepted axiom of married life, which no man questions, that a wife is free to dispose of her time as she pleases, provided she does not hamper the essential economic activities of the household, or neglect her children, or remain away from home for unwarrantable periods or at times—e.g. during the Great Festivals—when all the members of the family should be together. The routine of domestic tasks, over which men have no control, is a strong line of defence against the interference of men in their wives' disposal of their time. But differences of opinion on this matter are a common cause of squabbles between husband and wife. A young woman dresses up to go to market; her husband objects, saying that other men will be paying court to her there, or that the children will be left hungry all day; she insists; and a heated argument ensues. Nine times out of ten the woman has her way. Occasionally the husband succeeds in stopping her, by persuasion or by force. It is only at sowing or harvest time, or when, for instance, preparations for an important ceremony are in hand, that a man has full control over his wife's time.

At all times a wife's freedom to arrange her work and her leisure as best suits her may subject her husband to inconvenience. If, at the end of the day, she is too preoccupied or too tired to cook, he can but grumble and go hungry. And if he annoys her she can make a point of being too busy to attend to some want of his or too tired to cook the evening meal. This, men say frankly, is one of the strongest arguments in favour of keeping on good terms with one's wife.

593 581 Tallensi regard these utilitarian rights and duties, services and attentions of husband and wife towards each other as a most important feature of marriage. But it is clear that they do not constitute the unique relationship that distinguishes the marriage tie from other social ties of the Tallensi. Thus a woman performs much the same utilitarian services as daughter in her natal home, and as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law in her conjugal home. They are but a part of the whole configuration of co-operation, mutual help, reciprocal services, etiquette, and mutual tolerance that keep the wheels of family life running smoothly. And it is clear, also, that they imply the existence of common interests that create a sense of mutual moral obligation.

This underlying bond of mutual moral obligation is the basic sanction of reciprocity and co-operation in the domestic family. In the case of

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to 837
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence 577
compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the
ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrəg samər*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets
a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by
mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual
relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It
is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*daɣət*), mystical defilement. It may bring
sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf,
for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted
before, adultery (*pəɣambɔən*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with
revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed
something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her
husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be
admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill
Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔɣar,[1] the
supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous
third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a
confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few 765
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject
to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver
sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children
and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose
wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour
is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual
wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest 736
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her children 602
from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives.
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her 595
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past. So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*) and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been compelled 627
to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

595 paternal kin and more strongly by her uterine kin (*saarət*), insist on
●627 doing so. If she survived, she and her children and other *soog* kin would
never forgive her accuser. There would be chronic friction in the family.
178 If she died, her children and other *soog* kin would still resent the imputa-
578 tion against them and would have a lifelong grievance against her accuser
and her children. The accuser would in any case bear the ritual blame,
and would be in danger of mystical retribution. Nowadays, to judge by
one case that came to my notice, the accused woman and her kin insist on
an oath by the *bɔɣar*, usually the *bɔɣar* of the husband's medial lineage.
Both women swear to the justice of their case before the *bɔɣar*, and the
one who suffers a serious misfortune soonest—a misfortune such as
grave sickness or death in her own *dug* of the house—is deemed to be
in the wrong. Whatever the outcome, it amounts to one member of the
family invoking the *bɔɣar* which watches over the welfare of the whole
group to injure another member of the unit; and this is a sacrilege, even
if it is done in the name of justice. It must be atoned for by sacrifices to
which both women and their husband (or husbands) have to contribute.
But the *bɔɣar* is never wholly appeased; it may still bring misfortune on
the family for the sacrilege. And, of course, both women and their *soog*
kin might continue to harbour resentment. An accusation of witchcraft,
itself the symptom of the conflicts latent in the structure of the poly-
gamous family, breeds endless discord.

595 But it must be emphasized that such cases are rare. For the most part
women rub along pretty well with their co-wives. In this the senior wife
(*pɔɣakpeem*)—seniority being reckoned according to order of marriage—
may exercise a great deal of influence, especially if, as is likely, she is
older than the others. Though she has no disciplinary authority over her
younger co-wives, she has considerable moral authority over them. As
her husband's closest confidante among his wives she knows all the
affairs of the family and has its interests close at heart. She stands for
the common allegiance of the wives to their husband and the family. A
wise and tactful senior wife will keep an eye on the household economy
and on the children without seeming to interfere with the liberty of her
younger co-wives. Looking up to her with respect and affection, her
younger co-wives will accept advice and guidance from her that does
much to make the routine of family life smooth and pleasant. The
fiction that she is the real mistress of the house (*dugdaana*) and that all
the children 'belong' to her in a special sense gives her a formal status
that makes this easier. If a suitor calls to see a girl of the family he must
pay his respects to the senior wife before he goes to greet the girl's own
[431] mother. If a woman's son-in-law sends her gifts of sweet potatoes,
yams, and guinea-fowls at the time of the Harvest Festival, she will call
all her co-wives proudly to see the gifts, and will distribute some of the
tubers among them; but in addition the senior wife will receive a guinea-
fowl as a mark of special honour. In such ways is the mistress of the

577 But if the father's brother does not take the initiative of pointing out to
his 'son' that he would be better off on his own, the latter cannot do so.
593 It would be like suggesting that his proxy father is not treating him as
fairly as his own father. The usual course of events is that something
goes wrong with the young man's affairs. It may be a trivial mishap,
such as a hen being caught by a hyena, or something more serious, such
as the sickness of wife or child. The young man goes with his proxy
father to consult a diviner; and the diviner declares that the trouble was
caused by the young man's own father, because the young man has not
yet built his own homestead. The dead father lets it be known that he
wants to go directly to his son's own house to accept sacrifices and not
have to go to his brother's house as a mere guest. Thus the dictates of
filial piety are subtly and doubly fulfilled.

577 Filial piety, as these examples show, is the psychological bridge
between the relations of parents and children in life and in the ritual
593 relationships of the living with the ancestors. All the ancestors are
769 projections of the parents, different manifestations of the images Tale
culture draws of certain aspects of the parents that do not appear in
conventional, overt behaviour. This is clear, also, from the element of
reverence that enters into the sentiment of filial piety.

Siŋ's father and Na'abzɔ were the sons of two brothers. When Siŋ's
577 father died, Na'abzɔ married his widow and took charge of the children.
But Na'abzɔ is a notoriously cantankerous person. So Siŋ took his
593 younger brothers and mother and set up in his own homestead as soon
as he was old enough. In jural and ritual matters, however, Na'abzɔ
is still his 'father'. Passing Siŋ's house one day with an elder I heard
sounds of violent quarrelling between him and Na'abzɔ. Na'abzɔ stood
on the flat roof of a room in his house hurling abuse at Siŋ, who replied
angrily, but politely, from his gateway 50 yards away. My companion
and I turned aside to talk to Siŋ. It appeared that Na'abzɔ had as usual
been nagging Siŋ and his brothers unreasonably. He demanded that
they should leave their own farm-work to come and hoe his farm. When
Siŋ asked for his help, which was indispensable, in an important ritual
matter, he had refused out of petty spite; and now he had upset Siŋ's
sister's marriage by arbitrary and inconsiderate demands on her husband.
I asked Siŋ, 'Why don't you take hold of Na'abzɔ and thrash him? That
should stop him.' He looked at me in dismay and said, 'No, no. I
couldn't do that. It is forbidden. He is my father. He begot me.' My
companion, almost as shocked, chimed in, 'No, you can't strike your
father, you can't strike your mother. They have borne (*dɔɣa*) you. He
who strikes his father or his mother is a good-for-nothing.' He went on
to say that everybody knew what sort of a person Na'abzɔ was, but Siŋ
577 must be patient. It would all come right. For would not Na'abzɔ die
593 one day and Siŋ inherit all his property? Similar comments were made
627 by everybody I met about Deŋkumis's brother's son, Dmaarəb. The

young man was a lazy spendthrift and there was constant trouble 577
between the two. One day Deŋkumis forcibly stopped him from beating
his wife and he turned and struck Deŋkumis. There was an uproar, for 593
other men of the lineage set upon Dmaarəb with sticks and fists. Next 627
day Deŋkumis, followed by all the men of his lineage segment, dragged
the delinquent to the chief. As it was a *dugni yɛl*, an affair of the inner
lineage, the chief dealt with it as head of the clan. Trembling with anger
and contempt he read the youth an excoriating homily on how a person
ought to behave to his parents. Deŋkumis, ended the chief, had been
too patient with the worthless scamp just because he was his brother's
son. Let him beware. Another action of this kind, and Deŋkumis
would be commanded to throw him out of his house.

Another story deserves recording as an example of the working of 577
filial piety. Kuŋaaŋba was born when his father was an old man. At 593
that time a famine swept the country. A distant clansman of his father
seized his mother and her babe to sell them into slavery and recoup [567]
himself for a debt owed to him by Kuŋaaŋba's father. But the woman
managed to escape. When the famine was over she returned home to find her husband dead and his brother Gəlime at the head of the household. Gəlime, however, disregarding the rule that whoever inherits a man's property and status must take over his duties and liabilities, at first refused to have her back. She was like a corpse that had come to life again, he said. But his own wife, with an independence of spirit that Tale women often show, threatened to leave him if he did not take her co-wife and the child back, so he gave in. In due course Kuŋaaŋba's mother remarried one of her late husband's classificatory brothers, under whose care the boy grew up. Jurally and ritually Gəlime remained his 'father'. Then Kuŋaaŋba went to work for the white man at Kumasi. He returned with a quantity of clothes, a bag of salt, and three or four pounds in cash. He found Gəlime, now an old man in decline, left almost destitute, as his own sons, whom he had always treated with severity, had both run away to the Colony. Kuŋaaŋba at once took the old man to his own house. He gave him a cloth to wear, bought a supply of grain for him, and left him some money when he himself departed for another spell of work abroad. Thereafter Kuŋaaŋba took care of Gəlime as if he were his own father until the end of his life. 'For', said Kuŋaaŋba, as he concluded his simple tale, 'was he not my father? What did it matter that he had treated me badly in my childhood, since I am still alive and healthy? I couldn't leave my father to die of starvation just because his own sons were wastrels.' I asked Kuŋaaŋba if Gəlime had ever expressed remorse for having neglected his duty to him in his childhood. 'No,' was the answer, 'he would not do that. He would keep it to himself but his heart would be sore (*u suh ndum*). And now that he is dead he will (as a spirit) do good to me.' It was true, commented an elder who had listened to the story; a son who had

for him by the lineage of the ancestress who has demanded the erection 604
of the shrine. The diviner-to-be is himself a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' or
'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' of the men who come to perform the ceremony of 778
establishing the shrine. But in addition, a member of his clan who is
also an *ahəŋ* of the visitors' clan is deputed to act as intermediary. He
goes out to meet the visitors when they approach and escorts them to
the homestead of the diviner-to-be; and he acts as spokesman for the
latter throughout the ceremony. Thus he formally 'shows' (*paal*) the
visitors the beer and the fowls and the goat that have been provided for
the ceremony and acts as mediator if there is a disagreement about the
amount or quality of these provisions. In the ritual situations that make
up the ceremony the visitors sit together in a group and the diviner-to-be
and his clansmen sit together in a group. Between the two groups sits
the selected *ahəŋ*. As is customary in all such situations, the two parties
do not address one another directly. They address the intermediary,
who 'passes on (*zaŋ ti*)' what was said to the other party.

Similarly, if a dispute occurs between segments of different clans, for 604
instance over the abduction of a wife, the injured group might send one
of their members who is a 'sister's son' of the abductor's clan, with a 627
message of protest and a demand for the return of the wife. An *ahəŋ* is
the appropriate person to act as go-between in negotiations between
different clans. In the system of clanship ties, it will be remembered,
intercalary lineages are sometimes credited with being the agnates of
one clan and the 'sister's sons' of the other.[1]

As has been suggested, Tallensi maintain that an *ahəŋ* acting as an 604
intermediary in inter-clan transactions is bound to be equally faithful to
both parties. This does not mean that an *ahəŋ* is always equally loyal in 613
sentiment to both his patrilineal and his matrilateral—especially his
immediate maternal—kin. Tallensi say that when there is a clash of
interests a man will always side with his patrilineal kin while endeavouring,
if possible, to refrain from bringing harm on his maternal kin. The
behaviour of an *ahəŋ* in war between his and his mother's brother's clan
is a case in point.

But there is a belief which suggests that the loyalty of an *ahəŋ* to his 604
mother's brother's lineage may, in some circumstances, outweigh his
loyalty to his own clan. In the old days of warfare, it is said, if a man 613
was killed in fighting, there was a way of taking vengeance on the slayer
by means of sorcery. The arrow that slew the victim was extracted, and 754
the clan and lineage of the slayer were ascertained. This was easy.
Every inner or medial lineage of a clan usually has a distinctive mark
(*daan*). One lineage, for example, may tie a tiny guinea-fowl feather at
the base of the arrow-head, another may use a particular species of
grass. By inquiring from their sororal kinsmen in the enemy clan the
victim's lineage brothers soon discovered which lineage the slayer

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 44 ff.

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[1] have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
● 628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

x [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
●628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike, even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

623
624 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
793 section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders, but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

*618 *sunzɔp*' by Tongo people, and they take the part of distant *sunzɔp* in their
corporate relations with Tongo. Thus, an important funeral at Tongo
*618 always attracts a large contingent of Zoo people, and vice versa. When
764 Doohraan, one of the senior elders of Tongo, died, Zoo turned out in full force to join in the celebrations that inaugurated the funeral. A cow was slaughtered as an offering to the departed, and when it was divided up the Zoodem proper received half a foreleg, as distant *sunzɔp*, the other half going to Zubiuŋ, as the closest unrelated neighbours of the Tongo lineage which was celebrating the funeral. On this occasion Zoo-Yiraaŋ sent a number of young men to swell the ranks of their *sunzɔp*, the Zoodem proper, so that they could make as grand a display as possible. They themselves cannot take part in a Tongo funeral as an independent unit.

618 At the same time it is explicitly recognized that Zoodem proper are the
621 *sunzɔp* of Tongo only by courtesy. They do not have the rights and duties of true clan *sunzɔp*. Tale social structure, highly determinate as it is, is flexible, and allows of such extensions of its basic principles. It allows the translation into the idiom of kinship and clanship of the ties of contiguity or of ceremonial or political solidarity. For the ties of clanship-by-courtesy recognized between Zoo and Tongo rest upon their spatial contiguity and political interdependence. The maximal lineage of Zoo proper has the custody of a special shrine connected with the chiefship of Tongo. According to their myth of origin, their founding ancestor performed the ritual services associated with this shrine for Mosuor when he was Chief of the Mamprusi and followed him to Tongo. These ritual services still vested in Zoodem proper form a strong bond between them and Tongo.

On the other hand, the fact that both groups are Namoos is an essential factor of their clanship-by-courtesy. By contrast the people of Zubiuŋ, who are as closely associated with Tongo spatially, politically, and by reciprocal ritual services, and, like the people of Zoo, always fought on the side of Tongo in the old days, are Talis, properly speaking; thus there is a stricter social separation between them and Tongo. They are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy by the latter; they refrain from the ritual or ceremonial activities of the people of Tongo in which Zoodem proper can and do take a part greater than that of mere spectators.

At the same time the genealogical and corporate independence of the people of Zoo proper, in relation to Tongo, is precisely marked. Neither group takes part in the cult of the lineage ancestors of the other; and if, for instance, in a funeral ceremony men of Zoo proper perform ritual services for a Tongo lineage, or vice versa, they do so because true clan *sunzɔp* are not present.

*618 One infallible test of their differentiation from the clan of Mosuor biis
621 is the fact that the two groups intermarry. Another is the rule about
628 raiding. A generation ago, before the white man imposed the rule of his
law, raiding (*ŋɔk*) was a common method of self-help in Taleland. It was the final resource of a man who wished to retrieve a debt owed to him by a member of another clan. If, for instance, a Tongo man owed a Wakii man cattle for a marriage he had contracted, and withheld payment unduly long or in bad faith, the latter would resort to self-help.

He would set out one day with some of his close agnates, fully armed, and 618^{x} they would try to seize by stealth and drive off as many cattle and sheep 621 belonging to any clansman of their debtor as they could lay their hands on. 628 ● Thus they could seize live-stock belonging to any Tongo man. Or if the chance presented itself they could seize live-stock belonging to people of Yamələg or Sie, and would answer protests by 'pointing to' (*paal*) their Tongo debtor. This was legitimate, but they could not legitimately seize cattle belonging to a Zoo man in settlement of a debt due to them from a Tongo man. The Zoo people would be entitled to take severe reprisals, for Zoo and Tongo have no ties of clanship. They 'marry one another's children (*ba diit taaba biis*)'. Men who were youths in those days, and who themselves took part in such adventures, usually cite these rules of *ŋɔk* when they are explaining the nature and ramifications of clanship ties.

The people of Zoo proper have not the same local, political, and ceremonial ties with Yamələg or Sie, and are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of these two communities. But Yamələg and Sie feel more closely akin to Zoo than to their non-Namoo neighbours.

The ties between Tongo and Zoo influence their relations in innumer- 618^{x} able ways. A census of Zoo shows that every Zoo family (including Zoo-Yiraaŋ) is related to Tongo either by cognatic or by affinal ties. Zoo men show a preference in marriage for women from Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie, rather than women from other equally near settlements. Thirty-five (29 per cent.) of a large and representative sample (120) of Zoo wives are Tongo women; and if the Yamələg and Sie women are added they make up together 56 (47 per cent.) of Zoo wives. I once heard a group of elders discuss this fact, of which the people of Zoo and Tongo are well aware. A Zoo man said, 'Tongo girls like marrying us because we are such diligent farmers and always have plenty of food'. The Tongo elders denied this, and protested that they gave their daughters to Zoo rather than to men of Wakii or Tenzugu because of the bonds between them. 'Would we not rather', said one of them, 'marry our daughters to you, or even to Zubiuŋ, or the more distant places that used to fight on our side, than to nearer settlements which were our enemies?' Because of these ties, too, it is a grave affront for a Zoo man to abduct a Tongo man's wife or vice versa, or for a member of one clan to marry the former wife of a man of the other.

Again, the people of Zoo proper through their political head, the Chief 618^{x} of Biuŋ, control the great annual hunt in the Kparəg bush. They are less 224 strict in enforcing their rights to animals which fall to the weapon of a Tongo, Yamələg, or Sie man, than to those killed by men from other places. There is greater co-operation and camaraderie between hunting parties from Zoo, Tongo, Yamələg, and Sie than between any of them and parties from other settlements. When the Chief of Biuŋ sends round to announce the hunt, his messengers go to all the other Namoo chiefs in Taleland, who pronounce a blessing on the enterprise and send back fowls as a contribution to the sacrifices that will have to be made. Among them the blessing and contribution of the Chief of Tongo are regarded as the most important.

These relations between Tongo and Zoo are always a matter of degree

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577
ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721
reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life.
There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173
kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives. At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one. Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime, about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛləg*)' him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worthwhile life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682
the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577
the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721
in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In 1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury, lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards. And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721
matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673
for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might 682
follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628
neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578
of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations, in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

628 to enforcement by explicit or implicit sanctions—it prevailed only within 578 the clan or a cluster of closely interrelated clans, or between individual kinsfolk of different clans. Even so, every line of social cleavage was a source of weakness to the sanctions of right. It needed very little temptation or provocation for men of different clans or maximal lineages, however close the links between their respective groups, to lay violent hands on one another's property, person, or dependants. There was a general atmosphere of non-cognizance of rights *as such*. Times of crisis, such as famine, brought about a relapse into lawlessness.

681 In consequence the ultimate sanction of jural rights outside the clan 628 was self-help. If a man could not recover a wife who had been abducted or a bride-price debt owing to him through the intermediation of the elders of his clan and those of the abductor's or debtor's clan, he had the right to use self-help and make a raid on the cattle of the offender's clan. This was legitimate and reprisals were not allowed. If the offender were to attempt any, his clansmen would not support him. But these raids 720 might result in an armed clash with the cattle herds. Men might be killed; and then war flared up.

721 But raiding (*ŋɔk*), as a measure of self-help, in itself was not an act of 628 war. It led to war if men were killed, but not if there were no bloodshed. 578 Sometimes, even if a raid ended in an affray and men were killed, a reconciliation was made before an interclan fight could develop. The Tallensi distinguished precisely between raiding, as a method of self-help which they considered a legitimate jural device for redressing a wrong, and warfare. The custom of raiding reinforced warfare because it provided occasions for armed clashes and because of the habit of mind that lay behind it. Though this habit ran counter to the moral repugnance of the Tallensi to shedding human blood, it tolerated the use of violence as the proper ultimate means of asserting one's rights. This attitude still survives, to some extent. Men still carry their weapons when they go on a journey. Disputes over wives or unpaid debts sometimes bring the parties to the brink of a sanguinary fight. One reason why these fights are suppressed by the natives themselves before they become serious is the fear of the white man with his armed police in the background. Another [177] and more powerful reason is the system of chiefs' tribunals and District Commissioners' courts imposed by the British. This judicial system has become an established part of native life. It has provided an effectively sanctioned alternative to self-help and made the latter obsolete (cf. p. 13). But in the past the attitude of mind we have described led the natives to think of warfare in its corporate aspect as a mechanism for redressing wrongs that could not otherwise be put right. Considering their lack of a single, all-embracing government and their segmentary social structure, it was inevitable that conflicts should often arise that could only be settled by fighting.[1]

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[1] In this connexion it is worth noting that the Tallensi have only one term, *zabər*, for every kind of fighting, from a quarrel between co-wives to a war. But, in addition, war was distinguished by referring to it euphemistically as 'arrows' (*peema*). Thus a war is identified as 'the arrows of so-and-so', after its chief instigator.

members of two mutually exclusive corporate groups. That is why the 602
lineages of husband and wife are implicated in the marriage and have a lasting interest in its course and in the offspring that come from it. Tale speech and etiquette reveal this, and the classificatory extension of affinal kinship depends on this. Thus if your friend's son or daughter has recently married, you do not ask him 'Whom did he (she) marry?', but 'Where (i.e. which clan) did he (she) marry?', and 'A child of whose house (i.e. what segment of the clan) did he (she) marry?'. We shall take up this thread again at a later stage of our analysis. At present we are concerned with the consequences for the relations of husband and wife of their divergent lineage ties.

The tension due to these opposing sets of social ties appears most 578
acutely in the early stages of marriage, obviously as a result of the fact
that marriage is an alliance between two genealogically independent 582
corporate units with rival interests in the protagonists. Every marriage in which the husband is a young man begins as a struggle, carried on with many wiles, stratagems, pretexts, and even threats of or recourse to force. Firstly, the suitor has to compete with other young men whom his would-be bride and in-laws often play off astutely against him. The largest part of his courtship consists in winning over the girl's parents with frequent presents and soft words. To elope with her he must buy the secret connivance of her mother or brother, for her father will always stand out for a negotiated marriage. This is not only an acknowledgement of the father's right to dispose of his daughter's hand, but a guarantee of the consent of the bridegroom's guardian and lineage elders and hence of the payment of the bride-price on demand. It is a defeat for the bridegroom, who has to bow to the will of his father-in-law.

The real struggle begins, however, only after a man succeeds in 578
carrying off his bride by elopement. If the elders on both sides tacitly
accept the match as a good one, it becomes a matter of mere formality; 602
but all the conventions of the jural transactions necessary to make a 628
legitimate marriage are couched in the idiom of a struggle between hostile groups. That is why they must take place through an intermediary, the *pɔɣasama*, a clansman of the bridegroom and a cognatic kinsman of the bride, bound to hold an even balance between the two parties by reason of his kinship with both.[1] But often enough the struggle turns into a genuine and sometimes acrimonious battle for the girl which may go on for weeks or months. It is then that the lack of a constituted legal system in Tale political organization makes itself felt. The girl's father resorts to all sorts of devices to coerce her abductors. He may use ritual pretexts, exploit ties of cognatic kinship with the abductors' lineage or clan, even, in extremity, threaten to kill himself on their doorstep, or, in the old days, to stir up war against their clan. I have been present at several violent altercations between a party of men

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[1] Cf. pp. 317–18 below.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FORM OF TALE SOCIETY

The Socio-geographic Region

OUR survey of the macroscopic structure of Tale society has led us 181 from the consideration of the natives' habits of grouping themselves by name, through an analysis of Tale clanship, to the ritual institutions that form the crowning mechanism of co-ordination in the system, and finally to the internal structure of the settlement and the lineage. An ethnographer accustomed to think of a native society as a unit of social organization marked off by precise territorial, political, or cultural boundaries might protest against our frequent references to 'Tale society'. But this habit of thought, appropriate enough in dealing with island communities, nomadic tribes, or territorially organized states, must be discarded if we wish to understand the structure of societies like that of the Tallensi. For the concept of a society as a closed unit, a sort of thing distinguishable from like things in the same way as one house is distinguishable from another or one animal from another, we must substitute the concept of society as a socio-geographic region, the social elements of which are more closely knit together among themselves than any of them are knit together with social elements of the same kind outside that region. We must substitute a relative and dynamic concept for an absolute and static one. If we look at the area of Voltaic culture as a whole, we can imagine innumerable currents of social life flowing through it in all directions. There are major currents and tributary currents. They intersect in all sorts of ways. But at particular places the forces of which the currents are an expression act in such a way as to draw together a large number, if not all, of the major currents. These regions of maximum confluence would correspond to what we have called a socio-geographic region, or a society. If we follow any single current from a region of maximum confluence it leads us right out of that region into another region. It is only if we look at the region from within that we see the coherence it has as a result of the confluence of many social currents.

But metaphors are proverbially treacherous and we must return to our proper subject-matter. The concept of society we have formulated enables us to see clearly the most characteristic feature of Tale society. It is a segmentary[1] system. At bottom this is a consequence of the fact 631 that the Tallensi have not got a centralized, unified, political organization. 171 This is clear if we compare the Tallensi with some other African peoples such as the Tswana of Bechuanaland Protectorate,[2] the Bemba of Northern

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[1] Cf. Fortes, M., and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (editors), *African Political Systems*, 1940, 'Introduction', and Evans-Pritchard, E. E., *The Nuer*, 1940.

[2] Cf. Schapera, I., *Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, 1938, and 'The Political Organization of the Ngwato', in *African Political Systems*, cited above.

631 171 Rhodesia,[1] or the Ashanti of the Gold Coast.[2] These peoples have a pyramidal social structure corresponding to their pyramidal form of government. From the village to the tribal unit we find a hierarchy of territorial-political units, the greater made up of a collection of the lesser, and culminating in the whole tribal unit. This is associated with a corresponding hierarchy of political offices, from the village headman to the paramount chief at the apex. Among the Tallensi[3] there is no single person or body of persons vested with supreme executive and administrative authority over the whole of Taleland. Government is laterally distributed amongst all the corporate units that make up the society, instead of being vertically distributed as in pyramidal societies. All the corporate units are, broadly speaking, politically equal; all are segments of the same structural order.

621 This is one aspect of what is meant by describing Tale society as segmentary in form. But the concept has further implications. The corporate units that compose Tale society are not a casual agglomerate of discrete bodies, but are socially articulated and interconnected with one another; and they are thus interrelated in a segmentary series. This principle of association between defined social units runs right through the structure of Tale society. It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system. This rule holds whether the associations are temporary, for a particular end, or form permanent groupings. Furthermore, the principles according to which the associations occur are either uniform for a whole series of segments of increasing dimension or are so related to one another that principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.

128 This is an architectural way of looking at the structure of Tale society. It is the line we have largely followed in the preceding chapters, where we have been concerned with the largest corporate units into which the Tallensi are organized. Our attention has been fixed mainly on the permanent edifice in which social relations and activities are congealed rather than on their emergence in process. We have been analysing the product of social segmentation rather than the process itself. To distinguish between product and process is, however, merely an analytic convenience in dealing with social facts. In reality what we denote as a product is a set of regularities and recurrences of process. A corporate unit is really the sum total of corporate relations and activities occurring amongst a defined group of individuals. We can think of a maximal lineage as an architectural segment of a composite clan in the same way as we can picture one storey of a modern building as a lateral segment of the whole. A maximal lineage, however, differs from a part of a building of brick and wood in that it is not always 'there', tactually and visibly.

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[1] Cf. Richards, Audrey I., 'The Political System of the Bemba Tribe', in *African Political Systems*, and *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, 1939.

[2] Cf. Rattray, R. S., *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, 1929.

[3] A fuller analysis will be found in the 'Introduction' and in my article on 'The Political System of the Tallensi' in *African Political Systems*.

428 423 allotted by the father. On the death of the head of the family the male survivors inherit the land in varying proportions as tenants in common with benefits of survivorship. The eldest son assumes the responsibilities of his father and may elect to live either in his father's compound, or to remain in his own. In either case he will receive a large share of his father's farm and retain also an interest in his own. After a number of generations the distribution and ownership of land becomes very complicated in congested areas and considerable fragmentation of holdings takes place. Land not in use may be lent to another for farming, but often with a stipulation to plant non-exhausting crops.

Distribution of Population.

162 The distribution of population is very variable both from one political area to another and within each area. If one takes the the district as a whole, 3,559 square miles, the population by the 1931 census (7) is shown to be 406,566 persons; this gives a density of population of 114 per square mile (c.f. South Mamprusi 23 per square mile, and Western Dagomba 15). It is estimated that at least one-third of the total area is uninhabited, and much of this is fertile alluvial land near to rivers, where tse-tse flies abound. In other areas ruins are found for which slave raiding, sleeping sickness, and yellow fever, are variously held responsible. Table I below gives the distribution of tribes and population.

Table 1.—Distribution of Population in North Mamprusi.

Political Area	Area, square miles	Total Population	Density of Population per sq. ml.	Tribes
Navrongo ...	1,551	120,870	78	Nankani, Kassena, and Builsa.
Zuarungu ...	781	133,981	172	Nankani, Tallensi, and Nabdam.
Kusasi and Br. Togoland ...	807 420	110,614 41,101	137 98	Kusasi, Busanga, Bemoba and strangers.
Total ...	3,559	406,566	114	—

Political Organisation.

631 History shows that North Mamprusi was continually harrassed from outside (8) until comparatively recent times. The Mamprusis in the South, who were at one time a powerful and organised tribe,

conquered many of the small tribes in North Mamprusi and superimposed their rule upon the indigenous clan system. Thus many of the Chiefs in the district to-day are of Mamprusi descent and pay tribute to the Nayiri, the paramount Mamprusi Chief at Nalerigu, near Gambaga. There is little tribal cohesion amongst the family sections, or clans, and it is upon their federation into a political unit, the Mamprusi State, that political officers have been engaged recently, following Government's policy of Indirect Rule through native Administration. The clans in Zuarungu and Kusasi now come into the Mamprusi Native Administration; those of Navrongo have formed Administrations of their own. Direct taxation was introduced in 1936 and marked an important step forward. A large proportion of the money collected is to be spent upon social services in the areas of collection, and agriculture is not being neglected. 631 [651]

Recent Slave Raids.

In addition to conquest from the South, the district was continually invaded by mounted slave-raiders from the North. There is no doubt that the unsettled conditions produced by these raids have had a profound effect upon the economic and social life of the people. The importance of this from our point of view is that now, with settled conditions, the people may be expected to adjust themselves, in time, to the new order of things, and to be prepared to modify their system of farming where necessary. It is probable that these invasions, together with tse-tse fly in heavy bush, tended to concentrate the population around the rocky hills characteristic of the district, where the horsemen would be at a disadvantage. The attention of the people appears to have been concentrated more upon weapons—bows and arrows, or spears, still used to-day for ceremony and hunting—than upon agricultural implements. It is also a significant fact that the indigenous system of agriculture requires no operation to be performed on the farm during the dry season, which is the season of the year when invasion would take place. The burning of the grass in the dry season may have been done to reduce the chance of surprise attack. 721 241

Agriculture a Custom, not a Business.

As might be expected from tribes consisting of small units having continually to defend themselves and losing many of their strongest men in fighting or taken as slaves, the people in North Mamprusi remained, economically, very primitive. Although the system of agriculture is "fixed", which is generally regarded as an advance upon "shifting cultivation", it leaves much to be desired. Farming methods have not been adjusted sufficiently quickly to 241

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab* 624
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under the Chief of Nangode.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

NAMNAM

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1] report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed, informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
[783] lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 131 161 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 171 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later 632 on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement' rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following table illustrates the above.

103 614

Town.	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

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197 [1] Kusal is so much like Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

INTRODUCTION

This bulletin records the work of the Department of Agriculture in North Mamprusi during the years 1932 to 1936. It is divided into two parts: the first contains a description of the indigenous system of agriculture and the survey methods followed in studying it; and the second gives the results of preliminary trials, as an introduction to future experimental work. 128

North Mamprusi comprises three political sub-districts, Navrongo Area, Zuarungu Area, and Kusasi (Bawku) Area. These areas have a number of features in common, the most important from our point of view, being a dense population, and a primitive system of "fixed" agriculture. The most densely populated area is Zuarungu, where a shortage of cultivated foods is a fairly common experience. It was mainly to find the causes of this food shortage and to suggest ameliorative measures that the Department of Agriculture commenced preliminary survey work in this area in 1932. Unfortunately, owing to shortage of staff, the work had to be suspended in 1933, with a consequent loss of continuity. It was recommenced in 1934, however, and the scope was enlarged to admit of a certain amount of experimental work at Zuarungu and Navrongo, and survey work in the Navrongo Area. Some of the survey work was also repeated in Zuarungu Area to supply confirmatory information upon 1932 data, particularly yield data, since it was known that 1932 was an exceptionally favourable season. In 1935 the experimental side of the work received more attention; similarly in 1936. And in 1936 survey work was extended to Zebilla, in Kusasi Area. Zuarungu has been the headquarters throughout. 634 121

We have now obtained a fairly detailed knowledge of local agriculture and a certain amount of experimental evidence upon the best way in which it can be improved. All our experience points to some form of "mixed farming" (1) as a solution of the problem. Mr. F. A. Stockdale, C.M.G., C.B.E. (now Sir Frank Stockdale), Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State, visited Zuarungu and Navrongo in December, 1935, and recommended (2) the expansion of our work to enable us to investigate more 121

131 attractive touch to an otherwise uninspiring landscape. A fringe of
133 uninhabited bush, the home of a fair amount of game, follows the course
of the two Voltas. From the Tong Hills the area of close settlement and
perennial cultivation spreads out like a fan to the west, north, and east.
[361 Generally speaking, settlement is relatively sparse and recent along the
161] periphery of this area, except in the north to north-west segment, and
densest and most ancient in the middle.

● 636 The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast have been under effective
Government control for about twenty-five years. From the first efforts
491 were made to develop modern communications. At the present time a main road, suitable for motor traffic, connects Bawku in Kusaasi district, the northernmost administrative station, with Tamale, the capital of the Northern Territories, 145 miles to the south, and continues from there to Kumasi in Ashanti, another 220 miles. Branches link it with the principal Government stations in the Northern Territories. This road system was maintained, until recently, only for essential services in the wet season, but was always passable in the dry season. In 1936 large-scale works were undertaken to make it a permanent highway. Head carriage and footpaths still remain the only means of local transport and communications. About 50 miles of this road system traverse the Zuarungu district, the administrative head-quarters of which is at Zuarungu (Talni, *Zuŋaruŋ*) on the central road.

101 The people we are concerned with in this book occupy less than half
131 of the Zuarungu district. Their country, which, for convenience of
reference may be called Taleland, embraces most of the southern half of
161 the district between the two Voltas and the western boundary. On the north it can be demarcated only by an arbitrary boundary which extends in a wavy line from Zuarungu due east to the river. A typical section of the district, Taleland includes the Tong Hills, the vicinity of which harbours the densest and oldest settlements of the country. Its total population, according to the 1931 census, numbers about 35,000. Nearly a third of it is concentrated within a radius of two or three miles of the Hills. I estimate the total area of Taleland at about 300 square miles, which would imply an average population density of approximately 100 to the square mile, though the actual density of settlement in the inhabited areas must be considerably higher. Thus Taleland is thickly populated, by African standards.

Cultural Affinities of the Tallensi

101 Delafosse, in his monumental survey[1] of the peoples of the western
197 Sudan, distinguished five 'families' by ethnological and linguistic criteria. His largest division, the Voltaic family, comprises the tribes inhabiting the basin of the Volta rivers, from approximately 9° 30′ to 14° N. latitude.[2] Delafosse subdivides the Voltaic family into seven branches, one of which, the Mossi group, includes all the peoples living between Ouagadougou in the French Upper Ivory Coast and Salaga in the Gold Coast.

More recent research has not invalidated Delafosse's broad classification.

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[1] Delafosse, M., *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 3 vols., 1912.

[2] Op. cit., i, pp. 115 ff.

181 in their spare time, and chiefly in the dry season when there is no farm
241 work. They are exceedingly few in numbers—one or two in a settlement
463 —and their work is of mediocre quality. The only blacksmiths in Tale-
land are about a dozen men of the Sakpee clan of Tenzugu, and only one
[326] of them derives a substantial part of his livelihood from his craft. A
leather-worker or two, a potteress, a sewer of caps, may be found in
almost every settlement. Some men and women who are more skilful than
their neighbours at making articles of common use such as hen-coops,
baskets, bows, adze-shafts, &c., are in the habit of making a few for sale
[465] every dry season. The only specialized occupation is that of the diviner,
and it, also, is a part-time occupation in addition to farming, though a
popular diviner, making perhaps a shilling or eighteen pence a day, may
farm less land than he normally would. Diviners are numerous. There
may be as many as ten or twenty in a large settlement, but only one or
two of them will earn more than a few pence a day by divining.

British Rule and Contact with Western Civilization

● 636 Until the time of my first visit to Taleland the natives had been very
177 little influenced by the agencies of British government and of European
168 civilization that are active in these parts. The main roads skirt Taleland
so that the flow of north- and south-bound traffic by-passes the largest part
167 of the area. Nevertheless, these roads have served to open up Taleland
to a wider sphere of intercourse with other parts of the Gold Coast than
was possible twenty years before. Political and social conditions made it
impossible for people to travel freely beyond a radius of a few miles from
their own settlements in former days. To-day young men and even
women go in increasing numbers every year, in the dry season, to Tamale,
Kumasi, or the coast towns. Some go to visit friends or relatives, some
carry fowls for sale, others go as seasonal labourers, and others go to
work abroad for a term of years. In 1923 the Administration of the
Northern Territories reluctantly agreed to assist in the recruitment of
labour for the mines and cocoa farms of Ashanti and the colony. The
experiment failed and was soon abandoned. Nowadays labour migration
from the Northern Territories is entirely voluntary. It has become linked
up with the normal economic life of the natives. Whereas, in former years,
a young man moved out temporarily to the periphery of settlement on
account of a shortage of land in his natal community, nowadays he often
goes to Ashanti or the mines as a labourer. The cessation of agri-
cultural activity in the dry season makes it easy for a young man to get
away for a few months without loss to the routine of farming.

167 Economic incentives, which the natives sum up as 'the desire for
464 money', therefore lie behind much labour migration in the Northern
Territories. And the value of money may be gauged from the fact that
[435] a hen could be bought for 6*d*. to 1*s*., a cow in good condition for £2. 10*s*.,
and a dish of porridge enough for a satisfying meal for 1/10 of a penny
in any market in 1934–7. But there are other incentives as well. Curiosity,
and the desire to see the places and experience the life which those who
return from a stay abroad describe to their fellows at home, stimulate
many a youth to go south for a short or long period. And friction with

177 167 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 872 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi. A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 636 648 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 636 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

has brought them. But in the background there still lurk traces of fear 609
and suspicion, a sense of the inscrutability of the white man. 636

The influence of British rule has naturally been most marked in Tale 177
political life. At first it was directed towards two main ends: to maintain 636
the peace between the Administration and the native communities as 175
well as amongst the latter, and to ensure a sufficient supply of labour and
local materials from the native population for keeping up roads and rest
houses. The Administrative officers laid down boundaries, meted out
justice, and backed up chiefs and headmen, mostly appointed by themselves,
in the exercise of coercive powers over the mass of the people.
Nothing was known about the country or the people, and the Administrative
officers had to rely on their own sense of justice and their own ideas
of what was in the interests of the population. The natives look back on
this period with few regrets. They describe it as a time when extortion
was widely practised not only by the police, the soldiers, the interpreters,
and others who stood between them and the District Commissioners, but
also by their newly empowered chiefs and headmen. They learnt to think
of any official or unofficial servant of the white man as armed with arbitrary
authority which it would be futile to resist.

The outstanding political changes due to this period were the authority 177
given to chiefs and headmen, and the unofficial tribunals held by them. 622
These grew up gradually out of the need to keep the peace; for the ancient
method of settling disputes was by negotiation backed by armed self-help. 636
From the native point of view the most valuable relic of this period is the 175
embryonic legal system which grew up then. Armed self-help has disappeared,
but some of the values connected with it remain. The other
institutions of the native political organization retain their vigour. They
function side by side with the institutions imposed by British rule, for
they serve different ends and correspond to different values. It is often
an uneasy partnership leading to insoluble conflicts. Most of the political
troubles of the Tallensi since 1921 can be traced to the clash between
interests and loyalties springing from the native political system and those
created by the new political dispensation and its accompanying economic
changes. For the first time in its history a few men of outstanding wealth
have arisen in Taleland by extorting goods and services from their fellows
on the strength of their political powers, or by exploiting opportunities
due to the opening up of the country. And this has brought social friction
in its train.

This period of British rule came to an end about 1931. Between 1931 636
and 1936 the Administration undertook a complete political reorganization 175
of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. The principles of what is
commonly called Indirect Rule were applied. Native Authorities were
established, a graded scale of direct taxation was introduced, a policy of
economic development was started, and social services were multiplied.
The effects of this policy will not be discernible for some years.

Taleland is a very small portion of the Northern Territories of the Gold 171
Coast. But in its culture and social structure, as in its geography and 101
climate, it is typical of the whole plateau north of the Gambaga scarp.

Kusase

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

607 *Privileged Familiarity*: 'A man may play and be familiar with his sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents, 603 for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the 648 Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the Mampruse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat 607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's [587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.

[2] See p. 8.

[3] But see p. 508.

197 Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

171 The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

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619 Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

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648 We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes comprise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

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[113] [1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus du Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
648 factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and 619
to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social 101
reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are
identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. 621
This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding 101
the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, 648
is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of 101
settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gorni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common.
The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand [191]
Gorni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with
Goris. Gorni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between [197]
them and their Gore neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. 101
The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one 609
Gorəŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, pro-
pinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it 101
is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

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[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the
764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger
of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have
[579] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group
of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound
of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-
Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting them-
selves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of
the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the
true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same
time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those
of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration
[123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my
field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial
association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as
796 composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region
of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent
to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-
geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one
another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but
the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index
of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest
Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle.
The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in
relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely
of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and
certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society,
in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their
interdependence and overlapping.

184 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris,
796 Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take
648 the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring
Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though
they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the
'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is
Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically
and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

holds an important ritual office connected with the paramount chiefship 184
of Mampurugu. But, as befits their interstitial socio-geographic position 796
between the Mamprusi and the Tallensi, their Harvest Festival belongs 648
to the Tale cycle and is, in fact, the last of one of the series constituting
the cycle.

The differentiation of Taleland into lesser regions follows the same 184
general principle as the differentiation of the Mole-Dagbane-speaking 796
peoples into 'tribes'. A region is a socio-geographic segment of the society
in which the communities that constitute it have a greater degree of
interdependence and cohesion with one another than any of them have
with other neighbouring communities. And this interdependence and
cohesion is a function of the common interests symbolized in the Great
Festivals. The regions overlap in so far as the communities belonging
to one region have other interests in common with and other loyalties
towards communities belonging to a neighbouring region.

This is the façade of Tale society. Behind it lie the bricks and mortar 000
of the social structure. It is at that level of Tale social life that we must
look for the foundations of the principles of social organization whose
superficial action we have met with in this chapter.

x618 The Gbizug legend of how Ligər yidem came to dwell at Tongo is well known to Tongo elders who are versed in such matters, and is regarded by them as true. It would never, of course, be brought up in public, especially if any Ligər yidem were present. The elders of Ligər yidem accept this story, but they would be indignant at any suggestion that it is in any way derogatory. The assimilated lineages at Tongo stand in a marginal relation to the authentic posterity of Mosuor, and this is reflected in the general attitude of tacit discretion about their presumed origins and the disabilities these entail. These cannot be covered up, and no upright person would wish to do so; but they are not matters of which a public display is made unless there is a really serious issue at stake.

x618 ●648 It is unnecessary to describe at length the lineage structure of Yaməlag and Biuk, both of which closely resemble Tongo. At Biuk we enter the country of the Gərisi. Not only do the people of Biuk, though linked by ties of clanship with Mosuor biis, speak Gərni and practise some Gəre customs not found among the Tallensi, but they are also linked by clanship ties, through intercalary lineages, with the Gərisi of Zuarungu. These clan linkages of the people of Biuk with Gərisi are not known to the people of Tongo, Yaməlag, and Sie, nor are they of any interest to them. Biuk marks the limit of their frame of social reference, though the chain of clanship ties which links them to one another extends beyond it, across the frontier of linguistic and cultural variation.

x618 Our analysis of the clan structure of Mosuor biis and their clanship ties with other units may be summed up in the following table and diagram. For the sake of simplicity Yaməlag and Biuk are omitted, since they constitute only a wider ramification of the structural arrangements represented in the table.

TONGO

Authentic lineages (grouped in four major segments of the sub-clan)	have ties of clanship with	All Yaməlag All Sie All Biuk
Accessory lineages (distributed amongst the four major segments; no corporate organization *inter se*)	have ties of clanship, extended from those of the authentic lineages with	All Yaməlag All Sie All Biuk
One assimilated lineage (Ligər yidem)	has, in addition, ties of clanship with	Gbizug (Talis)

SIE PROPER

Authentic lineages (forming three major segments)	have ties of clanship with	All Tongo All Yaməlag All Biuk

These ties of clanship extended to the accessory lineages at Sie.

Authentic lineage (A) (Bayana yidem)	has ties of clanship with	Lineage (D) (Daaŋ yidem) of Sie-datok
Authentic lineage (B) (Sa-trŋərdem)	has ties of clanship with	Lineage (E) (Kaləŋkaa yidem) of Sie-datok

CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gorisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Ŋkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*baŋ*) by one major segment of Bayana yidem at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

[p.66]

829 men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no
602 one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so,
x618 let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used
601 here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana tɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

648 The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the
x618 Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the
171 country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔləga, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔləga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which among the Talis would be linked by clanship as well. There is therefore 648 greater variation in the degree of overlapping between the fields of clanship 618x of contiguous lineages than among the Talis. 171

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[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deen*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

Some clans in this area are closed units forming by themselves a miniature replica of the whole system. Thus, Duusi proper consists of three maximal lineages, bound together by ties of clanship, but none having clanship ties with any other lineages or clans. These three lineages are said to be 'consanguineous kin with one another (*dɔɣam ni taaba*)'. But there is no myth to account for their coalescence, nor is it rationalized by genealogical fictions. They are structurally differentiated in a similar way to the maximal lineages of Zoo. Thus, one lineage has the exclusive right to the chiefship, another to the tɛndaanaship, and the third to the ritual office of Yiraan, which holds the balance between chiefship and tɛndaanaship. The ritual observances of the three maximal lineages differ from one another and they have no common ancestral *bɔɣar*. One focus of integration for the whole of Duusi is the supreme *tɔŋgban*, Ziug, whose custody is vested in the lineage that holds the tɛndaanaship, but whose cult requires the co-operation of the other lineages as well. The other focus of integration is the chiefship, which demands both political co-operation and ritual collaboration among all three maximal lineages.

The loose articulation of this set of clans as compared with the Talis is reflected in their lack of a common appellation. One reason for this, no doubt, is that the line of cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in terms of structural relations, ritual observances, and politico-ritual roles and offices, is not so clear cut as in the Tongo district. At Sie, where it is most precise, the Namoos are identified as *naditib*, those who hold (lit. eat) the chiefship, in contraposition to the *tɛndaanditib*, those who hold the office of tɛndaana, namely the people of Sawalɔg and Tɛndaaŋ; and this cleavage runs parallel to their clanship relations and ritual observances. (Throughout the area, as among the Gɔrisi and Namnam, a settlement or part of a settlement occupied by *tɛndaanditib* is usually referred to as Tɛndaaŋ, and *tɛndaanditib* lineages are often described as Tɛndaaŋdɛm.) But in several other clans *naditib* and *tɛndaanditib* are constituent maximal lineages of the same clan. This is similar to the distribution of ritual offices amongst the maximal lineages of a Talis clan; but in this case the *naditib* lineages are usually Namoos, whereas the *tɛndaanditib* lineages fall into line with non-Namoo clans like Sawalɔg and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ in their ritual observances and social alliances. Among these clans, therefore, the ties of clanship often cut across the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos; the social and political alinements of clans or maximal lineages in accordance with their ritual observances cut across their alinements by clanship ties. The general effect is to link Namoos and non-Namoos more closely together than in the Tongo district, but in a looser system than is found among the Hill Talis.[1]

The *tɛndaanditib* clans and maximal lineages of the Sie district declare 618x

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[1] *Naditib* is compounded of *na'am*, chiefship and *di* to eat—here in its metaphorical meaning of 'to have the prerogative of an office'—and the plural suffix -*b* (< *ba*), people; *tɛndaanditib* comes in the same way from *tɛndaan*, *di*, and -*b*.

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return. 788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar* to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion with it. [551] Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl [582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here ● 648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a 574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis [609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances 776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for 184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛɣəraaŋ*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

613 561 Seniority (*kpɛmət*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔɣam pu yakət dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

613 [554] No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Tɔŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*ɛŋ yaləŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔɣar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

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[648] [1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next volume of this study.

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tɛndaana says of another 'I gave

613 Tallensi say that lineage headship is conferred by inheritance of, or succession to (the same term, *vaa*, vb. is used for both), firstly, the custody of the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔɣar*), and secondly the patrimonial property (*faar*), in particular the home farm (*saman*) of the lineage. Within the nuclear lineage, or at most the inner lineage, both conditions apply; beyond that limit lineage headship does not confer title to land, except in a few special cases; it is determined solely by succession to the custody of the *bɔɣar*. The rules of inheritance and succession are backed by the most powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and supported by the whole fabric of the social system. Within the medial lineage inheritance disputes occur so rarely as to be negligible. This is a reflection of the strong solidarity of this unit, and of the recognition of classificatory fatherhood within it. Beyond that range succession disputes are settled either by the arbitration of the maximal lineage head or by an appeal to the ancestors through divination or an oracle test.

613
577 The range of application of the two conditions of *kpɛmət* define the gradation of powers and functions discharged by lineage heads. Within the nuclear (or at most inner) lineage the head has paternal authority[1] associated with his control of the farm-land and of the labour of his dependants. He has corresponding jural and ritual responsibilities for the junior members of the lineage. Formally, his is the decisive voice in all matters in which the lineage emerges as a corporate unit—for example, in the disposal of the daughters in marriage and in the payment of bride-price for sons' wives. Beyond the nuclear lineage the lineage head's powers and authority are purely moral and ritual. He cannot, for instance, command the services of any member of the lineage (outside his nuclear lineage) as of right, nor is he responsible for any of them in such matters as bride-price payments. And the degree to which he commands the loyalty of his lineage co-members depends considerably on his personality. They will always support him unhesitatingly where the common interests of the lineage are concerned, but they might not, in private matters, treat him with the confidence due to his status if he lacks tact or tries to be dictatorial. A lineage head represents the lineage. He is the pivot of its corporate unity. Everything he does as lineage head is for and on behalf of the lineage. Hence he never takes action in corporate affairs without consulting and obtaining the consent of the heads of all the component segments of the lineage. In fact a lineage head very rarely takes action in corporate matters without the presence of all the senior male members of the lineage. Thus it is common for the initiative and drive in corporate activities to come from younger men of intelligence and forceful personality, though they are carried out by, or in the name of, the lineage head. This is especially the case when, as often happens, lineage heads are old and infirm. Tinta'aləm's senility did not diminish the respect and affection in which he was held by all the people

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● [548] him land to dwell on and therefore I am his superior' he must not be taken literally. He is referring to a tradition of settlement going back to the founding ancestors of their lineages.

[1] We analyse the function of classificatory fatherhood and of paternal authority in the lineage more fully in the second volume of this study.

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
[556] through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external
sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔɣar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans
among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔɣar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gɔrisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔɣar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔɣar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔɣar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere sideline. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔɣar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔɣar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon
of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔɣar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔɣar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔɣar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔɣar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔɣar*; and through them the *Bɔɣar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔɣar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

This aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔɣar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice.
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal 431
lineages which own the particular *Bɔɣar*. Nowadays these gifts are of
small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities
can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in
the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly
prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔɣar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔɣar*,
to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and
to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally
placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔɣar*. But these services
are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals
sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors.
Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the
client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation-
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from 486
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔɣar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers
of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from
these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow north-
wards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor,
farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and
Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of
the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔɣar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims.
Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase
the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔɣar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔɣar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

significance. From childhood on a person's relation to the economic 861 system is chiefly determined by sex. In the kinship system sex operates as a differentiating factor from an equally early age, from the time, in fact, when a child learns to designate like-sex siblings by different terms from opposite-sex siblings. Local, lineage, or family institutions also act as differentiating factors, though not in the same way. This is a consequence in part of the peculiarities of Tale political structure. Local groupings, clans and lineages are asymmetrically linked *inter se* 621 and with communities outside the Tale area proper by political, genea- 648 logical, territorial, or ritual ties. The most striking case of this sort is presented by the Hill Talis who have immemorial ritual links with villages and genealogical groups among Dagomba, Mamprussi, Bulisi (Builsa), Woolisi (Kassena), Mossi, and other neighbouring peoples. Each of the Hill communities has its exclusive associates in these foreign areas. The people of Sii were traditionally associated with the Bulisi, the people of Gorogo with the Woolisi, the Kpata'ar clan with certain villages of Black Dagomba, and so forth. There was in former times, and is even more so now, a constant traffic between the Tong Hills and the outside areas linked with the clans dwelling there—pilgrims coming to the Fertility Shrines in the Hills and Talis paying ceremonial visits to their associates. But the economic and political by-products of this traffic were most important. In this way a range of geographical and social contacts was, and is, available to a member of the Hill clans which no Namoos had, and among the Hill clans themselves the actual contacts varied from clan to clan. The Namoos again have their traditional political associates among the Mamprussi. It is especially interesting to note that the Mamprussi associates of the Hill Talis and the Mamprussi associates of the Namoos belonged to a single political structure; yet the latter would not, a generation ago, have hesitated to overpower and enslave any Hill Talis they encountered defenceless.

Factors of this sort become significant only after adolescence and 574 more so in the life of men than of women; but they are operative even 191 in childhood. The Black Dagomba guests at a Kpata'ar elder's homestead are familiar figures to his children; and one sign of the interest taken in them by the children is the fact that most Kpata'ar youths understand and easily speak the dialect of the Black Dagomba, whereas other Tallensi do not.

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teŋa* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teŋa* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1] report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed, informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
[783] ven to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

The princip[illegible]owever, concern the tribute due to the owner of the pool. 226
Morally his rights a[illegible]yond question and are never denied. But except for members 578
of the owner's immediate family, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute, 651
a moral obligation of this sort counts for nothing in practice without effective sanctions. 602
Hence the owner sees to it that members of his family are dispersed amongst the crowd in the water. These young men keep a sharp watch and do not hesitate to take by force the fish which they regard as their rightful tribute. The owner himself often enters the pool to assist in the police work. Those who contest the confiscation of their fish do so in vain. Not only will public opinion not support them, but the owner's "policemen" would not hesitate to give them a drubbing. A maternal kinsman, sister's son, or in-law relation of the owner is, however, allowed to keep his first fish, unless his catch is large, in virtue of kinship. This is a concession which the owner might also make to his personal friends, and not a right.

One obligation, by contrast, is never evaded. Young crocodiles are sometimes caught, 651
and the owner of the fetish is entitled to the hind legs and tail of every crocodile caught. 226
This is the perquisite of his *bayar* one part of which, the hoe shaft, will be covered with
the skin of a crocodile tail thus delivered to him. Not only is it very difficult to conceal 626
the capture of a crocodile, but the supernatural penalties of evasion—certain injury from a crocodile in a future fishing expedition being the least of them—dare not be risked.

Fishing continues thus from about 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m., or in a well stocked pool, 226
to 5 p.m. The exodus commences sporadically. People who had earlier in the day been cutting hoe shafts or rafters, collecting firewood, or medicinal herbs, come out first to complete these tasks. Finally, when only a few remain in the pool, the owner of the fetish goes down to pull up his *bayar*. As he does this, he shouts to those remaining to come out. The removal of the axe shaft is the signal that the fishing is over.

The catch in such expeditions varies greatly. The tribute received by the owner of the pool may be taken as a rough index of the catch. In the three expeditions in which I participated the owner's tribute varied from six to fifteen medium and large fish. The last pool was exceptionally prolific and was fished on two successive days. I estimated the number of men—men only fished on the first day—at about four hundred; on this occasion the catch was declared to be enormous, surpassing all expectations. Few people left empty handed. But on the other hand, nobody had more than four medium or large fish, which would be taken home and divided up within each man's immediate family. The best proof of the paucity of the catch relative to the population fishing and of the valuation of fish as a delicacy rather than as an addition to the food supply, was that throughout the fishing month fish caught on these expeditions never appeared for sale at the market.

Clearly too, communal fishing does not benefit the owner of the pool much materially. 226
However large his tribute, the net gain to himself is small since he distributes much of 651
it to others—men of rank and elders who attend the fishing as an expression of clan loyalty

226 ●651 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions ? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. [622] To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. [685] Besides, such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it ; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[554] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practice and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

conquered many of the small tribes in North Mamprusi and superimposed their rule upon the indigenous clan system. Thus many 631
of the Chiefs in the district to-day are of Mamprusi descent and pay tribute to the Nayiri, the paramount Mamprusi Chief at Nalerigu, near Gambaga. There is little tribal cohesion amongst the family sections, or clans, and it is upon their federation into a political unit, the Mamprusi State, that political officers have been engaged recently, following Government's policy of Indirect Rule through native Administration. The clans in Zuarungu and Kusasi now come into the Mamprusi Native Administration; those of Navrongo have formed Administrations of their own. Direct [651]
taxation was introduced in 1936 and marked an important step forward. A large proportion of the money collected is to be spent upon social services in the areas of collection, and agriculture is not being neglected.

Recent Slave Raids.

In addition to conquest from the South, the district was continually invaded by mounted slave-raiders from the North. There 721
is no doubt that the unsettled conditions produced by these raids 241
have had a profound effect upon the economic and social life of the people. The importance of this from our point of view is that now, with settled conditions, the people may be expected to adjust themselves, in time, to the new order of things, and to be prepared to modify their system of farming where necessary. It is probable that these invasions, together with tse-tse fly in heavy bush, tended to concentrate the population around the rocky hills characteristic of the district, where the horsemen would be at a disadvantage. The attention of the people appears to have been concentrated more upon weapons—bows and arrows, or spears, still used to-day for ceremony and hunting—than upon agricultural implements. It is also a significant fact that the indigenous system of agriculture requires no operation to be performed on the farm during the dry season, which is the season of the year when invasion would take place. The burning of the grass in the dry season may have been done to reduce the chance of surprise attack.

Agriculture a Custom, not a Business.

As might be expected from tribes consisting of small units 241
having continually to defend themselves and losing many of their strongest men in fighting or taken as slaves, the people in North Mamprusi remained, economically, very primitive. Although the system of agriculture is "fixed", which is generally regarded as an advance upon "shifting cultivation", it leaves much to be desired. Farming methods have not been adjusted sufficiently quickly to

000 livestock must be improved—using the term "environment' in its widest sense. Such simple improvements as the provision of roofs for protection against rain and sun, the supply of fodder for the dry season, and bedding, are well within the capacity of the people to adopt. Other improvements, not so easy to introduce but equally desirable, are the control of mating, and the control of grazing: little advance can be made with these until grazing land is enclosed. Just as enclosure has had to be adopted in other countries as their agriculture progressed from the pastoral to the "fixed" state, so will it have to come here ultimately.

8. *Selection and distribution of improved varieties of seed.*

A vast field for improvement lies in plant breeding, but it will be non-effective until some of the other measures have received attention, and for practical purposes it can be neglected at present.

Summary. Nearly all the measures suggested above may be summed up in the words "good husbandry"; and "mixed farming" is undoubtedly the key to the situation. Marked improvement in general economic conditions is unlikely to come from concentration upon any single aspect of local agriculture, but from attention to every aspect of the industry as a whole. Having diagnosed the disease, the next step is to carry out experiments to test our ideas upon treatment, before trying to work a cure. Upon this second phase of the work—experimentation—we are engaged at the present time. Our methods of approach to the problem, and the progress we have made so far, are discussed in Part II below.

Part II.

Section I.—EXPERIMENTAL WORK.

654 The detailed study of local farming methods described in Part I enabled suggestions for improvement to be made with reasonable certainty. But the form which these improvements should take and their details could be decided only after careful research. The nearest agricultural experiment station to North Mamprusi is at Tamal in Dagomba, where, as we have seen, conditions differ in practically every respect. It was obvious that very few results from Tamale would apply in the North and that experiments would have to be carried out locally.

This work was started in 1934 with a few observation plots and minor statistically planned experiments, and each year since then this side of the work has been increased. The aim has been to keep the trials as close to the farmer as possible, that is, simple trials with single issues. Small areas of land were acquired at Zuarungu, Yekeni, Sabiya, and Dagari, in Zuarungu Area, and at Navrongo, in Navrongo Area. In addition simple cultivation trials were laid-down in the farms of the Headmen of Goragu and Yekeni. The location of these places may be seen by reference to the map at the beginning. The method of experimenting in natives' farms has much to recommend it, particularly in a country where vacant land is difficult to obtain; it is possible only with such simple experiments as we have envisaged. It has a demonstration value as a link between the experiment centre and the native farm after preliminary trial, and is useful when a practice is known to be good and it is desired to find out how good.

The general results of the experimental work will be discussed below in Section I. It is necessary to emphasise that this work is exploratory in nature; in many cases conclusions have been based upon an insufficient number of replications for complete statistical reliability. This is not to say that our results are necessarily untrustworthy, but that they should be treated critically in subsequent stages, before extension. It is useful to have a stock-taking of the information we have gained during the last three years, because we have now arrived at a stage in our experiments when it is necessary to combine the results of individual experiments and to study them together in their place in a complete farming system. All our experience has been leading up to some system of "mixed farming" as a natural corollary (1); what is recorded here is a review of the situation as an introduction to the subject. A general summary and discussion in particular relation to mixed farming is given in Section II. Section I will be discussed under the following headings:—

I. Rotation Experiments.

II. Cultivation Experiments.

III. Manurial Experiments,
  a. manufacture,
  b. utilisation.

IV. Root Crops Experiments.

V. Miscellaneous Trials.

General conclusions are discussed in the text and tables are given in the Appendix IV.

1. *Rotation Experiments.*

Our survey suggested the desirability of increasing the area planted with root crops and legumes, to serve as famine reserves, supplementary foods for livestock, and to give the land a rest from continuous cereals. Our aim in these trials is to see how far this increase can be effected and at the same time to ensure for the farmer not a less quantity of grain than he was getting before. By the use of animal drawn implements and farmyard manure our experiments seem to show that this will be possible, but it is too early yet to draw definite conclusions.

Sabiya.

Two rotation experiments are being conducted. The first was started in 1934 at Sabiya in "bush" land. The aim was to obtain information upon the best manner in which land not previously cultivated could be exploited. A four-course rotation was followed :—

1st year.	Yams and interplanted late millet	Unmanured.
2nd year.	Early millet guinea corn cowpeas and neri	Manured with farmyard manure 2 tons per acre.
3rd year.	Early millet late millet cowpeas and neri	Unmanured.
4th year.	Early millet groundnuts	Unmanured.

Mean yields per acre are given in Appendix IV, Table I, from which it will be seen that yields so far are most unsatisfactory. This is due mainly to the ravages of pests—locusts, rats, wild-guinea fowl, birds, and white ants in yam seeds. At least we are learning some of the troubles which beset the farmer in the bush.

Navrongo.

The second rotation experiment is being carried out at Navrongo upon a piece of long farmed land acquired by Government some years ago as a possible terminus for the projected extension of the railway to the Northern Territories. The rotation here is similar to the one at Sabiya, except that sweet potatoes, cassava, and Coleus potatoes are included in the root area, and the experiment is being run as a unit farm of 8 acres by a man and his family with 2 bullocks as a mixed farming experiment. The mean yields obtained in 1935 and 1936 are given in Appendix IV, Table 2. It is interesting to observe that in 1936 early millet and guinea corn following a previous yam crop gave nearly a 100% better yield than where they followed sweet potatoes.

It is too early to express any opinion upon these rotations at present.

II. *Cultivation Experiments.*

As already described in Part I (Preparation for Planting), the native practice is to plant the main crops of cereals upon the previous season's stubble without giving any preliminary cultivation. With hand cultivation alone it is not possible to cultivate a very big area during the time between the first and second rain of the year, and we know that to miss the planting rain with early millet is serious. The introduction of animal drawn implements has completely altered the situation. It is possible with a cultivator or a plough to loosen the soil over a large area before the land dries out after the previous harvest, and we have found that each year that land is ploughed makes it easier to work. The local West African Shorthorn cattle stand up quite well to work. The questions we set ourselves to answer in our experiments were: "what is the best kind of cultivation under average local conditions, *i.e.*, ridge or flat?", and "what implement, or implements, can do this most economically?".

Implements used.

So far we have experimented with the following :—

Ransomes "DY" ridging plough,
,, "M.S.N."single furrow plough,
,, "Punjab" ,, ,, ,,
,, "Victory" ,, ,, ,,
,, BTSL cultivator,
Nigerian 5 tine iron cultivator from Kano,
Nigerian pattern 3 tine cultivator made locally upon a log frame.

Ridge Cultivation v. Flat.

So far experiments suggest that under the light soil conditions here, the combination of Ransomes DY ridging plough and the Nigerian pattern wooden cultivator will prove the most economical combination. Experiments over the last three years show a definite advantage in favour of ridging (see Appendix IV, Tables 3-7) as against flat cultivation; although, as might be expected, the effect upon yield varies in different places and in different seasons. Some of the advantages in favour of ridging are:—

1. Planting in straight lines is simplified and subsequent inter-cultivation is made more easy.

2. Contoured ridging is particularly useful as a measure to check soil erosion.

3. Cultivation can be extended to fertile valley lands too wet to grow crops on the flat.

4. Manure is concentrated in the middle of the ridge where feeding roots can make most use of it.

It has been found that with a DY plough an acre or more can be ridged in a day by a pair of bullocks working in the morning and in the evening. Excellent ridges are being made in Tamale by the Officer-in-Charge using the single furrow "Victory" plough, but since this involves going over the land twice we may find here in the Northern Province, with precarious early rains and a large area of early millet to plant, that the more quickly made, though possibly less efficient, ridges of the DY plough will suit us better. This matter will receive attention in the future.

III. *Manuring.*

a. *Manufacture of Manure.*

In the improvement of local agriculture attention to cultivation and manuring must be given together, for the one cannot take full effect without the other. The effects of quite small dressings (2 to 5 tons per acre) of native compost upon crop yields (see Appendix II, Tables 6 and 7) leave no doubt as to the order of improvement which we may expect from attention to this subject. The amazing growth of crops in the immediate vicinity of compounds tells its own story. But as we have seen, only 12% of the total area of land cultivated upon native farms receives a dressing of manure, and this is quite inadequate to maintain fertility under a system of continuous cultivation. We set ourselves to find out, therefore, how, with a reasonable head of stock, we could make manure in the biggest quantity and of the best quality. Green manuring could not be considered locally for obvious reasons; some form of compost or pen manure was envisaged, or a combination of the two.

Compost.

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Since the native manure is a compost, inefficiently prepared from vegetable waste and the sweepings of animal manure from the compounds, we turned our attention first to the manufacture of compost on the lines advocated by Sir Albert Howard at Indore (15). A battery of pits was laid down at Zuarungu in 1935 and "Indore" compost of excellent quality was prepared. (For analysis see Appendix IV, Table 8). But as Sir Frank Stockdale pointed out during his visit to Zuarungu in 1935, the process was far too complicated for the local native to adopt at present; and the shortage of water in the dry season would make it impracticable during half the year. The experience we gained of the decomposition of organic matter was valuable however. The method has now been discarded in favour of the manufacture of farmyard manure.

Farmyard Manure.

By farmyard manure is understood the material which results from the decomposition of cellulosic wastes—mainly cereal stalks and grasses—supplied as bedding to livestock; it receives the dung and urine from the stock and is trampled and allowed to accumulate under foot. Farmyard manure forms the basis of most systems of arable farming in the world; it has been adopted in Nigeria (3), Tanganyika (16), and elsewhere, in mixed farming; and we have adopted it here with most satisfactory results. It has been found that a pair of bullocks will produce about 5 tons of manure of good quality in a year, and a donkey, just over two tons.

The stock are housed in a pen, part of which is open, and part covered. The manure is allowed to accumulate in the covered part where clean grass bedding is added every morning. In the open part resistant material, like guinea corn stalks, is trampled and soaked with rain in the wet season; as it gets broken up it is thrown into the covered part together with any dung dropped outside. The junction of the walls and floor of the pen is rounded, and the floor is made saucer-shaped to reduce air pockets. Very little fly breeding has been found to take place and, if sufficient bedding is supplied, the pen keeps "sweet" and clean. So far only working bullocks and a donkey have been kept in this way. It has been suggested that the method may not be satisfactory with smaller stock and calves.

Human Health.

From the standpoint of human health we have convinced the local Health Authorities that so far from being insanitary, our method of manufacturing farmyard manure actually represents an

●654 advance in domestic sanitation over the present native practice. We are agreed, however, that it is desirable to keep stock separated from the peoples' living quarters; that a roof is essential in the rainy season; and that clean bedding must be put down regularly and in adequate quantities. (It will be remembered, see page 33, that the present native practice is to keep livestock at night within the compound with no litter, upon an unbeaten floor, which is only irregularly cleaned out, and there is no roof protection; this dirty yard has to be crossed in passing from the entrance of the compound, to the living quarters.)

b. *Utilisation of Manure.*

Manurial experiments have been carried out at Zuarungu and Navrongo since 1934 using small dressings, 2 tons or 4 tons, of farmyard manure, "Indore" compost, and native compost. (The manure used in the 1934 experiments was leached cattle dung of doubtful value.) Mean yields obtained in these experiments are given in Appendix IV, Tables 9 to 13. It will be seen that these small dressings of manure resulted in yield increases of up to 80% over the yields from controls, unmanured. It should be noted, however, that nearly all our yields compare very unfavourably with yields upon native farms. The reason for this is that our experiment centres, in every case, are situated upon land completely out of condition. Nevertheless our results are valid within the limitations of the trials.

Residual Values.

Residual manurial trials at Navrongo showed statistically significant values remaining after the application of 2 tons and 4 tons of dung to sweet potatoes, coleus potatoes, and mixed cereals, in 1934, upon subsequent cereal crops in 1935 and 1936. The residual effect of manure in these trials in 1936 was more marked upon the vegetative growth early in the season, than was reflected in the yields.

Optimum Dressing.

Our experiments so far suggest that the optimum dressing of manure under local conditions is probably from 2 to 4 tons per acre, and that such a dressing is desirable at least once in four years. It should be mentioned here that this is the optimum under present conditions; with an increase in livestock, and the introduction of stall feeding, the amount of manure available will be increased and heavier dressings may be practicable. So far we have refrained from experimenting with anything outside the capacity of the better farmers in the district to adopt; it would be of little value to us to know, for instance, that ten tons of manure per acre are desirable, when the maximum amount available is say three or four tons. And if these small dressings were not satisfactory we should have to consider other measures for maintaining fertility.

IV. *Root Crops.*

The desirability of increasing the proportion of land planted with root crops has already been stated. Experiments have been conducted with the following crops: yams (Dioscorea spp.), sweet potatoes (Ipomoea batatas), cassava (Manihot utilissima), and Coleus potatoes (Coleus dysentericus). The conclusions reached with regard to each are discussed below.

Yams.

Yams are the staple crop of the Mamprusis and Dagombas further South, and except for one or two special areas near the Volta Rivers—South Kusasi and South East Zuarungu—where conditions resemble those in Mamprusi, they are practically not grown at all in North Mamprusi. Yams are imported, however, and sell for very good prices in local markets. Ill considered attempts to introduce yams in the past had not met with much success (a notable exception being Chana, in Navrongo Area), and it was considered desirable to explore the situation by experiment. [244]

Our experiments have taken the form of variety trials and two Dagomba varieties, Kuki and Puno, have proved outstandingly the best yielders in every trial, see Appendix IV, Tables 14 and 15. But even the best yield from these does not compare with an indifferent yield in Dagomba. Nevertheless, a low yield of saleable tubers might prove profitable for sale locally as a luxury crop. In a season when rains come early and keep on late, yams yield fairly well; but since the early and the late rains are notoriously variable in North Mamprusi, yams must always be regarded as a gamble and only small scale planting is recommended. A point in favour of yams, which was brought out in the Unit Holding Rotation Experiment at Navrongo in 1936, is the remarkably high residual value of the heavy yam cultivation by comparison with the cultivation for sweet potatoes; this was shown by the yields of a subsequent mixed cereal crop. (The difference was nearly 100%.) A small area of yams would appear to be worth including in unit holding trials.

Sweet Potatoes.

●654 Three local varieties of sweet potatoes have been tested at Zuarungu and Navrongo—NANURI-SUNGA, NANURI-PUNGA, and NANURI-YADAGA. Of these, the last two have proved the easiest to establish and the most consistent yielders. The first has therefore been discarded. Results of these trials are given in Appendix IV, Table 16. Our yields so far have not been very satisfactory (between 2 and 3 tons per acre of tubers), but the reason for this has been due largely to the difficulty of obtaining sufficient planting material. There can be no doubt as to the value of this crop in a system of mixed farming locally. The tubers and tops provide very palatable fodder for livestock in the early part of the dry season when grazing becomes of poor value. The importance of the crop as a famine reserve for the people in years of locust invasions requires no stressing. Our practice is to plough up a ridge of sweet potatoes a day, as required for feeding. The tubers keep quite well in the ground until the end of February. Sun-dried, sliced tubers were found to keep very well for the whole of the dry season. There is undoubtedly a big future for this crop, and we are including a large proportion of it in the root area on unit holdings.

Cassava.

We have not very much information upon this crop in North Mamprusi. Observation plots at Zuarungu and Navrongo were planted in May and June, 1935, and yielded at the rate of from 2 to 6 tons of tubers per acre in February and March of 1937, having occupied the ground for about twenty months. Cassava is of particular value upon the mixed farm as a succulent food for livestock during the period from mid-February, when sweet potatoes start to rot in the ground, until the fresh grass is ready for grazing in mid-April. And as a famine reserve crop it is renowned the world over. But whilst cassava is obviously a desirable crop to grow, it is quite impracticable upon native farms at present because of damage by livestock, principally goats, during the dry season. Under different conditions, *i.e.*, with enclosure, or attention to the control of livestock, cassava could come into its own. The difficulty might be solved if everybody planted it; for individuals to do so without fencing would be a waste of time.

Coleus Potatoes.

This small tuber is of no great importance, but a small quantity is included in Unit Holding experiments since the people normally devote a small area to it. Coleus potatoes do not store well and yield between 1 ton and 1½ tons of tubers per acre under favourable conditions. As a stock food they cannot compare in value with sweet potatoes or cassava.

V. *Miscellaneous Trials.*

Under this heading experiments with groundnuts and rice will be discussed and observation plots of Sesamum indicum, "acha" grass (Digitaria exilis), Bengal beans (Mucuna spp.), Dolichos lab-lab, Dolichos biflorus, Calopogonium mucunoides.

Groundnuts.

Groundnuts are next to cereals in importance in North Mamprusi. They grow very well upon the sand drifts and their value as a potential export crop, as well as an important stock food, gives them a high place in cropping on a mixed farm. Experiments have been confined to testing the merits of selections from "bunch" type Nigerian groundnuts, imported for the groundnut scheme at Ejura in 1933, against the local procumbent variety. In three years of trial the Nigerian variety has proved itself to yield rather better than local and its habit of growth enabled a saving in labour at harvest of 30% to be effected—an important consideration upon a mixed farm. Mean yields obtained in these trials are given in Appendix IV, Table 17.

Rice.

Trials over three years proves conclusively the value of rice locally. It yields a bigger weight of food for man and for beast from a given area, than any crop we have tried so far. Variety yield trials have been carried out to test Local rice, Tamale selections—black husk, and yellow, and Essiama selections, NZ2 and NZ4. Of these, Tamale Yellow has proved itself to be the best; in 1936 it yielded nearly 1,500 lbs. of paddy to the acre and 5,900 lbs. of straw. The working bullocks eat the straw very readily during the dry season. Mean yields from rice trials are given in Appendix IV, Table 18.

Sesamum Indicum.

Odd plants of this crop are occasionally found in North Mamprusi, and following a visit of Dr. W. E. McCulloch, Dietetics Research Officer, Nigeria, in 1931 (17), great hopes were entertained from its extension. Trials have not given satisfactory results however. The plants were severely attacked by caterpillars and growth was not uniform. Planting in the third week of May upon ridges 3' apart was found to be most satisfactory. Early thinning was found to be essential. Trials have now been discontinued in favour of other crops.

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"Acha" Grass (Digitaria exilis).

Observation plots of this small grain plant have been found easy to establish. Yields of up to 470 lbs. of grain per acre have been obtained and 22 cwts. of hay. It is considered however that time and space can be more profitably devoted to other crops, and trials have not been continued. Acha grass has a possible value as a trap crop for the parasite Striga, sometimes a serious pest locally on guinea corn.

Pigeon Peas (Cajanus cajan).

Pigeon peas are not grown locally. Observation plots show that in a long rainy season the crop will grow quite well, but, since it ripens in the dry season, it suffers from damage from livestock in the same way as cassava. Trials are being made with early maturing strains from Pusa, India.

Green Manure and Fodder Crops.

Observation plots of Bengal bean (Mucuna spp.), Dolichos biflorus, Dolichos lab-lab, and Calopogonium mucunoides, have been planted at Zuarungu and Navrongo, and of these, Bengal beans have proved to be outstandingly the best. But all ideas of green manuring have now been given up in favour of farmyard manure; Bengal beans have a value, however, as a fodder crop and small areas are grown for this purpose.

Gum Arabic.

Hopes were entertained at one time of finding in the gum from Acacia Senegal an export crop from North Mamprusi. The tree is found in large numbers in a belt running through the district. Repeated tappings produced very poor results and it is considered that the "harmattan" is not sufficiently severe to cause the tree to respond. Trials have been discontinued.

Section II.—DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS IN PARTICULAR RELATION TO "MIXED FARMING".

In West Africa the term "mixed farming" is used to describe a system of agriculture in which livestock and land are complementary (1). With a pair of bullocks and a plough, from 8 to 12 acres of land can be cultivated instead of the usual 2 to 4 acres by hand methods; and by the use of the farmyard manure made by the working bullocks and other stock a farmer might have, this area of land can be maintained at a reasonable level of fertility, and the wasteful practice of "shifting cultivation" can be eliminated. Depending upon circumstances, the extensive use of the plough is important and a high yield per man farming is the aim; or alternatively, the intensive use of manure is important and a high yield per acre is the aim. Observations made during a visit to Nigeria in 1936 to study mixed farming are recorded in Bulletin No. 33 of the Department (3). We are starting to-day where Nigeria started ten years ago and Nigerian experience is valuable to us here as a guide. The best mixed farming system for North Mamprusi, however, must be worked out to suit our particular conditions. These conditions are discussed below.

Intensive System Required.

That conditions are ripe for the introduction of mixed farming has already been shown. The cultivators of the soil own livestock and practice a system of fixed cultivation relying, in part, upon regular manuring to maintain the level of crop production. But the system is not nearly so intensive as conditions demand. It is therefore the intensive use of manure with a high yield per acre which is important here.

Animal drawn implements, though necessary to enable the manure to take full effect, come second. In passing, it may be mentioned that herein lies the main difference between a system for North Mamprusi and one for South Mamprusi and Dagomba. In the South, where land is abundant, the extensive use of the plough will be important, with possibly a combination of green manuring and farmyard manure. North Mamprusi resembles the Kano "suburban areas" in Nigeria.

Conservation of Organic Matter.

"Non-burning".

The first step, which it is within the power of every farmer to adopt without the expenditure of capital, is to conserve all the waste vegetable products from the farm and from waste land (grazing areas, roadsides, fallow) for use as fodder, or if too coarse, as litter, for livestock. This implies control of the wasteful practice of burning. A good start was made in Zuarungu Area in 1936-37 season through the Native Administration: during this period practically no wide scale burning took place. This measure alone is likely to have far reaching effects for the welfare of the district, quite apart from its essential relationship with mixed farming. These effects will be cumulative and will not be appreciable in a single year; some of the more important advantages which may be expected are:—

1. Organic matter, in which local soils are particularly deficient, will be conserved for use as the basis of farmyard manure.

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2. Livestock fodder can be obtained for the dry season by cutting grass for hay before the onset of harmattan, and by the conservation of cereal and legume leaves.

3. Grazing lands will be improved, both in the stock carrying capacity and in the length of the grazing period.

4. Soil erosion will be considerably reduced (and less damage to roads). Control of vegetation must always be the first anti-erosion measure.

5. Tree growth will be assisted, both timber—notably deficient—and fruit. (Figures from Yendi Shea Reserve, in Dagomba, show this.)

6. Tree population will increase due to more successful regeneration.

7. Water-table of district will have a higher average height throughout the year, due to a slower rate of percolation, less run-off, and decreased evaporation.

8. Less danger from shortage of roofing grass. (This is likely to become increasingly important as flat roofs must give way to thatch, due, in part, to a growing shortage of strong timbers.) It might also be mentioned that there is a small market for grass, used as fuel in the producer gas engine, at Nangodi Mine.

Against "non-burning" very little can be said in North Mamprusi, In a few swamp areas burning might be desirable to check the development of acid conditions, and on the edges of bush land, as around Pwalagu on the Volta River, tall grass—tall because there is not sufficient population to cut all that is available—might encourage lions to come unpleasantly close to the houses. The control of cattle ticks has been suggested, but regular "dipping" is the remedy for these. Care must be taken to see that grass in waste places and on grazing lands is cut before the middle of December, for a late burn is more serious than the usual burn in November and December, and the risk will be ever present. It must be stressed here that it is not sufficient merely "not to burn"; if the grass cannot be kept close by grazing, coarse, dead grass must be cut down during the dry season, to enable the fresh grass to come through at the beginning of the following rains. (This is one of the reasons why "non-burning" is applicable at present only to areas where the system of cultivation is "fixed" and grass and grass-land is scarce and valuable because the proportion of arable to grass is high. In South Mamprusi and Dagomba, "shifting" cultivation is the practice and the proportion of arable to grass ("bush") is infinitesimal; the comparatively small population cannot possibly use all the grass available, and cannot, and need not, try to prevent burning; although they can ensure an early burn in many places with advantage. The difference between the two sets of conditions has been frequently ignored in discussions on the subject in the Northern Territories.) It is interesting to observe that burning of the veld is condemned in South Africa and parts of East Africa, and controlled by strict legislation.

Manufacture of Manure.

If the material conserved in the way described above is supplied as bedding to livestock, manure of excellent quality can be made by the method explained on page 45. It is desirable to feed stock on the farm as much as possible so that the loss of the dung and urine is reduced to a minimum. At least three times as much manure can be made in this way with a given head of stock than the native makes at present; and furthermore, farmyard manure is richer in plant food than native compost (see Appendix IV, Table 8). The output of manure from a mixed farm with an average stocking of say 2 working bullocks, 1 cow and calf, 1 donkey, 3 sheep and 6 goats (c.f. average stocking per compound, text Table 5, page 32) would be at least 8 tons per annum. Yields from native farms, see text Table 4, page 30, and from our experiments, page 46, show an average crop yield increase of up to 80% from the use of such small dressings of manure as 2 to 4 tons per acre; and residual trials show a value remaining in the third season after application. The average area of land farmed by a compound is nearly 8 acres; thus, with the stocking we have assumed, about 25% of the whole farm could be dressed with manure at the rate of 4 tons per acre in each year, instead of a smaller average dressing upon 12% of the area.

It will be seen that by the extension of this aspect of mixed farming alone—the means for which already exist and involve no more than the time of the farmer, of which he has an abundance, and the trouble of collecting and utilising the waste materials already everywhere in the district—much can be done towards ensuring an adequate food supply for the people, and better conditions for their livestock.

Animal Cultivation.

But whilst to increase soil fertility by the use of manure is a big step forward, not to improve methods of cultivation at the same time would be to lose much of the potential value of that fertility; manuring and cultivation must go hand in hand. Animal cultivation provides the solution. Admittedly more than half the farms in North Mamprusi are too small in area, too irregular in shape, too stony, or too hilly, to allow of economic animal cultivation, but there is also a large number of farms—more than we can hope to affect for many years to come—which are suitable, and it is upon these that we must concentrate. With expansion in the future, it is probable that land will be specially selected because of its suitability for animal cultivation, but this time is sufficiently far ahead not to concern us at the moment, although it would be well to keep it in mind. Local West African Shorthorn bullocks have been found to be easy to train and to handle, and to be sufficiently heavy for ploughing the light soils of the district; although an increase in size would be helpful. Experiments have shown that the type of cultivation best suited to our conditions is to plant crops on ridges, and that by using a light scuffling and ridging plough, and a simple cultivator, one man and a boy, with his wife to assist in planting, can farm an 8 acre holding with the work of two bullocks. Not only is this area three times the size of the area a man cultivates by hand at present (see page 18) but the cultivation is more efficiently performed. These factors, taken into consideration with manuring, already discussed, give some idea of the scope of the improvement at which we are aiming.

Economics of the Plough.

What we have yet to prove, however, is that within a reasonable period, say four years, a farmer will receive a return from the use of bullocks and bullock drawn implements to cover the original cost of the implements, and to provide reasonable interest on the extra farming capital invested, and for his enterprise. Unless we can prove conclusively that mixed farming is profitable no amount of demonstration can extend the use of the plough upon any great scale; neither can we put up a case to Government or the Native Authority for loans to supply the initial farming capital. The proof lies in the actual returns obtained from experimental unit holdings. The free distribution of implements to Chiefs and Headmen will not demonstrate the economic value of these implements; we know that a plough can work locally, but can it work profitably? Let us examine the matter more closely.

Export Essential.

Since the plough is an imported article it follows that for every one which comes into the country, something of an equivalent value must go out, directly or indirectly. It has been shown that the high cost of road transport rules out the possibility of an export crop for an overseas market (1 and 18). It is in this respect that we are at such a disadvantage by comparison with Northern Nigeria, where cheap rail transport enables cotton and groundnuts to be profitably exported from distances more than 600 miles from the coast. The alternative is a local export to some part of the country with money to spend; the obvious solution lies in the export of livestock to Ashanti and the Colony. 654

Livestock Industry.

The conditions under which livestock are kept in North Mamprusi have been fully discussed under the heading "Animal Husbandry", pages 31 to 33. It has been shown that whilst livestock are used mainly for uneconomic purposes, marriage dowries and sacrifice, they are becoming increasingly regarded as a source of money; and with the rapid development in money consciousness which is proceeding to-day, there is no doubt that the value of livestock will become to be recognised more and more. Survey showed that 54% of compounds (probably rather less over the whole district) owned cattle of the West African Shorthorn type. Bullocks find a ready sale to butchers' agents at prices varying from £1 10s. to £3 15s.; and milk, in the form of curds, is sold in local markets. Nearly all compounds own sheep, goats, fowls, and guinea fowls, and the trade in fowls is already very well established. The market for livestock in Ashanti and the Colony is practically unlimited; only a very small proportion of the meat slaughtered is locally grown. But if this proportion is to be increased, local methods of animal husbandry must be improved. Attention to breeding alone is not enough, as the Director of Veterinary Services pointed out in his Annual Report for 1935-36 (12). And because the bulk of the livestock in the Gold Coast belong to the cultivators of the soil, it will be seen, that the development of mixed farming is just as necessary for the future of the livestock industry, as the development of the livestock industry is for the future of mixed farming. Thus the ultimate justification for the investment of capital in working bullocks and cattle-drawn implements must be in the export of livestock. Work with livestock is necessarily slow, but if good feeding and good breeding produce an improvement in the local stock equivalent to the improvement effected in Northern Nigeria, by attention to these matters with Zebu cattle (13)—and there would seem to be no reason why it should not—we shall have little difficulty in justifying the cost of a plough, when local unimproved bullocks are worth nearly £4 a head to butchers' agents at the present time. 231 [178] [435]

Sale of Surplus Foodstuffs.

But before livestock receive better treatment the people themselves must have sufficient food, and it is by the sale, as food upon local markets, of a surplus of production over individual requirements that the first mixed farmers are likely to receive a return. At the present time, large quantities of grain are imported from 439

200 The limiting factor for the rapid extension of mixed farming is likely to be the people themselves. But at least we must prove and demonstrate our system before we can say that the people will not follow. Chiefs and Headmen must lead the way. The best means of extending our results is through the machinery of the Native Administration, a section of which will have to be adapted and organised for the purpose. It is considered that the extension of proved agricultural results is as much a political problem, if not more so, than an agricultural problem.

Much careful research work requires to be done before a system suitable for general adoption can be recommended. But we have sufficient information to proceed quietly with extension work in the case of school farms, Chiefs, etc. Undue haste at the present time might seriously jeopardize future chances of success. That there will be difficulties in the future is certain; it would be well to bear in mind, however, that it is only the good farmers we can help, farmers above the average; and the number we can effect in the early stages will be very small.

Most of the requirements for mixed farming already exist in the district; organisation and farming capital are lacking. That the local farmers already own cattle and practice fixed cultivation and regular manuring, are points in our favour by comparison with Nigeria where very few peasant cultivators owned cattle. There will be no return to the tedious hoe system of farming once the advantages of the new system have been appreciated. The introduction of mixed farming offers undoubtedly the best basis for the introduction of all other measures designed for the welfare of the natives in North Mamprusi.

School Farms.

654 A start with demonstration has been made in 1937 by establishing mixed farming units attached to the Native Administration Schools at Sandema and Bawku. These farms consist of 8 acre units run by two paid labourers using a pair of bullocks, a plough, and a locally made cultivator. The boys assist with planting, and light operations such as thinning. The purpose of school farm is a dual one: they are intended, firstly, to produce food as economically as possible to reduce the schools' messing expenses; and secondly, as ocular demonstrations of improved methods of farming for the pupils. Many of the boys at these schools will become chiefs of the district: for them to see and assist with our methods of farming through a number of consecutive seasons, makes the time we devote to school farms a valuable investment; the dividends we shall reap in future extension work. The size of

these farms is limited at present by the amount of manure available; it is hoped in the future to increase the stocking by the addition of a cow, or cows.

N.A. Demonstration Farms.

In addition to the school farms, we are starting two demonstration farms in 1937. One is at Bongo, ten miles North of Zuarungu, the other, at Garu, South of Bawku; both are being paid for entirely by the Native Authority. At Bongo, in the centre of a thickly populated area, we are demonstrating the intensive use of manure upon a six acre holding, with food crops, and later, fowls, as saleable produce. At Garu the farm is eight acres in area, with room for expansion; groundnuts, and later, cattle, are intended to be the saleable produce here. The dry season feeding of stock and the manufacture of farmyard manure are the features most stressed at present. A point in connection with these mixed holdings which is sometimes forgotten is that it takes at least three years to get one working as a self-contained unit, that is, the fodder and bedding which is grown in 1937, is used in 1938, and forms the basis of the manure for the 1939 season. We are coming up against a number of practical difficulties in the first year, the chief of these being: inexperienced staff and labour, newly trained cattle, stumps and outcrops of stones in the farms. Very late rains in 1937 season have not been in our favour.

We have made a start and before going any further it behoves us to consolidate this start during the next two seasons. It is unlikely that we have found the best system for local conditions from the beginning, and we shall learn much from the experience of the next two years. 00 0

Training of Staff.

There is an immediate need for a small experimental stock farm, and for facilities for instructing the staff in some of the principles of animal husbandry if mixed farming is to make steady progress. The curriculum of the farm school run by the Nigerian Agricultural Department at Samaru, near Zaria, would be a valuable guide to what is required in this respect.

Summary.

1. A brief description of the climate, vegetation, soil, population, and economic and social conditions in North Mamprusi, is given in Section I of Part 1, as an introduction to the study of local agriculture.

APPENDIX IV.

MEAN YIELDS FROM EXPERIMENTS.

ROTATIONS.

Table *1.*—Rotation Experiment, Sabiya.
,, *2.*—8 acre Unit Holding Experiment, Navrongo.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENTS.

Table *3.*—Ridge cultivation v. Native method at Goragu.
,, *4.*—Ridge cultivation v. Flat cultivation v. Native method at Yekeni.
,, *5.*—Ridge v. Flat v. Native at Zuarungu.
,, *6.*—Ransomes M.S.N. plough v. Native method at Zuarungu.
,, *7.*—Ransomes "Victory" plough v. Native method at Zuarungu.

MANURING EXPERIMENTS.

Table *8.*—Analysis of Manures used at Zuarungu in 1936—Native compost, "Indore" compost, and farmyard manure.
,, *9.*—Manurial Trial on sweet potatoes and residual values, Navrongo.
,, *10.*—Manurial Trial on Coleus potatoes, Navrongo.
,, *11.*—Manurial Trial on Cereals, Navrongo.
,, *12.*—"Indore" compost v. "Native", Zuarungu.
,, *13.*—"Indore" compost v. Farmyard manure, Zuarungu.

ROOT CROPS.

Table *14.*—Yam Variety Trials, Navrongo.
,, *15.*—Yam Variety Trials, Yekeni.
,, *16.*—Sweet Potato Variety Trials.

MISCELLANEOUS TRIALS.

Table *17.*—Groundnut Variety Trials, Zuarungu.
,, *18.*—Rice Variety Trials, Zuarungu.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 1.

ROTATION EXPERIMENT, SABIYA.

(Exp.: No. 1/34, 1/35, and 1/36.)

654 An experiment started in 1934 to test the best means of developing "bush" land.

Layout.—Latin Square.

Replications.—5.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in lbs. per acre for years 1934, 1935 and 1936.

Cropping	1934	1935	1936
A— Yams	3,124 lbs. tubers	860 lbs.	failed
millet	(not planted)	—	306 lbs. grain
B*— Early millet	failed	123 lbs.	240
guinea corn	87 lbs. grain	122	failed (locusts)
C— Early millet	failed	100 lbs.	78
late millet	257 lbs.	178 lbs.	238
D— Early millet	failed	99 lbs.	36
groundnuts	164 lbs.	307 lbs.	323
N**— (Native method)			
Early millet	—	42	—
late millet	—	131	—
alternated with			
Early millet	failed		16
guinea corn	54	—	failed (locusts)

*Manured at rate of 2 tons per acre in 1935 and 1936. No manure applied in 1934.

**Native method. This is not exactly what a native would do since no early millet is planted in 'bush' farms.

Note.—Failures are due mainly to the ravages of pests. So far yields do not give a true picture of the condition of this experiment. It is too early to draw any conclusions from this experiment.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 2.

8 ACRE UNIT HOLDING EXPERIMENT, NAVRONGO.

(Exp.: No. 2/35, and 2/36.)

Mean yields per acre from 4 fields each of two acres, worked by one man, his wife and a boy, as a mixed farm unit, with two working bullocks, a ridging plough and cultivator.

Cropping	1935		1936	
	Field	Yield	Field	Yield
Yams (½ acre)	C	17.6 cwts.	B	31 cwts.
Sweet potatoes (1 acre)		49.7 „		20.3 „
Coleus potatoes (¼ acre)...		26.5 „		10.8 „
Cassava (¼ acre)		—		120 „
Early millet*	D	36 lbs.	C	86 lbs.
guinea corn		215 „		331 „
cowpeas		20 „		103 „
Early millet	A	45 lbs.	D	42 lbs.
late millet		288 „		73 „
cowpeas		12 „		52 „
Early millet (½ acre)	B	107 lbs.	A	failed
groundnuts		115 „		442 lbs.
Early millet		failed		failed
Bengal beans		no weights		12½ cwts. hay

*Manured 2 tons dung per acre. Farmyard manure available for 1937 season.

Conclusion.

A man and his wife with the assistance of a small boy can farm fairly easily 8 acres cropped as above. Experience may suggest desirable modifications.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 3.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN THE HEADMAN OF GORAGU'S COMPOUND FARM.

(Exp. : Nos. 7/34, 5/35, and 4/36.)

Treatments.—2. To test cultivation before planting on 3′ ridges against native practice.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—11.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields per acre of grain.

Season	Cropping	Native	Ridged
1934	Early millet	535	980
	guinea corn	66	108
1935	Early millet	660	1,048
	guinea corn	29	472
1936	Early millet	897	1,276
	guinea corn	183	500
Combined grain yield from 1 acre in three years ...		2,370 lbs.	4,384 lbs.

Note.—Cultivations in 1934 and 1935 were done by hand. In 1936 with DY ridging plough. Differences definitely statistically significant in each year.

Conclusion.

There can be no doubt whatever as to the value of ridging under the conditions of this trial. Goragu lies at the foot of the Tong Hills on the North side between Tongo and Shia.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 4.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN THE COMPOUND FARM OF THE HEADMAN OF YEKENI.

(Exp. : Nos. 8/34, 6/35, and 5/36.)

Treatments.—3. To test cultivation before planting on 3′ ridges, in rows 3′ apart on the flat, against control, native practice.

Mean yields in lbs. of grain per acre.

Year	Cropping	Native	Ridged	Flat
1934	Early millet	17	87	—
	guinea corn	321	270	—
1935	Early millet	219	271	214
	guinea corn	100	145	198
1936	Early millet	305	420	376
	late millet	133	140	144

Note.—Cultivations in 1924 and 1935 done by hand. In 1936 with animal cultivation.

Conclusion.

Definite advantage in favour of cultivation before planting. No difference between ridge and flat. Manuring would probably have an effect. All yields are poor.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 5.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT ON THE EXPERIMENT AREA AT ZUARUNGU.

Exp. : Nos. 6/34, 7/35, and 6/36.)

Treatments.—3. To test cultivation before planting on 3′ ridges, in rows 3′ apart on flat against native method.

Layout.—Chessboard.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Replications.—9.

Mean yields per acre.

Year	Cropping	Control Native	Ridged	Flat
1934	Early millet	63	87	149
	guinea corn	267	241	581
1935	Early millet	150	332	256
	guinea corn	15	36	29
1936	Early millet	156	189	248
	late millet	178	231	292

Conclusion.

Yields are very low and can be accepted only with caution. The balance appears to be in favour of ridging if all factors are taken into consideration—ease of planting and intercultivation, etc.

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APPENDIX IV—TABLE 6.

CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN COMPOUND FARM OF ADACHAMA, ZUARUNGU (1936).

(Exp.: No. 7/36.)

Treatments.—2. To test cultivation with Ransomes M.S.N. single furrow plough before planting, against Native practice.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—5.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in grain per acre.

Cropping	Control Native	Ploughed
Early millet	366 lbs.	386 lbs.
late millet	586 „	692 „
cowpeas	49 „	44 „

Conclusion.

Taking the small number of replications into consideration the difference in yield is only barely significant $\left(\frac{\text{Md}}{\text{s.e.}} = 2.5\right)$. The value of the work was in the ease of cultivation and the cleanliness of the ground in the early stages.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 7.

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CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT IN COMPOUND FARM OF ABAGNA, ZUARUNGU (1936).

(Exp.: No. 8/36.)

Treatments.—2. To test cultivation with Ransomes "Victory" plough (single furrow) before planting, against native method.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—5.

Sise of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in grain per acre.

Cropping	Control Native	Ploughed
Early millet	321 lbs.	401 lbs.
late millet	283 „	336 „
cowpeas	137 „	132 „
neri	59 „	64 „

Conclusion.

These differences did not prove statistically significant but as in Experiment 7/36, ploughing effected a great saving of labour at a critical season.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 8.

ANALYSES OF MANURES USED AT ZUARUNGU IN 1936.

(Analyses carried out by the Agricultural Chemist, Mr. M. Greenwood.)

(Analyses on air dried, fine samples.)

	Native Compost	Zuarungu-made	
		" Indore " Compost	Farmyard Manure
Moisture	3.8	6.2	6.6
Insol. ash	78.8	77.2	67.9
Sol. ash	6.1	6.4	7.4
Loss on ignition	11.3	10.2	18.1
Nitrogen (including nitrates)	.47	.61	.68
P O...	.36	.32	.71
K O	.79	.34	1.13

Note.—The analyses show values on the low side. Those for " Indore " compost and farmyard manure are comparable with published Indian figures.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 9.

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MANURIAL TRIAL UPON SWEET POTATOES AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, AND THE RESIDUAL MANURIAL EFFECT UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 9/34, 9/35, 12/36.)

To test 4 tons of manure (leached-out cattle dung from Native Administration kraal) against control, "no manure".

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields per acre in lbs.

Year	Crop	Control no manure	Manured 1934 4 tons per acre
1934	Sweet potatoes	2,308 lbs. tubers	3,491 lbs.
1935	Early millet ... ... guinea corn	28 lbs. grain 357 „ „	60 lbs. 494 „
1936	Early millet ... ... late millet	47 lbs. grain 173 „ „	68 lbs. 191 „

Conclusion.

Although yields are low, all differences proved statistically significant. There is a definite residual manurial value remaining in the third season after application. Some other factor, other than manuring, requires attention—probably cultivation. The land is badly out of condition.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 10.

MANURIAL TRIAL UPON COLEUS POTATOES AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, AND THE RESIDUAL MANURIAL EFFECT UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp. : Nos. 10/34, 10/35, and 13/36.)

To test 4 tons of manure per acre (leached-out cattle dung from Native Administration kraal) against control, no manure.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields in lbs. per acre.

Year	Crop	Control no manure	Manured 1934 4 tons per acre
1934	Coleus potatoes	500 lbs. tubers	784 lbs. tubers
1935	Early millet	21 lbs. grain	115 lbs. grain
	guinea corn	192 „ „	465 „ „
1936	Early millet	44 lbs. grain	64 lbs. grain
	late millet	133 „ „	248 „ „

Conclusion.

Although yields are low all differences proved statistically significant. See remarks, Table 9.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 11.

MANURIAL TRIALS UPON MIXED CEREALS AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, AND THE RESIDUAL MANURIAL EFFECTS UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 11/34, 11/35, and 14/36.)

To test the effects of 4 tons of manure per acre and 2 tons of manure per acre (leached-out cattle dung from the Native Administration kraal at Navrongo) against control, no manure.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—4.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yields of grain in lbs. per acre.

Year	Cropping	Control no manure	2 tons manure 1934	4 tons manure 1934
1934	Early millet	14	71	91
	guinea corn	83	211	296
1935	Early millet	10	23	26
	late millet	189	211	336
1936	Early millet	63	93	104
	guinea corn	140	145	227

Conclusion.

The initial level of fertility was too low and the number of replications was insufficient to give us more than an indication of response to manure and residual manurial values. See note, Table 9.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 12.

MANURIAL TRIAL AT ZUARUNGU IN 1936 TO TEST "INDORE" COMPOST, AND NATIVE COMPOST AGAINST NO MANURE.

(Exp.: No. 10/36.)

Treatments.—3. 2 tons of "Indore" compost,
2 tons of Native compost,
no manure, control.

Layout.—Strip method.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Replications.—7.

Mean yield of grain per acre.

Crops planted	No manure	"Indore" compost 2 tons per acre	Native compost 2 tons per acre
Early millet	185	292	373
guinea corn	75	132	106

Conclusion.

All differences proved to be statistically significant. Under the conditions of the trial—typical of some of the poorest land around Zuarungu—the value of such small dressings of manure as 2 tons per acre is definite. It should be noted that whilst weight for weight native compost proved significantly better than Indore compost, a very much greater bulk of manure can be produced by the Indore process from a given head of stock than by the native method. This is important, since it is the gross yield which counts in practice.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 13.

MANURIAL EXPERIMENT AT ZUARUNGU IN 1936 TO TEST THE EFFECTS OF "INDORE" COMPOST AND FARMYARD MANURE UPON MIXED CEREALS IN 1936, AND THE RESIDUAL EFFECTS UPON SWEET POTATOES IN 1937.

Treatments.—3. "Indore" compost 2 tons per acre.
Farmyard manure 2 tons per acre.
Control, no manure.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

Mean yield in lbs. of grain per acre.

Crop	Control No manure	"Indore" compost 2 tons per acre	Farmyard manure 2 tons per acre
Early millet	104 lbs.	207 lbs.	185 lbs.
guinea corn	92 ,,	138 ,,	150 ,,

Conclusion.

The increase in favour [illegible] manure over no manure proved to be definitely significant, but not the difference between manures. Again it must be emphasised how much lower these yields are than district means. The site of [illegible] experiment was newly acquired. Neighbouring farmers expressed surprise not at the lowness of the yields but that we got a yield at all. It is doubtful whether any residual value remains.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 14.

YAM VARIETY TRIALS AT NAVRONGO IN 1934, 1935, AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 3/34, 3/35, and 15/36.)

To test nine Dagomba varieties of yam. Yams were planted in mounds made 5′ x 5′, a row with each variety in series. Individual mound weights were taken at harvest and the following table shows the mean weight per bearing mound for the three years of trial.

Variety	Mean weight of tubers per bearing mound		
	1934	1935	1936
Kuki	2.3 lbs.	1.55 lbs.	4.20 lbs.
Dapam	2.8 ,,	1.53 ,,	2.05 ,,
Labaco	2.3 ,,	1.04 ,,	2.75 ,,
Puno	1.9 ,,	1.70 ,,	2.97 ,,
Fugra	1.9 ,,	1.68 ,,	2.50 ,,
Zilambo	1.8 ,,	1.68 ,,	2.36 ,,
Peringa	1.6 ,,	1.14 ,,	1.61 ,,
Lili	1.4 ,,	1.07 ,,	2.24 ,,
Chenchito	1.2 ,,	—	—
Mean for all varieties ...	1.9 ,,	1.64 ,,	2.67 ,,
Bearing mounds	335	1,022	652
Percentage bearing ...	83%	67%	78%

Conclusion.

Kuki appears to be the best variety we have found up to date.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 15.

YAM VARIETY TRIALS AT YEKENI IN 1934, 1935, AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 4/34, 4/35, and 16/36.)

To test nine Dagomba varieties of yam. Yam were planted in mounds 5′ x 5′, a row with each variety. Individual mound weights were taken at harvest. The following table shows the mean yields per bearing mound obtained for each year of trial.

Variety	Mean weight of fresh tubers per bearing mound		
	1934	1935	1936
Kuki	4.3 lbs.	3.30 lbs.	2.57 lbs.
Dapam	2.6 „	—	2.30 „
Labaco	2.4 „	—	—
Puno	3.1 „	3.90 „	2.13 „
Fugra	3.2 „	1.15 „	—
Zilambo	2.9 „	2.80 „	2.11 „
Peringa	2.8 „	—	—
Lili	3.0 „	2.60 „	2.09 „
Chinchito	1.9 „	—	—
Mean weight for all varieties	2.9 „	3.02 „	2.23 „
No. bearing mounds ...	301	14[illegible]	116
Percentage bearing ...	71%	[illegible]%	46%*

*32% of seed yams were stolen two weeks after planting.

Conclusion.

The varieties Kuki, Puno, and Dapam appear to be the best. Yields are too low to warrant extensive extension.

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 16.

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VARIETY YIELD TRIALS OF SWEET POTATOES AT ZUARUNGU AND NAVRONGO IN 1935 AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 17/35, 19/35, 19/36, 20/36.)

To test three local varieties of sweet potatoes:—

Nanuri-sunga, entire leaves, red stem, red tuber.
Nanuri-punga, entire leaves, white tuber.
Nanuri-yadaga, indented leaves, white tuber.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—6.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre at Zuarungu.
1/20th acre at Navrongo.

Summary of mean yields in cwts. per acre.

Variety	Zuarungu		Navrongo	
	1935	1936	1935	1936
Nanuri-sunga	30 cwts.	14 cwts.	62¼ cwts.	7½ cwts.
Nanuri-punga	40 „	32½ „	42¾ „	24 „
Nanuri-yadaga	43 „	34½ „	40½ „	34 „

Conclusion.

Difficulty has been experienced in each year in obtaining sufficient planting material. Nanuri-sunga is the least vigorous of the three varieties and suffered most, except in 1935 at Navrongo. The reason for the comparatively high yield in that year is not understood.

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APPENDIX IV—TABLE 17.

GROUNDNUT VARIETY TRIALS AT ZUARUNGU IN 1934, 1935, AND 1936.

(Exp.: Nos. 13/34, 20/35, and 21/36.)

To test the relative merits of an upright (bunch) type of groundnut from Nigeria against the local procumbent variety. It was considered that a bunch variety would prove more suitable for work with animal drawn implements.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—11 (only 6 in 1934).

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Mean yields in lbs. per acre (dry in shell.)

Year	Method of Planting	Local Procumbent	Nigerian Bunch
1934	Flat 9"×9"	784	1,043
	Flat 18"×18"	936	744
1935	Flat 2'×1'	810	998
	Ridge 2'×1'	788	835
1936	Flat 1'×9"	1,075	1,174

Conclusion.

Although the differences are not statistically significant, the balance goes in favour of the bunch variety if for no other reason than the ease of harvesting. In 1936 the labour required to harvest the Nigerian groundnut was 30% less than for the local.

APPENDIX IV—TABLE 18.

RICE VARIETY TRIALS AT ZUARUNGU.

To test the following varieties:—

Tamale Black Selection.
Tamale Yellow ,,
Essiama NZ2 ,,
Essiama NZ4 ,,

1934. Single observation plots of ½ acre were put down in 1934.

1935. Statistical layout was adopted.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—5.

Size of Plots.—1/20th acre.

1936. Tamale Yellow, which had proved most satisfactory was tested against Local.

Layout.—Strip method.

Replications.—10.

Size of Plots.—1/40th acre.

Mean yields of paddy per acre are given below.

Variety	1934	1935	1936	Straw 1936
Tamale Black	1,463	1,605	—	—
Tamale Yellow	1,747	1,589	1,411	5,900 lbs.
Essiama NZ2	1,822	1,087	—	—
Essiama NZ4	1,742	912	—	—
Local	—	—	1,089	5,856 ,,

Conclusion.

The high return of grain and straw from rice locally and the comparative ease of cultivation with bullock drawn implements, makes rice a particularly desirable crop for the mixed farmer to grow.

146 164 [657] No biological or medical research has hitherto been carried out among the Tallensi or their nearest neighbours. Hence it is impossible to determine how far their physique, efficiency, and standard of health have been affected by their low scale of nutrition. To the lay observer they do not appear to be stunted or to show a high incidence of physical defects. They are fortunate in living outside the sleeping-sickness zone, but the common endemic diseases of the region are rife among them. The natives have no reliable remedies for these diseases, and the Government dispensary at Zuarungu, the only regular medical service provided for the district, cannot cope with more than a fraction of the sick. From the point of view of physical health the Tallensi of to-day are probably little better off than their fathers were.

291 515 Native habits of dress and personal hygiene are doubtful assets from the point of view of health. Children go stark naked till adolescence, in the case of boys, and till their first pregnancy in the case of girls. Women go naked except for the perineal band. Men always wear a loin-cloth for the sake of modesty, but it is usually grimy with accumulated dirt. In addition, a man usually wears a goatskin or sheepskin, or a ragged remnant of an old tunic or cloth slung across his back, as his working garb; clothes are worn only on special occasions.

515 Whether or not these customs of dress are injurious, the indifference of the Tallensi to bodily cleanliness cannot be beneficial to their health. By European or Coast African standards, the Tallensi and their neighbours are dirty people. They wash only rarely, especially in the dry season. This is due, in part, to the scarcity of water and to the fact that soap is still an expensive luxury, but also in some measure to native ideas of cleanliness. Tallensi do not object to body dirt. Only young dandies and marriageable girls take pride in a 'clean skin' as a mark of beauty and wash regularly. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most superficial wounds usually fester.

364 [514] [240] The sanitary habits of the natives are equally primitive. A homestead is usually kept fairly clean indoors, but the live-stock yard is inside the homestead, and the accumulation of manure there, as well as the refuse midden just outside the entrance, are the breeding-places of swarms of flies. Then, also, the natives defecate just outside their homesteads. The stench around a Tale homestead in the rainy season is enough to shake the hardiest anthropologist. These noisome accompaniments of home-life do not trouble the natives, who look upon animal manure and human excrement as essential fertilizers for their farms.

181 183 In spite of these hardships and hazards Tallensi set a very high value on their culture and way of life. In his workaday life the native gives an impression of being a steady, sober person with a good grip of himself. He can work hard if necessary, but he can enjoy idleness too. Wasteful and extravagant at times, especially on certain ceremonial occasions, he is normally frugal and abstemious. A keen sense of property and of the value of material goods goes with generosity to kinsfolk and friends. Though he is no stickler for the letter of custom, he attaches great importance to social rights and obligations. Respect for social and genealogical superiors is a strong point of Tale etiquette, but natives are rarely

578 acts as peacemaker. But in principle they go back to the same facts as general wars, the structural differentiation of maximal lineages and clans.

We can see that Tale wars were in fact a kind of intestine feud within a single homogeneous social region, rather than wars in our sense. We have refrained from calling them feuds because they were usually short and sharp and never led to a long series of mutual reprisals. If one war was followed a year later by a war of revenge, as in the instance given in this chapter, that was the end of it. [669] One might even describe them as a kind of civil war, since they sprang from the cleavages inherent in the social structure, particularly the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos. They served to keep these cleavages alive, to defend the corporate unity of the maximal lineage and clan and the corporate rights associated with it, against other like units. They were, at bottom, a mechanism for resolving tensions within the society[1] and not an instrument of political action against outsiders. The ever-present possibility of war was a potent factor in maintaining the segmentary structure of the society. It achieved this by enhancing to the utmost both aspects of the social differentiation of maximal lineages and clans—the demarcation of unit from unit by genealogical and local criteria, and the corporate solidarity of each unit in its own right. However much the Tallensi 578 deplored bloodshed among them, as in civilized nations, in warfare all 186 personal interests were subordinated to the common interest of the clan or maximal lineage, whether its cause was just or not. All normal activities were suspended and every man, woman, and adolescent child took some part in the fighting or in caring for the wants of the fighters. Clan patriotism reached a pitch of fervour which no other occasion could evoke. It was felt as passionately by the women and girls carrying water to the fighters and dragging the wounded away, and by the old men at home who tended the wounded and went around from shrine to shrine making sacrifices to the ancestors, as by the fighting men. Something of this spirit comes out to-day in the inaugural ceremonies of an important elder's funeral, when the whole clan turns out for a pageant mimicking the activities of war.

578 Yet there was never any danger of wars or smaller fights breaking the 182 society up into a number of anarchic fragments. They were inhibited from doing so by the countervailing influence of the strong social ties between traditionally hostile groups. Indeed their very occurrence [728] stimulated the reassertion of the overriding common interests of the society and the reaffirmation of the bonds of unity between the factions. In a war between Namoos and non-Namoos peace had to be made quickly and the *status quo ante* restored because the two groups are so closely interconnected by ties of marriage and kinship that the majority of members of one group have bonds of duty, affection, and mutual interest with members of the other; because they are such close neighbours; above all, because they are bound together by ties of politico-

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[1] These tensions persist, though they are kept well in check by fear of the British Administration. The new judicial system provides a safety valve to some extent; but they break through, chiefly in the form of political intrigue, as we shall see in the next section.

593 payment of at least a part of the fixed bride-price of three cows and a bull, or their equivalent. The essential responsibility for the per-584 formance of these two acts lies with the bridegroom's father or father's heir, subject to the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Formally, the bride's paternal kin send their invitation to the bridegroom's paternal kin to *lu sɛndaan* through the head of the latter's nuclear or inner lineage, and make their demands for bride-price through the same channels; for no jural act takes place except in the framework of the lineage system. But actually the responsibility for satisfying the bride's kin falls on the bridegroom's father. He must 'find the things'—the fowls and guinea-fowls—for the placation gifts; he must send off the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) who carries them to the bride's family; he must furnish the animals or goods or money to pay the bride-price. 'Is it not his child? (*Pa u biiga*)' say the natives, implying that this is a duty arising out of the fact of parenthood. In part it is 593 a specific duty; in part it is an aspect of a general responsibility that a ●672 man bears for his son's jural relations. Thus if his son's wife is abducted it is the father who calls on the other members of his inner lineage to 426 stand by him in taking action to recover the wife. If his son has abducted another man's wife the father is directly answerable. Strictly speaking a son cannot contract a debt involving heritable property such as cattle or large sums of money without his father's authorization. Even if the son is a man of substance, a wise creditor will insist that his father's (and also his brothers' of the same nuclear lineage) consent to the transaction be obtained first and made known to him. If this is not done the creditor's chances of recovery are small. It becomes a question of one man's word against another's and Tallensi are past masters in the art of putting off a creditor. The concurrence of the debtor's father and brothers fixes liability for ever, and if the debtor dies before settling the debt his father, or his heir, is liable. These rules do not apply to small sums of money, say a shilling or two, or things of small value such as a hen or a loin-cloth. But petty borrowing and lending rarely takes place between people who are not friends or close kin, and it is thus generally fitted into the scheme of reciprocal aid that obtains between friends and kinsfolk.

593 In their jural aspect these obligations of a father arise from the fact of 'begetting (*dɔɣam*)'; in their economic aspect they are greatly influ-584 enced by the principle of reciprocity. Where obligations of such great social consequence are involved, the principle of reciprocity is not 577 limited to particular individuals but it binds their heirs and successors as well owing to the operation of the lineage principle. One or two cases will show how these two aspects are interwoven.

While Tampoɣar was courting his wife he had very little recourse to his proxy father's help. The few shillings he had received from selling ground-nuts and a fowl or two sufficed to provide the occasional penny

593 577 for them to Saɣabo. This was the main reason why he was ready to meet Saɣabo's bride-price debt immediately. There was also a religious sanction in the background. Had he refused to support the youth, Galəmɔɣar's spirit would have become angry. He would have gone to their father's spirit and protested against the ill-treatment his son was receiving at his brother's hands, and the father would have punished Nyaaŋzum.

593 672 In the same way the father is the person who bears the essential jural responsibility for his son if the latter commits adultery. Though the negotiations for the reconciliation with the offended lineage or clan are carried out through the head of the inner lineage or medial lineage or even wider lineage segment to which the wrongdoer belongs, the animals sacrificed in the reconciliation rites are provided by his father.

593 577 Similarly a father is responsible for his son in all ritual matters in which the son is concerned as a member of the lineage or as the person through whom his father's line is perpetuated. A man is responsible to the ancestor spirits for performing the rites by which his child, boy or girl, is placed under the mystical care of a spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). It is the father's duty to provide the flour, beer, fowls, guinea-fowls, or other animals needed for these rites. If a child gets ill, its father has the duty of consulting a diviner and is obliged to provide any money, animals, or other goods that may be needed for the sacrifices to the ancestors, the treatment, and the payment of the medicine owner. Of course, if it is his own child a man does not think of such obligations as a duty but rather feels them to be a natural action of love and solicitude. But I have known cases where a proxy child was concerned in which the proxy father was less moved by affection than by his sense of duty and fear of mystical retribution. Among the Hill Talis it is a father's duty to provide the animals, flour, and beer required for his son's initiation into the External *Bɔɣar* cult. And, to complete this catalogue of examples, a father must take the initiative and provide the 'things' needed for the rites of exorcism, if his son is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). If his daughter-in-law is the sufferer, he must request her father to come and perform the exorcism and must provide the contributions due from the girl's husband's family.

593 The mutual rights and duties of parents and children among the Tallensi have a feature of particular interest which has already been indicated in the course of our analysis, but deserves further notice. They can be used as weapons of coercion by one side against the other, the principle of reciprocity being turned into an *ad hoc* sanction. The case of Tampɔɣar illustrates how a son can make use of the fact that his working power is essential for the household economy to force his father to get him a wife. This sanction is openly admitted by fathers. One day at Yinduuri I came upon a group of men engaged in a vehement argument. In the middle of the group was a man whose leg was badly

the paramount moral values of the Namoos. The oath a Namoo swears 577 by his father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells to rebut an accusation or assert his honesty is evidence of this.

The natives think of these rules as coeval with their social order. 613 They are axioms of conduct, which men accept without questioning as 577 they accept the fact that one is born a Namoo. Since they are binding on and restricted to the patrilineal line of descent, these avoidances serve to express the ultimate and unconditional validity of agnatic descent, through which the individual's place in a corporate unit is irrevocably fixed at birth, and by which his whole social and spiritual destiny is largely controlled. Through ignorance or stupidity, irreverence or lack of self-control, individuals sometimes, though very rarely, break these taboos. Such lapses will bring down mystical retribution on the sinner's head; that is his affair. They cannot impair the intrinsic validity of these rules or undermine their obligatory character.

It would be inconceivable for a Namoo to flout the taboo of the 688 goatskin loin-cover for the dead. To do so would be a sacrilege so gratuitous and so lunatic as to lie beyond the bounds of sane human behaviour. Actually a situation in which such a sacrilege would be possible would never occur, for the simple reason that a death is an affair of the clan. The clan elders conduct all mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and the inviolability of the prescribed ritual is thus safeguarded by the mechanics of its performance.

It is otherwise with the fowl taboo. This too the natives consider to 688 be something so fundamental and axiomatic that it requires no sanction 673 against possible breach except by accident. The danger of a breach occurs only with children. The first-born child who eats a fowl or even a hen's egg, either through inadvertence, through greed, or through childish recklessness, may sink into a decline (*u burəmrəme*), or at the least will break out in a rash on the head (*u zug koorəme*). But such a transgression by a child is venial, and the antidote is simple. The child is given an infusion of fowl droppings in water to drink which makes him vomit and so purges him.

Observation and questioning show that breaches of this taboo are 688 as rare as the natives assert them to be. I have often seen a first-born 613 man (*nɔ-kihir*, pl. *-kihib*, one who taboos the fowl) sacrificing fowls to his ancestor spirits and leaving them to others to consume. After such a rite a *nɔ-kihir* always washes his hands carefully lest he contaminate his food at the next meal with the blood of the fowl. Not only do parents, siblings, and other relatives take care to prevent children from breaking the taboo, but the children who have to observe it have a horror of doing so. By the time they are five or six years old children will tell an inquirer with great emphasis, 'I am an eldest child, and I don't eat fowl'. Though they do not know the myth that accounts for the taboo, they appreciate its obligatory character.

We have spoken of these taboos as symbols of moral values because, 577 though binding on all Namoos, they do not imply specific ties either 784 political or ceremonial, and are obligatory on individuals. Their observance is in the last resort a matter of conscience and belief. In the widest

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋbana*—for
782] which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas.
My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577 ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721 reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life. 721 There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173 kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives. At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one. Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime, about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛlɔg*)' him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worthwhile life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682 the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577 the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721 in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In 1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury, lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards. And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721 matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673 for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might 682 follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628 neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578 of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations, in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

economic and social activities there is co-operation, friendliness and 593
tolerance, almost equality. This is more marked between father and 861
child than between mother and child. A father is always addressed 858
by his personal name, a mother is always called *mma*, my mother.
Affectively, however, a powerful tension exists between parent and
child. A parent's authority may not be flouted, though he or she is
expected to be affectionate and indulgent. Sin, in Tale ideology, is [673]
primarily an offence against the person, status, or rights of the living
parents, or the parent-images—the ancestor spirits.

The structure of this relationship makes it possible for children 593
to acquiesce immediately in the commands and teachings of their 865
parents or parent-substitutes. Children are, as a rule, very obedient. If they refuse to carry out an order there is usually some very valid reason—acknowledged as such by both parents and children—such as that it is some one else's turn. But the parent-child relationship is educationally fundamental in another sense—it is the paradigm of all moral relationships.

It is worth noting, by contrast, that the relationship between grandparent 603
and grandchild is the reverse of that between parent and child. In this case equality, compatibility and partisanship, as if in league against the generation between them, are emphasized, more particularly by the joking relationship—mutual ragging among the Tallensi—permitted between grandparent and grandchild.

The social space. How these relationships function in the educational 000
development of a Tale child is determined by its social space.[1] An individual's social space is a product of that segment of the social structure and that segment of the habitat with which he or she is in effective contact. To put it in another way, the social space is the society in its ecological setting seen from the individual's point of view. The individual creates his social space but is himself in turn formed by it. On the one hand, his range of experiences and behaviour are controlled by his social space, and on the other, everything he learns causes it to expand and become more differentiated. In the lifetime of the individual it changes *pari passu* with his psycho-physical and social development.

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[1] This term is employed here for want of an apter one. It has been used in a different sense by Simmel and others.

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, ' is embarrassing ' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a
loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and
his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of
shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of
which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult,
the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose
the genitals with the word ' boy ' or ' girl '. An infant's excretory
processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
[863] regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a
nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would
dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all
matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions
as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the
expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
● 673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
' Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said
Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, ' he 's a thief. He stole
his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied
him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast,
is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance
and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child
for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours,
nevertheless, go beyond what is merely ' unbecoming '. They are not
nice, *a-pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience
rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have
a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical
notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from
infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with
mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

578 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's
lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use
602 other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly
627 for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle
with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It
is not until the formal placation gift (*sendaan*) is sent to the girl's father
with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not
until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace
appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

● 675 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument
by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a
583 marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights
over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from
her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role
as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to
her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the
576 maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her
husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young
man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon
him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan.
The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her
574 desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her
593 parents, enhanced as this i[illegible]y her respect for parental authority.
Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her
parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is
not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for
her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return
to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young
wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as
we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two,
though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may
have other wives at home. It must be admitted, however, that wives
[837] run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for
the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against
the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes,
for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if
she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty
to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law,
his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side
with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of
marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

[illegible] to enforcement by explicit or implicit sanctions—it prevailed only within
578 the clan or a cluster of closely interrelated clans, or between individual kinsfolk of different clans. Even so, every line of social cleavage was a source of weakness to the sanctions of right. It needed very little temptation or provocation for men of different clans or maximal lineages, however close the links between their respective groups, to lay violent hands on one another's property, person, or dependants. There was a general atmosphere of non-cognizance of rights *as such*. Times of crisis, such as famine, brought about a relapse into lawlessness.

631 In consequence the ultimate sanction of jural rights outside the clan
622 was self-help. If a man could not recover a wife who had been abducted or a bride-price debt owing to him through the intermediation of the elders of his clan and those of the abductor's or debtor's clan, he had the right to use self-help and make a raid on the cattle of the offender's clan. This was legitimate and reprisals were not allowed. If the offender were to attempt any, his clansmen would not support him. But these raids
721 might result in an armed clash with the cattle herds. Men might be killed; and then war flared up.

721 But raiding (*ŋɔk*), as a measure of self-help, in itself was not an act of
628 war. It led to war if men were killed, but not if there were no bloodshed.
578 Sometimes, even if a raid ended in an affray and men were killed, a reconciliation was made before an interclan fight could develop. The Tallensi distinguished precisely between raiding, as a method of self-help which they considered a legitimate jural device for redressing a wrong, and warfare. The custom of raiding reinforced warfare because it provided occasions for armed clashes and because of the habit of mind that lay behind it. Though this habit ran counter to the moral repugnance of the Tallensi to shedding human blood, it tolerated the use of violence as the proper ultimate means of asserting one's rights. This attitude still survives, to some extent. Men still carry their weapons when they go on a journey. Disputes over wives or unpaid debts sometimes bring the parties to the brink of a sanguinary fight. One reason why these fights are suppressed by the natives themselves before they become serious is the fear of the white man with his armed police in the background. Another
[177] and more powerful reason is the system of chiefs' tribunals and District Commissioners' courts imposed by the British. This judicial system has become an established part of native life. It has provided an effectively sanctioned alternative to self-help and made the latter obsolete (cf. p. 13). But in the past the attitude of mind we have described led the natives to think of warfare in its corporate aspect as a mechanism for redressing wrongs that could not otherwise be put right. Considering their lack of a single, all-embracing government and their segmentary social structure, it was inevitable that conflicts should often arise that could only be settled by fighting.[1]

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[1] In this connexion it is worth noting that the Tallensi have only one term, *[illegible]abər*, for every kind of fighting, from a quarrel between co-wives to a war. But, [illegible] addition, war was distinguished by referring to it euphemistically as 'arrows' (*[illegible]eema*). Thus a war is identified as 'the arrows of so-and-so', after its chief instigator.

796 182 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they [625] always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 681 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments; on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of the society.

182 721 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 182 769 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

587 When, some forty years ago, a Tongo man married a Zoo widow and his
x618 son was shot dead in revenge by a Zoo man, the Chief of Tongo forbade
a raid of retaliation. It was, my informants said, a just vengeance since
● [682] 'we don't marry the widows of Zoo people'.

Again, it would be a serious breach of solidarity for a member of one of
x618 the sub-clans to abduct the wife of a member of any other, and I have
627 never heard of such a case. Warfare between them is inconceivable, so
the injured group would have to rely upon moral pressure through the
chief and elders of the offender's community. But these measures would
undoubtedly succeed, even in these days when rebellious young men can
flee to foreign lands.

x618 This is likewise the widest extension of a restriction which holds with
587 greatest force for the segments of a maximal lineage belonging to the
same sub-clan, e.g. for the segments of Tongo *inter se*. In a lesser degree
it applies also to ex-wives. A man who marries the former wife of another,
even if the marriage was severed for just and accepted reasons, incurs the
hostility of the first husband's entire lineage both towards himself personally
and towards his clansmen as a group. Reprisals will be taken when
an opportunity occurs. When the parties are clansmen, feelings about such
acts become very bitter, and the more so the closer the tie. Marriages of
this kind take place from time to time, producing conflicts and reprisals
but not disruption of clanship ties.

x618 Another proof of kinship (*mabiirət*) usually cited by the natives is that
721 warfare between the four sub-clans was forbidden. They were allies in
war in the old days. They did not all come to one another's help, nor
were they each other's sole allies. But they could call upon one another's
assistance in the name of kinship. The recollections of the oldest men go
back no farther than the time of their grandparents, four or five generations
ago. They tell of ancient fights in which Tongo, Sie, and Yamələg
supported one another; but Biuk, it seems, maintained an isolationist
policy in the wars and feuds of its Tale kinsmen. The greatest war still
remembered in tale and anecdote occurred forty or fifty years ago.
Yaməlog became involved in it; and when Ba'ari raised the war-cry
against Yaməlag, Sie and Tongo attacked Ba'ari on the flanks.

Mosuor biis: a Maximal Lineage

x618 These four branches of Mosuor's agnatic posterity (*tu'u*) constitute
what appears to be a single, dispersed clan—the only clan of this type in
Taleland; more accurately, it is a maximal lineage—the most inclusive
agnatic lineage to which any descendant of Mosuor in the male line (i.e.
any member of the four branches) can belong. In the eyes of the natives
an important qualification is that the four branches are of equal status
though graded in seniority. Tongo is the most senior because it remained
in possession of the original home of the clan—'*ti waabi daboog*, the
ancient home-site of all of us', they say—and has retained the custody of
Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar*, the shrine which symbolizes the perpetuity,
x618 identity, and common ancestry of the entire maximal lineage. Yaməlag,
618 Sie, and Biuk follow in that order; but they no longer participate in
769 sacrifices to Mosuor. Each of them has its own ancestral *bɔɣar*, enshrining

779 the earth (*tɛŋənpiima*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray
425 animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *tɛŋənpiimər*. It must be
688 handed to a tendaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and
especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

714 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak
774 of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in
793 human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk
of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the
things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the
forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimi-
nation. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but
[567 he is given to a chief and not to a tendaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified
to sell a human being into slavery; a tendaana would commit a sacrilege
622] against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

●682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *ya-a-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms; and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

682 sacrifices of expiation or else 'their house—i.e. line of descent—is destroyed (*ba yiri ŋmaarəme*)' in retribution. This is the strongest sanction against homicide among the Tallensi. Whether it is intended or accidental, whether the victim is a clansman or a stranger, and has been slain at home or abroad, homicide is a sin against the Earth and must be expiated. But it is so grave a sin that it can, in fact, never be wholly atoned for. 'You cannot finish paying' the Tallensi say. It is a sin that pursues the wrongdoer's agnatic descendants for generations.

627 The Tallensi have no juridical machinery for taking penal action against
682 a murderer and do not exact compensation. Between clans homicide
577 may lead to vengeance and war; within the clan it does not. In the latter case it is like a cow that has trampled on its calf and killed it, the natives say. In either case the matter is left to the arbitrament of Earth. Tallensi who have shed human blood take no pride in it. A man who can be persuaded to confide the story of how he killed another speaks of his deed as if it were forced on him by circumstances. Though homicide seems to have been an infrequent occurrence in the past, it was by no means rare; but every instance I have heard of was presented as a reprehensible action, even if it was due to provocation or done in self-help. Informants always draw the moral prescribed by Tale ethical values. So-and-so killed a man and died childless; So-and-so left only one young son; deaths pile up in such-and-such a family because their father had shot a man. In the long run, again, the reaction to sacrilege is greater respect for the moral norm and its ritual sanction.

578 Bloodshed and strife are symptoms and causes of deep rifts in or
682 between human communities. The taboos against them show us the Earth as a sanction of solidarity within and between communities; and this is of particular interest in relation to the structure of the settlement. The bond between community and locality has moral implications for the natives that transcend the crude facts of spatial distribution and economic organization in which they are rooted. It is worth while tracing out these implications somewhat further from the starting-point of the individual farmer again.

The Social Framework of Production: Land Tenure

241 The farming unit among the Tallensi is the group of male agnates of
471 a single household who usually form a nuclear lineage. Most of the plots it farms are owned by the farming unit, but some may be borrowed for
[461] a shorter or longer period and some held by gift. In the case of borrowed
431 or gift land the farmer—distinguished as the 'owner of the farm' (*kuoraana*) —pays no rent to the owner—distinguished as 'the owner of the soil' (*tamraana*)—or tribute to a political authority. An annual gift of grain, when crops are good, is the only return he makes to the owner of the land, and this is a voluntary gesture of gratitude, not a jural obligation. Borrowed land always reverts to the owner. Theoretically gift land can also be resumed at will by the owner. In practice it often becomes the property of the recipient's lineage in the third or fourth generation after the gift, if it has been farmed continuously by that lineage. This is either because donor and recipient are usually kin, related in such a way that

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
● [682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋbana*—for
782] which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas.
My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

613 778 in the unity of the patrilineal descent group and in the coherence of the family. But when a lineage is visualized as a set of segments, these are differentiated by reference to their respective *progenitrices*, just as in the joint family the offspring can be subdivided in accordance with their maternal origins. The focal ancestor shrine of each segment is then called 'the *bɔɣar* of the mothers (of the segment) (*manam bɔɣar*)'. It is identical in form with the 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' but complementary to it in function. Its name stresses the predominance of matrilateral origin in the differentiation of the segments of a lineage, by contrast with the patricentral lineage as a whole. Tallensi speak of a 'mothers' *bɔɣar*' as being the shrine of the segment's founding ancestor and his mother, by contrast with the 'fathers' *bɔɣar*', which they say is the shrine of the founding ancestor of the lineage only. But they recognize that a 'mothers' *bɔɣar*' will in the course of time become a 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' when the segment undergoes internal differentiation into sub-segments, and may function as a 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' if the segment is already so differentiated. When a segment of a lineage is thus distinguished from co-ordinate segments of the same lineage, it is also implicitly contrasted with the whole lineage. It is thought of as a matri-segment, though named after its founding ancestor, and is described as a 'room', *dug*—'the children of one mother (*ma yeni biis*)'—of the 'house', *yir*, on the model of the joint family in which the matricentral *dug* is a segment of the patricentral *yir*.

613 Maternal origin (*ma dɔɣam*) thus has significance only within the frame of patrilineal descent, as the polar opposite of paternal origin (*ba dɔɣam*). Taken by itself, every lineage, no matter what its span or order may be, has only one founding ancestor and one progenitrix, this man's mother. The progenitrix of a lineage becomes significant only when it is considered in conjunction with other lineages of the same descent. Both morphologically and functionally every lineage represents an equilibrium based on the polarity of maternal filiation and patrilineal descent which runs through the whole genealogical structure of Tale society.

[778] Obviously any segment of a lineage which comprises two or more sub-segments can function as a *dug* in one context or situation and as a *yir* in another. Its focal ancestor shrine thus functions as a *manam bɔɣar* in one context and as a *banam bɔɣar* in another. In principle a maximal lineage of wide span must always act as a *yir*—and hence its focal ancestor shrine is always a *banam bɔɣar*; but by a stretch of the term it may be referred to as a *dug* when someone wishes to lay special stress on its genealogical unity and corporate solidarity in contrast to other similar units. The [682] murder of a fellow member of the same maximal lineage is, for instance, always dealt with as 'an affair of the room (*dugni yɛl*)', which stringently excludes reprisals.

A few maximal lineages have so narrow a span, due, no doubt, to the extinction of collateral lines, that they function as medial or inner lineages (wide *dugət*), a distinction that will be clearer presently. Thus the maximal lineage of Gundaat is not subdivided into ritually and jurally differentiated major segments. Its head, the Gundaat-Bɔɣarna'ab, explained this in a manner which shows how clearly many Tale elders grasp the mechanics of their own social structure. 'We have not yet achieved

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577
ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721
reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life.
There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173
kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives. At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one. Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime, about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛləg*)' him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worthwhile life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682
the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577
the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721
in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In 1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury, lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards. And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721
matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673
for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might
follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib 682
died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628
neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578
of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations, in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
282 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

X 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
● 682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

578

adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182 of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769 bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182 principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182 constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618 x evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Taləŋ identifies himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidɛm*)' and of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔyaba*)' and 'our children (*ti biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions to-day, a Taləŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182 for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426 groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman of his debtor, but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman, the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567] into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations. It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt. Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583 unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426 man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'. Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled. The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682 ● clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618X

682 Some sixty years ago a Tamboog man was killed by a group of Yamələg
x618 men with whom he quarrelled at a dance. Two or three years later a couple of Tamboog men met a Yamələg man alone in the bush and slew him in revenge. The Yamələg people understood that this was a case of 'wiping out a debt' and the matter was regarded as closed.

x618 The principle of representative status enhances the sense of lineage or
431 clan solidarity. We have seen how, in ceremonial situations, any member of a lineage or clan is regarded as representing the whole unit. I have often seen men refuse gifts of meat or food at ceremonies because these had no precedent and accepting them would be equivalent to committing their lineage or clan to reciprocate in the same way at some future time.

613 Co-operation in ceremonies, especially in funerals, brings to light the
764 institutional machinery of lineage and clan solidarity. Its basis is the
x618 distribution of duties and privileges among the different segments of the lineage or clan concerned in the situation, in accordance with their segmentary relationship to the group principally affected. Thus in funerals, in accordance with the maxim 'Brother lineages take charge of one's affairs (*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*)', members of a close brother lineage of the bereaved lineage supervise the ceremonies. In addition, all the segments of the maximal lineage or clan concerned send prescribed food contributions and receive prescribed shares of beer, meat, and food distributed during the ceremonies. Funerals are important because the death of a person may entail a rearrangement of social relations in a segment and this is a matter of common interest to the whole clan.

x618 These obligatory reciprocal services and privileges constantly remind the individual of his dependence on his clansmen for the proper management of the critical events of his life. In consequence the obligation of reciprocity is strongly felt, in both secular and ritual matters, the strength of the feeling being relative to the lineage relationship of the parties. When a man invites a collective hoeing party (*pooh kpa'arəp*) it is always co-members of his medial lineage who turn up in largest force. Distant clansmen only come if they have ties of personal matrilateral kinship with him. And the motive usually given for responding to such an invitation is 'To-morrow I may need the help of a hoeing party'. Public opinion is critical of those who do not conform to the conventions of mutual assistance, and when they find themselves compelled to call for assistance in collective hoeing or housebuilding or some similar activity, they are left in the lurch.

578 Intra-clan disputes involving lineages of a higher order than the
x618 nuclear lineage very rarely arise over economic affairs—that is, in effect, over the ownership of land or live-stock. Disputes in higher order lineages arise over the inheritance of widows or marriage with a woman who was formerly the wife of a member of a different segment of the clan. Members of the deceased husband's medial lineage feel they have a prior claim to a widow's hand and sometimes object to her marrying a man of a different branch of the clan. And if a marriage is dissolved, no matter what the reason may be, it is regarded as a grave breach of clan solidarity for any other member of the husband's clan to take her to wife. It arouses suspicion of collusion between the woman and the second

682 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 613 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 182 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 175 578 622 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 578 622 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-

in real life and in part distorted reflections of the tensions that exist 593
between parents and children in reality. It is no misrepresentation to
describe them as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the 769
parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically 578
omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent and long-suffering; but the emphasis is far more on the persecuting than on the protecting 577
attributes. The distortion is most striking in the case of a mother's spirit. All ancestor spirits are apt to reveal themselves more often by the misfortune they inflict than by the benefits they bring. They emerge as sanctions of conduct more by reason of the punishments they bring down on wrongdoers than because of the benefits they confer for right doing. But the spirits of female ancestors are believed to be specially hard, cruel, and capricious. This is remarkable when we consider the love and devotion a mother shows for her child throughout his life. As we have observed elsewhere,[1] there is a never-ending struggle between a man and his ancestors. It is psychologically rooted in the relations of parents and children during the lifetime of the parents. Sacrifices and prayers are reminiscent of the principle of reciprocity in the real relations of parents and children. They contain the same elements of acquiescence, justice, and hidden coercion. They show another aspect, though, in the propitiation, reverence, and gratitude they often express.[2]

We can see why filial piety towards the dead parents is more strongly stressed than towards the living. While he is alive a person's father has direct jural and ritual authority over him; when he dies, the father becomes the paramount sanction of moral conduct for him; and this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, in only a lesser degree to the mother. The oath 'by my father and his goatskin (or sheepskin) and his three cowries' discussed in our previous book[3] is one proof of this. The centre of gravity of the whole social system of the Tallensi is the relationship of father and son, and it is the idea of filial piety that keeps this relationship in balance in the face of all the forces that tend to divide father and son. In this as in other respects the Tallensi are typical of patrilineal and patriarchal societies of simple culture from many parts of the globe, both ancient and modern.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 145.

[2] As death, among the Tallensi, is always believed to be mystically caused by a particular ancestor spirit or a group of ancestor spirits (material causes such as [761
sickness being recognized as necessary but not sufficient without the mystical
adjunct), it follows that a dead father or mother can kill (*ku*) his or her own child. 682]
The converse is impossible, since children, in life, have no jurisdiction over parents. I have asked Tallensi if patricide ever occurs or is known to have occurred. My most trusted informants said they had never heard of a case and thought the very idea abhorrent beyond measure. The idea of matricide they considered even more vile and unnatural.

[3] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 66.

of the same inner lineage as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' or even as 'my wife 593
(*m-pɔɣa*)'; and, reciprocally, a woman speaks of her husband's brother 681
of the same inner lineage as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)' or, preferably, as 'my
husband's older (younger) brother (*n-sɛt-bier* or *n-sɛt-pit*)', but does not 784
address him thus. The proper reciprocal term of address is *n-kpee* ('my neighbour'), or *n-dakii* ('my sibling-in-law'). The terms for husband and wife are used in address only between a man and a distant clan-brother's wife.

The penalty for breaking this taboo has both a literal and a figurative 593
meaning, in the sense that the brothers will never share anything again 784
or take part in corporate activities as co-members of the same lineage.
It amounts to social and religious ostracism for the sinner, and Tallensi 682
say he would not long survive or his line of descent would perish. A similar penalty is said to follow the killing of a brother, whether it happens by accident or design. As we know, incest with a brother's wife is said to occur, though extremely rarely; fratricide by a brother of the same inner lineage as the victim is felt to be so abhorrent as to be likely to happen only by accident in exceptional circumstances. It has happened once or twice in the past, informants say, when brothers fought over the division of farm-land, but I have not heard of any cases having occurred in the last thirty years or so.[1]

The strength of the sanction we are considering can be judged from 593
its incidence, in an attenuated degree, in cases of intra-clan homicide
where the parties are not brothers of the same inner lineage. If this 682
happens, whether intentionally or by accident, the maxim 'A cow has 784
trampled her calf to death (*naaf n-nɔ bu bii ku*)' applies—that is to say, it is as if a cow had trampled its calf to death; so it is forbidden, on pain of bringing down the wrath of the ancestors, for the victim's close agnates to 'cancel the debt' by killing one of the slayer's close agnates. This rule holds also for lineages or clans interlinked by clanship or
ritual ties. The guilty party offers expiatory sacrifices to the Earth and [783]
then a ritual reconciliation is effected between the two units concerned. But thenceforth the close agnates of the slayer—members of his nuclear lineage, usually—will not participate in a sacrifice in which the close agnates of the victim take part. If the homicide was deliberate, this taboo will even extend to all the patrilineal descendants of the two men. Thus Wakii-Sagbarug yidem and Kuruugdem are adjacent maximal lineages linked by clanship and ritual ties. On certain occasions they meet to sacrifice together at an Earth shrine common to them. The Kuruug people refrain from attending these sacrifices if the chief officiant is a member of a particular segment of Sagbarug yiri. A Kuruug man told me the reason for this in confidence. Some four or five

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[1] There is a legend that one of the early chiefs of Tongo slew his brother in order to get the chiefship. Tallensi say this was following the customs of the Mamprusi. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

593 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidem slew the
682 ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice
784 together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective
ancestors.

593 Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brother-
hood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact
578 that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties
602 to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons
or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one
another.

In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings
593 sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classi-
602 ficatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Tɔŋ-Tɔbɔg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzɔ* siblings.

593 As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests
involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible
602 guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few
613 examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will be much more likely
to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[1]‡ have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab*'.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

‡ [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder—Analyst]

of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders, makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage. It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of interlineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not, the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway. This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting 224
out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and 587
the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the remarriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head of her nucleur lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

586 We have previously said that the Tallensi have no institutionalized procedure for divorce. This needs to be qualified. A very drastic pro- ●684 cedure to which we have referred in our earlier book[1] exists by which a man can get rid of an objectionable wife. It is usually described as 'blowing (on)' (*pebh*) a wife, for it consists in the man's blowing ashes over his wife. By this action he expels her utterly from his house with all her brood. He casts her off and disowns her children; and he forfeits the bride-price. Everybody knows of this custom, and it is held to be [613] entirely licit for any husband. The origins of attached lineages[2] are often attributed to clan sisters who were allegedly divorced in this way. But it is impossible to get a record of a single case that has occurred within the last forty or fifty years, or, indeed, within living memory. Though natives say that a man could, if he wished, 'blow on' his wife if she angered him continuously, or if she were dissolute, or were objectionable in any way, in fact her delinquencies would have to be of so grave a nature as to imperil his life and the welfare of the family for a man to cut through his marriage ties irrevocably at such enormous sacrifice.

The example of such a misdemeanour always quoted is concerned with their sexual relations. It is a taboo (*kihər*) for a woman to deny her husband's sexual rights over her. She would do so, by implication, if she were to kick him over in the act of coitus.[3] This is a sin of such gravity that the marriage must be dissolved at once or else disaster will come upon both partners. For it means that husband and wife have fallen out so badly with each other that they have come into sexual conflict.

This is implied, also, in a more symbolic way, if the disagreements between husband and wife come to a head in her attacking him with her stirring-stick (*vugər*) and his retaliating with his bow (*tap*). The stirring-stick, an indispensable implement for cooking porridge, is one of the emblems of femininity, and the bow, the principal weapon of the chase and of warfare, the chief emblem of manhood in Tale custom and ritual. Men are by convention excluded from the kitchen; women, both by convention and by ritual injunction, from the chase, and from contact with its magical and mechanical appurtenances when they are being [834] used for hunting. One of the very rare occasions on which sexual continence is ritually enjoined on men is when they are poisoning arrows for hunting or war. Thus, a fight between husband and wife with bow and stirring-stick is a fight in terms of their opposed sexuality, a repudiation of the fundamental bond of marriage. It is a sin, and the couple will die if they do not immediately sever their marital relationship completely.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] Ibid., p. 51.

[833] [3] The point lies in the postures adopted by the Tallensi in coitus. As in many other primitive cultures, the woman lies on her back, and the man squats on his haunches between her thighs. She can, therefore, easily push him over with a kick, the natives say.

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father. 586 684

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage. 158 827 586

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me. 578 833

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan. 684

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other. 581 613 618

684 man does not even have sexual desire for a sister or a daughter. This is
the standard, conscious, sexual attitude to a sister and it is in keeping
577 with the conscious attitude about incest with a sister or daughter. Such
an act is spoken of as tabooed (*kih*), but it is neither a crime nor a sin. It is simply despicable conduct that the culprits ought to be ashamed of as unworthy of grown persons. Even children talk of copulation with a sibling as something beneath contempt, though, in fact, it is common knowledge that up to the age of about 8 or 9 boys often try to have sexual intercourse with a small girl playmate in their play and for the most part playmates are close lineage siblings. Adults reprove the children if they discover them in this kind of play, but dismiss it as due to childish irresponsibility.[1] This, indeed, is the essence of the general attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter. It is disreputable, because it does not conform to the accepted standards of responsible adult conduct. Only in the case of incest with a full (*soog*) sister is there a feeling of horror. It is felt to be unlucky in a vague way. She is the person of the opposite sex with whom a man is most fully identified. What is more important, she perpetuates their mother's uterine line and therefore stands for the indestructibility of the unique bond between mother and child. Sexual intercourse with her would be almost like incest with one's own mother; and this feeling is extended to distant female uterine kin (*saarət*) as well.

Incest with a mother, a brother's wife, or a daughter-in-law is in a different class of reprehensible acts. It is a taboo for a man even to sit on the sleeping-mat of a woman related to him in any of these ways (and thus, we may presume, symbolically betraying a wish to seduce her). To have intercourse with her is a very grievous sin. It is utterly repugnant to Tale morality.

684 Incest with one's own mother the natives regard as a thing of such
monstrous iniquity that it is ridiculous to conceive of anyone who is not
577 mentally deranged committing it. Incest with a father's wife, other than
one's own mother, or a brother's or son's wife is almost as heinous a sin
539 and is regarded with little less horror; but it is known to happen some-
times. In one of the cases that occurred during my stay in Taleland, a
man raped his father's elderly wife (his own dead mother's co-wife),
whom he called '*ma-pit* (younger mother)'; in the other, a notoriously
dissolute young man seduced his father's brother's wife, whom he would
[626 also describe as '*ma-pit*'. Both were publicly derided in the songs sung
533] during the dances of the Great Festivals. One of the songs about the
second man went as follows:

Badiemaal (his name) you who rape vaginas, Oh!
Bakyɛlbanɔya (the woman) is a slut.
Zimbil-Badiemaal is a dog.

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[1] Cf. my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, Memorandum XVII, International African Institute, 1938.

684 Badiemaal, is this how you behave?
Zimbil-Badiemaal will never inherit the (lineage) *bɔyar*;
577 Why did you copulate with Naaho's wife?

539 *Badiemaal, pɛnzierug, woo-oo!*
Bakyɛlbanɔya a bumbarɔŋ.
Zimbil-Badiemaal, u a baa.

Badiemaal, i ɛŋa ŋwala?
Zimbil-Badiemaal ku vaa bɔyar;
I nyɛb Naah pɔya bo?

It was widely held that both of these men would take the first opportunity to get out of Taleland.

The Tallensi explain that such acts are so severely reprobated because
613 they cause deep and irreconcilable 'enmity' (*diuŋ*) between father and
684 son, brother and brother, and this is a mortal blow to the solidarity
of the family and the lineage. They arouse the wrath of the ancestors.
577 If the injured father, brother, or son does not bring the matter up before
the elders of his medial lineage or maximal lineage, he will be struck down by the ancestors. If he does, he must be ritually reconciled with his offending son, brother, or father. But in spite of such a formal reconciliation, 'the enmity remains within'. The sinner will never be able to offer sacrifice to his injured father with a clear conscience, or an injured son to the spirit of his father who so grievously sinned and offended him; nor may two brothers between whom this bitter inner discord prevails sacrifice together. Therefore, as the scornful song about Badiemaal declares, the sinner cannot, with a clear conscience, inherit the shrines common to the lineage; and since a man's sins spiritually taint his children and children's children, the sinner's whole line of agnatic descendants will be virtually outcast from the moral unity of the lineage, even if they are allowed to participate formally in the cult of its ancestors. Again, a man who has seduced his brother's wife cannot inherit her after his death, for he has broken the bond of brotherhood. The incestuous sexual act is sinful because it disrupts the moral relationship of father and son or brother and brother, and thus undermines the solidarity of the lineage at its core. There is a magical deterrent as well, which reflects this. If two men have sexual relations with the same woman and one of them gets ill, the other may not see him; it would cause him to sink and perhaps die; and to shun a sick parent, sibling, or child is the very negation of family solidarity.

593 A man's 'fathers', 'brothers', and 'sons' within the limits of the nuclear
lineage are the men who have the most direct interest in his wife, espe-
613 cially in her reproductive powers. They will all be concerned in, and
one or other of them will be responsible for, the payment of her bride-price. His children mean almost as much to them as to him. They

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●684
613
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By contrast, sex relations with the wife of a member of the same lineage or clan outside the range of the inner lineage is a wrong. It is not incest, but the most reprehensible form of adultery. It does not bear the same moral stigma as the corresponding form of incest, nor does it carry religious penalties for the adulterer. Unless the two men concerned have personal cognatic ties, which makes the offence more serious, they are related to each other only as members of related lineage segments. Their personal identity is submerged in the corporate unit, and the offence is interpreted as an injury to the husband's segment by the culprit's segment of a like order. What is a moral and ritual offence in the inner lineage shades over into a misdemeanour or jural injury in the wider lineage. The shift of evaluation is correlated with a change in the intensity though not in the kind of interests involved, and a widening of the span of the unit. The wider lineage has similar but less direct interests in a man's wife than his inner lineage; its unity and solidarity are of the same order as, but less intimate than that of the inner lineage. It has a jural and political unity and solidarity, primarily associated with formal sentiments of amity and mutual loyalty; whereas the cohesion of the inner lineage (based as it is on common economic interests, co-operation and consultation in the everyday affairs of life, contiguous residence, and minimal internal segmentation for jural purposes such as marriage arrangements with other lineages) is primarily moral, and associated with strong emotions of person-to-person amity and loyalty. Thus, beyond the range of the inner lineage, when the customary ritual reconciliation between the segment of the adulterer and the segment of the husband has been completed, the matter is over and done with so far as the public relations of the parties are concerned. No material compensation is made to the husband, and, in the absence of a judicial system, there is no one who can inflict a penalty on the adulterer. The wronged husband may harbour resentment against his wife's seducer; the magical danger inherent in their seeing each other if either is ill remains as a barrier between them; but the corporate unity of the lineage and clan to which they both belong is restored.

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Still, adultery with the wife of a clansman or of a member of a linked maximal lineage[1] (to which the same rules apply) creates dissension in the corporate body. It violates the principle that all men of the clan have a formally equal interest in the wife of a fellow member. It leaves behind rankling animosity that hinders united action. For these reasons it usually arouses an outburst of anger against the wrongdoer. Public opinion is a strong sanction against it therefore. Though cases are far from common, they occur more frequently than the corresponding form of incest. I was able to obtain details of a few cases that occurred immediately before and during my stay in Taleland. In one case the husband and his brothers were so outraged that they fell upon the offender in his

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to 837
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence 577
compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the
ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrɔg samər*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets
a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*daɣət*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔɣamboɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔɣar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few 765
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *haa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

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But the majority of open names refer to personal, local, family, historical and 551 such like circumstances at the time of the person's birth. Sometimes a proverb or maxim is aptly turned into a name to suit the event. More usually the father 553 or grandfather invents the name and the allusion may be so personal and obscure that only the family members see it. It is among these names that one finds what corresponds to the literary imagination of the Tallensi wisely, wittily, and often movingly expressed.

So luxuriant is the variety of these names that it is possible to quote only a few from amongst the many hundreds in my notebooks. A rare name is GƆMNA. It was borne by the son of a chief's headman. He was born on what was, for the chief and his headmen, a red-letter occasion that came around only once in two or three years, the day on which the Governor paid a visit to the area. So he was named GƆMNA, the Tale corruption of "Governor". By contrast, take such a name as NƆŊDEM-ZUOYA, literally, poor people abound. This is a proverbial saying used to console someone for a loss, particularly of livestock — as by disease — or other property. The father, in this case, had just suffered such a loss. A similar name is WU'UR-BEMI, literally, the name or renown remains. When the child was born, the father said, he and his brothers were poor and insignificant people. But they had their renown as the descendants of chiefs and as men of good character. Their day would come, he said to himself, quoting the proverbial saying that whatever else might be lacking "the name remains". NA'AB-DIYA, the chief has taken office, was born immediately after his grandfather's election as chief and his name commemorates this event. As he explained to me: "I was born when Kunduzoor had just got his chiefship. He said: *'Na'ab diya*, the chief has taken office. If he is a good chief, he stays in office; if he is a bad chief, he stays in office. Nobody can now deprive him of the chiefship.'" This name, therefore, sums up one of the essential laws of Tale chiefship, the law of the inviolability of chiefship. Once installed a chief cannot be unseated. Na'abdiya had a son called SUH-PUDUMƆRA, the heart does not ache. The death of a child had greatly distressed him; but the birth soon afterwards of this son came as a consolation; hence the name.

A very respectable elder had a son of about 25 who bore the name BA-DI-DATA, 551 let them not pull (my ear). When I asked for an explanation there was a burst of hilarity. The youth's father, grinning reminiscently, told the following story. 553 As a young man, being the son of a chief he was a gay spark. Though already 684 married he had an affair with the young wife of a senior chief. At that time the Administration took a serious view of adultery and treated it as a crime. So our friend found himself summoned to answer the charge of adultery and before the very chief whom he had wronged. The penalty was a heavy fine. Now a euphemistic way of talking about a court fine is to call it "tugging" or "twisting the ear" — [861] *daraŋ tɔbɔr*, an allusion to a practice sometimes resorted to by irate parents in correcting young children. As it happened, the culprit's wife had just born a son. The fine was announced in court but the wronged chief declared that it was not heavy enough, and demanded that it be increased by a sheep and a pot of beer. At this the culprit protested and begged "let them not twist my ear further". This episode is commemorated in the son's name.

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[1] have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
● 685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

[3] [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder—Analyst]

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are 586 taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a really effective force in maintaining the marriage.

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or 581 ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond is of vital importance in this relationship.

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects 581 to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of 586 consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima, Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may [842] decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside [685] ● by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace, formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women. Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, [827] however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat during sleep is a grave mystical offence endangering the life of the husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent back to her parents.

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. 602 The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are 593 of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When

dies childless, and that children are the greatest source of joy and pride, comfort and support that anybody can have. The Tallensi are much like ourselves in this matter and do not think there is any inconsistency between these two aspects of parenthood. Their whole philosophy of life is like that. Realists as they are, they take it for granted that life has many risks and troubles, but, as they often put it, 'Does anybody desire death on that account?' When I told them that Europeans often refrain deliberately from having children, they were either sceptical or appalled. 593

The Parent–Child Bond as an Absolute Bond

Tallensi say that the bonds between parent and child can never be obliterated and may not be repudiated. This is a fundamental moral principle and it goes back to the notion that bearing or begetting children is hard. From it follows the duty of filial piety.

You cannot disown your child. 'Even if your child is a good-for-nothing, you have no alternative but to keep him,' said Loyani, one of the most intelligent and upright men I knew. 'Have you not suffered to beget him?' he went on. 'How can you reject him? You are always thinking of your children's good, though they are often selfish and think only of their own advantage. Your child may be lazy or ill-behaved. But yet you cannot drive him away, you cannot harass him so that he quits you.'

Many examples could be quoted to illustrate the strength of this ideal. I sacked one of my servants for petty theft. A day or two later an elder who was known to be one of my friends came to intercede for him. He admitted that the man was a thief, but he was very disappointed when I declined to take him back. 'You are his father,' he said, 'and you ought to take him back.' Then, after a short silence, he added gravely, 'You white men! You are not like us. You do not understand the meaning of "to beg forgiveness".' 593 685

A better instance is an incident in which Loyani himself was concerned some days after he made the comment quoted above. A youth of Loyani's clan stole a fowl owned by another member of his own joint family, whom he called his older brother (*bier*). The theft, a despicable thing in any case, was made blacker by the youth's attempt to conceal it; and when it was discovered, the whole clan was agog with it. The culprit's father, in his shame and anger at the disgrace brought upon his family, struck and cursed him saying that he must never again set foot in the house. Thereupon the young man took refuge with Loyani, whose son was his friend. Loyani himself, like all respectable people, was shocked at the theft. 'Heaven save me from theft,' he said, when he told me the story. 'Death were better than that. It is shameful.' And he went on to describe how everybody scorns and derides a thief. Nevertheless, as soon as the boy arrived Loyani went to the elders of the boy's lineage to get them to intercede with the father to withdraw his [577] [789]

593 curse and take his son back. But meanwhile the boy sneaked away and went to his brother in Mampurugu for fear of public ridicule. 'But', ●685 said Lɔɣani, 'one day he will return and his father will certainly take him back.' It is because a man cannot disown his child that a Tale father always stands by his son in what the natives call *pɔɣadir yɛla*, marriage affairs, the test occasions of jural responsibility. A man may have strong private objections to his son's marriage and eventually cause it to be dissolved. He may criticize and scold his son for it. But in public he will support the boy if the marriage does not infringe some rule of kinship or convention of social relationships. This, it should be noted, is not the same thing as a man's responsibility for his son's bride-price which rests on a different principle. For the same reason a woman can never be denied refuge in her father's house if she has nowhere else to stay.

593 A woman, too, cannot disown her child. Indeed Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for a woman, bound as she is to her child by even stronger emotional bonds than a man. It happens, of course, that women desert, or are taken away from one husband to marry another and leave a child behind. But if the child is still too tiny to fend for itself it accompanies its mother until it is old enough to be separated (*pɔhɔg*) from her. Tallensi are very critical of a woman who deserts a child when she leaves its father, though not without ulterior motives; for a runaway wife is a loss, whether she leaves children or not. As has been mentioned, they say that in such cases 'Rearing is more important than bearing'. And yet, they say, a woman yearns after her child no matter who has the custody of it. She might easily desert a later husband to return to an earlier husband with whom she has left a child; and if a woman who has been married more than once returns to her first husband, his rights take precedence of all the others' by Tale custom. That is why men object strongly to a wife's attempting to visit or even see a child she has left with a former husband. I have seen a man keep watch on his wife for days lest she make such an attempt. 'Do you know what bearing (a child) means to a woman?' he said, in explanation. In any case, her marital history makes no difference to the *soog* (uterine) tie between a woman and her child and to the social relationships arising out of it. As we have already learnt, there is no surer guarantee that a woman will 537 stay with a husband than if she has two or three children by him. If she has children, a woman who commits adultery almost invariably returns to her husband, risking the wrath of his ancestor spirits and enduring the shame of a semi-public confession. If she has none, she usually runs off with her paramour.

593 577 The ideas we have been discussing are not thought to have a ritual sanction where own parents and children are concerned. But with proxy parents, as might be expected, a ritual sanction comes into the picture openly. A man who disowns or ill-treats or in other ways neglects the

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, 'is embarrassing' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a
loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and
his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of
shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of
which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult,
the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose
the genitals with the word 'boy' or 'girl'. An infant's excretory
processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
[863] regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a
nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would
dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all
matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions
as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the
expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
● 685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
'Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said
Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, 'he's a thief. He stole
his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied
him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast,
is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance
and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child
for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours,
nevertheless, go beyond what is merely 'unbecoming'. They are not
nice, *a-pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

226 and to give moral support to a man of their own rank, members of his own family, and 651 the *bayardaana*, who, in addition to the sacrificial animals he receives from the owner, is entitled to a present of fish.

226 Why then do owners of pools call out communal fishing expeditions ? They themselves say "because our ancestors did so." A more adequate explanation suggests itself from an examination of the fishing situation in relation to the technique of fishing and to the conditions of ownership of pools. Fishing with hook and line is practised by a few people throughout the year, but the technique is rudimentary, suitable for the capture of an occasional fish and not for the provision of a regular supply. The net technique, on the other hand, cannot be satisfactorily employed by individuals. It is essentially a communal technique. There is thus a practical necessity for communal fishing.

226 423 554 Principally, however, fishing is correlated with the ownership of pools. With few exceptions appointment to a chieftainship by the Paramount Chief of the Division constitutes the title to the ownership of a particular pool. Of the exceptions, I have record of one authentic case of a pool owned by a single lineage and transmitted according to the laws of inheritance. Tradition said that it had been purchased by the ancestor [622] of this lineage from a chief in a time of severe famine. To organize a communal fishing expedition is thus a prerogative of chieftainship[1]. It maintains the prestige and proclaims the status of a chief beyond the confines of his own limited territory. Striking proof of this occurred when the Chief of Yinduri announced an expedition to his pool. When the people arrived there, the pool was found to be so choked with weeds that fishing was impossible. Someone from another settlement suggested fishing a neighbouring pool, belonging to another chief, instead. The people of Yinduri were so incensed by this affront to the dignity of their chief that they attacked and beat the offender. Besides, ● [685] such an act of communal poaching would have exposed them to the penalty of a heavy fine.

226 621 Chiefs, consequently, desire large attendances drawn from a wide radius at fishing expeditions. Actually, however, the territorial range of the attendance at any expedition is limited by the factor of contiguity—the further a settlement is from that of the owner of the pool, the smaller will be the contingent coming from it ; while the social constitution of the attendance is conditioned by the principles of kinship. Thus, a man will always accompany an expedition arranged by his mother's brother or other kinsman, even if he is from a distant settlement, since he would probably be permitted to keep his catch, and would be less drawn to expeditions under the auspices of non-kinsmen. Similarly, the *Namoos* clans turn out in far greater numbers to expeditions arranged by *Namoos* chiefs than to those of the *Tallis* chiefs. Another factor influencing the social constitution of fishing expeditions is that people tend to go in family parties.

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[554] [1] A commoner who owns a river, as in the case cited above, naturally follows the general practise and on the occasion of the fishing expedition enjoys a prestige equivalent to that of a chief.

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789

The nodal factor in the situation is the magic. On one of the expeditions I attended the owner had his own fishing magic and made the sacrifices himself; but I do not know how general this is. Otherwise, the magician's office has its traditional warranty. It is an ancient privilege and even duty of his lineage to perform the rites for the lineage of the particular holder of the chieftainship. The association, like every relationship of this sort, is accounted for on the grounds of ancestral kinship. Thus a community of interest, such as could never arise in a purely commercial relationship, is presupposed. Functionally, whether the owner or the magician are united in one personage or not, magic enters into the fishing configuration as the owner's principal instrument of organization, helping to assert his status and rights in the fishing situation. This inference receives confirmation from the following observations: If a chief owns several pools, once the complete series of rites have been performed at the first pool to be fished, it is sufficient, subsequently, if the riverside rites alone are performed. Again, if, as sometimes happens, two adjacent pools are fished on the same day, the second will not be entered until it has been sprayed and the signal given. Thus the final and public rite, the actual organizing act, is emphasized. But the clinching evidence for this is the fact that the magical act proclaims the owner's responsibility for the satisfactory outcome of the expedition which he has organized. The behaviour of the people, more so, the ideology associated with situations of this type (full documentation of which must await later publication) and the purpose expressed in the magic prove this. Magic is, therefore, the binding factor in the fishing configuration, linking together the principal constituents—the objective facts of place and economic purpose, the owner, the people who come to fish and the relevant ideological principles.

The magic is able to achieve this in virtue of its content; that is, the control it ostensibly exercises over the psychologically critical factor in the situation, the dangers which might be encountered in the water. It is towards these dangers that the magic is *prima facie* directed. Its efficacy is never questioned; for even if, as sometimes happens, someone should be injured by a crocodile or fish, the ready explanation lies to hand that he has offended an ancestor spirit who took this occasion to punish him. An injury to an individual is his own affair. Nevertheless, nobody carries out private magic for his own protection. [685] Again, fear of injury is not a deterrent to poaching either by individuals or, as in the case of the Yinduri expedition, by a group.[1]

It is obvious, therefore, that the magic is valid only within the context of the organized fishing expedition, promoted by the rightful owner. The psychological facts upon which the magic is built have relevance only within this context. The real danger, or the correlative fear of injury, does not precipitate a magical rite whenever an individual or group is liable to it, but only within the appropriate social situation.

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[1] Indeed fishing expeditions are sometimes made to distant unowned pools and then no magic is performed, as I discovered during my second field trip in 1936. This is because these expeditions are informal, not organized by a responsible personage, and comparable to poaching.

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dis-
471 possessed without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut'
(*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tɛndaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among
the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important
613 part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is
generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*)
what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-
577 existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
● [886] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to
471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of
the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

the paramount moral values of the Namoos. The oath a Namoo swears 577
by his father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells to rebut an
accusation or assert his honesty is evidence of this.

The natives think of these rules as coeval with their social order. 613
They are axioms of conduct, which men accept without questioning as 577
they accept the fact that one is born a Namoo. Since they are binding on
and restricted to the patrilineal line of descent, these avoidances serve
to express the ultimate and unconditional validity of agnatic descent,
through which the individual's place in a corporate unit is irrevocably
fixed at birth, and by which his whole social and spiritual destiny is
largely controlled. Through ignorance or stupidity, irreverence or lack of
self-control, individuals sometimes, though very rarely, break these
taboos. Such lapses will bring down mystical retribution on the sinner's
head; that is his affair. They cannot impair the intrinsic validity of these
rules or undermine their obligatory character.

It would be inconceivable for a Namoo to flout the taboo of the 688
goatskin loin-cover for the dead. To do so would be a sacrilege so gratuitous
and so lunatic as to lie beyond the bounds of sane human behaviour.
Actually a situation in which such a sacrilege would be possible would
never occur, for the simple reason that a death is an affair of the clan.
The clan elders conduct all mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and the
inviolability of the prescribed ritual is thus safeguarded by the mechanics
of its performance.

It is otherwise with the fowl taboo. This too the natives consider to 688
be something so fundamental and axiomatic that it requires no sanction 673
against possible breach except by accident. The danger of a breach occurs
only with children. The first-born child who eats a fowl or even a hen's
egg, either through inadvertence, through greed, or through childish
recklessness, may sink into a decline (*u burəmrəme*), or at the least will
break out in a rash on the head (*u zug koorəme*). But such a transgression
by a child is venial, and the antidote is simple. The child is given an
infusion of fowl droppings in water to drink which makes him vomit and
so purges him.

Observation and questioning show that breaches of this taboo are 688
as rare as the natives assert them to be. I have often seen a first-born 613
man (*nɔ-kihir*, pl. *-kihib*, one who taboos the fowl) sacrificing fowls to his
ancestor spirits and leaving them to others to consume. After such a rite
a *nɔ-kihir* always washes his hands carefully lest he contaminate his food
at the next meal with the blood of the fowl. Not only do parents, siblings,
and other relatives take care to prevent children from breaking the taboo,
but the children who have to observe it have a horror of doing so.
By the time they are five or six years old children will tell an inquirer
with great emphasis, 'I am an eldest child, and I don't eat fowl'. Though
they do not know the myth that accounts for the taboo, they appreciate
its obligatory character.

We have spoken of these taboos as symbols of moral values because, 577
though binding on all Namoos, they do not imply specific ties either 784
political or ceremonial, and are obligatory on individuals. Their observance
is in the last resort a matter of conscience and belief. In the widest

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so
a supplicant coming to the *Bɔɣar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also
from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔɣar* in the
Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the
snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence,
children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔɣar* must avoid
all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have
independent External *Bɔɣa*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔɣar* congregation. This means that the clans and
lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the
ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It
implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-
ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of
redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation,
or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife,
though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member
lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling
of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another,
among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of
to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious
community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔɣar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794
sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the
rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them
over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing
Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔɣar* or the coercion of an
adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult to 776
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔɣar can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛɣər*) of an individual. An
ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native
religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist
(*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) must keep the totemic
avoidances of the *Bɔɣar* community. This applies particularly to non-
Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims
to the *Bɔɣar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual
dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born,
as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis them-
selves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards
of the *Bɔɣar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual
guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

769 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most
778 solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order be-
881 queathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of
794 the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm*
881 *kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when
627 he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial)
881 fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with
771 the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the
individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tɛndaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 778
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter. [193]

779 the earth (*tɛŋənpiima*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray 425 animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *tɛŋənpiimər*. It must be 688 handed to a tɛndaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

774 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these *services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached* to the mystical Earth.

779 774 793 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but 567 622 he is given to a chief and not to a tɛndaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified to sell a human being into slavery; a tɛndaana would commit a sacrilege against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *ya-a-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

241 the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dis-
471 possessed without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or
431 because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut'
(*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tendaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

471 The ownership (*soləm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among
613 the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important
part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

471 To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is
generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have
428 the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is
613 vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*)
577 what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-
existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a
[686] strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or
unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

688 There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to
471 one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of
the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust
432 of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and
preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688
with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471
corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays
there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*waləg*) such 432
difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471
punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's depen- 688
dants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613
thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471
and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426
now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the
significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782]
act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471
always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426
ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

of Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688 ●
support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 769
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody 182
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage 182
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes 782
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
282 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

× 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

577 misfortunes and learns from a diviner that this is due to his dead father
613 who is angry with him for leaving his *daboog* site derelict. That was the
166 case with Pa'anbɔbis and Mambaŋya.

We have said previously that the sentiments, the rights, and the duties
577 of parent and child to one another are traced back by the natives to the fact of birth; but in actual social usage they are fortified by strong
593 ritual sanctions. Tallensi have these in mind when they say that a
●688 father's authority is irresistible because 'he sacrifices for you (to your ancestors)'. Your father 'owns (*so*)' you because he begot (*dɔɣa*) you; and he sacrifices (*kaab*) on your behalf because he begot you; you can only approach your ancestors through your father while he is alive, and if you do so after his death it is always through the intermediation of his spirit. It all goes back to the fact of birth, but the ritual sanctions are the most important instrument by which a father's authority is maintained, as our discussion has several times shown, particularly in the case of a proxy or classificatory father. Siŋ cannot defy his proxy father Na'abzɔ 'because', as he says, 'he sacrifices for me'; Da'amo'o chafes under the vexations Kutɔbis and his sons frequently put upon him, but he cannot, for the same reason, disregard Kutɔbis's authority over him as his late father's brother. It is very rarely indeed that a man in a paternal position will refuse to sacrifice on behalf of another who is in the position of a 'son' to him; but the fear of this sanction has a restraining influence in cases such as those of Siŋ and Da'amo'o. The whole hierarchy of authority in the lineage rests on this ritual office. Most of the men of Yinyɛla's inner lineage were opposed to his cutting himself off from the rest of Puhug, but they had to 'follow (*dɔl*)' him because he had custody of the lineage *bɔɣar* and 'sacrificed for them'.

varies from case to case and from lineage to lineage. We have seen how this works out among the members of Ziŋgan biis. Another instance is 593 that of Yinworəb and his 'son' (his grandfather's brother's great-grandson) Kadεne. 577 Yinworəb gave Kadεne three shillings to pay the hearing fee when he was summoned to the chief's tribunal. This was not a debt. 426 Three or four months later Yinworəb borrowed a goat from Kadεne. Again, this was not a debt but it was tacitly understood to be an equivalent return for the loan of the three shillings. By contrast, Lɔyani used some sheep belonging to Maantiya, his father's half-brother's grandson and therefore his 'son'. This he regarded as a debt because the sheep were earmarked for the payment of Maantiya's wife's bride-price.

Outside the inner lineage, however, a debt is incurred by accepting goods or services from a clansman. The only exceptions are if the lender is also a matrilateral kinsman of the borrower—e.g. a uterine kinsman—or a close friend.

The principle of reciprocity, as seen in operation in the family and 613 lineage, ties on to a more general theory of social action in Tale society. It is a particular application of the principle of equilibrium in the social 577 system. The idea that in the long run mutual services or favours should balance is inherent in Tale social organization. Canalized by the lineage system, it means that a son or grandson or later descendant can make or expect equivalent returns for an action of his father or grandfather or earlier ancestor. It is a matter of pride as well as of moral or jural obligation to see that one benefit is balanced by another. For example, it is a common thing at an elder's funeral to see a distant clansman of his, who is not obliged to do so, bring a sheep or goat as a valedictory offering to the dead. The donor explains that there is a special reason for this offering. The deceased had been a friend of his father. When his father died the deceased brought a goat as a valedictory offering to his father. His goat is a return gift. The maxim that 'debts do not die' springs from this principle; and it applies not only to the relations of the living among themselves but to their relations with their departed ancestors. A grandson may have to atone for his grandfather's sins, as happened with Kuwaas. Years of constant ill luck were attributed by a succession of diviners to the sins of his paternal grandfather, whose name he bore. Kuwaas I, as Chief of Tongo, had betrayed his office by abandoning his clan and seeking only his personal safety once when the Hill Talis attacked Tongo. This was a grave sin against the ancestors, [688]● who demanded a large expiatory sacrifice, and until this was paid the sin would continue to lie heavily on the descendants of Kuwaas I. The right of self-help by raiding, and the notion that retaliatory warfare and retaliatory abduction of women are simply 'cancelling a debt (*lεrəg samər*)',[1] belong to the same category of ideas. The principle of reciprocity underlies all these categories of social behaviour.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 236, 245.

which children of 9 or 10 are fully familiar with and the compulsion 183
of which they experience to the same degree as the adults; and there is the whole body of implicit moral norms which regulate the day-to-day life of the family and emerge in the duties of children to one another and to their parents.

I have already mentioned the prohibition in some clans against the 784
eating of fowl by first-born children. By contrast with the voluntary 688 ●
abstention from fowl meat practised by women, this is a taboo of 869
supreme mystical value for these clans and is exactly parallel to the totemic avoidances of other clans. The Hill Tallis, for instance, may not eat tortoise, some may not eat crocodile or python, and others taboo dog. A 5-year-old knows his or her personal or clan taboo, and can state it emphatically. The remedy for a chance infringement of such a taboo is extremely simple—e.g., in the case of the fowl, crushing some fowl droppings in water and giving the child the fluid to drink. Again the supernatural penalty for a breach is of a vague and general kind. In some cases it is thought that it would lead merely to an eruption of scabies on the head; in others it is said that the offender would slowly lose health and strength. These sanctions, however, are not the effective agencies maintaining the observances. Breaches of these rules are exceptional, both among children and among adults. A Talɔŋa submits to a food taboo in virtue of a configuration of positive habits and dispositions built up in childhood, not through fear of the sanctions. From the time that it is a babe in arms a child is prevented from tasting or even touching any food which it is prohibited from eating. Later it will be called away from where its companions are sitting over a fire roasting titbits of food forbidden to it—'Come here, you mustn't eat that; it is forbidden.' I once observed a child of about 5 standing aloof while a group of his brothers and sisters were consuming a dish of python meat—a prized delicacy. 'I don't eat python, it is my taboo,' he explained, with an expression of complete aversion.

A vivid example of how food taboos are inculcated was provided 262
by a biographical reminiscence of the chief of Tongo who, as a first- 869
born, may not eat fowl. There was talk in his court-room of crops and famine in the old days, when an elder wondered if a man would eat a forbidden animal if he were starving. The chief, holding with

A small number of Tongo people have gone yet farther afield in search of 621
a livelihood: to Biuŋ and other peripheral settlements, to Mampurugu, |166
and, increasingly in recent years, to the tempting Eldorado of Ashanti |167
and the Colony. Thus, not all the members of the Tongo branch of
Mosuor biis and its accessory lineages live at Tongo at any given time;
but within its confines live only members of the sub-clan and their
families; and for all members of the sub-clan, wherever they may be
living, Tongo is their home, the centre of gravity of their social existence.

We have said before that no two Tale settlements are exactly alike. 621
Allowing for specific differences, however, the local and social circumscription
of Tongo may be taken as typical. The general rule is that
boundaries exist in terms of social cleavages co-ordinated with residential
distribution, and not of geographical or topographical features; and this
rule applies both to the spatial relations of contiguous settlements and to
those of parts of a settlement with one another. Community and locality
cannot be dissociated. The maxim, 'A *tɛŋ* is not a *tɛŋ* if there are no [577]
people in it', always cited to explain the strong sense of ethical obligation
felt by the natives to accept a suitable immigrant in any community, if [167]
land is available, sums this up. The boundary disputes that have become
common between chiefs and headmen in recent years turn on the contradiction
between the conception of a defined territorial boundary [578]
fostered by British rule, and the type of social boundary inherent in the
native social structure.

A revealing case occurred among the Hill Talis. The elaborate interlocking
of the Hill Talis clans with one another through clanship ties,
ritual collaboration, local cohesion, and political loyalties, and the diffused
solidarity to which this gives rise, impel them to common or mutually
supporting action in crises. Yet even among them, social boundaries
divide clan from clan and maximal lineage from maximal lineage both
spatially and structurally, and come into operation in certain situations.
But these social boundaries are far less firm than those between Tongo
and its neighbours. Groups of contiguous clans cohere to nearly the same
extent as a genealogically organic community like Tongo. Tɛnzugu, in
particular, and Yinduuri-Zandoya, form two such close-knit sub-communities
within the wider community of all the Hill Talis.

Since 1936 a boundary dispute has embittered the relations of the 621
Golibdaana and the Yinduurna'aba, who are recognized by the Adminis- 578
tration as headman of Tɛnzugu and headman of Yinduur-Zandoya 423
respectively. It is an insoluble dispute, bound to remain a chronic source
of friction as long as these two headmen exercise the territorially
defined powers entrusted to them by the Administration.

The dispute concerns a segment of Zandoya living on the slope of the [622
Hills between Yinduuri and Tɛnzugu. It was at length, after many 691]
evasions on the Golibdaana's part, brought before the Chief of Tongo for
arbitration. But this ended, inevitably, in a deadlock. The Golibdaana,
crafty and overweening, as only a man of his extravagant wealth and unyielding
temper could be, when he knew himself to be in the wrong,
took his stand on a criterion often used by Administrative officers in such
disputes. The group in question, he claimed, was living on land that

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as a form of investment, if such it can be called. Indeed, over most of [432]
Taleland the buying and selling of farm-land is ritually prohibited.[1]
Occasionally disputes arise between the heirs when farm-lands pass by [578]
inheritance. But these rare quarrels are considered to be despicable and are ascribed to idiosyncrasies of character. In any case they are quarrels over the apportionment of joint property and there is always the chance that the man who has come off worst will later inherit the very land he was deprived of.

It is the exact contrary with wives. They form the chief object of 578
competition both between individuals and between corporate groups. 583
This is explicitly admitted in the conventions ruling the abduction of wives and marriage with another man's ex-wife.[2] The prohibition against abducting the wife (or marrying an ex-wife) of a clansman, kinsman, or member of a locally contiguous clan admits the fact that such acts are the most prolific source of strife, leading, in the old days, to bloodshed at times. The corollary that it is permissible, nay, commendable, to abduct the wife of a member of a distant, unrelated clan is an expression of the idea that geographically distant and genealogically unconnected clans have no direct common interests.

Competition for wives always was and still is the chief source of con- 691 ●
flict between individuals and groups in Taleland. More than 90 per 185
cent. of all cases brought to chiefs' courts nowadays are concerned with 578
wives, and they are always triangular affairs with two men competing for the woman or her offspring. The reason for this competitive attitude about wives in a society almost devoid of durable goods of great productive or prestige value and possessing few prestige-conferring offices is not difficult to see, as has been previously indicated. Wives are the sole means of attaining the supreme end of life for the natives, the perpetuation and increase of a man's lineage. Like land, which is a common interest to the whole nuclear and often inner lineage, wives are of common interest to all the members of their husbands' lineages (not only their inner lineages, but even their maximal lineages and clans), for all of whom the perpetuation of their line of descent is of transcendent importance. / This idea, which is expressed in the principle of the levirate, lies behind many of the institutions we shall be considering in this chapter.

Tallensi maintain that marriageable young women have become much 581
scarcer than a generation ago. They blame the chiefs and headmen, 595
whose new-found wealth enables them to have large harems, thus 622
robbing young men of possible wives. Tallensi say that girls naturally prefer to marry young men, who are more congenial to them sexually and socially, rather than old men, however prosperous or exalted they may be. But a girl cannot easily resist an offer of marriage from a chief

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

[2] Ibid., ch. iv.

581 the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*)
583 to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price
acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the
[586] bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over
a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

582 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage.
Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot
593 remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law
he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away, though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband, he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of
[789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might
curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at
583 least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on
•691 the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives
of the lineage. Pukiehɔt's wife was taken from him five times because he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehɔt. The chief put it to her that Pukiehɔt was, in effect, treating both her and her guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehɔt saw he was in danger of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

This case, typical of dozens that occur every day among the Tallensi, 593
shows how the motif of duty and the motif of reciprocity are intertwined.
This appears still more clearly when 'father' and 'son' farm separately. 691 ●
Thus Saγabo of Kpata'ar was Nyaaŋzum's late half-brother's son. He 577
occupied the same homestead as Nyaaŋzum, but separate quarters with an independent gateway and farm for himself. When Saγabo abducted a Gorogo man's wife, the injured husband, supported by his father-in-law, brought a case against Saγabo at the chief's court. Nyaaŋzum, together with Saγabo and almost all the other men of their inner lineage, went to answer the suit. Nyaaŋzum's defence was simple and straightforward. He knew of no bar to the marriage. They had no kinship ties with the girl's paternal kin, nor clanship ties with Gorogo. In former times Kpata'ar men and Gorogo men had not hesitated to abduct one another's wives. He was ready to pay the bride-price at once if the 'owner of the child (*biiraan*)'—that is the girl's jural guardian in this case, the father—agreed. The latter, however, refused to accept Saγabo as a son-in-law, so she was returned to her first husband and Nyaaŋzum forfeited his hearing fee of three shillings. Incidentally, this fee was made up of a shilling contributed by Saγabo, a shilling from Nyaaŋzum, and a shilling from another member of the inner lineage.

Why was Nyaaŋzum so ready to accept the responsibility for Saγabo's 593
marriage and to answer for him at court, seeing that Saγabo was not
farming with him? In the first place it was his duty as Saγabo's proxy 577
father; and being a man of principle he would not evade such a duty. Even if he disapproved of the young man's behaviour he must answer for it in public, and he was under a jural obligation to pay the bride-price for the youth's wife, from his own resources if need be. In fact, however, he would not have offered to pay the bride-price with such alacrity if it were a question of using his own resources, for he had his own sons to think of. Another factor came into the situation, as Nyaaŋzum himself explained to me.

When Saγabo's father, Nyaaŋzum's half-brother Galəmɔγar, died, Nyaaŋzum inherited a number of cattle from him. Some were cattle Galəmɔγar had received as bride-price for a younger sister of his and Nyaaŋzum's. These cattle accrued to the *faar*, the patrimonial property, in the strict sense; Nyaaŋzum was entitled to dispose of them as he pleased since he was the last of his father's sons. In addition, Galəmɔγar's herd included cattle he had himself bought or had received in payment of his daughters', Saγabo's sisters', bride-price. As Saγabo was still only a boy, Nyaaŋzum took possession of these cattle too. In theory he could dispose of them as he pleased. In practice Saγabo had a prior right to them, since they were his father's own earnings and his sisters' bride-price animals, and Nyaaŋzum had merely a nominal over-right. Nyaaŋzum had utilized most of these cattle for his own purposes; but he considered himself morally bound to make an equivalent return

728 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire when its allied clan made peace.

727 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the
721 old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in
721 its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

[621] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region
[182] is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic
domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was
726 that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied
411 men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows,
[701] their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

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[1] A clan-head could initiate a just war of revenge, with the consent of all the clan elders, and after consulting a diviner, in theory without incurring mystical blood-guilt. And yet, in after years, misfortunes falling on his descendants might be ascribed to this act.

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701 ●
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was [462
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights. As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of the wound.

721

721 **INSTIGATION OF WAR**--frequency of war (e.g., common, rare, unknown); military preparedness; scale, severity, and duration of wars; small-scale military operations (e.g., raids for slaves or cattle, headhunting, privateering); conception of war (e.g., as glorious, as holy, as wrong but inevitable, as less debilitating than peace); prevalent motives for waging war (e.g., vengeance, self-defense, aggrandizement, prestige); predominance of offensive or defensive warfare; material gains through war (e.g., booty, trophies, slaves, women, mercantile advantages, territory); decision as to war (e.g., deliberations, negotiations); methods of initiating hostilities (e.g., challenges, declarations of war, attacks without warning); etc. See also:

Ethnocentrism	186	Feuds	628
Cannibalism	266	International relations	648
Prestige	554	Revolution	669
Riots, piracy and banditry	579		

764 793 white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the graveside. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

764 622 Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

778 [171] 782 721 *Shrines*: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan'* of Tongo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

778 cine' or 'roots') is 'to prevent war'; it is called *mweley* (compare Nan-
kane *mweleya*[1]). 'When the war cry is raised I will first sacrifice a fowl
782 on the stone, saying: "They want to shoot arrows, and I wish to stop
•724 it; receive a fowl, and compel them not to shoot; let the women
and children sleep." The stone on top of the head-rest signifies that we compel people to sit down. After I sacrifice the fowl, cow dung and corn-cobs are placed round the pot and set on fire, while I say: "My father, call your father; let women and children sleep; they wish to shoot arrows; fire wants to burn the land, but I wish it to be cool." When the fire which I have lit goes out, the war is also burning out. The roots inside the pot are from a shea butter tree; when you eat shea butter your heart will become cool. This *tim bagere* (medicine shrine) is related to the one I wear round my neck which is also called *mweley*. I take it off and place it on top of the stone when the fire is burning. Some *mweley* are now used by Chiefs to encourage disputes in order that they may be able to fine people.'

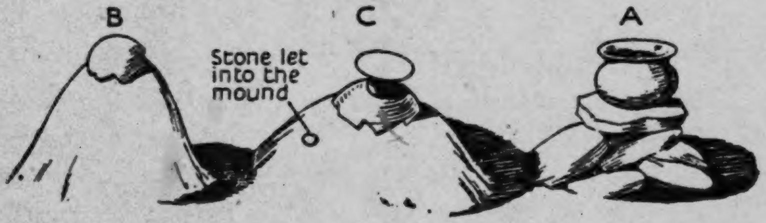

FIG. 66

778 [171] The above account was written nearly two years before my note on the same subject among the Nankanse.[2] I had, indeed, forgotten the latter, until I came to go over my notes in writing these volumes. It affords a good example, coupled with other evidence, of the close resemblance between the religion and customs of these two tribes, and also of the accuracy of the information imparted by two wholly independent informants. Unfortunately, the photograph I took of this shrine was not successful, but Fig. 66 A, is a rough diagram illustrating it and other shrines standing beside it. On the left of the *mweley* fetish stand two conical mounds, B and C. B is, Sayebere informed me, that of his *yab-pɔk la o bi* (grandmother and her son). The clay mound had a flat piece of iron on top covered by a potsherd and stone. C is a *Yini zug-bagere* (God-above shrine). On the apex of the mound was a piece of iron let into the clay which was covered

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[1] See p. 303.

[2] See p. 304.

NAMNAM

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was 173
succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such [551]
Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come
to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs 721 ●
receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Ti* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Ti* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler ?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We 173
marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our 304
ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called ***ta velim*** (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* 618
(python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. 173
A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people 622
have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), 103
Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of 632
yi zut (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* 622
(Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab* 624
appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine

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[1] He does not make any distinction between Mamprusse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Datoko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under the Chief of Nangode.

587 When, some forty years ago, a Tongo man married a Zoo widow and his
x618 son was shot dead in revenge by a Zoo man, the Chief of Tongo forbade
a raid of retaliation. It was, my informants said, a just vengeance since
[682] 'we don't marry the widows of Zoo people'.

Again, it would be a serious breach of solidarity for a member of one of
x618 the sub-clans to abduct the wife of a member of any other, and I have
627 never heard of such a case. Warfare between them is inconceivable, so
the injured group would have to rely upon moral pressure through the
chief and elders of the offender's community. But these measures would
undoubtedly succeed, even in these days when rebellious young men can
flee to foreign lands.

x618 This is likewise the widest extension of a restriction which holds with
587 greatest force for the segments of a maximal lineage belonging to the
same sub-clan, e.g. for the segments of Tongo *inter se*. In a lesser degree
it applies also to ex-wives. A man who marries the former wife of another,
even if the marriage was severed for just and accepted reasons, incurs the
hostility of the first husband's entire lineage both towards himself personally
and towards his clansmen as a group. Reprisals will be taken when
an opportunity occurs. When the parties are clansmen, feelings about such
acts become very bitter, and the more so the closer the tie. Marriages of
this kind take place from time to time, producing conflicts and reprisals
but not disruption of clanship ties.

x618 Another proof of kinship (*mabiirət*) usually cited by the natives is that
●721 warfare between the four sub-clans was forbidden. They were allies in
war in the old days. They did not all come to one another's help, nor
were they each other's sole allies. But they could call upon one another's
assistance in the name of kinship. The recollections of the oldest men go
back no farther than the time of their grandparents, four or five generations
ago. They tell of ancient fights in which Tongo, Sie, and Yamələg
supported one another; but Biuk, it seems, maintained an isolationist
policy in the wars and feuds of its Tale kinsmen. The greatest war still
remembered in tale and anecdote occurred forty or fifty years ago.
Yamələg became involved in it; and when Ba'ari raised the war-cry
against Yamələg, Sie and Tongo attacked Ba'ari on the flanks.

Mosuor biis: a Maximal Lineage

x618 These four branches of Mosuor's agnatic posterity (*tu'u*) constitute
what appears to be a single, dispersed clan—the only clan of this type in
Taleland; more accurately, it is a maximal lineage—the most inclusive
agnatic lineage to which any descendant of Mosuor in the male line (i.e.
any member of the four branches) can belong. In the eyes of the natives
an important qualification is that the four branches are of equal status
though graded in seniority. Tongo is the most senior because it remained
in possession of the original home of the clan—'*ti waabi daboog*, the
ancient home-site of all of us', they say—and has retained the custody of
Mosuor's grave and *bɔyar*, the shrine which symbolizes the perpetuity,
x618 identity, and common ancestry of the entire maximal lineage. Yamələg,
Sie, and Biuk follow in that order; but they no longer participate in
769 sacrifices to Mosuor. Each of them has its own ancestral *bɔyar*, enshrining

x618 themselves to be akin to the Talis, and are so regarded by the latter, though only in the very broadest sense. There is, of course, no clear boundary between the two aggregates of clans, either territorially or structurally. The *tɛndaanditib* maximal lineage of Gbee and the people of Yaɣazuor have ties of clanship, but Gbee is considered to belong more closely to the Sie district than to the Tongo district, whereas Yaɣazuordɛm are definitely Talis united by ritual bonds and clanship-by-courtesy to Ba'ari. Indeed Yaɣazuordɛm were always regarded as potential enemies by the clans of the Sie district. In two famous wars still recollected by the [721] old men, almost all the clans of the Sie district, both *naditib* and *tɛndaanditib*, including even the *naditib* maximal lineage of Gbee, were ranged against Yaɣazuor and Ba'ari. Thus, Gbee forms one interstitial group between the Tongo district and the Sie district. Similarly, Sɔk, near Yaməlәg, forms another interstitial group, considered by each aggregate to be more closely allied to the other.

621 framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are
182 dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

621 Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

173 When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos,
184 they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or
[535] heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of funeral dirges.

577 But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have
[511] a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an
173 attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too
721 lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

to it; and nowadays the natives lay more stress on this than on the 577
ancient glory of success in war. There was the mystical danger of 721 ●
reprisals from the spirit of one's victim (*gil*) following one all one's life.
There was the hate created in the dead man's kin, agnates and extra-clan 173
kin, including probably some of one's own clansmen or clansmen's wives.
At best they might try to injure one by means of bad medicine; at worst
it meant that one could never take part in a sacrifice or meal in which they
shared. If one did, their hidden hatred had a mystical power to kill one.
Nor did a man who had excelled in war derive any social, economic, or
political advantage from it. It did not add to his wealth or give him more
influence in the councils of the community. Soon even the fame of his
prowess became dim, for it is bad form to talk publicly, during his lifetime,
about the deeds of a man who has slain an enemy. It 'whitens (*pɛlɔg*)'
him—that is, exposes him to the wrath of his victim's spirit which
resents public comment on his defeat. A great fighter is praised in dirges
and speeches after his death. But in the past, as now, it was the good
farmer and not the bold fighter who was held up as the ideal of a worth-
while life.

Tallensi speak of fighting with weapons, for whatever reason, as one of 682
the necessary evils of the old days. They look back without regrets on 577
the passing of warfare. They regard the shedding of human blood, even 721
in self-defence or in justifiable anger, as sinful. To kill a man in war was
not homicide; one did not have to make heavy expiatory sacrifices to the
Earth for it, yet one could never get rid of the blood taint (*ziem*). In
1936 two of the oldest men I knew died. There was much whispered talk
about them. People pointed out that they had died in utter penury,
lacking even a sheep for their grave-clout. Yet at different times in their
long lives they had owned many cattle and had had several wives. Worse
still, they had died leaving only one or two young children, the survivors
of large families. Their lives had been tragically futile, by Tale standards.
And why? Because they had both been redoubtable fighters in their
young days; they had killed men in war; and this was the nemesis. All the
animals they had sacrificed in expiation had been in vain, in the long run.

The most heinous sin of all was to instigate (*sa*) a war. It did not 721
matter if the man had justice on his side. In the long run he paid 673
for his sin with sickness and death, and the tale of misfortune might
follow his descendants in the male line for generations. When Siiyɛlib 682
died, the diviner consulted to find out the cause of his death revealed an
unexampled story of misfortune going back twenty-five years. One after
another, Siiyɛlib's wives and children had died; rinderpest had wiped out
his cattle; and at last he himself had died without a son to mourn him
and in extreme poverty. All this went back to his part in the Tong Hills
Expedition of 1910–11, of which, the natives believe, he had been one
of the prime instigators.

Before the arrival of the British the Tallensi, in common with their 628
neighbours, had no judicial system. This was in keeping with their lack 578
of a centralized form of government. As far as there was a 'rule of law'—
that is, general observance of rights and obligations in property relations,
in person-to-person relations, in intra- and inter-group relations subject

[illegible] to enforcement by explicit or implicit sanctions—it prevailed only within
578 the clan or a cluster of closely interrelated clans, or between individual kinsfolk of different clans. Even so, every line of social cleavage was a source of weakness to the sanctions of right. It needed very little temptation or provocation for men of different clans or maximal lineages, however close the links between their respective groups, to lay violent hands on one another's property, person, or dependants. There was a general atmosphere of non-cognizance of rights *as such*. Times of crisis, such as famine, brought about a relapse into lawlessness.

631 In consequence the ultimate sanction of jural rights outside the clan
628 was self-help. If a man could not recover a wife who had been abducted or a bride-price debt owing to him through the intermediation of the elders of his clan and those of the abductor's or debtor's clan, he had the right to use self-help and make a raid on the cattle of the offender's clan. This was legitimate and reprisals were not allowed. If the offender were to attempt any, his clansmen would not support him. But these raids
721 might result in an armed clash with the cattle herds. Men might be killed; and then war flared up.

721 But raiding (*ŋɔk*), as a measure of self-help, in itself was not an act of
628 war. It led to war if men were killed, but not if there were no bloodshed.
578 Sometimes, even if a raid ended in an affray and men were killed, a reconciliation was made before an interclan fight could develop. The Tallensi distinguished precisely between raiding, as a method of self-help which they considered a legitimate jural device for redressing a wrong, and warfare. The custom of raiding reinforced warfare because it provided occasions for armed clashes and because of the habit of mind that lay behind it. Though this habit ran counter to the moral repugnance of the Tallensi to shedding human blood, it tolerated the use of violence as the proper ultimate means of asserting one's rights. This attitude still survives, to some extent. Men still carry their weapons when they go on a journey. Disputes over wives or unpaid debts sometimes bring the parties to the brink of a sanguinary fight. One reason why these fights are suppressed by the natives themselves before they become serious is the fear of the white man with his armed police in the background. Another
[779] and more powerful reason is the system of chiefs' tribunals and District Commissioners' courts imposed by the British. This judicial system has become an established part of native life. It has provided an effectively sanctioned alternative to self-help and made the latter obsolete (cf. p. 13). But in the past the attitude of mind we have described led the natives to think of warfare in its corporate aspect as a mechanism for redressing wrongs that could not otherwise be put right. Considering their lack of a single, all-embracing government and their segmentary social structure, it was inevitable that conflicts should often arise that could only be settled by fighting.[1]

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[1] In this connexion it is worth noting that the Tallensi have only one term, *zabɔr*, for every kind of fighting, from a quarrel between co-wives to a war. But, in addition, war was distinguished by referring to it euphemistically as 'arrows' (*peema*). Thus a war is identified as 'the arrows of so-and-so', after its chief instigator.

Forty years ago, when no man ventured outside the bounds of his own 578 settlement without weapons, when it was a common thing for a little group of armed men to raid the cattle of another clan in settlement of a debt, when a passing member of a different clan could be set upon and robbed, if he was unprotected, a trivial argument might lead to blows in the twinkling of an eye. Thus many fights occurred between clans and 721 lineages. But general wars, involving all the Tallensi, were less frequent. Only three seem to have taken place in the last three or four generations.

These general wars always took place between Tale clans or between some Tale clans and neighbouring non-Tale clans. The Tallensi never united for defence or offence against other 'tribes'. Wars began between adjacent clans which were not united by direct or indirect ties of clanship, and then spread by mobilizing the opposing forces along the lines of structural interconnexions which we have described. This was a basic feature of warfare. Tongo could not fight Gorogo directly, for to get at the men of Gorogo the Tongo warriors would have to cross the hostile territory of Gbeog and Wakii. Tɛnzugu could only fight Tongo if Wakii and Soog gave their men passage and took their side. A general war therefore inevitably followed the line of major cleavage between the Namoos and non-Namoos. An example will show how this occurred.

Some fifty years ago a quarrel between a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man led to a general war. It began in the way many of those wars did, with an argument about a wife. There was dancing at Yaɣazuor one night and a Kpatia man who was present was accused of trying to abduct the wife of a Yaɣazuor man. Next day one of the annual communal game drives took place. A bush turkey was brought down and both a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man claimed it. Such disputes were and still are common at these big game drives, when it is often difficult to determine whose club or arrow inflicted the death blow on an animal. In the circumstances, with the competitive spirit at its highest pitch, with men standing beside their clansmen with weapons in hand, with the excitement of the chase as a stimulus, words soon led to blows. Besides, the squabble of the previous evening over the woman was still rankling. So fighting broke out between the men of Yaɣazuor and the men of Kpatia.

Next morning the alarum was raised at both settlements. Ba'ari at 726 once came out to help its *sunzɔp* the Yaɣazuor men. Namɔɣalug and Sie rallied to the side of their fellow Namoos at Kpatia. Yamɔlɔg followed suit. Tongo, to assist Sie and Yamɔlɔg, attacked Ba'ari. Gbeog then attacked Tongo to help Ba'ari; Wakii and Soog, followed shortly by Tɛnzugu, came out to support their kin, the Gbeog people; Zoo immediately set out against the Hill Talis in support of Tongo, and Zubiuŋ, hitherto neutral, followed suit. Then Gorogo came to the help of Gbeog; and Sii and Yinduuri, mindful of their ties with Tongo through the chiefship of Sii, attacked Gorogo from the rear. All this happened in two or three days. Then the Gbizug and Wakii tendaanas, armed with 728 their ritual peacemaking powers, intervened and compelled the combatants to lay down arms. Tongo and Wakii made peace and the news was broadcast from clan to clan. Once two important representative clans made peace thus, all the others had to stop fighting. The ties of clanship

722 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire when its allied clan made peace.

727 721 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 721 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

[621] [182] 726 411 [701] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows, their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

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[1] A clan-head could initiate a just war of revenge, with the consent of all the clan elders, and after consulting a diviner, in theory without incurring mystical blood-guilt. And yet, in after years, misfortunes falling on his descendants might be ascribed to this act.

621 511 291 [465] and stationary form of hoe culture in which the volume of output is a direct product of human skill and muscle. The family group which produces the food, shelter, raiment, utensils, and weapons needed for its own subsistence can work only a limited amount of land. Wage labour is only sporadically employed for very short periods and to a negligible extent; twenty or thirty years ago it was almost non-existent. For technical and climatic reasons it is generally impossible for a subsistence unit to produce a regular surplus over current needs. And any surplus produced during any year is used up in meeting social or ritual obligations, in renewing the household's productive and living equipment, or in purchasing small numbers of live-stock destined to be used up, sooner or later, for obtaining wives or discharging social and ritual obligations.

471 311 The most valuable durable economic resource of the Tallensi is land; but as no rent, tax, or tribute is paid for the use of land, it would not profit a man to buy land he and his family could not work even in those parts where the sale of land is not a sacrilege. Nor would it be to the advantage of the head of a maximal lineage or clan to have authority over the land of another clan. He received no tax or tribute from his own clansmen, and the idea of exacting any such payments from others would never have occurred to him. In any case he had no means of enforcing such demands.

556 433 The scale of differences in wealth is narrow and was narrower in the past when there was no possibility of obtaining money by labour abroad or local trade. The stage has not yet been reached where a family group which has more resources than its neighbours thereby endows its members with permanent economic advantages or acquires, for any of them, special political or social powers and privileges.[1] The economic organization of the Tallensi was entirely, and to a great extent still is, a non-competitive, little differentiated, self-sufficient, stationary, subsistence economy. It acts as a stabilizing factor in the social system. It does not give rise, as yet, to social ties and cleavages cutting across those established by genealogical, local, and ritual principles. Economic incentives and interests did not influence the relations of clans with one another in the past, and did not therefore influence the course or aims of warfare.

182 721 That Tale warfare was a function of the segmentary structure of the society and not of political or economic ambitions is even clearer from the records of small-scale fights. It happened, quite often, that clans which were allies in general wars by reason of clanship or other structural ties fought among themselves. Like general wars, these local, interclan fights were kindled by such things as the abduction of a wife, quarrels over bride-price payments, the slaying of a man in a dispute between members of different clans or in a cattle raid, or simply by young men flaunting the corporate unity and independence of their clan in the face of another clan. Once started they followed the usual course of all social activities by setting the lineage system in motion and involving the patri-

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[1] Except for a handful of chiefs and the Golibdaana mentioned later; but even in their case the absence of facilities for investing wealth in land or other durable (capital) goods means that their wealth is rapidly dissipated by sons and grandsons.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
● 721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
292 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

X 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
508 contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within
182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many
sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from
breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they
625 always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out
during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater
solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies
throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare
681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the
obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments; on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of
721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from
the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels
182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in
769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within
clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

conquered many of the small tribes in North Mamprusi and superimposed their rule upon the indigenous clan system. Thus many of the Chiefs in the district to-day are of Mamprusi descent and pay tribute to the Nayiri, the paramount Mamprusi Chief at Nalerigu, near Gambaga. There is little tribal cohesion amongst the family sections, or clans, and it is upon their federation into a political unit, the Mamprusi State, that political officers have been engaged recently, following Government's policy of Indirect Rule through native Administration. The clans in Zuarungu and Kusasi now come into the Mamprusi Native Administration; those of Navrongo have formed Administrations of their own. Direct taxation was introduced in 1936 and marked an important step forward. A large proportion of the money collected is to be spent upon social services in the areas of collection, and agriculture is not being neglected. 631 [651]

Recent Slave Raids.

In addition to conquest from the South, the district was continually invaded by mounted slave-raiders from the North. There is no doubt that the unsettled conditions produced by these raids have had a profound effect upon the economic and social life of the people. The importance of this from our point of view is that now, with settled conditions, the people may be expected to adjust themselves, in time, to the new order of things, and to be prepared to modify their system of farming where necessary. It is probable that these invasions, together with tse-tse fly in heavy bush, tended to concentrate the population around the rocky hills characteristic of the district, where the horsemen would be at a disadvantage. The attention of the people appears to have been concentrated more upon weapons—bows and arrows, or spears, still used to-day for ceremony and hunting—than upon agricultural implements. It is also a significant fact that the indigenous system of agriculture requires no operation to be performed on the farm during the dry season, which is the season of the year when invasion would take place. The burning of the grass in the dry season may have been done to reduce the chance of surprise attack. 721● 241

Agriculture a Custom, not a Business.

As might be expected from tribes consisting of small units having continually to defend themselves and losing many of their strongest men in fighting or taken as slaves, the people in North Mamprusi remained, economically, very primitive. Although the system of agriculture is "fixed", which is generally regarded as an advance upon "shifting cultivation", it leaves much to be desired. Farming methods have not been adjusted sufficiently quickly to 241

of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, 613
hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are 578
thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters 627
right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders, makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage. It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of inter-lineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to 684
mystical dangers. Among Namoos she is haled to the homestead of the 613
head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of 627
entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not, the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway. This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kpeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* 613
homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices 726
to the ancestors and 'ate (*di*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves 224
against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives 613
and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common 684
interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and 587
the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the re-marriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities 613
of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his 582
capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head of her nucleur lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

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nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
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Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
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kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations
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corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties
to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit
are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very
careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen
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descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored
grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the
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727 721 The fighting lasted only a few days, but many men were killed, the old men say, and much grain and live-stock destroyed. The Namoos suffered badly. So the following year, at the usual time for fighting, just before the commencement of the sowing season, while the granaries were still full, the then Chief of Tongo 'set up arrows (*sa peema*)'[1] again to revenge their defeat. Thus the 'debt was cancelled (*samər lɛrigya*)'.

578 721 In these wars the major cleavage of Tale society came into operation in its most acute form, and they give us a particularly clear insight into its meaning. The major cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an insuperable barrier like that which separates castes or races in some societies. It should rather be regarded as the coping-stone of the whole complex system of differentiation and integration of corporate units in Tale society by means of the structural ties and cleavages inherent in it.

Wars, among the Tallensi, were not acts of political policy, as we understand it. They were not fought for the sake of acquiring territory, of extending the authority of one group over another, of taking captives, or of pillage. Indeed pillage to enrich oneself was strictly tabooed. Tale wars were not even calculated acts of aggression. They usually arose out of impulsive acts of retaliation by individuals or small groups of clan brothers for attacks, as often as not unpremeditated, on their kin, their property, or their self-regard. If the parties involved in the quarrel belonged to clans on opposite sides of the major cleavage, the whole system of clanship and ritual ties might be swung into activity and the result would be a general war. It could not be otherwise, given the native system of genealogical relationships and the sentiments connected therewith.

[621] [182] 726 411 [701] The structure of Tale society as a dynamically integrated social region is incompatible with warfare directed towards political or economic domination. One consequence of their segmentary social structure was that they had no regular military organization. In war all the able-bodied men turned out carrying their bows and quivers of poisoned arrows, their adzes, and other weapons, and hung around with medicines, exactly as they do to-day to go hunting. All the fighting men of a clan, the men of each major segment forming a separate contingent, went out in a mob to meet the enemy at the outskirts of the settlement. Their women folk, many of whom were daughters of the enemy clans, carried water to them, dragged away casualties, and urged on the fighters with their shrill, trilling *kpɛləmət* cries. The fighting consisted of uncoordinated sorties and skirmishes by individuals or small parties, without fixed leadership and with no other purpose than to rout the enemy and thus reassert the flouted rights or restore the injured pride of the victors. Their principal weapon, a bow strung with a slither of bamboo firing an unfeathered poisoned arrow, made it necessary for a man to get within about 50 yards

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764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔyayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔyayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔyayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubcnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔyayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
562 A *pɔyayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[292] to join. A *pɔyayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔyayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

x618 Lastly, a married *pɔyayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
● 728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔyasama*—a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔyayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

Forty years ago, when no man ventured outside the bounds of his own 578
settlement without weapons, when it was a common thing for a little
group of armed men to raid the cattle of another clan in settlement of a
debt, when a passing member of a different clan could be set upon and
robbed, if he was unprotected, a trivial argument might lead to blows in
the twinkling of an eye. Thus many fights occurred between clans and 721
lineages. But general wars, involving all the Tallensi, were less frequent.
Only three seem to have taken place in the last three or four generations.

These general wars always took place between Tale clans or between some Tale clans and neighbouring non-Tale clans. The Tallensi never united for defence or offence against other 'tribes'. Wars began between adjacent clans which were not united by direct or indirect ties of clanship, and then spread by mobilizing the opposing forces along the lines of structural interconnexions which we have described. This was a basic feature of warfare. Tongo could not fight Gorogo directly, for to get at the men of Gorogo the Tongo warriors would have to cross the hostile territory of Gbeog and Wakii. Tɛnzugu could only fight Tongo if Wakii and Soog gave their men passage and took their side. A general war therefore inevitably followed the line of major cleavage between the Namoos and non-Namoos. An example will show how this occurred.

Some fifty years ago a quarrel between a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man led to a general war. It began in the way many of those wars did, with an argument about a wife. There was dancing at Yaɣazuor one night and a Kpatia man who was present was accused of trying to abduct the wife of a Yaɣazuor man. Next day one of the annual communal game drives took place. A bush turkey was brought down and both a Yaɣazuor man and a Kpatia man claimed it. Such disputes were and still are common at these big game drives, when it is often difficult to determine whose club or arrow inflicted the death blow on an animal. In the circumstances, with the competitive spirit at its highest pitch, with men standing beside their clansmen with weapons in hand, with the excitement of the chase as a stimulus, words soon led to blows. Besides, the squabble of the previous evening over the woman was still rankling. So fighting broke out between the men of Yaɣazuor and the men of Kpatia.

Next morning the alarum was raised at both settlements. Ba'ari at 726
once came out to help its *sunzɔŋ* the Yaɣazuor men. Namɔɣalug and Sie
rallied to the side of their fellow Namoos at Kpatia. Yamɔlɔg followed
suit. Tongo, to assist Sie and Yamɔlɔg, attacked Ba'ari. Gbeog then
attacked Tongo to help Ba'ari; Wakii and Soog, followed shortly by
Tɛnzugu, came out to support their kin, the Gbeog people; Zoo immediately
set out against the Hill Talis in support of Tongo, and Zubiuŋ,
hitherto neutral, followed suit. Then Gorogo came to the help of Gbeog;
and Sii and Yinduuri, mindful of their ties with Tongo through the
chiefship of Sii, attacked Gorogo from the rear. All this happened in
two or three days. Then the Gbizug and Wakii tɛndaanas, armed with 728
their ritual peacemaking powers, intervened and compelled the combatants
to lay down arms. Tongo and Wakii made peace and the news
was broadcast from clan to clan. Once two important representative clans
made peace thus, all the others had to stop fighting. The ties of clanship

728 which brought a particular unit into the fight compelled it also to retire
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182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances
that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
282 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in
clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The
tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and
children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping
feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd,
the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in
their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the
dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies
and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the
highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each
group.

X 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
● [728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed
during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others
wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung
back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and
see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer
and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée
several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and
men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their
sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but
they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still
exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the
original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations
with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship
or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

578 acts as peacemaker. But in principle they go back to the same facts as general wars, the structural differentiation of maximal lineages and clans.

We can see that Tale wars were in fact a kind of intestine feud within a single homogeneous social region, rather than wars in our sense. We have refrained from calling them feuds because they were usually short and sharp and never led to a long series of mutual reprisals. If one war was followed a year later by a war of revenge, as in the instance given [669] in this chapter, that was the end of it. One might even describe them as a kind of civil war, since they sprang from the cleavages inherent in the social structure, particularly the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos. They served to keep these cleavages alive, to defend the corporate unity of the maximal lineage and clan and the corporate rights associated with it, against other like units. They were, at bottom, a mechanism for resolving tensions within the society[1] and not an instrument of political action against outsiders. The ever-present possibility of war was a potent factor in maintaining the segmentary structure of the society. It achieved this by enhancing to the utmost both aspects of the social differentiation of maximal lineages and clans—the demarcation of unit from unit by genealogical and local criteria, and the corporate solidarity of each unit in its own right. However much the Tallensi 578 deplored bloodshed among them, as in civilized nations, in warfare all 186 personal interests were subordinated to the common interest of the clan or maximal lineage, whether its cause was just or not. All normal activities were suspended and every man, woman, and adolescent child took some part in the fighting or in caring for the wants of the fighters. Clan patriotism reached a pitch of fervour which no other occasion could evoke. It was felt as passionately by the women and girls carrying water to the fighters and dragging the wounded away, and by the old men at home who tended the wounded and went around from shrine to shrine making sacrifices to the ancestors, as by the fighting men. Something of this spirit comes out to-day in the inaugural ceremonies of an important elder's funeral, when the whole clan turns out for a pageant mimicking the activities of war.

578 Yet there was never any danger of wars or smaller fights breaking the 182 society up into a number of anarchic fragments. They were inhibited from doing so by the countervailing influence of the strong social ties between traditionally hostile groups. Indeed their very occurrence [728] stimulated the reassertion of the overriding common interests of the society and the reaffirmation of the bonds of unity between the factions. In a war between Namoos and non-Namoos peace had to be made quickly and the *status quo ante* restored because the two groups are so closely interconnected by ties of marriage and kinship that the majority of members of one group have bonds of duty, affection, and mutual interest with members of the other; because they are such close neighbours; above all, because they are bound together by ties of politico-

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[1] These tensions persist, though they are kept well in check by fear of the British Administration. The new judicial system provides a safety valve to some extent; but they break through, chiefly in the form of political intrigue, as we shall see in the next section.

ritual collaboration in a series of complementary relations the proper 578
maintenance of which they believe to be indispensable for their common 182
welfare. This is the basis of the ritual sanctions against instigating war and shedding blood and of the moral repugnance associated with them. A war temporarily upset the equilibrium of Tale society; it could not destroy it.

The social system of the Tallensi, in its widest extent, is held together 182
by its religious superstructure. Its unity is none the less real because it appears only on the highest plane of common religious values known to the natives. As we have noted, the complementary politico-ritual offices of the chiefship, which is typically a Namoo office, and the tendaanaship, typically an office found amongst non-Namoos, constitute the focus of the institutions that maintain this unity; and the annual cycle of the Great Festivals are at once the chief sanction and the supreme expression of it.
The coming of the white man has made very little difference to the way [177]
these institutions operate in relation to the fundamental structure of Tale society. They continue to be the crowning mechanism of equilibrium in Tale society, because its segmentary social structure has kept its traditional form and vitality. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that only a strong and universally accepted religious sanction could hold such a society together. In practice the equilibrium is achieved by the distribution of mutually complementary offices among the segments of the society, all of which are essential for the performance of definite ritual duties.

It is a significant index of the type of social system presented by [728] ●
the Tallensi that the widest range of social solidarity found among 796
them is evoked by their Great Festivals. Great stress is laid on the ritu-
ally sanctioned truce to all fighting or discord between clans or maximal [582]
lineages during the Festivals. That is why marriages are forbidden during 182
the *Gɔlib* Festival. The Festival Cycle begins with the Harvest Festivals. These are celebrated by single clans or groups of linked maximal lineages independently of one another and serve to enhance the sense of clan and lineage solidarity. The climax is the *Gɔlib* Festival, immediately before the rains. This gives ritual sanction and dramatic expression to the idea of the close-knit interdependence of all the Tallensi with one another. Its reiterated themes are the common interests of all the Tallensi—food, peace, and fecundity—which must be achieved if they are to survive, and the supreme common values—the cult of the ancestors and of the Earth—by which the whole of Tale social life is steered. The lesson of *Gɔlib*, to the Tallensi, is that men cannot realize their greatest common interests or pursue their greatest common purposes in mutual enmity. *Gɔlib* is the most powerful counterweight to war and to the tendency of each clan and maximal lineage to set its own corporate interests above the common interest of the whole society. It is noteworthy that the Great Festivals do not presuppose the suspension of the primary loyalties of the segments that make up Tale society. They represent a synthesis, for the time being, of these primary loyalties—a synthesis that is possible only by giving full scope to the feeling of clan and maximal lineage unity and singularity in each group. *Gɔlib* emphasizes the mutual dependence of Namoos and Talis, but it does this by simultaneously enhancing the

621 421 The natives cannot imagine any tract of land or territory being totally unconnected with a human group. Most tracts of uninhabited bush are 'owned' by chiefs, who have ritual jurisdiction over hunting rights. But some tracts of unoccupied and uninhabited land (e.g. between Biuŋ and the river) appear to have no 'owners', either secular or ritual. The natives say the 'owners' have died out. The land did at one time have a connexion, perhaps only a ritual connexion, with a human group, and this connexion remains mystically effective still. Such areas of *wasak*, as the natives call them, are economically a free good. Anyone can come and build or cultivate there. But a man who does so will try to find some person or some clan to offer sacrifice to the Earth on his behalf, as the residuary legatee of the defunct 'owners', through local or clanship ties with them. If he fails to find anyone, he will consult a diviner to find out for himself where the sacred spots are in this stretch of *wasak* and make the sacrifices himself, thus creating a moral bond with it. Nowhere is the Earth inert; and its mystical powers are a reflex of its relations with human groups.

The three functionally differentiated aspects of man's relations to territory in Taleland are interconnected in Tale thought and custom in a rather complex way, and local differences blur the general principles. The simplest approach will be from the starting-point of land used for agricultural purposes. This is by far the most important economic use of land, but not the only one. There are few products of nature on the earth's surface that the natives do not make some economic use of, or rely on for other practical purposes. It is easy to see, therefore, why the natural environment is built into the social organization and invested with values and meaning in the social philosophy and ritual beliefs of the Tallensi. Our analysis would lead to the same conclusions if we started from uncultivated bush (*moog*), for instance, the source of essential products such as firewood, wild fruits, shea nuts, thatching grass, reeds for mat-making, rafters, medicine roots, and so forth, as well as of game and wild fowl.

Farm-land and Subsistence

311 Land means many things to the Tale farmer. He distinguishes, firstly, between the soil (*tam*) and the arable, or tilled land (*kuob*). He recognizes and takes into account different kinds and qualities of soil. This is something independent of the tillage of the land; and, conversely, cultivation (*kuo*, from *kɔ*, to hoe) turns any kind of soil (*tam*) into arable (*kuob*). Tilled land, again, is classified, without reference to soil qualities, by its location and by the kind of crops grown on it. Thus, every farmer has one or more home farms (*saman*) in the settlement and one or more bush farms (*poog*) in an area free of human habitations. In addition, a particular farm is merely a parcel of land, a bit carved out of a *tɛŋ*. In this context a *tɛŋ* is a stretch of territory in its useful, material aspect. One can speak of such and such a *tɛŋ* as being very fertile, or as having a sandy soil (*tambiihug*).

241 731 Farming is the basis of the Talaŋ's livelihood. A failure of crops, nowadays, spells widespread privation. Thirty years ago it would have brought famine. Tallensi often talk of this, especially when unpropitious

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years
ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine
is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing
this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and
forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black
man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy
grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on
the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among
distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567]
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke
down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535
end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend
the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good
year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young
mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders
fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There
is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ
kpɛŋya*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere
of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of
ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale
ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence.
For the individual the physical well-being of himself and
his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of
offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual
symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep
it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go
back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this:
'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring
be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul
guul, ka dɔyam dɔya, ka guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241
natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and
talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and
industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency
between a *pukpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious
hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption.
One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

731 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the
241 majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-
165 being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human
731 effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

788 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent
771 state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When
782 things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the
individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on 688

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[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. [193]
To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

x618 tɛndaanaship and in other religious cults. Each segment has its own tɛndaana, the Gbizug tɛndaana being the senior of the two, and in addition the Gbeogdɛm have the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, like Zubiuŋ and the Hill Talis, whereas the Gbizugdɛm do not participate in this cult. This cleavage comes into operation also in the political and jural relations of the two segments, so that in very many situations Gbeog emerges as an independent settlement.

Both segments have ties of clanship with Soog, the Talis clan sandwiched between Tongo and Wakii. But there is an additional bond between Gbeog and Soog, which is not shared by Gbizug, for one-half of Gbeog is associated with Soog in a common cult of an External *Bɔyar*, in the same way as the three sections of Zubiuŋ are associated in the cult of their External *Bɔyar*, Duunkpalɔ́g. The other half of Gbeog has a separate External *Bɔyar*. Gbizug has ties of clanship also with Degal, the Tɛnzugu clan, in virtue of the alleged 'brotherhood' of the four primordial tɛndaanas. Yet Wakii and Ka'ar, the clans sprung from the other two primordial tɛndaanas, are merely the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy of Gbizug, though both, and especially Wakii, have closer spatial, jural, and ritual relations with it than Degal has.

[608] Soogdɛm have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ, but regard them as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. They are linked by a ritual relationship which comes into effect whenever a Zubiuŋ tɛndaana dies. There was for a long time an estrangement between the two clans, because some years ago a Zubiuŋ youth married the ex-wife of a Soog man. A ceremonial reconciliation [627] under somewhat dramatic circumstances took place recently when ritual necessity compelled the elders of the offender's lineage to send a deputation to beg the pardon of the Soog elders. Apart from this intermittent and very limited ritual collaboration, the clanship-by-courtesy of Soog and Zubiuŋ is very weak. One of the standing jokes in Zubiuŋ concerned two [735] of the lineage heads of Soog. These two old men are notoriously poor through bodily infirmity, and therefore make use of every opportunity of getting free food or drink. Thus, whenever there is a funeral at Zubiuŋ they appear as representatives of their clan to claim their share of beer and meat as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy; but Zubiuŋdɛm have long ceased to go to Soog funerals.

From Ba'ari the mesh of clan linkages continues across the dialectal boundary with the Gɔrisi. Ba'at-Sakpar has clanship ties with Sanaab biis, a section of Bɔlɘga. 'They are our kinsmen', said the Ba'at-Sakpar tɛndaana-elect, 'even though they have become Gɔrisi.' Another Bɔlɘga section are similarly related to Ba'at-Lakum yiri. Ba'at-Guŋ, on the other hand, have ties of clanship with Tamboog on Tɛnzugu, and Ba'at-Dun biis have ties of clanship with Samiit on Tɛnzugu. Yaɣazuor and Gbee are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy to all sections of Ba'ari.

The internal constitution of Ba'ari is interesting, in that the whole clan is grouped around Ba'at-Sakpar. Thus, Ba'at-Lakum yiri has the status of an attached lineage of Sakpar. Their founding ancestor was said to have been a sororal nephew of Sakpar, begotten by a Zubiuŋ man—hence also their ties with Zubiuŋ; and Ba'at-Guŋ is similarly an attached lineage of Lakum yiri. Being related to Sakpar by a remove, Guŋ is allowed to

desirous of having, and are indulgent to, a young wife (*pɔɣabil*), not only for sexual motives but also, and mainly, in order to have a strong young woman about the house to administer those creature comforts to which they are said to become more and more addicted as they grow older. Thus siblings by the same father (*ba ukɔla biis*) may differ in age by as much as a generation. A man's younger half-brother or sister may be younger than his own children though senior to them in generation. This has important effects on the lineage organization. 596

The custom of the levirate introduces a component of some significance in the constitution of the joint family. In the 61 domestic families of our sample there were 111 married men, and no less than 21—more than one in five—had one or more inherited wives. An inherited wife usually brings her young children by her first husband (if she has any) with her. They grow up side by side with her children by her second husband, who is responsible for their support. Tale kinship ideas make this a simple and self-evident arrangement; but it means, nevertheless, a division within what is normally the most compact and cohesive element of the domestic family, the matricentral *dug*, in accordance with the different paternity of the children. Generally a widow of child-bearing age marries a close agnate of her deceased husband—his brother or first cousin—who is, therefore, a close classificatory father of her children. This makes it easy for them to regard her second husband with some of the devotion and affection due from children to their own father, especially if they are still very young. Still, this is a weak place in the cohesion of a family, at which a split easily occurs; for no man, say the Tallensi, can wholly take the place of one's true father. If a widow marries a distant agnate of her late husband, the latter's heir may demand the custody of his children when they are old enough to do without a mother's care. This splits the *dug*. But it also creates compensatory bonds of uterine (*soog*) kinship between her sons belonging to different lineage segments. 596 587 [602]

Sometimes a man's dependants include a deceased brother's children whose mother has died or married out of the family. Such children are, for all practical purposes, his own children, but the sons frequently secede when they have children. Much less commonly, a man may have an orphaned sister's son (*ahɔŋ*) living with him in as intimate a relationship, ostensibly, as if he were his son or brother. Actually, both jural and sentimental reservations hedge round a sister's son's position in the family, for his descent bars him, in the last resort, from ever acquiring real filial status.[1] It is significant that in the old settlements extremely few cases of this kind occur, and it is always assumed that the nephew will eventually return to his natal settlement—though he does not always do so. In the new settlements, where personal kinship ties largely replace lineage ties as the basis of local aggregation, not only sororal 596 736●

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI below.

596 nephews but more distant cognatic and even affinal kin frequently live
736 with a kinsman until they can set up in their own homesteads.

Sometimes, too, an unmarried sister's child (*tau-bii*) may grow up and live in its uncle's family. It may be an illegitimate child (*yi yeem bii*—a maiden's child), or one whose mother's bride-price was not paid, and who therefore belongs to her father unless or until it is redeemed (*pɔhəg*) by the payment of a cow by its genitor or his heir. A sister's child is to all intents and purposes a child of the family. But not being of the true agnatic line, it is subject to certain jural disabilities which have no consequence for a girl but handicap a boy, as we have previously seen.

The domestic families of chiefs and headmen are unusual only in
596 respect of size. Their newly won riches enable chiefs and headmen to
622 acquire numerous wives and to maintain households that appear enormous in the eyes of the ordinary man. A petty headman may have ten or more wives. The late Chief of Tongo, a chief of modest means compared with some of his peers in Taleland, had more than thirty. The Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu has at least eighty. The Chief of Datɔko is reputed to have a hundred, but he denies this and claims to have only a modest fifty. Except that their domestic economy and organization is more complex and that there is at times more friction between the womenfolk, these hypertrophied joint families have the same pattern of organization as those of ordinary folk.

It is noteworthy that this pattern has not been disturbed by the social
596 changes which have, in recent years, followed the subjection of the
177 Northern Territories of the Gold Coast to European political, economic,
and cultural influences. Family disorganization has barely begun to
167 appear in Taleland. There is hardly a domestic family in the country—not one in our sample—which has wholly escaped the effects of these contact influences. One or more of their members is or has been abroad in Mampurugu, Ashanti, or the Colony, for longer or shorter periods of time, farming, working for wages, or trading. But the number of men abroad, at any given time, for very long periods is relatively small[1] compared with other parts of West and Southern Africa, and their absence has little effect on the structure of the residual family. Their labour is lost to the family, but as they are no longer a drain on its resources this does not upset its internal economy. Similarly, as they are mostly young men[2] with little or no responsibility for the management of family

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[1] Estimates based on my own census material and on Nominal Rolls drawn up by Administrative Officers for tax collection show that an average of just under 7 per cent. of the adult male population of Taleland were away from home and not likely to return in the immediate future, in the years 1936 to 1939. This estimate may be compared with the 60–80 per cent. of able-bodied adult males absent from tribal reserves in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland quoted by Lord Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 701.

[2] Reliable information on the ages of these absentees cannot be obtained. But from personal contact with many of them, both on their return home and

Five or six years passed and Duun died. Baa was now head of the lineage and family. The patrimonial land passed to him. For a short time Duun's two sons, Saandi and Ku'ɔni, continued to occupy their late father's section of the homestead and farmed in partnership, independently of Baa. But they soon decided to move out. They went to build at Gbambee, on their late father's bush farm. At first they shared a homestead and farmed together. Then Ku'ɔni began to farm for himself and, a little later, wished to have his own gateway. At this stage the expanded family sprung from Katiŋoo consisted of two homesteads, one at Zoo, occupied by Baa and his sons with their families, who together made up a single household, and the other at Gbambee, consisting of two semi-detached parts occupied by Saandi and Ku'ɔni respectively, with their families, and constituting two separate households. 596

A little later Ku'ɔni separated altogether from Saandi and went to build his homestead at Zoo on a piece of land that had been their father's personal farm. This site proved to be mystically unpropitious and soon Ku'ɔni moved again. This time he returned to his father's (and grandfather's) original home (*daboog*) and built semi-detached quarters for himself adjoining Katiŋoo's old homestead, still occupied by Baa. He remained economically independent of Baa; but both he and Saandi were still under Baa's jural and ritual jurisdiction, as his brother's sons. A process of partial reintegration had, however, occurred.

Then Baa died and Saandi became head of the lineage and heir to the patrimonial land. So he moved back to Zoo, where he built semi-detached quarters for himself adjoining the group's original home. This happened quite recently; and the distribution of Katiŋoo yir is as we have described on p. 69. Saandi, Ku'ɔni, and Baa's son Ɔmara have each their separate, semi-detached quarters and their separate gateways; they are economically independent of each other; but jural and ritual jurisdiction over the unit is in Saandi's hands.

But this is not the end of the story. If Saandi were to die suddenly, none of his sons would be old enough to farm for himself and support Saandi's widows and children. So they would all join Ku'ɔni's household, and remain in his custody—the widows as his wives (unless they remarried other men, when they would fade out of the picture altogether), the children as his children—until Saandi's oldest boy was old enough to set up an independent household. The process of gradual dispersion would then start again. If, Saandi being dead, Ɔmara were also to die suddenly, leaving no son old enough to support his household, his children would also join Ku'ɔni, and thus all the branches of Katiŋoo's family would be reconstituted into a single unit for the time being. The whole cycle would take from twenty to thirty years. 596 736

Our illustration has been in part hypothetical so as not to confuse the reader with too many genealogies. But this is not a fanciful case. A dozen family histories that have followed the pattern outlined above 596

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-operation and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the household. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir* is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of 854 *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most 855 significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family. A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty [292] of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children. This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing. Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child ●736 as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

602 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to 736 fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things, we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest 736
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had
their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside
extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get
the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her children 602
from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for
the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to
co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives.
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her 595
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost
anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who
resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite
common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's
child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between
co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out
of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave
carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife
of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and
therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the
women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past.
So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*)
and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations
of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most
of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or
death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association
between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft
brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the
male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been com- 627
pelled to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

593 in illness. She is mainly responsible for their training in habits of cleanliness. She also has to teach her daughters housekeeping skills.

This formal summary is interposed here as a means of orientating our analysis. The reality, we shall find, is not so simple.

Classificatory Parents and Own Parents

Tallensi affirm that no one can wholly take the place of a person's 593 own parents. A child may be brought up by its dead father's brother 855 or dead mother's co-wife. Outwardly there is nothing to distinguish the relationship of such a child, during its pre-adolescent years, to its •736 proxy parent from that of a child living with its natural parent. Men or women point with pride and affection to orphans in their custody as 'my children'. They claim to care for them as conscientiously and devotedly as for their own children. But, the natives say, there is always something lacking; and observation shows that the affective ties of proxy parent and child are much weaker than those of natural parent and child. Sometimes, indeed, there is an acknowledged emotional barrier between them.

One can see this in young children like Gundaat, whose story is told in a previous chapter (p. 130). A young child is more restrained, more formal, with a proxy parent than with a natural parent. Boys seem to be less amenable to proxy parents than to own parents, especially as they approach adulthood. When young men who have been abroad, [167] working in Ashanti or the Colony for a period of years, are questioned about their motives for leaving home, the commonest reason they give is the death of a parent. 'My father (*ba*) died, and my junior father (*ba-pit*) took over the house (*die yir*) and so I went away', is the usual formula. One soon discovers that there was always some tension and often friction between the youth and his father's brother. The youth says that his *ba-pit* did not treat him properly; and when one questions his *ba-pit*, he usually says 'the boy did not respect (*nan*) me'. This is a modern development of what is a deeply ingrained feature of Tale social organization. A man will often continue to live and farm with his own father until the latter's death. I know men of 40 and over who are still living with their own fathers. But very rarely does this happen with a father's brother. A dead man's sons break away from the parental home when a father's brother inherits it as soon as they are able to. In such a case there is usually a convergence of different factors of segmentary differentiation in the lineage. The emotional cleavage serves as the catalyst that directs and accelerates the normal processes of splitting along economic and structural lines of cleavage.

This is the negative aspect of the idea that one's natural parents should be one's social parents, as it appears in the classificatory extension of the parent–child relationship. On the positive side it follows from this conception that all those who are socially identifiable with

one's parents and play a part in one's upbringing can, and in certain 593
circumstances must, stand to one in the relation of proxy parents.
The rule applies most directly to the men and women of the same 855
domestic unit who are identified with one's parents by generation and 736
by social role—to one's father's brothers (*sunzɔɔp*), including his full and half-brothers and first cousins on his father's side, who are his prospective successors; and to one's mother's co-wives (*nentaas*). If these men and women all belong to the same household they are directly concerned with the production of food, the provision of shelter, and the satisfaction of the other wants of the unit upon which the physical welfare and growth of a child depends. If the men belong to relatively autonomous economic units but to the same domestic unit, they will nevertheless have a common interest in the family patrimony, to the inheritance of which they all have rights, and a common ritual dependence on the immediate ancestors of the nuclear lineage. The women will sometimes help in caring for one another's children; the men will sometimes help one another in farming and always act as a unit in ritual and jural matters under the authority of the most senior of them. And the ritual care of a child is of as much importance as its physical care. A child will not thrive (*maan*) if it is not under the spiritual wing of its patrilineal ancestors, as we have learnt.

Outside the domestic unit the terms *ba* (father) and *ma* (mother) and 602
the distinctive modes of behaviour correlated with them, are not
extended beyond the expanded family (i.e. the family cluster built up 613
on the inner lineage) in normal circumstances. The only exception is in the case of a uterine kinsman or kinswoman of a parent, who is identified with the foundress of the uterine line and is therefore described as a 'father' or 'mother' irrespective of genealogical distance.[1]

Within the clan or maximal lineage it is a cardinal rule that generation differences are not recognized beyond the limits of the inner lineage. 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage—*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*' is the Tale maxim. This is correlated with the structural relations of the inner lineage to lineage segments of higher order. The inner lineage is likely to be the widest segment with a common interest in patrimonial land. In relation to the clan or the maximal lineage it is usually the smallest recognized corporate segment, whose members are significant for the clan only as members of the segment. As will be remembered, it is also the unit within which sexual relations with a co-member's wife are definitely sinful. In short, the inner lineage (and the family cluster which is its residential and familial correlate) marks the limit beyond which a person takes part in corporate activities not in his own right and in his personal capacity but as a member of the

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[1] Kinship terms without inverted commas stand for the primary meaning of the terms, e.g. (natural) father; those between inverted commas stand for the extended or derived meaning of the term, e.g. (classificatory) 'father'.

602 613 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidɛm*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship [736 768] terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 613 593 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements. There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series [601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mbà* (*ma*, *bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

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[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Goris and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kɛma* and *yɛbəga* for senior and junior.

251 (4). Small quantities of seed and soup ingredients are stored in earthenware pots and calabashes of different shapes and sizes, which can be sealed with mud and cowdung. Ashes are mixed with cowpeas to discourage attacks from weevils. Groundnuts are generally stored in big baskets, plastered on the outside with mud and cowdung.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.

231 744 The importance of livestock in maintaining a system of fixed cultivation, under the conditions described, is patent. Furthermore the importation from French territory of large quantities of cattle, sheep, goats, and fowls, is a good indication of the size of the market for meat in Ashanti and the Colony; there is no reason why a greater proportion of this market should not be satisfied from local sources than is at present supplied, with benefit to the local farmer. In recognition of this, Government has pursued a policy of general immunisation against cattle plague, which is now practically complete. As a result, the cattle in North Mamprusi are shown to be increasing very satisfactorily (12) since the initial immunisation in 1931-32. From a census taken in 1936 they were found to number over 64,000 head. Thus over one-third of the cattle in the Northern Territories (64,293 head out of 160,000) are being maintained upon less than one-tenth of its area (3,559 sq. miles out of 41,940 sq. miles). The growth of the cattle population, taken into account with the numbers of other livestock, and the shortage of water and of human food in some years, gives some idea of the magnitude of the animal husbandry problems which lie ahead.

Uneconomic Position of Livestock.

231 182 Livestock occupy a peculiar position in local farm economy. Although they are sold in order to get money when necessary, nevertheless, they are not reared for economic purposes, but primarily for religious sacrifice and the payment of marriage dowries. In North Mamprusi, wealth and position are associated, not with money, but with the number of wives and children, and livestock, that a man has. Four cows would enable a man to acquire another wife, but ten pounds would not do so (by custom). As with crop husbandry, so with animal husbandry, economic conditions are changing more rapidly than custom is adjusting itself; unless the adjustment receives careful assistance there is a grave risk of loss of soil fertility and human stamina, on the one hand, and the constitution of the livestock upon the other.

Numbers of Livestock Owned per Compound.

231 The numbers of livestock owned by recorded compounds are set out in Table 8, of Appendix II, in detail. From this table text Table 5 below has been extracted.

XL

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

The Family Compound (Yir) *and the Shrines* (Bagr) *which it contains*

351 171 KUSASE compounds (*Ya*, s. *Yir*) are roughly circular in shape, as are the huts which they contain, and are widely scattered like those of the Nankanse, Namnam, Talense, and Kasena, but there is one marked difference which immediately strikes the eye between the Kusase house and those already described. The former are not flat-roofed, but are neatly thatched (see Fig. 86). I now propose to describe a typical Kusase compound in detail. The main entrance which faces west is known as *zan pak nore* (compare Nankane *zenore*). It leads directly into the main yard which is also the cattle-kraal. The hut immediately on the left of the main entrance (it is sometimes on the right) is called *zɔŋ*, pl. *zon*. This hut is nominally where goats and fowls are shut up at night, but it is also used in the wet season as the place where the senior males in the compound sit and talk. When the head of a compound dies, his body is passed through a back doorway in the *zɔŋ* hut, instead of being taken through the main entrance. The *zɔŋ* (or *zɔŋo*) hut seems to figure largely on many such ceremonial occasions. Immediately outside the entrance of the compound is a grass-roofed hut without any walls, known as *suk* in Kusal (*Paka* in [776] Nankane). It contains a shrine called a *Wen bagr* (God's shrine), a circular mound like that seen in Fig. 142 at Tumu among the Isala. Let into the top of this mound is a sheep's horn and a stone. The stone is called *bagr bugr* (the *bugr* of the *baga*). The head of the compound and others sit or recline on this flat top, and in the very hot weather the compound head may sleep on it. It is sacrificed to at the sowing season, at the harvest, and when new beer is made from the first of the crops. 'The *Tenedan*' sacrifices to the land, I, the Chief, sacrifice on this *bagr*.'

● 751 Above the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut, through which the corpse of the head of the house is carried to burial, is a black cross (see Fig. 87) to guard against lightning.[1] The same symbol is put on trees in Kusase farms under which the farmer shelters, and for the same reason. At

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[1] The same symbol is used among the Isala to protect crops from menstruating women.

[p. 380]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

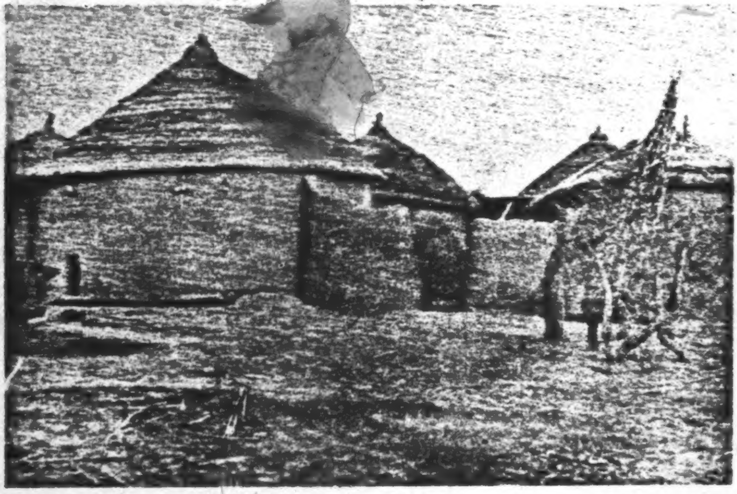

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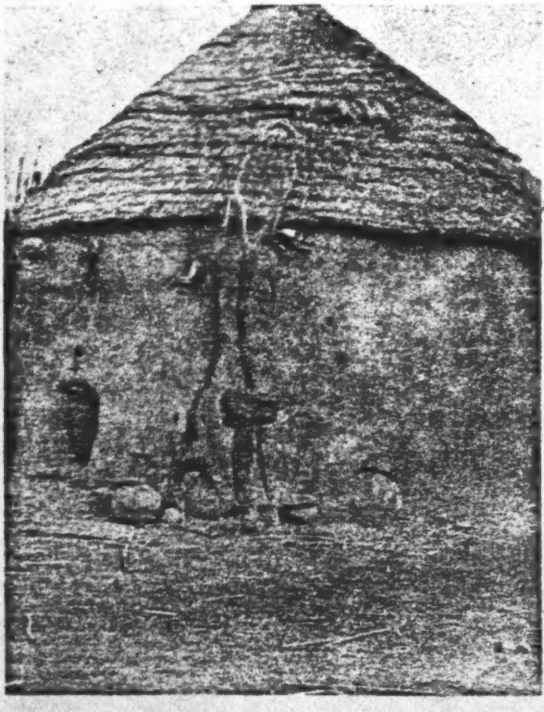
Fig. 86. A Kusase compound



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751 ●
778

Fig. 87. The *zɔŋ* hut. Note cross above doorway

[Facing p. 380]

Kusase

751 778 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top, and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On [515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr* (lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 769 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a *ba' bugr*. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 343 [34] 342 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog* (compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 342 778 755 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God), a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the *baa* (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

351 751 782 342 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots. 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Ƴi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Ƴi-dan*.
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

342 361 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry- and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Ƴi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the
[778] latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Ƴini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

778 783 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

TO complete our analysis of the norms governing the relations of parents and children we must now glance at their development in the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at successive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differentiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the surface. 593 183

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother. 854 593 [751/ 515]

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has 853 854

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[1] Tallensi distinguish different stages of infancy according to the feeding-habits and level of physical skill reached by the infant. They never count months or years, but a parent is often able to state roughly how many months or years have elapsed since the birth of the child, working it out, most commonly, by reference to harvest and sowing times or to the Great Festivals. A babe in arms is *bilie*; until it is weaned it is described as 'still suckling (*u na mɔɣarme*)'. If it is said to be still suckling but 'eating a little porridge (*u diit saɣabo biel-biel*)' one can infer that it is at least 2. The unweaned infant's stage of development is further specified by stating whether it is crawling (*u bɔɣarme*) or walking (*u kyenme*) or already talking (*u vɔlənnrəme*). When the child is weaned it is said to 'have left off milk (*u tuk biiliim*)'. Lastly comes the stage, at between 3 and 4 years, when it is said to be old enough to have another immediately following sibling (*u saɣa nyeer maraɣa*)—an idea we shall explain in a later chapter. The subject-matter of this chapter is supplemented by my paper, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, cit. supra. [856]

[p. 187]

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A
baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. 593
I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its 751
mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking,
to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What
discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period
comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until
it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative [515]
from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is
an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain
water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a
decoction of roots (*ŋaɣa*), the generic term for any vegetable products
used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by
the child's spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). After its bath the mother lays the
child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth,
and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It
splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is
poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected 514
to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt
to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside 863
in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may
happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training
or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a
gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications
with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the
adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the 593
child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There 789
is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have
anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. 826
I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic
of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to
nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of
milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt
to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously
affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her
breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔɣat
of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔɣat tried to lay hands
on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
581 spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
●753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripeta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripeta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual
relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries.
She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by
her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
[837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife,
whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

the time. From a series of menus which we collected over a period 262
of two months (November–January), it would appear that ocro is 252
the favourite soup, while *bet* (*hibiscus sabdariffa*) is the least liked.
Neri-seed[1] soup is rarely cooked for ordinary consumption, but is
prepared on a special occasion such as a visit of an in-law relation.

Though the number of different vegetables planted is few, the 251
women are able to achieve a considerable range of variation by using 262
every part of the plant and by combining them in different ways.
Every woman has a well-stocked larder of dried vegetable-leaves and
fruits which she keeps in pots (e.g. ocro) or onion-shaped receptacles
made of dried guinea-corn leaves (*kiŋkarog*) and suspended from the
rafters to keep them dry (e.g. *bet* or *naŋgena*).

The process of preparation is the same in the main for most soups, 252
and is described in the Appendix. Vegetables and other ingredients 515
are never washed or cleaned before use: Tale women are very casual
in their cooking hygiene; the cooking-pots are left unwashed from
one meal till the next and the soup dishes always have stale food
adhering to them.[2]

Meat is a very important ingredient in the soup. It is most com- 252
monly consumed in this way, though it is sometimes eaten by itself 262
by men after sacrifices. It is a great delicacy and men will often spend
long hours at a ceremony in order to obtain a morsel of meat or a tiny
piece of the viscera. Any scrap of meat or fat which falls to the ground
is picked up and swallowed raw. But meat is not 'food', they say, as
porridge is, it is *valeg*, i.e. gluttony. While a little of it is strengthening, [753]
too much causes diarrhoea.

The only meat directly killed for cooking is the guinea-fowl. The

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[1] *Neri* (*cucumis melo*) when ripe is buried and covered with guinea-corn stalks and allowed to rot. The seeds are then extracted, dried, and stored for making soups.

[2] The chief reason would seem to be the scarcity of water at certain times of the year, and the labour involved in carrying it, as well as the ingrained indifference of the Tallensi to cleanliness. Yet they take great pleasure in polishing their calabashes at the water-holes to make them yellow and shiny, and treat the new calabashes in a special way to attain the gloss. We have seen women carrying gravel home with them when visiting a neighbouring settlement some 4 miles away because their own clayey soil was not satisfactory for cleaning calabashes. We could not obtain an adequate explanation of this attitude from the women themselves, beyond that 'they like it so'.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, 103 614 now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa).

My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart 614 of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., 611 also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witch- 154 craft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

Traditions of the Kusase: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, 173 they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). 622 We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to 793 the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and give him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe tey*) and that person would

611 theoretically, without limit. In short, people of common uterine descent are socially identified with one another; but they do not form a corporate group.

611 The social recognition of the uterine line entails not only that *saarɔt* have defined ways of behaving towards one another, but also that the 602 fact of matrilineal descent is given an institutional embodiment. Matrilineal descent confers distinctive social attributes on people. In this Tale culture follows the rule found in most West African cultures that recognize both lines of descent.[1] The dominant line of descent confers the overtly significant attributes of social personality—jural status, rights of inheritance and succession to property and office, political allegiance, ritual privileges and obligations; and the submerged line confers certain spiritual characteristics. Among the Tallensi it is easy to see that this is a reflex of the fact that the bond of uterine descent is maintained as a purely personal bond. It does not subserve common interests of a material, jural, or ritual kind; it unites individuals only by ties of mutual interest and concern not unlike those that prevail between close collateral kin in our culture. While it constitutes one of the factors that counterpoise the exclusiveness of the agnatic line, it does not create corporate groups competing with the agnatic lineage and clan. Carrying only a spiritual attribute, the uterine tie cannot undermine the jural and politico-ritual solidarity of the patrilineal lineage.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Witchcraft

754 The critical spiritual attribute carried by the *soog* line is the potentiality of being a witch (*sɔi*, pl. *soob*—a term evidently cognate with 602 *soog*). This potentiality adheres only to the female line and defines that line in social terms. 'This is my *soog*' a person usually says when introducing a uterine relative. 'If he (or she) flies magically (*aɣat*) I, too, fly magically; if he sees magically (*nye*) I, too, see magically.' The potentiality of being a witch is hereditary in the female line. A woman's son and daughter may both become witches if she is a witch. If a person is accused of being a witch, all his or her *saarɔt* are automatically suspect of this inborn mystical vice. His agnatic kin are not implicated, not even his own father or his half-siblings by the same father. These are the points Tallensi invariably stress, both among themselves and in answer to an inquirer, if they are asked to define the meaning of *soog*.

754 It is significant that witchcraft occupies a minor place in Tale mystical thought and ritual action, and that is one reason why the Tallensi make no secret of its hereditary transmission in the female line. They

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[1] Cf., e.g., R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti*; C. D. Forde, 'Kinship in Umor—Double Unilateral Organization in a Semi-Bantu Society', *American Anthropologist*, xli, 1939.

have no clear notion of witchcraft, no detailed theories of its mode of 754 operation, and no institutionalized means of combating or sterilizing it. A witch (*sɔi*) is supposed to fly about (*u aɣarəme*) at night in the guise of a ball of fire; she—for the Tallensi tend to think of a witch as a woman, though they say that men may be witches too—is supposed to be clairvoyant, to 'see (*nye*)' hidden things. She can recognize fellow witches, foresee death coming to a particular person, prophesy an epidemic, and so forth; she may be beneficent, able to impart luck to a person in a mysterious way, or maleficent, killing people by eating (*ɔb*) their souls (*sii*). This is the sum of Tale ideas about the nature of witches. Actually, these qualities make up what is mainly an imaginary stereotype. One never hears of particular individuals being credited with the socially useful qualities or being suspected of possessing the anti-social qualities attributed to witches. Witchcraft is only attributed to people *ex post facto*, when an event occurs for which an explanation in terms of witchcraft is sought.

Witchcraft is something on the fringe of Tale mystical thought and 754 ritual values. I have more than once heard elders of the most conservative way of thinking, to whom the native scheme of ritual values is the 771 most important thing in life, declare roundly that there is no such thing as a witch. Though the Tallensi do not put it into clear words, they obviously feel that the idea of witchcraft is a mixture of superstition and folk-lore, and not a part of the system of mystical and ritual values that really matters for the conduct of life. Of course, superstition and folk-lore are not wholly negligible. Circumstances occur, now and then, in which people fall back on the idea of a witch's occult aggression in order to cope with anxieties and frustrations that are normally neutralized through the agency of the ancestor cult; and then a particular person may be accused of being a witch. Significantly, in every case that has come to my notice, some dating back twenty or thirty years and all of them together numbering less than ten, the accused has been a woman. Most accusations of this sort are in the first instance made by women [595] against co-wives, and are symptomatic of the tensions inherent in the joint family.

An accusation of being a witch is the private affair of the accused's 754 husband and his maximal lineage, her paternal family, and those of her 602 *saarət* who are in touch with her. In former days, if the accusation was confirmed by a diviner, the accused might insist on undergoing the [787] arrow ordeal (*kuh sɔ-peema*), or be compelled to do so by her husband's lineage and her *saarət* in order to prove her innocence. She had to [627] stab herself with a poisoned arrow in public at the same time as a branch of a *heŋkaŋ* (Ficus) tree was plucked; and if she were guilty, it was believed that she would die before the branch withered. But it is characteristic of the Tale attitude to witches that a person who died thus was accorded a proper funeral—unlike, for example, a person who

754 602 [593] dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children by her.

754 574 602 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moyaduur. Arriving at his kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp. His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 627 787 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt. There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence. The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock (*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant, as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the theme of one of the dance songs of the Golib Festival. 'Wherever she goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

754 [771] The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

The idea of witchcraft is not

easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is 754
by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based 613
on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not 827
connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas.
Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from 754
the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of 611
witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the 761
slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical
responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical 783
blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women 764
tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of 431
the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These [576] duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, [554] there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law.

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of 606
prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small 754●
contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This 431
consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a 574
large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samɔr*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*laɣapielɔb*, pl. *laɣapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *laɣah*, pl. *ligɔri*, [436] being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown.

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754 431 574 764 602

fully repaid in the bestowal of his daughter as a wife. A similar sanction to that mentioned in the case of a son-in-law operates here.

If one watches the behaviour of men at the funeral of an affine, one can see that they feel themselves to be under strong constraint. They and their clansmen accompanying them keep together, and when there are no ceremonies or festivities in progress they stay apart from the rest of the crowd. In former days a mourning party of affines always carried arms, and it is said that fighting sometimes broke out at funerals. When Tallensi comment on the ceremonial obligations of affines, they emphasize the feeling of constraint associated with them. One is impressed by the contrast between this attitude and the attitudes associated with the ceremonial obligations that follow on the death of a clansman or cognatic kinsman. It is as if the native feels his ceremonial obligations to an affine to be forced on him from outside, without his choice, whereas he seems to accept his duties and obligations on the death of a kinsman willingly and from within.

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It is evident that reciprocity between affines is different in character from that which prevails between people who have a bond of common interests, such as members of the same family. There is not the same free give and take. When gifts or services pass between affines, whether they are prescribed or ostensibly spontaneous, there is a deliberate effort to counterbalance them. A sort of book-keeping occurs. This appears most clearly in the jural formalities of marriage, but it comes out quite plainly in the apparently voluntary services and reciprocal hospitality of son-in-law and father-in-law. The side that benefits feels impelled to make an equivalent return in order not to give the other party grounds for a grudge. And people who flout this convention not only upset their good relations with their affines and so provide pretexts for conflict with them, but also incur the censure of public opinion.

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One incident will illustrate this. Banɔrəg asked his son-in-law, a member of an adjacent clan, to come and help him finish the hoeing of his home farm. The young man brought a couple of his clansmen and they worked with zeal from early morning till sunset. Then they went home, politely refusing Banɔrəg's invitation to come home with him for the evening meal. Had they come as a formal hoeing party they would have been entitled to a good meal as a reward at the end of the day. But they had come informally, and their own homes were near enough for them to get back in time for the evening meal. They spoke of their day's work for Banɔrəg as a simple act of courtesy to a father-in-law. As we watched them saunter homewards, Banɔrəg said to me 'Sons-in-law are shy (*deenam mmar vi*). They can't come home with you (their father-in-law) and eat with your children (as if they were your kin)'. But next day Banɔrəg sent a large basket of millet flour to his daughter with orders to cook a generous meal for her husband and his friends. He would feel ashamed, he told me, if he did not 'thank' the young men

resignation that was touching in the circumstances, that he missed his 602
mother dreadfully. When she was alive, he explained, he never went to 736
bed hungry. She always had something for him to eat even in the leanest
times. But nowadays he often slept hungry; for his other 'mothers' had
their own children to think of; in times of scarcity they would put aside
extra food for their own children but not for him. At best he might get
the scraps.

The genealogical and social differentiation of a woman and her chil- 602
dren from every other woman and her children of the same domestic
family is the kernel of the notion of uterine (*soog*) descent. The cultural 593
definition of this notion gets its psychological content, its meaning for
the individual, from the relations of mother and child and co-wife to
co-wife.

To every woman, therefore, her own children are the most complete
incarnation of her own social self, of her autonomy and status in the 593
family, and of the differentiation of her *dug* from those of her co-wives.
That is what the concept *soog* means for a mother in relation to her 595
children. Emotionally wrapped up in them as she is, she becomes almost
anarchical in her concern for their welfare. There are women who
resent it strongly if a co-wife scolds one of their children; and it is quite
common for a woman to get into a fury if her child is struck by a co-wife's child, let alone by a co-wife herself. Many quarrels between
co-wives begin in this way. That is why children are taught to keep out
of their mothers' co-wives' rooms as much as possible and to behave
carefully if they go into them.

The ever-present tension between co-wives, reduced to a minimum 595
at most times, occasionally bursts out acutely. This is liable to happen
if a child gets ill of a malady that defies all attempts to cure it, the more 754
so if it is an unusual sickness of sudden onset. The distracted mother is 578
likely then to turn on a co-wife (another wife of her husband, or a wife
of one of his brothers) whose own children are well and happy and
therefore the bitterest reminder of her evil fortune. Being co-wives the
women are sure to have had differences and even quarrels in the past.
So now the sick child's mother accuses her co-wife of being a witch (*sɔi*)
and of having caused the illness of the child. Infrequent as accusations
of witchcraft were in former days and are now, Tallensi say that most
of them were made by women against a co-wife owing to the illness or
death of a child. This is the more significant in view of the association
between witchcraft and uterine descent. An accusation of witchcraft
brands a woman and her children equally, but it does not impugn the
male line or, consequently, the *yir*.

When hostility between co-wives reaches this pitch it cannot but 595
result in a serious disturbance of the unity and cohesion of the family. 578
Formerly, as we have learnt, the accused woman might have been com- 627
pelled to undergo the arrow ordeal, or would herself, backed by her 178

for him by the lineage of the ancestress who has demanded the erection 604
of the shrine. The diviner-to-be is himself a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' or 778
'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' of the men who come to perform the ceremony of
establishing the shrine. But in addition, a member of his clan who is
also an *ahəŋ* of the visitors' clan is deputed to act as intermediary. He
goes out to meet the visitors when they approach and escorts them to
the homestead of the diviner-to-be; and he acts as spokesman for the
latter throughout the ceremony. Thus he formally 'shows' (*paal*) the
visitors the beer and the fowls and the goat that have been provided for
the ceremony and acts as mediator if there is a disagreement about the
amount or quality of these provisions. In the ritual situations that make
up the ceremony the visitors sit together in a group and the diviner-to-be
and his clansmen sit together in a group. Between the two groups sits
the selected *ahəŋ*. As is customary in all such situations, the two parties
do not address one another directly. They address the intermediary,
who 'passes on (*zaŋ ti*)' what was said to the other party.

Similarly, if a dispute occurs between segments of different clans, for 604
instance over the abduction of a wife, the injured group might send one
of their members who is a 'sister's son' of the abductor's clan, with a 627
message of protest and a demand for the return of the wife. An *ahəŋ* is
the appropriate person to act as go-between in negotiations between
different clans. In the system of clanship ties, it will be remembered,
intercalary lineages are sometimes credited with being the agnates of
one clan and the 'sister's sons' of the other.[1]

As has been suggested, Tallensi maintain that an *ahəŋ* acting as an 604
intermediary in inter-clan transactions is bound to be equally faithful to
both parties. This does not mean that an *ahəŋ* is always equally loyal in 613
sentiment to both his patrilineal and his matrilateral—especially his
immediate maternal—kin. Tallensi say that when there is a clash of
interests a man will always side with his patrilineal kin while endeavouring,
if possible, to refrain from bringing harm on his maternal kin. The
behaviour of an *ahəŋ* in war between his and his mother's brother's clan
is a case in point.

But there is a belief which suggests that the loyalty of an *ahəŋ* to his 604
mother's brother's lineage may, in some circumstances, outweigh his
loyalty to his own clan. In the old days of warfare, it is said, if a man 613
was killed in fighting, there was a way of taking vengeance on the slayer
by means of sorcery. The arrow that slew the victim was extracted, and 754
the clan and lineage of the slayer were ascertained. This was easy.
Every inner or medial lineage of a clan usually has a distinctive mark
(*daan*). One lineage, for example, may tie a tiny guinea-fowl feather at
the base of the arrow-head, another may use a particular species of
grass. By inquiring from their sororal kinsmen in the enemy clan the
victim's lineage brothers soon discovered which lineage the slayer

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 44 ff.

604 613 754 belonged to and who he was. The method of sorcery was to dip this 'evil arrow (*peembier*)' secretly into some food or drink the slayer was about to take. If this was done he would die. The problem then was to find someone who would carry out this task. It could not be done by any of the victim's clansmen since it required intimate contact with the slayer's family.

578 604 613 754 If there was a daughter of the victim's clan, or better still, inner lineage married to a member of the slayer's inner lineage, she might be persuaded to do it. Such an action would be a grave sin, for which the woman's husband's ancestors would punish her with death. But sometimes women hate their husbands so much in their hearts, Tallensi say, that they will risk anything to injure them and their clan. And if the dead man was a close agnate of the woman, she might put vengeance for his death above her duty to her husband's clan. Alternatively, an *ahəŋ* of the victim's inner lineage or clan, who is a member of the slayer's inner lineage or clan, might be persuaded to undertake the commission. Only a man who had a deep grudge against the slayer would undertake so wicked an action for which the clan ancestors would certainly punish him with death. But enmity between clansmen, even between brothers of the same inner lineage, is not unknown; and as Tallensi often assert, the belief that the ancestors may punish an action with death does not always restrain an unscrupulous man. Whether or not this act of sorcery was ever carried out I cannot tell. It is impossible to obtain verifiable information on a point of this sort. But what is of interest is the belief itself. Assuming that it is founded on fantasy, it still suggests that the loyalties of an *ahəŋ* are felt to be more evenly divided than is conventionally admitted.

604 578 There is other evidence for this view. The Gɔlibdaana of Tɛnzugu earned the hostility of most of the maximal lineage and clan heads of the Tongo district by his high-handed drive to aggrandize himself.[1] In public his opponents had the support of practically all their clan or lineage elders. But amongst them there were, in every clan, one or two private sympathizers of the Gɔlibdaana. The usual explanation was that these men were 'sisters' sons' or 'grandsons' of his inner lineage or clan. One of the Chief of Tongo's most trusted and devoted elders used to visit the Gɔlibdaana regularly. Another elder of the chief pointed out to me, in explanation, that the first was an *ahəŋ* of the Gɔlibdaana's inner lineage. He quoted several other men who were *ahəs* of the Gɔlibdaana's inner lineage and maintained close contact with him. It was through them, he added, that the Gɔlibdaana kept himself so well informed of everything that happened at Tongo, even of matters that should not be known outside the chief's family. He admitted that the Chief of Tongo probably had similar contacts with the Gɔlibdaana's faction and kept himself informed of the Gɔlibdaana's activities in the same way.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 251 ff.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

751 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top,
778 and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round
with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On
[515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in
which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr*
(lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway
is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an
769 ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on
the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that
of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a
ba' bugr. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father
and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and
put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive
these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father
receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen*
(Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the
spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed
huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we
343 enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge
[34] of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside
342 this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a
horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog*
(compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other
342 called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The
second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the
778 *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God),
● 755 a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full
of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons
one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to
one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When
a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the
baa (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

held up by an impassable river. He noticed a water-tortoise descending 773 the bank, and followed it. Thus he was led to a ford, which enabled him 539 to cross. Thereupon he vowed that he and his descendants would refrain from eating this animal and its brother species, the tortoise.

Similar myths are current among other clans that taboo aquatic animals. Thus one of the segments of Sie have the special avoidance of the crocodile in addition to the usual fowl avoidance of the Namoos. The head of this segment told me the following myth in explanation. There was a communal fish drive, during which their ancestor, Layɛn, disappeared. [2a6] He was given up for lost, and next day a party was dispatched to search for the body. But when they reached the river, they found him sitting on the bank with a crocodile at his feet. He told them that the crocodile had saved his life (*fa u ŋovor bah*) by holding him down and covering him up. Hence he vowed that he and his descendants would never again eat crocodile.

In the same way the elders of Gban narrate that 'their ancestor' was 773 suffering with a swollen hand. He asked friends to lance it, but they 539 thought this was unnecessary. Then one day, as he sat resting his hand 757 on his head because of the pain, a large grasshopper of a species with sharply serrated legs (*saŋkaan*) landed on it. The ancestor scared it away. As it leaped off, it kicked out and ripped the skin of the festering hand with its saw-edged legs. This let out the accumulated pus and cured the hand. Thereupon the ancestor vowed, in the phrase that usually concludes these myths, 'May he grow old with his grandson, but no descendant of his should ever again eat the *saŋkaan* (*ɔn kɔrəgən ni u yaaŋa, ka ɔn bii ku le di saŋkaan*)'.

Other myths of this kind relate how the anonymous ancestor was saved 773 from an enemy about to slay him by the opportune appearance of the 539 totemic animal. Thus, according to one of the elders of Sawaləg: 'Bows were in conflict (*tap ndaa ŋme*)', ('Perhaps', he added, as an afterthought, 'there was a fight with Mamprusi who came to raid for slaves') 'and our ancestor fled, seeking refuge in an animal's burrow. The enemy was about to break open the burrow when a squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) darted past. They turned to pursue it, and left our ancestor. Thereupon, he vowed never to eat the squirrel again, neither he nor his descendants.'

As this sample of totemic myths shows, the pattern is the same as that 773 of the Namoo myth accounting for the fowl avoidance. They are more 787 unstable in content, however. The two versions of the tortoise myth were obtained from two equally authoritative elders of the same clan. There is, indeed, always an element of speculation, or of *ad hoc* construction, in these myths. Listening to them one often has the feeling that they are being elaborated by logical deduction. The starting-point is the premiss that the totemic avoidance was due to a vow made by 'our ancestor' in gratitude for an extraordinary service that saved his life. The process of reasoning is to deduce an action on the part of the animal consistent with its known peculiarities of appearance and of behaviour. Informants are never able to tell one where and when they first heard these myths. They say vaguely: 'We heard them from our fathers.' This method of reasoning, however, is congenial to the Tallensi. It forms the

of an enemy in order to hit him. Fighting went on all day in spasms. At 726
nightfall the men retired to their settlements to feast, dance, sing boastful 411
songs, lament the dead, and rest. This was kept up for two or three
days at most and then peace was made.[1]

Tale warfare inevitably took this form, since no single segment of the 726
society and neither of the two major groups of clans had political power 701
superior to any other segment or the other group. There is no institutional 602
framework that could be extended so as to make any one segment paramount over the others as a result of a successful war. Every segment holds its allotted place in the whole system in virtue of complementary politico-ritual ties with the other segments, in particular with segments that would be opposed to it in war. They have common values and are subject to common ritual sanctions. Besides, their marriage rules and kinship system spread a wide network of affinal and cognatic relations between clans and lineages. Every Taləŋ has cognatic or affinal kin in every clan within a radius of four or five miles of his own. Though corporate loyalties to his lineage and clan override his private loyalties to his kinsfolk of other clans, whenever the corporate interests of his unit are at stake, they do not extinguish them. Hence a man had to be very careful, in a fight, to avoid killing or injuring any of his own kinsmen who might be on the other side. Hence, also, the prohibition of pillage for one's own advantage. If the enemy was routed, the victors might descend on their settlement, set fire to the homesteads, burn the stored grain, slaughter and eat the live-stock; they could not carry off any of the enemy's possessions. A Namoo clan might fight a Talis clan; but it would be a grave sin against kinship morality for an individual Namoo to plunder or to take captive individual Talis, since they would most likely be the cognates or affines of members of his own clan and therefore indirectly of
himself. The idea of killing the women folk or children of the enemy [727]
clan—who might easily be one's clan sisters or nephews—would have seemed monstrous.

Last, but not least, Tale economic organization is incompatible with 621
warfare for material gain. There was and is no such thing as a tribe-wide 511
or clan economy. Occupational differentiation, other than the division
of labour between the sexes and in accordance with age, has barely [462
emerged. Local trade is becoming increasingly important, but there was
in the past no commerce other than barter and occasional petty trade. 463]
The Tallensi were and are still sedentary cultivators, using a primitive 241

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[1] Tallensi often say that many men were killed and wounded in these fights. As they never counted their casualties it is impossible to get accurate figures from
them. But taking account of the weapons used, the manner of fighting, and the [727]
duration of the fights, it is difficult to believe that casualties were in fact very heavy. As far as I can estimate, no more than three to four thousand men, fighting in scattered contingents of about 20 to 50 men, would be engaged in a general war. A settlement like Tongo, the largest in Taleland, would turn out between 200 and 300 fighting men at the outside. Putting together all that I was told, I would say that three or four men killed and a dozen wounded would have been regarded as a very heavy casualty list for Tongo in a day's fighting. It must
be remembered, though, that the mortality from wounds was probably high, as [757]
the main non-magical treatment used was to suck the poison and pus out of the wound.

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔyat
of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣarayaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔyat tried to lay hands
on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
581 spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
●757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripeta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripeta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries.
She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by
her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
[837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife,
whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

769 577 167 when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not done so. Dema is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to abandon in Mampurugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the same with Na'abzɔ, Kaɣar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

769 577 •757 While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every native owns some 'roots (*ŋaɣa*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you (to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔɣam la zug, nyɛn dɔɣəm la zugu*).'

577 593 769 Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan, with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛɣəraan*) of one of her paternal forbears and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance [782] to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers. A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

one of the widows, it met with general approval among the men of 604
Zubiuŋ.

The relationship of Kpɛlimɛrəme and his mother's full brother Kuur 604
was similar. One incident may be quoted as a particularly forcible
illustration of the intimacy and attachment that often exist between *ahəb* 757
and *ahəŋ*. Kuur was suffering from a very painful and repulsive skin disease which had finally attacked his genitals, turning them into a disgusting, ulcerated area. When Lɔɣani, Kuur's younger paternal brother, came to ask me for some medicine to treat this sickness, he said that the mere sight of it made him vomit—and, as he remarked, he was known to be a man of stout heart (*suhkpeemərdaan*) in dealing with sickness or death. I gave Lɔɣani some disinfectant, and advised cleansing and bathing the affected parts with it. Lɔɣani looked dubious and then explained that Kuur was in too great pain to carry out the treatment himself, Kuur's children were all too young to do it, and his disease was so revolting that none of his more distant relatives would undertake the task. Then an idea struck him. There was someone who would do it—Kpɛlimɛrəme. And in fact Kpɛlimɛrəme did undertake the unpleasant task and performed it faithfully for several weeks. 'Do you think,' said Kpɛlimɛrəme to me, 'I would let my *ahəb* die if I knew of any way of saving him?'

Such a relationship is common between sister's son and mother's full 604
brother. As a rule there is not such great intimacy and devotion between a man and his half-sister's son. It is, however, only a matter of degree. Ɔmara was very attached to his half-sister's children, especially to her eldest daughter. He was as proud of her marriage to the Chief of Bongo as her own father was. Yɛanbɔrigya, like most Tallensi, was a constant visitor to his *ahəb* at Samiit. Once at a public sacrifice at which he was the only non-member of Samiit present, his mother's brother's clansmen teased him saying that he might as well come and join them for good. Anyhow, they chaffed him, he was really a son of Samiit since his mother's bride-price had not been fully paid.[1] He rejoined, jokingly, that he belonged both to Samiit and to his own clan.

As a rule, too, a sister's daughters do not after marriage have such constant and close contacts with their mother's brother's people as a sister's sons. Any interest a woman has in relatives other than her husband's people is chiefly directed towards her parental family, and she keeps in touch with her mother's brother's people through her mother and brothers. A woman lacks the bond of common interests due to identity of sex that reinforces the ties of mother's brother and sister's son. A woman also has no need to maintain ritual relations with her

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[1] If a woman dies leaving adult sons before the fourth cow of her bride-price is claimed, her paternal kin are normally obliged to waive it in favour of her sons. This is interpreted as a sign of their quasi-parental interest in the sons' welfare and marriages.

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241 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

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165 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper
burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

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782 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

may do so for himself. She, again, may eat an animal he avoids, but 262
would hardly find it feasible to cook it in her own kitchen.

The occasions for which special foods are customary are few. A woman in her first pregnancy must eat food ' which is good for her ', [843] such as meat and highly seasoned soup and avoid unsuitable foods such as thinly mixed flour-water (*zɔmsaka*), left-over porridge, or too many sweet potatoes or frafra potatoes. Nor may she eat cold food or drink too much cold water. ' Sweet ' food (i.e. luxury foods such as sold in the market) is not encouraged, while honey is prohibited for magical reasons. A woman found eating the latter is severely reprimanded and a special rite has to be carried out on the birth of the child or it will have a blocked nose. During confinement a woman is given porridge with highly seasoned soups and a generous allowance of fish or meat to make her strong.

There is no specific food for sick people, except that fresh porridge 262
and pungent soup are considered strengthening. The prognosis is 758
very grave if a sick person refuses food. In the prostration of grief, too, people refuse food and their relatives try to tempt their palate with delicacies.

Old and toothless people in time of food shortage are given crushed 262
ground-nuts (*sukpabugra*) to drink down with water. 888

We have attempted, in this paper, to give an outline of the domestic 000
commissariat of the Tallensi. Our interest has been focussed on the principles according to which the domestic groupings of Tale society organize and sustain the social activities customary for the production of raw foodstuffs, their preservation, and their conversion into and consumption as edible food. We have observed how the ever-changing, developing structure of the joint family determines these activities; how Tale culture defines the values and norms by which these activities are regulated and directed; how these values and norms, on the one hand, and seasonal conditions, on the other, control the annual cycle of food production and consumption; and finally, how the convergent influence of family structure, cultural norms and values, and seasonal exigencies determine the crucial situation of the series, the translation of the product of natural resources and culturally organized labour into the edible food in the kitchen.

XXXIV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

The Clan Settlement. The Family Compound. The Section-head (Yi-zut-kyɛma). *The* Ten'dan'. *The Territorial Ruler*

621 613 THE constitution of a Talense *tey* is identical with that of the Nankanse. The *tey* (Nankane *teya*) is divided into sections, all the inhabitants of which trace descent from a common ancestor, but each, again, has, as its own more intimate ancestral spirit, a less remote ancestor, from which that particular section takes its name and to whom 'section-', as opposed to '*tey*-', sacrifices, are offered. A section is *yi-zug* (Nankane *yi-zuo*). A section-head is *Yi-zug-kpwem* (Nankane *yi-zuo kyɛma*).

At Tongo there are four sections, known as (*a*) Pusega, (*b*) Guŋa, (*c*) Korega, (*d*) Seug. The post of section-head of Pusega was vacant; as 'the funeral custom of the late *yi-zut-kpwem* had not yet been held, his successor could not be appointed'.

The section-head of Guŋa is *Sayezaa* (my informant, see Fig. 63); of Korega, a certain *Basego*; of Seug, vacant, for the same reason as (*a*).

613 [76] *Election of New Section-head*: Heads of other sections met and consulted the *bay* (Nankane *baga*) to find out why the late head of the section had died. The soothsayer might say, 'It was because he did not give one of the cows, *sull* (Nankane, *sulle*), which he received for his eldest daughter, to his ancestor.' After the funeral custom his successor was appointed. 'The man who had the right to take the deceased's *bagere* (here ancestral shrine) was the one to succeed. This man was already known; the *bay* was only consulted about the funeral.'

The successor to the section-head was the 'senior' man in that section, but he was not necessarily the oldest: e.g. *A* marries a wife, *C*, by whom he has three sons, *D*, *E*, *F*, and three grandsons *G*, *H*, *I*, sons of *D*, *E*, and *F*; *A*, in his old age, marries a young wife, *B*, by whom he has a son, *J*. This son may be twenty years or more younger than *G*, *H*, *I*, but if *A*'s brothers are all dead and also *D*, *E*, and *F*, then *J* will become section head before *G*, *H*, or *I*, 'because *G*, *H*, and *I* call *J* father.'[1]

613 178 The tendency here, as almost everywhere in the Northern Territories, is for these hereditary section-leaders, who were really the back-

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[1] See p. 279 [i.e. reference to similar
[p. 346] practice among the Nankanse-A]

778 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere*
769 comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he
will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's spirit wants to punish (*eŋ*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband, "Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

171 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in con-
778 nexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but
791 when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's
mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's
769 town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives the power to the *bakologo*.'

A Seance attended at Tɔngo: A woman had died from snake-bite, and
787 after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's
761 compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family
769 of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with both hands and saying, '*N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor*' (I hold your sides, but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig. 71), and said, '*N ba Yin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n be, te te*'. (My father's *Yin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is; give us).

He then began to sing:

'*Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Yi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam zeret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.*' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole[1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash, on a gourd seed, on a hair ball from the stomach of a cow. I was later told that all this was interpreted as meaning that the father of the dead woman's husband had failed to give to his ancestor one of the cows which he had received for a daughter, hence vengeance had been taken on his son's wife. 781 761 769

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

After the seance a fowl was killed; this, falling on its back, was taken as proof that what the soothsayer had said was correct.

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral
custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike,
even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
● [761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
624
793 section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders,
but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

The idea of witchcraft is not easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is 754
by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based 613
on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not 827
connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas.
Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from 754
the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of 611
witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the 761 ●
slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical 783
responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

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blows and my visitor gets killed by accident. Then the slayer will bear one kind of mystical blood-guilt and I will bear the *tyuk* guilt. I may not realize this; indeed, it may not be discovered until, on the occasion of my death, the diviner reveals that my ancestor spirits caused my death in retribution for my unpurged *tyuk* guilt. This was the case with Siiyɛlib of Tongo. When he died it was revealed through divination that he had borne the *tyuk* guilt for the punitive expedition against the Hill Talis twenty-five years previously. He had lodged a complaint against a Yinduuri man with the District Commissioner, and the white man's attempt to bring the Yinduuri man to book had led to the first brush with the Hill Talis. Other incidents followed, but the real reason why the white man launched a punitive attack on the Hill Talis a year or so later was because he had been enraged by the insults and defiance of the people of Yinduuri when he went to arrest the abductor of Siiyɛlib's wife and child. The test of historical accuracy would have been quite irrelevant in this context. Siiyɛlib's clansmen were interpreting the facts subjectively, in accordance with the native system of moral values and mystical beliefs, so as to fit his death logically to the morally and ritually significant events of his social biography.

A person who bears *tyuk* guilt must be ritually cleansed—'to wash *tyuk* (*su tyuk*)' is the technical expression—or else he and his family will be dogged by sickness, death, and other disasters. After the cleansing rites, the medicinal roots used are wrapped tightly in the skin of a species of civet cat (*tyuk*—hence the general term for this complex of ideas and actions) and the bundle is lashed securely to a rafter of the man's room. It must never be disturbed; if it is, quarrelling and fighting break out. A strong wind shaking the rafters of the room is enough to stir up strife. *Tyuk* once incurred remains a taint for ever; for it is really the evocation of a latent proclivity (so one must interpret the ideas of the natives on this subject) that goes with the uterine line. When a man undergoes the *tyuk* cleansing rites he summons all his *saarət* who are known to him to come and 'eat' the medicine with him, for this dangerous proclivity once evoked in one of them involves them all.

The concept of *tyuk* guilt and its connexion with the uterine line is less explicit than that of witchcraft. There is no idea of its being a potentiality transmitted by birth from mother to child. Even more than witchcraft it is a *post hoc* inference; but the natives do not explicitly attach a *propter hoc* interpretation to it. Uterine kin do not share their *soog*'s *tyuk* guilt; they are, as it were, mystically contaminated by it, by reason of their *soog* tie. As one informant put it, *tyuk* is 'contagious to (*de lɔŋəra*)' *saarət* like a disease, or it 'kindles (*de ta'agəra*)' *saarət* like a spreading fire. If a man has incurred and washed *tyuk* then the most trivial argument in which he happens to be involved is often in danger of becoming a real quarrel; and his *saarət* also become hot-tempered, or, perhaps, become prone to give vent to hot temper.

602 593 a woman marries she does not forfeit her status as a daughter of her natal lineage (*pɔɣayabələg*) or lose her personal ties with her parents and siblings. We have discussed this, in its broader aspects, in our previous volume[1] and confine ourselves here to family ties. Throughout her life she keeps in close touch with her parents and siblings and other members of her clan, especially her close agnates. If, as is common, other daughters of her clan have married into her husband's clan, these will be the classificatory co-wives with whom she has most contact and to whom she gives and from whom she receives most help, kindness, and support. She visits her natal settlement, as well as her sisters married elsewhere, regularly, and is often visited by members of her parental family. She not only has emotional bonds with her natal family that time never erases, but she also retains certain privileges, which have almost the force of rights, in it and in her natal clan, as we have shown in our previous volume. Her natal family and clan also have claims on her all her life. This is strongly marked in the first two or three years of marriage, before motherhood, habit, and an increasing share in its routine have knit her firmly into her conjugal family.

574 593 In the early years of marriage a woman seldom lets an opportunity of visiting her natal family go by. She calls in to see how they are on her way to or from market. Now and then she comes to stay a few days. If she is ill she will generally come to stay with her mother, who will tend her much more carefully than her co-wives or in-laws. When Təŋ-Yikpemdaan's daughter developed an asthmatic complaint she stayed with her parents for nearly a year. When Da'amo'o's wife went down with guinea-worm she took her three-months-old baby and went to her father's house until she was cured, though it is considered a risky thing to take so young an infant out of its father's house. At sowing or harvest time a man often sends for a young married daughter who has no child to come and help. At all times a married daughter is informed, and sometimes sent for, if there is serious sickness in her parental home. She must be sent for if a member of her parental family dies; and she will go even if it means leaving a tiny infant in the care of a co-wife for a day or two.

●761 602 On this matter Tallensi are extremely sensitive, for death is the great test of all social ties among them. All relatives of the dead, and especially the principal mourners—parents, spouses, children, siblings—have defined ritual observances, ritual duties, and practical tasks in mortuary and funeral ceremonies. A death often comes as a shock to these close relatives, and especially the death of a parent or sibling to a married daughter of the family. Her mother-in-law or husband will break the news gently to her with a tactful periphrasis. But she must be told and sent for, else she—and, backing her up, her conjugal family—would be deeply offended. On her part, not to go when thus summoned would

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial cere-
mony. Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tɛnzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live,
expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care
613 of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One
769 of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛyər*), to whom her husband will have to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is
[777] selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate (*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors.
●[761 If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an
789] evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

602 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship
593 ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the contrary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

water lowered. Tallensi think it is essential for the health of the mother 846
and babe, and one important item in it is forcing some of the decoction
down the babe's throat. Whether or not it actually has a cleansing or
invigorating effect must be left to medical judgement. For the native
women it has the double significance of an ordeal, and a prescribed
treatment that they would not dream of neglecting.

As we have seen, the care of the child on the ritual side falls on its 854
father. The much more exacting physical care of the child in its parlous
passage through infancy is its mother's responsibility. This is stressed
when Tallensi insist that it is not on account of a magical taboo but
because a child is still partly dependent on the breast until it is about
three, that sexual intercourse between a man and his nursing wife is discontinued.
They say that a child requires the undivided care of its
mother until it can run about and eat solid food by itself, and that
it will wilt away through lack of nourishment if she conceives prematurely.
Nursing mothers become pregnant only too often through
lack of self-control, but this is never condoned by public opinion. The [847]
only time a Tale woman tries to induce an abortion is when such an
accident happens, for no sacrifice is too great to preserve her living child.

When Tale parents are asked what were the special difficulties they 854
had to overcome in rearing their children, they always mention sickness
first. Mothers especially have a great dread of sickness in their children. 855
One does not notice this in the easy-going, placid atmosphere of a well-conducted
family when there is no 'sleeplessness' (*gɔgiŋgara*), to use the
apt native euphemism for sickness. But one sees it when a child gets
ill. Minor ailments throw its mother into a state of anxiety. Serious
illness puts her into a panic or prostrates her with grief. She refuses
food—which is always regarded by the natives as a sign of severe illness
or great emotional distress—and stops all her work. I have seen illness
in adolescent or adult children have this effect on women; and the
younger the child the more do they suffer.

It is easy to imagine what the death of a child in infancy or childhood 761
means to its mother. A man is expected to control his emotions, but a
woman may express her grief freely. A father's grief is palliated, also, 593
by the active role he takes in the ritual by which the emotional shock
is neutralized. A woman's part in this ritual is more passive and she
feels the blow more acutely in consequence. A mother remains inconsolable
for many days and even weeks over the loss of a child.

The way Tallensi think of a mother's grief over the death of her child was brought home to me when Diŋkaha's little girl of about three died after a lingering and horrible illness. He had been devoted to the child and was greatly distressed, but in a few days he had accepted the diviner's verdict philosophically and was his old bouncing self again. His wife, on the other hand, broke down completely. Then, a couple of weeks later, news came that an older child of hers by a former husband, with

● 761 whom it was living, had also died suddenly. Diŋkaha, greatly concerned for his wife, warned all the members of his family not to say anything 593 to her about it. If she heard of this calamity now, he said, she would surely die. Later on, when she had settled down again he would himself break the news to her.

Incidentally, fathers do not always get over the death of a child, 765 whether an infant or an adult, with ease. It is easier for a young man, 593 the Tallensi say, because he thinks to himself that his wife can still bear children to him. But even young men have been known to abandon [762] themselves to despair. An extreme case was that of Dɔɣayam, who pierced himself with a poisoned arrow when his favourite child died; and the average Talɔŋ, it must be remembered, speaks of suicide with contempt. The grief of a father when a grown-up or adolescent son dies is very moving. When Pumaan's son Kpeemi and Tinta'alɔm's son Suor, both fine young men in the twenties, died, it was as if a shock ran through the whole community. On both occasions the men of the clan gathered in full force to mourn at the bereaved house and the atmosphere of tragedy was felt by all. I cannot forget the picture of Pumaan, as taciturn and dour a man as one could meet anywhere, holding himself tautly, his face ashen, his eyes staring ahead, stoically suppressing his despair as an elder should do. Tɛndaan Teroog, an old man over seventy, made no pretence of stoicism when his eldest and only adult son died leaving a number of wives and children. He simply pined away and followed his son to the grave in a couple of months.

When Tallensi say that it is hard to bring a child into the world, they 593 have in mind more than the physiological facts of birth, and the dangers 769 of infancy and childhood. They think of the whole gamut of social and emotional relations between parents and children arising out of the fact of birth. For a Talɔŋ, as we have seen, does not become altogether independent of his parents until their death—nor, indeed, even after their death. The pragmatic bonds of jural and economic dependence become transformed into the equally strong, nay stronger bonds of ritual dependence on the ancestor spirits of whom the parents are the immediate prototypes and intermediaries. And in many ways the ritual relationships of the Tallensi with the spirits of their parents give a truer insight into the parent-child bond than their visible behaviour towards one another. 'Fear the dead but do not fear the living (*Zom kpiim ka di zo vopa*)', says one of their proverbs which enshrines their feeling that a person is under a far more compelling bond with his parents when they are dead than during their life. We shall return to this presently.

593 The gist of our analysis is that to the Tallensi parenthood means responsibility that weighs heavily at times. This comes out both in the notion that bearing or begetting a child is hard and in the correlated notion of the importance of rearing. At the same time there is no native, man or woman, who would not insist that a person has lived in vain if he

in real life and in part distorted reflections of the tensions that exist 593
between parents and children in reality. It is no misrepresentation to
describe them as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the 769
parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically 578
omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent and long-suffering;
but the emphasis is far more on the persecuting than on the protecting 577
attributes. The distortion is most striking in the case of a mother's spirit. All ancestor spirits are apt to reveal themselves more often by the misfortune they inflict than by the benefits they bring. They emerge as sanctions of conduct more by reason of the punishments they bring down on wrongdoers than because of the benefits they confer for right doing. But the spirits of female ancestors are believed to be specially hard, cruel, and capricious. This is remarkable when we consider the love and devotion a mother shows for her child throughout his life. As we have observed elsewhere,[1] there is a never-ending struggle between a man and his ancestors. It is psychologically rooted in the relations of parents and children during the lifetime of the parents. Sacrifices and prayers are reminiscent of the principle of reciprocity in the real relations of parents and children. They contain the same elements of acquiescence, justice, and hidden coercion. They show another aspect, though, in the propitiation, reverence, and gratitude they often express.[2]

We can see why filial piety towards the dead parents is more strongly stressed than towards the living. While he is alive a person's father has direct jural and ritual authority over him; when he dies, the father becomes the paramount sanction of moral conduct for him; and this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, in only a lesser degree to the mother. The oath 'by my father and his goatskin (or sheepskin) and his three cowries' discussed in our previous book[3] is one proof of this. The centre of gravity of the whole social system of the Tallensi is the relationship of father and son, and it is the idea of filial piety that keeps this relationship in balance in the face of all the forces that tend to divide father and son. In this as in other respects the Tallensi are typical of patrilineal and patriarchal societies of simple culture from many parts of the globe, both ancient and modern.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 145.

[2] As death, among the Tallensi, is always believed to be mystically caused by [761 ●
a particular ancestor spirit or a group of ancestor spirits (material causes such as
sickness being recognized as necessary but not sufficient without the mystical
adjunct), it follows that a dead father or mother can kill (*ku*) his or her own child. 682]
The converse is impossible, since children, in life, have no jurisdiction over parents. I have asked Tallensi if patricide ever occurs or is known to have occurred. My most trusted informants said they had never heard of a case and thought the very idea abhorrent beyond measure. The idea of matricide they considered even more vile and unnatural.

[3] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 66.

and are taunted for months afterwards by their fellows. But these are 593 not the reasons why children so rarely commit this impropriety. It is because of the intimacy, the closeness to each other in daily life, of 864 brother and sister. Children do not need to be told that it is wrong to copulate with a sibling of the same joint family; they know it themselves. And, in fact, children from the age of 6 or 7 and upwards always say, with an expression of disgust, that sexual play with one's own siblings is wrong. Moreover, though they are not taught it as an avoidance, they are well aware of the conventional attitudes on the subject from listening to adult conversation.[1]

Incidentally, there are no taboos on conversation on sex matters 521 among the Tallensi. Men, women, and children are all outspoken about 831 sexual matters, though young women are apt to use euphemisms and to talk more circumspectly than men. 593 Some men also say that it is embarrassing to talk about sexual subjects in front of young wives or female relatives-in-law. But no native hesitates to discuss these subjects in the presence of his sister.

These ties of mutual affection and devotion between *soog* siblings 593 last throughout life and are extended to their children too. One sees this most dramatically in the grief people show, and especially women, 761 ● over the death of a *soog* sibling. Tallensi say that very often the loss of a full brother is a greater shock to a woman than the death of her husband. A husband is replaceable, a full brother not, they add. When Kpe'emi died his wife fainted and afterwards sat about disconsolately, weeping at intervals for days. His *soog* sister also fainted, but, the men said, it had been much more difficult to revive her than her sister-in-law and she became ill with grief. Seeing the two young women together one could not doubt that it was the sister who felt the blow worst.

Another vivid demonstration of the strength of this tie between 593 full siblings occurred when Tendaan Teroog performed the succession 793 ceremony on succeeding to the custody of his maximal lineage *bɔɣar*. A large crowd had gathered, chiefly men—clansmen, and neighbours and matrilateral kinsmen of Teroog's maximal lineage. Amongst them my

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[1] The psychological undercurrents of these conventional attitudes do not concern us here, but it may be remarked that there is probably a strong and partly overt sexual component in the affective relations of brother and sister. I was struck by this when I once had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of Yamzooya (aged about 11) and his *soog* sister (aged about 8) who were playing together in a corner of the room where I was chatting to their father. The children, who were quite naked, stood embracing each other, the boy with his legs round his sister's, and they twisted and wriggled about as if they were engaged in a mixture of an orgiastic dance and a wrestling-match. They were both in a state of high excitement, panting and giggling and muttering to each other, with obvious sexual pleasure. They seemed to be oblivious of their surroundings. This game went on for about twenty minutes after which they separated and lolled back as if exhausted. These two children were most attached to each other.

named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such 602
a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a 778
maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of 769
the several 'mothers' of its segments.

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it re- 613
quires a *bɔɣar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔɣar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔɣar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔɣar* symbolizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔɣar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the signi- 602
ficance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. 613
According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by
divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The 766
physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person [761]
may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ninvoo*)'—that is a full social being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral
custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which
the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family
would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed
to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has
destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and
give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit.
that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and
marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike,
even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family
and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to
return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
●762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622 624 793 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders,
but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one
might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A
brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

761 593 whom it was living, had also died suddenly. Diŋkaha, greatly concerned for his wife, warned all the members of his family not to say anything to her about it. If she heard of this calamity now, he said, she would surely die. Later on, when she had settled down again he would himself break the news to her.

765 593 Incidentally, fathers do not always get over the death of a child, whether an infant or an adult, with ease. It is easier for a young man, the Tallensi say, because he thinks to himself that his wife can still bear children to him. But even young men have been known to abandon ● [762] themselves to despair. An extreme case was that of Dəɣayam, who pierced himself with a poisoned arrow when his favourite child died; and the average Taləŋ, it must be remembered, speaks of suicide with contempt. The grief of a father when a grown-up or adolescent son dies is very moving. When Pumaan's son Kpeemi and Tinta'aləm's son Suor, both fine young men in the twenties, died, it was as if a shock ran through the whole community. On both occasions the men of the clan gathered in full force to mourn at the bereaved house and the atmosphere of tragedy was felt by all. I cannot forget the picture of Pumaan, as taciturn and dour a man as one could meet anywhere, holding himself tautly, his face ashen, his eyes staring ahead, stoically suppressing his despair as an elder should do. Tendaan Teroog, an old man over seventy, made no pretence of stoicism when his eldest and only adult son died leaving a number of wives and children. He simply pined away and followed his son to the grave in a couple of months.

593 769 When Tallensi say that it is hard to bring a child into the world, they have in mind more than the physiological facts of birth, and the dangers of infancy and childhood. They think of the whole gamut of social and emotional relations between parents and children arising out of the fact of birth. For a Taləŋ, as we have seen, does not become altogether independent of his parents until their death—nor, indeed, even after their death. The pragmatic bonds of jural and economic dependence become transformed into the equally strong, nay stronger bonds of ritual dependence on the ancestor spirits of whom the parents are the immediate prototypes and intermediaries. And in many ways the ritual relationships of the Tallensi with the spirits of their parents give a truer insight into the parent–child bond than their visible behaviour towards one another. 'Fear the dead but do not fear the living (*Zom kpiim ka di zo vopa*)', says one of their proverbs which enshrines their feeling that a person is under a far more compelling bond with his parents when they are dead than during their life. We shall return to this presently.

593 The gist of our analysis is that to the Tallensi parenthood means responsibility that weighs heavily at times. This comes out both in the notion that bearing or begetting a child is hard and in the correlated notion of the importance of rearing. At the same time there is no native, man or woman, who would not insist that a person has lived in vain if he

Kusase

764 *bing* fibre girdle; children are buried naked; a person who dies of small-pox is buried in the bush in an oblong hole which is filled in.

[763] It is taboo to allow a man to die unattended. A person about to die is supported in his brother's arms. When a man dies, the corpse is laid out on a mat and his death reported to the Elders. The corpse is bathed in cold water, and a second time with warm water. The body is then removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter by the sons. In the *zɔŋ* hut, the corpse is dressed in a goatskin and a belt of *sug* and *bea* fibre put on it; the goatskin is passed between the legs and three cowries are placed on the pubes. It is then placed on a mat which is folded over it and the ends tied, after which it is passed out at the door, being received by sons-in-law outside who then carry it three times round the compound, if a female four times. The *bayas* 764 (sextons) then take it from them and bury it. The body is removed from the mat; one *baya* enters the grave and the corpse is handed down to him. A male is placed on his right side, a female on her left side, in the grave. A man is buried facing the east, a female the west, because a male rises up to open up the compound, a woman at sundown is hurrying up to wash her pots and calabashes. When a male dies, and it is possible to get the grave ready, he is buried the same day. A *Tensdan'* encourages people to bury a corpse on the day of death, so that it will not be rotten and spoil the land. 'No one who has many brothers and sons can become rotten before burial.' Brothers and sons of the deceased begin to dig the grave, but as soon as the sons-in-law and brothers-in-law arrive, they take over the work. The *bayas* only walk about and superintend and say when it is deep enough. They put the body inside and close up the grave. If the deceased had 'medicine' his eldest son will take some stalks of *mus* and 'sweep' his father's body, after it has been bathed with tepid water, saying: 'My father, when you were alive, you had a thing which helped us all; it looked after our lives; you may perhaps take it away, so I am sweeping it (off you)'. He then brushes his father's body three times, and makes pretence of transferring what he has brushed from the grass brush into the pot containing the roots. Even if the deceased had an elder brother, the eldest son of the dead man will take his late father's medicine, but not any which his father had that belonged to *his* father; that is family medicine and goes to the heir. The goat whose skin was used to dress the corpse was killed being held by three persons and knocked three times against the wall of the *zɔŋ* hut, its throat being then cut to the accompaniment of the words: 'Here is material

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, 171
or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782]
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo:

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be 793
taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

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white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the graveside. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

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Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

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[171]
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Shrines: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan'* of Tɔngo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

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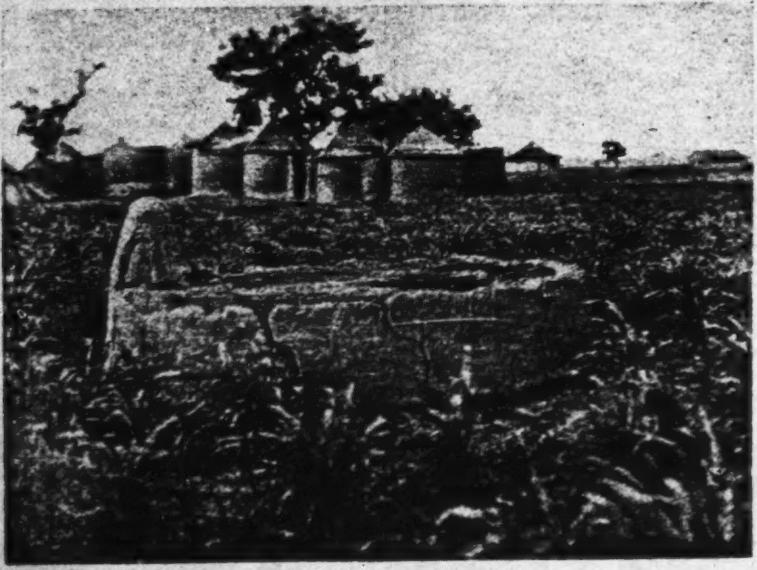

Fig. 64. Grave of Talense chief

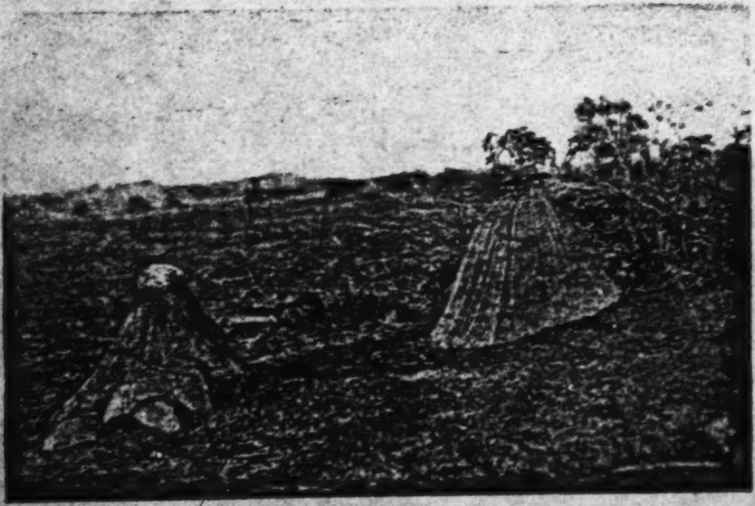

Fig. 65. Talense graves

[facing p. 352]

793 562 *Woman Ten'dan'*: 'A woman might become a *Ten'dan'*. She has the right to offer sacrifices, and receive lost things. She sits down saying: "Land receive your water and all your things". After she has said so, a man cuts the throat of the offering. She has a calabash, not a string hat. She owns the land and can stop wars with the corn stalk.' (A female *Ten'dan'* is interviewed later.)

791 *Rain-makers*: 'A rain-maker is separate from a *Ten'dan'*. He is called *Sa-ran*. We have none here.'

793 764 *Ten'dan' and Funeral Customs*: 'The family of the deceased would "reach" the *Ten'dan'* and he would give them a place to make a grave; were he to refuse they could not bury him. The *Ten'dan'* would send the boy to mark out the grave, making a circle with a calabash and the pointed stick used for digging the grave. He will say:

'*Dakirig* (a grove) some one is dead, can I refuse to bury him, therefore may you hear, and let the "room" be a proper one that he may sleep well?' A sheep is then sacrificed near the grave.

764 *Graves*: The Namnam bury their dead outside, not in, the compound. As many as twenty corpses may be in one grave. Men and women are buried in the same grave. The graves are circular with a bottle-neck. A boy or girl who has not any *nyere*[1] must have a separate grave.

834 A man does not have sexual intercourse with his wife for three years after she bears a child, i.e. if the child lives.

793 *Female Ten'dan'* (*Ten'dan' poka*): Akayiri, a female *Ten'dan'*, who may be seen in Fig. 81, told me the following:

'My ancestress was a *Ten'dan' poka* (a female *Ten'dan'*), called Banams. My grove is called Tinkyena; it is always a female *Ten'dan'* who is in charge of it. The calabash, which the little girl who always accompanies me carries, and my uncut hair, are the signs of my office. I own the land at Zoga. If the Zoga men want to fight, I will go between them, and place a corn stalk on the ground. Zoga has two *Ten'dan'*, a male and a female, but I own the land, as is proved by the fact that mine is the hind leg of all sacrifices; the male only gets a foreleg. Because "a female may kill a snake, but only a male cut off its head" (*poka ka kure wafo nwa zugo*), therefore, when I have given the sacrifice, the male cuts its throat. This male has no hat or skin. When I say that the land at Zogo belongs to me, I mean it belongs to the spirits. I am their servant. A male *Ten'dan'* may have a wife, but a

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[1] See p. 8. This only applies to a child whose mother is still young enough to bear children. [Nyere is a term applied to two children born consecutively of the same parents —Analyst.]

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not own the land, but is in charge of the hunting party for the time 624
that they are away in the bush.

'The *Tenedan*' would separate people fighting by spreading ashes 793
on the land between the combatants; no man may shoot an arrow 834
over this line. It is taboo to the land to have sexual intercourse in the bush. Any one who found people doing so will collect a heap of leaves and branches at that spot, and every one who passed there must add more. Such a place is called *pey bok* (vagina hole).

'A woman may not become a *Tenedan*.'[1] *Tenedan*' have not any 793
distinctive dress from that of any Elder. There is no difference 462
between the funeral custom for a *Tenedan*' and that of an Elder.' 764

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[1] But see p. 371. [i.e. The opposite is true among the Nam Nam - Analyst.]

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'.
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I 591
asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been
arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth
would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such,
for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom
would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner
would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants
a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [664]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows
for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back,
he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back
by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-pog*) once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 583 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears
him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking
out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every
new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and
go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep
and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law [764]
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his
village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones.
When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an
egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law
they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne
a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets
of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child,
for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

607 603 648 *Privileged Familiarity*: 'A man may play and be familiar with his sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents, for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the Mampruse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

607 'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

582 [587] *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

● 764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

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[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.

[2] See p. [illegible]

[3] But see p. 508.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

764

facing p. 390

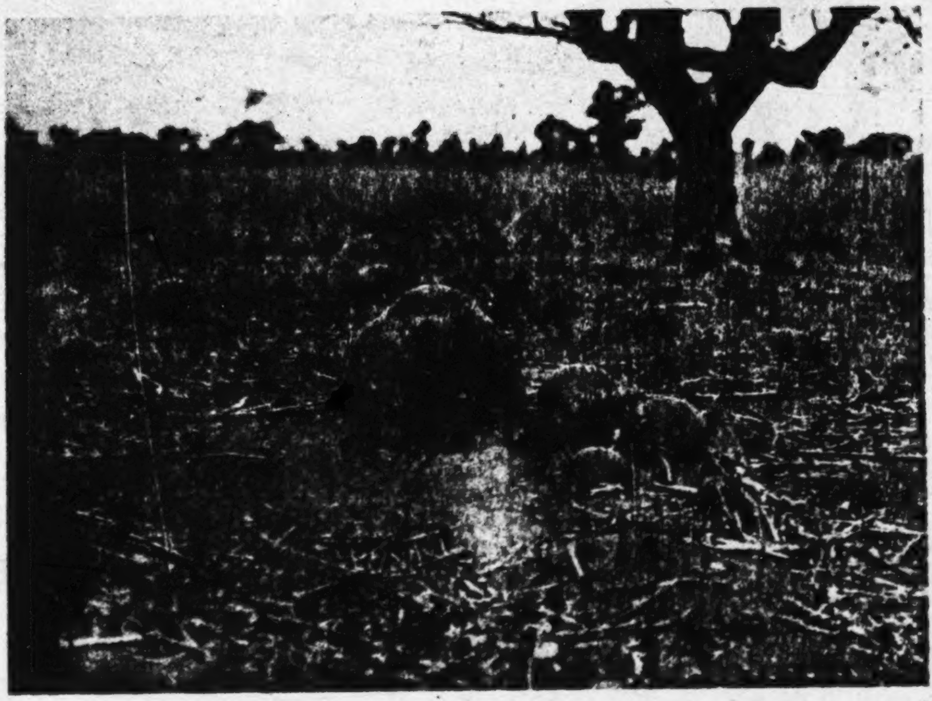

FIG. 88. Kusase graves

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

● 764 *bing* fibre girdle; children are buried naked; a person who dies of small-pox is buried in the bush in an oblong hole which is filled in.

[763] It is taboo to allow a man to die unattended. A person about to die is supported in his brother's arms. When a man dies, the corpse is laid out on a mat and his death reported to the Elders. The corpse is bathed in cold water, and a second time with warm water. The body is then removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter by the sons. In the *zɔŋ* hut, the corpse is dressed in a goatskin and a belt of *sug* and *bea* fibre put on it; the goatskin is passed between the legs and three cowries are placed on the pubes. It is then placed on a mat which is folded over it and the ends tied, after which it is passed out at the door, being received by sons-in-law outside who then carry it three times round the compound, if a female four times. The *bayas* 764 (sextons) then take it from them and bury it. The body is removed from the mat; one *baya* enters the grave and the corpse is handed down to him. A male is placed on his right side, a female on her left side, in the grave. A man is buried facing the east, a female the west, because a male rises up to open up the compound, a woman at sundown is hurrying up to wash her pots and calabashes. When a male dies, and it is possible to get the grave ready, he is buried the same day. A *Tenedan'* encourages people to bury a corpse on the day of death, so that it will not be rotten and spoil the land. 'No one who has many brothers and sons can become rotten before burial.' Brothers and sons of the deceased begin to dig the grave, but as soon as the sons-in-law and brothers-in-law arrive, they take over the work. The *bayas* only walk about and superintend and say when it is deep enough. They put the body inside and close up the grave. If the deceased had 'medicine' his eldest son will take some stalks of *mus* and 'sweep' his father's body, after it has been bathed with tepid water, saying: 'My father, when you were alive, you had a thing which helped us all; it looked after our lives; you may perhaps take it away, so I am sweeping it (off you)'. He then brushes his father's body three times, and makes pretence of transferring what he has brushed from the grass brush into the pot containing the roots. Even if the deceased had an elder brother, the eldest son of the dead man will take his late father's medicine, but not any which his father had that belonged to *his* father; that is family medicine and goes to the heir. The goat whose skin was used to dress the corpse was killed being held by three persons and knocked three times against the wall of the *zɔŋ* hut, its throat being then cut to the accompaniment of the words: 'Here is material

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front
and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath
[195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the
back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are
cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those
who have lost their fathers.

764 'When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are
765 boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and
after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his
[314] wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then
given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of
the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its
place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which
they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit
and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is
called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge
of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral
is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is
765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He
769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is
fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the
setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the
deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of
the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[171] [1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita.*

[535 831] [2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o ŋyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

1: Rattray E. G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

837 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood
783 drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the
765 woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs
off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a
man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'.
There she is given new waist-strings.

765 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow
768 out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother.
The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest
son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the
deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of
the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken
to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the
quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral
custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

●764 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If
my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother,
602 and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not
a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If
she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives,
my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once
and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger
brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which
contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's
people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my
daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my
sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been
bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and
the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My
younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one
across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos
(*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the
rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and
last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are
then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she
was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the
zɔŋ hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[302 [1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and
children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and
170] children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764
or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602
When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya* (sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man, he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it, may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept, as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-fowl they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave. It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*) for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one, even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given
to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561
ku-kweem just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834
his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765
'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768
would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171]
custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem* funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane *kaleŋa*), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*), and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

834 765 768 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property, it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women; any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 584 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

764 Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

of the group to which it refers. Owing to the balanced distribution of 173
political and ceremonial functions between units of structure, the members 773
of a group always overrate their own relative significance while non-members underrate its importance. These, sometimes contradictory, 578
valuations find expression, also, in the way myths are presented. It is the technique of contraposition coming to the surface again. When, therefore, in these days new tensions develop, erupting sometimes into open conflict, they are inevitably reflected in the cast given to their myths of origin by interested parties.

The Major Cleavage in Tale Society

Our reconnaissance of the cultural landscape of the Tallensi has left us 000
with a tangle of facts which do not fall into an obvious pattern. The reader may rest assured that his perplexity bears no comparison to that of an ethnographer seeking, for the first time, to understand Tale culture and social organization. The perspective changes as the investigator shifts his vantage point. The greatest puzzle of all is why there is so little apparent unity and coherence in an area of such dense and close habitation, carrying a population that has been sedentary for a long time, has a more or less homogeneous culture, and a strong sense of the continuity and stability of its social order. Leaving aside this puzzle, for the present, let us see what are the positive conclusions to which our survey leads.

The point of primary importance is that a major cleavage runs through 184
the whole of Tale society. On the one side stand communities or parts of communities the members of which are generally agreed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi. These are the Namoos. On the other side stand similar social groups who claim to be and are accepted as the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and earlier immigrants whom they absorbed. This cleavage is given a symbolic formulation in myths of origin the historicity of which need not concern us.

This cleavage is so fundamental that it permeates the whole social out- 184
look of the people. One sees it most vividly in the martial choruses chanted 764
at important funerals. One of the high lights at the opening ceremonies of the funeral of an important person is a grand mimic war march (*dee*) of the men of the clan. In their finest clothes, weapons in hand, plumed helms on their heads, blowing whistles and accompanied by drummers, the men gather in lineage squadrons to march round the settlement, and eventually mass at the house of the funeral. They march irregularly in an unorganized mob with excited children trailing behind and women dancing on the flanks trilling the shrill *kpɛləmət* cry of elation. And as they march, especially as they approach the funeral house, they chant defiant challenges against their traditional enemies in the wars of former days. 'Yo ho!' they chant, 'we might rise one day at break of dawn to sally forth against certain people.' 'Is it not because of us', the Namoos chant taunting the Talis, 'that you have water to drink?' And again, 'Do you not mock at them, do you not laugh at them?' And now and then a man leaps forward, crouches scowling, pretends to shoot off an arrow, and cries scornfully, 'If it were not for the white man, by now we would be meeting them in battle'. It is all play-acting, but there is an

184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the
● 764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have
[579] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration
[123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as
796 composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris,
796 Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take
648 the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

biis—we are the children of one father', when they want to stress recent 613
common ancestry, or '*ti a yaab yɛni biis*—we are the children of one ancestor', whenever they emphasize remote common ancestry. The same contrast is expressed in the appellations *dug* (room) and *yir* (house). Members of lineage V, for example, will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* (members of one room) by contrast with members of lineage W, whom they would describe as *ti yidɛm* (people of our house). Members of X will say 'We, the children of so and so (F.IV.1), are four rooms', but they will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* in contrast to Y, who would be called their *yidɛm*, e.g. at funeral ceremonies. Thus the segments of X or of Y are closer *sunzɔp* than are X and Y, which, again, are closer *sunzɔp* than are the major segments of the maximal lineage. A specially close tie is acknowledged also between lineages of common agnatic ancestry which have a common ancestress. Thus, if F.V.1 had three wives, from whom have sprung, respectively, segments $a+b$ and c, $d+e$, and f, then the first two segments regard each other as closer *sunzɔp* than either of the other two.

Genealogical distance and the tie of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are most 613
palpable in situations which bring out the structural equilibrium of the 764
set of lineages. When, for instance, a funeral occurs in lineage *g*, contributions of cooked food will be made by the *sunzɔp* as follows: by the head of $h+i$, the closest *sunzɔ* segment, on behalf of that segment; by the head of W on behalf of the whole lineage, not by its constituent segments, the contribution being given to its *sunzɔ* V, not to the segment *g*; and by the head of X, if it is the funeral of an elder, on behalf of the whole of X, when the recipient unit is considered to be Y, not *g*. If the other half of the maximal lineage, Major Segment II, sends a contribution, it will be given by the head of the segment on behalf of the whole unit as an obligation owed to the *sunzɔ* segment, the house of F.I.1. Cooked food, beer, and the meat of ceremonially slaughtered animals are distributed according to the same scale of genealogical distance, and the allocation of ritual duties, though less strictly regulated, depends on it, too. Hence any members of W who may be present at the funeral are regarded as representing W, however many segments of W they may individually represent. They are entitled only to those portions of food, beer, and meat which are the due share of W. An identical share can be claimed by members of X who may be present, whether they come from one of its segments or from all; and the same holds for the major segments of the maximal lineage. *Sunzɔt* here implies duties and privileges vested in the lineage as a corporate unit and exercised on its behalf by any representatives of that unit in relation to other units of a like sort.

There are many other institutions and situations in which the tie of 613
sunzɔt operates in the same way and receives precise and formal recognition according to the same rules. It operates thus in all corporate actions and in relation to all corporate interests of a lineage. It dictates the manner in which every activity associating people in groups is organized. Hoeing and building teams organize their work broadly along the lines [476]
of the lineage structure and distribute the food they receive in reward in accordance with it. In a hunting party lineage *sunzɔp* have the right to

*618 immutably established. The colonies which have budded off since the foundation of the four primary sub-clans rank only as minor segments of the sub-clans from which they come. Bɔləgraanyidɛm at Woo, Puliebər-yidɛm at Gorogo, Doohyidɛm at Ba'ari, all count as minor segments of their paternal sub-clan, Tongo.

The Lineage Principle in the Structure of the Clan

*618 ●764 Distant *sunzɔp* do not regularly attend funeral celebrations, but when an important person dies they occasionally come to pay their respects, though they do not bring contributions. Yamaləg people used to be frequent visitors at big Tongo funerals before their present chief quarrelled with the Chief of Tongo (Tɔŋraana). Sie has a closer tie with one of the segments of Tongo (the house of Kabuu) through their founder's mother than with the others, hence a Sie party would be very likely to turn up for the funeral of a Kabuu-yir elder. Biuk has a similar link with Nɔŋsuur-yir at Tongo, and when Sayəbazaa, the head of that lineage, died in 1936, a party of mourners from Biuk came to the funeral. *Sunzɔ* lineages, as we have seen, are entitled to particular portions of animals slaughtered as offerings to the dead, of beer, and of the food contributions. Whatever the motives which bring a party, or even an individual, from Sie or Yaməlag or Biuk to a funeral at Tongo, the prescribed share (*tɔrəg*) is given to them; a hind leg to the most senior of the three sub-clans which may be present, a foreleg to any of the others.

Each sub-clan behaves and is treated as a major segment of the maximal lineage in such a case; Tongo, the host segment, being regarded as a unit in contraposition to the guest segments and other more distant *sunzɔp*. If the other sub-clans are not represented, the major segments of Tongo emerge as the relatively autonomous units of the highest order, the one celebrating the funeral being the host segment. The host segment retains one hind leg of the beast slaughtered—the share of greatest distinction—and the other hind leg is the rightful share of the *sunzɔ* segment of equal status and grade in the lineage system. The forelegs, the shares of lesser distinction, go to *sunzɔ* segments which are more distant genealogically. The situation is always organized as an equilibrium of aliquot parts.

Thus, when the party from Biuk came to Sayəbazaa's funeral they received a hind leg of the cow which was slaughtered, since neither Yaməlag nor Sie was represented. Tongo people have the same rights at the other places. In such situations, in conformity with the principle of unit representation, any member (or members) of the unit who happens to be present exercises the prerogatives or carries out the duties appropriate to that unit. When the meat or beer is being apportioned at a Tongo funeral and Yaməlag or Sie people are known to be present, the man in charge of affairs—who is acting also as representative of a unit, his segment of the sub-clan—calls out, 'Are any Yaməlagdɛm here?' and hands them their share; and so on for the others. I once saw this principle pushed to an absurd point. A Mampuru tramp followed me to a funeral ceremony in the hope of begging some money from me. When his

presence was discovered, some were for driving him away immediately, 618x
others maintained that as he had followed me he should share my portion 764
of the beer; but one elder demanded that he should be treated with special courtesy. '*U a Mampurug na'ab bii*—he is the child (i.e. subject) of the Chief of Mampurugu', the old man solemnly insisted, and he proceeded to welcome the ragged tramp respectfully. So a pot of beer was offered to him, somewhat grudgingly, as a scion of the Mamprusi, the ancestral stock of the Tongo Namoos, whom he was here regarded as representing. It was the logic of the situation which caused the intruder to be assigned a specific place in the structural scheme. When we dispersed nobody took any more notice of him.

We describe the four units we have been dealing with as sub-clans 618x
together constituting a single clan, for convenience of reference; for the Tallensi have no terminology corresponding to this. People of the four sub-clans say, '*Mosuor ndɔɣa ti waabi*—Mosuor begot us all'; or '*ti dɔɣum a bukɔ'la*—our birth is one', i.e. 'our line of descent is single'; or they describe themselves simply as Mosuor biis, the children (i.e. descendants) of Mosuor. Such expressions indicate the fundamental canon of clanship, that of descent from a common ancestor in the male line. This equates the clan with the agnatic maximal lineage. Having stated this dogma, a man may add, '*ti a bim bukɔ'la*—we are of one kind', or '*ti buurət a dekɔ'la*—our stock is one'; but neither *bim* nor *buurət* is equivalent to the concept 'clan'. They are used for classes of plants, animals, and inanimate objects as well as for social groups; *buurət* is most commonly heard in the sense of 'seed', its primary meaning, e.g. *naarbuura*, seed of early millet. '*Toog kama a bim bukɔ'la*—All sickness is of one kind', I was once told. The segments of a maximal lineage may be referred to as *ti bim, ti bim*, each of our kind, when their relative autonomy rather than their unity is emphasized.

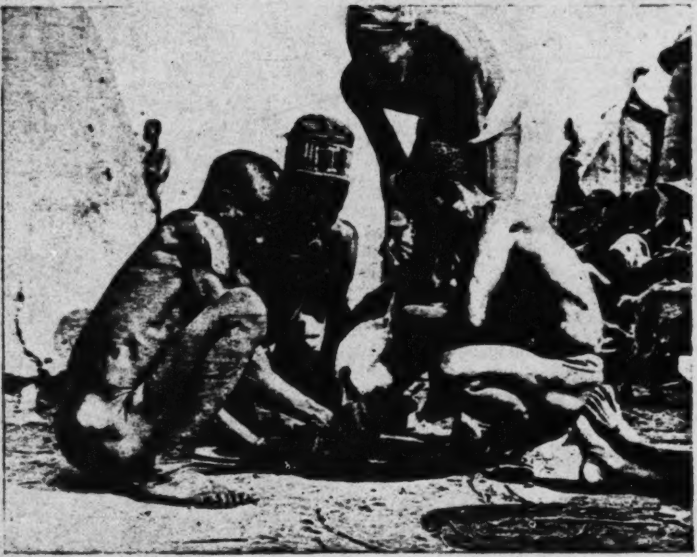
Tale clanship, however, involves a wider nexus than the lineage system from which it derives. Clanship operates on the same level of relations as the lineage system, within the limits of common agnatic descent. It implies the notion of convergent patrilineal ascent; but in actual fact its range is extended by modifications of the strict rule of patriliny. The lineage system is the core of clanship, but not the whole of it. Lineally discrete groups are linked together by ties of clanship, so that the clan organization as a whole consists of a series of interlocked chains of linked maximal lineages.

The Internal Differentiation of the Clan: (A) *Sie*

The canon of agnatic descent from Mosuor, strictly applied, defines a range of membership—which could be measured by a count of heads—embracing the four settlements we have mentioned and their offshoots. At Sie those who fall within this range comprise the three major segments of the sub-clan: (A) Bayana yidem; (B) Sa-teŋərdem; (C) Wooŋ yidem. These are all the agnatic posterity of Kuŋkye, the founder of the settlement of Sie, and can best be described as Kuŋkye biis, the children of Kuŋkye. They are the people of Sie proper.

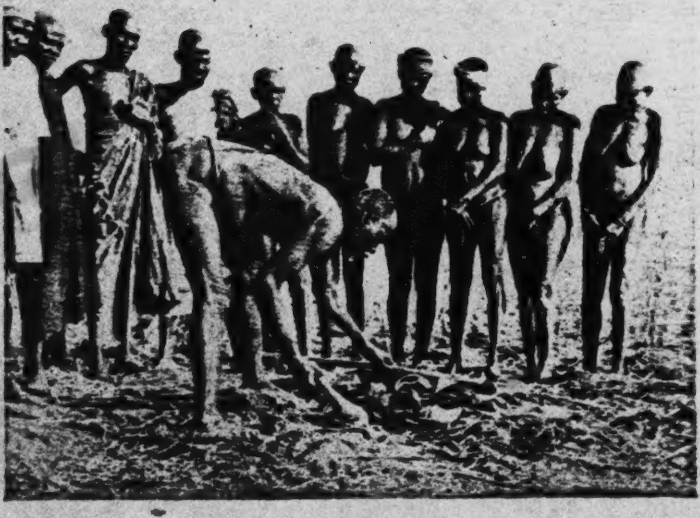
PLATE IV

782



(*a*) Ritual strangling of a goat to provide the loin cover for a Namoo elder's burial.

764



(*b*) *Ŋma wɔɣar*, the final rite of a Namoo funeral, is peculiar to Namoos.

[facing p. 57]

CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gorisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver ●[764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Ŋkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*baŋ*) by one major segment of Bayana yidɛm at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

[p.66]

618 *sunzɔp*' by Tongo people, and they take the part of distant *sunzɔp* in their corporate relations with Tongo. Thus, an important funeral at Tongo
618 always attracts a large contingent of Zoo people, and vice versa. When
764 Doohraan, one of the senior elders of Tongo, died, Zoo turned out in full force to join in the celebrations that inaugurated the funeral. A cow was slaughtered as an offering to the departed, and when it was divided up the Zoodɛm proper received half a foreleg, as distant *sunzɔp*, the other half going to Zubiuŋ, as the closest unrelated neighbours of the Tongo lineage which was celebrating the funeral. On this occasion Zoo-Yiraaŋ sent a number of young men to swell the ranks of their *sunzɔp*, the Zoodɛm proper, so that they could make as grand a display as possible. They themselves cannot take part in a Tongo funeral as an independent unit.

618 At the same time it is explicitly recognized that Zoodɛm proper are the
621 *sunzɔp* of Tongo only by courtesy. They do not have the rights and duties of true clan *sunzɔp*. Tale social structure, highly determinate as it is, is flexible, and allows of such extensions of its basic principles. It allows the translation into the idiom of kinship and clanship of the ties of contiguity or of ceremonial or political solidarity. For the ties of clanship-by-courtesy recognized between Zoo and Tongo rest upon their spatial contiguity and political interdependence. The maximal lineage of Zoo proper has the custody of a special shrine connected with the chiefship of Tongo. According to their myth of origin, their founding ancestor performed the ritual services associated with this shrine for Mosuor when he was Chief of the Mamprusi and followed him to Tongo. These ritual services still vested in Zoodɛm proper form a strong bond between them and Tongo.

On the other hand, the fact that both groups are Namoos is an essential factor of their clanship-by-courtesy. By contrast the people of Zubiuŋ, who are as closely associated with Tongo spatially, politically, and by reciprocal ritual services, and, like the people of Zoo, always fought on the side of Tongo in the old days, are Talis, properly speaking; thus there is a stricter social separation between them and Tongo. They are not regarded as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy by the latter; they refrain from the ritual or ceremonial activities of the people of Tongo in which Zoodɛm proper can and do take a part greater than that of mere spectators.

At the same time the genealogical and corporate independence of the people of Zoo proper, in relation to Tongo, is precisely marked. Neither group takes part in the cult of the lineage ancestors of the other; and if, for instance, in a funeral ceremony men of Zoo proper perform ritual services for a Tongo lineage, or vice versa, they do so because true clan *sunzɔp* are not present.

618 One infallible test of their differentiation from the clan of Mosuor biis
621 is the fact that the two groups intermarry. Another is the rule about
628 raiding. A generation ago, before the white man imposed the rule of his law, raiding (*ŋɔk*) was a common method of self-help in Taleland. It was the final resource of a man who wished to retrieve a debt owed to him by a member of another clan. If, for instance, a Tongo man owed a Wakii man cattle for a marriage he had contracted, and withheld payment unduly long or in bad faith, the latter would resort to self-help.

PLATE V

x618
782
77a

(*a*) Clanship at Zubiuŋ: Elders of Kpaɣara yaɣar awaiting the representatives of the other two maximal lineages at the entrance to the External *Bɔɣar* Duunkpaləg, in order to perform a sacrifice.

764
x618

(*b*) The duties of *tɛnnɔɔp*, at Zubiuŋ: The rite of 'sowing a field' for the dead during a tɛndaana's funeral. One representative of each maximal lineage of the clan has to take part.

[facing p. 80]

x618 Duunkpalɔg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the
778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child
placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a
[551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages
x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a
764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously
778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is
794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of
782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these
182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say
771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpalɔg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

618x 811 attached lineages, as well as for certain ritual and political ties between some groups. Thus, one segment of Tongo has a special ritual role as intermediary in the politico-ritual relations of Tongo and Zoo, and this is rationalized by the same fiction; but it does not involve ties of clanship with Zoo.

618x 621 There is a close parallelism between the inter-clan linkages we have described and the spatial relations of the groups concerned. Gbizugdɛm are the nearest non-Namoo neighbours of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra on one side; Ba'ari is contiguous with them on the other side; and Zoo-Yiraaŋ live side by side with their clansfolk at Zubiuŋ-Yapaas. There is an asymmetry in these clanship ties which appears to be mirrored in the fictions accounting for them. Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are linked by clanship ties in exactly the same way as they are linked with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, but neither has ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ.

618x 764● Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra has more frequent and closer relations and a stronger sense of fraternity with Gbizug than with its other two linked maximal lineages at Zoo and at Ba'ari. This is fostered by proximity and by the belief enshrined in their myth of origin. Thus, when a Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra tɛndaana dies and his funeral ceremonies are performed, the heads of all three linked maximal lineages have to send an obligatory contribution of porridge, specially prepared 'to set out for the dead (*zien kpiim la*)'. They act, then, in the same way as the other two Zubiuŋ lineages, which are also obliged to send this contribution. But Gbizugdɛm do more than make a merely formal acknowledgement of their ties with the dead man's lineage; they take part in the funeral to a much greater extent than Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ. Their representatives never fail to attend all the important ritual events of the funeral, whereas the representatives of the other two linked maximal lineages appear only at the exoteric public ceremonies, such as the final divination when the beer is distributed. The social relations of Gbizug with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra give them a place, as it were, half-way between the other Zubiuŋ maximal lineages and the other two linked maximal lineages in point of intimacy and corporate cohesion. [587] Every Yakɔra man knows the wives of the men of Gbizug almost as well as the wives of his own clansmen. He speaks of them all as his 'wives', for he has a right to inherit any of them if they remain widows. If he meets one of them by chance he will chaff her, as if she were a Zubiuŋ wife. Most of the wives of the men of Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ are quite unknown to him, though formally he has the same rights in respect of them.

The Gradation of Clanship Ties

618x What distinguishes the bonds of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra with Gbizug from their apparently identical bonds with their clansmen of Zubiuŋ is this: the latter are bound to perform all the duties of close *sunzɔp*, the former are under the much more limited obligation of giving expression to their ties of clanship through one or two formal acts. The latter, for example, are obliged to attend and to conduct all the important rites of a Yakɔra tɛndaana's funeral, whereas Gbizugdɛm come voluntarily, and if they undertake any task do so out of courtesy and friendliness. Similarly, the

x618 privileges of clanship have the force of rights in the case of *sunzɔp* belonging to the same clan, but are subject to a wider margin of flexibility and voluntary adjustment in the case of extra-clan *sunzɔp*. Some privileges which the former can claim are not held by the latter.

x618 •764 In short, here, as with the Namoos, clanship, or more specifically the ties of clan brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) between lineages, is a matter of degree. An illustration will show how it works. We shall take again the example of a distribution made at a funeral ceremony, but the same rules apply in all other aspects of clan relationships. A food distribution of minor importance, usually managed by the younger men, with an accompaniment of considerable hilarity, occurs on the evening of *Kogbeda'ar*, about the middle of the funeral ceremony. It is an occasion on which one usually hears the claims and counter-claims of the different groups represented argued out with great fervour. On *Kogbeda'ar* of the late Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra tɛndaana's funeral the meat of the animals contributed was divided out among the *sunzɔp* lineages as follows: Kpaγara-yaγardɛm, as the closest *sunzɔp*, received the share of greatest distinction, the hind leg of a sheep; Yapaasdɛm, the next closest *sunzɔp*, received the shoulder of a sheep; Gbizugdɛm, next in order of closeness, received the hind leg of a goat (for the Tallensi, unlike ourselves, regard the sheep as a nobler animal than the goat). Lastly came the Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm, whose share was the foreleg of a goat. Ba'at-Sakpardɛm were not present on this occasion; had they been they would have been entitled to a portion equivalent to the hind leg of a goat. The closest ties of clanship are those which entail the most definite and strict obligations and carry in compensation the most definite rights and superior privileges. These are the ties that bind the lineage to the other lineages which, with it, make up a single composite clan.

x618 The attached lineage of Pulien biis shares the extra-clan ties of clanship of the authentic lineage of the Yakɔradɛm, but it has in addition a tie of clanship independent of the authentic lineage. This links it to one of the segments of Sakpee, a Tɛnzugu clan. According to their tradition, their ancestor Pulien was begotten by a Sakpee man, who later divorced his wife, Pulien's mother, by blowing ashes on her. The recent history of this relationship throws an interesting light on the factors which keep alive the ties of clanship between linked maximal lineages, and on their dynamic characteristics.

x618 588 About a generation ago a Sakpee man married a daughter of Pulien biis in defiance of the exogamic ban. The protests of the elders of both lineages were fruitless. The drastic sanctions which might have been resorted to were out of the question; in theory, because the two lineages were related by ties of clanship; in practice, no doubt, because they were extremely difficult to apply on account of the political barriers between Zubiuŋ and Tɛnzugu. So the matter was allowed to slide, and left to the arbitrament of the ancestor spirits. The marriage, said the elders, would be sterile, or all the children would die. In the end, however, the offending couple reared a large and successful family; so apparently this breach of kinship (*dɔγam*) was not a sin after all.

In spite of this, Pulien biis continued to maintain their ties of clanship

lineage is also a region where different fields of clanship overlap. This is what gives it its intercalary functions (see Diagram on p. 86). 618x

Quasi-Clanship: Joking Partnership

Beyond the lineage's field of clanship lies a zone of social relations with which it has no constituted ties. For example, Zubiuŋ has no constituted ties with Zandoya. When Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the young wife of a Zandoya man, this was his justification for an act which would have been considered an outrage if she had been the wife of a Ba'ari man. Again, when Saɣabo of Kpata'ar clandestinely brought home the wife of a Gorogo man, the elders of his lineage were ready to shield him. A few months later another youth of the same lineage eloped with the wife of a man belonging to a linked lineage, and the same elders peremptorily sent her home to her former husband.

618x 602 Somewhere between clanship and potential enmity come two other kinds of ties belonging to the same class of structural relations as clanship and generally accounted for as arising out of some form of kinship (*mabiirət*). Each clan among the Talis, and in some cases a particular maximal lineage, has one or more joking partnerships with other clans or lineages. Thus Ba'ari has a joking partnership with Gorogo, Zubiuŋ with Sakpee and Gundaat, Kpata'ar with Wakii, Degal with Samiit, and so forth. The natives describe these relationships in the following terms. They say, 'We tease one another (*ti kiehət ni taaba*)', or 'We abuse one another (*ti tura taaba*)'. If they are asked for an explanation they say, 'It is laughter (*la'at*)', 'it is brother-in-lawship (*dakiirət*)'. Talking of it always raises a grin.

The joking partnership has two conventional modes of expression. When, for example, a Ba'ari man meets a Gorogo man or woman on a path by chance they abuse each other with impunity, in such terms as 'you ugly thing (*bonlɔɣa*)', or 'you good for nothing (*boŋwari*)', or some similar objurgation. Spoken in anger, these are deadly insults. Between joking partners, who shout them out with mock seriousness, they arouse only a roar of laughter. As we have noted, the natives compare them with the joking relationship of affines of the same generation. A man will tease his wife's brother (*dakii*) or sister (*dakii-pɔk*) or his sister's husband (*dakii*) or a clansman's wife in this way, and a woman her brother's wife (*pɔɣakii*) or her husband's sister (*pɔɣakii*), to the amusement of both.[1]

618x 764 602 The other gesture of privileged aggression which is a convention of the joking partnership I once observed at a Zubiuŋ funeral. A cow had been slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and the elders were distributing the meat. A huge crowd of people had gathered, as is usual, for the occasion, and the tumult was indescribable. The division of the meat was still in progress. This process is always accompanied by loud and what appears to be truculent argument. Suddenly a youth sprang forward from the middle of the crowd, snatched the leg of a sheep, and sprinted off at top speed. There was a moment's consternation, and then an uproar. Laughing and shouting taunts and mockery at the top of their voices, the crowd looked on as one of the most respected elders of Zubiuŋ dashed off

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[1] But marriage is not prohibited between joking partners.

*618 ●764 602 in pursuit. The youth zigzagged through the crowd, flourishing his leg of mutton, and threw it to a companion as the old man reached and grappled with him. For a few minutes they wrestled on the refuse heap, the old man pretending fury with the most realistic mimicry, as he cried out, 'you thief, you scoundrel', and his opponent making a pretence of resisting vigorously. A horde of small boys pranced around them with joy, and the elders at the gateway shook with laughter. Then it was all over, and everybody's attention reverted to the serious business of dividing the meat. 'Those young fellows are Sakpeedɔm', an elder explained to me; 'we and Sakpee abuse each other, it is brother-in-lawship, and not fighting.' This incident was a striking instance of how a social definition steers a situation. Anyone but a Sakpee man acting thus would have been set upon and manhandled; even a Zubiuŋ man, if he were to commit such an unthinkable act, would have been severely mauled.

*618 608 602 When the natives speak of this as brother-in-lawship, they make it clear that they are speaking figuratively. A clan's joking partners are usually clans that live just beyond the range of its effective ties of clanship. They are clans who actually are or might be the *sunzɔp* of its *sunzɔp* by clanship or by courtesy. Thus they lie on the border between two zones. On the one side lies the zone in which the clan has precisely defined social ties implying specific rights and obligations and resting on the assumption of amity and solidarity. Serious conflict with these clans is regarded as incompatible with the basic axioms of social relations, and when it occurs it always precipitates action designed to re-establish normal social relations. On the other side live people with whom no direct structural ties exist; they may be friendly if they wish, but they can be hostile with impunity. They are clans whose wives can be abducted or seduced, if one is bold enough, without infringing the loyalty of clanship or necessarily incurring instant reprisals.

Joking partners lie between these two sets of clans, and are likely to be connected with both by structural ties of one kind or another. Thus the joking partners of my clan are not our *sunzɔp* nor our possible but inaccessible enemies. They are the *sunzɔp* of our *sunzɔp*, in relation to whom both my clan and theirs have similar rights, obligations, and sentiments. This is a bond of friendliness between us. But they are also the *sunzɔp* of our possible enemies, who may side with them against us, and this is a source of latent opposition between us. The conventions of the joking relationship symbolize piquantly the interstitial status of joking partners between friends, who have rights, duties, and loyalties to one another, and potential enemies. Their privileged aggression reconciles the conflicting definitions of *sunzɔp*, whose right to a share of the meat symbolizes reciprocal bonds, and non-*sunzɔp* who have no right to it because of the absence of reciprocal obligations; of people who are near (*pɔrəga*)—a significant concept in Tale political thought indicating both spatial and social proximity—and those who are far (*zaa ha*); of people whose friendliness can be relied upon, and those who are incalculable.

This is obvious both in the custom of mock abuse and in the snatching of meat or other food at a funeral ceremony. The joking partners obtain a share of the meat almost as if they were *sunzɔp*—but by a burlesque of

619 gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pchug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tendaana.

764 Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have
[884] begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*waləg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teeləg lineages, use only a piece of string

619 The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin
184 has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

173 Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Wooləga country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teeləg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

577 The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the
764 lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihər*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihər*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

Funeral rites have a twofold symbolic value for the Tallensi. They 764 symbolize the corporate unity and identity of the lineage and clan and 182 its ties with other clans; but they also symbolize the group's dependence on and moral responsibility to their ancestors, collectively and individually. This is shown very well in the custom of each clan's using a particular kind of loin cover for the dead and in the associated custom of swearing an oath by the father's loin cover. They show that ritual symbols of social differentiation and association among the Tallensi are not mere emblems of intergroup differences. They are emotionally charged symbols of the fact that the corporate unity and identity of the group is created by the moral bonds of its members among themselves and of each member with the ancestors of the group. We shall return to this presently.

In spite of their deviant mortuary customs, the people of Gorogo, 619 Ka'ar, and Teelɔg consider themselves to be, and are considered to be, as 171 much a part of the Talis aggregate as any other Talis clans. Conversely 184 it is known among the Talis that some clans of Gɔrisi and Namnam, as well as many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, dress their dead in a sheepskin loin cover. The Talis do not on this account acknowledge any of these groups as Talis or as being kin to them. Again, some clans in the Sie district gird their dead with an oribi skin. But they deny having any ties with Ka'ar. Indeed, their elders are quite unaware that they have this custom in common with Ka'ar, and are not in the least interested in hearing of it. This is a significant difference between the Namoos, all of whom have the same mortuary observances, and the Talis and their congeners. This difference extends to other manifest ritual usages that serve to differentiate corporate units from one another.

Certain other funeral rites are also stressed as rigorously distinctive 764 of the Talis and as common to all of them. All Talis, it is said, conclude 184 a funeral by the rite of *yma ma'ala*. Members of the deceased's maximal lineage, and the heads of the other lineages of the clan, contribute a large number of fowls, which are slaughtered as a sacrifice to mark the final departure of the dead person from the social sphere of the living and his aggregation to the ancestors. In reality, almost every clan has its own modifications in the details of the rite. In some clans it is performed for all males who have begotten children, in others for lineage heads only, in others for both men and women; and the people of Kpata'ar omit the rite altogether. The rite is found also among many of the *tɛndaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, with diverse local variations.

Similar local variations from clan to clan appear in the other parts of the funeral ceremonies where the usages of the Talis contrast with those of the Namoos, and many, if not most, of these distinct customs are found among the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie district.

These variations in ritual observances, and their correlation with structural ties and cleavages, are constantly brought to an observer's attention. They form a common topic of discussion and comment at funeral ceremonies. One is often reminded of them by the behaviour of women at these ceremonies. A woman's husband's clan very often has different ritual practices from those of her father's clan. Now, married

764 184 daughters always come to funerals in their paternal family. They have special ritual duties, some specific to that clan, some more general. They are apt, then, to follow the procedures to which they have become accustomed in their husband's home and have, therefore, to be closely supervised.

In all these mortuary and funeral rites there is a tendency for the plainsmen to have one type of variant, while the Hill clans favour another. There is less variation in the details of rites among the clans of either group than between the two groups, and the clans at the foot of the Hills show variants of ritual usage intermediate between those of the plains Talis and of the Hill clans. Thus, one of the most solemn and sacred of the rites which transform the brute fact of death into the mystical fact of spiritual status is the rite of *kpe kpiintaŋ*. It is usually regarded as distinctive of the Namoos, but it occurs also in the funeral ceremonies of tɛndaanas and elders at Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Gbizug, and Wakii (the Talis clans contiguous with the Namoos) as well as among some of the non-Namoo clans of the Sie area. The Hill Talis attribute this to contamination by the customs of the Namoos. There are one or two rites which the plains Talis have and the Hill Talis lack altogether. There is, therefore, a broad distinction corresponding to the division between the clans that celebrate *Da'a* and those that celebrate *Bɔyaraam* as their Harvest Festival. But the two clusters overlap, as they do structurally, and the Talis overlap with the *tɛndaanditib* of the Sie area by the criterion of funeral customs as they do by those of locality and structure.

182 184 764 The funeral customs of the Talis, it is clear, are directly correlated with the structure of the society. The broad patterns of doctrine and ritual practice are the same for all Tallensi, and are an indication of their uniform culture and of a social structure which embraces all the Tallensi in a single system. More specific patterns of doctrine and practice are followed exclusively by the Talis and their congeners elsewhere in Taleland. They are an index of the structural differentiation of these clans from the Namoos. Some of these patterns are common to all or most of the Talis clans, and correspond therefore to the network of clanship and other structural ties linking them all to one another. Other specific patterns of funeral customs mark off lesser regions within the whole cluster of Talis clans. And finally, variations in detail correspond to the genealogical differentiation of clan from clan and lineage from lineage, and to the fact that each unit has a specific field of social relations not wholly congruent with that of any other unit of a like sort. The natives understand this. As we have noted before, they see variant ritual beliefs and practices of all kinds, and especially variant mortuary and funeral customs, as ways in which the corporate identity and the continuity of lineage and clan are expressed. They consider such variations within the limits of common patterns as belonging to the very fabric of their social organization.

Totemic Avoidances and Clanship Ties

784 184 The connexion between ritual observances and the social structure can be even more plainly seen in the totemic avoidances of the Talis and the

562 *pɔɣayabələg*, particularly of one who is living at her husband's house. x618 To be sure, her kinship ties with her own family and with the segment of the maximal lineage to which her father belongs are not severed; indeed, a woman's relations with her paternal clan are largely regulated and mediated by these ties. The concept of *pɔɣayabələg* implicitly stresses the fact that it is a woman's fate to be married out of the clan and to be cut off from its routine corporate activity; and it contains the idea that a woman thus separated from her parental home is felt to belong primarily to the widest corporate unit that stands in contraposition to her husband's, where his relations with her are concerned.

Thus outside the range of the lineage segment in which generation differences are recognized, a *pɔɣayabələg* is referred to as 'our sister (*ti tau*)' by any of her clansmen, and she speaks of them as *ntap*, 'my brothers'. A man visiting the settlement of another clan makes himself at home in the rooms of any *pɔɣayabələg* of his clan. When the cow-peas are ripening, a *pɔɣayabələg* visiting her clan settlement—her 'father's house' (*ba yiri*), as it is described by extension of the concept of the father's house or lineage in the narrowest sense—may pluck cow-pea leaves (*bɛŋət*) for herself anywhere in the settlement. A Yamələg or Sie *pɔɣayabələg* can do this at Tongo, for instance, if she is merely passing [578] through on her way elsewhere. No one would resent it; but if the wife of a member of a segment of the clan other than his own were to pluck a man's cow-pea leaves without his express permission, it would lead to a quarrel. Similarly, it is customary for women to come and collect a basket of grain from the men of their parental family after the harvest. A *pɔɣayabələg*, however, is permitted to ask any of her clansmen for a gift of this kind. Thus it sometimes happens that a Yamələg or Sie woman married to a man at Yinduuri comes to a clansman at Tongo after the harvest for a gift of grain, or a Tongo woman married to a man at Datɔk or Duusi calls on a clansman at Sie for such a gift. As these examples indicate, a *pɔɣayabələg* of a linked maximal lineage counts as a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan.

562 •764 When a woman's funeral is celebrated by her husband's people the last act is 'to send her home (*kulh*)' to her father's house. For this ceremony a large party of men and women in their gayest clothes, led by the nearest agnates of the dead woman and escorted by drummers and musicians, sets out for her husband's settlement to 'receive her funeral (*die koor*)'. When such a party is being assembled, messages are sent to the heads of all the constituent lineages of the clan, and representatives are generally sent from all the lineages to accompany the party. It is partly a matter of duty, and partly an act of courtesy and a voluntary demonstration of clan solidarity. Sometimes young people of linked lineages join the party, knowing that it will be lavishly entertained by the affinal clan and that there will be dancing and girls to flirt with. Fetching the funeral of a *pɔɣayabələg* is an affair of the whole clan.

562 613 The *pɔɣayabələg* has a formal status in the lineage and clan, and this status is recognized as an intrinsic element in the structure of the lineage and clan. The fiction behind this is the idea often explicitly stated by the natives that but for an accident of birth she might have been a man

might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal 604
nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their 618x
cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four 587
generations back.

Though the *pɔyayabəlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a 764
single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are 571
often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of 562
the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔyayabəlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔyayabəlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and [252]
food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔyayabəlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubɛnib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔyayabəlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubɛnib* (from *dug*, room, and *bɛ*, to stay or be) because they are identified with the *dugdɛm*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubɛnib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubɛnib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gɔre woman married to a Tɛnzugu man requires the help of *dubɛnib*, she calls upon all the other Gɔre wives, of whom there are very few, of Tɛnzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Gɔreland

764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔyayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔyayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔyayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔyayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
A *pɔyayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacri-
562 fices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[292] to join. A *pɔyayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔyayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

×618 Lastly, a married *pɔyayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔyasama* —a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔyayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious
in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

●764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
778 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
471 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tendaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tendaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his *ahəb* (maternal uncle), the Soog tendaana. Similarly, Lebhtiis yidem of Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tendaanas' *tes* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tendaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tendaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tendaana.[1] In these cases the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they undertook the tendaanaship themselves.

A tendaana's *teŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *teŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tendaana of that *teŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)' ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tendaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tendaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tendaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tendaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tendaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

613 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes 621 the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔɣar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔɣada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛɣahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔɣada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛɣahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔɣada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zɔŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seɣahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zɔŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contra- [782] position between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53-4). I have heard members of Zɔŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often 613 emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yɔrug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated, 621 contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yɔrug Yin had been the head of Bɔɣada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates [273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm [554] and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Sayawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔak*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

764 quarters) for the other three sections of Tongo, since one of the hind
613 quarters (*gbɛr*) remains with the 'owner of the funeral', the man who is
621 celebrating it. Thus the genealogical cleavage between Kuorəg and the rest of Tongo asserted itself. Kuorəg was treated as the *sunzɔp* of the rest of Tongo and received a forequarter, the remaining hind quarter going to the other three sections. There are stories of intra-clan quarrels in the
[578 old days in which Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug banded themselves together against Kuorəg.

613 Nevertheless, in the corporate affairs of Tongo as a whole Kuorəg
621 emerges as a segment of the same order as the other three sections. It is one of the four co-ordinate sections (*yizugət*). A significant index of this is the fact that in all four sections nine generations of ascendants are reckoned inclusively between the present section heads (*yizug kpeem*) and Mosuor. No Tongo man, however profoundly versed in the traditions and customs of his clan, is aware of this, however. Tallensi never have occasion to work out the genealogical relations of all the minimal segments of a maximal lineage with one another.

A man's genealogical knowledge is built up gradually and piecemeal in the give and take of social life, by participation in jural, ritual, and ceremonial activities. But a man of wide experience knows the lineage ancestry of the component segments of his own *dug* as far as its founding ancestor; he will know who were the putative brothers of this man, the founding ancestors of the other major segments of his section, and their sons, the founding ancestors of large sub-segments like Nɔpugzabər yidem, in his section; and he will know the founding ancestors of the other *yizugət* of the clan, and possibly their sons; but he will not know the whole descent of other major segments of other sections.

The nine-generation ladder of ascent found at Tongo is an index of the structural differentiation and internal equilibrium of the clan. As we have already observed, the maximal lineage (and Tongo functions as a maximal lineage, though strictly speaking it is not one) is unalterably fixed. Its major segments cannot be altered in relation to one another by further segmentation of its minimal segments. Its internal equilibrium is a function of the relations between its major segments; and the same principle applies to each major segment. This is symbolized in the tree of ascent of the people of Tongo. The structure of the maximal lineage does not permit of the recognition of more than one generation between Mosuor and his nine putative grandsons. Following the simplest possible pattern of symmetrical lineage segmentation, all Mosuor's progeny are first divided into two major (matri-)segments in accordance with the stereotyped scheme of differentiation by reference to their progenitrices; and each of these is again segmented on the same principle. Kuorəg counts as a section of the same order as Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug in the corporate affairs of the whole sub-clan, because this is necessary for the equilibrium of the sub-clan. The internal differentiation of Sɛɣahəg biis has reached an advanced stage. The relative autonomy of the three sections that constitute it is now so great that they can only act together as equal partners. Each of these three sections has a corporate unity and common interests that sometimes bring it into conflict with the other two

613 sex, station in life, character, and reputation of the deceased all influence the reactions of people to a death and the range of participation
613 in the funeral ceremonies. Every death is the corporate concern of the
621 deceased's medial lineage—his *dug* of the *yizug*. It is less stringently the
●764 corporate concern of the whole *yizug*. Funerals of old and important men evoke the participation of the whole clan or sub-clan, but it is clan solidarity and corporate obligation on the level of the section that draw *sunzɔ* sections to the ceremonies. Only the death of a chief, a tendaana, or other politico-ritual functionary, is the obligatory concern of every segment of the clan or maximal lineage. Funerals of women and young people or children impose no obligations on *sunzɔ* sections of the deceased's (or her husband's) section. Whether or not their representatives come to condole with the bereaved household or to take part in the burial and funeral ceremonies rests entirely with the individual members of these sections and depends on individual ties of neighbourhood, kinship, or friendship with the deceased's family and *dug*. A funeral, even that of a politico-ritual officer, is primarily the direct concern of every member of the deceased's segment of the clan or maximal lineage. It concerns *sunzɔ* segments only at the level of corporate relations, because every event that affects the existence and constitution of one part of the clan or maximal lineage impinges on its common interests.

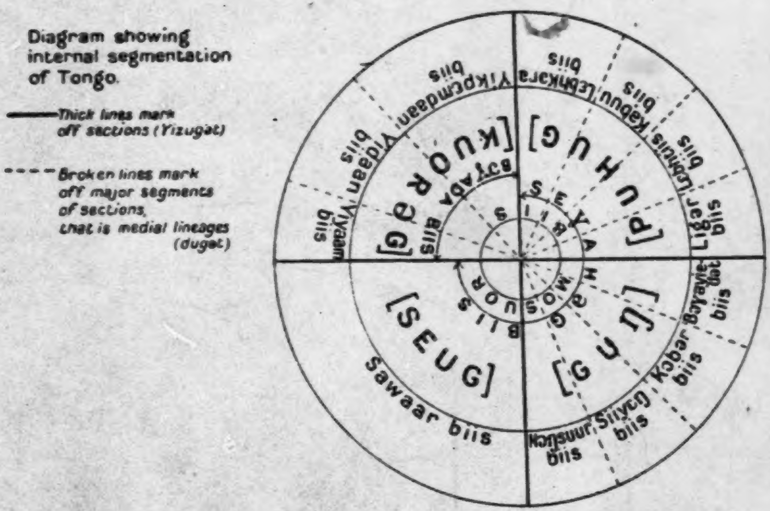
Diagram showing internal segmentation of Tongo.
Thick lines mark off sections (Yizugət)
Broken lines mark off major segments of sections, that is medial lineages (dugət)
[KUORƏG]
[PUHUG]
[SEUG]
[GUŊ]
SIEYAHƏ
MOSUOR BIIS
Yikpəmdaan biis
Lɛbhkara biis
Kabuu biis
Lɛbhtis biis
Lɛgit biis
Bayaŋe dat biis
Kəbar biis
Siiyɛŋ biis
Kɔnsuur biis
Sawaar biis
Yiyaam biis
Yidaan biis
Səyaba biis

622 We may contrast with this a corporate activity in a wider sense, such
621 as the sacrifice to Mosuor at Tongo, to which we have several times
613 referred, the Harvest Festival, or the communal hoeing of the chief's
[241] bush farm, which has become an established custom under British rule. The pivot of these activities is always the chief, who stands for the whole sub-clan and its common interests and values, and whose office transcends the cleavages inherent in its lineage segmentation. In these activities the

778 The graves of Sɛɣahəg and Bɔɣada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔɣada's grave is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbər, and Bɔɣayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
●764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus Tɛndaan Genət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakəradɛm, Genət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔɣada's grave is proof to the natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo clans living in the vicinity of Yaməlǝg and Sie—the group of clans which the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔɣar* takes the place of the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

PLATE XI

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(*a*) The grave of Tendaan Genat and the space believed to have been occupied by his homestead and Mosuor's, now the sacred dancing ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, at Tongo. Note that it is not cultivated.

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(*b*) A miniature homestead symbolizing the ancestral home of a maximal lineage or clan. Note the lineage *bɔyar* against the outside wall.

[FACING p. 224]

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of
daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same
as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, but all who participate feel them to
be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and
fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing
out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
●764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads
that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The
religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion
and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief
representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the
ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is
concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage
head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual
or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted
to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage),
and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar
situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he
receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔɣar* of his
medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as
well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a
new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of
a sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of
being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat
in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the
responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's*
duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their
goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
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PLATE XIV

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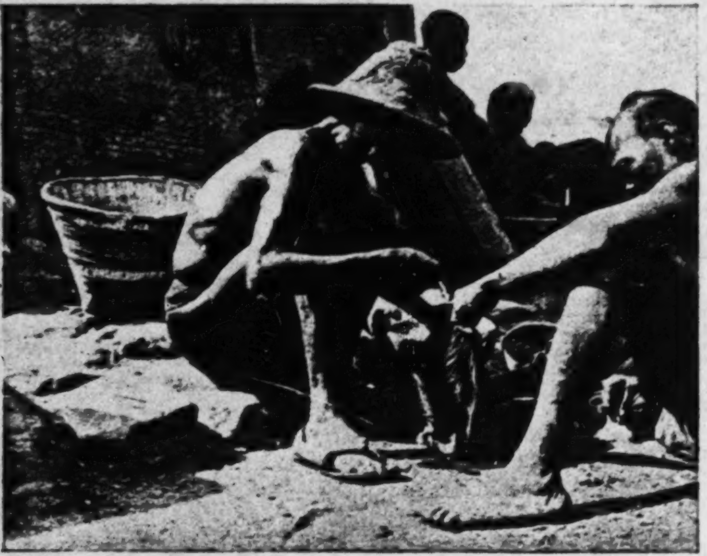

(*a*) *Sunɔɔp m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

● 764
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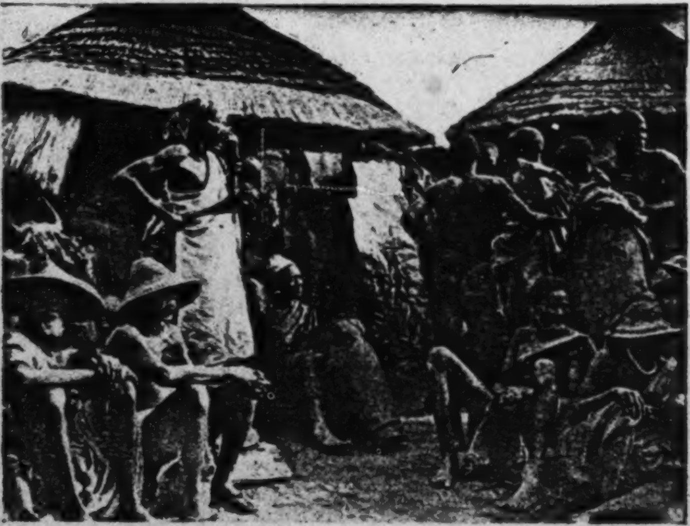

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpɔr tɛndaana at his homestead.

[facing p. 241]

682 Some sixty years ago a Tamboog man was killed by a group of Yamələg
x618 men with whom he quarrelled at a dance. Two or three years later a couple of Tamboog men met a Yamələg man alone in the bush and slew him in revenge. The Yamələg people understood that this was a case of 'wiping out a debt' and the matter was regarded as closed.

x618 The principle of representative status enhances the sense of lineage or
431 clan solidarity. We have seen how, in ceremonial situations, any member of a lineage or clan is regarded as representing the whole unit. I have often seen men refuse gifts of meat or food at ceremonies because these had no precedent and accepting them would be equivalent to committing their lineage or clan to reciprocate in the same way at some future time.

613 Co-operation in ceremonies, especially in funerals, brings to light the
● 764 institutional machinery of lineage and clan solidarity. Its basis is the
x618 distribution of duties and privileges among the different segments of the lineage or clan concerned in the situation, in accordance with their segmentary relationship to the group principally affected. Thus in funerals, in accordance with the maxim 'Brother lineages take charge of one's affairs (*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*)', members of a close brother lineage of the bereaved lineage supervise the ceremonies. In addition, all the segments of the maximal lineage or clan concerned send prescribed food contributions and receive prescribed shares of beer, meat, and food distributed during the ceremonies. Funerals are important because the death of a person may entail a rearrangement of social relations in a segment and this is a matter of common interest to the whole clan.

x618 These obligatory reciprocal services and privileges constantly remind the individual of his dependence on his clansmen for the proper management of the critical events of his life. In consequence the obligation of reciprocity is strongly felt, in both secular and ritual matters, the strength of the feeling being relative to the lineage relationship of the parties. When a man invites a collective hoeing party (*pooh kpa'arəp*) it is always co-members of his medial lineage who turn up in largest force. Distant clansmen only come if they have ties of personal matrilateral kinship with him. And the motive usually given for responding to such an invitation is 'To-morrow I may need the help of a hoeing party'. Public opinion is critical of those who do not conform to the conventions of mutual assistance, and when they find themselves compelled to call for assistance in collective hoeing or housebuilding or some similar activity, they are left in the lurch.

578 Intra-clan disputes involving lineages of a higher order than the
618 nuclear lineage very rarely arise over economic affairs—that is, in effect, over the ownership of land or live-stock. Disputes in higher order lineages arise over the inheritance of widows or marriage with a woman who was formerly the wife of a member of a different segment of the clan. Members of the deceased husband's medial lineage feel they have a prior claim to a widow's hand and sometimes object to her marrying a man of a different branch of the clan. And if a marriage is dissolved, no matter what the reason may be, it is regarded as a grave breach of clan solidarity for any other member of the husband's clan to take her to wife. It arouses suspicion of collusion between the woman and the second

PLATE XV

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(*a*) A mimic war parade at Ba'ari to inaugurate an elder's funeral.

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(*b*) The widest politico-ritual community includes all the Tallensi. Part of the vast gathering of people from all over Taleland who come to take part in or watch the concluding ceremonies and dances of the Golib Festival. Note the dust cloud raised by the dancers.

[facing p. 256]

621 lineages inherent in the native social structure. The majority of the
622 Gəlibdaana's own maximal lineage share in the profits of his monopoly
and are solidly behind him; the maximal lineages of the leaders of the
177 opposition are solidly against him; but many of the maximal lineages that
578 have clanship or ritual links with both sides are split. Many of the young men of these lineages side with the Gəlibdaana—enticed, their elders say bitterly, by his lavish gifts. The older men are uneasily neutral or tacitly opposed to the Gəlibdaana because he has brought dissension to the Hills and has flouted some of the ancient ritual customs. Both parties try to manœuvre the opposition into a position which will set the Administration in motion against them; the leaders of both parties say that the white man's authority is the only force that will help them to victory. And they feel particularly bitter because the vigilance of Administrative officers has frustrated all their efforts to exploit this potent sanction.

At the same time they try to use the sanctions of their own social structure to gain their aims. For outside the struggle for control of the pilgrim traffic, the ties of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration remain valid as before. During the Great Festivals the feud sinks into temporary abeyance. The Gəlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab speak with hatred of each other when it is a question of political power or the pilgrim traffic; they continue to perform those rites of the Great Festivals and of the Earth cult in which they are ritually obliged to collaborate, with apparent cordiality. This is a 'separate thing' they declare. It would be an appalling sin bringing catastrophe on the whole country, they say, if they threw over these bonds.

But the new alinements in the pecuniary struggle and the traditional social structure cannot be kept apart in watertight compartments. The Kpata'arna'ab and the Gəlibdaana try to coerce each other through their mutual ritual obligations. They try to put pressure on each other through maximal lineages that are intercalary between their lineages; and to win over the other maximal lineages with which they have clanship or ritual ties.

Experienced elders maintain, with the sceptical candour that is one of the few charms Tallensi have for an ethnographer, that this can never decide the issue. Putting it at its highest, the bonds of clanship, kinship, and ritual collaboration are a double-edged weapon. If Kpata'ar tries to coerce Samiit to side with it by refusing to collaborate with Samiit in the rites of their common External *Bɔyar*, the ancestors might well blame Kpata'ar and punish them. Tallensi are not—so the old men say—restrained from doing something to their personal advantage by the fear of mystical penalties. 'Who fears death before death comes upon you?' It is only after a death occurs that the survivors see in it signs and omens referring to their social relations with one another.

578 Whenever a death occurs in any of the Hill clans, especially if it is the
764 death of an important person, the chronic discord between them is openly recollected. It is both a symptom of the general feeling of uneasiness and a move in the game of attempted mutual coercion by mystical sanctions. A funeral almost inevitably causes this feeling to be ventilated. For people of all the Tɛnzugu and many other clans are present, as kinsfolk, affines,

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and
764 their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate
units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the
ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is
not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead
man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the
Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own
matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced
that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors,
for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for
the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of
which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which
787 they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these
ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through
which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the
lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor
have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's
maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in
opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up
cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will
not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out
of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when
the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tɛnzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been
621 regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations
of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana
of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar*
as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control
of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief
of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia
and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount
Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high
status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[177] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of
Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and
unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that
they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly.
Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as
a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through
the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals.
The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

2: Fortes
131, 133, 361, 487, 778, 764, 621

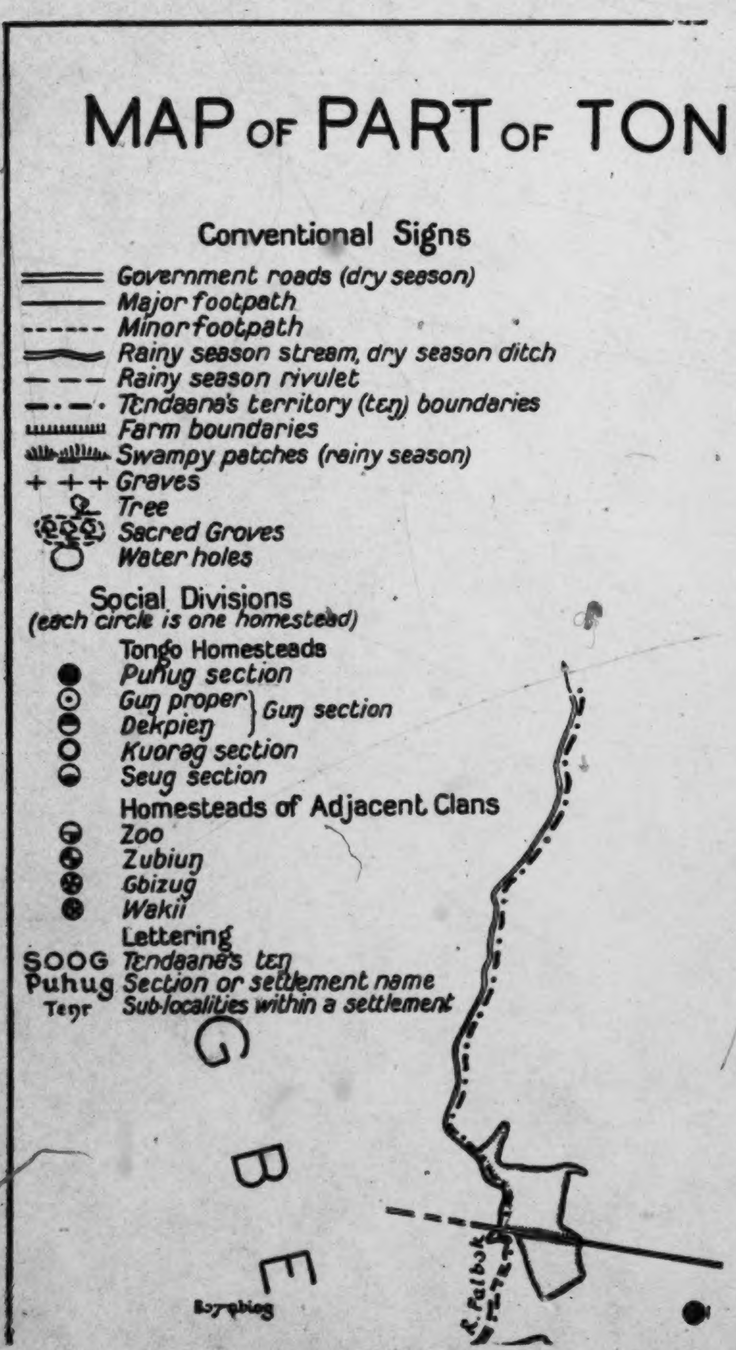
FE11 Tallensi FE11

[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

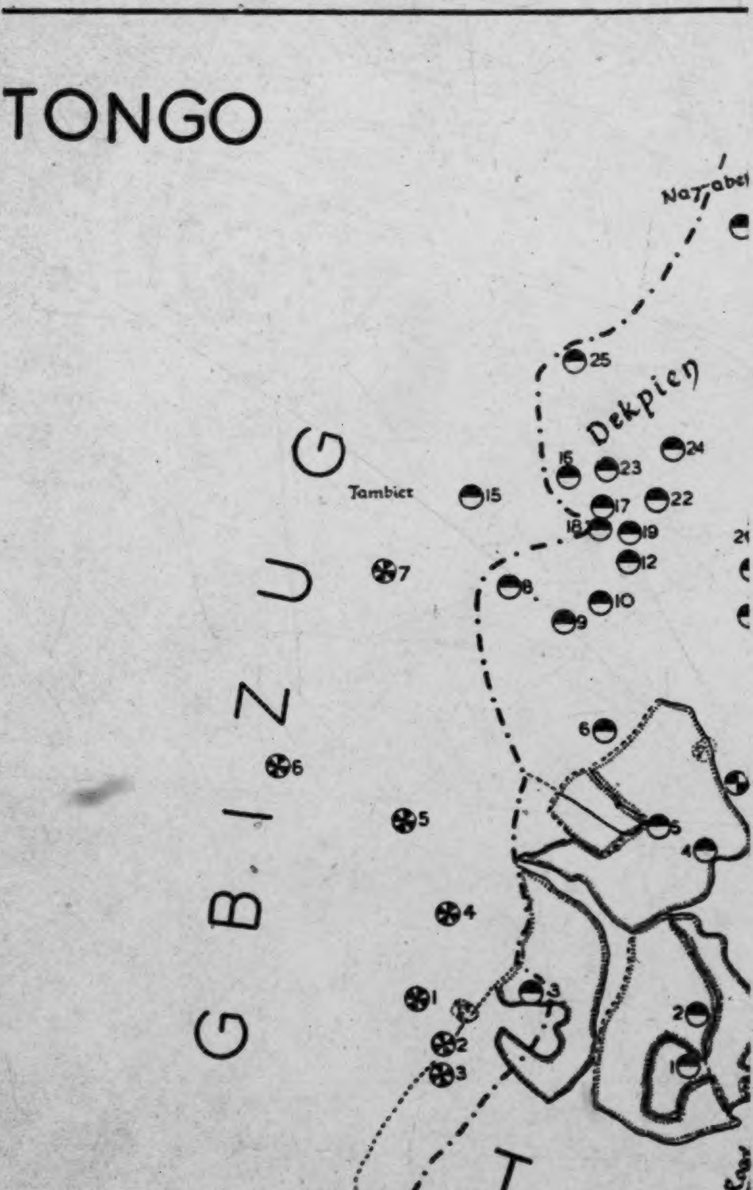
]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361


MAP OF PART OF TON
Conventional Signs
Government roads (dry season)
Major footpath
Minor footpath
Rainy season stream, dry season ditch
Rainy season rivulet
Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries
Farm boundaries
Swampy patches (rainy season)
+ + + Graves
Tree
Sacred Groves
Water holes
Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)
Tongo Homesteads
Puhug section
Guŋ proper
Dekpieŋ
Guŋ section
Kuorag section
Seug section
Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
Zoo
Zubiuŋ
Gbizug
Wakii
Lettering
SOOG Tɛndaana's tɛŋ
Puhug Section or settlement name
Teŋr Sub-localities within a settlement
G
B
E
Bɔŋgbiog
R. Falbok

[End-MAP (A)]

621
487
778
131
●764
133
361


TONGO
GBIZUG
TONGO
Tambict
Dekpien
Kpankparag
Gorogo Road
Baari Road
25
24
23
22
21
19
18
17
16
15
12
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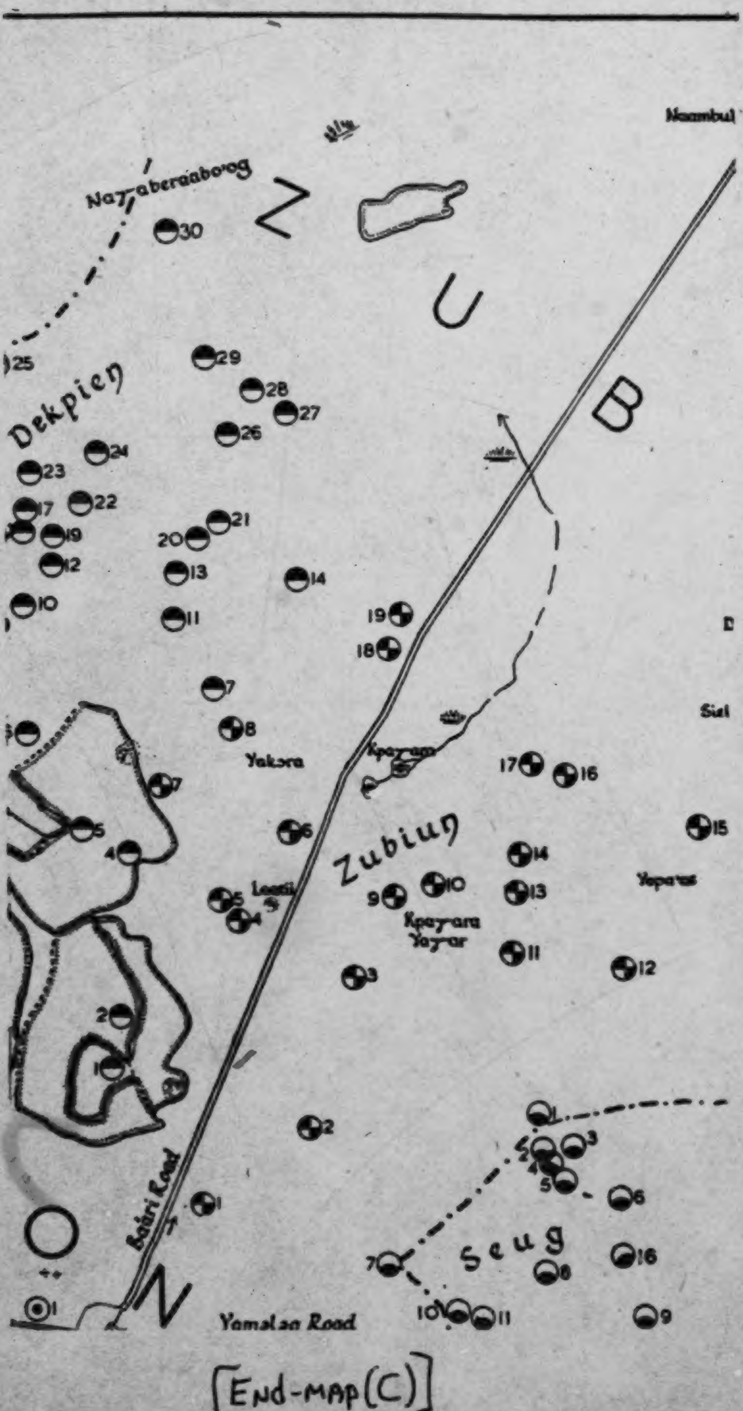
1

[End-MAP (B)]

621
487
778
131
764
133
361

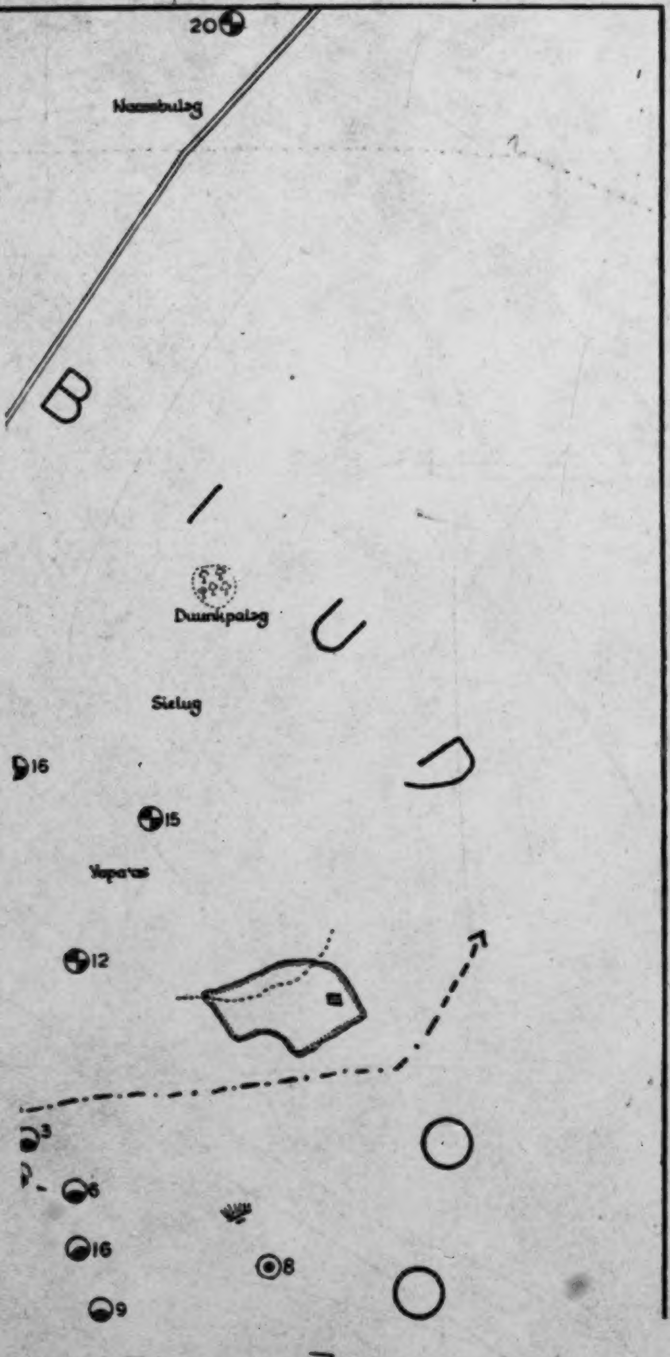

Naambul
Naɣaberaaboɣ
Z
U
B
Dekpien
Yakɔra
Kpaɣam
Zubiuŋ
Leeti
Kpaɣara
Yaɣar
Yopara
Siɛl
Seug
Bɔlari Road
Yamɔlɛa Road
O
N

[End-MAP(C)]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945

FE11 Tallensi FE11

621
487
778
131
●764
133
361



20
Naambulag
B I U D
Duunkpalag
Sielug
16
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Yaparas
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16
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9

[End-MAP (D)]

621
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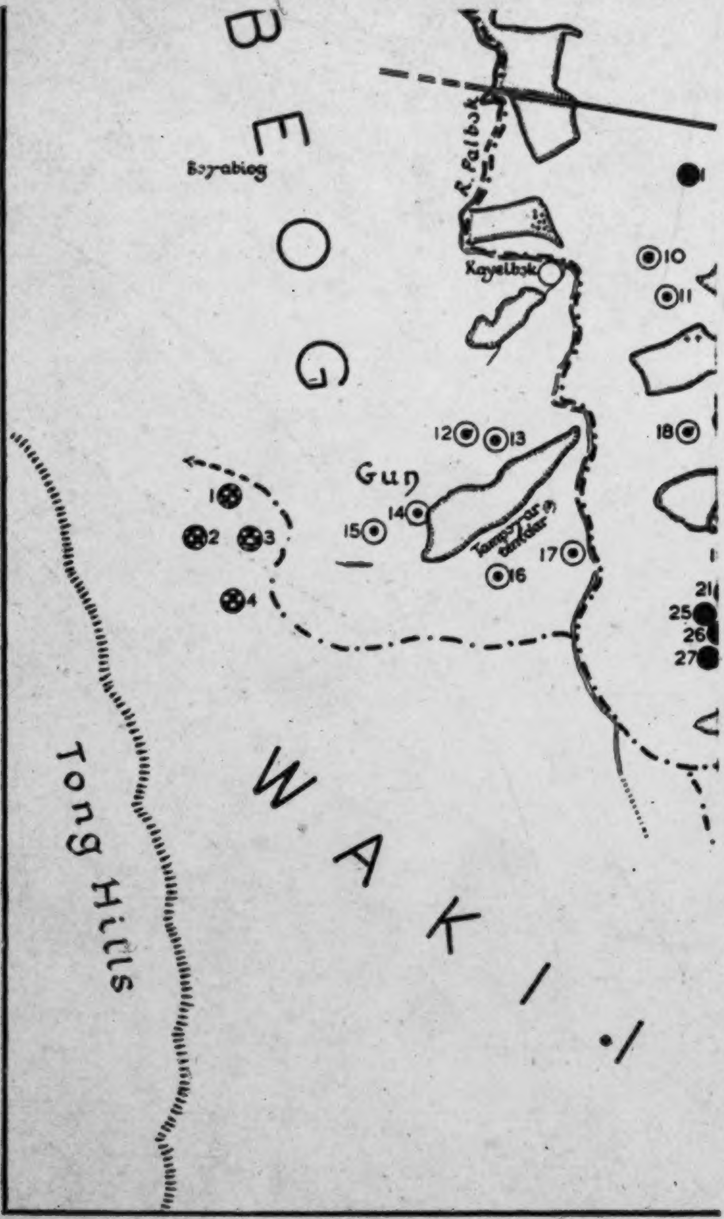
778
131
●764
133
361


BEOG
Bɔyabiog
R. Palbok
Kayelbok
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11
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Gun
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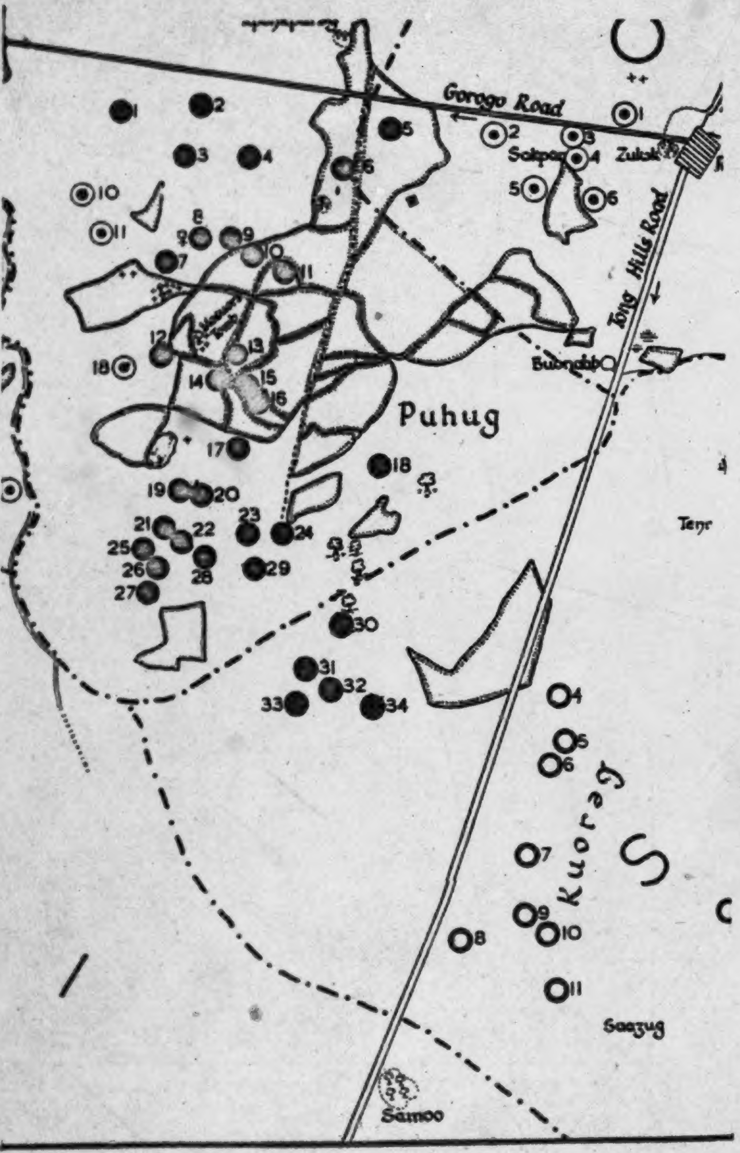
27
WAKII
Tong Hills

SI

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Naŋ*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakbra se

[End-Map(E)]

621
487
778
131
● 764
133
361


Gorogo Road
Tong Hills Road
Sakpaŋ
Zulok
Buongbb
Puhug
Tenr
Kuorəg
Saaʒug
Samoo

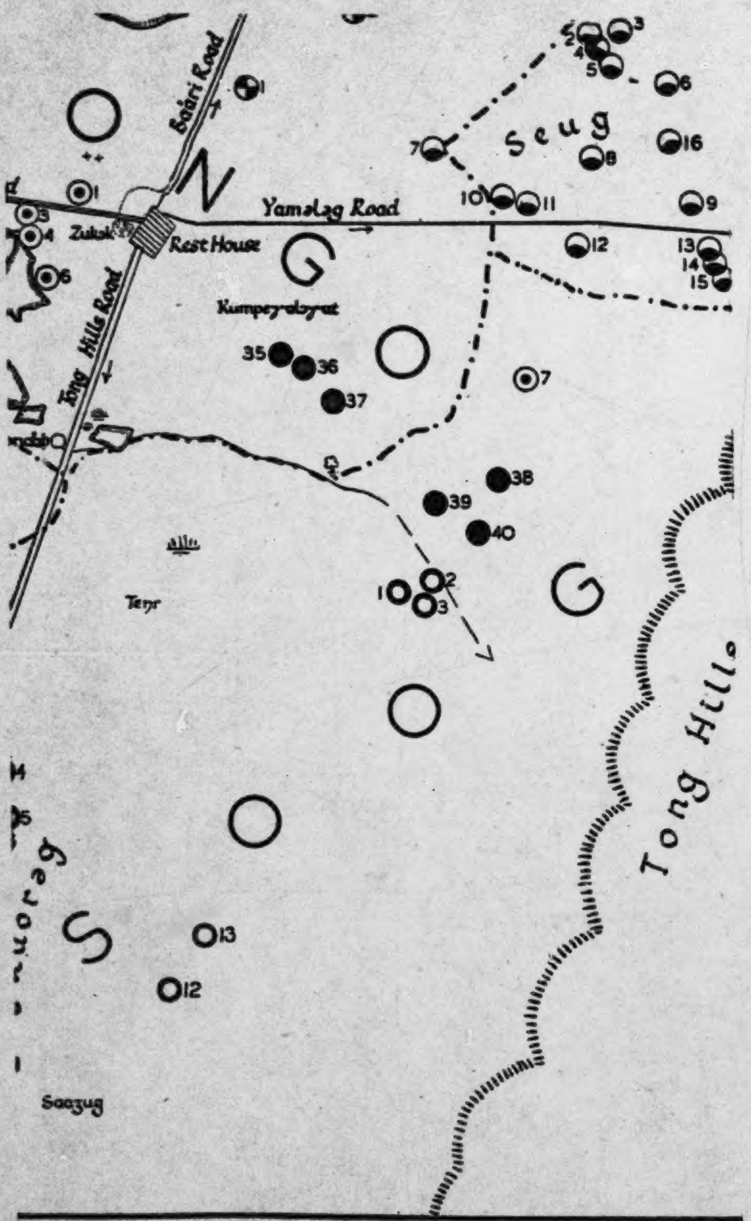
SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Tɔŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social
n and Guŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen
Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).
d of the Yakɔra section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpayar
few Wal
The l
covering

[End-MAP (F)]

621
487
778
131
●764
133
361


Bairi Road
N
Yamalag Road
Zuluk
Rest House
Tong Hills Road
Kumpey-abyat
Seug
Tenr
Tong Hills
Gorogo
Saazug
1
3
4
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5

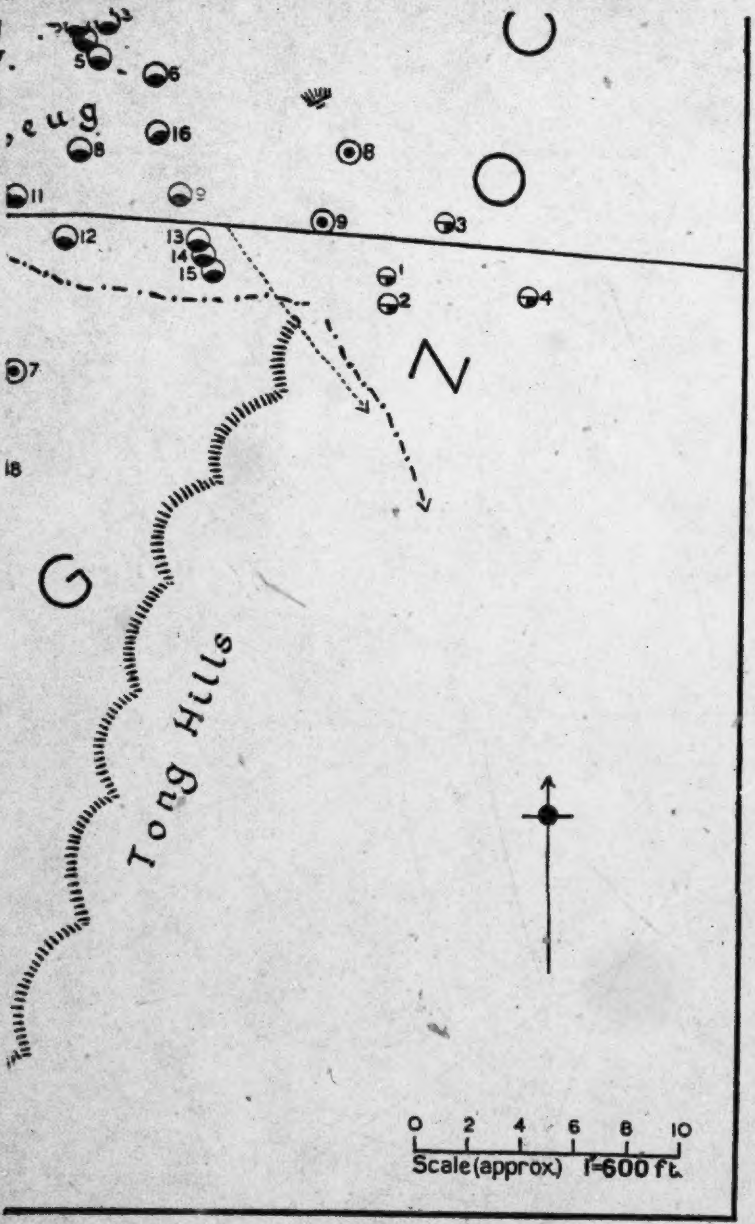
PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

nal Kpayara yayar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
en few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
ŋ- covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' gı

[END-MAP (G)]

621
487
778
131, eug
● 764
133
361


5
6
16
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11
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14
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1
2
4
7
18
Tong Hills
0 2 4 6 8 10
Scale (approx) 1"=600 ft.

JTS

r three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a

situatic… of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid
h… founding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-map (H)]

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342
partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778
room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔɣar*) always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*; the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard. Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ* must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there and the lineage *bɔɣar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it. The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the *zɔŋ*, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the
Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622]
of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623
deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most
conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social 554
personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 764
subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his 778
own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose. But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Talis tɛbhəm nla*—This is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me. The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt, an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*, when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611
dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

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be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764 ●
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial cere-
mony. Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tɛnzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789]
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live, expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

602 606 parents-in-law, particularly in the early years while he is not quite sure of his wife. If his father-in-law sends for him to help with the hoeing, or with house building, or his mother-in-law requests him to help thatch her rooms, he must respond with alacrity and bring as large a party of his clansmen to assist him as he can manage. In this way a man shows honour to, ingratiates himself with (*giem*), his affines; for these services are not enforceable obligations, and usually cease to be asked for after the marriage has become stabilized. They bear no relation to the bride-price, and are lavishly recompensed. A visiting work-party brought by a son-in-law expects generous hospitality, and the father-in-law, if he is a reputable man, would feel that he had lost dignity if he did not feed and entertain the work-party well. But though these services cannot be enforced, no man would risk offending his parents-in-law by refusing them. These material demonstrations of respect, gratitude, and goodwill are essential for the smooth working of a relationship artificially established by a jural compact. Parents-in-law praise and like an obliging son-in-law, even if he has not paid the bride-price, the natives say.

602 607 This is one side of the affinal relationship. It also has an aspect of friendliness and familiarity, as we have seen, which comes out most conspicuously in a man's relations with his siblings-in-law. A man has a joking relationship with his siblings-in-law similar to that of his wife with his sisters and distant clansmen. It goes so far that a man may sleep with an unmarried sister-in-law (*dakiipɔk*) who is visiting his house, and is therefore in that situation identified with his wife. A man's siblings-in-law belong to the familiar and friendly generation of his wife. They are identified with her. But they also belong to the potentially hostile lineage of her father, whose heir a brother-in-law will one day be. In very many ways a man's siblings-in-law are sympathetically drawn to him; but their rights in relation to his wife may pit them against him. The convention of joking serves to reconcile these two potentially discordant elements of their relationship. But when the marriage has lasted many years, and the possibility of a conflict of rights disappears, the element of friendliness in the relationship can assert itself without prejudice to its jural aspect. Thus, conventional teasing usually drops out of the intercourse of siblings-in-law of long standing.

606 764 431 The formal distance between affines is further shown in the duties and obligations to which a man is liable on the death of a son-in-law or parent-in-law. On the death of a parent-in-law a man is obliged to attend the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. He should come escorted by a large party of clansmen and their wives, and the mourning party should wear their finest clothes and be led by drummers and musicians. A son-in-law should provide the gravestone for a parent-in-law. He should distribute money freely to the grave-diggers, to the drummers, singers, and musicians, whose raucous noise stimulates the crowd

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and adds prestige to the occasion, to the widows, to the old women 764
tending the corpse, and to the girls dancing extravagantly in honour of 431
the dead.[1]

A son-in-law should help to dig the grave and to carry the corpse to the grave, or depute a clansman to do these tasks on his behalf. These duties are undertaken readily and with pride, as a rule, whether or not [576] a man has been on good terms with his deceased parent-in-law, though there are no sanctions for enforcing them. Men perform them as a mark of respect to their affines, both to the dead and the living, and it would be a serious affront, causing friction with his living in-laws and deep resentment on the part of his wife, if they were neglected. In addition, there is the incentive of personal satisfaction, for they give a grand [554] opportunity for self-display. The mourning party he brings, his largesse, and the conspicuous assistance he gives at the burial, are all means of showing off his personal importance and his excellence as a son-in-law.

A son-in-law is obliged also to send certain food contributions of 606
prescribed kind and quantity to the funeral of a parent-in-law. Small 754
contributions accompany the mourning party. The principal contribution is due on 'the day of sleeping at the funeral (*kogbedaar*)'. This 431
consists of a sheep or goat cut up and ready cooked, together with a 574
large basket of slabs of porridge and a pot of relish. Unlike the duties previously mentioned, these food contributions are 'debts' (*samər*, pl. *sama*)—i.e. obligatory gifts. If a man cannot pay any of them when they are due, he must do so whenever he is able to; and if he omits to do so altogether before his death, his son will have to settle the debt. For here a sanction that operates in many social and religious obligations of the Tallensi comes into play. If a man dies without paying a ceremonial debt of this kind, then, in accordance with the principle of equivalent returns, he must be done by likewise. *His* son cannot accept the same food contribution from *his* son-in-law until the debt is paid; and this is felt as an affront to his spirit. His son would therefore take steps immediately to set the matter right. In fact it appears to be very rare in normal circumstances, for a man to omit these duties altogether during his lifetime.

Conversely, if a man's daughter or his son-in-law dies, he in turn sends a mourning party to represent him and convey his condolences. He is also obliged to send certain customary food gifts. But these are small in quantity; for though they represent a return in kind for what is due from a son-in-law in like circumstances, they are made by a superior to an inferior, by one who has already conferred a benefit that can never be

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[1] The currency chiefly used on such occasions consists of cowrie shells (*layapieləb*, pl. *layapiela*, lit. white money, the original form *layah*, pl. *ligəri*, being nowadays restricted to British currency), now worth only a hundred a penny. A man can be generous for a shilling, and prodigal for half a crown. [436]

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fully repaid in the bestowal of his daughter as a wife. A similar sanction to that mentioned in the case of a son-in-law operates here.

●764
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If one watches the behaviour of men at the funeral of an affine, one can see that they feel themselves to be under strong constraint. They and their clansmen accompanying them keep together, and when there are no ceremonies or festivities in progress they stay apart from the rest of the crowd. In former days a mourning party of affines always carried arms, and it is said that fighting sometimes broke out at funerals. When Tallensi comment on the ceremonial obligations of affines, they emphasize the feeling of constraint associated with them. One is impressed by the contrast between this attitude and the attitudes associated with the ceremonial obligations that follow on the death of a clansman or cognatic kinsman. It is as if the native feels his ceremonial obligations to an affine to be forced on him from outside, without his choice, whereas he seems to accept his duties and obligations on the death of a kinsman willingly and from within.

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It is evident that reciprocity between affines is different in character from that which prevails between people who have a bond of common interests, such as members of the same family. There is not the same free give and take. When gifts or services pass between affines, whether they are prescribed or ostensibly spontaneous, there is a deliberate effort to counterbalance them. A sort of book-keeping occurs. This appears most clearly in the jural formalities of marriage, but it comes out quite plainly in the apparently voluntary services and reciprocal hospitality of son-in-law and father-in-law. The side that benefits feels impelled to make an equivalent return in order not to give the other party grounds for a grudge. And people who flout this convention not only upset their good relations with their affines and so provide pretexts for conflict with them, but also incur the censure of public opinion.

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One incident will illustrate this. Banɔrəg asked his son-in-law, a member of an adjacent clan, to come and help him finish the hoeing of his home farm. The young man brought a couple of his clansmen and they worked with zeal from early morning till sunset. Then they went home, politely refusing Banɔrəg's invitation to come home with him for the evening meal. Had they come as a formal hoeing party they would have been entitled to a good meal as a reward at the end of the day. But they had come informally, and their own homes were near enough for them to get back in time for the evening meal. They spoke of their day's work for Banɔrəg as a simple act of courtesy to a father-in-law. As we watched them saunter homewards, Banɔrəg said to me 'Sons-in-law are shy (*deenam mmar vi*). They can't come home with you (their father-in-law) and eat with your children (as if they were your kin)'. But next day Banɔrəg sent a large basket of millet flour to his daughter with orders to cook a generous meal for her husband and his friends. He would feel ashamed, he told me, if he did not 'thank' the young men

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight 593
into the working of the classificatory principle.

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. 764 784 A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions 613 602 of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits [601] of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

577 no charity (*ɔn kɛ sugəru*) would perhaps have done otherwise, but
593 Kuŋaaŋba's way was the right way.

It is on the death of a parent that filial piety is most sharply evoked, just as it is the death of a child that brings out most poignantly a parent's love and devotion. We have referred to this previously. In this matter filial sentiment and ritual sanctions converge.

The supreme act of filial piety sons owe to their parents is the performance
•764 of their mortuary and funeral ceremonies. If a man or woman
577 dies leaving no sons then this duty falls upon his or her nearest proxy
sons. The initiative and chief responsibility rest with the oldest living
593 son. The burial rites must be carried out immediately; but when and
765 how the funeral ceremony is to be made is for the sons to decide. No
one can put pressure on them to hurry on the funeral if they wish to postpone
it for several years. It is customary to delay the funeral of an elder,
an old woman, or a person holding a ritual office until the third year
after his or her death, ostensibly so as to enable the sons to collect the
large stock of grain and the livestock required for the ceremony. Meanwhile,
in the case of a man the sons exercise the social role of the
[793] deceased. If he was a tendaana they will perform the duties and exercise
the rights of his office, and this may be a motive for delaying his funeral
beyond the customary period. The old men who are eligible for the
office can object and grumble; they cannot compel a dead man's son to
make his father's funeral. The issue lies between the dead man and his
sons. If they delay unduly they will incur their father's anger. For
until his funeral has been celebrated he dwells between the world of the
living and the world of the spirits. As the Tallensi say, his one leg is
in the earth (among the spirits) and his other on the surface of the earth
(among the living) (*u gbɛr dɩkɔ bɛ teŋni ka gbɛr dɛna bɛ doorni*). He cannot
'join his forefathers (*paag u banam*)' until he has been 'taken back into
the house (*kpeeh dugni*)' as a spirit. And the situation is the same with
a dead mother, though she is of less jural importance.

The duty of burying a parent and celebrating his or her funeral is
769 the first step in the most exacting of all filial duties, the cult of the dead
577 parents. Native thought and behaviour show that the Tallensi feel it as
an inescapable compulsion of conscience, and not as a mere act of propriety.
764 Tallensi are quite matter-of-fact about the corpse (*kum*) of a
dead parent. They describe it as the 'slough (*fɔrəŋ*)' of the soul (*sii*).
What they are concerned about is the spirit (*kpiim*) of the dead parent.
A man cannot rest secure until he has assimilated his father's or mother's
spirit into the framework of his life, domesticated it, so to speak, as the
expression *kpeeh dugni* shows; and this is the function of the funeral
ceremony. For that reason Tallensi want to have the graves of their
parents near their dwellings. True, a man's ancestor spirits accompany
him wherever he goes, but they are most tangibly present in his house,
where he sacrifices to them. It often happens that a man has to be

buried in one of the peripheral settlements, or abroad, where he has 769
been living temporarily. Then, if his sons return to the ancestral home, 577
perhaps years after his death, he will one day, through a diviner, order
them to exhume (*gurəg*) him and rebury him among his ancestors at the 764 ●
ancestral home (*daboog*). The notion that when a person dies he joins
his ancestors (or a woman her husband's ancestors as well as her own), [775]
and that his body should therefore lie among their bodies, is a basic idea in Tale religion and an obvious reflex of filial piety.

As the case of Sawɔŋba's daughter, previously quoted (p. 89), shows, 764
daughters are as much bound as sons to mourn the death of a parent.
All the children of the deceased must come to the funeral so as to 765
undergo the mourning rites. They are ritually unclean until they
have done so and have had their heads ritually shaved (*kuo zug*) in 577
sign of it. Though the ritual uncleanness (*dayət*) of a person who 783
has lost a parent does not interfere with normal life, it is felt to be a psychological burden, for, as we have noted, until a dead person's funeral has been made, his or her social personality is not wholly erased from the real world. I have heard children of 10 or 11 say gravely that they wished their mother's or father's funeral could be made soon so that they could 'shave off the uncleanness (*kuo dayət la bah*)'. The uncleanness adheres primarily to the deceased's own children, but it also affects proxy children who have no living parent (as determined by the criteria of 'fatherlessness' or 'motherlessness') of the same sex as the deceased. One of the ways in which Tallensi demonstrate respect and affection for a classificatory parent such as a father's agnatic cousin or a classificatory father's wife, who has never been a proxy parent to them, is to undergo the chief mourning rites for him or her—provided, of course, the mourner is 'fatherless' or 'motherless' in that situation. When an old man or woman who was the last of the generation of 'fathers' or 'mothers' of the inner lineage dies, the men and women of the lineage to whom he or she is a classificatory parent gather from far and wide for the funeral and all undergo the rites of shaving the head. It is not compulsory for anyone to have the head shaved for a classificatory parent, but it is a pious gesture which at the same time proclaims the solidarity of the lineage. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* might be a Tale proverb. Old grudges are forgotten—though not necessarily buried for ever—and men and women who have been estranged from their classificatory brothers and sisters or the deceased parent turn up to the funeral to do the proper thing.

Nowadays the death of a parent is one of the strongest sanctions that 577
induce the men who go to work abroad to return home, if only for a
while. The absentees may dawdle for weeks or months or even two 765
or three years—for funeral ceremonies can be postponed, as we have noted, for periods up to three, four, or more years—but most of them come home eventually for the rites. Those who delay so long that their

ficial symbolism is transparent. What they mean is that a child may not 593
be equated with his or her father while he is alive. As we have observed,
though these taboos do not occur among non-Namoos, the ideas and 578
sentiments they express are as frankly admitted by them as by Namoos. It was a Tɛnzugu (Talis) man who gave me the clearest statement I obtained on the struggle between the Destinies (*Yina*) of father and son. I remember also being struck by this during the ceremony of exorcising the evil Predestiny of Sinkawol of Kpata'ar's wife. Just as the most important rite of all was begun somebody noticed that Tiezien, Sinkawol's proxy father, was absent. Nyaaŋzum, Sinkawol's proxy grandfather and Tiezien's proxy father, shouted for Tiezien to come out of the homestead. Tiezien shouted back, in some anger, 'No, I won't come. They are exorcising my daughter-in-law's *Yin* and I should be there? Oh no. Is she your (plural) wife or mine? No, it is not for me to be there.' There was a moment's pause and then Nyaaŋzum called back, 'Well, leave it then, you are right.' The point was that a man must not equate himself with his son, particularly where the latter's procreative status is concerned. But grandfather and grandson are equated with each other, as we shall see more fully later. And by the same principle a woman must not be equated with her daughter in her
reproductive capacity. Thus when a man's daughter becomes a mother [784]
for the second or third time he gives up sleeping with her mother even
if she is still of child-bearing age. Tallensi call this an important taboo. It is significant also that among both Namoos and non-Namoos an analogous taboo to that of the father's granary holds between a mother and her first-born daughter. While her mother is alive a girl may not uncover her mother's chief storage-pot (*u pu sugəl u ma doko*). This taboo is not stressed so much as those that discriminate a child from its father, as might be expected in a society so thoroughly organized around the patrilineal line. But it does show that the tension between the generations among the Tallensi is not the product of *patria potestas* only, but arises out of the whole network of the relations between parents and children.

The avoidances of first-born children are not the only customary 593
expression of the tension between the generations. A man and his oldest
child do not eat together. 'You and your oldest child do not dip your 264
fingers into the same dish of food together,' the natives say, 'for if you did perhaps his finger-nail might scratch you and that would bring misfortune on both of you.' This prohibition is not subject to ritual sanctions, though the misfortune that would follow the symbolic act of aggression would be of a mystical character. Tallensi share a dish with the youngest child for preference; and it is not an uncommon sight to see a man eating with his youngest child while his oldest son is sitting near by eating separately.

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Then there are the restrictions we have already mentioned that must be 764

593 764 observed at funeral ceremonies by anyone who has a parent of the same sex as the deceased still living. Similarly an oldest son may not deputize for his father in making sacrifices to an ancestor shrine which is in the latter's custody; 'he is too near to inheriting the shrine', the Tallensi say. The implication is that if an oldest son deputizes for his father in relation to the ancestors he is anticipating his inheritance and this is tantamount to wishing his father dead. Even during the interval between the mortuary rites and the final funeral ceremony of a dead father it is his younger sons who make sacrifices in his name to the ancestor shrines that were in his possession and will be inherited by the oldest son.

593 578 All these customs indicate how strongly the Tallensi feel that there is an underlying rivalry between parents and children that must not be allowed to drive a wedge between them. While his parent (particularly his father) is alive, a child (particularly a son) must not act in any way that suggests a desire to usurp the parent's place; and this holds vice versa for the parent too, as the incident between Tiezien and Nyaaŋzum shows. It is implicit in the Tale concept of incest. It can be summed up in the formula that father and son may not take each other's place in the procreative relationship, which is the fundamental relationship defining their positions in society relatively to each other; but this principle is extended to all social relations of father and son, particularly the first-born son. Tallensi state this quite openly, and it is worth quoting what Yarɔg of Gbizug, who is not a Namoo, said to me once in this connexion. There had been a ceremony the previous night at which the Gbizug tɛndaana had been represented by one of his younger sons. I asked Yarɔg why he did not sometimes deputize for the tɛndaana in these ceremonies, for surely he knew more about the rites than his younger classificatory brothers? 'No', he replied, 'that is impossible. I am like the tɛndaana's oldest son, for my father was his full (*soog*) brother; I cannot put on his cap and skin and perform these rites for him. We are Talis and it is not a taboo for us, but it would not be right, it would not be seemly.'

We have seen that the undercurrent of rivalry is most apparent in the relations of father and son. Marriage removes a daughter from the arena of possible conflict with her parents and her social role does not create interests and motives that bring her into competition with either of her parents. She cannot take the place of either her father or her mother. Removal from their control has the effect, if anything, of strengthening her uterine tie with her mother and her lineage tie with her father. The first-born daughter is associated with the first-born son in these taboos by the principle of sibling equivalence.[1] She is the first-born child of her sex, and stands for the filial generation as much as her brother does. It is their first child, whether it be son or daughter, that makes a married couple into parents. Moreover, we must not forget the Tale maxim that

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[1] This principle is discussed in Ch. X below.

responsible member of his society. Of this we have had ample evidence.[1] 593
Again, there are strong economic elements in the individual's adhesion
to the lineage. There is the pressure due to the form and organization 578
of Tale economy as a whole, which tends to restrict excessive mobility.
As Tallensi themselves often put it, shrewdly picking on the key item 613
in their productive cycle, it is all a question of manure, including human excrement. A home farm in one of the old settlements kept at a high level of fertility by continuous manuring is not light-heartedly abandoned.[2] This fact, and the scarcity of unutilized and unowned farmland in the old settlements, puts a premium on the right to inherit land in them. To-day, it is true, the pressure of these forces has been relaxed by the opening up of an easily accessible external labour market and of facilities for trade both in Taleland and with other areas. These extraneous outlets have made life easier for the natives but they have not, as we have observed before, materially altered their traditional mode of livelihood. In fact they serve to emphasize the contention of the natives that economic motives are of secondary consequence in maintaining lineage unity.

It is not joint interest in, and equal rights to the inheritance of, 593
their patrimonial lands which alone hold a group of brothers together.
Men who leave their natal settlements on account of land shortage do not 577
return home eventually only because they have at last inherited their 764
patrimonial lands. The decisive sanction, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, lies in the obligation of filial piety and what it stands for in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage. The focus of unity for every lineage is the authority of the father, either the real authority of the living father or the mystical supremacy of the dead father or his surrogate, an ancestor spirit. Men like Yinworəb and Da'amo'o gave up wage labour in Kumasi very reluctantly to return home because the death of their fathers left them at the head of their respective joint families, and other similar cases have been quoted in an earlier chapter (p. 179). Similarly, a group of brothers may be scattered, some at home, some in a peripheral settlement, some in Mampurugu, some working abroad. On certain ritual occasions those who are near enough make a point of returning home. Family funerals, in particular, bring the scattered members of the family together. The three chief mourners at Tɛndaan Gieŋ's funeral were his brothers' sons Gikoo-Duun, who lived near Sameni in Mampurugu, Saanbuohba, who had been farming near Tola on the Red Volta for some years, and Baŋ-Duun who had been living at Biuŋ for nearly twenty years. They all

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[1] In preceding chapters as well as in *Dynamics of Clanship*, *passim*.

[2] We have touched on this subject in our earlier book, chapters i and xi. It is more fully considered in C. W. Lynn's report, *Agriculture in North Mamprussi* (Dept. of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Bulletin 34, 1937), and in M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936.

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577 •764 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

593 613 As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 578 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zaɣahkpɛməre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zaɣahkpɛməre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zaɣahkpɛməre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zaɣahkpɛməre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 601 784 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another. As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔɣa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

593 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan
602 talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or
even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple
579 of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few
minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come
to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most
476 apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized
co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most
764 conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals
or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in
jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies.
The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)'
sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous
book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating
the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives
of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various
rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did
not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a
different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a
segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi
belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment,
who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened
by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of
[837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's
wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head
of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his
behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to
sunzɔp is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares
of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the
Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the
affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential
features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social
571 relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same
quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a
835 consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting
the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations
qua clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage
siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with
clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful,
and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered
to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their
inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

593 571 764 602 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Saɣawuob's mother's funeral Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Saɣawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 593 562 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔɣaɣabələgkpeŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the [782] lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE 15

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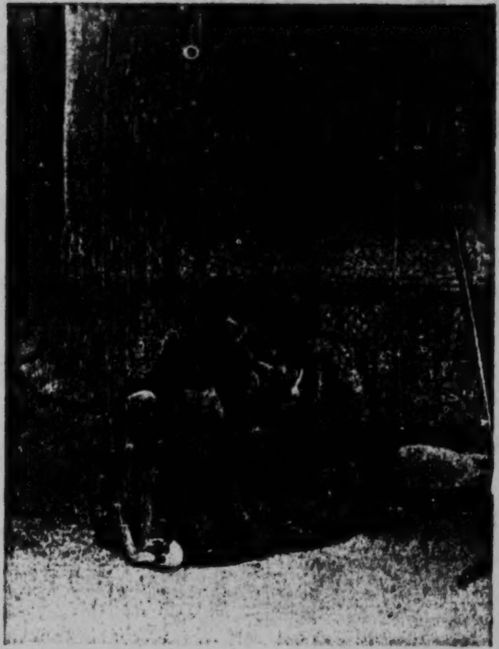
a. Classificatory sisters' sons (*ahɔs*) partake of the porridge ritually cooked by the *pɔyakiis* during one phase of the maternal uncle's (*ahɔb*) funeral ceremonies



b. A group of 'siblings' of the same inner lineage dividing a lizard which they have killed

[facing p. 288]

604 584 *pɔɣasama*. As has been previously stated, he is a clansman of the bridegroom who is also an *ahəŋ* of the bride's clan—*ahəŋ* being understood to include any sororal kinsman of whatever degree. The reason for this choice was well put by a group of elders with whom I discussed this subject. 'He (the *pɔɣɛsama*) is our (the bridegroom's clan's) person and is also their (the bride's clan's) person. He may not deceive us nor may he deceive them. If he deceives either of us the ancestors will not permit it.'[1]

604 584 764 The *pɔɣasama* appears in every transaction between the two parties to a marriage. He takes the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) to the bride's father. When, later, the bride's father sends messengers (*duondɛm*) to demand the bride-price, the *pɔɣasama* conducts them to the person responsible for paying the bride-price and assists in the negotiations. Many a marriage is saved by the skill and patience of a *pɔɣasama* in persuading the bride's people and the bridegroom's people to a compromise on the question of bride-price payments. He must be present whenever bride-price payments are made; for if, at any subsequent time, a dispute should arise as to what was paid, his word is final. The *pɔɣasama* also acts as intermediary in all the formal claims, services, and duties that arise between the parties as a result of the marriage. He is the messenger who goes to announce the birth of her first child to the bride's parents. If a woman's father or mother dies, the *pɔɣasama* conducts the party sent by her husband with his obligatory food contributions to the funeral, and he hands these contributions over to his 'mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*)'. In this and similar jural or ritual relations between the husband's people and the wife's people, the *pɔɣasama* has to be present both as a witness of the transaction and as a mediator, in case the recipients object to the quantity or quality of the food contributions or the payments offered. For though the obligations of the parties in such situations are clearly defined by custom, there is room for much quibbling over details. Custom declares that a man must kill and cook a goat or a sheep to send to his father-in-law's funeral at a certain stage. But one man will, out of generosity or as a special sign of respect, kill a large goat, whereas another will be mean and choose a puny animal. I have seen violent arguments arise between a son-in-law's messengers and his late father-in-law's lineage over a point of this sort. The mere presence of the *pɔɣasama*, even if he is but a young lad, has a conciliatory influence. As will be remembered, the *pɔɣasama*'s role does not come to an end on his death. It passes to his brothers and sons, like any other attribute of his social personality.

604 778 There are other situations in which an *ahəŋ* acts as intermediary between the members of his paternal clan and his matrilateral clan. For example, the setting up of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine for a man is done

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[1] *'U a tam nit ka le a bàm nit; u ku too m-paah tam, u ku too m-paah bam-mi; ɔn paah ti sɔ kpiinam la ku sɛyi.'*

604 and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance.
769 It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are in-
[764] formed, distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's
604 house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made
782 by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bɔɣar*, there are always *ahəs* present; perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

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[1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious
[778 custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own
769] homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

ahəs, representing perhaps five or six clans, over the division of the 604
cow's neck amongst themselves. It is on such occasions that the *ahəs*
divide into two groups, the *dugni ahəs*, who are sisters' sons of the inner 782
lineage responsible for the ceremony, and the *yɛŋha* (outside) *ahəs*, whose matrilateral links are with other segments of the clan. Etiquette dictates that the choicest and largest part of the meat apportioned to the *ahəs* should be given to the 'outside *ahəs*'. The *dugni ahəs*, it is argued, have many more opportunities of attending ceremonies of this inner lineage and receiving their shares of the sacrificial meat.

There are certain ceremonial occasions on which sisters' children of 604
all degrees usually turn up in large numbers.[1] They include not only
ahəs of the lineage immediately responsible for the ceremony but also 764
remote *ahəs* and 'grandsons (*yaas*)' of the clan. The death of a senior elder or of the holder of a politico-ritual office brings 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' from a wide range to the funeral. They are present at all stages of the funeral, but the largest number usually come on the day of the burial, on the day the funeral proper (as opposed to the burial rites) commences, and on the two occasions when a diviner is consulted to ascertain the mystical author of the death. These are all occasions when animals are slaughtered as offerings and tributes to the dead, or else food or beer is used in the rites and shared amongst all present. The meat and the drink form a big attraction to all who have kinship ties with the lineage celebrating the funeral. It is no mean attraction either, considering that at a big funeral, such as that of the head of a section (*yizug*) of a clan or of a maximal lineage, two or three big beasts (cows and donkeys) and from twenty to forty small stock (sheep and goats) will be slaughtered, not to speak of innumerable fowls. In addition there will be great quantities of porridge and other cooked food. And *ahəs* have prescribed shares of all these items. Similar prodigality is shown in the brewing of beer for a big funeral.

But greed is far from being the chief motive that brings matrilateral and sororal kin to an important funeral. The profusion of food and beer—both of which are distributed only on specific ritual occasions—serves chiefly to create and maintain the right atmosphere of pride and kinship amity. For it must be remembered that most of the 'sisters' sons' will bring a gift, if it is only a meagre chicken and a small basket of grain; and if there are twenty or thirty 'sisters' sons' present the
share of meat and beer each will receive is of less value than the things 604
he brings. 764

A 'sister's son' or a 'grandson', like everybody else who attends such 571

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[1] As these ceremonies are almost always conducted by men and belong to the ritual and jural spheres of activity dominated by the men, the *ahəs* who come are principally males; but often one or two female *ahəs* come as well. The neck of the animal sacrificed belongs in theory to the *ahəs* of both sexes, but I have never seen it given to a woman.

604 •764 571 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 571 602 782 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

793 602 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tendaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tendaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tendaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 769 776 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

home, where in the meantime the other members, both men and women, 778
of the new segment and the 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the segment 613
who have been able to come have gathered. The head of the new segment arrives, followed, as the Tallensi think, by the spirits of his grandmother's ancestors. He now performs the sacrifices by which the new *bɔɣar* is consecrated. He himself offers a sheep. All the other male members of the new segment bring a fowl each to be sacrificed on their behalf and *ahɔs* and *yaas* all do so too. A large pot or earthenware dish, inside which the small pot containing the sediment 'scooped' from the grandmother's lineage *bɔɣar* pot is placed, forms the altar. Henceforth this will be the *bɔɣar* of the new lineage segment; and there will be a similar communion rite embracing all the descendants of the founding ancestor and his mother whenever the *bɔɣar* is inherited by a new lineage head.[1]

We have now considered the most important ritual services matri- 602
lateral kin render to their sororal kin. The ritual services rendered by 764
sororal kin to matrilateral kin are, as might be expected, of far less consequence. In funeral ceremonies, for example, there are a number of rites in which it is necessary to have the participation of an *ahɔŋ* of the deceased. The rite of cooking 'the porridge of sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', which has been previously mentioned, is typical of these rites; and it is typical of them, also, that anybody who can, by any stretch of the term, be described as *ahɔŋ* can serve in them. All these rites express the fact that a person's death is of concern to his or her sororal kin as well as to his or her patrilineal kin, and affects the field of social relations of the former as well as that of the latter. Hence in all funeral rites a special portion of the meat, cooked food, and beer used is allocated to the 'sisters' children', whether few or many are present. Matrilateral and sororal kin do not, however, undergo mourning rites.

Apart from funerals, there are one or two other special ceremonies in 602
which the services of an *ahɔŋ* are needed. Thus in the ceremony of 789
exorcising an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) an *ahɔŋ* is required to perform the final act of sympathetic magic. This consists in collecting the magical paraphernalia used in the ceremony—all of which symbolize the wish that the evil Predestiny may depart and conceal itself for ever—and throwing them away in some barren spot. A 'sister's son' is called upon

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[1] There is a point of religious doctrine that cannot be fully discussed here but must be mentioned to avoid confusion. Every important ancestor shrine is a means of making a whole line of ancestors accessible to its possessor. Now the collective mystical power of a patrilineal line of ancestors reposes in the lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence every important shrine has to be linked up with the lineage *bɔɣar* of the dominant spirit to which it is consecrated. That is why when a *bakologo* is set up, the *bɔɣar* of the matrilateral lineage from which it is derived is 'scooped' for inclusion in the new shrine. Broadly speaking, the ritual validity of every ancestor shrine goes back to a *bɔɣar*. But the setting up of a new lineage *bɔɣar* is a very special ritual landmark.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-kab dɔya bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As 604
will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, [577
when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head 302
shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, 789]
Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely, withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage. But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural 604
rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have 574
principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a 764
woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws. The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the [431]
visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit. Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by 604
her father without having previously arranged to go to another man, she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, 586
under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. 587
She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
DECEMBER: Agricultural work over.	Height of ritual season: funeral ceremonies, children's dedication ceremonies, many marriages; all involving consumption of live stock and grain, in sacrifices, as cooked food, and beer.[1]
JANUARY: Period of secondary activities such as housebuilding, cut-	Grain rationing again begins. Grain and other foodstuffs, including im-

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796 guinea-fowls, sheep, goats, and dogs are slaughtered in profusion as sacrifices to ancestral and magical shrines. Beer (*daam*) made of malted grain is boiled, though in small quantities; much food is cooked to receive kinsfolk who call upon and greet each other. Recently married men send baskets of sweet potatoes, frafra potatoes, and yams to greet their parents-in-law. The Festivals last only a few days, but the tubers and animals are consumed over a period of some weeks.

[1] In this period, too, are celebrated all those clan and family religious ceremonies 796 in which animal sacrifices and cooked food and beer play a great part. Indeed, •764 these rites are often postponed for several years until a sufficiently good harvest enables enough supplies to be accumulated. We have seen a cow, a donkey, about 431 15 sheep and goats, and a large number of fowls and guinea-fowls slaughtered at the funeral ceremonies for a very venerable elder. We were assured ~~by his sons,~~ who were responsible for these ceremonies, that they had used up the whole of a large supply of guinea-corn in the preparation of ritual beer and food and in providing hospitality for throngs of guests. At such a funeral the deceased's cognatic and affinal kin bring obligatory food-contributions of cooked porridge, sheep, goats, and birds. So great were these contributions at one funeral that two or three basketfuls of porridge had to be thrown away as it turned sour. Funerals are extreme cases of the lavish utilization of food at this time of the year; and only three or four big funerals take place in any settlement in one season. Most funerals require a much smaller expenditure of live stock and grain than that made at an elder's funeral.

273 This is not the place to discuss the types of ritual and ceremonial situations in which 'things' (*bon*)—the Tale concept which covers every type of property—are consumed. In a good season there will be a tremendous spate of them; in a poor season only urgent rites will be performed. A word, however, must be said about beer, the most important ritual substance apart from the animals and flour used in sacrifices. Beer is cooked (*doy-*) by women, malted grain (*kpeya*) of guinea-corn or millet being issued to them by the man at whose request it is made. In the average compound beer is never cooked except for ritual purposes which may be twice or thrice a year. Chiefs and headmen, who always have a surplus of grain often, and elders occasionally keep a supply of beer on hand for guests. Tale women never make beer for sale in the markets; indeed, any man would be horrified at the suggestion that his hard-won grain should be used in this way. The Tallensi are a sober people on the whole.

867 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented
857 that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association
764 with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, ' because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed '. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: ' Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice
855] to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly
[966] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends
[839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. ' I will slaughter you if you do so and so ', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4–5 years, suspiciously

262 869 some of his elders that it would be too repugnant even for a starving man to do so, told this story of how he had himself, on two occasions, violated his taboo. When he was a child of perhaps 5 or 6 he was the favourite of his grandfather, as often happens. Some one brought the old man a gift of eggs which he promptly had roasted. He had to go outside to attend to some matter and he left his small grandson to see that no one purloined the eggs. Now an egg is a potential fowl, and is therefore equally taboo with the latter. The chief described how there was a brief struggle between his conscience and his desire, and how he succumbed and ate the eggs. His grandfather was furious when he returned and the child in trepidation lied, accusing a girl who was in the next room. The girl denied the accusation and the small boy's father was called in to adjudicate. He at once suspected his son, but the grandfather angrily defended the boy, who was now too terrified even to speak. The matter was dropped; but the small boy, afraid of his father, remained with his grandfather till nightfall. Then he slunk out, only to be caught at once by his father, who had been waiting for him. His father said nothing, but grimly called for a feather and a large gourd of water. 'Drink,' he commanded, and compelled the child, now sobbing with terror, to swallow the whole gourdful of water. 'Open your mouth,' said the father, and began to tickle the child's throat with the feather until he vomited. 'And now,' said the father, grasping the child's arms tightly and striking him right and left, on buttocks, back and head, 'I'll teach you to eat fowl and steal and tell lies.' 'That was how I learnt not to eat fowl,' the chief concluded amid general laughter. But, he continued, many years later, at the time of the great famine, he with two companions was on his way to a neighbouring district and stopped for the night *en route*. They were extremely hungry, not having had a proper meal for days, and when they were offered porridge and a cooked fowl ate ravenously. Now two of them tabooed the fowl, but they were too hungry to resist. The meal finished, they rose, when suddenly the other man who was not allowed to eat fowl was overcome with nausea and began to vomit. Immediately he himself also began to vomit. They had not, after all, been able to stomach the fowl.

183 764 How strongly quite young children feel the compulsion of a ritual obligation was brought home to me when a boy of about 10–11 was

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183
her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764 ●
shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783]
mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181
and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867
and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856
moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861
that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows, dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines (tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a group have no access. 784 184 [425] [778]

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are his own mother's kinsmen. 186 764

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction. The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus 793 622

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath [195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those who have lost their fathers.

764 'When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and ● 765 after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his [314] wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is 765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He 769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, [171] i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita*.

[2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose [535 831] men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765
father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769
his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his
father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make
use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the
flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies.
It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years,
later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been
settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the
day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters'
children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations,
assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302]
are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely
shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the
children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765
who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768
they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out.
After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765
main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837
the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle.
She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783
sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there
send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness.
He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the
land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan*' will come and [793]
sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have
sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says
so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one
representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their
mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201]
in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses
his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of
the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and
its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also
put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it.
The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a
fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices
the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out
from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

837 783 765 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'. There she is given new waist-strings.

765 768 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother. The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 602 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother, and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives, my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos (*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764
or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602
When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya* (sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man, he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it, may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept, as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-fowl they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave. It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*) for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one, even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given
to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561
ku-kweem just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834
his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765
'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768
would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171]
custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem* funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane *kaleŋa*), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*), and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

834 •765 768 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property, it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women; any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 584 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

764 Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

571 577 Hence, people connected in this way are careful not to ask each other for things. In the hunt, if a member of one group kills an animal and any members of the other group happen to be on the spot, the slayer will not lay a hand on the kill until the latter have cut a portion for themselves.

765 571 577 Sometimes it happens that a great tragedy overwhelms a member of one group and he abandons himself to grief, refusing food, drink, and consolation. Then, as a last resort, his relatives send for the head of the lineage whose requests cannot be refused, to persuade the stricken man to face life again. This happened, for example, when Puyɛl of Wakii's child was accidentally burnt to death. He was prostrate with grief, and said that he wished to die. Thereupon his brothers sent for the Bɔɣarna'ab of Gundaat, the clan to whose members Puyɛl's lineage must yield, and the Bɔɣarna'ab persuaded him to accept food and water, a sign that he was ready to throw off his despair. 'It is a matter of our fathers and our ancestors', the Bɔɣarna'ab declared when he told the story. 'He dare not refuse; I would call on the Earth, and my *bɔɣar*, and our ancestors, to witness, and his house would be destroyed if he remained obstinate.' Elders of other Talis clans explained the inviolability of this bond in almost the same words. It rests upon religious sanctions, the cult of the Earth and the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, common to all the Talis.

The Rationalization of Clanship Ties

811 Tallensi have no explanation to offer for the joking partnership or the bond of privileged moral coercion between clans or lineages, though they regard them as being somehow connected with the network of clanship. 'It is a matter of our fathers and forefathers', is all that even the best informed elders have to say about these ties.

*618 811 Clanship ties, however, always have the warrant of dogma or myth, as we have seen. It is worth while examining a few more instances.

Sometimes common agnatic ancestry is claimed, though no common ancestor can be cited by name or any point of convergence of the different genealogies suggested. This is the case with Yinduuri and Sii, for instance. Frequently the fiction of a cognatic link is used. Thus, in explanation of the clanship ties existing between Degal and Kpata'arna'ab yidem of Kpata'ar, it is said that the latter are the sororal nephews (*ahəs*) of the former. The name of the Degal woman who is thus alleged to have been the progenitrix of the Kpata'ar lineage is unknown, and no Kpata'ar man would even speculate as to which of their ancestors might have been her husband. Similarly, Dakuor yidem of Bunkiuk are said to be the descendants of a sororal nephew of Kpata'arna'ab yidem with whom they have ties of clanship. The fictional character of this formula is revealed when we compare the neighbouring clan of Samiit. The people of Samiit say that their founding ancestor was a Wakii man (hence their ties of clanship with Wakii), who migrated to the top of the hills because he had by accident killed and eaten a python, which is a taboo at Wakii. After wandering about for some time, he found refuge with the people of Gundaat, one of whose daughters was later given to him as a wife. The people of Samiit are the posterity (*tu'u*) of this pair. Strictly speaking, therefore, the people of Samiit are the sororal nephews of Gundaat; and

PLATE 6

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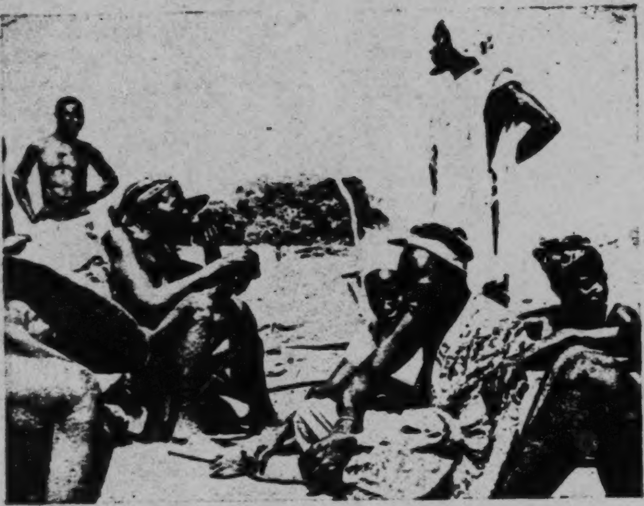

a. Kinship *versus* affinal relationships: sons-in-law, sitting in the customary posture of respect, on the right, come to offer condolences to their father-in-law's family and lineage on the occasion of a death

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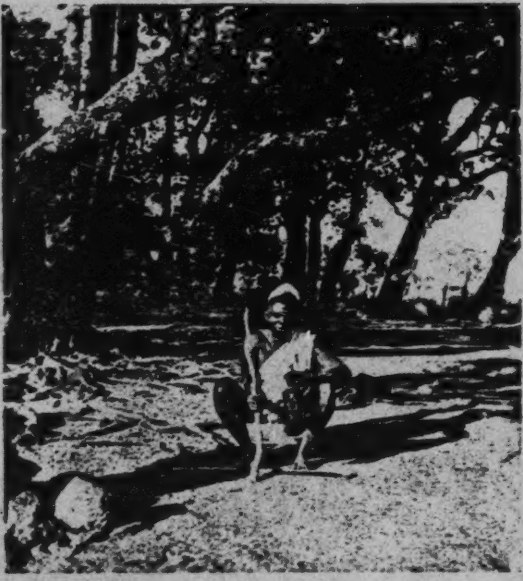

b. A husband goes to inform his parents-in-law of the birth of his wife's first child. He carries a hen as a gift and a thick stick of Shea wood on which four notches have been cut, which shows that the baby is a girl

[FACING p. 113]

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to 837
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence 577
compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrəg samər*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*daɣət*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔɣambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔɣar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her 765●
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies are hurried on. 581 Tallensi do not believe that young widows without infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of 834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his [768] funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

593 562 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

602 562 The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602 606 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have 613
a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a 593
mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser im- 784
portance of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social
status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance 601
than whether one has or lacks a father'. The range within which classificatory 'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso 613
both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to 601
marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies,
Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites
of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head [765] ●
shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother 888
and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

761 whom it was living, had also died suddenly. Diŋkaha, greatly concerned for his wife, warned all the members of his family not to say anything
593 to her about it. If she heard of this calamity now, he said, she would surely die. Later on, when she had settled down again he would himself break the news to her.

●765 Incidentally, fathers do not always get over the death of a child, whether an infant or an adult, with ease. It is easier for a young man,
593 the Tallensi say, because he thinks to himself that his wife can still bear children to him. But even young men have been known to abandon
[762] themselves to despair. An extreme case was that of Dɔyayam, who pierced himself with a poisoned arrow when his favourite child died; and the average Talɔŋ, it must be remembered, speaks of suicide with contempt. The grief of a father when a grown-up or adolescent son dies is very moving. When Pumaan's son Kpeemi and Tinta'alɔm's son Suor, both fine young men in the twenties, died, it was as if a shock ran through the whole community. On both occasions the men of the clan gathered in full force to mourn at the bereaved house and the atmosphere of tragedy was felt by all. I cannot forget the picture of Pumaan, as taciturn and dour a man as one could meet anywhere, holding himself tautly, his face ashen, his eyes staring ahead, stoically suppressing his despair as an elder should do. Tɛndaan Teroog, an old man over seventy, made no pretence of stoicism when his eldest and only adult son died leaving a number of wives and children. He simply pined away and followed his son to the grave in a couple of months.

593 When Tallensi say that it is hard to bring a child into the world, they have in mind more than the physiological facts of birth, and the dangers
769 of infancy and childhood. They think of the whole gamut of social and emotional relations between parents and children arising out of the fact of birth. For a Talɔŋ, as we have seen, does not become altogether independent of his parents until their death—nor, indeed, even after their death. The pragmatic bonds of jural and economic dependence become transformed into the equally strong, nay stronger bonds of ritual dependence on the ancestor spirits of whom the parents are the immediate prototypes and intermediaries. And in many ways the ritual relationships of the Tallensi with the spirits of their parents give a truer insight into the parent-child bond than their visible behaviour towards one another. 'Fear the dead but do not fear the living (*Zom kpiim ka di zo vopa*)', says one of their proverbs which enshrines their feeling that a person is under a far more compelling bond with his parents when they are dead than during their life. We shall return to this presently.

593 The gist of our analysis is that to the Tallensi parenthood means responsibility that weighs heavily at times. This comes out both in the notion that bearing or begetting a child is hard and in the correlated notion of the importance of rearing. At the same time there is no native, man or woman, who would not insist that a person has lived in vain if he

577 no charity (*ɔn kɛ sugɔru*) would perhaps have done otherwise, but
593 Kuŋaaŋba's way was the right way.

It is on the death of a parent that filial piety is most sharply evoked,
just as it is the death of a child that brings out most poignantly a parent's
love and devotion. We have referred to this previously. In this matter
filial sentiment and ritual sanctions converge.

The supreme act of filial piety sons owe to their parents is the per-
764 formance of their mortuary and funeral ceremonies. If a man or woman
577 dies leaving no sons then this duty falls upon his or her nearest proxy
sons. The initiative and chief responsibility rest with the oldest living
593 son. The burial rites must be carried out immediately; but when and
● 765 how the funeral ceremony is to be made is for the sons to decide. No
one can put pressure on them to hurry on the funeral if they wish to post-
pone it for several years. It is customary to delay the funeral of an elder,
an old woman, or a person holding a ritual office until the third year
after his or her death, ostensibly so as to enable the sons to collect the
large stock of grain and the livestock required for the ceremony. Mean-
while, in the case of a man the sons exercise the social role of the
[793] deceased. If he was a tendaana they will perform the duties and exercise
the rights of his office, and this may be a motive for delaying his funeral
beyond the customary period. The old men who are eligible for the
office can object and grumble; they cannot compel a dead man's son to
make his father's funeral. The issue lies between the dead man and his
sons. If they delay unduly they will incur their father's anger. For
until his funeral has been celebrated he dwells between the world of the
living and the world of the spirits. As the Tallensi say, his one leg is
in the earth (among the spirits) and his other on the surface of the earth
(among the living) (*u gbɛr dɛkɔ bɛ teŋni ka gbɛr dɛna bɛ doorni*). He cannot
'join his forefathers (*paag u banam*)' until he has been 'taken back into
the house (*kpeeh dugni*)' as a spirit. And the situation is the same with
a dead mother, though she is of less jural importance.

The duty of burying a parent and celebrating his or her funeral is
769 the first step in the most exacting of all filial duties, the cult of the dead
577 parents. Native thought and behaviour show that the Tallensi feel it as
an inescapable compulsion of conscience, and not as a mere act of pro-
764 priety. Tallensi are quite matter-of-fact about the corpse (*kum*) of a
dead parent. They describe it as the 'slough (*fɔrɔŋ*)' of the soul (*sii*).
What they are concerned about is the spirit (*kpiim*) of the dead parent.
A man cannot rest secure until he has assimilated his father's or mother's
spirit into the framework of his life, domesticated it, so to speak, as the
expression *kpeeh dugni* shows; and this is the function of the funeral
ceremony. For that reason Tallensi want to have the graves of their
parents near their dwellings. True, a man's ancestor spirits accompany
him wherever he goes, but they are most tangibly present in his house,
where he sacrifices to them. It often happens that a man has to be

buried in one of the peripheral settlements, or abroad, where he has 769
been living temporarily. Then, if his sons return to the ancestral home, 577
perhaps years after his death, he will one day, through a diviner, order
them to exhume (*gurəg*) him and rebury him among his ancestors at the 764
ancestral home (*daboog*). The notion that when a person dies he joins
his ancestors (or a woman her husband's ancestors as well as her own), [775]
and that his body should therefore lie among their bodies, is a basic idea
in Tale religion and an obvious reflex of filial piety.

As the case of Sawɔŋba's daughter, previously quoted (p. 89), shows, 764
daughters are as much bound as sons to mourn the death of a parent.
All the children of the deceased must come to the funeral so as to 765
undergo the mourning rites. They are ritually unclean until they
have done so and have had their heads ritually shaved (*kuo zug*) in 577
sign of it. Though the ritual uncleanness (*dayət*) of a person who 783
has lost a parent does not interfere with normal life, it is felt to be
a psychological burden, for, as we have noted, until a dead person's
funeral has been made, his or her social personality is not wholly erased
from the real world. I have heard children of 10 or 11 say gravely that
they wished their mother's or father's funeral could be made soon so
that they could 'shave off the uncleanness (*kuo dayət la bah*)'. The
uncleanness adheres primarily to the deceased's own children, but it
also affects proxy children who have no living parent (as determined by
the criteria of 'fatherlessness' or 'motherlessness') of the same sex as the
deceased. One of the ways in which Tallensi demonstrate respect and
affection for a classificatory parent such as a father's agnatic cousin or
a classificatory father's wife, who has never been a proxy parent to
them, is to undergo the chief mourning rites for him or her—provided,
of course, the mourner is 'fatherless' or 'motherless' in that situation.
When an old man or woman who was the last of the generation of
'fathers' or 'mothers' of the inner lineage dies, the men and women of
the lineage to whom he or she is a classificatory parent gather from far
and wide for the funeral and all undergo the rites of shaving the head.
It is not compulsory for anyone to have the head shaved for a
classificatory parent, but it is a pious gesture which at the same time
proclaims the solidarity of the lineage. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* might
be a Tale proverb. Old grudges are forgotten—though not necessarily
buried for ever—and men and women who have been estranged from
their classificatory brothers and sisters or the deceased parent turn up
to the funeral to do the proper thing.

Nowadays the death of a parent is one of the strongest sanctions that 577
induce the men who go to work abroad to return home, if only for a 765
while. The absentees may dawdle for weeks or months or even two
or three years—for funeral ceremonies can be postponed, as we have
noted, for periods up to three, four, or more years—but most of them
come home eventually for the rites. Those who delay so long that their

577 •765 relatives at home decide not to wait for them are the exceptions that prove the rule. In a few cases they are men who have struck root in their new environment after many years of living there and find it difficult to get away. Sometimes they find it easier to procrastinate because they originally left home through a quarrel with the deceased parent. But generally they tarry because the deceased is a proxy parent or because they have older brothers at home who will conduct the funeral. Later, perhaps, when the mantle of the lineage headship falls on their shoulders they will return, like Pal and Dema, to take over and end their lives in the ancestral home. It is a feature of Tale custom that natural human weaknesses are not unduly penalized by public opinion. As long as he lives a man can always try to make good his derelictions of filial duty. It lies between him and his ancestors. The community is neutral.

577 765 593 At funeral ceremonies of old people one also sees that filial piety includes pride in one's parents. The *koordaana*, owner of the funeral or chief mourner (that is, the deceased's oldest son), and his brothers strain their resources to the utmost to provide a lavish funeral. It is not uncommon for nearly the whole harvest of a household to be consumed in making the beer and providing the cooked food required. In addition, animals must be slaughtered in honour of the dead. A poor man may be able to give his father only a couple of sheep or goats which he has had to borrow for the purpose. On the other hand, when Doohraan, the head of Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, died, rich in years and in honour, his sons slaughtered a cow, a donkey, and about a dozen small stock for his spirit; and Sayawuob postponed his mother's funeral for two years so that he should be able to give her a cow. At a big funeral, when the war parade (*dee*) and the whole concourse of clansfolk, kinsfolk, neighbours, and friends of the dead stand milling at the gateway, [292] the oldest son climbs on to the wall to address the crowd. Wearing his ceremonial plumed helmet of straw, with a large red cock in his hand, he looks down haughtily upon the crowd and delivers his harangue. [537] His speech, spun out with all the tricks of rhetoric in the Tale repertoire, is proud almost to the point of arrogance. He is relating the great deeds of his dead father or mother. They may seem trivial, sometimes, to the cold-blooded ethnographer—so and so borrowed five cows and paid them back in two years; so and so was a redoubtable farmer who in one year sold enough grain to buy three cows; another man boldly carried off his wife from under the noses of Mamprusi who had seized her; and this old woman was a potteress who by her own efforts earned the money to buy two cows, and in addition had been faithful to her first and only husband until his death. But it is not the substance so much as the occasion of these funeral panegyrics that matter to the Tallensi. At the end of his speech the son beats the cock (or if he is a rich man it may be a goat) to death on the wall and flings it to the crowd with a challenge that any person who can claim equal achievements should take it. But

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can 593
match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so. 765

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride in one's parents among the Tallensi. They always show off an old 593
parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often 577
been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man 888
or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck [777]
(*zusɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full? (*U pu di ŋɔvɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and senile, as Doohraa [illegible] was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage, the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among 593
the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect, affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, 577
supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relation- 577
ships. A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from 613
his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion, and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

PLATE II

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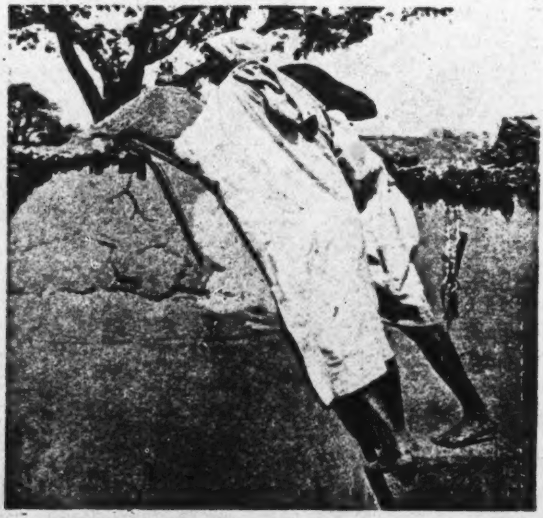

a. The first-born son of a Namoo is ritually 'shown' his father's granary for the first time on the last day of his father's funeral ceremony

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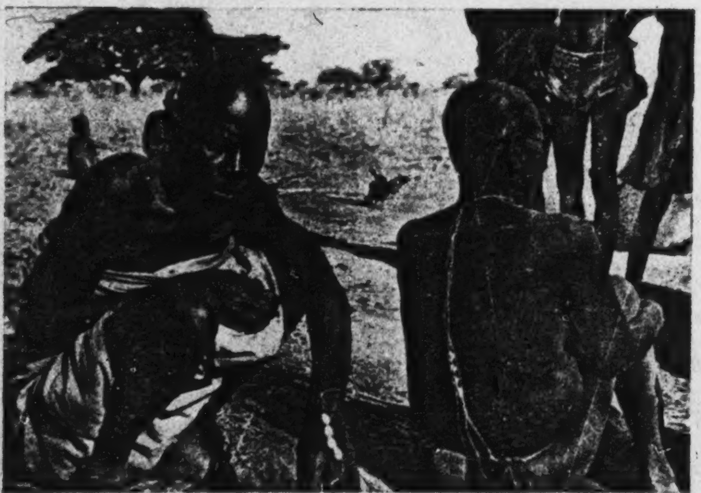

b. The youngest son and the youngest daughter of a dead woman wear the *dooluŋ* during the concluding rites of their mother's funeral

[facing p. 208]

tension that develops between a father and his oldest surviving son is 593
never as great as that which occurs between a man and his first-born 578
son. An oldest surviving son may in time begin to farm on his own, but
he will very often stay in his father's homestead, for his *Yin* is not a 184
danger to his father's.

Tallensi have no explanation for this. Their only comment is to point 593
to the fact, which can often be observed, that parents discriminate 578
between their older children and their younger children, especially
between the oldest and the youngest. Youngest children are the
favourites, upon whom they lavish all their tenderness when they have
long ceased to make a show of affection for the older children. A
man's or a woman's last child (*bikpa'ar*) is the apple of its parent's eye.
Tallensi say that a last child is always spoiled and pampered, and
therefore grows up to be vain, lazy, and extravagant. Guna'ab was
a man of this stamp, and his older brothers explained contemptuously
that he had been their mother's *bikpa'ar* and they had been unable to
discipline him after their father's death.

Tallensi say that a person's younger children, and in particular the youngest child, feel their dependence on their parents till the last. There is, as in so many aspects of the relations of parents and children, an element of reciprocity in this. For a man's youngest son, for instance, is still farming with him when his oldest son is farming either wholly or partly for himself—'thinking of how to feed his wife and children rather than of his parents', they often say. 'If I die to-day', men have said to me, 'do you think my oldest son will weep? Oh no; but my youngest son, he will shed bitter tears.' There is much truth in this. I have more than once seen a man's youngest son being harshly rated by an older brother for abandoning himself to grief over his father's death. Because older children no longer need their parents' care they do not inspire the same affection as young children. In the eyes of the natives, therefore, the discrimination between youngest and oldest children is a natural result of the process of upbringing. But I have heard women say, also, that a woman's love for her *bikpa'ar* is due to her seeing in him the sign of the end of her reproductive powers.

It is, however, not merely a matter of the vagaries of parental psycho- 593
logy. This discrimination runs deeply into the social structure of the 787
Tallensi. A curious but enlightening indication of this occurs with
divining (*bakologo*) shrines. When a diviner dies, the clairvoyant power
associated with his shrine sometimes passes on to one of his sons by a
process which the Tallensi think of as a kind of mystical contagion (*lɔŋ*).
The son who is selected for this privilege is always a younger son. There 593
is more sympathy between father and younger son than between father 765
and oldest son. But the best indication of this is found at funeral cere-
monies, where the oldest and the youngest children of the deceased 578
have distinctive mourning duties. The oldest son and oldest daughter,

593 as the chief mourners, have the most arduous mourning duties. They
578 have to take part in almost every rite, both by day and by night, and
765 these rites are mystically dangerous to those who participate in them. Hence they have to be carried out very carefully. All the participants must, for instance, observe absolute silence throughout these rites. The youngest son and youngest daughter, on the other hand, wear the *dooluŋ* string as a special emblem of mourning. The *dooluŋ* string is decorated with four cowrie shells for a dead mother and three cowrie shells if the deceased is the mourner's father. The youngest son wears it on his hand, looped about his middle finger in a prescribed fashion; the youngest daughter wears it round the neck and waist and down the back.

The most important of these rites are those which conclude the funeral. The rites differ in content from clan to clan, as we have mentioned in our earlier book,[1] but their symbolism is the same for all clans. Everywhere they symbolize the removal of the social personality of the deceased from the world of the living and his or her incorporation among the ancestors. They symbolize also the emancipation of the children from the control of their living parent and the assumption by the oldest son or daughter of the father's or mother's position in society. This is evident from the rites by which the customs, taboos, and articles which stood for the cleavage between the generations are ritually annulled or transferred to the son or daughter. In the case of a woman, among all the Tallensi, the principal rites are 'the sealing of the store-pot (*bεa dɔk*)' and the sending of the *kumpiog*.

The rite of 'sealing the store-pot' is the only ritual act performed solely by women for a woman. On the last day but one of an old woman's funeral a group of old women, her co-wives, sisters-in-law, and friends, together with her daughters, gather in her sleeping-room. They take one of her large store-pots, put inside it a ladle, a dish, and other articles characteristic of women's activities that belonged to her, and solemnly seal it with a potsherd plastered over with mud and cow-dung. Beer and porridge are offered on the pot to her spirit. Her oldest daughter takes part in these rites, and then the pot is hidden in a place where she is not likely to see it. She may not come near it until it is finally disposed of. Next day the pot is ritually opened by the old women and the oldest daughter, who thus symbolically discards the taboo which she had to observe all her life if she is a first-born, or since her mother's death if she is not. Later the pot is removed from the house and taken by one of the old women. The daughter must never see it again.

At the end of the funeral ceremonies a dead woman's *kumpiog*, the special pot and calabash which stand for her social personality as a woman and mother, is solemnly and extremely carefully carried to her oldest daughter's house and given to her, as we have noted before.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. viii.

For a man these final rites are more elaborate and variable. Among the Namoos the high-water mark of the rites is the induction of the first-born son and first-born daughter, if they survive, into those secret and forbidden things which they have avoided since infancy. The first-born son is dressed in his father's cap and smock, turned inside out.[1] A stick with a loop of string, and a piece of hollow bamboo, specially prepared for the occasion and symbolizing the father's bow and quiver, are hung round his neck. Then a procession is formed of all the children of the dead man, his first-born daughter following immediately behind the first-born son and holding on to the smock. An old man leads them round the homestead three times. Then the first-borns are taken inside through their dead father's *zɔŋ*, and are taken up to look into his granary for the first time in their lives. The whole rite is felt by the onlookers to be overwhelmingly solemn and the 'showing of the granary (*paal buur*)' is for them an intensely dramatic moment. A hush comes over the crowd of spectators as the son ascends to the granary and his mentor puts a hand behind his head and pushes it forward so that he peers into this hitherto-forbidden place. The son himself appears quite unperturbed, though this is one of the decisive moments of his life. I have been told by men who have been through this rite that they felt quite calm and collected at the time. But Tallensi are that way, and this is perhaps a sign of the efficacy of their ritual practices. 765 593 578 [292] [781]

Among the Talis and other non-Namoos, the parallel rite is that of sending the quiver (*ta'ah loko*) of the dead man to the External *Bɔγar*. When an old man dies, his quiver is hidden in his principal granary by one of the elders and his oldest son and daughter are thereafter forbidden to look into the granary until the end of the funeral ceremonies. 'If they did', a Yinduuri elder once explained to me, 'they would see the spirit of the dead man and die.' Younger sons and daughters are free to look into the granary. This is of particular interest as a parallel to the Namoo taboos; but with the Talis the ritual and affective expression of the tension between father and eldest son is concentrated in the period when its meaning is most significant to the son, the transition period between the extinction of his father's social personality and his assumption of his father's place. For the rite of 'sending the quiver', the 'quiver' (consisting of a real bow and a symbolical quiver exactly like that used by the Namoos) is taken from the granary by the oldest son. Followed by his father's senior surviving wife he is escorted by the clan elders to the External *Bɔγar*. Sacrifices are made to the ancestors and especially to the dead man, who now belongs to the realm of the ancestors, and his 'quiver' is left in the *Bɔγar* in token of his final departure from the world of the living.

We must conclude that the distinction Tallensi make, both in custom 593 578

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[1] To distinguish the context of death from that of life and to symbolize the reversal of the taboo.

603 them into grandparents. Again, this is especially marked with the paternal grandparents. The first-born son among Namoos, in whom the cleavage between parents and children is focused, is his grandparents' particular favourite. His grandmother will always have some titbit for him to eat, his grandfather tries to shield him from his father's authority. 'Look at Nobya', said Samane of his first-born son, 'he spends his time in play [that is, having a good time]. He never lacks for anything. He does not want to work. That is because he is the oldest grandchild. When he was a child he used to be with his grandparents always and they spoilt him. Now he goes to his grandfather if he wants anything.' The story of Kpana-Te[illegible] and his grandson, which we have previously related, is typical of many cases in which father and son disagree and even quarrel over the latter's treatment of his son. The alternate generations seem to be in league against the generation between them.

Maternal grandparents spoil their daughter's children in the same way, but there is not the feeling that they are acting in opposition to the parents. Maternal grandparents do not see so much of their daughter's children as paternal grandparents of their son's children. But from infancy a child is often taken to visit its maternal grandparents, and children over 4 or 5 are sometimes left in the care of their mother's mother for days or weeks on end. This is a kind of holiday for the child and is generally greatly enjoyed. Also, as we have mentioned before, a motherless child, especially a little girl, is often sent to her maternal grandmother and may grow up with her.

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•765 The death of a grandchild is felt as a heavy blow by grandparents of both lines. But they do not have to undergo special mourning rites as parents have to. Curiously enough, it is the maternal grandparents, and in particular the grandmother, who is singled out by custom as the greatest sufferer by the loss of a grandchild. The maternal grandparents may not attend the funeral of their grandchild, though their children may. They must grieve alone at home. And if it is a daughter's first-born dying in babyhood a special rite of consolation has to be performed at the maternal grandparents' home. After the infant's mother has been ritually purified she goes to her mother's house accompanied by one or two co-wives and carrying gifts from her husband. When she arrives a simple and very moving rite is carried out symbolizing the consolation offered by the child's father's people to its grandmother, almost as if the father's people were apologizing for the child's death. Then mother and daughter weep together and the daughter remains for a few days to keep her mother company. Tallensi say that this is done because the grandmother has lost her *soog*.[1] They have no explanation for the taboo against maternal grandparents attending a grandchild's funeral. It can be con-

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[1] Cf. Ch. II above. The rite is a reflection of the recognition of the uterine tie as a personal tie. It symbolizes, also, the recognition of a woman's parents, in particular of her mother, as the source of her reproductive powers.

jectured that the taboo is connected with the fact that the rights over a 603 woman's reproductive powers belong to her husband and must not be confounded with her parents' authority over her. If they came to the 765● funeral of their daughter's child they would have to be received with respect, and it might seem as if they were on a par with the child's paternal grandparents. For the same reason, perhaps, a married woman's parents do not attend her funeral in person, but are represented by other members of her natal family and lineage.

For a man his son's children stand for the certainty that his line of descent will go on. The wheel of the generations has come full circle. When he and his wife die it will be announced to all the world. On the day of his or her funeral the youngest grandson will be placed before a drum with the drumsticks in his hands and the youngest granddaughter before a calabash with two pieces of cane in her hands. When the signal is given for the funeral to begin they will strike the drum and calabash and cry out, 'Oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather, oh my grandfather (*N-yaab yee*)'. And when the funeral is concluded [302] the son's children and the brothers' sons' children will have their heads shaved in mourning in the manner prescribed for grandchildren. Half the head will be shaved and half left unshaved.

The equivalence of alternate generations is shown by the fact that a 603 grandson may marry the widow of his paternal or maternal grandfather, or of any man whom he calls grandfather, other than his own grandmother. 587 This rule is of practical significance when an old man dies leaving a young widow, and all the men of his inner lineage are either 'sons' or 'grandsons' to him. Then the grandsons who are old enough are encouraged to woo the widow, and the elders of the lineage put pressure on her to choose one of them so that she can remain a wife of that lineage. It was thus that Tiezien married his own paternal grandfather's youngest widow. At that time she had a young infant at the breast who was Tiezien's own father's half-brother. Tiezien was then about 18 or 19. He thus had the unusual experience of bringing up a child who was his proxy father. To-day Tiezien, a vigorous man of about 70, is ritual head of Kpata'ar; but his proxy father Nyaaŋzum, whom he reared, is the head of their inner lineage. Tiezien was made politico-religious head of the clan (*Kpata'ar na'ab*) over Nyaaŋzum's head according to the rule that 'begetting does not cross the *dug*';[1] but within their *dug* he is nominally subject to Nyaaŋzum's authority. This might lead to considerable friction between them if they were not as devoted to each other as they are. The marriage of a grandson with his grandfather's widow is, however, an uncommon occurrence, chiefly

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[1] Headship of the clan, in this case, goes by selection from amongst the [618] eligible elders, but usually comes to the oldest man in the clan. Tiezien could, however, not have accepted the offer without the consent of his proxy father, Nyaaŋzum.

604 *ahəb*. Nevertheless she has much the same attitude to him as her brothers have and will, if need arises, go to him for help as if he were her father. A woman will go to her mother's brother for a basket of grain at harvest time if her husband's grain supplies are very low and she knows that her father or brother has none to spare.

These personal bonds are transferred, in accordance with the principles we have previously made clear, to sons and grandsons and collateral relatives, as well as to the lineages, of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ*. Yarəg of Gbizug was a close friend of his paternal grandfather's mother's brother's family at Puhug. Saɣəbazaa, who was both a neighbour and a distant classificatory *ahəŋ* of Zubiuŋ (since both the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage and one of his inner lineage forbears were sister's sons of a Zubiuŋ lineage), took great pride in being the *ahəŋ-kpeem*, most senior of the 'sisters' sons' of that clan. He took a keen interest in its affairs and never missed attending important ceremonies anywhere in Zubiuŋ. The elders of the clan spoke of him with respect as 'our elder brother (*ti bier*)'. But naturally, the more distant the relationship is, the less intimate and the more formal do the mutual interests of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* tend to become.

604 • 765 Death is the key test of kinship sentiments. The day after Kpe'emi's death I happened to call at the house of his mother's full brother, Lɔɣani. I found Lɔɣani and his brother sitting listlessly at their gateway and the house was as quiet as if there were a person on his death-bed inside. The women, who should have been out collecting firewood, were at home, and the children, usually playing boisterously at that time of the day, sat in corners, talking in subdued voices. When I asked what was the matter, Lɔɣani said mournfully, 'Have you not heard of our child Kpe'emi's death? That is our grief (*ti suhkpɛləg nla*). We sitting here, our bodies are prostrate (*ti nɛŋgbina nkpi*—lit. our bodies are dead). We have no thought for food or drink or work.' Barimoda was deeply affected when his *ahəb* Teroog died, though he was then a very old man. Barimoda could not publicly manage the funeral but he did in fact manage it behind the scenes. As we shall see later, an *ahəŋ* has certain [578] customary obligations to fulfil at the funeral of his *ahəb*. The feud between the Gɔlibdaana's faction and the Kpata'arna'ab's supporters at Tɛnzugu placed many men in the camp opposed to that of their *ahəb* or *ahəs*. Kpata'ar men and Bunkyiuk men stopped having any contacts with each other. But just then the mother's brother of Naɣabil of Kpata'ar died. I was with the Kpata'arna'ab, the head of the maximal lineage, when Naɣabil came to tell him of this. 'I want to tell you', he said, 'because he (the dead man) is my true *ahəb* (i.e. mother's full brother) and if I do not go to the funeral to mourn his death it would be unseemly (*de ku maali*). Besides', he went on, turning to me, 'if I don't go my mother (also dead) would be angry because I was scorning her brother's funeral.' The Kpata'arna'ab at once gave Naɣabil permis-

sion to go, saying that the quarrel between the two clans had nothing 604
to do with the question of personal kinship ties. As this example shows, 765●
there is a strong element of moral (but not jural) compulsion in the
respect owed by a sister's son to his mother's brother, and the sanction [577]
behind it is the allegiance every man owes to his maternal ancestors.

On the level of sentiment and affective attitudes there is clearly a 604
close resemblance between the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child and that of father and child. The difference, and it is a fundamental difference, lies in the fact that *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* have no common economic or jural interests. Thus a man can be familiar with all the affairs of his *ahəb* or *ahəŋ* and be keenly concerned that they should go well, but he is under no responsibility for their satisfactory outcome. The tension underlying the relationship of father and son is absent, and in this important respect the relationship of *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* resembles that of mother and child more closely. An *ahəb* must be respected by and he has considerable moral authority over his *ahəŋ*; but he cannot demand obedience from him as of right. This will be clearer from what follows.

Here it is pertinent to ask why the mother's brother and not her father—though he is the head of her natal family—holds the key position in the network of social relations that bind a person to his mother's patrilineal kin. As our analysis makes clear, it follows from the interaction of the principle of the equivalence of siblings and the principle of the cleavage between successive generations. A person cannot identify himself with his mother in relation to her father. He cannot have the status of a son and the status of a grandson in relation to the same person. On the other hand, as the preceding discussion makes clear, it is in conformity both with the logic of the social structure and with the pattern of sentiments uniting parent and child, for a person to extend to his mother's brother the filial attitude he has towards his mother. He can consistently be his mother's son and at the same time have a quasi-filial status in relation to her brother.

The Place of Gifts in the Relations of Ahəb and Ahəŋ

An *ahəb* demonstrates his interest in his sister's son's well-being by 604
the gifts (*piini*) he occasionally gives him. The theory is that they are
given freely out of kinship amity. By the rule of reciprocity there should 431
be a similar freely-given flow of gifts and services from *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*, but the emphasis lies on the generosity of the *ahəb*. A man is under no jural or ritual obligation to give things to his sister's child; he does so voluntarily as a quasi-paternal gesture. And though an *ahəŋ* has no property rights in the lineage or clan of his *ahəb*, he is, in theory, allowed certain liberties with things belonging to them, as if he were a kind of son of the clan. This is explained by the formula that but for the accident of

ashes) was blind, when a *sakur* and *meŋ* came and asked him what was 173
the matter. He replied, "Sickness." They said, "Open your eyes," and 784
he could see.'

In one of the tribal histories recorded above we again have an 784
example of the violation of a taboo after death—dressing the dead 766
body in a goat-skin. With regard to what we may call the 'royal clan', i.e. lion clan, I was told: 'In olden times, if any one killed a lion, the skin was sent to the Chief of Kurugu, who then sent it on to the Chief of Mampurugu. There a funeral ceremony was held for it.'

Blood Relationship: Relationship, transmitted through the female 611
line, is called *soog'* (compare the Nankanse *sõõ*). The *soog'* groups are well known, but, as far as I could discover, do not bear any special names. The *soog'* exhibits all the characteristics already noted with regard to the Nankanse *sõõ*.[1] A male cannot transmit a taint of witchcraft, inherited from his mother. 'If your mother can fly (*ak*) (that is, is a witch), you can fly.' (*Soe* is a witch in Talene).

'My sister's child is my *soog'*, my brother's child is not; he is my son.' Again, *ziim* (blood) and *soog'* are synonymous terms.

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[1] See Chapter XVIII.

Kusase

Five to six months after birth
the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787]
father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782
then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on
that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water
to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

' "Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787
daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574
that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834
more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is
walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845
Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766
fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die." '

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583
barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586
them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may
take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

731 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the
241 majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-
165 being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
●[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

788 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent
771 state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When
782 things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766 ●
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)] and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members 613
in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. 593
The token funeral performed [illegible] woman by her father's people, after 562
her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔɣayabəlɔg-kpɛŋ* [766]
not by her own father's heir [illegible] the head of the inner or medial or
even maximal lineage, her [illegible], so to speak. Tallensi say she
belongs to the whole lineage [illegible] paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow 595
may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan
or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two 587
principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', 595
and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint 613
leviratic rights is one of the critical ~~norms~~ of clanship,[1] implying that
all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither 593
absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to 587
them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such 602
a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a 778
maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of 769
the several 'mothers' of its segments.

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it re- 613
quires a *bɔɣar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔɣar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔɣar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔɣar* symbolizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔɣar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the signi- 602
ficance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. 613
According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by
divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The 766
physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person [761]
may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ninvoo*)'—that is a full social being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

602 613 766 he does not join his forefathers, he does not become an ancestor spirit. This shows that it is not the fact of death that turns a person into an ancestor spirit but the fact that, as Tallensi believe, he is summoned (*buol*) by his ancestors and goes to join them.

769 613 Thus when a lineage progenitrix becomes an ancestor spirit, she does so as the bearer of mystical powers and attributes that reside in the collective body of her lineage ancestors, symbolized and made accessible to man in their lineage *bɔyar*. Looked at in this way, too, the *bɔyar* consecrated to her and her son must be an offshoot of her lineage *bɔyar*.[1]

778 613 In addition, there is the obvious point that a segment of a lineage cannot symbolize its distinctness by means of a *bɔyar* derived from their own lineage *bɔyar*, which is the symbol of the genealogical and social unity of the lineage, not of its internal differentiation. The lineage *bɔyar*, as is evident, is the most esoteric symbol of the principle that runs right through Tale social structure, that social differentiation within the lineage framework springs from maternal origin. This principle operates in lineage structure;[2] and we have seen how, at the other end of the scale, it constitutes the springboard of individual differentiation in the structure of the joint family.[3] This is a further instance of the consistency of Tale social structure at all levels conferred upon it by the kinship system.

A new segment of a lineage begins to crystallize out as a recognized corporate unit in the time of its founding ancestor's grandsons. For it is not until then that the process of fission in the lineage has gone far enough to separate his grandchildren and his brothers' grandchildren into distinct nuclear lineages. Thus it is a man's grandson or great-grandson who sets up a *bɔyar* consecrated to him and his mother. According to the idiom of Tale religious thought, the ancestor demands that a *bɔyar* be set up for him and his mother. A day is appointed for the ceremony, and all the descendants of the progenitrix, through both males and females, are informed. In the morning or early afternoon the head of the new segment takes a fowl, a goat or sheep, and a pot of beer to the head of his grandmother's inner lineage, or in some clans, medial lineage. The men of that lineage assemble so that all of its branches are represented and the animals are sacrificed to the lineage *bɔyar* on behalf of the *ahəŋ*. Then the *bɔyar* is 'scooped' for him, in the same way as was described in the case of the diviner's shrine. The *ahəŋ* goes straight

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[1] In theory, obviously, the only lineage *bɔyar* that need not be derived from another *bɔyar* is the *bɔyar* of a maximal lineage. Actually most maximal lineage *bɔya* conform to the pattern we have described. The only truly sovereign *bɔya*—i.e. *bɔya* not derived from other *bɔya*—are the External *Bɔya* of the Talis and their congeners. And it is significant that the component maximal lineages of these clans generally have two *bɔya*, one the domestic representative of the External *Bɔyar*, the other a distinctive *bɔyar* derived from their founder's mother's lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

[2] Ibid., ch. xii.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. III.

XLI

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Rites de Passage

●768 428 IF the heir, who is the deceased's next eldest brother, is a *meŋ dan pud sob* (a greedy person) he will come, almost immediately, after the final funeral custom, to see about the division of the deceased's property.[1] He will tell the eldest son to produce all his late father's cowries. These the heir shares out among the sons, giving the eldest son most, because he is the one who will sacrifice to his father. The heir also takes some, but less than he gives to the eldest son. The eldest son accounts to the heir for all the cattle, sheep, horses, goats, donkeys, fowls, and guinea-fowls, which had belonged to the deceased, but once having done so, these remain under the care of the son, the heir drawing on them from time to time when he needs any. Though these remain in charge of the son, he has not any right to sell or lend any of them, and if asked to do so, he will say, "No, they belong to my 'father' ". The heir has already become head of his own compound, so he does not inherit the compound of the deceased. The deceased's eldest son will return to it and all his younger brothers who are married will quit, leaving only his unmarried brothers.'

Inheritance of Farms: 'The eldest son of the deceased takes the *saman* farm (near the compound), and his brothers who are "going out" take the *put* (bush farms). The heir has his own *saman* and does not take any farm of the deceased. Standing crops and crops in the grain-store are divided among those who had helped the deceased to work on his farm, but widows of the deceased who do not marry clansmen do not get any of this.'

Clothes, Hoes, Axes, &c.: 'The day the heir comes to see the property, he will see all these things, but will leave everything with the son.'

[778] *Shrines*: 'The eldest son will take his father's spirit, building a *bay* (shrine) for it; the heir will take the shrine of the deceased's father to his own compound and all family ancestral shrines and family ancestral "medicine". All personal "medicine" belonging to the deceased is taken by the son.'

The Leather Bag (*Kolog*): 'This is taken by the eldest brother of the

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[1] Among the Nankanse, the time this is done is from two to five months after the final funeral.

[p. 384]

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these [586]
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows 614
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul.* This sanction is very typical.

583 ●768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

584 585 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765
father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769
his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his
father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make
use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the
flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies.
It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years,
later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been
settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the
day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters'
children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations,
assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302]
are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely
shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the
children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765
who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768
they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out.
After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765
main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837
the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle.
She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783
sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there
send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness.
He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the
land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan*' will come and [783]
sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have
sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says
so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one
representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their
mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201]
in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses
his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of
the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and
its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also
put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it.
The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a
fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices
the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out
from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

837 783 765 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'. There she is given new waist-strings.

765 768 ● The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother. The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 602 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother, and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives, my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos (*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[302 171] [1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764
or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602
When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya*
(sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the
left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man,
he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it,
may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept,
as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also
gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back
from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and
roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to
bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-fowl
they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the
body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's
mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing
the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave.
It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl
over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut
their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your
fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*)
for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one,
even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given
to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561
ku-kweem just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834
his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765
'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768
would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171]
custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a
calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my
wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom
of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem*
funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will
take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's
porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane
kaleya), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*),
and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there
one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those
carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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834 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property,
765 it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her
● 768 eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women; any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the
584 sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will
764 be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

/ 787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

are entirely their own property. A woman owns the sleeping-mats she makes. A potteress is in the same position as a blacksmith or leather-worker. She keeps the money or natural products for which she exchanges her pots. Nowadays many women who live near a market carry on a regular or intermittent petty trade in cooked food. Sometimes, borrowing the small capital (two or three shillings is sufficient) with which to start, they keep the profits of their trade. It is not uncommon for women to own livestock, mainly poultry but often sheep and goats, and occasionally a cow. They may be obtained by gift or purchase, in the case of small stock, or by exchanging the natural increase of small stock for more valuable stock. A woman's sheep, goat, or cow will be herded with the family livestock, but her 'ownership' (*soləm*, from *so*, to own) remains secure. 593 421 [426]

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

A woman's clothing, and her household utensils, most of which she provides for herself, belong to her solely. They are distributed, on her death, to her daughters, daughters-in-law, and sisters. Any money or livestock she may possess passes to her sons on her death, these being what might be called consumers' capital goods, the appropriate owners of which are men. They remain, therefore, in her *dug*, and do not accrete to the patrimonial property of her husband's effective minimal lineage. But it is an accepted principle that her husband has an over-right to them in her lifetime. For, as the natives put it, 'How can a man own his wife and not own the products of her labour?' 768 422 593

There is a quibble in this statement, the concept 'own' being used first in the sense of 'to have authority over', and secondly to mean 'having full rights of disposal over'—rights *in personam* being equated with rights *in rem*, to speak in lawyer's language.[1] And the Tallensi are not blind to this. Theoretically a man is entitled to utilize his wife's property as he wishes. In practice, he would not dare to do so without her consent, and the transaction is looked upon as a loan (*samər*). True, like all loans within the domestic family, it is not subject to book-keeping. But just as the woman feels morally bound to put her possessions at her husband's disposal if he is in difficulties, so her husband feels in honour bound to repay her in time, and generously, if he has any self-respect. Similarly, if a woman contracts a debt without her husband's knowledge and explicit permission he cannot be held liable. But no 'man of sense' would publicly repudiate his wife's debt. He reserves his reproaches for the privacy of the home. Significantly, a man does not, as a rule, settle his wife's debt. He will try to temporize with the creditor—an art in which the Tallensi are past masters—until his wife succeeds in finding the wherewithal to satisfy him. Or, if the husband cannot avoid paying the debt, he considers this as an advance 593 426

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[1] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 'Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession', *Iowa Law Review*, xx. 2, Jan. 1935, for an illuminating discussion of the anthropological relevance of these legal concepts.

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies
581 are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of
834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his
•[768] social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

593 562 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

602 562 The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602 606 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

602 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with 613 the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidem*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that [736 a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of 768] one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants 613 perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship 593 of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements. There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series [601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma, bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

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[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Gɔris and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kɛma* and *yɛbəga* for senior and junior.

Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere*' (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become
Ten'dan'.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusoodana*.

778 with congealed blood and fowls' feathers. The top was protected with the usual broken pot.

'Into the first, B, come the spirits of three persons to receive flour-water and fowls; they help me to find wives and children. The second, C, is my *Ɣini* who sent me down and gave me life and my Ten'dan'ship.

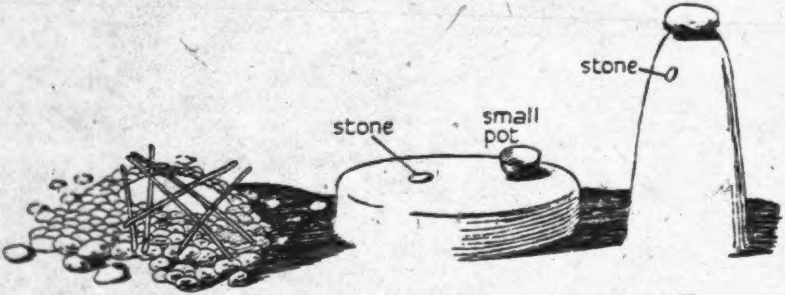

Fig. 67

It helps me to get life, women and children. God kept me formerly, afterwards he sent me.'

Facing these two shrines, and close to the wall of the *zoŋo* hut, were three more shrines, see Fig. 67.

B is the *Ɣini* of Sayebere's father, Pirun. A he called a *Tobog'*. A consisted of a heap of round stones with sticks laid on top, surrounding a larger stone sunk in the ground. 'The small round stones are there for the *tobog'* to throw at anything bad coming into the compound. The *tobog'* is *tim* (medicine) to protect me and give me life,' he said, 'It belonged to my father'. I think there is little doubt but that this shrine was for the spirit of a man whom Sayebere's father had
•[769] killed. (Compare the Nankanse *tobega.*) C was a tall conical shrine, with a stone let into the mud surface, called *duŋ-kpaleg*; 'It was my father's *bogere*,' said Sayebere. 'The power of my hat and skin are in it. When I sacrifice to it, I call all the spirits of the old *Ten'dan'* and of my father to assemble and drink water, striking the stone let into the side with the stone which rests on top.'

778 769 [171] *Shrines Inside the Compound*: Inside the compound in the yard, called in Talene *dendɔŋ* (in Nankane *zinzaka*), is a large grain-store (*bur*; Nankane *bare*) with a chameleon (*nangan*; Nankane *ngana*) in bas-relief on the side (see Fig. 68; Sayebere's hand is resting on the chameleon[1]). This is the shrine of his father's father's wife, a certain

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[1] Compare Fig. 30, which shows a similar shrine among the Nankanse.

Bama.. At the foot of this grain-store were other shrines, seen 778
rather indistinctly in the photograph. 769

One is the shrine for the spirit of a woman called Tapur, who was a co-wife to Bama, both being wives of Sayebere's paternal grandfather. Another is a shrine of Bama. There was also a large stone. 'Bama asked for this through a soothsayer.'

Moving further round the grain-store we come to another series of shrines which are illustrated in the photographs, Figs. 69–70.

In Fig. 69 A is the shrine of the *Ten'dan's* own mother, Kurug; the actual spirit is in the head of a hoe let into the clay; B, a log of wood with a stone on top. I seem to have omitted to record what this was; C is a pot out of which an infant which has become ward of a spirit is given to drink.

Fig. 70 Sayebere called a *tim bager*', 'But,' he added, 'it is also 778
called *anoa-dok* (a mouth pot).'[1] He was in a state of great trepidation lest I should uncover it, saying, holding his nostrils as he spoke, 'It is my life. When I sacrifice to it I say, "Mouth pot receive and protect me from mouths".' It had, he said, many avoidances; these included: Passing behind its owner when he was eating; carrying a flaming faggot past it; mention of the word moon (*mwarega*) while its owner was eating.

The fetish consisted of a pot, covered with another broken pot, a bow, bundle of arrows, and a quiver. The bow, arrows, and quiver had, he said, been added to the pot after consultation with a soothsayer.

Bogere and Bagere: There seems a distinction between these shrines [776]
so named, which hardly appears to exist among the Nankanse.

'A *bogere*,' said my Taleŋa informant, 'you fetch from your mother's 778
country after she is dead. You go to your mother's father's compound, 769
and take some earth from the *bagere* of your mother's father and put
this in a calabash, which your wife will carry home. She must not 775
speak to any one except her husband on the return journey. This soil will be put in a horn and is called my mother's *bogere*. Your mother's spirit may have become an iron bangle, that is a *bagere*; a *bogere* is like a shade to a *bagere*. A man's house may become 'bitter'; he consults and is told that it is his mother who wants a room. He makes one; that is a *bagere*. After that, he will go to his mother's home and bring earth from the mound which has been made there for his mother's father's spirit, and bring it home, and build a new mound with the

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[1] See p. 301.

778 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere*
769 comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he
will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's spirit wants to punish (*eŋ*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband, "Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

171 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in con-
778 nexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but
791 when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's
769 mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's
town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives the power to the *bakologo*.'

A Seance attended at Tɔngo: A woman had died from snake-bite, and
787 after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's
761 compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family
769 of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The
ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with both hands and saying, '*N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor*' (I hold your sides, but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig. 71), and said, '*N ba Ƴin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n bè, te te*'. (My father's *Ƴin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is; give us).

He then began to sing:

'*Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Ƴi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam zeret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.*' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole[1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash,

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932
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FIG. 72. Ancestral shrines

[facing p. 356]

on a gourd seed, on a hair ball from the stomach of a cow. I was later 781
told that all this was interpreted as meaning that the father of the dead 761
woman's husband had failed to give to his ancestor one of the cows 769
which he had received for a daughter, hence vengeance had been taken
on his son's wife.

After the seance a fowl was killed; this, falling on its back, was taken as proof that what the soothsayer had said was correct.

some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day 527
is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may
be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, 793
but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* 796
(or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the 535
water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'* of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the words:

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches 527
the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of 793
Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree
used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for 769
you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return 796
the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices.

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never 534
brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on the land that it may know all is well.'

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests be- 241
came ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that 527
the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant.

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

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751/ the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top,
778 and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round
with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On
[515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in
which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr*
(lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway
is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an
●769 ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on
the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a *ba' bugr*. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351/ Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed
343 huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we
enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge
[347] of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside
342 this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a
horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog* (compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other
342 called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The
second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the
778 *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God),
755 a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full
of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the *baa* (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768
man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428
it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768
want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men 834
whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The
deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292]
wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these [586]
on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768
the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562
cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587
cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clans- 768
man who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769
whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows 614
belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

Kusase

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'.
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I 591
asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such, for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [604]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back, he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-* 583
pog) once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea- [769]
fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep
and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law [764]
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones. When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child, for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front
and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath
[195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the
back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are
cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those
who have lost their fathers.

764 'When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are
765 boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and
after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his
[314] wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then
given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of
the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its
place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which
they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit
and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is
called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge
of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral
is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is
765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He
769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is
fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the
setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the
deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of
the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[171] [1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath, i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita*.

[535 831] [2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected, sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about such things.

Kusase

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765
father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769
his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his
father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make
use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the
flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies.
It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years,
later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been
settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the
day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters'
children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations,
assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302]
are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely
shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the
children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765
who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768
they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out.
After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765
main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837
the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle.
She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783
sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there
send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness.
He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the
land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedaṇ'* will come and [793]
sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have
sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says
so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one
representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their
mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201]
in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses
his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of
the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and
its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also
put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it.
The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a
fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices
the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out
from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

throughout its past; and it is, at the same time, the embryo of its future 613
organization. A Tale lineage cannot be dissociated from its temporal
extension.

A maximal lineage is fixed with reference to its founding ancestor, who 613
is the focus of its unity and the symbol of its corporate identity. From 769 ●
time to time its unity and identity become explicit in the common cult
of this ancestor and in the regulation of intra-lineage relations which
hinges on it. The ancestor cult is the calculus of the lineage system, the
mechanism by means of which the progressive internal differentiation of
a lineage is ordered and is fitted into the existing structure. It is also the
principal ideological bulwark of the lineage organization.

Every maximal lineage is continually expanding and proliferating 613
through the fission of its minor segments. But though its span is thus
constantly increasing, its form does not alter. It has a fixed centre and a
fixed locus we might say. In theory it always remains the same lineage,
and new maximal lineages cannot arise through the splitting up of an
existing maximal lineage. It is a unit of common agnatic descent, and no
branch of it can ever repudiate this. In theory ties of descent can never
lapse. A maximal lineage is also an exogamous unit, and no branch of it [582]
can contract out of this bond.

To the contemporary observer the Tale lineage system appears as a stable and finally established factor of the constituted social structure, the ground plan of which was laid down in the distant past by processes which are still going on. In any maximal lineage, therefore, the fission of minor segments does not alter the equilibrium of the major segments at any given time. Changes in minimal lineages, in fact, cannot alter the equilibrium of any segment greater than the minimal. This is reflected in the naming of lineages and their segments. Every lineage is named after its founder, and as long as a lineage persists it bears the same name. Thus the names of segments greater than the minimal may be regarded as fixed once for all. A lineage is called the 'children (*biis*) of so-and-so' or 'the house (*yir*) or people of the house (*yidem*) of so-and-so'. These ways of denoting a lineage are interchangeable. A lineage may also be described as a 'room' (*dug*) of a superordinate lineage. This indicates that it is being thought of as a segment of the latter.

This formal analysis will be more easily understood from the diagram which follows. It shows, in a simplified way, the structure of a major segment of a maximal lineage which is assumed to have only two major segments. The major segment not included must be homologous with the major segment shown here since a lineage necessarily divides into segments of equal order. Similarly, the relations of the two major segments of our hypothetical maximal lineage to each other are repeated, at a lower order of segmentation, in the relations of the major segments of each major segment to one another. In the diagram the relations of subsegments X and Y to each other, within the framework of Major Segment I, are identical in form with those of Major Segment I and its brother (*sunzɔ*) segment, Major Segment II, and this rule holds for every subsequent order of segmentation. We shall later on study the interests, rights, and obligations associated with such an ordered series

587 When, some forty years ago, a Tongo man married a Zoo widow and his
x618 son was shot dead in revenge by a Zoo man, the Chief of Tongo forbade
a raid of retaliation. It was, my informants said, a just vengeance since
[682] 'we don't marry the widows of Zoo people'.

Again, it would be a serious breach of solidarity for a member of one of
x618 the sub-clans to abduct the wife of a member of any other, and I have
627 never heard of such a case. Warfare between them is inconceivable, so
the injured group would have to rely upon moral pressure through the
chief and elders of the offender's community. But these measures would
undoubtedly succeed, even in these days when rebellious young men can
flee to foreign lands.

x618 This is likewise the widest extension of a restriction which holds with
587 greatest force for the segments of a maximal lineage belonging to the
same sub-clan, e.g. for the segments of Tongo *inter se*. In a lesser degree
it applies also to ex-wives. A man who marries the former wife of another,
even if the marriage was severed for just and accepted reasons, incurs the
hostility of the first husband's entire lineage both towards himself personally
and towards his clansmen as a group. Reprisals will be taken when
an opportunity occurs. When the parties are clansmen, feelings about such
acts become very bitter, and the more so the closer the tie. Marriages of
this kind take place from time to time, producing conflicts and reprisals
but not disruption of clanship ties.

x618 Another proof of kinship (*mabiirət*) usually cited by the natives is that
721 warfare between the four sub-clans was forbidden. They were allies in
war in the old days. They did not all come to one another's help, nor
were they each other's sole allies. But they could call upon one another's
assistance in the name of kinship. The recollections of the oldest men go
back no farther than the time of their grandparents, four or five generations
ago. They tell of ancient fights in which Tongo, Sie, and Yaməlɔg
supported one another; but Biuk, it seems, maintained an isolationist
policy in the wars and feuds of its Tale kinsmen. The greatest war still
remembered in tale and anecdote occurred forty or fifty years ago.
Yaməlɔg became involved in it; and when Ba'ari raised the war-cry
against Yaməlɔg, Sie and Tongo attacked Ba'ari on the flanks.

Mosuor biis: a Maximal Lineage

x618 These four branches of Mosuor's agnatic posterity (*tu'u*) constitute
what appears to be a single, dispersed clan—the only clan of this type in
Taleland; more accurately, it is a maximal lineage—the most inclusive
agnatic lineage to which any descendant of Mosuor in the male line (i.e.
any member of the four branches) can belong. In the eyes of the natives
an important qualification is that the four branches are of equal status
though graded in seniority. Tongo is the most senior because it remained
in possession of the original home of the clan—'*ti waabi daboog*, the
ancient home-site of all of us', they say—and has retained the custody of
Mosuor's grave and *bɔyar*, the shrine which symbolizes the perpetuity,
x618 identity, and common ancestry of the entire maximal lineage. Yaməlɔg,
Sie, and Biuk follow in that order; but they no longer participate in
769 sacrifices to Mosuor. Each of them has its own ancestral *bɔyar*, enshrining

its founding ancestors and its own differential line of agnatic descent. 618x Each sub-clan sacrifices separately to its own founding ancestor. Mosuor 769 ● is regarded as the common ancestor of all the sub-clans, but the cult of his shrine is the sole prerogative and duty of the Tongo branch of his posterity. According to Tale interpretation, a long period of territorial separation, bringing about political independence of one another, has inevitably resulted in the corresponding religious autonomy of each unit. A *bɔɣar* cannot be separated from the grave and the home-site (*daboog*) of the ancestor it enshrines. Though the custody and cult of Mosuor's *bɔɣar* are the exclusive province of the Tongo branch of the clan, because residence, lineage, and ancestor cult must have a concurrent continuity, these rights and duties are held to be exercised on behalf of the whole clan.

An unusual incident showed how the cult of Mosuor's *bɔɣar* is related to the constitution of the clan. It was on the occasion of the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other early ancestors of Tongo described below (pp. 53–4). When the beer was being distributed, a man called out that there was a young man from Yaməlәg present. This was quite unprecedented. The elders began to discuss the situation vigorously. The people of Yaməlәg had no right to attend such a sacrifice; but they were Mosuor's agnatic descendants, and if one of them turned up by chance, could he be excluded? 'Is not Mosuor their ancestor as well as ours?' At this point the Yaməlәg man stepped forward. He said that the question was of no importance; he was not a complete outsider intruding on the ritual of people not connected with him, neither was he there as a representative of Yaməlәg; he had come solely in his personal capacity, to 'scrounge' some of the beer and meat, and not to take part in the sacrifice. In short, though he could not be turned away from the sacrifice (as, say, a Zubiuŋ or Zoo man would have been) without offence to the clan ancestors, his presence there did not signify a claim by Yaməlәg to be represented at such rites, nor would it establish a precedent for the future. On this understanding, so amicably reached, he was given a courtesy portion of beer and meat.

As with the ancestor cult, so with the chiefship. Each sub-clan has 618x its own chiefship (*na'am*), in keeping with its territorial and political 622 autonomy, but the prototypical chiefship is that of Tongo, since it was established by Mosuor. Just as the four sub-clans are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) to one another, so their chiefs are 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*) equal in status but graded in seniority of rank, Tongo being the most senior and Biuk the most junior.

The equality of status of the four sub-clans is paralleled in the structure 618x of the maximal lineage which they constitute. In their relations of clanship 554 they are distant 'brothers' (*sunzɔp*), treating one another as relatively autonomous lineages. A Tongo man, when his conduct is determined by the norms of clanship, thinks of Yaməlәg, Sie, or Biuk as a corporate unit. Its internal structure is of no relevance to him. At any of these places, in any relations of clanship, he represents Tongo, taken as a unit, irrespective of his position in its internal structure.

The children of Mosuor think of their maximal lineage as finally and 618x

Assimilated lineages, therefore, all over Taleland, though thoroughly 618x
absorbed into the structure of the sub-clan or clan, suffer the same dis- 554
abilities as the more precisely differentiated attached lineages; they cannot,
however, make a virtue of this, as the latter sometimes can; they cannot 576
explain away their status. To tax a person, openly or explicitly, with 567
being the descendant of a slave (*da'abɔr bii*) is one of the deadliest insults, however remote his slave ancestry may be. This is more than a matter of etiquette. It amounts, in certain circumstances, to blasphemy against the spirit of the man who originally adopted this slave ancestor. Thus, under this rule of courtesy to clansmen and respect for ancestors, the status of an assimilated lineage is never commented on publicly unless a serious issue hangs on it or a severe quarrel is involved. This exceptional circumspection about assimilated lineages shows better than anything else their ambiguous position in the clan.

Such elements of the social structure as these are not apparent at first 618x
glance. I did not discover the existence of assimilated lineages at Tongo until the end of my first year in the field. To do so it was essential to have a very thorough understanding of the way the lineage system works and of the internal structure of the Tale community. I was able then to notice and to be puzzled by the absence, or self-effacement, of certain people in situations where they would normally be representing their lineage segments. It was not the behaviour to be expected of them if their segments were of equal status with the authentic segments of Mosuor biis. Veiled hints began to have a meaning which confidential informants confirmed.

One of my earliest friends and frankest informants at Tongo was 618x
Saɣəbazaa, an elder in whom the chief had the greatest confidence and 115
who was universally esteemed for his industry and probity. Saɣəbazaa was the head (*kpeem*) of Nɔŋsuur yidem, a major segment of one of the major segments of Tongo. One of its members held an important and confidential office under the chief. Nɔŋsuur yidem appeared to be of the true agnatic line of Mosuor. I took this for granted the more readily because, when the Great Festival season came round and all the elders of Tongo were summoned to the chief's house so that a diviner could be consulted, it was Saɣəbazaa who consulted the diviner on behalf of the chief and the whole of Tongo, in order to ascertain what offerings must be given to Mosuor and the chiefly ancestors.

Nevertheless, Nɔŋsuur yidem is an assimilated lineage whose founding 618x
ancestor is vaguely said to have arrived with Mosuor. Though almost completely absorbed by the authentic line of Mosuor biis, a last barrier remains, which I discovered only through one of the most striking of the events which revealed the existence and status of accessory lineages at Tongo. It showed also how there is a continuous process of adjustment going on in every sector of the social structure, resolving the tensions and contradictions latent in it.

It was an occasion of historic importance marking the climax of one 618x
phase in the absorption of the accessory lineages by the authentic lineages 769
of Tongo. The occasion was that of the great thanksgiving sacrifice to the founding ancestors of Tongo, Mosuor and his son Seɣahəg, which took place in 1936. Beer and animals were contributed by the chief, who gave

x618 a cow, and by all the segments of the sub-clan—the heads bringing a
●769 sheep each, the elders next in seniority in each segment a goat each, and the junior elders bringing fowls. It was noticeable that assimilated and attached lineages also brought contributions of fowls, by express command of the chief. Never before in the memory of the oldest men had so many animals been slaughtered in sacrifice to the ancient ancestors (*yaabkɔrəg*, pl. *yaakɔrəb*) of the sub-clan on one day; and a great concourse of men of all ages, such as had never in living memory gathered for such a sacrifice, assembled for the occasion. Among them were several members of assimilated and attached lineages, but, surprisingly, none of the senior elders of these lineages. The authentic segments were there in full force, their senior elders acting as their formal representatives and taking the lead in the rites. In the days of their youth, some of the old men murmured with disapproval, only the heads of the authentic lineages used to be present at sacrifices to Mosuor. A noisy crowd of men of all ages would have been considered altogether out of keeping with so sacred and esoteric a *bɔɣar* as that of the founding ancestor. But times
[622] have changed; these are the chief's orders; and if it is obligatory for every authentic lineage to be represented at such a sacrifice, it is also the right of any of their male members to participate if they wish. There were whispers, also, about 'strangers' (*saam*) being present, and I thought, at first, that they must be referring to me.

The ceremony proceeded with the usual alternation of reverential solemnity and conviviality and lasted far into the night. But for two incidents one might have forgotten the presence of those men who by the strict canon of agnatic descent were intruders. There was a long delay at the outset while the elders of the segment which has the custody of the graves and shrines of the clan founders (Lɛbhtiis yidɛm) held a private conference at the house of their lineage head. This aroused the suspicion of some of the better informed men amongst the crowd waiting impatiently for their arrival. Next day we learnt that these suspicions were justified. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm had been debating with some acrimony, though inconclusively, what was the right line to take about the presence of members of accessory lineages.

Later, there was another hitch just before the culminating rite, the actual sacrifice to Mosuor's *bɔɣar*. There were whispered consultations. An impetuous member of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm protested that the intruders should be shut out, but he was overruled by an elder who counselled moderation in view of the chief's wishes.

Next day these incidents were threshed out by the chief when all the elders met to congratulate him on the success of the sacrifices. He rated Lɛbhtiis yidɛm scathingly for their reactionary conduct. 'Times have changed', he said in the course of a long harangue, 'and you must disregard those old tales. Anyhow, you are only my deputies. It is I who really own Mosuor's *bɔɣar*, and it is I who will suffer the penalties if Mosuor is offended by what I am doing. And what if some people are of slave descent? They won't steal the *bɔɣar* from you. If a man has a slave he calls him to come and join in sacrifices to his ancestors; his slave is like his son. Mosuor established (*naam*, lit. created) all of us, he owns

all of us (i.e. those of alleged slave descent as well). Who are you to 618x
decide who is or is not to be allowed to take part in sacrifices to him?' 769

Crest-fallen, the supporters of the *status quo ante* begged the chief's pardon. It was a victory for the forces of community integration and a personal triumph for the chief over the cleavages due to the strict application of the canon of agnatic descent.

One of the chief's most intimate and influential elders commented to 618x
me afterwards, cautiously but with a hint of regret, that soon it would become impossible to withhold the chiefship from the accessory lineages now that they had practically won the right to participate in the most esoteric ritual cult of the true agnatic sodality. But the battle for consolidation is not yet over. The presence of some members of accessory lineages at the sacrifices was not part of a deliberate scheme to gain equality of status but was an unthinking reaction to the whole situation—the unusual publicity of the ceremony, its emphasis on an all-embracing solidarity of the whole sub-clan, and the chief's insistence on interpreting this to mean all the people of Tongo and not only those of true agnatic descent from Mosuor. Some elders of the accessory lineages were as dubious about the affair as some of the elders of authentic lineages. To take part in sacrifices from which one's fathers and grandfathers (*banam ni yaanam*) had been rigidly excluded might well be an offence against one's own ancestors, even though the chief had taken the responsibility on himself. Members of accessory lineages do not resent their disfranchisement as a disability to be fought against, but accept it as part of the fixed order of society validated by the whole religious system.

Thus these elders of the accessory lineages will not take it for granted that they now have the same rights as the authentic lineages. They are aware, also, that the occurrence has left behind a good deal of hidden resentment which may, at some future crisis, precipitate a violent reaction against the inclusion of accessory lineages in the ritual brotherhood of Mosuor biis. The forces of integration are strong at Tongo; but the genealogical cleavages in its lineage structure are so fundamental that this historic sacrifice may yet prove to be a warning against their abrogation rather than a precedent for it.

This episode brought out more vividly than anything I had previously 618x
encountered the significance of the ancestral graves and shrines, in 778
particular of Mosuor's *bɔyar*, as the focus of the sub-clan's unity and the symbol of its corporate identity; for it was obvious that until they were able to participate on equal terms in sacrifices to this *bɔyar*, the accessory lineages would not be regarded as, or feel themselves to be, completely absorbed by the authentic lineages.

Tongo, we may conclude, though it is more closely knit than Sie, is 618x
also an open system in its lineage structure; and this is equally true of 184
Yaməlɘg and Biuk. This peculiarity of the clan organization is more precisely apparent in the asymmetrical linkages of the component lineages of the different sub-clans of Mosuor biis. It is evident from our analysis that the ties of clanship summarily posited by the natives as linking *all* of Tongo with *all* of Sie, *all* of Yaməlɘg, and *all* of Biuk, measured by the strict canon of agnatic descent as well as by the critical norms of clanship,

PLATE III

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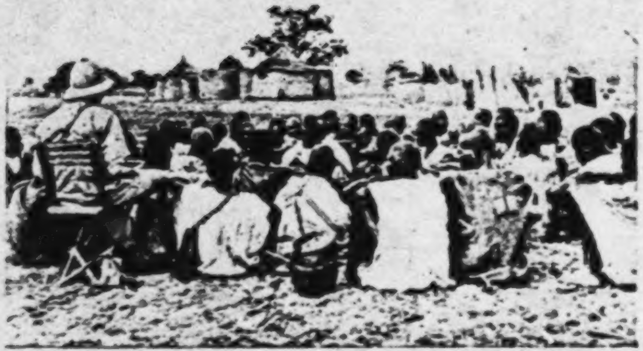

(*a*) Elders of a Maximal Lineage assemble to sacrifice to their Founder.

The Maximal Lineage is a corporate unit: The elders of a maximal lineage, representing all its component segments, assemble to perform a sacrifice on the grave of one of their founding ancestors. Note that (a) only men are present; (b) the members of each segment sit together; (c) the close-packed form of the group, an index of the strong sense of lineage solidarity in such situations.

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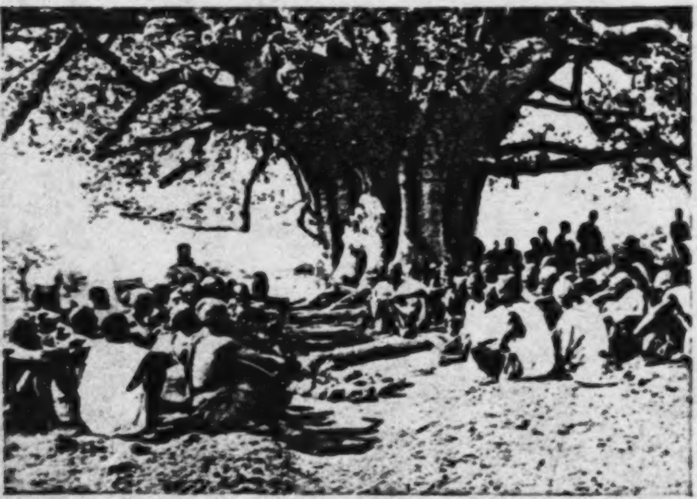

(*b*) Prayer preceding Sacrifice to Clan Founder.

An episode in the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other founding ancestors, at Tongo, in 1936. Men of the sub-clan assembled at Mosuor's grave (stones in foreground) and tree shrine (baobab tree). The photograph was taken as the prayer preceding the sacrifice was being offered.

[facing p. 56]

x618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tɛndaana, both receive sacrifices.
182 But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a
771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent
lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the
lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their
common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult
is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the
common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms
and sanctions of collective life.

774 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both
767 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve
182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages.
613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar (dugni bɔyar)*, the
shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members
of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a
derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpalɔg). It is, so to speak, the domestic
incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal
lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part
of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own
tɛndaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the
tɛndaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is
through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the
lineage, and through the joint action of all three tɛndaanas that they are
mobilized for the good of the clan.

x618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of
182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate
activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in
relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative
mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a
balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests
of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the
common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges
and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual
adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan
unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[793] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one
178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar
182 tɛndaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders
578 to Duunkpalɔg, where the most important rite of the series was to be
performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The
Yapaasdɛm did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments
were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs,
and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who
should have come to escort the tɛndaana-elect to Duunkpalɔg. The
Yapaasdɛm, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day,
scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient
to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is,
each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested
in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

x618 clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an
182 offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be
made at the External *Bɔyar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

x618 Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in
182 form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will
184 be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External
778 *Bɔyar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are
769 built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of
the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔyar* among
the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent
maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔyar*
of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔyar* is kept at the house of the segment head
in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔyar* of
one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔyar* itself consists
of one or two small pots (*kpatarəg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel
made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and
covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually
indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

182 As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔyar and the Earth

x618 A. *Zubiuŋ*. We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ
182 becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔyar*, Duunkpaləg, the common shrine
778 of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of
782 the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the
769 cults of the *Bɔyar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of
clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration
with the clan structure is relatively simple and is analogous to what is
found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal
lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of
their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpaləg *Bɔyar*. It is described as an
External *Bɔyar* (*yɛŋha bɔyar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being
out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being
bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

x618 But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔyar*,
778 'the *bɔyar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal
769 lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages
similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni*

bɔyar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the 618x External *Bɔyar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it 778 symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that 769 particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔyar*, that is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpalɔg in ritual homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔyar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage, as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia, and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure— 618x on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the 769 clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship 618x never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpalɔg or at any of the Zubiuŋ 782 Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ 769 maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in the ceremonies of inducting a new tɛndaana into his office, or in the funeral rites of a deceased tɛndaana—members of the linked lineages of that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari*. The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component 618x units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the 778 principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. 782 Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and obligations of close *sunzɔp*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, [794] and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔyar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔyar* and a focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yayazuor, who are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties [608] of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field.
Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔɣar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔɣar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔɣar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
184 single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine
●769 (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to
assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the
Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a
[793] Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[778] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
769

182
778 of the people of Gbizug is the grave of their primordial ancestor, Tɛndaan
794 Gɛnət. This grave, situated on the reputed house-site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət,
is in the sole custody of Gbizug, and is associated with the tɛndaanaship,
x618 therefore with the Earth cult. But whenever a new Gbizug tɛndaana is
●769 installed, representatives of Gbeog, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra must be present at the rites performed at Gɛnət's grave. This is a matter of right and duty, subsumed under the rights and duties of their clanship ties and validated by the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas. But one segment of Wakii must also be represented at these rites, not in virtue of clanship ties but of the kinship (*mabiirət*) in the figurative sense that is held to prevail between all tɛndaana clans. It is effective in this case because of the proximity and the ritual collaboration in the Great Festivals of Wakii and Gbizug.

x618 It is significant that the people of Soog, despite their clanship ties with Gbizug, do not come into the field of its ritual relations. On the surface this appears to be correlated with their spatial separation from Gbizug. It is only by their attendance at the exoteric ceremonies that accompany the installation or funeral of a Gbizug tɛndaana, and by the rights to special portions of meat and beer that they can exercise on these occasions, that the clanship ties between Soog and Gbizug impinge on the latter's field of ritual relations.

x618 On the other hand, the clanship ties of Soog with Gbeog have a ritual
794 embodiment in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. All the segments of Gbeog
769 practise this cult; but some of them owe allegiance to the *Bɔyar* of which the people of Soog are the senior custodians, and the others have a separate *Bɔyar* of their own. Soog and Gbeog do not have a common Earth shrine. In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog forms one united community and Soog another.

182 In this intricate tissue of ritual relations we see again, as at Ba'ari, the
x618 interweaving of clanship ties, neighbourhood ties, and ties of ritual interdependence *per se*, forming syntheses of politico-ritual relations at a higher level than those that are possible in terms of any one of these categories. This interweaving can be seen at any of the ceremonies in which a particular field of ritual relations is actualized. It is particularly clear among the Tɛnzugu clans, where we can see, more plainly than at Gbizug or Ba'ari, how it is produced by the counterbalancing of ritual ties against clanship and local cleavages, and of ritual ties of one sort against those of another sort.

x618 Soog has a specific ritual tie with one major segment of Sakpee, the
769 head of which installs the senior ritual functionary of the Soog External *Bɔyar*. This segment of Sakpee, Sakpee I, has its own *Bɔyar*. But it unites with the other major segment, Sakpee II, in the worship of a common Earth shrine, the custody of which is vested in Sakpee II; and Sakpee II owes allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* Bona'ab, the senior custodian of which is the head of Kpata'ar. Soog, though linked by clanship ties with Kpata'ar, has no direct ritual connexions with it. Their fields of ritual relations overlap at Sakpee, which forms the bridge between them at this level.

Kpata'ar provides a typical instance of the structure of the ritual fields

of any of the Hill Talis clans. Each of the two maximal lineages that 618 X
constitute Kpata'ar, Kpata'arna'ab yiri and Nakyeet yiri, has its own 769 ●
private lineage *bɔyar*. Though bound by all the reciprocal duties and privileges that make them the closest clan *sunzɔp* of each other, the genealogical cleavage between them is somewhat more strongly emphasized than it is between the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ, for example. The head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is the head of the clan, and *eo ipso* the senior ritual functionary and principal custodian of the Bona'ab *Bɔyar*. The head of Nakyeet yiri has a complementary role in relation to him in political, ritual, and jural affairs that concern the whole clan.

The politico-ritual office held by the head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is symbolized in a shrine that is ancillary to the External *Bɔyar*. It is in the sole custody of Kpata'arna'ab yiri. But when sacrifice is offered at it on prescribed occasions Nakyeet yiri must also be represented; and in addition Dakuor yiri, the component maximal lineage of Bunkiuk with which Kpata'arna'ab yiri has ties of clanship, must be represented and share in the sacrament. Thus, both Nakyeet yiri and Dakuor yiri, though they themselves have no ties of clanship, take part in a common sacrifice with Kpata'arna'ab yiri because of their clanship ties with the latter. In this case the central region of the field of clanship of Kpata'arna'ab yiri becomes actualized in a sacrament that symbolizes the exclusive rights to a particular politico-ritual office held by that maximal lineage.

But what about the worship of the External *Bɔyar*, Bona'ab? As its senior custodians, the men of Kpata'arna'ab yiri can sacrifice there alone or accompanied by Nakyeet yiri, if they desire the intercession of the *Bɔyar* in matters that concern them only. When the Great Festivals come round, however, it is obligatory for the whole congregation of the *Bɔyar* to join together in the performance of the ceremonies. The other communicants, beside the two segments of Kpata'ar, are Gundaat, Samiit and two of its linked lineages, together counting as a single unit, and Sakpee II.

The cult of the *Bɔyar* Bona'ab is the central force uniting this group 122
of maximal lineages. It is, we must emphasize, not a permanent bond of 618 X
union that operates at all times and under all conditions, but a synthesis 769
that emerges chiefly in the context of the Great Festivals. During the
festivals their interdependence in the cult of the *Bɔyar* imposes mutual [796]
amity and solidarity on this group of maximal lineages. At other times this is not always an effective sanction of amity and goodwill. For these ties of ritual collaboration are not homogeneous. Underneath them run other ties which reinforce them in the context of the *Bɔyar* cult but might act against them outside of this context. There are first the ties of clanship linking Kpata'arna'ab yiri with Nakyeet yiri, Nakyeet yiri with
Sakpee, Sakpee with Gundaat, in a chain, as it were. Then there are the [608]
ties of clanship-by-courtesy which link all these lineages with one another. Samiit and Sakpee have bonds of local contiguity because they 'sit together on the same land' under the ritual jurisdiction of the Sakpee tendaana. Gundaat and Samiit are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, bound by a covenant of mutual amity which they trace back to the alleged kinship ties of their mythological founding ancestors. Gundaat and Kpata'ar

182 x618 769 have not only bonds of local contiguity, but an additional tie of ritual interdependence in that their heads install each other in their respective ritual offices. Similarly, Sakpee and Samiit have an added ritual tie in that their heads each have a special role in the ceremonial installation of the other. Finally, the head of Samiit exercises a special politico-ritual function in relation to the head of Kpata'ar. It is his task, in times of great social emergency, formally to adjure the head of Kpata'ar to initiate the ritual procedures necessary to avert disaster.

Thus, underneath the general collaboration of the communicants of Bona'ab with one another in the *Bɔyar* cult, and interweaving with it, spread these particular, divergent ties between different pairs of maximal lineages. In many situations these subordinate ties hold fast where the superordinate ties of ritual collaboration between all the communicants are not strong enough to override the cleavages between them. [578] It is a striking thing, for instance, that whereas Nakyeet yiri and Sakpee have tended to side with the Gɔlibdaana of Bunkiuk in the struggle for power that has been going on between him and the head of Kpata'ar during the last few years, Gundaat has stood staunchly by the latter. The general bond of ritual collaboration in the *Bɔyar* cult has not ensured the support of the whole Bona'ab congregation for Kpata'arna'ab yidem in this struggle, and even the specific ties of clanship between them and Nakyeet yidem have not been proof against the lure of the Gɔlibdaana's fleshpots.

It is characteristic of Tale society that the structure of a community, whether it be a permanent community or a temporary community such as emerges in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, is directly mirrored in every situation and every institution in which this structure becomes manifest. To take a very simple example: when the congregation of Bona'ab assembles there for a sacrifice, the representatives of the different maximal lineages sit in a fixed order. Kpata'arna'ab yidem sit in the place of greatest honour, since they are the senior custodians, and the other lineages are distributed as shown in the diagram opposite. It will be seen that this diagram gives a picture also of the structural relations between the different lineages, and incidentally of their local relations to one another. It shows in a nutshell how local, structural, and politico-ritual relations are interlocked with one another and converge to create and maintain interclan co-operation and solidarity. The diagram shows also how the ritual roles in any of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship at the *Bɔyar* are distributed amongst the different maximal lineages.

182 x618 794 796 Kpata'arna'ab yidem are the senior custodians also of the supreme Earth shrine of Tenzugu, Doo; but in the cult of Doo they have a completely different set of ritual collaborators from those associated with them in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. They have a different field of ritual relations counterpoised to that of which the External *Bɔyar* is the focus. The units associated with Kpata'arna'ab yidem in the cult of Doo are Degal (linked by clanship ties to them, but having its own External *Bɔyar*), Gɔlibdaan yidem of Bunkiuk (who have no clanship ties with Kpata'arna'ab yidem, and are the senior custodians of a different External

Bɔyar from theirs), and Tamboog (who also have no clanship ties with 182.
Kpata'ar, and have an independent External *Bɔyar*). These four units 769
must be represented at all rites performed at Doo during the Great 794
618x

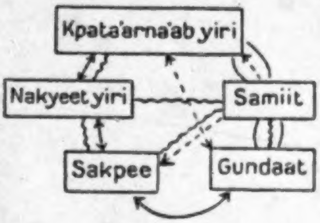

Diagram showing the seating arrangements at ceremonies in the sacred grove of the External Bɔyar BONA'AB, as reflecting the structural relations underlying ritual collaboration in the Bɔyar cult.

⟷ = Clanship ties
〰 = Ties of local contiguity
- - -➤ = Specific ties of politico-ritual interdependence
⬭ = Other social ties.

Festivals. Each one has also a private Earth shrine, with which the other three groups have no connexion, but their common allegiance to Doo binds them to one another in mutual ritual dependence. This should mean also, and by all accounts formerly did mean, a bond of mutual amity and cohesion; for there is nothing, according to Tale belief, which the Earth abhors so greatly as strife between those who worship it together at the same shrine.

To-day the cult of Doo furnishes an outstanding instance of the rela- 182
tivity of such ritual sanctions to the structural relations of the corporate 618x
units amongst which they are effective. During the Great Festivals, the
four maximal lineages meet as of old to perform the prescribed rites at 794
Doo. For this limited period and this objective they are obliged to set
aside their antagonisms and collaborate amicably. At other times, how- [578]
ever, they are divided by the struggle for power that has been going on
between the Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab. Both Degal (in spite of
their clanship ties with Kpata'ar) and the majority of the Tamboog people
have been seduced by the wealth and power of the Gɔlibdaana.

The pull of loyalty to Kpata'ar sustained by the common cult of Doo 578
has not, however, remained altogether ineffective. In order to make their religious relations with Kpata'ar consistent with their newly arisen political hostility to them, the supporters of the Gɔlibdaana have tried to oust Kpata'arna'ab yidem from their traditional status in relation to Doo. They would thus, if they succeeded, have put Kpata'ar in the position of a faction opposed to the rightful principals in the cult of Doo.

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At
the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

●769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them
as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They
owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the
Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

784 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances.
Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so
a supplicant coming to the *Bɔɣar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also
from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔɣar* in the
Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the
snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence,
children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔɣar* must avoid
all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have
independent External *Bɔɣa*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔɣar* congregation. This means that the clans and
lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the
ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It
implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-
ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of
redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation,
or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife,
though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member
lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling
of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another,
among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of
to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious
community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔɣar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794
sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the
rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them
over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing
Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔɣar* or the coercion of an
adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult to 776
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔɣar can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛɣər*) of an individual. An
ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native
religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist
(*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) must keep the totemic
avoidances of the *Bɔɣar* community. This applies particularly to non-
Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims
to the *Bɔɣar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual
dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born,
as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis them-
selves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards
of the *Bɔɣar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual
guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion
[551] with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
[582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi;
and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of
the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts
and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the
benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace,
and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the
totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured
kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client
lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

leopard taboo of Dkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of 776
the Talis. 784

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems 184
is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛyər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛyər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔyar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛyər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔyar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔyar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔyar* and the *Bɔyar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that 608
sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be 776
called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔyar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔyar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔyar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔyar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with 608
lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when 769
the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔya* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔyar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding 182
pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618x
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is
through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social
order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔɣar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618x
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the
Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔɣar*.

The External *Bɔɣar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔɣar*, parallel to 618x
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and 778
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794
each External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of
maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Taləŋ (*u pana baŋ Taləŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Taləŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔɣar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔɣar*, and often
invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔɣar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

769 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most
778 solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order be-
881 queathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of
794 the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm*
881 *kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when
627 he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial)
881 fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with
771 the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562
of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613
relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔɣayabəlis*, deprived by an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan. This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784]
pɔɣayabələg of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives, of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔɣayabələg* might, in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔɣayabələg* as 562
an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854
example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan. Usually she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787]
will be a suitable *pɔɣayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a *pɔɣayabələg* is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task; it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being. Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔɣar* is significant in 562
this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793
shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769
case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔɣayabəlis* have the right to take part

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔɣar*, the married *pɔɣayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔɣayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔɣayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔɣayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔɣar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive
succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the
lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his succes-
[787] sor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔɣayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination.
Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔɣar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔɣar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent
through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769 ●
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on 688

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[1] The word *tєŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter. [193]

613 621 602 ●[769] where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of residence, common interests, and common experience. The local concentration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives, which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

613 621 571 In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the [587] segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close [602] agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

778 The graves of Sɛγahəg and Bɔγada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔγada's grave is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbər, and Bɔγayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakɔradɛm, Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔγada's grave is proof to the natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo clans living in the vicinity of Yamələg and Sie—the group of clans which the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos —a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔγar* takes the place of the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

of Təŋ-Kuorəg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tendaana any the less a chief or tendaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tendaana has, in addition, the sanction of the
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 769
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody 182
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is 182
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes 782
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, but all who participate feel them to be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage), and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔyar* of his medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of a sacrifice to the *bɔyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's* duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
627

796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within
182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they
[625] always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare
681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments; on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of
721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels
182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those [illegible] have discerned in
769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

578

adapted by stages to changes in its internal composition due to the passage 182
of time or the cumulative effects of social and economic pressure, without 769
bursting its form.

Solidarity within the clan or the lineage is governed by the field 182
principle. It is a function of the situation; and it is a function, also, of
the segmentary relationship of each unit involved to other like units, to
more inclusive units, and to the whole social structure. The complex of
thought, feeling, action, and expression we designate as the sentiment
of solidarity is evoked in different degrees in accordance with the sector
of the social structure engaged. It reflects the range of common interests
evoked in the situation and the strength of the common values.

Within the clan, or any segment of it, the sentiment of solidarity is a 182
constant motive of conduct and a regular criterion by which the individual 618 X
evaluates the behaviour of others. We have seen how it grows out of the
lifelong association of lineage kin in daily life. Hence a Taləŋ identifies
himself by reference to his clan settlement and the segment of his clan to
which he belongs. He speaks of his clansmen as 'our folk (*ti yidɛm*)' and
of their wives and children as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)' and 'our children (*ti
biis*)'. In the old days of warfare, as in market brawls or hunting expeditions
to-day, a Taləŋ never stops to question the rights or wrongs of an
argument in which a clansman of his is involved with a non-clansman, or
a close agnate with a distant agnate. He immediately takes his clansman's
or close agnate's part.

The unity of a clan or a lineage is not only a vital fact of experience 182
for its members but the principal concept by which other corporate 426
groups define it in jural, political, and ritual relations. Thus in the old
days a creditor could raid the live-stock of any clansman of his debtor,
but not those of a neighbour of his debtor who belonged to a different
clan. In the latter case a reprisal raid was the penalty. In the former
case the victim of the raid could demand restitution from his clansman,
the original debtor; and I know of men who pawned a child or sold him [567]
into slavery in order to find the means of repaying a clansman who had
been raided, rather than let the affair become a source of conflict in the
clan. This is a good illustration, incidentally, of the statement previously
made that collective responsibility is not a principle of Tale jural relations.
It is not the clan but the debtor himself who is responsible for his debt.
Self-help is a technique for putting pressure on a debtor through the
mechanisms of clan and lineage cohesion.

The same principle appears in the abduction of wives of distant 583
unrelated clans. Thus Pal of Zubiuŋ abducted the wife of a Yinduuri 426
man. He claimed that this was merely 'cancelling a debt (*lɛrəg samər*)'.
Some years earlier a distant clansman of the Yinduuri man had abducted
the wife of one of Pal's clansmen and this 'debt' had now been cancelled.
The point is, not that all Yinduuri was held responsible for the original
wrong, but that every wife is a gain to the clan as a whole and the loss
of a wife is a loss to the clan as a whole. If a clan wishes to avoid reprisals
such as those taken by Pal, men of the clan must not countenance the
abduction of wives by any of their fellows. It is like the avenging of a 682
clansman's death at the hands of men of another clan in the old days. 618X

793 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as
578 their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the
privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as
the Gbizug tɛndaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at
ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tɛndaana. For a short
while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two
tɛndaanas together again, when the Gbeog tɛndaana had to perform the
principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tɛndaana. But soon
afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans
declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tɛndaanas are right, they say. The
Gbizug tɛndaana is going by 'what used to be (*dɛn daa a siem*)', the
Gbeog tɛndaana by 'what is now (*dɛn a siem zinala*)'. It is a problem of
adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary
relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be
a Gbizug tɛndaana who will accept the present position. Then the two
tɛndaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co-
x618 operation and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of
conduct. Yinyɛla's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led
to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members
of Yinyɛla's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his
house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly
rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal
scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in
public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to
focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solida-
[208] rity as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of
the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of
stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time
one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the
mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and
social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment.
The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and
relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors,
concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means
● [769 of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in
182] which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the
lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common
ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

578 We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago
[780] Gbalɔg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief
pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbalɔg went to
settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with
him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father,
stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo.
Yet Gbalɔg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man,
boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But
[787] the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

613 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also
ipso facto an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differen-
769 tiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as
well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult
778 of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine
(*bɔɣar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a composite clan has its lineage *bɔɣar*, distinguishing it from the other segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se* by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors. The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔɣar* known as an External *Bɔɣar*. An External *Bɔɣar* is usually a sacred grove, or a shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

771 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor
of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult
794 of the External *Bɔɣar* is another important factor of cohesion and
182 equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of
the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It repre-
769 sents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those
of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not associated in the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, collaborate in the rites of
the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally
[778] in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of
a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social relations in terms of the External *Bɔɣar* cult, and yet a third field of corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity. Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all, moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and the tendaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

602 These norms of kinship the Tallensi regard as axiomatic, one might say as the *a priori* moral premisses of their social behaviour. Behind the 577 utility of kinship in practical life and the jural and ritual sanctions that buttress kinship ties stands the notion of kinship as the rock-bottom category of social relations, inviolable in its own right. The root of this notion lies in the bond between parent and child and it reflects the fact that genealogical relationship is the binding medium of Tale social structure. The Tallensi are outspoken sceptics about human nature. They take it for granted that the ideal norms of kinship will often be violated. They know well, however, that they are usually effective and cannot be destroyed by the transgressions of individuals; for these, in the end, always bring their own revenge and are compensated for in the total flow of collective life. In any case, the lapses of individuals, and the fact that strong sanctions exist to check them, do not diminish the absolute, *a priori* character of kinship.

602 It is worth noting that economic reciprocity—which is a conspicuous element in kinship, especially among close kin—and jural rights and ● 769 duties have a much less direct connexion with this fundamental assumption of kinship than religious bonds have. This is connected with the important place of ancestor worship in Tale society. To trace genealogical relationship it is necessary to recollect common ancestors; and if these have religious value, ritual allegiance to a common ancestor or ancestress inevitably forms an intrinsic feature of kinship ties and their most powerful sanction. The more distant a genealogical tie is, the more does it become a matter of moral and ritual, rather than of jural or economic, relations. We shall see this in more detail when we come to compare social relations within the domestic family with the relations of kinship outside the domestic family.

Two Classes of Kinship Relations

602 Any relation of kinship belongs to one of two classes. If people say 'We are *dɔyam*', the basic analogy they have in mind is that of siblings. Two men who are cognatically related to the same lineage—e.g. two men who have a common maternal uncle's lineage (*ahɔb yir*) or whose fathers or grandfathers had a common maternal uncle's lineage—describe themselves thus. They visualize their relationship primarily as one of common though independent religious allegiance to a particular line of common ancestors, in sacrifices to whom they may both partake. By the operation of the lineage principle two lineages might consider themselves to be related in such a manner. Kɔnbameŋ and Pudiniba, two young men of the same clan but of different sections of the clan, were good friends. When I asked them how their friendship had arisen, they resorted, characteristically, to the idiom of kinship. Being members of the same clan is not a sufficient reason for so personal a relationship as friendship. The reason they adduced was that they were both sister's

837 his friend's children. Tale sentiment takes no cognizance of physical paternity in this situation. No kinship tie is recognized between the physiological father and the child he was deputed to beget. One might almost describe it as, from their point of view, a kind of artificial insemination.

The case of an unmarried woman's child (*yi-yeem-bii*) is different. 848 611 It is brought up as the foster-child of her father or brother. If it is a girl, no difficulties occur, as she will eventually marry and Tale kinship ideas permit *her* children to regard her mother's lineage as their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yir*). She will even be allowed to marry into her mother's clan provided it is a different major segment of the clan. Several instances of this are on record; for no stigma attaches to anybody concerned, since an illegitimate child is not a true clan member.

An illegitimate boy's circumstances are not so easy. The evidence of two cases I was acquainted with amply confirms conventional opinion on this subject. Such a boy will grow up to all intents and purposes as a child of his mother's father's or brother's family and as a full member of the clan. He will be treated exactly like other sons of the family, whom he will call his brothers. His quasi-father will, for example, provide the cattle and take the responsibility for his marriage, as would not be done for a legitimate sister's son (*ahəŋ*) growing up in his maternal uncle's (*ahəb*) home. But he has two fundamental disabilities, which nothing can overcome and which pass, by the principle of the corporate identity of the lineage, to his agnatic male descendants. He [428 769] has no right to inherit his quasi-father's patrimonial estate, though he may be permitted to do so if there are no other heirs; and he has no right to sacrifice directly to his spirit, or consequently, to the lineage ancestors. He cannot, therefore, succeed to the custody of lineage ancestors' shrines or hold an office vested in the lineage. The tie of true agnatic descent, which alone confers these rights, cannot be fabricated.

An illegitimate boy's status in the lineage is in fact, therefore, inferior 848 to that of his quasi-brothers. He is always liable to a certain amount of covert contempt, though good manners forbid the mention of his irregular descent in the normal course of events. But if he gets involved in a quarrel with his quasi-siblings or quasi-clansmen, even as a child, they might well taunt him as an interloper (*zaŋkuomər*). His lot may be harder, if he has an intractable character, than that of a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with his mother's brother (*ahəb*); for the latter has a home of his own to fall back upon, where he is entitled, by right of legitimate descent, to his patrimonial inheritance, protection, and communion in the ancestor cult. In no circumstances, however, can an illegitimate son be deprived of those rights that belong to him. His quasi-father's home is his home, his mother's clan his clan. From him may spring an accessory lineage of the clan. In theory, incidentally, he may marry a daughter of a different major segment of his adoptive clan, but I know

The Ritual Coefficient of Patriliny

602 769 All these cases of irregular paternity bring out a point of central importance in native thought. As we shall see in more detail later, the bonds of physical consanguinity and the concomitant social ties created by parenthood are *ipso facto* spiritual and moral bonds. They have a ritual coefficient in which the natives see their deepest meaning and value. One's bonds with one's lineage imply a ritual bond with one's patrilineal ancestors and other mystical forces associated with the existence and well-being of the lineage. They are the chief mystical powers governing the life of the individual. Legitimate paternity is a *sine qua non* for a right relationship with one's agnatic ancestor spirits who watch over one's whole life from the moment of birth. There is a spiritual hiatus between an illegitimate son or a slave's son and his adoptive lineage ancestors. Being only indirectly under their tutelage, and unable to gain direct contact with them by offering sacrifices himself, he cannot use them to master the vicissitudes and frustrations of life as freely as a true scion of their line. Also, as we have seen, the ancestor spirits are the principal sanction enforcing a man's rights to full filial status in his physical father's lineage. As we have observed, political and ritual office can be held only by men who are legitimate members of the lineage in which these offices are vested; and the sanction for this lies in the key functions of these offices in the cult of the ancestors and of the other mystical powers coupled with the lineage.

834 842 769 All social relations in which agnatic descent has a decisive function have this ritual coefficient. Legitimate paternity is bound up with a man's exclusive rights over his wife's reproductive powers, conferred on him by marriage. A child's legitimate paternity is jeopardized if it is conceived or born in a situation in which its father's marital rights do not prevail. Hence, sexual intercourse between a man and his wife (and by extension between any man of the husband's medial lineage and a woman of the wife's medial lineage) at her paternal home is rigorously tabooed; it is a ritual 'pollution of the room (*sayam dug*)'—i.e. an outrage against the lineage identity—of the girl's father; for a woman has the status of a daughter in her father's house, where she comes under her father's authority and the tutelage of his ancestors.

611 769 In keeping with this, a child must not be born in its mother's father's, or brother's house. Its ties with its maternal kin must not be confounded with its bonds with its paternal kin. These represent opposed forces in its social world, and matrilateral kinship ties must not be allowed to become a threat to lineage ties. A woman bears a child to her husband, an additional member of his lineage and clan. When she conceives, it is the right and duty of her husband and his family to care for her. His ancestor spirits must guard her and the unborn child. In the perilous hour of childbirth she must be cared for by her husband and his family,

and watched over by his ancestors. If she or the child dies in childbirth 611
the responsibility falls on her husband. A child should be born under 769
its father's roof, literally into the lineage to which it comes as a profit ●
(*ŋoor*) and a responsibility, and under the auspices of its patrilineal
ancestors, the spiritual arbiters of its destiny, to whom it will later in
life bring sacrifices. Its life will depend on these ancestors, one of whom
will immediately demand to be made its spiritual guardian, charged [776]
with preserving its life (*mar u ŋɔvɔr*).

Not only should a child be born under its father's roof, but it should, 854
ideally, be reared, or at least be brought through the first dangerous
months of infancy, in its father's house. Circumstances occasionally 769
compel a child to be entrusted to the care of its mother's family, and the Tallensi are practical enough to accept this necessity with equanimity. But they are extremely reluctant to let a young infant pass out of the direct tutelage of its paternal kin and ancestors even for a short while. Thus strong objection is raised if a young wife takes her infant and goes to stay at her parents' house for some time. Here, again, practical necessity may leave no alternative, but there is always a feeling of uneasiness, as can be seen from the following case. When Nindɔɣat of Zubiuŋ died, his youngest wife went home to her father's house at Tɔŋ-Seug, about a quarter of a mile from her late husband's house, taking her infant of some six months with her. Nindɔɣat's brother and prospective heir tried to prevent her going, but she was not well, and they had to admit that she would be better cared for by her mother than by her co-wives. So they allowed her to go. A couple of weeks later, however, the baby fell ill, and though the young mother was staying only a few minutes' walk from her late husband's house, she returned to it immediately. 'She came running back home', her late husband's brother told me, 'because the child was ill. Its (dead) father had not agreed for it to be taken away (that is, the dead father, now a spirit, had mystically caused the child's illness as a sign of his displeasure). And supposing the child were to die at its maternal uncle's house? Should we not say that they had caused the death of our child?' The proper ritual measures to cure the child, without which practical leechcraft could not avail, could only be taken by its father or his representative in its father's house. The young mother believed this as firmly as her late husband's heir.

For all these reasons it is a taboo (*kihɔr*) for a child to be born in its 844
mother's father's house. His ancestor spirits cannot watch over mother
and child, for they do not 'own (*so*)' the child. It is, therefore, dangerous 783
for the child's health and chances of survival. Of course, such a thing 769
may, and sometimes does happen by accident. Then the child's father must, whenever he can afford it, erase the pollution by the ceremony of 'removing the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the birth from his father-in-law's house. He sends a sheep and beer to his father-in-law as a placation

844 gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his
783 son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders
of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be per-
769 formed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both
842 parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is
613 overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔɣam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔɣam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is
604 the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

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[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

602 578 and Ɔndieso was one of the first to come to the help of his *soog* in his sorrow. The other members of Ɔndieso's segment demonstratively remained away.

602 Other ties of matrilateral kinship also create bonds of personal attachment between members of the same maximal lineage, but none is so effective as that of uterine kinship.

The Dispersion of Uterine Kin

602 582 591 The majority of a person's uterine kin are, however, dispersed among other clans than his own. This is a natural result of the rule of clan exogamy. But Tallensi, as we shall see later,[1] tend to marry into nearby clans rather than into distant clans. A woman of clan A marries into the adjacent clan B; her daughters marry into the next clans C and D; their daughters marry into clans E and F; and so the process goes on. The result is, firstly, that with the passage of the generations the uterine line becomes more and more dispersed; and secondly, that any person's genealogically nearest uterine kin are also, generally, his spatially nearest uterine kin. In practice, it is these near *saarət* whom he knows and knows of; it is they who are concerned in witchcraft accusations or *tyuk* guilt. His more distant *saarət*—distant in both the genealogical sense and in residence—are often unknown to him. The main reason for this is that uterine kinship remains effective only through personal contact. The children of sisters know one another because their mothers have kept in touch, visited one another, and often helped one another all their lives. Similarly, the uterine grandchildren of sisters know one another, if they live near one another, because their mothers have kept in touch, though not so faithfully as true siblings. Often these contacts are maintained into the fourth generation of a woman's uterine descendants; rarely beyond the fourth generation; and a person does not, as a rule, know all his or her *saarət* whose link with him or her is a common great-grandmother. Some of them will, as likely as not, be Gɔrisi or Namnam and he will not even know of their existence.

602 [769] In principle, however, uterine kinship is never extinguished, and it often happens that people of different clans, who are strangers to one another, discover by chance that they are distant *saarət*. Supposing, for instance, a man proposes to make an important sacrifice to a lineage ancestor. His agnatic co-descendants of this ancestor are bound to be present; but he will also send to tell the cognatic descendants through women of that ancestor and some of them will come. Two men of different clans may be present who now discover, for the first time, that they are cognatically related through the lineage of their host. They trace out their genealogical connexion (*tumh dɔyam*) and find that they are distant *saarət*. I have seen this happen more than once, and the delight of the men concerned was a vivid testimony to the meaning

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[1] Cf. Ch. XI.

CHAPTER III

THE HOMESTEAD AND THE JOINT FAMILY

Homestead and Family—a Single Social Entity

361 592 PHYSICALLY a Tale settlement is an aggregation of homesteads irregularly distributed at varying distances from one another.[1] A homestead is the domicile of a domestic family. The edifice of pile and thatch, and its occupants, constitute a single entity. There is no word for either apart from the other. The native concept, *yir* (pl. *yɛa*), a house, means primarily the joint family as a coherent social unit residing in its own dwelling. An unoccupied homestead is a dead shell, left to crumble into ruins.

592 When a homestead is abandoned it becomes a *daboog* (pl. *dabaar*), a word applied both to an empty homestead in any stage of decay and to the site of a former homestead, and carrying two main and complementary implications that spring directly from the dominance of the lineage principle in Tale social values. *Daboog* stands for something good and worthy of praise when it refers to the site of a person's father's or grandfather's homestead, or, by extension, to the site or locality of an ancestor's homestead. A *daboog* in this sense is a symbol of the origins and a portent of the good fortune of an existing lineage; it is an object of personal attachment and religious reverence; though vacant it is not dead; the spirits of the ancestors still abide there, and it may be reoccupied some day; it is a symbol of the living continuity of a line of descent. *Daboog* can also be used to describe the site of a former human habitation left deserted and forlorn through the extinction of a line of descent. No ancestor spirits dwell there; it is an accursed spot, a monument of human sin, and a symbol of the most terrible mystical retribution that can befall a Taləŋ. A curse one sometimes hears uttered when a grave injury has been suffered at the hands of an unknown person is: 'May his house lie in ruins and tobacco be grown there (*K'u yir doon daboog ka ba ɛŋ taba waal nɛŋha*).' A ruined homestead provides an exceptionally fertile patch of soil, suitable for growing tobacco. If a man's line of descent is extinguished, there will be no one to claim ownership of his *daboog*, and anyone who wishes will come and plant tobacco there.

592 769 A homestead is always built for a particular family. From the day when the site is chosen it is the scene of human labour, of organized co-operation, and of religious and moral preoccupations. It must be lived in from the laying of the foundations, lest evil mystical agencies desecrate it. Ancestor shrines are immediately installed in it; for the spirits of a man's fathers and forefathers abide in his house, presiding

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities 769● in their lifetime.

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's 592 father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is consecrated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, 783 and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who 778 formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tɛndaana under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebees*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them.

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the 592 elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They 181 represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another.

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two 592 planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and 571 the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Taləŋ than of the modern Englishman to say 592 that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their home- 361 steads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

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[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off 342
to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug* 593
and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return
until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately.
The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the
domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the
domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person.
A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife,
mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family.

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments, but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, 595
the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more
esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household
have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is
the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than
actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in
the case of the latter.

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that 778
are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman.
They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is 595
custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these
shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often
taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and
out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him.

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the 775
ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, 169
into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la
dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary
rites, make this clear.

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. 592
Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked
outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A
woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies
learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests
and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops
are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being
stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a
leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there
when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights,
after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing
or gossiping or asking riddles.

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

613 Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care
of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One
769 of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*), to whom her husband will have
to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as
her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually
released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors
takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties
to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage
founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is
[777] selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill
fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter
of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate
(*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors.
[761 If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an
789] evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of
exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her
husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated
to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and
worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic
funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be
received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is
completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

602 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship
593 ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the contrary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

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In the joint family it marks them off as a separate and potentially independent family segment. A mother of two children usually has her own quarters, or her own part of her mother-in-law's *dug*, if her husband's mother is one of several wives of her father-in-law. She is a *dugdaana*, mistress of her rooms, in a small way, with some freedom of action where its affairs are concerned. She begins to regard the work that falls to her share, not merely as her contribution to the economy of the household, but more as serving the needs of her children and husband. He, for his part, begins to think of the future in terms of his wife and children. He may still accept a position of dependence on his father or older brother as a matter of course; but the separate needs of his wife and children are recognized in the allocation of food-supplies. He makes an effort to extend his private farm plot in order to grow a little food to tide his own family segment over lean periods. It may be many years before he achieves independence, but his aspirations towards it have a definite channel and a clear objective.

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The greater intimacy of husband and wife, after several years of marriage, is shown in their greater familiarity with each other in public. The woman does not hesitate to address her husband by his name or title, and he may use a nickname for her. By the time a woman has grown old with her husband she is on terms of comradeship and equality with him, for she now identifies herself completely with his interests. An old couple often show great devotion to and affection for each other. The man often has such confidence in his wife that he will discuss all his affairs with her, and she can exercise considerable influence on his decisions in family matters, though the last word still rests with him. Though she still shows deference to him in public, she no longer keeps in the background. She speaks her mind freely to him and before him. Often when I have talked to men about domestic organization, kinship, marriage, children, or even their private religious and magical shrines, their wives of senior standing have stopped to join in the conversation. I have seen a lineage head's senior wife listen to a group of lineage elders thresh out a domestic squabble and give her opinion without restraint. A suitor always tries to gain the favour of a girl's mother; for, though she lacks authority to give him the girl, she can sometimes be persuaded to connive at an elopement, or at least to say a good word for him with her husband, and this may sway the balance in his favour.

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Nevertheless, it is a basic assumption of the Tallensi that a wife never ceases entirely to be a 'stranger' in her husband's clan. For she never, as we have learnt, loses the social identity conferred on her by birth as a member of a different clan. She does not adopt her husband's totemic taboos; and though her health and fertility, being essential for the satisfactory performance of her wifely role, come under the guardianship of his ancestors, she does not participate in the cult of his lineage ancestors. When she attends the sacrifices made to domestic shrines by the joint

family head, she does so as a privileged spectator. She has this privilege 593
because her welfare is bound up with that of her husband and children,
and theirs with hers. She remains outside the religious and moral 769
solidarity of her husband's clan and maximal lineage, and, indeed, has
only a contingent interest in the solidarity of his minimal lineage. It is
noteworthy that women, both daughters and wives, are excluded from
the esoteric ritual activities in which the moral sanctions of the unity
and continuity of lineage and clan are embodied. In religious, jural, 593
and political matters—all of which are closely interconnected—Tale
women have the status of minors. This exclusion is most stringent in 562
the case of the Earth cult and the cult of the lineage *bɔɣar*. But the
segregation is not so rigid as to keep women in entire ignorance of or
wholly disinterested in these male monopolies. Their welfare depends
upon the propitious outcome of these activities as much as that of their
menfolk. They see, hear, and discuss among themselves and with their
menfolk ritual affairs and jural actions that concern their husbands'
lineages of which, indeed, wives and children often form the main
subject. They grind the flour, brew the beer, and witness the preparations
for esoteric religious rites. They see the public and semi-public
phases of big religious ceremonies and overhear the endless consultations
and discussions between the men which these ceremonies always produce. 593

A wife, therefore, can be in sympathy with the interests and can respect
the values that rule the actions of her husband and her sons as members 578
of their agnatic descent group, while being herself excluded from an 787
effective public role in relation to them. But a cleavage remains. Thus
in a conflict between her husband's clan and her father's clan she might
very well take the side of the latter, not openly, it is true, but covertly.
How strongly the natives feel this was shown at the divination ceremony
following the death of Siiyɛlib of Tɔŋ-Seug. This divination was so
cryptic and involved that I could make no sense of it. Fortunately I was
able to get an explanation from one of my most trustworthy informants,
a close agnate of the dead man. Siiyɛlib's death, it appeared, was a
mystical retribution for a grave sin he had committed many years before.
He had been one of the instigators of the white man's attack on the Hill
Talis, and was an accessory, therefore, to the slaughter of many men.
Now there were several Talis present at the funeral—kinsmen, affines,
and, last but not least, wives of the dead man and his close agnates. If
Siiyɛlib's sin were publicly brought out in the divination it would stir
up all their hostile feelings. They would feel resentful towards Siiyɛlib's
surviving agnates on account of his complicity in the destruction of their
fathers and grandfathers. And this would produce strife between the
men of Seug and their Talis wives, their Talis cognates, and their Talis
affines.

The social and psychological cleavage which underlies all the rela- 593
tions of husband and wife is the structural kernel around which the 578

761 whom it was living, had also died suddenly. Diŋkaha, greatly concerned
for his wife, warned all the members of his family not to say anything
593 to her about it. If she heard of this calamity now, he said, she would
surely die. Later on, when she had settled down again he would himself
break the news to her.

Incidentally, fathers do not always get over the death of a child,
765 whether an infant or an adult, with ease. It is easier for a young man,
593 the Tallensi say, because he thinks to himself that his wife can still bear
children to him. But even young men have been known to abandon
[762] themselves to despair. An extreme case was that of Dɔɣayam, who
pierced himself with a poisoned arrow when his favourite child died;
and the average Talɔŋ, it must be remembered, speaks of suicide with contempt. The grief of a father when a grown-up or adolescent son dies is very moving. When Pumaan's son Kpeemi and Tinta'aləm's son Suor, both fine young men in the twenties, died, it was as if a shock ran through the whole community. On both occasions the men of the clan gathered in full force to mourn at the bereaved house and the atmosphere of tragedy was felt by all. I cannot forget the picture of Pumaan, as taciturn and dour a man as one could meet anywhere, holding himself tautly, his face ashen, his eyes staring ahead, stoically suppressing his despair as an elder should do. Tɛndaan Teroog, an old man over seventy, made no pretence of stoicism when his eldest and only adult son died leaving a number of wives and children. He simply pined away and followed his son to the grave in a couple of months.

When Tallensi say that it is hard to bring a child into the world, they
593 have in mind more than the physiological facts of birth, and the dangers
769 of infancy and childhood. They think of the whole gamut of social and
emotional relations between parents and children arising out of the fact of birth. For a Talɔŋ, as we have seen, does not become altogether independent of his parents until their death—nor, indeed, even after their death. The pragmatic bonds of jural and economic dependence become transformed into the equally strong, nay stronger bonds of ritual dependence on the ancestor spirits of whom the parents are the immediate prototypes and intermediaries. And in many ways the ritual relationships of the Tallensi with the spirits of their parents give a truer insight into the parent-child bond than their visible behaviour towards one another. 'Fear the dead but do not fear the living (*Zom kpiim ka di zo vopa*)', says one of their proverbs which enshrines their feeling that a person is under a far more compelling bond with his parents when they are dead than during their life. We shall return to this presently.

593 The gist of our analysis is that to the Tallensi parenthood means
responsibility that weighs heavily at times. This comes out both in the notion that bearing or begetting a child is hard and in [illegible] correlated notion of the importance of rearing. At the same time there is no native, man or woman, who would not insist that a person has lived in vain if he

593 against one's mother—'*ɔn dɔyi la zugu*—because he begot you'. One's dependence on him increases one's attachment and sense of duty
577 towards him. Dependence on one's father is a good thing, a highly desirable and advantageous state of affairs, and the essence of filial piety is to accept this condition of dependence as the right thing in life. Tallensi say that a man has no cares while his father is alive. He looks after all one's affairs (*maal i yɛla*). He takes charge of the farming, attends to all ritual matters such as sacrifices to the ancestors and the consultation of diviners if one is ill, and assumes responsibility for such things as the payment of bride-price. He takes care of the house (*gur yiri*) both in the physical sense of always staying at home and in the jural and ritual sense of being its responsible head, leaving his sons free to go about as they please. The emphasis is on the father as the one who bears all responsibility for one's welfare in economic, jural, and ritual matters. That is why, the natives say, a man mourns the death of a father, for henceforth he must take on the burden of responsibility for himself. It means the end of protection and security in relation to society at large and to the spirits of the ancestors.

The picture is overdrawn but not inaccurate. The burden of social responsibility does not weigh so heavily as this statement implies. Siŋ and Gbana, both young men in the twenties, managed their households very well. But both often bemoaned their fate in having been left fatherless when still boys. 'If my father were alive I would have had a wife by now', said Siŋ, 'and Na'abzɔ (his proxy father) would not have used my sister's bride-price cattle for his own purposes.' The death of the father often means the uprooting of his sons. 'Now', said Kɛlibsɔ after his father's funeral ceremonies were over, 'we (he and his brothers) shall become poor men. When our father was alive we had a large home farm to cultivate. Now our junior father (*ba-pit*) will take that and we shall have to go and farm our bush farms. Soon the day will come when we shall move out, for who knows how a *ba-pit* will look after you?' I have heard boys of 9 or 10 talk in this way after the death of their father. It is easier for a woman who has her husband's protection. But even she suffers a sad loss in the death of her own father. His heirs, even her own brothers, will never have quite the same intimate and personal interest in her and her children.

• [769] There is a direct connexion between this emphasis on the dependence of children on parents and the worship of the ancestors. Nor is the underlying feeling of a hidden antagonism between father and son, of which we shall have more to say presently, altogether incongruous with this overt stress on the security the father symbolizes. The social relations of father and son, at every stage of the latter's development, are always a compromise between the mutual dependence of father and son and the limited dependence enjoyed by the latter.

There is not the same degree of tension between mother and child or

573 577 even mother and daughter, and hence, perhaps, Tallensi do not have such a definite conventional rationalization of their attitudes towards the mother. They say you respect your mother and cherish her in old age because she bore and fed you. In childhood you were more attached to her than to your father; you ran to her whenever you were tired or hungry or ill and she comforted and fed you; as an adult you realize the importance of 'father's begetting' (*ba-dɔɣam*) in jural, ritual, and economic matters such as marriage or landowning, and in crises like sickness or death; but your mother is still honoured as the centre of your domestic arrangements if you are a man, and if you are a woman, she is the one person you can always come to in sickness or trouble, in the certainty of loving attention. Comfort, emotional security, and food—these are the distinguishing qualities of a mother in Tale thought. It corresponds to the more personal character of the bonds between mother and child, by contrast with the jurally and ritually weighted ties with the father.

769 ● 577 Tallensi say that one must respect one's living parents; but to one's dead parents one owes reverence and submission in surpassing degree. That is what the proverb 'Fear the dead and do not fear the living' means to them.[1] One can defy a living parent sometimes and rely on being forgiven; one cannot defy a dead parent. One can live without the help of a living parent, if necessary, but not without the mystical protection of one's dead parents.

769 577 167 In the religious practice of the Tallensi the ancestors exercise their powers without compunction. They punish and slay as arbitrarily as they bless. Every dry season men return to rebuild their parental homes which have been allowed to lie in decay for many years. They come from Mampurugu, from outlying parts of Taleland, or from Ashanti and the Colony. Some have been away for years. Pal of Zubiuŋ had a prosperous farm in Mampurugu, where he had gone to settle on being discharged from the regiment after the war of 1914–18. During his fifteen years in Mampurugu he had become fairly wealthy, with five wives, a horse, several head of cattle, and a quantity of good clothes. Dema of Tɛnzugu, who joined the regiment as far back as 1912 and had lived in Ashanti as a trader since his discharge after the war, was obviously a man of considerable wealth by Tale standards. Both returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads in 1935–6. They told the same story. Wives and children had died; there had been repeated bouts of sickness in the family; other misfortunes had piled up over the years; and all, as the diviners declared, because they had 'rejected (*zaɣah*) their fathers (*banam*)' by remaining in foreign parts. It did not matter much while there were older brothers at home to 'give water (*zaŋ kuom ti*)', that is, make sacrifices, to the ancestral shrines. But

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[1] The verb *zo*, to fear, has a wide range of meaning and here it means to show respect towards, to revere, to stand in awe of. [192]

769 when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come
577 home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not
167 done so. Dema is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own
people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to abandon in Mampurugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the same with Na'abzɔ, Kaɣar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

769 While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety
towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the
577 observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every
757 native owns some 'roots (*ŋaɣa*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the
therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you (to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔɣam la zug, nyɛn dɔɣəm la zugu*).'

Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for
577 a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities
593 and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan,
with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other
769 patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is
important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛɣəraan*) of one of her paternal forbears and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance
[782] to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female
survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she
can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers. A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

of his dead mother's spirit; she is not tied to the lineage home in the 577
same way as a father's spirit is and can be 'given water' more easily 593
wherever the man happens to be. Nevertheless, his welfare and that of 769
his dependants rests as much on his maintaining good relations with her
spirit as with his father's spirit.

Filial piety among the Tallensi is a great deal more than a customary 577
injunction to honour and respect one's parents. Psychologically it is
a very complex sentiment. Even during their lifetime parents have 593
quasi-mystical attributes, as we shall see more clearly when we consider
the relations of parents and first-born children, and these dominate the 789
sentiment. A parent can bless or curse a child. A parent's curse, in
particular, is greatly dreaded, as we have previously noted, and, in
consequence, only resorted to in case of gross affront or unforgivable
defiance on the part of a child. If a parent expresses or merely feels
resentment against a child, that is equivalent to a curse which may cause
it illness or other harm. Thus one element in the sentiment of filial
piety is respect for the blessing and fear of the curse of a parent. That
is why, men say, it is sometimes embarrassing to have an old mother in
one's house, though one is bound to keep her, both in duty and out of
affection. For old women become completely egoistic. All they think [888]
of is having enough to eat and being comfortable, and if they are crossed
they are apt to curse anybody incontinently.

In a large joint family one often finds a young man with a growing family of his own torn between his devotion to his father and his desire to be economically independent so as to provide for his wife and children more satisfactorily. He cannot go out to farm on his own without his father's blessing and consent else his venture will surely fail. He begins to drop hints or makes a tentative approach to his father. But if the latter shows displeasure he retreats at once. I have seen this happen more than once. When Təɣalbcrəgu wanted to go out to farm on his own, his father Naabdiya reproached him, saying that *he* had not deserted *his* father as Təɣalbcrəgu now wished to desert *him*. Təɣalbcrəgu apologized and withdrew. But, as Naabdiya told me, 'I still had resentment in my heart and he still secretly cherished his plan'. A couple of weeks later Təɣalbcrəgu developed a large boil in the armpit. In panic he begged an elder to ask Naabdiya to forgive him and formally withdraw his implicit curse, which, he was certain, was the cause of the boil. It was the same with Yinyɛla's son Duun. Though as an eldest son he felt entitled to start farming on his own, he dared not ask that hard old man's permission for fear that it might arouse his resentment.

It is an interesting point that when a young man who has been living 577
and farming with his dead father's brother, for example, sets up in his 593
own homestead, the pretext for the separation is often not an economic
one. It is commonly recognized that the young man moves out because
he needs more land and freedom to provide for his family by himself.

577 But if the father's brother does not take the initiative of pointing out to
his 'son' that he would be better off on his own, the latter cannot do so.
593 It would be like suggesting that his proxy father is not treating him as
fairly as his own father. The usual course of events is that something
goes wrong with the young man's affairs. It may be a trivial mishap,
such as a hen being caught by a hyena, or something more serious, such
as the sickness of wife or child. The young man goes with his proxy
father to consult a diviner; and the diviner declares that the trouble was
caused by the young man's own father, because the young man has not
yet built his own homestead. The dead father lets it be known that he
wants to go directly to his son's own house to accept sacrifices and not
have to go to his brother's house as a mere guest. Thus the dictates of
filial piety are subtly and doubly fulfilled.

577 Filial piety, as these examples show, is the psychological bridge
between the relations of parents and children in life and in the ritual
593 relationships of the living with the ancestors. All the ancestors are
•769 projections of the parents, different manifestations of the images Tale
culture draws of certain aspects of the parents that do not appear in
conventional, overt behaviour. This is clear, also, from the element of
reverence that enters into the sentiment of filial piety.

Siŋ's father and Na'abzɔ were the sons of two brothers. When Siŋ's
577 father died, Na'abzɔ married his widow and took charge of the children.
But Na'abzɔ is a notoriously cantankerous person. So Siŋ took his
593 younger brothers and mother and set up in his own homestead as soon
as he was old enough. In jural and ritual matters, however, Na'abzɔ
is still his 'father'. Passing Siŋ's house one day with an elder I heard
sounds of violent quarrelling between him and Na'abzɔ. Na'abzɔ stood
on the flat roof of a room in his house hurling abuse at Siŋ, who replied
angrily, but politely, from his gateway 50 yards away. My companion
and I turned aside to talk to Siŋ. It appeared that Na'abzɔ had as usual
been nagging Siŋ and his brothers unreasonably. He demanded that
they should leave their own farm-work to come and hoe his farm. When
Siŋ asked for his help, which was indispensable, in an important ritual
matter, he had refused out of petty spite; and now he had upset Siŋ's
sister's marriage by arbitrary and inconsiderate demands on her husband.
I asked Siŋ, 'Why don't you take hold of Na'abzɔ and thrash him? That
should stop him.' He looked at me in dismay and said, 'No, no. I
couldn't do that. It is forbidden. He is my father. He begot me.' My
companion, almost as shocked, chimed in, 'No, you can't strike your
father, you can't strike your mother. They have borne (*dɔɣa*) you. He
who strikes his father or his mother is a good-for-nothing.' He went on
to say that everybody knew what sort of a person Na'abzɔ was, but Siŋ
577 must be patient. It would all come right. For would not Na'abzɔ die
593 one day and Siŋ inherit all his property? Similar comments were made
627 by everybody I met about Dɪŋkumis's brother's son, Dmaarɔb. The

577 no charity (*ɔn ka sugəru*) would perhaps have done otherwise, but
593 Kuŋaaŋba's way was the right way.

It is on the death of a parent that filial piety is most sharply evoked, just as it is the death of a child that brings out most poignantly a parent's love and devotion. We have referred to this previously. In this matter filial sentiment and ritual sanctions converge.

The supreme act of filial piety sons owe to their parents is the performance
764 of their mortuary and funeral ceremonies. If a man or woman
577 dies leaving no sons then this duty falls upon his or her nearest proxy
593 sons. The initiative and chief responsibility rest with the oldest living son. The burial rites must be carried out immediately; but when and
765 how the funeral ceremony is to be made is for the sons to decide. No
one can put pressure on them to hurry on the funeral if they wish to postpone
it for several years. It is customary to delay the funeral of an elder,
an old woman, or a person holding a ritual office until the third year
after his or her death, ostensibly so as to enable the sons to collect the
large stock of grain and the livestock required for the ceremony. Meanwhile,
in the case of a man the sons exercise the social role of the
[793] deceased. If he was a tendaana they will perform the duties and exercise
the rights of his office, and this may be a motive for delaying his funeral
beyond the customary period. The old men who are eligible for the
office can object and grumble; they cannot compel a dead man's son to
make his father's funeral. The issue lies between the dead man and his
sons. If they delay unduly they will incur their father's anger. For
until his funeral has been celebrated he dwells between the world of the
living and the world of the spirits. As the Tallensi say, his one leg is
in the earth (among the spirits) and his other on the surface of the earth
(among the living) (*u gbɛr dɛkɔ bɛ teŋni ka gbɛr dɛna bɛ doorni*). He cannot
'join his forefathers (*paag u banam*)' until he has been 'taken back into
the house (*kpeeh dugni*)' as a spirit. And the situation is the same with
a dead mother, though she is of less jural importance.

●769 The duty of burying a parent and celebrating his or her funeral is
the first step in the most exacting of all filial duties, the cult of the dead
577 parents. Native thought and behaviour show that the Tallensi feel it as
an inescapable compulsion of conscience, and not as a mere act of propriety.
764 Tallensi are quite matter-of-fact about the corpse (*kum*) of a
dead parent. They describe it as the 'slough (*fɔrəŋ*)' of the soul (*sii*).
What they are concerned about is the spirit (*kpiim*) of the dead parent.
A man cannot rest secure until he has assimilated his father's or mother's
spirit into the framework of his life, domesticated it, so to speak, as the
expression *kpeeh dugni* shows; and this is the function of the funeral
ceremony. For that reason Tallensi want to have the graves of their
parents near their dwellings. True, a man's ancestor spirits accompany
him wherever he goes, but they are most tangibly present in his house,
where he sacrifices to them. It often happens that a man has to be

buried in one of the peripheral settlements, or abroad, where he has 769 ●
been living temporarily. Then, if his sons return to the ancestral home, 577
perhaps years after his death, he will one day, through a diviner, order
them to exhume (*gurəg*) him and rebury him among his ancestors at the 764
ancestral home (*daboog*). The notion that when a person dies he joins [775]
his ancestors (or a woman her husband's ancestors as well as her own),
and that his body should therefore lie among their bodies, is a basic idea
in Tale religion and an obvious reflex of filial piety.

As the case of Sawəŋba's daughter, previously quoted (p. 89), shows, 764
daughters are as much bound as sons to mourn the death of a parent.
All the children of the deceased must come to the funeral so as to 765
undergo the mourning rites. They are ritually unclean until they
have done so and have had their heads ritually shaved (*kuo zug*) in 577
sign of it. Though the ritual uncleanness (*dayət*) of a person who 783
has lost a parent does not interfere with normal life, it is felt to be
a psychological burden, for, as we have noted, until a dead person's
funeral has been made, his or her social personality is not wholly erased
from the real world. I have heard children of 10 or 11 say gravely that
they wished their mother's or father's funeral could be made soon so
that they could 'shave off the uncleanness (*kuo dayət la bah*)'. The
uncleanness adheres primarily to the deceased's own children, but it
also affects proxy children who have no living parent (as determined by
the criteria of 'fatherlessness' or 'motherlessness') of the same sex as the
deceased. One of the ways in which Tallensi demonstrate respect and
affection for a classificatory parent such as a father's agnatic cousin or
a classificatory father's wife, who has never been a proxy parent to
them, is to undergo the chief mourning rites for him or her—provided,
of course, the mourner is 'fatherless' or 'motherless' in that situation.
When an old man or woman who was the last of the generation of
'fathers' or 'mothers' of the inner lineage dies, the men and women of
the lineage to whom he or she is a classificatory parent gather from far
and wide for the funeral and all undergo the rites of shaving the head.
It is not compulsory for anyone to have the head shaved for a
classificatory parent, but it is a pious gesture which at the same time
proclaims the solidarity of the lineage. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* might
be a Tale proverb. Old grudges are forgotten—though not necessarily
buried for ever—and men and women who have been estranged from
their classificatory brothers and sisters or the deceased parent turn up
to the funeral to do the proper thing.

Nowadays the death of a parent is one of the strongest sanctions that 577
induce the men who go to work abroad to return home, if only for a
while. The absentees may dawdle for weeks or months or even two 765
or three years—for funeral ceremonies can be postponed, as we have
noted, for periods up to three, four, or more years—but most of them
come home eventually for the rites. Those who delay so long that their

But a man's most important *Yin* is that with which certain of his 777 ancestors are associated. This too may come to him in childhood, though it does so more commonly in early manhood. Usually it manifests 778 itself to him through an accident or a coincidence. Thus a young man falls ill shortly after he has bought a new hoe or killed an animal in the hunt. The diviners then declare that his illness was caused by his *Yin*; his ancestors so and so, and so and so, are thus revealing themselves as his *Yin*; the hoe or the animal is their vehicle; they brought illness on him because they demand that he should accept them as his *Yin* and sacrifice to them. The young man will then build a shrine dedicated to these ancestors placing the skull of the animal or the blade of the hoe on it, and will henceforth sacrifice to them on this shrine. This is his first and most intimately personal shrine, and it plays an enormous part in his life thereafter. As far as his own personal affairs are concerned, it will always be his most important link with his ancestors. It is through his *Yin* that they exercise the most direct influence upon his life and that he seeks to maintain their goodwill specifically for himself. When he becomes head of his joint family he will entrust most of the children born into the family to his *Yin* as spirit guardian. Every important step in his social development will be registered in his relations with his *Yin*; it may be by a special sacrifice, or it may be by a change in the location of the shrine, or the addition of an ancestor to the group of ancestors who have revealed themselves (*naam*) as his *Yin*. A man's *Yin* is both the chart of his life and the helm with which he steers his way through life.

All the ancestors and ancestresses of a man have a potential mystical 777 relevance for his life, but they have the same potential relevance for any of their descendants. His *Yin* ancestors, on the other hand, are concerned 769 exclusively with him, for his own sake, so to speak. They form a particular combination, usually of very recent forebears, who do not belong together in just that grouping for any other of their descendants. They may be patrilateral or matrilateral ancestors or a combination of both lines. Thus a man might have as his *Yin* ancestors his father, father's father, father's father's mother, and her father, while his brother has their father, father's mother, and father's mother's father as his *Yin* ancestors. Of another pair of brothers, one's *Yin* ancestors may be their mother's father, maternal grandfather, and maternal great-grandfather; and the other's might be their mother's mother, her father, and his father (see Fig. 5, page 230).

Thus when a Taləŋ says that his *Yin* and his eldest son's *Yin* are 593 mutually dangerous, he is saying that his son's successful growth and development into and through manhood is a threat to his authority and 578 primacy in the family, a symbol of the inevitable decline in his physical 777 and mental power that comes with age, and a warning that he must in due course make way for the next generation; and yet it is also the

593 578 and in sentiment, between oldest children and youngest children is of more than casual significance. It is as if the two major aspects of parent-child relations are split apart and distributed so as to make them more easily reconcilable. The mutual identification, mutual love and devotion of parents and children are focused in the relations of parents with their youngest children; the cleavage between successive generations is focused in the relations between parents and oldest children; and we can easily see why this is so. For it is the latter who will take the place of the parents on their death, who seem to be standing on the threshold waiting for them to die. The emphasis of the Namoos on first-born children is, as we have noted, due to the fact that it is the first-born child which makes a man and woman parents. Hence, if a first-born dies, its parents have to undergo a special purification rite; and a wife who has not borne a child to her husband does not undergo the purification rites for a widow when he dies. Later children do not change the role and status of a person in the same way; they do not make him or her more of a parent. Nor does the sex of the first-born matter, though the agnatic principle makes a first-born son of greater importance to a man than a first-born daughter. This and the principle of the equivalence of siblings explain why both sons and daughters are subject to the taboos of the first-born among the Namoos.

The Ancestors as Parent Images

593 769 578 577 The ambivalence in the relations of parents and children is more dramatically expressed in the ancestor cult than in any other aspect of Tale culture. We cannot discuss this at length here. We can only note that there is a direct continuity between the relations of parents and children in life and their relations after the parents' death. The worship of the ancestors is a culturally standardized projection on to the mystical plane of the tangle of attachments, reciprocities, tensions, and submerged antagonisms that bind parents and children to one another in life. Anyone unfamiliar with the speech and customs of the Tallensi would often find it impossible to tell, in some situations, whether a man is speaking of his living father or his dead father. The dead parents are the prototypes of all the ancestors. Distinctions of name and generation conceal the same primary images. This is clear from the fact that no man can sacrifice to an ancestor or ancestress except through the medium of the spirit of the parent who links him to that ancestor or ancestress.

It will not surprise the psychologist, however, to learn that the attributes with which the spirits of the parents are invested differ in some respects markedly from those that are conventionally assumed for living parents. The disciplinary limitations imposed by the demands of economic and social adjustment and by the rationale of reality are no longer operative. The figures of the dead parents are clothed in qualities that are in part highly magnified versions of their most praiseworthy qualities

in real life and in part distorted reflections of the tensions that exist 593
between parents and children in reality. It is no misrepresentation to 769
describe them as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the
parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically 578
omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent and long-suffering; but the emphasis is far more on the persecuting than on the protecting attributes. 577
The distortion is most striking in the case of a mother's spirit. All ancestor spirits are apt to reveal themselves more often by the misfortune they inflict than by the benefits they bring. They emerge as sanctions of conduct more by reason of the punishments they bring down on wrongdoers than because of the benefits they confer for right doing. But the spirits of female ancestors are believed to be specially hard, cruel, and capricious. This is remarkable when we consider the love and devotion a mother shows for her child throughout his life. As we have observed elsewhere,[1] there is a never-ending struggle between a man and his ancestors. It is psychologically rooted in the relations of parents and children during the lifetime of the parents. Sacrifices and prayers are reminiscent of the principle of reciprocity in the real relations of parents and children. They contain the same elements of acquiescence, justice, and hidden coercion. They show another aspect, though, in the propitiation, reverence, and gratitude they often express.[2]

We can see why filial piety towards the dead parents is more strongly stressed than towards the living. While he is alive a person's father has direct jural and ritual authority over him; when he dies, the father becomes the paramount sanction of moral conduct for him; and this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, in only a lesser degree to the mother. The oath 'by my father and his goatskin (or sheepskin) and his three cowries' discussed in our previous book[3] is one proof of this. The centre of gravity of the whole social system of the Tallensi is the relationship of father and son, and it is the idea of filial piety that keeps this relationship in balance in the face of all the forces that tend to divide father and son. In this as in other respects the Tallensi are typical of patrilineal and patriarchal societies of simple culture from many parts of the globe, both ancient and modern.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 145.

[2] As death, among the Tallensi, is always believed to be mystically caused by [761
a particular ancestor spirit or a group of ancestor spirits (material causes such as
sickness being recognized as necessary but not sufficient without the mystical 682]
adjunct), it follows that a dead father or mother can kill (*ku*) his or her own child. The converse is impossible, since children, in life, have no jurisdiction over parents. I have asked Tallensi if patricide ever occurs or is known to have occurred. My most trusted informants said they had never heard of a case and thought the very idea abhorrent beyond measure. The idea of matricide they considered even more vile and unnatural.

[3] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 66.

to his mother's brother's house and Ba'andoog gave him a cow of some- 604
what greater value than the white bull to give to his father-in-law. But 431
such exchanges are exceptional. A fowl, a sixpence, a slab of tobacco, a few kola nuts, these are the more usual kinds of gifts that pass between extra-clan kin.

There are two gifts from a mother's brother to which great significance 604
is attached. One of these is the gift of a hen to a lad from his *ahəb* when
he becomes capable of productive labour. This is almost a universal 431
custom among the Tallensi. As we have shown in an earlier chapter,
its importance lies in that it marks the beginning of the economic (and, 556
therefore, in due course, social) self-differentiation of a boy within the joint family. It symbolizes, and in many cases actually serves as, the starting-point of the accumulation of wealth by individual effort. It was the proud boast of Barimoda that starting as a small boy with a fowl given to him by his father's *ahəb* he had eventually 'achieved' (*paa*) a cow from which he had had several calves. In every settlement one can find two or three men who have matched this achievement, but it is more common to find men who have 'achieved' a goat or a sheep in this way. And though Tallensi always speak as if they began with one hen this is not strictly true. A boy may receive fowls from two or three matrilateral kinsmen, and he may be given more than one fowl by an *ahəb* who is specially attached to him. Kɔyatee was unlucky with the first hen his true mother's brother gave him. When it died he told his *ahəb*, who gave him another. He successfully bred a brood of chickens from this hen and was given yet another hen by the same mother's brother.

An *ahəb* has no claims on livestock bred in this way by his sister's son. 604
Very often, if a man needs a fowl for a sacrifice and has none that is
suitable, he will send to ask his sister's son for one; but this is not con- 431
nected with the gift of a hen he may have made to the latter many years 769
before. The equivalent return for the mother's brother's hen is made in another way. As has been previously mentioned, when a man 'achieves' a cow, after starting with his mother's brother's hen, he owes this cow to his mother's brother's lineage ancestor shrine (*bɔyar*). He keeps the cow until it is too old to calve and then takes it to his mother's brother's lineage as a thank-offering to his maternal ancestors. For, say the natives, it must surely have been their beneficence that gave him prosperity, since the hen came from their son.

Far more important is the gift of land by an *ahəb* to an *ahəŋ*. There 604
are degrees of finality about such a gift. It is a very common practice
for both men and women to beg a plot of land from an *ahəb*—or any 426
other extra-clan matrilateral kinsman—living in an adjacent settlement to plant with ground-nuts or sweet potatoes. The land given for these purposes generally lies on the outskirts of the donor's settlement, near that of the recipient. As often as not, it is land too exhausted for grain crops; or else it is land not required by the *ahəb* that season. Use of the land

The Ritual Relations of Matrilateral and Sororal Kin

We have previously observed that the distinguishing attribute of an 604
ahɔb in Tale thought is that he sacrifices on behalf of his *ahɔŋ*; and *ahɔŋ*
in this context includes all sororal kin, both those who are strictly *ahɔs* 602
and those who are strictly *yaas*. This is an indication of the importance
attached to the ritual relations of extra-clan kin.

As with all the social relations of mother's brother and sister's son, their ritual relations vary in frequency and degree according to their genealogical distance. Thus a male *ahɔŋ* is obliged to send a ready cooked fowl to be 'set out (*zien*)' in commemoration of his *ahɔb* when the latter's funeral is being celebrated. A child of 3 or 4 will have the fowl sent in his name by his parents; a man of substance might, as a special gesture of affection and respect, send a sheep instead of a fowl. No *ahɔŋ* would fail in this duty where his true mother's brother is concerned. I have known men who were small children when a mother's brother died, and whose parents omitted to send fowls to the funeral in their name, make up for it years later on the occasion of a funeral in the family of their *ahɔb*. Not infrequently, men will voluntarily send a fowl or a sheep as a tribute to the funeral of a father's mother's brother. But it is exceptional for such a tribute to be offered at the funeral of a more remote 'mother's brother'.

When a man sacrifices to an ancestor spirit, any descendant of that 602
ancestor has the right to be present and to share in the sacrament. The
only exceptions are the cult of the clan or maximal lineage *bɔɣar* and, 604
among the real Talis, the cult of the Earth and of the External *Bɔɣar*. 769
It would be incompatible with the functions of these cults as foci of
social integration on the highest level of corporate structure to allow
non-members of the lineage concerned to take part in them. But an
ahɔŋ may attend domestic sacrifices to any of his matrilateral ancestors
and sacrifices to the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔɣar*) of the lineage of
his true or classificatory mother's brother.

If a man proposes to make a sacrifice to one of his immediate antecedents (say, his father or grandfather), and if he is going to sacrifice anything larger than a fowl or guinea-fowl (say, a goat or a sheep or a cow), he is in duty bound to inform his sisters. He is not bound to tell his deceased sister's sons, but he generally does so, particularly if it is so important a sacrifice as a cow. A cow is seldom sacrificed to a shrine of lesser standing than a lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence when such a sacrifice is planned, the man who is making it should, in theory, inform all the sororal descendants of the lineage. He does not actually do so; he informs his own sisters' sons and his father's sisters' sons and leaves it to the other members of the lineage (who will, of course, automatically be present) to inform their close *ahɔs* if they wish to. But news of such a sacrifice travels fast owing to the complex interweaving of kinship ties, 604 ●769 [764] and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance. It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are informed, distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's 604 782 house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bɔyar*, there are always *ahəs* present; perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

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[778 769] [1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

604 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The
764 funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public
interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the
571 beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of
a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally
571 taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage
head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the
602 lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of
782 the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly
793 appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan
kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated
602 clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'
769
778

and 'grandsons'. There is another, and in some ways more important, 604
aspect. Every man sacrifices to both his agnatic ancestors and his
maternal ancestors, as we have seen. He has shrines consecrated to 769
ancestors of both lines in his homestead. The ancestors who constitute
his *Yin* are very often matrilateral or include matrilateral ancestors. 778
Indeed this is so common that a *Yin* that has no matrilateral ancestors
is somewhat unusual. Knowing the significance of the *Yin* shrine as a
symbol of a man's individuality, we can see why his connexion with his
mother's side is apt to be stressed in it. Again, every man erects a shrine
to his mother when she dies, which in the course of time may develop
into a very important shrine for him. There are other shrines, too,
which are consecrated to matrilateral ancestors. The most important of
these are divining shrines (*bakologo*) and *bɔɣar* shrines.

A *bakologo* shrine is, by definition, a 'female (*bumpɔk*)' shrine. That 778
is to say, the ancestors associated with it come, by definition, from a
matrilateral lineage of the diviner; and the dominant figure among them 781
is usually a woman, a 'mother'. It is a point of striking significance in
the social psychology of the Tallensi that the spirits through whom a 769
diviner makes contact with the ancestors of his clients should constitute
a 'feminine' group,[1] the more so when the character of the *bakologo* complex is understood. The *bakologo*[2] is the very incarnation of the vindictive and jealous aspect of the ancestors. It persecutes the man in whose life it has intervened relentlessly, until he finally submits and 'accepts (*die*)' it—that is, until he undertakes to set up a shrine to the *bakologo* spirits in his own home so that he can sacrifice to them regularly. He then promises, also, to use the shrine for divining. But not every man has a talent for divining, so most men simply have the shrine and do not use it for divination. It is interesting to note that nine out of ten men over 40 have *bakologo* shrines. Every man, and not only those who have suffered exceptional misfortunes, is directed by the religious system of the Tallensi to project his deeper feelings of guilt and insecurity largely on to the mother image embodied in the *bakologo* complex. Usually, also, a man does not immediately yield to the demands of the *bakologo* ancestors. He temporizes, evades, and resists, perhaps for years, until he is at last forced to submit and accept the *bakologo*. This 'cools (*maa*)' or subdues the *bakologo*. By giving the spirits a home in his own house, where they can be cared for, their victim transforms their hate into love. They may still inflict misfortunes on him, but he has a means of placating them since he can sacrifice to the shrine. In return for the sacrifices they

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[1] Cf. what was said on p. 235 above about the cruelty attributed to female ancestor spirits.

[2] As with all religious terms of this class among the Tallensi, *bakologo* is used both for the shrine (*baɣər*)—the tall, conical object built of mud and smeared with the dried blood and feathers of sacrifices—and for the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated. It signifies also the whole configuration of ideas and beliefs associated with the shrine.

778 will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And
787 if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his bene-
769 factress. The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing
menace.

613 As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man
769 it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the domi-
778 nant ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo*
791 ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather, and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔγar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahəŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔγar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔγar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔγar* is tangibly symbolized.

Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahəŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahəs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

769 The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple
602 combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

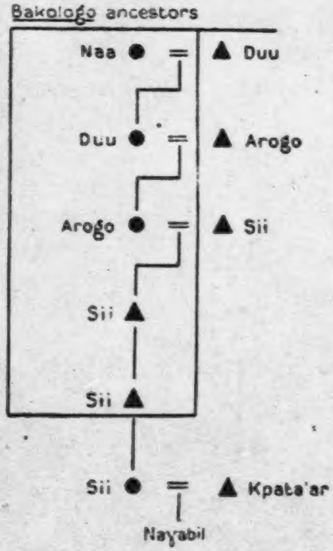
769 602

lineage, and thence he was escorted to his maternal grandfather's mother's mother's brother's lineage. At each place he had to sacrifice a fowl and a guinea-fowl to the lineage *bɔɣar*. Naɣabil's *bakologo* ancestors were his mother's father, *his* father, *his* mother, *her* mother, and *her* mother. Zɔŋ knew of the ancestress who was the dominant figure in his *bakologo*. He had been to Gbambee to attend sacrifices to the lineage *bɔɣar* as an *ahəŋ*, both as a child, accompanying his father, and as an adult by himself. Naabdiya and Naɣabil had never heard of the ancestresses who dominated their *bakologo* shrines before they revealed themselves as *bakologo* ancestresses. They had never before been to the natal clan settlements of these women; and once their divining shrines were established would probably never go there again.

One reason for this difference is spatial proximity. Zɔŋ lives about three miles from the Gbambee Tɛndaana; the matrilateral kinsmen who set up Naabdiya's shrine live about twelve miles from him, and those who set up Naɣabil's shrine nearly fifteen miles from his clan settlement. But more important is the genealogical distance involved. Zɔŋ is considered to be a fairly close *ahəŋ* of the Gbambee Tɛndaana, Naabdiya and Naɣabil count themselves distant 'grandsons' (*yaas*) of the matrilateral kinsmen who thus almost accidentally became socially relevant for them.[1]

602 769 778

Though matrilateral ancestors are particularly conspicuous in connexion with the *bakologo* complex, they can be associated with many types of ancestor shrines. Hence few men pass through life without having at least one such experience as that of Naabdiya and Naɣabil. Tiezien, for instance, had a magnificent baobab tree outside the entrance to his homestead. It was a stalwart sapling when Tiezien was born and



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[1] Naɣabil is a Kpata'ar man, and the matrilateral kinsmen who came to set up his *bakologo* were not Tallensi but Mamprusi from beyond the White Volta. This is an interesting illustration of how extra-clan kinship in this part of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast cuts across 'tribal' and political boundaries. As the attached genealogy, showing Naɣabil's genealogical connexion with his *bakologo* ancestors and ancestresses, indicates, it is also a beautiful illustration of how matrilateral kinship 'travels' (*kyɛŋ*) through intermarriage between adjacent clans. The result is that genealogical distance by matrilateral ties is closely correlated with socio-geographical distance, as in this instance.

602 769 778 could not have been less than 80 years old. This tree was the centre of the communal life of the neighbourhood. It was, as every native would automatically expect, also an important ancestor shrine. A few years after it sprouted Tiezien's paternal grandfather discovered through a diviner that his mother's father and *his* mother, a Pusunamoo woman, had chosen the baobab as their shrine. The Pusunamoo woman's maximal lineage consecrated it for Tiezien's grandfather. Thereafter sacrifices were regularly offered on the tree. In due course Tiezien succeeded to [164] the custody of this shrine. Then came the influenza epidemic of 1918. Many people died at Kpata'ar, including members of Tiezien's inner lineage and wives and children of the lineage. A diviner revealed that these deaths were being inflicted by the Pusunamoo ancestress in retaliation for long neglect. She demanded that Tiezien should collect a large number of fowls from all the members of his inner lineage and take them to Pusunamoo to be sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* of her medial lineage as an atonement. This was Tiezien's first and last contact with his matrilateral kin at Pusunamoo up to 1936.

602 It is evident, from these examples, as has been previously suggested, that the majority of a man's remote matrilateral kin are not socially relevant for him. All, however, are potentially so and may become so at some time or another; and when they do enter his field of social relations it is chiefly in their ritual capacity.

602 778 769 We said that the most important ancestor shrines linking a man to a matrilateral lineage are *bakologo* and *bɔɣar* shrines. Of the two the *bɔɣar* shrine is, in fact, the more important. As we have shown in our earlier book,[1] the ancestor cult of the Tallensi culminates in the conception and cult of the *bɔɣar*. This notion and the cult that expresses it form the centre of gravity of the lineage system. Hence it seems strange, at first sight, to find that every *bɔɣar* must necessarily be derived from a matrilateral lineage. We can understand this, however, if we consider the significance of the *bɔɣar* in the lineage system.

602 778 769 613 A *bɔɣar* is the shrine consecrated to the founding ancestor of a lineage and his mother. It symbolizes the identity of that lineage and its differentiation from other lineages of the same order within a more inclusive lineage or within a clan. A lineage expands by a process of internal segmentation and differentiation that follows the lines of cleavage inherent in the structure of the joint family.[2] The component segments of a lineage are differentiated from one another primarily by reference to their descent from different 'mothers'—that is different wives of their common founding ancestor. But a woman does not sever her ties with her lineage when she marries and becomes a mother; and in kinship questions Tale thought is dominated by the lineage concept. Hence Tallensi think of a lineage progenitrix not only as such-and-such a

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 137.

[2] Ibid. ch. xii.

named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such 602
a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a 778
maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of 769
the several 'mothers' of its segments.

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it re- 613
quires a *bɔγar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔγar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔγar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔγar* symbolizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔγar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the signi- 602
ficance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. 613
According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by
divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The 766
physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person [761]
may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ninvoo*)'—that is a full social being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

602 613 766 he does not join his forefathers, he does not become an ancestor spirit. This shows that it is not the fact of death that turns a person into an ancestor spirit but the fact that, as Tallensi believe, he is summoned (*buol*) by his ancestors and goes to join them.

● 769 613 Thus when a lineage progenitrix becomes an ancestor spirit, she does so as the bearer of mystical powers and attributes that reside in the collective body of her lineage ancestors, symbolized and made accessible to man in their lineage *bɔɣar*. Looked at in this way, too, the *bɔɣar* consecrated to her and her son must be an offshoot of her lineage *bɔɣar*.[1]

778 613 In addition, there is the obvious point that a segment of a lineage cannot symbolize its distinctness by means of a *bɔɣar* derived from their own lineage *bɔɣar*, which is the symbol of the genealogical and social unity of the lineage, not of its internal differentiation. The lineage *bɔɣar*, as is evident, is the most esoteric symbol of the principle that runs right through Tale social structure, that social differentiation within the lineage framework springs from maternal origin. This principle operates in lineage structure;[2] and we have seen how, at the other end of the scale, it constitutes the springboard of individual differentiation in the structure of the joint family.[3] This is a further instance of the consistency of Tale social structure at all levels conferred upon it by the kinship system.

A new segment of a lineage begins to crystallize out as a recognized corporate unit in the time of its founding ancestor's grandsons. For it is not until then that the process of fission in the lineage has gone far enough to separate his grandchildren and his brothers' grandchildren into distinct nuclear lineages. Thus it is a man's grandson or great-grandson who sets up a *bɔɣar* consecrated to him and his mother. According to the idiom of Tale religious thought, the ancestor demands that a *bɔɣar* be set up for him and his mother. A day is appointed for the ceremony, and all the descendants of the progenitrix, through both males and females, are informed. In the morning or early afternoon the head of the new segment takes a fowl, a goat or sheep, and a pot of beer to the head of his grandmother's inner lineage, or in some clans, medial lineage. The men of that lineage assemble so that all of its branches are represented and the animals are sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* on behalf of the *ahɔŋ*. Then the *bɔɣar* is 'scooped' for him, in the same way as was described in the case of the diviner's shrine. The *ahɔŋ* goes straight

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[1] In theory, obviously, the only lineage *bɔɣar* that need not be derived from another *bɔɣar* is the *bɔɣar* of a maximal lineage. Actually most maximal lineage *bɔɣa* conform to the pattern we have described. The only truly sovereign *bɔɣa*—i.e. *bɔɣa* not derived from other *bɔɣa*—are the External *Bɔɣa* of the Talis and their congeners. And it is significant that the component maximal lineages of these clans generally have two *bɔɣa*, one the domestic representative of the External *Bɔɣar*, the other a distinctive *bɔɣar* derived from their founder's mother's lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

[2] Ibid., ch. xii.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. III.

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate 182
and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of 578
the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the 796
following moon, Bɔγaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival
of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival 778
translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. 769
Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔγar, after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔγar may be a grove of trees, a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders. It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔγar's communicants generally comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔγar cult is built up on the notion of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔγar. The bɔγar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral, like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I 778
had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The
Namoos know the dates of Bɔγaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they 881
had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted by the bɔγar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔγaraam ritual is at the same time communion, initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔγar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔγaraam on 796

Look to my sickness that it may cease. If any one is doing this to me, 796
catch him for me, or kill him and let me get health and strength.'

Another: 'I was in my town when I heard of this god, that he is 782
strong, so I came to lean on him that he may help me. I am a person who drinks gin always and I am become a drunkard. Help me to stop drinking. Again, whatever work I do, I get in debt. If some one is doing all this to me, let *nana* catch him or kill him for me.'

When I state that these supplicants were educated men and women, 796
some of whom owned large businesses, well-furnished European houses, 177
and not a few of them their own cars, in which they had come hundreds of miles to visit this pagan god, the power and influence of the 771 ●
old beliefs may readily be imagined. I need not multiply examples. All the petitions were based on the same formula—the god was *nana*, the supplicants had come to lean upon him (*dan nebo*). They were promised nothing. If their prayers were answered, they would bring back an offering. Nearly every one asked for 'money' or 'profit'.

When the service was ended, we all backed out again into the sunlight and were led, complete silence being enjoined upon us, to the 796
entrance of the second cave. Here the offerings were sacrificed over a mound so smothered in congealed blood and feathers as to hide its surface completely.

The *Ten'dan'* lifted up a round stone and tapped it against this altar. Each person then handed him the offering he or she had brought. Its throat was cut, the blood flowed on the altar, and the sacrifice was cast down. My sheep was sacrificed last of all. The photograph, Fig. 77, shows the old *Ten'dan'* about to cut its throat. All this was carried out in complete silence. We all then returned to where every one had [302]
undressed, and each person was smeared with a line of red clay on the side of each cheek, between the breasts, on each forearm, on the legs and back. This ended the ceremony.

CHAPTER IV

CLANSHIP: THE NAMOOS

The Dispersion of Mosuor biis

For the Namoos of Tongo[1] history begins with Mosuor. Of his Mampuru forbears nothing is known. 173 [77] When a Namoo piously invokes the names of Toohug and Gbamwaa, the mythical founders of the Mampuru State, these are to him mystical words. Dominated in his moral and mystical thought by the ancestor cult, he is ready to infer that they were probably remote ancestors of the Mampuru stock; but no one in Taleland knows the myths which the Mamprusi relate about them. There is at the present time constant intercourse between the Tallensi and the Mamprusi, especially between the Tale chiefs and the court of the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu (*Mampurugna'ab*); but the myth of Toohug and Gbamwaa has not diffused to the Tallensi, for it has no relevance to their internal social structure, and the names alone suffice to symbolize the bond of common stock with the Mamprusi.

Mosuor died at Tongo. His grave indicates where his homestead stood, a stone's throw from the sacred dancing-ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, which was the site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət's homestead. After Mosuor's death, it is related, his eldest son, Naŋkamuŋ, wished to assume the chiefship at once; but a younger son, Sɛɣahəg, insisted that his father's death should be ceremonially reported to the Mampurugna'ab, the fountain-head of their chiefship (na'am). He went secretly to do so, and was invested with his father's chiefship by the Chief of the Mamprusi in return for a payment of 100 cattle. Naŋkamuŋ, resenting his younger brother's guile in robbing him of his patrimony, thereupon seceded and settled at Yamələg beside the people of Sək and their tɛndaana. This place, it is related, came to be called so because Naŋkamuŋ declared that he would go and settle just nearby (*yama yama*), where he could keep in touch with his kinsfolk at Tongo.

Sie, which the Namoos say means beside (*sie*, side) Yamələg, was founded by another 'son' of Mosuor, Kuŋkye. Sie people claim to have been the first settlers in the area. On the other hand, with characteristic emphasis on their own priority, Sawaləg people assert that Kuŋkye was received by their ancestor the Sawaləg tɛndaana, who had 'sprouted from the earth'. The tɛndaana allowed him to settle there beside (*sie*) himself, after having presented him ritually to the Earth shrines. This myth is a replica of that told by the Gbizug people, and symbolizes a structural and ideological relationship of the same order as that which exists between Gbizug and Tongo.

Yet another 'son' of Mosuor—the exact genealogy is obscure, since *bii*, child, can be used to refer to any descendant—migrated to Biuk, where his descendants adopted the speech and customs of the Gɔris.

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[1] The correct vernacular form is Tɔŋo, but we shall keep the more familiar English form throughout this book.

773 the fowl, the man merely said, 'The fowl is thirsty'. Thus his wife knew that people had been deceiving her and she remained with him. Afterwards she bore a daughter, and vowed solemnly that her child should never eat fowl. Later a son followed, and the man declared that the boy too must refrain from eating fowl. That is why the first-born son and first-born daughter of all Namoos have the fowl avoidance; but later children may eat it, for if they, too, were prohibited, who would consume the fowls which men sacrifice to their ancestors?

●771 If we bear in mind the enormous importance Tallensi attach to marriage and progeny, we can sympathize with the respect they pay to the common domestic fowl in return for this apparently trivial benefit conferred on their ancestor. Of course nobody knows or cares who this ancestor was, but it would not occur to anybody to doubt the truth of this tale. Every day some animal, domestic or wild, becomes a shrine (*bayər*), the symbol and medium of contact with the ancestor spirits, to some person or another in every Tale settlement; and the occasion of this ritual transformation of a commonplace creature is always a piece of good or ill fortune associated with it. Nor would the fact, admittedly contrary to ordinary experience, that a fowl broke into speech, disconcert the natives. They see no need for explaining away such incongruities, either by invoking the supernatural or by referring it to a fabulous age when animals possessed the power of speech. 'That is the story', they declare, and that is enough for them; as we might say, it fits in with the logic of the myth.

186 This casual attitude to the myth is due to the fact that the natives attach little importance to it in comparison with the observance it seeks to explain. For the myth is simply a formulation of the idea that the fowl taboo is the fundamental symbol of the social definition of Namoos. Everywhere within the social ambit of the Tallensi, and at all times, Namoos are those who are subject to distinctive ritual and moral restrictions in virtue of their agnatic descent; and amongst these the fowl taboo is crucial. That is how others think of Namoos, and that is how they themselves visualize their social identity. Through these observances the individual identifies himself in thought and feeling with the fraternity of clans of which his own is a part and, what is of equal significance, with the dead but still regnant forebears.

The anonymity of the ancestor in the myth shows that he stands for the prototype of all the ancestors who must necessarily have gone before in order that the present generation of men should exist, and to whom the living owe their whole social order. It is a notion entirely in keeping with the ideas underlying the kinship system of the Tallensi. But for the intervention of the fowl, says the myth, the Namoo stock might never have come into existence; and the taboo which commemorates that event came into being with the birth of their stock, which was at the same time the birth of their role in society. All Namoos, it must be remembered, are concerned with their totemic observances; for those who are themselves exempt from them have this privilege only because they are the brothers or sisters of individuals who are compelled to observe them.

577 The fowl taboo and the ritual observances associated with it symbolize

x618 Duunkpaləg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the
778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child
placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a
[551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages
x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a
764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives
of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously
778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is
794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master,
or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of
782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint
custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these
182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say
● 771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpaləg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the
Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

x618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tendaana, both receive sacrifices.
182 But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a
●771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent
lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the
lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their
common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult
is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the
common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms
and sanctions of collective life.

794 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both
767 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve
182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages.
613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar* (*dugni bɔyar*), the
shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members
of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a
derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpaləg). It is, so to speak, the domestic
incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal
lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part
of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own
tendaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the
tendaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is
through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the
lineage, and through the joint action of all three tendaanas that they are
mobilized for the good of the clan.

x618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of
182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate
activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in
relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative
mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a
balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests
of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the
common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges
and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual
adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan
unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[793] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one
178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar
182 tendaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders
578 to Duunkpaləg, where the most important rite of the series was to be
performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The
Yapaasdem did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments
were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs,
and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who
should have come to escort the tendaana-elect to Duunkpaləg. The
Yapaasdem, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day,
scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient
to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is,
each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested
in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

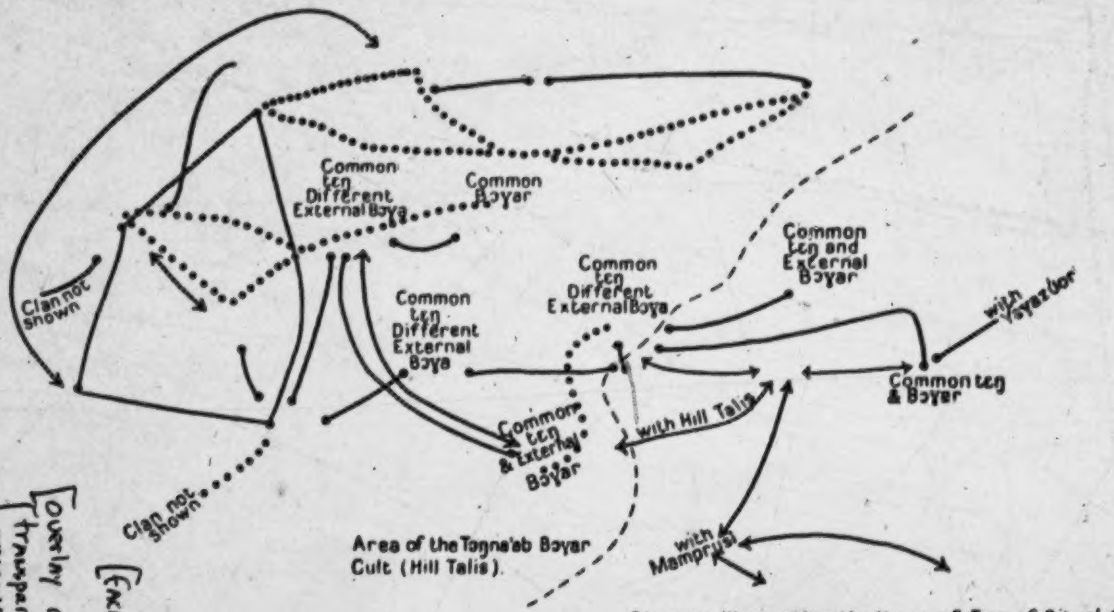
Common tɛn Different External Bɔɣa
Common Bɔɣar
Clan not shown
Common tɛn Different External Bɔɣa
Common tɛn Different External Bɔɣa
Common tɛn and External Bɔɣar
with Yayazbor
Common tɛn & Bɔɣar
Common tɛn & External Bɔɣar
with Hill Talis
Clan not shown
with Mamprusi
Area of the Tɔŋna'ab Bɔɣar Cult (Hill Talis).

Diagram illustrating the Nexus of Ties of Ritual Collaboration
(only a small selection of these ties shown)

Clans or Maximal lineages connected by lines thus ●——● collaborate in the Cult of the Earth (tɛŋ) and/or in rites of the Festival Cycle associated with that cult. Clans connected by continuous line or figure collaborate jointly in Cult of the Earth.

Clans or Maximal lineages connected by lines thus ←——→ have reciprocal or complementary ritual relationships associated with politico-ritual offices mainly chiefship (na'am) or Tendaanaship.

Clans or Maximal lineages connected thus ● ● ● collaborate in cult of External Bɔɣar (Tɔŋna'ab); those connected by continuous dotted lines do so jointly.

[Facing p. 108]

[overlay on p. 109
transparent in
original]

other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos 784 are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in 184 many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans, no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to violate (*galəm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence. It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu ɔbət*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals [262 prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages, 853] when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness, not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners 784 in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But 771 like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage 184 totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example, call a totem a sacred object (*bayər*). The emphasis is on the avoidance, the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, 784 though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch 184 these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them; for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their 627 congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear 184 an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in 618x this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath, uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence, 769 778 881 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔɣar* cult binds the individual by the most solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order bequeathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 794 881 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔɣar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔɣar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔɣar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 627 881 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when he is initiated. The *Bɔɣar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔɣar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial) fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔɣar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔɣar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔɣar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔɣar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 771 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔɣar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔɣar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔɣar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔɣar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔɣar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole 182
social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line. 771

One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' 182
with the cult of the External *Bɔγar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔγar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔγar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔγar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔγar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔγar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔγar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔγar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔγar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔγar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔγar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest.

It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic 794
taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the 611
External *Bɔγar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔγar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔγar* is the pivot.

In sum, then, the totem stands for the relative autonomy of the maximal 182
lineage, the External *Bɔγar* for the interdependence of lineages in a single 184
religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔγar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have

184 extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more dis-
182 tinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

619 It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Taləŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tɛndaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔγar* cult, which extends ~~as~~ far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

182 But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos,
771 funeral rites, and *Bɔγar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

784 The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may
171 well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

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[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134-5.

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one another. Tenzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized; but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*', but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to native custom. 621 619 829 [578]

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the Tɛnzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted, is the keel of Tale social organization. 621

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu sayat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character). 621 182 771

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settlement name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name of a well-known *tɔŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are called Saniiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her 621 618x 551

731 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the
241 majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-
165 being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*)
or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper
burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

788 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent
771 state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When
782 things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they
do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *teŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

[193]

613 769 778 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also *ipso facto* an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differentiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine (*bɔγar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a composite clan has its lineage *bɔγar*, distinguishing it from the other segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se* by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors. The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔγar* known as an External *Bɔγar*. An External *Bɔγar* is usually a sacred grove, or a shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

•771 794 182 769 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult of the External *Bɔγar* is another important factor of cohesion and equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It represents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not associated in the cult of the External *Bɔγar*, collaborate in the rites of the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally
[778] in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social relations in terms of the External *Bɔγar* cult, and yet a third field of corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity. Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all, moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and the tendaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

have no clear notion of witchcraft, no detailed theories of its mode of 754
operation, and no institutionalized means of combating or sterilizing it.
A witch (*sɔi*) is supposed to fly about (*u ayarəme*) at night in the guise
of a ball of fire; she—for the Tallensi tend to think of a witch as a
woman, though they say that men may be witches too—is supposed to
be clairvoyant, to 'see (*nye*)' hidden things. She can recognize fellow
witches, foresee death coming to a particular person, prophesy an epidemic,
and so forth; she may be beneficent, able to impart luck to a
person in a mysterious way, or maleficent, killing people by eating (*ɔb*)
their souls (*sii*). This is the sum of Tale ideas about the nature of witches.
Actually, these qualities make up what is mainly an imaginary stereotype.
One never hears of particular individuals being credited with the
socially useful qualities or being suspected of possessing the anti-social
qualities attributed to witches. Witchcraft is only attributed to people
ex post facto, when an event occurs for which an explanation in terms of
witchcraft is sought.

Witchcraft is something on the fringe of Tale mystical thought and 754
ritual values. I have more than once heard elders of the most conser-
vative way of thinking, to whom the native scheme of ritual values is the 771
most important thing in life, declare roundly that there is no such thing
as a witch. Though the Tallensi do not put it into clear words, they
obviously feel that the idea of witchcraft is a mixture of superstition
and folk-lore, and not a part of the system of mystical and ritual values
that really matters for the conduct of life. Of course, superstition and
folk-lore are not wholly negligible. Circumstances occur, now and then,
in which people fall back on the idea of a witch's occult aggression in
order to cope with anxieties and frustrations that are normally neutralized
through the agency of the ancestor cult; and then a particular person
may be accused of being a witch. Significantly, in every case that has
come to my notice, some dating back twenty or thirty years and all of
them together numbering less than ten, the accused has been a woman.
Most accusations of this sort are in the first instance made by women [595]
against co-wives, and are symptomatic of the tensions inherent in the
joint family.

An accusation of being a witch is the private affair of the accused's 754
husband and his maximal lineage, her paternal family, and those of her 602
saarət who are in touch with her. In former days, if the accusation was
confirmed by a diviner, the accused might insist on undergoing the [787]
arrow ordeal (*kuh sɔ-peema*), or be compelled to do so by her husband's [627]
lineage and her *saarət* in order to prove her innocence. She had to
stab herself with a poisoned arrow in public at the same time as a branch
of a *keŋkaŋ* (Ficus) tree was plucked; and if she were guilty, it was
believed that she would die before the branch withered. But it is
characteristic of the Tale attitude to witches that a person who died
thus was accorded a proper funeral—unlike, for example, a person who

754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive
by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently
guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often
continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her
guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children
by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following
case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moɣaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman
of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold
porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush
with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this
instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp.
His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and
the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill
with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the
787 old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the
cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality
and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt.
There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into
consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself
partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at
someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the
matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no
doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared
her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence.
The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock
(*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant,
as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the
theme of one of the dance songs of the Gɔlib Festival. 'Wherever she
goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance
at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public
ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted
on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
754 mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
• [771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms
consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
●[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[1] have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

3 [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

PLATE V

x618
762
● 772

(*a*) Clanship at Zubiuŋ: Elders of Kpaɣara yaɣar awaiting the representatives of the other two maximal lineages at the entrance to the External *Bɔɣar* Duunkpalɔg, in order to perform a sacrifice.

764
x618

(*b*) The duties of *sunzɔp*, at Zubiuŋ: The rite of 'sowing a field' for the dead during a tɛndaana's funeral. One representative of each maximal lineage of the clan has to take part.

[facing p. 80]

173 them back to differences of origin. Everyone knows that all Namoos came originally from Mampurugu, how long ago nobody can tell. The tradition of Tongo, as it was related to me on many occasions, is as follows: The ancestor who founded Tongo was Mosuor. He was the Paramount Chief (*na'ab*) of Mampurugu, but had to flee the country after being vanquished in a fight for the chiefship. When he reached Tongo the Gbizug tɛndaana, Gɛnɔt, was living there. Mosuor came to the house but found nobody there; for Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt had seen him coming and had sought refuge in the nearby hills. Now, there is a watercourse a little distance off and there he found a shallow pit beside which stood a *kiŋkaŋ* (*Ficus*) tree which was shedding its leaves. A path led from this water-hole towards the Hills and someone had been carrying water which had spilled over on to this path. 'Thereupon', to quote the version of one of my Tongo informants, 'our ancestor said, "There is someone in these hills who comes to fetch water here". So he caused the dry fig leaves to be scattered on the path and went to hide quietly. In due course he saw Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt stepping along the path, while the leaves crunched *kaya, kaya*, coming to fetch water. Thereupon our ancestor Mosuor, having seen him, caught him and asked him what he was afraid of. Why did he run away and hide? Gɛnɔt replied that he had seen him wearing a gown and that there was something on his head all red, and fear took hold of him.[1] So Mosuor brought him back and asked, "Who owns this house?" He said that it was his house, and Mosuor brought him home thither and said that he himself would settle down here and Gɛnɔt as well. He said that Gɛnɔt would be his tɛndaana to carry out the sacrifices on his behalf.'

Gbizug elders told the story of Mosuor in much the same way but omitting the trick by which Mosuor caught their ancestor; adding that it was the horses and guns of Mosuor that inspired fear in Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt. 173 608 They say, also, that having accepted Mosuor as a settler and having allotted land to him close beside his own homestead, he told Mosuor what were the taboos of the country (*tɛŋɔn-kiha*), and entered into a solemn pact of blood-brotherhood with him. They *ŋma pɔlɔŋ*, cut wrists. A cut was made on the wrist of each, and each licked the blood of the other. Thus '*ba leeba mabiih, ba leeba soog*, they became brethren, they became uterine brothers' and pledged themselves and their descendants to perpetual peace. This was a unique instance of blood-brotherhood, which is not practised in Taleland to-day.

773 According to this tradition, Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt told Mosuor of his kinsmen, the Ba'at-Sakpar Tɛndaana, the Wakii Tɛndaana, the Degal tɛndaana, and the Ka'ar tɛndaana. These five were the original inhabitants of the country. They sprang from the Earth itself, say their descendants. At Gbizug they declare that Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt's ancestor Bumbiogta'adug sprouted from the earth (*u bulme na*), he had no father or mother (*u ka ba u ka ma*). Pressed further they say, '*u yi Naawun zug sig na*—he descended from Heaven'. Heaven and Earth are one, they contend; they have the same mystical value. At Wakii they call their first

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[292] [1] A red fez and a cloth tunic are the distinctive costume of chiefs of Mampuru origin. Tɛndaanas may not wear garments of cloth. They are ritually obliged to wear skins only. Chiefs and their clansmen may ride horses, tɛndaanas not.

773 ancestor Tɛŋɔnbulɔg—Earth-begotten—and give the same myth of his origin. The people of Degal and of Ka'ar attribute a similar origin to their first ancestors. Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt is said to have begotten Dagbeog (Bearded man) whose descendants are the Gbeog people, who are therefore a 'brother' lineage to Gbizug (=*Gbeog zug*, the upper part of Gbeog).

One of Gɛnɔt's 'brothers'—the exact genealogical relationship is regarded as of no consequence, some describing him as *soog* (uterine kinsman), others as *pit* (younger brother)—was Daziug (Red man), a hunter who founded the Ba'at-Sakpar line; and another 'brother' of his founded one of the Zubiuŋ lineages. Indeed all the primordial tɛndaanas were 'brothers' in a more general sense, the concepts of kinship serving here consciously to identify them with one another.

These myths, meagre as they appear, are laid down with a finality of conviction that makes any question of their historical truthfulness irrelevant.

173 Most of the Hill Talis are also alleged to have been immigrants originally who arrived to find the Degal Tɛndaana living on top of the hills. But their myths of origin are as deficient in circumstantial detail as those of the primordial tɛndaanas. Thus candid people at Yinduuri said complacently: 'We don't know, it is said that our ancestor came from Tampɔlɔŋ in Mampurugu, but now we have all become Talis.' People of other clans told a vague story of an ancestor wandering about the uninhabited hills, sheltering in caves, until one day he observed the smoke of a fire. Going towards it he discovered the Degal tɛndaana, and later settled on the Hills. Gorogo is said to have been founded thus by Woolisi immigrants, Sii by Bulisi and Mamprusi, and some of the Tɛnzugu lineages by Mamprusi, Kusaasi, or Gɔrisi. The origins thus attributed to any community symbolize special ritual relationships with the areas they are alleged to have migrated from, which are still maintained.

173 811 All these myths of origin become intelligible when it is realized that they are nothing more than formulations of the contemporary scheme of political and ceremonial relationships. The Tallensi themselves are philosophers enough to appreciate this. Many Namoos, for example, privately view the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas with unaffected scorn. 'They lie', declared Sayɔbazaa, a shrewd and respected elder of Tongo, himself a kinsman of the present[1] Gbizug tɛndaana. 'A human being can't emerge sprouting out of the earth. The rain falls, and the millet comes up, trees come up, grass comes up; but we have never seen a human being sprout up.' When I tried to defend the tɛndaanas, he countered triumphantly: 'And if their ancestor really sprouted up, why don't they let a person sprout again?' Then, with a sudden inspiration he proposed an explanation: 'Suppose you come and settle here and your children succeed you, and their children, and their children succeed and so on, and so on. Then, one day strangers come and ask your descendants whence they have sprung. Will they not say that their ancestor was begotten of the earth? We Namoos', he concluded, 'are immigrants (*kpeeha*) here.' This acute estimation of the myths gives a clue to their

[1] The present time throughout this book refers to the years 1934–7.

178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Gɔlibdaana, in his
overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
184 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Gɔlibdaana to
626 stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the
576 building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

of the group to which it refers. Owing to the balanced distribution of 173
political and ceremonial functions between units of structure, the members 773
of a group always overrate their own relative significance while non-members underrate its importance. These, sometimes contradictory, 578
valuations find expression, also, in the way myths are presented. It is the technique of contraposition coming to the surface again. When, therefore, in these days new tensions develop, erupting sometimes into open conflict, they are inevitably reflected in the cast given to their myths of origin by interested parties.

The Major Cleavage in Tale Society

Our reconnaissance of the cultural landscape of the Tallensi has left us 000
with a tangle of facts which do not fall into an obvious pattern. The reader may rest assured that his perplexity bears no comparison to that of an ethnographer seeking, for the first time, to understand Tale culture and social organization. The perspective changes as the investigator shifts his vantage point. The greatest puzzle of all is why there is so little apparent unity and coherence in an area of such dense and close habitation, carrying a population that has been sedentary for a long time, has a more or less homogeneous culture, and a strong sense of the continuity and stability of its social order. Leaving aside this puzzle, for the present, let us see what are the positive conclusions to which our survey leads.

The point of primary importance is that a major cleavage runs through 184
the whole of Tale society. On the one side stand communities or parts of communities the members of which are generally agreed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi. These are the Namoos. On the other side stand similar social groups who claim to be and are accepted as the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and earlier immigrants whom they absorbed. This cleavage is given a symbolic formulation in myths of origin the historicity of which need not concern us.

This cleavage is so fundamental that it permeates the whole social out- 184
look of the people. One sees it most vividly in the martial choruses chanted 764
at important funerals. One of the high lights at the opening ceremonies of the funeral of an important person is a grand mimic war march (*dee*) of the men of the clan. In their finest clothes, weapons in hand, plumed helms on their heads, blowing whistles and accompanied by drummers, the men gather in lineage squadrons to march round the settlement, and eventually mass at the house of the funeral. They march irregularly in an unorganized mob with excited children trailing behind and women dancing on the flanks trilling the shrill *kpɛləmət* cry of elation. And as they march, especially as they approach the funeral house, they chant defiant challenges against their traditional enemies in the wars of former days. 'Yo ho!' they chant, 'we might rise one day at break of dawn to sally forth against certain people.' 'Is it not because of us', the Namoos chant taunting the Talis, 'that you have water to drink?' And again, 'Do you not mock at them, do you not laugh at them?' And now and then a man leaps forward, crouches scowling, pretends to shoot off an arrow, and cries scornfully, 'If it were not for the white man, by now we would be meeting them in battle'. It is all play-acting, but there is an

We have noted that Tale culture is homogeneous. Thus the totemic 184 taboos of the Tale Namoos and their characteristic funeral rites, distinctive as they are, are homologous in form and function with the totemic observances and funeral rites of non-Namoos. We shall see the evidence for this when we examine the more elaborate differentiation of Talis and other non-Namoo clans and lineages by totemic and other ritual observances. Tallensi know this and take it for granted, as they also take for granted variations in the ritual observances of different communities which are presumed to have identical ritual forms. They attribute such variations to the influence of neighbouring communities. In fact the homologous usages of neighbouring communities have features in common which do not occur among more widely separated clans with the same practices.

But the taboos of the first-born and the goatskin loin-cover of the dead 171 are fixed and unalterable. All Tallensi know that these are the distin- 784 guishing *kiha* (sing. *kihər*)—literally, forbidden things, but meaning ritual injunctions as well as prohibitions—of all Namoos, 'from Dagbəŋ to Mooga', as the natives say.

Namoos say that they observe these *kiha* 'because it is the custom of our ancestors (*ti yaab yɛl nla*)'. They require no other explanation, but accept such ritual observances as facts of immemorial antiquity and part of the fixed order of society. The taboo of the fowl is the only one of these observances for which a myth of origin exists, and this is typical of the Tale myths purporting to account for the origins of totemic avoidances, being apparently trivial in content and neutral in emotional tone. Considering the fluid form and content of such myths and the fact that they are never deliberately taught, this myth is remarkably consistent in outline among Namoo clans in Taleland.[1] Tallensi display no interest in the private myths of any social group other than their own, and therefore make no secret of these myths. Knowledge of them is not deemed to be a necessary condition of adherence to the tenets they enshrine. Most young Namoos and many older men, even those who have themselves to observe the fowl taboo—an onerous enough restriction in a society whose chief sacrificial animal is the fowl—are ignorant of or but hazily acquainted with the myth. The men who know it tell it without reticence.

Significance of the Totemic Taboos of the Namoos

The fowl taboo, Namoos say, came about because 'a fowl did a great 773● service to our ancestor'. He had a wife, and people came to her with slander of her husband, trying thus to persuade her to leave him. This made her very unhappy. But one day a broody hen sitting in the woman's grinding room told her not to weep. When her husband returns from the farm she must prepare a drink of flour-water for him, said the fowl, and it would fly up and dash the calabash from his hand. If he then killed the fowl in anger the woman would know that he was a wicked man, and if he spared it she would know that people were slandering him maliciously. When the man came home, the plan was carried out. Far from injuring

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[1] Different versions of the myth are found among Namoos outside Taleland, but the central theme is the same. All versions stress the point that the intervention of a fowl was responsible for the birth of the clan.

773 the fowl, the man merely said, 'The fowl is thirsty'. Thus his wife knew that people had been deceiving her and she remained with him. Afterwards she bore a daughter, and vowed solemnly that her child should never eat fowl. Later a son followed, and the man declared that the boy too must refrain from eating fowl. That is why the first-born son and first-born daughter of all Namoos have the fowl avoidance; but later children may eat it, for if they, too, were prohibited, who would consume the fowls which men sacrifice to their ancestors?

771 If we bear in mind the enormous importance Tallensi attach to marriage and progeny, we can sympathize with the respect they pay to the common domestic fowl in return for this apparently trivial benefit conferred on their ancestor. Of course nobody knows or cares who this ancestor was, but it would not occur to anybody to doubt the truth of this tale. Every day some animal, domestic or wild, becomes a shrine (*bayər*), the symbol and medium of contact with the ancestor spirits, to some person or another in every Tale settlement; and the occasion of this ritual transformation of a commonplace creature is always a piece of good or ill fortune associated with it. Nor would the fact, admittedly contrary to ordinary experience, that a fowl broke into speech, disconcert the natives. They see no need for explaining away such incongruities, either by invoking the supernatural or by referring it to a fabulous age when animals possessed the power of speech. 'That is the story', they declare, and that is enough for them; as we might say, it fits in with the logic of the myth.

186 This casual attitude to the myth is due to the fact that the natives attach little importance to it in comparison with the observance it seeks to explain. For the myth is simply a formulation of the idea that the fowl taboo is the fundamental symbol of the social definition of Namoos. Everywhere within the social ambit of the Tallensi, and at all times, Namoos are those who are subject to distinctive ritual and moral restrictions in virtue of their agnatic descent; and amongst these the fowl taboo is crucial. That is how others think of Namoos, and that is how they themselves visualize their social identity. Through these observances the individual identifies himself in thought and feeling with the fraternity of clans of which his own is a part and, what is of equal significance, with the dead but still regnant forebears.

The anonymity of the ancestor in the myth shows that he stands for the prototype of all the ancestors who must necessarily have gone before in order that the present generation of men should exist, and to whom the living owe their whole social order. It is a notion entirely in keeping with the ideas underlying the kinship system of the Tallensi. But for the intervention of the fowl, says the myth, the Namoo stock might never have come into existence; and the taboo which commemorates that event came into being with the birth of their stock, which was at the same time the birth of their role in society. All Namoos, it must be remembered, are concerned with their totemic observances; for those who are themselves exempt from them have this privilege only because they are the brothers or sisters of individuals who are compelled to observe them.

577 The fowl taboo and the ritual observances associated with it symbolize

x618 784 have been their founding ancestors' paternal clans. In other cases the correlation is not so clear, since the attached lineages concerned are intercalary between clans that have the same avoidances. But it is not a general rule that attached lineages preserve the avoidances of the clan of the alleged father of their founding ancestor, as can be seen from the case of Ba'at-Lakum yidem, who do not keep the Zubiuŋ taboos.

Thus Talis sometimes cite common totemic and other ritual observances as a sign of clanship ties, and at other times deny any necessary connexion between ritual observances and clanship ties. When they want to emphasize the close interdependence, or the sense of community of a particular group of clans, by contrast with other Talis or non-Talis clans, they tend to pick on common ritual observances in proof of this. But on the other hand, they are equally ready to quote peculiar totemic taboos as signs of the genealogical or social singularity of a clan or lineage. The apparent inconsistency does not worry them. For, as we have seen, Tallensi cannot visualize precisely the structure of their society in its entirety, and there is good evidence for both views in the ritual observances of the Talis. There is a tendency for some clans that are closely interconnected to have some totems in common, and for others to have different totems.

x618 784 184 The totemic avoidances found among the clans of the Sie district in general follow the pattern found at Ba'ari; but in this area there is no close-knit nuclear aggregate of clans like the Hill Talis. The relative autonomy of the maximal lineage stands out more markedly, and there is consequently a greater diversity of totemic avoidances.

Totemic Myths

●773 We have previously remarked that Namoos show little interest in the mythology of their totemic taboos. This attitude is characteristic of all Tallensi. Talis elders, whose authority and wisdom in ritual matters were widely respected, and who willingly gave me information of the most secret kind, were content to dismiss the question of the origin of their totemic taboos with some trite remark such as, 'We grew up to find it thus'. But here and there one comes across a myth accounting for the origin of a totemic taboo, especially in the Sie area. They are all expansions of the text 'The animal conferred a benefit on our ancestor (*u daa maal ti yaab la*)'. Though they all have the same moral, they vary greatly in substance.

773 539 Thus, according to one version, the avoidance of the tortoise and water-tortoise among the Hill Talis began in this way: 'Our (anonymous) ancestor' was suffering severely from thirst once and could find no water. He saw a tortoise crawling along and followed it. The animal reached a heap of dry leaves, which it scratched aside revealing a spring. Thereupon 'our ancestor' vowed that never again would he or his descendants eat the tortoise; and as the water-tortoise is merely another species of the same family, this taboo naturally extends to it as well.

According to another version, which is worth quoting as an example of the variations in these myths, 'our ancestor' was on a journey and was

held up by an impassable river. He noticed a water-tortoise descending 773
the bank, and followed it. Thus he was led to a ford, which enabled him 539
to cross. Thereupon he vowed that he and his descendants would refrain
from eating this animal and its brother species, the tortoise.

Similar myths are current among other clans that taboo aquatic
animals. Thus one of the segments of Sie have the special avoidance of
the crocodile in addition to the usual fowl avoidance of the Namoos. The
head of this segment told me the following myth in explanation. There
was a communal fish drive, during which their ancestor, Layɛn, dis- [226]
appeared. He was given up for lost, and next day a party was dispatched
to search for the body. But when they reached the river, they found him
sitting on the bank with a crocodile at his feet. He told them that the
crocodile had saved his life (*fa u ŋovor bah*) by holding him down and
covering him up. Hence he vowed that he and his descendants would
never again eat crocodile.

In the same way the elders of Gban narrate that 'their ancestor' was 773
suffering with a swollen hand. He asked friends to lance it, but they 539
thought this was unnecessary. Then one day, as he sat resting his hand 757
on his head because of the pain, a large grasshopper of a species with
sharply serrated legs (*saŋkaan*) landed on it. The ancestor scared it away.
As it leaped off, it kicked out and ripped the skin of the festering hand
with its saw-edged legs. This let out the accumulated pus and cured the
hand. Thereupon the ancestor vowed, in the phrase that usually concludes these myths, 'May he grow old with his grandson, but no
descendant of his should ever again eat the *saŋkaan* (*ɔn kɔrəgən ni u
yaaŋa, ka ɔn bii ku le di saŋkaan*)'.

Other myths of this kind relate how the anonymous ancestor was saved 773
from an enemy about to slay him by the opportune appearance of the 539
totemic animal. Thus, according to one of the elders of Sawaləg: 'Bows
were in conflict (*tap ndaa ŋme*)', ('Perhaps', he added, as an afterthought,
'there was a fight with Mamprusi who came to raid for slaves') 'and our
ancestor fled, seeking refuge in an animal's burrow. The enemy was
about to break open the burrow when a squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) darted past.
They turned to pursue it, and left our ancestor. Thereupon, he vowed
never to eat the squirrel again, neither he nor his descendants.'

As this sample of totemic myths shows, the pattern is the same as that 773
of the Namoo myth accounting for the fowl avoidance. They are more 787
unstable in content, however. The two versions of the tortoise myth were obtained from two equally authoritative elders of the same clan. There is, indeed, always an element of speculation, or of *ad hoc* construction, in these myths. Listening to them one often has the feeling that they are being elaborated by logical deduction. The starting-point is the premiss that the totemic avoidance was due to a vow made by 'our ancestor' in gratitude for an extraordinary service that saved his life. The process of reasoning is to deduce an action on the part of the animal consistent with its known peculiarities of appearance and of behaviour. Informants are never able to tell one where and when they first heard these myths. They say vaguely: 'We heard them from our fathers.' This method of reasoning, however, is congenial to the Tallensi. It forms the

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

774 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

602 613 577 members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise. This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

593 582 597 The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

597 593 Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

● 773 604 622 An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

622 183 When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly, they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

779 425 688 the earth (*tɛŋəmpiïma*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *tɛŋəmpiïmər*. It must be handed to a tɛndaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

● 774 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 774 793 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but
[567 622] he is given to a chief and not to a tɛndaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified to sell a human being into slavery; a tɛndaana would commit a sacrilege against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *ya-a-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

Bama. . At the foot of this grain-store were other shrines, seen 778
rather indistinctly in the photograph. 769

One is the shrine for the spirit of a woman called Tapur, who was a co-wife to Bama, both being wives of Sayebere's paternal grandfather. Another is a shrine of Bama. There was also a large stone. 'Bama asked for this through a soothsayer.'

Moving further round the grain-store we come to another series of shrines which are illustrated in the photographs, Figs. 69–70.

In Fig. 69 A is the shrine of the *Ten'dan's* own mother, Kurug; the actual spirit is in the head of a hoe let into the clay; B, a log of wood with a stone on top. I seem to have omitted to record what this was; C is a pot out of which an infant which has become ward of a spirit is given to drink.

Fig. 70 Sayebere called a *tim bager'*, 'But,' he added, 'it is also 778
called *anoa-dok* (a mouth pot).'[1] He was in a state of great trepidation lest I should uncover it, saying, holding his nostrils as he spoke, 'It is my life. When I sacrifice to it I say, "Mouth pot receive and protect me from mouths".' It had, he said, many avoidances; these included: Passing behind its owner when he was eating; carrying a flaming faggot past it; mention of the word moon (*mwarega*) while its owner was eating.

The fetish consisted of a pot, covered with another broken pot, a bow, bundle of arrows, and a quiver. The bow, arrows, and quiver had, he said, been added to the pot after consultation with a soothsayer.

Bogere and Bagere: There seems a distinction between these shrines [778]
so named, which hardly appears to exist among the Nankanse.

'A *bogere*,' said my Taleŋa informant, 'you fetch from your mother's 778
country after she is dead. You go to your mother's father's compound, 769
and take some earth from the *bagere* of your mother's father and put
this in a calabash, which your wife will carry home. She must not 775
speak to any one except her husband on the return journey. This soil will be put in a horn and is called my mother's *bogere*. Your mother's spirit may have become an iron bangle, that is a *bagere*; a *bogere* is like a shade to a *bagere*. A man's house may become 'bitter'; he consults and is told that it is his mother who wants a room. He makes one; that is a *bagere*. After that, he will go to his mother's home and bring earth from the mound which has been made there for his mother's father's spirit, and bring it home, and build a new mound with the

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[1] See p. 301.

778 769 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere* comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's spirit wants to punish (*eŋ*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband, "Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

171 778 791 769 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in connexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives the power to the *bakologo*.'

787 761 769 *A Seance attended at Tɔngo*: A woman had died from snake-bite, and after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with both hands and saying, '*N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor*' (I hold your sides, but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig. 71), and said, '*N ba Yin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n be, te te*'. (My father's *Yin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is; give us).

He then began to sing:

'*Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Yi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam zeret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.*' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole[1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash, and these are left on the grave. The iron heads of the hoes are washed in water containing *grunyoa* grass (*nagwa* in Nankane, used to fumigate everything which has had contact with the dead). If the deceased had a *bakolog* (soothsaying shrine) it is fumigated with the grass. 787 [783] [778]

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

Driving the Souls of the Living from Graves: 'Some *bayas* (sextons) can see souls (*sis*) in graves. When they do so, they will take a potsherd and put peppers and tobacco on it and set them on fire and place them in the open grave in order that the soul may be driven out.' 791 775

This exhausts the information which I obtained while living with the Kusase,[1] whom I found a charming and delightful people. I pass on in my next chapter to describe the Builsa, whom Europeans know better as the 'Kanjaga'. 000

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[1] The Kusase do not circumcise, nor do their women practise incision, unless influenced by Mampruse connexions, e.g. at Bawku. They file the teeth. The women pierce the lower lip only. 304

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of
Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men
who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg
is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors
was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his
ahəb (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of
Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most
of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases
the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one
living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as
at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been
carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they
undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he
constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in
order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build
a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)'
ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed
portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the
dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead
is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is
fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual
and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiïm*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly, there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ* where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋgbana*—
782] for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat. Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in. We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan. For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the im-
291 portant *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas. My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre (*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos, as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug* and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately. The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person. A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife, mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family. 342 593

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments, but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in the case of the latter. 595

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman. They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him. 778 595

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary rites, make this clear. 775 769

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights, after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing or gossiping or asking riddles. 592

buried in one of the peripheral settlements, or abroad, where he has 769
been living temporarily. Then, if his sons return to the ancestral home, 577
perhaps years after his death, he will one day, through a diviner, order
them to exhume (*gurəg*) him and rebury him among his ancestors at the 764
ancestral home (*daboog*). The notion that when a person dies he joins
his ancestors (or a woman her husband's ancestors as well as her own), [775] ●
and that his body should therefore lie among their bodies, is a basic idea
in Tale religion and an obvious reflex of filial piety.

As the case of Sawɔŋba's daughter, previously quoted (p. 89), shows, 764
daughters are as much bound as sons to mourn the death of a parent.
All the children of the deceased must come to the funeral so as to 765
undergo the mourning rites. They are ritually unclean until they 577
have done so and have had their heads ritually shaved (*kuo zug*) in
sign of it. Though the ritual uncleanness (*dayət*) of a person who 783
has lost a parent does not interfere with normal life, it is felt to be
a psychological burden, for, as we have noted, until a dead person's
funeral has been made, his or her social personality is not wholly erased
from the real world. I have heard children of 10 or 11 say gravely that
they wished their mother's or father's funeral could be made soon so
that they could 'shave off the uncleanness (*kuo dayət la bah*)'. The
uncleanness adheres primarily to the deceased's own children, but it
also affects proxy children who have no living parent (as determined by
the criteria of 'fatherlessness' or 'motherlessness') of the same sex as the
deceased. One of the ways in which Tallensi demonstrate respect and
affection for a classificatory parent such as a father's agnatic cousin or
a classificatory father's wife, who has never been a proxy parent to
them, is to undergo the chief mourning rites for him or her—provided,
of course, the mourner is 'fatherless' or 'motherless' in that situation.
When an old man or woman who was the last of the generation of
'fathers' or 'mothers' of the inner lineage dies, the men and women of
the lineage to whom he or she is a classificatory parent gather from far
and wide for the funeral and all undergo the rites of shaving the head.
It is not compulsory for anyone to have the head shaved for a
classificatory parent, but it is a pious gesture which at the same time
proclaims the solidarity of the lineage. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* might
be a Tale proverb. Old grudges are forgotten—though not necessarily
buried for ever—and men and women who have been estranged from
their classificatory brothers and sisters or the deceased parent turn up
to the funeral to do the proper thing.

Nowadays the death of a parent is one of the strongest sanctions that 577
induce the men who go to work abroad to return home, if only for a 765
while. The absentees may dawdle for weeks or months or even two
or three years—for funeral ceremonies can be postponed, as we have
noted, for periods up to three, four, or more years—but most of them
come home eventually for the rites. Those who delay so long that their

553 776 778 head and the python skull were placed on the shrine that was eventually consecrated to the *bakologo* spirit and my informant's name was a reference to the arrow head. One of *his* sons taken in guardianship by the same shrine was named WAAFO, snake.

● [775] This case is interesting from another angle, too. The Tallensi have no belief in reincarnation. There is no special bond between a person and his ancestral namesake. He is not supposed to resemble or expected to emulate his ancestor. His name is a display of pride in ancestry, on the one hand, and a sign of submission to the religious supremacy of the ancestors, on the other. Thus he has no special ritual observances, on account of his name, if he is the ward of a patrilineal ancestor. [614] But if his *sεγər* is a matrilateral ancestor, this person might have belonged to a clan different from his own. In that case he is often obliged to keep the totemic taboos of the clan of this ancestor. Thus in the above case it is not altogether an accident that the slain python turned out to be a manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor whose clan have a taboo against killing and eating this animal. Children taken in spirit-guardianship by this ancestor have therefore to observe the same taboo, whether or not it is followed by other members of their family and clan.

553 776 I do not want to follow further the complex ramifications of this aspect of Tale naming customs. One more detail must suffice. The greatest renown, that is the most respected *wu'uri*, comes from election to an office. A chief (*Na'ab*) or Custodian of the Earth (*Tendaana*) is always addressed and referred to by his title. After his death he is certain to have descendants through his sons, grandsons, and daughters, placed under his spiritual guardianship. They will be named either by the name he took to himself on election to his office, which I shall describe presently, or by his title. NA'AB, NA'ABPƆK, TENDAANA, etc. are common names among descendants of such dignitaries.

And here it is pertinent to add that certain forms of disgrace which are associated with ritual danger result in the suppression of ancestral names. Thus if a man dies of smallpox, or is killed in war, his name is never given to a descendant. He will be remembered in sacrifices if he has descendants but not in their names.

551 553 I want to turn now to the open names. Their variety is extraordinary. A few refer to accidental or conventional circumstances connected with the birth of the bearer and are therefore fairly frequent. ZIBA, knows not father, is the name always given to a posthumous child. SAMANE, the home farm, is a common name. It is given to a child whose mother was overcome by labour pains while engaged on some task on the home farm. SUOR, path, has the same origin. TAMPƆγAR, the garbage heap, may be the name given to a child born after the onset of labour pains at the ash heap. But it also arises in this way. A woman has had several children all of whom have died soon after birth. This is failure or malevolence on the part of the various ancestors who claimed these children as wards. When her next child is born the father says: "I give this child's life to be watched over by the garbage heap. My ancestors have failed me, for all that my children are good for is to be buried (as babies that die are so buried) in the garbage heap." This is a well tried magical idea, found also elsewhere in West Africa and in many other parts of the world.

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582 from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586 the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584 of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585 proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, 171 or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nankane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776] ● by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782] has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764 given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo: 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed 177
on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and 796
extraordinary of many curious rites ~~which it~~ has been my privilege to 776 ●
attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work.
Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity, but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which
must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally [778]
the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

Its power is from God (*Na Yin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan'*; its 784
taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the follow- 776
ing avoidances:

(*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
(*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
(*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
(*d*) *Meya* (water turtle).
(*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
(*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
(*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la* [195]
a zia koom (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range 788
which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There 776
seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who 778
come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

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[1] It is also known as *Ya ni* and *Ya pwiga*.

788 defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a
776 grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl.
778 There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the
punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come
down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

776 The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme
Being, does not, as far ~~as I could~~ discover, possess any shrine beyond
778 a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service
about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not
have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far
from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags.
The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than
ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

796 On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the
first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of
788 Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* had not yet appeared. From then onwards,
until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder
[484] and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who
I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi,
Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti
friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on
their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the
Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived. The former was a really
magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely
[777] proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the
Ten'dan' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

796 I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to
attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They
asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards
I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible
to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast
women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets,
and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75).
We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until
we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were
asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many
were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person
on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted.
I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how
I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔɣar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔɣar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔɣar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔɣa*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔɣar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔɣar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794
sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing
Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔɣar* or the coercion of an adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult to 776 ●
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔɣar can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛɣər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔɣar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔɣar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔɣar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔɣar* in return.
738 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔɣar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion
[551] with it. Wards of the *Bɔɣar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔɣare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
[582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔɣar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔɣa* extends, also, to
whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔɣar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale
tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi;
and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of
the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts
and sacrifices to the *Bɔɣar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the
benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace,
and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the
totems and other ritual rules of the *Bɔɣar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔɣar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔɣar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured
kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct
of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client
lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔɣar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔɣar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic
avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's
lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will
have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and
as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between
the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of
sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus
he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to
inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the
agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of
maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes
have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who
observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the
totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo
of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that
it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl
in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer
remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary
totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

leopard taboo of Ŋkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of 776 the Talis. 784

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems 184 is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛyər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛyər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔyar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛyər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔyar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔyar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔyar* and the *Bɔyar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that 608 sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be 776 called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔyar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔyar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔyar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔyar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with 608 lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when 769 the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔya* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔyar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding 182 pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

182 Every functionally differentiated aspect of the social life carries specific norms of conduct. It implies specific social obligations, jural rights, and, very often, economic relationships. It usually has a morphological correlate, as offices are vested in particular lineages, localities are associated with lineages, and social roles are transmitted by descent or determined by kinship. Hence every functionally differentiated aspect of social life tends to be subject to specific ritual sanctions within the general frame of the ancestor cult and to be identified by particular ritual symbols. In terms of the individual's place in the social system, this means that Tale religious ideology recognizes the fact that a man's social personality is compounded of many roles corresponding to the different functional aspects of social life in which he takes part. But this multiplicity of social roles does not obliterate the individual. Though he is a microcosm of his society he is always, also, uniquely himself. At times this is the prime determinant of his behaviour, at others a particular social role or membership of a corporate group is decisive. Totemic and other ritual symbols are the ideological landmarks that keep the individual on his course.

622 We see this very well in the case of a chief or other politico-ritual
182 functionary. The man himself with his personal qualities, his career, his good or ill fortune is one thing. He also belongs to his lineage, and is subject to the code of lineage rights and duties. His title to his office rests on this. Then he is also a chief, with the special ritual and secular privileges and responsibilities of his office. Each facet of his social personality corresponds to a different functional aspect of social life—the aspect of private relationships, of lineage membership, of politico-ritual office representing common or corporate interests. Each aspect has its ritual imprimatur, made explicit largely in the form of symbolic actions or taboos, especially animal taboos. Chiefs, for instance, may not eat the bush-pig (*dee*) and the dog (*baa*); the natives say that is because they are scavengers and therefore unclean in both the physical and the mystical sense.

182 The use of ritual symbolism in this context is not fortuitous. It reflects the supremacy of the ancestors as the sanction of the social order. Men cannot visualize their ancestors, but they experience their intervention in human affairs; and this gives a clue to the importance of animal symbolism in Tale religion.

182 As a member of a corporate group, a man comes under the spiritual
776 jurisdiction of the common ancestors of the group, focused in the lineage *bɔyar*. This relationship is symbolized, *inter alia*, by his totemic taboos. As a unique individual his immediate ancestors have most relevance for him. The pattern of his life is broadly the same as that of his contemporaries. But particular events such as an illness, or the birth of a child, have a personal significance in his own biography. The Tallensi sum this up in the notion of Personal Destiny (*Yin*). Certain ancestors of his become a man's *Yin*. They are revealed to him gradually in the course of years. The process begins with some stroke of good or, more usually, ill fortune that singles him out. He builds a shrine to his *Yin* ancestors in which are incorporated material symbols of the occasions on which they were revealed to him. And animals play a big part in these

symbols. It may be a domestic animal peculiarly associated with the man 182
because he reared it. But far more significance is attached to a bush 776
animal killed in the hunt, or an aquatic animal caught in a fish drive. Encountering such an animal is a matter of luck. Overcoming it demands skill and has an element of danger; and this singles out the successful hunter or fisherman from his fellows. It is a sign of the intervention of his *Yin* ancestors in his life and the animal is an obvious choice as a symbol for them. It should be stressed that the question of economic value does not come in at all. Bush and aquatic animals have very little economic value. It is as symbols of personal achievement and luck that they have meaning.

But what is the common psychological theme in these different categories of animal symbolism? The relations between men and their ancestors among the Tallensi are a never-ceasing struggle. Men try to coerce and placate their ancestors by means of sacrifices. But the ancestors are unpredictable. It is their power to injure and their sudden attacks on routine well-being that make men aware of them rather than their beneficent guardianship. It is by aggressive intervention in human affairs that they safeguard the social order. Do what they will, men can never control the ancestors. Like the animals of the bush and the river, they are restless, elusive, ubiquitous, unpredictable, aggressive. The relations of men with animals in the world of common-sense experience are an apt symbolism of the relations of men with their ancestors in the sphere of mystical causation.

It is an interesting point that the commonest and most widely respected 182
totem or quasi-totem animals are what Tallensi call 'teeth-bearers' 613
(*nyindem*)—reptiles and carnivores, whose weapons are their teeth and who live and defend themselves by attacking other animals or even men. The symbolical link with the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors is patent.[1] This is, no doubt, the chief reason why other species of earth-dwelling animals are not selected as Earth taboos.

To sum up, animals are peculiarly apt symbols for the livingness—the immortality—of the ancestors as this emerges in the various functionally differentiated aspects of the social life. They symbolize, in particular, the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors as the supreme sanction of Tale cultural values. They serve to crystallize in simple, concrete, unequivocal imperatives and images the notion of the binding force of the moral code which is not clearly apparent in the diffused and particularized imperatives that make up the day-to-day experience of it. Different animal symbols stand for different aspects of the moral code, but they all form a connected series corresponding to the unitary basis of that code and the all-embracing sanctions of the ancestor cult. The principles of right and wrong, of duty and justice, of what is permissible and what is prohibited in social life fall into a consistent scheme among the Tallensi. And as the existence of the society depends on the maintenance of this code, its ultimate sanctions are necessarily of mystical form.

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[1] Teeth are a common symbol of aggression among many peoples. The association is familiar to psychologists. We have it ourselves—witness our expression 'to show one's teeth'.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. [193]
To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

and watched over by his ancestors. If she or the child dies in childbirth 611
the responsibility falls on her husband. A child should be born under 769
its father's roof, literally into the lineage to which it comes as a profit (*ŋoor*) and a responsibility, and under the auspices of its patrilineal ancestors, the spiritual arbiters of its destiny, to whom it will later in life bring sacrifices. Its life will depend on these ancestors, one of whom [776]
will immediately demand to be made its spiritual guardian, charged with preserving its life (*mar u ŋɔvɔr*).

Not only should a child be born under its father's roof, but it should, 854
ideally, be reared, or at least be brought through the first dangerous months of infancy, in its father's house. Circumstances occasionally 769
compel a child to be entrusted to the care of its mother's family, and the Tallensi are practical enough to accept this necessity with equanimity. But they are extremely reluctant to let a young infant pass out of the direct tutelage of its paternal kin and ancestors even for a short while. Thus strong objection is raised if a young wife takes her infant and goes to stay at her parents' house for some time. Here, again, practical necessity may leave no alternative, but there is always a feeling of uneasiness, as can be seen from the following case. When Nindɔɣat of Zubiuŋ died, his youngest wife went home to her father's house at Tɔŋ-Seug, about a quarter of a mile from her late husband's house, taking her infant of some six months with her. Nindɔɣat's brother and prospective heir tried to prevent her going, but she was not well, and they had to admit that she would be better cared for by her mother than by her co-wives. So they allowed her to go. A couple of weeks later, however, the baby fell ill, and though the young mother was staying only a few minutes' walk from her late husband's house, she returned to it immediately. 'She came running back home', her late husband's brother told me, 'because the child was ill. Its (dead) father had not agreed for it to be taken away (that is, the dead father, now a spirit, had mystically caused the child's illness as a sign of his displeasure). And supposing the child were to die at its maternal uncle's house? Should we not say that they had caused the death of our child?' The proper ritual measures to cure the child, without which practical leechcraft could not avail, could only be taken by its father or his representative in its father's house. The young mother believed this as firmly as her late husband's heir.

For all these reasons it is a taboo (*kihɔr*) for a child to be born in its 844
mother's father's house. His ancestor spirits cannot watch over mother 783
and child, for they do not 'own (*so*)' the child. It is, therefore, dangerous 769
for the child's health and chances of survival. Of course, such a thing may, and sometimes does happen by accident. Then the child's father must, whenever he can afford it, erase the pollution by the ceremony of 'removing the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the birth from his father-in-law's house. He sends a sheep and beer to his father-in-law as a placation

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949

FE11 Tallensi FE11

the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846 wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are near, might give some help too.[1] 602 The younger women fetch water and cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593 begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of a father's tribulations. 854 Talking with men immediately after the birth of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family [787 visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as 776] a spiritual ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) to guard its life (*gur u ŋɔvɔr*) and watch over its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabalɔg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, [165] vol. xxxv, nos. 3 and 4, 1943.

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593 the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855 print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these 'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577 been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry. He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593 or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845 greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789 are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263] in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845 social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766 one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776 are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851 survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarɔg*, when the cause of its death is sought by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyɛɛr*)] and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845 pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854 alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

551 his immediate household, it is willingly told to a *bona fide* enquirer. Nor is it a sacred name to be used, perhaps, only in religious contexts; for, as I have implied, the spirit-guardian name can, and often does serve also as the mundane name. It is, rather, a private name, symbolising a unique relationship of religious dependence and reciprocity between the ward and his ancestors. A person's *sɛyər* is the ancestor or ancestress (or sometimes group of ancestors) who keeps spiritual watch over the person's life, as the Tallensi put it. The *sɛyər* is an ancestor mystically located at a particular shrine whose status as an ancestor spirit is quite independent of his relationship with his namesake. Any ancestral shrine can be a *sɛyər* shrine to one or other descendant of the ancestor commemorated. As the guardian of the ward's life the *sɛyər* spirit has to receive sacrifices for and from the ward at certain crises, such as childbirth in the case of a woman, or whenever the spirit demands it; and, as follows logically, the *sɛyər* has to be informed and placated when the ward dies.

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553 776 This is an over-simplified outline of what the notion of spirit-guardianship means to the Tallensi but it must suffice. What we are here interested in is how a person comes by his *sɛyəraan* name and what such a name is likely to be. My friend Saγəbazaa summed the matter up. Your *yu'ur-zoo*, he said, is just "thought up" — *i tiik i pooni*; but your *sɛyər* name is a "command from a shrine" — *bayər n-yel* — given through a diviner. In conformity with the strong patriarchal character of Tale social organisation it is the right and duty of the father (or of the patrilineal head of his family such as his father or someone in that position if he is still alive) to name his children. It is he — sometimes following a suggestion from a son or brother — who thinks up the everyday name; and it is he, as head of the house, who consults the diviner to find which of the ancestors demands a child as spiritual ward. This demand may come before the child is born, incidentally to a consultation on other matters; or, if the prospective father is anxious, for instance, as often happens with his wife's first born, it may come out in a consultation held some time before the baby is due, mainly in order to find out which ancestors to appeal to for help for the woman in her condition. With later children it may be left for days or even a week or two after the birth of the child. At all events, it is in this consultation that an ancestor (or ancestress) "declares himself" as the new babe's spirit-guardian. It is, on the face of it, not a voluntary choice by the infant's father but a behest which he cannot reject.

Anyhow, having ascertained his child's *sɛyər*, the father now returns home and makes a small offering to the shrine at which the ancestor has declared himself to reside in his role of spirit-guardian. The father may offer no more than a libation of flour stirred up in water (*zɔm-koom*) or he may offer a chicken as well. He prays that the ancestor may take good care of his new ward so that he may live long and prosper.

551 776 The child may henceforth be called by his *sɛyəraan* name; but if he also has an open name, he will be known by that. In fact he is in a transitional state, as regards his spirit-guardian. It is a tentative relationship, as yet. The Hill Talis[8]) show this by calling every infant, at this stage, SAMPANA, a term used in no other context

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[8]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

and probably best translated as "Baby". Proper guardianship is later fixed by a special ritual of dedicating the child to its spirit-guardian with a larger sacrifice of a sheep or a goat or other animal of that standing, which takes place at the first head-shaving of the child, generally when it is two or three years old. By then the child may have a successor in birth order and he will have proved himself to be under good guardianship by virtue of his survival. 551 776

But our concern is with the names themselves. What sort of names are these private ones? Some are immediately obvious to anyone who knows the language and culture of the Tallensi. These are names of particular kinds of ancestor shrines which all men have, or owe homage to, through their family or lineage head. Thus, one of the commonest Tale names is YIN[9]) or some compound of this root. It is the root of the word NAAYIN, literally Chief-God, that is the heavenly god. But more pertinently for the subject of names, it is the name for the shrine and the associated ancestors, powers, and votive objects that together make up the cult focus of what is thought of as the individual's Destiny. The best fortune a Taləŋa can have is to have many children; and if he is lucky in this respect it is attributed to the benevolence of his YIN. Thus [illegible] happens that some of a man's children are almost always claimed as wards by his YIN ancestors; and a census soon shows that there are few families in which one or more children are not called by the name YIN or a compound of this word. Like all Tale names, it can be borne by both males and females, and is, of course, both the *sɛγəraan* name and the open name. 551 777

Since having children is so often interpreted as a sign of the benevolence of a person's YIN, it is not surprising to find that often a number of a man's children are the wards of his YIN. If they are all under the guardianship of the YIN "as such" they may all bear the name YIN but with affixes that help to distinguish one child from another. The following is a list of some of the commonest YIN names. They are taken from a list of names found among the children and grandchildren of one old man. 551 776

YIN: YIN-DOOG (lit. male Yin); YIM-PƆK (lit. female Yin); YIM-BIL (lit. little Yin); YIN-ZIE (lit. red Yin — because the child was light skinned); YIN-TEE (lit. Yin's tree — referring to one of the votive objects on the shrine); YIN-TEEBIL (lit. little Yintee).

Similar devices are used with other names that may be repeated among several children and grandchildren of one family; for a man's children may be successively given as wards to other ancestor figures than the YIN. Thus another common name that is both a private name and an open name is BƆγAR and its compounds. Children so named may be the wards of the distant lineage ancestors mystically assembled at the central shrine of the lineage, the *bɔγar*[10]), as it is called. But they are also so named because they are the spiritual wards of one of the Hill Talis "external"

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[9]) Cognate forms, in other dialects, are WUN, WENDE. I have given some account of the YIN concept in my previously mentioned books. YIN is also the name given to the first-born of a pair of twins, "because he is the first to see the heavens above". The second-born is called ZUUR, tail, "because he comes behind the first".

[10]) This is the supreme ancestral shrine of a clan or a lineage. See op. cit. *Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

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bɔγar centres. This happens when a woman is taken to the "external" *bɔγar* because she has no child, in order to supplicate for offspring. When, later, she bears a child, this child is dedicated to the *bɔγar* as a ward. The name shows this. In addition, however, each of the Talis "external" *bɔγar* centres has its own set of names for its wards. These names are used in exactly the same way as the general name Bɔγar. Both this general name and the particular names are modifiable in the same way as Yin is to distinguish several wards of the same shrine in one family or lineage. So we find the names Bɔγa-Bil, Bɔγa-Zie, etc.; or to take a particular name, Tɔŋ, Tan-Doog, Tɔŋ-Pɔk, Tan-Zoo, etc. which are given to children who are wards of the Bunkyiug "external" *bɔγar*.

This procedure is followed for children who come under the spiritual tutelage of any shrine. For example, Kologo is the name given to a child who is the ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine and Tɔbɔga is the name for a child whose spirit guardian is an ancestor connected with a magical medicine often owned by senior elders; and there are many others. But this mode of naming does not account for all persons who are wards of *yin* or *bɔγar* or other shrines. Thus, in addition to the Yins, there were, among Tinta'aləm's children and sons' children, Mɔrbu and Mɔrbil, Bantaŋ and Bantambill, and all of these were the wards of the same *yin* shrine as the Yins.

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The reason for this is typical. The most important ancestor spirit associated with Tinta'aləm's Destiny (*yin*) shrine was that of his own father Mɔrbu. While some of the children were the wards of the *yin* "as such", the two Mɔrbus were specifically claimed as wards by their dead grandfather "sitting at" Tinta'aləm's *yin* as the Tallensi state it. They were his particular wards, but under his spiritual oversight through the medium of the *yin*. So they were given his name. Thus many people who have names other than Yin are the wards of ancestors associated with *yin* shrines and their names may be both private and open. The interesting point here is that the name thus given is that of an ancestor who received it not as a private name but as a *wu'ur-zoo*. The original Mɔrbu's *seyəraan* name was Yidaan; but when he in turn became an ancestor it was his open name that was commemorated. This is the common practice, and the reason is obvious. Like the equivalent in European languages, the Tale word *wu'uri* means both "appellation" and "repute" or "renown". Now a person's repute is not a private matter. It is the public esteem in which he is held. He is remembered by his descendants — invariably with pride, whatever his true character might have been — by the public name he was known by. So we have the apparent paradox that it is the private name that carries some element of ritual value but when a person achieves the high status of an ancestor spirit he is commemorated in the shrines dedicated to him and in the names given to his descendants by his open — in this context perhaps we might say his profane — — name. Neighbours, friends and acquaintances of Tinta'aləm's family, hearing one of the children addressed as Mɔrbu, at once recollect who is being commemorated. They would not associate the name Yidaan with the man who was known to them and their fathers as Mɔrbu.

Again, what applies to a Yin holds for other groupings of ancestors linked to specific ritual vehicles. A person whose spirit guardian is a *bɔγar* or a *bakologo* may be claimed by one of the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated and

may be given his name; and the same rule applies to all cult groupings of ancestors, 551
for example at *ga'an*, at *tɔbɔga*, at *nɔya-dok* and other shrines. 553

What about BANTAŊ and BANTAMBIL? This name literally translated means 776
crocodile. It is one of very many animal names given to people and these again are part of the larger class of names taken from natural objects in general. Other names that fall into this class are NAAHO, cow or bull, BAA, dog, WAAFO, snake. They are very common either in their root forms or in the usual derivative forms. So are names like KURUG, iron, KUGƏR, stone, TEE, tree, and their compounds. There is nothing totemistic about such names. How they arise can best be made clear by an example. When TINTA'ALƏM was a youth he went on a communal fishing expedition and had the good fortune to catch a young crocodile. This is regarded as both a feat of skill and a sign of great good fortune. Not only is it difficult to catch crocodiles on these battues but it often happens that anybody who tries to catch one he has sighted gets bitten, and the consequences may be very serious. Men have lost limbs thus and some have even died as a result of such bites. So when TINTA'ALƏM got home his father at once took him off to consult a diviner. It emerged that the episode with the crocodile was a manifestation of TINTA'ALƏM's *yin*, specifically of his grandfather's wish to be recognised as one of his *yin* ancestors; and in due course, after the necessary rites had been done, the skull of the animal was placed on the *yin* shrine to commemorate and symbolise the event. The spirit of the crocodile caught on this expedition thus becomes one of the votive elements of the *yin*, and if the ancestor associated with the occasion claims a child as a ward it will be given the name BANTAŊ.

This is the standard pattern of belief and observance when a votive element is 551
part of an ancestor shrine. Thus, to continue with TINTA'ALƏM's Yin, among its
votive objects are a much worn hoe blade and the skull of a cow. The explanation 776
is that TINTA'ALƏM was a hard working farmer. He prospered and was able, by 778
occasional sales of surplus grain, gradually to acquire some livestock. In middle age his *yin* ancestors demanded a cow from him as a thank-offering — symbolically, the first cow he was able to acquire as the fruits of his good fortune. After the sacrifice, the cow's skull was placed on the *yin* shrine. But long before that, when TINTA'ALƏM had saved enough only to buy his first sheep, his *yin* had directed him to dedicate to it his hoe, the implement with which the good farmer gains his living. When his first hoe, the hoe he had bought for himself to cultivate his own land, wore out he placed it on his *yin* shrine in dedication.

What happens in the case of a child of this family whose private name is NAAHO, 553
cow, or KUUR, hoe, or KURUG, iron, is that one (or more) of the ancestors who have
manifested themselves as watching over TINTA'ALƏM's Destiny — that is, as his 776
yin — on demanding this child as a ward has declared the cow or the hoe have 778
been his special vehicle. Sacrifices offered on behalf of the ward will be given to all the ancestors manifested in the *yin*, but the cow or the hoe blade will be particularly cited.

Similar ideas and beliefs are associated with other ritual vehicles of the ancestors. Thus one KURUG I knew was the spiritual ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine. His father had fallen ill shortly after shooting a python and this proved to be the manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor demanding recognition. Both the arrow

553 head and the python skull were placed on the shrine that was eventually conse-
● 776 crated to the *bakologo* spirit and my informant's name was a reference to the arrow
778 head. One of *his* sons taken in guardianship by the same shrine was named WAAFO, snake.

[775] This case is interesting from another angle, too. The Tallensi have no belief in reincarnation. There is no special bond between a person and his ancestral namesake. He is not supposed to resemble or expected to emulate his ancestor. His name is a display of pride in ancestry, on the one hand, and a sign of submission to the religious supremacy of the ancestors, on the other. Thus he has no special ritual observances, on account of his name, if he is the ward of a patrilineal ancestor.
[614] But if his *seyər* is a matrilateral ancestor, this person might have belonged to a clan different from his own. In that case he is often obliged to keep the totemic taboos of the clan of this ancestor. Thus in the above case it is not altogether an accident that the slain python turned out to be a manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor whose clan have a taboo against killing and eating this animal. Children taken in spirit-guardianship by this ancestor have therefore to observe the same taboo, whether or not it is followed by other members of their family and clan.

I do not want to follow further the complex ramifications of this aspect of Tale
553 naming customs. One more detail must suffice. The greatest renown, that is the
776 most respected *wu'uri*, comes from election to an office. A chief (*Na'ab*) or Custodian of the Earth (*Təndaana*) is always addressed and referred to by his title. After his death he is certain to have descendants through his sons, grandsons, and daughters, placed under his spiritual guardianship. They will be named either by the name he took to himself on election to his office, which I shall describe presently, or by his title. NA'AB, NA'ABPƆK, TENDAANA, etc. are common names among descendants of such dignitaries.

And here it is pertinent to add that certain forms of disgrace which are associated with ritual danger result in the suppression of ancestral names. Thus if a man dies of smallpox, or is killed in war, his name is never given to a descendant. He will be remembered in sacrifices if he has descendants but not in their names.

551 I want to turn now to the open names. Their variety is extraordinary. A few refer to accidental or conventional circumstances connected with the birth of the
553 bearer and are therefore fairly frequent. ZIBA, knows not father, is the name always given to a posthumous child. SAMANE, the home farm, is a common name. It is given to a child whose mother was overcome by labour pains while engaged on some task on the home farm. SUOR, path, has the same origin. TAMPƆƔAR, the garbage heap, may be the name given to a child born after the onset of labour pains at the ash heap. But it also arises in this way. A woman has had several children all of whom have died soon after birth. This is failure or malevolence on the part of the various ancestors who claimed these children as wards. When her next child is born the father says: "I give this child's life to be watched over by the garbage heap. My ancestors have failed me, for all that my children are good for is to be buried (as babies that die are so buried) in the garbage heap." This is a well tried magical idea, found also elsewhere in West Africa and in many other parts of the world.

788 defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a
776 grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl.
778 There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the
punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme
776 Being, does not, as far ~~as I could~~ discover, possess any shrine beyond
778 a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service
about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags. The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the
796 first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of
188 Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* had not yet appeared. From then onwards,
until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder
[484] and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who
I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi, Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived. The former was a really magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely
●[777] proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the
Ten'dan' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to
796 attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They
asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets, and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75). We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted. I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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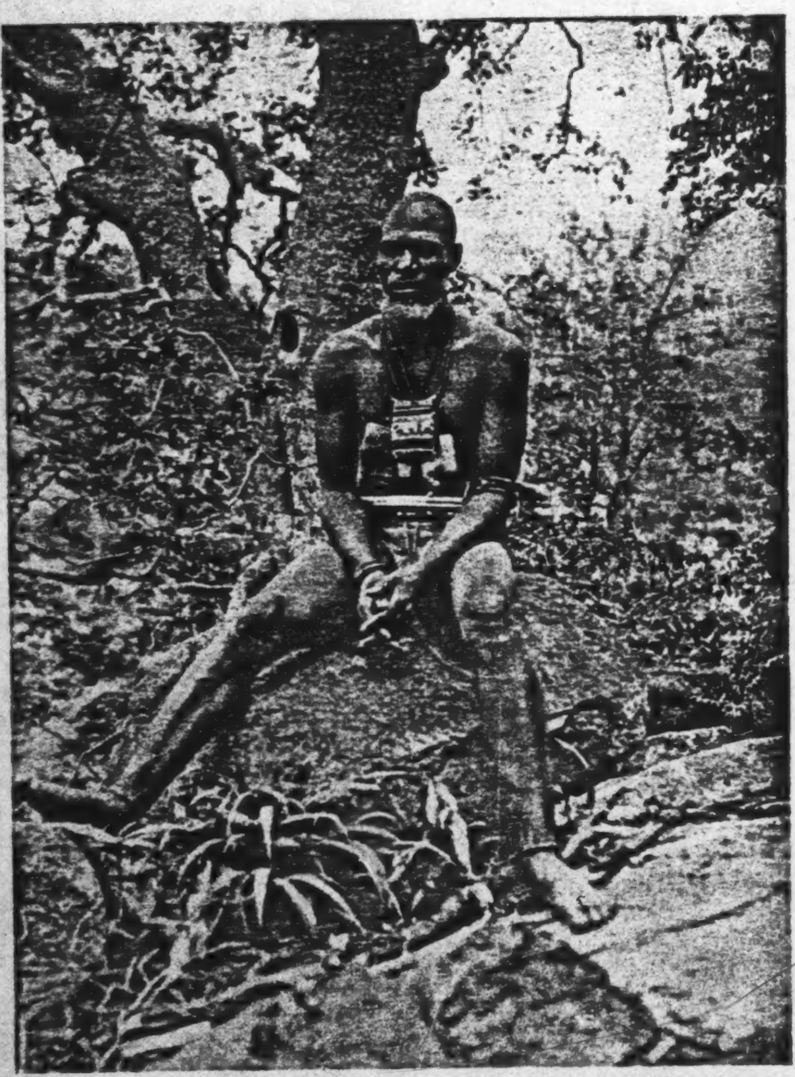

FIG. 73. The Chief of Teŋ'zugu

[facing p. 362]

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

613 769 Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛγər*), to whom her husband will have to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. [777] Her good or ill fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate (*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors. [761 789] If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

602 593 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the contrary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

602 843 the family keep an eye on the girl lest she overstrain herself or break one of the dietary taboos. If his father is alive it is he who visits diviners and appeals to the ancestors.

The woman's paternal family, too, are concerned, especially in a first pregnancy. When they have been informed of it, her father appeals to his ancestors to bless her in her coming ordeal, and her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood, as her time approaches. It is also her mother's duty, round about the fourth or fifth month, to send one of [292] her co-wives to 'gird the girl with a perineal band (*suol u voog*)', the garb of a matron; for until she has a child a woman wears no genital covering.

The prohibition against giving or accepting bride-price during a woman's pregnancy expresses this general solicitude too. Bride-price transactions involve tension and possible conflict between her father's people and her husband's; and this is not only distressing to her but dangerous to the unborn child. If, for instance, her father, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, as some men are heartless enough to do, takes her from her husband because the bride-price is not paid, the child's legitimate paternity may be prejudiced, as we have noted before, and its health suffer, or the woman herself have a difficult labour.

843 844 846 The solicitude for a woman with child reaches its peak at her confinement and during the subsequent three or four weeks, until she has regained her strength and resumes her normal activities. Many men have described to me their feelings in the hour of a wife's labour. 'You sit listening to her cries and groans of agony. You can't sleep. Your heart is clenched with fear and pity. You do not know how it will end. Do not women die in childbirth or become ill? Do not children die or get injured at birth?' A man's relief and happiness when his wife has passed safely (*salɔg*) through her confinement is written plainly in his voice and gait. Zaŋ, one of the most morose men I have known, was all smiles and affability on the morning after his wife's confinement. ● [777] When friends and neighbours congratulate a man on his good luck (*zusɔŋ*, lit. good head) it is as much on account of his wife's safety as on the child's arrival.

846 During the days of seclusion—three for a boy and four for a girl—and for the next week or so, it is the husband's duty to provide sustaining food and appetizing condiments for his wife. He will go out to fetch large logs for the fire that must be kept going day and night in the woman's room while she and the babe are still weak and liable to catch cold. Every morning he will go out or send someone to collect the leaves and herbs to infuse in the hot water with which mother and child are bathed. And if necessary he will himself carry water from the water-hole or do other services for her comfort that men usually consider to be beneath their dignity.

846 602 A confinement also involves extra labour and the dislocation of routine for the womenfolk of the husband's family. The care of the woman and

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can 593
match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so. 765

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride
in one's parents among the Tallensi. They always show off an old 593
parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often 577
been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man 888
or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride
and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old [777] ●
people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck
(*zusɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full? (*U pu di ŋɔvɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and senile, as Doohraan was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage, the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among 593
the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect, 577
affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relation-
ships. A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from 577
his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from 613
his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion, and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

593 the other taboos of first-born children. Its meaning is plain if we bear in mind what the gateway and the *zɔŋ* symbolize in the structure of the
578 family and the lineage.[1] Significantly enough, a first-born daughter does not observe it.

Eventually, when the son's older children are reaching adolescence, the opposition between his father and himself culminates in his formal separation from his parental family. We have noticed before that fission in the joint family is basically due to structural and economic factors. In the case of an eldest son's hiving off, Tallensi say that it is often brought about by the jealousies of the womenfolk. The son's wife or wives complain that they are not getting a fair deal in the distribution of food-supplies in the joint family. They are always nagging at their husband on that account. So when a son 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)' natives say it is in order the better to support his wives and children. But the separation is actually due as much to the relations between the man and his father as to the purely economic causes. It is an instance of the convergence and congruence of structural principles and economic necessities.

Most commonly an eldest son separates off formally by cutting a
593 new gateway for himself in the family homestead. The native phrase
578 is *bit u zanɔr* ('slit his gateway'), and it describes precisely what happens. The wall of the homestead is cut through so as to make an extra gateway
884 leading into the son's quarters. Though he and his wife and children will very often use the main gateway, he is by status the owner of his own subsidiary gateway and cannot formally clash with his father. At the same time he achieves a considerable measure of economic independence. He will have his own bush farm and small home farm and be responsible for providing the bulk of the food required by his wife and children. But he still helps his father and younger brothers with their farm work, and receives some food-supplies from his father in return if his own supplies are insufficient for his needs. Sometimes, however, an eldest son moves out altogether. His father may let him build a homestead on a bush farm belonging to the family, or he may migrate to one of the peripheral settlements. As we have seen, it usually takes a few years for a son to achieve this step. I have heard young men who were pressing their claims for a separate gateway express impatience with an obstinate old father and even resentment against his apparent tyranny. But when the parting comes it is usually amicable, and father and son continue to be on excellent and intimate terms thereafter. The son is still under his father's final authority in jural and ritual matters.

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The Native Theory of the Tension between the Generations

578 Tallensi explain the rivalry between father and son by means of the

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[1] Cf. Ch. III above.

mystical concept of the *Yin* or personal Destiny.[1] There is, they say, 573
an inborn antagonism between the *Yin* of a father and the *Yin* of his
eldest son. While the son is still young his *Yin* is weak, but as he grows 578
older his *Yin* grows more powerful and wants to make him master of 777
his own affairs. The son's *Yin* wants to destroy the father's *Yin*; but the father's *Yin* desires the father to live and be well and remain master of the house. It wishes to continue to receive sacrifices from the father. Therefore it will try to destroy the son's *Yin*, and if it is the stronger *Yin* it will cause misfortune and perhaps death to the son. That is the reason why father and son must avoid meeting in the gateway of the homestead and why it is better for them to separate, after the son has reached a stage of maturity when his *Yin* begins to be as powerful as his father's. In the same way an oldest daughter's evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) is a threat to her mother's life and health. When Sinkawol's wife was waiting for her evil Predestiny to be exorcised she was not allowed to go and visit her sick mother for fear that her *Yinbe'er* might cause her mother to get worse.

To appreciate the profundity of this interpretation we need to under-
stand the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is one of the most difficult of their 777
religio-psychological ideas to translate into our categories of thought. Indeed, it is not a precise notion but, like all Tale ritual ideas, a configuration of mutually overlapping ideas, beliefs, and values.

Yin is the shortened form of *Naawun* or *Naayin*, the Tale term which can best be translated as Heaven. But whereas *Naawun* is concerned with all mankind, each person's *Yin* belongs uniquely to that person. It is the symbol of his individuality, of what makes his life history different in his own eyes from that of every other person. If he falls ill he is enduring something that is the common human lot, and he tries to cope with his illness by the same measures that anybody else would take. But, he asks himself, why should he have fallen ill just at this time and not his brother or somebody else, for instance. When he kills an animal in the hunt, or buys a cow, or marries, or has a child he goes through experiences that every man has, and his social personality takes on attributes that are part of the social personality of every man of about the same stage of social maturity. Yet they are his own private experiences. They form part of the unique continuity of his personal development. None of them was inevitable. They are due to the intervention of chance in his life; or, as the Tallensi believe, to the action of the mystical agencies that dictate the course of human life.

These, very briefly, are the ideas, as nearly as one can translate them into our modes of thought, behind the Tale notion of *Yin*. It is a mystical notion because their ideas of causality are couched in a ritual idiom and are rooted in ritual beliefs; and it serves several ends. Tallensi do not

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 144, for a discussion of this concept from a different angle.

777 conceive of the inner life of the individual as a distinct phenomenon apart from the external, material, and social facts of his life. But they understand clearly that each person is unique as an individual. The notion of *Yin* is the means by which they visualize the connexion between the material and social facts of the person's life and his individuality. It enables them, also, to see a tendency and a determinism in the life of the individual by reference to which they make the intervention of chance intelligible and emotionally tolerable.

A person's Destiny has various aspects, some or all of which may emerge in the course of his life. There is, first of all, his Predestiny (*nuor Yin*, the *Yin* of the mouth). This is the fate the individual has preordained for himself before birth. In his pre-natal state he 'spoke when he was with Heaven above (*u daa vɔləm Naayin zugni*)'. Both men and women have this *Yin*; and it is this *Yin* that sometimes manifests itself as an evil *Yin* (*Yinbe'er*), when the individual is pursued by chronic bad luck in the important things of life—things like health, marriage, parenthood. He (or she) had declared before birth that he does not want to have parents or children or a spouse or any of the good things of life. A child suffering from an evil Predestiny is constantly ailing; a man so afflicted cannot find a wife or is deserted by every wife he marries; or he loses his children one after the other in infancy; or he is for ever having bad crops or losing his livestock; and a woman with a *Yinbe'er* loses her children one after another in infancy, or her husband, or perhaps she herself gets ill of some wasting disease. Moreover, this ill luck that haunts the unwitting sufferer is also a constant danger to his family. A child's evil *Yin* may cause the death of a parent or a sibling; a man's or woman's evil *Yin* spoils the life of his or her spouse, children, and parents as well as his or her own life. [578] The evil *Yin* symbolizes all the subterranean animosities and aggression latent in the relations of members of the joint family with one another. The cure is a ritual exorcism, carried out by the maximal or medial lineage of the sufferer, but this is not always successful.

If a woman's Predestiny is harmless or beneficent it remains latent, as it were. It is not objectified in any way as she has no ritual status.[1] Her *Yin* is subordinate to and submerged in her father's or her husband's *Yin*. But a man's Predestiny, if it is beneficent, may declare itself to him, usually after adolescence, but occasionally before. Thus a young man may kill an animal in the hunt and this will declare itself, through a diviner, to be the vehicle of his *nuor Yin*, and demand that he dedicate a shrine to it.

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[1] Women have no *Yin* or other ancestor shrines as they have no independent relationship with the ancestors. This is a reflex of their status in Tale society as jural and ritual minors who do not play a part in maintaining the continuity of the society or the equilibrium of the body politic independently of their relationship to their fathers or husbands.

But a man's most important *Yin* is that with which certain of his ancestors are associated. This too may come to him in childhood, though it does so more commonly in early manhood. Usually it manifests itself to him through an accident or a coincidence. Thus a young man falls ill shortly after he has bought a new hoe or killed an animal in the hunt. The diviners then declare that his illness was caused by his *Yin*; his ancestors so and so, and so and so, are thus revealing themselves as his *Yin*; the hoe or the animal is their vehicle; they brought illness on him because they demand that he should accept them as his *Yin* and sacrifice to them. The young man will then build a shrine dedicated to these ancestors placing the skull of the animal or the blade of the hoe on it, and will henceforth sacrifice to them on this shrine. This is his first and most intimately personal shrine, and it plays an enormous part in his life thereafter. As far as his own personal affairs are concerned, it will always be his most important link with his ancestors. It is through his *Yin* that they exercise the most direct influence upon his life and that he seeks to maintain their goodwill specifically for himself. When he becomes head of his joint family he will entrust most of the children born into the family to his *Yin* as spirit guardian. Every important step in his social development will be registered in his relations with his *Yin*; it may be by a special sacrifice, or it may be by a change in the location of the shrine, or the addition of an ancestor to the group of ancestors who have revealed themselves (*naam*) as his *Yin*. A man's *Yin* is both the chart of his life and the helm with which he steers his way through life. 777 778

All the ancestors and ancestresses of a man have a potential mystical relevance for his life, but they have the same potential relevance for any of their descendants. His *Yin* ancestors, on the other hand, are concerned exclusively with him, for his own sake, so to speak. They form a particular combination, usually of very recent forebears, who do not belong together in just that grouping for any other of their descendants. They may be patrilateral or matrilateral ancestors or a combination of both lines. Thus a man might have as his *Yin* ancestors his father, father's father, father's father's mother, and her father, while his brother has their father, father's mother, and father's mother's father as his *Yin* ancestors. Of another pair of brothers, one's *Yin* ancestors may be their mother's father, maternal grandfather, and maternal great-grandfather; and the other's might be their mother's mother, her father, and his father (see Fig. 5, page 230). 777 769

Thus when a Talɔŋ says that his *Yin* and his eldest son's *Yin* are mutually dangerous, he is saying that his son's successful growth and development into and through manhood is a threat to his authority and primacy in the family, a symbol of the inevitable decline in his physical and mental power that comes with age, and a warning that he must in due course make way for the next generation; and yet it is also the 593 578 777

593 crowning achievement of his lif[illegible]t significant sign that his *Yin* has
●777 prospered him (*màal*) well. Th[illegible]s of father and son are a balance
578 between their ties of solidarity a[illegible]l identification, which form the
central link of the lineage syst[illegible]leavage due to their belonging
to successive generations. [illegible] we encounter the fundamental principle of Tale social organization, that every constellation of social relationships is made up of a polar balance of ties and cleavages.

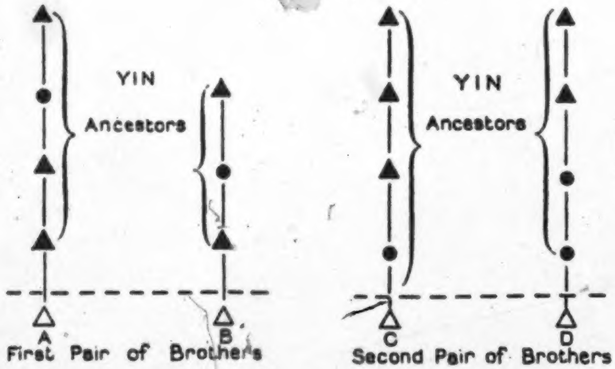

FIG. 5. *Yin* Ancestors.

The Discrimination between Oldest Children and Youngest Children

593 The cleavage between father and first son obviously plays an important part in the cycle of development of the joint family and lineage.
578 The oldest son's breakaway from the parental home is the first phase of fission of the joint family, and it is not until after his father's death that he and his brothers are likely to become reunited into a single domestic unit.

We have spoken sometimes as if the cleavage between successive generations lay solely between parents and their first-born children, at other times as if it were a gulf between parents and all their children. In practice, tension crops up between a parent and any of his or her adolescent or adult children, but one reason why it is always likely to be sharpest with oldest children is simply because they have gone farthest along the road of social and economic maturity and so symbolize the filial generation most effectively of all the children. Among
593 non-Namoos it does not seem to matter whether the oldest children
578 are first-born or merely the oldest surviving children. Among the
184 Namoos, however, there is the striking peculiarity of their fixing the
ritual and affective bar between the generations on the first-born children. If a man's first-born son is dead, and even if he died in infancy, the oldest living son does not assume the taboos of the first-born. The

603 because it is not very usual for a man to have a grandson old enough to take a wife, when he dies, and also to leave a young widow.

587 [777] The converse marriage of a grandfather with the widow of his 'grandson' of the same inner lineage is said to be permissible but not good. Tallensi think it is incongruous and therefore likely to be unlucky. I learnt of only one such case that has occurred in recent years, and my informants pointed out that all the children born of the marriage had died.

Old women make use of this rule when they are left widows. A widow must either remarry one of her husband's clansmen or else go home to her father's house and marry from there as if she were a spinster. For an old widow remarriage is a formality since she is past child-bearing, and will in any case live with her sons. So when she is asked to choose her new husband from amongst those of her late husband's clansmen who offer her marriage *pro forma*, she often announces, 'I choose a grandson (*man luogɔra yaaŋ*)'. She thus satisfies the formal requirements and can go on living with her sons.

Within the lineage inter-personal relations of grandparent and grandchild are not extended beyond the inner lineage—that is, the range within which generation differences between individuals are recognized; but the term *yaab* is applied to any patrilineal ancestor except the father. On the mother's side only the mother's own parents and proxy parents are recognized as grandparents; but any lineage with which a person has matrilateral connexions is described as his *yaab yiri*. Thus any patrilineal ancestor's mother's lineage is a *yaab yiri*; and the letter of custom entitles a man to marry the widow of any member of his *yaab yiri*. In practice such marriages are exceedingly rare, for the widow's husband's lineage-brothers and clansmen resent them strongly. But there have been one or two instances in the past generation in which a young widow eloped with her deceased husband's classificatory *yaaŋ*. What the outraged members of the deceased husband's lineage most resent is that they cannot claim the return of the bride-price. The only sanction they can use is to refuse to sacrifice to their ancestors on behalf of the 'grandson' who has so flouted them; but this is a double-edged weapon. They may not use it, since the 'grandson' was within his formal rights in marrying one of their widows. Hence they would arouse the wrath of their ancestors if they sought to penalize their 'grandson' ritually. This extension of leviratic rights to matrilateral kin is associated with the notion that a woman might have been born a man but for the intervention of chance, and her descendants might therefore have been of the true agnatic line. It will be better understood when we have considered the relations of mother's brother and sister's son (Ch. XI below).

and probably best translated as "Baby". Proper guardianship is later fixed by a 551
special ritual of dedicating the child to its spirit-guardian with a larger sacrifice
of a sheep or a goat or other animal of that standing, which takes place at the first 776
head-shaving of the child, generally when it is two or three years old. By then the child may have a successor in birth order and he will have proved himself to be under good guardianship by virtue of his survival.

But our concern is with the names themselves. What sort of names are these 551
private ones? Some are immediately obvious to anyone who knows the language
and culture of the Tallensi. These are names of particular kinds of ancestor shrines 777
which all men have, or owe homage to, through their family or lineage head. Thus, one of the commonest Tale names is YIN[9]) or some compound of this root. It is the root of the word NAAYIN, literally Chief-God, that is the heavenly god. But more pertinently for the subject of names, it is the name for the shrine and the associated ancestors, powers, and votive objects that together make up the cult focus of what is thought of as the individual's Destiny. The best fortune a Taləŋa can have is to have many children; and if he is lucky in this respect it is attributed to the benevolence of his YIN. Thus it happens that some of a man's children are almost always claimed as wards by his YIN ancestors; and a census soon shows that there are few families in which one or more children are not called by the name YIN or a compound of this word. Like all Tale names, it can be borne by both males and females, and is, of course, both the *sɛyəraan* name and the open name.

Since having children is so often interpreted as a sign of the benevolence of a 551
person's YIN, it is not surprising to find that often a number of a man's children
are the wards of his YIN. If they are all under the guardianship of the YIN "as 776
such" they may all bear the name YIN but with affixes that help to distinguish one child from another. The following is a list of some of the commonest YIN names. They are taken from a list of names found among the children and grandchildren of one old man.

YIN: YIN-DOOG (lit. male Yin); YIM-PƆK (lit. female Yin); YIM-BIL (lit. little Yin); YIN-ZIE (lit. red Yin — because the child was light skinned); YIN-TEE (lit. Yin's tree — referring to one of the votive objects on the shrine); YIN-TEEBIL (lit. little Yintee).

Similar devices are used with other names that may be repeated among several children and grandchildren of one family; for a man's children may be successively given as wards to other ancestor figures than the YIN. Thus another common name that is both a private name and an open name is BƆγAR and its compounds. Children so named may be the wards of the distant lineage ancestors mystically assembled at the central shrine of the lineage, the *bɔγar*[10]), as it is called. But they are also so named because they are the spiritual wards of one of the Hill Talis "external"

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[9]) Cognate forms, in other dialects, are WUN, WENDE. I have given some account of the YIN concept in my previously mentioned books. YIN is also the name given to the first-born of a pair of twins, "because he is the first to see the heavens above". The second-born is called ZUUR, tail, "because he comes behind the first".

[10]) This is the supreme ancestral shrine of a clan or a lineage. See op. cit. *Dynamics of Clanship* for details.

764 white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. 793 I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the grave-side. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

764 622 Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

•778 [171] 782 721 *Shrines*: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan'* of Tongo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

cine' or 'roots') is 'to prevent war'; it is called *mweleŋ* (compare Nan-
●778 kane *mweleŋa*[1]). 'When the war cry is raised I will first sacrifice a fowl
782 on the stone, saying: "They want to shoot arrows, and I wish to stop
724 it; receive a fowl, and compel them not to shoot; let the women
and children sleep." The stone on top of the head-rest signifies that
we compel people to sit down. After I sacrifice the fowl, cow dung and corn-cobs are placed round the pot and set on fire, while I say: "My father, call your father; let women and children sleep; they wish to shoot arrows; fire wants to burn the land, but I wish it to be cool." When the fire which I have lit goes out, the war is also burning out. The roots inside the pot are from a shea butter tree; when you eat shea butter your heart will become cool. This *tim bagere* (medicine shrine) is related to the one I wear round my neck which is also called *mweleŋ*. I take it off and place it on top of the stone when the fire is burning. Some *mweleŋ* are now used by Chiefs to encourage disputes in order that they may be able to fine people.'

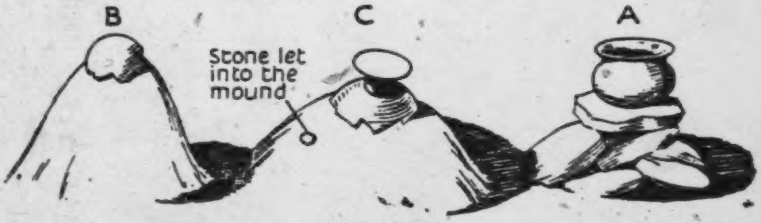
B
C
A
Stone let into the mound

Fig. 66

778 [171] The above account was written nearly two years before my note on the same subject among the Nankanse.[2] I had, indeed, forgotten the latter, until I came to go over my notes in writing these volumes. It affords a good example, coupled with other evidence, of the close resemblance between the religion and customs of these two tribes, and also of the accuracy of the information imparted by two wholly independent informants. Unfortunately, the photograph I took of this shrine was not successful, but Fig. 66 A, is a rough diagram illustrating it and other shrines standing beside it. On the left of the *mweleŋ* fetish stand two conical mounds, B and C. B is, Sayebere informed me, that of his *yab-pɔk la o bi* (grandmother and her son). The clay mound had a flat piece of iron on top covered by a potsherd and stone. C is a *Yini zug-bagere* (God-above shrine). On the apex of the mound was a piece of iron let into the clay which was covered

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[1] See p. 303.

[2] See p. 304.

[facing p. 354]

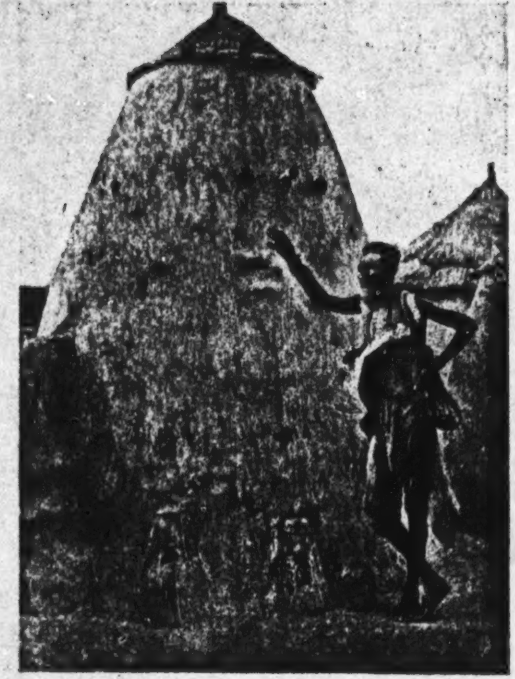

Fig. 68. 'Sayebere's hand is resting on the chameleon'

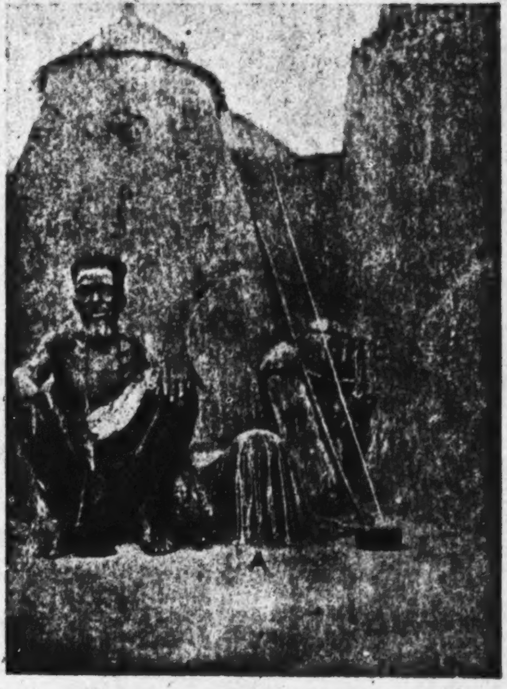

Fig. 69. Talense shrines

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932

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•778 with congealed blood and fowls' feathers. The top was protected with the usual broken pot.

'Into the first, B, come the spirits of three persons to receive flour-water and fowls; they help me to find wives and children. The second, C, is my *Yini* who sent me down and gave me life and my Ten'dan'ship.

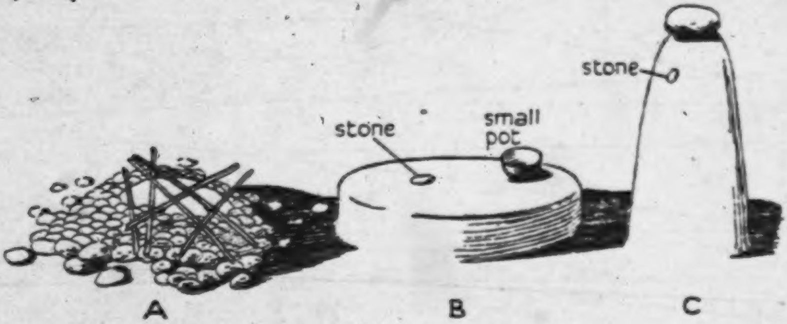

Fig. 67

It helps me to get life, women and children. God kept me formerly, afterwards he sent me.'

Facing these two shrines, and close to the wall of the *zoyo* hut, were three more shrines, see Fig. 67.

B is the *Yini* of Sayebere's father, Pirun. A he called a *Tobog'*. A consisted of a heap of round stones with sticks laid on top, surrounding a larger stone sunk in the ground. 'The small round stones are there for the *tobog'* to throw at anything bad coming into the compound. The *tobog'* is *tim* (medicine) to protect me and give me life,' he said, 'It belonged to my father'. I think there is little doubt but that this shrine was for the spirit of a man whom Sayebere's father had killed. (Compare the Nankanse *tobega*.) C was a tall conical shrine, with [769] a stone let into the mud surface, called *duŋ-kpaleg*; 'It was my father's *bogere*,' said Sayebere. 'The power of my hat and skin are in it. When I sacrifice to it, I call all the spirits of the old *Ten'dan'* and of my father to assemble and drink water, striking the stone let into the side with the stone which rests on top.'

778 769 [171] *Shrines Inside the Compound*: Inside the compound in the yard, called in Talene *dendɔŋ* (in Nankane *zinzaka*), is a large grain-store (*bur*; Nankane *bare*) with a chameleon (*nangan*; Nankane *ŋgana*) in bas-relief on the side (see Fig. 68; Sayebere's hand is resting on the chameleon[1]). This is the shrine of his father's father's wife, a certain

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[1] Compare Fig. 30, which shows a similar shrine among the Nankanse.

1: Rattray, E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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FIG. 70. A *tim bager*

791
789

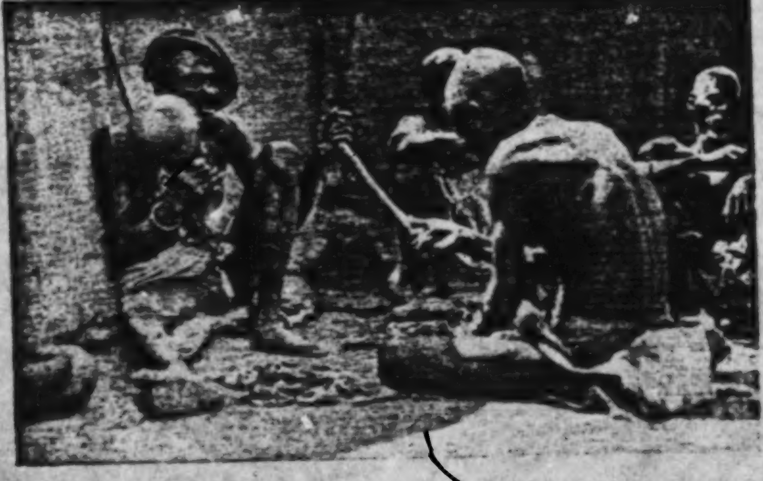

FIG. 71. 'The soothsayer then began to rattle'
[facing p. 355]

Bama.. At the foot of this grain-store were other shrines, seen 778
rather indistinctly in the photograph. 769

One is the shrine for the spirit of a woman called Tapur, who was a co-wife to Bama, both being wives of Sayebere's paternal grandfather. Another is a shrine of Bama. There was also a large stone. 'Bama asked for this through a soothsayer.'

Moving further round the grain-store we come to another series of shrines which are illustrated in the photographs, Figs. 69–70.

In Fig. 69 A is the shrine of the *Ten'dan's* own mother, Kurug; the actual spirit is in the head of a hoe let into the clay; B, a log of wood with a stone on top. I seem to have omitted to record what this was; C is a pot out of which an infant which has become ward of a spirit is given to drink.

Fig. 70 Sayebere called a *tim bager'*, 'But,' he added, 'it is also 778
called *anoa-dok* (a mouth pot).'[1] He was in a state of great trepidation lest I should uncover it, saying, holding his nostrils as he spoke, 'It is my life. When I sacrifice to it I say, "Mouth pot receive and protect me from mouths".' It had, he said, many avoidances; these included: Passing behind its owner when he was eating; carrying a flaming faggot past it; mention of the word moon (*mwarega*) while its owner was eating.

The fetish consisted of a pot, covered with another broken pot, a bow, bundle of arrows, and a quiver. The bow, arrows, and quiver had, he said, been added to the pot after consultation with a soothsayer.

Bogere and Bagere: There seems a distinction between these shrines [776]
so named, which hardly appears to exist among the Nankanse.

'A *bogere*,' said my Taleŋa informant, 'you fetch from your mother's 778
country after she is dead. You go to your mother's father's compound, 769
and take some earth from the *bagere* of your mother's father and put
this in a calabash, which your wife will carry home. She must not 775
speak to any one except her husband on the return journey. This soil will be put in a horn and is called my mother's *bogere*. Your mother's spirit may have become an iron bangle, that is a *bagere*; a *bogere* is like a shade to a *bagere*. A man's house may become 'bitter'; he consults and is told that it is his mother who wants a room. He makes one; that is a *bagere*. After that, he will go to his mother's home and bring earth from the mound which has been made there for his mother's father's spirit, and bring it home, and build a new mound with the

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[1] See p. 301.

778 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere*
769 comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he
will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's
spirit wants to punish (*eŋ*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit
wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband,
"Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

171 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in con-
778 nexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but
791 when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's
769 mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's
town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in
a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives
the power to the *bakologo*.'

A Seance attended at Tɔngo: A woman had died from snake-bite, and
787 after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's
761 compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family
769 of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The
ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with
both hands and saying, '*N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor*' (I hold your sides,
but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig.
71), and said, '*N ba Yin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam
mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n be, te te*'.
(My father's *Yin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they
will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do
not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is;
give us).

He then began to sing:

'*Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Yi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam zeret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.*' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole [1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash,

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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FIG. 72. Ancestral shrines

[facing p. 356]

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed 177
on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and
extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to 796
attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work. 776
Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it
so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of
the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which
are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of
cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity,
but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which
must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally [778]
the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country
about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the
boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to
the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

'Its power is from God (*Na Ƴin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan*'; its 784
taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the follow- 776
ing avoidances:

(*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
(*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
(*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
(*d*) *Meya* (water turtle).
(*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
(*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
(*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la* [195]
a zia koom (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range 788
which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There 776
seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who
come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this 778
shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

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[1] It is also known as *Ƴa ni* and *Ƴa pwiga.*

788 defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a
776 grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl.
778 There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the
punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come
down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme
776 Being, does not, as far ~~as I could~~ discover, possess any shrine beyond
778 a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service
about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not
have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far
from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags.
The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than
ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the
796 first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of
188 Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* had not yet appeared. From then onwards,
until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder
[484] and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who
I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi,
Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti
friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on
their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the
Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived. The former was a really
magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely
[777] proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the
Ten'dan' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to
796 attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They
asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets, and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75). We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted. I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes.
The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language
Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls,
and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse
and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have
been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the
Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came
here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a
people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They
spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and
Zan became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people
whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The
Ten'dan' makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European
doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but
it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded
by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men
(Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We
met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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NAMNAM

[facing p. 372]

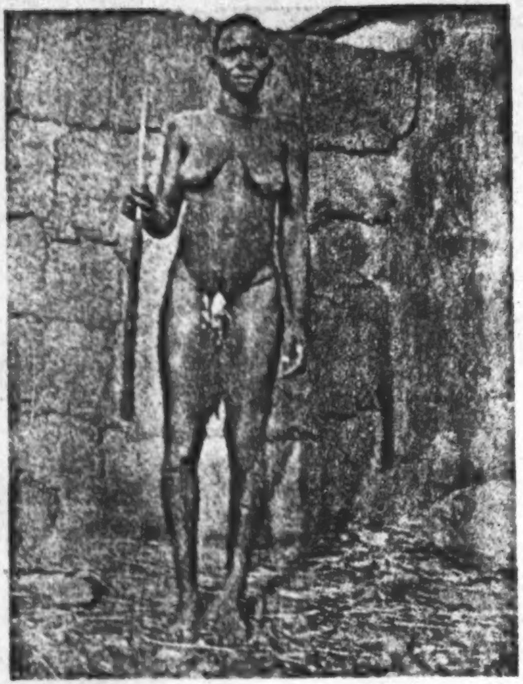

Fig. 82. A Namnam woman

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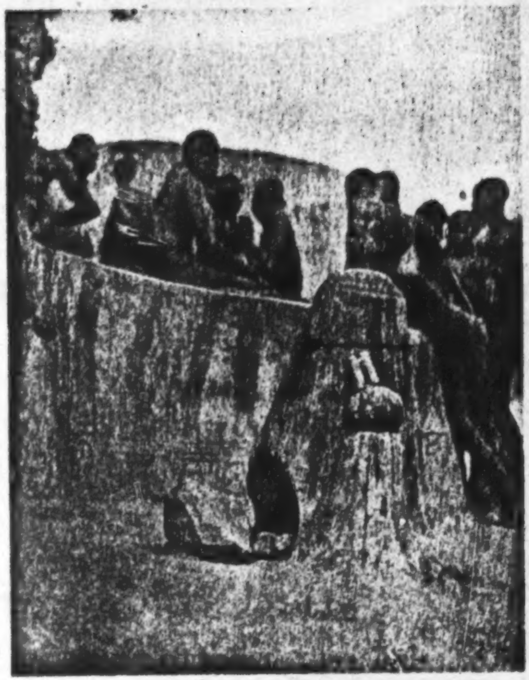

Fig. 83. Namnam children and shrines

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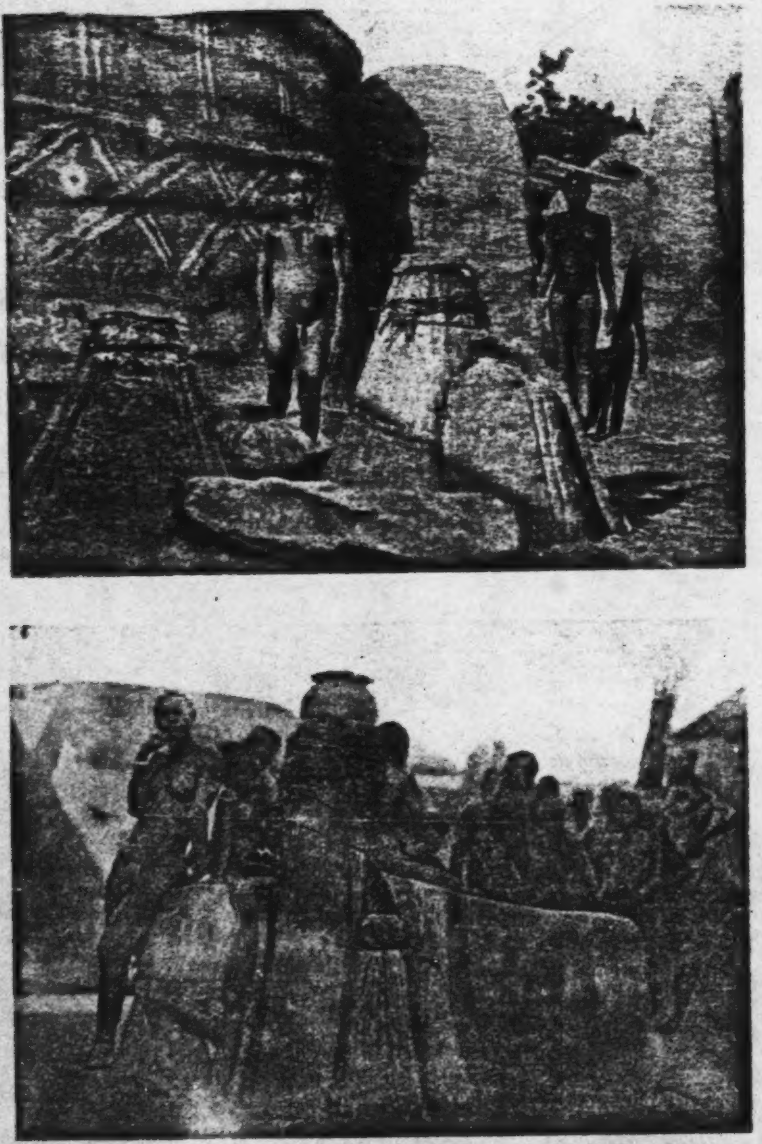
NAMNAM



Figs. 84-5. Namnam shrines

[facing p. 373]

XL

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

The Family Compound (Yir) *and the Shrines* (Bagr) *which it contains*

351 171 KUSASE compounds (*Ya*, s. *Yir*) are roughly circular in shape, as are the huts which they contain, and are widely scattered like those of the Nankanse, Namnam, Talense, and Kasena, but there is one marked difference which immediately strikes the eye between the Kusase house and those already described. The former are not flat-roofed, but are neatly thatched (see Fig. 86). I now propose to describe a typical Kusase compound in detail. The main entrance which faces west is known as *zan pák nore* (compare Nankane *zenore*). It leads directly into the main yard which is also the cattle-kraal. The hut immediately on the left of the main entrance (it is sometimes on the right) is called *zɔŋ*, pl. *zon*. This hut is nominally where goats and fowls are shut up at night, but it is also used in the wet season as the place where the senior males in the compound sit and talk. When the head of a compound dies, his body is passed through a back doorway in the *zɔŋ* hut, instead of being taken through the main entrance. The *zɔŋ* (or *zɔŋo*) hut seems to figure largely on many such ceremonial occasions. Immediately outside the entrance of the compound is a grass-roofed hut without any walls, known as *suk* in Kusal (*Paka* in ● [776] Nankane). It contains a shrine called a *Wen bagr* (God's shrine), a circular mound like that seen in Fig. 142 at Tumu among the Isala. Let into the top of this mound is a sheep's horn and a stone. The stone is called *bagr bugr* (the *bugr* of the *baga*). The head of the compound and others sit or recline on this flat top, and in the very hot weather the compound head may sleep on it. It is sacrificed to at the sowing season, at the harvest, and when new beer is made from the first of the crops. 'The *Tenedan*' sacrifices to the land, I, the Chief, sacrifice on this *bagr*.'

751 Above the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut, through which the corpse of the head of the house is carried to burial, is a black cross (see Fig. 87) to guard against lightning.[1] The same symbol is put on trees in Kusase farms under which the farmer shelters, and for the same reason. At

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[1] The same symbol is used among the Isala to protect crops from menstruating women.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

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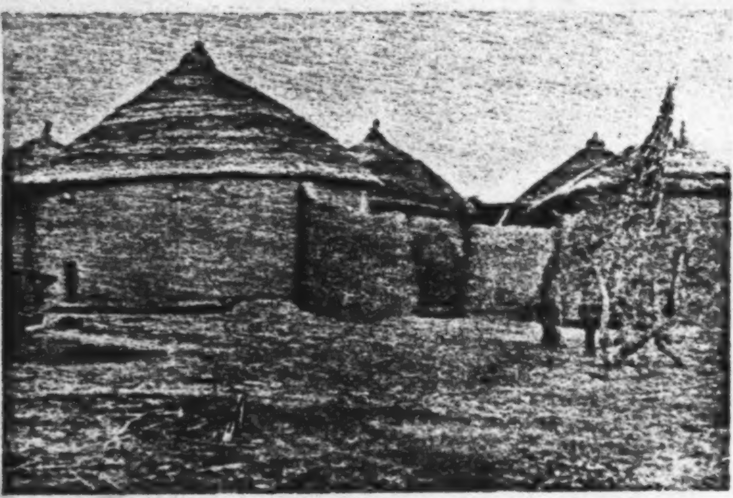

Fig. 86. A Kusase compound

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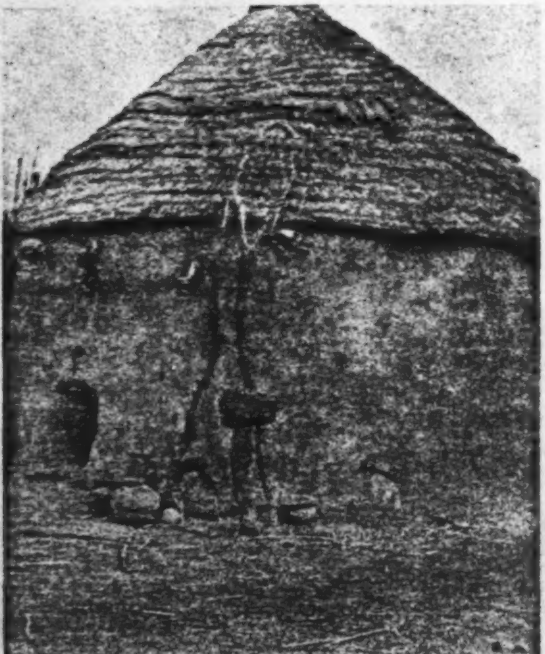

Fig. 87. The *zɔŋ* hut. Note cross above doorway

[Facing p. 380]

Kusase

751 778 the doorway of the *zɔŋ* hut stands a post with a large stone on top, and a long stick, bent in the shape of a butterfly net and bound round with leaves. 'I tie up the lightning with this', said my informant. On [515] the ground near the stick is a pot containing 'roots' in a decoction in which the inmates of the compound bathe. 'I also use this *sa-bagr* (lightning shrine) to bring rain, only the lightning I tie.'

778 769 All the above may be seen in Fig. 87. On the left of this doorway is a shrine (*ba bagr*) of the spirit 'of the owner of the compound' (an ancestor ?) with a cow horn the remains of a past sacrifice hanging on the hut wall above it. To the left of this again is another shrine, that of the 'owner's' mother. Resting on the *ba-bagr* is a pot, called a *ba' bugr*. 'This pot is the shrine of spirits once served by my father and my elder brother. I brought some earth from it (a *bagr* ?) and put it in the pot, so I now say when sacrificing, "My father receive these offerings and give to your *bugr*", instead of saying, "My father receive and give to your father". I own my grandfather's *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), it can descend (on my death) to whoever he (the spirit) names, but the spirit of our ancestor always goes to the eldest.'

351 343 [34] 342 Passing now through the main entrance, between two grass-roofed huts, one of which is the *zɔŋ*, the other called *nos dog* (fowl house), we enter the *zan-pak* (cattle-kraal). The cattle in this case were in charge of Fulani herdsmen who were paid by being given the milk. Inside this yard were two other huts, one for goats and sheep, and one for a horse. Surrounding this yard were four suites of rooms called *dog* (compare Nankane *deo*, pl. *detto*). These *dog* were those of:

(*a*) *Yi-dan's* wife.
(*b*) An unmarried son of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) The wife of the *Yi-dan's* younger brother.
(*d*) *Dog* of another of *Yi-dan's* wives.

351 342 778 755 Inside the main yard is a hut with two doors opposite each other called *zon-tug* (lit. pass straight through), where the women sit. The second doorway of this hut leads right into the yard (*zak*) of one of the *dog* (suites) in which is a shrine called *meŋ Wen* (lit. one's own God), a stone let into a circular mud mound. Beside this shrine is a pot full of roots, called *dendeuk duk* or chameleon's pot. 'I saw two chameleons one day copulating. I was told this is a forbidden thing, so I went to one who had medicine for this and he told me to bring roots. When a child is born to me, I bathe it with water from the roots. Before the *baa* (soothsayer) told me to do this, my children used to die.'

351 751 782 342 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots. 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).

(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan*.

(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

342 361 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry- and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the ● [778] latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

778 783 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

Kusase

three days. At the end of that time, he will bury the "roots" which 783 the pot contains. Beer is then prepared and more roots sought for, 778 and two pots. A dog and a red cock are sacrificed on one pot; a goat and a white cock on the other. Water, in which the roots have been soaked, is used for making *sagbo* (porridge) in which the livers of the sacrifice are put. The murderer and the head of his family first take some of this food in their left hands and put it in the pots, after which they and any one else who has ever killed a man (in war or otherwise) will partake of the rest of the food. Some of the roots are burned and then powdered and put in beer, and the head of the murderer's family (if he too has ever killed any one) and the murderer drink it. A similar sacrifice is made over these pots twice a year. When the murderer dies, the two pots are placed inside the *zɔŋ* hut, and the son of the murderer will continue to sacrifice on them, but unless he too has killed some one, he may not himself eat of these sacrifices. The following words are spoken when the sacrifice is being made:

'Medicine (*tim*) receive this offering and drive away that person 783 (the murdered man) that he may return to his own compound.' The relations of the murderer have also to bring a goat, a cock, and beer [793] to 'cover up the blood'. This is the work of the *Tenedan*'. He will make the sacrifice and say:

'Children have done something bad (*yele*) and blood has come forth and death resulted. Receive this offering and quench this fire.' The fowl and goat are sacrificed over a hole in the ground and the feathers of the fowl and undigested food in the stomach of the goat are buried in the hole. The whole of the sacrifice must be eaten at the spot where it is made. A child's bow and arrow is broken and placed in the same hole with the words, 'This is the bow and arrow which has caused the death; we have broken it; do not permit it to come out'.

'A man is very proud to have killed another in war, but not to have murdered one.'

Kusase

XLI

THE KUSASE (*continued*)

Property and Inheritance. Rites de Passage

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IF the heir, who is the deceased's next eldest brother, is a *meŋ dan pud sob* (a greedy person) he will come, almost immediately, after the final funeral custom, to see about the division of the deceased's property.[1] He will tell the eldest son to produce all his late father's cowries. These the heir shares out among the sons, giving the eldest son most, because he is the one who will sacrifice to his father. The heir also takes some, but less than he gives to the eldest son. The eldest son accounts to the heir for all the cattle, sheep, horses, goats, donkeys, fowls, and guinea-fowls, which had belonged to the deceased, but once having done so, these remain under the care of the son, the heir drawing on them from time to time when he needs any. Though these remain in charge of the son, he has not any right to sell or lend any of them, and if asked to do so, he will say, "No, they belong to my 'father' ". The heir has already become head of his own compound, so he does not inherit the compound of the deceased. The deceased's eldest son will return to it and all his younger brothers who are married will quit, leaving only his unmarried brothers.'

Inheritance of Farms: 'The eldest son of the deceased takes the *saman* farm (near the compound), and his brothers who are "going out" take the *put* (bush farms). The heir has his own *saman* and does not take any farm of the deceased. Standing crops and crops in the grain-store are divided among those who had helped the deceased to work on his farm, but widows of the deceased who do not marry clansmen do not get any of this.'

Clothes, Hoes, Axes, &c.: 'The day the heir comes to see the property, he will see all these things, but will leave everything with the son.'

[778] *Shrines*: 'The eldest son will take his father's spirit, building a *bay* (shrine) for it; the heir will take the shrine of the deceased's father to his own compound and all family ancestral shrines and family ancestral "medicine". All personal "medicine" belonging to the deceased is taken by the son.'

The Leather Bag (*Kolog*): 'This is taken by the eldest brother of the

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[1] Among the Nankanse, the time this is done is from two to five months after the final funeral.

of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take 584
fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have 585
light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'. 591
Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I
asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been
arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth
would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such,
for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom
would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner
would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible
for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants
a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his
own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too [604]
poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows
for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back,
he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back
by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*sumapog*) 583
once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist 606
his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears
him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking
out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every
new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and
go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife
becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea-fowl [769]
as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen*
(*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do [778]
so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep
and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral
taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law [764]
will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his
village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones.
When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an
egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law
they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne
a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets
of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child,
for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he 606

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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Kusase

and these are left on the grave. The iron heads of the hoes are washed in water containing *grunyoa* grass (*nagwa* in Nankane, used to fumigate everything which has had contact with the dead). If the deceased had a *bakolog* (soothsaying shrine) it is fumigated with the grass. 787 [783] [778] ●

Driving the Souls of the Living from Graves: 'Some *bayas* (sextons) can see souls (*sis*) in graves. When they do so, they will take a potsherd and put peppers and tobacco on it and set them on fire and place them in the open grave in order that the soul may be driven out.' 791 775

This exhausts the information which I obtained while living with the Kusase,[1] whom I found a charming and delightful people. I pass on in my next chapter to describe the Builsa, whom Europeans know better as the 'Kanjaga'. 000

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[1] The Kusase do not circumcise, nor do their women practise incision, unless influenced by Mampruse connexions, e.g. at Bawku. They file the teeth. The women pierce the lower lip only. 304

all of us (i.e. those of alleged slave descent as well). Who are you to 618x
decide who is or is not to be allowed to take part in sacrifices to him?' 769

Crest-fallen, the supporters of the *status quo ante* begged the chief's pardon. It was a victory for the forces of community integration and a personal triumph for the chief over the cleavages due to the strict application of the canon of agnatic descent.

One of the chief's most intimate and influential elders commented to 618x
me afterwards, cautiously but with a hint of regret, that soon it would become impossible to withhold the chiefship from the accessory lineages now that they had practically won the right to participate in the most esoteric ritual cult of the true agnatic sodality. But the battle for consolidation is not yet over. The presence of some members of accessory lineages at the sacrifices was not part of a deliberate scheme to gain equality of status but was an unthinking reaction to the whole situation—the unusual publicity of the ceremony, its emphasis on an all-embracing solidarity of the whole sub-clan, and the chief's insistence on interpreting this to mean all the people of Tongo and not only those of true agnatic descent from Mosuor. Some elders of the accessory lineages were as dubious about the affair as some of the elders of authentic lineages. To take part in sacrifices from which one's fathers and grandfathers (*banam ni yaanam*) had been rigidly excluded might well be an offence against one's own ancestors, even though the chief had taken the responsibility on himself. Members of accessory lineages do not resent their disfranchisement as a disability to be fought against, but accept it as part of the fixed order of society validated by the whole religious system.

Thus these elders of the accessory lineages will not take it for granted that they now have the same rights as the authentic lineages. They are aware, also, that the occurrence has left behind a good deal of hidden resentment which may, at some future crisis, precipitate a violent reaction against the inclusion of accessory lineages in the ritual brotherhood of Mosuor biis. The forces of integration are strong at Tongo; but the genealogical cleavages in its lineage structure are so fundamental that this historic sacrifice may yet prove to be a warning against their abrogation rather than a precedent for it.

This episode brought out more vividly than anything I had previously 618x
encountered the significance of the ancestral graves and shrines, in 778●
particular of Mosuor's *bɔyar*, as the focus of the sub-clan's unity and the symbol of its corporate identity; for it was obvious that until they were able to participate on equal terms in sacrifices to this *bɔyar*, the accessory lineages would not be regarded as, or feel themselves to be, completely absorbed by the authentic lineages.

Tongo, we may conclude, though it is more closely knit than Sie, is 618x
also an open system in its lineage structure; and this is equally true of 184
Yamələg and Biuk. This peculiarity of the clan organization is more precisely apparent in the asymmetrical linkages of the component lineages of the different sub-clans of Mosuor biis. It is evident from our analysis that the ties of clanship summarily posited by the natives as linking *all* of Tongo with *all* of Sie, *all* of Yamələg, and *all* of Biuk, measured by the strict canon of agnatic descent as well as by the critical norms of clanship,

PLATE III

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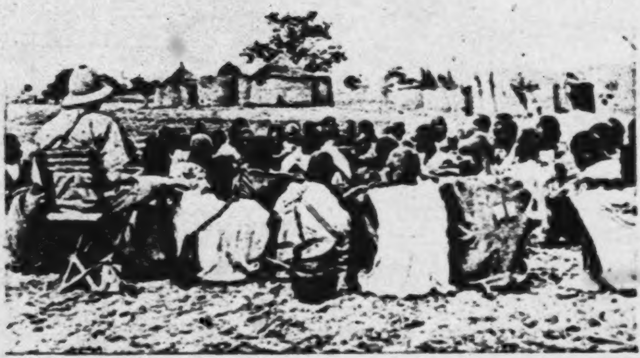

(*a*) Elders of a Maximal Lineage assemble to sacrifice to their Founder.

The Maximal Lineage is a corporate unit: The elders of a maximal lineage, representing all its component segments, assemble to perform a sacrifice on the grave of one of their founding ancestors. Note that (a) only men are present; (b) the members of each segment sit together; (c) the close-packed form of the group, an index of the strong sense of lineage solidarity in such situations.

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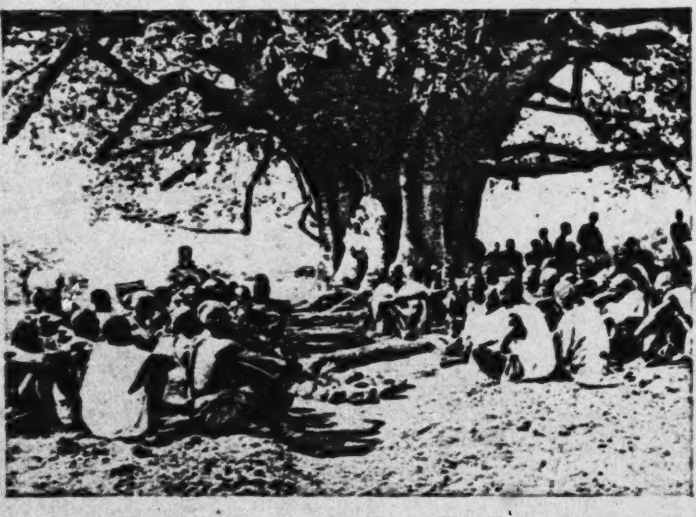

(*b*) Prayer preceding Sacrifice to Clan Founder.

An episode in the great sacrifice to Mosuor and the other founding ancestors, at Tongo, in 1936. Men of the sub-clan assembled at Mosuor's grave (stones in foreground) and tree shrine (baobab tree). The photograph was taken as the prayer preceding the sacrifice was being offered.

[facing p. 56]

the Yakɔradɛm ('the people of the old homes') mingle with those of their 618X Tongo neighbours and spread out irregularly into what is properly Ba'ari. The next block of homesteads, separated from them by a stone's throw and known as the Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm ('the people of the Kpaɣara side'), so named after a sacred pool in their midst, abuts on the fields of other Tongo neighbours and straggles over into the part occupied by the third maximal lineage. These, the Yapaasdɛm ('the people of the new homesteads'), have Zoo homesteads as their neighbours on one side and somewhat more distantly Ba'ari neighbours on the other. By the criteria of clanship with which we have become familiar, Zubiuŋ forms a single clan; the three maximal lineages act together as a unit in all secular and religious affairs of common interest.

Outsiders regard Zubiuŋ as a single unit, like Tongo or Zoo, and the relations of its constituent maximal lineages to one another are organized on the plan of a single maximal lineage of three segments. Thus, the mortuary rites or funeral ceremonies of an important member of any one of these lineages cannot be carried out without the presence and collaboration of representatives of the other two lineages. They have the reciprocal privileges and obligations of close clan *sunzɔp* in relation to one another. They speak of one another as kinsmen by consanguinity (*dɔɣam*).

Nevertheless, it is generally known that the three segments of Zubiuŋ 618X are of diverse origin. The Yakɔradɛm have a status senior to the others. 554 According to the myth, which has already been recorded, their founding ancestor (*yaab*) was a 'brother' of the primordial Gbizug tɛndaana. They were the first to settle at Zubiuŋ. The Kpaɣara-yaɣardɛm, who are next in order of seniority, claim that their line was founded by immigrants who accompanied Mosuor as his Gbandaat—a ceremonial office which is still their exclusive prerogative in relation to the Chief of Tongo. The Yapaasdɛm are said to be offshoots of the other two lineages, and are therefore the most junior. The relative status of the three lineages is shown in all their corporate activities. Thus, if they make a joint sacrifice and the sacrificial animal is provided by either of the senior lineages, the Yapaasdɛm receive only a shoulder (that is, a junior portion) as their rightful share, whereas the other lineages receive the legs (the senior portions). The two senior lineages are relatively equal in status compared with Yapaas.

Overlooking this diversity of origin, the people of Zubiuŋ say: 'We 618X have become consanguineous kin (*ti leeba dɔɣam*).' One focus of their 778 unity and corporate identity as a clan is their External (*yɛŋha*) *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg, a sacred grove whose mystical powers are renowned and respected far beyond the borders of Taleland. Duunkpaləg is the shrine of all the ancestors of all three maximal lineages. 'All our ancestors are there (*ti yaanam waabi be nɛŋha*)', is the formula used by the natives to define this shrine. Any ritual event which involves a sacrifice at Duunkpaləg requires the presence of all three lineages, each represented by its head (*kpeem*), and he should be accompanied by the head of each constituent segment of his lineage and by any other of its mature male members who are able to come. The ideological dominance of

x618 Duunkpalɔg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the
● 778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a
[551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages
x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a
764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously
778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is
794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of
782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these
182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say
771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpalɔg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

PLATE VI

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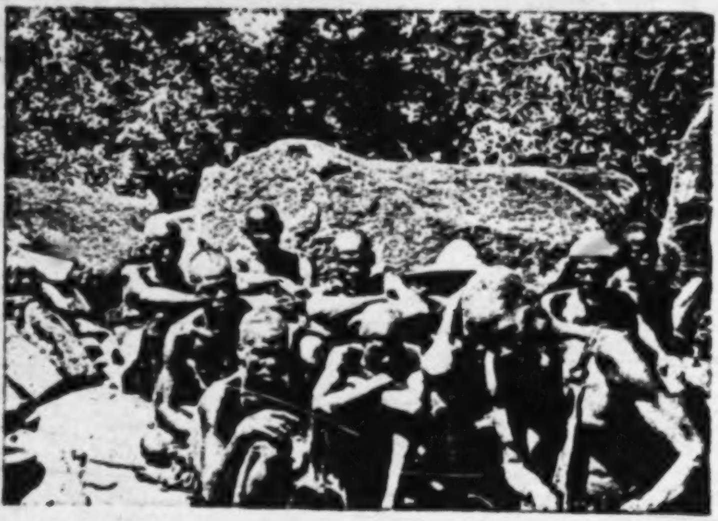

(*a*) Ritual collaboration among the Hill Talis: A sacrifice at the External *Bɔɣar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the principal custodians. Representatives of Gundaat, Samiit, Sakpee are present while the head of Kpata'ar performs the sacrifice.

(*b*) A sacrifice at the Earth Shrine, Doo, of which Kpata'ardɛm are the principal custodians. Representatives of Kpata'ar, Tamboog, Degal, and Bunkiuk are present on this occasion.

[facing p. 81]

*618 clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an
182 offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be
made at the External *Bɔyar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

*618 Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in
182 form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will
184 be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External
● 778 *Bɔyar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are
769 built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of
the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔyar* among the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔyar* of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔyar* is kept at the house of the segment head in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔyar* of one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔyar* itself consists of one or two small pots (*kpatarəg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

182 As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔyar and the Earth

*618 A. *Zubiuŋ*. We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ
182 becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔyar*, Duunkpaləg, the common shrine
778 of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of
782 the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the
769 cults of the *Bɔyar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of
clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration with the clan structure is relatively simple, and is analogous to what is found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpaləg *Bɔyar*. It is described as an External *Bɔyar* (*yɛŋha bɔyar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

*618 But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔyar*,
778 'the *bɔyar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal
769 lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages
similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni*

bɔyar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the 618X
External *Bɔyar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it 778
symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that 769
particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔyar*, that
is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpalɔg in ritual
homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔyar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage,
as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting
bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia,
and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and
feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure— 618X
on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the 769
clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing
these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but
according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute
these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same
pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult
of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship 618X
never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpalɔg or at any of the Zubiuŋ 782
Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ 769
maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very
elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the
constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in
the ceremonies of inducting a new tɛndaana into his office, or in the
funeral rites of a deceased tɛndaana—members of the linked lineages of
that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of
the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the
case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari*. The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component 618X
units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the 778
principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. 782
Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require
the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the
accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that
one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with
two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and
obligations of close *sunzɔp*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, [794]
and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔyar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated
with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔyar* and a
focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric
aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only
the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages
of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected
with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked
lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of
Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yayazuor,
who are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties [608]
of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

618 778 782 general ritual bond in the tɛndaanaship and the special ritual relationship with the Earth which this office imposes on a group that has the prerogative of it, and they have a specific ritual bond that comes into action during the Great Festivals.

618 608 At the level of these ritual relations, Ba'ari, Gbizug, Wakii, and Yaɣazuor are brethren (*mabiis*) to one another. Gbizug, it will be remembered, is also linked to Ba'ari by clanship ties; through it, therefore, the scheme of linkage by clanship ties is interlocked with the scheme of linkage through ritual ties; and the myth in which the social relations of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are symbolically pictured expresses this double-sided interdependence. As will be clearer presently, the organization of ritual ties between corporate units, like that of clanship ties, follows the field principle. Working at different levels of the social structure in the service of different interests, the two systems are interlocked but not congruent. They reinforce each other by counterbalancing each other; and both kinds of ties are translated into the basic idiom of Tale social relations, the idiom of genealogical connexion.

C. *Gbizug*. We shall see this more clearly if we consider the role of Gbizug in this configuration. As we have noted before, linked maximal lineages have the right to participate in exoteric ceremonies (such as funeral ceremonies) in which the corporate identity of the particular Ba'ari lineage with which they have clanship ties emerges; but clanship ties do not give them the right to take part in the religious cults in which the corporate unity and identity of the whole clan emerges. They have no bonds with the clan as a whole, but only with the relatively autonomous segments of the clan. Gbizug, however, is bound to a segment of the clan by clanship ties and to the whole clan by ritual ties, and the bridge between these two sets of ties is Ba'at-Sakpar. Gbizug has no loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari, other than Ba'at-Sakpar, on the level of clanship; in this respect Gbizug is a threat to the stability of Ba'at-Sakpar's field of clanship. The latter's loyalties to Gbizug might in certain circumstances clash with its loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari. Compromise and adjustment are made possible by the scheme of ritual ties. The partly independent fields of clanship of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are adjusted to one another at a different level of social organization. In the frame of ritual relations, Gbizug is, as it were, assimilated to the whole clan of Ba'ari, drawn into the field of clanship of Ba'at-Sakpar.

It follows that on this plane of ritual relations Gbeog and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra are indirectly bound to the whole of Ba'ari, for Gbizug represents its whole field of clanship in its corporate ritual relationship with Ba'ari. At a further remove Zubiuŋ Yakɔra is the bridge between the whole of Zubiuŋ and the whole of Ba'ari through Gbizug; and this rule extends, by a series of removes, to all the Talis.

The Underlying Principles of Ritual Collaboration

618 182 We must try to see clearly the principles underlying this bewildering hierarchy of social ties between corporate units in Taleland. It is as difficult to state this principle simply and precisely as it was for the writer to elicit it from the confusing and, at first sight, inconsistent welter of

×618 elaboration. Among them the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*,[1] homologous
182 though it is in function and doctrine with its Zubiuŋ counterpart, includes
794 peculiar esoteric elements lacking in the latter. This cult is the pivot of their Harvest Festival, *Bɔɣaraam*, which takes its name from the External *Bɔɣar*, of which it is essentially a sacrament. The sacrament includes an initiation cult, by which the males are brought into the *Bɔɣar* sodality and bound to its obligations and observances.

Each *Bɔɣar* has a number of ritual functionaries who hold office by virtue of being the heads of the maximal lineages in which these ritual offices are vested. As a rule a particular maximal lineage has the exclusive ownership of one office, and the ritual offices connected with a particular *Bɔɣar* are distributed among all or most of the corporate units (maximal lineages) that owe allegiance to that *Bɔɣar*. They usually include maximal lineages of a single clan, maximal lineages of other clans linked to them by ties of clanship, and territorially adjacent maximal lineages not related to them by clanship.

The cult of the Earth (*Tɛŋ*), again, is localized at a number of sacred spots, the most exalted of which are the foci of ritual association and collaboration between groups of clans and maximal lineages *not* connected by clanship. As in the *Bɔɣar* cult, the ritual roles are distributed among
the heads of the corporate units owing allegiance to a particular Earth
● [778] shrine. Each maximal lineage has, in addition, its private lineage *bɔɣar*,
the symbolic seat of its own ancestors, as well as the special shrine that symbolizes and is bound up with the ritual office vested in that lineage.

Though each ritual office of a particular *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is vested in one maximal lineage, the other member-units of the congregation have an interest in that office. There are certain occasions when all the ritual functionaries must be present in order that the rites of worship may be performed. This is the case during the Great Festivals, and the concrete manifestation of this principle is the common sacrament partaken of in the rites at the *Bɔɣar* and the *Tɛŋ*.

793 Again, there is an order of seniority among the ritual functionaries of a
794 *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ*. The most senior is the chief custodian of that shrine.
182 Members of his lineage have a private relationship with the shrine, in
×618 addition to their public duties in connexion with it. They may, through
him, bring private sacrifices to it in misfortune, or out of gratitude. But this functionary is also the direct intermediary between the congregation and the shrine. The priestly duties of its cult fall mainly on him. He is obliged to preside at all rites in which the whole congregation takes part, and the lineages of the other functionaries are dependent on [illegible] for the proper performance of the rites. This does not give him political power over them, for he is only *primus inter pares*, but it enhances the prestige of his office and makes it the pivot of the whole constellation. Thus all the functionaries and their respective lineages have a particular interest in the senior, pivotal office.

Furthermore, the installation of a ritual functionary in his office is

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[1] For the sake of clarity whenever reference is made to an external *Bɔɣar*, a capital *B* will be used; when any other kind of *bɔɣar* is referred to a lower-case *b* will be used.

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field. Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔɣar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔɣar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔɣar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
184 single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine
769 (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the
[793] Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[779] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
769

778 of the people of Gbizug is the grave of their primordial ancestor, Tɛndaan
794 Gɛnət. This grave, situated on the reputed house-site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət,
is in the sole custody of Gbizug, and is associated with the tɛndaanaship,
x618 therefore with the Earth cult. But whenever a new Gbizug tɛndaana is
769 installed, representatives of Gbeog, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra
must be present at the rites performed at Gɛnət's grave. This is a matter of right and duty, subsumed under the rights and duties of their clanship ties and validated by the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas. But one segment of Wakii must also be represented at these rites, not in virtue of clanship ties but of the kinship (*mabiirət*) in the figurative sense that is held to prevail between all tɛndaana clans. It is effective in this case because of the proximity and the ritual collaboration in the Great Festivals of Wakii and Gbizug.

x618 It is significant that the people of Soog, despite their clanship ties with Gbizug, do not come into the field of its ritual relations. On the surface this appears to be correlated with their spatial separation from Gbizug. It is only by their attendance at the exoteric ceremonies that accompany the installation or funeral of a Gbizug tɛndaana, and by the rights to special portions of meat and beer that they can exercise on these occasions, that the clanship ties between Soog and Gbizug impinge on the latter's field of ritual relations.

x618 On the other hand, the clanship ties of Soog with Gbeog have a ritual
794 embodiment in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. All the segments of Gbeog
769 practise this cult; but some of them owe allegiance to the *Bɔyar* of which the people of Soog are the senior custodians, and the others have a separate *Bɔyar* of their own. Soog and Gbeog do not have a common Earth shrine. In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog forms one united community and Soog another.

182 In this intricate tissue of ritual relations we see again, as at Ba'ari, the
x618 interweaving of clanship ties, neighbourhood ties, and ties of ritual interdependence *per se*, forming syntheses of politico-ritual relations at a higher level than those that are possible in terms of any one of these categories. This interweaving can be seen at any of the ceremonies in which a particular field of ritual relations is actualized. It is particularly clear among the Tɛnzugu clans, where we can see, more plainly than at Gbizug or Ba'ari, how it is produced by the counterbalancing of ritual ties against clanship and local cleavages, and of ritual ties of one sort against those of another sort.

x618 Soog has a specific ritual tie with one major segment of Sakpee, the
769 head of which installs the senior ritual functionary of the Soog External *Bɔyar*. This segment of Sakpee, Sakpee I, has its own *Bɔyar*. But it unites with the other major segment, Sakpee II, in the worship of a common Earth shrine, the custody of which is vested in Sakpee II; and Sakpee II owes allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* Bona'ab, the senior custodian of which is the head of Kpata'ar. Soog, though linked by clanship ties with Kpata'ar, has no direct ritual connexions with it. Their fields of ritual relations overlap at Sakpee, which forms the bridge between them at this level.

Kpata'ar provides a typical instance of the structure of the ritual fields

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618x
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is
through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social
order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider com-
munity of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and
looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one
belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based
on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by
common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social
personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and
of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are signifi-
cant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual
fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the
lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔɣar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618x
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the
Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔɣar*.

The External *Bɔɣar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔɣar*, parallel to 618x
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and 778
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794
each External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of
maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental
common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social
identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been
initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Taləŋ
(*u pana baŋ Taləŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Taləŋ
has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child';
now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to
indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member
of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider
community.

The *Bɔɣar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔɣar*, and often
invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical,
anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔɣar* symbolizes the ritual value of
the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis
to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It
symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought
into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

769 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔɣar* cult binds the individual by the most
778 solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order be-
881 queathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of
794 the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔɣar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm*
881 *kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔɣar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔɣar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when
627 he is initiated. The *Bɔɣar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔɣar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial)
881 fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔɣar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔɣar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔɣar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔɣar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with
771 the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔɣar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔɣar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔɣar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔɣar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔɣar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

171 they are generally fairly common domestic or wild creatures. We have
784 shown that the totemic avoidances of the Tallensi have a symbolic value
182 in relation to their social organization. They are not, however, explicable simply as a function of the social structure. We cannot dismiss the choice of animal symbolism for this function as an accident of history or as mere coincidence. To understand it we should have to probe more deeply into the religious beliefs not only of the Tallensi but of all the peoples of this culture area. Animal and food taboos play a very important part in the ritual symbolism of Voltaic culture and indeed of West African cultures in general. We have repeatedly emphasized the intrinsic relation of the religious system of the Tallensi to their social structure. In a social system such as theirs, ritual ideas and values and the morphology of the society are interrelated as mind and body in the higher primates. But these two aspects of Tale society are not merely the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Though Tale religion springs directly out of the social structure, it is fed by streams whose sources lie beneath and beyond the social structure. We cannot pursue this theme here in detail, for it leads to problems of Tale psychology, and indeed of human psychology, that lie outside the scope of this study. We can only give an indication of the line such an enquiry would take. To do this we must consider some other forms of animal symbolism that appear in Tale religious beliefs.

Taboos of the Earth

778 Animals of all kinds can be endowed with ritual significance for individuals or groups among the Tallensi. They become sacred objects (*baɣa*, sing. *baɣər*) forming part of shrines (*baɣa*, sing. *baɣər*) dedicated to named ancestor spirits, on which sacrifices are offered. A *baɣər* animal is an individual animal or a species found in a particular place. Totem animals are not *baɣa*, since they are whole species respected everywhere and not associated with particular shrines.

784 Certain 'taboos of the Earth' (*tɛŋən kiha*) form a class of animal taboos
171 standing between *baɣa* in the narrow sense and totems. Some Earth taboos are universal. Thus, throughout the Voltaic region it is a taboo to appropriate any unclaimed object of iron found lying on the ground. Other Earth taboos are specific to localities coming under the ritual jurisdiction of particular clans or lineages. All over Taleland large reptiles such as the crocodile (*baŋ*), the python (*waɣakpɛm*), the tree- and water-lizards (*uuk* and *wuu*) are taboos of the Earth. They may not be killed within the precincts of any important Earth shrine. In the bush, where men have no social bonds with the land, and therefore no ritual bonds with the Earth at specific places, they are not sacred. Binding on everybody, these taboos hold with extra force for members of lineages that have tɛndaanas (see also pp. 187–8. below).

784 Tallensi say these animals are 'the people of the Earth (*tɛŋən nirəba*)'
778 as men are people of such and such a settlement. They symbolize the mystical power of the Earth as it acts on human life, sometimes beneficently, sometimes punitively. This is what the natives mean when they say 'The Earth is a living thing (*tɛŋ la a bonvor*)'.

This mystical power is focused for a particular social group in the Earth 778
shrines of their own settlement—that is why the Earth animals are not 182
sacred in the bush. And the ritual efficacy of the Earth at a particular place depends on its connexion with a particular social group holding the office of tɛndaana for that place. The animals therefore symbolize the moral relations of men, as these are determined by their social ties with particular tracts of the earth. They symbolize the function of locality in Tale social organization.

One logical element in this symbolism is obvious. The mystical 'livingness' of the Earth is symbolized in the living creatures it harbours. But this is not all, for otherwise other earth-dwelling creatures might have been selected as well.

The special relationship of the sacred Earth animals with the clan 778
holding the tɛndaanaship for the area is focused in one species, as a rule. 184
Thus the python is specially sacred at Gbizug, the crocodile at Zubiuŋ. To kill one of these animals at home is almost as bad as murder. For they are more than Earth taboos; they are 'ancestors' (*yaab*, pl. *yaanam*) to the group concerned. If found dead in the settlement, they are given a token funeral. The sacred crocodiles living in the Zubiuŋ water-hole are treated with an almost human familiarity. 'They are our ancestors, they would not injure us', the people say. In some clans carnivores like the leopard or the lion have this function, but are not considered Earth taboos. The natives say that their ancestors who have held politico-ritual office 'rise up again (*ihigərəme*)' after death as these animals. Tallensi deny that this is a belief in reincarnation or in the transmigration of souls. These taboos have attributes of totems, of Earth taboos, and of personal ancestor symbols; and the common thread is the notion of the ancestors as a living mystical force, symbolized in living creatures. The animals symbolize the immortality of the ancestors, that is, their efficacy and power in the life of their descendants. The ancestors are where their descendants are. One reason why the lineage is tied to its locality is because the ancestors are tied to it. They are spiritually present in the social life of their descendants in the same way as the sacred animals are present in sacred pools or in the locality with which the group is identified.

Functional Differentiation and its Symbolism

An important inference emerges from our argument. Lineage and 182
locality are interwoven and interdependent factors of Tale social structure. But they are functionally discrete factors. We have previously seen how their interdependence is reflected in Tale religious ideology. We see now that their functional discreteness within the pattern of interdependence is also expressed in ritual symbols. The formally similar and associated but functionally distinct symbols we have discussed bring this out.

Tale society is highly homogeneous and integrated. But this is a [181]
resultant of the balanced interplay of a number of functionally discrete 182
factors and of the inter-articulation of many clearly defined social units. Tale religion gives ritual expression and sanction to these principles.

621 161 101 living at Zoo and Gbambee, though they are an integral part of the community.

621 131 Like all Tale settlements Tongo has no fixed territorial boundaries. (See map at end of book.) Its frontiers with the circumjacent settlements take the form of a social circumference, kept in being by local, genealogical, and politico-ritual ties and cleavages. This is the line of ecological and social balance between Tongo and its neighbours, more or less stable now, but still undergoing minor readjustments as this balance changes with alterations in the internal equilibrium of any of these units. It is most stable and firm where the genealogical, political, and ideological cleavages between Tongo and its neighbours are clear-cut and dominant; it is more pervious where Tongo's structural ties with an adjacent clan have greater strength than the cleavages between them. Thus, there is a distinct though sometimes narrow territorial separation between the outermost homesteads of Tongo and those of Wakii, Soog, Gbeog, and Ba'ari. At one point on the west side of Tongo only a stretch of cultivation separates Tongo homesteads from Wakii homesteads a stone's throw away. Tongo homesteads actually lie on the Wakii side of the watercourse which might have formed a natural boundary between them. On the south this watercourse and a straggling outcrop of rocks and boulders hedge in Tongo and mark it off from Wakii. A prominent landmark here ●[778] is Samoo, a mass of huge rocks overgrown with trees and scrub. It is a sacred spot, the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog and Gbeog. North of Samoo lies Tongo, the nearest Tongo homestead being about 50 yards away; south of it are Wakii and Soog. It would be most unlikely for a Tongo man to build his homestead on the south side of Samoo, or for a Soog or Wakii man to live north of it. For Samoo symbolizes all that the Namoos consider alien, hostile, and to some extent repugnant, in the cultural differences and structural cleavages between themselves and the Hill Talis. In olden days the immediate vicinity of Samoo was the no-man's-land where the two groups used to meet in battle.

578 131 Soog, Wakii, Gbeog, and Ba'ari, all Talis clans that were among the traditional enemies of Tongo in war, are all demarcated from the latter. On the border between Tongo and each of these clans is a stretch of land, cultivated or uncultivated, but free of homesteads, which is still thought of as the traditional battle-ground of the two groups. It is significant that these battle-grounds are all associated with Earth or *Bɔɣar* shrines under the ritual jurisdiction of the Talis clans.

621 131 361 By contrast it is impossible to draw a clear line between the homesteads of Tongo and those of Zubiuŋ or Zoo. They merge completely. This corresponds to the close ties which have always existed between these three units and have enabled them to fuse easily into a single political community under the authority of the Chief of Tongo, since his acquisition of judicial and executive power under British rule.

x618 In the old days Zubiuŋ and Zoo always fought on the side of Tongo against the Hill Talis. Both clans have direct politico-ritual roles in connexion with the Tongo chiefship, and come into its immediate field of influence, whereas the Hill Talis and Ba'ari come into its secondary field [608] of influence. The three clans act as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy (cf. ch. V) to

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

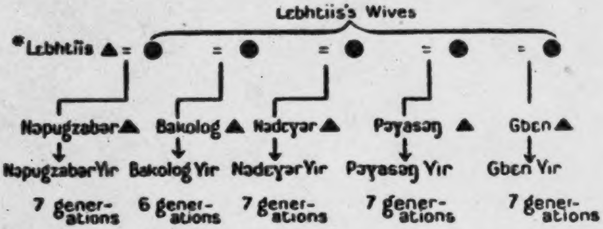
779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
778 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
471 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

ritual custody of a particular clan or maximal lineage. Such a territorial 778
section is the *tɛŋ* of a particular tɛndaana. He is the master (*daana*) of 779
that locality (*tɛŋ*), exercising ritual jurisdiction over it on behalf of the 793
maximal lineage or clan which has the ritual ownership of it, in virtue of 471
being the head of that unit. He is the mediator between the Earth and the
people whose interests lie in that fraction of its physical surface. When
the concept *tɛŋ* is coupled with a tɛndaana it has a double meaning. It
denotes both a stretch of territory and a place of contact with the mystical
Earth. It may be used to designate a single Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) and
its precincts, a total area of anything from about 20 square yards to an
acre or two; and it can be applied to the whole of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*, which
includes a number of *tɔŋgbana*.

Tɛndaanas' *tɛs* vary greatly in extent. As I have no exact measurements, 471
I can only indicate roughly the range of differences. Small *tɛs* are the 793
rule in the older and more densely settled part of the country. The area
of a clan settlement on Tɛnzugu, for instance, perhaps a square mile altogether,
may be divided amongst three or four tɛndaanas. On the other
hand, at the peripheries tɛndaanas have ritual jurisdiction over large
tracts of land, many square miles in extent. This is largely due to the
absence of permanent settlement in these parts until recently, and the
still relatively scanty population living there.

Tallensi do not think of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* in terms of its size but in 471
terms of its position relatively to the *tɛs* of neighbouring tɛndaanas. 793
Tɛndaanas themselves claim that their *tɛs* have definite boundaries, but 779
when asked to show them they become very uneasy and quote the
maxim 'The boundaries of a *tɛŋ* must not be pointed out (*Tɛŋən tentɔris pu
pa'ana*)'. When my bona fides was, at length, accepted by the Tallensi I
was able to persuade several tɛndaanas to have the boundaries of their *tɛs*
shown to me. My guides were always ill at ease, and apparently felt that
what they were doing verged on sacrilege. Chiefs and elders of clans that
do not have tɛndaanas usually declare that it is impossible for tɛndaanas
to have boundaries (cf. p. 164); for are not neighbouring tɛndaanas
always 'kin' (*mabiis*)—by clanship or by ritual ties? Do they not often
sacrifice together at one another's Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) or go by stealth,
at night, to sacrifice at a neighbouring tɛndaana's Earth shrines? Tɛndaanas
do not deny this. In every group of contiguous maximal lineages,
each presided over by a tɛndaana (as for instance Gbeog, Gbizug, and
Zubiuŋ), the senior tɛndaana (in this instance the Gbizug tɛndaana)
always claims to be the real 'owner' of the aggregate of *tɛs* held by the
group of tɛndaanas. He talks of this aggregate of *tɛs* as if it were one *tɛŋ*
apportioned amongst his junior 'brothers' and himself for the greater
convenience of performing the priestly duties of the tɛndaanaship. They
divide their common spiritual jurisdiction rather than a distinct stretch
of territory; and in principle this rule embraces the whole of Taleland.
For the powers of the Earth are indivisible, the Earth is a unity. When the [782]
Gbizug tɛndaana sacrifices to his supreme *tɔŋgban*—or, as he often
phrases it, his *tɛŋ*—Kpɔŋkparəg, he invokes all the important *tɔŋgbana* of
Taleland, up to the limit of the field of politico-ritual relations in which
Gbizug participates, from Duusi in the north-east to Biuŋ in the south.

Diagrammatically, the agnatic filiation of the branches of Lɛbhtiis yir 613
(or biis) can be represented as follows:



These five segments form a set of co-ordinate segments, all except Bakolog yidɛm reckoning seven generations inclusively between their present lineage heads and their common ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. Their corporate unity and common interests are symbolized by the ancestor shrine dedicated to the 'fathers' (*banam*) of the lineage, culminating in Lɛbhtiis. This is the *bɔɣar* of Lɛbhtiis, the *banam bɔɣar* (shrine of the forefathers) held by the head (*kpeem*) of the whole lineage, who may be a member of any of the five *dugət*. In 1934 the head of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, Naandɔmər, who was also head of his own segment of Nɔpugzabər yiri died, and as his final funeral rites were not immediately performed, the *banam bɔɣar* remained in the custody of his son, who carried out the duties of head of the whole lineage in his late father's name. Naandɔmər's prospective successor as *kpeem* of Lɛbhtiis yir was Yinyɛla, the *kpeem* of Bakolog yir.

Each segment also has its particular *dugni bɔɣar* (shrine of the 'room'). 613
This, as will be explained presently, is known as its 'mothers'' *bɔɣar* 778
(*manam bɔɣar*)—the shrine of its eponymous founding ancestor among the sons of Lɛbhtiis, and his mother—the symbol of its differentiation, by reference to maternal origin, from its brother (*sunzɔ*) segments of the same descent, and of its specific corporate unity and identity in contraposition to those other segments.

Each segment tends to form a coherent residential cluster, situated on 613
land which has been owned by its members for several generations, and in 361
close proximity to the graves of their ancestors. The lineage as a whole 167
tends to form a local aggregate, though a somewhat looser one than any of its segments. But not all the members of the lineage reside in Puhug, or at Tongo, at a given time. There are its married *pɔɣaɣabəlis* (women members) and absent male members. In Nɔpugzabər yiri two young men were away in 1934, one farming in Mampurugu, another working somewhere in the colony; three of the younger 'sons' of Bakolog yir were away at Kumasi, where they had been for several years. One subsegment of Pɔɣasɔŋ yidem has been established at Yaməlɔg for a generation or so; and several members of the other two segments were away in Mampurugu and Ashanti.

Numerically Nɔdeɣər yir is exceptionally small, for it has only eleven 613
male members. The other segments have between twenty and thirty male members each, counting infants as well. Numbers, we must again emphasize, do not in any way affect the status of a lineage or the rights

daily life, the antithesis between patrilateral and matrilateral ties in the 613
joint family. There is also the principle of the continuity and identity of 596
the lineage. Members of the same lineage are identified with one another and with their lineal ascendants. Tallensi think of a lineage as a continuous, even eternal, group, a unit persisting through time as well as existing at a given time. A particular lineage to-day is the same lineage that it was at its inception two, three, or *x* generations ago. Segments of a clan or maximal lineage have the same structural position relatively to one another as they had in the beginning, only on a different scale; and in the beginning segmentarily related lineages sprang from brothers. As these founding ancestors were related, so are their contemporary agnatic descendants related. Hence co-ordinate segments of a lineage are described as *sunzɔp* ('brothers by the same father'), and the bonds of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are the nucleus and prototype of the bonds between co-ordinate segments. Two co-ordinate segments whose founding ancestors were full (*soog*) brothers have closer ties than similar co-ordinate segments descended from a pair of half-brothers. The lineage is always growing, but can never break the unchanging frame laid down at its beginning. It is almost as if a single person has undergone a quantitative metamorphosis with the passage of generations.

Lineage ties cannot lapse or be renounced. A maximal lineage once 613
established can never split into two or more independent (i.e. mutually exogamous) maximal lineages, as in some other areas of Africa, and territorial dispersion does not break the lineage tie, even after many generations. In fact, the whole stream of Tale social life emphasizes and reinforces the sense of lineage continuity, and of the identification of members of a lineage with one another, with their predecessors, and with their prospective successors. This is the basis of the corporate unity and solidarity of the lineage, and of the lineal transmission of rights and duties, ritual observances, office, property, and debts; and for this reason any member of a lineage can represent any other member, living or dead, or the whole lineage, in relation to other lineages of a like sort. This, too, underlies the usage by which members of a lineage can refer to their founding ancestor either as their 'father' (*ba*) or as their 'ancestor' (*yaab*), a term which denotes any patrilineal ancestor beyond and including the grandfather. It explains the conception of the lineage progenitrix—the founding ancestor's mother—as the 'mother' (*ma*) of the lineage. It must be added that even when a lineage is envisaged as a *dug* deriving from its progenitrix, it takes its name from her son, as its agnatic founding ancestor as a branch of a more inclusive lineage.

The rules of lineage segmentation can be summed up as follows: 613
Whenever a lineage is envisaged as an inclusive corporate unit embracing 778
two or more subordinate segments, it is identified by reference to its founding *ancestor*, as the starting-point of its descent. It is thought of as a *yir*, house, 'the children of one father (*ba yɛni biis*)', on the model of the patricentral joint family (*yir* in the primary sense) in which the offspring form a single genealogical and social unit with reference to their common father. Its focal ancestor shrine is designated the '*bɔyar* of the fathers (*banam bɔyar*)', a notion that stresses the dominance of the father-figure

613 in the unity of the patrilineal descent group and in the coherence of the ●778 family. But when a lineage is visualized as a set of segments, these are differentiated by reference to their respective *progenitrices*, just as in the joint family the offspring can be subdivided in accordance with their maternal origins. The focal ancestor shrine of each segment is then called 'the *bɔyar* of the mothers (of the segment) (*manam bɔyar*)'. It is identical in form with the 'fathers' *bɔyar*' but complementary to it in function. Its name stresses the predominance of matrilateral origin in the differentiation of the segments of a lineage, by contrast with the patricentral lineage as a whole. Tallensi speak of a 'mothers' *bɔγar*' as being the shrine of the segment's founding ancestor and his mother, by contrast with the 'fathers' *bɔyar*', which they say is the shrine of the founding ancestor of the lineage only. But they recognize that a 'mothers' *bɔyar*' will in the course of time become a 'fathers' *bɔyar*' when the segment undergoes internal differentiation into sub-segments, and may function as a 'fathers' *bɔyar*' if the segment is already so differentiated. When a segment of a lineage is thus distinguished from co-ordinate segments of the same lineage, it is also implicitly contrasted with the whole lineage. It is thought of as a matri-segment, though named after its founding ancestor, and is described as a 'room', *dug*—'the children of one mother (*ma yeni biis*)'—of the 'house', *yir*, on the model of the joint family in which the matricentral *dug* is a segment of the patricentral *yir*.

613 Maternal origin (*ma dɔyam*) thus has significance only within the frame of patrilineal descent, as the polar opposite of paternal origin (*ba dɔyam*). Taken by itself, every lineage, no matter what its span or order may be, has only one founding ancestor and one progenitrix, this man's mother. The progenitrix of a lineage becomes significant only when it is considered in conjunction with other lineages of the same descent. Both morphologically and functionally every lineage represents an equilibrium based on the polarity of maternal filiation and patrilineal descent which runs through the whole genealogical structure of Tale society.

[778] Obviously any segment of a lineage which comprises two or more sub-segments can function as a *dug* in one context or situation and as a *yir* in another. Its focal ancestor shrine thus functions as a *manam bɔyar* in one context and as a *banam bɔyar* in another. In principle a maximal lineage of wide span must always act as a *yir*—and hence its focal ancestor shrine is always a *banam bɔyar*; but by a stretch of the term it may be referred to as a *dug* when someone wishes to lay special stress on its genealogical unity and corporate solidarity in contrast to other similar units. The [682] murder of a fellow member of the same maximal lineage is, for instance, always dealt with as 'an affair of the room (*dugni yɛl*)', which stringently excludes reprisals.

A few maximal lineages have so narrow a span, due, no doubt, to the extinction of collateral lines, that they function as medial or inner lineages (wide *dugɔt*), a distinction that will be clearer presently. Thus the maximal lineage of Gundaat is not subdivided into ritually and jurally differentiated major segments. Its head, the Gundaat-Bɔyarna'ab, explained this in a manner which shows how clearly many Tale elders grasp the mechanics of their own social structure. 'We have not yet achieved

613 621 nuclear lineage; but this land may be some distance from the ancestral home, owing to the scattering of holdings.

Looking at it from the native point of view, we should say, not that individuals tend to live near one another because they are agnatic kin, but that all lineages down to the effective minimal lineage tend to be tied to localities; and the more closely lineages are related, the greater is the spatial propinquity of their dwelling areas. The distribution of households is not rigidly parallel to the lineage structure at a given time. Mere spatial proximity cannot be directly translated into terms of lineage proximity. There is a diachronic element as well. Kurug's homestead (No. 6), for example, is nearer to Pumaan's (No. 5) in yards and feet than to Lɛbhtiis's; but Kurug is closer to Lɛbhtiis than to Pumaan in lineage. This is due chiefly to changes in the internal structure of their respective nuclear lineages in the last twenty or thirty years. The spatial relations of homesteads to one another reflect lineage relations in their diachronic aspect.

The Concept of the Lineage Home

613 621 778 Lineages tend to be tied to specific localities even if many of their members are permanently or temporarily away from the lineage home. Some representatives of the lineage will generally continue to reside near the ancient home where the spirits of the ancestors still dwell. The *daboog*, the site of the original home of the lineage, the first dwelling-place of its founding ancestor, is a hallowed spot. It is identified by reference to ancestral land and to the graves of the ancestors. These are the fixed things. Homesteads are not eternal. Their collocation reflects the structure of the lineage at a given time; but it changes as the composition and segmentation of the lineage alters. Whenever an alteration of this sort occurs, there is a corresponding reshuffle in the housing arrangements. New homesteads are erected, old homesteads replanned and rebuilt or abandoned. A lineage being an organic unit has, in native eyes, but one home (*yir*), though the material embodiment of this home is distributed at any given time. The *daboog* of the lineage of Nɔpugzabər yidɛm, the original homestead site of their ancestor Nɔpugzabər, is on what was in 1934 the home farm of the head of the lineage, Deemzeet, a stone's throw from his gateway. The graves of Nɔpugzabər and his sons, and a tree which sprouted on Nɔpugzabər's grave and is believed, therefore, to enshrine his spirit, mark the spot where his gateway (*zanɔr*) stood.

From this arises the concept of the lineage *zanɔr*. All the homesteads of its members together make up the lineage home (*yir*), and this home has its single gateway (*zanɔr*), the lineage *zanɔr*. The notion is pre-eminently symbolical, but its material embodiment is the homestead of the lineage head, and therefore, specifically, the gateway of his homestead. It applies to all levels of lineage organization, up to the maximal lineage. In a maximal lineage the site of the founding ancestor's homestead is generally a sacred spot, often marked by the erection on or near it of a [554] miniature room to represent the ancestral *zɔŋ*. This room is one of the shrines connected with the lineage *bɔyar*, and its custody is vested in a

segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] 613
and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage 621
on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior 778
tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding
ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes [557]
possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabər. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned [123]
by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally [104]
organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits
on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire 613
life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real 621
and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, 602
and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

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[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies [191]
are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpalɔg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar* and Sɛɣahɔg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahɔg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782]
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour- 461
water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bɔɣar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

778 The graves of Sɛɣahəg and Bɔɣada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔɣada's grave
is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested
in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly
Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbər, and Bɔɣayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie
buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority
of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or
diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through
the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus
Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted
as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival
and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading
of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakɔradɛm,
Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that
remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by
Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔɣada's grave is proof to the
natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants
to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans
the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the
segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The
correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of
the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo
clans living in the vicinity of Yaməlog and Sie—the group of clans which
the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos
—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate
forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small
cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔɣar* takes the place of
the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of
the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most
important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is
often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession
also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the
maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the
actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought
into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office
of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds
known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

PLATE XI

764
778
241
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(*a*) The grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt and the space believed to have been occupied by his homestead and Mosuor's, now the sacred dancing ground, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug, at Tongo. Note that it is not cultivated.

778
341

(*b*) A miniature homestead symbolizing the ancestral home of a maximal lineage or clan. Note the lineage *bɔyar* against the outside wall.

[FACING p.224]

PLATE XII

415
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●778
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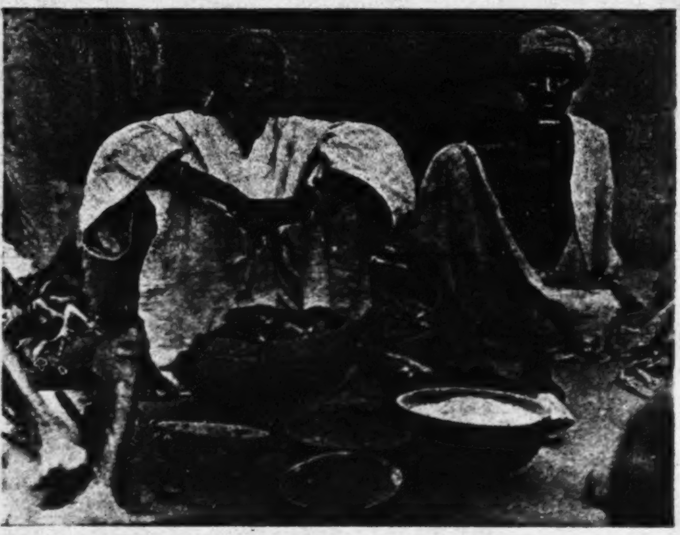

(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔɣar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔɣar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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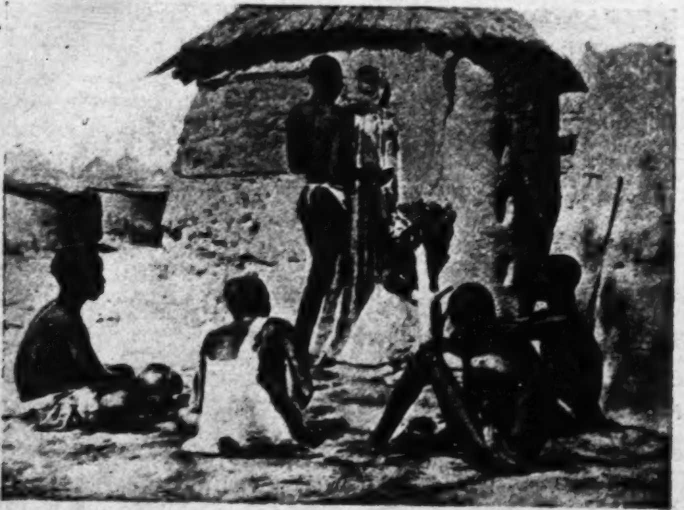
415



(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔɣar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p. 225]

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal
lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation- 486
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

2: Fortes
131, 133, 361, 487, 778, 764, 621

FE11 Tallensi FE11

[Chart of sections of end-map:

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H

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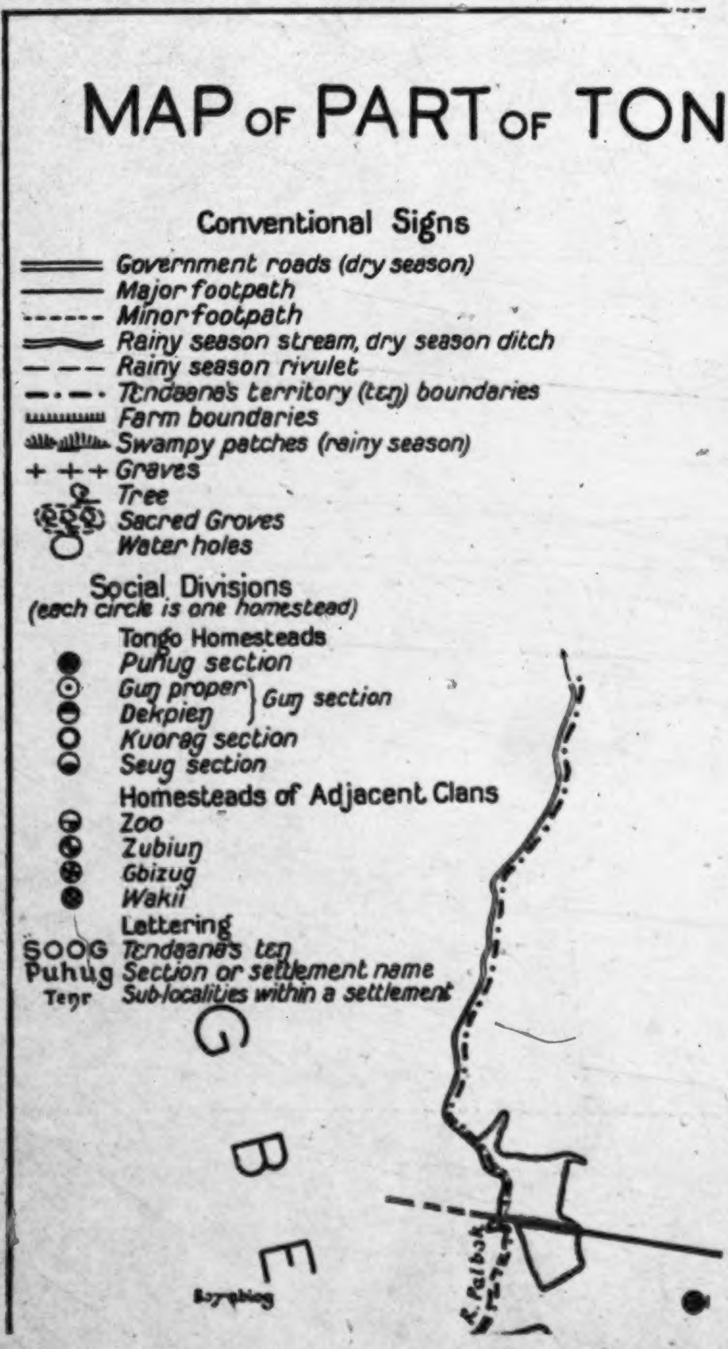
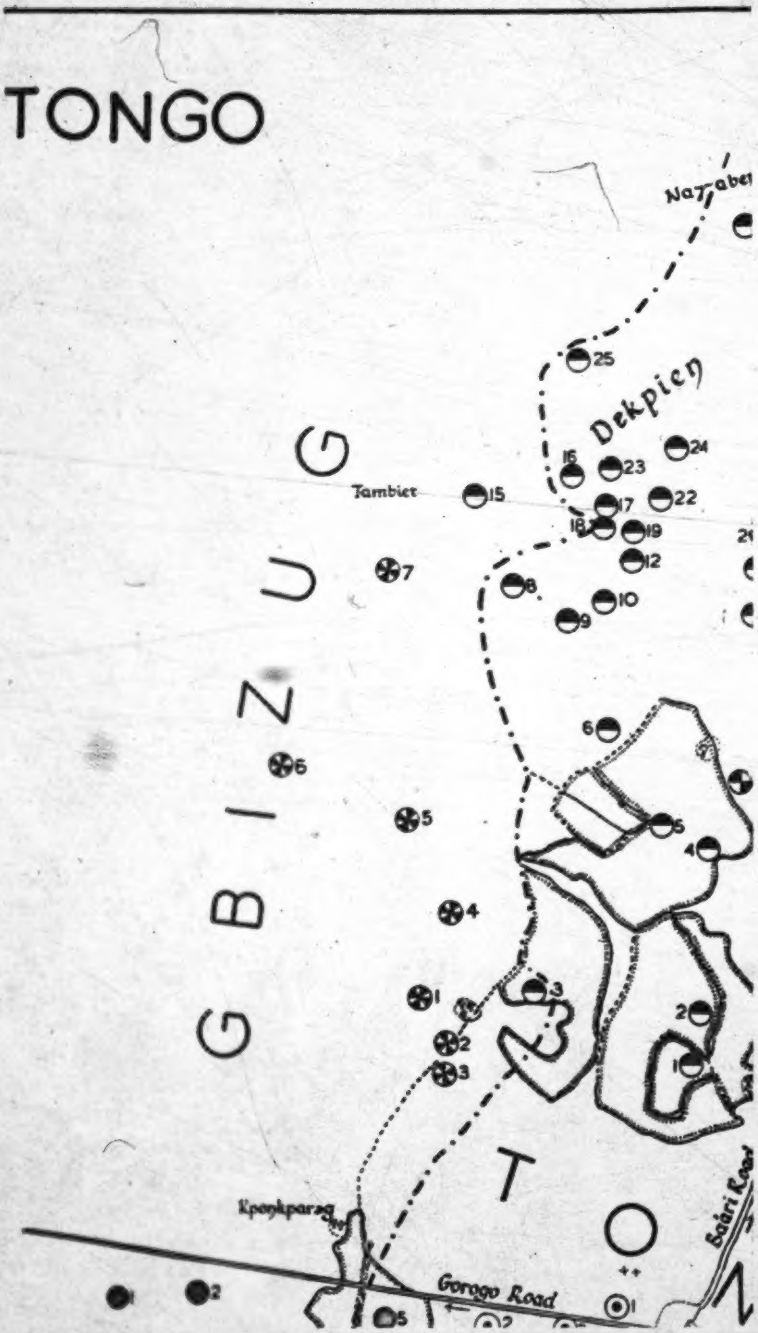
621
487
●778
131
764
133
361


MAP OF PART OF TON
Conventional Signs
Government roads (dry season)
Major footpath
Minor footpath
Rainy season stream, dry season ditch
Rainy season rivulet
Tɛndaana's territory (tɛŋ) boundaries
Farm boundaries
Swampy patches (rainy season)
+ + + Graves
Tree
Sacred Groves
Water holes
Social Divisions
(each circle is one homestead)
Tongo Homesteads
● Puhug section
⊙ Guŋ proper
Dekpieŋ
Guŋ section
○ Kuoreg section
Seug section
Homesteads of Adjacent Clans
Zoo
Zubiuŋ
Gbizug
Wakii
Lettering
SOOG Tɛndaana's tɛŋ
Puhug Section or settlement name
Tɛŋr Sub-localities within a settlement
G
B
E
Boyɛbiog
R. Palbok

[End-map (A)]

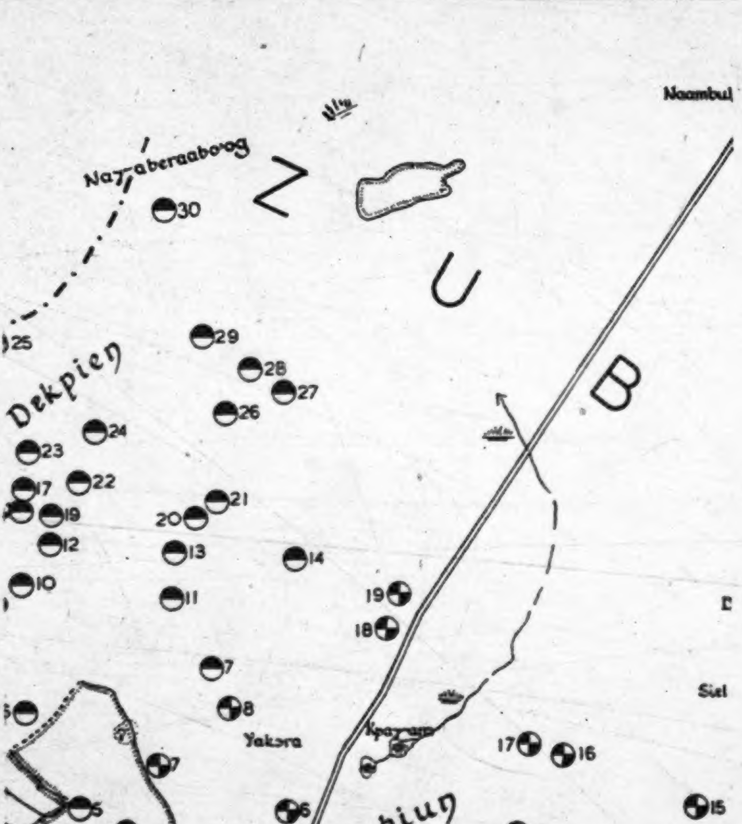
621
487
778
131
764
133
361


TONGO
Nayabei
Dekpien
Tambiet
GBIZUG
TO
Z
Kpankparag
Gorogo Road
Sakari Road
25
24
23
22
16
15
17
18
19
21
12
7
8
10
9
6
6
5
5
4
4
3
1
2
3
2
1
1
2
5
1
2

[End-MAP (B)]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

621
487
● 778
131
764
133
361


Naambul
Naŋaberaabo'og
Z
U
B
Dekpieŋ
Zubiuŋ
Yakɔra
Kpaŋaŋ
Laati
Kpaŋara
Yaŋar
Yaparas
Siel
E
Seug
Boári Road
Yamɔlɔa Road
N
1
2
3
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[End-map (C)]

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● 778
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764
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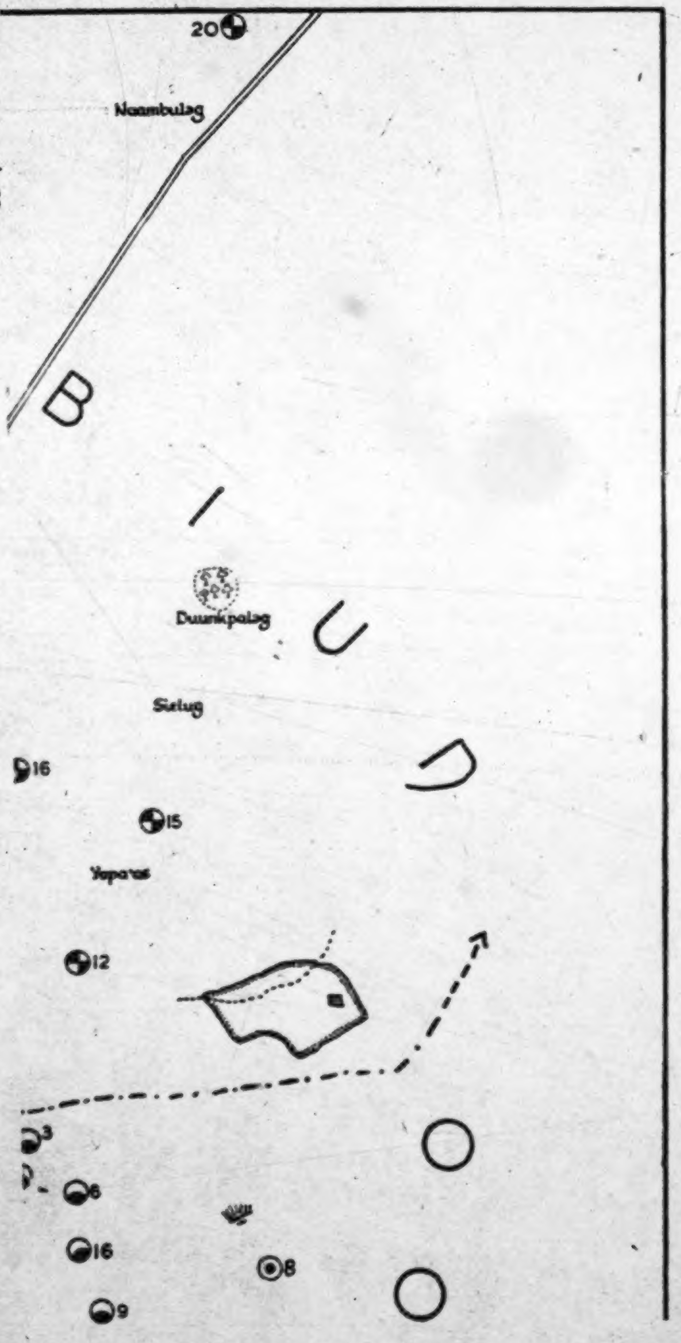
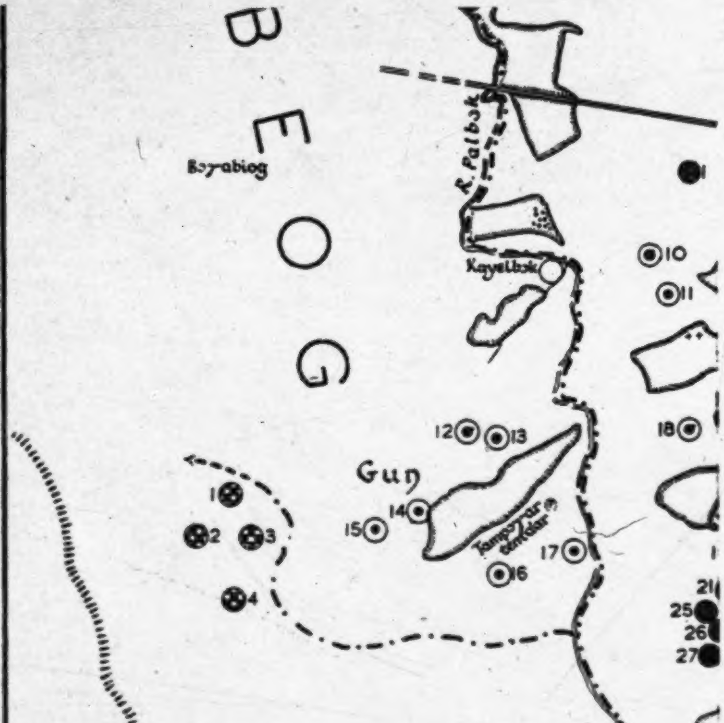

20
Naambulag
B
I
Duunkpalag
U
Sielug
D
16
15
Yaparas
12
3
6
16
8
9

[End-MAP (D)]

621
487
●778
131
764
133
361


BEOG
Bɔɣ-abiog
R. Palbɔk
Kayəlbɔk
Guŋ
Tampɔrəs ... tɛndaa
WAKII
Tong Hills
1
2
3
4
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SI

The map includes the whole territorial extent of Tongo proper (*Tɔŋ-Na*
boundaries. It shows *all* the homesteads of Puhug section and Guŋ proper
homesteads on the outskirts of the other sections (i.e. in Kuorəg, Seug, and
The map also shows *all* the homesteads of Gbizug and of the Yakɔra se

[End-Map(E)]

621
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764
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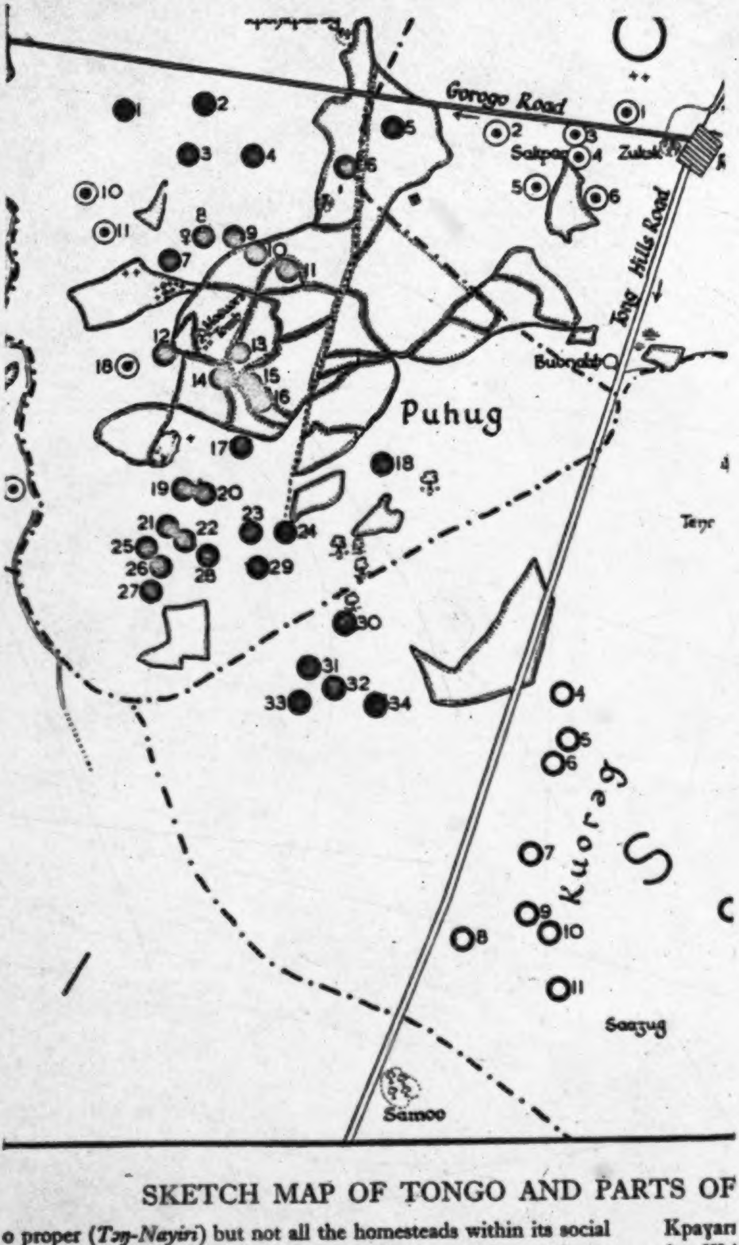
Gorogo Road
Saltpar
Zuluk
Tong Hills Road
Bubnab
Puhug
Kuorəg
Tenr
Saazug
Samoo
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
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34

SKETCH MAP OF TONGO AND PARTS OF

o proper (*Tɔŋ-Nayiri*) but not all the homesteads within its social
n and Guŋ proper (*Guŋ* on the map) but leaves out about a dozen
Kuorəg, Seug, and Dekpieŋ).
d of the Yakora section of Zubiuŋ. It shows most of the Zubiuŋ-

Kpayar
few Wal
The l
covering

[End-MAP (F)]

621
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778
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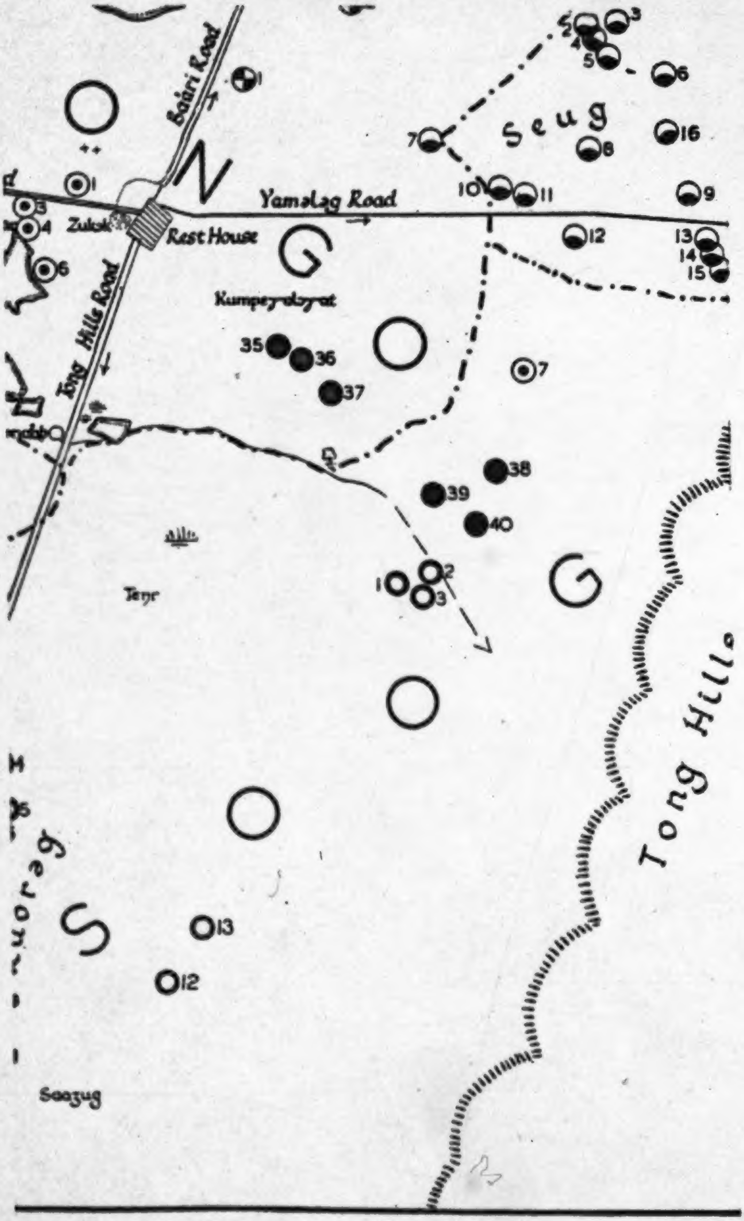
764
133
361


Bairi Road
N
1
1
3
4
6
Zulok
Rest House
Yamalag Road
Seug
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
G
Kumpeyolayat
Tong Hills Road
35
36
37
7
38
39
40
1
2
3
G
Teŋr
Tong Hills
S
Gorogo
13
12
Saazug

PARTS OF ADJACENT SETTLEMENTS

aal Kpayara yayar homesteads, leaving out two or three on the outskirts,
en few Wakii and Zoo homesteads.

The Farm Boundaries shown indicate the situation of only a small
ŋ- covering the map with crosses, only a few of the founding ancestors' gı

[End-MAP (G)]

621
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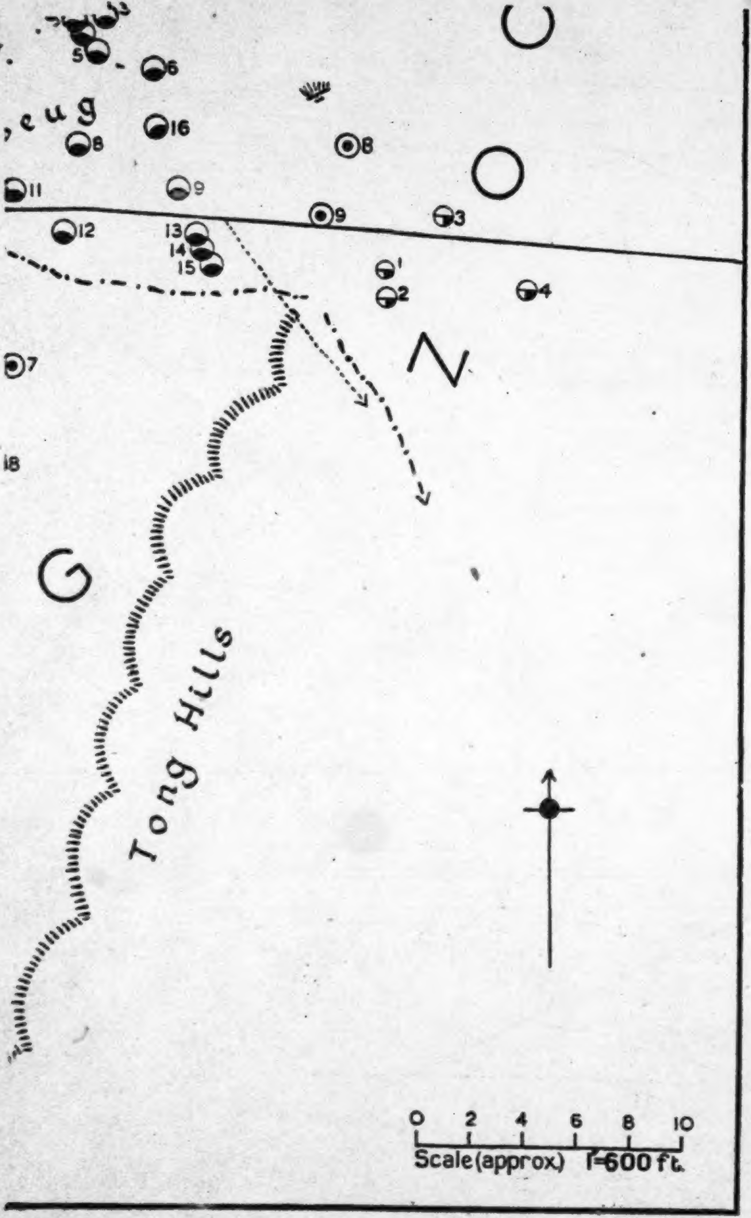
778
131, cug
764
133
361


5
6
16
8
8
11
9
9
3
12
13
14
15
1
2
4
7
N
18
G
Tong Hills
0 2 4 6 8 10
Scale (approx) 1"=600 ft.

ITS

r three on the outskirts, but no Zubiuŋ-Yapaas homesteads. It shows only a

situation of only a small selection of Tongo home farms. Similarly, to avoid h founding ancestors' graves have been marked.

[End-MAP (H)]

613 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also *ipso facto* an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differen- 769 tiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult 778 of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine (*bɔɣar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a composite clan has its lineage *bɔɣar*, distinguishing it from the other segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se* by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors. The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔɣar* known as an External *Bɔɣar*. An External *Bɔɣar* is usually a sacred grove, or a shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

771 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult 794 of the External *Bɔɣar* is another important factor of cohesion and 182 equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It repre- 769 sents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not associated in the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, collaborate in the rites of the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally [778] in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social relations in terms of the External *Bɔɣar* cult, and yet a third field of corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity. Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all, moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and the tɛndaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

592

over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities 769 in their lifetime.

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's 592 father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is conse- crated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, 783 and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who 778 formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tendaana under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebees*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them.

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the 592 elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They 181 represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another.

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic 592 descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and 571 the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Taləŋ than of the modern Englishman to say 592 that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their home- 361 steads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

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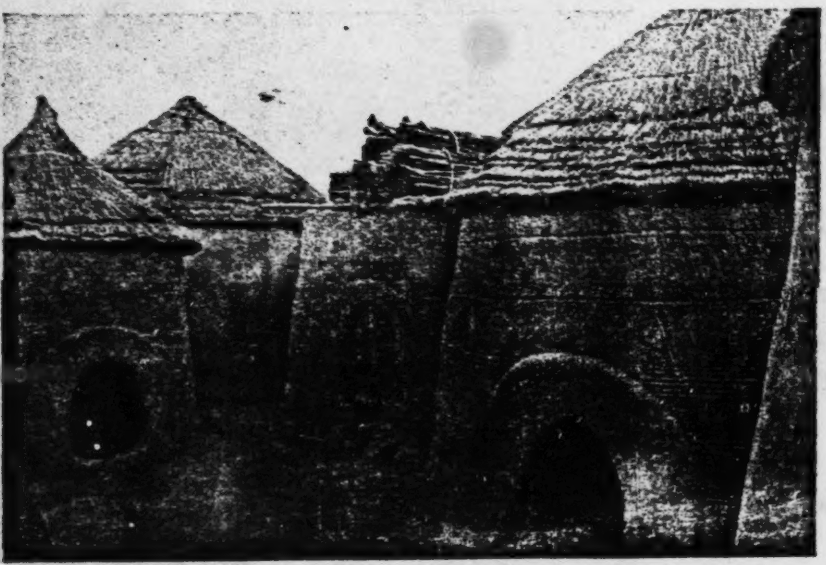
[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

PLATE 3



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343
531

a. Interior of a woman's *Dug*. The rooms from right to left are: a store-room (*Da'ŋboog*), a dry season kitchen (*Da'aŋ*), and a small *Dakir* for the woman's young son and daughter-in-law. The woman's own sleeping-room (*Dakir*) is farther to the right, not visible. Note how clean and bare the *Dɛndɔŋo* is and note, also, the bundles of dry guinea-corn stalks on top of the open kitchen. These have been saved for fuel in the rainy season

342
778

b. The homestead of a maximal lineage head, the Gbizug Tɛndaana. Note the ancestor shrines in front of the gateway (X)

[facing p. 48]

sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When 592
his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every 341
morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for
stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or [778
two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in
the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the 192]
alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something
untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is
needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the 341
cost in time and labour is great. *For this is a taboo* (*kihər*) *of the* 778
Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore
obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu
all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth
shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout.
This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many
details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and 341
condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and 554
experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Gəlibdaana of
Tɛnzugu and the Yikpemdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular 592
room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White
Fathers' Mission at Boləga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom,
and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious,
upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly
dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate
and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became
established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious
innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance.
The Təŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy
men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration,
but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not
require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are
built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door
fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very
hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with
one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad
a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been
in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. 592
A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or 356
lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense
relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing
like Yɛlnaar of Təŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his
neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

[facing p. 49]

PLATE 4

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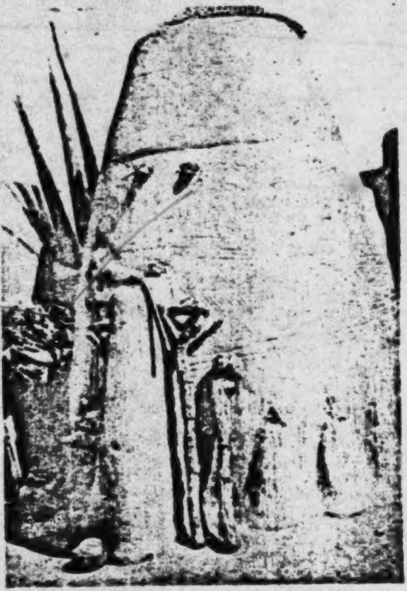

a. The central granary in the homestead of an elder. Note the array of ancestor shrines on the granary. The granary is about 10 ft. high and 5 ft. in diameter at the base

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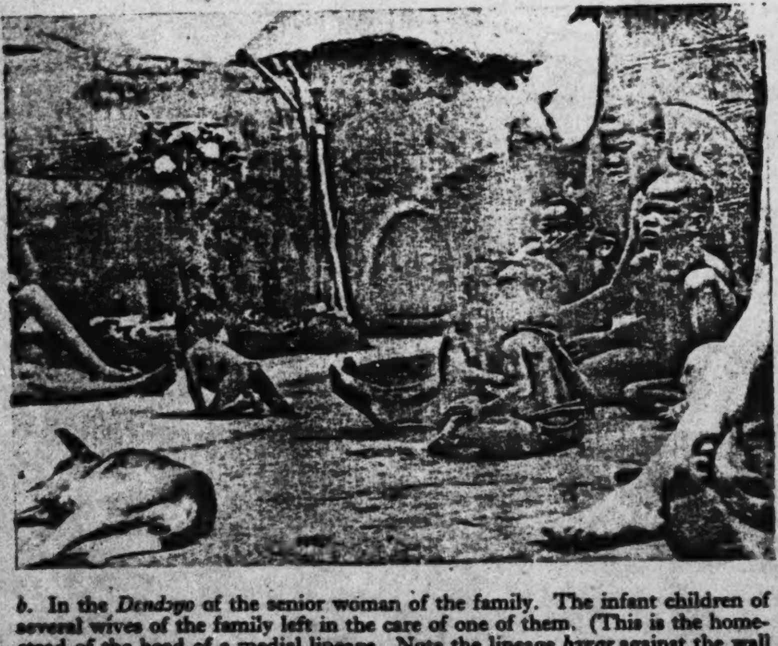

b. In the *Dendɔgo* of the senior woman of the family. The infant children of several wives of the family left in the care of one of them. (This is the homestead of the head of a medial lineage. Note the lineage *bɔyar* against the wall on the left, part of it supported on a tree-stump and part on the floor in shallow pottery dishes)

592 356 ashamed of it and exert himself to the utmost to have it repaired. But a poor man who has the energy and can himself build and thatch, or has a son or sons skilled in these crafts, will generally keep his homestead in a satisfactory condition. On the other hand, even men who own cattle and sheep are apt to wait until the thatch is rotted through and the walls collapse before undertaking essential repairs. The ingrained thrift of the natives, fostered by their narrow margin of sufficiency in food-supplies, induces them often to submit to discomfort which would tax less hardy folk to breaking-point rather than expend food and other resources to alleviate it.

356 Indoors, Tale homesteads are usually surprisingly tidy. A good housewife sees that her quarters are swept every morning. Litter indoors is a sign that the mistress of those rooms is a lazy or a sick woman, or one too harassed by family cares or poverty to look after her home properly. A good housewife has her floors regravelled and beaten almost every year to keep them hard and smooth.

592 But individual idiosyncrasies do not affect the layout of a homestead; for apart from minor variations this depends wholly on the constitution of the domestic unit. The layout of a homestead is an index to the structure of the domestic family occupying it.

The simplest domestic and procreative unit is the elementary family—a man, his wife, and their young children—occupying their own homestead. Often the man's mother (*ma*), either his own mother (*ma dɔɣarug*—the mother [of] bearing), or a surviving co-wife (*nentaa*) of his mother lives with him. The whole group constitutes one household, that is, a single economic unit all the members of which are mutually dependent on one another for the production of their common food-supply and the satisfaction of most other wants. Essentially this is a matter of pooling labour and skill, of utilizing land in common, of drawing on the food, livestock, and to some extent monetary resources built up by joint effort, for the benefit of any member of the unit, and of mutual assistance from any private resources that the members may have.

592 351 778 A good example of a domestic family of this kind is that of Ɔndieso of Tɔŋ-Guŋ, a man in the late thirties whose homestead stands on the border of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ and Gbizug. Outside his homestead, 10 or 12 yards from the gateway, stands the usual shade tree. Ɔndieso's tree is also, like almost all shade trees, an ancestor shrine. Between it and the gateway is a bare space, with the midden heap (*tampɔɣar*) on one side and a large, round, flat-topped ancestor shrine built of pile on the other. It is the shrine of his late father's *Yin*. One or more ancestor shrines stand thus at the entrance to every homestead. '*Ɔn nso yirla*—it owns the house', the natives say, meaning by this a spiritual and not material ascendancy in the affairs of the family. It stands outside, at the entrance, as a spiritual sentry guarding the welfare of the house.

If the head of the house is still junior in status in the lineage hierarchy, 592
as Ɔndieso is, it will be the shrine dedicated to his father's Destiny 351
(*yin*), or it may be his father's divining (*bakologo*) shrine. The house is
still under the spiritual jurisdiction of Ɔndieso's dead father, though he 778
himself now owns it in the temporal sense. A man of greater social maturity, with grown children and higher lineage status, would very likely have his own *yin* or *bakologo* shrine at his gateway. His house is established; it is no longer the fulfilment of his father's destiny, as is the house of a young man, though it may still be known by his father's or grandfather's name. For as long as a homestead remains standing it is known by the name of the man who first built it.

A bird's-eye view would show a homestead as covering a roughly 592
circular or oval area (Figs. 2*a* and 2*b*). The space in front of the gateway
(*zanɔne*—at the gateway) belongs pre-eminently to the menfolk. The 593
public phases of funeral and mortuary ceremonies, which are corporate concerns of the lineage and are conducted by the men, take place there. When anything touching the rights, duties, or interests of the head of the family in his capacity as a member of a particular lineage calls for consultation with fellow members of the lineage, the *zanɔne* is the gathering place. It is the proper place for him to receive greetings, condolences, or congratulations, and to conduct formal negotiations in a matter such as the payment of bride-price owed to him or by him. In the dry season he often rests there, beneath the shade tree, during the sweltering afternoon, chatting with a friend or fondling an infant left in his charge while its mother is busy indoors. Women of the house come and go freely, and often sit or lounge about in front of the gateway; but when 'an affair of the men (*buraas yɛl*)' is in progress they keep away.

The gateway (*zanɔr*) always faces west to south-west, 'where the sun 351
sets (*nintaŋ nluut*)'. This is a convention never broken by the Tallensi, though they have neither a naturalistic explanation nor a mystical rationalization for it, and it is not subject to mystical sanctions.[1]

The gateway is a V-shaped opening, about a foot wide at the base and 3 to 4 feet wide on top, between two round pillars (*meelɔŋ*) forming part of the wall of the house. Large irregularly spaced holes are made in these pillars for short logs to be inserted at night as cross-bars against which a heavy, hollow board (*beluŋ*), cut from a tree-trunk, or a bundle of poles can be leaned to close the gateway. Tallensi say that they build the gateway thus in order to bar it the more securely against the

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[1] As the rain-bearing winds blow from the south-east, and the tornadoes that [132]
begin and end the rainy season come from an easterly direction, it is possible that the placing of the doorway on the western side of the house is an adaptation to this feature of the climate. Anyone who has experienced the discomfort of a tornado whirling straight into a room, or of a heavy rain, in this region will appreciate the usefulness of placing the only entrance into a homestead on the lee side. But no native has ever given me this obvious explanation, though this may be due to inadequate inquiries on my part.

[Text is continued on p. 54.—Analyst]

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish
hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and
unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every
[622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief
of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining
the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the
privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its
members.

Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the
351 *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary
556 spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish
231 and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any.
[514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and
sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even
by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his
homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor
goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less
than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug
tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has
cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls
and guinea-fowls.

[361] From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out
and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the
342 homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through
the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*,
and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the
room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed
between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities
are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable possessions,
[556] his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth,
the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that
to the Talɔŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated
with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which
[782] wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the
principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain
their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers.
In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the
zɔŋ, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to
nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two
chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber
is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber,
communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey,
for the night.

342 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality.
778 It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

or implements there. This is due partly to the values associated with it, 342
partly to its use as a stall for livestock, and partly to its being an outside 778
room from which things might easily be stolen. A young man like
Ɔndieso has nothing but a couple of unimportant medicine horns stuck
into the thatch, a log to sit on, and a few odds and ends in his rather
tumbledown *zɔŋ*; for he makes little use of it. Yet the house would be
incomplete without a *zɔŋ*; for the *zɔŋ* is the sanctuary of the *yirdaana*'s
lineage-ancestor spirits. It is no profanation, in Tale eyes, to fold livestock
there. The mundane and the mystical are complementary in
Tale thought. Because the ancestor spirits abide there, a diviner holds
his consultations in his *zɔŋ*. Among the Talis the lineage-shrine (*bɔγar*)
always rests inside or against the outer wall of the lineage head's *zɔŋ*;
the Namoos generally keep such a shrine in an inside room or courtyard.
Even if the other rooms of his homestead are thatched, a tɛndaana's *zɔŋ*
must have a flat roof, because the spirits of his predecessors dwell there
and the lineage *bɔγar* and indoor shrines dedicated to the Earth are in it.
The investiture of a tɛndaana culminates in his ritual induction into the
zɔŋ, which is the final test of his acceptability to the ancestors and the
Earth. A chief has a special *zɔŋ* (*zanto'o*), which is not only the sanctuary [622]
of the spirits of former chiefs but his council-chamber and the room in
which he performs the rites that bless the community during the Great
Festivals.

To an elder of great seniority in the lineage hierarchy his *zɔŋ* has a 623
deeper value than to a man of junior status. A person's status is most 554
conspicuously proclaimed at his or her death, when his or her social 764
personality has to be cancelled by rite and ceremony. When a man of 778
subordinate status in the lineage, a man who is not yet the master of his
own house, or a young woman, dies, he or she is carried to the grave
through a hole broken in the wall of the homestead for this purpose.
But the head of a house, or an old woman, is carried out through a hole
specially cut in the outside wall of the *zɔŋ*. '*Ti Ƭalis tɛbhəm nla*—This
is the [great] honour of us, the Tallensi', an informant explained to me.
The conventional idea of one who deserves it is that of a man or woman
who leaves children and grandchildren to perpetuate his or her line and
to celebrate his or her decease. When his homestead is being rebuilt,
an old man often tells his sons, half-jocularly but with more than a hint
of earnestness: 'Hurry up with the roofing of the *zɔŋ*. I might die, and
I don't wish to be carried out through the gateway because the *zɔŋ* is
unfinished.' 'May Heaven permit me to attain to lying in the *zɔŋ*,
when I die, and forfend the breaking of the wall for me to be carried
out' a young man once exclaimed fervently when he was talking about
the funeral of a worthy elder. The last rites by which a dead person is
finally aggregated to the ancestor spirits take place in the *zɔŋ*.

The *zɔŋ*, the *sapak*, and the *zanɔr* stand for the ideological and jural 611
dominance of the male line of descent. Together, and in particular 778

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
778 of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes
his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the
zɔŋ of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors,
is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr*
of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11
and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages
later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say,
transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery
she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*.
She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage
against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized
in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not
confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this
ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary
342 course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbɔg*) a
yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the
sapak. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and
6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One
suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more
numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more
smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with
a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
[351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a
Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the
domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters
and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the
smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and
guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this,
life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and
the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency
of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

she will become very discontented. A young wife sometimes runs off 342
to her father's home because she thinks she ought to have her own *dug* 593
and her husband has been dilatory about it; and she will refuse to return
until he convinces her of his intention to build her *dug* immediately.
The observance of this rule is an essential element in the structure of the
domestic family. It is indispensable for the satisfactory working of the
domestic economy and for the mutual adjustment of person to person.
A wife's separate quarters stand for her relative autonomy as wife,
mother and housekeeper, *vis-à-vis* the other women of the family.

As the head of the house is *yirdaana*, master of the house, so the senior
woman of the house—his mother, or senior wife—is the *dugdaana*, the
mistress of the rooms. Every woman is the *dugdaana* of her own apartments,
but the mistress of the principal *dug* is the *dugdaana* of the whole
house.

In a polygynous family, or what might be called a multicellular family, 595
the senior *dugdaana* has more authority in domestic affairs, and more
esteem in the eyes of the public than the other women of the household
have. Whether she is the *yirdaana*'s mother or his senior wife, she is
the central pillar of his domestic establishment, honorifically more than
actively in the case of the former, actively as well as honorifically in
the case of the latter.

One sign of this is that most of the ancestor and medicine shrines that 778
are kept indoors rest in the *dɛndɔŋo* and rooms of the senior woman.
They include a man's personal shrines, as well as those of which he is 595
custodian as head of a lineage segment. Sacrifice is offered to these
shrines in this *dɛndɔŋo*, the women and children of the family often
taking part. A man's ancestors keep watch and ward both indoors and
out over the things, the place, and the people most precious to him.

When a person dies he or she must not only be gathered to the 775
ancestors, but must subsequently be ritually brought back, as a spirit, 769
into the living quarters, the veritable home. The expression '*Kpeehu la
dugni*—bring him [her] into the *dug*', used for this as well as the customary
rites, make this clear.

The intimate domestic life of a family goes on mainly in the *dɛndɔŋo*. 592
Meals are often cooked and always eaten there. Food is never cooked
outside the homestead except for ritual or ceremonial purposes. A
woman does much of her domestic work in her *dɛndɔŋo*. Her babies
learn to crawl and to take their first steps there. She entertains guests
and relatives, and receives her daughter's suitors there. When the crops
are harvested they are spread out to dry in the *dɛndɔŋo* before being
stored. A man often sits about in his wife's *dɛndɔŋo* when he has a
leisurely manual task in hand. Youths and girls come to dance there
when an elderly person's funeral is celebrated. And on pleasant nights,
after a satisfying meal, men, women, and children sit there conversing
or gossiping or asking riddles.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the ancestors. 684 613 837 577

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrɔg samɔr*)' by seducing the wife of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets a chance of doing so. 837 613 627 577

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*daɣɔt*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔɣambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔɣar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife. [778]

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *haa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when 581 765 834

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

PLATE 8

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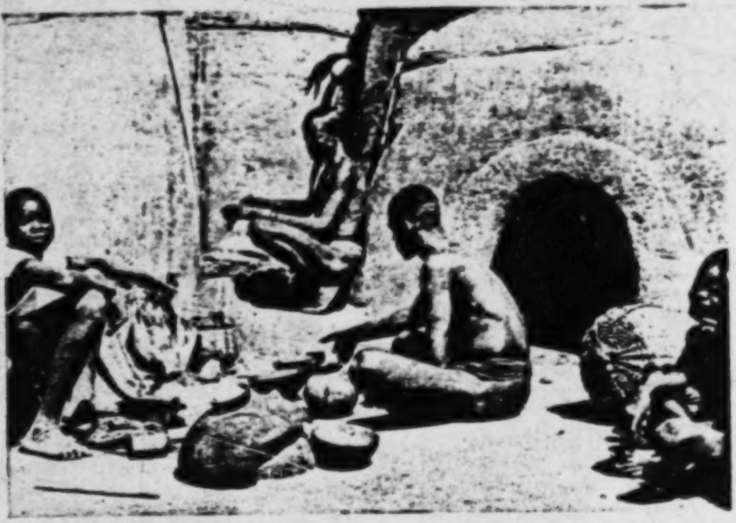

a. A domestic sacrifice of fowls, guinea-fowls, and beer. The head of the joint family is addressing the shrine, which occupies a recess in his senior wife's *Dug*

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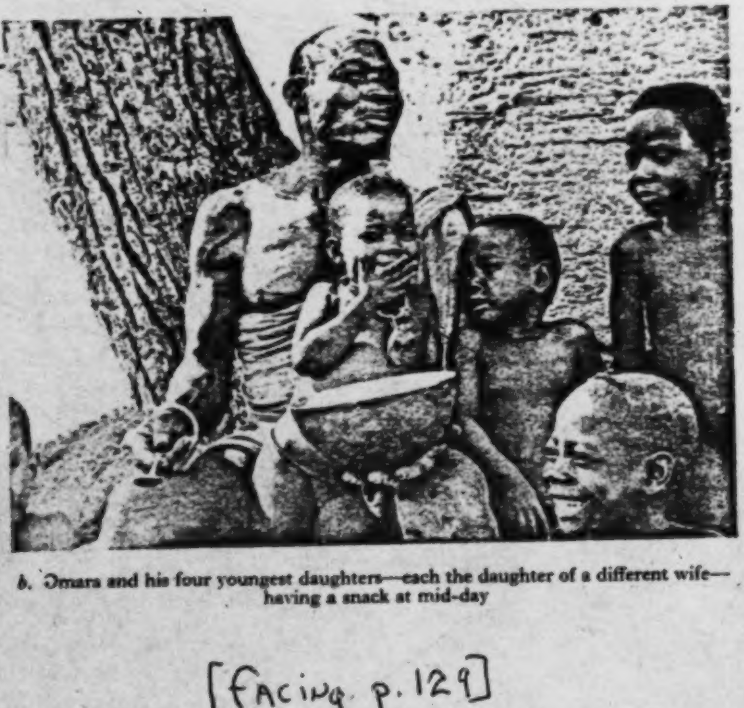

b. Omara and his four youngest daughters—each the daughter of a different wife—having a snack at mid-day

[facing p. 129]

613 622 554 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed, some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔya na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

●778 554 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔue*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps [888] the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

601 613 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 554 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

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[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

But a man's most important *Yin* is that with which certain of his ancestors are associated. This too may come to him in childhood, though it does so more commonly in early manhood. Usually it manifests itself to him through an accident or a coincidence. Thus a young man falls ill shortly after he has bought a new hoe or killed an animal in the hunt. The diviners then declare that his illness was caused by his *Yin*; his ancestors so and so, and so and so, are thus revealing themselves as his *Yin*; the hoe or the animal is their vehicle; they brought illness on him because they demand that he should accept them as his *Yin* and sacrifice to them. The young man will then build a shrine dedicated to these ancestors placing the skull of the animal or the blade of the hoe on it, and will henceforth sacrifice to them on this shrine. This is his first and most intimately personal shrine, and it plays an enormous part in his life thereafter. As far as his own personal affairs are concerned, it will always be his most important link with his ancestors. It is through his *Yin* that they exercise the most direct influence upon his life and that he seeks to maintain their goodwill specifically for himself. When he becomes head of his joint family he will entrust most of the children born into the family to his *Yin* as spirit guardian. Every important step in his social development will be registered in his relations with his *Yin*; it may be by a special sacrifice, or it may be by a change in the location of the shrine, or the addition of an ancestor to the group of ancestors who have revealed themselves (*naam*) as his *Yin*. A man's *Yin* is both the chart of his life and the helm with which he steers his way through life. 777 778

All the ancestors and ancestresses of a man have a potential mystical relevance for his life, but they have the same potential relevance for any of their descendants. His *Yin* ancestors, on the other hand, are concerned exclusively with him, for his own sake, so to speak. They form a particular combination, usually of very recent forebears, who do not belong together in just that grouping for any other of their descendants. They may be patrilateral or matrilateral ancestors or a combination of both lines. Thus a man might have as his *Yin* ancestors his father, father's father, father's father's mother, and her father, while his brother has their father, father's mother, and father's mother's father as his *Yin* ancestors. Of another pair of brothers, one's *Yin* ancestors may be their mother's father, maternal grandfather, and maternal great-grandfather; and the other's might be their mother's mother, her father, and his father (see Fig. 5, page 230). 777 769

Thus when a Talɔŋ says that his *Yin* and his eldest son's *Yin* are mutually dangerous, he is saying that his son's successful growth and development into and through manhood is a threat to his authority and primacy in the family, a symbol of the inevitable decline in his physical and mental power that comes with age, and a warning that he must in due course make way for the next generation; and yet it is also the 593 578 777

the widow (or widower) during a funeral, or assist in the rites of purifying 593 the widow or share her meals. Tallensi assert that a breach of this 608 rule is impossible as no man or woman who had not had the experience would take charge of a widow. It is a taboo (*kihər*), and anyone who [778] ● infringed it would die. Again, owners of diviners' shrines (*bakologo* shrines—the diviner is called *baɣa*) are identified in certain situations, though they do not form a corporate body of any sort. Thus when a new diviner's shrine is being set up for a man certain portions of the beer used in the rites can be drunk only by men who already have such shrines, and it is they who carry out the final rites by which the actual power of divination is conferred on him. Similarly it is only men who [783] have themselves undergone the experience and the treatment who may assist in the ritual of purifying a homicide or a man who has slain a big game animal such as a bush cow. The list of illustrations could be extended, but this will suffice to show how deeply rooted the idea is. It is, however, only a determinant of individual conduct and sentiment, giving rise to *ad hoc* co-operation in certain situations, and not a principle of association in corporate units.

Factors modifying the Sibling Bond

The solidarity and social equivalence of siblings are conditioned by a 593 number of factors. Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of 613 age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure. Siblingship does not cancel out the uniqueness of the individual, as symbolized in the notion of the *Yin*, and socially crystallized in the precise differentiation of the lineage segment which he or she founds. This factor, with its counterpart in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with the years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and, consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin. Thus the sibling relationship, while itself an important constitutive factor of the lineage structure, is reciprocally moulded by that structure. The relationship of brothers among the Tallensi might very well have been different from what it is if their social organization provided for the continuous merging of collateral lines of descent in lineal lines,[1] so that lineage branches springing from brothers were not specifically recognized, but only the inclusive trunk-line deriving from a distant ancestor.

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[1] This appears to be the case with the Nuer at higher levels of lineage structure (cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, 1940, ch. v) and among some Southern Bantu tribes, such as the Zulu (cf. E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, 1936).

PLATE 16

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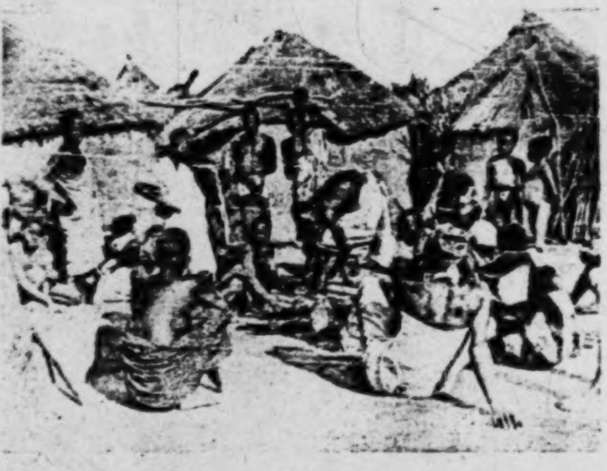

a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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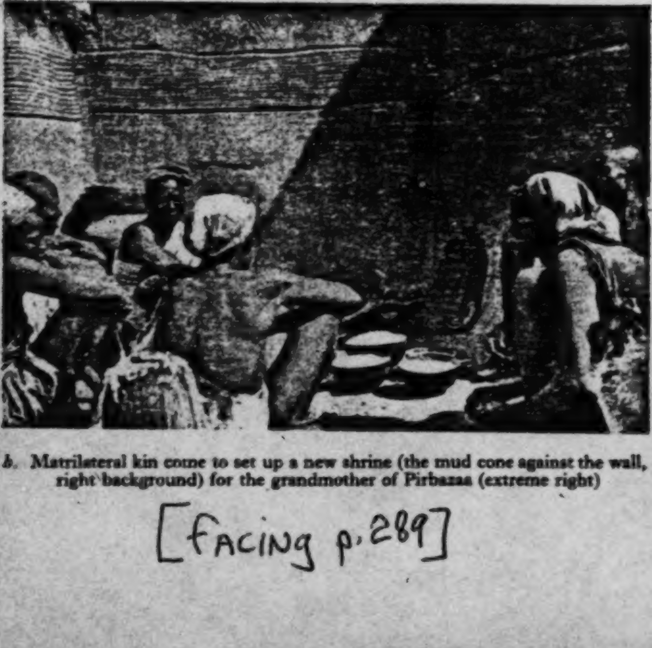

b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[facing p. 289]

604 *pɔɣasama.* As has been previously stated, he is a clansman of the
bridegroom who is also an *ahəŋ* of the bride's clan—*ahəŋ* being under-
584 stood to include any sororal kinsman of whatever degree. The reason for this choice was well put by a group of elders with whom I discussed this subject. 'He (the *pɔɣasama*) is our (the bridegroom's clan's) person and is also their (the bride's clan's) person. He may not deceive us nor may he deceive them. If he deceives either of us the ancestors will not permit it.'[1]

604 The *pɔɣasama* appears in every transaction between the two parties to a marriage. He takes the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) to the bride's
584 father. When, later, the bride's father sends messengers (*duondɛm*) to
demand the bride-price, the *pɔɣasama* conducts them to the person
764 responsible for paying the bride-price and assists in the negotiations. Many a marriage is saved by the skill and patience of a *pɔɣasama* in persuading the bride's people and the bridegroom's people to a compromise on the question of bride-price payments. He must be present whenever bride-price payments are made; for if, at any subsequent time, a dispute should arise as to what was paid, his word is final. The *pɔɣasama* also acts as intermediary in all the formal claims, services, and duties that arise between the parties as a result of the marriage. He is the messenger who goes to announce the birth of her first child to the bride's parents. If a woman's father or mother dies, the *pɔɣasama* conducts the party sent by her husband with his obligatory food contributions to the funeral, and he hands these contributions over to his 'mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*)'. In this and similar jural or ritual relations between the husband's people and the wife's people, the *pɔɣasama* has to be present both as a witness of the transaction and as a mediator, in case the recipients object to the quantity or quality of the food contributions or the payments offered. For though the obligations of the parties in such situations are clearly defined by custom, there is room for much quibbling over details. Custom declares that a man must kill and cook a goat or a sheep to send to his father-in-law's funeral at a certain stage. But one man will, out of generosity or as a special sign of respect, kill a large goat, whereas another will be mean and choose a puny animal. I have seen violent arguments arise between a son-in-law's messengers and his late father-in-law's lineage over a point of this sort. The mere presence of the *pɔɣasama*, even if he is but a young lad, has a conciliatory influence. As will be remembered, the *pɔɣasama*'s role does not come to an end on his death. It passes to his brothers and sons, like any other attribute of his social personality.

604 There are other situations in which an *ahəŋ* acts as intermediary
between the members of his paternal clan and his matrilateral clan. For
778 example, the setting up of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine for a man is done

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[1] *'U a tam nit ha le a bam nit; u ku too m-paah tam, u ku too m-paah bam-mi; ɔn paah ti sɔ kpiinam la ku sayi.'*

for him by the lineage of the ancestress who has demanded the erection 604
of the shrine. The diviner-to-be is himself a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' or
'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' of the men who come to perform the ceremony of 778
establishing the shrine. But in addition, a member of his clan who is
also an *ahəŋ* of the visitors' clan is deputed to act as intermediary. He
goes out to meet the visitors when they approach and escorts them to
the homestead of the diviner-to-be; and he acts as spokesman for the
latter throughout the ceremony. Thus he formally 'shows' (*paal*) the
visitors the beer and the fowls and the goat that have been provided for
the ceremony and acts as mediator if there is a disagreement about the
amount or quality of these provisions. In the ritual situations that make
up the ceremony the visitors sit together in a group and the diviner-to-be
and his clansmen sit together in a group. Between the two groups sits
the selected *ahəŋ*. As is customary in all such situations, the two parties
do not address one another directly. They address the intermediary,
who 'passes on (*zaŋ ti*)' what was said to the other party.

Similarly, if a dispute occurs between segments of different clans, for 604
instance over the abduction of a wife, the injured group might send one
of their members who is a 'sister's son' of the abductor's clan, with a 627
message of protest and a demand for the return of the wife. An *ahəŋ* is
the appropriate person to act as go-between in negotiations between
different clans. In the system of clanship ties, it will be remembered,
intercalary lineages are sometimes credited with being the agnates of
one clan and the 'sister's sons' of the other.[1]

As has been suggested, Tallensi maintain that an *ahəŋ* acting as an 604
intermediary in inter-clan transactions is bound to be equally faithful to
both parties. This does not mean that an *ahəŋ* is always equally loyal in 613
sentiment to both his patrilineal and his matrilateral—especially his
immediate maternal—kin. Tallensi say that when there is a clash of
interests a man will always side with his patrilineal kin while endeavouring,
if possible, to refrain from bringing harm on his maternal kin. The
behaviour of an *ahəŋ* in war between his and his mother's brother's clan
is a case in point.

But there is a belief which suggests that the loyalty of an *ahəŋ* to his 604
mother's brother's lineage may, in some circumstances, outweigh his
loyalty to his own clan. In the old days of warfare, it is said, if a man 613
was killed in fighting, there was a way of taking vengeance on the slayer
by means of sorcery. The arrow that slew the victim was extracted, and 754
the clan and lineage of the slayer were ascertained. This was easy.
Every inner or medial lineage of a clan usually has a distinctive mark
(*daan*). One lineage, for example, may tie a tiny guinea-fowl feather at
the base of the arrow-head, another may use a particular species of
grass. By inquiring from their sororal kinsmen in the enemy clan the
victim's lineage brothers soon discovered which lineage the slayer

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 44 ff.

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604 769 [764] and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance. It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are informed, distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

604 782 An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bɔɣar*, there are always *ahəs* present; perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

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● [778 769] [1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

604 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The
764 funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the
571 beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally
571 taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the
602 lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of
782 the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

793 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan
602 kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'
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and 'grandsons'. There is another, and in some ways more important, 604
aspect. Every man sacrifices to both his agnatic ancestors and his
maternal ancestors, as we have seen. He has shrines consecrated to 769
ancestors of both lines in his homestead. The ancestors who constitute
his *Yin* are very often matrilateral or include matrilateral ancestors. 778
Indeed this is so common that a *Yin* that has no matrilateral ancestors is somewhat unusual. Knowing the significance of the *Yin* shrine as a symbol of a man's individuality, we can see why his connexion with his mother's side is apt to be stressed in it. Again, every man erects a shrine to his mother when she dies, which in the course of time may develop into a very important shrine for him. There are other shrines, too, which are consecrated to matrilateral ancestors. The most important of these are divining shrines (*bakologo*) and *bɔɣar* shrines.

A *bakologo* shrine is, by definition, a 'female (*bumpɔk*)' shrine. That 778
is to say, the ancestors associated with it come, by definition, from a
matrilateral lineage of the diviner; and the dominant figure among them 787
is usually a woman, a 'mother'. It is a point of striking significance in
the social psychology of the Tallensi that the spirits through whom a 769
diviner makes contact with the ancestors of his clients should constitute a 'feminine' group,[1] the more so when the character of the *bakologo* complex is understood. The *bakologo*[2] is the very incarnation of the vindictive and jealous aspect of the ancestors. It persecutes the man in whose life it has intervened relentlessly, until he finally submits and 'accepts (*die*)' it—that is, until he undertakes to set up a shrine to the *bakologo* spirits in his own home so that he can sacrifice to them regularly. He then promises, also, to use the shrine for divining. But not every man has a talent for divining, so most men simply have the shrine and do not use it for divination. It is interesting to note that nine out of ten men over 40 have *bakologo* shrines. Every man, and not only those who have suffered exceptional misfortunes, is directed by the religious system of the Tallensi to project his deeper feelings of guilt and insecurity largely on to the mother image embodied in the *bakologo* complex. Usually, also, a man does not immediately yield to the demands of the *bakologo* ancestors. He temporizes, evades, and resists, perhaps for years, until he is at last forced to submit and accept the *bakologo*. This 'cools (*maa*)' or subdues the *bakologo*. By giving the spirits a home in his own house, where they can be cared for, their victim transforms their hate into love. They may still inflict misfortunes on him, but he has a means of placating them since he can sacrifice to the shrine. In return for the sacrifices they

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[1] Cf. what was said on p. 235 above about the cruelty attributed to female ancestor spirits.

[2] As with all religious terms of this class among the Tallensi, *bakologo* is used both for the shrine (*baɣər*)—the tall, conical object built of mud and smeared with the dried blood and feathers of sacrifices—and for the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated. It signifies also the whole configuration of ideas and beliefs associated with the shrine.

778 will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And
787 if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his bene-
769 factress. The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing menace.

613 As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man
it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the domi-
769 nant ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo*
778 ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grand-
father, and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the
791 group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔɣar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahəŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔɣar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔɣar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔɣar* is tangibly symbolized.

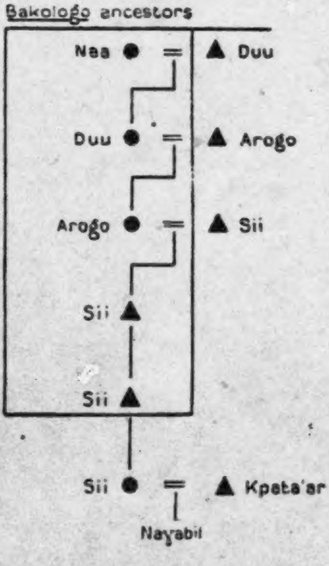
Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahəŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahəs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

769 The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple
combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's
602 father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

lineage, and thence he was escorted to his maternal grandfather's mother's mother's brother's lineage. At each place he had to sacrifice a fowl and a guinea-fowl to the lineage *bɔɣar*. Naɣabil's *bakologo* ancestors were his mother's father, *his* father, *his* mother, *her* mother, and *her* mother. Zɔŋ knew of the ancestress who was the dominant figure in his *bakologo*. He had been to Gbambee to attend sacrifices to the lineage *bɔɣar* as an *ahəŋ*, both as a child, accompanying his father, and as an adult by himself. Naabdiya and Naɣabil had never heard of the ancestresses who dominated their *bakologo* shrines before they revealed themselves as *bakologo* ancestresses. They had never before been to the natal clan settlements of these women; and once their divining shrines were established would probably never go there again. 769 602

One reason for this difference is spatial proximity. Zɔŋ lives about three miles from the Gbambee Tɛndaana; the matrilateral kinsmen who set up Naabdiya's shrine live about twelve miles from him, and those who set up Naɣabil's shrine nearly fifteen miles from his clan settlement. But more important is the genealogical distance involved. Zɔŋ is considered to be a fairly close *ahəŋ* of the Gbambee Tɛndaana, Naabdiya and Naɣabil count themselves distant 'grandsons' (*yaas*) of the matrilateral kinsmen who thus almost accidentally became socially relevant for them.[1]

Though matrilateral ancestors are particularly conspicuous in connexion with the *bakologo* complex, they can be associated with many types of ancestor shrines. Hence few men pass through life without having at least one such experience as that of Naabdiya and Naɣabil. Tiezien, for instance, had a magnificent baobab tree outside the entrance to his homestead. It was a stalwart sapling when Tiezien was born and 602 769 778



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[1] Naɣabil is a Kpata'ar man, and the matrilateral kinsmen who came to set up his *bakologo* were not Tallensi but Mamprusi from beyond the White Volta. This is an interesting illustration of how extra-clan kinship in this part of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast cuts across 'tribal' and political boundaries. As the attached genealogy, showing Naɣabil's genealogical connexion with his *bakologo* ancestors and ancestresses, indicates, it is also a beautiful illustration of how matrilateral kinship 'travels' (*kyeŋ*) through intermarriage between adjacent clans. The result is that genealogical distance by matrilateral ties is closely correlated with socio-geographical distance, as in this instance.

602 could not have been less than 80 years old. This tree was the centre of
769 the communal life of the neighbourhood. It was, as every native would
automatically expect, also an important ancestor shrine. A few years after
778 it sprouted Tiezien's paternal grandfather discovered through a diviner
that his mother's father and *his* mother, a Pusunamoo woman, had
chosen the baobab as their shrine. The Pusunamoo woman's maximal
lineage consecrated it for Tiezien's grandfather. Thereafter sacrifices
were regularly offered on the tree. In due course Tiezien succeeded to
[164] the custody of this shrine. Then came the influenza epidemic of 1918.
Many people died at Kpata'ar, including members of Tiezien's inner
lineage and wives and children of the lineage. A diviner revealed that
these deaths were being inflicted by the Pusunamoo ancestress in retaliation for long neglect. She demanded that Tiezien should collect a large
number of fowls from all the members of his inner lineage and take them
to Pusunamoo to be sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* of her medial lineage
as an atonement. This was Tiezien's first and last contact with his
matrilateral kin at Pusunamoo up to 1936.

602 It is evident, from these examples, as has been previously suggested,
that the majority of a man's remote matrilateral kin are not socially
relevant for him. All, however, are potentially so and may become
so at some time or another; and when they do enter his field of social
relations it is chiefly in their ritual capacity.

602 We said that the most important ancestor shrines linking a man to a
matrilateral lineage are *bakologo* and *bɔɣar* shrines. Of the two the *bɔɣar*
778 shrine is, in fact, the more important. As we have shown in our earlier
769 book,[1] the ancestor cult of the Tallensi culminates in the conception and
cult of the *bɔɣar*. This notion and the cult that expresses it form the
centre of gravity of the lineage system. Hence it seems strange, at first
sight, to find that every *bɔɣar* must necessarily be derived from a matrilateral lineage. We can understand this, however, if we consider the
significance of the *bɔɣar* in the lineage system.

A *bɔɣar* is the shrine consecrated to the founding ancestor of a lineage
602 and his mother. It symbolizes the identity of that lineage and its dif-
778 ferentiation from other lineages of the same order within a more inclusive
769 lineage or within a clan. A lineage expands by a process of internal
segmentation and differentiation that follows the lines of cleavage in-
613 herent in the structure of the joint family.[2] The component segments
of a lineage are differentiated from one another primarily by reference
to their descent from different 'mothers'—that is different wives of their
common founding ancestor. But a woman does not sever her ties with
her lineage when she marries and becomes a mother; and in kinship
questions Tale thought is dominated by the lineage concept. Hence
Tallensi think of a lineage progenitrix not only as such-and-such a

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 137.

[2] Ibid. ch. xii.

named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such 602
a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a 778
maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of 769
the several 'mothers' of its segments.

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it re- 613
quires a *bɔɣar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔɣar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔɣar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔɣar* symbolizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔɣar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the signi- 602
ficance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. 613
According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by
divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The 766
physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person [761]
may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ninvoo*)'—that is a full social being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

602 he does not join his forefathers, he does not become an ancestor spirit.
613 This shows that it is not the fact of death that turns a person into an
766 ancestor spirit but the fact that, as Tallensi believe, he is summoned
(*buol*) by his ancestors and goes to join them.

Thus when a lineage progenitrix becomes an ancestor spirit, she does
769 so as the bearer of mystical powers and attributes that reside in the
613 collective body of her lineage ancestors, symbolized and made accessible
to man in their lineage *bɔɣar*. Looked at in this way, too, the *bɔɣar*
consecrated to her and her son must be an offshoot of her lineage *bɔɣar*.[1]

In addition, there is the obvious point that a segment of a lineage
● 778 cannot symbolize its distinctness by means of a *bɔɣar* derived from their
613 own lineage *bɔɣar*, which is the symbol of the genealogical and social
unity of the lineage, not of its internal differentiation. The lineage *bɔɣar*, as is evident, is the most esoteric symbol of the principle that runs right through Tale social structure, that social differentiation within the lineage framework springs from maternal origin. This principle operates in lineage structure;[2] and we have seen how, at the other end of the scale, it constitutes the springboard of individual differentiation in the structure of the joint family.[3] This is a further instance of the consistency of Tale social structure at all levels conferred upon it by the kinship system.

A new segment of a lineage begins to crystallize out as a recognized corporate unit in the time of its founding ancestor's grandsons. For it is not until then that the process of fission in the lineage has gone far enough to separate his grandchildren and his brothers' grandchildren into distinct nuclear lineages. Thus it is a man's grandson or great-grandson who sets up a *bɔɣar* consecrated to him and his mother. According to the idiom of Tale religious thought, the ancestor demands that a *bɔɣar* be set up for him and his mother. A day is appointed for the ceremony, and all the descendants of the progenitrix, through both males and females, are informed. In the morning or early afternoon the head of the new segment takes a fowl, a goat or sheep, and a pot of beer to the head of his grandmother's inner lineage, or in some clans, medial lineage. The men of that lineage assemble so that all of its branches are represented and the animals are sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* on behalf of the *ahəŋ*. Then the *bɔɣar* is 'scooped' for him, in the same way as was described in the case of the diviner's shrine. The *ahəŋ* goes straight

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[1] In theory, obviously, the only lineage *bɔɣar* that need not be derived from another *bɔɣar* is the *bɔɣar* of a maximal lineage. Actually most maximal lineage *bɔɣa* conform to the pattern we have described. The only truly sovereign *bɔɣa*—i.e. *bɔɣa* not derived from other *bɔɣa*—are the External *Bɔɣa* of the Talis and their congeners. And it is significant that the component maximal lineages of these clans generally have two *bɔɣa*, one the domestic representative of the External *Bɔɣar*, the other a distinctive *bɔɣar* derived from their founder's mother's lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

[2] Ibid., ch. xii.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. III.

778 613 home, where in the meantime the other members, both men and women, of the new segment and the 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the segment who have been able to come have gathered. The head of the new segment arrives, followed, as the Tallensi think, by the spirits of his grandmother's ancestors. He now performs the sacrifices by which the new *bɔɣar* is consecrated. He himself offers a sheep. All the other male members of the new segment bring a fowl each to be sacrificed on their behalf and *ahəs* and *yaas* all do so too. A large pot or earthenware dish, inside which the small pot containing the sediment 'scooped' from the grandmother's lineage *bɔɣar* pot is placed, forms the altar. Henceforth this will be the *bɔɣar* of the new lineage segment; and there will be a similar communion rite embracing all the descendants of the founding ancestor and his mother whenever the *bɔɣar* is inherited by a new lineage head.[1]

602 764 We have now considered the most important ritual services matrilateral kin render to their sororal kin. The ritual services rendered by sororal kin to matrilateral kin are, as might be expected, of far less consequence. In funeral ceremonies, for example, there are a number of rites in which it is necessary to have the participation of an *ahəŋ* of the deceased. The rite of cooking 'the porridge of sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', which has been previously mentioned, is typical of these rites; and it is typical of them, also, that anybody who can, by any stretch of the term, be described as *ahəŋ* can serve in them. All these rites express the fact that a person's death is of concern to his or her sororal kin as well as to his or her patrilineal kin, and affects the field of social relations of the former as well as that of the latter. Hence in all funeral rites a special portion of the meat, cooked food, and beer used is allocated to the 'sisters' children', whether few or many are present. Matrilateral and sororal kin do not, however, undergo mourning rites.

602 789 Apart from funerals, there are one or two other special ceremonies in which the services of an *ahəŋ* are needed. Thus in the ceremony of exorcising an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) an *ahəŋ* is required to perform the final act of sympathetic magic. This consists in collecting the magical paraphernalia used in the ceremony—all of which symbolize the wish that the evil Predestiny may depart and conceal itself for ever—and throwing them away in some barren spot. A 'sister's son' is called upon

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[1] There is a point of religious doctrine that cannot be fully discussed here but must be mentioned to avoid confusion. Every important ancestor shrine is a means of making a whole line of ancestors accessible to its possessor. Now the collective mystical power of a patrilineal line of ancestors reposes in the lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence every important shrine has to be linked up with the lineage *bɔɣar* of the dominant spirit to which it is consecrated. That is why when a *bakologo* is set up, the *bɔɣar* of the matrilateral lineage from which it is derived is 'scooped' for inclusion in the new shrine. Broadly speaking, the ritual validity of every ancestor shrine goes back to a *bɔɣar*. But the setting up of a new lineage *bɔɣar* is a very special ritual landmark.

596 of sleeping-rooms and kitchens (to be described later) distributed
342 roughly in a semicircle round an open space, 10 to 15 feet across, bounded on one side by a co-wife's quarters or a low partitioning wall. This little close (*dendɔŋo*) is the central place in the life of the family. Here it takes its meals in the dry season; here friends are received;
● [778] here most of the routine of family life goes on. A man's principal ancestor shrines are kept in his mother's or senior wife's *dendɔŋo*; and there he performs many of the frequently recurring rites of the ancestor cult. The women of a single household have adjacent quarters. Their husband's mother or the senior wife occupies the central quarters; junior wives or son's wives are on either side of her, forming altogether a rough circle or segment of a circle. A householder who is not also head of the compound has no room of his own. He keeps his private possessions in his senior wife's sleeping-room. Apart from this, it is the cardinal principle of family life that a man must divide his time, his affection, and his supplies of food with absolute impartiality between his wives.

343 Within the compound two other kinds of rooms are of special importance for our theme, the granaries and the grinding-rooms.
778 Every independent agricultural unit has its own granaries which are
784 said to belong to the head of the unit. His granary (*boor*) is a man's most private and personal possession. No woman may enter it, nor any man not directly authorized by the owner. Ritual prohibitions associated with it closely identify a man's granary with his social personality. As one informant put it, with a flash of insight, 'Your granary is like your soul'.

343 One or more grinding-rooms (*neer*) belongs to every well-differentiated household. These are discussed later.

The family structure thus outlined is the basis of a domestic
596 economy and of a configuration of moral, legal, religious, and personal
182 relationships which can best be described as a compromise between strong centralizing or integrating tendencies and powerful differentiating tendencies. In the domestic economy of food, our sole concern in this paper, every unit in the system is completely autonomous in some respects and dependent upon a more comprehensive unit in others. It is a fluctuating compromise, slowly changing. Births, deaths, marriages, and their social consequences, even the mere lapse

Plate II

●778
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A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

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Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

Whenever they build miniature houses, during the building season, 857
' shrines ' are added and, as in real life, each has his own. 524

Play with these shrines is woven into other play activities, and it 869
revolves around sacrifice. When a small boy goes out hunting for
fieldmice or birds, if he happens to have a ' shrine ' he will ' give it
water ', i.e. pour a libation to it. Ashes represent flour, which is
stirred up in water as in a real sacrifice. He invokes the shrine, ' My
father ' (but never mentioning names as in real sacrifice since his own
father is probably still alive), ' accept this water and grant that I have
successful hunting. If I kill an animal, I will give you a dog.' Some
time later he may catch a live mouse, and when he has played with it
to satiety he ' sacrifices ' it on his shrine—this is the promised ' dog '.
A nestling bird found alive is ' sacrificed ' as a ' fowl ' or ' guinea-fowl '.
If he finds a live mouse or bird by chance it will always be
taken home and ' sacrificed ' thus before it is cut up and eaten.
Taboos like those of adults are invented for his shrines. Fetishes,
like those of adults, accept only red and black ' fowls '; other shrines
only white ones. Siikaɔni, a small boy of about 7 or 8, built himself [778
a *loo* fetish, which can be dispatched to ' tie up ' any one 789]
who might interfere with one's enterprises. Siikaɔni pretended to
use his *loo* to keep the parents of his ' sweetheart ' out of the
way when he went to see her—a frequent use of a real *loo* by
young men.

Of the imaginative and constructive play produced as a response 857
to current social activities in which children co-operate, I shall 524
instance only building. During the building season a favourite preoccupation 868
of the children is to build miniature rooms or houses.
It is a co-operative group enterprise, boys and girls frequently working
together, led by a boy of about 12–13. It is carried on in the intervals
between helping the men. Sometimes they are content to build only
walls, a few inches high, but when the leader is keen they undertake
a complete replica of a house—walls a foot or more high, several
rooms properly arranged, a roof, a beaten inner court, and shrines.
The work goes on for days on end and needs planning and organization.
The girls and smaller boys make the swish and roll it into pellets,
the older boys do the actual building, often with extraordinary skill.
When the ' house' is built and roofed and the walls have dried, if the

226 789 782 [778] typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance. Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*). The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp.* Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool and of the magical specialist. [787] A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist. Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bolgraana's* first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish. The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near [424] pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

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[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784
agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again 184
may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth
is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are
traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the
Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance
of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities.
So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425]
over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows,
dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious
practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778]
(tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a
group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186
political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and
Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764
vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every
funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at
the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism
is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously
or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are
his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793
barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction. 622
The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage.
Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have 787
selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival 796
is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: [778
a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large
one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. 534]
Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the
shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his
elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience,
show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices
have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest
of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels
and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock
to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and
thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by
the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits
the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into 796
abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest,
until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have 535
almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their
awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until
in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the
drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." 796
It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the
dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effer-
vescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which [578]
threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement,
planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive
the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo [784]
against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this
month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month,
in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident
from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even
from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch
the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the
dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. 796
Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festival, 535
and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ meŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

Daa (the supreme bɔɣar of the Baari people) and Mosur will jointly prosper the land. Then he departs. That day Baari celebrates Daa. 796

That same evening the large Gingauŋ drum is escorted to Baari by the Gbizug Tendaana and the Wakyi Tendaana, following a ritual path. All Tongo flocks to Baari to dance with great enthusiasm on a traditional spot outside the grove of Baat Daa. Near the dance, but silently aloof, wait the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas. A few hundred yards away, as if indifferent to the dance, young men of Baari assemble, wearing their ritual garb, a goatskin. When the Baari Tendaana and his ritual coadjutors arrive to join them, the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas are summoned. Greetings are exchanged, and then led by the Baari Tendaana, the whole company files away in a most solemn and silent procession, brought up by the youngest members carrying pots of consecrated beer. With utter gravity this procession thrice encircles the dancers who continue to dance as if oblivious to this. Anyone who dares to break through the encircling procession is doomed to a supernatural death. The procession files away again, into the sacred grove. There the Tendaanas pour libations of beer to Baat Daa, calling down the very same blessings as had been invoked by the Chief earlier in the day. They drink the beer and send a small pot out to the representative of the Chief, who is among the dancers. Now the Tendaanas' procession emerges, again solemnly encircles the dancers, and files away. At a tree which marks the path to Tongo they stop, and marching round it in a circle, chant a song the burden of which is Mosur boot kuliga ("Mosur wants to go home"). Upon this signal the allusion of which is obvious to all, the dance breaks up, the ritual is over. 796 535 [784]

That finishes the Gingauŋ dance for a year. *The next three days at* Tongo are given over to the gayest festivities of the season, the celebration of Daa. This is a New Year's festival, a fitting conclusion to the dancing season. Dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, the whole of Tongo assembles at the Chief's compound on the day after the rites at Baari. From far and near, Tongo women who have married away return to their homes, many bearing gifts of special food from their husbands. The Chief's house throngs with his people and strangers. His elders bring him presents of guinea fowls and he, sitting in state, has a bullock slaughtered, part of which he shares amongst them. The Chief, it is true, gets the better part of this exchange of gifts, but good form is satisfied. The afternoon is devoted to light-hearted dancing in praise of the Chief. 796 [574]

The Gbizug Tendaana has also celebrated Daa, but very quietly. That evening, however, Chief and Tendaana meet in ceremonial. The scene is the dancing ground. This is a dedicated area which may not be cultivated. 796 778

796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 514 782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos [784] have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

182 578 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate 182
and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of 578
the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the 796
following moon, Bɔγaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival
of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival 778
translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. 769
Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries
at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔγar,
after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all
the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied
development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their
own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔγar may be a grove of trees,
a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders.
It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in
the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔγar's communicants generally
comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints
one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔγar cult is built up on the notion
of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at
every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants
must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔγar. The
bɔγar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors
of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral,
like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent
ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it
can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its
communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I 778
had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The
Namoos know the dates of Bɔγaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they 881
had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed
they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear
and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me
against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the
sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted
by the bɔγar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the
Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their
cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even
Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔγaraam ritual is at the same time communion,
initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔγar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔγaraam on 796

may be given his name; and the same rule applies to all cult groupings of ancestors, 551
for example at *gu'an*, at *tɔbəga*, at *nɔya-dok* and other shrines. 553

What about BANTAŊ and BANTAMBIL? This name literally translated means 776
crocodile. It is one of very many animal names given to people and these again are part of the larger class of names taken from natural objects in general. Other names that fall into this class are NAAHO, cow or bull, BAA, dog, WAAFO, snake. They are very common either in their root forms or in the usual derivative forms. So are names like KURUG, iron, KUGƏR, stone, TEE, tree, and their compounds. There is nothing totemistic about such names. How they arise can best be made clear by an example. When TINTA'ALƏM was a youth he went on a communal fishing expedition and had the good fortune to catch a young crocodile. This is regarded as both a feat of skill and a sign of great good fortune. Not only is it difficult to catch crocodiles on these battues but it often happens that anybody who tries to catch one he has sighted gets bitten, and the consequences may be very serious. Men have lost limbs thus and some have even died as a result of such bites. So when TINTA'ALƏM got home his father at once took him off to consult a diviner. It emerged that the episode with the crocodile was a manifestation of TINTA'ALƏM's *yin*, specifically of his grandfather's wish to be recognised as one of his *yin* ancestors; and in due course, after the necessary rites had been done, the skull of the animal was placed on the *yin* shrine to commemorate and symbolise the event. The spirit of the crocodile caught on this expedition thus becomes one of the votive elements of the *yin*, and if the ancestor associated with the occasion claims a child as a ward it will be given the name BANTAŊ.

This is the standard pattern of belief and observance when a votive element is 551
part of an ancestor shrine. Thus, to continue with TINTA'ALƏM's Yin, among its
votive objects are a much worn hoe blade and the skull of a cow. The explanation 776
is that TINTA'ALƏM was a hard working farmer. He prospered and was able, by 778
occasional sales of surplus grain, gradually to acquire some livestock. In middle age his *yin* ancestors demanded a cow from him as a thank-offering — symbolically, the first cow he was able to acquire as the fruits of his good fortune. After the sacrifice, the cow's skull was placed on the *yin* shrine. But long before that, when TINTA'ALƏM had saved enough only to buy his first sheep, his *yin* had directed him to dedicate to it his hoe, the implement with which the good farmer gains his living. When his first hoe, the hoe he had bought for himself to cultivate his own land, wore out he placed it on his *yin* shrine in dedication.

What happens in the case of a child of this family whose private name is NAAHO, 553
cow, or KUUR, hoe, or KURUG, iron, is that one (or more) of the ancestors who have 776
manifested themselves as watching over TINTA'ALƏM's Destiny — that is, as his
yin — on demanding this child as a ward has declared the cow or the hoe have 778
been his special vehicle. Sacrifices offered on behalf of the ward will be given to all the ancestors manifested in the *yin*, but the cow or the hoe blade will be particularly cited.

Similar ideas and beliefs are associated with other ritual vehicles of the ancestors. Thus one KURUG I knew was the spiritual ward of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine. His father had fallen ill shortly after shooting a python and this proved to be the manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor demanding recognition. Both the arrow

553 head and the python skull were placed on the shrine that was eventually conse-
776 crated to the *bakologo* spirit and my informant's name was a reference to the arrow
778 head. One of *his* sons taken in guardianship by the same shrine was named WAAFO, snake.

[775] This case is interesting from another angle, too. The Tallensi have no belief in reincarnation. There is no special bond between a person and his ancestral namesake. He is not supposed to resemble or expected to emulate his ancestor. His name is a display of pride in ancestry, on the one hand, and a sign of submission to the religious supremacy of the ancestors, on the other. Thus he has no special ritual observances, on account of his name, if he is the ward of a patrilineal ancestor.
[614] But if his *sɛyɔr* is a matrilateral ancestor, this person might have belonged to a clan different from his own. In that case he is often obliged to keep the totemic taboos of the clan of this ancestor. Thus in the above case it is not altogether an accident that the slain python turned out to be a manifestation of a matrilateral ancestor whose clan have a taboo against killing and eating this animal. Children taken in spirit-guardianship by this ancestor have therefore to observe the same taboo, whether or not it is followed by other members of their family and clan.

I do not want to follow further the complex ramifications of this aspect of Tale
553 naming customs. One more detail must suffice. The greatest renown, that is the
776 most respected *wu'uri*, comes from election to an office. A chief (*Na'ab*) or Custodian of the Earth (*Tɛndaana*) is always addressed and referred to by his title. After his death he is certain to have descendants through his sons, grandsons, and daughters, placed under his spiritual guardianship. They will be named either by the name he took to himself on election to his office, which I shall describe presently, or by his title. NA'AB, NA'ABPƆK, TENDAANA, etc. are common names among descendants of such dignitaries.

And here it is pertinent to add that certain forms of disgrace which are associated with ritual danger result in the suppression of ancestral names. Thus if a man dies of smallpox, or is killed in war, his name is never given to a descendant. He will be remembered in sacrifices if he has descendants but not in their names.

551 I want to turn now to the open names. Their variety is extraordinary. A few refer to accidental or conventional circumstances connected with the birth of the
553 bearer and are therefore fairly frequent. ZIBA, knows not father, is the name always given to a posthumous child. SAMANE, the home farm, is a common name. It is given to a child whose mother was overcome by labour pains while engaged on some task on the home farm. SUOR, path, has the same origin. TAMPƆƔAR, the garbage heap, may be the name given to a child born after the onset of labour pains at the ash heap. But it also arises in this way. A woman has had several children all of whom have died soon after birth. This is failure or malevolence on the part of the various ancestors who claimed these children as wards. When her next child is born the father says: "I give this child's life to be watched over by the garbage heap. My ancestors have failed me, for all that my children are good for is to be buried (as babies that die are so buried) in the garbage heap." This is a well tried magical idea, found also elsewhere in West Africa and in many other parts of the world.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 762
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *teŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

779 the earth (*tɛŋənpiima*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray
425 animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *tɛŋənpiimər*. It must be
688 handed to a tendaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and
especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

714 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak
774 of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in
793 human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk
of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the
things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the
forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination.
Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but
[567 he is given to a chief and not to a tendaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified
to sell a human being into slavery; a tendaana would commit a sacrilege
622] against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *ya-a-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
776 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
471 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

ritual custody of a particular clan or maximal lineage. Such a territorial 778
section is the *tɛŋ* of a particular tɛndaana. He is the master (*daana*) of 779
that locality (*tɛŋ*), exercising ritual jurisdiction over it on behalf of the 793
maximal lineage or clan which has the ritual ownership of it, in virtue of 471
being the head of that unit. He is the mediator between the Earth and the people whose interests lie in that fraction of its physical surface. When the concept *tɛŋ* is coupled with a tɛndaana it has a double meaning. It denotes both a stretch of territory and a place of contact with the mystical Earth. It may be used to designate a single Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) and its precincts, a total area of anything from about 20 square yards to an acre or two; and it can be applied to the whole of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*, which includes a number of *tɔŋgbana*.

Tɛndaanas' *tɛs* vary greatly in extent. As I have no exact measurements, 471
I can only indicate roughly the range of differences. Small *tɛs* are the 793
rule in the older and more densely settled part of the country. The area of a clan settlement on Tɛnzugu, for instance, perhaps a square mile altogether, may be divided amongst three or four tɛndaanas. On the other hand, at the peripheries tɛndaanas have ritual jurisdiction over large tracts of land, many square miles in extent. This is largely due to the absence of permanent settlement in these parts until recently, and the still relatively scanty population living there.

Tallensi do not think of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* in terms of its size but in 471
terms of its position relatively to the *tɛs* of neighbouring tɛndaanas. 793
Tɛndaanas themselves claim that their *tɛs* have definite boundaries, but 779
when asked to show them they become very uneasy and quote the maxim 'The boundaries of a *tɛŋ* must not be pointed out (*Tɛŋən tentɔris pu pa'ana*)'. When my bona fides was, at length, accepted by the Tallensi I was able to persuade several tɛndaanas to have the boundaries of their *tɛs* shown to me. My guides were always ill at ease, and apparently felt that what they were doing verged on sacrilege. Chiefs and elders of clans that do not have tɛndaanas usually declare that it is impossible for tɛndaanas to have boundaries (cf. p. 164); for are not neighbouring tɛndaanas always 'kin' (*mabiis*)—by clanship or by ritual ties? Do they not often sacrifice together at one another's Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) or go by stealth, at night, to sacrifice at a neighbouring tɛndaana's Earth shrines? Tɛndaanas do not deny this. In every group of contiguous maximal lineages, each presided over by a tɛndaana (as for instance Gbeog, Gbizug, and Zubiuŋ), the senior tɛndaana (in this instance the Gbizug tɛndaana) always claims to be the real 'owner' of the aggregate of *tɛs* held by the group of tɛndaanas. He talks of this aggregate of *tɛs* as if it were one *tɛŋ* apportioned amongst his junior 'brothers' and himself for the greater convenience of performing the priestly duties of the tɛndaanaship. They divide their common spiritual jurisdiction rather than a distinct stretch of territory; and in principle this rule embraces the whole of Taleland.
For the powers of the Earth are indivisible, the Earth is a unity. When the [782]
Gbizug tɛndaana sacrifices to his supreme *tɔŋgban*—or, as he often phrases it, his *tɛŋ*—Kpoŋkparəg, he invokes all the important *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, up to the limit of the field of politico-ritual relations in which Gbizug participates, from Duusi in the north-east to Biuŋ in the south.

793 Like the tɛndaanas all the *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, and even beyond Tale-
779 land, are described as 'kin' (*mabiis*) to one another. In principle, *tɛŋ*, the Earth, cannot be divided up; it is the tɛndaanaship which is distributed.

471 This explains the diversity and lack of precision one finds in the
793 boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs*. Like settlement boundaries they are determined by social rather than physical facts, though here and there conspicuous topographical features may be fixed upon as landmarks from which to take a bearing. Doo *tɛŋ*, the area immediately surrounding and including the supreme *tɔŋgban* Doo of Tɛnzugu, is an example of a
[341] tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* that can easily be distinguished. Homesteads on Doo *tɛŋ* may not have roofs of thatch (*mopin*) but must ~~have~~ flat roofs (*bɛa*, vb.) of mud. This is a quasi-totemic taboo of this *tɛŋ* (cf. p. 142). Standing on the wall of granite boulders that overlooks this part of Tɛnzugu one can see where the mud roofs end and the thatched roofs begin. I was very reluctantly told about, and later shown, what purported to be the fixed physical boundaries of Doo *tɛŋ* by men of Kpata'ar, the clan which has ritual jurisdiction over it. A ditch, a line of large boulders, a prominent tree, a path, such were the landmarks by which they went. But the striking thing about this boundary was that, almost all the way, it followed the social boundaries between Kpata'ar and Gundaat on the one side, and between Bunkiuk and Samiit on the other. In the closely settled parts of the country, wherever *tɛndaanditib* clans are in occupation of the areas under their ritual jurisdiction, there is a noticeable tendency for the alleged physical boundaries of *tɛs* to coincide with social boundaries between clans or maximal lineages.

621 Settlements like Tongo, where people believed to be of immigrant
471 descent occupy land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans, are
793 instructive. Tongo, like many other Tale settlements, stretches over the ritual territories of several tɛndaanas (cf. p. 169). The alleged boundaries between the *tɛs* of the Gbizug, Soog, and Zubiuŋ tɛndaanas run through Tongo. As the people of Tongo put it, these clans at various times allotted portions of their own land for Tongo people to build and farm on. Physical landmarks are pointed out as indicating these boundaries. But if they are examined it will be seen that they tend to coincide with the social boundaries between sections (*yizugɔt*) or between segments of sections (*dugɔt*). (See map at end of book.) Wherever part of a tɛndaana's boundary runs between homesteads of men of the same segment (*dug*), the homesteads (rarely more than one or two) on the wrong side of the boundary have not been sited there for more than a generation. The continual slow shifting about of homestead sites in a settlement through the course of generations is paralleled by a shifting of the boundaries between farm plots; for they pass through alternate phases of being divided up, wholly or in part, among the segments of a nuclear lineage that has reached a phase of fission, and of being reconstituted, wholly or in part, at a later stage of lineage integration. These internal adjustments often result in a spilling over of one section of a clan into what was till then regarded as the area of a neighbouring unit of like sort.

178 We lack historical documents; but we can infer from the contemporary dynamics of Tale social life that the boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* shift

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social boundaries. 178

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his *ahəb* (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage, the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)' ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[175] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋgbana*—for
782] which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas.
My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
tɛs. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
779 (*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and con- 793
siderable moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.' The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the statement implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term 'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties, privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to 784
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship. And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

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842 has a medicine which enables women to conceive without the participation of a male.

The notion of a procreative essence as distinct from the sexual fluid, however vaguely formulated it is, is of importance. Tallensi distinguish between sexual vigour or desire and the power of procreation. They know that people who are sterile (*kundɔɣar*) lack the latter but are not necessarily deficient in the former. Na'abzɔ, gossip said, was sterile because in his wild young days as a soldier he had lived with a Dagban woman who had maliciously caused him by some magical means to 'pour away all his power of begetting (*kpaa u dɔɣam waabi bah*)' in excessive intercourse with her. The uncharitable believed that he was impotent to boot, but others were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

842 [837] The Tallensi regard *dɔɣam* as, above all, a very precious human function, quite apart from the pleasures of sex. Thus, when Zikihib's young wife was left a grass widow for three years by her vagabond husband and had a child by a lover, it was unanimously condoned. Was she, it was argued, to cast away her powers of child-bearing for nothing (*zaŋ u dɔɣam bah wari*) just because she had a faithless husband and was herself too devoted to her children by him to run off with another man?

842 781 Lastly, the notion of the *ŋaamis* is the point at which mystical beliefs enter into the theory of conception. The obvious physiological facts of parenthood are summed up in the maxim, 'A man and a woman unite to procreate a child'. But behind plain physiology lies a mystery. Sometimes a man sleeps with his wife on a single occasion and she becomes pregnant (*u ŋɔɣa puur*—lit. she seizes a belly). At other times a man has relations with his wife regularly for months and she fails to conceive. Thus conception depends, in the last resort, on Heaven (*Naawun*), the Final Cause by which the Tallensi rationalize chance and which they invoke when empirical or less recondite mystical explanations fail. There is an essential mystical factor in procreation; and if a man or a woman fails to beget or bear a child, appeals can be made to the ancestor spirits and other mystical powers that intervene directly in human destiny. That is why a barren woman in her heart of hearts never gives up hope of having a child as long as she is still of child-bearing age, though the Tallensi know that barrenness is often a fact of nature beyond cure by either empirical or mystical agencies.

The Significance of Paternity and Patriliny

602 A person's genealogical ties are fixed by his parentage. Among the Tallensi these are the ties that plot the trajectory of the individual's life. The rights and duties that are critical for his role and status in society all stem, in the last resort, from the fact of birth. A person cannot divest himself, or be divested, of the bonds created by his birth and yet remain a member of the society; nor can he fully and unconditionally acquire

For a man these final rites are more elaborate and variable. Among 765
the Namoos the high-water mark of the rites is the induction of the 593
first-born son and first-born daughter, if they survive, into those secret 578
and forbidden things which they have avoided since infancy. The first-born son is dressed in his father's cap and smock, turned inside out.[1] [292]
A stick with a loop of string, and a piece of hollow bamboo, specially prepared for the occasion and symbolizing the father's bow and quiver, are hung round his neck. Then a procession is formed of all the children of the dead man, his first-born daughter following immediately behind the first-born son and holding on to the smock. An old man leads them round the homestead three times. Then the first-borns are taken inside through their dead father's *zɔŋ*, and are taken up to look into his granary
for the first time in their lives. The whole rite is felt by the onlookers [781] ●
to be overwhelmingly solemn and the 'showing of the granary (*paal buur*)' is for them an intensely dramatic moment. A hush comes over the crowd of spectators as the son ascends to the granary and his mentor puts a hand behind his head and pushes it forward so that he peers into this hitherto-forbidden place. The son himself appears quite unperturbed, though this is one of the decisive moments of his life. I have been told by men who have been through this rite that they felt quite calm and collected at the time. But Tallensi are that way, and this is perhaps a sign of the efficacy of their ritual practices.

Among the Talis and other non-Namoos, the parallel rite is that of sending the quiver (*ta'ah loko*) of the dead man to the External *Bɔyar*. When an old man dies, his quiver is hidden in his principal granary by one of the elders and his oldest son and daughter are thereafter forbidden to look into the granary until the end of the funeral ceremonies. 'If they did', a Yinduuri elder once explained to me, 'they would see the spirit of the dead man and die.' Younger sons and daughters are free to look into the granary. This is of particular interest as a parallel to the Namoo taboos; but with the Talis the ritual and affective expression of the tension between father and eldest son is concentrated in the period when its meaning is most significant to the son, the transition period between the extinction of his father's social personality and his assumption of his father's place. For the rite of 'sending the quiver', the 'quiver' (consisting of a real bow and a symbolical quiver exactly like that used by the Namoos) is taken from the granary by the oldest son. Followed by his father's senior surviving wife he is escorted by the clan elders to the External *Bɔyar*. Sacrifices are made to the ancestors and especially to the dead man, who now belongs to the realm of the ancestors, and his 'quiver' is left in the *Bɔyar* in token of his final departure
from the world of the living. 593

We must conclude that the distinction Tallensi make, both in custom 578

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[1] To distinguish the context of death from that of life and to symbolize the reversal of the taboo.

871 [186] 181 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descendants. Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system, and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a significant motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from their ancestor cult. Every Talɔŋa desires sons so that there may be some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son, a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious duty to their ancestors.

● 781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children. It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation. Last year, for instance, Kuwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

869 861 828 The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors (*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,' he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?' When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

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[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

857 with sacrifice and least about the beliefs and theories. He is familiar
524 with all the concepts of Tale religion and magic but cannot assign
869 them accurately to their relevant contexts. He knows that ancestor spirits and medicines are different, and can even describe some of the latter by their functions, but cannot elucidate these differences. He knows also and believes that health, prosperity and success depend on mystical agencies, that sickness, death, and misfortune are caused by them, and that sacrifices must be made to placate them or to expiate offences. He has heard talk of all this and seen consultations of diviners. As an infant, perhaps, he has been called by his mother to get off a partition wall 'lest the spirits push you off', or has seen food put out 'for the spirits' during the ritual festivals. He knows what different types of shrines look like and what are their appurtenances. But it is surface knowledge, confused in details and full of gaps.

857 Ritual is men's business, though women are well versed in it.
524 Hence it emerges mostly in the play of boys and not of girls. Signifi-
869 cantly, it is permitted till pubescence, that is, as long as a boy is not likely to take a responsible part in real ritual. After that he is liable to
●781 have to accept an ancestor spirit demanding real sacrifices and may no
788 longer play at it. At 13 or 14 years of age, when a boy's ritual schemas approximate those of an adult, he fully understands and acquiesces in this prohibition. It suggests, however, that playing at ritual has a different value for children than actual ritual has for adults. Children share the adults' interest in ritual and accept its prescriptions, but not the adults' emotional relationship to ritual. In their play they express this interest and their identifications, rehearse their knowledge, and integrate it with the rest of their educational achievements.

857 Small boys build shrines a few inches high for themselves in a corner
524 of the cattle-yard. They take great pains to achieve verisimilitude and
869 neatness, and their inventiveness is remarkable. *Kalmpoo* husks are turned into medicine-pots; fragments of calabash or potsherd represent the hoe-blade which is essential to many ancestor shrines; a pronged twig is a shrine's 'tree'; the tail of a stillborn kid or lamb, tied with string and feathers in the same way as adults do, is a shrine's 'tail', another object commonly dedicated to real shrines. There are 'roots'—of grass—as in adult medicine-pots, and other appurtenances.

613 178 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

793 *The Ten'dan'*: Among the Talense an investigation into the former status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 783 627 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs; this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die, except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*teŋ*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man teŋ*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

● 782 783 If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person, he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

Purification of the land when some one is Sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere*' (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes, axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become *Ten'dan'*.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyihir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusoodana*.

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother,
or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and 171
mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or
four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to
his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something
with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and
guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seɣr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782] ●
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they
bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's
town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came
from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she
goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the
girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka*
in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then
called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound,
her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them,
and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bride-
groom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is
'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs,
and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are
called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality
the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the
husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If
the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back
the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo: 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be
taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to
the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I
then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they
continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran*
(the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

764 793 white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the graveside. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

764 622 Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

778 [171] ● 782 721 *Shrines*: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan'* of Tongo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

778 cine' or 'roots') is 'to prevent war'; it is called *mweley* (compare Nankane *mweleya*[1]). 'When the war cry is raised I will first sacrifice a fowl •782 on the stone, saying: "They want to shoot arrows, and I wish to stop 724 it; receive a fowl, and compel them not to shoot; let the women and children sleep." The stone on top of the head-rest signifies that we compel people to sit down. After I sacrifice the fowl, cow dung

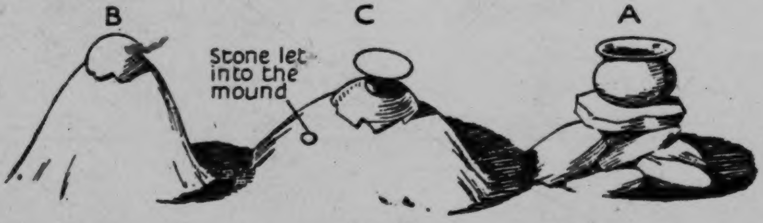
B
C
A
Stone let into the mound

FIG. 66

and corn-cobs are placed round the pot and set on fire, while I say: "My father, call your father; let women and children sleep; they wish to shoot arrows; fire wants to burn the land, but I wish it to be cool." When the fire which I have lit goes out, the war is also burning out. The roots inside the pot are from a shea butter tree; when you eat shea butter your heart will become cool. This *tim bagere* (medicine shrine) is related to the one I wear round my neck which is also called *mweley*. I take it off and place it on top of the stone when the fire is burning. Some *mweley* are now used by Chiefs to encourage disputes in order that they may be able to fine people.'

778 [171] The above account was written nearly two years before my note on the same subject among the Nankanse.[2] I had, indeed, forgotten the latter, until I came to go over my notes in writing these volumes. It affords a good example, coupled with other evidence, of the close resemblance between the religion and customs of these two tribes, and also of the accuracy of the information imparted by two wholly independent informants. Unfortunately, the photograph I took of this shrine was not successful, but Fig. 66 A, is a rough diagram illustrating it and other shrines standing beside it. On the left of the *mweley* fetish stand two conical mounds, B and C. B is, Sayebere informed me, that of his *yab-pɔk la o bi* (grandmother and her son). The clay mound had a flat piece of iron on top covered by a potsherd and stone. C is a *Yini zug-bagere* (God-above shrine). On the apex of the mound was a piece of iron let into the clay which was covered

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[1] See p. 303.

[2] See p. 304.

796 The following are a selection of these petitions; in my notebook; they are jotted down in the vernacular (Ashanti) of which the following
782 are literal translations:

'I was at my town of Mampon, and I heard about grandfather (*nana*, here a term of respect), so I came to lean upon him, that he might give me health, which I once had. I keep a store and I have two motor-cars. From that store I derive no profit whatever. As for my two motor-cars, when I ply them for hire and people enter them, I only incur debts and there is no profit in them. Because of that, and because I have heard of grandfather, I have come to ask him if he will show me the way to make profit. Again, I have four wives and they have either not borne children, or, if they have, the children die. Therefore help me, and permit my wives to bear children, and give my relations health and long life.'

Another: 'As for me, I come from Kwawu (in the Colony). Now the work which we do to-day is farming, but when I do it I get no profit. When ~~I~~ cultivate cocoa, and the trees grow, they die, or when the trees bear pods, they rot. I also have a store, but I get no profit from that; then I heard about *nana* and I came to lean upon him, that he may give me and all my relations life, my nephews and my "brothers" life, and that I may obtain much profit.'

Another: 'I am a clerk, who pays his debts, as my neighbours pay me what they owe me, yet I have not a copper (*capre*). I have four wives, yet none of them has a child; when one bears an infant, it dies. I have heard of *nana* and I have come to take myself and put myself in his hands that he may help me and let me get much money.'

Another: 'I come from a street in Kwawu. I have heard about *nana*. The work which men do these days is farming. I have a plantation, but I get nothing out of it; when the crops ripen, beasts (i.e. insects) eat them, and the cocoa-trees die. Whatever I do, I get in debt; therefore I have come to lean upon you, that you may help me and give me profit.'

A Woman's Prayer: 'I have come from a street in Kwawu, and I have heard of *nana*, and I have brought myself to lean on you, that you may give me life. I was in Kumase and I bore a child and it died, so I give myself to you, in order that if any one has caused this you may kill him, and guard me and let me bear another. If I do, I will repay you.'

Another: 'I have come from Mampon. I have heard about this god. I have a sickness in my belly; it never ceases; it cries out *ko! ko!*

Look to my sickness that it may cease. If any one is doing this to me, 796
catch him for me, or kill him and let me get health and strength.'

Another: 'I was in my town when I heard of this god, that he is 782
strong, so I came to lean on him that he may help me. I am a person who drinks gin always and I am become a drunkard. Help me to stop drinking. Again, whatever work I do, I get in debt. If some one is doing all this to me, let *nana* catch him or kill him for me.'

When I state that these supplicants were educated men and women, 796
some of whom owned large businesses, well-furnished European houses, 177
and not a few of them their own cars, in which they had come hun- 771
dreds of miles to visit this pagan god, the power and influence of the old beliefs may readily be imagined. I need not multiply examples. All the petitions were based on the same formula—the god was *nana*, the supplicants had come to lean upon him (*dan nebo*). They were promised nothing. If their prayers were answered, they would bring back an offering. Nearly every one asked for 'money' or 'profit'.

When the service was ended, we all backed out again into the sun- 796
light and were led, complete silence being enjoined upon us, to the entrance of the second cave. Here the offerings were sacrificed over a mound so smothered in congealed blood and feathers as to hide its surface completely.

The *Ten'dan'* lifted up a round stone and tapped it against this altar. Each person then handed him the offering he or she had brought. Its throat was cut, the blood flowed on the altar, and the sacrifice was cast down. My sheep was sacrificed last of all. The photograph, Fig. 77, shows the old *Ten'dan'* about to cut its throat. All this was carried out
in complete silence. We all then returned to where every one had [302]
undressed, and each person was smeared with a line of red clay on the side of each cheek, between the breasts, on each forearm, on the legs and back. This ended the ceremony.

NAMNAM

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral
custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which
the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family
would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed
to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has
destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and
give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit.
that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and
marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike,
even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family
and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to
return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

Suicide (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
793 and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
● 782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622
624 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
793 section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders,
but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one
might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A
brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

Tenedan' will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good 793
crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, 793
and the *Tenedan'* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) 782 ●
where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a *Tenedan'* is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to the land. The land is not a human spirit.' The *Tenedan'* will say:

'"We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating, we cannot
refuse you yours, receive this beer." We pour out the beer and then [273]
kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow (through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan'* will then ask every one to give him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a cow. Every one in the *teya* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan'* will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan'* and eats of this
sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan'* and the *Tey-kpeem* (Elders of the *teya*) [623]
always discussed town affairs together.'

Succession to the Tenedan'ship: 'When a *Tenedan'* dies, his next eldest 793
brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest "son"; that means the eldest of all the "sons" among the *Tenedan'* and his brothers. In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan'*, but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan'* had power to drive a man out of the *teya*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would remain until he lost everything.'

Tenedan' and the Land: 'A *Tenedan'* is in charge of all uncultivated 793
land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan'*, 423
saying, "*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I 425
wish to make a farm upon it". The *Tenedan'* will send a boy to look 782
at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the
farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and [273]
take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan'* to sacrifice to the land. This he will do in his own compound, giving it to his father's *bagr* (shrine) to give to the land, saying: "Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give to the land that the farmer may get crops". The remainder of the beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan'* will also send his son to pour some on the land and say:

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

423 ‘“Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm.
425 Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache
● 782 and belly-ache.”

‘When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan’* a large
793 bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a
423 guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his “sons”, but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan’* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan’* still “owns” the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan’*, even if growing on a man’s land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man’s own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan’* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan’* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.’

Lost Animals: ‘Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tene-*
793 *dan’*. I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries.
425 Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. ‘No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.’

‘In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are “*Wen*” (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan’*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan’*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan’* only received a hind leg.’

224 *Go-dan*: ‘We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost
624 a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan’* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

351 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a
751 long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots.
●782 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the
342 land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are
withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan.*
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

342 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry-
361 and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the
centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan.* Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the
[778] latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large
flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

778 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot',
set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or
783 killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be
kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

Five to six months after birth
the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787]
father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782
then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on
that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water
to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

' "Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787
daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574
that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

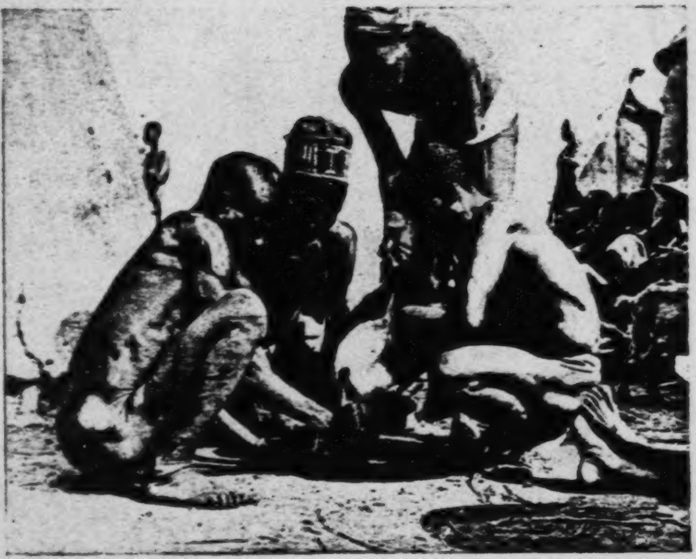
'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834
more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is
walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845
Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766
fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die." '

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583
barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586
them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may
take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

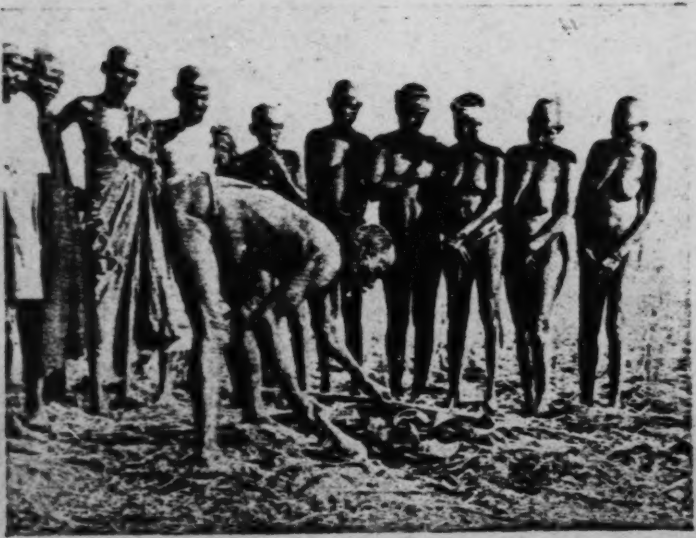
PLATE IV

●782



(*a*) Ritual strangling of a goat to provide the loin cover for a Namoo elder's burial.

764



(*b*) *Ŋma wɔyar*, the final rite of a Namoo funeral, is peculiar to Namoos.

[facing p.57]

PLATE V

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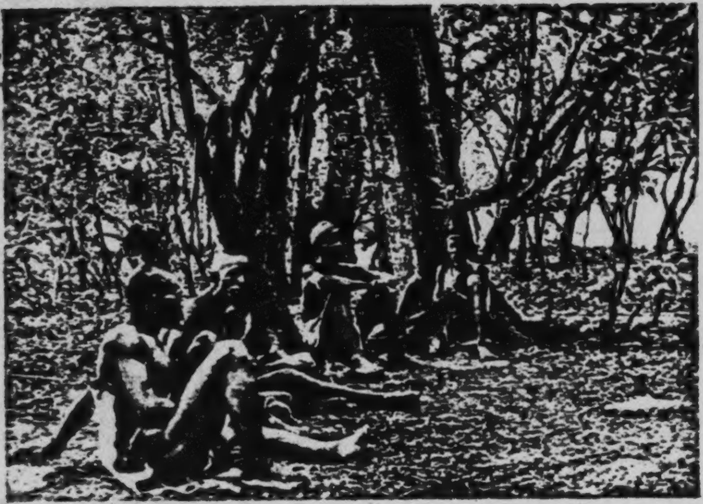
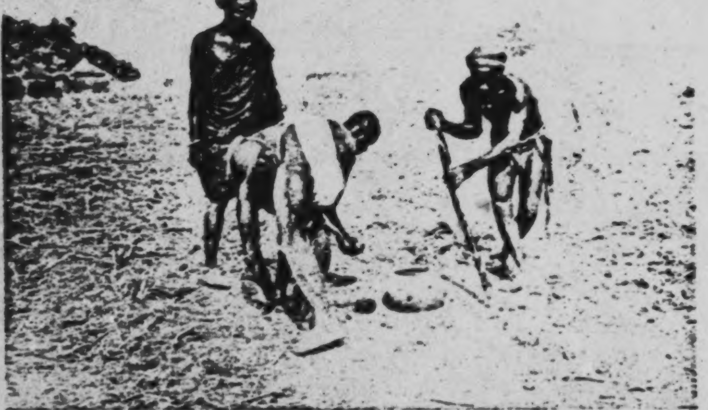
77a



(*a*) Clanship at Zubiuŋ: Elders of Kpaγara yaγar awaiting the representatives of the other two maximal lineages at the entrance to the External *Bɔγar* Duunkpaləg, in order to perform a sacrifice.

764
*618



(*b*) The duties of *sunzɔp*, at Zubiuŋ: The rite of 'sowing a field' for the dead during a tendaana's funeral. One representative of each maximal lineage of the clan has to take part.

[facing p. 80]

x618 Duunkpalɔg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the
778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child
placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a
[551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages
x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a
764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously
778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is
794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tendaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of
● 782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these
182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say
771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpalɔg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

PLATE VI

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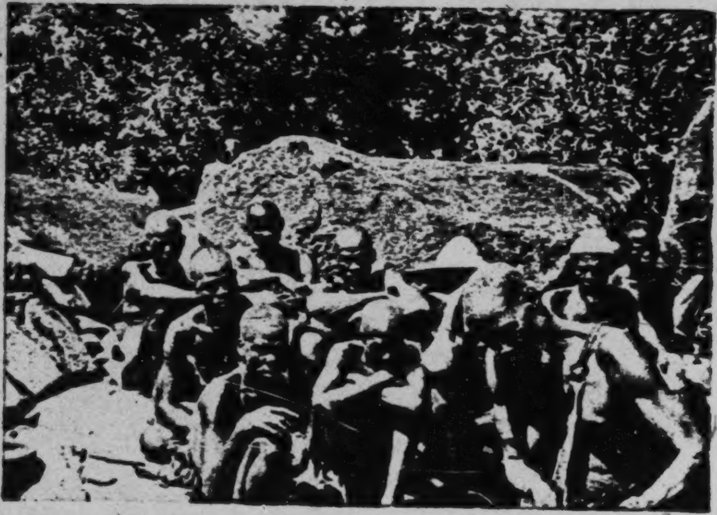

(*a*) Ritual collaboration among the Hill Talis: A sacrifice at the External *Bɔɣar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the principal custodians. Representatives of Gundaat, Samiit, Sakpee are present while the head of Kpata'ar performs the sacrifice.

(*b*) A sacrifice at the Earth Shrine, Doo, of which Kpata'ardɛm are the principal custodians. Representatives of Kpata'ar, Tamboog, Degal, and Bunkiuk are present on this occasion.

[facing p. 81]

CHAPTER VII

CLANSHIP AND RITUAL COLLABORATION

782 *The Significance of Sacrificing Together*

182 SOCIAL ties and cleavages are most conspicuously affirmed in Tale ritual. Ritual collaboration and common ritual allegiances are indices of common interests and mechanisms of solidarity. The core of Tale ritual thought, doctrine, and performance is the sacrifice (*kaab*). In some situations a libation of water into which a handful of flour has been stirred (*zɔm kuom*, flour-water) is a sufficient sacrifice. In others, and more characteristically, domestic animals (fowls, guinea-fowls, goats, sheep, cattle, and dogs), with or without the addition of beer, are sacrificed. The selection of the animal depends on a multiplicity of factors, such as the relative importance of the shrine at which it is offered, the importance of the occasion, the status of the suppliant, or the group offering the sacrifice. No other situation evokes so vividly and so directly, both for the native and for the onlooker, the sense of the significance, for the Tallensi, of their continuity with their ancestors, and the strength and reality of the moral cohesion of such corporate units as lineages and clans.

To sacrifice together (*kab kaabəra*) is the most binding form of ritual collaboration. According to the ethical and religious ideas of the Tallensi, it is totally incompatible with a state of hostility—that is, with an open breach of good relations. Personal feelings are of secondary importance in this connexion. One can sacrifice with a person whom one despises or dislikes, as long as these feelings do not lead to an infringement of the ties of mutual obligation. But one cannot sacrifice propitiously with someone who is an enemy. This, according to native theory, would cause the ancestors to become angry, for 'as you are towards each other so are the spirits of your ancestors towards one another'. Therefore, if avowed enemies sacrifice together, mystical retribution will follow. To sacrifice together means not only to acknowledge a common spiritual tutelage, but also to eat together of the sacrifice; in short, to unite in a sacrament. Thus it is both an expression and a pledge of mutual amity and dependence.

x 618
782 *Ritual Relations in Namoo Clans*

As our analysis of the clan structure of Mosuor biis has shown, the final barrier to the complete absorption of an accessory lineage into one of the sub-clans is its exclusion from sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the sub-clan. This is the disability that excludes accessory lineages from the right to hold the chiefship of the sub-clan. But accessory lineages participate in sacrifices to the shrine of the ancestor who is regarded as the founder of that segment of the sub-clan to which they are attached or assimilated. The shrine (*bɔγar*) of the founding ancestor of the sub-clan is usually in the custody of one of its segments, whose head (*kpeem*) has, by right of succession, the duty of sacrificing to it on behalf of the whole sub-clan. Whenever sacrifice is made, all the segments of the authentic lineage must be represented. Accessory lineages are not represented, but they regard the representatives of the authentic segments to which they are linked as representing them also. 618x 782

Thus, Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, of Tongo, are assimilated to the authentic segment of Siiyɛŋ yiri, and are present at sacrifices made to the founding ancestor of Siiyɛŋ yiri. But no member of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm could ever succeed to the custody of Siiyɛŋ's *bɔyar*. Now when sacrifice is made to Mosuor's *bɔyar* on behalf of the whole sub-clan, representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri must be present; and Nɔŋsuur yidɛm, who cannot be present, regard these representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri as representing them as well. This view is justified, for when the portion of the sacrificial animal which falls to the share of Siiyɛŋ yiri is divided out, some will be given to Nɔŋsuur yidɛm also 'to cook and set out for their ancestor spirits (*kpiinam*).' As it is expressly forbidden for anyone not a member of the clan or the wife of a member to eat of this meat, this obviously signifies an acknowledgement of the indirect religious dependence of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm on the ancestors of the authentic lineage to which they are structurally linked. Though formally barred from the sacrament by the dogma of agnatic descent, accessory lineages are in practice indirectly admitted to it.

This arrangement is thoroughly in keeping with Tale ideas of the representation of corporate units. But where the centripetal forces of co-operation and solidarity within the local community are as great as at Tongo, it is an unstable compromise. In all secular affairs, and in other ceremonial and ritual events, the accessory lineages exercise all the duties and privileges that spring from solidarity and fellowship. They cannot be rigidly barred from the crowning ritual act that witnesses to the solidarity of the sub-clan, and most categorically pledges its constituent units to amity and co-operation. We have seen how this results in pressure to admit the accessory lineages to the cult of Mosuor's *bɔyar*, exerted indirectly by them but supported vigorously also by the most powerful agent of cohesion in the sub-clan, the chief. The unity of the sub-clan in practical affairs is evidently felt to be negatived by the ritual discrimination against some of its elements. 618x 182

In other Namoo clans the correlation of ritual collaboration with the jural and material aspects of clanship is even closer. At Dkoog, for instance, the attached lineage, Alaa biis, participate in all sacrifices to the shrine of the clan's founding ancestor, but they are prohibited from holding the chiefship. Politically and locally Alaa biis form an integral part of Dkoog, even though they intermarry with the two segments to which they are not attached. But their strongest bond of unity with the authentic branches of the clan is their right to take part in the cult of the clan *bɔyar*. This has been made easier by the fact that the custody of this *bɔyar* is vested in Abɔkrə biis, the segment to whose 'sister's son' Alaa biis trace their origin. It can be interpreted as an extension of the right to participate in the cult of the founding ancestor of Abɔkrə biis. One sign of the close social affiliation of Alaa biis to Dkoog is that they do not participate in the sacrifices of the Wakii lineage with which they are linked by ties of

x618 clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an
182 offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be
made at the External *Bɔγar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

x618 Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in
182 form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will
184 be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External
778 *Bɔγar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are
769 built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔγar* among the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔγar* of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔγar* is kept at the house of the segment head in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔγar* of one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔγar* itself consists of one or two small pots (*kpatarəg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

182 As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔγar and the Earth

x618 A. *Zubiuŋ*. We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ
182 becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔγar*, Duunkpaləg, the common shrine
778 of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of
● 782 the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the
769 cults of the *Bɔγar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration with the clan structure is relatively simple, and is analogous to what is found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpaləg *Bɔγar*. It is described as an External *Bɔγar* (*yɛŋha bɔγar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

x618 But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔγar*,
778 'the *bɔγar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal
769 lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni*

bɔγar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the 618x
External *Bɔγar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it 778
symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that 769
particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔγar*, that is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpalɔg in ritual homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔγar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage, as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia, and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔγar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure— 618x
on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the 769
clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship 618x
never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpalɔg or at any of the Zubiuŋ 782
Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ 769
maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in the ceremonies of inducting a new tendaana into his office, or in the funeral rites of a deceased tendaana—members of the linked lineages of that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari*. The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component 618x
units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the 778
principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. 782
Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and obligations of close *sunzɔp*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔγar*, [794]
and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔγar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔγar* and a focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yaγazuor,
who are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties [608]
of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

x618 general ritual bond in the tendaanaship and the special ritual relationship
778 with the Earth which this office imposes on a group that has the prerogative
782 of it, and they have a specific ritual bond that comes into action during the Great Festivals.

x618 At the level of these ritual relations, Ba'ari, Gbizug, Wakii, and
608 Yaγazuor are brethren (*mabiis*) to one another. Gbizug, it will be remembered, is also linked to Ba'ari by clanship ties; through it, therefore, the scheme of linkage by clanship ties is interlocked with the scheme of linkage through ritual ties; and the myth in which the social relations of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are symbolically pictured expresses this double-sided interdependence. As will be clearer presently, the organization of ritual ties between corporate units, like that of clanship ties, follows the field principle. Working at different levels of the social structure in the service of different interests, the two systems are interlocked but not congruent. They reinforce each other by counterbalancing each other; and both kinds of ties are translated into the basic idiom of Tale social relations, the idiom of genealogical connexion.

C. *Gbizug*. We shall see this more clearly if we consider the role of Gbizug in this configuration. As we have noted before, linked maximal lineages have the right to participate in exoteric ceremonies (such as funeral ceremonies) in which the corporate identity of the particular Ba'ari lineage with which they have clanship ties emerges; but clanship ties do not give them the right to take part in the religious cults in which the corporate unity and identity of the whole clan emerges. They have no bonds with the clan as a whole, but only with the relatively autonomous segments of the clan. Gbizug, however, is bound to a segment of the clan by clanship ties and to the whole clan by ritual ties, and the bridge between these two sets of ties is Ba'at-Sakpar. Gbizug has no loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari, other than Ba'at-Sakpar, on the level of clanship; in this respect Gbizug is a threat to the stability of Ba'at-Sakpar's field of clanship. The latter's loyalties to Gbizug might in certain circumstances clash with its loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari. Compromise and adjustment are made possible by the scheme of ritual ties. The partly independent fields of clanship of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are adjusted to one another at a different level of social organization. In the frame of ritual relations, Gbizug is, as it were, assimilated to the whole clan of Ba'ari, drawn into the field of clanship of Ba'at-Sakpar.

It follows that on this plane of ritual relations Gbeog and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra are indirectly bound to the whole of Ba'ari, for Gbizug represents its whole field of clanship in its corporate ritual relationship with Ba'ari. At a further remove Zubiuŋ Yakɔra is the bridge between the whole of Zubiuŋ and the whole of Ba'ari through Gbizug; and this rule extends, by a series of removes, to all the Talis.

The Underlying Principles of Ritual Collaboration

x618 We must try to see clearly the principles underlying this bewildering
182 hierarchy of social ties between corporate units in Taleland. It is as difficult to state this principle simply and precisely as it was for the writer to elicit it from the confusing and, at first sight, inconsistent welter of

182 of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme, 794 through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the 796 chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔyaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔyar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔyar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔyar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔyar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔyar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔyar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔya* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

782 So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔyar*, the officiant in his 794 invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔya*, enumerating them by name, to [552] 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔyar* has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔya* of all the Talis clans are

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[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔyar* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔya* 782
of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of 794
the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual 619
community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of 794
every Taləŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔyar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔyar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔyar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) 794
are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social 171
groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔyar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔyar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔyar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkəra*)'.

Bɔyar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage 182
associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious 794
conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of 613
loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔyar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

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[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years
ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine
is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing
this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and
forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black
man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy
grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on
the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among
distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567]
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke
down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the 535
end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend
the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good
year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young
mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders
fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There
is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ
kpɛŋŋa*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmo-
sphere of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of
ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale
ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and inter-
dependence. For the individual the physical well-being of himself and
his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of
offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual
symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep
it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go
back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this:
'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that off-
spring be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul
guul, ka dɔγam dɔγa, ka guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the 241
natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and
talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and
industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency
between a *pukpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious
hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of con-
sumption. One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

731 241 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 165 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting [766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of 758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

788 771 782 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 788
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. [193]
To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man 688
with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight 471
corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays
there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*walǝg*) such 432
difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical 471
punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's depen- 688
dants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are 613
thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; 471
and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land 426
now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the
significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive [782] ●
act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions 471
always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land 426
ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the 602

ritual custody of a particular clan or maximal lineage. Such a territorial 778
section is the *tɛŋ* of a particular tɛndaana. He is the master (*daana*) of 779
that locality (*tɛŋ*), exercising ritual jurisdiction over it on behalf of the 793
maximal lineage or clan which has the ritual ownership of it, in virtue of 471
being the head of that unit. He is the mediator between the Earth and the
people whose interests lie in that fraction of its physical surface. When
the concept *tɛŋ* is coupled with a tɛndaana it has a double meaning. It
denotes both a stretch of territory and a place of contact with the mystical
Earth. It may be used to designate a single Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) and
its precincts, a total area of anything from about 20 square yards to an
acre or two; and it can be applied to the whole of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*, which
includes a number of *tɔŋgbana*.

Tɛndaanas' *tɛs* vary greatly in extent. As I have no exact measurements, 471
I can only indicate roughly the range of differences. Small *tɛs* are the 793
rule in the older and more densely settled part of the country. The area of a clan settlement on Tɛnzugu, for instance, perhaps a square mile altogether, may be divided amongst three or four tɛndaanas. On the other hand, at the peripheries tɛndaanas have ritual jurisdiction over large tracts of land, many square miles in extent. This is largely due to the absence of permanent settlement in these parts until recently, and the still relatively scanty population living there.

Tallensi do not think of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* in terms of its size but in 471
terms of its position relatively to the *tɛs* of neighbouring tɛndaanas. 793
Tɛndaanas themselves claim that their *tɛs* have definite boundaries, but 779
when asked to show them they become very uneasy and quote the maxim 'The boundaries of a *tɛŋ* must not be pointed out (*Tɛŋən tentɔris pu pa'ana*)'. When my bona fides was, at length, accepted by the Tallensi I was able to persuade several tɛndaanas to have the boundaries of their *tɛs* shown to me. My guides were always ill at ease, and apparently felt that what they were doing verged on sacrilege. Chiefs and elders of clans that do not have tɛndaanas usually declare that it is impossible for tɛndaanas to have boundaries (cf. p. 164); for are not neighbouring tɛndaanas always 'kin' (*mabiis*)—by clanship or by ritual ties? Do they not often sacrifice together at one another's Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) or go by stealth, at night, to sacrifice at a neighbouring tɛndaana's Earth shrines? Tɛndaanas do not deny this. In every group of contiguous maximal lineages, each presided over by a tɛndaana (as for instance Gbeog, Gbizug, and Zubiuŋ), the senior tɛndaana (in this instance the Gbizug tɛndaana) always claims to be the real 'owner' of the aggregate of *tɛs* held by the group of tɛndaanas. He talks of this aggregate of *tɛs* as if it were one *tɛŋ* apportioned amongst his junior 'brothers' and himself for the greater convenience of performing the priestly duties of the tɛndaanaship. They divide their common spiritual jurisdiction rather than a distinct stretch of territory; and in principle this rule embraces the whole of Taleland.
For the powers of the Earth are indivisible, the Earth is a unity. When the [782] ●
Gbizug tɛndaana sacrifices to his supreme *tɔŋgban*—or, as he often
phrases it, his *tɛŋ*—Kpɔŋkparəg, he invokes all the important *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, up to the limit of the field of politico-ritual relations in which Gbizug participates, from Duusi in the north-east to Biuŋ in the south.

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of
Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men
who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg
is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors
was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his
ahəb (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidem of
Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most
of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases
the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one
living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as
at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been
carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they
undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he
constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in
order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [762]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build
a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)'
ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed
portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the
dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead
is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is
fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual
and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tendaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tendaana in whose *tey* the land lies. Unless the tendaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tendaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tendaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
●782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tendaana of the *tey*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tendaanaship,
[673 through their own tendaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋg-*
782] *bana*—for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tendaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tendaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tendaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tendaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tendaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tendaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tendaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tendaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tendaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the im-
291 portant *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few ten-
daanas. My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tendaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tendaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tendaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tey* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tey*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tes*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

613 621 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔɣar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ha Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔɣada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛɣahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔɣada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛɣahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔɣada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zɔŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seɣahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zɔŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contra-[782]position between Kuorɛg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zɔŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often 613 emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yərug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated, 621 contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yərug Yin had been the head of Bɔɣada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates [273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large [554] pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Saɣawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔak*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them 613
in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in 621
the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, 613
though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal 621
lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and 161
children), including members of the section and their families who live at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the 613
effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments 621
of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare 182
it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things.
When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or cere- [782]
monially slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section, as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides.
Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and [787]
Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*, that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and 613
solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range 621
of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same 622
obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined 621
in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in 613
equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpalɔg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and 621
jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior 554
(*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar* and Sɛɣahɔg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt 173
beside Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing- 621
ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is 778
the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever 613
vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnɔt, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahɔg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies 778
under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* [782] ●
Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are 461
signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour-water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Baɣar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

PLATE XII

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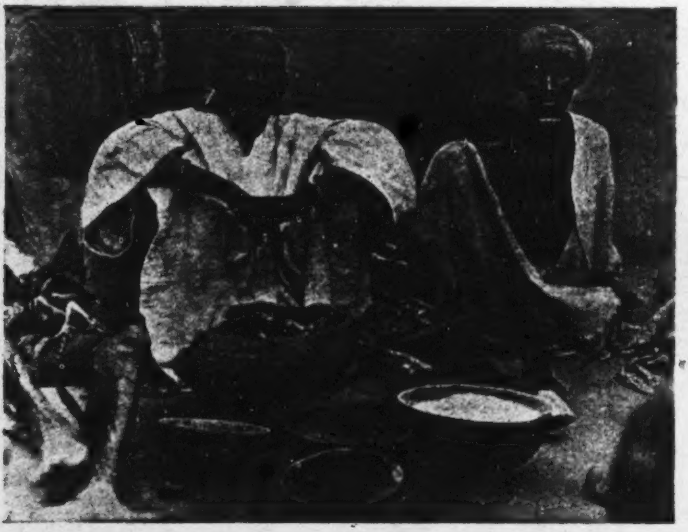

(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyeŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔγar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔγar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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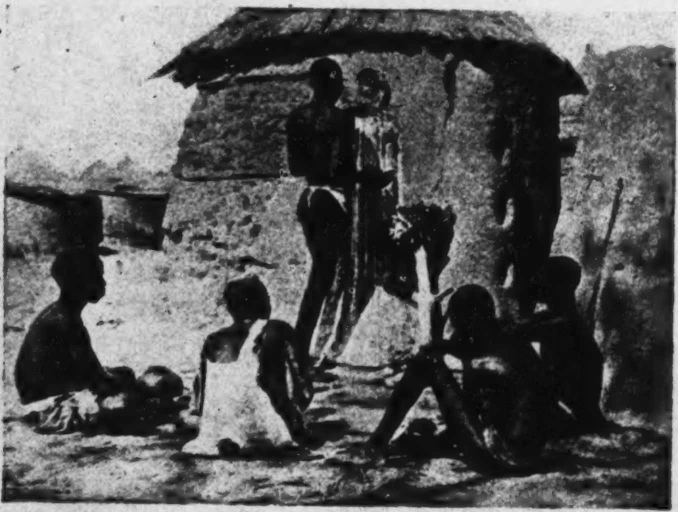

(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔγar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p.225]

of Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his 613
sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make 577
a chief or tendaana any the less a chief or tendaana. The activities of the
office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a 613
marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new 571
bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial
lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their
section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre
of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a
constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's
homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or
discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of [574]
lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This
applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and
sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of
solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are
thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to 613
arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What 627
he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation,
for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in
adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has
the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would
attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing
of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a 613
chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to 688
support his authority. A tendaana has, in addition, the sanction of the
Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, 769
responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody 182
of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only
on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on
the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which
lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the
supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away
from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account
of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the
norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death,
when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors
and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism 613
for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage 769
head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage
of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is 182
of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes [782
ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort.
They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of
other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, but all who participate feel them to be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in
182 many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines.
And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head
of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the
[224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin
are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage), and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the
[769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for
instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's
welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔɣar* of his medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of a sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's* duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
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PLATE XIV

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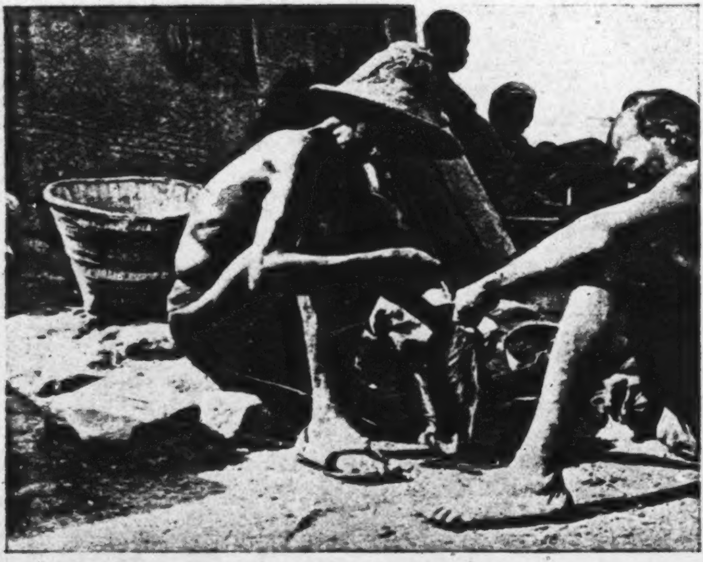

(*a*) *Sunzɔp m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

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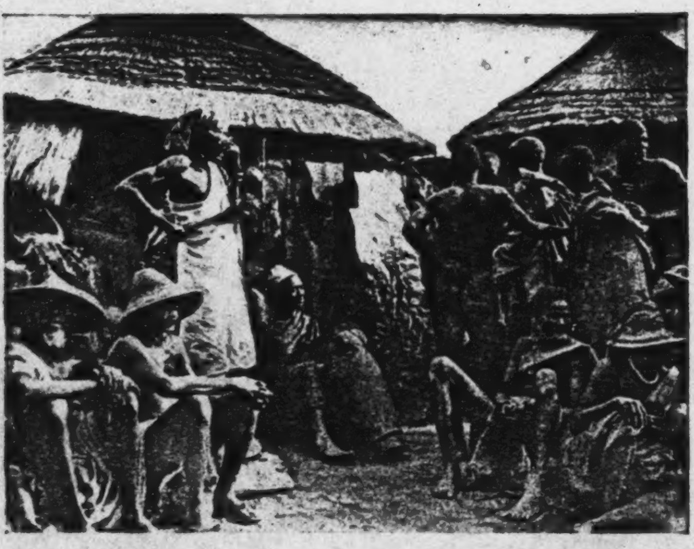

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tendaana at his homestead.

[facing p. 24]

This aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔɣar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔɣar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔɣar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔɣar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔɣar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation- 486
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔɣar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔɣar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔɣar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔɣar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔyar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country, recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

PLATE 2

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a. The domestic family is the matrix of kinship. A family party out lifting ground-nuts on the home farm. Their homestead is in the background. From right to left: the head of the family, his infant daughter, his adult son, the latter's wife and baby, the family head's wife and daughter

● 782

b. A domestic sacrifice: cleaning and apportioning the meat of the goat at the conclusion of the sacrifice. Baŋan-Teroog, his senior wife, and his junior wife's two children. The old woman is holding a chicken ready for the next sacrifice

[FACING p. 33]

351 ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish
hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and
unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every
[622] gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief
of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining
the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the
privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its
members.

Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the
351 *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary
556 spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish
231 and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any.
[514] One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and
sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even
by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his
homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor
goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less
than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug
tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has
cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls
and guinea-fowls.

[361] From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out
and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the
342 homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through
the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*,
and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the
room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed
between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities
are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable posses-
[556] sions, his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth,
the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that
to the Taləŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated
with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which
wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the
● [782] principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain
their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers.
In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the
zɔŋ, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to
nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two
chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber
is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber,
communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey,
for the night.

342 The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality.
778 It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes
778 his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the
zɔŋ of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors,
is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr*
of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11
and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages
later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere
than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
627 welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say,
transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery
she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*.
She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage
against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized
in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not
confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this
ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

342 Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary
course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a
yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the
sapak. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom
and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and
6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One
suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more
numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more
smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with
a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
[351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a
Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the
domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters
and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the
smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and
guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this,
life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and
the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency
of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

PLATE 8

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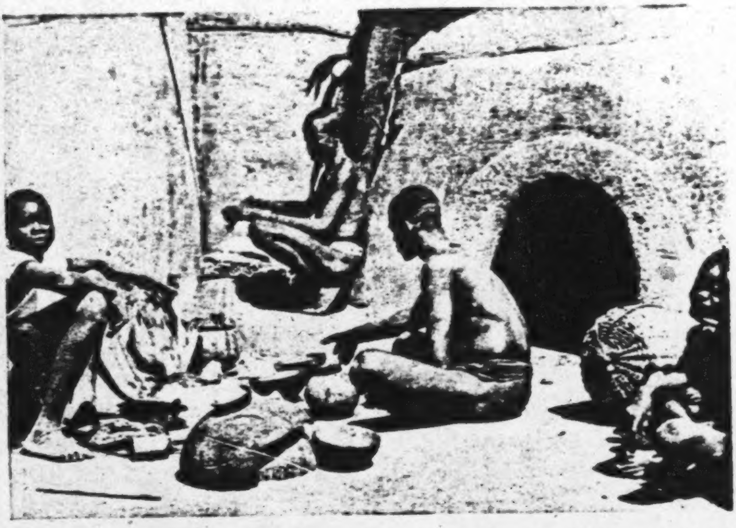

a. A domestic sacrifice of fowls, guinea-fowls, and beer. The head of the joint family is addressing the shrine, which occupies a recess in his senior wife's *Dug*

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b. Omara and his four youngest daughters—each the daughter of a different wife—having a snack at mid-day

[facing p. 129]

593 family is at home, to see this, especially where young children are concerned. With adults the discrimination is not so obvious in the 602 ordinary daily routine as with children. I have seen a babe of six months left in the care of its mother's co-wife, whimper and strain eagerly towards its mother when it saw her arrive at the homestead with a load of firewood in the company of two other women of the household. An older child will run to its own mother for protection, if it is frightened, clutching her knees and thrusting its face between her thighs. A small boy of 3 to 6 years of age will try to follow his own father about wherever he can; and a little girl of this age hangs around her own mother, as she gets on with the household tasks, in a way that would be impossible with her mother's co-wife. On the other side, one can easily notice the difference between the sympathy and often grief of a woman over the illness or death of a co-wife's child and the utter prostration into which a mother falls if such a misfortune strikes her own child. Similarly, a man shows deep concern over the sickness or death of his brother's child. He will abandon a visit he has planned to a relative, give up work for the day, shelve any plans he may have made; for next to a death, nothing is so upsetting to a Tale household as the illness of a child. But this is as nothing compared with his grief over the death, or his distress at the illness of his own child.

613 This affective discrimination of own parents and own children is the psychological counterpart of the differentiation of descent lines within 602 the lineage and of segments within the family. Sentiment and structural relationships go hand in hand and the ritual superstructure of Tale society mirrors both. This consistency of the total scheme of social relationships means that we can make inferences about aspects of the relationship between parents and children that are not expressed in their ordinary intercourse, from ritual ideas and practices and from the ●[782] changing pattern of co-operation and association between them. The fact that a man can only sacrifice directly to the spirits of his own parents and to antecedent ancestors through his own parents, and not to or through the spirits of proxy parents, is as important a factor in the unique bond of parent and child as the fact that a child is usually brought up by his own parents.

Structural arrangements and ritual ideas show that, in spite of the precise discrimination of own parents and own children, proxy and classificatory parents do have a parental role even during the lifetime of own parents. They take pride in these children, and speak of them as 'my children'. Everyone who is 'father' or 'mother' to a person must be treated with the respect due to a parent and has some degree of authority over him or her. I recall one day seeing Sinkawol, a young man of about 25, instructing Kyekambɛ, a lively boy of about 12, in a task connected with house-building. They both belonged to the inner lineage of which Nyaaŋzum of Kpata'ar was the head. This lineage

603 *ma-kpeem*, fem.) are a foil to those of parents and children. It is convenient here to state the range within which grandparents are acknowledged. On both the mother's side and the father's side grandparents are primarily one's own parent's own parents. The terms are extended to own grandparents' siblings (in particular to a grandfather's brothers) and their wives, but rarely beyond that limit, and never, in my experience, beyond a grandfather's agnatic cousin. This is correlated with the cycle of development of the joint family. By the time a man has grandchildren he is not likely to be still sharing a homestead with his brother, let alone cousin, and his classificatory siblings will have only a formal interest in his grandchildren.

The diagram on p. 148 sums up this discussion of the range of parenthood acknowledged by the Tallensi.

The Significance of 'Having no Father alive'

593 Clearly the formula 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage' covers a complicated tissue of social relationships. Another aspect of it appears in the significance Tallensi attach to whether or not one's father is alive.

593 885 This is a matter of considerable practical importance, more particularly for men, but also for women. A person's status in his clan, and in every segment of it to which he belongs, depends largely on whether 'his father is alive (*u ba be*)' or not (*u ba ka*). It is correlated with the distribution of jural and ritual authority and responsibility in the lineage. During his own father's lifetime a person's status is submerged in that of his father for jural and ritual purposes. He comes directly under his father's authority, as we shall see presently. He attains his first degree of independence only on the death of his own father. This is shown to some extent in every department of his life, but most significantly in the sphere of ritual. A man cannot make sacrifices to [782] ● his patrilineal ancestors in his own right while his own father is alive. His father does this on his behalf. It is only when his father dies that a man can sacrifice directly to his ancestors; for such sacrifices can only be offered through the medium of his father's spirit.

This marks a very important stage in a man's social maturation, whatever his chronological age may be. Henceforth the responsibility for keeping the goodwill of his ancestors rests directly on his own shoulders. It will be he himself, for instance, not his father, who decides whether a sacrifice demanded by such-and-such an ancestor should be offered at once or postponed. And with this first stage of ritual responsibility usually goes some degree of autonomy in jural and economic matters, as we shall see presently. Nevertheless, no man attains full autonomy within the limits of the lineage system until he is altogether 'fatherless'. While he has a proxy or classificatory father alive he is still to some extent under paternal authority. It is worth

613 or father's [illegible] brother's son is still alive would not claim to be
602 fatherless. [illegible]atters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in relation t[illegible]nits, he has no independent status. The unit is under the [illegible] of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. [illegible]milarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved ~~and~~ the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

613 We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how
593 the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog. When Sɛbɔg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bɔɣabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sɛbɔg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔɣar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔɣabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the
[784] elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then Bɔɣabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

782 Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain
593 of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External *Bɔɣar* are known as 'tabooed fowls (*nɔkiha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten,
[784] by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

593 In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

769 577 167 when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not done so. Dema is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to abandon in Mampurugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the same with Na'abzɔ, Kaɣar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

769 577 751 While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every native owns some 'roots (*ŋaɣa*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you (to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔɣam la zug, nyɛn dɔɣəm la zugu*).'

577 593 769 Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan, with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛɣəraan*) of one of her paternal forbears and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance [782] to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers. A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

593 *doo*, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep
in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children
866 over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come
to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older
children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night
[864] when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the
suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations
between their parents.

As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his
868 mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of
866 which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut
plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for
602 instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a
loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them
in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too,
as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding
from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be
given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already
has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition
by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize,
inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his
matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*)
or uncle (*ahəb*), but sometimes his father's *ahəb* or some other kinsman
of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal
uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Taləŋ
can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of
selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was
bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from
¶[782] the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to
take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage
bɔyar as a thank-offering.

The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as
866 a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition
593 to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral
kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the
yir in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at
animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation
of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads,
at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that
time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build
on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at
a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants
and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

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[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

593 571 764 602 In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Saɣawuob's mother's funeral Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Saɣawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

613 593 562 A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔɣaɣabələg-kpeŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the lineage. ● [782 If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

PLATE 16

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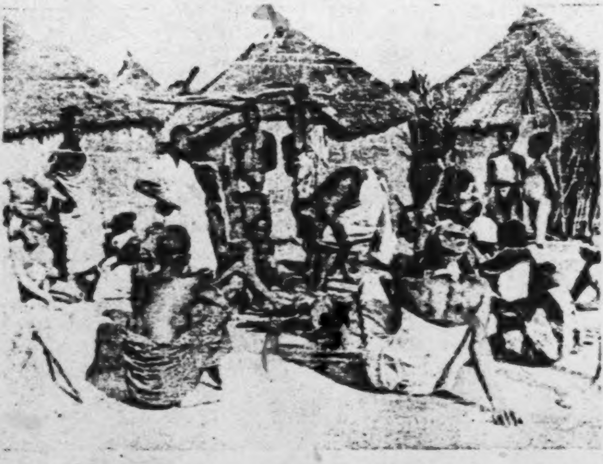

a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[facing p. 289]

602 577 rites of setting up a shrine dedicated to her. For safety's sake all the travelling on such journeys was always done at night. During the day the traveller lay low in a kinsman's house. So Teroog set off one night. He went first to his father's mother's brother's home at Gorogo. Thence he was escorted to his father's mother's mother's natal home at Sii. The Sii people took him to a more remote kinsman at Balung and from there he was conducted, by similar stages, to Sandema. His return journey was made in the same way. The whole trip took nearly a month. The same journey can be done on foot, nowadays, in three or four days each way.

Similarly Zubiuŋ men relate how in the old days their Tongo neighbours, being of a different and unconnected clan,[1] used sometimes to raid their livestock to recover bride-price debts. As the people of Tongo were much more numerous than those of Zubiuŋ resistance was generally impossible. But if a Zubiuŋ man had a close matrilateral or affinal kinsman at Tongo, this afforded him some protection. His kinsman would intercede to get any livestock of his that had been seized restored to him, or, if the debtor were a very close agnate of his, to arrange a settlement between creditor and debtor. Often the head of an intercalary lineage, such as Nɔŋsuur yidem,[2] undertook this on behalf of his classificatory mother's brother's lineage.

602 782 Nowadays the most important obligations extra-lineage kin have towards one another are in ritual matters, and these are unavoidable obligations. This applies especially to kin of a senior generation in relation to those of a junior generation. A person owes ritual allegiance to his matrilateral ancestors as well as to his paternal ancestors. In fact, in the strictly personal affairs of the individual, his matrilateral ancestors have as decisive a role in his life as his patrilineal ancestors. This accords with the recognition given to maternal origin in the social structure and with the rule that kinship never dies out. Hence there are many occasions in the life of a man when he has to go to his mother's brother or to someone standing in that order of relationship to him to ask him to sacrifice on his behalf. For it must be remembered that the canon of agnatic descent prohibits anyone other than a true patrilineal descendant from sacrificing to an ancestor or ancestress. Thus if a man wants to sacrifice to his mother's spirit guardian he has to go to her natal home and ask her father (or his heir) to perform the sacrifice. Herein lies the force of the statement commonly used to define extra-clan kinship ties, 'I sacrifice on his behalf', or 'he sacrifices on my behalf'. The whole weight of the ancestor cult stands behind these and other ritual obligations of extra-clan kin to one another and no Talɔŋ would violate them.

602 582 If we add to this the rule that marriage between extra-clan kin of any degree is forbidden, we can see that there is much in common between

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

[2] Cf. ibid., pp. 59 and 78.

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partly because Ɔmara's relationship was with the whole inner lineage, not with Dawoog personally, the request had to be placed before the assembled elders of the inner lineage. The land could not have been granted without their unanimous consent. This having been obtained, a day was fixed for handing over the land. Early in the morning of the appointed day Ɔmara, followed by his oldest son, arrived bringing a fowl and a guinea-fowl and a large basket of guinea corn. Dawoog then summoned all the men of his inner lineage, and proceeded to sacrifice the birds to his lineage ancestors at the lineage *bɔyar*. Addressing the ancestors he explained all the circumstances of their 'grandson' Ɔmara's request and exhorted them to bless his labour and to grant that the new farm might bring him prosperity. It was a long prayer detailing exactly how Ɔmara was related to Dawoog's lineage and promising that he would bring further offerings in gratitude to the *bɔyar* whenever the new farm produced good crops. The flesh of the birds was divided amongst all present, including Ɔmara, in accordance with the customary rules. [782]

Ɔmara and his son, accompanied by two young men and an elder of the *ahəb yiri* deputed by Dawoog, then repaired to the bush-farm. The elder showed Ɔmara the boundaries of the farm and the young men hoed a strip along one boundary to symbolize marking them out (*kyie*). They then set to, with the aid of Ɔmara and his sons, to hoe a small patch, and so symbolically to hand over the right of working the farm. This was symbolized, also, in a simple rite in which the elder handed Ɔmara a large pellet of soil from the farm, mixed with a handful of the flour used in the sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, to eat.

The procedure was identical in the case of Sɔmbura, with one exception. The land belonged to his *ahəb* Sayamane's nuclear lineage, so there was no need to obtain the consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Sayamane did, however, inform them because, as he put it, 'you cannot undertake so important a transaction without the knowledge of your "brothers" and "fathers", and besides, telling them makes them witnesses to the act'. It means that there will always be some member of the inner lineage who knows the circumstances and conditions of the gift. [577]

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Tallensi attach very great importance to the ritual steps in this transaction. They secure the blessing of his matrilateral ancestors for the recipient of the land. Without this, they believe, failure and even disaster would overtake him when he starts farming the new bush-farm; for, they say, the land really belongs to the ancestors who first cultivated it. Moreover, the ritual formalities also have an explicitly stressed jural function. It is a solemn covenant between the parties, made in the presence of the ancestors, in which all those who have rights in the land avow their consent to the gift and the recipient pledges himself to abide by the implicit conditions of the tenure of the land. The arrangement

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604 and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance.
769 It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are in-
[764] formed, distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's
604 house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made
782 by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bɔɣar*, there are always *ahəs* present; perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

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[1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious
[778 custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to
769] them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

ahəs, representing perhaps five or six clans, over the division of the 604 cow's neck amongst themselves. It is on such occasions that the *ahəs* divide into two groups, the *dugni ahəs*, who are sisters' sons of the inner 782 lineage responsible for the ceremony, and the *yɛŋha* (outside) *ahəs*, whose matrilateral links are with other segments of the clan. Etiquette dictates that the choicest and largest part of the meat apportioned to the *ahəs* should be given to the 'outside *ahəs*'. The *dugni ahəs*, it is argued, have many more opportunities of attending ceremonies of this inner lineage and receiving their shares of the sacrificial meat.

There are certain ceremonial occasions on which sisters' children of 604 all degrees usually turn up in large numbers.[1] They include not only *ahəs* of the lineage immediately responsible for the ceremony but also 764 remote *ahəs* and 'grandsons (*yaas*)' of the clan. The death of a senior elder or of the holder of a politico-ritual office brings 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' from a wide range to the funeral. They are present at all stages of the funeral, but the largest number usually come on the day of the burial, on the day the funeral proper (as opposed to the burial rites) commences, and on the two occasions when a diviner is consulted to ascertain the mystical author of the death. These are all occasions when animals are slaughtered as offerings and tributes to the dead, or else food or beer is used in the rites and shared amongst all present. The meat and the drink form a big attraction to all who have kinship ties with the lineage celebrating the funeral. It is no mean attraction either, considering that at a big funeral, such as that of the head of a section (*yizug*) of a clan or of a maximal lineage, two or three big beasts (cows and donkeys) and from twenty to forty small stock (sheep and goats) will be slaughtered, not to speak of innumerable fowls. In addition there will be great quantities of porridge and other cooked food. And *ahəs* have prescribed shares of all these items. Similar prodigality is shown in the brewing of beer for a big funeral.

But greed is far from being the chief motive that brings matrilateral and sororal kin to an important funeral. The profusion of food and beer—both of which are distributed only on specific ritual occasions—serves chiefly to create and maintain the right atmosphere of pride and kinship amity. For it must be remembered that most of the 'sisters' sons' will bring a gift, if it is only a meagre chicken and a small basket of grain; and if there are twenty or thirty 'sisters' sons' present the 604 share of meat and beer each will receive is of less value than the things 764 he brings.

A 'sister's son' or a 'grandson', like everybody else who attends such 571

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[1] As these ceremonies are almost always conducted by men and belong to the ritual and jural spheres of activity dominated by the men, the *ahəs* who come are principally males; but often one or two female *ahəs* come as well. The neck of the animal sacrificed belongs in theory to the *ahəs* of both sexes, but I have never seen it given to a woman.

604 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The
764 funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public
interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the
571 beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations
of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That
is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related
clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in
the funeral.

For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔγar* of a lineage of
613 a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally
571 taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage
602 head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the
lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of
● 782 the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head
after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage
head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of
lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of
their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All
the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives
of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from
far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from
the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son',
whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor
of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion,
the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance.
Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to
a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to
bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔγar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and
'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the
essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship
prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice
itself.

It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly
793 appointed tendaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan
kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated
602 clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls,
dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other
voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tendaana and to testify
to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in
effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage
bɔγar. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding
with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons'
and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tendaana are as proud
of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'
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592 and also, as we shall see, the many unpredictable modes of consumption of the grain (e.g. in recompensing collective labour, *vide infra*).[1]

MEAT AND FISH. Meat (*numit*) is subject to even greater fluctuations 231 of supply than grain owing to uncontrollable sources. Every com- 235 pound possesses some live stock, if it be only a few fowls and guinea- 262 fowls. A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely, to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never slaughtered specifically for food[2] by the average man. We heard of two donkeys being slaughtered in order to sell the meat by a couple of young men out for profit. This was vigorously denounced by the Chief, and was not repeated. As a rule beef is obtained from sacrifices ●[782] to the ancestor spirits, always made by men of senior status, and from animals offered during funeral ceremonies, donkey-meat only from the latter offerings. The carcase is usually divided up among a large number of people in accordance with kinship status. An elder may obtain a whole leg of a bull, but he will sub-divide it among the compounds or households subordinate to him. Thus, in the long run, the share of a single household comes to a very small quantity, often only a few ounces. But nothing is wasted; the whole carcase, including all the viscera, is consumed.

Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again, 231 no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food. In addition 782 to sacrifices and funerals, there is a number of formal occasions on 262 which one of these animals must be killed, e.g. as an act of hospitality to a mother-in-law or a very great friend. Corresponding to their lesser value and much greater abundance, sheep and goats are sacrificed in larger numbers than cows, often by men of junior status. The

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[1] Mr. Lynn, *op. cit.* finds that 1 man supports 3·7 people on the average, on 2·03 acres of farmed land. In addition to the sources of error mentioned in the text, it should be noted that the simplicity of Tale agricultural technology makes it possible for quite small boys to be of occasional, if somewhat casual, assistance in the fields.

[2] The Chief of Tongo slaughtered a cow for his wives and elders at the New Year (*Daa*) Festival in 1934, the only case of the kind we came across.

consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus considerably 231
greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire 782 ●
leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of 262
junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by
professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which
we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign
settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there
along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief
customers of the butchers. But a Taleŋa occasionally buys a little [435]
meat—from a few ounces for 3*d.*, to a leg for 9*d.* to 1*s.* He may do this
when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is
courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her
some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial 231
animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occasions 262
such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great 224
delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs
throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the
majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush
on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost [354]
entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though
regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride
in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once
observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth,
among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal
as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*ziŋ*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small 262
supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and 226
part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially
dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success,
as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought
in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some 262
of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

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[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will
be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of
protein foods.

For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable
262 ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The
235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, can-
422 not replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-
born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its
chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often
do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For
poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may
be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing
friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking
away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore,
the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and indi-
viduals within the unit of food economy come to marked expres-
sion. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry
[231] freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a
self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before
selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though
nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be
disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of
that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the
cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food
economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own
efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls
● [782 never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and
431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of
birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-
meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacri-
fice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of
meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred.
At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left
to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

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[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed 226
by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a 423
minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bɔlgraana*, who had only recently been installed. 535
To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the
full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The [292]
musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place "where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences.

The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move 226
about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense 423
is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements. The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights.

Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the 226
performance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to 789
start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, 782
surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features—

226 typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also
789 many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance.
782 Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*).
[778] The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*. Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool
[787] and of the magical specialist. A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist. Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bolgraana's* first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish. The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near
[424] pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

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[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of 226
his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated 789
with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a
little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus 782
symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its 226
highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round
him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. [533]
On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was tâken of sending four good swimmers in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

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[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognized. Members 602
of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 514 •782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos [784] have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

182 578 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

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	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

A. W. CARDINALL.

[p. 63]

513 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed
178 aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these
minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

The Ten'dan': Among the Talense an investigation into the former
793 status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the
answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs;
783 this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land
627 from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die,
except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*tey*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man tey*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

782 If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a
cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person,
783 he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the
people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten'dan'*, nor will the latter take
●783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering
to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold
his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere*' (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan*'[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
793 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
425 by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes,
axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become
Ten'dan'.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyihir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusodana*.

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632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge
of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1]
report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed, informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpeeem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
[783] given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
● [783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[627] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[‡] have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab*'.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered ?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned
would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

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[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

[‡] [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

351 751 782 342 In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots. 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

342 361 Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry- and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the
[778] latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

778 783 The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

three days. At the end of that time, he will bury the "roots" which 783
the pot contains. Beer is then prepared and more roots sought for, 778
and two pots. A dog and a red cock are sacrificed on one pot; a goat and a white cock on the other. Water, in which the roots have been soaked, is used for making *sagbo* (porridge) in which the livers of the sacrifice are put. The murderer and the head of his family first take some of this food in their left hands and put it in the pots, after which they and any one else who has ever killed a man (in war or otherwise) will partake of the rest of the food. Some of the roots are burned and then powdered and put in beer, and the head of the murderer's family (if he too has ever killed any one) and the murderer drink it. A similar sacrifice is made over these pots twice a year. When the murderer dies, the two pots are placed inside the *zɔŋ* hut, and the son of the murderer will continue to sacrifice on them, but unless he too has killed some one, he may not himself eat of these sacrifices. The following words are spoken when the sacrifice is being made:

'Medicine (*tim*) receive this offering and drive away that person 783
(the murdered man) that he may return to his own compound.' The relations of the murderer have also to bring a goat, a cock, and beer [793]
to 'cover up the blood'. This is the work of the *Tenedan*'. He will make the sacrifice and say:

'Children have done something bad (*yele*) and blood has come forth and death resulted. Receive this offering and quench this fire.' The fowl and goat are sacrificed over a hole in the ground and the feathers of the fowl and undigested food in the stomach of the goat are buried in the hole. The whole of the sacrifice must be eaten at the spot where it is made. A child's bow and arrow is broken and placed in the same hole with the words, 'This is the bow and arrow which has caused the death; we have broken it; do not permit it to come out'.

'A man is very proud to have killed another in war, but not to have murdered one.'

Kusase

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765
father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769
his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his
father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make
use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the
flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies.
It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years,
later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been
settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the
day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters'
children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations,
assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302]
are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely
shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the
children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765
who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768
they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out.
After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765
main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837
the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle.
She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783
sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there
send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness.
He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the
land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan'* will come and [793]
sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have
sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says
so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one
representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their
mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201]
in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses
his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of
the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and
its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also
put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it.
The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a
fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices
the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out
from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

837 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood
•783 drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the
765 woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs
off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a
man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'.
There she is given new waist-strings.

765 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow
768 out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother.
The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If
602 my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother,
and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives, my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos (*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

and these are left on the grave. The iron heads of the hoes are washed 787
in water containing *grunyoa* grass (*nagwa* in Nankane, used to fumi- [783]
gate everything which has had contact with the dead). If the deceased [778]
had a *bakolog* (soothsaying shrine) it is fumigated with the grass.

Driving the Souls of the Living from Graves: 'Some *bayas* (sextons) can 791
see souls (*sis*) in graves. When they do so, they will take a potsherd 775
and put peppers and tobacco on it and set them on fire and place them in the open grave in order that the soul may be driven out.'

This exhausts the information which I obtained while living with 000
the Kusase,[1] whom I found a charming and delightful people. I pass on in my next chapter to describe the Builsa, whom Europeans know better as the 'Kanjaga'.

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[1] The Kusase do not circumcise, nor do their women practise incision, unless 304
influenced by Mampruse connexions, e.g. at Bawku. They file the teeth. The women pierce the lower lip only.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this 721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

796 535 282 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

× 618 535 533 508 [728] Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

721 535 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tɛndaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 682 783 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tɛnzugu on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578
demanded that Gbalɔg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787]
among his forefathers. This meant that Gbalɔg's sons should beg the Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors. But Gbalɔg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578
At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x
of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783]
behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation. Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbalɔg's defection was thus erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613
solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x
source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577]
of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen, the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a consideration 182
of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage membership. 183
There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife. Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan. These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms. This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife, the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

and watched over by his ancestors. If she or the child dies in childbirth 661
the responsibility falls on her husband. A child should be born under 769
its father's roof, literally into the lineage to which it comes as a profit
(*ŋoor*) and a responsibility, and under the auspices of its patrilineal
ancestors, the spiritual arbiters of its destiny, to whom it will later in
life bring sacrifices. Its life will depend on these ancestors, one of whom [776]
will immediately demand to be made its spiritual guardian, charged
with preserving its life (*mar u ŋɔvɔr*).

Not only should a child be born under its father's roof, but it should, 854
ideally, be reared, or at least be brought through the first dangerous
months of infancy, in its father's house. Circumstances occasionally 769
compel a child to be entrusted to the care of its mother's family, and the Tallensi are practical enough to accept this necessity with equanimity. But they are extremely reluctant to let a young infant pass out of the direct tutelage of its paternal kin and ancestors even for a short while. Thus strong objection is raised if a young wife takes her infant and goes to stay at her parents' house for some time. Here, again, practical necessity may leave no alternative, but there is always a feeling of uneasiness, as can be seen from the following case. When Nindəɣat of Zubiuŋ died, his youngest wife went home to her father's house at Təŋ-Seug, about a quarter of a mile from her late husband's house, taking her infant of some six months with her. Nindəɣat's brother and prospective heir tried to prevent her going, but she was not well, and they had to admit that she would be better cared for by her mother than by her co-wives. So they allowed her to go. A couple of weeks later, however, the baby fell ill, and though the young mother was staying only a few minutes' walk from her late husband's house, she returned to it immediately. 'She came running back home', her late husband's brother told me, 'because the child was ill. Its (dead) father had not agreed for it to be taken away (that is, the dead father, now a spirit, had mystically caused the child's illness as a sign of his displeasure). And supposing the child were to die at its maternal uncle's house? Should we not say that they had caused the death of our child?' The proper ritual measures to cure the child, without which practical leechcraft could not avail, could only be taken by its father or his representative in its father's house. The young mother believed this as firmly as her late husband's heir.

For all these reasons it is a taboo (*kihər*) for a child to be born in its 844
mother's father's house. His ancestor spirits cannot watch over mother
and child, for they do not 'own (*so*)' the child. It is, therefore, dangerous 783
for the child's health and chances of survival. Of course, such a thing 769
may, and sometimes does happen by accident. Then the child's father must, whenever he can afford it, erase the pollution by the ceremony of 'removing the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the birth from his father-in-law's house. He sends a sheep and beer to his father-in-law as a placation

844 gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his
son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders
•783 of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be per-
769 formed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both
842 parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is
613 overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔɣam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔɣam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

604 One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is
the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

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[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

The idea of witchcraft is not

easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is 754
by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based 613
on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not 827
connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas. 754
Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of 611
witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the 761
slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical 783
responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

761 ●783 blows and my visitor gets killed by accident. Then the slayer will bear one kind of mystical blood-guilt and I will bear the *tyuk* guilt. I may not realize this; indeed, it may not be discovered until, on the occasion of my death, the diviner reveals that my ancestor spirits caused my death in retribution for my unpurged *tyuk* guilt. This was the case with Siiyɛlib of Tongo. When he died it was revealed through divination that he had borne the *tyuk* guilt for the punitive expedition against the Hill Talis twenty-five years previously. He had lodged a complaint against a Yinduuri man with the District Commissioner, and the white man's attempt to bring the Yinduuri man to book had led to the first brush with the Hill Talis. Other incidents followed, but the real reason why the white man launched a punitive attack on the Hill Talis a year or so later was because he had been enraged by the insults and defiance of the people of Yinduuri when he went to arrest the abductor of Siiyɛlib's wife and child. The test of historical accuracy would have been quite irrelevant in this context. Siiyɛlib's clansmen were interpreting the facts subjectively, in accordance with the native system of moral values and mystical beliefs, so as to fit his death logically to the morally and ritually significant events of his social biography.

A person who bears *tyuk* guilt must be ritually cleansed—'to wash *tyuk* (*su tyuk*)' is the technical expression—or else he and his family will be dogged by sickness, death, and other disasters. After the cleansing rites, the medicinal roots used are wrapped tightly in the skin of a species of civet cat (*tyuk*—hence the general term for this complex of ideas and actions) and the bundle is lashed securely to a rafter of the man's room. It must never be disturbed; if it is, quarrelling and fighting break out. A strong wind shaking the rafters of the room is enough to stir up strife. *Tyuk* once incurred remains a taint for ever; for it is really the evocation of a latent proclivity (so one must interpret the ideas of the natives on this subject) that goes with the uterine line. When a man undergoes the *tyuk* cleansing rites he summons all his *saarət* who are known to him to come and 'eat' the medicine with him, for this dangerous proclivity once evoked in one of them involves them all.

The concept of *tyuk* guilt and its connexion with the uterine line is less explicit than that of witchcraft. There is no idea of its being a potentiality transmitted by birth from mother to child. Even more than witchcraft it is a *post hoc* inference; but the natives do not explicitly attach a *propter hoc* interpretation to it. Uterine kin do not share their *soog*'s *tyuk* guilt; they are, as it were, mystically contaminated by it, by reason of their *soog* tie. As one informant put it, *tyuk* is 'contagious to (*de lɔŋəra*)' *saarət* like a disease, or it 'kindles (*de ta'agəra*)' *saarət* like a spreading fire. If a man has incurred and washed *tyuk* then the most trivial argument in which he happens to be involved is often in danger of becoming a real quarrel; and his *saarət* also become hot-tempered, or, perhaps, become prone to give vent to hot temper.

It is analogous to the way in which a man's agnatic descendants 783
become liable for his sins, though it is not so rigorous and consequential 611
in action as the responsibility for sins and delicts that adheres to the
male line. *Tyuk* is connected primarily with males; though it is of
minor significance in the social definition of uterine kinship, compared
with witchcraft, it obviously fits in with the principles of Tale social
organization in the same way.[1]

Uterine Kinship as a Personal Bond

As we have observed, the fundamental distinction between uterine 611
kinship and agnatic descent is that the former does not give rise to
corporate units of social structure. *Soog* is essentially a personal bond, 602
a bond of mutual interest and concern uniting individual to individual.
Witchcraft, similarly, is an individual act of mystical aggression due
to personal malice against an individual. The model of the relations
between *saarət* is the affection, devotion, and strong feeling of mutual
identification that prevails between parent and child or between full
siblings of the same sex. Its keynote is mutual trust as between equals.
It is never thought of as a matter of rights and duties but as a matter
of sentiment, of spontaneous goodwill and intimate, personal confidence.
Hence the term *soog* is often loosely used to refer to someone with
whom one has a relationship of a similar sort, or to denote a very close
relative of a class of relatives, whether or not they are true *saarət*. An
intimate and trusted friend is like your *soog*, the Tallensi say. Two
daughters of the same lineage, but of unrelated mothers, married into
a single joint family feel themselves to be particularly closely related
and identified with each other by contrast with their conjugal family,
and thus speak of each other as 'my *soog*'. The children of two men
who were uterine kin, keeping up the friendship of their fathers, talk of
themselves as *saarət*. Two men of the same lineage, whether they are
close or distant agnates, who have a common maternal uncle's lineage
(*ahəb yiri*)—i.e. whose mothers' brothers belong to a single segment of
a maximal lineage—feel a bond of personal kinship distinguishing their
relationship with each other from their relationships with their co-members of the lineage. In contexts where they wish to emphasize
their personal bonds in contrast to their common membership of the
lineage they might describe each other as 'my *soog*'. And I once heard 611
a man refer to his son-in-law as 'my *soog* son-in-law (*n-deem-soog*)'. This 606
is a contradiction in terms, for marriage being prohibited between kin
of any degree, a man cannot be both a son-in-law and a *soog*. But the 602
speaker explained that he was using this term in order to distinguish

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[1] There is an interesting psychological problem here, but it lies outside our present scope. *Tyuk* and witchcraft might be regarded as the male and female aspects, respectively, of deep-seated vindictive impulses connected with the mother.

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over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities 769
in their lifetime.

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's 592
father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is conse-
crated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, 783
and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who 778
formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not
only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won
for human ends. Hence the tɛndaana under whose ritual jurisdiction
the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be
magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational
maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebees*). So
complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if
persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new home-
stead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is
finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted
them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex
of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for
the family is against them.

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the 592
elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has
three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They 181
represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale
social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi
always have these three classes of components, they do not always
work in harmony with one another.

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two 592
planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic
descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and 571
the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and
parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense,
control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who
form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other.
Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by
the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral
segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Taləŋ than of the modern Englishman to say 592
that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall
imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their home- 361
steads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them
against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

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[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

thus; and besides, people would say he was mean. This attitude does 606
not occur with the true reciprocity that prevails in the domestic family 431
or between near kin.

Sex in the Relationship of Affines

While, therefore, the relations of affines assume the existence of a 602
formal distance between them, they are not encumbered by avoidances or other social barriers that make friendliness impossible or ordinary social intercourse a burden. There is amity as well as opposition in their relationship. In one matter only is there a rigorous barrier between affines. In respect to sex and procreation they are strictly separate. The emphasis is on the deed, not the word; there is no prohibition against talking to or in the presence of an affine about sexual matters.

One aspect of this ban on bringing sex into the relationship of affinity 602
is the native attitude about a sexual offence against an affine. For a man
to seduce the wife of an affine is almost as heinous a transgression as 577
intercourse with the wife of a man of one's own expanded family, though it is not regarded as incest; and the offence is nearly as bad if the culprit is a close agnate of the woman's husband's affine or the woman the wife of a close agnate of the affine concerned. It is a grave offence, also, if a man or his close agnate abducts the wife of an affine or his close agnate. There are no explicit mystical sanctions against either of these wrongs, but Tallensi describe them as 'a thing of enormous evil (*yɛlbiog tɛnta'ar*)' bound to bring ill fortune on the wrongdoer, and in any case involving such serious social consequences that no man in his senses would descend to them. They think of the possible culprit as being the son-in-law, and they say that the father-in-law would take away his daughter and the bride-price be forfeited. Affines are bound to fall out with one another now and then. Usually apologies proffered through an inter-
mediary lead to their making it up again. But in the case of a sexual [783] ●
offence against a father-in-law, it is quite impossible to beg or receive pardon. For it is a sin; it 'pollutes the room (*sayam dug*)' of the injured man.[1]

'Pollution of the room' in this sense is very rare among the Tallensi. But it is not unknown for a man to abduct the wife of the father- or brother-in-law (true or classificatory) of one of his own clansmen. The elders of both the abductor's medial lineage and the wronged husband's medial lineage are then extremely indignant. The latter demand the return of 'their' wife; and in all the cases I have come across the former see to it at once that the woman is sent back to her husband.

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[1] Cf. p. 28 above. *Sayam dug* has the double sense of a mystical defilement of the sleeping-room—the inner sanctuary of family and of reproductive life—and of an irreparable infringement of lineage rights. If the offender is a distant clansman of the true son-in-law, a ritual reconciliation between the two lineages might be allowed after the defilement has been ritually removed.

606 602 837 577 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman, anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house. Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 606 837 577 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly within the limits of the medial lineage. [576] A man may not even meet his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

● 783 434 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 574 434 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

584 574 834 expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep in separate rooms.

574 834 These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

606 783 ● 844 The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

606 783 827 A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

buried in one of the peripheral settlements, or abroad, where he has 769
been living temporarily. Then, if his sons return to the ancestral home, 577
perhaps years after his death, he will one day, through a diviner, order
them to exhume (*gurəg*) him and rebury him among his ancestors at the 764 ?
ancestral home (*daboog*). The notion that when a person dies he joins
his ancestors (or a woman her husband's ancestors as well as her own), [775]
and that his body should therefore lie among their bodies, is a basic idea
in Tale religion and an obvious reflex of filial piety.

As the case of Sawəŋba's daughter, previously quoted (p. 89), shows, 764
daughters are as much bound as sons to mourn the death of a parent.
All the children of the deceased must come to the funeral so as to 765
undergo the mourning rites. They are ritually unclean until they
have done so and have had their heads ritually shaved (*kuo zug*) in 577
sign of it. Though the ritual uncleanness (*dayət*) of a person who 783 ●
has lost a parent does not interfere with normal life, it is felt to be
a psychological burden, for, as we have noted, until a dead person's
funeral has been made, his or her social personality is not wholly erased
from the real world. I have heard children of 10 or 11 say gravely that
they wished their mother's or father's funeral could be made soon so
that they could 'shave off the uncleanness (*kuo dayət la bah*)'. The
uncleanness adheres primarily to the deceased's own children, but it
also affects proxy children who have no living parent (as determined by
the criteria of 'fatherlessness' or 'motherlessness') of the same sex as the
deceased. One of the ways in which Tallensi demonstrate respect and
affection for a classificatory parent such as a father's agnatic cousin or
a classificatory father's wife, who has never been a proxy parent to
them, is to undergo the chief mourning rites for him or her—provided,
of course, the mourner is 'fatherless' or 'motherless' in that situation.
When an old man or woman who was the last of the generation of
'fathers' or 'mothers' of the inner lineage dies, the men and women of
the lineage to whom he or she is a classificatory parent gather from far
and wide for the funeral and all undergo the rites of shaving the head.
It is not compulsory for anyone to have the head shaved for a
classificatory parent, but it is a pious gesture which at the same time
proclaims the solidarity of the lineage. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* might
be a Tale proverb. Old grudges are forgotten—though not necessarily
buried for ever—and men and women who have been estranged from
their classificatory brothers and sisters or the deceased parent turn up
to the funeral to do the proper thing.

Nowadays the death of a parent is one of the strongest sanctions that 577
induce the men who go to work abroad to return home, if only for a
while. The absentees may dawdle for weeks or months or even two 765
or three years—for funeral ceremonies can be postponed, as we have
noted, for periods up to three, four, or more years—but most of them
come home eventually for the rites. Those who delay so long that their

the widow (or widower) during a funeral, or assist in the rites of purifying the widow or share her meals. Tallensi assert that a breach of this rule is impossible as no man or woman who had not had the experience would take charge of a widow. It is a taboo (*kihər*), and anyone who infringed it would die. Again, owners of diviners' shrines (*bakologo* shrines—the diviner is called *baγa*) are identified in certain situations, though they do not form a corporate body of any sort. Thus when a new diviner's shrine is being set up for a man certain portions of the beer used in the rites can be drunk only by men who already have such shrines, and it is they who carry out the final rites by which the actual power of divination is conferred on him. Similarly it is only men who have themselves undergone the experience and the treatment who may assist in the ritual of purifying a homicide or a man who has slain a big game animal such as a bush cow. The list of illustrations could be extended, but this will suffice to show how deeply rooted the idea is. It is, however, only a determinant of individual conduct and sentiment, giving rise to *ad hoc* co-operation in certain situations, and not a principle of association in corporate units. 593 608 [778] [783]

Factors modifying the Sibling Bond

The solidarity and social equivalence of siblings are conditioned by a number of factors. Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure. Siblingship does not cancel out the uniqueness of the individual, as symbolized in the notion of the *Yin*, and socially crystallized in the precise differentiation of the lineage segment which he or she founds. This factor, with its counterpart in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with the years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and, consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin. Thus the sibling relationship, while itself an important constitutive factor of the lineage structure, is reciprocally moulded by that structure. The relationship of brothers among the Tallensi might very well have been different from what it is if their social organization provided for the continuous merging of collateral lines of descent in lineal lines,[1] so that lineage branches springing from brothers were not specifically recognized, but only the inclusive trunk-line deriving from a distant ancestor. 593 613

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[1] This appears to be the case with the Nuer at higher levels of lineage structure (cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, 1940, ch. v) and among some Southern Bantu tribes, such as the Zulu (cf. E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, 1936).

of the same inner lineage as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' or even as 'my wife 593
(*m-pɔɣa*)'; and, reciprocally, a woman speaks of her husband's brother 681
of the same inner lineage as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)' or, preferably, as 'my
husband's older (younger) brother (*n-sɛt-bier* or *n-sɛt-pit*)', but does not 784
address him thus. The proper reciprocal term of address is *n-kpee* ('my neighbour'), or *n-dakii* ('my sibling-in-law'). The terms for husband and wife are used in address only between a man and a distant clan-brother's wife.

The penalty for breaking this taboo has both a literal and a figurative 593
meaning, in the sense that the brothers will never share anything again 784
or take part in corporate activities as co-members of the same lineage.
It amounts to social and religious ostracism for the sinner, and Tallensi 682
say he would not long survive or his line of descent would perish. A similar penalty is said to follow the killing of a brother, whether it happens by accident or design. As we know, incest with a brother's wife is said to occur, though extremely rarely; fratricide by a brother of the same inner lineage as the victim is felt to be so abhorrent as to be likely to happen only by accident in exceptional circumstances. It has happened once or twice in the past, informants say, when brothers fought over the division of farm-land, but I have not heard of any cases having occurred in the last thirty years or so.[1]

The strength of the sanction we are considering can be judged from 593
its incidence, in an attenuated degree, in cases of intra-clan homicide
where the parties are not brothers of the same inner lineage. If this 682
happens, whether intentionally or by accident, the maxim 'A cow has 784
trampled her calf to death (*naaf n-nɔ bu bii ku*)' applies—that is to say, it is as if a cow had trampled its calf to death; so it is forbidden, on pain of bringing down the wrath of the ancestors, for the victim's close agnates to 'cancel the debt' by killing one of the slayer's close agnates. This rule holds also for lineages or clans interlinked by clanship or
ritual ties. The guilty party offers expiatory sacrifices to the Earth and [783]
then a ritual reconciliation is effected between the two units concerned. But thenceforth the close agnates of the slayer—members of his nuclear lineage, usually—will not participate in a sacrifice in which the close agnates of the victim take part. If the homicide was deliberate, this taboo will even extend to all the patrilineal descendants of the two men. Thus Wakii-Sagbarug yidem and Kuruugdem are adjacent maximal lineages linked by clanship and ritual ties. On certain occasions they meet to sacrifice together at an Earth shrine common to them. The Kuruug people refrain from attending these sacrifices if the chief officiant is a member of a particular segment of Sagbarug yiri. A Kuruug man told me the reason for this in confidence. Some four or five

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[1] There is a legend that one of the early chiefs of Tongo slew his brother in order to get the chiefship. Tallensi say this was following the customs of the Mamprusi. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth
regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive,
851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their
[783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recur-
● rence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that
has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded
and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which
593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their
parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are
593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults
that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best
571 exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance
and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should
591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her
571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

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854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs
of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins)
165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye
it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183
her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764
shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783]
mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual
uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181
and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867
and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856
moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861
that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

173 buried in it. Our first Chief was *Nopeog*. The present Chief is the
622 thirteenth of his line. There are no *Ten'dan'* at Biun[1]; the Chief per-
804 forms sacrifices. We no longer circumcise. Our Chiefs get the red fez
from Kurugu. We no longer speak Dagwanert' (Dagomba).

173 The history of the ruling class of almost every Talense town follows
565 these lines. This upper class were scions of the Kings of Mampruse, from which place, according to themselves, the black race, i.e. the upper classes of Moshi, Dagomba, and Mampruse—and, just possibly, Ashanti—sprang.

178 The *Ten'dan'*, among the Talense, have for the most part fallen upon evil days. One old grey-beard, whom I came to know well enough for him to feel he could express his thoughts to me without fear or evasion, said, 'We were once the owners of this land; since the scorpion Europeans came we have entered into holes. You have burned our bows and arrows; we once were keepers of the moons' (referring to the fact that the *Ten'dan'* knew the time for certain annual festivals and kept the calendars.

618 *Clans*: The word for clan—a patrilineal and exogamous division—
128 is *burt*, pl. *bura*. As already stated above, I omitted to make exhaustive enquiries as to the clans to which the majority of the common people in each *teŋ* (settlement) belonged, merely recording in my notebook at the time what I had been told by the various Chiefs or their satellites, with the result that, in almost every case, I have written 'lion clan' opposite the names of the various Talense settlements. In the light of subsequent experience, I now am positive that this statement requires considerable qualification. What I recorded was really only the clan of the particular kindred-group who supplied the ruler. Had I made more extensive enquiries it would, I am certain, have been found that in each *teŋ* (town, Nankanse *teŋa*) there was a predominant, if not a single, group belonging to one or another of the clans with whose names we have now become acquainted in dealing with the Nankanse, in addition to the lion clan of the Territorial Ruler. I have, in fact, a note to the effect that the majority of the people of *Tɔnzu* appear to be of the *Ye-ba* (leopard clan), and that certain of my informants state they belong to the *Sakur* (tortoise), *Meŋ* (water-turtle), *Sako* (a wild cat ?), *Nwan* (monkey) and *Waf'* (python), clans.

173 'I rise (after death) a *sako*', said one informant, "that is my *burt* (clan),
● 784 but I also taboo *sakur* and *meŋ*. My ancestor *Tamperŋpeleg* (white-

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[1] This, I was later informed, was not the case, but my informants did not wish the correct facts to be known.

ashes) was blind, when a *sakur* and *meŋ* came and asked him what was 173
the matter. He replied, "Sickness." They said, "Open your eyes," and 784
he could see.'

In one of the tribal histories recorded above we again have an 784
example of the violation of a taboo after death—dressing the dead 766
body in a goat-skin. With regard to what we may call the 'royal clan', i.e. lion clan, I was told: 'In olden times, if any one killed a lion, the skin was sent to the Chief of Kurugu, who then sent it on to the Chief of Mampurugu. There a funeral ceremony was held for it.'

Blood Relationship: Relationship, transmitted through the female 611
line, is called *soog'* (compare the Nankanse *sõõ*). The *soog'* groups are well known, but, as far as I could discover, do not bear any special names. The *soog'* exhibits all the characteristics already noted with regard to the Nankanse *sõõ*.[1] A male cannot transmit a taint of witchcraft, inherited from his mother. 'If your mother can fly (*ak*) (that is, is a witch), you can fly.' (*Soe* is a witch in Talene).

'My sister's child is my *soog'*, my brother's child is not; he is my son.' Again, *ziim* (blood) and *soog'* are synonymous terms.

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[1] See Chapter XVIII.

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work. Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity, but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast. 177 796 776 [778]

'Its power is from God (*Na Yin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan*; its taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the following avoidances: 784 776

- (*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
- (*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
- (*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
- (*d*) *Meŋa* (water turtle).
- (*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
- (*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
- (*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la a zia koom* (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water). [195]

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged 788 776 778

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[1] It is also known as *Ya ni* and *Ya pwiga*.

NAMNAM

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kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan'*, also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan'*. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan'* to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).' 793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan'* must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan'* has to be so careful not to eat new crops 173
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan'* of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]●
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gorisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*ŋmba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Ŋkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*baŋ*) by one major segment of Bayana yidəm at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

We have noted that Tale culture is homogeneous. Thus the totemic 184
taboos of the Tale Namoos and their characteristic funeral rites, distinctive as they are, are homologous in form and function with the totemic observances and funeral rites of non-Namoos. We shall see the evidence for this when we examine the more elaborate differentiation of Talis and other non-Namoo clans and lineages by totemic and other ritual observances. Tallensi know this and take it for granted, as they also take for granted variations in the ritual observances of different communities which are presumed to have identical ritual forms. They attribute such variations to the influence of neighbouring communities. In fact the homologous usages of neighbouring communities have features in common which do not occur among more widely separated clans with the same practices.

But the taboos of the first-born and the goatskin loin-cover of the dead 171
are fixed and unalterable. All Tallensi know that these are the distin- 784
guishing *kiha* (sing. *kihər*)—literally, forbidden things, but meaning ritual injunctions as well as prohibitions—of all Namoos, 'from Dagbɔŋ to Mooga', as the natives say.

Namoos say that they observe these *kiha* 'because it is the custom of our ancestors (*ti yaab yɛl nla*)'. They require no other explanation, but accept such ritual observances as facts of immemorial antiquity and part of the fixed order of society. The taboo of the fowl is the only one of these observances for which a myth of origin exists, and this is typical of the Tale myths purporting to account for the origins of totemic avoidances, being apparently trivial in content and neutral in emotional tone. Considering the fluid form and content of such myths and the fact that they are never deliberately taught, this myth is remarkably consistent in outline among Namoo clans in Taleland.[1] Tallensi display no interest in the private myths of any social group other than their own, and therefore make no secret of these myths. Knowledge of them is not deemed to be a necessary condition of adherence to the tenets they enshrine. Most young Namoos and many older men, even those who have themselves to observe the fowl taboo—an onerous enough restriction in a society whose chief sacrificial animal is the fowl—are ignorant of or but hazily acquainted with the myth. The men who know it tell it without reticence.

Significance of the Totemic Taboos of the Namoos

The fowl taboo, Namoos say, came about because 'a fowl did a great 773
service to our ancestor'. He had a wife, and people came to her with slander of her husband, trying thus to persuade her to leave him. This made her very unhappy. But one day a broody hen sitting in the woman's grinding room told her not to weep. When her husband returns from the farm she must prepare a drink of flour-water for him, said the fowl, and it would fly up and dash the calabash from his hand. If he then killed the fowl in anger the woman would know that he was a wicked man, and if he spared it she would know that people were slandering him maliciously. When the man came home, the plan was carried out. Far from injuring

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[1] Different versions of the myth are found among Namoos outside Taleland, but the central theme is the same. All versions stress the point that the intervention of a fowl was responsible for the birth of the clan.

the paramount moral values of the Namoos. The oath a Namoo swears 577
by his father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells to rebut an
accusation or assert his honesty is evidence of this.

The natives think of these rules as coeval with their social order. 613
They are axioms of conduct, which men accept without questioning as 577
they accept the fact that one is born a Namoo. Since they are binding on
and restricted to the patrilineal line of descent, these avoidances serve
to express the ultimate and unconditional validity of agnatic descent,
through which the individual's place in a corporate unit is irrevocably
fixed at birth, and by which his whole social and spiritual destiny is
largely controlled. Through ignorance or stupidity, irreverence or lack of
self-control, individuals sometimes, though very rarely, break these
taboos. Such lapses will bring down mystical retribution on the sinner's
head; that is his affair. They cannot impair the intrinsic validity of these
rules or undermine their obligatory character.

It would be inconceivable for a Namoo to flout the taboo of the 688
goatskin loin-cover for the dead. To do so would be a sacrilege so gratuitous
and so lunatic as to lie beyond the bounds of sane human behaviour.
Actually a situation in which such a sacrilege would be possible would
never occur, for the simple reason that a death is an affair of the clan.
The clan elders conduct all mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and the
inviolability of the prescribed ritual is thus safeguarded by the mechanics
of its performance.

It is otherwise with the fowl taboo. This too the natives consider to 688
be something so fundamental and axiomatic that it requires no sanction 673
against possible breach except by accident. The danger of a breach occurs
only with children. The first-born child who eats a fowl or even a hen's
egg, either through inadvertence, through greed, or through childish
recklessness, may sink into a decline (*u burəmrəme*), or at the least will
break out in a rash on the head (*u zug koorəme*). But such a transgression
by a child is venial, and the antidote is simple. The child is given an
infusion of fowl droppings in water to drink which makes him vomit and
so purges him.

Observation and questioning show that breaches of this taboo are 688
as rare as the natives assert them to be. I have often seen a first-born 613
man (*nɔ-kihir*, pl. *-kihib*, one who taboos the fowl) sacrificing fowls to his
ancestor spirits and leaving them to others to consume. After such a rite
a *nɔ-kihir* always washes his hands carefully lest he contaminate his food
at the next meal with the blood of the fowl. Not only do parents, siblings,
and other relatives take care to prevent children from breaking the taboo,
but the children who have to observe it have a horror of doing so.
By the time they are five or six years old children will tell an inquirer
with great emphasis, 'I am an eldest child, and I don't eat fowl'. Though
they do not know the myth that accounts for the taboo, they appreciate
its obligatory character.

We have spoken of these taboos as symbols of moral values because, 577
though binding on all Namoos, they do not imply specific ties either 784
political or ceremonial, and are obligatory on individuals. Their observance
is in the last resort a matter of conscience and belief. In the widest

577 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with
784 non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely
labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the
individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

613 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔγar*)
428 of the founding ancestor of Bɔγada biis at Tongo was a case in point.
627 Saŋgbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of
Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'aləm, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'aləm, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔγar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋgbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔγada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'aləm, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*mieŋ*), and the crocodile (*baŋ*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pɛhug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋgbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Puliebər yidɛm, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'aləm and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋgbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle.
[787] A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the
posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

764 daughters always come to funerals in their paternal family. They have
184 special ritual duties, some specific to that clan, some more general. They are apt, then, to follow the procedures to which they have become accustomed in their husband's home and have, therefore, to be closely supervised.

In all these mortuary and funeral rites there is a tendency for the plainsmen to have one type of variant, while the Hill clans favour another. There is less variation in the details of rites among the clans of either group than between the two groups, and the clans at the foot of the Hills show variants of ritual usage intermediate between those of the plains Talis and of the Hill clans. Thus, one of the most solemn and sacred of the rites which transform the brute fact of death into the mystical fact of spiritual status is the rite of *kpe kpiintaŋ*. It is usually regarded as distinctive of the Namoos, but it occurs also in the funeral ceremonies of tendaanas and elders at Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Gbizug, and Wakii (the Talis clans contiguous with the Namoos) as well as among some of the non-Namoo clans of the Sie area. The Hill Talis attribute this to contamination by the customs of the Namoos. There are one or two rites which the plains Talis have and the Hill Talis lack altogether. There is, therefore, a broad distinction corresponding to the division between the clans that celebrate *Da'a* and those that celebrate *Bɔyaraam* as their Harvest Festival. But the two clusters overlap, as they do structurally, and the Talis overlap with the *tendaanditib* of the Sie area by the criterion of funeral customs as they do by those of locality and structure.

182 The funeral customs of the Talis, it is clear, are directly correlated with
184 the structure of the society. The broad patterns of doctrine and ritual
764 practice are the same for all Tallensi, and are an indication of their uniform culture and of a social structure which embraces all the Tallensi in a single system. More specific patterns of doctrine and practice are followed exclusively by the Talis and their congeners elsewhere in Taleland. They are an index of the structural differentiation of these clans from the Namoos. Some of these patterns are common to all or most of the Talis clans, and correspond therefore to the network of clanship and other structural ties linking them all to one another. Other specific patterns of funeral customs mark off lesser regions within the whole cluster of Talis clans. And finally, variations in detail correspond to the genealogical differentiation of clan from clan and lineage from lineage, and to the fact that each unit has a specific field of social relations not wholly congruent with that of any other unit of a like sort. The natives understand this. As we have noted before, they see variant ritual beliefs and practices of all kinds, and especially variant mortuary and funeral customs, as ways in which the corporate identity and the continuity of lineage and clan are expressed. They consider such variations within the limits of common patterns as belonging to the very fabric of their social organization.

Totemic Avoidances and Clanship Ties

784 The connexion between ritual observances and the social structure can
184 be even more plainly seen in the totemic avoidances of the Talis and the

other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos 784
are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in 184
many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans, no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to violate (*galǝm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence. It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu ɔbǝt*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals [262
prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages, 853]
when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness, not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners 784
in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But 771
like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage 184
totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example, call a totem a sacred object (*bayǝr*). The emphasis is on the avoidance, the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, 784
though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch 184
these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them; for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their 627
congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear 184
an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in 618x
this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath, uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence,

627 I was told. I have never heard it used by anybody, and this itself shows
184 how seriously it is taken.

×618 The oath by the totem is not quite so serious a matter, though it could not be uttered with impunity. The formula is: '*Pakur ni nnuoni*—the tortoise and inside my mouth', if the totemic animal is the tortoise, or, in free translation: 'By the tortoise which I may not eat.' This oath might be used in trivial circumstances. Thus, if a man were wrongly accused of adultery he might swear by his father. But if he were accused of having appropriated something belonging to a friend or relative without permission, though admittedly without intending to steal it, he would swear to his innocence with an oath by his totem. It is the sort of oath, too, informants said, that one might use to assert one's truthfulness in an argument. A person who swears falsely by his totem would decline in health and begin to waste away (*burəm*), but he could probably be saved by atoning sacrifices. A person who swears one of the greater oaths, including the oath by one's father, falsely, will probably die. That is how the natives distinguish the degrees of sacredness they attach to these oaths. Again, I have never heard a totemic oath used, but I have discussed the matter with many people, both young and old, and their views are unanimous. Tallensi are reluctant to swear an oath except in an issue of real importance, and then they resort to the most solemn oath that is appropriate in the situation.

● 784 There is nothing secret about these totemic avoidances. Knowledge of them is public and widespread, though not always accurate where the totems of other clans than one's own are concerned. People become acquainted with the totemic avoidances of other clans through their ties of extra-clan kinship, and women spread the knowledge of the totemic avoidances of their paternal clans among the clans into which they marry. An amusing instance of the way in which this knowledge spreads occurred with one of my own boys. He was a Namoo, and one day bought a live water-tortoise from a Tenzugu youth. This is a great delicacy, but, as he told me afterwards, the cooking of it cost him almost more trouble than it was worth. For he had to cook it himself, out of doors in a borrowed pot, because his wife, a Tenzugu woman, was prohibited from eating this animal and refused to let him contaminate her kitchen or her cooking utensils with it.

It is never necessary for Tallensi to ask one another what their totemic avoidances are. When a person is required, for ritual reasons, to observe the taboos of another clan, the people of that clan who come to perform the rites that impose these taboos on him tell him about them. But one can ask a person, 'What do you (i.e. such and such a clan or lineage) taboo? (*ya kiha lani*)', or, 'What do you swear by? (*ya pɔta lani*)', in order to ascertain a group's totemic avoidances.

784 The animals most widely avoided among the Talis are the tortoise
184 (*pakur*) and the water tortoise (*mieŋ*). Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and most of the
×618 Hill clans taboo both these animals. But there are several exceptions. None of the clans on the Degal side of the Hills keep these avoidances, nor do the people of Tamboog, and only the senior maximal lineage of the three constituent lineages of Soog has them. The people of Degal,

for example, avoid the squirrel (*tinsɛrəg*); the Tamboog people do not 784
eat the dog (*baa*), the leopard (*yeogbaa*), the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*), and the 184
hare (*suoŋ*). 618x

The majority of the clans which observe the two characteristic avoidances of the Talis have additional discriminatory totems. Zubiuŋ has the cat (*sakoo*); at Wakii it is the snake (*waaf*), and this includes all species of snake, even the innocent little green *bɛnɔrəg* which children of other clans kill and eat. A whole group of clans, including all that part of the network of linked lineages that connects Bunkiuk, Yinduur, Sii, and Gorogo, taboo the snake and the crocodile (*baŋ*) in addition to the land and water tortoises. Among these clans a snake that injures a domestic animal or a person is killed without hesitation, and if it is of an edible species, such as the python (*waɣukpɛm*), it will be given to a friend or kinsman of a neighbouring clan which does not taboo snakes. This rule applies to all species of dangerous animals that serve as totems to a clan. If they injure mankind, or man's property, they are transgressing (*galəm*) and deserve to be killed. This does not mean, however, that the Tallensi conceive of a special tie of friendship or kinship between a clan and its totem animals. But we shall come back to this point later.

Ba'ari and Yaɣazuor, with the exception of one accessory lineage, do not fall into the same circle of totemic avoidances. Their taboos vary from one maximal lineage to another. Thus, Ba'at-Sakpar taboos the dog and the hare; but Lakum yiri has no totemic avoidances.

When a clan or lineage has several totemic avoidances they are all considered to be of equal importance. In some situations the totems common to several clans are stressed, in others the natives draw attention to those which differentiate units among a number that have some common totems. There is no precise correlation between the ties of clanship and the distribution of totemic avoidances. Tamboog and Gundaat, closely allied as they are by ties of clanship, have different totemic avoidances. The constituent maximal lineages of clans like Soog and Ba'ari have no common totems, nor have the linked lineages of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari, or Soog and Sakpee. Conversely, common totemic avoidances do not by themselves indicate the existence of clanship ties. Ba'at-Sakpar has no clanship ties with Tamboog, though both taboo the dog and the hare, and the avoidance of the Degal people is found also among some clans of the Sie area which have no ties of clanship with Degal. It follows [582]
from this that (as among the Namoos) common totemic prohibitions are not a bar to marriage; lineage and clan exogamy operate in terms of clanship ties only.

On the other hand, clanship ties are in some instances associated with 618x
totemic avoidances. Dun biis of Ba'ari are said to observe the same 784
avoidances as the Hill Talis, because they have clanship ties with Samiit. Alaa biis of Dkoog have the totemic taboos of Wakii, as well as those of Dkoog proper (a Namoo clan), because of their clanship ties with Wakii. Both these are attached lineages, whose descent is attributed to a son of a clan sister who had been married to a Samiit and a Wakii man respectively and had subsequently been divorced and sent back home with her children. The two lineages thus preserve the avoidances of what would

x618 •784 have been their founding ancestors' paternal clans. In other cases the correlation is not so clear, since the attached lineages concerned are intercalary between clans that have the same avoidances. But it is not a general rule that attached lineages preserve the avoidances of the clan of the alleged father of their founding ancestor, as can be seen from the case of Ba'at-Lakum yidem, who do not keep the Zubiuŋ taboos.

Thus Talis sometimes cite common totemic and other ritual observances as a sign of clanship ties, and at other times deny any necessary connexion between ritual observances and clanship ties. When they want to emphasize the close interdependence, or the sense of community of a particular group of clans, by contrast with other Talis or non-Talis clans, they tend to pick on common ritual observances in proof of this. But on the other hand, they are equally ready to quote peculiar totemic taboos as signs of the genealogical or social singularity of a clan or lineage. The apparent inconsistency does not worry them. For, as we have seen, Tallensi cannot visualize precisely the structure of their society in its entirety, and there is good evidence for both views in the ritual observances of the Talis. There is a tendency for some clans that are closely interconnected to have some totems in common, and for others to have different totems.

x618 784 184 The totemic avoidances found among the clans of the Sie district in general follow the pattern found at Ba'ari; but in this area there is no close-knit nuclear aggregate of clans like the Hill Talis. The relative autonomy of the maximal lineage stands out more markedly, and there is consequently a greater diversity of totemic avoidances.

Totemic Myths

773 We have previously remarked that Namoos show little interest in the mythology of their totemic taboos. This attitude is characteristic of all Tallensi. Talis elders, whose authority and wisdom in ritual matters were widely respected, and who willingly gave me information of the most secret kind, were content to dismiss the question of the origin of their totemic taboos with some trite remark such as, 'We grew up to find it thus'. But here and there one comes across a myth accounting for the origin of a totemic taboo, especially in the Sie area. They are all expansions of the text 'The animal conferred a benefit on our ancestor (*u daa maal ti yaab la*)'. Though they all have the same moral, they vary greatly in substance.

773 539 Thus, according to one version, the avoidance of the tortoise and water-tortoise among the Hill Talis began in this way: 'Our (anonymous) ancestor' was suffering severely from thirst once and could find no water. He saw a tortoise crawling along and followed it. The animal reached a heap of dry leaves, which it scratched aside revealing a spring. Thereupon 'our ancestor' vowed that never again would he or his descendants eat the tortoise; and as the water-tortoise is merely another species of the same family, this taboo naturally extends to it as well.

According to another version, which is worth quoting as an example of the variations in these myths, 'our ancestor' was on a journey and was

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

●784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galɔm kihɔr*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔɣar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔɣar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

784 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔɣar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔɣar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so
a supplicant coming to the *Bɔyar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also
from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔyar* in the
Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the
snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence,
children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔyar* must avoid
all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have
independent External *Bɔya*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔyar* congregation. This means that the clans and
lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the
ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It
implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual
plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of
redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation,
or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife,
though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member
lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling
of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another,
among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of
to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious
community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔyar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It emphasizes 794
the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the
rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them
over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing
Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔyar* or the coercion of an
adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult to 776
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔyar can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛyər*) of an individual. An
ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native
religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist
(*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛyəraan*) must keep the totemic
avoidances of the *Bɔyar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis
(Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims
to the *Bɔyar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual
dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born,
as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves
keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards
of the *Bɔyar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual
guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔγar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔγar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into com-
[551] munion with it. Wards of the *Bɔγar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔγare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
[582] sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔγar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔγa* extends, also, to
whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔγar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-
Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi;
and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of
the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts
and sacrifices to the *Bɔγar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the
benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace,
and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the
totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔγar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔγar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔγar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured
kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe con-
duct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client
lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔγar*.

●784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔγar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛγəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic
avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's
lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will
have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and
as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between
the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of
sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus
he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to
inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the
agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of
maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes
have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who
observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the
totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo
of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that
it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl
in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer
remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary
totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

leopard taboo of Dkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of 776
the Talis. 784

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems 124 is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛyər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛyər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔyar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛyər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔyar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔyar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔyar* and the *Bɔyar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that 608 sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be 776 called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔyar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔyar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔyar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔyar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with 608 lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when 769 the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔya* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔyar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding 182 pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

184 182 extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more distinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

619 It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Taləŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tɛndaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔyar* cult, which extends as far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

182 771 But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos, funeral rites, and *Bɔyar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

● 784 171 The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

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[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134–5.

speak only of the Voltaic area, the animal species referred to above occur 171
among the totemic avoidances of people as remote from the Tallensi, 784
both spatially and linguistically, as the Isala and the Lobi,[1] as well as among all the other 'tribes' of the area.

Confining ourselves to Taleland and to the settlements of Gɔrisi 171
fringing this area, we find that the totemic avoidances include birds like 784
the canary (*wurəg*), the turtle-dove (*daŋman*), the domestic fowl (*noo*), and 136
several other species; reptiles, like the snake, the tortoise, the water- 262
tortoise, and the crocodile; fish, like the *tunəg*; insects, like the large grasshopper (*saŋkaan*); rodents, like the squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) and the hare (*suoŋ*); ruminants, like the goat (*buu*) and the sheep (*pɛhug*); carnivores, such as the cat (*sakoo*), the dog (*baa*), and the leopard (*yeogbaa*); and a variety of other animals, such as the monkey (*ŋmaaŋ*) and the bush-pig (*dee*).[2]

It is impossible to find any common trait amongst this variety of 171
creatures. Some play an important part in the economic life and the 784
food-supply of the natives, but the majority are negligible in this respect.
Many are prized as delicacies by those who are permitted to eat them; 231
and, on the other hand, some are despised as food. No adult would 262
willingly eat grasshoppers, canaries, or small edible snakes, though little children, who eat almost any small animals they can lay their hands on, quite often do so. Several of these animal species are regarded as always potentially dangerous in the magical as well as the physical sense. Such are the crocodile, snakes, the leopard, and other wild carnivores. But many, on the contrary, are entirely innocent both in the magical and the physical sense. Some have a place in the meagre folk-lore of the Tallensi, including such diverse creatures as the monkey, the turtle-dove, and the cat. Cats, for instance, are considered to be pre-eminently the domestic companions of women, but with a streak of the wild animal in them. Women treat them with a mixture of solicitude, appropriate to a valued pet, and of pseudo-ritual respect that meets with good-humoured ridicule from the men. Incidentally, clans that have the cat as a totem show no particular respect towards household cats, nor are household dogs treated differently by people who may and people who may not eat the dog.

The totemic animals of the Tallensi thus comprise neither a zoological 171
nor a utilitarian nor a magical class. All that can be said of them is that 784

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[1] For the Isala and other 'tribes' of the Voltaic area, see Rattray, op. cit. 182
His report on the Isala is in vol. ii, pp. 465 ff. For the Lobi, see ib., vol. ii, pp. 425 ff., and Labouret, op. cit., pp. 227 ff. Rattray does not distinguish clearly between the different kinds of ritual prohibitions and injunctions coupled with patrilineal descent, some of which are not totemic in the sense we have given to this term. But his observations and those of Labouret confirm the conclusion that there is no precise correlation between these avoidances and clanship ties. Labouret's account of the attitudes and values associated with totemic avoidances among the Lobi shows them to resemble closely those of the Tallensi.

[2] Rattray's list for this area, op. cit., vol. i, p. 236, includes also several big-game animals, such as the roan (*koo*), hartebeest (*sɛbəg*), bush-cow (*yeognaaf*), and elephant (*wɔbəg*), as well as the lion (*gbiaŋmər*), the hyena (*gbiŋgbɛr*), and the hippo (*ɛmər*). But here, as elsewhere in the book, Rattray appears to have lumped together ritual observances that are similar in form though not in function, and he does not state clearly what clans or settlements hold particular taboos.

171 they are generally fairly common domestic or wild creatures. We have
784 shown that the totemic avoidances of the Tallensi have a symbolic value
182 in relation to their social organization. They are not, however, explicable simply as a function of the social structure. We cannot dismiss the choice of animal symbolism for this function as an accident of history or as mere coincidence. To understand it we should have to probe more deeply into the religious beliefs not only of the Tallensi but of all the peoples of this culture area. Animal and food taboos play a very important part in the ritual symbolism of Voltaic culture and indeed of West African cultures in general. We have repeatedly emphasized the intrinsic relation of the religious system of the Tallensi to their social structure. In a social system such as theirs, ritual ideas and values and the morphology of the society are interrelated as mind and body in the higher primates. But these two aspects of Tale society are not merely the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Though Tale religion springs directly out of the social structure, it is fed by streams whose sources lie beneath and beyond the social structure. We cannot pursue this theme here in detail, for it leads to problems of Tale psychology, and indeed of human psychology, that lie outside the scope of this study. We can only give an indication of the line such an enquiry would take. To do this we must consider some other forms of animal symbolism that appear in Tale religious beliefs.

Taboos of the Earth

778 Animals of all kinds can be endowed with ritual significance for individuals or groups among the Tallensi. They become sacred objects (*baya*, sing. *bayər*) forming part of shrines (*baya*, sing. *bayər*) dedicated to named ancestor spirits, on which sacrifices are offered. A *bayər* animal is an individual animal or a species found in a particular place. Totem animals are not *baya*, since they are whole species respected everywhere and not associated with particular shrines.

784 Certain 'taboos of the Earth' (*tɛŋən kiha*) form a class of animal taboos
171 standing between *baya* in the narrow sense and totems. Some Earth taboos are universal. Thus, throughout the Voltaic region it is a taboo to appropriate any unclaimed object of iron found lying on the ground. Other Earth taboos are specific to localities coming under the ritual jurisdiction of particular clans or lineages. All over Taleland large reptiles such as the crocodile (*baŋ*), the python (*wayakpɛm*), the tree- and water-lizards (*uuk* and *wuu*) are taboos of the Earth. They may not be killed within the precincts of any important Earth shrine. In the bush, where men have no social bonds with the land, and therefore no ritual bonds with the Earth at specific places, they are not sacred. Binding on everybody, these taboos hold with extra force for members of lineages that have tɛndaanas (see also pp. 187–8 below).

784 Tallensi say these animals are 'the people of the Earth (*tɛŋən nirəba*)'
778 as men are people of such and such a settlement. They symbolize the mystical power of the Earth as it acts on human life, sometimes beneficently, sometimes punitively. This is what the natives mean when they say 'The Earth is a living thing (*tɛŋ la a bonvor*)'.

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562 of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613 relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔɣayabəlis*, deprived by an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan. This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784] *pɔɣayabələg* of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives, of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔɣayabələg* might, in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔɣayabələg* as 562 an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854 example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan. Usually she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787] will be a suitable *pɔɣayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a *pɔɣayabələg* is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task; it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being. Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔɣar* is significant in 562 this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793 shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769 case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔɣayabəlis* have the right to take part

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
[311] a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[775] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly, there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ* where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋgbana*—
782] for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat. Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in. We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan. For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
● 784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important
291 *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛndaanas. My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre (*tandaɣanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos, as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and considerable 793
moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784 ●
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the
formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations
of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say
gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed
ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.'
The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the statement
implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But
this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's
curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term
'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply
a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties,
privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community
with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to
the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The
material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico-ritual 823
institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine
or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to
be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major
emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the
earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to 784
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is
sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be
sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and
is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction
between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common
and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a
Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of
their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis
on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship.
And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as
the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises
an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

425 of his own sub-clan. This is the central field of integrated social relations
471 pivoting on this chiefship. But his ritual status also affects the prosperity
× 618 and welfare of Zubiuŋ and Zoo directly and that of the Hill Talis in-
directly. In fact, in the last resort, it affects all the clans of Taleland that
622 have a place in the cycle of the Great Festivals. 'The community (*tɛŋ*)
● 784 cannot be subdivided (*bɔk*)', the Chief of Tongo once told me in explana-
793 tion of the ritual significance of his office. Famine, pestilence, war cannot
be dammed and confined to one place. And so if the Chief of Tongo dies
the whole country suffers, though his own clan will perhaps suffer most
and the remoter zones of his politico-ritual influence least.

182 The bonds between man and land, community and locality that are so fundamental in the structure of Tale society cannot be understood apart from this context of ritual values and moral norms. Difficult as they are to grasp and pin down in exact language, they are as ever present to the native's mind as his sentiment of attachment to his native soil. They cause men who have been away from home for many years to give up splendid farms in Mampurugu or good jobs in Kumasi to return to take up their patrimonial land.

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homestead accompanied often by the family head's old mother. This is the usual history of the independent elementary family in Taleland; and about 1 in 8 of the domestic families of our sample have this constitution. Often, however, when a man secedes from the joint family he already has more than one wife, though his children are all still under marriageable age. Polygynous domestic families of this class occur in about the same proportion—1 in 8—in the sample. And thus the cycle begins again. As the children grow up and marry, each fraction of the dismembered joint family evolves into a new joint family, or at least has the possibility of doing so.

A joint family splits up—into family segments, be it noted, not into a number of dispersed individuals—if it has existed long enough to have reached an advanced stage of internal differentiation; but during its existence it is a remarkably cohesive unit. The fissiparous tendencies inherent in its structure are kept well in check until the pressure of economic needs, psychological friction, or a radical alteration in the constellation of the social relations, such as occurs when the family head dies, makes them irresistible. The split follows the lines of cleavage inherent in the structure of the effective minimal lineage on which a particular joint family is founded, and it takes place by stages.

We shall study the process of fission in the joint family later. Here only the results concern us. The simplest split occurs when the oldest son of the family head 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)',[1] or 'cuts his own gateway (*bit u zanɔr*)' in the family homestead, during his father's lifetime. He thus sets up an independent household, though perhaps living in a semi-detached part of the paternal homestead. But when the old man dies, he frequently returns to the parental home, and the joint family is reconstituted under his authority.

Permanent fission usually occurs between brothers (full, or half-brothers, or paternal cousins), or by the secession of the family head's deceased brother's sons. It begins, and may persist until the family head's death, as a purely economic division. Thus two full (*soog*) brothers—the older being the family head—may decide to farm independently because the growing economic wants of their respective families no longer permit them to maintain a common household. The bond of full brotherhood (*soog*) inhibits further fission altogether, or until such time as both men have adult children. Until then they generally continue to occupy the same homestead, using a single common gateway, cattle-yard (*sapak*), and *zɔŋ*. Their respective sections of the

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[1] The intra-family tensions which lead to the 'going out' of the eldest son will be discussed later. They are rationalized, and the secession of the eldest son is given a mystical sanction by the taboo which, among the Namoos, forbids a man ever meeting his first-born adult son face to face in his gateway after the latter has a family of adolescent children. Non-Namoos do not have the taboo, but the beliefs expressed in it are as strong among them as among the Namoos. Cf. below, Ch. VIII.

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight 593 into the working of the classificatory principle.

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. 764 A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat 784 or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions 613 of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. 602 At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. [601] Within the limits of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

613 602 or father's father's brother's son is still alive would not claim to be fatherless. For, in matters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in relation to other like units, he has no independent status. The unit is under the authority of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. Similarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved and the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

613 593 We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔɣar* of Soog. When Sɛbɔg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bɔɣabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sɛbɔg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔɣar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔɣabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the [784] elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then Bɔɣabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

782 593 [784] Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External [illegible]*ar* are known as 'tabooed fowls (*nɔkiha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten, by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

593 In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

613 428 Kutɔbis also inherited the lineage *bɔɣar* of Pa'anbɔbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and brother's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbɔbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutɔbis. With this *bɔɣar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbɔbis's homestead. If on Kutɔbis's death the present head of Baɣanlɔrəg biis, Na'abzə, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutɔbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Baɣana, Pa'ana, and Sɔmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Sɔmnam's line of descent. On Kutɔbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbɔbis II. Lastly, Kutɔbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Baɣana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Baɣana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutɔbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutɔbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutɔbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

613 593 784 601 On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*ŋman*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

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[1] This was because Kutɔbis and Yidaan were *saarət*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have 613
a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a
mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser importance 593
of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social 784 •
status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance
than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. The range within which classificatory 601
'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso 613
both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to 601
marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies,
Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites
of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head [765]
shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother 888
and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VIII

TENSIONS IN THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Rivalry between Parents and Children

593 578 PERHAPS the most extraordinary feature of Tale parents' relations with their children is the recognition, in custom and belief, of the latent antagonism behind their mutual identification and comradeship, their devotion and co-operation. We have already had some glimpses of this. A psycho-analyst might say that the Oedipus complex is apparently openly recognized in Tale culture. He would have to add that it is built into their social organization in such a way as to enable them to control it. The mystical ideas and ritual symbols in which the rivalry between successive generations is clothed form the cultural mechanism by which it is neutralized and made to serve socially useful ends.

● 784 [184] 578 593 We have discussed the taboos observed by first-born children among the Namoos in our previous book. We showed there[1] that the distinguishing mark of all Namoo clans as opposed to non-Namoo clans is the observance of these taboos. Among all Namoos a man's first-born son and daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, may not wear any of their father's garments or his quiver, or look into his granary during his lifetime. The latter taboos are connected with the fact that a man's clothes and quiver and granary are intimately identified with his social personality. As the natives put it, a man's clothes and quiver are imbued with his bodily exuviae from constant contact with his body, while his granary is associated with his unique status in the patricentral family. It is easy to see that these possessions are peculiarly apt symbols of a man's social self. It is not surprising, therefore, that though these taboos are not formally observed by non-Namoos analogous usages with the same symbolic significance occur among them.

In our previous book we studied the significance of these taboos as quasi-totemic symbols in the system of inter-clan relations; but they have other dimensions of meaning as well, like all Tale customs and ideas that give expression to fundamental elements in their social organization. For they go back to deep and universal tendencies in human psychology. These taboos have a particular meaning in the contemporary structure of Tale society as symbols of corporate units; but underlying this is the deeper meaning they have in the relations of successive generations and for the individual himself in the conduct of his life.

We are concerned here with these latter aspects of their meaning. We cannot attempt to unravel all that lies behind them, but their super-

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. v and viii.

ficial symbolism is transparent. What they mean is that a child may not 593
be equated with his or her father while he is alive. As we have observed,
though these taboos do not occur among non-Namoos, the ideas and 578
sentiments they express are as frankly admitted by them as by Namoos. It was a Tɛnzugu (Talis) man who gave me the clearest statement I obtained on the struggle between the Destinies (*Yina*) of father and son. I remember also being struck by this during the ceremony of exorcising the evil Predestiny of Sinkawol of Kpata'ar's wife. Just as the most important rite of all was begun somebody noticed that Tiezien, Sinkawol's proxy father, was absent. Nyaaŋzum, Sinkawol's proxy grandfather and Tiezien's proxy father, shouted for Tiezien to come out of the homestead. Tiezien shouted back, in some anger, 'No, I won't come. They are exorcising my daughter-in-law's *Yin* and I should be there? Oh no. Is she your (plural) wife or mine? No, it is not for me to be there.' There was a moment's pause and then Nyaaŋzum called back, 'Well, leave it then, you are right.' The point was that a man must not equate himself with his son, particularly where the latter's procreative status is concerned. But grandfather and grandson are equated with each other, as we shall see more fully later. And by the same principle a woman must not be equated with her daughter in her reproductive capacity. Thus when a man's daughter becomes a mother [784]
for the second or third time he gives up sleeping with her mother even if she is still of child-bearing age. Tallensi call this an important taboo. It is significant also that among both Namoos and non-Namoos an analogous taboo to that of the father's granary holds between a mother and her first-born daughter. While her mother is alive a girl may not uncover her mother's chief storage-pot (*u pu sugəl u ma doko*). This taboo is not stressed so much as those that discriminate a child from its father, as might be expected in a society so thoroughly organized around the patrilineal line. But it does show that the tension between the generations among the Tallensi is not the product of *patria potestas* only, but arises out of the whole network of the relations between parents and children.

The avoidances of first-born children are not the only customary 593
expression of the tension between the generations. A man and his oldest 264
child do not eat together. 'You and your oldest child do not dip your fingers into the same dish of food together,' the natives say, 'for if you did perhaps his finger-nail might scratch you and that would bring misfortune on both of you.' This prohibition is not subject to ritual sanctions, though the misfortune that would follow the symbolic act of aggression would be of a mystical character. Tallensi share a dish with the youngest child for preference; and it is not an uncommon sight to see a man eating with his youngest child while his oldest son is sitting near by eating separately. 593

Then there are the restrictions we have already mentioned that must be 764

593 577 764 spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

593 613 As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

593 578 We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zayahkpɛmərɛ inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zayahkpɛmərɛ was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zayahkpɛmərɛ; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zayahkpɛmərɛ would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

593 601 • 784 There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another. As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔɣa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

of the same inner lineage as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' or even as 'my wife 593
(*m-pɔɣa*)'; and, reciprocally, a woman speaks of her husband's brother 681
of the same inner lineage as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)' or, preferably, as 'my
husband's older (younger) brother (*n-sɛt-bier* or *n-sɛt-pit*)', but does not 784
address him thus. The proper reciprocal term of address is *n-kpee* ('my neighbour'), or *n-dakii* ('my sibling-in-law'). The terms for husband and wife are used in address only between a man and a distant clan-brother's wife.

The penalty for breaking this taboo has both a literal and a figurative 593
meaning, in the sense that the brothers will never share anything again 784
or take part in corporate activities as co-members of the same lineage.
It amounts to social and religious ostracism for the sinner, and Tallensi 682
say he would not long survive or his line of descent would perish. A similar penalty is said to follow the killing of a brother, whether it happens by accident or design. As we know, incest with a brother's wife is said to occur, though extremely rarely; fratricide by a brother of the same inner lineage as the victim is felt to be so abhorrent as to be likely to happen only by accident in exceptional circumstances. It has happened once or twice in the past, informants say, when brothers fought over the division of farm-land, but I have not heard of any cases having occurred in the last thirty years or so.[1]

The strength of the sanction we are considering can be judged from 593
its incidence, in an attenuated degree, in cases of intra-clan homicide
where the parties are not brothers of the same inner lineage. If this 682
happens, whether intentionally or by accident, the maxim 'A cow has 784
trampled her calf to death (*naaf n-nɔ bu bii ku*)' applies—that is to say, it is as if a cow had trampled its calf to death; so it is forbidden, on pain of bringing down the wrath of the ancestors, for the victim's close agnates to 'cancel the debt' by killing one of the slayer's close agnates. This rule holds also for lineages or clans interlinked by clanship or
ritual ties. The guilty party offers expiatory sacrifices to the Earth and [783]
then a ritual reconciliation is effected between the two units concerned. But thenceforth the close agnates of the slayer—members of his nuclear lineage, usually—will not participate in a sacrifice in which the close agnates of the victim take part. If the homicide was deliberate, this taboo will even extend to all the patrilineal descendants of the two men. Thus Wakii-Sagbarug yidɛm and Kuruugdɛm are adjacent maximal lineages linked by clanship and ritual ties. On certain occasions they meet to sacrifice together at an Earth shrine common to them. The Kuruug people refrain from attending these sacrifices if the chief officiant is a member of a particular segment of Sagbarug yiri. A Kuruug man told me the reason for this in confidence. Some four or five

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[1] There is a legend that one of the early chiefs of Tongo slew his brother in order to get the chiefship. Tallensi say this was following the customs of the Mamprusi. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

593 682 •784 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidem slew the ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective ancestors.

593 578 602 Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brotherhood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one another.

593 602 In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classificatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Tɔŋ-Tɔbɔg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzɔ* siblings.

593 602 613 As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will be much more likely to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

male agnates. He is *yirdaan* by virtue of indisputable succession which 592 carries with it ritual responsibilities for the whole joint family, legal 596 and moral duties and rights and valuable economic privileges. His younger brothers and his sons share his dwelling as a rule, ortho-cousins or nephews occasionally. Everything depends on factors such as those previously enumerated when it comes to the constitution of a particular compound. But in general, genealogical distance imposes corresponding spatial and social arrangements. Thus, the secondary gate of a plural gate compound[1] is usually owned by an ortho-cousin or nephew (classificatory brother or son) of the *yirdaan*, except for the special case of a man's first-born son.[2]

The single dwelling or the single-gate compound is the habitation of one or more households, each consisting of an adult male, his wife (or wives), and his children. A householder may have younger unmarried brothers or sisters or an old mother dependent on him. Every married man is a householder, but households vary greatly in status according to their degree of social and economic differentiation within the joint family. This is determined not only by the stage of development it has reached, but also by kinship factors and by those individual social and psychological characteristics which we have referred to before. A newly married man, for example, is to all intents and purposes part of the household to which he was attached prior to his marriage, but he has a small degree of autonomy which increases from year to year.

A newly married wife has a room in the quarters of her husband's 596 mother, if she is alive, or of his senior wife. In due course, however, 342 whether it be a man's first or later wife, he must build her separate quarters. Hence, in a well-differentiated household every wife has her own quarters (*dug*) partitioned off from those of her co-wives or her mother-in-law. Here she and her children—the primary family—live, and here she is supreme mistress. A woman's quarters consists

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[1] Two gates are usual, three gates infrequent, and more than three gates found only in exceptional circumstances.

[2] It is taboo for the head of a compound and his first-born son to continue to use a single entrance after the latter has married and founded a family, though this [784] taboo is never enforced until the younger man's children approach adolescence. But few men live long enough to see their first-born sons make their own gateways.

596 342 of sleeping-rooms and kitchens (to be described later) distributed roughly in a semicircle round an open space, 10 to 15 feet across, bounded on one side by a co-wife's quarters or a low partitioning wall. This little close (*dendɔŋo*) is the central place in the life of the family. Here it takes its meals in the dry season; here friends are received; [778] here most of the routine of family life goes on. A man's principal ancestor shrines are kept in his mother's or senior wife's *dendɔŋo*; and there he performs many of the frequently recurring rites of the ancestor cult. The women of a single household have adjacent quarters. Their husband's mother or the senior wife occupies the central quarters; junior wives or son's wives are on either side of her, forming altogether a rough circle or segment of a circle. A householder who is not also head of the compound has no room of his own. He keeps his private possessions in his senior wife's sleeping-room. Apart from this, it is the cardinal principle of family life that a man must divide his time, his affection, and his supplies of food with absolute impartiality between his wives.

343 778 784 Within the compound two other kinds of rooms are of special importance for our theme, the granaries and the grinding-rooms. Every independent agricultural unit has its own granaries which are said to belong to the head of the unit. His granary (*boor*) is a man's most private and personal possession. No woman may enter it, nor any man not directly authorized by the owner. Ritual prohibitions associated with it closely identify a man's granary with his social personality. As one informant put it, with a flash of insight, 'Your granary is like your soul'.

343 One or more grinding-rooms (*neer*) belongs to every well-differentiated household. These are discussed later.

596 182 The family structure thus outlined is the basis of a domestic economy and of a configuration of moral, legal, religious, and personal relationships which can best be described as a compromise between strong centralizing or integrating tendencies and powerful differentiating tendencies. In the domestic economy of food, our sole concern in this paper, every unit in the system is completely autonomous in some respects and dependent upon a more comprehensive unit in others. It is a fluctuating compromise, slowly changing. Births, deaths, marriages, and their social consequences, even the mere lapse

184 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its
326 culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be
565 taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of
463 inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the
[784] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

867 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]
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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

which children of 9 or 10 are fully familiar with and the compulsion of which they experience to the same degree as the adults; and there is the whole body of implicit moral norms which regulate the day-to-day life of the family and emerge in the duties of children to one another and to their parents. 183

I have already mentioned the prohibition in some clans against the eating of fowl by first-born children. By contrast with the voluntary abstention from fowl meat practised by women, this is a taboo of supreme mystical value for these clans and is exactly parallel to the totemic avoidances of other clans. The Hill Tallis, for instance, may not eat tortoise, some may not eat crocodile or python, and others taboo dog. A 5-year-old knows his or her personal or clan taboo, and can state it emphatically. The remedy for a chance infringement of such a taboo is extremely simple—e.g., in the case of the fowl, crushing some fowl droppings in water and giving the child the fluid to drink. Again the supernatural penalty for a breach is of a vague and general kind. In some cases it is thought that it would lead merely to an eruption of scabies on the head; in others it is said that the offender would slowly lose health and strength. These sanctions, however, are not the effective agencies maintaining the observances. Breaches of these rules are exceptional, both among children and among adults. A Taləŋa submits to a food taboo in virtue of a configuration of positive habits and dispositions built up in childhood, not through fear of the sanctions. From the time that it is a babe in arms a child is prevented from tasting or even touching any food which it is prohibited from eating. Later it will be called away from where its companions are sitting over a fire roasting titbits of food forbidden to it—'Come here, you mustn't eat that; it is forbidden.' I once observed a child of about 5 standing aloof while a group of his brothers and sisters were consuming a dish of python meat—a prized delicacy. 'I don't eat python, it is my taboo,' he explained, with an expression of complete aversion. 784 688 869

A vivid example of how food taboos are inculcated was provided by a biographical reminiscence of the chief of Tongo who, as a first-born, may not eat fowl. There was talk in his court-room of crops and famine in the old days, when an elder wondered if a man would eat a forbidden animal if he were starving. The chief, holding with 262 869

184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

621 622 793 Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

784 184 Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784
agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again 184
may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth
is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are
traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the
Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance
of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities.
So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425]
over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows,
dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious
practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778]
(tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a
group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186
political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and
Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764
vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every
funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at
the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism
is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously
or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are
his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793
barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction.
The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. 622
Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual
and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can
directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis
or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug
Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional
enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension
exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of
the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own
aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received
and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos.
The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is
inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the
Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of
making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship,
that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

787 796 [778 534] From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

796 535 The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest, until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

796 [578] [784] This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effervescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement, planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

796 535 A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festival, and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ meŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

796 535 tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingauŋ incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

[533 578] A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like [292] masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

796 [784] And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingauŋ, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Golib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

Daa (the supreme bɔɣar of the Baari people) and Mosur will jointly pros- 796
per the land. Then he departs. That day Baari celebrates Daa.

That same evening the large Gingauŋ drum is escorted to Baari by the 796
Gbizug Tendaana and the Wakyi Tendaana, following a ritual path. All
Tongo flocks to Baari to dance with great enthusiasm on a traditional spot 535
outside the grove of Baat Daa. Near the dance, but silently aloof, wait the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas. A few hundred yards away, as if indifferent to the dance, young men of Baari assemble, wearing their ritual garb, a goatskin. When the Baari Tendaana and his ritual coadjutors arrive to join them, the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas are summoned. Greetings are exchanged, and then led by the Baari Tendaana, the whole company files away in a most solemn and silent procession, brought up by the youngest members carrying pots of consecrated beer. With utter gravity this procession thrice encircles the dancers who continue to dance as if
oblivious to this. Anyone who dares to break through the encircling pro- [784]
cession is doomed to a supernatural death. The procession files away again, into the sacred grove. There the Tendaanas pour libations of beer to Baat Daa, calling down the very same blessings as had been invoked by the Chief earlier in the day. They drink the beer and send a small pot out to the representative of the Chief, who is among the dancers. Now the Tendaanas' procession emerges, again solemnly encircles the dancers, and files away. At a tree which marks the path to Tongo they stop, and marching round it in a circle, chant a song the burden of which is Mosur boot kuliga ("Mosur wants to go home"). Upon this signal the allusion of which is obvious to all, the dance breaks up, the ritual is over.

That finishes the Gingauŋ dance for a year. The next three days at 796
Tongo are given over to the gayest festivities of the season, the celebration of Daa. This is a New Year's festival, a fitting conclusion to the dancing season. Dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, the whole of Tongo assembles at the Chief's compound on the day after the rites at Baari.
From far and near, Tongo women who have married away return to their [574]
homes, many bearing gifts of special food from their husbands. The Chief's house throngs with his people and strangers. His elders bring him presents of guinea fowls and he, sitting in state, has a bullock slaughtered, part of which he shares amongst them. The Chief, it is true, gets the better part of this exchange of gifts, but good form is satisfied. The afternoon is devoted to light-hearted dancing in praise of the Chief.

The Gbizug Tendaana has also celebrated Daa, but very quietly. That 796
evening, however, Chief and Tendaana meet in ceremonial. The scene is 778
the dancing ground. This is a dedicated area which may not be cultivated.

796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 514 782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that ● [784] the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

182 578 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, 796
like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to
the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881
initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar.
Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of
one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough
stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If [784]
I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of
the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796
home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who
have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574
follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535
Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social
interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may
not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171
with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its
calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and 796
elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of responsibility 182
for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of
lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of
jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion
in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual
of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special
emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182
festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand
it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by
the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

Gɔlib is a dangerous month, during which both Namoos and Tallis are 182
subject to numerous taboos, mainly aimed at averting quarrels and strife 796
at the dances and in everyday relations between the groups. It is forbidden
to shed blood on the earth, lest supernatural death overtake one, to take 784●
a wife, to carry out the final ceremonies connected with delayed funeral
rites, to wear cloth garments in any of the Hill Tallis settlements, and so
forth. Marriages are the cause of most inter-group litigation, and funeral [578]
ceremonies represent social situations in which large numbers of people
from different settlements congregate and often give rise to disputes.
Throughout, the Namoos are spectators of the dancing and excluded from
the ritual. But on two occasions they meet the Hill Tallis in ceremonial
interaction. In the inaugural rites the Hill Tallis, led by their Tendaanas,
march to all their sacred groves in succession blowing sacred whistles in
honor of them. When they reach the sacred groves which lie in Tongo, every
Namoo man, woman, and child hides indoors. A Namoo who sees these
rites of the Hill Tallis risks the destruction of his entire home and family
by the outraged sacred groves. Once again, therefore, are the Namoos and
Tallis mutually insulated or segregated by the symbolism of unchallengeable
ritual, the living affirmation of tradition. But there is a ritual reintegration
of the groups. The final rite of Gɔlib requires the coöperation of the
Chief of Tongo. Again led by their Tendaanas, the Hill Tallis come down to
the Chief's house to dance; and there Tendaanas and Chief join together
to beg for blessings upon the land, for the safety of the people and the
abundance of crops.

To revert to the harvest festivals, the magical and religious value of the 182
ceremonial to the group performing it must not blind us to its socially integrative
functions. The former is mainly determined by the seasonal context 796
of the festivals and is evidenced preeminently in commonplace techniques,
such as the sacrifice. The latter, which is determined primarily by
the context of the social structure, is evidenced in the ceremonies peculiar
to the occasion. These differ completely in content, as between Namoos and
Tallis, a fact which the natives would explain by citing the historically different
origins of the two groups. This suggests the principle common to all
the integrative ceremonies. It is the dramatization of the nodal, hence
traditionally sanctioned, relationship in the social structure of each group
—the Chieftainship at Tongo, the right of access to the bɔɣar among the
Tallis. This fundamental bond is resuscitated in both the symbolical and
the direct phases of the ceremonies. The Chief and the Gbizug or Baari
Tendaana thus reimpose on each other those responsibilities which bind
them to a common task; and, by the very same rites, the Chief and his

778 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere*
769 comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he
will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's
spirit wants to punish (*ey*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit
wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband,
"Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

171 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in con-
778 nexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but
791 when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's
769 mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's
town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in
a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives
the power to the *bakologo*.'

787 *A Seance attended at Tɔngo*: A woman had died from snake-bite, and
761 after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's
769 compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family
of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The
ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with
both hands and saying, '*N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor*' (I hold your sides,
but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig.
71), and said, '*N ba Ɣin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam
mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n be, te te*'.
(My father's *Ɣin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they
will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do
not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is;
give us).

He then began to sing:

'*Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Ɣi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam zeret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.*' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole[1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash,

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

on a gourd seed, on a hair ball from the stomach of a cow. I was later 787
told that all this was interpreted as meaning that the father of the dead 761
woman's husband had failed to give to his ancestor one of the cows 769
which he had received for a daughter, hence vengeance had been taken
on his son's wife.

After the seance a fowl was killed; this, falling on its back, was taken as proof that what the soothsayer had said was correct.

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike,
even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

Suicide (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
793 and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622 624 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
793 section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
●787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders,
but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

173 622 793 die. He would tap the land with his fingers and say, "*Teŋ ya be, zagala saam ka nees teŋ la okom*" (If such a thing as the land really is, (here is) So-and-so who has offended and treated you as of no account, may you kill him).[1] The land will break his compound; his fowls, goats, sheep, children, wives will die. The offender would approach an Elder and "beat his hands" and ask him to intercede with the *Tenedan'* on his behalf. Chiefs now own the people, but *Tenedan'* still own the land. The first Chief of Kagbiri was my father. He was *Tenedan'* at the time when the Germans made him Chief. The present Chief is Ati, he is my father's child (i.e. son of the speaker's father's brother). My father, after the Germans made him Chief, used to delegate the work of *Tenedan'* to me, so when he died and Ati was made Chief we continued to do the same.'

177 793 622 171 At this place (Kagbiri) so far as I could see, we find the Territorial Ruler (who is not a foreigner, but one of the family of the former *Tenedan'*), and the *Tenedan'*, 'his brother', working in complete harmony. The Germans, it will be noted, whether by accident or design, had made the *Tenedan'* also the Territorial Ruler. The significance of the rather curious and suggestive procedure—which I have also noted elsewhere—whereby a *Tenedan'* who, by chance, has become Chief, delegates the religious part of his duties to another, should not be overlooked. The multifarious administrative and executive duties, which the Territorial Ruler is asked by us to undertake, cannot be wholly responsible for this. This may be proved by an examination of the position of a Chief in Ashanti, where these two functions—religious and secular—are combined in one person. Perhaps the bad example set by the majority of foreign Chiefs in these parts, who were always unconcerned with local land-gods, may partly account for this. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked, that by far the most important religious duties performed by Ashanti Chiefs for their people are the ceremonies in connexion with their own ancestral spirits, in which their subjects now join, and not those rites in connexion with the land, which has tended to become alienated, although theoretically they still belong to the Stool. Many Northern Territory Rulers, while ignoring land gods, would, nevertheless, lay claim to the land. The following are some further notes on the duties and privileges of the *Tenedan'* among the Kusase.

793 • [781] 'When the rain does not fall, the Elders consult the soothsayer and report to the *Tenedan'* what the *baa* (soothsayer) has told them. The

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[1] Compare p. 370. (i.e. different practice among Namnam)

428 *Inheritance of Wife's Property*: All the property which a wife brings with her and everything she earns later at her husband's compound by her own individual labour—by brewing beer, making baskets and pots—on her death goes to her children. If she has no children her father's family will take it, not her husband.[1]

Son's Property: His brother takes it, including any wives. A father may not take a son's widow.

Rites de Passage:

787 844 846 *Birth*: 'When a woman conceives, we consult the soothsayer about it, to find out if she will be delivered easily. When she gives birth, we send a long piece of wood notched in three or four places (according to sex of child) to the woman's mother. The husband may take this himself, or, if he has other children, send it by one of them. This stick is cut through at one of the notches and used for firewood. Three or four days later, her mother will come to visit her daughter, bringing some *dawa dawa*. A woman takes care not to be confined inside a room. She will either go into the yard, or cattle-kraal, or to the *saman* farm. Leaves are spread on the ground for her to bring forth upon. The afterbirth (*zar*)[2] is buried in the compound farm in a pot and covered by another pot. The heads of mother and child are shaved on the day the navel string is cut. That of the child is thrown down in the fowl-house, that of the mother in the *saman* farm. The mother and child are bathed in warm water containing certain leaves. From these leaves the child gets its father's taboos. If a woman is confined in her mother's village, they would not dare to bathe the infant in their medicine. They would send a messenger to her husband, who would then dispatch some one with his medicine to treat his wife properly. Neither the father nor any other male will see the child until its navel string is healed up. When it finally drops off, it is buried where the afterbirth was put. A child is not taken outside until it becomes black, but as soon as the mother is better she may go out and fetch water as usual. Sometimes a soothsayer may say that an infant must be taken outside for the first time by such and such a person. This woman must be a *poato* (i.e. a woman born in the
000 infant's father's town, a clanswoman). Five to six months after birth,

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[1] Among the Nankanse, what a woman earns while living with her husband belongs to him. Her private property, however, which she brought with her, belongs to her daughter.

[2] In Nankane, the afterbirth of animals is called *zale*, that of human beings *yala*.

Kusase

Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grandfather's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows: [787] 782

'"Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months. 787 574

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die."' 834 845 766

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.' 583 586

834 765 768 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property, it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women; any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 584 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

764 Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

and these are left on the grave. The iron heads of the hoes are washed 787
in water containing *grunyoa* grass (*nagwa* in Nankane, used to fumi- [783]
gate everything which has had contact with the dead). If the deceased [778]
had a *bakolog* (soothsaying shrine) it is fumigated with the grass.

Driving the Souls of the Living from Graves: 'Some *bayas* (sextons) can 791
see souls (*sis*) in graves. When they do so, they will take a potsherd 775
and put peppers and tobacco on it and set them on fire and place
them in the open grave in order that the soul may be driven out.'

This exhausts the information which I obtained while living with 000
the Kusase,[1] whom I found a charming and delightful people. I pass on in my next chapter to describe the Builsa, whom Europeans know better as the 'Kanjaga'.

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[1] The Kusase do not circumcise, nor do their women practise incision, unless 304
influenced by Mampruse connexions, e.g. at Bawku. They file the teeth. The women pierce the lower lip only.

577 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with 784 non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

613 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔɣar*) 428 of the founding ancestor of Bɔɣada biis at Tongo was a case in point. 627 Saŋgbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'aləm, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'aləm, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔɣar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋgbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔɣada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'aləm, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*mieŋ*), and the crocodile (*baŋ*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pɛhug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋgbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Puliebər yidem, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'aləm and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋgbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle. [78 A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

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No one was surprised when Tinta'aləm gained the verdict. Thus the ancestors themselves vouched for the legitimate status of Yidaan biis.

Other Namoo Clans

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The most important of the Namoo clans that come within the political orbit of Tongo, though not related to it by ties of clanship, is the contiguous clan of Zoo. A number of Tongo families live on Zoo land, which was not so densely populated as Tongo 50 or 60 years ago and could therefore accommodate some of its overflow population. In the same way, a number of Zoo families have overflowed into the neighbouring locality of Gbambee, where they live among Tongo people. These ecological adjustments are facilitated, though not solely determined, by the structural ties between Zoo and Tongo, and by the fact that both are Namoo settlements. Ten out of the thirty-nine homesteads at Zoo belong to Tongo people, and they are members of all but one of the major segments of Tongo. By contrast, Tongo people are reluctant to move out to vacant parts of Zubiuŋ, where the people, though their neighbours and cognatic kinsfolk, are Talis in their ritual beliefs and practices. In recent years only one Tongo man has done this as a temporary measure.

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The people of Zoo (Zoodɛm) comprise two maximal lineages. One of these, Zoo proper, is a maximal lineage of three segments, to one of which is attached a 'sister's son's' lineage. Their founding ancestor, Yikpɛmdaan, is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*) of Mosuor, whom he accompanied from Mampurugu. As Zoodɛm marry any of the descendants of Mosuor, the fiction of original kinship (*mabiirət*) here emphasizes the cultural and political solidarity of the two groups, not a genealogical connexion.

Living side by side with Zoodɛm proper (Yikpɛmdaan biis) is another maximal lineage known as Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm. These two maximal lineages exclude one another from the cults of their respective founding ancestors and from the ritual observances connected with them. Indeed, Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are affiliated to the Talis by ritual observance and cult. Nevertheless, Zoodɛm proper and Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm have all the ties of clanship that hold between constituent lineages of the same clan who consider themselves to be *sunzɔp*. The explanation they give is that 'it is because we live together side by side (*tin kab ziin ni taaba la zugu*)'. Here clanship is attributed to local coalescence. These clanship ties are shown in all ceremonial matters that concern either of the lineages as well as in their co-operative enterprises. Though they do not take part in the esoteric ritual of one another's funeral ceremonies, they act as *sunzɔp* to one another in the public and exoteric phases of the ceremonies. If a party of Zoodɛm proper set out to pay their respects to a deceased relative-in-law, they will always be supported by some young men from Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm; and if a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is summoned to take a working party to help his father-in-law, he will always be accompanied by a few young men of the other lineage.

Zoo-Yiraaŋ is linked by ties of clanship to one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ.[1] Zoodɛm proper have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ or with any other clan. Yet they are often described as 'our

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[1] See ch. VI.

held up by an impassable river. He noticed a water-tortoise descending 773
the bank, and followed it. Thus he was led to a ford, which enabled him 539
to cross. Thereupon he vowed that he and his descendants would refrain
from eating this animal and its brother species, the tortoise.

Similar myths are current among other clans that taboo aquatic
animals. Thus one of the segments of Sie have the special avoidance of
the crocodile in addition to the usual fowl avoidance of the Namoos. The
head of this segment told me the following myth in explanation. There
was a communal fish drive, during which their ancestor, Layɛn, dis- [226]
appeared. He was given up for lost, and next day a party was dispatched
to search for the body. But when they reached the river, they found him
sitting on the bank with a crocodile at his feet. He told them that the
crocodile had saved his life (*fa u ŋovor bah*) by holding him down and
covering him up. Hence he vowed that he and his descendants would
never again eat crocodile.

In the same way the elders of Gban narrate that 'their ancestor' was 773
suffering with a swollen hand. He asked friends to lance it, but they 539
thought this was unnecessary. Then one day, as he sat resting his hand 757
on his head because of the pain, a large grasshopper of a species with
sharply serrated legs (*saŋkaan*) landed on it. The ancestor scared it away.
As it leaped off, it kicked out and ripped the skin of the festering hand
with its saw-edged legs. This let out the accumulated pus and cured the
hand. Thereupon the ancestor vowed, in the phrase that usually con-
cludes these myths, 'May he grow old with his grandson, but no
descendant of his should ever again eat the *saŋkaan* (*ɔn kɔrəgən ni u
yaaŋa, ka ɔn bii ku le di saŋkaan*)'.

Other myths of this kind relate how the anonymous ancestor was saved 773
from an enemy about to slay him by the opportune appearance of the 539
totemic animal. Thus, according to one of the elders of Sawaləg: 'Bows
were in conflict (*tap ndaa ŋme*)', ('Perhaps', he added, as an afterthought,
'there was a fight with Mamprusi who came to raid for slaves') 'and our
ancestor fled, seeking refuge in an animal's burrow. The enemy was
about to break open the burrow when a squirrel (*sinsɛrəg*) darted past.
They turned to pursue it, and left our ancestor. Thereupon, he vowed
never to eat the squirrel again, neither he nor his descendants.'

As this sample of totemic myths shows, the pattern is the same as that 773
of the Namoo myth accounting for the fowl avoidance. They are more 787
unstable in content, however. The two versions of the tortoise myth
were obtained from two equally authoritative elders of the same clan.
There is, indeed, always an element of speculation, or of *ad hoc* construc-
tion, in these myths. Listening to them one often has the feeling that
they are being elaborated by logical deduction. The starting-point is the
premiss that the totemic avoidance was due to a vow made by 'our
ancestor' in gratitude for an extraordinary service that saved his life.
The process of reasoning is to deduce an action on the part of the animal
consistent with its known peculiarities of appearance and of behaviour.
Informants are never able to tell one where and when they first heard
these myths. They say vaguely: 'We heard them from our fathers.' This
method of reasoning, however, is congenial to the Tallensi. It forms the

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on 787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the 181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is 828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one 627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line, 611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of 184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against 769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔɣar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔɣar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

784 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con- 784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔɣar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔɣar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562
of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613
relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔɣayabəlis*, deprived by
an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan.
This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784]
pɔɣayabələg of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the
homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own
brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage
ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there
simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives,
of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with
Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔɣayabələg* might,
in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident
of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied
as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the
lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic
rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For
these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously
represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal
descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔɣayabələg* as 562
an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854
example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some
months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be
ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan. Usually
she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to
carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787]
will be a suitable *pɔɣayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the
ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the
clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a
pɔɣayabələg is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with
the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's
mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the
house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task;
it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being.
Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and
mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's
patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔɣar* is significant in 562
this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793
shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769
case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral
male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian
of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status
of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a
consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔɣayabəlis* have the right to take part

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔyar*, the married *pɔyayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior *pɔyayabələg*, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔyayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔyayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔyar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his successor.
● [787] This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔyayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination. Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔyar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔyar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
× 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

term still prevails. Their function is 'to prosper the community (*maal tɛŋ*)'. 622
Overtly and most conspicuously this is a ritual function. By their conscientious 793
observance of the ritual rules of conduct that symbolize their respective offices, their responsibilities for the community to the mystical powers, and their mutual relationships, as well as by taking the lead in ritual acts calculated to preserve or restore the goodwill of these mystical powers, they maintain the well-being of the community. Actually, these ritual attributes symbolize the fact that chief or tɛndaana is the hub of clan unity and solidarity, the representative of the common interests and of the common values that enable men to visualize and to hold fast to this common interest.

The polar conjunction of chiefship and tɛndaanaship is expressed in 622
the obligatory ritual collaboration, with complementary roles, of chiefs 793
and tɛndaanas. It mirrors the fusion of the two principles that shape 182
the total social field which ultimately determines the prosperity of the individual. One is the principle that the fate of the individual and of the community is determined by the practical and utilitarian concerns and needs that bind man to the earth and put him at the mercy of natural phenomena. The other is the principle that the attainment of prosperity and security, both for the individual and the community, depends upon the integration of the community. The two principles fuse in the notion that the prosperity of the land (*tɛŋ*)—that is, of the community dwelling on its territory—depends on the united strength of the chiefship and the tɛndaanaship, in the last resort. When drought or an epidemic threatens, chiefs and tɛndaanas meet together to decide on ritual measures to be undertaken to avert it. When war temporarily cuts through the tissue of structural ties that holds the clans of Taleland together, the social equilibrium is finally restored by the ritual collaboration, according to
ancient custom, of chief and tɛndaana. The death of a chief or tɛndaana [787]
leaves 'the land empty (*tɛŋvoog*)', as if its sentinel has departed, until his successor is installed. The death of a chief, Tallensi say, portends want—at best a scarcity of food in his own clan, at the worst a famine throughout the whole country. 'The land dies (*tɛŋ la kpiirəme*)', the people starve, and social life breaks up. This always happens when a Chief of Tongo dies. It is the one disaster, Tallensi declare, which even the white man's rule cannot avert. The death of an important tɛndaana is also ominous, but not likely to be so disastrous, since there is usually at least one other tɛndaana in the same clan and there are a great many tɛndaanas in the country.

The principles underlying the structure of a society are never embodied in a perfectly unambiguous way in its social institutions. Social life, even in the most stable and unprogressive of societies, demands continual reshufflings, readjustments, and revaluations of social relationships. Though the distant past has no record among the Tallensi, their society exists in time like every human society. Events leave a deposit in its structure, though they themselves vanish into the limbo of oblivion. Thus, in some clans the two principles we have been examining are very clearly brought out in the precise separation by office, ritual observances, and genealogical limitation of the functions of chiefship and tɛndaanaship.

or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them 613
in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in 621
the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, 613
though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal 621
lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and 161
children), including members of the section and their families who live at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the 613
effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments 621
of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare 182
it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things.
When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or cere- [782]
monially slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section, as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides.
Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and [787]
Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*, that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and 613
solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range 621
of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

793 578 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as the Gbizug tɛndaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tɛndaana. For a short while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two tɛndaanas together again, when the Gbeog tɛndaana had to perform the principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tɛndaana. But soon afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tɛndaanas are right, they say. The Gbizug tɛndaana is going by 'what used to be (*dɛn daa a siem*)', the Gbeog tɛndaana by 'what is now (*dɛn a siem zinala*)'. It is a problem of adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be a Gbizug tɛndaana who will accept the present position. Then the two tɛndaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 x618 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co-operation and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of conduct. Yinyɛla's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members of Yinyɛla's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solida-
[208] rity as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment. The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors, concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means
[769 of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in
182] which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

578 We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago
[781] Gbalɔg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbalɔg went to settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father, stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo. Yet Gbalɔg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man, boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But
● [787] the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors 578
demanded that Gbaləg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo [787]
among his forefathers. This meant that Gbaləg's sons should beg the
Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors.
But Gbaləg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to
do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother
Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There
was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be
done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by
custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear
to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. 578
At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath 618x
of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was
sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the
recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his [783]
behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and
several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his
father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be
present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation.
Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and
brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects
he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of
whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbaləg's defection was thus
erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan 613
solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the 618x
source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral
premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of
Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display
of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom [577]
of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own
right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen,
the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a con- 182
sideration of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage member- 183
ship. There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions
centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the
identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their
common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the
correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife.
Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings
and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan.
These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms.
This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife,
the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband
if the latter gets ill.

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[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and
their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate
units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the
ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is
not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead
man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the
Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own
matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced
that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors,
for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for
the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of
which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which
they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these
ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through
which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the
lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor
have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's
maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in
opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up
cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will
not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out
of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when
the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tɛnzugu. *He has come* into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been
regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations
of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana
of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar*
as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control
of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief
of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia
and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount
Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high
status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular
[177] quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of
Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and
unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that
they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly.
Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as
a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through
the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals.
The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

have no clear notion of witchcraft, no detailed theories of its mode of 754
operation, and no institutionalized means of combating or sterilizing it. A witch (*sɔi*) is supposed to fly about (*u ayarəme*) at night in the guise of a ball of fire; she—for the Tallensi tend to think of a witch as a woman, though they say that men may be witches too—is supposed to be clairvoyant, to 'see (*nye*)' hidden things. She can recognize fellow witches, foresee death coming to a particular person, prophesy an epidemic, and so forth; she may be beneficent, able to impart luck to a person in a mysterious way, or maleficent, killing people by eating (*ɔb*) their souls (*sii*). This is the sum of Tale ideas about the nature of witches. Actually, these qualities make up what is mainly an imaginary stereotype. One never hears of particular individuals being credited with the socially useful qualities or being suspected of possessing the anti-social qualities attributed to witches. Witchcraft is only attributed to people *ex post facto*, when an event occurs for which an explanation in terms of witchcraft is sought.

Witchcraft is something on the fringe of Tale mystical thought and 754
ritual values. I have more than once heard elders of the most conser-
vative way of thinking, to whom the native scheme of ritual values is the 771
most important thing in life, declare roundly that there is no such thing as a witch. Though the Tallensi do not put it into clear words, they obviously feel that the idea of witchcraft is a mixture of superstition and folk-lore, and not a part of the system of mystical and ritual values that really matters for the conduct of life. Of course, superstition and folk-lore are not wholly negligible. Circumstances occur, now and then, in which people fall back on the idea of a witch's occult aggression in order to cope with anxieties and frustrations that are normally neutralized through the agency of the ancestor cult; and then a particular person may be accused of being a witch. Significantly, in every case that has come to my notice, some dating back twenty or thirty years and all of them together numbering less than ten, the accused has been a woman. Most accusations of this sort are in the first instance made by women [595]
against co-wives, and are symptomatic of the tensions inherent in the joint family.

An accusation of being a witch is the private affair of the accused's 754
husband and his maximal lineage, her paternal family, and those of her 602
saarət who are in touch with her. In former days, if the accusation was
confirmed by a diviner, the accused might insist on undergoing the [787]
arrow ordeal (*huh sɔ-peema*), or be compelled to do so by her husband's [627]
lineage and her *saarət* in order to prove her innocence. She had to stab herself with a poisoned arrow in public at the same time as a branch of a *kegbaŋ* (Ficus) tree was plucked; and if she were guilty, it was believed that she would die before the branch withered. But it is characteristic of the Tale attitude to witches that a person who died thus was accorded a proper funeral—unlike, for example, a person who

754 dies of small-pox—and that the decision was not accepted as conclusive
by her *saarət* whom it directly implicated. A proven witch's uterine
602 kin, her children in particular, felt the shame for a time, but they were
[593] not publicly stigmatized or penalized. Even the husband of an apparently
guilty woman would, judging by what happens nowadays, very often continue privately to believe in her innocence; and if he admitted her guilt would not allow this to influence his relations with his children by her.

754 The public attitude to a witch nowadays is illustrated by the following
case which occurred during my stay among the Tallensi. A young man
574 from Yinduuri went to visit a kinsman at Moyaduur. Arriving at his
602 kinsman's house, he was offered some cold porridge by an old woman
of the house who happened to be the only person at home. Now, cold porridge is not a dish to offer to a guest. The poorest native would blush with shame if he had nothing better to put before a visitor. But in this instance the young man was weary and hungry after a long tramp. His kinsman was not at home to offer him more seemly hospitality and the old woman had nothing else. So he accepted it gladly.

754 Later in the day, on his way home, the youth was suddenly taken ill
with what soon proved to be acute dysentery. He at once thought of
627 the old woman's cold porridge and told his family of this when he
787 reached home. Next day he died. Thereupon his father accused the
old woman of having bewitched the youth through the medium of the cold porridge, and so caused his death. Her unconventional hospitality and the sequence of events seemed to leave no doubt about her guilt. There was, it is true, no obvious motive, but this was not taken into consideration. Indeed, as one man remarked, the youth was himself partly to blame, for no self-respecting adult would eat cold porridge at someone else's house. However, the old woman was sent for and the matter submitted to divination. As the dead youth's clansmen had no doubt about her guilt, it is not to be wondered at that the diviner declared her to have bewitched him. In vain she protested her innocence. The head of the youth's maximal lineage told all his people to mock (*wool*) her with a derisive chant. Neighbouring clans took up the chant, as she passed on her way home, and some weeks later it was made the theme of one of the dance songs of the Gɔlib Festival. 'Wherever she goes', my informants said, 'men, women, and children will look askance at her and jeer at her for being a witch. Shame and grief will dog her,
[626] and she will pine away and die.' It was for fear of this kind of public
ostracism that anyone accused of being a witch in the old days insisted on undergoing the arrow ordeal.

The main reason why witchcraft is of minor significance in Tale
754 mystical thought is because the elaborate ancestor cult and the Earth
[771] cult deal adequately with most social and psychological tensions in terms
consistent with the total social structure. The idea of witchcraft is not

family head, she does so as a privileged spectator. She has this privilege 593 because her welfare is bound up with that of her husband and children, and theirs with hers. She remains outside the religious and moral 769 solidarity of her husband's clan and maximal lineage, and, indeed, has only a contingent interest in the solidarity of his minimal lineage. It is noteworthy that women, both daughters and wives, are excluded from the esoteric ritual activities in which the moral sanctions of the unity and continuity of lineage and clan are embodied. In religious, jural, 593 and political matters—all of which are closely interconnected—Tale women have the status of minors. This exclusion is most stringent in 562 the case of the Earth cult and the cult of the lineage *bɔɣar*. But the segregation is not so rigid as to keep women in entire ignorance of or wholly disinterested in these male monopolies. Their welfare depends upon the propitious outcome of these activities as much as that of their menfolk. They see, hear, and discuss among themselves and with their menfolk ritual affairs and jural actions that concern their husbands' lineages of which, indeed, wives and children often form the main subject. They grind the flour, brew the beer, and witness the preparations for esoteric religious rites. They see the public and semi-public phases of big religious ceremonies and overhear the endless consultations and discussions between the men which these ceremonies always produce. 593

A wife, therefore, can be in sympathy with the interests and can respect the values that rule the actions of her husband and her sons as members 578 of their agnatic descent group, while being herself excluded from an 787 effective public role in relation to them. But a cleavage remains. Thus in a conflict between her husband's clan and her father's clan she might very well take the side of the latter, not openly, it is true, but covertly. How strongly the natives feel this was shown at the divination ceremony following the death of Siiyɛlib of Tɔŋ-Seug. This divination was so cryptic and involved that I could make no sense of it. Fortunately I was able to get an explanation from one of my most trustworthy informants, a close agnate of the dead man. Siiyɛlib's death, it appeared, was a mystical retribution for a grave sin he had committed many years before. He had been one of the instigators of the white man's attack on the Hill Talis, and was an accessory, therefore, to the slaughter of many men. Now there were several Talis present at the funeral—kinsmen, affines, and, last but not least, wives of the dead man and his close agnates. If Siiyɛlib's sin were publicly brought out in the divination it would stir up all their hostile feelings. They would feel resentful towards Siiyɛlib's surviving agnates on account of his complicity in the destruction of their fathers and grandfathers. And this would produce strife between the men of Seug and their Talis wives, their Talis cognates, and their Talis affines.

The social and psychological cleavage which underlies all the rela- 593 tions of husband and wife is the structural kernel around which the 578

the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846
wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are 602
near, might give some help too.[1] The younger women fetch water and cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593
begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of 854
a father's tribulations. Talking with men immediately after the birth of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some
days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family [787 ●
visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as 776]
a spiritual ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) to guard its life (*gur u ŋɔvɔr*) and watch over its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabələg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, vol. xxxv, nos. 3 and 4, 1943. [165]

tension that develops between a father and his oldest surviving son is 593 never as great as that which occurs between a man and his first-born 578 son. An oldest surviving son may in time begin to farm on his own, but he will very often stay in his father's homestead, for his *Yin* is not a 184 danger to his father's.

Tallensi have no explanation for this. Their only comment is to point 593 to the fact, which can often be observed, that parents discriminate 578 between their older children and their younger children, especially between the oldest and the youngest. Youngest children are the favourites, upon whom they lavish all their tenderness when they have long ceased to make a show of affection for the older children. A man's or a woman's last child (*bikpa'ar*) is the apple of its parent's eye. Tallensi say that a last child is always spoiled and pampered, and therefore grows up to be vain, lazy, and extravagant. Guna'ab was a man of this stamp, and his older brothers explained contemptuously that he had been their mother's *bikpa'ar* and they had been unable to discipline him after their father's death.

Tallensi say that a person's younger children, and in particular the youngest child, feel their dependence on their parents till the last. There is, as in so many aspects of the relations of parents and children, an element of reciprocity in this. For a man's youngest son, for instance, is still farming with him when his oldest son is farming either wholly or partly for himself—'thinking of how to feed his wife and children rather than of his parents', they often say. 'If I die to-day', men have said to me, 'do you think my oldest son will weep? Oh no; but my youngest son, he will shed bitter tears.' There is much truth in this. I have more than once seen a man's youngest son being harshly rated by an older brother for abandoning himself to grief over his father's death. Because older children no longer need their parents' care they do not inspire the same affection as young children. In the eyes of the natives, therefore, the discrimination between youngest and oldest children is a natural result of the process of upbringing. But I have heard women say, also, that a woman's love for her *bikpa'ar* is due to her seeing in him the sign of the end of her reproductive powers.

It is, however, not merely a matter of the vagaries of parental psychology. 593 This discrimination runs deeply into the social structure of the 787 Tallensi. A curious but enlightening indication of this occurs with divining (*bakologo*) shrines. When a diviner dies, the clairvoyant power associated with his shrine sometimes passes on to one of his sons by a process which the Tallensi think of as a kind of mystical contagion (*lɔŋ*). The son who is selected for this privilege is always a younger son. There 593 is more sympathy between father and younger son than between father 765 and oldest son. But the best indication of this is found at funeral ceremonies, 578 where the oldest and the youngest children of the deceased have distinctive mourning duties. The oldest son and oldest daughter,

inheriting from their father he will be effectively restrained by his 593
brothers. This rule is constantly met with in discussions of the pledging 428
of property or the sale of land or cattle. Naabdiya summed up these
rules very well in reference to the various farms held by the members 423
of his inner lineage of Kunduzoor biis. First there was the home farm
originally inherited and left intact by Kunduzoor at the time of his
death, now owned by the last of his and his brothers' sons, Na'am.
Na'am could, if he wished, sell some or all of this land, since on his
death it will pass to men whom he calls 'sons'. 'We (the sons) could
protest but we could not restrain him', said Naabdiya, 'but Kunduzoor
(i.e. his spirit) would be angry and would slay Na'am.' Then there was
some land Kunduzoor had himself acquired and left intact, heritable
only by his direct descendants. The largest part of this was now owned
by Na'ampa'ahya, the oldest of his true grandsons. 'He cannot sell this
land', said Naabdiya; 'we, his brothers (who will inherit after him)
could restrain him. In the old days we should not hesitate to draw
arrows in order to do so, but now we would drag him to the chief, who
would forbid the sale.'

The records of land sales in the past which I collected at Tongo amply
confirm Naabdiya's statement. When Na'ampa'ahya inherited this
land from the last of Kunduzoor's own sons it was as oldest of a group
of brothers. So he had to 'cut off (*ŋma*)' portions of it for his other
brothers. These distributed portions are normally re-amalgamated with
the main block of patrimonial land as the brothers inherit from one
another and add their portions to the main block. But if friction
develops between brothers over a serious issue, it may result in one of
them refusing to let his portion revert to the patrimonial land. Such a
case occurred in Naabdiya's inner lineage in his father's time. One of
Kunduzoor's sons, having become his father's heir, took offence at an
apparent slight put upon him by a son of his father's brother. So he took an
oath that his portion of the patrimonial land should never revert to the
brother who would inherit from him and made a bond with his brothers
that they should act likewise. Such a compact could never have been
made by a man with his 'sons'. Characteristically, the compact left
uneasy consciences. A generation later deaths occurred in the lineage.
Diviners said they were a punishment for certain actions that resulted [587]
from this compact and Kunduzoor's grandsons were commanded to
annul it. They could no longer do so in fact, but a token annulment
and an expiatory sacrifice to their grandfather were considered sufficient.

In accordance with this principle we find that duties and rewards are 593
distributed among siblings on a basis of equality of status, though in
proportion to such distinguishing personal attributes as age, ability,
need, and in conformity with the demands of the situation. When
brothers work together as a team in the production of the household's
food resources, each is expected to contribute the maximum share he is

and 'grandsons'. There is another, and in some ways more important, 604 aspect. Every man sacrifices to both his agnatic ancestors and his maternal ancestors, as we have seen. He has shrines consecrated to 769 ancestors of both lines in his homestead. The ancestors who constitute his *Yin* are very often matrilateral or include matrilateral ancestors. 778 Indeed this is so common that a *Yin* that has no matrilateral ancestors is somewhat unusual. Knowing the significance of the *Yin* shrine as a symbol of a man's individuality, we can see why his connexion with his mother's side is apt to be stressed in it. Again, every man erects a shrine to his mother when she dies, which in the course of time may develop into a very important shrine for him. There are other shrines, too, which are consecrated to matrilateral ancestors. The most important of these are divining shrines (*bakologo*) and *bɔɣar* shrines.

A *bakologo* shrine is, by definition, a 'female (*bumpɔk*)' shrine. That 778 is to say, the ancestors associated with it come, by definition, from a matrilateral lineage of the diviner; and the dominant figure among them 787 ● is usually a woman, a 'mother'. It is a point of striking significance in the social psychology of the Tallensi that the spirits through whom a 769 diviner makes contact with the ancestors of his clients should constitute a 'feminine' group,[1] the more so when the character of the *bakologo* complex is understood. The *bakologo*[2] is the very incarnation of the vindictive and jealous aspect of the ancestors. It persecutes the man in whose life it has intervened relentlessly, until he finally submits and 'accepts (*die*)' it—that is, until he undertakes to set up a shrine to the *bakologo* spirits in his own home so that he can sacrifice to them regularly. He then promises, also, to use the shrine for divining. But not every man has a talent for divining, so most men simply have the shrine and do not use it for divination. It is interesting to note that nine out of ten men over 40 have *bakologo* shrines. Every man, and not only those who have suffered exceptional misfortunes, is directed by the religious system of the Tallensi to project his deeper feelings of guilt and insecurity largely on to the mother image embodied in the *bakologo* complex. Usually, also, a man does not immediately yield to the demands of the *bakologo* ancestors. He temporizes, evades, and resists, perhaps for years, until he is at last forced to submit and accept the *bakologo*. This 'cools (*maa*)' or subdues the *bakologo*. By giving the spirits a home in his own house, where they can be cared for, their victim transforms their hate into love. They may still inflict misfortunes on him, but he has a means of placating them since he can sacrifice to the shrine. In return for the sacrifices they

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[1] Cf. what was said on p. 235 above about the cruelty attributed to female ancestor spirits.

[2] As with all religious terms of this class among the Tallensi, *bakologo* is used both for the shrine (*baɣər*)—the tall, conical object built of mud and smeared with the dried blood and feathers of sacrifices—and for the group of ancestors to whom the shrine is dedicated. It signifies also the whole configuration of ideas and beliefs associated with the shrine.

778 will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And
•787 if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his bene-
769 factress. The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing menace.

613 As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the domi-
769 nant ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo*
778 ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather, and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the
791 group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔɣar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahəŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔɣar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔɣar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔɣar* is tangibly symbolized.

Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahəŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahəs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

769 The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's
602 father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

226 typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also
789 many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance.
782 Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*).
[778] The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*. Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool and of the magical specialist.
●[787] A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist. Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bolgraana's* first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish. The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near
[424] pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

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[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have 787 selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival 796 is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: [778 a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. 534] Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into 796 abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest, 535 until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." 796 It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effervescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which [578] threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement, planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo [784] against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. 796 Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festival, 535 and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ meŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed 177
on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and
extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to 796
attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work. 776
Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it
so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of
the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which
are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of
cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity,
but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which
must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally [778]
the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country
about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the
boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to
the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

'Its power is from God (*Na Yin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan'*; its 784
taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the following 776
avoidances:

- (*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
- (*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
- (*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
- (*d*) *Meya* (water turtle).
- (*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
- (*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
- (*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la* [195]
a zia koom (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range 788
which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There 776
seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who 778
come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this
shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

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[1] It is also known as *Ta ni* and *Ta pwiga*.

788 defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a
776 grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl.
778 There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the
punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come
down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme
776 Being, does not, as far ~~as I could~~ discover, possess any shrine beyond
778 a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service
about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not
have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far
from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags.
The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than
ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

796 On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the
first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of
788 Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* had not yet appeared. From then onwards,
until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder
[484] and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who
I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi,
Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti
friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on
their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the
Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived. The former was a really
magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely
[777] proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the
Ten'dan' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to
796 attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets, and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75). We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted. I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔyar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔyar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔyar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔya*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔyar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔyar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794
sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the
rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them
over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing
Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔyar* or the coercion of an
adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult to 776
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔyar can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛɣər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔyar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔyar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔyar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
738 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar*
to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion
[551] with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to
their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children
have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl
[582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in
marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and
sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
648 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a
574 traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale
tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi;
and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of
the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts
and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the
benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace,
and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the
totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal
visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as
emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured
kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct
of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client
lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for
184 instance. Then the ward (*sɛyəraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

731 241 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 165 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting [766 758] their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

● 788 771 782 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

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[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of 778 ●
ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial 771
observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects 782
of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual 769
conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social 776
security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical 731
powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common 782
concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who 182
represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the 779
Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual 425
observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most 688
important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

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[1] The word *teŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter. [193]

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external
[556] sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gorisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere sideline. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. 431
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relationships
than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from 486
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or
misdeeds.

This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
431 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional
788 gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts
in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔyar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this
lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded
471 ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country,
recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his
gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close
agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—
to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

857 with sacrifice and least about the beliefs and theories. He is familiar
524 with all the concepts of Tale religion and magic but cannot assign
869 them accurately to their relevant contexts. He knows that ancestor spirits and medicines are different, and can even describe some of the latter by their functions, but cannot elucidate these differences. He knows also and believes that health, prosperity and success depend on mystical agencies, that sickness, death, and misfortune are caused by them, and that sacrifices must be made to placate them or to expiate offences. He has heard talk of all this and seen consultations of diviners. As an infant, perhaps, he has been called by his mother to get off a partition wall 'lest the spirits push you off', or has seen food put out 'for the spirits' during the ritual festivals. He knows what different types of shrines look like and what are their appurtenances. But it is surface knowledge, confused in details and full of gaps.

857 Ritual is men's business, though women are well versed in it.
524 Hence it emerges mostly in the play of boys and not of girls. Signifi-
869 cantly, it is permitted till pubescence, that is, as long as a boy is not
likely to take a responsible part in real ritual. After that he is liable to
781 have to accept an ancestor spirit demanding real sacrifices and may no
788 longer play at it. At 13 or 14 years of age, when a boy's ritual schemas approximate those of an adult, he fully understands and acquiesces in this prohibition. It suggests, however, that playing at ritual has a different value for children than actual ritual has for adults. Children share the adults' interest in ritual and accept its prescriptions, but not the adults' emotional relationship to ritual. In their play they express this interest and their identifications, rehearse their knowledge, and integrate it with the rest of their educational achievements.

857 Small boys build shrines a few inches high for themselves in a corner
524 of the cattle-yard. They take great pains to achieve verisimilitude and neatness, and their inventiveness is remarkable. *Kalampoo* husks are
869 turned into medicine-pots; fragments of calabash or potsherd represent the hoe-blade which is essential to many ancestor shrines; a pronged twig is a shrine's 'tree'; the tail of a stillborn kid or lamb, tied with string and feathers in the same way as adults do, is a shrine's 'tail', another object commonly dedicated to real shrines. There are 'roots'—of grass—as in adult medicine-pots, and other appurtenances.

778

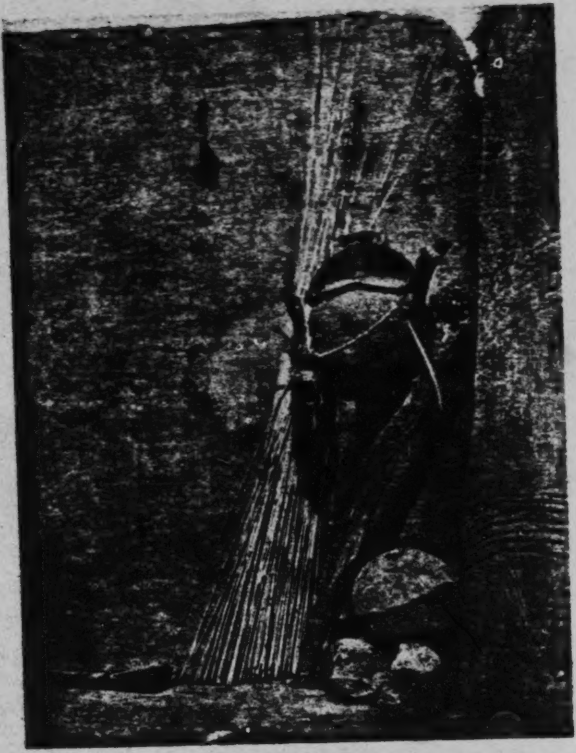

Fig. 70. A *tim bager*

791
•789

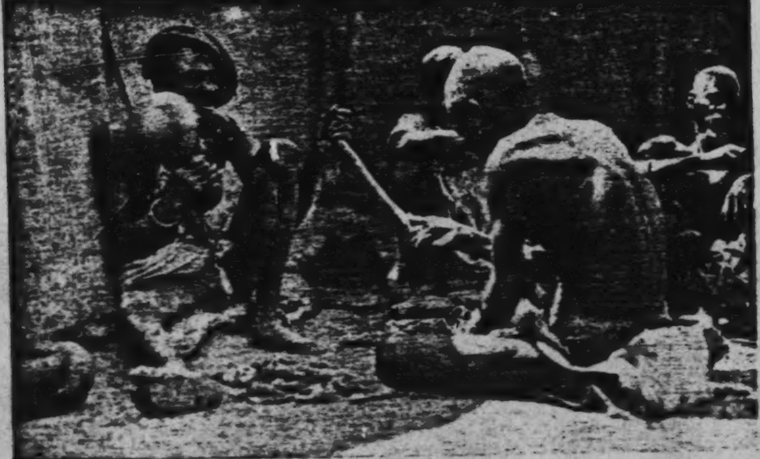

Fig. 71. 'The soothsayer then began to rattle'

[facing p. 355]

jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual 602 coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tendaana's brother, who often deputizes for 618x him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of 578 the tendaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true, but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's [789] ● ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohəg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiirət*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations 184 which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also 571 confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of 571 clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, 577 but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihər*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*ba yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and considerable 793
moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.' The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the statement implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term 'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties, privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of 784
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship. And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

793 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as 578 their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as the Gbizug tɛndaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tɛndaana. For a short while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two tɛndaanas together again, when the Gbeog tɛndaana had to perform the principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tɛndaana. But soon afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tɛndaanas are right, they say. The Gbizug tɛndaana is going by 'what used to be (*dɛn daa a siem*)', the Gbeog tɛndaana by 'what is now (*dɛn a siem zinala*)'. It is a problem of adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be a Gbizug tɛndaana who will accept the present position. Then the two tɛndaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co- X618 operation and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of conduct. Yinyɛla's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members of Yinyɛla's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solida- [208] rity as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment. The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors, concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means [769 of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in 182] which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

578 We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago [781] Gbalɔg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbalɔg went to settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father, stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo. Yet Gbalɔg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man, boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But [787] the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

581 583 [586] the bridegroom's guardian must send the placation gift (*lu sendaan*) to the bride's guardian, and must pay a proportion of the bride-price acceptable to the latter. A wife is usually espoused (*sol*) by paying the bride-price of four head of cattle or their equivalent in instalments over a number of years. If he does not fulfil these jural requirements, a man has no rights to and over his wife. On the other hand, women frequently desert husbands who have paid a part or, occasionally, even the whole bride-price. In such a case an honourable man may feel bound to compel his daughter to return to her husband, but if the girl refuses obstinately he may have to yield to her. Often, however, a father prefers his daughter to find another husband from whom he claims the bride-price that has to be refunded to the first husband. And it is not uncommon for men to instigate a daughter to leave her lawful husband for another man, or to take a daughter away from her husband and give her to another man as a means of raising what we should call ready cash or its equivalent—for instance, a cow to repay a pressing debt, or to buy grain for the household. Thus, observance of the jural proprieties gives a husband a weapon with which he can try to assert his rights to and over his wife. It does not give him an absolute guarantee of these rights nor does it ensure the stability of the marriage.

582 593 A girl's parents, and especially her father, can make or mar a marriage. Young people may wed without their fathers' consent, but they cannot remain legitimately married without it. If a man objects to a son-in-law he usually succeeds in exercising his right to take his daughter away, though cases are numerous in which the woman has persistently returned to the rejected husband, who has had to be accepted in the end. By contrast, if a father has himself chosen or likes his daughter's husband, he is a strong ally. He can force the girl, beating her if necessary, to stay with her husband, though here again fathers have been known to fail with obdurate daughters. Generally, however, the strength of [789] paternal authority makes a father's command irresistible; for he might curse an intractable daughter, and this is greatly dreaded.

583 691 Again, a woman will not stay with a husband who does not pay at least a portion of the bride-price. It is an insult to her, placing her on the level of a casual lover and exposing her to the taunts of her co-wives of the lineage. Pukiehɔt's wife was taken from him five times because he could not pay anything towards her bride-price; every time she came back. At length her guardian brought a case against Pukiehɔt. The chief put it to her that Pukiehɔt was, in effect, treating both her and her guardian with contempt. Sadly she admitted this and agreed to leave him if he did not meet the debt at once. Pukiehɔt saw he was in danger of losing his wife. He was a poor man; but he set to work energetically and managed to raise the equivalent of two cows, which was enough to satisfy his father-in-law.

586 Even a fruitful marriage, the strongest of all bonds between husband

761

be a grievous sin against her parents and her ancestors, sure to bring 602
misfortune on her and her children.

I was the unsuspecting witness of the strength of a woman's filial 764
devotion, brought out by the crisis of death, at Sawɔŋba's burial cere-
mony. Sawɔŋba's daughter married a Tenzugu man against her father's 578
wish. To add insult to injury, when Sawɔŋba sent messengers to 576
demand a cow of the bride-price, his son-in-law turned them away 593
with contempt. As the girl refused to leave her husband, Sawɔŋba [789] ●
cursed her, and, being a leper who knew he had not long to live, expressly forbade her to come to his funeral. She was not told of his death, but heard of it indirectly. On the day of the burial, during one of the major rites, there was a sudden commotion in the crowd around the gateway. A young woman dashed forward, making for the homestead. I could see the strained and agitated look on her face as she passed me. But at once one of Sawɔŋba's classificatory sons darted forward, seized her, and dragged her back to the tree where the elders sat. For a minute or two nothing but a wildly shouting mob could be seen under the tree. Then the girl struggled out, sobbing aloud, her body covered with bruises where she had been beaten by her enraged brothers and clansmen. Followed by execrations, she was escorted by one of the elders to where her husband and a party of his lineage kin were waiting. Only the fear of bloodshed, which would make the affair into that much-dreaded thing, a 'case for the white man (*nasaara yɛl*)', had restrained them from interfering. Sawɔŋba's sons and lineage kin did not see the pathos of their sister's action. They were thoroughly incensed, and called it an insult. Had her husband wished to behave properly, he would have sent an elder of his lineage to beg Sawɔŋba's pardon while he was still alive, or, at any rate, to beg the head of Sawɔŋba's medial lineage to intercede with his sons when he heard of Sawɔŋba's death.

These bonds of a woman with her parental family play an important 593
part in Tale domestic economy. After the harvest there is always a great [574]
coming and going of daughters to and from their parental homes. And
no man would let his daughter or sister depart, at this time, without a [431]
gift of a well-filled basket of grain. This is one way in which a woman builds up her own private resources out of which she provides little luxuries, utensils, and clothes for herself and by means of which she often tides the family over a lean period. This is a privilege, but it has almost the force of a right. Occasionally an elderly woman without a son, or, as sometimes happens nowadays, with her only son away for long in Ashanti or the Colony, is left without proper support in her husband's home. She can then go back to her father's home and is entitled to her sustenance as of right. The services a woman's husband renders to her father, now and then, in the early years of marriage, the interest she has in her brother's children, the importance attached to

593 kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

613 Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One
769 of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛyər*), to whom her husband will have to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is
[777] selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate (*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors.
[761 If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an
789] evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

602 All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship
593 ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the contrary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

602 Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

dies childless, and that children are the greatest source of joy and pride, 593
comfort and support that anybody can have. The Tallensi are much like ourselves in this matter and do not think there is any inconsistency between these two aspects of parenthood. Their whole philosophy of life is like that. Realists as they are, they take it for granted that life has many risks and troubles, but, as they often put it, 'Does anybody desire death on that account?' When I told them that Europeans often refrain deliberately from having children, they were either sceptical or appalled.

The Parent–Child Bond as an Absolute Bond

Tallensi say that the bonds between parent and child can never be obliterated and may not be repudiated. This is a fundamental moral principle and it goes back to the notion that bearing or begetting children is hard. From it follows the duty of filial piety.

You cannot disown your child. 'Even if your child is a good-for-nothing, you have no alternative but to keep him,' said Loyani, one of the most intelligent and upright men I knew. 'Have you not suffered to beget him?' he went on. 'How can you reject him? You are always thinking of your children's good, though they are often selfish and think only of their own advantage. Your child may be lazy or ill-behaved. But yet you cannot drive him away, you cannot harass him so that he quits you.'

Many examples could be quoted to illustrate the strength of this 593
ideal. I sacked one of my servants for petty theft. A day or two later
an elder who was known to be one of my friends came to intercede for 685
him. He admitted that the man was a thief, but he was very disappointed when I declined to take him back. 'You are his father,' he said, 'and you ought to take him back.' Then, after a short silence, he added gravely, 'You white men! You are not like us. You do not understand the meaning of "to beg forgiveness".'

A better instance is an incident in which Loyani himself was concerned some days after he made the comment quoted above. A youth of Loyani's clan stole a fowl owned by another member of his own joint family, whom he called his older brother (*bier*). The theft, a despicable [577]
thing in any case, was made blacker by the youth's attempt to conceal it; and when it was discovered, the whole clan was agog with it. The culprit's father, in his shame and anger at the disgrace brought upon [789] ●
his family, struck and cursed him saying that he must never again set foot in the house. Thereupon the young man took refuge with Loyani, whose son was his friend. Loyani himself, like all respectable people, was shocked at the theft. 'Heaven save me from theft,' he said, when he told me the story. 'Death were better than that. It is shameful.' And he went on to describe how everybody scorns and derides a thief. Nevertheless, as soon as the boy arrived Loyani went to the elders of the boy's lineage to get them to intercede with the father to withdraw his

of his dead mother's spirit; she is not tied to the lineage home in the 577 same way as a father's spirit is and can be 'given water' more easily 593 wherever the man happens to be. Nevertheless, his welfare and that of 769 his dependants rests as much on his maintaining good relations with her spirit as with his father's spirit.

Filial piety among the Tallensi is a great deal more than a customary 577 injunction to honour and respect one's parents. Psychologically it is a very complex sentiment. Even during their lifetime parents have 593 quasi-mystical attributes, as we shall see more clearly when we consider the relations of parents and first-born children, and these dominate the 789 sentiment. A parent can bless or curse a child. A parent's curse, in particular, is greatly dreaded, as we have previously noted, and, in consequence, only resorted to in case of gross affront or unforgivable defiance on the part of a child. If a parent expresses or merely feels resentment against a child, that is equivalent to a curse which may cause it illness or other harm. Thus one element in the sentiment of filial piety is respect for the blessing and fear of the curse of a parent. That is why, men say, it is sometimes embarrassing to have an old mother in one's house, though one is bound to keep her, both in duty and out of affection. For old women become completely egoistic. [888] All they think of is having enough to eat and being comfortable, and if they are crossed they are apt to curse anybody incontinently.

In a large joint family one often finds a young man with a growing family of his own torn between his devotion to his father and his desire to be economically independent so as to provide for his wife and children more satisfactorily. He cannot go out to farm on his own without his father's blessing and consent else his venture will surely fail. He begins to drop hints or makes a tentative approach to his father. But if the latter shows displeasure he retreats at once. I have seen this happen more than once. When Təɣalbɛrəgu wanted to go out to farm on his own, his father Naabdiya reproached him, saying that *he* had not deserted *his* father as Təɣalbɛrəgu now wished to desert *him*. Təɣalbɛrəgu apologized and withdrew. But, as Naabdiya told me, 'I still had resentment in my heart and he still secretly cherished his plan'. A couple of weeks later Təɣalbɛrəgu developed a large boil in the armpit. In panic he begged an elder to ask Naabdiya to forgive him and formally withdraw his implicit curse, which, he was certain, was the cause of the boil. It was the same with Yinyela's son Duuŋ. Though as an eldest son he felt entitled to start farming on his own, he dared not ask that hard old man's permission for fear that it might arouse his resentment.

It is an interesting point that when a young man who has been living 577 and farming with his dead father's brother, for example, sets up in his 593 own homestead, the pretext for the separation is often not an economic one. It is commonly recognized that the young man moves out because he needs more land and freedom to provide for his family by himself.

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A
baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. 593
I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its 751
mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking,
to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What
discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period
comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until
it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative [515]
from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is
an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain
water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a
decoction of roots (*ŋaɣa*), the generic term for any vegetable products
used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by
the child's spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). After its bath the mother lays the
child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth,
and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It
splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is
poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected 514
to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt
to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside 863
in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may
happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training
or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a
gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications
with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the
adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the 593
child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There 789
is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have
anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. 826
I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic
of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to
nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of
milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt
to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously
affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her
breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

593 (*Man daa nye fara dɔɣi ki tŋəm la ŋwala*)', this is a curse of the most
789 terrible kind. For that reason, no doubt, none of my informants could
quote an instance of a mother actually putting this curse on a child.
826 The symbolism is of interest, however, in view of the stress Tallensi lay
on the mother as food-giver in their conventional picture of her.

Childhood

The next three or four years of a child's life are probably its freest and
857 happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the imme-
593 diate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older
siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in being with their parents too. They will hang around their mother in the kitchen and trot around or sit with their father when he is resting under the shade tree. They see and hear everything that is going on in the house and are tolerated at all domestic occasions. In this way, and through their mimetic play, they build up the rudimentary schemas[1] of ideas, manual dexterities, and sentiments out of which grow the skills, interests, and values of later life. Love and indulgence is still the keynote of their parents' and other close relatives' attitude to them. Tallensi say that small children at this stage are still more attached to their mother than to their father because it is she who feeds them. In fact, as we have already mentioned, throughout a Talaŋ's life he thinks of his mother as the one who gave him food without stint, going hungry herself, if need be, so that her child might be fed.

By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex;
857 and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it
868 reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it
still remains free to play for much of its time. But from the age of 7 or
593 so boys and girls are eager to participate in the adult routine of life and
they become more and more involved in it. They begin by being given the simplest economic and household tasks such as scaring the birds from the fields of ripening grain, tethering the goats, rounding up the poultry—tasks which children of both sexes perform—or sweeping the house, carrying a tiny pot of water, gathering edible fungi or herbs for the pot, which girls only do. A very common task of both girls and boys at this stage is acting nursemaid to a baby. As this shows, there is very little social differentiation between them as yet.

857 By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division
of labour customary among the Tallensi, and with it the corresponding
593 division of social roles and ideals. Boys start following their older
462 brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any.
868 They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12
reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother

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[1] Cf. the discussion of this concept in my Memorandum just cited.

These affective divergencies spring from the different social relations 593 of father and son on the one hand, and father and daughter on the other. Though a woman's ties with her paternal family are never severed, a man's jural responsibilities for his daughter cease with her marriage. He never loses the moral and religious authority of a father, however, or the corresponding ritual responsibilities for her. His curse is as potent as ever. The shrine of her spirit guardian is in his keeping and he sacrifices to it on her behalf when her husband requests him to do so. His chief ritual responsibility arises if she is persecuted by an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). It is his duty to have the rites of exorcism [789] performed so that she can bear children and fulfil satisfactorily her role as a wife. He is obliged to send ceremonial gifts to the funeral if she or his son-in-law dies; and he must 'fetch her funeral home (*die koor*)' and carry out the rites that bring her spirit back to her ancestral fold when she is dead. He has a very definite social and personal interest in her children too. When a woman bears her first child her husband must 593 send immediately to tell her parents and they demonstrate their continued affection and concern for her and her children by sending her 431 gifts of food and other necessaries as generous as their means allow. A poor man might send only a basket of unthreshed guinea corn or millet and a couple of guinea-fowls, while his wife sends some shea butter, vegetables, and firewood. A rich chief I knew, when his first-born daughter had her first baby sent a procession of his younger wives bearing an assortment of gifts, including a 25-lb. bag of salt, several baskets of grain, a sheep, six guinea-fowls, and various luxury articles. Throughout her life a woman has a right to substantial gifts of grain from her father's house at harvest time, and to a home if she is left homeless. Women make a special point of collecting these gifts of grain at harvest time whether they are in want or not. As Tanzoo, the wife of a well-to-do man with enough grain and to spare, said when she received a large basket of early millet from her brother, 'I should feel ashamed not to fetch this grain. My co-wives would scoff saying I have no brother, no father.' Thus it is a source of pride, a test of family solidarity and, most important, a recurrent demonstration of a right to share in the products of the patrimonial estate which they might have owned if they had been born men.[1] These duties that a man has towards his daughter are the nucleus of his relations with her children. They are socially prescribed and fall upon his heirs when he dies.

From Adolescence to Adulthood

Let us return to the relations of father and son during this phase of 593 the latter's growth and study it more closely. The son is a member of 882

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 178.

593 518 If a person is ill tempered or unnecessarily sharp with him, or appears to dislike him, a Taləŋ retorts with 'Why do you dislike me? Am I your *nyeer*, or what? (*I yaagəm bo? Man a i nyeer bɛ?*)' This formula is always spoken half-mockingly; for the rivalry of successive children, though assumed to be in the very nature of their relationship, is not taken too seriously. It is not, like the underlying rivalry of father and first-born son, subject to ritual sanctions. It is simply an acute expression of the familiarity and equality of siblings and does not destroy their solidarity.[1] Tallensi themselves say that successive siblings often get on together admirably and stand together as staunchly as any other full siblings. I have never heard it said that *soog* brothers are quicker to set up separate households if they are successive siblings than if they are not.

518 593 595 Tale custom recognizes the rivalry of successive siblings in a number of other ways. Thus successive siblings (this applies chiefly to brothers) may not be buried in the same grave. If they are, their spirits will be continually quarrelling and persecuting their descendants until they are exhumed and separated. Again, successive sisters may not be married to the same man or even to the same clan. But this rule is, to my own knowledge, often broken. If they do happen to be married into the same clan the sisters must avoid being pregnant at the same time or, if they are, they must not see each other during their pregnancy. If they do one or both will miscarry. Here it is belief rather than practice that is a sign of the rivalry of successive siblings. Tallensi object to having two sisters married to the same man for prudential reasons. They say that it is obviously more difficult to get eight cows out of one man in payment of bride-price than it is to get four cows. Nevertheless it does sometimes occur. A well-to-do son-in-law who has his father-in-law's esteem can often persuade the old man to give him another daughter to wife. ●[789] If the girls are successive siblings, a very simple magical rite involving the burying of a hoe at the entrance of the husband's homestead serves to 'cut' their *nyeer* relationship.[2]

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[1] I do not know whether successive siblings quarrel more often than non-successive siblings. Tallensi say they do. Knowing the Tallensi, I have no doubt that conventional expectation itself acts as a stimulus to petty wrangling between successive siblings. Every time they have a disagreement not only onlookers but they themselves put the conventional interpretation on the situation, and this is bound to make them more touchy in relation to each other than to other siblings. In every aspect of Tale social life cultural definitions and expectations direct behaviour in this way. On the other hand, I knew several pairs of successive siblings who got on extremely well together and to all appearances never said a cross word to each other. Tallensi admit that this is quite common and explain it by the invariable stock phrase 'It 's all a matter of character'.

828 [2] A question that immediately suggests itself is, whence does the rivalry of successive siblings arise? I have put this question to many Tallensi. The usual answer is in terms of the cliché that 'it is in the nature of things (*de yɛl nla*)'.

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite
ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops
is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of
twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have
seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine
charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and
treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still
prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought
by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it
will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal
child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the
age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyɛer*)]
and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is
a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring 165
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that

602 Puɛŋyii's inner lineage as his distant 'mother's brother's lineage'. On the other hand, the Gɔlibdaana can make the same claim in regard to Puɛŋyii by identifying himself with his 'sister', Puɛŋyii's mother. In the ordinary intercourse of daily life it is immaterial which relationship is stressed. The blanket concept of kinship (*dɔyam*) covers all. But in special ritual situations a specific relationship emerges as the decisive one. For example, if the head of Puɛŋyii's inner lineage were to die, the Gɔlibdaana might, if he were on good terms with the deceased, as a gesture of respect, send a gift of millet flour and a fowl as a contribution to the funeral, on the grounds that he is a 'sister's son' of the lineage.

Many instances could be quoted of people discovering hitherto unknown extra-clan kin by chance, as it is a common occurrence. It was on a chance visit to Tɛnzugu that Kuŋaanba learnt that Nyaaŋzum was the head of his father's mother's brother's inner lineage. Since then Kuŋaanba has become a regular visitor to and a great personal friend of Nyaaŋzum's family. In the same way it happens that people get married and discover later that they are kin. Tallensi say this probably happens very often but seldom becomes known. It is only if the couple lose several children one after another that it comes out. A diviner then reveals it as the cause of their misfortunes. Thus apprised of it, they consult the elders of their lineages and try to 'trace out (*tumh*)' their kinship. Whether they are successful or not—and they usually are—
[789] they then perform the rite of splitting kinship (*bɔk dɔyam*), and this makes it permissible for their marriage to continue. It happened thus with Pukiehɔt, and this was one of the reasons why his in-laws were so angry with him for not paying his wife's bride-price. It was bad enough, they complained, that their daughter's marriage should be a breach of kinship; but, on top of that, here was her husband for ever hedging over the payment of the bride-price.

The natives know very well that they have closer and more numerous matrilateral and sororal kinsfolk among adjacent clans than among more distant clans. We have seen (Ch. II) how they visualize this situation for uterine kin (*saarɔt*). They tend to think of their close matrilateral kin as being spatially near and their more remote extra-clan kin as being far away geographically as well. But they do not, of course, realize that all the extra-clan kinship ties of a lineage or clan, taken together, fall into a regular and definite socio-spatial order. They think of these relationships from the individual angle always. At the same time they are very conscious of the mutual reaction on one another of the clanship and lineage structure and these extra-clan kinship ties. Thus Tongo people say that it is much more satisfactory to have one's mother's brother at Zubiuŋ or Zoo than at Ba'ari or Wakii. The local and political cohesion of Zubiuŋ and Zoo with Tongo make it easier to keep in touch with one's mother's brother, make one readier to accept and be accepted

home, where in the meantime the other members, both men and women, 778
of the new segment and the 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the segment
who have been able to come have gathered. The head of the new segment 613 arrives, followed, as the Tallensi think, by the spirits of his grandmother's ancestors. He now performs the sacrifices by which the new *bɔɣar* is consecrated. He himself offers a sheep. All the other male members of the new segment bring a fowl each to be sacrificed on their behalf and *ahəs* and *yaas* all do so too. A large pot or earthenware dish, inside which the small pot containing the sediment 'scooped' from the grandmother's lineage *bɔɣar* pot is placed, forms the altar. Henceforth this will be the *bɔɣar* of the new lineage segment; and there will be a similar communion rite embracing all the descendants of the founding ancestor and his mother whenever the *bɔɣar* is inherited by a new lineage head.[1]

We have now considered the most important ritual services matrilateral kin render to their sororal kin. 602 764 The ritual services rendered by sororal kin to matrilateral kin are, as might be expected, of far less consequence. In funeral ceremonies, for example, there are a number of rites in which it is necessary to have the participation of an *ahəŋ* of the deceased. The rite of cooking 'the porridge of sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', which has been previously mentioned, is typical of these rites; and it is typical of them, also, that anybody who can, by any stretch of the term, be described as *ahəŋ* can serve in them. All these rites express the fact that a person's death is of concern to his or her sororal kin as well as to his or her patrilineal kin, and affects the field of social relations of the former as well as that of the latter. Hence in all funeral rites a special portion of the meat, cooked food, and beer used is allocated to the 'sisters' children', whether few or many are present. Matrilateral and sororal kin do not, however, undergo mourning rites.

Apart from funerals, there are one or two other special ceremonies in 602
which the services of an *ahəŋ* are needed. Thus in the ceremony of
exorcising an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) an *ahəŋ* is required to perform the 789
final act of sympathetic magic. This consists in collecting the magical paraphernalia used in the ceremony—all of which symbolize the wish that the evil Predestiny may depart and conceal itself for ever—and throwing them away in some barren spot. A 'sister's son' is called upon

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[1] There is a point of religious doctrine that cannot be fully discussed here but must be mentioned to avoid confusion. Every important ancestor shrine is a means of making a whole line of ancestors accessible to its possessor. Now the collective mystical power of a patrilineal line of ancestors reposes in the lineage *bɔɣar*. Hence every important shrine has to be linked up with the lineage *bɔɣar* of the dominant spirit to which it is consecrated. That is why when a *bakologo* is set up, the *bɔɣar* of the matrilateral lineage from which it is derived is 'scooped' for inclusion in the new shrine. Broadly speaking, the ritual validity of every ancestor shrine goes back to a *bɔɣar*. But the setting up of a new lineage *bɔɣar* is a very special ritual landmark.

602 789 to do this service because, as a kinsman of the sufferer, he naturally wishes to see him free of his evil fate. He is held to desire this the more strongly because his *ahəb* sacrifices on his behalf. Hence his welfare depends on the continued life and the perpetuation of the lineage of the *ahəb*, both of which are threatened by the evil Predestiny. Lastly, he is specially suitable because a complete stranger might use the opportunity to do the sufferer magical harm, while a patrilineal kinsman of his might be contaminated by the evil Predestiny. Again, anybody who can be identified as an *ahəŋ*, in however remote a classificatory sense, may be asked to perform this service.

The Father's Sister

604 We have left the discussion of the relationship of father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) and brother's child (*bii*) for this chapter, although it is not a relationship of extra-clan kinship. Father's sister and brother's child are members of the same clan and lineage. But Tallensi associate the father's sister with relatives outside the clan. This is due to her marrying out of the clan, to her having no significant public voice in the affairs of the lineage, [428] and to her being unable to inherit lineage property or ancestor shrines.[1] Thus a native usually compares his relationship with his father's sister to his relationship with his mother's brother, not to his relationship with his parents. It is thought of more as the opposite of the relationship between sister's son and mother's brother than as an item in the scheme of intra-familial or intra-lineage relationships.

As in the case of mother's brother and sister's child, the bond between father's sister and brother's child tends to be more effective for brother's sons than for brother's daughters. In the case of the brother's sons it is reinforced by the ties a woman has with her paternal lineage and by the ties her children have with their mother's brother and his sons. In the case of brother's daughters, it is attenuated because the daughters tend to be dispersed by marriage and their relationship with their father's sister is much more a purely personal affair.

Compared with the mother's brother, the father's sister (*ba-pɔk*) counts for little in the web of extra-clan kinship. Tallensi say this is because she is a woman. 'It is not she who sacrifices for you but you (her brother's son) may one day sacrifice on her behalf.' At the same time they declare that 'she is your father'. I have several times had an old woman introduced to me by a man or a woman as 'my father'. Eŋwala, explaining her affection for her full brother's son, Anaaho, said in the stock phraseology, 'Is he not my child? If you and your brother together have a child, is he not also your child [as much as your brother's]?

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[1] Except, as has been mentioned before if she is the last surviving member of the lineage. Even then she does not inherit the ancestor shrines but merely sacrifices to them, as if she were acting on behalf of her deceased father. She can never inherit lineage land.

(*Pa m-biiga? Nyɛn ni i tau n-kab dɔɣa bii, pa nyɛnmi biig n-a u?*)'. As will be remembered, men quote the same maxim when they are asked why mother's brother and sister's son are generally so attached to each other. In support of this Tallensi usually quote two customs. Firstly, when an old woman dies, the oldest of her brothers' sons has his head shaved in mourning, as if for his father. He represents all his siblings, Tallensi say, in this act of filial respect. Secondly, a *ba-pɔk* has the power of pronouncing a curse against a child of her brother. She can, conversely, withdraw a curse pronounced by her brother if he dies without having done so, and if he has no surviving brother of the same nuclear lineage. But the social equivalence of a woman with her brother in relation to his children is limited by her sex. She is barred from exercising the jural and ritual authority and the rights of a father. In fact, the tendency is for her to look up to her brother's son as the future heir of her brother and the potential repository of authority in the affairs of her lineage.

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Two examples will suffice to show how limited in fact are the jural rights a woman has in relation to her brother's children. They have principally a token value. When a funeral is being celebrated by a woman's husband's nuclear lineage her close lineage kin send a party of mourners to bear their condolences to the lineage of their lineage-in-laws. The party includes a number of young girls whom the woman calls her sisters and daughters. Before they leave again for home these young girls are gathered together and surrounded by a crowd of young men of the host clan. Amid laughter and good-humoured teasing the girls are invited to choose a 'future husband' each from among the young men. It is all a game, part of the hospitality accorded to the visitors. The selected 'husband' has to give a parting gift to the girl who has chosen him, so that she shall go home pleased with her visit. Among these girls might be a daughter of one of the woman's brothers of the same nuclear lineage. If the woman is particularly interested in the young man this girl selects, she may declare publicly that she is giving him the girl as his wife. Everybody pretends to accept this declaration as if it came from the girl's father, but in fact everybody knows that it has only a token significance and no jural force whatever.

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Again, if a woman deserts a husband to whom she has been given by her father without having previously arranged to go to another man, she very often takes refuge with a *ba-pɔk*. There she is, so to speak, under a parent's protection but not subject to her father's authority. She knows that her *ba-pɔk* will sympathize with her and cannot in any case force her to return to the man she has left. Her father, satisfied that she is in parental care, will not seek to put pressure on her, at least for some time. However, a girl in this position soon attracts suitors, though courtship has to be clandestine, for she is still formally the wife of another man. But sometimes a suitor succeeds in ingratiating himself with the *ba-pɔk* and persuades her to connive at an elopement, a thing

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604 586 587 which a father would never do. In theory, this means that the *ba-pɔk* consents to the new marriage. In practice, her action has no binding force on her brother. This rule applies also to an unmarried girl who is given in marriage by her *ba-pɔk*. A woman might have one of her brother's daughters living with her as a nursemaid for her baby. She might promise the girl as a wife to one of her husband's brothers. But her brother need not consider himself bound by this promise if he has objections to the marriage.

604 571 A father's sister is, in short, a kind of female 'father', but without the jural and ritual attributes of fatherhood. A father's sister must be treated with respect. It would be grossly improper, for example, to joke with her as one jokes with a wife's sister; and to strike or abuse her, even if she were much younger than oneself, would be a sin. But the respect accorded to her is only a pale reflection of the attitude implicit in filial piety. It is much more a matter of etiquette than of emotion, as if it were merely conventional and not evoked by a feeling of moral obligation.

604 A marked characteristic of a person's relations with his or her father's sister is the absence of specific mutual obligations. Just as a *ba-pɔk* has in reality no rights over her brother's children, so she has no specific duties of either a ritual or a secular kind towards them, or they to her. This is the chief contrast between this relationship and that of parent and child or that of mother's brother and sister's child. Only a shadow of a ritual sanction comes into the relationship, in the form of the belief that the curse of a *ba-pɔk* can harm her brother's child, and in the notion that she stands under the protection of the same ancestors as the latter. Hence, though she cannot demand services from her brother's child, it is felt that a request for help from her should be met, even at the cost of
● [789] some inconvenience. If a person offends his father's sister and she reproaches him saying, 'I bore you (identifying herself with her brother) and this is how you treat me. My ancestors have seen it, my fathers have seen it (*Man dɔyi la k-i tyəm là ŋwala; n-yaanam nyeya, m-banam nyeya*)', this has the force of a curse because she is invoking her ancestors who are also his ancestors. Such a curse would disturb a native, but not nearly so deeply as a father's curse or if a mother's brother refused to sacrifice on his behalf.

Because their relationship is devoid of a definite jural coefficient and is not subject to organized ritual sanctions; because, also, a father's sister stands outside the scheme of economic and domestic associations in which the relationship of parent and child is set, the relations of father's sister and brother's child are free of the undercurrent of tension found in those of father and child. A woman's bonds with her brother's children are fundamentally bonds of sentiment. That is why they seldom endure beyond one generation, or extend beyond the nuclear lineage.

The personal relations of father's sister and brother's child have much

Whenever they build miniature houses, during the building season, 857 ‘shrines’ are added and, as in real life, each has his own. 524

Play with these shrines is woven into other play activities, and it 869 revolves around sacrifice. When a small boy goes out hunting for fieldmice or birds, if he happens to have a ‘shrine’ he will ‘give it water’, i.e. pour a libation to it. Ashes represent flour, which is stirred up in water as in a real sacrifice. He invokes the shrine, ‘My father’ (but never mentioning names as in real sacrifice since his own father is probably still alive), ‘accept this water and grant that I have successful hunting. If I kill an animal, I will give you a dog.’ Some time later he may catch a live mouse, and when he has played with it to satiety he ‘sacrifices’ it on his shrine—this is the promised ‘dog’. A nestling bird found alive is ‘sacrificed’ as a ‘fowl’ or ‘guinea-fowl’. If he finds a live mouse or bird by chance it will always be taken home and ‘sacrificed’ thus before it is cut up and eaten. Taboos like those of adults are invented for his shrines. Fetishes, like those of adults, accept only red and black ‘fowls’; other shrines only white ones. Siikaɔni, a small boy of about 7 or 8, built himself [778 a *loo* fetish, which can be dispatched to ‘tie up’ any one 789] who might interfere with one’s enterprises. Siikaɔni pretended to use his *loo* to keep the parents of his ‘sweetheart’ out of the way when he went to see her—a frequent use of a real *loo* by young men.

Of the imaginative and constructive play produced as a response 857 to current social activities in which children co-operate, I shall 524 instance only building. During the building season a favourite preoccupation 868 of the children is to build miniature rooms or houses. It is a co-operative group enterprise, boys and girls frequently working together, led by a boy of about 12–13. It is carried on in the intervals between helping the men. Sometimes they are content to build only walls, a few inches high, but when the leader is keen they undertake a complete replica of a house—walls a foot or more high, several rooms properly arranged, a roof, a beaten inner court, and shrines. The work goes on for days on end and needs planning and organization. The girls and smaller boys make the swish and roll it into pellets, the older boys do the actual building, often with extraordinary skill. When the ‘house’ is built and roofed and the walls have dried, if the

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔɣar*, 133
"river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226
river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 196
social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226
clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a
pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates
the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing
of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789] ●
and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and
death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor
spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general
blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226
expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different parts of the Volta occur on the same day. During the month I recorded the occurrence of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226
customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203
falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market. Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622]
country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226
day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children
of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or
nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush.
The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [441]
partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out
of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482]
But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

226 423 535 [292]

About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bolgraana*, who had only recently been installed. To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place "where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences.

226 423

The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights.

226 789 782

Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the performance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features—

226 typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also 789 many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance. 782 Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*). [778] The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*. Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool [787] and of the magical specialist. A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist. Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bɔlgraana's* first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish. The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near [424] pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

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[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of 226
his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated 789
with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a 782
little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its 226
highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round [533]
him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was taken of sending four good swimmers in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

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[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognized. Members 602
of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

The nodal factor in the situation is the magic. On one of the expeditions I attended the owner had his own fishing magic and made the sacrifices himself; but I do not know how general this is. Otherwise, the magician's office has its traditional warranty. It is an ancient privilege and even duty of his lineage to perform the rites for the lineage of the particular holder of the chieftainship. The association, like every relationship of this sort, is accounted for on the grounds of ancestral kinship. Thus a community of interest, such as could never arise in a purely commercial relationship, is presupposed. Functionally, whether the owner or the magician are united in one personage or not, magic enters into the fishing configuration as the owner's principal instrument of organization, helping to assert his status and rights in the fishing situation. This inference receives confirmation from the following observations: If a chief owns several pools, once the complete series of rites have been performed at the first pool to be fished, it is sufficient, subsequently, if the riverside rites alone are performed. Again, if, as sometimes happens, two adjacent pools are fished on the same day, the second will not be entered until it has been sprayed and the signal given. Thus the final and public rite, the actual organizing act, is emphasized. But the clinching evidence for this is the fact that the magical act proclaims the owner's responsibility for the satisfactory outcome of the expedition which he has organized. The behaviour of the people, more so, the ideology associated with situations of this type (full documentation of which must await later publication) and the purpose expressed in the magic prove this. Magic is, therefore, the binding factor in the fishing configuration, linking together the principal constituents—the objective facts of place and economic purpose, the owner, the people who come to fish and the relevant ideological principles. 226 789

The magic is able to achieve this in virtue of its content; that is, the control it ostensibly exercises over the psychologically critical factor in the situation, the dangers which might be encountered in the water. It is towards these dangers that the magic is *prima facie* directed. Its efficacy is never questioned; for even if, as sometimes happens, someone should be injured by a crocodile or fish, the ready explanation lies to hand that he has offended an ancestor spirit who took this occasion to punish him. An injury to an individual is his own affair. Nevertheless, nobody carries out private magic for his own protection. Again, fear of injury is not a deterrent to poaching either by individuals [685] or, as in the case of the Yinduri expedition, by a group.[1]

It is obvious, therefore, that the magic is valid only within the context of the organized fishing expedition, promoted by the rightful owner. The psychological facts upon which the magic is built have relevance only within this context. The real danger, or the correlative fear of injury, does not precipitate a magical rite whenever an individual or group is liable to it, but only within the appropriate social situation.

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[1] Indeed fishing expeditions are sometimes made to distant unowned pools and then no magic is performed, as I discovered during my second field trip in 1936. This is because these expeditions are informal, not organized by a responsible personage, and comparable to poaching.

226 789 There the psychological facts are, one might say, re-created, socially transformed by the magic into a collective risk against which protection is provided by the very act which affirms its existence. The magic is concerned not with the safety of individuals but with the security of the group. Above all, responsiblity for the security of the group rests, in the last resort, upon the owner of the pool, the one who brings the group into being. Through the magic this responsibility is affirmed as a privilege associated with the ownership rather than a burden. Individual magical precautions would be as incongruous with this communal situation as a particular individual's chances of injury are unpredictable. In brief, the magical organization of the situation depends upon the exploitation of psychological factors latent in it ; but these psychological factors cannot be regarded as the source of the magic. Ownership, magic, and organization of the expedition constitute a unitary structure the disruption of which would entirely alter the significance of any of the constituents.

121 At the outset of this paper the view was expressed that every type of social situation exhibits a definite structure. An analysis was then made of a typical social situation met with among the Tallensi. Various institutions (chieftainship) techniques (magic) and norms of behaviour (disposal of the catch) each determined in part by a context lying beyond the boundaries of the fishing expedition, were shown to enter into the situation. It was suggested, also, that the fishing magic is the factor which binds the different components into a definite pattern. The question arises why is it that situations such as this exhibit a specific structure ? Is it due to the peculiar ensemble of institutions, etc., represented ? Is it due to the nuclear interest—*viz.*, the catching of fish—of the situation ? Or is it due to the fact that what we differentiate as institutions, etc., appear in such situations, as the concrete responses of individuals and groups to one another in terms of social definitions and psychological impulses arising solely from the situation itself ? This is a problem which requires the examination of many types of situations comprising similar combinations of institutions, techniques, and norms of behaviour.[1]

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[114] [1] This paper was written after my first expedition to the field, in 1934-5, as a Fellow of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

793 622 [789] the prosperity of the land. Though it is housed in his compound, neither the Chief nor any of his clansmen may set eyes on it; only the Gbizug Tendaana and his lineage may. The Chief speaks of it with an awe which is almost terror. The balance is adjusted by the Chief's rainmaking powers. Only Namoos may own rain medicine, which was brought to Taleland by their ancestor. When drought is prolonged, all the Tendaanas, led by the Gbizug Tendaana, formally call upon and implore the Chief to see to it that rain falls. So great is his rainmaking power that rain will fall at once if he merely declares, in the name of his ancestors, that their wishes will be satisfied. Such, in fact, proved to be the case in 1934.

Again, this ritual polarity is paralleled in social and personal attitudes. The Chief and the Gbizug Tendaana, in private conversation, comment with a mixture of pride, scorn, and fear each upon his opposite number.

796 Among the most striking mechanisms of this equilibrium are the ritual festivals. The various settlements are always classified in terms of them, and the natives never tire of dilating enthusiastically upon them.

Ritual and dance are the two components of every festival; the former usually esoteric, the latter public though exclusive. During the rainy season, which lasts roughly from April to September, ritual and group activities are almost completely ousted by agriculture. In July-August the early millet is harvested, but the major crops, the guinea corn and late millet, still stand.[2] [805] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, and the last month of the rains is called the "Moon of Waters" (Kuom ŋmarig). An ethnologist cannot, alas, be in two places at the same time. I was living among the Namoos in September, 1934, and shall therefore describe the events of this and the next month from their point of view.

Weeks in advance the approaching festivals are the dominant theme of conversation for man, woman, and child. The ceremonial cycle is inaugurated by the Baari Tendaana, who ritually "throws away the water," i.e. abolishes the rains on the first day of the new month. This is announced by a burst of hallooing, which commences at Baari and sweeps across the country, the signal that the festivals have come round again.

That night the people of Baari begin their celebrations. At Tongo, on the next day, the youths and maidens are putting finishing touches to their festive costumes. On the fourth day of the moon a deputation of elders waits on the Chief, to remind him of his traditional obligation to summon a diviner on the following day.

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[2] The calendrical incidence of the ritual festivals and their relation to the annual productive cycle are more fully set out in M. and S. L. Fortes, Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi (Africa, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1936).

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

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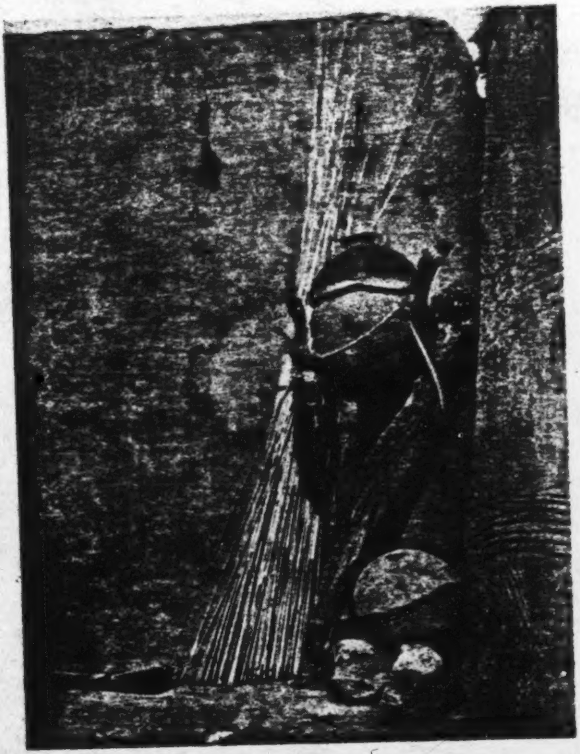

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FIG. 70. A *tim bager*

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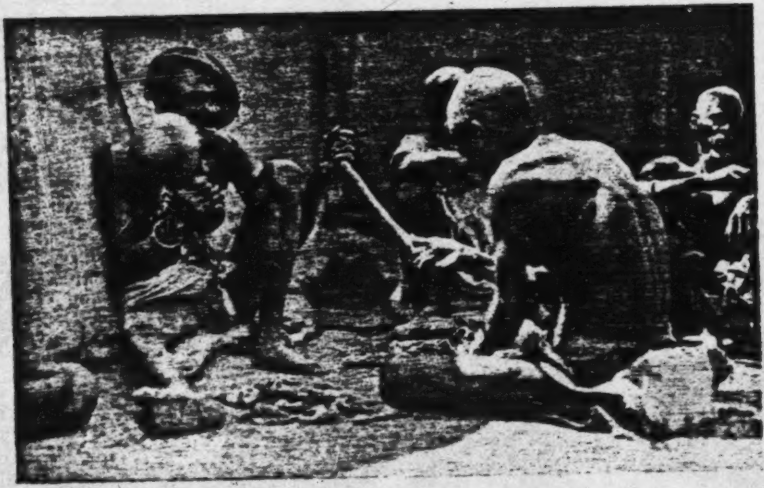

FIG. 71. 'The soothsayer then began to rattle'

[facing p. 355]

778 new soil and the old. This new mound is a *bogere*. When the *bogere*
769 comes, the *bagere* has become strong. When he wants to sacrifice he
will say: "My mother, call your father."

775 'A mother's spirit has power over her son. Suppose your mother's spirit wants to punish (*ey*, lit. to "do") her son, and the father's spirit wishes to prevent her doing so, the mother will say to her husband, "Had I died while in conception, would you have had this child?"'

171 Among the Nankanse the word *bugere* or *bogere* is used only in con-
778 nexion with a *bakologo* shrine. An ordinary *bagere* has no *bogere*, but
● 791 when a soothsayer's shrine is made, in which is, e.g., the soothsayer's
769 mother's mother's spirit, he will fetch earth from his grandmother's
town from the *bagere* shrine of her father. This is brought home in a small pot and becomes the *bugere* or *bogere* of the *bakologo*. 'It gives the power to the *bakologo*.'

A Seance attended at Tɔngo: A woman had died from snake-bite, and
787 after she had been buried a soothsayer was brought to her husband's
761 compound to be consulted about the cause of her death. The family
769 of the dead woman was represented by an Elder from her section. The
ceremony began by the consultant holding the soothsayer's bag with both hands and saying, '*N' gyi i lugeri ka kye i nor*' (I hold your sides, but not your mouth). The soothsayer then began to rattle (see Fig. 71), and said, '*N ba Ƴin, n bol i, la i bol i banam, ka ba tana zin, mam mi nireba n zi wa, ka n po mi baŋ bol ma sere yi na baŋ de n be, te te*'. (My father's *Ƴin*, I call you, and you will call your fathers and they will come and sit down. I know these people sitting (here), but I do not know the reason that they call me. You will know what it is; give us).

He then began to sing:

'*Golugdan, Kanbung mwan lang kai bagere. Ƴi na baŋ surdan. Kpolebeo saam [illegible]eret; mam kpalim la popelimi koŋ yiri, ma mam kpelim mwee.*' (*Golugdan, Kanbung*, mere supposition is not (proper) soothsaying. You will know the one who is angry. Bad *dawa dawa* seeds spoil soup. I entered a hole[1]; I became infected with misfortune; I was obedient; now I have no house. Mother, I am still rattling). The soothsayer now emptied out the contents of his bag on the ground; the consultant held the end of the wand and went through the customary performance of picking out objects with it, the soothsayer singing the while. The wand seemed to search among the miscellaneous oddments, pounced on the hoof of a cow, on a fragment of a calabash,

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[1] He refers to his having worked in the gold mines.

793 562 *Woman Ten'dan'*: 'A woman might become a *Ten'dan'*. She has the right to offer sacrifices, and receive lost things. She sits down saying: "Land receive your water and all your things". After she has said so, a man cuts the throat of the offering. She has a calabash, not a string hat. She owns the land and can stop wars with the corn stalk.' (A female *Ten'dan'* is interviewed later.)

●791 *Rain-makers*: 'A rain-maker is separate from a *Ten'dan'*. He is called *Sa-ran*. We have none here.'

793 764 *Ten'dan' and Funeral Customs*: 'The family of the deceased would "reach" the *Ten'dan'* and he would give them a place to make a grave; were he to refuse they could not bury him. The *Ten'dan'* would send the boy to mark out the grave, making a circle with a calabash and the pointed stick used for digging the grave. He will say:

'*Dakirig* (a grove) some one is dead, can I refuse to bury him, therefore may you hear, and let the "room" be a proper one that he may sleep well?' A sheep is then sacrificed near the grave.

764 *Graves*: The Namnam bury their dead outside, not in, the compound. As many as twenty corpses may be in one grave. Men and women are buried in the same grave. The graves are circular with a bottle-neck. A boy or girl who has not any *nyere*[1] must have a separate grave.

834 A man does not have sexual intercourse with his wife for three years after she bears a child, i.e. if the child lives.

793 *Female Ten'dan'* (*Ten'dan' pɔka*): Akayiri, a female *Ten'dan'*, who may be seen in Fig. 81, told me the following:

'My ancestress was a *Ten'dan' pɔka* (a female *Ten'dan'*), called Banams. My grove is called Tinkyena; it is always a female *Ten'dan'* who is in charge of it. The calabash, which the little girl who always accompanies me carries, and my uncut hair, are the signs of my office. I own the land at Zoga. If the Zoga men want to fight, I will go between them, and place a corn stalk on the ground. Zoga has two *Ten'dan'*, a male and a female, but I own the land, as is proved by the fact that mine is the hind leg of all sacrifices; the male only gets a foreleg. Because "a female may kill a snake, but only a male cut off its head" (*pɔka ka kure wafo nwa zugo*), therefore, when I have given the sacrifice, the male cuts its throat. This male has no hat or skin. When I say that the land at Zogo belongs to me, I mean it belongs to the spirits. I am their servant. A male *Ten'dan'* may have a wife, but a

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[1] See p. 8. This only applies to a child whose mother is still young enough to bear children. [Nyere is a term applied to two children born consecutively of the same parents —Analyst.]

and these are left on the grave. The iron heads of the [illegible] washed 787
in water containing *grunyoa* grass (*nagwa* in Nankane, [illegible] fumi- [783]
gate everything which has had contact with the dead) [illegible]eased [778]
had a *bakolog* (soothsaying shrine) it is fumigated w[illegible]ss.

Driving the Souls of the Living from Graves: 'Some *bayas* [illegible]xtons) can 791 ●
see souls (*sis*) in graves. When they do so, they will take a potsherd 775
and put peppers and tobacco on it and set them on fire and place
them in the open grave in order that the soul may be driven out.'

This exhausts the information which I obtained while living with 000
the Kusase,[1] whom I found a charming and delightful people. I pass
on in my next chapter to describe the Builsa, whom Europeans know
better as the 'Kanjaga'.

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[1] The Kusase do not circumcise, nor do their women practise incision, unless 304
influenced by Mampruse connexions, e.g. at Bawku. They file the teeth. The
women pierce the lower lip only.

778 will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And
787 if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his bene-
769 factress. The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing menace.

As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man
613 it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the domi-
769 nant ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo*
778 ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grand-
father, and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the
791 group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔɣar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahəŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔɣar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔɣar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔɣar* is tangibly symbolized.

Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahəŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahəs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

769 The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple
combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's
602 father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

513 bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed
178 aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these
minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

342 *The Family Compounds*: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

The Ten'dan': Among the Talense an investigation into the former
●793 status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

793 *Duties of Ten'dan'*: (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs;
783 this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land
627 from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die,
except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*tey*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man tey*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

782 If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a
783 cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person,
he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

Purification of the land when some one is Sold: When a person sells
567 a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten'dan'*, nor will the latter take
783 any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor,
●793 or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be
593 informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised
to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

769 I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an inter-
793 mediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all
783 our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere'* (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm:
793 The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through
782 the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan'*[1]
241 (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor.
427 This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring
the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

793 'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather
425 owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped
by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes, axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother
[292] or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn
by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become *Ten'dan'*.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

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[1] Nankane, *Kusoodana*.

of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back 582
from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with 586
the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those 584
of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor ap- 585
proaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, 171
or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *aben* (*isiga* in Nan-
kane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) [776]
by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl [782]
has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *aben* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *aben* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *aben* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was 764
given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tongo: 793

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*leho*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

764 white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water.
I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water,
●793 drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called
me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the graveside. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan'* takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

764 Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not
think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines
622 were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

778 *Shrines*: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear
to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my
[171] reader round the compound of my friend Saγebere, a *Ten'dan'* of
782 Tɔngo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the
721 various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

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[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

XXXVI

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Ceremonies in Connexion with Sowing and Harvest. The Talense Calendar

527 THERE appear to be at least three great festivals which are held by the Talense in connexion with the crops and harvest. These are:

(*a*) *Gologo*, held in the month of February by the whole of the Talense.

b) *Bugram Waa* (lit. the *Bugram* dance) held in October by the following towns: Sia, Winduri, Gorogo, Wakyi, Teŋ'zugu, and Gbeo.

(*c*) *Da koom*, *Da meŋ* or simply *Waa*, (the dance) held by Bade and Tongo, in the months of August and September.

[171] Among the Nankanse we have seen that the October festival is called *Tingana* (the Groves), or simply *Waa* (the Dance), a festival which is held by Winkoŋo, Orogo, Kologo, and Na, in rotation.

(*a*) *The Gologo Ceremony*: It was my intention to have attended this ceremony in person; hence I omitted to obtain a full description of it. I am informed, however, that during the time when the festival is being held 'every one is permitted to abuse his neighbour and even to laugh at any physical deformity, and that no one is allowed to quarrel'. [171] All this seems most reminiscent of the *Apo* ceremony, which has been described in another volume.[1] Circumstances, however, prevented me ever carrying out my intention, and a full description of this ceremony must be left to some other historian to record. I hope an account of it will be obtained before the extraordinarily rapid changes in conditions in these parts have interfered with or altered its characteristic observances.

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The Da koom and Da meŋ Ceremonies: 'When we dance these, all our ancestors sleep. When the time approaches for the ceremonies, the *Ten'dan'* of Bade takes a calabash (*zu-gur*, lit. a head-calabash), puts it in a net, and hangs it outside the entrance to the *zoŋo* hut. When the rain falls, it is filled. Before dawn, early in the morning after the appearance of the new moon, the Bat (*Anglice* Bade) *Ten'dan'* pours out

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[1] See *Ashanti*, Chapter XV.

some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day 527
is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may
be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, 793
but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* 796
(or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the 535
water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'* of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the words:

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches 527
the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of 793
Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree
used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for 769
you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return 796
the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices.

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never 534
brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on the land that it may know all is well.'

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests 241
became ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that 527
the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant.

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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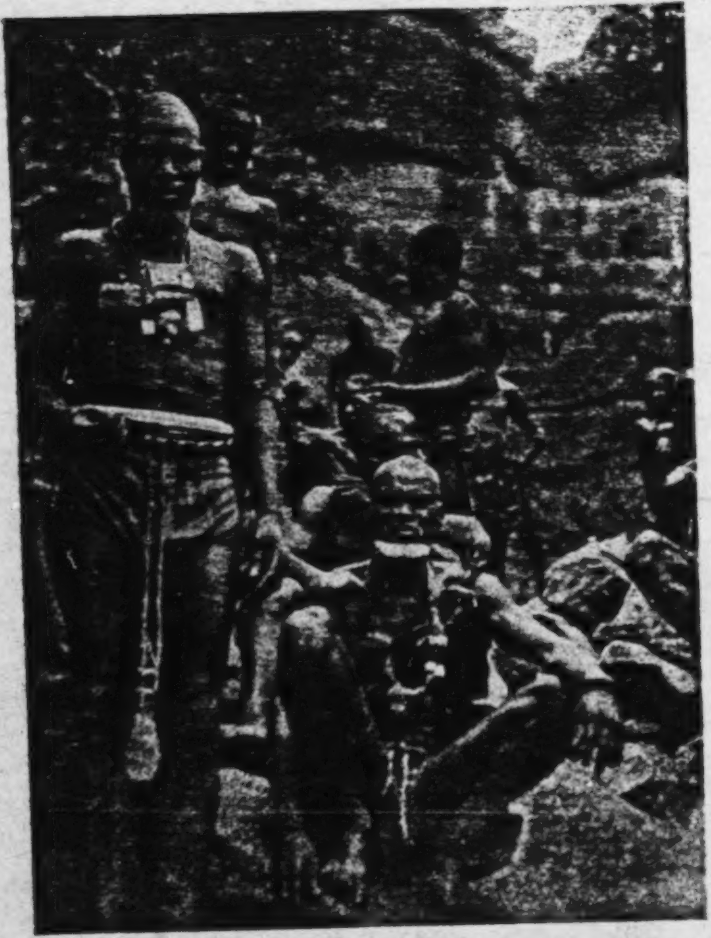

FIG. 74. 'The Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived'

[facing p. 363]

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the
west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

103 The capital town (*teŋa*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
167 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
563 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
622 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first
793 settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was
nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'*
is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of
the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti ?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

NAMNAM

632 and intelligent man (see Fig. 79), informed me this was the constitu-
622 tion long before the Europeans came. 'A *Kambon-nab*', he said, 'is
624 succeeded by any one who asks for the post, but if there are many
applicants, the wishes of the people of the *teya* were taken into
consideration.'

651 *Tribute*: The head Chief stated that he received yearly tribute of
622 corn, ground-nuts, and ~~beans,~~ and that friends for whom he settled
cases would 'thank him with a sheep'. He also received presents from
the *teya* heads, whose appointment lay with him.

651 'When a beast is killed in hunting, the whole beast is given to the
622 section-head of the hunter who killed it. He, in turn, sends a hind leg
224 to the *Kambon-naba*, who sends it to the Chief, who shares it with the
Kambonnannam.'

624 *Work of Section-heads: Ten'dan': The Territorial Ruler*: 'The section-
622 heads settled adultery cases. If blood were shed on the land or any one
● 793 was killed, or if rain did not fall, a cow or sheep or goat was given by
the Chief to the *Ten'dan'* to sacrifice and purify the land. Now-a-days most Chiefs do not do so. Before you Europeans came, we Chiefs recognized the *Ten'dan'*. The reason others do not do so now is, that since Europeans came, many new Chiefs have been made, who know nothing about Chieftainship and only want to look after their own bellies. I myself have continued the old things. After the sowing we collect things and give to him (the *Ten'dan'*) to sacrifice. I have not, like most Chiefs, taken away the *dawa dawa* trees from the *Ten'dan'*; when I am in need of some, I buy what I require. Formerly Chiefs ate out of calabashes, now they try to eat out of a basket.'

624 Heads of sections, of whom there are four at Nangoot (in charge of the sections known as *Zod'bis*, *Beam-bis*, *Isaka bis*, and *Kpea-bis*),[1] report to the *Kambon-naba*, who in turn report to the Chief.

622 The Chief of Nangode, with whom I was very much impressed, informed me that he had continued the old system of Native Administration, although 'few other Chiefs now do so, which causes the spirits in the groves to lament'.

793 *The Ten'dan'*: The following was told me by the *Ten'dan'* of Nangode
(see Fig. 80): 'My ancestor owned the land. I was head *Ten'dan'*
[421] (*Ten'dan' kpwem*). The Europeans have given power to the Chiefs,
who now own the land. My ancestors owned *dawa dawa* trees, and
[783] lost beasts, and when men shot arrows and killed any one, a cow was
given to purify the land. When some one wanted to build a new house,

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[1] *Bis*—children, i.e. descendants.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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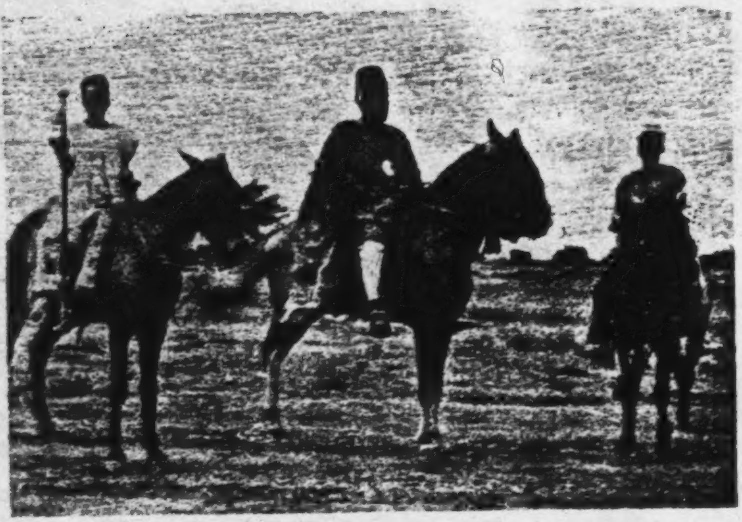

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Fig. 79. The Chief of the Namnam

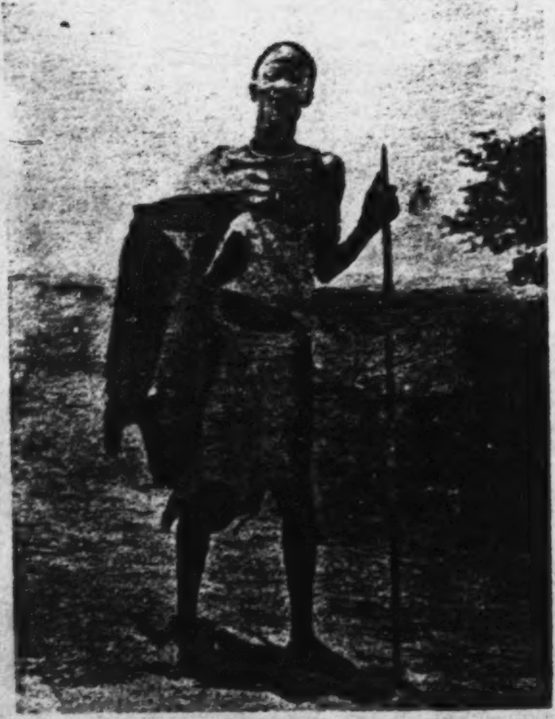

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Fig. 80. A Namnam *Ten'dan'* [facing p. 368]

793 he would ask the *Ten'dan'* and be given a place to build, or a place to
farm. After the harvest of the early millet, they would send millet
to give "water" to the groves, and so too, after the corn harvest. If
[783] blood came from any one, except from the nose, and fell upon the land,
the *Ten'dan'* had to purify it. If Chiefs sold any man in exchange for
[567] cattle, the *Ten'dan* was given one to give to the land, but when people
were sold in a time of famine in exchange for food it was not customary
to give anything, but the land would be angry and kill a member of
that family who had sold their kinsman, even (extending its vengeance)
to a member of their daughter's family who had married far away.
[772] The land is a female and "above" is a male. When I sacrifice I call
upon my father to "reach" his father who will "reach" the grove.
Birth, crops, the getting of wives, good sleep, depend upon the land,
[621] who tells *Wen* (God). When two people were about to fight, and the
Ten'dan' went to stop them, he would lay down his staff between them
and no man might shoot arrows over that. The staff is a corn stalk.
Any one who disregarded that would die. *Tobeg'* and *taku*[1] have not
anything to do with the *Ten'dan'*.

The Position of the Ten'dan' in Cases of Adultery, Theft, Murder, and Suicide.

684 *Adultery*: 'The head of the section settled such cases; it was not
624 formerly a Chief's concern.'

Theft: 'In case of theft, the thief, if caught, would be taken to
685 the one who "owned" (i.e. was responsible for) him, who would
624 settle the matter. If the parties could not agree, the matter was
taken to the head of the section, who would take it if necessary to
[177] the Chief. Since Europeans came we have the *Kambon-nab'*.'[2]

Murder: 'If a man from Nangoot was killed (murdered?) by a man
622 from (say) Pelino, and the slayer was caught, he would be killed by
793 those who chased him. Afterwards, the Pelino people would bring
628 cows, and the people of Nangoot also, and give to the Chief who would
then give some to the *Ten'dan'*, keeping the remainder to purify his
[783] skins. There is a hole below the skin on which a Chief sits for the
blood to flow. The family who had had a member murdered did not
receive anything. The Pelino people and the Nangoot people concerned would mix the flour and water which each will bring and make
peace. Were the Pelino man, in such a case, to escape, and if the

[1] See Chapter XXVIII.

[2] According to the Chief, these officials were part of the old administration.

[3] [Nankanse concepts apply to persons who have directly and indirectly committed a murder — Analyst]

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

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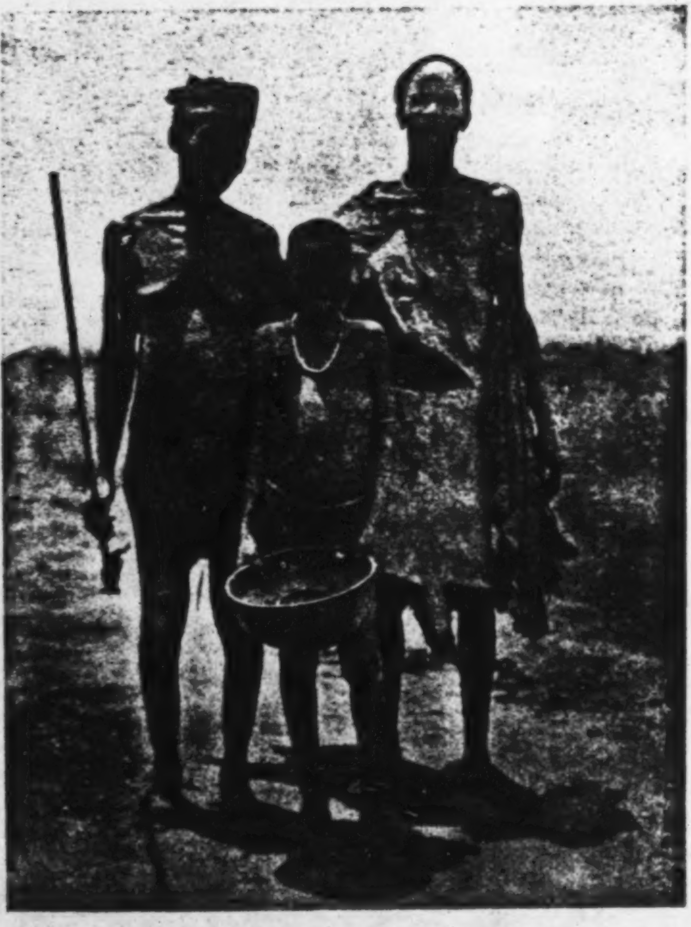

FIG. 81. A female *Ten'dan'* and attendants

[facing p. 370]

622 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop
793 them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any
628 power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over,
but he would bring cows and purify the land.

'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or
622 same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have
793 to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral
custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He
627 could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike,
even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep,
and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the
762 *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart
782 (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains,
a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return".
[761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he
would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

622 624 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and
793 section-heads.

Succession to Ten'dan': 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral
793 custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at
787 the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders,
but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

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[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

● 793 562 *Woman Ten'dan'*: 'A woman might become a *Ten'dan'*. She has the right to offer sacrifices, and receive lost things. She sits down saying: "Land receive your water and all your things". After she has said so, a man cuts the throat of the offering. She has a calabash, not a string hat. She owns the land and can stop wars with the corn stalk.' (A female *Ten'dan'* is interviewed later.)

791 *Rain-makers*: 'A rain-maker is separate from a *Ten'dan'*. He is called *Sa-ran*. We have none here.'

793 764 *Ten'dan' and Funeral Customs*: 'The family of the deceased would "reach" the *Ten'dan'* and he would give them a place to make a grave; were he to refuse they could not bury him. The *Ten'dan'* would send the boy to mark out the grave, making a circle with a calabash and the pointed stick used for digging the grave. He will say:

'*Dakirig* (a grove) some one is dead, can I refuse to bury him, therefore may you hear, and let the "room" be a proper one that he may sleep well?' A sheep is then sacrificed near the grave.

764 *Graves*: The Namnam bury their dead outside, not in, the compound. As many as twenty corpses may be in one grave. Men and women are buried in the same grave. The graves are circular with a bottle-neck. A boy or girl who has not any *nyere*[1] must have a separate grave.

834 A man does not have sexual intercourse with his wife for three years after she bears a child, i.e. if the child lives.

793 *Female Ten'dan'* (*Ten'dan' poka*): Akayiri, a female *Ten'dan'*, who may be seen in Fig. 81, told me the following:

'My ancestress was a *Ten'dan' poka* (a female *Ten'dan'*), called Banams. My grove is called Tinkyena; it is always a female *Ten'dan'* who is in charge of it. The calabash, which the little girl who always accompanies me carries, and my uncut hair, are the signs of my office. I own the land at Zoga. If the Zoga men want to fight, I will go between them, and place a corn stalk on the ground. Zoga has two *Ten'dan'*, a male and a female, but I own the land, as is proved by the fact that mine is the hind leg of all sacrifices; the male only gets a foreleg. Because "a female may kill a snake, but only a male cut off its head" (*poka ka kure wafo nwa zugo*), therefore, when I have given the sacrifice, the male cuts its throat. This male has no hat or skin. When I say that the land at Zogo belongs to me, I mean it belongs to the spirits. I am their servant. A male *Ten'dan'* may have a wife, but a

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[1] See p. 8. This only applies to a child whose mother is still young enough to bear children. [Nyere is a term applied to two children born consecutively of the same parents —Analyst.]

●793 female one may not marry or even have a lover. When a woman is chosen as *Ten'dan' poka*, she will leave husband and children and go to Zoka to enter on her work, and the cows which her husband paid for her will not be claimed, as his wife has been chosen by the land, and if her husband claimed back the cows, he would die. I myself left home just a year ago.' The Chief, who was present when this woman was speaking, said, 'We caught her and put the calabash and stalk in her hand, without telling her; she could not refuse; it was the word of our *Yaba* (ancestor). Her predecessor was my own wife; she was taken from me.'

She continued: 'Female *Ten'dan'* are chosen from one family; my clan is *loa* (a red squirrel?)'.

This woman's small girl attendant told me she would be the *Ten'dan's* servant until she reached puberty and married, when another young girl would replace her.

793 I again asked the female *Ten'dan'*, if *Ten'dan'* owned the land. She 423 said, 'No, not really, the grove does, *Ten'dan'* are only children of the *tengwan* (grove)'.

Some Further Notes regarding Ten'dan' and the Land:

'In olden times, the *Ten'dan'* gave the Chief land to farm as well as lesser people. He, the *Ten'dan'*, would point out the place to make the farm and call the name of his grove, saying, "So-and-so wants to eat, help him". The *Ten'dan'* will turn over the first sod, and at that place, *kyili* seed will be planted, the leaves of which are called *bito*. When this farm bears its first crops, and thereafter each year, a basket of corn, a pot of beer, and some fowls are given to the *Ten'dan'* by its owner. As soon as land is totally abandoned, it reverts to the *Ten'dan'*, but as long as it is being cultivated, he cannot take it back, unless its owner offends. The *Ten'dan'* may give land to a stranger provided he [326] lives in the *teya*. Before a smith used iron from the land, he would make a knife, an axe, and a nail called *pin kpa*,[1] and give them to the *Ten'dan'* before doing any work for others.'

The Godan: 'I am called *Ten'dan'*, there is one called *Godan* who wanders and kills meat. His work is to take people to the bush to hunt. When a beast is killed, he receives a foreleg; the remainder goes to the head of the section. The *Godan* "owns" the men whom he takes to the bush to hunt; he does not own any land. If one of my own section

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[1] Used by leather workers.

NAMNAM

793

kills a beast, I receive some, not otherwise. I own the land in the bush, 423
not so the *Godan*.

'Things found on the land, except beads, belong to the *Ten'dan'*, also 793
lost fowls, iron, worked or unworked, goats, sheep, and cows. A horse 425
or a donkey goes to the Chief; these are not permitted to enter my
kraal. If any one found these things and kept them, his home would 622
break. The finder of beads, guinea-fowls, a cloth, cowries, may keep
them if not claimed, but if the cowries[1] were many, he would give
some to the Chief and to the *Ten'dan'*. A lost child belongs to the
Chief; it is forbidden for a *Ten'dan'* to take such a one, she may not eat
anything with hairs (i.e. a person).' 793

Tattooing: A *Ten'dan'* must not have tattoo marks, but markings 304
called *Taavelem* do not matter.[2]

Harvest Festivals: 'Beans, ground-nuts, and new crops must first be 527 /
given to the groves, after which every one may eat. Only naked people 793
may go to the groves. A *Ten'dan'* has to be so careful not to eat new crops
before the groves have done so, that, when the corn is ripening, his 173
water-pots have to be covered over to prevent any grain from being
blown into them.' He concluded the above by stating: 'Our ancestors
did not come from any other place. *Na Wen* (God) created our *Yaba*
and allowed him to be on the land. No stranger can possess *ten-kur*
(land stones).[3] Formerly we called our land Zug, and there were only
thorns upon it. Then the Dagbama (Dagomba) came and ate the
Chieftainship and called the land Gohe-nam or Nangoot. Our
mother's children are the *Ten'dan'* of Pals (near Zuarono). They went
there from this place. Our taboo is red clay; we do not use it for [784]
plastering the walls of compounds.'[4]

A rapid survey of other matters, fully described in previous chapters, 171
revealed everywhere a uniform similarity in customs and beliefs with
those of their neighbours. A more intensive investigation will no
doubt reveal differences in detail here and there, but the task of
recording these I must leave to others and pass on to examine the
next tribe, the Kusase.

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[1] See p. 378.

[2] This prohibition was, I was informed, only local.

[3] See p. 256.

[4] See footnote 6, p. 244.

Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa). 103 614

614 My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

611 154 The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

173 622 793● *Traditions of the Kusase*: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe tey*) and that person would

173 die. He would tap the land with his fingers and say, "*Teŋ ya be,*
622 *zagala saam ka nees teŋ la okom*" (If such a thing as the land really is,
793 (here is) So-and-so who has offended and treated you as of no account,
may you kill him).[1] The land will break his compound; his fowls, goats, sheep, children, wives will die. The offender would approach an Elder and "beat his hands" and ask him to intercede with the *Tenedan'* on his behalf. Chiefs now own the people, but *Tenedan'* still own the land. The first Chief of Kagbiri was my father. He was *Tenedan'* at the time when the Germans made him Chief. The present Chief is Ati, he is my father's child (i.e. son of the speaker's father's brother). My father, after the Germans made him Chief, used to delegate the work of *Tenedan'* to me, so when he died and Ati was made Chief we continued to do the same.'

177 At this place (Kagbiri) so far as I could see, we find the Territorial
793 Ruler (who is not a foreigner, but one of the family of the former
Tenedan'), and the *Tenedan'*, 'his brother', working in complete har-
622 mony. The Germans, it will be noted, whether by accident or design,
171 had made the *Tenedan'* also the Territorial Ruler. The significance of the rather curious and suggestive procedure—which I have also noted elsewhere—whereby a *Tenedan'* who, by chance, has become Chief, delegates the religious part of his duties to another, should not be overlooked. The multifarious administrative and executive duties, which the Territorial Ruler is asked by us to undertake, cannot be wholly responsible for this. This may be proved by an examination of the position of a Chief in Ashanti, where these two functions—religious and secular—are combined in one person. Perhaps the bad example set by the majority of foreign Chiefs in these parts, who were always unconcerned with local land-gods, may partly account for this. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked, that by far the most important religious duties performed by Ashanti Chiefs for their people are the ceremonies in connexion with their own ancestral spirits, in which their subjects now join, and not those rites in connexion with the land, which has tended to become alienated, although theoretically they still belong to the Stool. Many Northern Territory Rulers, while ignoring land gods, would, nevertheless, lay claim to the land. The following are some further notes on the duties and privileges of the *Tenedan'* among the Kusase.

793 'When the rain does not fall, the Elders consult the soothsayer and
[787] report to the *Tenedan'* what the *baa* (soothsayer) has told them. The

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[1] Compare p. 370. (i.e. different practice among Namnam)

Tenedan’ will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good 793
crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good
harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, 793
and the *Tenedan’* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) 782
where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a *Tenedan’* is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to the land. The land is not a human spirit.’ The *Tenedan’* will say:

‘“We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating, we cannot
refuse you yours, receive this beer.” We pour out the beer and then [273]
kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow (through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan’* will then ask every one to give him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a cow. Every one in the *teŋa* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan’* will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children
too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan’* and eats of this
sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan’* and the *Teŋ-kpeem* (Elders of the *teŋa*) [623]
always discussed town affairs together.’

Succession to the Tenedan’ship: ‘When a *Tenedan’* dies, his next eldest 793
brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest “son”; that means the eldest of all the “sons” among the *Tenedan’* and his brothers. In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan’*, but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan’* had power to drive a man out of the *teŋa*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would remain until he lost everything.’

Tenedan’ and the Land: ‘A *Tenedan’* is in charge of all uncultivated 793
land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan’*, 423
saying, “*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I 425
wish to make a farm upon it”. The *Tenedan’* will send a boy to look 782
at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the
farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and [273]
take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan’* to sacrifice to the land. This he will do in his own compound, giving it to his father’s *bagr* (shrine) to give to the land, saying: “Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give to the land that the farmer may get crops”. The remainder of the beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan’* will also send his son to pour some on the land and say:

423 '"Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm.
425 Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache
782 and belly-ache."

'When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan'* a large
793 bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a
423 guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his "sons", but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan'* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan'* still "owns" the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'*, even if growing on a man's land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man's own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan'* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.'

793 *Lost Animals*: 'Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tene-*
425 *dan'*. I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries. Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. 'No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.'

'In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are "*Wen*" (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan'*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan'* only received a hind leg.'

224 *Go-dan*: 'We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost
624 a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan'* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

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not own the land, but is in charge of the hunting party for the time that they are away in the bush. 224 624

'The *Tenedan*' would separate people fighting by spreading ashes on the land between the combatants; no man may shoot an arrow over this line. It is taboo to the land to have sexual intercourse in the bush. Any one who found people doing so will collect a heap of leaves and branches at that spot, and every one who passed there must add more. Such a place is called *pey bok* (vagina hole). 793 834

'A woman may not become a *Tenedan*.'[1] *Tenedan*' have not any distinctive dress from that of any Elder. There is no difference between the funeral custom for a *Tenedan*' and that of an Elder.' 793 462 764

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[1] But see p. 371. [i.e. The opposite is true among the Nam Nam - Analyst.]

three days. At the end of that time, he will bury the "roots" which 783
the pot contains. Beer is then prepared and more roots sought for, 778
and two pots. A dog and a red cock are sacrificed on one pot; a goat
and a white cock on the other. Water, in which the roots have been
soaked, is used for making *sagbo* (porridge) in which the livers of the
sacrifice are put. The murderer and the head of his family first take
some of this food in their left hands and put it in the pots, after which
they and any one else who has ever killed a man (in war or otherwise)
will partake of the rest of the food. Some of the roots are burned and
then powdered and put in beer, and the head of the murderer's
family (if he too has ever killed any one) and the murderer drink it.
A similar sacrifice is made over these pots twice a year. When the
murderer dies, the two pots are placed inside the *zɔŋ* hut, and the
son of the murderer will continue to sacrifice on them, but unless he
too has killed some one, he may not himself eat of these sacrifices.
The following words are spoken when the sacrifice is being made:

'Medicine (*tim*) receive this offering and drive away that person 783
(the murdered man) that he may return to his own compound.' The
relations of the murderer have also to bring a goat, a cock, and beer [793] ●
to 'cover up the blood'. This is the work of the *Tenedan*'. He will
make the sacrifice and say:

'Children have done something bad (*yele*) and blood has come forth and death resulted. Receive this offering and quench this fire.' The fowl and goat are sacrificed over a hole in the ground and the feathers of the fowl and undigested food in the stomach of the goat are buried in the hole. The whole of the sacrifice must be eaten at the spot where it is made. A child's bow and arrow is broken and placed in the same hole with the words, 'This is the bow and arrow which has caused the death; we have broken it; do not permit it to come out'.

'A man is very proud to have killed another in war, but not to have murdered one.'

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765
father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769
his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his
father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make
use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the
flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies.
It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years,
later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been
settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the
day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters'
children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations,
assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pòkor nwi* (widows' strings) [302]
are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely
shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the
children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765
who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768
they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out.
After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765
main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837
the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle.
She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783
sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there
send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness.
He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the
land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan'* will come and [793]
sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have
sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says
so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one
representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their
mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201]
in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses
his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of
the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and
its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also
put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it.
The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a
fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices
the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out
from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

The institution distinctive of the autochthonous communities is the 171
office of 'Custodian of the Earth'. This ritual office, involving priestly 793
functions in connexion with the cult of the Earth, is found among many West African peoples from the Senegal to the mouth of the Niger. In the Voltaic region it is the exclusive prerogative of the autochthonous communities.

The ethnographic picture of to-day suggests that the population of the 174
Voltaic region was, in the past, constantly being redistributed by migrations of small groups. In the absence of written records that is all we can say. The fact that such migrations have gone on in the recent past, and are still going on in the central area, suggests that these migrations were (as they are) the result rather of ecological pressures and social forces than of large-scale conquests. But marauding slave-raiders may have been a cause of migrations in some areas. Two of the most notorious, Samory and Babatu, were spreading devastation in the north-western parts of the region at the time when the French and the British were partitioning the country during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Physically, culturally, in their economic organization, and their social 171
and political structure, the people of Taleland are typical in every respect of the tribes of the central Volta region.

General Characteristics of the Tallensi

The people of the central Volta region are of negroid stock. They are 144
not a notably fine physical type, but the best of them are attractive physical 141
specimens, as may be seen from the photographs in this book. Head
measurements of thirteen Tale men gave an average C.I. of 74·7. The 142
predominant head type appears to be dolichocephalic. In skin colour they 146
vary from black through chocolate brown to bronze, which the natives call 'red' (*bon-ze'e*) and regard as the most attractive bodily hue. Their hair is of the usual negroid peppercorn type. They have also the typical negroid nasal and lip forms, but the very broad, flat nose and markedly everted lips are not so common as in the tropical forest belt. Both men and women are of medium stature, the men being slightly the taller. Anybody over 5 ft. 7 or 8 in. is considered tall. Though they are mostly slight in build, all the somatic types with which we are familiar may be seen among these people: the stocky pyknic, the slim asthenic, the stalwart athletic, to use Kretschmer's terminology, are all common. Fat men or women, however, are very rare. Climatic conditions, density of population, and a primitive agricultural technique[1] all conspire to keep the average standard of nutrition low. In the best seasons the natives grow only enough cereals for their needs.[2] Their animal husbandry provides little surplus to exchange for cereals, and they have no crafts worth speaking of. The labour they supply to richer parts of the Gold Coast contributes very little return by way of foodstuffs to the home community. Like most subsistence farmers in Africa, their diet is notably deficient in animal protein.

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[1] *Vide* Lynn, C. W., op. cit.

[2] This aspect of Tale economics is more fully discussed in Lynn, op. cit., and in Fortes, M. and S. L., loc. cit.

x618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tɛndaana, both receive sacrifices.
182 But the *Bɔɣar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a
771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

774 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔɣar* cult and the Earth cult, both
769 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve
182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages.
613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔɣar* (*dugni bɔɣar*), the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔɣar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔɣar* (Duunkpaləg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔɣar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tɛndaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔɣar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tɛndaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tɛndaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

x618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of
182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

● [773] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one
178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpaɣara-yaɣar
182 tɛndaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders
578 to Duunkpaləg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdɛm did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunɔɔp* who should have come to escort the tɛndaana-elect to Duunkpaləg. The Yapaasdɛm, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

x618 elaboration. Among them the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*,[1] homologous
182 though it is in function and doctrine with its Zubiuŋ counterpart, includes
794 peculiar esoteric elements lacking in the latter. This cult is the pivot of their Harvest Festival, *Bɔɣaraam*, which takes its name from the External *Bɔɣar*, of which it is essentially a sacrament. The sacrament includes an initiation cult, by which the males are brought into the *Bɔɣar* sodality and bound to its obligations and observances.

Each *Bɔɣar* has a number of ritual functionaries who hold office by virtue of being the heads of the maximal lineages in which these ritual offices are vested. As a rule a particular maximal lineage has the exclusive ownership of one office, and the ritual offices connected with a particular *Bɔɣar* are distributed among all or most of the corporate units (maximal lineages) that owe allegiance to that *Bɔɣar*. They usually include maximal lineages of a single clan, maximal lineages of other clans linked to them by ties of clanship, and territorially adjacent maximal lineages not related to them by clanship.

The cult of the Earth (*Tɛŋ*), again, is localized at a number of sacred spots, the most exalted of which are the foci of ritual association and collaboration between groups of clans and maximal lineages *not* connected by clanship. As in the *Bɔɣar* cult, the ritual roles are distributed among the heads of the corporate units owing allegiance to a particular Earth
[778] shrine. Each maximal lineage has, in addition, its private lineage *bɔɣar*, the symbolic seat of its own ancestors, as well as the special shrine that symbolizes and is bound up with the ritual office vested in that lineage.

Though each ritual office of a particular *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is vested in one maximal lineage, the other member-units of the congregation have an interest in that office. There are certain occasions when all the ritual functionaries must be present in order that the rites of worship may be performed. This is the case during the Great Festivals, and the concrete manifestation of this principle is the common sacrament partaken of in the rites at the *Bɔɣar* and the *Tɛŋ*.

●793 Again, there is an order of seniority among the ritual functionaries of a
794 *Bɔɣar* or *Tɛŋ*. The most senior is the chief custodian of that shrine.
182 Members of his lineage have a private relationship with the shrine, in
x618 addition to their public duties in connexion with it. They may, through him, bring private sacrifices to it in misfortune, or out of gratitude. But this functionary is also the direct intermediary between the congregation and the shrine. The priestly duties of its cult fall mainly on him. He is obliged to preside at all rites in which the whole congregation takes part, and the lineages of the other functionaries are dependent on him for the proper performance of the rites. This does not give him political power over them, for he is only *primus inter pares*, but it enhances the prestige of his office and makes it the pivot of the whole constellation. Thus all the functionaries and their respective lineages have a particular interest in the senior, pivotal office.

Furthermore, the installation of a ritual functionary in his office is

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[1] For the sake of clarity whenever reference is made to an external *Bɔɣar*, a capital *B* will be used; when any other kind of *bɔɣar* is referred to a lower-case *b* will be used.

always the privilege of another functionary of the same congregation, or 793
of a neighbouring congregation. The effect of this is to maintain particu- 794
larly close bonds of interdependence and mutual amity between pairs of 182
clans or maximal lineages and thus to strengthen the force of ritual 618x
collaboration as a sanction of mutual loyalty and cohesion. If the *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is coterminous with a clan (as at Zubiuŋ), the relationship tends to be mutual or circular—A installs B and B installs A, or A installs B and B installs C who in turn installs A. The arrangement is then plausibly subsumed under the relations of clanship. In a congregation of unrelated maximal lineages the relationship may be mutual between some pairs of lineages and circular between other sets of lineages, which will often include lineages belonging to mutually installing pairs. Thus, A installs B and B installs A; but A also installs C, C installs D, and D installs E.

It often happens, also, that the ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage belonging to one *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is installed by a ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage of a neighbouring congregation. The two lineages may be connected by clanship ties and the arrangement explained by invoking these. Or they may be adjacent to each other; or they may belong to the same *Bɔyar* congregation but different *Tɛŋ* congregations (or vice versa), so that it is only with respect to one context that the parties can be said to belong to different ritual groupings.

In every case it comes to this: that maximal lineages bound to each other 794
by one set of ritual ties, with respect to one focus of ritual cohesion, are 182
divided from each other, and bound to maximal lineages of other con- 618x
gregations constituted with reference to the same category of ritual relations, by another set of ritual ties. Thus the division between adjacent *Bɔyar* congregations (or *Tɛŋ* congregations), mutually exclusive by reference to the particular *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* at which each worships, is bridged by the ritual interdependence, in terms of another ritual category, of some of their respective member lineages. And the system extends chainwise throughout all the clans of the Hill Talis.

We have here a more elaborate reproduction of the pattern of ritual relations that was observed to hold between Ba'ari and its neighbours. Indeed, the schematic formulation attempted above gives only an inkling of the labyrinthine intricacies of these ritual relations among the Hill Talis. In this pattern the cult of the External *Bɔyar* and the cult of the Earth have a very significant relationship, as we have previously indicated. It can be seen more explicitly than at Zubiuŋ or Ba'ari that they form polar principles in the total system of public ritual values and relations.

This appears quite clearly in the doctrines and ritual practices of the 182
Hill Talis. *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* are always coupled together in ritual activities. 794
Together they exercise a mystical rule over the life and health, the fertility 796
and prosperity of man. The differences in the way in which they are concerned with these fundamentals of human existence are like a complementary division of labour. This is well shown in the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. Thus *Gɔlib*, the Sowing Festival just before the first rains, is centred on the Earth cult. It dramatizes man's dependence on the fertility of the soil and on the rain for his livelihood, and the dependence

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field. Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔɣar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔɣar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔɣar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
184 Tenzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine
769 (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to
assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the
Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a
● [793] Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[778] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
769

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562 of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613 relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔγayabəlis*, deprived by an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan. This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784] *pɔγayabələg* of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives, of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔγayabələg* might, in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔγayabələg* as 562 an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854 example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔγayabələg* of the clan. Usually she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787] will be a suitable *pɔγayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a *pɔγayabələg* is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task; it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being. Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔγayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔγar* is significant in 562 this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793 shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769 case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔγayabəlis* have the right to take part

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔɣar*, the married *pɔɣayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔɣayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔɣayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔɣayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔɣar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive
succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a
lineage *bɔɣar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the
lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his successor.
[787] This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔɣayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination.
Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔɣar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔɣar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent
through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

PLATE VII

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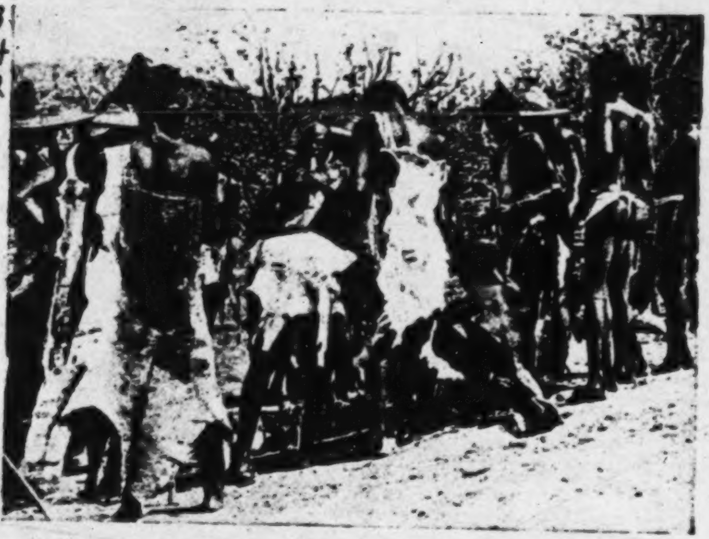

(*a*) The Unity of all the Talis: The chief tendaanas of all the Talis settlements assemble to perform the rite of 'blowing the whistles' to inaugurate the Gɔlib Festival.

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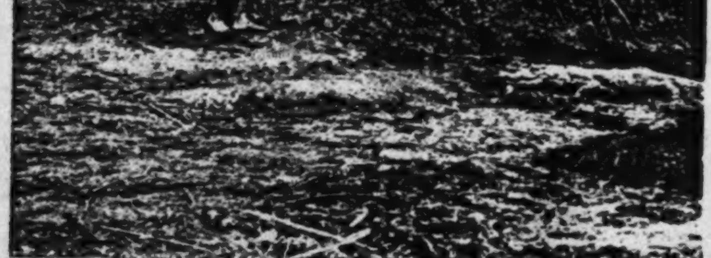

(*b*) A sacred crocodile at Zubiuŋ crawling out of the water-hole to take a live frog offered to him by a youth of the clan. Note the latter's fearlessness.

[facing p. 160]

779 the earth (*teŋɔnpiima*)'. As we have previously noted, any article or stray
425 animal, the owner of which is unknown, is a *teŋɔnpiimɔr*. It must be
688 handed to a tendaana. The rule applies to stray fowls, goats, sheep, and
especially to objects of iron; and it is most scrupulously observed. A hoe or an axe, for instance, can safely be left lying about on a farm. Tallensi speak with awe of the sacrilege of appropriating a 'thing found on the Earth'. They say that swift retribution invariably overtakes a sinner, and they quote the example of those who occasionally break the taboo, by accident or purposely. It is particularly heinous to take anything found near an Earth shrine, where the mystical power of the Earth is directly localized. Even children are fearful of picking up bits of rubbish near *tɔŋgbana*. Breaches of Earth taboos serve, in the long run, to increase the respect in which they are held. The native is constantly reminded, by these taboos, that the useful, material earth is only the façade of the universal mystical Earth. They remind him that the security and satisfaction he derives from the utilization of the earth's resources are conditional upon his moral behaviour.

714 We have examined the relation of the concept of the Earth in its mystical aspect to the great public calamities that threaten the physical basis of the existence of the natives. But this concept has a positive side, too. When men do not offend it, the Earth permits crops to flourish, women to bear children, and men's enterprises to succeed. Locusts, Tallensi say, when they rationalize the powers they attribute to the Earth, come up out of the earth; tornadoes sweep across its surface; but, also, crops grow on the earth; homesteads stand on it; men walk on it; out of it they dig the roots they use to cure their illnesses and make magical defences for themselves; in it they bury their dead. All these services of the material earth have their reflex in the ritual values attached to the mystical Earth.

779 All Tallensi stand in awe of the Earth. We have learnt that they speak
774 of it as 'a living thing', meaning by this that it intervenes mystically in
793 human affairs in the same way as the ancestor spirits do. When they talk
of the Earth they mention its remorseless punishment of sacrilege, and the things it prohibits, not its blessings. Yet it is the symbol to them of the forces that promote the common welfare of all mankind without discrimination. Thus a wandering stranger is a 'thing found on the earth'; but
[567 he is given to a chief and not to a tendaana. Chiefs are ritually qualified
to sell a human being into slavery; a tendaana would commit a sacrilege
622] against the Earth if he did so. As the priest of the Earth it is his duty to
protect human beings, keep the peace among them, and be watchful against the dangers that threaten them. The dog lives in such close association with man that it has quasi-human qualities, and therefore stray dogs must also be surrendered to chiefs. And this holds for stray cattle, too, which are also closely identified with man owing to their great economic value and their special importance as sacrificial animals.

682 Everywhere, too, the Earth forbids the shedding of blood in strife, and, in the neighbourhood of important Earth shrines, the raising of the alarm signal (a long-drawn-out, high-pitched cry *ya-a-a-a-hi*) as a call to arms, and therefore to bloodshed. Men who transgress have to pay heavy

clan must not kill one another or abduct one another's wives, so they must 621
not trespass on one another's land. For this would wreck the mutual 471
loyalties of segment to segment and make impossible the maintenance of 182
the reciprocity of rights and duties on which their corporate life depends. There is, in other words, a generally accepted body of jural and moral norms, binding on all members of the clan and cementing its solidarity, and supported by the powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. The security of land tenure is guaranteed by this.

Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for any man to take another's farm- 577
land. It is his ancestral land. You would not borrow a patch for a ground- 471
nut plot without his permission: how could you think of seizing any of it for yourself? The idea is either fantastic or simply ludicrous to them. And in fact, disputes over farm boundaries or trespassing on another's land are almost unknown. The most remarkable proof of this occurred
in 1936, when the Hill Talis returned to their ancestral homes after [167]
twenty-five years of exile. Several hundred men took possession again of their ancestors' farm plots without a single boundary dispute. If there was doubt about a particular plot the elders were consulted and settled the matter, not by the exercise of authority but by reason of their knowledge of where every member of the clan had farmed in the old days. Boys of thirteen or fourteen know in detail the ownership and boundaries of every farm plot in the settlement, or at any rate in their section, if it is a large settlement.

It should be noted that there is no communal production for communal 621
use of foodstuffs or any other commodities among the Tallensi, and there 471
is, accordingly, no concept of the communal ownership of the farm-lands
of the community. A nuclear lineage has indefeasible rights of ownership 182
over its land. No one has an over-right over it, either real or fictitious. This rule applies between clans as well as within the clan. Trespassing on the farm-lands of members of clans other than one's own is unheard of. For, as we have learnt, adjacent clans are interconnected by structural ties. Every clan is a member of a wider community of interdependent clans, emerging at the level of politico-ritual relations and including, at its widest extent, all the Tallensi. This is the *teŋ* at its widest extent, symbolically recognized in the Great Festivals and in the chain of interdependent politico-ritual offices held by the heads of all the different maximal lineages and clans. It is the counterpart, in the social structure, of the notion of the Earth in its mystical aspect as a universal power acting on the lives of all men.

Security of land ownership, which means security for every man of the opportunity to supply the basic needs of himself and his dependants, is, therefore, conditional upon the integration of the community; in the first place, of the clan, but also of the wider community of interdependent groups of clans. Its ultimate basis is the politico-ritual organization of the Tallensi.

The Integration of the Community: Chiefship and Tendaanaship

The politico-ritual integration of a Tale clan is focused in the politico- 622
ritual office or offices vested in it or in its component maximal lineages. 793

622 793 [184] These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External *Bɔγar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

622 793 554 Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*) ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

622 793 As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔγar* cult function as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

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[1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

term still prevails. Their function is 'to prosper the community (*maal tɛŋ*)'. 622 793 Overtly and most conspicuously this is a ritual function. By their conscientious observance of the ritual rules of conduct that symbolize their respective offices, their responsibilities for the community to the mystical powers, and their mutual relationships, as well as by taking the lead in ritual acts calculated to preserve or restore the goodwill of these mystical powers, they maintain the well-being of the community. Actually, these ritual attributes symbolize the fact that chief or tɛndaana is the hub of clan unity and solidarity, the representative of the common interests and of the common values that enable men to visualize and to hold fast to this common interest.

The polar conjunction of chiefship and tɛndaanaship is expressed in 622 the obligatory ritual collaboration, with complementary roles, of chiefs 793 and tɛndaanas. It mirrors the fusion of the two principles that shape 182 the total social field which ultimately determines the prosperity of the individual. One is the principle that the fate of the individual and of the community is determined by the practical and utilitarian concerns and needs that bind man to the earth and put him at the mercy of natural phenomena. The other is the principle that the attainment of prosperity and security, both for the individual and the community, depends upon the integration of the community. The two principles fuse in the notion that the prosperity of the land (*tɛŋ*)—that is, of the community dwelling on its territory—depends on the united strength of the chiefship and the tɛndaanaship, in the last resort. When drought or an epidemic threatens, chiefs and tɛndaanas meet together to decide on ritual measures to be undertaken to avert it. When war temporarily cuts through the tissue of structural ties that holds the clans of Taleland together, the social equilibrium is finally restored by the ritual collaboration, according to ancient custom, of chief and tɛndaana. The death of a chief or tɛndaana [787] leaves 'the land empty (*tɛŋvoog*)', as if its sentinel has departed, until his successor is installed. The death of a chief, Tallensi say, portends want—at best a scarcity of food in his own clan, at the worst a famine throughout the whole country. 'The land dies (*tɛŋ la kpiirəme*)', the people starve, and social life breaks up. This always happens when a Chief of Tongo dies. It is the one disaster, Tallensi declare, which even the white man's rule cannot avert. The death of an important tɛndaana is also ominous, but not likely to be so disastrous, since there is usually at least one other tɛndaana in the same clan and there are a great many tɛndaanas in the country.

The principles underlying the structure of a society are never embodied in a perfectly unambiguous way in its social institutions. Social life, even in the most stable and unprogressive of societies, demands continual reshufflings, readjustments, and revaluations of social relationships. Though the distant past has no record among the Tallensi, their society exists in time like every human society. Events leave a deposit in its structure, though they themselves vanish into the limbo of oblivion. Thus, in some clans the two principles we have been examining are very clearly brought out in the precise separation by office, ritual observances, and genealogical limitation of the functions of chiefship and tɛndaanaship.

622 Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion
793 of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution
182 of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community; and tɛndaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tɛndaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tɛndaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

764 This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the
184 burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos
622 bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral
793 graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tɛndaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tɛndaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tɛndaana's Tɛŋ

779 Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same
793 way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural
778 resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular
471 places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

ritual custody of a particular clan or maximal lineage. Such a territorial 778
section is the *tɛŋ* of a particular tɛndaana. He is the master (*daana*) of 779
that locality (*tɛŋ*), exercising ritual jurisdiction over it on behalf of the 793
maximal lineage or clan which has the ritual ownership of it, in virtue of 471
being the head of that unit. He is the mediator between the Earth and the
people whose interests lie in that fraction of its physical surface. When
the concept *tɛŋ* is coupled with a tɛndaana it has a double meaning. It
denotes both a stretch of territory and a place of contact with the mystical
Earth. It may be used to designate a single Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) and
its precincts, a total area of anything from about 20 square yards to an
acre or two; and it can be applied to the whole of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*, which
includes a number of *tɔŋgbana*.

Tɛndaanas' *tɛs* vary greatly in extent. As I have no exact measurements, 471
I can only indicate roughly the range of differences. Small *tɛs* are the 793
rule in the older and more densely settled part of the country. The area
of a clan settlement on Tɛnzugu, for instance, perhaps a square mile altogether,
may be divided amongst three or four tɛndaanas. On the other
hand, at the peripheries tɛndaanas have ritual jurisdiction over large
tracts of land, many square miles in extent. This is largely due to the
absence of permanent settlement in these parts until recently, and the
still relatively scanty population living there.

Tallensi do not think of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* in terms of its size but in 471
terms of its position relatively to the *tɛs* of neighbouring tɛndaanas. 793
Tɛndaanas themselves claim that their *tɛs* have definite boundaries, but 779
when asked to show them they become very uneasy and quote the
maxim 'The boundaries of a *tɛŋ* must not be pointed out (*Tɛŋən tentɔris pu pa'ana*)'.
When my bona fides was, at length, accepted by the Tallensi I
was able to persuade several tɛndaanas to have the boundaries of their *tɛs*
shown to me. My guides were always ill at ease, and apparently felt that
what they were doing verged on sacrilege. Chiefs and elders of clans that
do not have tɛndaanas usually declare that it is impossible for tɛndaanas
to have boundaries (cf. p. 164); for are not neighbouring tɛndaanas
always 'kin' (*mabiis*)—by clanship or by ritual ties? Do they not often
sacrifice together at one another's Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) or go by stealth,
at night, to sacrifice at a neighbouring tɛndaana's Earth shrines? Tɛndaanas
do not deny this. In every group of contiguous maximal lineages,
each presided over by a tɛndaana (as for instance Gbeog, Gbizug, and
Zubiuŋ), the senior tɛndaana (in this instance the Gbizug tɛndaana)
always claims to be the real 'owner' of the aggregate of *tɛs* held by the
group of tɛndaanas. He talks of this aggregate of *tɛs* as if it were one *tɛŋ*
apportioned amongst his junior 'brothers' and himself for the greater
convenience of performing the priestly duties of the tɛndaanaship. They
divide their common spiritual jurisdiction rather than a distinct stretch
of territory; and in principle this rule embraces the whole of Taleland.
For the powers of the Earth are indivisible, the Earth is a unity. When the [782]
Gbizug tɛndaana sacrifices to his supreme *tɔŋgban*—or, as he often
phrases it, his *tɛŋ*—Kpoŋkparəg, he invokes all the important *tɔŋgbana* of
Taleland, up to the limit of the field of politico-ritual relations in which
Gbizug participates, from Duusi in the north-east to Biuŋ in the south.

●793 Like the tɛndaanas all the *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, and even beyond Tale-
779 land, are described as 'kin' (*mabiis*) to one another. In principle, *tɛŋ*, the Earth, cannot be divided up; it is the tɛndaanaship which is distributed.

471 This explains the diversity and lack of precision one finds in the
793 boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs*. Like settlement boundaries they are determined by social rather than physical facts, though here and there conspicuous topographical features may be fixed upon as landmarks from which to take a bearing. Doo *tɛŋ*, the area immediately surrounding and including the supreme *tɔŋgban* Doo of Tɛnzugu, is an example of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* that can easily be distinguished. Homesteads on Doo *tɛŋ*
[341] may not have roofs of thatch (*mopin*) but must have flat roofs (*bɛa*, vb.) of mud. This is a quasi-totemic taboo of this *tɛŋ* (cf. p. 142). Standing on the wall of granite boulders that overlooks this part of Tɛnzugu one can see where the mud roofs end and the thatched roofs begin. I was very reluctantly told about, and later shown, what purported to be the fixed physical boundaries of Doo *tɛŋ* by men of Kpata'ar, the clan which has ritual jurisdiction over it. A ditch, a line of large boulders, a prominent tree, a path, such were the landmarks by which they went. But the striking thing about this boundary was that, almost all the way, it followed the social boundaries between Kpata'ar and Gundaat on the one side, and between Bunkiuk and Samiit on the other. In the closely settled parts of the country, wherever *tɛndaanditib* clans are in occupation of the areas under their ritual jurisdiction, there is a noticeable tendency for the alleged physical boundaries of *tɛs* to coincide with social boundaries between clans or maximal lineages.

621 Settlements like Tongo, where people believed to be of immigrant
471 descent occupy land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans, are
793 instructive. Tongo, like many other Tale settlements, stretches over the ritual territories of several tɛndaanas (cf. p. 169). The alleged boundaries between the *tɛs* of the Gbizug, Soog, and Zubiuŋ tɛndaanas run through Tongo. As the people of Tongo put it, these clans at various times allotted portions of their own land for Tongo people to build and farm on. Physical landmarks are pointed out as indicating these boundaries. But if they are examined it will be seen that they tend to coincide with the social boundaries between sections (*yizugət*) or between segments of sections (*dugət*). (See map at end of book.) Wherever part of a tɛndaana's boundary runs between homesteads of men of the same segment (*dug*), the homesteads (rarely more than one or two) on the wrong side of the boundary have not been sited there for more than a generation. The continual slow shifting about of homestead sites in a settlement through the course of generations is paralleled by a shifting of the boundaries between farm plots; for they pass through alternate phases of being divided up, wholly or in part, among the segments of a nuclear lineage that has reached a phase of fission, and of being reconstituted, wholly or in part, at a later stage of lineage integration. These internal adjustments often result in a spilling over of one section of a clan into what was till then regarded as the area of a neighbouring unit of like sort.

178 We lack historical documents; but we can infer from the contemporary dynamics of Tale social life that the boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛs* shift

gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social 178
boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tendaanas' 621
boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tendaana's 793
clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpieŋ, barring 471
two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of
Dekpieŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men
who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg
is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors
was a Soog *ahəŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his
ahəb (maternal uncle), the Soog tendaana. Similarly, Lebhtiis yidem of
Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most
of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tendaanas' *tɛs* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. 622
The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tendaana of Biuŋ. The 793
people of Dkoog live on land under their own tendaana, a member of 779
their own clan. They have both a chief and a tendaana.[1] In these cases
the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one
living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as
at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been
carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they
undertook the tendaanaship themselves.

A tendaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and 793
responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It 471
is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he
constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in
order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed
property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, [782]
to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build
a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage,
the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore [342]
the tendaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)'
ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed
portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be
dug, the tendaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out [764]
ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the
dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead
is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual
meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life [775]
and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is
fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual
and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

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[1] But, characteristically, the tendaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tendaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tendaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tendaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

793 one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too,
471 the tɛndaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If
a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent
[311] of the tɛndaana in whose *tɛŋ* the land lies. Unless the tɛndaana comes to
[175] cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but
disaster on the farmer. The tɛndaana's reward is, again, only a portion
of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly,
there are the circumstances in which a tɛndaana must be called upon to
[682 make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the
782] case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement
sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tɛndaana of the *tɛŋ*
where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tɛndaanaship,
[673 through their own tɛndaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges
and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋ-*
782] *bana*—for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the
tɛndaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually
cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for
example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's
crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tɛndaana, after it
has been physically put out.

793 For all these ritual services, which tɛndaanas regard both as duties
471 that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their
status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of
[511] the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the
value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying
that all tɛndaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat.
Cynics say that the office of tɛndaana is coveted for the meat it brings in.
We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tɛndaana here it
would be more appropriate to speak of a tɛndaana and his lineage or clan.
For a tɛndaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen
to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties
to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared
with them and with his close agnates.

793 Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tɛndaanas. Thus it is
784 a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the im-
291 portant *tɔŋbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tɛn-
daanas. My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tɛndaanas even
after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As
tɛndaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they
may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or
wild ungulates. A tɛndaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn
occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

793 There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *tɛŋ* taboos obligatory
784 on everybody who lives on that *tɛŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other
779 *tɛs*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre
(*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the
taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos,
as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected
with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and considerable 793
moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the
formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations
of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say
gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed
ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.'
The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the statement
implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But
this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's
curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term
'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply
a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties,
privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community
with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to
the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The
material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico-ritual 823
institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine
or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to
be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major
emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the
earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of 784
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is
sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be
sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and
is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction
between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common
and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a
Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of
their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis
on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship.
And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as
the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises
an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

425 of his own sub-clan. This is the central field of integrated social relations
471 pivoting on this chiefship. But his ritual status also affects the prosperity
× 618 and welfare of Zubiuŋ and Zoo directly and that of the Hill Talis in-
directly. In fact, in the last resort, it affects all the clans of Taleland that
622 have a place in the cycle of the Great Festivals. 'The community (*tɛŋ*)
784 cannot be subdivided (*bɔk*)', the Chief of Tongo once told me in explana-
● 793 tion of the ritual significance of his office. Famine, pestilence, war cannot
be dammed and confined to one place. And so if the Chief of Tongo dies
the whole country suffers, though his own clan will perhaps suffer most
and the remoter zones of his politico-ritual influence least.

182 The bonds between man and land, community and locality that are so fundamental in the structure of Tale society cannot be understood apart from this context of ritual values and moral norms. Difficult as they are to grasp and pin down in exact language, they are as ever present to the native's mind as his sentiment of attachment to his native soil. They cause men who have been away from home for many years to give up splendid farms in Mampurugu or good jobs in Kumasi to return to take up their patrimonial land.

778 The graves of Sɛɣahəg and Bɔɣada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bɔɣada's grave
is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested
in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly
Siiyɛŋ, Kɔbər, and Bɔɣayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie
buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority
of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or
diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through
the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus
Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted
as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival
and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading
of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakɔradɛm,
Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that
remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by
Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bɔɣada's grave is proof to the
natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants
to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans
the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a
764 locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the
segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The
correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of
the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo
clans living in the vicinity of Yamələg and Sie—the group of clans which
the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos
—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate
forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small
cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔɣar* takes the place of
the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of
the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most
important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is
often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession
also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the
maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the
actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought
into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office
of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds
known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

578 618x husband. In both types of case conflicts reflect the importance of wives as a common interest of the lineage and clan.

But the chief source of intra-clan discord is rival claims to priority in the exercise of rights of a politico-ritual nature, which are generally vested in lineages and are associated with the dominant values of the society. The conflict may be precipitated by a clash of personalities. But very often the underlying pressure comes from a change in the internal constitution of the lineage that has been taking place gradually with the passage of the generations and is not yet recognized. In the course of two or three generations an inner lineage may ramify so widely that its members claim the status of a medial lineage when it comes to succeeding to the headship of a more inclusive lineage, and this claim may be resisted by the other branches of the more inclusive lineage. It is such conflicts that eventually get resolved by the setting up of a new equilibrium in which the change is recognized by the redistribution of reciprocal rights and obligations. Intra-clan discord is often due to the universal human propensity to resist infringements of one's recognized social rights or one's self-regard; or to the complementary tendency for individuals to assert themselves by aggressive action. But it is probably more often a phase in the structural development of a lineage or clan, a symptom of a hitherto unrecognized internal change in its structure. This does not make the conflict less acute or disturbing while it lasts; but it does mean that there are always social forces at work that counteract the conflict even while it is going on and will prevent it from disrupting the corporate group entirely.

578 618x 177 These processes are so characteristic of the social system of the Tallensi that they could be illustrated from the contemporary history of any clan or maximal lineage. Tallensi say that intra-clan conflicts have increased since the coming of the white man. They maintain that the suppression of warfare and of self-help, and the new freedom of movement, have greatly diminished lineage and clan solidarity. People no longer need the help of their kinsmen as much as they used to. But careful inquiry shows that intra-clan discord was as common forty or fifty years ago as to-day and sometimes more violent. Many of the most deep-seated and intractable antagonisms within and between lineages or clans to-day go back to conflicts that began fifty or sixty years ago.

793 578 A typical instance is the dispute between the Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana which began with the immediate predecessors of the present tɛndaanas. The dispute concerns the degree of autonomy to which the Gbeog tɛndaana is entitled in his ritual jurisdiction over the *tɛŋ* of Gbeog (see p. 87). He claims full autonomy. The Gbizug tɛndaana as 'elder brother' (*bier*) in ritual status of the Gbeog tɛndaana, and head of the senior maximal lineage of the clan, citing ancient custom, claims to have an over-right over the Gbeog tɛndaana. He says that the Gbeog tɛndaana is simply his deputy and should therefore render to him the perquisites that a tɛndaana receives for the performance of such ritual services as marking out graves. The men of Gbizug are unreservedly on the side of their lineage head. The men of Gbeog are torn between their loyalty to their maximal lineage and the greater solidarity

● 793 of the clan. They regularly attend sacrifices and ceremonies at Gbizug as 578 their forefathers did, and continue to perform the duties and accept the privileges of close *sunzɔp* of Gbizug. But they are uneasy, the more so as the Gbizug tɛndaana never loses an opportunity of haranguing them, at ceremonies, about the disgraceful conduct of their tɛndaana. For a short while the inescapable demands of ritual collaboration brought the two tɛndaanas together again, when the Gbeog tɛndaana had to perform the principal rites at the installation of the new Gbizug tɛndaana. But soon afterwards their dispute revived again. It is, as elders of related clans declared, an insoluble dispute. Both tɛndaanas are right, they say. The Gbizug tɛndaana is going by 'what used to be (*dɛn daa a siem*)', the Gbeog tɛndaana by 'what is now (*dɛn a siem zinala*)'. It is a problem of adjusting the equilibrium of the clan to changes in the segmentary relationship of its component lineages. One day, it is said, there will be a Gbizug tɛndaana who will accept the present position. Then the two tɛndaanas will become reconciled and the quarrel will cease.

578 As this story shows, intra-clan conflicts dislocate the routine of co-x618 operation and reciprocity and lead to anomalies in customary modes of conduct. Yinyɛla's refusal to co-operate in the affairs of Tɔŋ-Puhug led to many embarrassing situations; as when two men who were not members of Yinyɛla's segment came to assist his (classificatory) grandson with his house-building, in accordance with normal custom, and were publicly rebuked for this by the head of their family. Dislocation of the normal scheme of ritual and ceremonial co-operation in the ancestor cult and in public ceremonies such as funerals is particularly disturbing. It serves to focus attention on the interpretation of actions that damage lineage solida-[208] rity as offences against the ancestors. Public opinion, the point of view of the majority, which always favours the greater solidarity as the source of stability and normality in corporate relations, becomes critical. In due time one of the opponents of the dispute dies; and according to custom the mystical cause of his death is sought by divination. The technique and social setting of the divining session make it a reflection of public sentiment. The diviner brings the simmering conflict in the lineage into the open and relates the death to it. His verdict, coming ostensibly from the ancestors, concludes with commands from them to put the situation right by means [769 of sacrifices and a ritual reconciliation. This is the commonest way in 182] which the ancestor cult emerges as a sanction of reintegration in the lineage or clan. But it presupposes the existence of ritual ties and common ritual obligations among lineage and clan kin; and it comes as the culmination of a social reaction to the anomalies arising from intra-clan conflicts.

578 We have space only for one illustrative case history. Many years ago [780] Gbalɔg of Tɔŋ-Puhug insulted the then Chief of Tongo. The chief pronounced a curse on him; and rather than apologize Gbalɔg went to settle in one of the peripheral settlements taking his younger sons with him. His oldest son, Naŋgbeog, dissociating himself from his father, stayed behind at Tongo. Years passed. There was a new Chief of Tongo. Yet Gbalɔg remained unrepentant. In 1937 he died, a very old man, boasting that after all he had got the better of the chiefs of Tongo. But [787] the diviner revealed that the ancestors had caused him to die because of

577 no charity (*ɔn ka sugɔru*) would perhaps have done otherwise, but
593 Kuŋaaŋba's way was the right way.

It is on the death of a parent that filial piety is most sharply evoked, just as it is the death of a child that brings out most poignantly a parent's love and devotion. We have referred to this previously. In this matter filial sentiment and ritual sanctions converge.

The supreme act of filial piety sons owe to their parents is the performance
764 of their mortuary and funeral ceremonies. If a man or woman
571 dies leaving no sons then this duty falls upon his or her nearest proxy
sons. The initiative and chief responsibility rest with the oldest living
593 son. The burial rites must be carried out immediately; but when and
765 how the funeral ceremony is to be made is for the sons to decide. No
one can put pressure on them to hurry on the funeral if they wish to postpone
it for several years. It is customary to delay the funeral of an elder,
an old woman, or a person holding a ritual office until the third year
after his or her death, ostensibly so as to enable the sons to collect the
large stock of grain and the livestock required for the ceremony. Meanwhile,
in the case of a man the sons exercise the social role of the
● [793] deceased. If he was a tendaana they will perform the duties and exercise
the rights of his office, and this may be a motive for delaying his funeral
beyond the customary period. The old men who are eligible for the
office can object and grumble; they cannot compel a dead man's son to
make his father's funeral. The issue lies between the dead man and his
sons. If they delay unduly they will incur their father's anger. For
until his funeral has been celebrated he dwells between the world of the
living and the world of the spirits. As the Tallensi say, his one leg is
in the earth (among the spirits) and his other on the surface of the earth
(among the living) (*u gbɛr dɩkɔ bɛ teŋni ka gbɛr dɛna bɛ doorni*). He cannot
'join his forefathers (*paag u banam*)' until he has been 'taken back into
the house (*kpeeh dugni*)' as a spirit. And the situation is the same with
a dead mother, though she is of less jural importance.

The duty of burying a parent and celebrating his or her funeral is
769 the first step in the most exacting of all filial duties, the cult of the dead
577 parents. Native thought and behaviour show that the Tallensi feel it as
an inescapable compulsion of conscience, and not as a mere act of propriety.
764 Tallensi are quite matter-of-fact about the corpse (*kum*) of a
dead parent. They describe it as the 'slough (*fɔrəŋ*)' of the soul (*sii*).
What they are concerned about is the spirit (*kpiïm*) of the dead parent.
A man cannot rest secure until he has assimilated his father's or mother's
spirit into the framework of his life, domesticated it, so to speak, as the
expression *kpeeh dugni* shows; and this is the function of the funeral
ceremony. For that reason Tallensi want to have the graves of their
parents near their dwellings. True, a man's ancestor spirits accompany
him wherever he goes, but they are most tangibly present in his house,
where he sacrifices to them. It often happens that a man has to be

and are taunted for months afterwards by their fellows. But these are 593
not the reasons why children so rarely commit this impropriety. It is
because of the intimacy, the closeness to each other in daily life, of 864
brother and sister. Children do not need to be told that it is wrong to
copulate with a sibling of the same joint family; they know it themselves.
And, in fact, children from the age of 6 or 7 and upwards always say,
with an expression of disgust, that sexual play with one's own siblings
is wrong. Moreover, though they are not taught it as an avoidance, they
are well aware of the conventional attitudes on the subject from listening
to adult conversation.[1]

Incidentally, there are no taboos on conversation on sex matters 521
among the Tallensi. Men, women, and children are all outspoken about 831
sexual matters, though young women are apt to use euphemisms and
to talk more circumspectly than men. Some men also say that it is 593
embarrassing to talk about sexual subjects in front of young wives or
female relatives-in-law. But no native hesitates to discuss these subjects
in the presence of his sister.

These ties of mutual affection and devotion between *soog* siblings 593
last throughout life and are extended to their children too. One sees
this most dramatically in the grief people show, and especially women, 761
over the death of a *soog* sibling. Tallensi say that very often the loss
of a full brother is a greater shock to a woman than the death of her
husband. A husband is replaceable, a full brother not, they add. When
Kpe'emi died his wife fainted and afterwards sat about disconsolately,
weeping at intervals for days. His *soog* sister also fainted, but, the men
said, it had been much more difficult to revive her than her sister-in-law
and she became ill with grief. Seeing the two young women together
one could not doubt that it was the sister who felt the blow worst.

Another vivid demonstration of the strength of this tie between 593
full siblings occurred when Tendaan Teroog performed the succession 793
ceremony on succeeding to the custody of his maximal lineage *bɔɣar*.
A large crowd had gathered, chiefly men—clansmen, and neighbours and
matrilateral kinsmen of Teroog's maximal lineage. Amongst them my

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[1] The psychological undercurrents of these conventional attitudes do not concern us here, but it may be remarked that there is probably a strong and partly overt sexual component in the affective relations of brother and sister. I was struck by this when I once had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of Yamzooya (aged about 11) and his *soog* sister (aged about 8) who were playing together in a corner of the room where I was chatting to their father. The children, who were quite naked, stood embracing each other, the boy with his legs round his sister's, and they twisted and wriggled about as if they were engaged in a mixture of an orgiastic dance and a wrestling-match. They were both in a state of high excitement, panting and giggling and muttering to each other, with obvious sexual pleasure. They seemed to be oblivious of their surroundings. This game went on for about twenty minutes after which they separated and lolled back as if exhausted. These two children were most attached to each other.

593 eye was caught by an old woman who seemed to be particularly privileged, as she walked about giving orders, and greeting the guests. I was
● 793 not surprised to learn that she was Teroog's only surviving full sister (*tasoog*). He presented her to me with great pride, holding her hand affectionately. She sat beside him throughout the rites, listening intently to his long invocation to their ancestors, prompting him once or twice, and helping him as if she and he were jointly succeeding to the ownership of the *bɔɣar*. One could see that the notion that any woman might well have been in her brother's place in the social system if it were not for an accident of birth has a very concrete meaning to the Tallensi.

593 Full (*soog*) siblings, as we have already related, constantly visit one another, bringing and taking away gifts. When a woman has a baby, her full sister hastens to her with a bundle of firewood or a dish of soup ingredients. If a person falls ill, his full siblings come running to see him. When Kuur fell and broke his ankle there was consternation among his immediate relatives. Two of his half-brothers rushed off at once to consult a diviner about the accident—no laughing matter, as they well realized, for a man in the fifties—while his full sister stayed behind to nurse him. His wife hovered about helplessly, only approaching him when his sister called for some more hot water. The sister came to him every day for the next week or so and was his most devoted nurse.

593 We have described before, also, how full brothers generally hold together, economically and residentially, longer than half-brothers and
622 often throughout their lives. This is due, basically, to their close identification with and attachment to each other. One constantly comes across examples of this. Samane was the Chief of Tongo's right-hand man and probably the only person who had the chief's absolute trust. Why, I once asked Samane, did the chief not put the same trust in his own son Saa? 'Don't you see', said Samane, 'the chief and I are born of one father and one mother. We are as one. He will have no secrets from me or I from him. A man's brother is more to him than his son. Saa wouldn't care[1] if the chief died and he succeeded. I want my brother to live, for his being chief is just as if I were chief myself.' Again, one of the very few cases I knew of men working abroad sending home regular remittances of money was Sɔɣar's policeman brother. When I praised him, Sɔɣar said, as if in explanation, 'He is my *soog*'.

593 This comes out very clearly, too, in the property relations of full
422 brothers. Men of the same joint family borrow one another's clothes freely, though the individual ownership of the clothes is never in doubt and the owner's permission is always necessary. But full brothers behave almost as if their clothes were their common property. Hence when a man dies his full brother often takes some of his clothes, instead of leaving all to his sons. There is also a specific ritual sanction in this relationship, the common subjection of full brothers to their mother's

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[1] He was the chief's first-born son. Cf. p. 225 above.

if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great 622
lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tɛndaana. In 183
addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahəŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office.

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an 425
ahəŋ or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a par-
ticular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in 622
former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yɛa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tɛnzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahəŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman.

Certain powers normally held by tɛndaanas only are sometimes vested 793 ●
in lineages that do not have tɛndaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of
Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo 604
Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyɛbəg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahəŋ* of the tɛndaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tɛndaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors.

The Ahəŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahəŋ* forms a link between his father's 604
lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to
every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahəŋ* is always chosen 584
as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

604 764 571 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

613 571 602 782 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔɣar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔɣar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

●793 602 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tɛndaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tɛndaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔɣar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tɛndaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 769 778 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

241 scattered compounds, or whether closer building between compounds, on land previously available for farming, enforced the system because of the increasing distance to bush land. The result is the same, however, from our point of view. Farmers living on the edge of the densely populated areas frequently have bush farms, which are farmed by shifting methods of cultivation, as well as compound farms which are farmed continuously.

Land Tenure.

793● 622 425 The customs associated with the acquisition and retention of land are intimately bound up with the religion of the people. Land is recognized as having a "spirit" which requires placating to deliver of its goodness. This is done through the "tindana" (Nankani), who is the intermediary between the "spirit of the land" and the people. It is frequently heard that "Chiefs command people, not land", and a Chief approaches the land through the "tindana". Every area has a tindana; if an area develops to an unmanageable size, a new "tindana" may be appointed by the tindana who exercised authority there before it developed. The area administered by a Chief, however, is fixed; so that Chiefs' and tindanas' boundaries do not necessarily coincide.

To acquire a new area of land, *i.e.*, land not known to be claimed by anyone, a prospective occupant will generally first approach the Chief of the district and state his requirements. If the Chief is satisfied as to the probity of the applicant he will refer him to the tindana, who has the final say in the matter. An application is seldom, if ever, refused. A suitable offering is made through the tindana to propitiate the spirit of the land, and the tindana may indicate a site for the new compound, and make suggestions with regard to the crops to be planted. The question of rent does not arise since there are no "money crops" and agricultural land has no value in the economic sense; there are a number of seasonal dues, however, given voluntarily to the spirit of the land, through the tindana. [427]

428 423 In demarcating areas, such natural objects as stone outcrops, water-courses, and trees, are observed. This explains the reason for the irregular outline of most farms. Once land has been conveyed through the tindana, it is held in perpetuity by the family receiving it. Presumably, when a compound is first built in a bush area, sufficient land exists immediately around it to satisfy the requirements of the family. When the family grows up and the elder sons marry, they may choose to build compounds of their own. A new compound is made as close to the parent compound as possible, either upon a new land acquired from the tindana, or upon land

184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

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Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

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Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in 784 agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again 184 may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed [425] over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows, dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines [778] (tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized 186 political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but 764 vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are 793● barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction. 622 The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

●793 622 [789] the prosperity of the land. Though it is housed in his compound, neither the Chief nor any of his clansmen may set eyes on it; only the Gbizug Tendaana and his lineage may. The Chief speaks of it with an awe which is almost terror. The balance is adjusted by the Chief's rainmaking powers. Only Namoos may own rain medicine, which was brought to Taleland by their ancestor. When drought is prolonged, all the Tendaanas, led by the Gbizug Tendaana, formally call upon and implore the Chief to see to it that rain falls. So great is his rainmaking power that rain will fall at once if he merely declares, in the name of his ancestors, that their wishes will be satisfied. Such, in fact, proved to be the case in 1934.

Again, this ritual polarity is paralleled in social and personal attitudes. The Chief and the Gbizug Tendaana, in private conversation, comment with a mixture of pride, scorn, and fear each upon his opposite number.

796 Among the most striking mechanisms of this equilibrium are the ritual festivals. The various settlements are always classified in terms of them, and the natives never tire of dilating enthusiastically upon them.

Ritual and dance are the two components of every festival; the former usually esoteric, the latter public though exclusive. During the rainy season, which lasts roughly from April to September, ritual and group activities are almost completely ousted by agriculture. In July-August the early millet is harvested, but the major crops, the guinea corn and late millet, still stand.[2] [805] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, and the last month of the rains is called the "Moon of Waters" (Kuom ŋmarig). An ethnologist cannot, alas, be in two places at the same time. I was living among the Namoos in September, 1934, and shall therefore describe the events of this and the next month from their point of view.

Weeks in advance the approaching festivals are the dominant theme of conversation for man, woman, and child. The ceremonial cycle is inaugurated by the Baari Tendaana, who ritually "throws away the water," i.e. abolishes the rains on the first day of the new month. This is announced by a burst of hallooing, which commences at Baari and sweeps across the country, the signal that the festivals have come round again.

That night the people of Baari begin their celebrations. At Tongo, on the next day, the youths and maidens are putting finishing touches to their festive costumes. On the fourth day of the moon a deputation of elders waits on the Chief, to remind him of his traditional obligation to summon a diviner on the following day.

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[2] The calendrical incidence of the ritual festivals and their relation to the annual productive cycle are more fully set out in M. and S. L. Fortes, Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi (Africa, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1936).

As to the following, their meanings are known but the context of circumstances can only be guessed. 551

N-Nye-Fara, I have seen sorrow; ɔN-Ti-Wari, who gives something for nothing? Saɣa-Ti-Ba, submit to them; ɔN-Die-Sɔ, he who accepts (humbly) is better; Zi-Kihib, men who know no taboos; Ku-ŋaaŋ-Ba, will not overwhelm them; Ba-Eŋ-Ka-Mi, let them do it and find out.

As I have already noted, the same names are used for both males and females, occasionally with a suffix to indicate the sex of the person. But there is one respect in which women's names differ from men's. When they marry they are known in their husband's home only by a nominal form of the name of their natal settlement or clan, never by their given name. The given name is used only when they are at home among their own family and clan. This is one of the ways in which the strict separation of a woman's role in life as wife and mother, on the one hand, and as daughter and sister, on the other, is symbolised. I have described these ideas more fully in *The Dynamics of Clanship*, CH. IX, and in *The Web of Kinship*, CH. IV, and therefore say no more about them here.

One more topic must be briefly discussed. The naming customs I have described all belong to what Tallensi call "conferring names" — *pit wu'uri*. It is clear that names so given do serve very precisely to distinguish individuals. What about the other naming process, the uttering or announcing of names — *pot wu'uri*? 553

This takes place whenever a man is elected to a politico-ritual office as a chief (*na'ab*) among Namoo clans or as a tendaana or *bɔyar* officiant among the Talis[11]). The installation ceremonies include a short period of seclusion in a room where the clan and Earth shrines are housed. Then, following the common pattern of such *rites de passage*, the new chief or priest announces the names by which he wishes to be henceforth known. He has put aside his former social personality and the new one he assumes must be symbolised by an appropriate name. From his chamber of seclusion he announces his new names through the elder whose traditional duty it is to proclaim them. As a rule, three names are proclaimed, and as the last is given out the people assembled for the ceremonies shout in acclamation. The new chief or priest then comes out himself. Hereafter it is a taboo for his given name to be mentioned and he goes down to posterity by his new name, or rather by that one of them for which he shows most preference. I might add that it is impressive to see what a profound change a man seems to undergo when he is elected to a politico-ritual office. It is the supreme honour to which a man and all his kin can aspire, the greatest renown that can come to a name. Yet it is also a heavy burden. The new name stands for constant watchfulness and responsibility. Among the Tallensi, these duties are largely expressed in religious concepts and observances, though they are related to vital necessities such as the regularity of rainfall, peace and the absence of disease. To ensure this, chiefs and tendaanas have to keep ritual taboos, make sacrifices to the ancestors, arbitrate honestly in disputes, in short, watch over the welfare of the land and the people. The new names stand for this. 553 622 793

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[11]) See *The Dynamics of Clanship*, passim, for details.

553 551 The Tallensi call these accession names *na'am wu'uri*, chiefship name, or *tɛndaan wu'uri*, tɛndaana name, or more generally *saam-wu'uri*, a term colloquially used for what we call nick-names, but meaning the name by which a person is publicly acclaimed. Accession names are, of course, "thought up" by the office-holder elect and so resemble the ordinary open names, which indeed they parallel in function. But they are interesting because they reflect not only the circumstances of the individual's achieving the honour of office, but his ideas about himself, his political role, and his historical position. In the legendary history of Tale clans the names of leaders often sum up the significance of the clan in the total social organisation. Thus an early Gbizug Tɛndaana is said to have been named GERIBAZAA, to mix all together, a name that well represents the present social and ritual functions of this tɛndaana as the intermediary between the Namoos and the Talis[12]).

553 551 A few examples only are needed to illustrate what I have said. I take, first, some well known chiefs' accession names.

622 One of the famous chiefs of Tongo was NAMBƆƔADA, still crawling. This name was taken by a young chief who announced that he was, as yet, but an infant in chiefship, "still a crawler", but would soon grow up as a chief and do great things. A more recent chief called himself DEŊ-TIES, short for *Dɛŋ-ties-kunkɔŋ-na'am*, first to think of what to do will not lack a chiefship. He had acted quickly to seek election, before anybody else had thought of it, and implied that this was a promise of how he would act in the future. KU-NDU-ZOOR, cannot climb a hill, was the proud name taken by a chief whom I have previously mentioned. The reference was to the fact that water cannot run up-hill. Had he not excelled his competitors he would have been like water, unable to rise superior to the rest. Alas, his short chiefship was saddened by famine and his successor took to himself the name of NA-LEB-SEUG, it will turn to the rainy season. However long and hard a dry season may seem, he declared, it must give way to the rains at length. Coming after a famine — a long dry season, as it were — he proclaimed himself as the bringer of rain and so of food. The list can be extended but I will give only one more example. The Chief of Tongo, when I was there in 1935—37, had the given name of KPA'AMA, and this is how he is named, in breach of native ideas of propriety, in some Administrative records of the time[13]). His chiefly name was NA-NAAM-BIUŊ, will change into a lake. This is short for *Bul-sɔŋ-na-naam-biuŋ*, a good spring (rising in a small pool) will change into a lake. He meant that he was as yet only a small pool, an inexperienced and young chief, but given time to grow he would change into a lake, a great and beneficent chief —— beneficent, because water, being scarce in Taleland, is thought of as a very valuable thing.

551 553 793 The accession names of tɛndaanas and other holders of priestly offices follow the same pattern. One tɛndaana I saw installed proclaimed his new name as DOƔ-BAZAA, begetter of all. He wished everybody to know that he regarded himself in his new role as the father of all his people, watching over their welfare as a father watches over that of his children.

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[12]) See my previously cited books for details of this division.

[13]) Cf. also RATTRAY, op. cit. vol. II, ch. 33.

Another tɛndaana called himself NA-DEŊ-BUGƏLUG, will drop manure. He was 557
comparing himself to a herd of cattle whose coming would bring fertility to the 553
impoverished soil of his clan and so give them more food and well-being. A well 793
known tɛndaana of former days was called MAAL-BAZAA, he who puts everything
right by the proper religious acts.

Naming customs of the kind I have described are found among all the tribes 553
and peoples of Africa. They show with particular clarity, just because the data seem so simple, how fundamental a really good knowledge of a people's language is for a proper understanding of their culture. How deep can the understanding of the culture be if the ethnographer who is studying it does not immediately understand the meaning of the names of the people he is in daily contact with? It can be seen, also, that a name is a document epitomising personal experiences, historical happenings, attitudes to life, and cultural ideas and values.

x618 Duunkpaləg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the 778 frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a [551] single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages x618 testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a 764 death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

x618 At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously 778 guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is ●794 most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

778 *Tɔŋgbana* do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of 782 the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

x618 We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these 182 two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say 771 that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpaləg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

x618 ing the installation or the funeral of a tɛndaana, both receive sacrifices.
182 But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a
771 symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent
lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

•774 It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both
769 of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve
182 to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages.
613 Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar* (*dugni bɔyar*), the
shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpalɔg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tɛndaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tɛndaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tɛndaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

x618 The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of
182 its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate
activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

[773] Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one
178 will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar
182 tɛndaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders
578 to Duunkpalɔg, where the most important rite of the series was to be
performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdɛm did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tɛndaana-elect to Duunkpalɔg. The Yapaasdɛm, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves. 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

bɔγar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the 618x
External *Bɔγar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it 778
symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that 769
particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔγar*, that is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpaləg in ritual homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔγar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage, as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia, and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔγar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure— 618x
on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the 769
clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship 618x
never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpaləg or at any of the Zubiuŋ 782
Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ 769
maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in the ceremonies of inducting a new tɛndaana into his office, or in the funeral rites of a deceased tɛndaana—members of the linked lineages of that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari.* The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component 618x
units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the 778
principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. 782
Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and
obligations of close *sunzɔp*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔγar*, [794] ●
and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔγar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔγar* and a focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yaγazuor,
who are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties [608]
of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

facts with which he was faced in the field. Maximal lineages are the 618x
smallest corporate units that emerge in political action. The social and 182
political relations between maximal lineages are regulated by ties of clanship. These ties constitute fields of social relations in which larger corporate units, which we have called clans, emerge. These are the largest corporate units that act in political matters. At the level of social and political relations between clans—that is to say, where the fields of social relations, constituted by clanship ties, overlap one another—clanship ties no longer suffice as the organizing mechanism. Here we meet with the interaction of more complex units and regions of Tale social structure than the maximal lineage. The social interests in response to which these interactions occur are more complex and more diffuse than those that are served by clanship. Consequently, an organizing mechanism of a different order comes into play, the mechanism of ritual.

Ritual is the appropriate mechanism of social organization at this level because the interests involved are not of a practical or utilitarian kind but of a moral kind—in fact, the most general moral interests of the natives, the maintenance of their existing institutions and norms of social behaviour. We must emphasize that we are dealing here with levels of organization correlated with different grades of social interests, and not with hard-and-fast forms of social grouping. We are dealing with different expressions of the same underlying forces. The same categories of ritual values and forms of association serve as a differentiating and integrating mechanism both at the level of social relations between maximal lineages and at the level of interclan relations. And clanship forms the bridge between the two levels as well as the organizing factor at the lower level. Both factors operate at both levels but with inverse dominance. That this is so can be seen from the natives' habit of conceptually assimilating all their social ties to the pattern of genealogical relationship and evaluating them all by the touchstone of kinship. The basic pattern of organization is that which we have described in our analysis of the clan system.

The ritual configurations and connexions at the higher level are obviously modelled on clanship configurations and connexions. The reason for this is simply that the ritual relations we are here concerned with exist between corporate units, maximal lineages or clans, defined by the canon of agnatic descent and by their place in the whole system of clanship.

We can say then that a Talis clan has a field of ritual relations overlapping but not congruent with its field of clanship ties. The fields of ritual relations of adjacent clans are articulated with one another so as to form a connected system linking all Talis to one another. It is through this system that the major cleavage between the Talis and their congeners on the one hand, and the Namoos on the other, is transcended; and the cycle of the Great Festivals is the medium through which this ritual system is regularly, obligatorily, and conspicuously brought into action. Let us see how the system extends to the Hill Talis.

The Scheme of Ritual Collaboration among the Hill Talis 774 ●

The ritual relations of clans and lineages among the Hill Talis, though 618x
based on the same principles as those of Ba'ari, have a much more complex 182

x618 elaboration. Among them the cult of the External *Bɔyar*,[1] homologous
182 though it is in function and doctrine with its Zubiuŋ counterpart, includes
●794 peculiar esoteric elements lacking in the latter. This cult is the pivot of their Harvest Festival, *Bɔyaraam*, which takes its name from the External *Bɔyar*, of which it is essentially a sacrament. The sacrament includes an initiation cult, by which the males are brought into the *Bɔyar* sodality and bound to its obligations and observances.

Each *Bɔyar* has a number of ritual functionaries who hold office by virtue of being the heads of the maximal lineages in which these ritual offices are vested. As a rule a particular maximal lineage has the exclusive ownership of one office, and the ritual offices connected with a particular *Bɔyar* are distributed among all or most of the corporate units (maximal lineages) that owe allegiance to that *Bɔyar*. They usually include maximal lineages of a single clan, maximal lineages of other clans linked to them by ties of clanship, and territorially adjacent maximal lineages not related to them by clanship.

The cult of the Earth (*Tɛŋ*), again, is localized at a number of sacred spots, the most exalted of which are the foci of ritual association and collaboration between groups of clans and maximal lineages *not* connected by clanship. As in the *Bɔyar* cult, the ritual roles are distributed among the heads of the corporate units owing allegiance to a particular Earth
[778] shrine. Each maximal lineage has, in addition, its private lineage *bɔyar*, the symbolic seat of its own ancestors, as well as the special shrine that symbolizes and is bound up with the ritual office vested in that lineage.

Though each ritual office of a particular *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is vested in one maximal lineage, the other member-units of the congregation have an interest in that office. There are certain occasions when all the ritual functionaries must be present in order that the rites of worship may be performed. This is the case during the Great Festivals, and the concrete manifestation of this principle is the common sacrament partaken of in the rites at the *Bɔyar* and the *Tɛŋ*.

793 Again, there is an order of seniority among the ritual functionaries of a
794 *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ*. The most senior is the chief custodian of that shrine.
182 Members of his lineage have a private relationship with the shrine, in
x618 addition to their public duties in connexion with it. They may, through him, bring private sacrifices to it in misfortune, or out of gratitude. But this functionary is also the direct intermediary between the congregation and the shrine. The priestly duties of its cult fall mainly on him. He is obliged to preside at all rites in which the whole congregation takes part, and the lineages of the other functionaries are dependent on him for the proper performance of the rites. This does not give him political power over them, for he is only *primus inter pares*, but it enhances the prestige of his office and makes it the pivot of the whole constellation. Thus all the functionaries and their respective lineages have a particular interest in the senior, pivotal office.

Furthermore, the installation of a ritual functionary in his office is

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[1] For the sake of clarity whenever reference is made to an external *Bɔyar*, a capital *B* will be used; when any other kind of *bɔyar* is referred to a lower-case *b* will be used.

always the privilege of another functionary of the same congregation, or 793
of a neighbouring congregation. The effect of this is to maintain particu- 794
larly close bonds of interdependence and mutual amity between pairs of 182
clans or maximal lineages and thus to strengthen the force of ritual 618x
collaboration as a sanction of mutual loyalty and cohesion. If the *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is coterminous with a clan (as at Zubiuŋ), the relationship tends to be mutual or circular—A installs B and B installs A, or A installs B and B installs C who in turn installs A. The arrangement is then plausibly subsumed under the relations of clanship. In a congregation of unrelated maximal lineages the relationship may be mutual between some pairs of lineages and circular between other sets of lineages, which will often include lineages belonging to mutually installing pairs. Thus, A installs B and B installs A; but A also installs C, C installs D, and D installs E.

It often happens, also, that the ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage belonging to one *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is installed by a ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage of a neighbouring congregation. The two lineages may be connected by clanship ties and the arrangement explained by invoking these. Or they may be adjacent to each other; or they may belong to the same *Bɔyar* congregation but different *Tɛŋ* congregations (or vice versa), so that it is only with respect to one context that the parties can be said to belong to different ritual groupings.

In every case it comes to this: that maximal lineages bound to each other 794
by one set of ritual ties, with respect to one focus of ritual cohesion, are 182
divided from each other, and bound to maximal lineages of other con- 618x
gregations constituted with reference to the same category of ritual relations, by another set of ritual ties. Thus the division between adjacent *Bɔyar* congregations (or *Tɛŋ* congregations), mutually exclusive by reference to the particular *Bɔyar* or *Tɛŋ* at which each worships, is bridged by the ritual interdependence, in terms of another ritual category, of some of their respective member lineages. And the system extends chainwise throughout all the clans of the Hill Talis.

We have here a more elaborate reproduction of the pattern of ritual relations that was observed to hold between Ba'ari and its neighbours. Indeed, the schematic formulation attempted above gives only an inkling of the labyrinthine intricacies of these ritual relations among the Hill Talis. In this pattern the cult of the External *Bɔyar* and the cult of the Earth have a very significant relationship, as we have previously indicated. It can be seen more explicitly than at Zubiuŋ or Ba'ari that they form polar principles in the total system of public ritual values and relations.

This appears quite clearly in the doctrines and ritual practices of the 182
Hill Talis. *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* are always coupled together in ritual activities. 794
Together they exercise a mystical rule over the life and health, the fertility 796
and prosperity of man. The differences in the way in which they are concerned with these fundamentals of human existence are like a complementary division of labour. This is well shown in the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. Thus *Gɔlib*, the Sowing Festival just before the first rains, is centred on the Earth cult. It dramatizes man's dependence on the fertility of the soil and on the rain for his livelihood, and the dependence

182 of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme,
794 through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the
796 beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the
chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔyaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔyar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔyar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔyar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔyar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔyar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔyar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔya* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

782 So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔyar*, the officiant in his
794 invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔya*, enumerating them by name, to
[552] 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔyar*
has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔya* of all the Talis clans are

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[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔyar* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔya* 782 of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of 794 ● the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual 619 community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of 794 every Taləŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔyar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔyar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔyar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) 794 are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social 171 groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔyar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔyar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔyar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkəra*)'.

Bɔyar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage 182 associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious 794 conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of 613 loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔyar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

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[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

182 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that
●794 its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counter-
613 balanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field. Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔyar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔyar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔyar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

x618 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties
794 that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to
184 Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a
769 single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a
[793] Gbizug tɛndaana are performed. The Gbizug tɛndaana and the Gbeog tɛndaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tɛndaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tɛndaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdɛm, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔyar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdɛm have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations
794 of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole
x618 component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form
[778] a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine
769

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[778] of the people of Gbizug is the grave of their primordial ancestor, Tɛndaan
794 Gɛnət. This grave, situated on the reputed house-site of Tɛndaan Gɛnət,
x618 is in the sole custody of Gbizug, and is associated with the tɛndaanaship, therefore with the Earth cult. But whenever a new Gbizug tɛndaana is
769 installed, representatives of Gbeog, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra must be present at the rites performed at Gɛnət's grave. This is a matter of right and duty, subsumed under the rights and duties of their clanship ties and validated by the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas. But one segment of Wakii must also be represented at these rites, not in virtue of clanship ties but of the kinship (*mabiirət*) in the figurative sense that is held to prevail between all tɛndaana clans. It is effective in this case because of the proximity and the ritual collaboration in the Great Festivals of Wakii and Gbizug.

x618 It is significant that the people of Soog, despite their clanship ties with Gbizug, do not come into the field of its ritual relations. On the surface this appears to be correlated with their spatial separation from Gbizug. It is only by their attendance at the exoteric ceremonies that accompany the installation or funeral of a Gbizug tɛndaana, and by the rights to special portions of meat and beer that they can exercise on these occasions, that the clanship ties between Soog and Gbizug impinge on the latter's field of ritual relations.

x618 On the other hand, the clanship ties of Soog with Gbeog have a ritual
794 embodiment in the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. All the segments of Gbeog
769 practise this cult; but some of them owe allegiance to the *Bɔɣar* of which the people of Soog are the senior custodians, and the others have a separate *Bɔɣar* of their own. Soog and Gbeog do not have a common Earth shrine. In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog forms one united community and Soog another.

182 In this intricate tissue of ritual relations we see again, as at Ba'ari, the
x618 interweaving of clanship ties, neighbourhood ties, and ties of ritual interdependence *per se*, forming syntheses of politico-ritual relations at a higher level than those that are possible in terms of any one of these categories. This interweaving can be seen at any of the ceremonies in which a particular field of ritual relations is actualized. It is particularly clear among the Tɛnzugu clans, where we can see, more plainly than at Gbizug or Ba'ari, how it is produced by the counterbalancing of ritual ties against clanship and local cleavages, and of ritual ties of one sort against those of another sort.

x618 Soog has a specific ritual tie with one major segment of Sakpee, the
769 head of which installs the senior ritual functionary of the Soog External *Bɔɣar*. This segment of Sakpee, Sakpee I, has its own *Bɔɣar*. But it unites with the other major segment, Sakpee II, in the worship of a common Earth shrine, the custody of which is vested in Sakpee II; and Sakpee II owes allegiance to the External *Bɔɣar* Bona'ab, the senior custodian of which is the head of Kpata'ar. Soog, though linked by clanship ties with Kpata'ar, has no direct ritual connexions with it. Their fields of ritual relations overlap at Sakpee, which forms the bridge between them at this level.

Kpata'ar provides a typical instance of the structure of the ritual fields

182 have not only bonds of local contiguity, but an additional tie of ritual
x618 interdependence in that their heads install each other in their respective
769 ritual offices. Similarly, Sakpee and Samiit have an added ritual tie in that their heads each have a special role in the ceremonial installation of the other. Finally, the head of Samiit exercises a special politico-ritual function in relation to the head of Kpata'ar. It is his task, in times of great social emergency, formally to adjure the head of Kpata'ar to initiate the ritual procedures necessary to avert disaster.

Thus, underneath the general collaboration of the communicants of Bona'ab with one another in the *Bɔyar* cult, and interweaving with it, spread these particular, divergent ties between different pairs of maximal lineages. In many situations these subordinate ties hold fast where the superordinate ties of ritual collaboration between all the communicants are not strong enough to override the cleavages between them. It is a
[578] striking thing, for instance, that whereas Nakyeet yiri and Sakpee have tended to side with the Gɔlibdaana of Bunkiuk in the struggle for power that has been going on between him and the head of Kpata'ar during the last few years, Gundaat has stood staunchly by the latter. The general bond of ritual collaboration in the *Bɔyar* cult has not ensured the support of the whole Bona'ab congregation for Kpata'arna'ab yidem in this struggle, and even the specific ties of clanship between them and Nakyeet yidem have not been proof against the lure of the Gɔlibdaana's fleshpots.

It is characteristic of Tale society that the structure of a community, whether it be a permanent community or a temporary community such as emerges in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, is directly mirrored in every situation and every institution in which this structure becomes manifest. To take a very simple example: when the congregation of Bona'ab assembles there for a sacrifice, the representatives of the different maximal lineages sit in a fixed order. Kpata'arna'ab yidem sit in the place of greatest honour, since they are the senior custodians, and the other lineages are distributed as shown in the diagram opposite. It will be seen that this diagram gives a picture also of the structural relations between the different lineages, and incidentally of their local relations to one another. It shows in a nutshell how local, structural, and politico-ritual relations are interlocked with one another and converge to create and maintain interclan co-operation and solidarity. The diagram shows also how the ritual roles in any of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship at the *Bɔyar* are distributed amongst the different maximal lineages.

182 Kpata'arna'ab yidem are the senior custodians also of the supreme
x618 Earth shrine of Tenzugu, Doo; but in the cult of Doo they have a com-
•794 pletely different set of ritual collaborators from those associated with
796 them in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. They have a different field of ritual relations counterpoised to that of which the External *Bɔyar* is the focus. The units associated with Kpata'arna'ab yidem in the cult of Doo are Degal (linked by clanship ties to them, but having its own External *Bɔyar*), Gɔlibdaan yidem of Bunkiuk (who have no clanship ties with Kpata'arna'ab yidem, and are the senior custodians of a different External

Bɔyar from theirs), and Tamboog (who also have no clanship ties with 182.
Kpata'ar, and have an independent External *Bɔyar*). These four units 769
must be represented at all rites performed at Doo during the Great 794 ●
618x

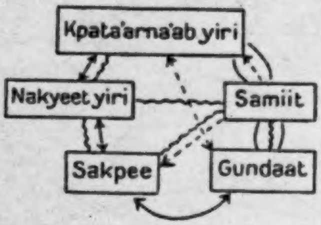

Diagram showing the seating arrangements at ceremonies in the sacred grove of the External Bɔyar BONA'AB, as reflecting the structural relations underlying ritual collaboration in the Bɔyar cult.

⟷ = Clanship ties
〰 = Ties of local contiguity
---> = Specific ties of politico-ritual interdependence
⌒ = Other social ties.

Festivals. Each one has also a private Earth shrine, with which the other three groups have no connexion, but their common allegiance to Doo binds them to one another in mutual ritual dependence. This should mean also, and by all accounts formerly did mean, a bond of mutual amity and cohesion; for there is nothing, according to Tale belief, which the Earth abhors so greatly as strife between those who worship it together at the same shrine.

To-day the cult of Doo furnishes an outstanding instance of the rela- 182
tivity of such ritual sanctions to the structural relations of the corporate 618x
units amongst which they are effective. During the Great Festivals, the 794
four maximal lineages meet as of old to perform the prescribed rites at
Doo. For this limited period and this objective they are obliged to set
aside their antagonisms and collaborate amicably. At other times, how- [578]
ever, they are divided by the struggle for power that has been going on between the Gɔlibdaana and the Kpata'arna'ab. Both Degal (in spite of their clanship ties with Kpata'ar) and the majority of the Tamboog people have been seduced by the wealth and power of the Gɔlibdaana.

The pull of loyalty to Kpata'ar sustained by the common cult of Doo 578
has not, however, remained altogether ineffective. In order to make their religious relations with Kpata'ar consistent with their newly arisen political hostility to them, the supporters of the Gɔlibdaana have tried to oust Kpata'arna'ab yidem from their traditional status in relation to Doo. They would thus, if they succeeded, have put Kpata'ar in the position of a faction opposed to the rightful principals in the cult of Doo.

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

774 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794
taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784
to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔγar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔγar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔγar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔγa*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184
Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794
the same External *Bɔγar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔγar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769
notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794
sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881
we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688]
wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔγar* or the coercion of an adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔγar* cult to 776
which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788
Bɔγar can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛγər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛγəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔγar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔγar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔγar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618x
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔɣar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618x
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔɣar*.

The External *Bɔɣar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔɣar*, parallel to 618x
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and 778
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794 ●
each External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Taləŋ (*u pana baŋ Taləŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Taləŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔɣar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔɣar*, and often invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔɣar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

769 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most
778 solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order bequeathed
881 to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of
794 the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm*
881 *kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when
627 he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial)
881 fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with
771 the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line. 182 771

One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' with the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔyar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔyar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔyar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔyar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔyar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔyar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔyar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔyar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔyar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest. 182

It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔyar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔyar* is the pivot. 794 611

In sum, then, the totem stands for the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage, the External *Bɔyar* for the interdependence of lineages in a single religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔyar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have 182 184

178 precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance
438 of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely
578 excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth
[556] through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external
sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

● 794 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly
648 the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gɔrisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to
788 the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come in-
648 dividually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon
of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tɛndaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, 794
in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, 788
hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial 648
Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice.
Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal 431
lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of
small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities
can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in
the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly
prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to 574
the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its 794
sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual 437
visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*,
to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and
to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally
placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services
are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals
sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors.
Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the
client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset 439
of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves 484
point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relation- 486
ships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from
the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* 778
cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi 177
were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the 439
Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a 788
mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers
of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from
these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow north-
wards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor,
farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and
Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of
the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes 788
to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, 782
for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory 425
in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims.
Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase
the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

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[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

food, beer, tobacco, kola nuts, and household and farming equipment, 556
must be hoarded. One result has been that the Gɔlibdaana's ambitions 439
have been enormously inflated. He has been striving to turn his wealth 471
into prestige. He would fain be a great chief, and has for years been
scheming and intriguing to this end. As is common in African societies [177
to which European contact has opened up new economic opportunities 171]
that are wholly or partially divorced from their own social structure and economic system, the Gɔlibdaana's response to the opportunity offered by the pilgrim traffic has been a mixture of cupidity, calculation, and unbridled self-interest.

The point of interest here is the effect of the Gɔlibdaana's monopoly 621
on the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans. All the other clans of the 578
Hills view it with open envy, in particular Kpata'ar, the clan immediately 794
contiguous with the Gɔlibdaana's clan, Bunkiuk. The people of Kpata'ar claim political superiority to Bunkiuk, on the strength of their being (as they assert) *primus inter pares* in the scheme of ritual collaboration among the Hill clans. They therefore demand the lion's share of the pilgrim traffic with the south, though they are now wholly excluded from it. The other clans of the Hills excluded from this traffic make similar but smaller demands. It is, in effect, a demand for a distribution of the profits of this new economic application of the *Bɔyar* cult on the same lines as the distribution of the traditional client villages. In the traditional arrangement the economic exploitation of the cult follows the accepted principles of equality and equilibrium in the social system. Each of the dozen or so *Bɔya* of the Hill Talis had its group of client communities exclusively reserved for it and there were no great variations between the profits of one *Bɔyar* and another.

An immediate result has been that the Gɔlibdaana no longer exercises 622
undisputed headmanship, as the executive agent of the Administration, 578
over all the Tɛnzugu clans. In 1933 he was in control of all the Tɛnzugu
clans in all matters falling under the jurisdiction of the Administration. 177
He called out the young men for road building or rest-house repairs; 621
exacted a tribute from all independent householders living on top of the Hills or entitled to live there; and judged all cases brought against Tɛnzugu people or sent on cases from Tɛnzugu to other headmen or chiefs. Since 1936 the Kpata'ar faction has refused to submit to his control in these matters. Meanwhile the Administration has ruled that neither the Gɔlibdaana nor the Kpata'arna'ab shall be recognized as headman of the Tɛnzugu clans until the people have settled among themselves which of them is rightfully entitled to the post. So there are now two headmen.

To-day a silent feud, taking the form of intrigue and conspiracies to undermine one another's reputation with the Administration, rages among the Hill Talis. On one side stands the Gɔlibdaana and his faction, the nucleus of which is the majority of his own maximal lineage; on the other the factions hostile to him, chief of which is the maximal lineage of the Kpata'arna'ab. The struggle has become so acute, on several occasions, that bloodshed was only prevented by the fear of stern intervention by the District Commissioner.

The feud follows the lines of cleavage between clans and maximal

613 A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also
ipso facto an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differen-
769 tiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as
well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult
778 of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine
(*bɔγar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the
most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a
composite clan has its lineage *bɔγar*, distinguishing it from the other
segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages
belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se*
by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors.
The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔγar* known as an
External *Bɔγar*. An External *Bɔγar* is usually a sacred grove, or a
shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual
of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the
Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young
men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

771 Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor
of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult
● 794 of the External *Bɔγar* is another important factor of cohesion and
182 equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of
769 the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It repre-
sents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those
of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of
religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of
maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not
associated in the cult of the External *Bɔγar*, collaborate in the rites of
[778] the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally
in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of
a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social
relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social
relations in terms of the External *Bɔγar* cult, and yet a third field of
corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a
whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of
social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity.
Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by
similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system
as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of
Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all,
moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition
of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and
the tendaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

613 In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

XXXVI

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Ceremonies in Connexion with Sowing and Harvest. The Talense Calendar

527 THERE appear to be at least three great festivals which are held by the Talense in connexion with the crops and harvest. These are:

(*a*) *Gologo*, held in the month of February by the whole of the Talense.

b) *Bugram Waa* (lit. the *Bugram* dance) held in October by the following towns: Sia, Winduri, Gorogo, Wakyi, Teŋ'zugu, and Gbeo.

(*c*) *Da koom*, *Da meŋ* or simply *Waa*, (the dance) held by Bade and Tongo, in the months of August and September.

[171] Among the Nankanse we have seen that the October festival is called *Tingana* (the Groves), or simply *Waa* (the Dance), a festival which is held by Winkoŋo, Orogo, Kologo, and Na, in rotation.

(*a*) *The Gologo Ceremony*: It was my intention to have attended this ceremony in person; hence I omitted to obtain a full description of it. I am informed, however, that during the time when the festival is being held 'every one is permitted to abuse his neighbour and even to laugh at any physical deformity, and that no one is allowed to quarrel'. [171] All this seems most reminiscent of the *Apo* ceremony, which has been described in another volume.[1] Circumstances, however, prevented me ever carrying out my intention, and a full description of this ceremony must be left to some other historian to record. I hope an account of it will be obtained before the extraordinarily rapid changes in conditions in these parts have interfered with or altered its characteristic observances.

527 793 796 535 *The Da koom and Da meŋ Ceremonies*: 'When we dance these, all our ancestors sleep. When the time approaches for the ceremonies, the *Ten'dan'* of Bade takes a calabash (*zu-gur*, lit. a head-calabash), puts it in a net, and hangs it outside the entrance to the *zoyo* hut. When the rain falls, it is filled. Before dawn, early in the morning after the appearance of the new moon, the Bat (*Anglice* Bade) *Ten'dan'* pours out

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[1] See *Ashanti*, Chapter XV.

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some of the water from this calabash on the ground, saying: 'Your day 527
is drawing near, and I wish to pour water for you that the corn may
be good. Your moon stands.' A little only of the water is poured out, 793
but the remainder is kept until the next moon, which is the *Daa meŋ* 796 ●
(or 'real' *Daa*). The first water is called *Ko'-beet* (bad water); the 535
water poured out later is called *Ko'soŋ* (good water). Until the *Ten'dan'*
of Bade has performed this ceremony no one may begin to hold the
custom; we dance thirty nights at the grove. Seven days after the bad
water is poured out, beer and a fowl are given to the land with the
words:

'*Misore* and his father wish to come forth; receive, and let the women and children come out to dance and let the men meet them there. Prevent headache and belly-ache and may everything bad on the land (snakes, scorpions) hide away.'

As they dance they sing: *La pug dill* (the corn is blooming).

At the end of thirty days the Bade *Ten'dan'* pours out the rest of the water on the ground, saying: 'This is the good water I am pouring to-day; may the land become good; may women bear children and the corn become good.' He pours out the whole of the water. The *Daa meŋ* has now arrived and the people dance for fifteen nights, singing: *Laa moo zimi* (It [the corn] is red). Every one assembles by the full moon at the grove called *Pusig* (the name of a tree now no longer standing).

The *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo sacrifices at *Misore's* grave.[1] When he reaches 527
the grove, he takes some beer, flour, and a fowl, which the Chief of
Tɔngo has given him, and sacrifices at the spot where the *pusig* tree 793
used to stand, saying to the land: 'The Chief gives me these things for 769
you because the days (of the festival) are ending. We wish to return 796
the drums to the house; allow the women and children to sleep in
peace; allow the men to go hunting.' He then makes the sacrifices.

The drums, called *Tusgunwaa*, are kept by the Chief and are never 534
brought out except at this ceremony or at a death. '*Daa* is a dance on
the land that it may know all is well.'

Formerly the day of sowing was common to all, so all harvests be- 241
came ripe at the same time. Now people plant independently, so that 527
the reaping is done at different times. The *Da koom* may not be
held until all the *nara* is cut, so that the date is not now constant.

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[1] See *History*, Chapter XXXIII.

XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed 177
on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and 796
extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to
attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work. 776
Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it
so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of
the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which
are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of
cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity,
but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which
must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally [778]
the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country
about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the
boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to
the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

'Its power is from God (*Na Yin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan*'; its 784
taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the follow- 776
ing avoidances:

(*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
(*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
(*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
(*d*) *Meŋa* (water turtle).
(*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
(*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
(*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la* [195]
a zia koom (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range 788
which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There 776
seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who 778
come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this
shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

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[1] It is also known as *Ya ni* and *Ya pwiga*.

788 defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a
776 grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl.
778 There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the
punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come
down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme
776 Being, does not, as far ~~as I could~~ discover, possess any shrine beyond
778 a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service
about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not
have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far
from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags.
The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than
ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

● 796 On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the
first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of
188 Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* had not yet appeared. From then onwards,
until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder
[484] and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who
I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi,
Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti
friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on
their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the
Chief of Teŋ'zugu and the *Ten'dan'* arrived. The former was a really
magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely
[777] proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the
Ten'dan' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to
796 attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They
asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets, and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75). We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted. I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

might be retained, and that I would like a blessing on this task. I also said I hoped some day to fly over this spot, and I ended with the promise of a cow if these requests were granted.

I was, about this time, planning a solo flight from England to the Gold Coast. On 12 January, just eight months later, almost at the same hour, I was to look down from a height of 6,000 ft. through the harmattan haze on these same hills, just an hour before reaching Tamale, my journey's end.

To return to the cave. The *Ten'dan'*, after Aboya had finished what I asked him to say, spoke as follows:

'M'ba n bol i, bol i ba, ko o bol Takuru-nab ka ba tana zin Tɔŋ-nab nendan la ba dee Silmiga soma-soma; ko o kyen te tum o tuma sea ko o bort. O yi nye a zaag' on te i naf'. Fo me na mal o, ka dee i nafon. I yi mal o i na dee' i naf. Kye ku o yur' du gar' o tab zaa; kye ka naam, pabe naam. Tulg' de gbwaa o dan seree; ko o kyen len siliga, i to dee' i naf'; layem mora ban kab dol o a o bisi, ka bam n'deyir tir to.'

Translation: 'My father, I call your father that he may call Takuru-nab,[1] that they may come and sit before Tɔŋ-naba's face and receive the white man favourably; permit him to work at the work which he wishes to do. He says that if he sees all, he will give you a cow. Permit his name to mount up more than all his neighbours and let Chieftainship be added to Chieftainship. Do not allow fever to catch him any day; let him go and return (like) a hawk, that you may be able to receive your cow. Keep his children who will follow him, that they may receive and give us.'

At the end of this speech—which is rather amusing from our point of view for the prominence given to the matter of the cow—a long wail came from somewhere in the back of the cave. Every one then clapped their hands with a kind of masonic rhythm for the space of at least a minute.

Other pilgrims now rose one at a time, and the cave echoed to the old familiar Ashanti tongue. Their petitions were then translated into Talene, in which language they were finally recited by the *Ten'dan'*. At the end of each petition the pilgrim was asked his or her name and this was passed on, and at the termination of each request hands were clapped as before. This was all; the statement, the repetition in Talene to the god, a wail, the clapping of hands, silence, a shuffling or a squelch of a sweaty naked body, as the next pilgrim squirmed to his feet to tell of his troubles.

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[1] Possibly *To-kora*, see *Ashanti*, Chapter XIX.

The following are a selection of these petitions; in my notebook; they are jotted down in the vernacular (Ashanti) of which the following are literal translations:

'I was at my town of Mampon, and I heard about grandfather (*nana*, here a term of respect), so I came to lean upon him, that he might give me health, which I once had. I keep a store and I have two motor-cars. From that store I derive no profit whatever. As for my two motor-cars, when I ply them for hire and people enter them, I only incur debts and there is no profit in them. Because of that, and because I have heard of grandfather, I have come to ask him if he will show me the way to make profit. Again, I have four wives and they have either not borne children, or, if they have, the children die. Therefore help me, and permit my wives to bear children, and give my relations health and long life.'

Another: 'As for me, I come from Kwawu (in the Colony). Now the work which we do to-day is farming, but when I do it I get no profit. When ~~I cultivate~~ cocoa, and the trees grow, they die, or when the trees bear pods, they rot. I also have a store, but I get no profit from that; then I heard about *nana* and I came to lean upon him, that he may give me and all my relations life, my nephews and my "brothers" life, and that I may obtain much profit.'

Another: 'I am a clerk, who pays his debts, as my neighbours pay me what they owe me, yet I have not a copper (*capre*). I have four wives, yet none of them has a child; when one bears an infant, it dies. I have heard ~~of~~ *nana* and I have come to take myself and put myself in his hands that he may help me and let me get much money.'

Another: 'I come from a street in Kwawu. I have heard about *nana*. The work which men do these days is farming. I have a plantation, but I get nothing out of it; when the crops ripen, beasts (i.e. insects) eat them, and the cocoa-trees die. Whatever I do, I get in debt; therefore I have come to lean upon you, that you may help me and give me profit.'

A Woman's Prayer: 'I have come from a street in Kwawu, and I have heard of *nana*, and I have brought myself to lean on you, that you may give me life. I was in Kumase and I bore a child and it died, so I give myself to you, in order that if any one has caused this you may kill him, and guard me and let me bear another. If I do, I will repay you.'

Another: 'I have come from Mampon. I have heard about this god. I have a sickness in my belly; it never ceases; it cries out *ko! ko!*

Look to my sickness that it may cease. If any one is doing this to me, 796
catch him for me, or kill him and let me get health and strength.'

Another: 'I was in my town when I heard of this god, that he is 782
strong, so I came to lean on him that he may help me. I am a person who drinks gin always and I am become a drunkard. Help me to stop drinking. Again, whatever work I do, I get in debt. If some one is doing all this to me, let *nana* catch him or kill him for me.'

When I state that these supplicants were educated men and women, 796
some of whom owned large businesses, well-furnished European houses, 177
and not a few of them their own cars, in which they had come hun- 771
dreds of miles to visit this pagan god, the power and influence of the old beliefs may readily be imagined. I need not multiply examples. All the petitions were based on the same formula—the god was *nana*, the supplicants had come to lean upon him (*dan nebo*). They were promised nothing. If their prayers were answered, they would bring back an offering. Nearly every one asked for 'money' or 'profit'.

When the service was ended, we all backed out again into the sun- 796
light and were led, complete silence being enjoined upon us, to the entrance of the second cave. Here the offerings were sacrificed over a mound so smothered in congealed blood and feathers as to hide its surface completely.

The *Ten'dan'* lifted up a round stone and tapped it against this altar. Each person then handed him the offering he or she had brought. Its throat was cut, the blood flowed on the altar, and the sacrifice was cast down. My sheep was sacrificed last of all. The photograph, Fig. 77, shows the old *Ten'dan'* about to cut its throat. All this was carried out in complete silence. We all then returned to where every one had [302]
undressed, and each person was smeared with a line of red clay on the side of each cheek, between the breasts, on each forearm, on the legs and back. This ended the ceremony.

184 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the
764 border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger
of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have
[574] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group
of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound
of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration
[123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as
796 composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region
of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris,
796 Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take
648 the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring
Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

holds an important ritual office connected with the paramount chiefship 184
of Mampurugu. But, as befits their interstitial socio-geographic position 796
between the Mamprusi and the Tallensi, their Harvest Festival belongs 648
to the Tale cycle and is, in fact, the last of one of the series constituting
the cycle.

The differentiation of Taleland into lesser regions follows the same 184
general principle as the differentiation of the Mole-Dagbane-speaking 796
peoples into 'tribes'. A region is a socio-geographic segment of the society
in which the communities that constitute it have a greater degree of
interdependence and cohesion with one another than any of them have
with other neighbouring communities. And this interdependence and
cohesion is a function of the common interests symbolized in the Great
Festivals. The regions overlap in so far as the communities belonging
to one region have other interests in common with and other loyalties
towards communities belonging to a neighbouring region.

This is the façade of Tale society. Behind it lie the bricks and mortar 000
of the social structure. It is at that level of Tale social life that we must
look for the foundations of the principles of social organization whose
superficial action we have met with in this chapter.

always the privilege of another functionary of the same congregation, or 793 of a neighbouring congregation. The effect of this is to maintain particularly 794 close bonds of interdependence and mutual amity between pairs of 182 clans or maximal lineages and thus to strengthen the force of ritual 618x collaboration as a sanction of mutual loyalty and cohesion. If the *Bɔγar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is coterminous with a clan (as at Zubiuŋ), the relationship tends to be mutual or circular—A installs B and B installs A, or A installs B and B installs C who in turn installs A. The arrangement is then plausibly subsumed under the relations of clanship. In a congregation of unrelated maximal lineages the relationship may be mutual between some pairs of lineages and circular between other sets of lineages, which will often include lineages belonging to mutually installing pairs. Thus, A installs B and B installs A; but A also installs C, C installs D, and D installs E.

It often happens, also, that the ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage belonging to one *Bɔγar* or *Tɛŋ* congregation is installed by a ritual functionary representing a maximal lineage of a neighbouring congregation. The two lineages may be connected by clanship ties and the arrangement explained by invoking these. Or they may be adjacent to each other; or they may belong to the same *Bɔγar* congregation but different *Tɛŋ* congregations (or vice versa), so that it is only with respect to one context that the parties can be said to belong to different ritual groupings.

In every case it comes to this: that maximal lineages bound to each other 794 by one set of ritual ties, with respect to one focus of ritual cohesion, are 182 divided from each other, and bound to maximal lineages of other congregations 618x constituted with reference to the same category of ritual relations, by another set of ritual ties. Thus the division between adjacent *Bɔγar* congregations (or *Tɛŋ* congregations), mutually exclusive by reference to the particular *Bɔγar* or *Tɛŋ* at which each worships, is bridged by the ritual interdependence, in terms of another ritual category, of some of their respective member lineages. And the system extends chainwise throughout all the clans of the Hill Talis.

We have here a more elaborate reproduction of the pattern of ritual relations that was observed to hold between Ba'ari and its neighbours. Indeed, the schematic formulation attempted above gives only an inkling of the labyrinthine intricacies of these ritual relations among the Hill Talis. In this pattern the cult of the External *Bɔγar* and the cult of the Earth have a very significant relationship, as we have previously indicated. It can be seen more explicitly than at Zubiuŋ or Ba'ari that they form polar principles in the total system of public ritual values and relations.

This appears quite clearly in the doctrines and ritual practices of the 182 Hill Talis. *Bɔγar* and *Tɛŋ* are always coupled together in ritual activities. 794 Together they exercise a mystical rule over the life and health, the fertility 796 ● and prosperity of man. The differences in the way in which they are concerned with these fundamentals of human existence are like a complementary division of labour. This is well shown in the annual cycle of the Great Festivals. Thus *Gɔlib*, the Sowing Festival just before the first rains, is centred on the Earth cult. It dramatizes man's dependence on the fertility of the soil and on the rain for his livelihood, and the dependence

182 of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme,
794 through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the
beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the
●796 chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take
part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔyaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔyar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔyar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔyar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔyar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔyar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔyar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔyar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔya* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

782 So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔyar*, the officiant in his
794 invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔya*, enumerating them by name, to
[552] 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔyar*
has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔya* of all the Talis clans are

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[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔyar* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

of any of the Hill Talis clans. Each of the two maximal lineages that 618x
constitute Kpata'ar, Kpata'arna'ab yiri and Nakyeet yiri, has its own 769
private lineage *bɔyar*. Though bound by all the reciprocal duties and
privileges that make them the closest clan *sunzɔp* of each other, the
genealogical cleavage between them is somewhat more strongly emphasized
than it is between the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ, for
example. The head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is the head of the clan, and
eo ipso the senior ritual functionary and principal custodian of the Bona'ab
Bɔyar. The head of Nakyeet yiri has a complementary role in relation to
him in political, ritual, and jural affairs that concern the whole clan.

The politico-ritual office held by the head of Kpata'arna'ab yiri is symbolized in a shrine that is ancillary to the External *Bɔyar*. It is in the sole custody of Kpata'arna'ab yiri. But when sacrifice is offered at it on prescribed occasions Nakyeet yiri must also be represented; and in addition Dakuor yiri, the component maximal lineage of Bunkiuk with which Kpata'arna'ab yiri has ties of clanship, must be represented and share in the sacrament. Thus, both Nakyeet yiri and Dakuor yiri, though they themselves have no ties of clanship, take part in a common sacrifice with Kpata'arna'ab yiri because of their clanship ties with the latter. In this case the central region of the field of clanship of Kpata'arna'ab yiri becomes actualized in a sacrament that symbolizes the exclusive rights to a particular politico-ritual office held by that maximal lineage.

But what about the worship of the External *Bɔyar*, Bona'ab? As its senior custodians, the men of Kpata'arna'ab yiri can sacrifice there alone or accompanied by Nakyeet yiri, if they desire the intercession of the *Bɔyar* in matters that concern them only. When the Great Festivals come round, however, it is obligatory for the whole congregation of the *Bɔyar* to join together in the performance of the ceremonies. The other communicants, beside the two segments of Kpata'ar, are Gundaat, Samiit and two of its linked lineages, together counting as a single unit, and Sakpee II.

The cult of the *Bɔyar* Bona'ab is the central force uniting this group 182
of maximal lineages. It is, we must emphasize, not a permanent bond of 618x
union that operates at all times and under all conditions, but a synthesis 769
that emerges chiefly in the context of the Great Festivals. During the
festivals their interdependence in the cult of the *Bɔyar* imposes mutual [796]
amity and solidarity on this group of maximal lineages. At other times
this is not always an effective sanction of amity and goodwill. For these
ties of ritual collaboration are not homogeneous. Underneath them run
other ties which reinforce them in the context of the *Bɔyar* cult but
might act against them outside of this context. There are first the ties
of clanship linking Kpata'arna'ab yiri with Nakyeet yiri, Nakyeet yiri with
Sakpee, Sakpee with Gundaat, in a chain, as it were. Then there are the [608]
ties of clanship-by-courtesy which link all these lineages with one
another. Samiit and Sakpee have bonds of local contiguity because they
'sit together on the same land' under the ritual jurisdiction of the Sakpee
tendaana. Gundaat and Samiit are *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy, bound by a
covenant of mutual amity which they trace back to the alleged kinship
ties of their mythological founding ancestors. Gundaat and Kpata'ar

182 have not only bonds of local contiguity, but an additional tie of ritual
x618 interdependence in that their heads install each other in their respective
769 ritual offices. Similarly, Sakpee and Samiit have an added ritual tie in that
their heads each have a special role in the ceremonial installation of the other. Finally, the head of Samiit exercises a special politico-ritual function in relation to the head of Kpata'ar. It is his task, in times of great social emergency, formally to adjure the head of Kpata'ar to initiate the ritual procedures necessary to avert disaster.

Thus, underneath the general collaboration of the communicants of Bona'ab with one another in the *Bɔyar* cult, and interweaving with it, spread these particular, divergent ties between different pairs of maximal lineages. In many situations these subordinate ties hold fast where the superordinate ties of ritual collaboration between all the communicants
are not strong enough to override the cleavages between them. It is a
[578] striking thing, for instance, that whereas Nakyeet yiri and Sakpee have
tended to side with the Gɔlibdaana of Bunkiuk in the struggle for power that has been going on between him and the head of Kpata'ar during the last few years, Gundaat has stood staunchly by the latter. The general bond of ritual collaboration in the *Bɔyar* cult has not ensured the support of the whole Bona'ab congregation for Kpata'arna'ab yidem in this struggle, and even the specific ties of clanship between them and Nakyeet yidem have not been proof against the lure of the Gɔlibdaana's fleshpots.

It is characteristic of Tale society that the structure of a community, whether it be a permanent community or a temporary community such as emerges in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, is directly mirrored in every situation and every institution in which this structure becomes manifest. To take a very simple example: when the congregation of Bona'ab assembles there for a sacrifice, the representatives of the different maximal lineages sit in a fixed order. Kpata'arna'ab yidem sit in the place of greatest honour, since they are the senior custodians, and the other lineages are distributed as shown in the diagram opposite. It will be seen that this diagram gives a picture also of the structural relations between the different lineages, and incidentally of their local relations to one another. It shows in a nutshell how local, structural, and politico-ritual relations are interlocked with one another and converge to create and maintain interclan co-operation and solidarity. The diagram shows also how the ritual roles in any of the rites and ceremonies connected with the worship at the *Bɔyar* are distributed amongst the different maximal lineages.

182 Kpata'arna'ab yidem are the senior custodians also of the supreme
x618 Earth shrine of Tɛnzugu, Doo; but in the cult of Doo they have a com-
794 pletely different set of ritual collaborators from those associated with
them in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. They have a different field of
•796 ritual relations counterpoised to that of which the External *Bɔyar* is the
focus. The units associated with Kpata'arna'ab yidem in the cult of Doo are Degal (linked by clanship ties to them, but having its own External *Bɔyar*), Gɔlibdaan yidem of Bunkiuk (who have no clanship ties with Kpata'arna'ab yidem, and are the senior custodians of a different External

578 On the other hand, there are dissidents in the Gɔlibdaana's camp who rationalize their opposition to him and find a rallying motive for it in the traditional loyalty which they owe to Kpata'ar in virtue of their reciprocal ties of ritual collaboration.

182 For Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm, Degal, Bunkiuk, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm, and Tamboog, their common allegiance to Doo counteracts their divergent loyalties to their respective *Bɔɣar* congregations. Doo, however, does more than merely bind these four units to one another. It is the focus of integration of the four *Bɔɣar* communities they represent; and it is the point of confluence of the distinctive fields of clanship and of local ties of these four units. The ritual of the Gɔlib Festival when closely analysed shows that Doo is the palladium of all the Talis, the centre about which the equilibrium of all their corporate relations with one another swings.

Thus, to be specific, Tamboog is regarded as representing Wakii, and therefore, in virtue of the latter's ties with Gbizug, Zubiũŋ, and Ba'ari, these clans as well. Tamboog also represents Wɔɣar and the other members of its *Bɔɣar* congregation. Kpata'ar represents the other units constituting its *Bɔɣar* congregation, and through them Soog and Gbeog. Degal represents the Talis on the east slope of the hills and the adjacent plain. Bunkiuk represents its *Bɔɣar* congregation, which includes segments of Zandoya, Yinduuri, Sii, and Gorogo. And intersecting these groupings run the numerous ties of clanship, joking partnership, clanship-by-courtesy, privileged coercion, and local contiguity, that link up particular members of different groups.

We have considered only the two major ritual institutions through the medium of which the clans of the Talis are articulated into interdependent sets, and these again serially interlocked in a single system. There are also a number of other religious institutions ancillary to the cults of the *Bɔɣar* and the *Tɛŋ* in which more localized forms of ritual collaboration unite maximal lineages and clans, not otherwise ritually related, on certain occasions. It would be tedious to deal with them at length. It is enough to say that their effect is to interweave more closely the numerous threads which form the amazing web of politico-ritual relations among the Talis. They make the system complete to its last detail.

182 The all-embracing range of this web of politico-ritual relations
796 comes out most plainly in the Great Festivals. The cycle requires the ritual co-operation not only of all the Talis but of the Namoos as well. The distribution of ritual roles and responsibilities amongst the clans is such that every corporate unit has a specific role associated with a particular phase of the cycle and with particular ritual emblems. Thus the cycle of the Great Festivals unites all the Tallensi in the performance of one connected series of ritual acts, and this is a bond of profound importance for all their social relations with one another.

The Great Festivals are dramatizations on the plane of ritual symbolism of the most vital and universal values of the Tallensi. They express the idea that the common good of all the Tallensi is founded on the inescapable interdependence of their elaborately differentiated clans and lineages. This common good, the ritual of the Great Festivals might be interpreted

to declare, is not a matter of expediency or calculation but the essence of 122
life for the individual and the community. It is a sacred necessity; and 796
men must be in harmony amongst themselves and with the mystical powers that control their lives if they desire to gain the beneficence of these powers for this end. The ritual, the sacrifices, and the prayers to the ancestors and to the Earth, pleading for the fruitfulness of the land, of women, and of the flocks and herds, for health, prosperity, and peace, and offering thanks at the end of the agricultural year for these boons, eloquently express the Tale conception of the common good. In the rites of the Great Festivals the widest community that has social relevance for any Taləŋ emerges, not as a hard-and-fast political unit, but as a temporary synthesis of all the forces of social integration operative in Tale society. This is an expression of the fact that, though they have no centralized government, the Tallensi do form a single body politic, albeit one without defined territorial boundaries. This unit is built up on the widely ramifying structural ties which knit the independent corporate units together. But its ultimate basis is a body of moral and jural norms and values accepted as binding by all Tallensi, and defended from the disruptive action of conflicting sectional interests by the most solemn ritual sanctions of Tale religion. The function of ritual collaboration between clans and lineages is to maintain the unchallengeable validity of these norms and values; for upon their observance the attainment of the common good ultimately depends.[1]

Native Thought and the Realities of Social Structure

We have digressed to survey the scope and function of ritual collabora- 582
tion among the Talis in order to see what truth there is in the maxim that 'those who sacrifice together do not intermarry'. As a generalization it is obviously inaccurate; but it is valid for particular instances of linkage by clanship ties, though only as an *a posteriori* inference.

Tale elders do not fall into this error of deduction through lack of 829
intelligence or ignorance of their social organization. Among the Tallensi, as among most primitive peoples, what appears to us to be defective logic usually proves to be a product of the social organization as it is apprehended by native thought. When an individual Taləŋ applies the maxim we have criticized to his own particular field of social relations—not to that of his lineage or clan—it is perfectly apposite. For an individual in his personal capacity can only sacrifice together with other individuals if they are his kinsfolk or clansfolk; and this implies automatically that he cannot marry their daughters or sisters.

In the social philosophy of the Tallensi, as will be shown in the next 829
volume of this study, kinship is the model of all social ties between 602
individuals and groups. The ties of clanship, ritual collaboration, or local contiguity are visualized as so many different extensions and transformations of the fundamental patterns of kinship. For the individual this is accurate to a very large extent. There is a kinship element in all his social

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[1] This aspect of Tale political organization and its wider sociological implications are discussed in *African Political Systems*, cit. supra.

562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔɣar*, the married *pɔɣayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior
pɔɣayabələg, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrəg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔɣayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔɣayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔɣar* by a new
● 796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive
succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔɣar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his succes-
[787] sor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost
invariably a *member of the segment whose head has become head of the*
562 lineage, and one *pɔɣayabələg* of the lineage, both selected by divination.
Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔɣar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔɣar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
× 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent
through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

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[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social 241
calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people 731
speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing this (*ti gbansablɔg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy
grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times [261]
of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among
distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to [567]
sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean 796
joy to the Tallensi. 535
They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ kpɛŋya*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the 241
fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social 182
order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence. For the individual the physical well-being of himself and his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go
back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with [782]
which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this: 'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul gɔul, ka dɔyam dɔya, ka guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general 731
physical well-being depend upon? 241
It is quite clear, from the way the natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency between a *pukpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption. One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

182 lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this
721 kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the
British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances
that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

● 796 On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis
535 and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on
292 the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main
a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

x 618 Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which
535 new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of
533 most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other
508 people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan
contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The
old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young
[728] men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of
strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed
during the dances.

721 These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and
535 Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other.
The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

688 Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu
682 on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is
783 a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the
Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

578 Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took
place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

ritual collaboration in a series of complementary relations the proper 578
maintenance of which they believe to be indispensable for their common 182
welfare. This is the basis of the ritual sanctions against instigating war and shedding blood and of the moral repugnance associated with them. A war temporarily upset the equilibrium of Tale society; it could not destroy it.

The social system of the Tallensi, in its widest extent, is held together 182
by its religious superstructure. Its unity is none the less real because it appears only on the highest plane of common religious values known to the natives. As we have noted, the complementary politico-ritual offices of the chiefship, which is typically a Namoo office, and the tendaanaship, typically an office found amongst non-Namoos, constitute the focus of the institutions that maintain this unity; and the annual cycle of the Great Festivals are at once the chief sanction and the supreme expression of it.
The coming of the white man has made very little difference to the way 177
these institutions operate in relation to the fundamental structure of Tale society. They continue to be the crowning mechanism of equilibrium in Tale society, because its segmentary social structure has kept its traditional form and vitality. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that only a strong and universally accepted religious sanction could hold such a society together. In practice the equilibrium is achieved by the distribution of mutually complementary offices among the segments of the society, all of which are essential for the performance of definite ritual duties.

It is a significant index of the type of social system presented by 728
the Tallensi that the widest range of social solidarity found among 796
them is evoked by their Great Festivals. Great stress is laid on the ritually sanctioned truce to all fighting or discord between clans or maximal 582
lineages during the Festivals. That is why marriages are forbidden during 182
the *Gɔlib* Festival. The Festival Cycle begins with the Harvest Festivals. These are celebrated by single clans or groups of linked maximal lineages independently of one another and serve to enhance the sense of clan and lineage solidarity. The climax is the *Gɔlib* Festival, immediately before the rains. This gives ritual sanction and dramatic expression to the idea of the close-knit interdependence of all the Tallensi with one another. Its reiterated themes are the common interests of all the Tallensi—food, peace, and fecundity—which must be achieved if they are to survive, and the supreme common values—the cult of the ancestors and of the Earth—by which the whole of Tale social life is steered. The lesson of *Gɔlib*, to the Tallensi, is that men cannot realize their greatest common interests or pursue their greatest common purposes in mutual enmity. *Gɔlib* is the most powerful counterweight to war and to the tendency of each clan and maximal lineage to set its own corporate interests above the common interest of the whole society. It is noteworthy that the Great Festivals do not presuppose the suspension of the primary loyalties of the segments that make up Tale society. They represent a synthesis, for the time being, of these primary loyalties—a synthesis that is possible only by giving full scope to the feeling of clan and maximal lineage unity and singularity in each group. *Gɔlib* emphasizes the mutual dependence of Namoos and Talis, but it does this by simultaneously enhancing the

● 796 feeling of politico-ritual difference between them. It is the same within
182 each cluster. The elders inaugurate the Festival season with many
sacrifices asking the ancestors and the Earth to prevent fighting from
breaking out between the young men, in spite of the truce, and they
[625] always depute a number of reliable young men to keep a good look-out
during the dances lest unruly spirits stir up trouble. Thus the greater
solidarity is built up on the lesser solidarities; and this principle applies
throughout the social system.

221 The rhythm of Tale social life is contained within an annual cycle. It swings between two poles. For most of the year the sectional interests of lineage and clan dominate the pattern of collective life. But for one month the greater solidarity of the whole society prevails.

182 In relation to the mechanisms of unity and equilibrium Tale warfare
681 appears as a negative sanction that reinforces their effects. It was the obverse of these mechanisms, the polar opposite of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that makes that unity possible. Both in time and at a given time the equilibrium of Tale political life swung (and still swings) between two poles: on the one hand, the extraordinarily consistent and precise differentiation of social segments; on the other, the strong sense of unity created by the religious bonds of the society.

182 War or, more often, the threat of war was the most drastic means of
721 bringing to a head and working off the frictions that inevitably arose from the action of the principle of social differentiation of corporate units; its effect, however, was to bring the opposite principle into action, and thus it served to strengthen the forces of social cohesion in the society at large.

Equilibrium and Solidarity within the Clan and Lineage

578 The pattern of solidarity we have been discussing applies at all levels
182 of Tale social structure. Tensions similar to those we have discerned in
769 the corporate relations between clans underlie corporate relations within clans and maximal lineages. Centrifugal tendencies and centripetal tendencies pull against one another. Conflicts within corporate units tend to follow the lines of lineage and local segmentation. They take the form of opposition between the solidarity of the segment and the wider solidarity of the lineage or clan. And the greater the relative autonomy of the segment, the deeper does the conflict tend to be. Hence conflicts in a composite clan tend to go deeper than conflicts in a genealogically unitary group such as a sub-clan of Mosuor biis. But, as in the social structure at large, the bonds of common interest, of mutual dependence in ritual and secular matters, and of local unity tend to prevail in the long run. However deep a breach may be, the dissidents never repudiate membership of the larger unit, for this would be tantamount to repudiating the ancestors. The ancestor cult is the supreme sanction of lineage and clan solidarity. Thus, at the best, conflicts are resolved by the eventual restoration of the *status quo ante*. At the worst, a new balance is struck between the centrifugal tendencies of lineage segmentation and the centripetal emphasis of the lineage structure as a whole backed by the ancestor cult. It is in this way that the structure of a lineage or clan is

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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PLATE XV

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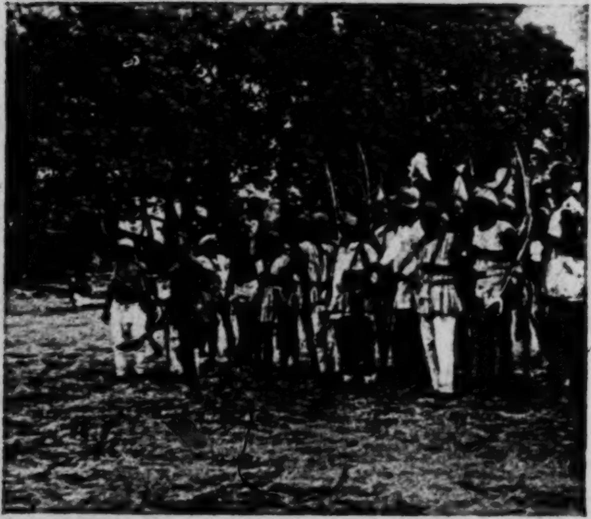

(*a*) A mimic war parade at Ba'ari to inaugurate an elder's funeral.

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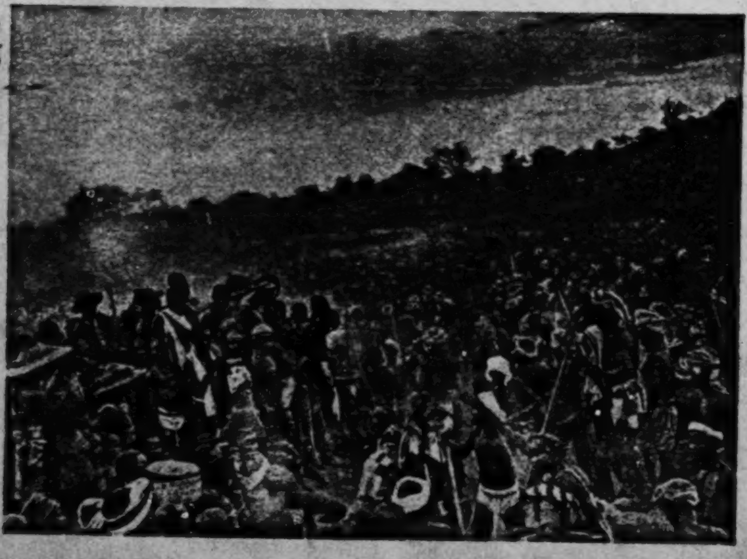

(*b*) The widest politico-ritual community includes all the Tallensi. Part of the vast gathering of people from all over Taleland who come to take part in or watch the concluding ceremonies and dances of the Golib Festival. Note the dust cloud raised by the dancers.

[Facing p. 256]

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakaa*.[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely. 221 262
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

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[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakaa* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but the *bakaa* is their own property. [263 422]

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying and stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s.* or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly. 584

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls, 796

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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
DECEMBER: Agricultural work over.	Height of ritual season: funeral ceremonies, children's dedication ceremonies, many marriages; all involving consumption of live stock and grain, in sacrifices, as cooked food, and beer.[1]
JANUARY: Period of secondary activities such as housebuilding, cut-	Grain rationing again begins. Grain and other foodstuffs, including im-

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796 guinea-fowls, sheep, goats, and dogs are slaughtered in profusion as sacrifices to ancestral and magical shrines. Beer (*daam*) made of malted grain is boiled, though in small quantities; much food is cooked to receive kinsfolk who call upon and greet each other. Recently married men send baskets of sweet potatoes, frafra potatoes, and yams to greet their parents-in-law. The Festivals last only a few days, but the tubers and animals are consumed over a period of some weeks.

[1] In this period, too, are celebrated all those clan and family religious ceremonies
796 in which animal sacrifices and cooked food and beer play a great part. Indeed,
764 these rites are often postponed for several years until a sufficiently good harvest enables enough supplies to be accumulated. We have seen a cow, a donkey, about
431 15 sheep and goats, and a large number of fowls and guinea-fowls slaughtered at the funeral ceremonies for a very venerable elder. We were assured by his sons, who were responsible for these ceremonies, that they had used up the whole of a large supply of guinea-corn in the preparation of ritual beer and food and in providing hospitality for throngs of guests. At such a funeral the deceased's cognatic and affinal kin bring obligatory food-contributions of cooked porridge, sheep, goats, and birds. So great were these contributions at one funeral that two or three basketfuls of porridge had to be thrown away as it turned sour. Funerals are extreme cases of the lavish utilization of food at this time of the year; and only three or four big funerals take place in any settlement in one season. Most funerals require a much smaller expenditure of live stock and grain than that made at an elder's funeral.

273 This is not the place to discuss the types of ritual and ceremonial situations in which 'things' (*bon*)—the Tale concept which covers every type of property—are consumed. In a good season there will be a tremendous spate of them; in a poor season only urgent rites will be performed. A word, however, must be said about beer, the most important ritual substance apart from the animals and flour used in sacrifices. Beer is cooked (*doy-*) by women, malted grain (*kpeya*) of guinea-corn or millet being issued to them by the man at whose request it is made. In the average compound beer is never cooked except for ritual purposes which may be twice or thrice a year. Chiefs and headmen, who always have a surplus of grain often, and elders occasionally keep a supply of beer on hand for guests. Tale women never make beer for sale in the markets; indeed, any man would be horrified at the suggestion that his hard-won grain should be used in this way. The Tallensi are a sober people on the whole.

by dry stretches of sand remains. The river during the rains is simply known as *mɔɣar*, 133
"river"; but each pool has a name extended to the corresponding division of the 226
river banks on both sides.

The end of the dry season and the commencement of the agricultural season receives 796
social affirmation in a great ritual festival the *Gɔlib*, celebrated by one group of Tallensi 226
clans. The series of rites and ceremonies includes a communal and ritual fishing of a
pool *Gɔlimbiuŋ*, dedicated to *Gɔlib* (not in the Volta). The fishing itself is a ritual performance in which the size of the catch counts for very little. But this inaugurates
the season of the utilitarian fishing expeditions, none of which may precede the fishing
of *Gɔlimbiuŋ*. The magical intention of *Gɔlib* is to ensure the fertility of crops, women, [789]
and livestock, success in all food-getting enterprises, security from danger, disease and
death. Fishing is frequently mentioned in the exhortations addressed to the ancestor
spirits during the *Gɔlib* rites. The *Gɔlib*, however, is more in the nature of a general
blessing than of specifically efficacious magic.

Some ten to fourteen days after the close of *Gɔlib* the first of the communal fishing 226
expeditions takes place. Every owner decides for himself the day on which he wishes
to fish his pool. Thus it often happens that two or more fishing expeditions to different
parts of the Volta occur on the same day, During the month I recorded the occurrence
of ten expeditions; but as many more certainly escaped my notice. I accompanied
three of these expeditions.

An impending fishing expedition is announced through the two main channels 226
customary for the publication of such events. A day or two in advance, after darkness 203
falls, the owner causes it to be cried (*tuol*) from the house-tops of his settlement. The
news subsequently spreads throughout the country, from mouth to mouth. But alternatively or in addition, he employs an even more effective means of publicity, the market.
Members of his family and neighbours are sent on market day to inform the friends and
acquaintances they meet. Soon it is known to every person in the market, to which people
throng from every quarter of the Tallensi and neighbouring tribal areas.

A message may also be sent to the *Tɔŋraana*, the chief of highest rank in the Tallensi [622]
country; but this is an act of deference not a political obligation, and is observed principally by the minor chiefs who have a clan relationship with Tongo. So also the chief
of Kurugu, Paramount Chief of the division, is usually apprised.

So much for the economic, seasonal and public context of fishing. On the appointed 226
day ceaseless processions of men, women, adolescent boys and girls, and even children
of 9 and 10 years, converge upon the selected pool. Some of them come from eight or
nine miles away by winding paths through low but rough and sparsely inhabited bush.
The men and boys carry bows and arrows, spears and axes, as well as their fishing nets, [441]
partly as a precaution against meeting with a hyena or leopard or some game, partly out
of habit. The women, balancing their fishing baskets on the head, set out with the men. [482]
But as the procession swells they tend to drop behind to join their fellows, and come along

793 622 [789] the prosperity of the land. Though it is housed in his compound, neither the Chief nor any of his clansmen may set eyes on it; only the Gbizug Tendaana and his lineage may. The Chief speaks of it with an awe which is almost terror. The balance is adjusted by the Chief's rainmaking powers. Only Namoos may own rain medicine, which was brought to Taleland by their ancestor. When drought is prolonged, all the Tendaanas, led by the Gbizug Tendaana, formally call upon and implore the Chief to see to it that rain falls. So great is his rainmaking power that rain will fall at once if he merely declares, in the name of his ancestors, that their wishes will be satisfied. Such, in fact, proved to be the case in 1934.

Again, this ritual polarity is paralleled in social and personal attitudes. The Chief and the Gbizug Tendaana, in private conversation, comment with a mixture of pride, scorn, and fear each upon his opposite number.

●796 Among the most striking mechanisms of this equilibrium are the ritual festivals. The various settlements are always classified in terms of them, and the natives never tire of dilating enthusiastically upon them.

Ritual and dance are the two components of every festival; the former usually esoteric, the latter public though exclusive. During the rainy season, which lasts roughly from April to September, ritual and group activities are almost completely ousted by agriculture. In July-August the early millet is harvested, but the major crops, the guinea corn and late millet, [805] still stand.[2] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, and the last month of the rains is called the "Moon of Waters" (Kuom ŋmarig). An ethnologist cannot, alas, be in two places at the same time. I was living among the Namoos in September, 1934, and shall therefore describe the events of this and the next month from their point of view.

Weeks in advance the approaching festivals are the dominant theme of conversation for man, woman, and child. The ceremonial cycle is inaugurated by the Baari Tendaana, who ritually "throws away the water," i.e. abolishes the rains on the first day of the new month. This is announced by a burst of hallooing, which commences at Baari and sweeps across the country, the signal that the festivals have come round again.

That night the people of Baari begin their celebrations. At Tongo, on the next day, the youths and maidens are putting finishing touches to their festive costumes. On the fourth day of the moon a deputation of elders waits on the Chief, to remind him of his traditional obligation to summon a diviner on the following day.

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[2] The calendrical incidence of the ritual festivals and their relation to the annual productive cycle are more fully set out in M. and S. L. Fortes, Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi (Africa, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1936).

From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have 787 selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival 796 is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large [778 one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. 534] Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into 796 abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest, until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have 535 almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." 796 It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effervescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which [578] threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement, planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo [784] against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. 796 Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festi- 535 val, and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ mɛŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

●796 535 tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingauŋ incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

[533 578] A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like [592] masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

796 [784] And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingauŋ, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Golib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

Daa (the supreme bɔγar of the Baari people) and Mosur will jointly pros- 796
per the land. Then he departs. That day Baari celebrates Daa.

That same evening the large Gingauŋ drum is escorted to Baari by the 796
Gbizug Tendaana and the Wakyi Tendaana, following a ritual path. All
Tongo flocks to Baari to dance with great enthusiasm on a traditional spot 535
outside the grove of Baat Daa. Near the dance, but silently aloof, wait
the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas. A few hundred yards away, as if indifferent to the dance, young men of Baari assemble, wearing their ritual
garb, a goatskin. When the Baari Tendaana and his ritual coadjutors
arrive to join them, the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas are summoned.
Greetings are exchanged, and then led by the Baari Tendaana, the whole
company files away in a most solemn and silent procession, brought up by
the youngest members carrying pots of consecrated beer. With utter gravity
this procession thrice encircles the dancers who continue to dance as if
oblivious to this. Anyone who dares to break through the encircling pro- [784]
cession is doomed to a supernatural death. The procession files away again,
into the sacred grove. There the Tendaanas pour libations of beer to Baat
Daa, calling down the very same blessings as had been invoked by the
Chief earlier in the day. They drink the beer and send a small pot out to
the representative of the Chief, who is among the dancers. Now the Tendaanas' procession emerges, again solemnly encircles the dancers, and files
away. At a tree which marks the path to Tongo they stop, and marching
round it in a circle, chant a song the burden of which is Mosur boot kuliga
("Mosur wants to go home"). Upon this signal the allusion of which is
obvious to all, the dance breaks up, the ritual is over.

That finishes the Gingauŋ dance for a year. The next three days at 796
Tongo are given over to the gayest festivities of the season, the celebration
of Daa. This is a New Year's festival, a fitting conclusion to the dancing
season. Dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, the whole of Tongo
assembles at the Chief's compound on the day after the rites at Baari.
From far and near, Tongo women who have married away return to their [574]
homes, many bearing gifts of special food from their husbands. The Chief's
house throngs with his people and strangers. His elders bring him presents
of guinea fowls and he, sitting in state, has a bullock slaughtered, part of
which he shares amongst them. The Chief, it is true, gets the better part
of this exchange of gifts, but good form is satisfied. The afternoon is devoted to light-hearted dancing in praise of the Chief.

The Gbizug Tendaana has also celebrated Daa, but very quietly. That 796
evening, however, Chief and Tendaana meet in ceremonial. The scene is 778
the dancing ground. This is a dedicated area which may not be cultivated.

796 [778] For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

[292] Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

796 574 782 Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do. [784]

182 518 Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate 182
and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of 578
the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the 796
following moon, Bɔγaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival
of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival 778
translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. 769
Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔγar, after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔγar may be a grove of trees, a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders. It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔγar's communicants generally comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔγar cult is built up on the notion of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔγar. The bɔγar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral, like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I 778
had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The
Namoos know the dates of Bɔγaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they 881
had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted by the bɔγar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔγaraam ritual is at the same time communion, initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔγar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔγaraam on 796

●796 successive days, starting from the first day of the moon. The order of entry is fixed by tradition, and claims to precedence in rank are based in part on this. But preliminary sacrifices, consultations of diviners, collection of the chickens and guinea fowls which will be required, and finally ritual preparation of beer, usher in the festival. From the "Moon of Waters" on, every head of a joint family must eat out of special vessels, lest his food or water be contaminated by the newly harvested guinea corn flour, ground beans, or ocra. None of these foods are prohibited to women and younger members of the family. The taboo depends not upon some notions of the magical danger of eating unconsecrated first fruits, but upon the relationship of the communicants to the bɔɣar, who has the prerogative of tasting them first.

796 881 I can not describe the esoteric rites of Bɔɣaraam in detail. The main events take place during one night and the next day. The initiand youths, selected simply by the fact that their fathers can afford the numerous fowls and guinea fowls and the beer necessary for the rites, are pounced upon at night, undressed, and segregated throughout the rites. The communicants wear skins, the ritual garb of the Tallis. Women and uninitiated boys are rigorously excluded from earshot. Each elder brings fowls, guinea fowls, guinea corn flour, and cooked ground beans, and sacrifices are made in great numbers both at the houses of the Tendaanas and inside the bɔɣar. The ancestors are called upon and the bɔɣar is invoked. "Your day has come round again. We are about to eat the new guinea corn. Hence we bring you this offering of guinea corn and beans and these, your bɔɣaraam chickens. Grant us untroubled sleeping. May our wives bear children, and may we sow early millet successfully and meet again next year." This is the theme of the sacrificial invocations. Every chicken thus slaughtered is observed with concentrated anxiety. It must come to rest on its back, else the doner has sinned in some way and must at once go to a diviner to discover how. For the initiands long life, success in marriage and in farming, and safety from enemies is begged. It is a very serious thing if an initiand's fowl is rejected by the ancestors; and all proceedings are suspended until the sin is traced and atonement made.

The ritual is sensationally dramatic, and entirely different in style and emphasis from Namoos ritual. There is a constant interweaving of the three motifs, of communion, initiation, and first fruit offerings. The tone fluctuates between intense and almost terrified ritual participation and casual conviviality, when the beer is being divided.

The bɔɣar is first entered mysteriously in pitch darkness; but the "high spot" is what might be called the administration of the sacrament to the

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled con- 796
tumely, like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to
the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881
initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar.
Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of
one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough
stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If [784]
I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of
the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796
home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who
have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574
follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535
Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social
interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may
not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171
with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its
calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and 796
elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of re- 182
sponsibility for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of
lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of
jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion
in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the in-
dividual of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special
emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182
festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand
it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by
the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

182 even to the date of its festival, each community celebrates its release from the hazards of the past year and especially of the food-growing season, and fortifies itself by magical and religious techniques for another year. Nothing could more strikingly demonstrate the factors of dichotomy and antagonism in the polarity which we saw previously to be fundamental to Tale political structure than the difference between the rites of the Hill Tallis and those of the Namoos. It is true that every Tale ceremonial activity expresses the exclusiveness of the group performing it; but in these festivals the expression of difference has a political validity because it is reciprocal. The difference is published in the dance and dramatized in esoteric ritual.

But Namoos and Tallis are culturally equivalent communities, dwelling in close juxtaposition, having intimate economic and social relationships with each other. This, it seems to me, sets a limit to the degree of antagonistic differentiation tolerable; and thus the other factor in the polarity of Tale society comes into existence—the equilibrium between the two communities. The very opposition, as it were, engenders dependence. This aspect of Namoos-Tallis relations comes out clearly in the ceremony at Baari, in the visits of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief, and in the ritual reenacting of the Chief's induction at Tongo. It is notable how these rituals vividly insulate each group from the other, while at the same time uniting them in common responsibility for the welfare of the country.

182
796 The same compulsion to coöperate in the magical safeguarding of the land and the people obtains between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis. It is expressed in the Gɔlib festival, which unfortunately space does not permit me to describe fully. The purpose of this festival, which occurs in the last month of the dry season, is to ensure a successful sowing and harvesting of early millet and to call down the blessing of fertility in general. In it all the clans of the Hill Tallis collaborate ritually and unite to dance together. In their ritual collaboration the distribution of offices and sacred apparatus among the several clans is so remarkably equal that each one of them can claim with ostensibly full justification to be more important than
[578] the others. It so happens that a bitter personal feud is at present raging between one of these officiants, on the one hand, and the Chief of Tongo and another of the Gɔlib officiants, on the other. But none of them could escape his obligation to coöperate with his enemy in the appropriate ceremonial situations. Here, perhaps, is a clue to the problem of why ritual forms and religious situations should be the institutional media selected for the expression of the equilibrium in Tale society. They have a compulsive power which a pragmatic institution orientated to the demands of the objective world could never have.

Gɔlib is a dangerous month, during which both Namɔɔs and Tallis are 182
subject to numerous taboos, mainly aimed at averting quarrels and strife 796
at the dances and in everyday relations between the groups. It is forbidden
to shed blood on the earth, lest supernatural death overtake one, to take 784
a wife, to carry out the final ceremonies connected with delayed funeral
rites, to wear cloth garments in any of the Hill Tallis settlements, and so
forth. Marriages are the cause of most inter-group litigation, and funeral [578]
ceremonies represent social situations in which large numbers of people
from different settlements congregate and often give rise to disputes.
Throughout, the Namoos are spectators of the dancing and excluded from
the ritual. But on two occasions they meet the Hill Tallis in ceremonial
interaction. In the inaugural rites the Hill Tallis, led by their Tendaanas,
march to all their sacred groves in succession blowing sacred whistles in
honor of them. When they reach the sacred groves which lie in Tongo, every
Namoo man, woman, and child hides indoors. A Namoo who sees these
rites of the Hill Tallis risks the destruction of his entire home and family
by the outraged sacred groves. Once again, therefore, are the Namoos and
Tallis mutually insulated or segregated by the symbolism of unchallengeable
ritual, the living affirmation of tradition. But there is a ritual reintegration
of the groups. The final rite of Gɔlib requires the coöperation of the
Chief of Tongo. Again led by their Tendaanas, the Hill Tallis come down to
the Chief's house to dance; and there Tendaanas and Chief join together
to beg for blessings upon the land, for the safety of the people and the
abundance of crops.

To revert to the harvest festivals, the magical and religious value of the 182
ceremonial to the group performing it must not blind us to its socially integrative
functions. The former is mainly determined by the seasonal con- 796
text of the festivals and is evidenced preeminently in commonplace techniques,
such as the sacrifice. The latter, which is determined primarily by
the context of the social structure, is evidenced in the ceremonies peculiar
to the occasion. These differ completely in content, as between Namoos and
Tallis, a fact which the natives would explain by citing the historically different
origins of the two groups. This suggests the principle common to all
the integrative ceremonies. It is the dramatization of the nodal, hence
traditionally sanctioned, relationship in the social structure of each group
—the Chieftainship at Tongo, the right of access to the bɔɣar among the
Tallis. This fundamental bond is resuscitated in both the symbolical and
the direct phases of the ceremonies. The Chief and the Gbizug or Baari
Tendaana thus reimpose on each other those responsibilities which bind
them to a common task; and, by the very same rites, the Chief and his

people redefine each the place of the other in a social system the essence of which is the Chieftainship. The Hill Tallis, again, reestablish the responsibility of each initiated man for the preservation of their traditional cult, by imposing it upon the next generation, and thus reaffirm the loyalty of each to the other, and of sons to fathers.

To sum up, social cohesion as I understand this concept, both within and between the major communities which constitute Tale society, is no ultimate attribute of that society, but is achieved by specific social mechanisms such as those I have described. To me its most significant feature appears to be the fact that this integration is engendered as an equilibrium between opposed groups, over-riding, it seems, the tendencies to conflict inherent in the system. It is worthy of note that this principle of a balance of powers is exploited also within each community to overcome the competitive autonomy of its constituent groupings.

Whether only a single general process is involved, accomodation to an immigrant group, is beyond my power to determine. One could presumably envisage the entire pattern of ritual and political values as a "reaction" to the "foreign body" represented by the Namoos clans. It seems not unlikely also that the equilibrium thus achieved is itself the barrier that prevents the diffusion of the esoteric rites of one community to the other.

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177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

● 797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
648 factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

mothers are busy with some household task. A healthy infant will 868
remain sitting thus, almost motionless, playing with a fragment of cala- 854
bash, a stick, or the sand—for the idea of giving an infant a toy or some
attractive trinket to occupy it when it is left alone does not occur to
the Tallensi. On the other hand, when an infant clamours for attention
there is always some one of its kinsfolk near at hand to render it.

The native point of view about physical growth was well illustrated 827
in the case of two infants belonging to a single extended family which 856
I knew well. The younger infant was a lively, healthy, inquisitive girl
of about 2½–3 years old already toddling about and exploring the
world. The other infant, a boy about 3 months older, had been puny
and ailing from birth and, though obviously intelligent, was chronically
fretful and dependent and had not yet begun to walk. In Taleland [801] ●
the number three is symbolical of maleness, four of femaleness. Hence
it is said in their folk-lore that boys begin to walk and talk in their
third year, girls in their fourth. Yet the glaring discrepancy in development between these two infants caused no anxiety to the parents of the boy, except about his health. They realized clearly the connexion between his retardation and his health, but were entirely complacent about the former. That he would walk and talk in due course was taken for granted.

The expectation of normal behaviour. It will be evident from these 856
examples that in the cultural idiom of the Tallensi age is not conceived as a significant factor in psycho-physical or social development. Yet relative seniority determines status and rights even in children's groups and their notion of time is explicit and clear. They think of genetic development primarily in terms of maturity, which is a synthetic concept embracing both physiological and behavioural signs. Growing up, in other words, is the evolution of one's social personality as it approximates closer and closer to the fully grown, mature adult. Just as this point of view precludes deliberate and standardized methods of training children in the rudimentary bodily skills such as walking, talking, and eye-hand co-ordination in eating, so it would be incompatible with a didactic attitude about bowel and bladder control or about sexual habits and knowledge.

This point of view gives rise to a factor of great importance in Tale 828
education, the *expectation of normal behaviour*. In any given social

805 *Months of the Year in Talane:*

OCTOBER. *Bugram Namboo.*
NOVEMBER. *Kabunubu Namboo* (harvest moon).
DECEMBER. *Koor-oro Namboo* (cold moon).
JANUARY. *Nyoo Namboo* (burning moon).
FEBRUARY. *Gologo Namboo.*
MARCH. *Sibig Namboo.*
APRIL. *Siga Namboo.*
MAY. *Namboo woo* (empty moon).
JUNE. *Nar-cheog Namboo* (cutting millet moon).
JULY. *Nar-birt Namboo* (bad corn moon).
AUGUST. *Daa-koom Namboo.*
SEPTEMBER. *Daa Namboo.*

The climate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast has two well-marked seasons, a rainy season (*seug*) and a dry season (*uum*). The rainy season is the period of intense agricultural activity and lasts from April to October; the dry season, when agriculture sinks into the background of social interest, from November to March. We shall set out the cycle of agricultural and food economy month by month, beginning with April, the first month of the rains.[1] 132 221

PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
APRIL: First planting-rain fell on March 26, and early millet (*naara*) with some cow-peas and *neri* was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, &c. Women sowed their vegetable patches; *naŋgena*, *hibiscus* (*ma'ana*, *bɛt* and *bɛris*), marrow (*wɔk*—planted by only a few women) and other vegetables. Hoeing begun; but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.	Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. 221 262 Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts.[2] Wild fruits—shea (*taamr*), *ximenia americana* (*lieŋ*) and especially dawa-dawa powder (*dɔbugm*)—being consumed to stave off hunger.[3]

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[1] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, but we are following the European calendar to simplify the exposition. All dates given refer to 1934. [805]

[2] Ground-nut gleaning (*nyeeh*) is a regular pursuit of children, adolescents, and even adults of households with small supplies of ground-nuts. After the ground-nuts have been lifted any one may come and scratch with a hoe for those left in the ground. Thus little groups of boys and girls, from infancy to adolescence, wander about in the fields near their homes scratching with old hoes for the ground-nuts, which they collect and eat. Early in the dry season these ground-nuts are regarded as snacks. When the dry season reaches its end, however, they become scarcer but are searched for more eagerly as a measure to stop the pangs of hunger between one meal and the next, often twenty-four hours later. 222

[3] Shea fruits are collected by the women throughout this season, mainly from trees on bush farms belonging to their compound. Dawa-dawa powder is more difficult to come by as the trees are jealously watched by the owners, who are in some areas the chiefs *ex-officio* and in others heads of lineages. Dawa-dawa pods are thus often obtained by gift, purchase, or exchange from the owners, or in the market. Every part of the fruit is of great value—the floury powder is eaten, the seeds collected and turned into *kpolug*, the husks of the pod used to prepare *am*, the liquid with which the walls and floors of compounds are waterproofed. 222 [356]

121 each within the context of the particular type of social situation is specific to it and can be determined only from the analysis of the situation itself. It may differ considerably from its "institutional function" in relation to the culture as a whole. Thus the rules of exogamy viewed in relation to the entire social organization of a people may demonstrably serve to emphasize and preserve the integrity of an unilateral kinship group. But in a particular situation, a man barred from marriage with a woman he desires may enter into an illicit sexual intrigue with her, which may lead to dissension within the kinship group. In such a case the "proximate function" of the rules of exogamy appears to be the very contrary of their "institutional function." This is an hypothetical instance; but it will suffice to illustrate what we mean when we say that the components of any type of social situation are inter-related in a manner specific to it or that it exhibits a definite structure. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the structure of a situation which recurs with some frequency in the life of a tribe recently visited by the writer.

226 221 ●[805] Among the Tallensi, a tribe of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, the communal fishing expeditions which take place every year are events of this kind. They extend over a period of about a month, between the close of the dry season and the commencement of the heavy rains. During this month which coincides with most of the native lunar month *Sigkpéoŋ* ("Dry rains"), and the European month of April, rain falls sporadically (five times, at varying intervals, in 1934, a dry year) but sufficiently for the sowing of early millet and some of the minor crops. Sowing demands the concentration of all energies of the family for a day or two after a fall of rain; then it is discontinued until the next fall of rain. Besides sowing, other technological and economic activities compete with fishing during this month. House repairs and rebuilding are still in progress and of course the markets, which take place on two days out of three within the tribal area, are in full swing. All these activities are equally shared by men and women, assisted by the children of both sexes.

226 262 Fishing therefore is not an activity of an economic off-season. Its calendrical incidence depends primarily on the technique employed, which is suitable only for shallow pools; and the pools are shallowest at the end of the dry season. It is, also, only indirectly correlated with the diminution in food supplies which becomes general during the "dry rains", since fish, like meat, is valued as a delicacy and never as a substitute for the staple cereal foods. In any case, the catch is usually too small to influence the economy of food supplies materially. Nevertheless, the luxury value of fish furnishes one of the main inducements to join the fishing expeditions.

226 But the greatest attraction of these fishing expeditions to young and old, men and women, is the excitement and thrill they provide, the immediate pleasure of participation in a communal enterprise with the possibility, however remote, of some gain.

133 226 The pools fished lie in the bed of the White Volta River. When the rains cease the water level gradually sinks till eventually only a series of pools divided from one another

793 622 [789] the prosperity of the land. Though it is housed in his compound, neither the Chief nor any of his clansmen may set eyes on it; only the Gbizug Tendaana and his lineage may. The Chief speaks of it with an awe which is almost terror. The balance is adjusted by the Chief's rainmaking powers. Only Namoos may own rain medicine, which was brought to Taleland by their ancestor. When drought is prolonged, all the Tendaanas, led by the Gbizug Tendaana, formally call upon and implore the Chief to see to it that rain falls. So great is his rainmaking power that rain will fall at once if he merely declares, in the name of his ancestors, that their wishes will be satisfied. Such, in fact, proved to be the case in 1934.

Again, this ritual polarity is paralleled in social and personal attitudes. The Chief and the Gbizug Tendaana, in private conversation, comment with a mixture of pride, scorn, and fear each upon his opposite number.

796 Among the most striking mechanisms of this equilibrium are the ritual festivals. The various settlements are always classified in terms of them, and the natives never tire of dilating enthusiastically upon them.

Ritual and dance are the two components of every festival; the former usually esoteric, the latter public though exclusive. During the rainy season, which lasts roughly from April to September, ritual and group activities are almost completely ousted by agriculture. In July-August the early millet is harvested, but the major crops, the guinea corn and late millet, still stand.[2] [805] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, and the last month of the rains is called the "Moon of Waters" (Kuom ŋmarig). An ethnologist cannot, alas, be in two places at the same time. I was living among the Namoos in September, 1934, and shall therefore describe the events of this and the next month from their point of view.

Weeks in advance the approaching festivals are the dominant theme of conversation for man, woman, and child. The ceremonial cycle is inaugurated by the Baari Tendaana, who ritually "throws away the water," i.e. abolishes the rains on the first day of the new month. This is announced by a burst of hallooing, which commences at Baari and sweeps across the country, the signal that the festivals have come round again.

That night the people of Baari begin their celebrations. At Tongo, on the next day, the youths and maidens are putting finishing touches to their festive costumes. On the fourth day of the moon a deputation of elders waits on the Chief, to remind him of his traditional obligation to summon a diviner on the following day.

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[2] The calendrical incidence of the ritual festivals and their relation to the annual productive cycle are more fully set out in M. and S. L. Fortes, Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi (Africa, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1936).

Africa, West: Calendar. **Cardinall.**

The Division of the Year among the Talansi of the Gold Coast. 47

By A. W. Cardinall.

805 192 Among the Talansi, a hill tribe of mixed origin living in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, close to the 11th parallel North, the following divisions in the year are recognised. They do not actually correspond to months or moons, but are periods of time or seasons recognisable by all. They depend on the fall of the rain, which is far from being regular :—

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
1. Kodo	- December to end January	- The cold season—no particular meaning to the word, which is a proper name.

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090 * Beri. The Kanuri-speaking inhabitants of Bornu are called Beriberi by Hausa and other peoples, indicating a former and very ancient connection with the Berber.

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
805 192 2. Gunfuku [174]	February	Gun', gunga—kapok tree. fuku—blowing of the wind. The period when the kapok pods ripen. This is evidence of the Dagomba extraction of this people, since kapok is, undoubtedly, a southern production. Their own tradition says they came from the south as a result of interfamily wars.
3. Gologu [527]	March	This is the name of a festival which takes place shortly after full moon. In 1921 the ceremonial dancing and symbolic planting of corn, which I witnessed by good luck, took place on March 1st. In 1922 about March 13th.
4. Sionbeo	End of March or early April	Time of early planting. Sion—making holes in which to drop the grains. beo—poor. At this time it is not certain if the dry season will not return for a period and so dry up the first shoots.
5. Sionsongo	April and May	The time of good planting. songo—good. This is the proper planting time.
6. Sionyio	Late May and early June	The time of late planting. yio—conveys an idea of doubt. Planting at this time may or may not have a result.
7. Narechag	Late June and early July	Early millet harvest. Nare—early millet. chag'—cut.
8. Nabiri	Late July, mid August	Na'—early millet. biri—small. The time for eating the small ears of early millet, which are not put in the granary owing to their smallness.
9. Komwanrega	August-September	Kom—water. wanreg'—month or moon. The period of heavy rain.

9: Cardinall G-5 (ca. 1920) 1924 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

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ancestor Tɛŋənbuləg—Earth-begotten—and give the same myth of his 773
origin. The people of Degal and of Ka'ar attribute a similar origin to their first ancestors. Tɛndaan Gɛnət is said to have begotten Dagbeog (Bearded man) whose descendants are the Gbeog people, who are therefore a 'brother' lineage to Gbizug (=*Gbeog zug*, the upper part of Gbeog).

One of Gɛnət's 'brothers'—the exact genealogical relationship is regarded as of no consequence, some describing him as *soog* (uterine kinsman), others as *pit* (younger brother)—was Daziug (Red man), a hunter who founded the Ba'at-Sakpar line; and another 'brother' of his founded one of the Zubiuŋ lineages. Indeed all the primordial tɛndaanas were 'brothers' in a more general sense, the concepts of kinship serving here consciously to identify them with one another.

These myths, meagre as they appear, are laid down with a finality of conviction that makes any question of their historical truthfulness irrelevant.

Most of the Hill Talis are also alleged to have been immigrants originally 173
who arrived to find the Degal Tɛndaana living on top of the hills. But their myths of origin are as deficient in circumstantial detail as those of the primordial tɛndaanas. Thus candid people at Yinduuri said complacently: 'We don't know, it is said that our ancestor came from Tampələŋ in Mampurugu, but now we have all become Talis.' People of other clans told a vague story of an ancestor wandering about the uninhabited hills, sheltering in caves, until one day he observed the smoke of a fire. Going towards it he discovered the Degal tɛndaana, and later settled on the Hills. Gorogo is said to have been founded thus by Woolisi immigrants, Sii by Bulisi and Mamprusi, and some of the Tɛnzugu lineages by Mamprusi, Kusaasi, or Gɔrisi. The origins thus attributed to any community symbolize special ritual relationships with the areas they are alleged to have migrated from, which are still maintained.

All these myths of origin become intelligible when it is realized that 173
they are nothing more than formulations of the contemporary scheme of 811
political and ceremonial relationships. The Tallensi themselves are philosophers enough to appreciate this. Many Namoos, for example, privately view the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas with unaffected scorn. 'They lie', declared Saɣəbazaa, a shrewd and respected elder of Tongo, himself a kinsman of the present[1] Gbizug tɛndaana. 'A human being can't emerge sprouting out of the earth. The rain falls, and the millet comes up, trees come up, grass comes up; but we have never seen a human being sprout up.' When I tried to defend the tɛndaanas, he countered triumphantly: 'And if their ancestor really sprouted up, why don't they let a person sprout again?' Then, with a sudden inspiration he proposed an explanation: 'Suppose you come and settle here and your children succeed you, and their children, and their children succeed and so on, and so on. Then, one day strangers come and ask your descendants whence they have sprung. Will they not say that their ancestor was begotten of the earth? We Namoos', he concluded, 'are immigrants (*kpeeha*) here.' This acute estimation of the myths gives a clue to their

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[1] The present time throughout this book refers to the years 1934–7.

173 ideological significance as a counterweight to the Mosuor legend and
811 as a dogma of prior habitation.

[171] In the Sie district the Sawaləg people, whose political and ceremonial relations with the Sie Namoos are exactly parallel to those of Gbizug with Tongo, also declare that their ancestor came into being miraculously, self-generated. In the identical phraseology of the people of Gbizug and Wakii, they say, 'Our ancestor descended from Heaven', or 'Our ancestor sprouted from the earth'. I once challenged the clan-head of Sawaləg to prove how this was possible. His answer, shrewdly rationalistic, deserves to be recorded. 'We have not heard that our ancestor came from any other land. We have no other land to return to as the Sie people (immigrant Namoos) have. If they desecrate (*sayəm*, lit. spoil) the land here, they return to their (original) land yonder (at Tongo). That is why we say that we have descended from Heaven'—an interpretation which coincides with that of Sayəbazaa, the Namoo.

173 The covenant between Mosuor and Tɛndaan Gɛnət, again, accords
177 well with a myth which is but a projection into the unchallengeable past
622 of the present-day relationships between Gbizug and Tongo. The amorphous and unstandardized myths of origin with which the Hill Talis are satisfied symbolize the remarkable social integration they had achieved before their subjugation by the British in 1911. For nowadays the Hill Talis are rent by factions and by an intestine struggle for power amongst the various ritual office-holders. Rival claims are validated by citing established custom, by appealing to the memories of men, or, in the last resort, by the fabrication or distortion of myths of origin. The Administration recognizes as chiefs only those clan heads whose title is derived directly or indirectly from the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi. Hence we find the Gəlibdaana of Tɛnzugu justifying his pretensions to recognized chiefship by concocting, for the benefit of a white inquirer, a story of how the founder of his lineage migrated thither from Mampurugu—a story which his enemies scoff at. The Sii Bɔyaraan, on the other hand, tries to strengthen his claim to precedence by alleging not only a Mampuru origin for his ancestors, but also that they were the very first to come and settle on the Hills.

173 These new myths are part of the defensive ideologies engendered by social conflict, but they follow the axioms of Tale thought. The Tallensi have no conception of a mythological or historical past of their society when people lived and behaved differently from to-day. The past is but an extension into the days of their forefathers of the life of to-day on the same rational plane of existence. Their history is to them not a sequence of events or a progression but a continuity. All that matters of the past, which lies beyond the span of man's recollection, lives on in the social structure, the ideology, the morality, and institutions of to-day. These are the palpable proofs of things that happened '*oh ho, ti banam ni ti yaanam ni*—in the days of our forefathers and ancestors'; one can infer from them what must have been the state of society in those far-off times. Conversely, the social arrangements which prevail to-day are valid, sensible, and appropriate not only because they achieve desired ends but also because *banam ni yaanam ndaa piil na*—the forefathers and ancestors

x618 dimensions. The clan is also the region where a lineage's clanship ties have the maximum force; for, as we have seen, there are differences in the range and precision of the rights, obligations, and participation in the secular and ceremonial matters of common interest implied by the ties of clanship which a lineage has with other lineages.

A lineage's field of clanship is not homogeneous. As will become clearer when we have analysed one or two more chains of linked lineages, spatial distance and genealogical distance are the main factors upon which the incidence and variation of the rights and duties of clanship depend. The farther away a lineage lives from another with which it has ties of clanship, the less intercourse is there between their members and the less likely are they to co-operate in those situations and events which mobilize these ties. Again, the closer the genealogical links, actual, putative, or fictional, between two linked lineages the more regularly will they co-operate and the more effectively assert the rights and perform the duties of clanship.

The principles so far elicited have a general application throughout Taleland. But the clan of Mosuor biis is unique. The typical clan in Taleland is a single local unit of the composite kind. Mosuor biis are certainly the most numerous patrilineal descent group in Taleland.[1] It must not be forgotten that in addition to the four localized branches of the clan which form its recognized major subdivisions, there are the minor colonial offshoots.

x618 The natives see no difficulty in explaining the numerical preponderance
●811 of Mosuor biis. It is, in their eyes, due simply to a fecundity greater than that of other lineages. Members of Mosuor biis themselves give this a mystical rationalization. They say that they are prolific because they all have but one religious cult, that of their ancestors, which binds them to one another in mutual amity and solidarity. In their cult of their ancestors each branch of Mosuor biis seeks not only its own increase and prosperity but the increase and prosperity of all its clan brethren as well. To do otherwise would be a sin inviting the wrath of the common ancestors of the whole clan. But in composite clans, they say, each component lineage has its own independent ancestral and other ritual cults. It is jealously concerned with its own increase and prosperity, even regarding it as an advantage if other maximal lineages of the same clan are diminished. Such an attitude brings down mystical retribution; for those who seek the ill of their fellow men are bound to suffer ill themselves.

x618 These views are not accepted among members of composite clans, who consider their own cults to be no less founded on, and instrumental in

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[162] [1] To take a complete census of the members of Mosuor biis, even of the male members only, would be impossibly laborious and time-consuming for an anthropological field-worker limited to a short stay in the country. Sample censuses were made at Tongo and Sie. Going by these and by recent counts made throughout Taleland by the Administration of the taxable male population, I should estimate the male members of Mosuor biis (including accessory lineages) as not less than 2,000. The women are so scattered, owing to patrilocal marriage, that it is impossible to estimate their numbers. No other clan in Taleland can, I should judge, reckon more than half this number of male members.

178 forefathers in that way (*ti ku zaŋ ti bɔnam bah ŋwala*)'. Some of the
182 younger men of Yapaas were merely being tiresome. 'You'll see',
578 countered the man who had spoken earlier, sceptically, 'some day there
will be a quarrel over something, the division of meat at a sacrifice, or the
inheritance of a widow, or something of that sort, and then you people of
Zubiuŋ will split up.'

578 Meanwhile, we continued to wait for the Yapaasdɛm, for the ritual could not be performed without the presence of their representatives. In due course they arrived. Far from expressing contrition, they excused themselves by accusing the others of having bungled the sequence of the rites. A violent argument followed, but one of the elders cut it short. No doubt, he said, the Yapaasdɛm preferred a different order of the rites. That was their affair. The senior lineages had no intention of copying them. To-day the ceremonies were *their* concern, and now that all the lineages were properly assembled they might as well get on with the business.

Linked Maximal Lineages and the Field of Clanship

x618 Corresponding to this structural differentiation within the clan, each
maximal lineage has its distinct field of clanship. One segment of
Yakɔradɛm, known as Pulien biis, is an attached lineage descended from a
[567] 'sister's son' of the authentic lineage. Another segment (Zaŋgɔbɔg yidɛm)
is an assimilated lineage, said to be of slave descent. Members of this segment are debarred from holding the tɛndaana-ship. Pulien biis have the right to hold the office, but mainly in a titular capacity, for they are barred from its most essential responsibilities. In other respects these accessory lineages have been fully absorbed by the authentic line of Yakɔradɛm, and participate in all the corporate activities of the latter.

The Yakɔradɛm have ties of clanship with Gbizug, which counts as the senior segment of Gbeog, and is bound to Gbeog proper by the usual ties of clanship. But there are no ties of clanship between Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Gbeog proper. They may not marry a daughter of Gbizug; they may and do marry Gbeog women, who would of course be barred by the rule of exogamy from marrying into Gbizug. Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra also have ties of clanship with Ba'at-Sakpar, one of the major segments of the clan of Ba'ari; but they have no ties of clanship with any of the other Ba'ari maximal lineages. Similarly, they have ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ, but not with the Namoo lineage of Zoodɛm proper. The other two component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ are excluded from this field of clanship. For instance, they can and do marry Gbizug, Ba'at-Sakpar, and Zoo-Yiraaŋ women.

x618 These extra-clan ties of clanship are rationalized in various ways.
●811 Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar claim to be the consanguineous kin (*dɔyam*) of
Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, because, as the myth of the primordial tɛndaanas relate, the founding ancestors of all three lineages were 'brothers'. The Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are claimed as kin (*dɔyam*) of the latter because their founding ancestor is said to have been a 'sister's son' of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra. It should be noted that such a remote cognatic link does not in every case establish ties of clanship. The same fiction is used to account for the existence of

attached lineages, as well as for certain ritual and political ties between 618x
some groups. Thus, one segment of Tongo has a special ritual role as 811
intermediary in the politico-ritual relations of Tongo and Zoo, and this is
rationalized by the same fiction; but it does not involve ties of clanship
with Zoo.

There is a close parallelism between the inter-clan linkages we have 618x
described and the spatial relations of the groups concerned. Gbizugdɛm 621
are the nearest non-Namoo neighbours of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra on one side;
Ba'ari is contiguous with them on the other side; and Zoo-Yiraaŋ live
side by side with their clansfolk at Zubiuŋ-Yapaas. There is an asymmetry in these clanship ties which appears to be mirrored in the fictions accounting for them. Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are linked by clanship ties in exactly the same way as they are linked with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra, but neither has ties of clanship with Zoo-Yiraaŋ.

Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra has more frequent and closer relations and a stronger 618x
sense of fraternity with Gbizug than with its other two linked maximal 764
lineages at Zoo and at Ba'ari. This is fostered by proximity and by the belief enshrined in their myth of origin. Thus, when a Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra tɛndaana dies and his funeral ceremonies are performed, the heads of all three linked maximal lineages have to send an obligatory contribution of porridge, specially prepared 'to set out for the dead (*zien kpiim lɔ*)'. They act, then, in the same way as the other two Zubiuŋ lineages, which are also obliged to send this contribution. But Gbizugdɛm do more than make a merely formal acknowledgement of their ties with the dead man's lineage; they take part in the funeral to a much greater extent than Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ. Their representatives never fail to attend all the important ritual events of the funeral, whereas the representatives of the other two linked maximal lineages appear only at the exoteric public ceremonies, such as the final divination when the beer is distributed. The social relations of Gbizug with Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra give them a place, as it were, half-way between the other Zubiuŋ maximal lineages and the other two linked maximal lineages in point of intimacy and corporate cohesion.
Every Yakɔra man knows the wives of the men of Gbizug almost as well [587]
as the wives of his own clansmen. He speaks of them all as his 'wives', for he has a right to inherit any of them if they remain widows. If he meets one of them by chance he will chaff her, as if she were a Zubiuŋ wife. Most of the wives of the men of Ba'at-Sakpar or Zoo-Yiraaŋ are quite unknown to him, though formally he has the same rights in respect of them.

The Gradation of Clanship Ties

What distinguishes the bonds of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra with Gbizug from 618x
their apparently identical bonds with their clansmen of Zubiuŋ is this: the latter are bound to perform all the duties of close *sunzɔp*, the former are under the much more limited obligation of giving expression to their ties of clanship through one or two formal acts. The latter, for example, are obliged to attend and to conduct all the important rites of a Yakɔra tɛndaana's funeral, whereas Gbizugdɛm come voluntarily, and if they undertake any task do so out of courtesy and friendliness. Similarly, the

571 Hence, people connected in this way are careful not to ask each other
577 for things. In the hunt, if a member of one group kills an animal and
any members of the other group happen to be on the spot, the slayer will
not lay a hand on the kill until the latter have cut a portion for themselves.

765 Sometimes it happens that a great tragedy overwhelms a member of
571 one group and he abandons himself to grief, refusing food, drink, and
577 consolation. Then, as a last resort, his relatives send for the head of the
lineage whose requests cannot be refused, to persuade the stricken man to face life again. This happened, for example, when Puɣɛl of Wakii's child was accidentally burnt to death. He was prostrate with grief, and said that he wished to die. Thereupon his brothers sent for the Bɔɣarna'ab of Gundaat, the clan to whose members Puɣɛl's lineage must yield, and the Bɔɣarna'ab persuaded him to accept food and water, a sign that he was ready to throw off his despair. 'It is a matter of our fathers and our ancestors', the Bɔɣarna'ab declared when he told the story. 'He dare not refuse; I would call on the Earth, and my *bɔɣar*, and our ancestors, to witness, and his house would be destroyed if he remained obstinate.' Elders of other Talis clans explained the inviolability of this bond in almost the same words. It rests upon religious sanctions, the cult of the Earth and the cult of the External *Bɔɣar*, common to all the Talis.

The Rationalization of Clanship Ties

● 811 Tallensi have no explanation to offer for the joking partnership or the bond of privileged moral coercion between clans or lineages, though they regard them as being somehow connected with the network of clanship. 'It is a matter of our fathers and forefathers', is all that even the best informed elders have to say about these ties.

*618 Clanship ties, however, always have the warrant of dogma or myth, as
811 we have seen. It is worth while examining a few more instances.

Sometimes common agnatic ancestry is claimed, though no common ancestor can be cited by name or any point of convergence of the different genealogies suggested. This is the case with Yinduuri and Sii, for instance. Frequently the fiction of a cognatic link is used. Thus, in explanation of the clanship ties existing between Degal and Kpata'arna'ab yidem of Kpata'ar, it is said that the latter are the sororal nephews (*ahɔs*) of the former. The name of the Degal woman who is thus alleged to have been the progenitrix of the Kpata'ar lineage is unknown, and no Kpata'ar man would even speculate as to which of their ancestors might have been her husband. Similarly, Dakuor yidem of Bunkiuk are said to be the descendants of a sororal nephew of Kpata'arna'ab yidem with whom they have ties of clanship. The fictional character of this formula is revealed when we compare the neighbouring clan of Samiit. The people of Samiit say that their founding ancestor was a Wakii man (hence their ties of clanship with Wakii), who migrated to the top of the hills because he had by accident killed and eaten a python, which is a taboo at Wakii. After wandering about for some time, he found refuge with the people of Gundaat, one of whose daughters was later given to him as a wife. The people of Samiit are the posterity (*tu'u*) of this pair. Strictly speaking, therefore, the people of Samiit are the sororal nephews of Gundaat; and yet they have no ties of clanship with the latter. Questioned about this 618x anomaly, Samiit elders brushed it aside coolly with the remark, 'That is a 811 long time ago, so now we marry one another'. But this argument, which is also met with elsewhere, runs counter to the basic principle of Tale exogamy, that consanguinity, however remote, is always a bar to marriage, not to speak of its obvious contradiction of the explanation of the Degal-Kpata'ar and other similar clanship ties. The Samiit elders, characteristically, admit these logical contradictions, but remain indifferent to them. For the structural ties that constitute the field of clanship of a particular lineage are validated independently of those that constitute the field of clanship of any other lineage. Theory and myth are made to fit the facts of social structure. It is enough if the fictions and myths utilized to explain the different linkages of a particular maximal lineage are consistent with one another. The Samiit story, which is typical of many others, proves, incidentally, that the explanations alleged for present-day structural ties are often myths of origin. Even if a Taləŋ killed a tabooed animal by accident, it would be unthinkable for him to cook and eat it; and if by some mischance he did commit this sacrilege, he would not flee his settlement on that account.

Owing to the dominance of genealogical relationships and the ideology of kinship in Tale social organization, most of the formulas accounting for the clanship ties of maximal lineages are couched in the idiom of kinship. But in many cases this is not so. We have already had instances where clanship ties are attributed to local coalescence; but there are cases in which this rationalization cannot work.

Take, for instance, Gundaat and Tamboog. These two adjacent maximal lineages are considered to be on an equal footing with the other clans of Tɛnzugu. But they are united by clanship ties as intimate as those that unite the component lineages of a single clan. Thus, as we have already noted, when either clan celebrates mortuary or funeral ceremonies, the ritual duties which normally devolve on close *sunzɔp* are undertaken by the other. When the placation gift (*sɛndaan*) is sent for a bride from one of these units, the live cock which forms part of it is always presented to the head of the other. This reciprocal privilege is usually confined to the component lineages of a single clan; and it is the same with political and economic activities in which co-operation is usually restricted to the clan. But according to their nebulous myths of origin, these two clans have a totally diverse ancestry. To explain their clanship ties the elders of these two clans fall back on an *a posteriori* argument which is common in similar circumstances all over the country. They say, 'We sacrifice together at a single shrine, so how can we marry one another? (*ti kab kaabət bayər dekɔ'la, ti le na ntuo ndi taaba?*)'. The implication here is that clanship ties are a consequence of 'sacrificing together'. This is inaccurate as a description of fact, but the formula draws attention to the most important overt factor of organization in the social structure of the Tallensi. We have met it already in our study of the Namoos and some of the Talis clans; but its remarkable elaboration among the latter deserves further attention.

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and considerable 793 moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784 they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779 spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.' The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577] it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the statement implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789] of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term 'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties, privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779 in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812 ● But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823 ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793 In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of 784 land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471 Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425 direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622 for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship. And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121
mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be
culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining
a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145
correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884
of physiological and psychological development and that of social and 182
cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of
which social development lags behind psycho-physical development.
A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but
has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and
social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she
is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight
in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that
he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four
or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower
than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily
be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856]
age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single
words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are
used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one
can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at
about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as
a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582]
they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827
ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881
growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812
The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage
from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West
African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls,
which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality
as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the
body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical
and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural
emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Talɔŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adulthood 857
children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational development 82[illegible]
of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

82 861 9 or 10 the children are thoroughly familiar with the ecological environment of their clan settlements. They know the economically important trees, grasses, and herbs, e.g., a girl of about 9 once named and showed me nine varieties of herbs used for making soup. They have a fair idea of the gross anatomy of the fowl, small field animals, and larger live stock. But apart from these achievements which lead one to infer the existence of an interest in the natural environment, I was able to obtain some direct evidence thereof. The natives say that small children frequently ask questions about people and things they see around them. However, listening to children's talk for 'why' questions,[1] I was surprised to note how rarely they occurred; and the few instances I recorded refer to objects or persons foreign to the normal routine of Tale life. It would seem that Tale children rarely have to ask 'why' in regard to the people and things of their normal environment because so much of their learning occurs in real situations where explanation is generally coupled with instruction, and because they hear so much adult discussion, in terms of cause and effect, as these are understood by the Tallensi, of the things they are interested in. Yet two examples will prove that even quite small children react with exploratory interest to what is new and unusual. I gave some tiny tin figures of animals to a group of small children to play with. A little boy of about 5 looked intently at the figure of a horse. 'Why does he stoop like that?' he asked, speaking to himself rather than to his companions. But immediately he answered his own question, 'He is eating grass.' On another occasion I observed the 3-year-old son of our cook, pointing to the garbage tin, ask the horseboy: 'Why has that got a lid?'

857 177 532 Again, making clay figures is a favourite diversion of small boys and adolescents. The standard figures are men and women, cows and horses. But a youngster of about 9 or 10 once produced a motorcycle, explaining that he had recently seen the Agricultural Officer arrive on one. Another boy, a little older, once made a roan antelope, explaining that some two years previously he had seen one of these animals which, fleeing from a hunting party, had entered the settlement and been surrounded and killed there.

128 I have not attempted to give an exhaustive account of the interests

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[1] See N. Isaacs in *Intellectual Growth of Young Children.*

pression liable to flooding in the rainy season. The people of the Tong 361
Hills consider themselves to be particularly fortunate in this respect. 133
Their homesteads stretch densely across the slopes of the hills, and amid the great boulders and rocky piles of the summit. Singing the praises of their tiny fastness, they contrast it with the plain, where one is always ankle-deep in mud and slush during the rains and scorched by the sun in the dry season. On the hills, they say, a sheltered nook can always be found among the rocks, shady when the sun is most cruel, dry in the severest storm, where the children can play or the grown-ups sit and talk.

The Stability and Continuity of a Settlement

Stability and continuity are essential characteristics of a settlement. 621
They are implied in the native concept of a *tɛŋ* (settlement) as both a 361
definite locality and a fixed community. The ancient settlements have attained a very high degree of stability and continuity. The peripheral settlements are rapidly ceasing to be mere economic apanages to the older centres of habitation, and are taking on the form of permanent and stable units. Being still in process of organization, their structure is fluid compared with that of the ancient settlements, and the dynamic factors of Tale social structure sometimes appear more conspicuously in them than in the latter.

But the older settlements are by no means static. The bounds, the layout, and the internal constitution of a settlement alter continuously, if very slowly. Even in a single year one can see how processes of expansion and contraction, of segmentation and incorporation, are at work all the time. Whenever land changes hands by inheritance, or an office passes by succession, or a man achieves economic independence, a minor reshuffle in the collocation of homesteads takes place. The cumulative effects of these processes of slow but progressive readjustment are clearly exhibited in the contemporary structure of a settlement. They are documented in its constitution and layout, in the location of ancestral graves, the ownership of farm plots, and in ceremonial and political relations. Fixity of location and of the structural plan ensure the stability and continuity of a Tale settlement.

Topographical Distinctions and the Natives' Knowledge of Natural History

Precise local orientation is essential in the economic activities and 823
social relations of the Tallensi. Place-names are often derived from 103
prominent topographical or geographical features. Thus, Tɛnzugu means the head (*zug*) or highest part of the country (*tɛŋ*), Yaɣazuor means 'perched on a hill', and many other place-names are popularly believed to be corruptions of topographical or spatial metaphors. Within a settlement topographical variations are distinguished by terms like *tɛŋr*, the lower part (the locative of *tɛŋ*, here in the sense of 'ground'), and *saazugu*, the higher part (lit. head-high, or high up). Conspicuous patches of low-lying land, hillocks, rock piles, ditches, water-holes, streams, &c., are named, and are very often sacred spots. The name may indicate peculiar qualities of the soil, prominent trees, or other landmarks formerly or still

823 103 found at that spot. Thus, Sielug is an uninhabited part of Zubiuŋ, where clay (*siela*) is abundant near the surface, making it unsuitable for cultivation and therefore a favourite pasture. Naɣabɛraabo'og ('cattle-poison-[824] grass valley'), the tract of low-lying land renowned as the traditional battle-field of Tongo and Ba'ari, appears to be named after a kind of grass believed to be noxious to cattle. Other such names have a legendary flavour, but the Tallensi, with their characteristic realism, have no myths or legends to account for them. Locality names of this kind are Kumpeɣalɔɣat ('Death carries quivers') and Kurbɔk ('Stooping ditch'). Sacred groves (*tɔŋgbana*) often serve as landmarks to identify a locality; e.g. Dooni (at Doo), means the precincts of that *tɔŋgban*, vaguely defined, as are all such localities, by position and not by definite boundaries.

823 We shall see later how the social structure of a settlement is anchored to a locality. The physical environment is built into the whole edifice of native life. Tale economic pursuits demand an intimate knowledge—unscientific but remarkably efficient at the level of their social organization and technical development—of natural history and topography. Tale leechcraft, on its empirical side, depends on this knowledge; and every prominent and many an inconspicuous feature of the landscape has its meaning and place in native social relations. A great boulder may be the children's playground, or the women's pounding-floor, or a shrine. A hoary baobab tree is not only an amenity and a source of useful products, but also a lineage shrine. A furrow, an outcrop of laterite, or a fringe of grass, may mark the boundary of a farm plot. A shrub, hardly noticeable on the bank of a dry watercourse, is a medicine. In consequence, the natural environment forms a very important aspect of the native's social space. In his own settlement, and especially in his section of the settlement, he knows every rock and tree and almost every tuft of grass, the qualities of the soil, and the ownership of farm plots.

In addition to his own settlement a man usually knows pretty thoroughly the natural environment of neighbouring settlements with which his clan has close social bonds and, more superficially, that of his mother's natal settlement and of settlements in which close extra-clan kin live. The great majority of men, even the younger men who have been abroad for lengthy periods, are all well versed in the geography, the vegetation, and the fauna of the tracts of bush and river-bank on the borders of Taleland, the economic exploitation of which is indispensable for the subsistence of [824] the natives. Every dry season many men and boys have to go out to the nearest bush to cut grass for thatching, rafters for roofing, shafts for their implements, *baɣana* (*Bauhinia*, spp.) bark for the rope used in house-building, canes for their bows and reeds for their arrows, tree-stumps for their shrines, and many medicinal roots and leaves. They go hunting in near and distant tracts of bush, so that most adult men are familiar with every hunting bush within a day's march of their settlement; and they go fishing in the pools left in the river-beds during the dry season. Women [222] are as expert as men in these matters. They take part in the big fishing drives, comb the fields for edible herbs, seek out deposits of clay for pottery and gravel for beating floors, explore the neighbouring bush for firewood, for reeds to make sleeping mats, for fruits and edible leaves.

In marked contrast is the average person's ignorance of settlements, 823
even near at hand, with which his clan has no close social bonds or with
which he has no personal links of kinship or friendship. Tallensi acquire
their knowledge of geography and natural history gradually in childhood,
by direct experience. It is already well established by the age of 9 or 10,
and grows *pari passu* with the expansion of the child's social space. The
basis of this is the child's natal settlement, where, except for occasional
visits to kinsfolk elsewhere, it spends its entire childhood. But even
adults had little liberty of movement in the past, since they could hardly
go unmolested in settlements unrelated to theirs by clanship or political
ties or where they had no kinsfolk. Most of the older people have never [484]
been outside Taleland, and many of them have never, or only rarely,
visited some of the settlements within an hour's walk of their own.

A Taləŋ inevitably has a profound emotional attachment to his native 186
settlement. It is striking how many Tale emigrants return home eventually after years of absence, casting aside the flesh-pots of Ashanti or the rich fields of Mampurugu. '*Kpala m-mah*—Here it is pleasant', they say, in spite of the penury of existence; for here are your kith and kin, here is the scene of your childhood joys and sorrows, and above all, the abode of your forefathers. The Taləŋ's empirical knowledge of his habitat is the precipitate in his thought and experience of the economic and structural facts that determine the local fixity of his native settlement. His affective attachment to it finds an institutionalized expression and support in the ancestor cult.

Settlement Boundaries

The hub of Taleland is Tongo (see map on p. 15). This ancient 621
settlement, geographically central and politically nodal in the network of interclan relations, provides a very good model of the structure of a typical Tale settlement.

As we know, the Tongo branch of Mosuor biis live in such close spatial 101
and social propinquity with Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, and Zoo that these clans are 621
often spoken of collectively as 'the people of Tongo (Tɔŋdɛm)'. For precision, Tongo proper is referred to as Tɔŋ-Nayiri—the Chief's House of Tongo—all over Taleland. Throughout the Mole-Dagbane-speaking region clans which hold a chiefship are thus identified by reference to it. Those which have tɛndaanas are sometimes called Tɛndaaŋ, on the same principle. Thus outsiders distinguish between Sie-Nayiri and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ.

Tɔŋ-Nayiri, Tongo proper, forms an irregular block of homesteads, 101
somewhat less than three square miles in area and is one of the largest 161
settlements in Taleland. It comprised, in 1934, 192 homesteads and a 621
total population of about 2,400.[1] This does not include Tongo people

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[1] Calculations, based on my own census samples and on figures kindly supplied to me by the A.D.C. Zuarungu, show that in Taleland the average number of people of both sexes and all ages occupying a homestead is 12 to 14. Owing to the variation in the constitution of homesteads this figure must be accepted with reserve; but it is sufficient for a rough estimate of population in a country where accurate statistics do not exist.

his ritual powers and duties give a tɛndaana very great prestige and considerable 793
moral authority over people living on his *tɛŋ* whether or not 784
they belong to his clan. At Tongo, for instance, the Gbizug tɛndaana is 779
spoken of and treated with a respect little short of reverence, both in the
formal interclan politico-ritual relations and in commonplace relations
of everyday life. 'He owns the land (*ɔn nso tɛŋ la*)', Tongo people say
gravely, 'we are strangers here. We only grow our millet here to feed
ourselves. If we offend the tɛndaana he can drive us away from here.'
The last part of this statement is not literally true. A tɛndaana cannot
drive people off their ancestral dwelling and farm-land; to say the least [577]
it would be ethically evil. It is not legal but ritual action that the statement
implies. I have seen a tɛndaana's curse throw a person into a state [789]
of anxiety that persisted for days, until a reconciliation was effected. But
this was anxiety concerning the mystical consequences of the tɛndaana's
curse, without any assumption as to its jural implications. The term
'owner' applied to a chief or tɛndaana, as we have stated earlier, is simply
a means of subsuming in one concept the configuration of rights and duties,
privileges and obligations which defines the relations of a community
with its politico-ritual heads in reference to its local framework and to
the common values symbolized in ritual doctrine and practice. The
material earth and the mystical Earth meet in the functions of tɛndaanas.

Many Tallensi are able to formulate the distinction between the earth 779
in its physical, utilitarian aspect and the Earth in its ritual manifestations. 812
But in general the distinction is inherent in the economic and politico- 823
ritual institutions of the natives rather than expressed in explicit doctrine
or language. Whenever or wherever the concept *tɛŋ* comes up it tends to
be ambiguous. It suggests both aspects of the earth, though the major
emphasis may be on one or the other. It is as if neither aspect of the
earth can appear without the other following like its shadow.

This holds particularly with the *tɛndaanditib* clans. Their ritual bonds 618x
with their *tɛs* form a halo around their utilitarian relations with the earth. 793
In most of these clans, therefore, it is a taboo of the Earth to sell parcels of
land. To sell farm-land (*kuo*) is like selling pieces of the mystical *tɛŋ* to 784
which they are bound by the strongest ties of interest, emotion, and values. 471
Namoo clans which do not have tɛndaanas do not feel this strong and 425
direct tie with their *tɛŋ* in its mystical aspect. The utilitarian, material
aspect of the earth falls apart from its mystical counterpart more easily 622
for them. Hence it is mostly in such communities that farm-land is
sold. But even Namoos say that the earth as such, the *tɛŋ*, cannot be
sold. In practice the sale of farm-land is a sale of usufructuary rights and
is confined to clansmen or kinsmen as we know. It is, always, a transaction
between men who are bound to one another by the fundamental common
and mutual interests of Tale collective life. Men cannot buy land in a
Tale settlement in which they have no kin. In this, as in other aspects of
their relationship towards locality, the Namoos put the major emphasis
on the coherence of the community as this is focused in the chiefship.
And fundamentally the coherence of the community is as indivisible as
the continuity of territory. The Chief of Tongo, for example, exercises
an ever-present influence on the prosperity and welfare of the members

823 found at that spot. Thus, Sielug is an uninhabited part of Zubiuŋ, where
103 clay (*siela*) is abundant near the surface, making it unsuitable for cultivation
and therefore a favourite pasture. Naɣabɛraabo'og ('cattle-poison-
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to a locality. The physical environment is built into the whole edifice of
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and technical development—of natural history and topography. Tale
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nearest bush to cut grass for thatching, rafters for roofing, shafts for their
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near and distant tracts of bush, so that most adult men are familiar with
every hunting bush within a day's march of their settlement; and they go
fishing in the pools left in the river-beds during the dry season. Women
[222] are as expert as men in these matters. They take part in the big fishing
drives, comb the fields for edible herbs, seek out deposits of clay for
pottery and gravel for beating floors, explore the neighbouring bush for
firewood, for reeds to make sleeping mats, for fruits and edible leaves.

On any day in the dry season or the first half of the rainy season 857
one can find a group of girls playing at housekeeping. Most com- 524
monly they consist of a group of sisters and ortho-cousins—two to 868
four active participants with, perhaps, a couple of infants attached. Often one or two small boys of about 5 or 6 are in their company, sharing in their play or absorbed in their own separate play. In play, as in the simple economic duties, there is as yet no marked sex dichotomy at this age; and small boys are not ridiculed for 'grinding grain' and 'cooking porridge', or small girls for 'building houses' in play. The girls generally constitute a mixed age group, varying from 6 to 10–11 years, for even those who are already capable of real cooking enjoy playing at it. When they are of about equal maturity their play tends to be loosely organized. Each cooks for herself, but they help one another, lending one another 'utensils', 'grain', 'firewood', and exchanging 'dishes of porridge' like co-wives. When one girl is older than the others she tends to take the lead, and the smaller girls assist her on the pattern of daughter helping mother in real cooking. Infants are 'our children'; and reliable informants have told me that small boys are said to be the 'husbands'—but I have never observed boys being addressed thus, though I have watched housekeeping play very frequently. According to my observation, it is merely implied in the manner of distributing the 'cooked porridge', which follows the pattern of family feeding. Older girls sometimes introduce dolls as the 'children'—clay figures of people made by themselves or, more usually, for them by their brothers.

The essentials of the play consist in 'grinding flour', 'cooking sauce' and 'porridge', and 'sharing out' the 'food'. Every feature of the real processes is mimicked, but with the most ingenious imaginative adaptations. A pair of flattish stones or a boulder and a large pebble serve as 'grindstones'. For pots, dishes, calabashes, and ladles various things are used—old sherds chipped into roughly circular pieces the size of a half-crown or crown, fragments of old
calabashes, the husks, whole or bisected, of *mɔləmɔk* or *kaləmpoo*, [824
spherical fruits of common trees varying in size from that of a large 137]
marble to that of a cricket ball, and even old tins or bits of tins, while
some girls make little pots of clay. Pebbles make a fire-place, a thin [177]
piece of millet-stalk is the stirring-stick, some dried grass the firewood.

APPENDIX III.

List of crops more commonly grown in North Mamprusi with their botanic and local native names.

Crop	Nankani	Kassena	Builsa
Early millet (Pennisetum typhoides, var.)	Nara	Chara	Nara
Late millet (Pennisetum typhoides, var.)	Zia	Mumpuana	Zia
Guinea corn (Sorghum vulgare)	Tchee*	Yara	Zamonta
Maize (Zea mays)	Karjana	Kamana	Tumbena
Rice (Oryza sativa)	Mui	Mumulinga	Mua
Groundnuts (Arachis hypogea)	Sunkpam	Sunoga	Sunkpa
Bambarra beans (Voandzeia subterranea)	Suma	Sinonu	Suma
Geocarpa beans (Kerstingiella geocarpa)	Sumperga	—	Sulumperg
Cowpeas (Vigna spp.)	Tia	Suona	Tua
Yams (Dioscorea spp.)	Nyuya	Pia	Nyuya
Sweet potatoes (Ipomoea batatus)	Nyimbemto	Nanuri	Nambanura
Coleus potatoes (Coleus dysentericus)	Pearsa	Yia	Pisa
Cassava (Manihot utilissima)	Banchi	Manchi	Banchib
Okra (Hibiscus esculentus)	Ma-ana	Ma-ana	Ma-ana
Hibiscus (short) (Hibiscus sabdariffa)	Bito	Puora	Suri
Hibiscus (long) (Hibiscus cannabinus)	Bersi	Kasoga	Kasoga
Soup plant (Gynandropsis pentaphylla)	Nangina	Kalema	Karabacho
Neri (Cucumis melo)	Sama	Yakoro	Bura
Calabash (Lagenaria vulgaris)	Tungu	Zonga	Chin
Calabash (bottle shaped) (Lagenaria vulgaris)	Linka	Konkolu	—
Pumpkin (Curcubita pepo)	Yogari	—	—
Bungu (Ceratotheca sesamoides)	Suri	Suru	Boarta
Sesame (Sesamum indicum)	Sasam	Buum	Bunsiug

**Note.*—Tchee is also used as a general term for cereals, rather in the same way that we use the word " corn."

[p. 74 is blank]

855

me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A
baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. 593
I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its 751
mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking,
to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What
discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period
comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until
it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative [515]
from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is
an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain
water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a
decoction of roots (*ŋaŋa*), the generic term for any vegetable products
used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by
the child's spirit guardian (*sɛŋɔr*). After its bath the mother lays the
child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth,
and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It
splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is
poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected 514
to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt
to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside 863
in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may
happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training
or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a
gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications
with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the
adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the 593
child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There 789
is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have
anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. 826
I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic
of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to
nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of
milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt
to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously
affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her
breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

593 (*Man daa nye fara dɔŋi ki cŋəm la ŋwala*)', this is a curse of the most
789 terrible kind. For that reason, no doubt, none of my informants could
quote an instance of a mother actually putting this curse on a child.
●826 The symbolism is of interest, however, in view of the stress Tallensi lay
on the mother as food-giver in their conventional picture of her.

Childhood

The next three or four years of a child's life are probably its freest and
857 happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the imme-
593 diate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older
siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in
being with their parents too. They will hang around their mother in the kitchen and trot around or sit with their father when he is resting under the shade tree. They see and hear everything that is going on in the house and are tolerated at all domestic occasions. In this way, and through their mimetic play, they build up the rudimentary schemas[1] of ideas, manual dexterities, and sentiments out of which grow the skills, interests, and values of later life. Love and indulgence is still the keynote of their parents' and other close relatives' attitude to them. Tallensi say that small children at this stage are still more attached to their mother than to their father because it is she who feeds them. In fact, as we have already mentioned, throughout a Taləŋ's life he thinks of his mother as the one who gave him food without stint, going hungry herself, if need be, so that her child might be fed.

By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex;
857 and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it
868 reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it
still remains free to play for much of its time. But from the age of 7 or
593 so boys and girls are eager to participate in the adult routine of life and
they become more and more involved in it. They begin by being given the simplest economic and household tasks such as scaring the birds from the fields of ripening grain, tethering the goats, rounding up the poultry—tasks which children of both sexes perform—or sweeping the house, carrying a tiny pot of water, gathering edible fungi or herbs for the pot, which girls only do. A very common task of both girls and boys at this stage is acting nursemaid to a baby. As this shows, there is very little social differentiation between them as yet.

857 By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division
of labour customary among the Tallensi, and with it the corresponding
593 division of social roles and ideals. Boys start following their older
462 brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any.
868 They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12
reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother

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[1] Cf. the discussion of this concept in my Memorandum just cited.

The idea of witchcraft is not easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is 754 by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based 613 on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not 827 connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas. Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from 754 the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of 611 witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the 761 slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical 783 responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are 586 taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a really effective force in maintaining the marriage.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or 581 ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond is of vital importance in this relationship.

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects 581 to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of 586 consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima, Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may [842] decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who [685] filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace, formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women. Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, [827] however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat during sleep is a grave mystical offence endangering the life of the husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent back to her parents.

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. 602 The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are 593 of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with 586
genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his 684
wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the 158
sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against 827
the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the 586
others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have 578
coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his
rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if 833
she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If 684
any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman 581
marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and
even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its 613
members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman 618
trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They 584
expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations
with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about 574
as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are 834
more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to
flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach
of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors
seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep
in separate rooms.

These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry 574
season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the 834
rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her 606
father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of 783
the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we
have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous 844
position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his 606
father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will 783
not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in
the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. 827
The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121
mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be
culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining
a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145
correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884
of physiological and psychological development and that of social and
cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of 182
which social development lags behind psycho-physical development.
A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but
has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and
social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she
is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight
in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that
he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four
or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physio-
logical development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower
than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily
be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856]
age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single
words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are
used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one
can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at
about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as
a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582]
they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827 ●
ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881
growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812
The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage
from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West
African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls,
which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality
as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the
body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical
and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural
emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

● 827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

mothers are busy with some household task. A healthy infant will 868
remain sitting thus, almost motionless, playing with a fragment of calabash, 854
a stick, or the sand—for the idea of giving an infant a toy or some
attractive trinket to occupy it when it is left alone does not occur to
the Tallensi. On the other hand, when an infant clamours for attention
there is always some one of its kinsfolk near at hand to render it.

The native point of view about physical growth was well illustrated 827 ●
in the case of two infants belonging to a single extended family which 856
I knew well. The younger infant was a lively, healthy, inquisitive girl
of about 2½–3 years old already toddling about and exploring the
world. The other infant, a boy about 3 months older, had been puny
and ailing from birth and, though obviously intelligent, was chronically
fretful and dependent and had not yet begun to walk. In Taleland [801]
the number three is symbolical of maleness, four of femaleness. Hence
it is said in their folk-lore that boys begin to walk and talk in their
third year, girls in their fourth. Yet the glaring discrepancy in development
between these two infants caused no anxiety to the parents of
the boy, except about his health. They realized clearly the connexion
between his retardation and his health, but were entirely complacent
about the former. That he would walk and talk in due course was
taken for granted.

The expectation of normal behaviour. It will be evident from these 856
examples that in the cultural idiom of the Tallensi age is not conceived
as a significant factor in psycho-physical or social development. Yet
relative seniority determines status and rights even in children's
groups and their notion of time is explicit and clear. They think of
genetic development primarily in terms of maturity, which is a synthetic
concept embracing both physiological and behavioural signs.
Growing up, in other words, is the evolution of one's social personality
as it approximates closer and closer to the fully grown, mature
adult. Just as this point of view precludes deliberate and standardized
methods of training children in the rudimentary bodily skills such as
walking, talking, and eye-hand co-ordination in eating, so it would
be incompatible with a didactic attitude about bowel and bladder
control or about sexual habits and knowledge.

This point of view gives rise to a factor of great importance in Tale 828
education, the *expectati[illegible] of normal behaviour.* In any given social

773 basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on
787 rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the
181 Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is
●828 on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

184 We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

769 The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one
627 feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line,
611 passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

784 We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of
184 the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against
769 eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔɣar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galəm kihər*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔɣar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔɣar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

794 As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the con-
784 gregation of a particular External *Bɔɣar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔɣar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

CHAPTER IV

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE FAMILY

The General and the Particular in the Pattern of Domestic Relations

611 It is clear from Chapter II that *dɔɣam*, the fact of birth, the event that fixes one's descent immutably, takes precedence over all other conditions governing the social relations and the social roles of a Taləŋ. This principle comes out in all departments of Tale social life, and nowhere so plainly as in the organization of domestic life. We turn, therefore, to examine the working of kinship in the domestic family, which we have called the focal field of kinship.

593 It is important to bear in mind that kinship relations in the family group are inter-articulated in a single configuration, dominated by the *patria potestas* of the male head of the family. The relations of father and child are coloured by the relations of mother and child that coexist with them, and the relations of mother and child acquire a special accent in the context of the relations between co-wives. Particular domestic relationships appear in their true light only when they are considered as part of the total pattern. The polarity of *dug* and *yir* moulds them all; all play a part in the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces in the structure of the family. All, moreover, are subject to the pull and pressure of genealogical connexions and groupings outside the family circle.

593 606 The natives are very conscious of this, and take it into account in the management of their lives. They say, for instance, that a woman's parents continue to have great influence over her for some years after her marriage and that is why her husband must keep on the good side of his parents-in-law. 'Don't you know what in-lawship means?' said Baɣankura, somewhat lugubriously, when I found him hard at work helping to rebuild his father-in-law's homestead. Again, Tiezien's family believed that he was much under the influence of his senior wife, Tanzoo. So when by various pretexts he caused both of his late brother's sons to lose the young wives they had recently taken, they ascribed it morosely to Tanzoo's jealousy of their mother, Tiezien's second wife.

181 We shall not attempt a full-dress study of Tale family life; here we are concerned only with the structurally significant norms. In a society as homogeneous and economically undifferentiated as that of the Tallensi, people of the same sex, age, and social standing tend to have the same life history; and organized units such as the lineage and the family tend to have a stereotyped structure and development. The common denominators of action stand out.

828 156 Yet it is a constantly reiterated assumption of the natives that no two

people are absolutely alike. Peculiarities of personality and character, 828 they say (and observation bears them out), qualify all social relationships. 156 People conform to the norms but each in the light of his own experiences, his special circumstances, his personal idiosyncrasies. The same sort of events, the same kind of person-to-person relations, make up the life of every family; but they are combined in a unique way in the history of a particular family. They give a distinctive tone or atmosphere to the life of that family that can be more easily felt than described. I knew 123 intimately six domestic families which I kept under observation for many months; I knew another dozen or so families fairly well, and spent many hours in yet other homes all over Taleland. I learnt to perceive, but I could never get below the surface of this affective ambient of family life. It is, indeed, difficult to find terms with which to convey the impression of smooth, equable, well-balanced running which a family like that of Ɔmara's makes on an observer, or the contrary impression of strain, or of inadequate co-ordination, which one sees in families like those of Kutɔbis of Tɔŋ-Dekpieng, or of Pumaan of Tɔŋ-Puhug.

Most Tale families seem to go on in a stable and harmonious way; but 596 there are, as we shall see, very many possibilities of friction, some inevitable, some avoidable, which arise out of the cleavages inherent in the 156 structure of the family. How long these forces of dissension remain 578 dormant, or how they are handled when they thrust forward, depends very much on the character of the family head. A tactful and considerate family head like Ɔmara manages to keep a smooth discipline in his family and to maintain amicable relations with his neighbours, whereas an erratic man like Kutɔbis cannot keep his sons in check and is for ever at loggerheads with his nearest agnates. From the point of view of the structurally significant norms, this feature of Tale family life and of Tale kinship in general is important as underlying the elasticity of actual social behaviour within the limits of the norms, and as a dynamic factor in the cycle of changes that a family passes through.

One thing which puts a screen between an inquirer and the inner life 602 of a family is the surprising degree of privacy a family can preserve. It is surprising in the circumstances of Tale social life. One's neighbours are one's nearest lineage kin. The lineage principle compels a man to consult and gain the support of these kin in any matter of importance, and he generally does so in trivial matters too. Men of the same lineage grow up together, play together in childhood, often work together as youths or men, constantly visit one another's homes, identify themselves with one another and act together in corporate affairs. Inevitably they know one another's personal history in detail. And this knowledge is not the mere stuff of gossip, but a real force in the corporate life of the lineage and the community, since the biography of the individual is a thread in the current history of the lineage, tying up with its common

or six abortive—or rather, to translate the native attitude into our own 586
terms, experimental—marriages. Men of over 50 say, with a laugh, that 587
they cannot remember all the women they have married who left them
after a short time. Women are more discreet about their marital history; 582
but observation leads to the conclusion that between 50 and 60 per cent.
of all married women have had more than one husband.[1]

A marriage breaks up either through the action of one of the spouses, 586
generally the woman, or through that of the wife's guardian. The
Tallensi have no formal procedure for divorce. If a man wishes to get
rid of a wife (which happens very seldom) he generally does so by withholding the bride-price, so that her guardian eventually recalls her, or
he makes her life so uncomfortable that she deserts him. If a woman
decides to leave a husband, she simply absconds. She may do so because
she dislikes him, or because he does not feed her well enough, or neglects
her sexually or otherwise, or, natives say, out of mere caprice. All women,
according to the men, are fickle and gullible; a plausible suitor can [828]
seduce any woman. So if a young wife goes to visit her parents and stays
longer than two or three days, her husband, be he an ardent young man
or a sober greybeard, hurries off to fetch her, usually in considerable
dudgeon, for fear that she may be abducted by another man.

Despite these initial pitfalls of marriage, families do get established 581
and remain stable. Though the idea of marriage as a lifelong and
irrevocable bond does not exist among the Tallensi, many couples do
settle down for life, and many other couples remain united for a long
enough stretch of years to produce one or more children.

Many complicated circumstances have an influence on this. Naturally, 581
the jural formalities must be properly complied with. That is to say, 583

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[1] Many of these experimental marriages are not marriages at all, according to the strict letter of custom, since they are sometimes dissolved before placation gifts have been made and often before any instalment of the bride-price has been paid. Some last only a few weeks. But they are always called marriages; for it is a fact that many marriages that begin in exactly this way do turn out to be stable in the end. Counting as 'wives' only those for whom bride-price was paid and who bore children to their husbands, I found, among a randomly chosen group of 20 men over 45, approximately, that only 2 had had 1 wife each; only 3 had had 2 wives each; the remaining 15 (= 75 per cent.) had all had more than 2 wives each. Altogether, these 20 men had had 71 wives (average 3·5 wives each); they had lost 21 (average 1 each) by death; and at the time of the census they had 45 wives (average 2·25 each). But most of them claimed to have 'married' from 10 to 20 times and were able to give a fairly complete history of these abortive 'marriages'.

Among a randomly chosen group of 20 women of child-bearing age—who were therefore not yet at the end of their matrimonial careers—6 (= 30 per cent.) had had only one husband each; 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had only 2 husbands each; the remaining 7 (= 35 per cent.) had had more than 2 husbands each, 4 of them having had more than 3 husbands each. Apart from the propensity to choose a final husband by trial and error, the custom of the levirate helps to increase the number of husbands a woman may have in her lifetime.

593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

861 Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of
parenthood as *dɔyam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb,
[538] 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔyam*)', often
[431] quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or
foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a 'cow of rearing (*ughug na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian, and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure, only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it. It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and that is the hardest part.

593 In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability
855 of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their
natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly 78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a
861 particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of
the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of
828 individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is
always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

and conform to them. Extreme cases illustrate this best. There is the 593
harsh disciplinarian whose sons fret under his control and often take 861
the first opportunity of running away. Saɣəbazaa was said to have been
a man of this kind—puritanical, industrious, and inclined to be over- 828
strict with his children. Four of his sons left him to seek work abroad. He made his daughters marry men he chose for them, and when one of them ran away with another man he whipped her and sent her back to her first husband. At the opposite extreme are men like Guna'ab and Yeanbərigya. They are casual and irresponsible. Guna'ab's sons were often pointed out as an example of bad parental influence. They did not farm but tried to earn a living by trading in chickens; they were reputed to be lazy and extravagant, and showed no respect to their father or his brothers—'just like their father', people said.

Nevertheless, it is a fundamental axiom that the ties of rearing do 593
not wipe out the absolutely binding ties of procreation (*dəɣam*). Whether 861
a person is reared by his own parents or not, whether he is badly or well brought up, nothing can erase the binding ties between parents and children. It is desirable for children to be brought up by their natural parents because then there will be no contradiction between the ties of *dəɣam* and the adventitious ties of affection created by upbringing.

By Tale custom, if a woman leaves a husband by whom she has had a child and is properly married to another man, the child lives with her during its infancy. When it is five or six years old it can be claimed by its natural father. This is called 'separating (*pəhəg*)' it from its mother. Tallensi think it immoral to separate a child from its mother before it is well able to fend for itself. I once heard a group of elders expostulate angrily with a man for taking his two children, aged about 4 and 7, from their mother who had married another man. The elders said the children would not thrive in the care of another woman; their father was acting out of sheer malice. He would be well advised to leave them with their mother for another three or four years and then claim them. Their prophecy was right, for the children pined away and both died within a year. This is an extreme case. But it is a good illustration of a problem that often arises when men claim the custody of their children from an ex-wife. A compromise between the claims of natural parenthood and jural paternity has to be struck which will not endanger the child's life.

Rights and Duties of Parents

We shall have much to say about the rights and duties of parents and 593
children in this book and it will be useful to list here briefly the most important of them. The central fact is the dominance of the father in all social relations; but this is balanced by the personal equality of the parents in the intimate domestic sphere.

A father's first duty to his children is to provide them with food.

593 old, admonished sometimes by his mother, tries not to eat too greedily lest his 2-year-old brother or sister eating with him should not have his fill. The 11- or 12-year-old, copying his parents, will take a mouthful or two and then say he has had enough, leaving the dish to be finished by his younger siblings. Thus are the seeds of the concern for each other's welfare commonly found between full siblings planted through the precept and example of the mother.

593 857 As we have seen, children sleep with their mother in infancy and early childhood. The feeling of emotional security this gives to a child thus becomes associated with his maternal siblings. Tarəmba, aged about 9, was playing with his usual companions of about the same age—four other boys and a little girl. All but one of these children came from the same expanded family. I stopped to chat to them. After a while we got on to the subject of parents. Yindubil said he preferred his father to his mother. Tarəmba interrupted, exclaiming, 'Hee! he 's telling fibs. It 's only because his mother has run away. My mother is dead and so I can't help it, I've got to like my father best. But if you have a mother it 's different. She is the one who gives you food and when night comes you sleep beside her, and you don't have bad dreams. If ● [828] you sleep alone you have bad dreams.' For a Taləŋ sleeping badly or having bad dreams is the arch symptom of a state of anxiety. Tarəmba's wistful remarks sum up vividly what a mother means to a Taləŋ as the focus of his sense of security, and this affect adheres to a full sibling. It forms a strong motive in the reluctance of full brothers to part and set up separate households or separate homesteads. Təbəg and Dəbil were full brothers (*saarət*), both middle-aged men with adult children. They lived together and farmed together in great amity. I knew them well and had occasion more than once to discuss with them one of my stock subjects, why *soog* brothers do not, like half-brothers, separate when their families start growing up. 'No', they said, 'thus it is pleasant (*ŋwala m-mah*). Being together thus we help each other. We two sitting here, are we not the children of one mother? He and I, we come from one vulva (*ti yi la pɛn yenni na*).' This is the standard explanation given for the lifelong partnership of *soog* brothers.

Soog siblings are generally devoted to each other and always, as far as my observation goes, unquestioningly loyal to each other in relation to other people. One sees this very clearly in the behaviour of young children. Babies and infants are often left by their mothers in the care of older children. A woman may ask one of her co-wives' children to keep an eye on her infant for a little while, but it is not usual for an infant to be left for hours on end, or a whole day, in the care of a half-sibling. So if one sees an infant being carried about by a young girl of 10 or 11 one can be fairly certain that they are either full siblings or that the little nursemaid is the infant's mother's classificatory 'sister' or 'child', whom she has specially brought to live with her

If a person is ill tempered or unnecessarily sharp with him, or appears 593 to dislike him, a Taləŋ retorts with 'Why do you dislike me? Am I 518 your *nyeer*, or what? (*I yaagəm bo? Man a i nyeer bɛ?*)' This formula is always spoken half-mockingly; for the rivalry of successive children, though assumed to be in the very nature of their relationship, is not taken too seriously. It is not, like the underlying rivalry of father and first-born son, subject to ritual sanctions. It is simply an acute expression of the familiarity and equality of siblings and does not destroy their solidarity.[1] Tallensi themselves say that successive siblings often get on together admirably and stand together as staunchly as any other full siblings. I have never heard it said that *soog* brothers are quicker to set up separate households if they are successive siblings than if they are not.

Tale custom recognizes the rivalry of successive siblings in a number 518 of other ways. Thus successive siblings (this applies chiefly to brothers) may not be buried in the same grave. If they are, their spirits will be 593 continually quarrelling and persecuting their descendants until they 595 are exhumed and separated. Again, successive sisters may not be married to the same man or even to the same clan. But this rule is, to my own knowledge, often broken. If they do happen to be married into the same clan the sisters must avoid being pregnant at the same time or, if they are, they must not see each other during their pregnancy. If they do one or both will miscarry. Here it is belief rather than practice that is a sign of the rivalry of successive siblings. Tallensi object to having two sisters married to the same man for prudential reasons. They say that it is obviously more difficult to get eight cows out of one man in payment of bride-price than it is to get four cows. Nevertheless it does sometimes occur. A well-to-do son-in-law who has his father-in-law's esteem can often persuade the old man to give him another daughter to wife. If the girls are successive siblings, a very [789] simple magical rite involving the burying of a hoe at the entrance of the husband's homestead serves to 'cut' their *nyeer* relationship.[2]

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[1] I do not know whether successive siblings quarrel more often than non-successive siblings. Tallensi say they do. Knowing the Tallensi, I have no doubt that conventional expectation itself acts as a stimulus to petty wrangling between successive siblings. Every time they have a disagreement not only onlookers but they themselves put the conventional interpretation on the situation, and this is bound to make them more touchy in relation to each other than to other siblings. In every aspect of Tale social life cultural definitions and expectations direct behaviour in this way. On the other hand, I knew several pairs of successive siblings who got on extremely well together and to all appearances never said a cross word to each other. Tallensi admit that this is quite common and explain it by the invariable stock phrase 'It's all a matter of character'.

[2] A question that immediately suggests itself is, whence does the rivalry of ●828 successive siblings arise? I have put this question to many Tallensi. The usual answer is in terms of the cliché that 'it is in the nature of things (*de yɛl nla*)'.

To return to our main subject, squabbles between children, whether they are successive siblings or not, are laughed away. When adult brothers and sisters quarrel it is taken more seriously. The irresponsibility—as the men view it—of women in marriage often leads to family quarrels. A woman who runs away from a husband to whom she has been given, or obstinately returns to one from whom she has been taken, arouses her father's and her brothers' anger. There may be a temporary estrangement between them. But in the end they usually become reconciled again. If she does not give in, her father or brothers do. 'They have no alternative but to give in (*ba kɔŋ ka diegəra*)', the natives say. Before that happens, however, there may be a father's curse on the girl and hard words spoken to her and her husband by her brothers. 573 578

Adult *soog* brothers also fall out at times, but in contrast to disputes between half-brothers this seems very rarely to become either the pretext or the stimulus to their deciding to separate. Tallensi ascribe it to peculiarities of personality. The very fact that full brothers are often alike in character may be the cause of friction between them. To give one or two illustrations, there was the case of Zaŋ and his older *soog* brother Pumaan. They were both inclined to be solitary, egocentric, excessively touchy about their status, and suspicious of others. The strong competitive streak in them inevitably coloured their relations. So Zaŋ often complained that he found Pumaan's authority irksome. But there was never, as far as I could discover, an open quarrel between

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But one or two more thoughtful informants appeared to have an inkling of the deeper sources of this peculiarity. They connected it with the fact that the older sibling is 'set aside' or 'left to itself (*bah*)' by the mother when she becomes pregnant with its *nyeer*. That is to say, the child's physical weaning is completed and simultaneously its affective attachment to its mother—a very possessive attachment with unweaned Tale babies—is brought to an end. A *nyeer* dispossesses its immediately preceding sibling of their mother's undivided care and devotion in both the physical and the psychological sense. This is a fact of observation and one which has a direct influence on family life. As we know, Tallensi maintain that it is very difficult for a woman to take care of two unweaned infants, hence the prohibition against a woman's becoming pregnant again before her infant is old enough to do without her undivided attention. When this custom is broken, so that a premature pregnancy follows, the parents are said to *nye* their child. As this term, cognate with *nyeer*, suggests, and conventional opinion confirms, a premature *nyeer* is believed to endanger a child's life. On the analogy of what is known to happen in our society, it can be surmised that the open acknowledgement of rivalry between successive siblings is a culturally standardized safety-valve for the jealousy and resentment the older sibling has against the younger for robbing him of their mother's attention. This explains also why successive birth order is the significant feature and not survival order. The older child's resentment will be directed only against its immediately next-born sibling, the one on whose account it was 'set aside', whether that sibling lives or not. It is possible, moreover, that open acknowledgement of the rivalry of successive siblings prevents it from turning into a disruptive element in the relations of siblings. 828 [843]

871 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descendants.
[186] Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system,
and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a significant
181 motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from
their ancestor cult. Every Taləŋa desires sons so that there may be
some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his
death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every
man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both
physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and
their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass
on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son,
a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on
a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not
merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious
duty to their ancestors.

781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of
the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children.
It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be
visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation.
Last year, for instance, Kuwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to
expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations
ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also
869 frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once
861 observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors
● 828 (*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor
shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these
conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing
some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of
about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,'
he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any
one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will
take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?'
When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about
religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

shrine they accompany us and listen to what we say. Will they not 869
[thus] get to know it?' His own small son Badiwona (6–7 years) is 861
extremely devoted to him. One day, affectionately patting the child, 828
he said: 'When we come out in the morning, and if he doesn't see [593]
me, he seeks about for me. If he doesn't find me he won't rest. That is why I had him initiated last year. Whatever I do he also sits and listens. Will he not get to know it thus? And when I am gone will he not say that when he was a child he used to go about with his father and used to see how his father did this and that? This is my child and I am teaching him uprightness. If he is about to do anything that is not seemly I tell him, so that when he grows up he will know upright ways.'[1]

Education, it is clear, is regarded as a joint enterprise in which 861
parents are as eager to lead as children to follow. In consequence of 856
this attitude adults are very tolerant of children's ways and especially about their learning. A child is never forced beyond its capacity. This is seen most clearly in relation to the pivotal economic activity, agriculture. However skilful a boy may be with his hoe, he will not be forced to do as much work as an adult. Men often restrain their sons of 12–14 from joining the adults in hoeing on the grounds that over-exertion is harmful. Again, women do not take daughters of 9–10 on firewood expeditions to the bush.

That skill comes with practice is realized by all. When adults are 868
asked about children's mimetic play they reply: 'That is how they learn.' Thus when a boy is 7 or 8 his father buys him a small bow so that he can go and learn marksmanship in play with his comrades. Yet the existence of individual differences in ability, both amongst children and amongst adults, is recognized and cited with reference to the acquisition of skill. Rapid learning or the acquisition of a new skill is explained by *n mar nini pam*, 'he has eyes remarkably', that is, he is very sharp. A friend of mine who was a cap-maker told me how he had learnt his craft, as a youth, from a Dagban by carefully watching him at work. When he was young, he explained, he had 'very good eyes'. This conception of cleverness is intelligible in a society where learning by looking and copying is the commonest manner of achieving dexterity both in crafts and in the everyday manual activities.

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[1] He learns—*a bandera*, cognate with *baŋ*, to know; I teach him—*npaasami*.

mothers are busy with some household task. A healthy infant will 868
remain sitting thus, almost motionless, playing with a fragment of calabash, 854
a stick, or the sand—for the idea of giving an infant a toy or some
attractive trinket to occupy it when it is left alone does not occur to
the Tallensi. On the other hand, when an infant clamours for attention
there is always some one of its kinsfolk near at hand to render it.

The native point of view about physical growth was well illustrated 827
in the case of two infants belonging to a single extended family which 856
I knew well. The younger infant was a lively, healthy, inquisitive girl
of about 2½–3 years old already toddling about and exploring the
world. The other infant, a boy about 3 months older, had been puny
and ailing from birth and, though obviously intelligent, was chronically
fretful and dependent and had not yet begun to walk. In Taleland [801]
the number three is symbolical of maleness, four of femaleness. Hence
it is said in their folk-lore that boys begin to walk and talk in their
third year, girls in their fourth. Yet the glaring discrepancy in development
between these two infants caused no anxiety to the parents of
the boy, except about his health. They realized clearly the connexion
between his retardation and his health, but were entirely complacent
about the former. That he would walk and talk in due course was
taken for granted.

The expectation of normal behaviour. It will be evident from these 856
examples that in the cultural idiom of the Tallensi age is not conceived
as a significant factor in psycho-physical or social development. Yet
relative seniority determines status and rights even in children's
groups and their notion of time is explicit and clear. They think of
genetic development primarily in terms of maturity, which is a synthetic
concept embracing both physiological and behavioural signs.
Growing up, in other words, is the evolution of one's social personality
as it approximates closer and closer to the fully grown, mature
adult. Just as this point of view precludes deliberate and standardized
methods of training children in the rudimentary bodily skills such as
walking, talking, and eye-hand co-ordination in eating, so it would
be incompatible with a didactic attitude about bowel and bladder
control or about sexual habits and knowledge.

This point of view gives rise to a factor of great importance in Tale 828
education, the *expectation of normal behaviour*. In any given social

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating
either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner
appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of
maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the
demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another
[183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact
876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour.
We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation
entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and
little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever
we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of
Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little
doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without
being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect
their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of
development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from
earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children
deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and
talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the
daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves.
A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand:
'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?'
868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of
198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour
acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of
clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk
or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs
of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into
the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors.
The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong
stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules
[576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete
514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way
from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to
learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean
habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall
refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

understand or to be eager to understand the language of adults, and 868
no one would think of using ' baby talk ' to them. 178

As normal behaviour is always expected, no one hesitates to correct 828
a child or adult who behaves inappropriately through ignorance, and 861
the correction is generally accepted with alacrity and ease. If children are allowed to be present at the activities of adults, they are assumed to be interested in and to understand what is being said and done. No one would inhibit his conversation or actions because children are present, or withhold information upon which adequate social adjustment depends from a child because it is thought to be too young. Tallensi, therefore, are not surprised at the comprehensive and accurate sexual knowledge of a 6-year-old, though direct instruction in these matters is never given. As with the ordinary skills and interests of daily life, they expect children to want to know such things. *Naawun mpaan ba*, ' Heaven teaches them ', they say, or, as we should put it, it is perfectly natural.

It is known that some people learn more quickly and accurately
than others, that variations in skill and ability exist. But the idea of [856]
precocity or retardation as a quality of a child's character has no place in Tale thought. A child may intrude on a situation where some one of his or her degree of maturity has no business to be and will be categorically dismissed then; but it would never be rated for being ' old-fashioned '. Every child is expected to be eager to know and to do as much as its social space and its stage of psycho-physical development permits. Hence, though it is clearly recognized that knowledge, skill, and capacity for social adjustment grow cumulatively, the Tallensi have no technique of isolating a skill or observance from the total reality and training a child in it according to a syllabus, as, for instance, we train children in dancing, the multiplication table,
or the catechism. Tale educational method does not include drill as [876]
a fundamental technique. It works through the situation, which is a bit of the social reality shared by adult and child alike.

The conceptions and practices we have been considering constitute 861
the significant factors in education by participation in practical tasks which is often described as the distinctive method of primitive societies and is as conspicuous in Taleland as in every other preliterate country. It may be observed that even in Western society the

861 principal method of education is by participation. A child repeating the multiplication table is participating in the practical activity appropriate to and defined by the school; but measured by the total social reality it is a factitious activity, a training situation constructed for that purpose. The Tallensi do not make systematic use of training situations. They teach through real situations which children are drawn to participate in because it is expected that they are capable and desirous of mastering the necessary skills.

000 Corresponding to this contrast in method we can observe a contrast in psychological emphasis. The training situation demands atomic modes of response; the real situation requires organic modes of response. In constructing a training situation we envisage a skill or observance as an end-product at the perfection of which we aim and therefore arrange it so as to evoke only motor or perceptual practice. Affective or motivational factors are eliminated or ignored. In the real situation behaviour is compounded of affect, interest and motive, as well as perceptual and motor functions. Learning becomes purposive. Every advance in knowledge or skill is pragmatic, directed to achieve a result there and then, as well as adding to a previous level of adequacy.

861 ● 828 The expectation of normal behaviour and organic response operate also in the education of a Western child, e.g. when it is learning speech or manners. In Taleland it is the most effective factor in the inculcation of a wide range of social behaviour from bowel and bladder control to ritual notions, and from economic skills to sexual habits.

Interests, skills, and observances. We have seen, now, that a Tale child acquires the interests, skills and observances which comprise the repertoire of adult social behaviour not in discrete categories but in a synthetic combination. But it is necessary, for analytical purposes, to define such categories of behaviour. They refer to forms of overt behaviour and not to the psychological functions or mechanisms subsumed therein.

181 *Interests.* By *interest* I mean simply the observable fact that, according to their level of maturity, Tale children and adults spontaneously show preference for some activities rather than others; that they have a selective orientation in their social space, e.g. reacting to some people more readily than to others; that they obviously seek to satisfy

867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the
601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and
602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge
accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations
856 in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning—mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 *Mimesis*. Writers on primitive education have often attributed an
828 almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

actions or words of older children or adults with whom they happen 153
to be without rhyme or reason and merely for the sake of ‘ imitation ’. 828
For hours at a stretch mimetic behaviour may be unnecessary, but in certain types of situation it is the child's readiest form of cognitive adaptation.

Mimesis occurs (*a*) as a response to direct stimulation; (*b*) as an 868
adaptation to a situation the child does not know how to deal with 153
on the basis of its attainments at the time; (*c*) in play, when it is rehearsing in fantasy its interests and the life of the world about it. The Tale boy who learns the leatherworkers' or blacksmiths' craft by closely studying his father at his work and listening to his explanations, tentatively repeating the procedure with scraps of leather or iron and gradually perfecting his skill, is no more learning by imitation than our own children do when they learn arithmetic by copying procedures demonstrated on the blackboard. If he does not understand the craftsman's procedure the lad will never learn it.

We have already had examples of mimesis in response to direct stimulation—e.g. when an infant begins to learn to dance. A child's first efforts at talking are constantly stimulated in this way. At the babbling stage its mother or grandmother, or whoever is looking after it, will frequently in playful mockery mimic its babblings, ‘ What are you muttering there? ’ says the woman, ‘ gba-gba-gba-ma-ma . . .’, and the infant is thus stimulated to repeat these sounds again and again. I have often observed incidents such as the following: Duun was playing with his little daughter of about 2. He called her, ‘ Kologo-o-o ee! ’ and she replied ‘ m! ’; and again he called, and she replied; and so on for about five minutes. Then he said, ‘ Call the dog, wo-ho, wo-ho! ’ The infant repeated, ‘ Wo-wo! ’ Again he called the dog and the infant repeated the call, and so on several times. Some one spoke to him, and turning his attention from the child, he answered. The infant, still influenced by the set of the game, repeated, as well as she could, a word or two, much to his amusement. As we have seen, the expectation of normal behaviour influences parents to talk to infants as if they understand everything.

When there is a pair or a group of children together, the oldest or 861
most self-possessed generally gives the cues to behaviour which the 153
others follow. This is logical, since collective action must be common

153 laughing and called to me: ' Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

861 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's
153 co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activities in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish[1] for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Taləŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its cooperation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

153 *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrame*,
524 ' they are playing ') is well defined and clearly recognized by the

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● [828] [1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

[1] [A Kind of mud mortar --Analyst]

[828] 153 524 Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 524 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 867 On a morning in June I found Gɔmna, aged about 7, his half-sister Zɔŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

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[1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

to declare, is not a matter of expediency or calculation but the essence of 182 life for the individual and the community. It is a sacred necessity; and 796 men must be in harmony amongst themselves and with the mystical powers that control their lives if they desire to gain the beneficence of these powers for this end. The ritual, the sacrifices, and the prayers to the ancestors and to the Earth, pleading for the fruitfulness of the land, of women, and of the flocks and herds, for health, prosperity, and peace, and offering thanks at the end of the agricultural year for these boons, eloquently express the Tale conception of the common good. In the rites of the Great Festivals the widest community that has social relevance for any Taləŋ emerges, not as a hard-and-fast political unit, but as a temporary synthesis of all the forces of social integration operative in Tale society. This is an expression of the fact that, though they have no centralized government, the Tallensi do form a single body politic, albeit one without defined territorial boundaries. This unit is built up on the widely ramifying structural ties which knit the independent corporate units together. But its ultimate basis is a body of moral and jural norms and values accepted as binding by all Tallensi, and defended from the disruptive action of conflicting sectional interests by the most solemn ritual sanctions of Tale religion. The function of ritual collaboration between clans and lineages is to maintain the unchallengeable validity of these norms and values; for upon their observance the attainment of the common good ultimately depends.[1]

Native Thought and the Realities of Social Structure

We have digressed to survey the scope and function of ritual collaboration among the Talis in order to see what truth there is in the maxim that 582 'those who sacrifice together do not intermarry'. As a generalization it is obviously inaccurate; but it is valid for particular instances of linkage by clanship ties, though only as an *a posteriori* inference.

Tale elders do not fall into this error of deduction through lack of 829 intelligence or ignorance of their social organization. Among the Tallensi, as among most primitive peoples, what appears to us to be defective logic usually proves to be a product of the social organization as it is apprehended by native thought. When an individual Taləŋ applies the maxim we have criticized to his own particular field of social relations—not to that of his lineage or clan—it is perfectly apposite. For an individual in his personal capacity can only sacrifice together with other individuals if they are his kinsfolk or clansfolk; and this implies automatically that he cannot marry their daughters or sisters.

In the social philosophy of the Tallensi, as will be shown in the next 829 volume of this study, kinship is the model of all social ties between 602 individuals and groups. The ties of clanship, ritual collaboration, or local contiguity are visualized as so many different extensions and transformations of the fundamental patterns of kinship. For the individual this is accurate to a very large extent. There is a kinship element in all his social

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[1] This aspect of Tale political organization and its wider sociological implications are discussed in *African Political Systems*, cit. supra.

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relations; for him they are all contained within a single frame of social reference, determined, at bottom, by his parentage. He cannot connect the rules and conditions that govern his own social behaviour with the general principles of Tale social structure. He has no means of ascertaining these, since the Tallensi do not make a systematic study of their own society. Every native knows only a limited sector of the social system, and the picture he has of it is built up out of his direct experience of the way in which it acts upon the day to day conduct of his life. Individuals who have the same or nearly the same field of social relations tend to have the same picture of their society; and individuals who have different fields of social relations tend to interpret their social behaviour and the structure of their society by the same concepts and along the same lines in so far as the same principles determine Tale social structure in every sector of the society. When we speak of Tale social philosophy or Tale thought, we do not mean that the natives have a systematic body of objective knowledge about their own society. We mean only the common denominators in the knowledge of their society that they have individually. Such knowledge, though partially inaccurate and transmitted only in face to face contact, is necessary for the existence of every society. For men employ their social notions in their relations with others and adapt their concepts to those of their fellows in carrying on collective life. Common notions emerge out of corporate and co-operative social action for common ends. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi this knowledge is widespread and tends to be uniform; hence the common denominators stand out.

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When a native harks back to kinship in order to explain or interpret any social tie that directs his corporate or co-operative activities, he is putting forward a common point of view, but not an objectively accurate one. The outside student, seeing Tale social life on a wider scale than any native, can see differences in the significance of kinship for the individual, and of clanship for a corporate unit. Thus, matrilateral kinship has a different value for the individual from what it has in the sphere of clanship. In the former case, matrilateral kinship confers definite privileges and obligations on an individual in relation to other individuals or to defined groups, and it has the same value for everybody. In the latter case, it is one of several fictions used to rationalize ties of a [601] particular kind between corporate units. For example, the sister's son (*akəŋ*) of a Ba'ari man is not entitled by right of matrilateral kinship to participate in sacrifices at Ba'at Da'a; but Ba'at-Lakum yidem exercise this right in virtue of clanship ties accounted for by the fiction of descent from a sororal nephew. Similarly, it is evident to the sociologist that the exogamic barrier by which ties of clanship are distinguished from other social ties has a different structural value from the prohibition against marrying a maternal kinsman; for the former is a factor of solidarity between corporate units, and the latter the index of a particular tie between certain individuals. But the natives lump them together.

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Thus it comes about that the Tallensi describe and discuss the social relations of corporate units in terms of kinship, using such concepts as *sunzɔ*, *mabii*, and *dɔyam*. The primary significance of these concepts will

be discussed in our next volume. It will be useful, however, to sum up 829
the meanings attached to them in the context of the structural relations 602
between corporate units. 618x

The term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*) means literally sibling by the same father.
It is applied by the members of a particular lineage or clan to another 601
lineage or clan with which they have a defined structural relationship, involving reciprocal rights, duties, and interests, identical with or analogous to those that obtain between segments of a single lineage. The natives visualize this relationship, which they describe by the abstract noun *sunzɔt*, as modelled on the social relationship of brothers.

Mabii (pl. *mabiis*), literally mother's child, and the abstract noun *mabiirət*, are more loosely used and have a wider range of reference. In its primary sense *mabii* denotes a kinsman of the same generation, in particular a sibling, as distinguished from kinsmen of a preceding or succeeding generation. Its emphasis, however, is not on the reciprocal rights, duties, and interests of siblings, but on their equality of status and on the sentiments of brotherhood based on common descent. A man can speak appropriately of his brother as his *mabii*, but not of his son. Lineages of the same order of segmentation can be described as *mabiis*, but not a segment of a lineage in relation to the whole lineage. Related clans, or even clans that have some distinctive usage in common, can speak of one another as *mabiis*. In certain circumstances all the Tallensi may be described as *mabiis* by contrast with non-Tallensi. *Mabiirət* means 'to be akin to one another in some way'—by kinship in the narrow sense, in a kinship context; by local propinquity, political or ritual association, common custom, or merely common race, in other contexts. It is reminiscent of our own phrase 'kith and kin', which we apply to our actual kinsmen in one context, and to our 'cousins', the Australians or Canadians, in another. We have tried to convey this by translating *mabiirət* by 'kinship in the wide sense'.

Lastly, there is the concept *dɔyam*, derived from the verb *dɔy-*, to bear or beget a child. Its primary reference is to kinship by consanguinity; hence it is most appropriately used to refer to a structural tie based on a known or accepted genealogical connexion. It serves to distinguish such ties from apparently similar ties for which no genealogical connexion or at most a very general community of stock is postulated. Thus, a Tongo man will describe the people of Yamələg as 'our *dɔyam*', but not the people of Zoo; they are merely 'our *mabiis*'. *Dɔyam* has no reference to the relative status of the parties or to their precise jural relationship. Father and son, uncle and nephew, a person and his distant cognate, clansfolk, members of linked lineages, are all *dɔyam* to one another. The term refers to the tie of consanguinity itself.

All three terms are frequently used in a metaphorical way to express attitudes of amity, solidarity, or goodwill, such as are taken for granted amongst kinsfolk, even where the parties concerned have no social ties based on genealogical connexion. To give an instance, Soog and Zubiuŋ were estranged from each other for a long time. At length they were compelled for ritual reasons to meet and become reconciled. Pledging their clans to everlasting amity and goodwill in the future, the two spokes-

829 men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no
602 one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so,
×618 let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used
601 here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana ɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

648 The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the
×618 Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the
171 country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔlɔga, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔlɔga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which

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[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deen*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

621 comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Degal tɛndaana, the ritual
578 'owner' of the land of Bunkiuk, the Gɔlibdaana's clan. As the head of
423 Bunkiuk and headman of Tɛnzugu, which includes Degal, he held political authority over all the territory under the ritual jurisdiction of the latter. Hence this strip of territory, as far as the watercourse, belonged to him. The people dwelling there were no concern of his; let them go elsewhere if they wished.

The Yinduurna'aba, a simple and inarticulate old man, who has never mastered the wiles of modern headmanship, protested vehemently. The Gɔlibdaana's arguments were untenable. The ritual jurisdiction of tɛndaanas had nothing to do with the matter. In any case the Zandoya tɛndaana would contest the Degal tɛndaana's claim. Everybody knows that tɛndaanas acknowledge no boundaries. The group in question was a segment of Zandoya. How could they belong to any other political unit than the latter? To talk of their abandoning the land on which their ancestors had dwelt was preposterous. Indeed, the whole situation was something quite unheard of; it could never have occurred before the coming of the white man, when everyone had his acknowledged place in the society. The truth was that the Gɔlibdaana was deliberately trying to entice his people away from him.

There the matter rested. The case was widely discussed and public opinion, except for the Gɔlibdaana's supporters, sided unanimously with the Yinduurna'aba. Five other cases of the same kind came to my notice; and in all of them the verdict of native custom is unequivocal; social affiliation and not alleged territorial boundaries define the extent of a community. Even the new settlements, though they sprawl more widely than the old settlements and are usually surrounded by considerable tracts of uninhabited land, have no defined geographical boundaries. They can and do go on expanding.

The Concept of the Tɛŋ

621 A Tale settlement can only be identified as a unit by reference to the lineage relationships, politico-ritual ties and cleavages, and jural rights and duties, prevailing within it and between it and its neighbours. That is why we have avoided the word 'village', which conjures up the image of a neatly isolated, compact territorial unit. *Tɛŋ* (pl. *tɛs*) is the native concept denoting a settlement; but no English translation can convey its exact sense. In some ways it is reminiscent of the deme of ancient Greece, a coalescence of local association, lineage organization, common religious cult, and political solidarity. None of these factors serves to demarcate a *tɛŋ* absolutely from adjacent *tɛs*; all of them link together neighbouring *tɛs* or parts of *tɛs* as closely in respect of that one category of social relations as they unite segments of the same *tɛŋ*. A settlement is only a relatively autonomous community. One might perhaps define it as the region of maximum overlap of all the categories of social relations found among the Tallensi.

621 Native linguistic usage reflects this, for *tɛŋ* has a width of reference
619 varying with the situation. A man beginning a discourse on marriage
829 with '*ti tɛŋɔ, nyɛn di pɔya* . . .—In this our land, if you marry a wife . . .'

is thinking of the country at large as a unit with respect to marriage 621
customs. Hill Talis often describe Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo as one *tɛŋ*. 619
They are thinking of the close bonds uniting these places in opposition to 829
themselves. But Tongo, Zubiuŋ, and Zoo are always distinct *tɛs* to one
another. Tɛnzugu is described as a single *tɛŋ* when the coherence and
close interdependence of the group of clans inhabiting it are emphasized;
but when their genealogical cleavages loom foremost they are designated
as separate *tɛs*. In the struggle for political dominance now going on [578]
between the head of Kpata'ar and the head of Bunkiuk, the partisans of
both bitterly denounce one another for 'breaking up the unity of the *tɛŋ*',
but insist, at the same time, that each clan holds its *tɛŋ* in its own right
and does not come under the jurisdiction of any other, according to
native custom.

Underlying these variations in usage is the generic conception of *tɛŋ* as 621
a locality defined in relation to a corporate unit of social structure, a lineage, clan, or interconnected group of clans; and the variation in the width of reference of the concept reflects the variation in the range of corporate solidarity that is effective in different situations. In war the Tɛnzugu clans all hold together; in the matter of marriage one of them might quite easily come into conflict with another. The confluence of local, lineage, and politico-ritual relations, as we have previously noted, is the keel of Tale social organization.

Tɛŋ, like all the key concepts of Tale social organization, has a ritual 621
significance as well. It denotes the Earth in its mystical aspect, either in 182
the generic sense or in the specific sense of a particular sacred spot and 771
its precincts. What is a *tɛŋ* in the sphere of secular relations may be, but often is not, a *tɛŋ* in the system of religious beliefs. There are two aspects to locality as a correlate of social structure: the secular aspect and the sacred. They merge in the social organization and the social philosophy of the Tallensi, and consequently also in linguistic usage. Sometimes one aspect is the focus of a social activity, sometimes the other, sometimes both together. If a man repeats the conventional formula, '*Tɛŋ la pu sayat ziem la ni*—The Earth does not permit bloodshed', his exclusive reference to the mystical aspect of the Earth is obvious; if he says of another settlement or region, '*Ba tɛŋ la mar ki pam*—Their land has plenty of grain', he is thinking solely of the material and secular denotation of the word; if he says of Ba'ari, '*Bam tɛŋ kuob la pu dara*—In their settlement farms are not sold', his implication to anyone familiar with native beliefs is that it is a taboo of the Earth (in its mystical character) at Ba'ari to sell parcels of the earth (in its material character).

Postponing for the moment the further elucidation of these ideas, we 621
may note their most commonplace expression in Tale custom. A settle- 618x
ment name is *ipso facto* the name of the clan or group of maximal lineages 551
whose home it is. A custom arising out of the rule of clan exogamy is that of addressing a wife by an appellation indicating her clan of birth. Most often it is the clan place-name, e.g. Zubieŋa, Wakiiŋa. It may be the name of a well-known *tɔŋgban* in her natal settlement, e.g. Ba'ari women are called Saniiga, after the sacred grove of that name in Ba'ari. It may be a name indicating differences of custom and belief that distinguish her

764 for a cloth'. When the skin is put on the corpse, the tail comes in front
and the three cowries are placed on it. This gives rise to a Kusase oath
[195] *M'ba ne o ligidi ta*[1] (My father and his three cowries). Only the
back of the goatskin is used; the flesh and the skin off the belly are
cooked outside the compound and must only be partaken of by those
who have lost their fathers.

764 When a man dies, his wife's brother will bring roots which are
boiled in water in which the widows bathe for three days, and
765 after the third day the roots are buried (by a man who has lost his
wife) in the cattle-kraal, or behind the compound. Each widow is then
[314] given a fruit of the *kponkporog* palm tree, from which the contents of
the shell have been removed and "medicine" from "roots" put in its
place. For a month, a little of this must be put in all the food which
they eat. When they see the new moon, they will put aside this fruit
and begin to prepare beer for the second funeral custom which is
called *ku dar*. This date will be fixed by the *kudan*—the one in charge
of the funeral custom—who is the heir. The first part of the funeral
is called *ku-masir*[2] (the wet funeral). *Ku-dar* (the second funeral) is
765 derived from the word *dar*, to give some one permission to go off. "He
769 (the dead) will not go until all these things have been done." A day is
fixed to begin the making of the beer, called *ku-malem* or *zel* (the
setting of the funeral (beer). On that day, all the daughters of the
deceased, who have married elsewhere, assemble at the compound of
the deceased. Every one brings a fowl and a guinea-fowl; grain food

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[1] The Nankanse of Winkoŋo and the Black and Red *Tendana* have a similar oath,
[171] i.e. *Kare perega la ligidi ita.*

[2] The night of the *ku-masir* custom, there is a dance at which the women choose
[535 men (*poa-leasig*). All the 'strangers' line up with the townspeople opposite them. The
831] 'stranger' women choose from the townsmen and the townswomen from the men
who are 'strangers'. A girl comes forward and touches the man of her choice with her
finger. Some men will be chosen by two or three girls, another man may not be
chosen at all. Such a one, *o nyu kuk* (has drunk of a bitter tree). These girls, except
those who are married, pass the night with the man or men whom they have selected,
sleeping on one mat with them, but they do not have sexual intercourse with each
other. It would be a disgraceful thing if they did so. When I expressed scepticism
as to this, I was informed that in the old days youths and maidens took great pride in
resisting such temptations, and sought it rather than avoided it. The two sexes
everywhere joined in games, dances, and swimming. A youth's ambition was to be
renowned as a hunter, or good farmer, or wrestler. There was a firm belief that a
profligate would be killed by an arrow in his first fight, or bitten by a snake. My
informant said Europeans separated boys and girls in our schools and told boys not to
think about women, and in consequence young boys were now always thinking about
such things.

841 contours. Before a woman menstruates (*lu sie*, lit. fall from the waist), and after she ceases altogether to menstruate, she cannot bear children. 842 When a woman has monthly periods she is capable of conception; when she is pregnant her periods stop. Thus menstruation, say the Tallensi, is a condition like pregnancy (*sie a puur*). It is the sign of capacity for child-bearing.

A man's *dɔyam* becomes fruitful some time after puberty (*u solǝme*, 842 verb), the main sign of which is the emergence of pubic hair. At first, 831 when the adolescent boy begins to have nocturnal emissions, his powers of procreation are not yet mature. It is only after some time, when he is completely *sol*, that he becomes capable of procreation. For procreation depends not on the sexual fluids ejaculated in the act of coitus by both man and woman, but on an active principle, as it were, in these fluids, the *ŋaamis*. The natives cannot explain more precisely what the *ŋaamis* is or how it works. What they maintain, emphatically, is that conception, both among men and among animals, cannot occur without sexual congress, and that it depends on the mingling (*gɛrǝm*) of the male sexual fluid with the female sexual fluid, or rather on the happy conjunction of their respective procreative essences (*ŋaamis*). Thus the function of the male is as essential as that of the female in procreation, and every child knows this.

842 Much evidence could be quoted in proof of this. Tallensi know that a male's procreative potency resides in the testicles (*lana*), and they 831 castrate small livestock which they want to prevent from breeding. The suspension of sex relations with a wife who has a nursing child is not a ritual matter, subject to mystical sanctions, but a practical necessity in order to prevent the woman from conceiving again too soon. Its observance is a question of conscience and self-control and few men get through life without a lapse. Some, I was told by one of my most trustworthy informants, practise *coitus interruptus* in order to avoid impregnating a nursing wife. Some men believe in a 'safe period'. I once heard a theory of this kind stated by a man to a couple of friends. His very [841] modern-sounding theory was that the 'safe period' follows shortly after menstruation, since menstruation is a sort of pregnancy, and a pregnant woman cannot conceive again. But the clearest indication of the role attributed by the Tallensi to sexual conjugation in procreation was given in a conversation I listened to at the Chief of Tongo's house. The chief and the elders were talking about the White Fathers at Bolǝga. Garbled ideas about their doctrines have reached many Tallensi. Jesus was mentioned. One man said that the Fathers claimed that His mother conceived Him without knowing a man. A vigorous argument followed. Most of the men were openly sceptical, saying that it was quite impossible. But one or two had a deeper respect for the white man. True, they admitted, black people cannot have children without sex relations; but perhaps the white man, with his wondrous powers and knowledge,

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842 has a medicine which enables women to conceive without the participation of a male.

The notion of a procreative essence as distinct from the sexual fluid, however vaguely formulated it is, is of importance. Tallensi distinguish between sexual vigour or desire and the power of procreation. They know that people who are sterile (*kundɔɣar*) lack the latter but are not necessarily deficient in the former. Na'abzɔ, gossip said, was sterile because in his wild young days as a soldier he had lived with a Dagban woman who had maliciously caused him by some magical means to 'pour away all his power of begetting (*kpaa u dɔɣam waabi bah*)' in excessive intercourse with her. The uncharitable believed that he was impotent to boot, but others were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

842 [837] The Tal'ensi regard *dɔɣam* as, above all, a very precious human function, quite apart from the pleasures of sex. Thus, when Zikihib's young wife was left a grass widow for three years by her vagabond husband and had a child by a lover, it was unanimously condoned. Was she, it was argued, to cast away her powers of child-bearing for nothing (*zaŋ u dɔɣam bah wari*) just because she had a faithless husband and was herself too devoted to her children by him to run off with another man?

842 781 Lastly, the notion of the *ŋaamis* is the point at which mystical beliefs enter into the theory of conception. The obvious physiological facts of parenthood are summed up in the maxim, 'A man and a woman unite to procreate a child'. But behind plain physiology lies a mystery. Sometimes a man sleeps with his wife on a single occasion and she becomes pregnant (*u ŋɔɣa puur*—lit. she seizes a belly). At other times a man has relations with his wife regularly for months and she fails to conceive. Thus conception depends, in the last resort, on Heaven (*Naawun*), the Final Cause by which the Tallensi rationalize chance and which they invoke when empirical or less recondite mystical explanations fail. There is an essential mystical factor in procreation; and if a man or a woman fails to beget or bear a child, appeals can be made to the ancestor spirits and other mystical powers that intervene directly in human destiny. That is why a barren woman in her heart of hearts never gives up hope of having a child as long as she is still of child-bearing age, though the Tallensi know that barrenness is often a fact of nature beyond cure by either empirical or mystical agencies.

The Significance of Paternity and Patriliny

602 A person's genealogical ties are fixed by his parentage. Among the Tallensi these are the ties that plot the trajectory of the individual's life. The rights and duties that are critical for his role and status in society all stem, in the last resort, from the fact of birth. A person cannot divest himself, or be divested, of the bonds created by his birth and yet remain a member of the society; nor can he fully and unconditionally acquire

593 578 basic dichotomy of *dug* and *yir* crystallizes. The comradeship which grows up gradually between husband and wife with the lapse of time is the obverse, paradoxical as it may seem, of a process of gradual emancipation of the wife. As her children grow up, the centre of gravity of her life shifts more and more to them and away from her husband. If she has a grown-up son, her interests and emotions become centred more and more on him and his family by marriage. They constitute her *dug*, in which she is secure, honoured, and titularly, if not effectively, supreme. It is her son and grandson who will honour her spirit and commemorate her in worship after her death. Her son has become the effective breadwinner, and she looks to him for sustenance. If a young woman loses her husband, her grief is aggravated because she realizes that she has lost the head and pivot of her young family and must face uprooting and readjustment to a new partner. An old woman mourns the death of her husband greatly, too, but her grief is mitigated, if she 888 has a son, by her feeling of security and of fulfilment. The death of an adult son, especially an only son, is an irreparable tragedy to her.

593 Thus it happens that a woman who has been twice married often lives, in her old age, with the oldest son of her first marriage, rather than with her husband. This was the case with Tiezien's old wife, Naaho; and the reason Tiezien and Naaho's son, Nyaaŋzum, gave for this brings out a point of the first importance. Laughing, they said, 'She is no use any longer as a wife, she can't cook; and she has no vulva now (*u le ka pɛn yaha*)—that is, her reproductive powers are finished. And they laid special stress on the last point.

A woman attains her fullest freedom in the family when she ceases to have sexual value, that is, from the native point of view, when she ceases to be reproductive.

The Sexual Relationship in Marriage

• 831 836 The sexual relationship is the corner-stone of Tale marriage. At first sight this is puzzling to the observer, for the Tallensi have a thoroughly matter-of-fact attitude about sex. They regard sex as a normal and natural appetite. Any aspect of the generative functions can be discussed without circumlocution in the presence of men, women, or children. A young woman, or a girl, may show signs of shyness or coyness, but no one ever shows any real embarrassment. Bawdy or salacious talk about sex is common amongst men; very rarely does it verge on the obscene. The Tallensi take it for granted that children will indulge in sexual play, and attach no value to prenuptial chastity. In the ritual of the Arrow Medicine (*Peentee*) for protection in war, the services of a virgin boy and virgin girl are required. These children are bound to the medicine by a taboo of chastity in early childhood; but they are released as soon as they approach puberty; for by that time, the natives say, they cannot be expected to resist sexual temptation. Tallensi say that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since 831 the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriageable girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. 836 Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love 831 affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not con- 835 sidered to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan 836 does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them. This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply contrasted with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction, characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the 581 same thing (*Pɛn nyɛbɔg ni pɔɣadir, ba ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 831 'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is fundamental as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider 581 first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of 593 her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as [576] a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth. She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

trite, especially after one has heard it fifty times. But it is charged with deep emotion for the native to whom it stands for all the tribulations and anxieties connected with the whole task of bringing up a child. 593

Men say that these tribulations begin with the act of sex itself. 831 ● Desired though it is for the pleasure it gives, sexual intercourse is debilitating. Ejaculation (*duun duurəm*, a term primarily used for micturition) is a giving up of something vital that is a source of strength and youth. That is why young, unmarried men are so much more vigorous than married men.

Then there is the strain under which a man lives during his wife's 843 pregnancy, particularly if it is a first pregnancy. Pregnancy, the creation of life, must not be brought into contact with death. Hence he, as the father of his wife's coming child, must not take direct part in mortuary or funeral rites. If he is one of the bereaved, the rites he is compelled to undergo are modified so as to eliminate contact with the corpse or objects symbolizing it. No particular evil is thought to follow on a breach of this taboo, which can, in fact, be magically purged if circumstances compel a man to it. But no man would be so callous as to flout the taboo deliberately.

Again, a man must not cut a new bush farm while his wife is pregnant, lest she miscarry. Both are critical events, affectively as well as socially, involving economic readjustments and the assumption of new responsibilities. Preparing a new bush farm absorbs you completely; it is, the natives say, 'a commotion of the heart (*suhkpclɔg*)'. But when your wife is pregnant you 'take heed only of her pregnancy (*i wona u puur la*)'. You cannot give attention, at the same time, to a new and vital economic enterprise like cutting a new bush farm. Apart from a wife's pregnancy only two other critical happenings are so obsessing as to be considered mystically incompatible with making a new bush farm—building a new house, a momentous undertaking, both materially and ritually, which marks an important change in a man's social personality; and taking a new wife, which also involves or portends big readjustments in one's social relations. It is significant that a man who is cutting a new bush farm or building a new house keeps away from funerals outside his own inner lineage since they are both emotionally disturbing and a distraction. All these critical events demand watchfulness and solicitude, for unknown dangers of both a physical and a mystical kind threaten their outcome. A man has to go about consulting diviners. He offers special sacrifices to his ancestors and puts the matter in their particular care.

Another sign of the concern that tempers a man's joy at his wife's pregnancy is the caution he must use in the chase. He must not kill certain mystically dangerous animals, else his wife may miscarry or bear a deformed child.

A man's close relatives are also concerned when his wife is pregnant, 602 843 especially if it is a first pregnancy. His mother and the older women of

and are taunted for months afterwards by their fellows. But these are 593
not the reasons why children so rarely commit this impropriety. It is
because of the intimacy, the closeness to each other in daily life, of 864
brother and sister. Children do not need to be told that it is wrong to
copulate with a sibling of the same joint family; they know it themselves.
And, in fact, children from the age of 6 or 7 and upwards always say,
with an expression of disgust, that sexual play with one's own siblings
is wrong. Moreover, though they are not taught it as an avoidance, they
are well aware of the conventional attitudes on the subject from listening
to adult conversation.[1]

Incidentally, there are no taboos on conversation on sex matters 521
among the Tallensi. Men, women, and children are all outspoken about 831
sexual matters, though young women are apt to use euphemisms and
to talk more circumspectly than men. Some men also say that it is 593
embarrassing to talk about sexual subjects in front of young wives or
female relatives-in-law. But no native hesitates to discuss these subjects
in the presence of his sister.

These ties of mutual affection and devotion between *soog* siblings 593
last throughout life and are extended to their children too. One sees
this most dramatically in the grief people show, and especially women, 761
over the death of a *soog* sibling. Tallensi say that very often the loss
of a full brother is a greater shock to a woman than the death of her
husband. A husband is replaceable, a full brother not, they add. When
Kpe'emi died his wife fainted and afterwards sat about disconsolately,
weeping at intervals for days. His *soog* sister also fainted, but, the men
said, it had been much more difficult to revive her than her sister-in-law
and she became ill with grief. Seeing the two young women together
one could not doubt that it was the sister who felt the blow worst.

Another vivid demonstration of the strength of this tie between 593
full siblings occurred when Tɛndaan Teroog performed the succession 793
ceremony on succeeding to the custody of his maximal lineage *bɔyar*.
A large crowd had gathered, chiefly men—clansmen, and neighbours and
matrilateral kinsmen of Teroog's maximal lineage. Amongst them my

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[1] The psychological undercurrents of these conventional attitudes do not concern us here, but it may be remarked that there is probably a strong and partly overt sexual component in the affective relations of brother and sister. I was struck by this when I once had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of Yamzooya (aged about 11) and his *soog* sister (aged about 8) who were playing together in a corner of the room where I was chatting to their father. The children, who were quite naked, stood embracing each other, the boy with his legs round his sister's, and they twisted and wriggled about as if they were engaged in a mixture of an orgiastic dance and a wrestling-match. They were both in a state of high excitement, panting and giggling and muttering to each other, with obvious sexual pleasure. They seemed to be oblivious of their surroundings. This game went on for about twenty minutes after which they separated and lolled back as if exhausted. These two children were most attached to each other.

586 684 We have previously said that the Tallensi have no institutionalized procedure for divorce. This needs to be qualified. A very drastic procedure to which we have referred in our earlier book[1] exists by which a man can get rid of an objectionable wife. It is usually described as 'blowing (on)' (*pebh*) a wife, for it consists in the man's blowing ashes over his wife. By this action he expels her utterly from his house with all her brood. He casts her off and disowns her children; and he forfeits the bride-price. Everybody knows of this custom, and it is held to be [613] entirely licit for any husband. The origins of attached lineages[2] are often attributed to clan sisters who were allegedly divorced in this way. But it is impossible to get a record of a single case that has occurred within the last forty or fifty years, or, indeed, within living memory. Though natives say that a man could, if he wished, 'blow on' his wife if she angered him continuously, or if she were dissolute, or were objectionable in any way, in fact her delinquencies would have to be of so grave a nature as to imperil his life and the welfare of the family for a man to cut through his marriage ties irrevocably at such enormous sacrifice.

The example of such a misdemeanour always quoted is concerned with their sexual relations. It is a taboo (*kihər*) for a woman to deny her husband's sexual rights over her. She would do so, by implication, if she were to kick him over in the act of coitus.[3] This is a sin of such gravity that the marriage must be dissolved at once or else disaster will come upon both partners. For it means that husband and wife have fallen out so badly with each other that they have come into sexual conflict.

This is implied, also, in a more symbolic way, if the disagreements between husband and wife come to a head in her attacking him with her stirring-stick (*vugər*) and his retaliating with his bow (*tap*). The stirring-stick, an indispensable implement for cooking porridge, is one of the emblems of femininity, and the bow, the principal weapon of the chase and of warfare, the chief emblem of manhood in Tale custom and ritual. Men are by convention excluded from the kitchen; women, both by convention and by ritual injunction, from the chase, and from contact with its magical and mechanical appurtenances when they are being [834] used for hunting. One of the very rare occasions on which sexual continence is ritually enjoined on men is when they are poisoning arrows for hunting or war. Thus, a fight between husband and wife with bow and stirring-stick is a fight in terms of their opposed sexuality, a repudiation of the fundamental bond of marriage. It is a sin, and the couple will die if they do not immediately sever their marital relationship completely.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] Ibid., p. 51.

[833] [3] The point lies in the postures adopted by the Tallensi in coitus. As in many other primitive cultures, the woman lies on her back, and the man squats on his haunches between her thighs. She can, therefore, easily push him over with a kick, the natives say.

Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with 586
genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his 684
wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the 158
sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against 827
the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the 586
others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have 578
coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his 833
rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pen tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If 684
any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman 581
marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and
even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its 613
members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman 618
trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

793 562 *Woman Ten'dan'*: 'A woman might become a *Ten'dan'*. She has the right to offer sacrifices, and receive lost things. She sits down saying: "Land receive your water and all your things". After she has said so, a man cuts the throat of the offering. She has a calabash, not a string hat. She owns the land and can stop wars with the corn stalk.' (A female *Ten'dan'* is interviewed later.)

791 *Rain-makers*: 'A rain-maker is separate from a *Ten'dan'*. He is called *Sa-ran*. We have none here.'

793 764 *Ten'dan' and Funeral Customs*: 'The family of the deceased would "reach" the *Ten'dan'* and he would give them a place to make a grave; were he to refuse they could not bury him. The *Ten'dan'* would send the boy to mark out the grave, making a circle with a calabash and the pointed stick used for digging the grave. He will say:

'*Dakirig* (a grove) some one is dead, can I refuse to bury him, therefore may you hear, and let the "room" be a proper one that he may sleep well?' A sheep is then sacrificed near the grave.

764 *Graves*: The Namnam bury their dead outside, not in, the compound. As many as twenty corpses may be in one grave. Men and women are buried in the same grave. The graves are circular with a bottle-neck. A boy or girl who has not any *nyere*[1] must have a separate grave.

●834 A man does not have sexual intercourse with his wife for three years after she bears a child, i.e. if the child lives.

793 *Female Ten'dan'* (*Ten'dan' poka*): Akayiri, a female *Ten'dan'*, who may be seen in Fig. 81, told me the following:

'My ancestress was a *Ten'dan' poka* (a female *Ten'dan'*), called Banams. My grove is called Tinkyena; it is always a female *Ten'dan'* who is in charge of it. The calabash, which the little girl who always accompanies me carries, and my uncut hair, are the signs of my office. I own the land at Zoga. If the Zoga men want to fight, I will go between them, and place a corn stalk on the ground. Zoga has two *Ten'dan'*, a male and a female, but I own the land, as is proved by the fact that mine is the hind leg of all sacrifices; the male only gets a foreleg. Because "a female may kill a snake, but only a male cut off its head" (*poka ka kure wafo nwa zugo*), therefore, when I have given the sacrifice, the male cuts its throat. This male has no hat or skin. When I say that the land at Zogo belongs to me, I mean it belongs to the spirits. I am their servant. A male *Ten'dan'* may have a wife, but a

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[1] See p. 8. This only applies to a child whose mother is still young enough to bear children. [Nyere is a term applied to two children born consecutively of the same parents —Analyst.]

Kusase

not own the land, but is in charge of the hunting party for the time 224 624
that they are away in the bush.

'The *Tenedan*' would separate people fighting by spreading ashes 793
on the land between the combatants; no man may shoot an arrow 834 ●
over this line. It is taboo to the land to have sexual intercourse in the
bush. Any one who found people doing so will collect a heap of leaves
and branches at that spot, and every one who passed there must add
more. Such a place is called *peŋ bok* (vagina hole).

'A woman may not become a *Tenedan*.'[1] *Tenedan*' have not any 793
distinctive dress from that of any Elder. There is no difference 462
between the funeral custom for a *Tenedan*' and that of an Elder.' 764

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[1] But see p. 371. [i.e. The opposite is true among the Nam Nam— Analyst.]

deceased's senior wife (the eldest son's maternal uncle) because a 768 man's senior wife owns the compound and has all the work of building 428 it up. During a man's lifetime, the eldest son may not look into his father's bag or into his grain-store, or make use of anything personally used by his father.'[1]

Widows and Children: 'Widows go to the heir, but if he does not 768 want them, they will know this, and already have spoken to the men whom they wish to marry. Before their heads have been shaved, they 834 must not on any account have sexual intercourse with any one. Any man who is guilty of doing so, is said "to have cut the widows' strings" (*okoa pɔkɔ nwis*) and any infant whom such an adulterer looks upon will die. These widows' strings are made by an old woman who has ceased to bear children, and, after the funeral custom, she will cut them. After this they will appear in fresh leaves and people will know they are eligible to remarry. They will marry a clansman, not some one from another town. A son may not marry any of his father's widows if the father has ever had sexual intercourse with them. The deceased's brother, if not a *nyere*, may do so. The leaves which widows [292] wear are *tanpiba* leaves (shea butter leaves). If a wife ever puts these on (during his lifetime) her husband will divorce her, and claim back [586] the cows.[2]

'If the widow goes outside the clan of the late husband to marry, 768 the heir will claim from her parents the cows paid, but deducting one 562 cow for each child borne by her. Her father in turn will recover these 587 cows from the man whom she then marries. The children then remain with the late husband's family. Should all the cows not have been paid when the first husband died, the heir, or whichever of the clansmen take her, have to pay the balance due, otherwise no new payments are necessary. It is taboo for the heir to take for himself two widows of the same man. He chooses which he will have and gives the other to his brother, that is, if these persons want them, otherwise they may marry a clansman.' Other customs in connexion with widows and the funeral custom will be dealt with under that heading.

Children: 'The children of the deceased belong to his fellow clansman 768 who marries the widow, but across the Volta, among the Kusase 769 whom we call the people of the West (*Toondem*), children of widows belong to the ghost (i.e. the late husband). If the widow marries 614 outside her late husband's clan, any children she had by her first husband remain the property of his clansman, i.e. of the heir.'

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[1] Compare the Nankanse.

[2] Compare Nankanse custom.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920) 1932

FE11 Tallensi FE11

Kusase

Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551
certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787]
father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782
then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

' "Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787
daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574
that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834 ●
more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is
walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845
Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766
fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die." '

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583
barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586
them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

Kusase

carry it round. The body is carried by her sons-in-law to the grave, 764
or if she has not any, by her husband's brothers and brothers' sons. 602
When the grave is reached, the body is taken out of the mat; a *baya* (sexton) enters the grave and receives the body which is laid on the left side, facing west. If the husband of my daughter is a rich man, he will kill a goat for my brothers, who, when they have skinned it, may return him a hind leg. This, however, he may refuse to accept, as he may be hoping I will give him another of my daughters. He also gives them fowls and guinea-fowls, one a dead one. On the way back from the funeral custom, they will halt near our town and kill and roast and eat all these but one. This they do, because if they were to bring them home, there would not be so much for them. One guinea-fowl they bring home, also the calabash of water with which the body has been bathed. The guinea-fowl is given to the dead girl's mother and any of my unmarried daughters. The calabash containing the water is buried in the compound farm and this becomes her grave. It is buried by a *baya*. I, her father, will kill a fowl and a guinea-fowl over it. First the heads are knocked against the ground and then I cut their throats saying: "So-and-so (naming the dead woman) take your fowl and guinea-fowl; ask for a way to pass and ask blessings (*malog*) for us". This sacrifice is cooked outside the compound, and every one, even small children, may eat of it. After that no attention is given
to the grave; fowls may scratch over it.' 765

An old woman who has had many children will have the *ku-dar* and 561
ku-kweem just as a man, but a young woman will not.

When a man's wife dies, he is not allowed to have intercourse with 834 ●
his other wives until the final obsequies of his wife have been held. 765
'If he did so, any infant upon whom he looked would die.' The man 768
would have something called *gaba* (exactly the same name and same [171]
custom is found among the Nankanse). 'If he were even to look on a calf it would die. I have not had sexual intercourse with any of my wives for over a year', said a widower to me, the final funeral custom of whose wife had not yet been held. When the time for the *ku-kweem* funeral ceremony arrives, the sisters of the dead woman will take one of the three pots used for a hearth, the dead woman's porridge stick, her old broom, a red earthen pot called *kaŋ* (Nankane *kaleya*), her calabash spoon (*bea*), her upper grinding stone (*ni-kan*), and go with all these to the cross-roads. When they arrive there one of the women will raise the shrill *kyeliŋ* cry of women, and those carrying these things will cast them down. When they return, they

834 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property,
765 it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women;
768 any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the
584 sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will
764 be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

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[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

The Ritual Coefficient of Patriliny

602 769 All these cases of irregular paternity bring out a point of central importance in native thought. As we shall see in more detail later, the bonds of physical consanguinity and the concomitant social ties created by parenthood are *ipso facto* spiritual and moral bonds. They have a ritual coefficient in which the natives see their deepest meaning and value. One's bonds with one's lineage imply a ritual bond with one's patrilineal ancestors and other mystical forces associated with the existence and well-being of the lineage. They are the chief mystical powers governing the life of the individual. Legitimate paternity is a *sine qua non* for a right relationship with one's agnatic ancestor spirits who watch over one's whole life from the moment of birth. There is a spiritual hiatus between an illegitimate son or a slave's son and his adoptive lineage ancestors. Being only indirectly under their tutelage, and unable to gain direct contact with them by offering sacrifices himself, he cannot use them to master the vicissitudes and frustrations of life as freely as a true scion of their line. Also, as we have seen, the ancestor spirits are the principal sanction enforcing a man's rights to full filial status in his physical father's lineage. As we have observed, political and ritual office can be held only by men who are legitimate members of the lineage in which these offices are vested; and the sanction for this lies in the key functions of these offices in the cult of the ancestors and of the other mystical powers coupled with the lineage.

● 834 842 769 All social relations in which agnatic descent has a decisive function have this ritual coefficient. Legitimate paternity is bound up with a man's exclusive rights over his wife's reproductive powers, conferred on him by marriage. A child's legitimate paternity is jeopardized if it is conceived or born in a situation in which its father's marital rights do not prevail. Hence, sexual intercourse between a man and his wife (and by extension between any man of the husband's medial lineage and a woman of the wife's medial lineage) at her paternal home is rigorously tabooed; it is a ritual 'pollution of the room (*sayam dug*)'—i.e. an outrage against the lineage identity—of the girl's father; for a woman has the status of a daughter in her father's house, where she comes under her father's authority and the tutelage of his ancestors.

611 769 In keeping with this, a child must not be born in its mother's father's, or brother's house. Its ties with its maternal kin must not be confounded with its bonds with its paternal kin. These represent opposed forces in its social world, and matrilateral kinship ties must not be allowed to become a threat to lineage ties. A woman bears a child to her husband, an additional member of his lineage and clan. When she conceives, it is the right and duty of her husband and his family to care for her. His ancestor spirits must guard her and the unborn child. In the perilous hour of childbirth she must be cared for by her husband and his family,

586 684 We have previously said that the Tallensi have no institutionalized procedure for divorce. This needs to be qualified. A very drastic procedure to which we have referred in our earlier book[1] exists by which a man can get rid of an objectionable wife. It is usually described as 'blowing (on)' (*pɛbh*) a wife, for it consists in the man's blowing ashes over his wife. By this action he expels her utterly from his house with all her brood. He casts her off and disowns her children; and he forfeits the bride-price. Everybody knows of this custom, and it is held to be [613] entirely licit for any husband. The origins of attached lineages[2] are often attributed to clan sisters who were allegedly divorced in this way. But it is impossible to get a record of a single case that has occurred within the last forty or fifty years, or, indeed, within living memory. Though natives say that a man could, if he wished, 'blow on' his wife if she angered him continuously, or if she were dissolute, or were objectionable in any way, in fact her delinquencies would have to be of so grave a nature as to imperil his life and the welfare of the family for a man to cut through his marriage ties irrevocably at such enormous sacrifice.

The example of such a misdemeanour always quoted is concerned with their sexual relations. It is a taboo (*kihər*) for a woman to deny her husband's sexual rights over her. She would do so, by implication, if she were to kick him over in the act of coitus.[3] This is a sin of such gravity that the marriage must be dissolved at once or else disaster will come upon both partners. For it means that husband and wife have fallen out so badly with each other that they have come into sexual conflict.

This is implied, also, in a more symbolic way, if the disagreements between husband and wife come to a head in her attacking him with her stirring-stick (*vugər*) and his retaliating with his bow (*tap*). The stirring-stick, an indispensable implement for cooking porridge, is one of the emblems of femininity, and the bow, the principal weapon of the chase and of warfare, the chief emblem of manhood in Tale custom and ritual. Men are by convention excluded from the kitchen; women, both by convention and by ritual injunction, from the chase, and from contact with its magical and mechanical appurtenances when they are being [834] used for hunting. One of the very rare occasions on which sexual continence is ritually enjoined on men is when they are poisoning arrows for hunting or war. Thus, a fight between husband and wife with bow and stirring-stick is a fight in terms of their opposed sexuality, a repudiation of the fundamental bond of marriage. It is a sin, and the couple will die if they do not immediately sever their marital relationship completely.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] Ibid., p. 51.

[833] [3] The point lies in the postures adopted by the Tallensi in coitus. As in many other primitive cultures, the woman lies on her back, and the man squats on his haunches between her thighs. She can, therefore, easily push him over with a kick, the natives say.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of 837
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence 577
compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the
ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrɔg samɔr*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets
a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*daɣɔt*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔɣambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill
Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔɣar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her 765
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834●
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

765 a man dies leaving young wives without infants his funeral ceremonies are hurried on. Tallensi do not believe that young widows without
581 infants will remain chaste for long out of a sense of duty or for fear of
834 mystical penalties. A man's widow, in short, remains his wife, sexually bound to him, as long as his social personality continues to be recognized. Death alone does not expunge a man's social personality. The management of his property, his social roles, and all his rights and responsibilities, continue to be exercised by proxy in his name after his death until his
[768] funeral ceremonies are finished; for it is by these ritual acts that his social personality is expunged. His property then passes to his heir, his social roles to his successor, and his widow is free to remarry.

The Husband's Relationship with his Affines

593 562 The sexual bond of husband and wife is also, as we have noticed, the critical element that discriminates a woman's marital relationship with her husband from her filial relationship with her father or with anyone who takes over his social role. As we have mentioned before, the economic duties and rights of a woman in her conjugal family are not very different from those that she exercises in her natal family before marriage or if she comes to live with the latter at any time. Her jural status as a minor under her husband's or father-in-law's authority corresponds to her jural status in her father's family. It is essentially with respect to her reproductive capacity that her role and status as wife and mother are sharply separated from her role and status as daughter and sister.

This will be clearer if we look first at the general rules and conventions of a son-in-law's relations with his father-in-law's family and lineage.

602 562 The term *deema* (pl. *deenam*), affine, correctly used applies to wife's parent and daughter's husband, and to anyone identified with them in a particular situation. It is the self-reciprocal term of address between these relatives, as well as the term of reference for them. I have heard it used as a special gesture of consideration and courtesy by a man to his brother's wife, but this is not usual. For the relationship between affines, in the Tale sense of this term, is not quite the same as that of a woman with her husband's parents and siblings. A man's affines have no authority over him. The tensions connected with common residence are absent. There are no common economic, jural, or ritual interests between affines.

602 606 As in all Tale social relations, differences of personality and the flexibility of custom result in variations in the actual behaviour of affines to one another that sometimes obscure the real nature of the relationship. I have seen a man chaff his mother-in-law (*deempɔk*) in a way that would be regarded as excessively familiar by the majority of natives. In a well-established marriage one often finds great friendliness and mutual good-

606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman,
602 anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house.
Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-
837 in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settle-
577 ment. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces
the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or
someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of
606 his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and
837 on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking
thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a
577 father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own
wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particu-
[576] larly within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet
his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though
not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the pro-
834 hibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's
paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for
instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few
574 days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A
834 man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They 584
expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations
with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about 574
as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are 834
more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep in separate rooms.

These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry 574
season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the
rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which 834
a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her 606
father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of 783
the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we
have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous 844
position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*ʋaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his 606
father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will 783
not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in
the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. 827
The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them. Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them. It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves, bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think, still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valɔm*, 'is embarrassing' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a
loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and
his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of
shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of
which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult,
the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose
the genitals with the word 'boy' or 'girl'. An infant's excretory
processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
863 regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a
nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would
dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all
matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions
as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the
expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
'Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said
Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, 'he's a thief. He stole
his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied
him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast,
is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance
and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child
for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours,
nevertheless, go beyond what is merely 'unbecoming'. They are not
nice, *a pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

226 at a leisurely pace, stopping every now and then to pluck bunches of soft, heavy leaves. These they stick into their waistbands, in front and behind, as a substitute for the perineal belt which they remove to prevent its being damaged in the water. The throng presses gaily on, joking, laughing, and conversing.

226 515 562 834 Several hours before the fishing is due to begin the well-wooded banks of the river swarm with a jostling multitude. The small and very shallow pools scattered in the sandy reaches between the large fishing pools are filled with bathers. The segregation of the sexes, inchoate at the time of the approach to the pool, now becomes more explicit. The women tend to congregate apart from the men though communication between the two groups is perfectly free and frequent, and they bathe in different pools from the men. In explanation men declare with a smirk, "so that we can't see each other's sexual parts," but the close proximity to each other of the two groups of bathers and their unabashed bearing contradicts this allegation. Indeed nakedness is never a source of shame, though modesty requires a woman who has had children to cover the genitalia. But the men thus hint obscurely at the real explanation: the sexual dichotomy which runs through the whole culture, expressing itself in the division of labour and as now in a spontaneous but not rigid social segregation at certain times. It will be seen later that this principle emerges graphically in the actual technique of fishing. In the case of one pool, fished on two successive days, it took the extreme form of barring women altogether on the first day, on ritual grounds.

226 578 Besides the division in terms of sex, a distribution in accordance with political cleavages can be observed. Broadly speaking, the tribe is divided into two large political aggregates, the *Namoos* and the *Tallis* (the "real Tallensi"), each comprising several settlements or "lands" (*teŋ*, pl. *tes*). When the number of people is large, as in the first expedition of the season, each settlement occupies its own traditional place by the river, *Namoos* on one bank, *Tallis* on the other, more or less. In the small expeditions the groups merge more. Again there is nothing rigid about this political segregation. Bonds of kinship and of marriage unite every individual of the one group to the other group; but the disposition of the contingents nevertheless expresses a traditional though latent opposition between the two groups which requires little provocation to flare up.

461 322 While some bathe and others lounge about, conversing with friends, or the young girls flirt with the young men, many employ themselves usefully. Some men cut thick withes to insert into their fishing nets, others cut hoe shafts or axe shafts, shaping them roughly, to carry them home for finishing. Since the agricultural season is just beginning there is a ready sale for these articles. Some hack down saplings for rafters, some strip lengths of bark from the *bayana* trees, if any are about, for making the rough rope used in thatching, while others search for trees and shrubs used as household medicines, and many women begin to collect bundles of firewood to take back with them. The geographical setting of the fishing expedition thus creates a subsidiary economic situation which ensures that the day is not wasted, even if no fish are caught.

571 613 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 613 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 [578] Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of [835] one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not [837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

606 611 602 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*; they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

● 835 The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

582 602 [586] Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*. If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bɔk*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'aləm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpemdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpemdaan and Tinta'aləm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpemdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'aləm, are well known. Tinta'aləm

606 578 ter-in-law towards one another, and the terminology of address associated with them, put a protective fence between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. 'My mother', or 'my father', in this context means 'a person to whom I owe punctilious respect'. The relation is one of reciprocal respect, because it is based on something in the nature of a contract. The daughter-in-law's attitude is an exaggeration of one aspect of filial respect towards the parents. This aspect is more prominent in kinship relations outside the focal field and in ceremonial relations patterned on, but structurally different from, true parent-child relations, than in the latter. It is reminiscent of the behaviour of his clansmen to a chief or tɛndaana on formal occasions, when his symbolic position as father (*ba*) of the clan is most apparent.

Naturally the barrier between father-in-law and daughter-in-law is stricter than between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law owing to the difference of sex, though it is not obvious to an outsider. Once she is accepted, a man usually treats his daughter-in-law with kindness and affability. In public he treats her with a familiar friendliness, in the same way as if she were his daughter. But whereas he scolds his daughter without hesitation, he does not scold or criticize his daughter-in-law directly. It would offend and hurt her, and upset their amicable relations. The barrier between them—and this applies in a lesser degree to the mother-in-law too—can be maintained only on the basis of mutual courtesy and affability. Where the barrier is most sharply emphasized is not in their public intercourse but in their relations as members of opposite sexes. [835] For a man to have sexual relations with, or even sit on the same mat as, his daughter-in-law is a sin of the first magnitude. '*Dɛn n-kih pam!* (that is an extreme taboo)', say the natives, with every sign of repugnance. It is a sin that can never be wholly atoned for. Sooner or later the culprits will be slain by the ancestor spirits; for, like incest with a father's wife of which it is the counterpart, it destroys irreparably the moral and religious bonds of father and son. I heard of an old man who died some years ago who used to have his daughters-in-law sit on his lap, and 'play' with them. This, my informants said scoffingly, was just the ill manners of an old dotard. But Gunyaam's seduction of his daughter-in-law was revealed to me with bated breath. It was no wonder, my informant said, that he died soon after, and that misfortunes crowded on his family.

The relations of daughter-in-law to parents-in-law are well summed up in the statement always made by Tallensi if they are asked for an explanation of the terminology of address used between these relatives. They say: 'We stand in awe of them (parents-in-law or daughters-in-law)', (*ti zootbame*, lit. 'we fear them').[1]

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601 [1] This terminology of address is of considerable theoretical interest. Rattray (op. cit., p. 6) attributes the custom of addressing a daughter-in-law as 'mother' (customary also amongst the Gorisi, Namnam, and other peoples adjacent to

The Relationship of Husband and Wife

The closest bonds a woman has with any member of the family into which she marries are her bonds with her husband. Habit, economic co-operation, and the jural authority of husband over wife bring them closer and closer together as the years pass. But these mutual interests are insufficient by themselves. The true cement of their union is the birth of children. Children give the union its *raison d'être*. They become the focus of the common interests, common pride, and common devotion of the partners, without which their economic co-operation or the other satisfactions they get from marriage would be meaningless. As we have already seen, one thing Tallensi never tire of stressing is that the object of marriage is to have children. When she has borne two or three living children to him a woman will be most unwilling to leave her husband, however hard her life with him may be.

The arrival of children not only forges closer the emotional bonds of husband and wife, but it also unites them socially in a firmer compact.

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the Tallensi) to the 'horror of a father having intercourse with a son's wife'. He does not take into account the fact that mother-in-law and daughter-in-law also address each other reciprocally as 'mother'. As is mentioned above, the Tallensi themselves have no complete explanation for this usage, and this applies to the neighbouring 'tribes'. Many informants amplified the conventional formula 'We fear them' by pointing out that it was a degree of respect similar to that due to a mother. As we shall see later, the respect due to one's mother is almost a sacrosanct norm. The natives do not explicitly associate the mode of address with the horror of incest between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, but they do stress the latter in discussing the relationship of father-in-law and daughter-in-law. We shall see later that incest with a daughter-in-law is coupled with incest with one's mother as among the most serious kinship sins conceivable to the Tallensi. Rattray's inference, therefore, probably isolates one element in the usage, but it is a suppressed element. The incest barrier is a factor of importance in the relations of father-in-law and daughter-in-law in very many patrilineal African societies. Logically, however, it would seem to be more in keeping with the relationship of parent-in-law and daughter-in-law for the former to address the latter as his or her daughter, as is customary in a number of African societies. Here, however, a combination of circumstances arising out of the lineage principle comes into the picture. A daughter-in-law is not under her parents-in-law's authority and control in the same sense as their daughter is. She is not a substitute daughter, but their son's wife and a potential mother of their grandchildren of the same lineage. She is a stranger in theory, standing outside the scheme of lineage loyalties and sanctions, yet at the same time the one person on whom the whole future of the lineage depends. Again no Tallensi ever suggested that a daughter-in-law is called 'mother' by her parents-in-law because she is a future mother of lineage members. It is rather her ambiguous position as a stranger tied to the lineage that is uppermost in their thought. Her being addressed as 'mother' by her parents-in-law may be a means of stressing this and of over-emphasizing the respect due to her from them, the usage being a metaphoric derivation from the mode of address used to one's mother and, by extension, in an honorific sense to old women in general. In short, this usage aptly symbolizes the tensions in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law, in respect to which the latter is almost on an equal footing with the former.

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[835]

that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since 831
the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriage-
able girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. 836
Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love 831
affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members
of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not con- 835 ●
sidered to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan
does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual 836
penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them. This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply contrasted with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction, characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the 581
same thing (*Pɛn nyɛbɔg ni pɔɣadir, ba ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 831
'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is fundamental as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider 581
first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By
marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of 593
her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority
he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has
he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as [576]
a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth. She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

His family had had a windfall of two daughters in half a generation and 848
that meant eight cows.

Yet the Tallensi believe emphatically that a girl can only realize her 848
womanhood to the full by bearing legitimate children. For this she must marry; and marriage means having only one husband at a time. It is as 581
her husband's sexual mate that a woman is most sharply separated from her natal family; it is her husband's exclusive rights over her reproductive powers that definitively makes them husband and wife.

This proposition applies also to the husband's field of social relations. 835
Within the region of family and kinship ties where generation differences are socially recognized, sexual relations may occur only between married partners. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman of the family who is not his wife is incest. The Tallensi have no name for this act. They say, simply, 'It is tabooed (*de kihme*)'; and they look on it with unanimous revulsion. Translating their ideas into our cultural idiom, we should say that they regard any form of incest as an unnatural act.[1]

Incest, to a Talɛŋa, includes sex relations with a sister or daughter, that is, a woman of one's own lineage: with a mother, the wife of one's own or classificatory father; with a brother's wife; and with a son's wife. Such acts of misconduct are considered incestuous if they occur within the limits of the expanded family—that is, the family group based on the inner lineage (the narrow *dug*). The natives stress this, putting the emphasis on the fact that the narrow *dug* is the smallest lineage segment with a common ancestor shrine (*bɔyar*). Such acts are, also, often regarded as incestuous within the limits of the family cluster based on the medial lineage, particularly if this lineage has a narrow span.

Incest occurs occasionally in every Tale community. Such an act soon leaks out, and is remembered with contempt for many years. I have discussed such cases with many informants, and was able, also, to witness the public reaction to two cases that occurred during my field work.[2]

There are no penal sanctions against any form of incest, nor are the 835
culprits believed to be subject to automatic mystical retribution. Incest is so incompatible with the pattern of co-operation and the structure 577
of disciplinary and affective relations in the family that this itself serves to banish it from the field of family relationships. Though incest taboos are never deliberately inculcated, the habits, attitudes, and organization of family life (to put the native expressions into sociological language) create internal barriers against incest, in the normal person. This applies particularly to incest with a sister or daughter, whether it is a single impulsive act or a more lasting liaison. Tallensi explain that a normal

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[1] A preliminary analysis of this subject was given in my paper, 'Kinship, Incest, and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King: Essays presented to R. R. Marett*, 1936.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

593 613 [587] replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

613 ●835 577 We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kɔrih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

835 613 What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly

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[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the 835
inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some
doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous 613
or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number
of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not
uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal
lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is
stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a
distant clan-sister (*pɔɣaɣabəlɔg*) do not clash with the habits, morals,
and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships.
Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man
who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen.
Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed
to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of
offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that 584
they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual
liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to
their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship
in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce
a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship
is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries
prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples
to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement
of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a
woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the
latter's settlement.

A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry 835
her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so
familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or 613
daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan
seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge 837
that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can
desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in
her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate
marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between
in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman
is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It
may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own.
The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head
of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation.
There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer
and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take
this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives
to stay long at their parents' homes.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman,
602 anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house.
Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-
837 in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settle-
577 ment. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces
the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or
someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of
606 his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and
837 on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking
thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a
577 father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own
wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particu-
[576] larly within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet
his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though
not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the pro-
834 hibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's
paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for
instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few
574 days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A
834 man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

835 626 Finally, the prohibition of sexual relations between father and daughter or brother and sister in the expanded family also links up with this complex. Tallensi say that if a man's daughter becomes pregnant before marriage he will hasten to marry her off as soon as possible, if she does not elope with a suitor of her own accord. A man once told me that people do this for fear that it might be said of them, 'Oh, so-and-so is not marrying his daughter off because he wants to keep her for a wife for himself'. I do not know if this statement accurately represents the way men feel the pressure of public opinion in cases of this sort; but it is an accurate indication of the feeling that a woman's procreative powers are out of place in her father's home and belong properly to her husband's home.

The Adjustment of Co-Wives to One Another

595 We have still to consider one of the main problems of adjustment that face a woman in her husband's family, her relations with her co-wives (*nentaa*, pl. *nentaas*). These include both her husband's other wives and his brothers' wives. A woman refers to a co-wife as 'younger (or older) sibling of the same sex (*pit* or *bier*)', and addresses her by her clan sobriquet, e.g. Namooga. A woman's children describe her co-wives as 'mother' (*ma*), with the suffix *pit* or *bier* according as she is junior or senior to their own mother, and address her as 'mother of such-and-such a clan', e.g. *ma Namooga.*

Women do not, as a rule, object to their husbands having other wives as well. Indeed, it often happens that a monogamist's wife presses him to marry again so that there should be someone to share the work of the household with her, or even takes the initiative in finding another wife for him. It is quite common for women to bring younger clan sisters, or a brother's daughter, a sister's daughter, or a daughter of a mother's brother's lineage, to live with them with a view to their eventually marrying their husbands or husbands' brothers. From such marriages spring cognatically related matri-segments of a lineage, with a special link through their progenitrices in addition to their agnatic ties.

Through this custom of fetching in (*pie na*) a kinswoman-wife (*poɣa-soog*) one often finds women related by kinship married into the same joint family or the same expanded family. But this is not a preferential marriage. It is due simply to the inertia of kinship. A woman who wants to bring a girl into her husband's house usually does so because she has need of someone to help her with the care of an infant or because she is ill or elderly and has no daughter or daughter-in-law to relieve her of the heaviest domestic tasks. And she looks naturally to her kinsfolk, upon whom she has claims by right of birth, to provide her with a suitable girl. Again, though the Tallensi do not like two full or half-sisters to marry the same man or to marry into the same joint family, it is not a taboo. A man who particularly likes his son-in-law and his people

593 best is this. A 12-year-old is conscious of his seniority (*kpcmət*) in
578 relation to his younger siblings. He orders them about and pulls them up if they are not behaving properly. But whereas he would not hesitate for a moment to smack a younger *soog*, he will not go further than scolding a younger half-sibling for the same offence. Tallensi say that if you strike your younger *soog* it does not matter; your mother or your father may rebuke you afterwards and the affair is forgotten. But if you strike a half-sibling—even if the child has behaved so disgracefully that public opinion will be on your side—you cause friction in the family. The child's mother gets annoyed with you and with your mother and quarrels arise.

593 There is another interesting indication of this. As has been previously
● 835 mentioned, Tallensi do not designate incest between brother and sister as sinful. When they say it is forbidden (*kih*), as they sometimes do, they mean it rather in the sense that it is disgraceful, scandalous, and unnatural than in the narrower ritual sense. If they are asked why then it is so uncommon, considering the many opportunities and temptations that surely offer, they explain it by the intimacy of siblings in childhood and adolescence. They deny that the temptation exists. 'Look', said Sinkawol, arguing this point with me, 'my sister, is she not marriageable? And here am I, however attractive she is, I do not even notice it; I am never aware that she has a vagina; she is just my sister and someone will one day come and marry her and I will give her to him and get my cows. You and your sister grow up together, you quarrel and make it up, how can you desire to have intercourse with her?' This is a stock argument with the Tallensi.

At the same time the natives are the first to point out that sexual
593 play in childhood generally begins with a classificatory sibling. Family
864 play is a regular thing in the under-8 play-groups; and the final realistic touch is for the 'husband' and 'wife' to pretend to have coitus. This is common knowledge, and adults laugh at it. A standing joke is to tease a small boy about his so-called sweethearts. As we have seen, Tallensi say that small children 'have no sense (*ka yam*)', and therefore it is not a breach of propriety or morals for them to play at coitus with a sibling. Every man I questioned on the subject told me, with a grin of amusement, that his first sweetheart was a 'sister', sometimes of the same expanded family, more often of the same inner or medial lineage. 'We were very small and didn't know better', they said.

But Tallensi maintain stoutly that even small boys of 6 or 7 do not play at coitus with their *soog* sisters or half-sisters. There are exceptions, of course, they readily admit. There are stupid children, precocious children, and badly brought up children. Among such children instances of brothers copulating with sisters are bound to occur. It has been known to happen even with adolescents, who are presumed to 'have sense'. If it is found out, the culprits are given a severe thrashing

593 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan
602 talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple
579 of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most
476 apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. *It is most*
764 conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of
[837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social
571 relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a
●835 consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were 593
non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but
may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's 571
wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's 835
wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength
of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between 593
brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office
is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. 622
No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the 584
same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu ɓoot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social 593
equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists
between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with 554
the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

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[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

593 578 basic dichotomy of *dug* and *yir* crystallizes. The comradeship which grows up gradually between husband and wife with the lapse of time is the obverse, paradoxical as it may seem, of a process of gradual emancipation of the wife. As her children grow up, the centre of gravity of her life shifts more and more to them and away from her husband. If she has a grown-up son, her interests and emotions become centred more and more on him and his family by marriage. They constitute her *dug*, in which she is secure, honoured, and titularly, if not effectively, supreme. It is her son and grandson who will honour her spirit and commemorate her in worship after her death. Her son has become the effective breadwinner, and she looks to him for sustenance. If a young woman loses her husband, her grief is aggravated because she realizes that she has lost the head and pivot of her young family and must face uprooting and readjustment to a new partner. An old woman mourns the death of her husband greatly, too, but her grief is mitigated, if she 888 has a son, by her feeling of security and of fulfilment. The death of an adult son, especially an only son, is an irreparable tragedy to her.

593 Thus it happens that a woman who has been twice married often lives, in her old age, with the oldest son of her first marriage, rather than with her husband. This was the case with Tiezien's old wife, Naaho; and the reason Tiezien and Naaho's son, Nyaaŋzum, gave for this brings out a point of the first importance. Laughing, they said, 'She is no use any longer as a wife, she can't cook; and she has no vulva now (*u le ka pen yaha*)—that is, her reproductive powers are finished. And they laid special stress on the last point.

A woman attains her fullest freedom in the family when she ceases to have sexual value, that is, from the native point of view, when she ceases to be reproductive.

The Sexual Relationship in Marriage

831 836 The sexual relationship is the corner-stone of Tale marriage. At first sight this is puzzling to the observer, for the Tallensi have a thoroughly matter-of-fact attitude about sex. They regard sex as a normal and natural appetite. Any aspect of the generative functions can be discussed without circumlocution in the presence of men, women, or children. A young woman, or a girl, may show signs of shyness or coyness, but no one ever shows any real embarrassment. Bawdy or salacious talk about sex is common amongst men; very rarely does it verge on the obscene. The Tallensi take it for granted that children will indulge in sexual play, and attach no value to prenuptial chastity. In the ritual of the Arrow Medicine (*Peentee*) for protection in war, the services of a virgin boy and virgin girl are required. These children are bound to the medicine by a taboo of chastity in early childhood; but they are released as soon as they approach puberty; for by that time, the natives say, they cannot be expected to resist sexual temptation. Tallensi say

that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since 831
the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriage-
able girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. 836
Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love 831
affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members
of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not con- 835
sidered to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan 836
does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them. This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply contrasted with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction, characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the 581
same thing (*Pɛn nyɛ̀bɔg ni pɔɣadir, ba ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 831
'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is fundamental as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider 581
first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By
marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of 593
her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has
he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as [576]
a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth. She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

boys are keenly learning the art of courtship and are experimenting 593
with sex. They have sweethearts (*gab*, pl. *gabnam*), most commonly 572
slightly younger girls of the same clan whom they call 'sisters' in the widest sense. These girls may have serious suitors from other clans, but not being quite ripe for marriage find much more pleasure and
excitement in their freer relations with their clan 'brothers'. With them [836]
they can indulge in sexual play, not always stopping short of intercourse, without criticism. Now when boys go to visit their sweethearts they often like to have the company of a friend (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) of about the same age, who has a similar interest in such adventures. For this a boy prefers a friend from another homestead, a not too near classificatory brother, to a close brother. Later on such a pair of friends will help each other in serious courtship, for one cannot carry on a serious courtship without a friend to act as spokesman and go-between. And a distant brother is preferable to a close brother as a friend in affairs of the heart. It helps to keep them secret from the other members of one's family, and that is desirable because it is a point of honour with every young man to find a wife for himself. The same motives operate with girls between the ages of about 13 and marriage at 16 to 18 years of age. A girl likes going to market with a girl friend of about her own age who is equally interested in the young men around. But if a girl is thinking of eloping with a suitor she prefers to confide in her mother or her clan-brother sweetheart. Having no rights in the bride-price they will—for a bribe from the suitor—help her to get away, whereas her own brothers will insist on a marriage by arrangement so as to make sure of the bride-price.

But the divergence of interests and companionship in the years
immediately preceding and following adolescence does not disturb the 593
personal intimacy and attachment of *soog* siblings. Custom prescribes 264
that husband and wife should eat separately. So a man eats with one or two of his younger children, and each of his wives eats with one of her younger daughters or an infant. The other children are divided up, one dish of porridge to this pair of boys or that pair of girls or even to a girl and a boy. They may be full siblings or half-siblings, and the porridge they are eating on a particular occasion may be of their mother's co-wife's cooking. Nevertheless, every child continues to think of his own mother as the food-giver and of his *saarət* as those with whom he automatically shares food. A boy of 12 does not sleep in his mother's room, yet he still regards her as the source of his sense of emotional security. In a small and harmonious polygynous family the children are almost equally at home in all the women's quarters, but in a large joint family the children of one woman tend to be in her quarters for most of the time that they are indoors.

Of many other signs of the lasting intimacy of full siblings and their 593
closer identification with each other than with their half-siblings, the 578

857 Sometimes a real fire is lit, but usually it is merely imagined. Real
524 grain is never used in such play—it is too valuable to waste thus, as
868 the children themselves would be the first to insist. A piece of potsherd pounded up or a handful of sand serves as grain; but a much more realistic effect is sometimes achieved by using dry baobab stamens. These can be 'winnowed' and the 'grain' ground. Green weeds and leaves are vegetables.

The children play with great zest and earnestness, yet never forget that it is but play. As they grind they hum in a low voice a grinding song they have heard from mother or elder sister. They examine the 'flour' to see that it is fine enough, try to get the right proportion of water, stir the 'porridge' thoroughly, 'dish' it out with scrupulous fairness. There is a constant interchange of conversation and commands to the smaller children: 'Bring me that dish', 'Lend me your broom', 'That's my firewood', 'Don't stir so fast', 'Come and fetch your porridge', and so on. As a rule they play together most amicably. I have observed arguments in such groups about who should do some task or another, but never quarrels. There is real co-operation, based on a distribution of tasks in play.

Such play is occasionally associated with a 'house' built of mud by a brother who often does not share the play, or actually uses the 'house' for his cattle play while his sisters are 'cooking' nearby.
[864] It is said, also, that housekeeping play sometimes branches into sexual play, little boys and girls pretending to be husband and wife and trying to copulate. Detailed inquiry shows that this is not common.
● [836] The usual method of sexual experimentation at this stage of development follows the pattern of adolescence. Small boys 'woo sweethearts' with little gifts, and sexual experiments occur in connexion with dancing or by chance opportunities.[1]

Girls' housekeeping play ceases with the beginning of pubescence. Not only are they by then already taking a full share in real housekeeping but their interests are turning to youths and marriage. Housekeeping play, in which the child rehearses the interests which it has as yet neither the skill nor the degree of social development to satisfy, and expresses the wishes which pubescence brings near to realization, has served its purpose.

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[1] See my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

is prepared, and the eldest son will kill a sheep and make food for his 765
father's spirit. "Next day is the *ku-dar*, but the spirit has still to get 769
his bow and quiver. All the food he has been given, he will take to his
father and then return for his bow and quiver." The spirit will make
use of all these things. I sometimes dream I see my father driving the
flocks before him', said my informant.

The date of the *ku-kweem* or dry funeral depends on food supplies.
It may be held at once after the *ku-dar*, or a year, or even four years,
later. 'The spirit must be patient about this.' A day having been
settled for the *ku-kweem*, all those concerned are informed, and the
day before the beer is finally ready, all the relatives, sisters and sisters'
children, daughters and daughters' children, and mother's relations,
assemble at the town of the deceased. New *pokor nwi* (widows' strings) [302]
are put round the waists of the widows and their heads are completely
shaved. Sons-in-law will bring baskets of grain food and all the
children of the deceased will also shave. Towards evening, the widows, 765
who have not been taken by the heir, will choose new husbands, for 768
they will have to leave the compound before the quiver is brought out.
After shaving, widows are made to pass through the doorway of the 765
main entrance to the compound. One who has been unchaste during 837 ●
the period of her widowhood will refuse to do so and will struggle.
She will then confess the name of the adulterer. This man, when he 783
sees he has been exposed, will run away to his in-laws and from there
send a messenger to the Elders of his section begging their forgiveness.
He will be told to bring a large fowl and a pot of beer to purify the
land. A hole will be dug in the ground, the *Tenedan'* will come and [793]
sacrifice the fowl, saying: 'Land, receive this beer, for children have
sinned—a matter of a vagina—may the offence be buried'. As he says
so he fills in the hole. A male relative of the adulterer and one
representing the woman, sit beside the hole. They each put their
mouth to the calabash of beer and drink some. A leaf has been put [201]
in the beer to represent the leaves worn by women. One man crosses
his leg over the other, to symbolize sexual intercourse. The dregs of
the beer and the leaf are buried in the hole. The fowl is also killed and
its blood allowed to drip in the hole, into which its feathers are also
put. The fowl is roasted and eaten, but not by him who brought it.
The head of the compound to which the adulteress belongs, sends a
fowl to the head of her section with the guilty woman. He sacrifices
the fowl on his *yab bagr* (ancestral shrine) saying: 'A woman went out
from her compound and they have got to bring her back, must you

● 837 allow her to return.' He cuts the fowl's throat and lets the blood
783 drop on the shrine, and next holds the fluttering chicken against the
woman's waist-strings which he cuts through. The woman then runs
765 off to the house of the senior wife of the section-head, followed by a
man with a whip; 'if he likes her, he will not flog her too severely'.
There she is given new waist-strings.

765 The next morning, after 'the going out of the widows', one arrow
768 out of the quiver of the deceased is given to each surviving brother.
The remainder, with the quiver, are then given to the deceased's eldest
son, who will divide them between his brothers and himself. If the
deceased had two bows, one of these will be given to a male friend of
the dead man, with whom he used to hunt. The second bow is taken
to the cross-roads and cut in pieces by the heir. The leather of the
quiver is stripped off, cut in pieces, and thrown away. 'The funeral
custom is now ended' (*kur naya*).

764 *Funeral Custom of a Clanswoman who dies in her Husband's Town*: 'If
my daughter falls ill, her husband will report to me or to her mother,
602 and one of my wives will go there and stay with her. If there is not
a good doctor in her town, her husband will ask me to send one. If
she dies, a message is sent to me at once, when my brothers, their wives,
my sons and daughter, and others from my section, will set off at once
and go to her town. I do not go myself, that is forbidden, my younger
brother, however, will go. They will bring back the calabash which
contains the water with which the corpse was bathed. If her husband's
people are few, her "brothers" will help in bathing the body, and if my
daughter has not any sons-in-law to help in digging the grave, my
sons, her brothers, will also assist to do so. When the body has been
bathed, it is removed to the *zɔŋ* hut and rubbed with shea butter and
the head shaved,[1] and *biug* fibre is passed between the legs. My
younger brother will then take three stalks of *mwi* (rice) and brush one
across her arms and say: "When you were alive, you had our taboos
(*kyisug*); this you have to carry back to our fathers". He brushes the
rest of the stalks down the right side, the left side, her breasts, and
last of all, the back, repeating these words each time. These stalks are
then placed on the calabash which contains the water in which she
was bathed. The corpse is then carried out through the door of the
zɔŋ hut and "shown" the compound four times—they do not trouble to

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[302 [1] That of male corpse is also shaved. When a man's wife dies, the husband and
children shave at the *ku-kweem* funeral, and when a man dies, the widows and
171] children shave their heads. The same custom prevails among the Nankanse.

571 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the
613 clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage
613 segment of the order of Lebhtiis yidem. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lebhtiis yidem of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but
[578] this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous.
[835] Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not
[837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidem. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

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has a medicine which enables women to conceive without the participation of a male.

The notion of a procreative essence as distinct from the sexual fluid, however vaguely formulated it is, is of importance. Tallensi distinguish between sexual vigour or desire and the power of procreation. They know that people who are sterile (*kundɔɣar*) lack the latter but are not necessarily deficient in the former. Na'abzɔ, gossip said, was sterile because in his wild young days as a soldier he had lived with a Dagban woman who had maliciously caused him by some magical means to 'pour away all his power of begetting (*kpaa u dɔɣam waabi bah*)' in excessive intercourse with her. The uncharitable believed that he was impotent to boot, but others were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

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The Tallensi regard *dɔɣam* as, above all, a very precious human function, quite apart from the pleasures of sex. Thus, when Zikihib's young wife was left a grass widow for three years by her vagabond husband and had a child by a lover, it was unanimously condoned. Was she, it was argued, to cast away her powers of child-bearing for nothing (*zaŋ u dɔɣam bah wari*) just because she had a faithless husband and was herself too devoted to her children by him to run off with another man?

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Lastly, the notion of the *ŋaamis* is the point at which mystical beliefs enter into the theory of conception. The obvious physiological facts of parenthood are summed up in the maxim, 'A man and a woman unite to procreate a child'. But behind plain physiology lies a mystery. Sometimes a man sleeps with his wife on a single occasion and she becomes pregnant (*u ŋɔɣa puur*—lit. she seizes a belly). At other times a man has relations with his wife regularly for months and she fails to conceive. Thus conception depends, in the last resort, on Heaven (*Naawun*), the Final Cause by which the Tallensi rationalize chance and which they invoke when empirical or less recondite mystical explanations fail. There is an essential mystical factor in procreation; and if a man or a woman fails to beget or bear a child, appeals can be made to the ancestor spirits and other mystical powers that intervene directly in human destiny. That is why a barren woman in her heart of hearts never gives up hope of having a child as long as she is still of child-bearing age, though the Tallensi know that barrenness is often a fact of nature beyond cure by either empirical or mystical agencies.

The Significance of Paternity and Patriliny

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A person's genealogical ties are fixed by his parentage. Among the Tallensi these are the ties that plot the trajectory of the individual's life. The rights and duties that are critical for his role and status in society all stem, in the last resort, from the fact of birth. A person cannot divest himself, or be divested, of the bonds created by his birth and yet remain a member of the society; nor can he fully and unconditionally acquire made by other members of the family and by one of Saɣəbazaa's maternal kinsmen. 848 Kologo, it appeared, was an adulterine child. Saɣəbazaa could never forget this, though it was not a thing that was ever mentioned 578 in public. A man of strong principles, inclined in any case to keep a firm hand on his children, Saɣəbazaa was often over-severe with Kologo. The tension admitted by custom to exist between a man and his first-born son was exacerbated. At length Kologo deliberately violated—or so Saɣəbazaa said—the Namoo taboos of a first-born son; and Saɣəbazaa thereupon cursed him and expelled him from the house. It was evident from the remarks which gave the clue to the story that the seed of discord here was Kologo's physical paternity, though it did not affect his rights to inherit his father's property and ancestral shrines.

This kind of psychological friction is said not to occur in the special 837 case of a child begotten in permitted extra-marital intercourse, which the Tallensi do not regard as adultery (*pɔɣambon*). A man who is sterile or impotent may allow his wife to conceive by another man. The proper way to do this is for him to inform the elders of his lineage first. With their blessing and consent he may give his wife permission to find a lover wherever she wishes—'*u gɔma, nye puur, ɔn nye Moog ni Zaŋbiog ɔn nyɛbma*—let her walk about to get a belly; if she meets a Mossi man or a Hausa man (i.e. any passer-by) let her copulate'—is the traditional formula with which he sets her free to be promiscuous, if she chooses, in order to become pregnant. Sensible men and women prefer a more reputable procedure, however. Either the husband asks a friend or kinsman not of his own clan to deputize for him sexually, or he lets the wife choose one of her own distant clan-brothers as a lover. This man is then formally deputed (*galəh*) to be the woman's lover by being presented to the lineage elders, who sacrifice a fowl on his behalf to the lineage ancestors, with an explanation of the circumstances and pleas for a blessing on the affair. The arrangement, though formal, is strictly private, for no man willingly admits to sterility or sexual incapacity; and when, as inevitably happens, it leaks out, public opinion is sympathetic rather than contemptuous. Tallensi say that such cases of begetting a child by proxy do not occur very often.

While I was in Taleland, Baŋam-Teroog's junior wife had a child by a deputed lover. Teroog was an old man, shrivelled and half-blind with age. He once begged me for medicine to restore his fertility, but admitted with regret that he was probably too old for procreation. He deputed his closest friend and distant sister's son, Naabdiya, to beget a child for him. The liaison continued throughout the woman's pregnancy, but ceased as soon as her child was born. I often saw Teroog with this baby, fondling and caressing it with a tenderness that showed more eloquently than words that he regarded it as his own child. Naabdiya, for his part, though his relations with Teroog were as cordial as ever, took no more interest in the infant than any man might take in

● 837 his friend's children. Tale sentiment takes no cognizance of physical paternity in this situation. No kinship tie is recognized between the physiological father and the child he was deputed to beget. One might almost describe it as, from their point of view, a kind of artificial insemination.

848 611 The case of an unmarried woman's child (*yi-yeem-bii*) is different. It is brought up as the foster-child of her father or brother. If it is a girl, no difficulties occur, as she will eventually marry and Tale kinship ideas permit *her* children to regard her mother's lineage as their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yir*). She will even be allowed to marry into her mother's clan provided it is a different major segment of the clan. Several instances of this are on record; for no stigma attaches to anybody concerned, since an illegitimate child is not a true clan member.

An illegitimate boy's circumstances are not so easy. The evidence of two cases I was acquainted with amply confirms conventional opinion on this subject. Such a boy will grow up to all intents and purposes as a child of his mother's father's or brother's family and as a full member of the clan. He will be treated exactly like other sons of the family, whom he will call his brothers. His quasi-father will, for example, provide the cattle and take the responsibility for his marriage, as would not be done for a legitimate sister's son (*ahəŋ*) growing up in his maternal uncle's (*ahəb*) home. But he has two fundamental disabilities, which nothing can overcome and which pass, by the principle of the corporate identity of the lineage, to his agnatic male descendants. He [428 769] has no right to inherit his quasi-father's patrimonial estate, though he may be permitted to do so if there are no other heirs; and he has no right to sacrifice directly to his spirit, or consequently, to the lineage ancestors. He cannot, therefore, succeed to the custody of lineage ancestors' shrines or hold an office vested in the lineage. The tie of true agnatic descent, which alone confers these rights, cannot be fabricated.

848 An illegitimate boy's status in the lineage is in fact, therefore, inferior to that of his quasi-brothers. He is always liable to a certain amount of covert contempt, though good manners forbid the mention of his irregular descent in the normal course of events. But if he gets involved in a quarrel with his quasi-siblings or quasi-clansmen, even as a child, they might well taunt him as an interloper (*zaŋkuomər*). His lot may be harder, if he has an intractable character, than that of a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with his mother's brother (*ahəb*); for the latter has a home of his own to fall back upon, where he is entitled, by right of legitimate descent, to his patrimonial inheritance, protection, and communion in the ancestor cult. In no circumstances, however, can an illegitimate son be deprived of those rights that belong to him. His quasi-father's home is his home, his mother's clan his clan. From him may spring an accessory lineage of the clan. In theory, incidentally, he may marry a daughter of a different major segment of his adoptive clan, but I know

611 the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master
of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes
778 his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the
zɔŋ of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors,
is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr*
of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11
and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages
later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for
[782] they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors else-
where than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins
● 837 against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and
welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say,
627 transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely
778 in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery
she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*.
She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage
against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized
in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not
confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this
ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary
342 course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to
343 the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbɔg*) a
yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the
sapak. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or store-
room and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and
6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One
suffices for a small family like Ɔndieso's. A wealthier man with a more
numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more
smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with
a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

343 In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental
[351] element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a
Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly
181 in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that
592 section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the
domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters
and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the
smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and
guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this,
life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and
the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency
of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

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[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

578 602 627 come to demand a runaway daughter and her would-be husband's lineage elders. The young man will hide the girl with friends, or use other stratagems to keep her, backed up for the time being, and chiefly for form's sake, by his lineage elders. But later he may have a struggle with the head of his nuclear lineage if he is opposed to the marriage. It is not until the formal placation gift (*sɛndaan*) is sent to the girl's father with his consent and that of his lineage elders, that a truce comes, and not until the first instalment of the bride-price is paid that a promise of peace appears—which may not be for months, or even for a couple of years.

675 583 The placation gift and the bride-price provide an objective instrument by means of which the two lineage segments which are the parties to a marriage can balance their divergent interests in and opposing rights over the woman. It is the instrument that separates the woman from her natal family—or rather, it separates her role as wife from her role as daughter, her subordination to her husband from her subjection to her father, so that the conflict between these roles is kept in check.

583 576 That is the meaning of the rule I once heard summed up in the maxim: 'A woman must not be at her father's house when they (her husband's people) send the placation gifts. That is a taboo.' The young man who said this was protesting at the breach of this rule forced upon him by the unscrupulous action of one of the leading elders of his clan. The rule applies both to the placation gift and to the bride-price.

574 593 A newly wed wife, therefore, often finds herself torn between her desire to be with her husband and her loyalty and sense of duty to her parents, enhanced as this is by her respect for parental authority. Tallensi realize that she must be weaned from her attachment to her parents. Thus for the first month or two of marriage a young wife is not allowed to visit her parents, lest, as the natives say, her longing for her mother should get the better of her and she should refuse to return to her husband. Even after some years of marriage men object to young wives paying prolonged visits to their parents without good cause, as we have seen. I have often been amused at the mood of bristling suspicion which comes over a man left a grass-widower for a week or two, though he has probably consented to his wife's going on a visit and may have other wives at home. •[837] It must be admitted, however, that wives run off with other men often enough after such visits to give grounds for the taunt of innate frivolity and fickleness that men throw up against the whole of the opposite sex. A woman in her father's house assumes, for the time being, the social personality of a daughter; and it is as if she is prone, then, to doff her wifehood and with it her sense of duty to her husband. Tallensi say that, if a man falls out with his father-in-law, his wife will take her husband's part when she is with him, but will side with her father at her parental home. Only after several years of marriage, with children pledging her to marital fidelity and an established relationship binding her to her husband, is she most likely to

593 husband and wife, the man is more his wife's physical and spiritual
581 protector than her lord and master. Baŋ of Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra and Nindɔɣat
of Zubiuŋ-Kpaɣaraɣaɣar had a complicated dispute over an ancient
[578] cattle debt. It culminated in blows when Nindɔɣat tried to lay hands
on Baŋ's wife. That, declared Baŋ, he would not stand for.

A man is responsible for ensuring the beneficence of the ancestor
581 spirits and other mystical powers towards his wife; and that he does this
753 out of a sense of moral duty is evident when his wife gets ill. I well
757 remember two particularly pathetic cases. Baripɛta, a handsome, industrious, intelligent, and popular young man, had one young wife. Shortly after the birth of their child, she was stricken with leprosy. The Tallensi are generally prepared to admit that this disease is incurable by their magico-medical methods. They say that it is contagious to the sufferer's young children. The bodily corruption of the disease disgusts them, and they say that lepers are difficult to live with as they become bitter and vindictive. Baripɛta knew all this as well as anybody else. His wife had become an economic and social burden instead of a helpmate. Yet he continued to cherish her, and, poor though he was, to try treatment after treatment for her, at the cost of many fowls and goats and pence. It is true that a jural principle was involved. As she had contracted the disease in his home under his care, he was responsible for her. He could not return her to her father, for instance. But it was plain from his behaviour and talk that he continued to care for her, with even greater consideration than usual, not out of submission to a customary jural rule but out of a feeling of immediate duty towards and concern for her.

It was the same with Ɔmara. His senior wife fell a victim to leprosy when her eldest children had already reached adulthood. He went to great expense in trying to get her cured. Explaining this to me, he said that, firstly, a sick person's nearest relatives never give up hope of a cure, and secondly, he was her husband, therefore he must try his utmost to save her. If he gave up she would be mortally hurt and might pine away. It was his duty to her and to her children.

The Sexual Relationship as the Corner-stone of Marriage

581 The moral bond of husband and wife is founded on their sexual
relationship, conceived as the means to the end of reproduction. It is
this that makes the sexual relationship the corner-stone of marriage.

The simplest proof of the significance of the sexual relationship is the
581 fact that a marriage is not properly consummated until coitus takes place
585 between the partners. This is seen most clearly when a widow remarries.
She may be given in marriage to one of her deceased husband's brothers
587 by the head of his effective minimal lineage, or she may be claimed by
her deceased husband's brother, and may acquiesce, to begin with. If
● [837] she has sexual relations with her new husband she becomes his wife,
whether or not the formalities of remarriage are completed. If she

succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife and may 581
sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery. 585
Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that
of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was 587
pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried,
but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this
soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology)
of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of
the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself
with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant
at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy,
he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's
marriage with the woman had never been consummated.

It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with 581
her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by
her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this 585
line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to
use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how
Baŋyelib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance
of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning,
as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by
the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She
was helpless, and Baŋyelib, who had purposely stayed in the room,
'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told
me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform
his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering
rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to
eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told
him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with
humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree.
Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time [842]
in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that
shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to
procreation rather than to gratification.

Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, 595
she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the
support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must 578
divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected
wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say,
somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the
jealousy (*yuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common
husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her
husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on
her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for
him in revenge.

613 581 587 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife, implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however, not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

581 •837 593 The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Unlike the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extramarital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non*. Tallensi express contempt for the Gorisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeembii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbobis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbobis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbobis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the 835 inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous 613 or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a distant clan-sister (*pɔŋ·aɣabəlɔg*) do not clash with the habits, morals, and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships. Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen. Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that 584 they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the latter's settlement.

A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry 835 her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or 613 daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge 837 that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own. The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation. There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives to stay long at their parents' homes.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

•837 684 613 577 By contrast, sex relations with the wife of a member of the same lineage or clan outside the range of the inner lineage is a wrong. It is not incest, but the most reprehensible form of adultery. It does not bear the same moral stigma as the corresponding form of incest, nor does it carry religious penalties for the adulterer. Unless the two men concerned have personal cognatic ties, which makes the offence more serious, they are related to each other only as members of related lineage segments. Their personal identity is submerged in the corporate unit, and the offence is interpreted as an injury to the husband's segment by the culprit's segment of a like order. What is a moral and ritual offence in the inner lineage shades over into a misdemeanour or jural injury in the wider lineage. The shift of evaluation is correlated with a change in the intensity though not in the kind of interests involved, and a widening of the span of the unit. The wider lineage has similar but less direct interests in a man's wife than his inner lineage; its unity and solidarity are of the same order as, but less intimate than that of the inner lineage. It has a jural and political unity and solidarity, primarily associated with formal sentiments of amity and mutual loyalty; whereas the cohesion of the inner lineage (based as it is on common economic interests, co-operation and consultation in the everyday affairs of life, contiguous residence, and minimal internal segmentation for jural purposes such as marriage arrangements with other lineages) is primarily moral, and associated with strong emotions of person-to-person amity and loyalty. Thus, beyond the range of the inner lineage, when the customary ritual reconciliation between the segment of the adulterer and the segment of the husband has been completed, the matter is over and done with so far as the public relations of the parties are concerned. No material compensation is made to the husband, and, in the absence of a judicial system, there is no one who can inflict a penalty on the adulterer. The wronged husband may harbour resentment against his wife's seducer; the magical danger inherent in their seeing each other if either is ill remains as a barrier between them; but the corporate unity of the lineage and clan to which they both belong is restored.

Still, adultery with the wife of a clansman or of a member of a linked maximal lineage[1] (to which the same rules apply) creates dissension in the corporate body. It violates the principle that all men of the clan have a formally equal interest in the wife of a fellow member. It leaves [626] behind rankling animosity that hinders united action. For these reasons it usually arouses an outburst of anger against the wrongdoer. Public opinion is a strong sanction against it therefore. Though cases are far from common, they occur more frequently than the corresponding form of incest. I was able to obtain details of a few cases that occurred immediately before and during my stay in Taleland. In one case the husband and his brothers were so outraged that they fell upon the offender in his

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal 684
belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within
the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed 613
incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to
Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of 837
conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no conse- 577
quence compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the
ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also 837
adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's
clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be 613
mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such 627
ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his
clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*lɛrɔg samɔr*)' by seducing the wife 577
of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets
a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by
mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual re-
lations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It
is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*dayɔt*), mystical defilement. It may bring
sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf,
for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted
before, adultery (*pɔyambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with
revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed
something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her
husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be
admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the
lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The [778]
threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill
Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Bɔyar,[1] the
supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous
third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a con-
fession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death 581
until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few
ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her 765
greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval 834
between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject
to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver
sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose
wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual
wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman,
602 anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house.
Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's
● 837 wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement.
If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces
577 the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one
of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible
form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily
divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and
the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I
have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or
someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of
606 his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and
837 on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking
thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a
577 father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own
wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married
couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from
her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before,
if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her
status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and
daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his
status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not
abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict
would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations.
So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's
lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly
within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet
[576] his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his,
if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this
would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though
434 not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition
against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's
paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement),
or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the
husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children
borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done,
disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited
by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for
574 instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few
days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A
434 man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

593 685 curse and take his son back. But meanwhile the boy sneaked away and went to his brother in Mampurugu for fear of public ridicule. 'But', said Loɣani, 'one day he will return and his father will certainly take him back.' It is because a man cannot disown his child that a Tale father always stands by his son in what the natives call *pɔɣadir yɛla*, marriage affairs, the test occasions of jural responsibility. A man may have strong private objections to his son's marriage and eventually cause it to be dissolved. He may criticize and scold his son for it. But in public he will support the boy if the marriage does not infringe some rule of kinship or convention of social relationships. This, it should be noted, is not the same thing as a man's responsibility for his son's bride-price which rests on a different principle. For the same reason a woman can never be denied refuge in her father's house if she has nowhere else to stay.

593 A woman, too, cannot disown her child. Indeed Tallensi say that it is unthinkable for a woman, bound as she is to her child by even stronger emotional bonds than a man. It happens, of course, that women desert, or are taken away from one husband to marry another and leave a child behind. But if the child is still too tiny to fend for itself it accompanies its mother until it is old enough to be separated (*pɔhɔg*) from her. Tallensi are very critical of a woman who deserts a child when she leaves its father, though not without ulterior motives; for a runaway wife is a loss, whether she leaves children or not. As has been mentioned, they say that in such cases 'Rearing is more important than bearing'. And yet, they say, a woman yearns after her child no matter who has the custody of it. She might easily desert a later husband to return to an earlier husband with whom she has left a child; and if a woman who has been married more than once returns to her first husband, his rights take precedence of all the others' by Tale custom. That is why men object strongly to a wife's attempting to visit or even see a child she has left with a former husband. I have seen a man keep watch on his wife for days lest she make such an attempt. 'Do you know what bearing (a child) means to a woman?' he said, in explanation. In any case, her marital history makes no difference to the *soog* (uterine) tie between a woman and her child and to the social relationships arising out of it. ● 537 As we have already learnt, there is no surer guarantee that a woman will stay with a husband than if she has two or three children by him. If she has children, a woman who commits adultery almost invariably returns to her husband, risking the wrath of his ancestor spirits and enduring the shame of a semi-public confession. If she has none, she usually runs off with her paramour.

593 577 The ideas we have been discussing are not thought to have a ritual sanction where own parents and children are concerned. But with proxy parents, as might be expected, a ritual sanction comes into the picture openly. A man who disowns or ill-treats or in other ways neglects the

593 602 579 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 476 764 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan yɛla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of ●[837] *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 571 835 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

867 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented
857 that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association
764 with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice
855] to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly
[966] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends
[839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4–5 years, suspiciously

sons (*ahəs*) of the same Tɛnzugu clan. This had brought them together. 602
Similarly, there is a much closer bond between Ziŋgan biis and Tambil biis, two of the five segments of Bɔɣayiedət yidɛm of Tongo, than between either of these segments and the other three segments, because their founding ancestors were sister's sons of the same clan.[1]

The other and more important class of kinship ties presupposes the analogy of the parent–child relationship. When a person says of another '*n-dɔɣume*—I have begotten (born) him', or, speaking of lineages, '*ti dɔɣabame*—We (my lineage) have begotten (born) them (their lineage)', what is meant is that the latter can trace a line of descent to the former or to the former's lineage. A man refers to a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) or to a classificatory *ahəŋ* in these terms. When I was staying at Kpata'ar, my servants received unusually generous hospitality and were obviously much more at ease than they had been at some places we had previously visited. I was several times told in explanation (on one occasion by some Kpata'ar children) that my two local boys were *dɔɣa* by the Kpata'ar na'ab's lineage. The father of one and the paternal grandfather of the other had been sister's sons of Kpata'ar. Again, two lineages can be related in this way, as, for instance, Naɣasaa yidɛm of Kpata'ar and Ɔmanpiog yidɛm of Gbeog are. The most important feature of such a relationship to the natives is that the lineage or individual of the senior generation sacrifices to their or his ancestors on behalf of the lineage or individual of the junior generation.

The idiom of kinship has such a dominant place in Tale thought that all social relations implying mutual or common interests tend to be assimilated to those of kinship. This happens, as has been shown in our previous volume, with ties of local contiguity and of politico-ritual interdependence between lineages and clans.

The Native Theory of Conception

The Tallensi, we have said, take cognizance of a very wide range of genealogical relationships, and they regard all such relationships as based on the physical fact of consanguinity. The starting-point for this lies in their notions about the physiology of conception. In their view man and woman have equally vital roles in the act of conception. Hence kinship through one's mother, and, consequently, through her ascendants, counts equally with—though admittedly less influentially than, and differently from—kinship through one's father and paternal line. 842

Dɔɣam is the power of procreation. In women it is connected with menstruation, the external signs and periodicity of which are known to everybody, and the nature of which man, woman, or child readily refers to without the slightest squeamishness. A girl is said to be fit for childbearing (*u saɣa dɔɣam* [*or dɔɣabu*]) when her monthly courses become established, her breasts develop, and her body takes on womanly 841 842

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 211 ff.

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verb), the main sign of which is the emergence of pubic hair. At first,
831 when the adolescent boy begins to have nocturnal emissions, his powers of procreation are not yet mature. It is only after some time, when he is completely *sol*, that he becomes capable of procreation. For procreation depends not on the sexual fluids ejaculated in the act of coitus by both man and woman, but on an active principle, as it were, in these fluids, the *ŋaamis*. The natives cannot explain more precisely what the *ŋaamis* is or how it works. What they maintain, emphatically, is that conception, both among men and among animals, cannot occur without sexual congress, and that it depends on the mingling (*gɛrɔm*) of the male sexual fluid with the female sexual fluid, or rather on the happy conjunction of their respective procreative essences (*ŋaamis*). Thus the function of the male is as essential as that of the female in procreation, and every child knows this.

842 Much evidence could be quoted in proof of this. Tallensi know that a male's procreative potency resides in the testicles (*lana*), and they
831 castrate small livestock which they want to prevent from breeding. The suspension of sex relations with a wife who has a nursing child is not a ritual matter, subject to mystical sanctions, but a practical necessity in order to prevent the woman from conceiving again too soon. Its observance is a question of conscience and self-control and few men get through life without a lapse. Some, I was told by one of my most trustworthy informants, practise *coitus interruptus* in order to avoid impregnating a nursing wife. Some men believe in a 'safe period'. I once heard a theory of this kind stated by a man to a couple of friends. His very
[841] modern-sounding theory was that the 'safe period' follows shortly after menstruation, since menstruation is a sort of pregnancy, and a pregnant woman cannot conceive again. But the clearest indication of the role attributed by the Tallensi to sexual conjugation in procreation was given in a conversation I listened to at the Chief of Tongo's house. The chief and the elders were talking about the White Fathers at Bolɔga. Garbled ideas about their doctrines have reached many Tallensi. Jesus was mentioned. One man said that the Fathers claimed that His mother conceived Him without knowing a man. A vigorous argument followed. Most of the men were openly sceptical, saying that it was quite impossible. But one or two had a deeper respect for the white man. True, they admitted, black people cannot have children without sex relations; but perhaps the white man, with his wondrous powers and knowledge,

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has a medicine which enables women to conceive without the participation of a male. 842

The notion of a procreative essence as distinct from the sexual fluid, however vaguely formulated it is, is of importance. Tallensi distinguish between sexual vigour or desire and the power of procreation. They know that people who are sterile (*kundɔɣar*) lack the latter but are not necessarily deficient in the former. Na'abzɔ, gossip said, was sterile because in his wild young days as a soldier he had lived with a Dagban woman who had maliciously caused him by some magical means to 'pour away all his power of begetting (*kpaa u dɔɣam waabi bah*)' in excessive intercourse with her. The uncharitable believed that he was impotent to boot, but others were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

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The Tallensi regard *dɔɣam* as, above all, a very precious human function, quite apart from the pleasures of sex. Thus, when Zikihib's young wife was left a grass widow for three years by her vagabond husband and had a child by a lover, it was unanimously condoned. Was she, it was argued, to cast away her powers of child-bearing for nothing (*zaŋ u dɔɣam bah wari*) just because she had a faithless husband and was herself too devoted to her children by him to run off with another man?

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Lastly, the notion of the *ŋaamis* is the point at which mystical beliefs enter into the theory of conception. The obvious physiological facts of parenthood are summed up in the maxim, 'A man and a woman unite to procreate a child'. But behind plain physiology lies a mystery. Sometimes a man sleeps with his wife on a single occasion and she becomes pregnant (*u ŋɔɣa puur*—lit. she seizes a belly). At other times a man has relations with his wife regularly for months and she fails to conceive. Thus conception depends, in the last resort, on Heaven (*Naawun*), the Final Cause by which the Tallensi rationalize chance and which they invoke when empirical or less recondite mystical explanations fail. There is an essential mystical factor in procreation; and if a man or a woman fails to beget or bear a child, appeals can be made to the ancestor spirits and other mystical powers that intervene directly in human destiny. That is why a barren woman in her heart of hearts never gives up hope of having a child as long as she is still of child-bearing age, though the Tallensi know that barrenness is often a fact of nature beyond cure by either empirical or mystical agencies.

The Significance of Paternity and Patriliny

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A person's genealogical ties are fixed by his parentage. Among the Tallensi these are the ties that plot the trajectory of the individual's life. The rights and duties that are critical for his role and status in society all stem, in the last resort, from the fact of birth. A person cannot divest himself, or be divested, of the bonds created by his birth and yet remain a member of the society; nor can he fully and unconditionally acquire

602 these bonds except by birth. No other ties can wholly supersede them in linking person to person and affiliating individuals to defined social groups.

We have noted, however, that not all genealogical ties have an equal 602 value. Though a person acquires significant social ties through both 611 parents, his agnatic relationships have an outstanding importance; and this is particularly so for a man. For not only is patrilineal descent the vertebral principle of Tale social organization and the vehicle of the continuity and stability of the social structure, but men hold the reins of authority, direct economic life, control the political organization, and are supreme in religious and ceremonial thought and action. From his father a man derives his rights to inherit land and other property, his clan membership and the political rights and ritual obligations that go with it, and his ritual relations with his most important ancestors. A woman does not inherit land or other property of value, nor does she succeed to political or ritual office. But clan membership and the concomitant totemic observances,[1] as well as her ritual allegiance to her patrilineal ancestors, mean a great deal for her social destiny and for her children. In short, paternity is the predominant side of parentage in this conspicuously patriarchal society.

842 Like many other primitive societies, the Tallensi recognize a distinction between physiological paternity and jural paternity—between 848 *genitor* and *pater*, as Radcliffe-Brown puts it. However, the Tallensi feel very strongly that a person's physiological father is his or her right jural father. The assumption is that all the social attributes that come to one from one's father should come from a father who both begot one *and recognizes one as his legitimate offspring*. Thus there is an inevitable tendency for conflict to arise if a person's physiological and jural paternity do not coincide. Such a person tends to be penalized in respect of his social status, for jural paternity by itself cannot altogether take the place of physiological cum jural paternity.

848 The conflict is least in the case of an adulterine child, who is always accepted as the rightful child of its mother's husband. No difficulties at all arise in the case of a daughter, who marries out of the lineage as soon as she is nubile. An adulterine son has complete and unreserved filial status. He has full rights of inheritance, of succession, and of ritual access to his putative patrilineal ancestors. Nevertheless, the blot on the scutcheon is not without effect. The story of Sayəbazaa's first-born son, Kologo, illustrates this.

848 Some years before my first visit to Tongo, Kologo had left his father 578 to go and farm near Datok. There seemed to be no adequate motive for this in his case. But when Sayəbazaa died, in 1936, and Kologo as chief mourner had to be summoned for the mortuary rites, I was able to piece together how it had occurred, from guarded hints and veiled comments

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

567 insulted or molested; for it was held to be both good policy and a moral duty to treat a slave no differently from a son. As the ward of the lineage ancestors, he had a place and a moral status in the lineage; but, Tallensi say, he was bound to harbour some resentment at his invidious social position, and would certainly try to abscond if he were ill-used.

These ideas are as active as ever among the Tallensi; for a few ex-slaves still survive, and there are one or two sons, grandsons, and remoter agnatic descendants of slaves in many settlements, who, by the lineage principle, retain their ancestors' social status in a much attenuated form. These people have exactly the same place in society that they would have occupied in former times. To judge by their participation in social activities, both profane and ceremonial, there is no obvious distinction between them and other members of the clan. They are as loyal and patriotic members of the clan as any other members of it. Wɔla of Zoo always took a leading part in the public affairs and ceremonial activities of Zoo. I was surprised to discover accidentally that he was an ex-slave. I was told on excellent authority that he is still often teased about his slave status, but that he takes it in good part, saying that since the coming of the white man a slave is as good a man as his neighbour. Usually no one would so affront a man and his quasi-relatives as to refer pointedly to his slave status or descent if he did not provoke it by offensive conduct. Wrongly to accuse a person of slave descent, if only by implication, is a deadly insult. And even those of whom it is true never voluntarily betray it. Not everyone has Wɔla's aggressive sense of humour, and good manners require that tact and discretion be exercised in such delicate matters of social standing.

Analogously, a slave girl's (*da'abpɔk*) status resembled that of an illegitimate daughter. She was taken in marriage like any other girl, so her children had no disabilities in respect of their patrilineal connexions. They regarded their mother's quasi-paternal kin as their maternal uncle's lineage. But I have records of cases in which the descendants of a slave woman have sought out her true paternal kin in a distant land in order to establish correct ritual ties with them.

567 602 All the men with whom I discussed the question affirmed without hesitation that it would be disgraceful and immoral to treat a slave, or an illegitimate son or brother, differently from true agnatic kin. But they all emphasized, nevertheless, that a slave or an illegitimate son cannot possibly become a son or a brother in the full sense of these terms. He can be to you *in loco filii* or *fratris* but not *filius* or *frater*, since he cannot sacrifice directly to his quasi-father's spirit or inherit, as of right, his patrimony. ● [842] The principle at issue is that physical father and social father, *genitor* and *pater*, must be the same person. The vicissitudes of marriage illustrate the same point.

611 842 It often happens that a young woman becomes the bride of one man, is later married to another man, by whom she conceives or has a

child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The 611
second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its
life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father 842
a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or
has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right
rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so
much importance to having children that they generally make every
effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony,
or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the
care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When 611
she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the 583
cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense
of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three
head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law
(or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's
children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established
as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted 611
as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory
he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In
practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in
the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of
his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when
he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare,
when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours,
sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came
across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and
eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite
an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted 613
into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without 618
any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt
to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition 602
to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more
important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship
and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the
new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one
would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old
man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance
of his father's estate, but was elected tɛndaana over the heads of men
who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's
jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either
his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do
so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow
of redemption.

The Ritual Coefficient of Patriliny

602 769 All these cases of irregular paternity bring out a point of central importance in native thought. As we shall see in more detail later, the bonds of physical consanguinity and the concomitant social ties created by parenthood are *ipso facto* spiritual and moral bonds. They have a ritual coefficient in which the natives see their deepest meaning and value. One's bonds with one's lineage imply a ritual bond with one's patrilineal ancestors and other mystical forces associated with the existence and well-being of the lineage. They are the chief mystical powers governing the life of the individual. Legitimate paternity is a *sine qua non* for a right relationship with one's agnatic ancestor spirits who watch over one's whole life from the moment of birth. There is a spiritual hiatus between an illegitimate son or a slave's son and his adoptive lineage ancestors. Being only indirectly under their tutelage, and unable to gain direct contact with them by offering sacrifices himself, he cannot use them to master the vicissitudes and frustrations of life as freely as a true scion of their line. Also, as we have seen, the ancestor spirits are the principal sanction enforcing a man's rights to full filial status in his physical father's lineage. As we have observed, political and ritual office can be held only by men who are legitimate members of the lineage in which these offices are vested; and the sanction for this lies in the key functions of these offices in the cult of the ancestors and of the other mystical powers coupled with the lineage.

834 ● 842 769 All social relations in which agnatic descent has a decisive function have this ritual coefficient. Legitimate paternity is bound up with a man's exclusive rights over his wife's reproductive powers, conferred on him by marriage. A child's legitimate paternity is jeopardized if it is conceived or born in a situation in which its father's marital rights do not prevail. Hence, sexual intercourse between a man and his wife (and by extension between any man of the husband's medial lineage and a woman of the wife's medial lineage) at her paternal home is rigorously tabooed; it is a ritual 'pollution of the room (*sayam dug*)'—i.e. an outrage against the lineage identity—of the girl's father; for a woman has the status of a daughter in her father's house, where she comes under her father's authority and the tutelage of his ancestors.

611 769 In keeping with this, a child must not be born in its mother's father's, or brother's house. Its ties with its maternal kin must not be confounded with its bonds with its paternal kin. These represent opposed forces in its social world, and matrilateral kinship ties must not be allowed to become a threat to lineage ties. A woman bears a child to her husband, an additional member of his lineage and clan. When she conceives, it is the right and duty of her husband and his family to care for her. His ancestor spirits must guard her and the unborn child. In the perilous hour of childbirth she must be cared for by her husband and his family,

844 gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his
783 son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders
of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be per-
769 formed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

● 842 The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both
parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is
613 overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔɣam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔɣam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

604 One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

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[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

and wife, may suffer shipwreck. Many women leave a husband or are taken from him after bearing one child to him. Only after a woman has borne two or three living children to a man does this bond become a really effective force in maintaining the marriage. 586

The real foundation of a lasting marriage is not custom or jural or ritual sanctions, but a satisfactory relationship between the married pair; and this is a complex tissue woven of many strands, changing and strengthening with the years. It has elements that can be translated into terms of reciprocal rights, duties, and services. But it is essentially a moral and personal bond, a question of the mutual adjustment of roles and persons in pursuit of the interests married partners have in one another and in common, and the purposes they share. The sexual bond is of vital importance in this relationship. 581

The personality of a spouse is important. A lazy man who neglects to provide for his wife sufficiently, a harsh man who strikes her at the least provocation, a man who through sickness, impotence, or lack of consideration does not or will not give her sexual satisfaction, yet holds her jealously to her marital fidelity; any such man may find it hard to keep a wife. A lazy woman, a disobedient woman, a woman with a hasty temper or one who is a confirmed gadabout, is likely to have several husbands before she finally settles down. A barren woman, too, with her growing sense of frustration as the years pass, tends to become restless and to drift from husband to husband. Such a one is Gelima, Naabdiya's elderly sister, who has tried no fewer than eighteen husbands and has been compelled to seek a haven for her declining years in her brother's home. Barrenness is one of the reasons for which a man may decide to get rid of a wife, but often enough a barren wife who is a good worker and has a tractable disposition gains her husband's devotion and remains with him. Occasionally a wife proves to be a petty thief, who filches the supplies of other women of the household or stores put aside by the men. She will get short shrift, and will be sent back in disgrace, formally, by the head of her husband's *dug*; for such a person is bound to cause endless disturbance in the family. A woman accused of witchcraft by a co-wife may be dealt with similarly, it is said, but in the few cases I have heard of the husbands have not divorced the women. Lastly, no man will tolerate a wife who suffers from nocturnal enuresis, however attractive or proficient she may be. To urinate on the sleeping-mat during sleep is a grave mystical offence endangering the life of the husband; hence, a woman suffering from this complaint is formally sent back to her parents. 581 586 [842] [685] [827]

The Wife's Ties with Her Paternal Family and Lineage

These accidents of personality affect only a minority of marriages. The constant social factors that steer the course of every marriage are of greater significance to us, and must be examined more fully. When 602 593

[837]

succeeds in avoiding intercourse with him she is not his wife, and may 581
sleep with any other man without fear of being accused of adultery. 585
Cases of this kind are common. A particularly instructive case was that
of a wife whom Pal-Zɔŋ inherited from his dead brother. As she was 587
pregnant at the time, he did not attempt to sleep with her. She miscarried, but continued to put him off with excuses. The reason for this soon became apparent. An agnatic cousin ('brother' in native terminology) of Zɔŋ's was living with him, who, being half blind, spent most of the day at home. This gave him the opportunity of ingratiating himself with the woman, and he became her lover. Though Zɔŋ was indignant at the humiliation put upon him, and obviously burning with jealousy, he could do nothing about the affair. For it was not incest, as Zɔŋ's marriage with the woman had never been consummated.

It follows from this rule that a woman cannot refuse to cohabit with 581
her husband. It sometimes happens that a girl is given in marriage by
her father to a man whom she does not like, and that she takes up this 585
line of resistance. The husband then has the right to thrash her or to use other forms of force in order to make her yield. The story of how Baŋyɛlib consummated his first marriage is a somewhat ribald instance of this rule. The girl literally fought him off for days. Then one morning, as she was crawling out of their sleeping-room, his brother seized her by the neck and held her as in a vice, caught in the narrow doorway. She was helpless, and Baŋyɛlib, who had purposely stayed in the room, 'mounted her from behind', in the words of one of his brothers who told me the story. Another man I knew, in the same plight, sent to inform his father-in-law. The old man arrived at cockcrow next day in a towering rage and laid an ultimatum before his daughter. He was not going to eat or drink or budge from the door of her room until her husband told him that the marriage was consummated. The girl, weeping with humiliation, yielded immediately to this heartless form of third degree.
Tallensi say that if a man has connexion with his wife for the first time [842]
in such circumstances she is at once impregnated—a bit of folk-lore that shows how marital cohabitation is felt to be essentially the means to procreation rather than to gratification.

Reciprocally, a man cannot refuse to cohabit with his wife. If he does, 595
she will quarrel bitterly with him and leave him; and she will have the
support of her father or guardian in this action. A polygynist must 578
divide his sexual attentions equally among his wives, or else the neglected wives will quarrel with him and with their co-wives. Indeed, men say, somewhat cynically, that more family quarrels arise because of the jealousy (*ŋuur*) of co-wives over the sexual attentions of their common husband than for any other cause. Though a woman cannot prevent her husband from having a clandestine lover, she will resent it as a slight on her sexual attractions if she finds out, and make life uncomfortable for him in revenge.

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things' (*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarəmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarəmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father] and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it [*pɔhg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely unwitting 871
process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over-determined, [186]
value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

hidden struggle between her husband and her father-in-law. Though 606
she is in the position of a daughter to her parents-in-law, she cannot feel for them nor they for her the love and devotion that moderate the strictness of parental authority and give a tone of easy-going friendliness to the normal intercourse of parents and children. One side of the parent-child relationship, the authority of parents over their children, looms foremost for her. The cleavage between successive generations and the tension that holds them apart, are underlined at the expense of the mutual devotion and identification of parents and children.

Parents-in-law, for their part, have ambivalent feelings towards their 606
daughter-in-law. Behind their ostensible pride and pleasure in their son's marriage lurks the shadow of resentment. A man realizes that his 578
son's marriage is the first step in his eventual emancipation. It is the seed from which grow responsibilities and interests that compete with those he owes to his natal family and threaten his loyalties to them. A woman sees in her son's marriage a sign that her reproductive life is over. Tallensi hold that it is improper, and to some extent mystically [843] ●
dangerous, for mother-in-law and daughter-in-law to bear at the same time. Hence parents often, though covertly, try to prevent a first son marrying young, or else, in self-defence, display exaggerated conceit at a son's early marriage. Only the coming of grandchildren, coinciding as it does with the habituation of the daughter-in-law to her conjugal family, and itself a distinction inspiring great pride and joy in the grandparents, compensates for the renunciations implicitly required of a man's parents when he takes a wife.

Inevitably, therefore, there is an element of tension in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. The fact that the daughter-in-law is under the power of her husband's family, particularly of her father-in-law, and that they are formally, if not openly, opposed to her paternal family, to which, however, she is still attached by the strongest ties of duty and sentiment, may add to the strain. It may be quite superficial in a well-regulated family or in the case of an approved marriage, apparent only in the conventions of speech and etiquette. In an ill-managed family, or if there is opposition to the marriage, it often comes out openly. Parents-in-law complain of their daughter-in-law's manners or actions, or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law have petty squabbles. As time passes the strain is mitigated with the gradual absorption of the daughter-in-law into her conjugal family. It is never wholly erased. Even in so well organized a family as Ɔmara's, there was a standing feud between his younger wives and his mother. The old woman, half-sunk in the hebetude of senility, complained ceaselessly of the neglect of her daughters-in-law; and they often quarrelled with her vehemently on account of what they regarded as her exorbitant demands on their firewood, their labour, and their food-supply.

The conventions of behaviour followed by parents-in-law and daugh-

593 trite, especially after one has heard it fifty times. But it is charged with deep emotion for the native to whom it stands for all the tribulations and anxieties connected with the whole task of bringing up a child.

831 Men say that these tribulations begin with the act of sex itself. Desired though it is for the pleasure it gives, sexual intercourse is debilitating. Ejaculation (*duun duurəm*, a term primarily used for micturition) is a giving up of something vital that is a source of strength and youth. That is why young, unmarried men are so much more vigorous than married men.

843 Then there is the strain under which a man lives during his wife's pregnancy, particularly if it is a first pregnancy. Pregnancy, the creation of life, must not be brought into contact with death. Hence he, as the father of his wife's coming child, must not take direct part in mortuary or funeral rites. If he is one of the bereaved, the rites he is compelled to undergo are modified so as to eliminate contact with the corpse or objects symbolizing it. No particular evil is thought to follow on a breach of this taboo, which can, in fact, be magically purged if circumstances compel a man to it. But no man would be so callous as to flout the taboo deliberately.

Again, a man must not cut a new bush farm while his wife is pregnant, lest she miscarry. Both are critical events, affectively as well as socially, involving economic readjustments and the assumption of new responsibilities. Preparing a new bush farm absorbs you completely; it is, the natives say, 'a commotion of the heart (*suhkpɛləg*)'. But when your wife is pregnant you 'take heed only of her pregnancy (*i wona u puur la*)'. You cannot give attention, at the same time, to a new and vital economic enterprise like cutting a new bush farm. Apart from a wife's pregnancy only two other critical happenings are so obsessing as to be considered mystically incompatible with making a new bush farm—building a new house, a momentous undertaking, both materially and ritually, which marks an important change in a man's social personality; and taking a new wife, which also involves or portends big readjustments in one's social relations. It is significant that a man who is cutting a new bush farm or building a new house keeps away from funerals outside his own inner lineage since they are both emotionally disturbing and a distraction. All these critical events demand watchfulness and solicitude, for unknown dangers of both a physical and a mystical kind threaten their outcome. A man has to go about consulting diviners. He offers special sacrifices to his ancestors and puts the matter in their particular care.

Another sign of the concern that tempers a man's joy at his wife's pregnancy is the caution he must use in the chase. He must not kill certain mystically dangerous animals, else his wife may miscarry or bear a deformed child.

A man's close relatives are also concerned when his wife is pregnant, 602 especially if it is a first pregnancy. His mother and the older women of 843

602 the family keep an eye on the girl lest she overstrain herself or break one
843 of the dietary taboos. If his father is alive it is he who visits diviners and appeals to the ancestors.

The woman's paternal family, too, are concerned, especially in a first pregnancy. When they have been informed of it, her father appeals to his ancestors to bless her in her coming ordeal, and her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood, as her time approaches. It is also her mother's duty, round about the fourth or fifth month, to send one of
[292] her co-wives to 'gird the girl with a perineal band (*suol u voog*)', the garb of a matron; for until she has a child a woman wears no genital covering.

The prohibition against giving or accepting bride-price during a woman's pregnancy expresses this general solicitude too. Bride-price transactions involve tension and possible conflict between her father's people and her husband's; and this is not only distressing to her but dangerous to the unborn child. If, for instance, her father, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, as some men are heartless enough to do, takes her from her husband because the bride-price is not paid, the child's legitimate paternity may be prejudiced, as we have noted before, and its health suffer, or the woman herself have a difficult labour.

843 The solicitude for a woman with child reaches its peak at her confinement and during the subsequent three or four weeks, until she has
844 regained her strength and resumes her normal activities. Many men
846 have described to me their feelings in the hour of a wife's labour. 'You sit listening to her cries and groans of agony. You can't sleep. Your heart is clenched with fear and pity. You do not know how it will end. Do not women die in childbirth or become ill? Do not children die or get injured at birth?' A man's relief and happiness when his wife has passed safely (*salǝg*) through her confinement is written plainly in his voice and gait. Zaŋ, one of the most morose men I have known, was all smiles and affability on the morning after his wife's confinement.
[777] When friends and neighbours congratulate a man on his good luck (*zusɔŋ*, lit. good head) it is as much on account of his wife's safety as on the child's arrival.

846 During the days of seclusion—three for a boy and four for a girl—and for the next week or so, it is the husband's duty to provide sustaining food and appetizing condiments for his wife. He will go out to fetch large logs for the fire that must be kept going day and night in the woman's room while she and the babe are still weak and liable to catch cold. Every morning he will go out or send someone to collect the leaves and herbs to infuse in the hot water with which mother and child are bathed. And if necessary he will himself carry water from the water-hole or do other services for her comfort that men usually consider to be beneath their dignity.

846 A confinement also involves extra labour and the dislocation of routine
602 for the womenfolk of the husband's family. The care of the woman and

●843 For a woman too, and for any native who is looking at it from the point of view of motherhood, the difficulties of bringing a child into the 844 world centre round pregnancy and labour. Tale women generally seem to take a pregnancy in their stride, especially later pregnancies. They go on with their household tasks until the last minute. Children are sometimes born in the bush, and quite often born outside on the home farm, where the mother has been busy with some task. Miscarriages due to the strain of heavy work such as fetching heavy loads of firewood or going to distant markets to buy grain by the sack, and bringing it home by head carriage are not uncommon among multiparae. Primiparae, as we have seen, are usually watched over by older women, but miscarriages due to overstrain occur among them too. A woman who has had a child is trusted to look after herself.

843 But in spite of their apparently casual attitude to it, women think of pregnancy as fraught with weariness, discomfort, and anxiety. A woman thinks of the purely physiological discomforts such as the attacks of sickness and giddiness she may suffer. She thinks of the circumspection she must use in her eating and drinking. Very thin gruel, cold left-over porridge, sweet potatoes, too much cold water, are all things which would injure her health and must be avoided; nor may she eat honey, else her babe will be born with a catarrhal snuffle. A woman thinks, also, of the increasing lassitude that makes her household tasks more and more burdensome as her term approaches. She remembers the store of firewood she must gather and the provisions she must lay in for her confinement, though it is hard enough to satisfy the current needs of the household. And at the back of her mind she has always the fear of a miscarriage. She is subject, also, to ritual taboos, the most important being the avoidance of funerals.

844 Then, of course, there is the act of giving birth (*dɔɣ*) in the narrow sense. Tale women do not think of it in anticipation with terror or repugnance, but they do associate it with pain and possible complications. The crude midwifery of the old women who assist at a birth, relying in part on magical measures, cannot correct a breech presentation (*tula*) or expel an undescended placenta.

846 Women always put particular emphasis on the agonies of the hygiene of confinement. Mother and child are subjected to a course of hot baths, douching, and massage which the natives say is extremely painful. A white onlooker finds the process harrowing, to say the least. Water heated to nearly boiling-point is used and medicinal leaves and herbs are infused in it. The infant goes rigid with pain when it is washed in this decoction, and the mother squirms and shrieks as it is sluiced over her body and still tender sexual parts. Massage and oiling with shea butter follow the bath. The treatment is given twice or thrice daily during the days of seclusion and is gradually reduced over the following two or three weeks, fewer baths being given and the temperature of the

To return to our main subject, squabbles between children, 573 whether they are successive siblings or not, are laughed away. When 578 adult brothers and sisters quarrel it is taken more seriously. The irresponsibility—as the men view it—of women in marriage often leads to family quarrels. A woman who runs away from a husband to whom she has been given, or obstinately returns to one from whom she has been taken, arouses her father's and her brothers' anger. There may be a temporary estrangement between them. But in the end they usually become reconciled again. If she does not give in, her father or brothers do. 'They have no alternative but to give in (*ba kɔŋ ka diegəra*)', the natives say. Before that happens, however, there may be a father's curse on the girl and hard words spoken to her and her husband by her brothers.

Adult *soog* brothers also fall out at times, but in contrast to disputes between half-brothers this seems very rarely to become either the pretext or the stimulus to their deciding to separate. Tallensi ascribe it to peculiarities of personality. The very fact that full brothers are often alike in character may be the cause of friction between them. To give one or two illustrations, there was the case of Zaŋ and his older *soog* brother Pumaan. 2 They were both inclined to be solitary, egocentric, excessively touchy about their status, and suspicious of others. The strong competitive streak in them inevitably coloured their relations. So Zaŋ often complained that he found Pumaan's authority irksome. But there was never, as far as I could discover, an open quarrel between

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But one or two more thoughtful informants appeared to have an inkling of the deeper sources of this peculiarity. They connected it with the fact that the older 828 sibling is 'set aside' or 'left to itself (*bah*)' by the mother when she becomes pregnant with its *nyeer*. That is to say, the child's physical weaning is completed and simultaneously its affective attachment to its mother—a very possessive attachment with unweaned Tale babies—is brought to an end. A *nyeer* dispossesses its immediately preceding sibling of their mother's undivided care and devotion in both the physical and the psychological sense. This is a fact of observation and one which has a direct influence on family life. As we know, Tallensi maintain that it is very difficult for a woman to take care of two unweaned infants, hence the prohibition against a woman's becoming pregnant [843] again before her infant is old enough to do without her undivided attention. When this custom is broken, so that a premature pregnancy follows, the parents are said to *nye* their child. As this term, cognate with *nyeer*, suggests, and conventional opinion confirms, a premature *nyeer* is believed to endanger a child's life. On the analogy of what is known to happen in our society, it can be surmised that the open acknowledgement of rivalry between successive siblings is a culturally standardized safety-valve for the jealousy and resentment the older sibling has against the younger for robbing him of their mother's attention. This explains also why successive birth order is the significant feature and not survival order. The older child's resentment will be directed only against its immediately next-born sibling, the one on whose account it was 'set aside', whether that sibling lives or not. It is possible, moreover, that open acknowledgement of the rivalry of successive siblings prevents it from turning into a disruptive element in the relations of siblings.

601 602 also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Təŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sɔk—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sɔk; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence.

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

604 All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1]

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u ŋman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u ŋman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

604 843 ● 431 [884] When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl with a perineal band (*suol voog*). This is a proud moment for her, as the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have entered the ranks of the matrons (*pɔγaŋaaŋ*, pl. *pɔγaŋaas*). Then, before 2/A

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[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

2/A [Text continued on p. 301.-Analyst]

the child is due, her husband sends a sacrifice for her spirit guardian to 604 her father, to secure the blessing of her patrilineal ancestors on the 843 ordeal she is soon to undergo. When the child is born, a messenger is again dispatched to announce its birth to the girl's parents. He is 431 received with the hospitality due to a bearer of particularly glad tidings. Now the girl's mother sends her four new calabashes. These are the [854] infant's toilet-vessels—one for giving the infant its daily medicated water to drink, one as a dipper for use when bathing it, one as a slop basin, one for scooping up its excrement. These private toilet utensils are in part a magical protection for the baby. The occasion is also marked, as we have learnt, by a special gift of foodstuffs to the new mother from her father. All these formalities are not necessary for children after the first; it is enough to send a message on the birth of the child. But the woman's paternal relatives are no less interested in these later children than in her first child.

A child makes the acquaintance of its mother's paternal family very 604 early in life. Its mother's sisters and mother's mother, if she is not too old, are frequent visitors to its mother. Its mother's brothers may be frequent visitors too, especially if they are on friendly terms with its father. But it is not till the child reaches the age of about 5 or 6, when it begins to be taken on visits to its *ahəb yiri*, that it clearly distinguishes these relatives. The person who matters most to a small child at its mother's brother's house is its maternal grandmother (*ma-kpeem*), in whose quarters and under whose care the child lives.[1] Old people, both [574] men and women, love to have their daughters' young children to stay with them, and pet and spoil them quite as much as their sons' children. As will be remembered, grandchildren joke with their maternal grandparents. At harvest time, in particular, old women often have daughters' children to stay for a week or two, so that they can enjoy the good food available at that time. Playing and eating and sleeping with the children of the house, a child learns to regard them as siblings, and partly through imitating them, partly through coming directly under the discipline of his mother's brother, a child thus visiting its *ahəb yiri* learns to think of its *ahəb* as a 'sort of father'. He hears all the gossip of the family. When a domestic sacrifice is performed he is present and receives the portion of the animal—the neck (*naŋgoor*)—prescribed for an *ahəŋ*. I have more than once seen a small boy of perhaps 8 receive the neck of a sacrifice, amid an amused chuckle from his mother's brothers. If a woman dies leaving a young child of less than 5 or 6 years old it is a common thing for the child to be sent to live with its maternal grandmother for a year or two until it is old enough to need only a minimum of maternal care.

Thus, a child learns to think of its *ahəb yiri*, in the strict sense of its mother's brother's homestead, at first, in the more extended sense, later, as a place where it is given food, shelter, affectionate attention, and

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[1] This follows directly from the constitution of the joint family.

may do so for himself. She, again, may eat an animal he avoids, but 262
would hardly find it feasible to cook it in her own kitchen.

The occasions for which special foods are customary are few. A woman in her first pregnancy must eat food 'which is good for her', [843] such as meat and highly seasoned soup and avoid unsuitable foods such as thinly mixed flour-water (*zɔmsạka*), left-over porridge, or too many sweet potatoes or frafra potatoes. Nor may she eat cold food or drink too much cold water. 'Sweet' food (i.e. luxury foods such as sold in the market) is not encouraged, while honey is prohibited for magical reasons. A woman found eating the latter is severely reprimanded and a special rite has to be carried out on the birth of the child or it will have a blocked nose. During confinement a woman is given porridge with highly seasoned soups and a generous allowance of fish or meat to make her strong.

There is no specific food for sick people, except that fresh porridge 262
and pungent soup are considered strengthening. The prognosis is 758
very grave if a sick person refuses food. In the prostration of grief, too, people refuse food and their relatives try to tempt their palate with delicacies.

Old and toothless people in time of food shortage are given crushed 262
ground-nuts (*sukpabugra*) to drink down with water. 888

We have attempted, in this paper, to give an outline of the domestic 000
commissariat of the Tallensi. Our interest has been focussed on the principles according to which the domestic groupings of Tale society organize and sustain the social activities customary for the production of raw foodstuffs, their preservation, and their conversion into and consumption as edible food. We have observed how the ever-changing, developing structure of the joint family determines these activities; how Tale culture defines the values and norms by which these activities are regulated and directed; how these values and norms, on the one hand, and seasonal conditions, on the other, control the annual cycle of food production and consumption; and finally, how the convergent influence of family structure, cultural norms and values, and seasonal exigencies determine the crucial situation of the series, the translation of the product of natural resources and culturally organized labour into the edible food in the kitchen.

T

428 *Inheritance of Wife's Property*: All the property which a wife brings with her and everything she earns later at her husband's compound by her own individual labour—by brewing beer, making baskets and pots—on her death goes to her children. If she has no children her father's family will take it, not her husband.[1]

Son's Property: His brother takes it, including any wives. A father may not take a son's widow.

Rites de Passage:

787 844 846 *Birth*: 'When a woman conceives, we consult the soothsayer about it, to find out if she will be delivered easily. When she gives birth, we send a long piece of wood notched in three or four places (according to sex of child) to the woman's mother. The husband may take this himself, or, if he has other children, send it by one of them. This stick is cut through at one of the notches and used for firewood. Three or four days later, her mother will come to visit her daughter, bringing some *dawa dawa*. A woman takes care not to be confined inside a room. She will either go into the yard, or cattle-kraal, or to the *saman* farm. Leaves are spread on the ground for her to bring forth upon. The afterbirth (*zar*)[2] is buried in the compound farm in a pot and covered by another pot. The heads of mother and child are shaved on the day the navel string is cut. That of the child is thrown down in the fowl-house, that of the mother in the *saman* farm. The mother and child are bathed in warm water containing certain leaves. From these leaves the child gets its father's taboos. If a woman is confined in her mother's village, they would not dare to bathe the infant in their medicine. They would send a messenger to her husband, who would then dispatch some one with his medicine to treat his wife properly. Neither the father nor any other male will see the child until its navel string is healed up. When it finally drops off, it is buried where the afterbirth was put. A child is not taken outside until it becomes black, but as soon as the mother is better she may go out and fetch water as usual. Sometimes a soothsayer may say that an infant must be taken outside for the first time by such and such a person. This woman must be a *poato* (i.e. a woman born in the infant's father's town, a clanswoman). Five to six months after birth, 000

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[1] Among the Nankanse, what a woman earns while living with her husband belongs to him. Her private property, however, which she brought with her, belongs to her daughter.

[2] In Nankane, the afterbirth of animals is called *zale*, that of human beings *yala*.

and watched over by his ancestors. If she or the child dies in childbirth 611
the responsibility falls on her husband. A child should be born under 769
its father's roof, literally into the lineage to which it comes as a profit
(*ŋoor*) and a responsibility, and under the auspices of its patrilineal
ancestors, the spiritual arbiters of its destiny, to whom it will later in
life bring sacrifices. Its life will depend on these ancestors, one of whom [776]
will immediately demand to be made its spiritual guardian, charged
with preserving its life (*mar u ŋɔvɔr*).

Not only should a child be born under its father's roof, but it should, 854
ideally, be reared, or at least be brought through the first dangerous
months of infancy, in its father's house. Circumstances occasionally 769
compel a child to be entrusted to the care of its mother's family, and the Tallensi are practical enough to accept this necessity with equanimity. But they are extremely reluctant to let a young infant pass out of the direct tutelage of its paternal kin and ancestors even for a short while. Thus strong objection is raised if a young wife takes her infant and goes to stay at her parents' house for some time. Here, again, practical necessity may leave no alternative, but there is always a feeling of uneasiness, as can be seen from the following case. When Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ died, his youngest wife went home to her father's house at Tɔŋ-Seug, about a quarter of a mile from her late husband's house, taking her infant of some six months with her. Nindɔyat's brother and prospective heir tried to prevent her going, but she was not well, and they had to admit that she would be better cared for by her mother than by her co-wives. So they allowed her to go. A couple of weeks later, however, the baby fell ill, and though the young mother was staying only a few minutes' walk from her late husband's house, she returned to it immediately. 'She came running back home', her late husband's brother told me, 'because the child was ill. Its (dead) father had not agreed for it to be taken away (that is, the dead father, now a spirit, had mystically caused the child's illness as a sign of his displeasure). And supposing the child were to die at its maternal uncle's house? Should we not say that they had caused the death of our child?' The proper ritual measures to cure the child, without which practical leechcraft could not avail, could only be taken by its father or his representative in its father's house. The young mother believed this as firmly as her late husband's heir.

For all these reasons it is a taboo (*kihɔr*) for a child to be born in its 844
mother's father's house. His ancestor spirits cannot watch over mother
and child, for they do not 'own (*so*)' the child. It is, therefore, dangerous 783
for the child's health and chances of survival. Of course, such a thing 769
may, and sometimes does happen by accident. Then the child's father
must, whenever he can afford it, erase the pollution by the ceremony of
'removing the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the birth from his father-in-law's
house. He sends a sheep and beer to his father-in-law as a placation

● 844 gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his
783 son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders
of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be per-
769 formed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both
842 parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is
613 overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔɣam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔɣam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is
604 the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahəb*) and sister's son (*ahəŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They 584
expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations
with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about 574
as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are 834
more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep in separate rooms.

These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry 574
season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the
rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which 834
a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her 606
father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of 783
the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we
have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous 844●
position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his 606
father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will 783
not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in
the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. 827
The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

602 the family keep an eye on the girl lest she overstrain herself or break one
843 of the dietary taboos. If his father is alive it is he who visits diviners and appeals to the ancestors.

The woman's paternal family, too, are concerned, especially in a first pregnancy. When they have been informed of it, her father appeals to his ancestors to bless her in her coming ordeal, and her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood, as her time approaches. It is also her mother's duty, round about the fourth or fifth month, to send one of
[292] her co-wives to 'gird the girl with a perineal band (*suol u voog*)', the garb of a matron; for until she has a child a woman wears no genital covering.

The prohibition against giving or accepting bride-price during a woman's pregnancy expresses this general solicitude too. Bride-price transactions involve tension and possible conflict between her father's people and her husband's; and this is not only distressing to her but dangerous to the unborn child. If, for instance, her father, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, as some men are heartless enough to do, takes her from her husband because the bride-price is not paid, the child's legitimate paternity may be prejudiced, as we have noted before, and its health suffer, or the woman herself have a difficult labour.

843 The solicitude for a woman with child reaches its peak at her confine-
ment and during the subsequent three or four weeks, until she has
844 regained her strength and resumes her normal activities. Many men
846 have described to me their feelings in the hour of a wife's labour. 'You sit listening to her cries and groans of agony. You can't sleep. Your heart is clenched with fear and pity. You do not know how it will end. Do not women die in childbirth or become ill? Do not children die or get injured at birth?' A man's relief and happiness when his wife has passed safely (*salɔg*) through her confinement is written plainly in his voice and gait. Zaŋ, one of the most morose men I have known, was all smiles and affability on the morning after his wife's confinement.
[777] When friends and neighbours congratulate a man on his good luck (*zusɔŋ*, lit. good head) it is as much on account of his wife's safety as on the child's arrival.

846 During the days of seclusion—three for a boy and four for a girl—and for the next week or so, it is the husband's duty to provide sustaining food and appetizing condiments for his wife. He will go out to fetch large logs for the fire that must be kept going day and night in the woman's room while she and the babe are still weak and liable to catch cold. Every morning he will go out or send someone to collect the leaves and herbs to infuse in the hot water with which mother and child are bathed. And if necessary he will himself carry water from the water-hole or do other services for her comfort that men usually consider to be beneath their dignity.

846 A confinement also involves extra labour and the dislocation of routine
602 for the womenfolk of the husband's family. The care of the woman and

843 For a woman too, and for any native who is looking at it from the
point of view of motherhood, the difficulties of bringing a child into the
● 844 world centre round pregnancy and labour. Tale women generally seem
to take a pregnancy in their stride, especially later pregnancies. They
go on with their household tasks until the last minute. Children are
sometimes born in the bush, and quite often born outside on the home
farm, where the mother has been busy with some task. Miscarriages
due to the strain of heavy work such as fetching heavy loads of firewood
or going to distant markets to buy grain by the sack, and bringing it
home by head carriage are not uncommon among multiparae. Primi-
parae, as we have seen, are usually watched over by older women, but
miscarriages due to overstrain occur among them too. A woman who has
had a child is trusted to look after herself.

843 But in spite of their apparently casual attitude to it, women think of pregnancy as fraught with weariness, discomfort, and anxiety. A woman thinks of the purely physiological discomforts such as the attacks of sickness and giddiness she may suffer. She thinks of the circumspection she must use in her eating and drinking. Very thin gruel, cold left-over porridge, sweet potatoes, too much cold water, are all things which would injure her health and must be avoided; nor may she eat honey, else her babe will be born with a catarrhal snuffle. A woman thinks, also, of the increasing lassitude that makes her household tasks more and more burdensome as her term approaches. She remembers the store of firewood she must gather and the provisions she must lay in for her confinement, though it is hard enough to satisfy the current needs of the household. And at the back of her mind she has always the fear of a miscarriage. She is subject, also, to ritual taboos, the most important being the avoidance of funerals.

844 Then, of course, there is the act of giving birth (*dɔɣ*) in the narrow sense. Tale women do not think of it in anticipation with terror or repugnance, but they do associate it with pain and possible complications. The crude midwifery of the old women who assist at a birth, relying in part on magical measures, cannot correct a breech presentation (*tula*) or expel an undescended placenta.

846 Women always put particular emphasis on the agonies of the hygiene of confinement. Mother and child are subjected to a course of hot baths, douching, and massage which the natives say is extremely painful. A white onlooker finds the process harrowing, to say the least. Water heated to nearly boiling-point is used and medicinal leaves and herbs are infused in it. The infant goes rigid with pain when it is washed in this decoction, and the mother squirms and shrieks as it is sluiced over her body and still tender sexual parts. Massage and oiling with shea butter follow the bath. The treatment is given twice or thrice daily during the days of seclusion and is gradually reduced over the following two or three weeks, fewer baths being given and the temperature of the

Kusase

Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a 551 certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grand- [787] father's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will 782 then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

'"Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baŋa* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her 787 daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says 574 that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even 834 more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. 845 Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been 766 fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die."'

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is 583 barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid 586 them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*),
or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite
ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops
is the medicine of twins (*leebà teem*) used in purifying the parents of
twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have
seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine
charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and
treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still
prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought
by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it
will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal
child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the
age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)]
and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is
a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the
younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes
last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the
Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring 165
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth
regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive,
851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their
[783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that
has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded
and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which
593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their
parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are
593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults
571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best
exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should
591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her
571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

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854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs
of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins)
165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye
it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

428 *Inheritance of Wife's Property*: All the property which a wife brings with her and everything she earns later at her husband's compound by her own individual labour—by brewing beer, making baskets and pots —on her death goes to her children. If she has no children her father's family will take it, not her husband.[1]

Son's Property: His brother takes it, including any wives. A father may not take a son's widow.

Rites de Passage:

787 844 ● 846 *Birth*: 'When a woman conceives, we consult the soothsayer about it, to find out if she will be delivered easily. When she gives birth, we send a long piece of wood notched in three or four places (according to sex of child) to the woman's mother. The husband may take this himself, or, if he has other children, send it by one of them. This stick is cut through at one of the notches and used for firewood. Three or four days later, her mother will come to visit her daughter, bringing some *dawa dawa*. A woman takes care not to be confined inside a room. She will either go into the yard, or cattle-kraal, or to the *saman* farm. Leaves are spread on the ground for her to bring forth upon. The afterbirth (*zar*)[2] is buried in the compound farm in a pot and covered by another pot. The heads of mother and child are shaved on the day the navel string is cut. That of the child is thrown down in the fowl-house, that of the mother in the *saman* farm. The mother and child are bathed in warm water containing certain leaves. From these leaves the child gets its father's taboos. If a woman is confined in her mother's village, they would not dare to bathe the infant in their medicine. They would send a messenger to her husband, who would then dispatch some one with his medicine to treat his wife properly. Neither the father nor any other male will see the child until its navel string is healed up. When it finally drops off, it is buried where the afterbirth was put. A child is not taken outside until it becomes black, but as soon as the mother is better she may go out and fetch water as usual. Sometimes a soothsayer may say that an infant must be taken outside for the first time by such and such a person. This woman must be a *poato* (i.e. a woman born in the 000 infant's father's town, a clanswoman). Five to six months after birth,

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[1] Among the Nankanse, what a woman earns while living with her husband belongs to him. Her private property, however, which she brought with her, belongs to her daughter.

[2] In Nankane, the afterbirth of animals is called *zale*, that of human beings *yala*.

595 than the others, all the women must be allocated more or less equal plots for this purpose. Each woman, with the help of her daughters or a [222 daughter-in-law, collects and stores wild herbs and edible leaves, buys 263] condiments and seasonings like salt, pepper, and locust bean balls, sometimes with the proceeds of her own petty trading in the markets, and collects shea nuts for the preparation of shea butter, the most important source of fat and the most prized emollient in the native cuisine, for the use of her own *dug*. If a man gives a penny or twopence to one wife for the purchase of seasonings, he must, either immediately or on subsequent market days, give some money to his other wives for this purpose. If he obtains some meat, he must either distribute it amongst all his wives or give all of it to his senior wife to use or preserve for the benefit •[846] of the whole family. Only a wife in childbed is entitled to have extra luxuries, which it is the duty of her husband to provide.

Though each woman cooks for herself with an eye to the feeding of 595 her own children and her husband, in the first place, co-wives are 252 obliged to share food prepared with grain from the common supply. In times of plenty, if all the wives of a man have cooked a meal, each woman dishes out a portion of porridge and the accompanying relish for her husband, a portion for herself and her child or children eating with her, and a smaller portion for each of her co-wives. The husband should taste all the dishes sent in to him by his wives, and should pass on to the older children who do not eat with their mothers the dishes he does not want for himself. In times of scarcity a man's wives may cook in rotation for the whole family. But if a woman has a private supply of grain, obtained by trade or from her own relatives, she is entitled to use it for feeding her own children and the husband only; she need not give anything to her co-wives or their children.

596 In the production and utilization of food-supplies, as this brief sketch shows, the common interests of the *yir* are distinctly paramount. Co-wives co-operate most harmoniously, both among themselves and with the other women of the household, in this sphere of family life. In the organization of productive labour and of the domestic economy, and in the conventions regulating mutual help in this sphere, the dependence on one another of all the members of a household for their sustenance is constantly emphasized. But the relative autonomy of the *dug* is never wholly submerged. The women do not pool the products of their individual labour and enterprise. They do not pool their utensils, and family quarrels sometimes arise because one woman or one woman's child has borrowed and damaged a utensil belonging to another. They keep their firewood supplies, the accumulation of which is one of their most arduous tasks, jealously separate; and they do the same with vegetables and seasonings. There is sometimes friction between co-wives over the use of the grinding-room. But it is significant of the balance usually maintained between the centrifugal tendencies of the *dug* and the

house apprised of what is going on in the quarters of the younger women and enabled to exercise benevolent supervision over them. 595

Her supervision is of special importance when any of the younger women is confined. 595 She sees to it that mother and child are properly attended, that the rites of confinement and of emergence from seclusion 846 ● are properly performed, that mother and babe are bathed in the prescribed way, and that the mother is given nourishing food. I was passing Ɔmara's homestead one afternoon, about a fortnight after the birth of a child to one of his wives, and called in. The new baby's mother was just coming out of the gateway with an empty water-pot on her head, and I noticed that she was looking far from well. Ɔmara's senior wife, a woman of sterling character, unsoured even by the leprosy that was rapidly getting a hold on her, was sitting outside in the shade. 'Where are you going to?' asked the older woman. 'To the water-hole,' replied her young co-wife. 'Don't go alone,' said the senior wife, 'I'll come with you'; and she rose to accompany the girl. For the first few weeks after the birth of her child a woman must not go about alone outside the homestead. She is still suffering from 'the dreams of a parturient woman (*pɔɣarɔɣah za'ahug*)'; that is, she is weak and liable to hallucinations or attacks of terror—or, as the natives think of it, to attacks from evil trees and stones—which might drive her mad. That was why the older woman accompanied the young mother. Many such incidents could be quoted in illustration of the concern shown by a senior wife for the welfare of her juniors.

Of course, not all senior wives exercise their role in a wise and unselfish spirit. 595 A woman with an overbearing disposition may make life difficult for her juniors. [578] One result will be that each woman tends to keep strictly to her own *dug* so as to avoid clashing with the senior wife or the other women, and co-operation between co-wives tends to follow the letter of convention rather than the spirit of family unity. Again, there are families in which the senior wife has through age, infirmity, or weakness of character resigned the effective supervision of the household to a younger co-wife, though she still remains the titular senior. But observation shows that on the whole senior wives conform to the pattern we have outlined above. Their position in the family, their responsibilities and privileges, shape them to this pattern.

It must be remembered, also, that the size and stage of development of a family have a great influence on the relations between co-wives. 596 In a family like that of Da'amo'o of Tɔŋ-Dekpieŋ who has but recently set up in his own homestead, there are only three women, two being Da'amo'o's wives and the third his younger brother's wife. They are all young women round about the age of 20, two with an infant each and the other still a maiden (*pɔɣasarɔt*). In such a family the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* is rudimentary. The three girls work in co-operation and live together harmoniously like sisters and with no visible distinction

602 843 the family keep an eye on the girl lest she overstrain herself or break one of the dietary taboos. If his father is alive it is he who visits diviners and appeals to the ancestors.

The woman's paternal family, too, are concerned, especially in a first pregnancy. When they have been informed of it, her father appeals to his ancestors to bless her in her coming ordeal, and her mother and sisters bring her gifts of firewood, as her time approaches. It is also her mother's duty, round about the fourth or fifth month, to send one of
[292] her co-wives to 'gird the girl with a perineal band (*suol u voog*)', the garb of a matron; for until she has a child a woman wears no genital covering.

The prohibition against giving or accepting bride-price during a woman's pregnancy expresses this general solicitude too. Bride-price transactions involve tension and possible conflict between her father's people and her husband's; and this is not only distressing to her but dangerous to the unborn child. If, for instance, her father, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, as some men are heartless enough to do, takes her from her husband because the bride-price is not paid, the child's legitimate paternity may be prejudiced, as we have noted before, and its health suffer, or the woman herself have a difficult labour.

843 844 ● 846 The solicitude for a woman with child reaches its peak at her confinement and during the subsequent three or four weeks, until she has regained her strength and resumes her normal activities. Many men have described to me their feelings in the hour of a wife's labour. 'You sit listening to her cries and groans of agony. You can't sleep. Your heart is clenched with fear and pity. You do not know how it will end. Do not women die in childbirth or become ill? Do not children die or get injured at birth?' A man's relief and happiness when his wife has passed safely (*saləg*) through her confinement is written plainly in his voice and gait. Zaŋ, one of the most morose men I have known, was all smiles and affability on the morning after his wife's confinement.
[777] When friends and neighbours congratulate a man on his good luck (*zusɔŋ*, lit. good head) it is as much on account of his wife's safety as on the child's arrival.

846 During the days of seclusion—three for a boy and four for a girl—and for the next week or so, it is the husband's duty to provide sustaining food and appetizing condiments for his wife. He will go out to fetch large logs for the fire that must be kept going day and night in the woman's room while she and the babe are still weak and liable to catch cold. Every morning he will go out or send someone to collect the leaves and herbs to infuse in the hot water with which mother and child are bathed. And if necessary he will himself carry water from the water-hole or do other services for her comfort that men usually consider to be beneath their dignity.

846 602 A confinement also involves extra labour and the dislocation of routine for the womenfolk of the husband's family. The care of the woman and

the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846 wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are near, might give some help too.[1] The younger women fetch water and 602 cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593 begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of a father's tribulations. Talking with men immediately after the birth 854 of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some [787 days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as 776] a spiritual ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) to guard its life (*gur u ŋɔvɔr*) and watch over its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabɔlɔg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper 'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, [165] vol. xxxv, nos. 3 and 4, 1943.

For a woman too, and for any native who is looking at it from the
843 point of view of motherhood, the difficulties of bringing a child into the
844 world centre round pregnancy and labour. Tale women generally seem
to take a pregnancy in their stride, especially later pregnancies. They go on with their household tasks until the last minute. Children are sometimes born in the bush, and quite often born outside on the home farm, where the mother has been busy with some task. Miscarriages due to the strain of heavy work such as fetching heavy loads of firewood or going to distant markets to buy grain by the sack, and bringing it home by head carriage are not uncommon among multiparae. Primiparae, as we have seen, are usually watched over by older women, but miscarriages due to overstrain occur among them too. A woman who has had a child is trusted to look after herself.

843 But in spite of their apparently casual attitude to it, women think of pregnancy as fraught with weariness, discomfort, and anxiety. A woman thinks of the purely physiological discomforts such as the attacks of sickness and giddiness she may suffer. She thinks of the circumspection she must use in her eating and drinking. Very thin gruel, cold left-over porridge, sweet potatoes, too much cold water, are all things which would injure her health and must be avoided; nor may she eat honey, else her babe will be born with a catarrhal snuffle. A woman thinks, also, of the increasing lassitude that makes her household tasks more and more burdensome as her term approaches. She remembers the store of firewood she must gather and the provisions she must lay in for her confinement, though it is hard enough to satisfy the current needs of the household. And at the back of her mind she has always the fear of a miscarriage. She is subject, also, to ritual taboos, the most important being the avoidance of funerals.

844 Then, of course, there is the act of giving birth (*dɔɣ*) in the narrow sense. Tale women do not think of it in anticipation with terror or repugnance, but they do associate it with pain and possible complications. The crude midwifery of the old women who assist at a birth, relying in part on magical measures, cannot correct a breech presentation (*tula*) or expel an undescended placenta.

846 Women always put particular emphasis on the agonies of the hygiene of confinement. Mother and child are subjected to a course of hot baths, douching, and massage which the natives say is extremely painful. A white onlooker finds the process harrowing, to say the least. Water heated to nearly boiling-point is used and medicinal leaves and herbs are infused in it. The infant goes rigid with pain when it is washed in this decoction, and the mother squirms and shrieks as it is sluiced over her body and still tender sexual parts. Massage and oiling with shea butter follow the bath. The treatment is given twice or thrice daily during the days of seclusion and is gradually reduced over the following two or three weeks, fewer baths being given and the temperature of the

water lowered. Tallensi think it is essential for the health of the mother 846 and babe, and one important item in it is forcing some of the decoction down the babe's throat. Whether or not it actually has a cleansing or invigorating effect must be left to medical judgement. For the native women it has the double significance of an ordeal, and a prescribed treatment that they would not dream of neglecting.

As we have seen, the care of the child on the ritual side falls on its 854 father. The much more exacting physical care of the child in its parlous passage through infancy is its mother's responsibility. This is stressed when Tallensi insist that it is not on account of a magical taboo but because a child is still partly dependent on the breast until it is about three, that sexual intercourse between a man and his nursing wife is discontinued. They say that a child requires the undivided care of its mother until it can run about and eat solid food by itself, and that it will wilt away through lack of nourishment if she conceives prematurely. Nursing mothers become pregnant only too often through lack of self-control, but this is never condoned by public opinion. The [847] only time a Tale woman tries to induce an abortion is when such an accident happens, for no sacrifice is too great to preserve her living child.

When Tale parents are asked what were the special difficulties they 854 had to overcome in rearing their children, they always mention sickness first. Mothers especially have a great dread of sickness in their children. 855 One does not notice this in the easy-going, placid atmosphere of a well-conducted family when there is no 'sleeplessness' (*gɔgiŋgara*), to use the apt native euphemism for sickness. But one sees it when a child gets ill. Minor ailments throw its mother into a state of anxiety. Serious illness puts her into a panic or prostrates her with grief. She refuses food—which is always regarded by the natives as a sign of severe illness or great emotional distress—and stops all her work. I have seen illness in adolescent or adult children have this effect on women; and the younger the child the more do they suffer.

It is easy to imagine what the death of a child in infancy or childhood 761 means to its mother. A man is expected to control his emotions, but a woman may express her grief freely. A father's grief is palliated, also, 593 by the active role he takes in the ritual by which the emotional shock is neutralized. A woman's part in this ritual is more passive and she feels the blow more acutely in consequence. A mother remains inconsolable for many days and even weeks over the loss of a child.

The way Tallensi think of a mother's grief over the death of her child was brought home to me when Diŋkaha's little girl of about three died after a lingering and horrible illness. He had been devoted to the child and was greatly distressed, but in a few days he had accepted the diviner's verdict philosophically and was his old bouncing self again. His wife, on the other hand, broke down completely. Then, a couple of weeks later, news came that an older child of hers by a former husband, with

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE 9

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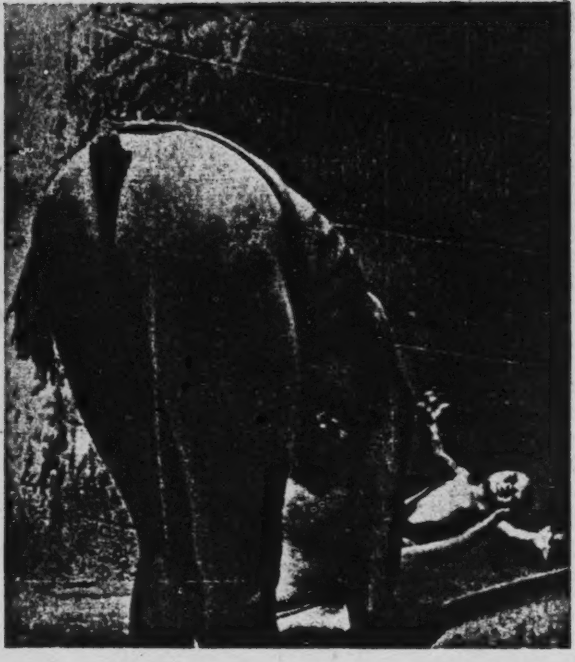
[facing p. 192]

a. The tribulations of motherhood: the daily bath and massage of the mother after childbirth



b. The husband's mother and a co-wife of the new mother give her new-born baby its daily bath. The water is so hot that the baby goes rigid with pain

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consequence, become almost completely submerged in the authentic lineages. Only one attached lineage (Zɔŋ yidɛm) still intermarries with other members of the sub-clan, provided they belong to a different major segment from that to which Zɔŋ yidɛm are attached, and these marriages are not encouraged. At Sie, by contrast, 15 out of the 43 wives of Sie-datɔk are members of Wooŋ yidɛm or other branches of Mosuor biis not related to them by clanship ties. 618x

The attached lineages at Tongo are accounted for by the stereotyped tradition which is found, in similar circumstances, all over Taleland. The story is that a woman of the authentic lineage concerned (e.g. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm)—a 'sister' in the classificatory sense—married a member of one of the Hill Talis clans and bore children to him. Later, however, her husband divorced her by the rite of 'blowing' (*pɛbh*), by which he not only banished her from his home but disowned the children she had borne to him. She returned to live at her parental home, where her children grew up and settled, and where one son gave rise to the lineage attached to his mother's brother's lineage. Because of their founding ancestors' paternity, which even the act of formal repudiation of wife and child could not extinguish, two of the attached lineages preserve the totemic taboos and some of the funeral customs of the Hill Talis. It is a religious duty which they say could not be abandoned without the greatest peril.

Apart from this mark of distinction and the disabilities which will be mentioned later and which apply to all accessory lineages, they participate in social events as ordinary segments of the lineages to which they are attached. They can even represent these lineages in relation to other groups.

An attached lineage is said, sometimes, to have sprung from an unmarried girl's son (*yiyeembii*). His paternity never having been socially recognized, it has no influence on his social role or on that of the lineage which originates from him. Thus, such a lineage has all the customs and observances of its maternal lineage—the lineage, that is, of its founder's mother, to which her son is reckoned as belonging. The third attached lineage at Tongo is said to be descended from an unmarried 'sister's' son and their ritual observances confirm this view. 618x 848

Tongo also includes several assimilated lineages. These are indistinguishable, at first sight, from the authentic lineages either by the criterion of differences in custom or from their manner of participation in the social events which mobilize structural relations. Whatever their real origin may be alleged to be, they are linked to the constellation of authentic lineages by the fiction of direct agnatic descent from the founder of the whole sub-clan, Mosuor himself. They are, as this implies, more closely welded into the sub-clan than are the attached lineages. It would be inconceivable, for example, for a member of an assimilated lineage to marry any other member of the sub-clan. 618x

Attached lineages, everywhere, are incorporated into a lineage of authentic descent by an indirect route, as it were. They are hinged on to the true agnatic line by a compromise, as descendants of a woman of the true agnatic line. This introduces a clear distinction by the canon 618x 554

602 these bonds except by birth. No other ties can wholly supersede them in linking person to person and affiliating individuals to defined social groups.

602 611 We have noted, however, that not all genealogical ties have an equal value. Though a person acquires significant social ties through both parents, his agnatic relationships have an outstanding importance; and this is particularly so for a man. For not only is patrilineal descent the vertebral principle of Tale social organization and the vehicle of the continuity and stability of the social structure, but men hold the reins of authority, direct economic life, control the political organization, and are supreme in religious and ceremonial thought and action. From his father a man derives his rights to inherit land and other property, his clan membership and the political rights and ritual obligations that go with it, and his ritual relations with his most important ancestors. A woman does not inherit land or other property of value, nor does she succeed to political or ritual office. But clan membership and the concomitant totemic observances,[1] as well as her ritual allegiance to her patrilineal ancestors, mean a great deal for her social destiny and for her children. In short, paternity is the predominant side of parentage in this conspicuously patriarchal society.

842 848 Like many other primitive societies, the Tallensi recognize a distinction between physiological paternity and jural paternity—between *genitor* and *pater*, as Radcliffe-Brown puts it. However, the Tallensi feel very strongly that a person's physiological father is his or her right jural father. The assumption is that all the social attributes that come to one from one's father should come from a father who both begot one and recognizes one as his legitimate offspring. Thus there is an inevitable tendency for conflict to arise if a person's physiological and jural paternity do not coincide. Such a person tends to be penalized in respect of his social status, for jural paternity by itself cannot altogether take the place of physiological cum jural paternity.

848 The conflict is least in the case of an adulterine child, who is always accepted as the rightful child of its mother's husband. No difficulties at all arise in the case of a daughter, who marries out of the lineage as soon as she is nubile. An adulterine son has complete and unreserved filial status. He has full rights of inheritance, of succession, and of ritual access to his putative patrilineal ancestors. Nevertheless, the blot on the scutcheon is not without effect. The story of Sayəbazaa's first-born son, Kologo, illustrates this.

848 578 Some years before my first visit to Tongo, Kologo had left his father to go and farm near Datok. There seemed to be no adequate motive for this in his case. But when Sayəbazaa died, in 1936, and Kologo as chief mourner had to be summoned for the mortuary rites, I was able to piece together how it had occurred, from guarded hints and veiled comments

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. ix.

848 578 made by other members of the family and by one of Saɣəbazaa's maternal kinsmen. Kologo, it appeared, was an adulterine child. Saɣəbazaa could never forget this, though it was not a thing that was ever mentioned in public. A man of strong principles, inclined in any case to keep a firm hand on his children, Saɣəbazaa was often over-severe with Kologo. The tension admitted by custom to exist between a man and his first-born son was exacerbated. At length Kologo deliberately violated—or so Saɣəbazaa said—the Namoo taboos of a first-born son; and Saɣəbazaa thereupon cursed him and expelled him from the house. It was evident from the remarks which gave the clue to the story that the seed of discord here was Kologo's physical paternity, though it did not affect his rights to inherit his father's property and ancestral shrines.

837 This kind of psychological friction is said not to occur in the special case of a child begotten in permitted extra-marital intercourse, which the Tallensi do not regard as adultery (*pɔɣambon*). A man who is sterile or impotent may allow his wife to conceive by another man. The proper way to do this is for him to inform the elders of his lineage first. With their blessing and consent he may give his wife permission to find a lover wherever she wishes—'*u gɔma, nye puur, ɔn nye Moog ni Zaŋbiog ɔn nyɛbma*—let her walk about to get a belly; if she meets a Mossi man or a Hausa man (i.e. any passer-by) let her copulate'—is the traditional formula with which he sets her free to be promiscuous, if she chooses, in order to become pregnant. Sensible men and women prefer a more reputable procedure, however. Either the husband asks a friend or kinsman not of his own clan to deputize for him sexually, or he lets the wife choose one of her own distant clan-brothers as a lover. This man is then formally deputed (*galəh*) to be the woman's lover by being presented to the lineage elders, who sacrifice a fowl on his behalf to the lineage ancestors, with an explanation of the circumstances and pleas for a blessing on the affair. The arrangement, though formal, is strictly private, for no man willingly admits to sterility or sexual incapacity; and when, as inevitably happens, it leaks out, public opinion is sympathetic rather than contemptuous. Tallensi say that such cases of begetting a child by proxy do not occur very often.

While I was in Taleland, Baŋam-Teroog's junior wife had a child by a deputed lover. Teroog was an old man, shrivelled and half-blind with age. He once begged me for medicine to restore his fertility, but admitted with regret that he was probably too old for procreation. He deputed his closest friend and distant sister's son, Naabdiya, to beget a child for him. The liaison continued throughout the woman's pregnancy, but ceased as soon as her child was born. I often saw Teroog with this baby, fondling and caressing it with a tenderness that showed more eloquently than words that he regarded it as his own child. Naabdiya, for his part, though his relations with Teroog were as cordial as ever, took no more interest in the infant than any man might take in

837 his friend's children. Tale sentiment takes no cognizance of physical paternity in this situation. No kinship tie is recognized between the physiological father and the child he was deputed to beget. One might almost describe it as, from their point of view, a kind of artificial insemination.

The case of an unmarried woman's child (*yi-yeem-bii*) is different. 848 611 It is brought up as the foster-child of her father or brother. If it is a girl, no difficulties occur, as she will eventually marry and Tale kinship ideas permit *her* children to regard her mother's lineage as their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yir*). She will even be allowed to marry into her mother's clan provided it is a different major segment of the clan. Several instances of this are on record; for no stigma attaches to anybody concerned, since an illegitimate child is not a true clan member.

An illegitimate boy's circumstances are not so easy. The evidence of two cases I was acquainted with amply confirms conventional opinion on this subject. Such a boy will grow up to all intents and purposes as a child of his mother's father's or brother's family and as a full member of the clan. He will be treated exactly like other sons of the family, whom he will call his brothers. His quasi-father will, for example, provide the cattle and take the responsibility for his marriage, as would not be done for a legitimate sister's son (*ahəŋ*) growing up in his maternal uncle's (*ahəb*) home. But he has two fundamental disabilities, which nothing can overcome and which pass, by the principle of the corporate identity of the lineage, to his agnatic male descendants. He [428 769] has no right to inherit his quasi-father's patrimonial estate, though he may be permitted to do so if there are no other heirs; and he has no right to sacrifice directly to his spirit, or consequently, to the lineage ancestors. He cannot, therefore, succeed to the custody of lineage ancestors' shrines or hold an office vested in the lineage. The tie of true agnatic descent, which alone confers these rights, cannot be fabricated.

An illegitimate boy's status in the lineage is in fact, therefore, inferior 848 to that of his quasi-brothers. He is always liable to a certain amount of covert contempt, though good manners forbid the mention of his irregular descent in the normal course of events. But if he gets involved in a quarrel with his quasi-siblings or quasi-clansmen, even as a child, they might well taunt him as an interloper (*zaŋkuomər*). His lot may be harder, if he has an intractable character, than that of a sister's son (*ahəŋ*) living with his mother's brother (*ahəb*); for the latter has a home of his own to fall back upon, where he is entitled, by right of legitimate descent, to his patrimonial inheritance, protection, and communion in the ancestor cult. In no circumstances, however, can an illegitimate son be deprived of those rights that belong to him. His quasi-father's home is his home, his mother's clan his clan. From him may spring an accessory lineage of the clan. In theory, incidentally, he may marry a daughter of a different major segment of his adoptive clan, but I know

of no case, in recent years, of this having occurred. Public sentiment 848 ●
would not be sympathetic to it, since he is felt to be so closely connected with the clan.

It sometimes happens that a woman who has an illegitimate child 848
takes it with her when she gets married, and the child is brought up in
her husband's house. Eŋwala's illegitimate son, Kumahe, grew up thus 583
under the care of her husband, Yɛanbɔrəgya. The boy and his stepfather were greatly attached to each other. Kumahe farmed with Yɛanbɔrəgya like his own sons, and was treated like a son in the ordinary affairs of the household. When he began courting a daughter of his stepfather's clan, Yɛanbɔrəgya gave him fatherly support and counsel. But when Kumahe's prospective parents-in-law asked for an advance payment on the bride-price, Yɛanbɔrəgya neither provided it nor [illegible] responsibility for it. For Kumahe had not acquired filial status in Yɛanbɔrəgya's lineage, and the responsibility for the payment of bride-price on his behalf rested with his jural guardian, his mother's brother. Kumahe belongs to his mother's clan, and both he, his stepfather, and his mother's brother told me, at different times, that he would undoubtedly return one day to live amongst this clan.

The status of a male slave (*da'abər*) in former times was similar, 567
though in some respects less advantageous. The Tallensi seem to have kept few slaves.[1] It is said that a man usually bought a male slave if he lacked a son to help him with his farming and to support him in his old age. Slaves were never natives of Taleland but hapless strangers from other parts of the Northern Territories found wandering in the country. Having no kinsfolk in Taleland to protect them they fell a prey to anyone who chanced to encounter them. Their only security lay in the taboo that made it obligatory for them to be handed over to chiefs, who alone had the ritual status entitling men to sell fellow men. To fit them into the social structure they were incorporated into the family and lineage of their owners by being placed under the spiritual guardianship of one of their owner's lineage ancestors' shrines. This gave a slave a quasi-filial status of the same kind, with the same rights and disabilities, as an illegitimate son's.

In his social relations with his quasi-paternal family and clan a slave was indistinguishable from an illegitimate member of the group. In a quarrel he might be abused as a slave—'a bought thing (*bonda'abər*)'—and his quasi-clansmen would be inclined to regard him with a kind of patronizing contempt. But his owner would take up the cudgels for him as energetically as for one of his own sons if he were wantonly

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[1] When they are questioned on the subject, men of 50–60 can usually quote one or two slaves they knew of in their childhood, never more. The impression I got from talks with many people was that there were never more than five or six male slaves living at any one time in Tongo, and correspondingly fewer in smaller settlements.

613 581 587 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife, implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however, not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

581 837 593 The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Unlike the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extramarital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non*. Tallensi express contempt for the Gorisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeem-bii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbobis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbobis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbobis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

His family had had a windfall of two daughters in half a generation and 848 ● that meant eight cows.

Yet the Tallensi believe emphatically that a girl can only realize her 848 womanhood to the full by bearing legitimate children. For this she must marry; and marriage means having only one husband at a time. It is as 581 her husband's sexual mate that a woman is most sharply separated from her natal family; it is her husband's exclusive rights over her reproductive powers that definitively makes them husband and wife.

This proposition applies also to the husband's field of social relations. 835 Within the region of family and kinship ties where generation differences are socially recognized, sexual relations may occur only between married partners. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman of the family who is not his wife is incest. The Tallensi have no name for this act. They say, simply, 'It is tabooed (*de kihme*)'; and they look on it with unanimous revulsion. Translating their ideas into our cultural idiom, we should say that they regard any form of incest as an unnatural act.[1]

Incest, to a Talɛŋa, includes sex relations with a sister or daughter, that is, a woman of one's own lineage: with a mother, the wife of one's own or classificatory father; with a brother's wife; and with a son's wife. Such acts of misconduct are considered incestuous if they occur within the limits of the expanded family—that is, the family group based on the inner lineage (the narrow *dug*). The natives stress this, putting the emphasis on the fact that the narrow *dug* is the smallest lineage segment with a common ancestor shrine (*bɔyar*). Such acts are, also, often regarded as incestuous within the limits of the family cluster based on the medial lineage, particularly if this lineage has a narrow span.

Incest occurs occasionally in every Tale community. Such an act soon leaks out, and is remembered with contempt for many years. I have discussed such cases with many informants, and was able, also, to witness the public reaction to two cases that occurred during my field work.[2]

There are no penal sanctions against any form of incest, nor are the 835 culprits believed to be subject to automatic mystical retribution. Incest is so incompatible with the pattern of co-operation and the structure 577 of disciplinary and affective relations in the family that this itself serves to banish it from the field of family relationships. Though incest taboos are never deliberately inculcated, the habits, attitudes, and organization of family life (to put the native expressions into sociological language) create internal barriers against incest, in the normal person. This applies particularly to incest with a sister or daughter, whether it is a single impulsive act or a more lasting liaison. Tallensi explain that a normal

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[1] A preliminary analysis of this subject was given in my paper, 'Kinship, Incest, and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King: Essays presented to R. R. Marett*, 1936.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

593 851 In the joint family it marks them off as a separate and potentially independent family segment. A mother of two children usually has her own quarters, or her own part of her mother-in-law's *dug*, if her husband's mother is one of several wives of her father-in-law. She is a *dugdaana*, mistress of her rooms, in a small way, with some freedom of action where its affairs are concerned. She begins to regard the work that falls to her share, not merely as her contribution to the economy of the household, but more as serving the needs of her children and husband. He, for his part, begins to think of the future in terms of his wife and children. He may still accept a position of dependence on his father or older brother as a matter of course; but the separate needs of his wife and children are recognized in the allocation of food-supplies. He makes an effort to extend his private farm plot in order to grow a little food to tide his own family segment over lean periods. It may be many years before he achieves independence, but his aspirations towards it have a definite channel and a clear objective.

593 The greater intimacy of husband and wife, after several years of marriage, is shown in their greater familiarity with each other in public. The woman does not hesitate to address her husband by his name or title, and he may use a nickname for her. By the time a woman has grown old with her husband she is on terms of comradeship and equality with him, for she now identifies herself completely with his interests. An old couple often show great devotion to and affection for each other. The man often has such confidence in his wife that he will discuss all his affairs with her, and she can exercise considerable influence on his decisions in family matters, though the last word still rests with him. Though she still shows deference to him in public, she no longer keeps in the background. She speaks her mind freely to him and before him. Often when I have talked to men about domestic organization, kinship, marriage, children, or even their private religious and magical shrines, their wives of senior standing have stopped to join in the conversation. I have seen a lineage head's senior wife listen to a group of lineage elders thresh out a domestic squabble and give her opinion without restraint. A suitor always tries to gain the favour of a girl's mother; for, though she lacks authority to give him the girl, she can sometimes be persuaded to connive at an elopement, or at least to say a good word for him with her husband, and this may sway the balance in his favour.

593 769 Nevertheless, it is a basic assumption of the Tallensi that a wife never ceases entirely to be a 'stranger' in her husband's clan. For she never, as we have learnt, loses the social identity conferred on her by birth as a member of a different clan. She does not adopt her husband's totemic taboos; and though her health and fertility, being essential for the satisfactory performance of her wifely role, come under the guardianship of his ancestors, she does not participate in the cult of his lineage ancestors. When she attends the sacrifices made to domestic shrines by the joint

PLATE 6

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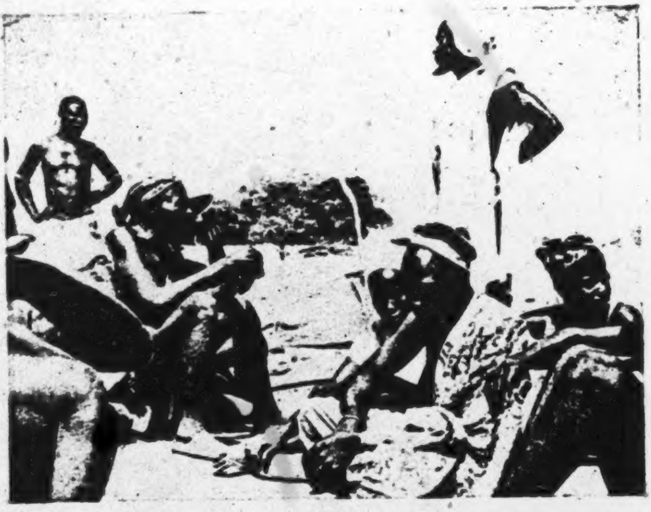

a. Kinship *versus* affinal relationships: sons-in-law, sitting in the customary posture of respect, on the right, come to offer condolences to their father-in-law's family and lineage on the occasion of a death

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b. A husband goes to inform his parents-in-law of the birth of his wife's first child. He carries a hen as a gift and a thick stick of Shea wood on which four notches have been cut, which shows that the baby is a girl

[FACING p. 113]

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite
ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops
is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of
twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have
seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine
charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and
treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still
prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought
by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it
will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal
child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the
age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)]
and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is
a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba*')'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive, 851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their [783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which 593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are 593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults 571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should 591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her 571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

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854 artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins) 165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things' (*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father] and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it [*pɔhg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos 784
are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in 184
many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans,
no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is
considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to
violate (*galəm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental
breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence.
It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children
to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic
taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into
his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden
to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic
taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu
ɔbət*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular
species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory
on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain
maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth
to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals [262
prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages,
when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their 853] ●
child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into
milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem
does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating
the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one
of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness,
not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners 784
in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But 771
like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage 184
totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything
in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example,
call a totem a sacred object (*bayər*). The emphasis is on the avoidance,
the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in
keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors
and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, 784
though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch 184
these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them;
for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their 627
congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear 184
an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in 618x
this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put
on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the
substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father
and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath,
uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence,

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949

FE11 Tallensi FE11

PLATE I

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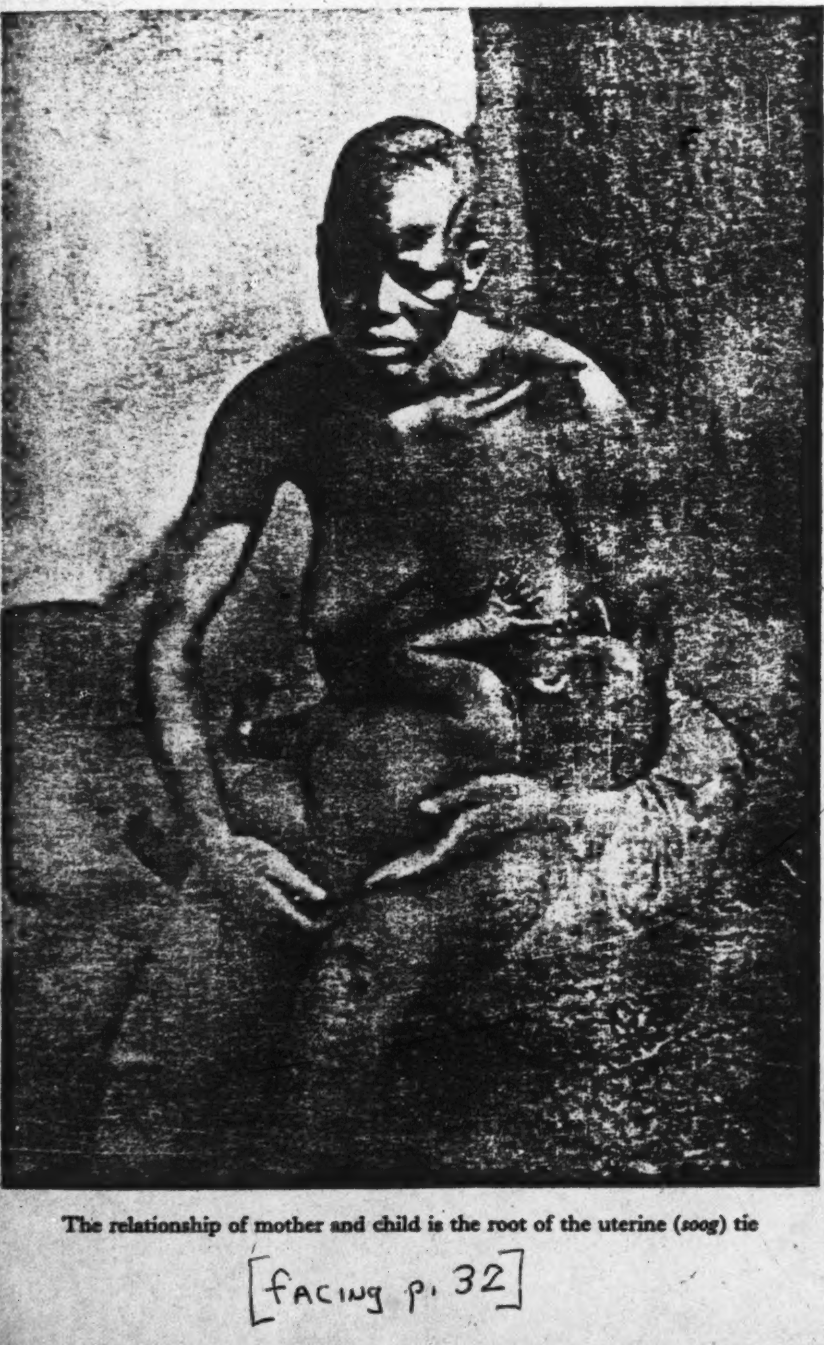

The relationship of mother and child is the root of the uterine (*soog*) tie

[facing p. 32]

PLATE 7

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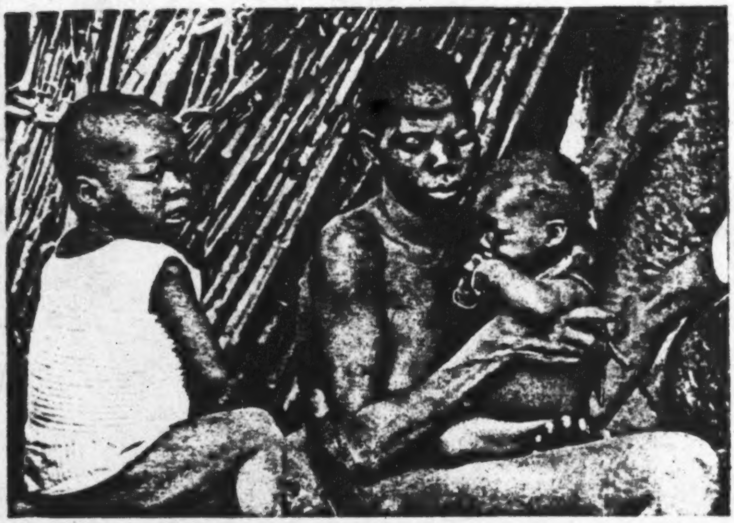

a. A senior wife takes care of her junior co-wives' infants while they are away at the water-hole

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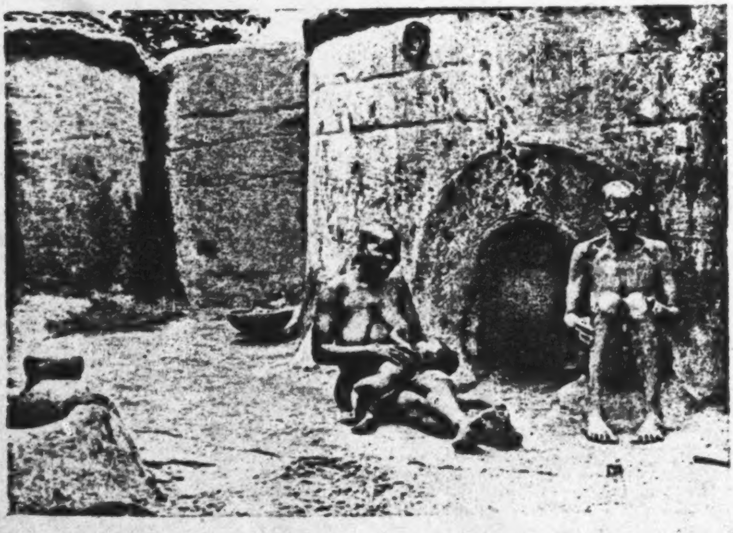

b. A pair of devoted co-wives. The younger woman (with her infant) is about 35, the older about 65, their husband over 70. The older woman has a son of about 45

[facing p. 128]

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

TO complete our analysis of the norms governing the relations of parents and children we must now glance at their development in 593
the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at suc- 183
cessive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differentiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the surface.

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally 854
naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, 593
they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of
the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the [751
sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or 615]
so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother.

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of 853 ●
its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least
the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It 854
is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has

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[p. 187]

● 853 nothing else to do, her babe is at the breast, sucking hungrily or, if it is replete, just playing with the breast with its mouth, its fingers, and its
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own efforts in time of scarcity. Each woman cares for her own 264
children only. She keeps food for an absent child, but will offer some 595
to a co-wife's child only if it asks her for it. But the man will give
food to all his children. As a rule, he eats the portion sent in by his
senior wife and tastes a little from each dish brought in by the others.
When he has had his fill he calls his children to come and eat the rest,
always remembering those who have not had enough. Thus the
discrepancy in the distribution of grain, where each woman gets the
same share irrespective of the number of mouths she has to feed, is
adjusted by the man in his fair re-distribution of the cooked food.

This general pattern is not a rigid one, but is adapted to the structure
of every household and to its special circumstances, e.g. a man would [576]
eat with his wife and small children from a common dish if they
happened to be alone in the compound. To do so if another wife were
present would cause envy and quarrelling between the women; these
arrangements are a matter of etiquette and not of taboo.

The natives account for the custom of a man's eating with his 264
'youngest' child on the grounds that a child must eat properly in order
to grow and must be taught to do so. They say, also, that it thus ?
learns to know its father, and not only its mother whom it is always
following about. We have not sufficient material to judge the validity
of this interpretation; it is quoted here to indicate the native valuation
of the sharing of food in the family.

Infants are given morsels of porridge as soon as they can swallow 853 ●
solid food, and by the age of 18 months can feed themselves dexterously.
They are weaned by the age of three not by a forcible or harsh 862
separation from the breast, but by gradual habituation to adult food. 264
The emphasis on the adequate feeding of children is shown, also,
in the manner in which *sayakɔrɔt*, left-over porridge, is reserved for
them. Porridge remaining after the noon meal is stirred into the
porridge cooked at sunset; if it is left after the evening meal it is given
to children cold for breakfast next day. Only after they have eaten
their fill will adults have some. In the months of plenty children
often have a morning meal of *sayakɔrɔt*; at other times a handful of
ground-nuts, or a dish of flour-water or of dawa-dawa powder must
suffice.

Flour-water (*zɔmkuom*) deserves a note to itself. There are two ways 272

and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties 562
of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the 613
relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔɣayabəlis*, deprived by
an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan.
This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living [784]
pɔɣayabələg of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the
homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own
brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage
ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there
simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives,
of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with
Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔɣayabələg* might,
in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident
of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied
as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the
lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic
rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For
these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously
represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal
descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔɣayabələg* as 562
an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For 854 ●
example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some
months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be
ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔɣayabələg* of the clan. Usually
she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to
carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who [787]
will be a suitable *pɔɣayabələg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the
ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the
clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a
pɔɣayabələg is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with
the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's
mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the
house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task;
it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being.
Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and
mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's
patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔɣar* is significant in 562
this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor 793
shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that 769
case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral
male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian
of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status
of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a
consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔɣayabəlis* have the right to take part

and watched over by his ancestors. If she or the child dies in childbirth 611
the responsibility falls on her husband. A child should be born under 769
its father's roof, literally into the lineage to which it comes as a profit (*ŋoor*) and a responsibility, and under the auspices of its patrilineal ancestors, the spiritual arbiters of its destiny, to whom it will later in life bring sacrifices. Its life will depend on these ancestors, one of whom [776]
will immediately demand to be made its spiritual guardian, charged with preserving its life (*mar u ŋɔvɔr*).

Not only should a child be born under its father's roof, but it should, 854 ●
ideally, be reared, or at least be brought through the first dangerous months of infancy, in its father's house. Circumstances occasionally 769
compel a child to be entrusted to the care of its mother's family, and the Tallensi are practical enough to accept this necessity with equanimity. But they are extremely reluctant to let a young infant pass out of the direct tutelage of its paternal kin and ancestors even for a short while. Thus strong objection is raised if a young wife takes her infant and goes to stay at her parents' house for some time. Here, again, practical necessity may leave no alternative, but there is always a feeling of uneasiness, as can be seen from the following case. When Nindɔɣat of Zubiuŋ died, his youngest wife went home to her father's house at Tɔŋ-Seug, about a quarter of a mile from her late husband's house, taking her infant of some six months with her. Nindɔɣat's brother and prospective heir tried to prevent her going, but she was not well, and they had to admit that she would be better cared for by her mother than by her co-wives. So they allowed her to go. A couple of weeks later, however, the baby fell ill, and though the young mother was staying only a few minutes' walk from her late husband's house, she returned to it immediately. 'She came running back home', her late husband's brother told me, 'because the child was ill. Its (dead) father had not agreed for it to be taken away (that is, the dead father, now a spirit, had mystically caused the child's illness as a sign of his displeasure). And supposing the child were to die at its maternal uncle's house? Should we not say that they had caused the death of our child?' The proper ritual measures to cure the child, without which practical leechcraft could not avail, could only be taken by its father or his representative in its father's house. The young mother believed this as firmly as her late husband's heir.

For all these reasons it is a taboo (*kihɔr*) for a child to be born in its 844
mother's father's house. His ancestor spirits cannot watch over mother
and child, for they do not 'own (*so*)' the child. It is, therefore, dangerous 783
for the child's health and chances of survival. Of course, such a thing 769
may, and sometimes does happen by accident. Then the child's father must, whenever he can afford it, erase the pollution by the ceremony of 'removing the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the birth from his father-in-law's house. He sends a sheep and beer to his father-in-law as a placation

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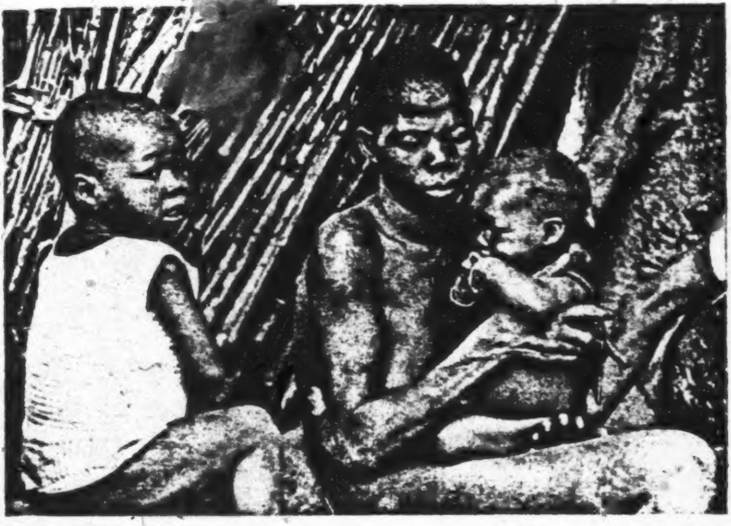

a. A senior wife takes care of her junior co-wives' infants while they are away at the water-hole

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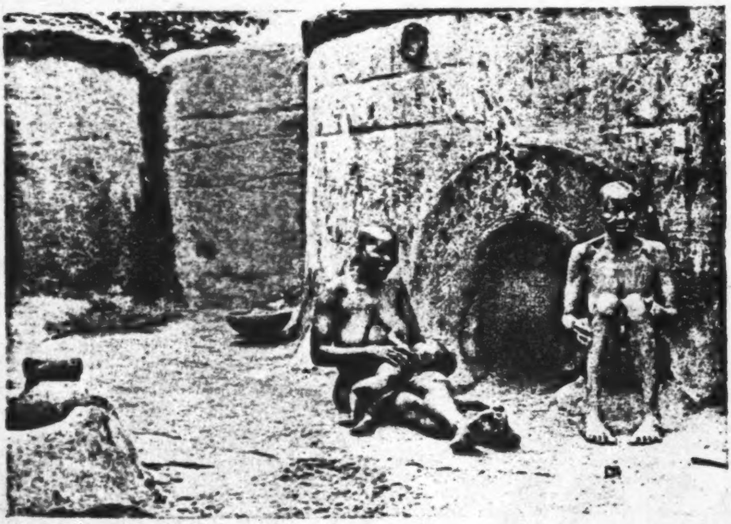

b. A pair of devoted co-wives. The younger woman (with her infant) is about 35, the older about 65, their husband over 70. The older woman has a son of about 45

[facing p.128]

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-operation and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the household. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir*
is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of
854 *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most
855 significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the
children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his
brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually
help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This
commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient
woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family.
A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by
another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person
to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a
co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to
be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are
reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the
[292] first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty
of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives
often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children.
This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing.
Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being
herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the
children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and
child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child
736 as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her
co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi
say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan
never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be
given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the
sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

602 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent
to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to
736 fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met
Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things,
we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

the child falls largely on the other women of the household, though the 846
wives of neighbours belonging to the same expanded family, if they are
near, might give some help too.[1] The younger women fetch water and 602
cook for her. One of the experienced old women, her mother-in-law or the wife of a neighbour, usually of one of her husband's fellow members of the same inner lineage, supervises and sees to such matters as the bathing of mother and child and the ritual emergence from seclusion of the mother. When she is getting about again, her mother-in-law or senior co-wives must keep a watch over her to see that she does not over-exert herself or go any distance unaccompanied. For as we have mentioned earlier, a woman after childbirth is nervous and may be driven mad by evil trees and stones if she is alone far from home.

These are some of the things a man thinks of when he says that 593
begetting or bearing a child is hard; but they are only the beginning of
a father's tribulations. Talking with men immediately after the birth 854
of a child to them, one feels a secret anxiety behind their obvious joy. Many children die in infancy,[2] the Tallensi say, and how can a man know if this particular child will survive? During the first few months of life a child is extremely vulnerable, both physically and mystically. Medicine to keep out evil trees and stones is carefully daubed over the gateway and over every orifice in the homestead wall, and in a circle round the spot where the child lies. *Nɔya teem* ('mouth medicine'), to protect it against malicious praise is given to it. Lucky omens, whether of a conventional or an unconventional kind, are noted. Then, some
days after its birth, the child's father or the head of the joint family [787
visits a diviner to find out which of the lineage ancestors is taking it as 776]
a spiritual ward (*sɛɣɔraan*) to guard its life (*gur u ŋɔvɔr*) and watch over its growth. Only after two to six months from the day of its birth is the child at length allowed out of doors; and then it must be ritually carried out, for the first time, by a clanswoman (*pɔɣayabələg*) of the father's clan (i.e. by a 'female father', *bapɔk*, of the child) chosen by divination, so that the ancestors may bless this important step in its development. And this is not the end of the story, for a father's responsibilities for his children never come to an end, as we shall see presently.

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[1] Among the Tallensi, as among many patrilineal peoples, the parturient woman's sisters do not assist at the birth of the child. For, as the natives say, it is not their child. The responsibility of assisting at the birth falls on the wives of the lineage to which the child belongs—women who will later be recognized as its proxy and classificatory mothers. It is one of these women, too, who suckles the child for the first two or three days until the mother's milk begins to flow properly. A parturient woman's mother and sisters bring her gifts of foodstuffs and firewood; and her father also sends her a gift of foodstuffs, guinea-fowls, salt, and other condiments, according to his means. They have nothing to do with the care of mother and child during and after the confinement.

[2] Infant mortality is high—probably about 150–200 per 1,000. Cf. my paper
'A Note on Fertility among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast', *Sociological Review*, [165]
vol. xxxv, nos. 3 and 4, 1943.

water lowered. Tallensi think it is essential for the health of the mother and babe, and one important item in it is forcing some of the decoction down the babe's throat. Whether or not it actually has a cleansing or invigorating effect must be left to medical judgement. For the native women it has the double significance of an ordeal, and a prescribed treatment that they would not dream of neglecting. 846

As we have seen, the care of the child on the ritual side falls on its father. The much more exacting physical care of the child in its parlous passage through infancy is its mother's responsibility. This is stressed when Tallensi insist that it is not on account of a magical taboo but because a child is still partly dependent on the breast until it is about three, that sexual intercourse between a man and his nursing wife is discontinued. They say that a child requires the undivided care of its mother until it can run about and eat solid food by itself, and that it will wilt away through lack of nourishment if she conceives prematurely. Nursing mothers become pregnant only too often through lack of self-control, but this is never condoned by public opinion. The only time a Tale woman tries to induce an abortion is when such an accident happens, for no sacrifice is too great to preserve her living child. 854 [847]

When Tale parents are asked what were the special difficulties they had to overcome in rearing their children, they always mention sickness first. Mothers especially have a great dread of sickness in their children. One does not notice this in the easy-going, placid atmosphere of a well-conducted family when there is no 'sleeplessness' (*gɔgiŋgara*), to use the apt native euphemism for sickness. But one sees it when a child gets ill. Minor ailments throw its mother into a state of anxiety. Serious illness puts her into a panic or prostrates her with grief. She refuses food—which is always regarded by the natives as a sign of severe illness or great emotional distress—and stops all her work. I have seen illness in adolescent or adult children have this effect on women; and the younger the child the more do they suffer. 854 855

It is easy to imagine what the death of a child in infancy or childhood means to its mother. A man is expected to control his emotions, but a woman may express her grief freely. A father's grief is palliated, also, by the active role he takes in the ritual by which the emotional shock is neutralized. A woman's part in this ritual is more passive and she feels the blow more acutely in consequence. A mother remains inconsolable for many days and even weeks over the loss of a child. 761 593

The way Tallensi think of a mother's grief over the death of her child was brought home to me when Diŋkaha's little girl of about three died after a lingering and horrible illness. He had been devoted to the child and was greatly distressed, but in a few days he had accepted the diviner's verdict philosophically and was his old bouncing self again. His wife, on the other hand, broke down completely. Then, a couple of weeks later, news came that an older child of hers by a former husband, with

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

To complete our analysis of the norms governing the relations of parents and children we must now glance at their development in the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at successive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differentiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the surface. 593 183

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother. 854 593 [751 515]

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has 853 854

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[1] Tallensi distinguish different stages of infancy according to the feeding-habits and level of physical skill reached by the infant. They never count months or years, but a parent is often able to state roughly how many months or years have elapsed since the birth of the child, working it out, most commonly, by reference to harvest and sowing times or to the Great Festivals. A babe in arms is *bilie*; until it is weaned it is described as 'still suckling (*u na mɔɣarme*)'. If it is said to be still suckling but 'eating a little porridge (*u diit saɣabo biel-biel*)' one can infer that it is at least 2. The unweaned infant's stage of development is further specified by stating whether it is crawling (*u bɔɣarme*) or walking (*u kyenme*) or already talking (*u vɔləmrəme*). When the child is weaned it is said to 'have left off milk (*u tuk biihim*)'. Lastly comes the stage, at between 3 and 4 years, when it is said to be old enough to have another immediately following sibling (*u saɣa nyeer marəga*)—an idea we shall explain in a later chapter. The subject-matter of this chapter is supplemented by my paper, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, cit. supra. [856]

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By the age of 18 months a baby's diet is being regularly supplemented
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The completion of weaning marks the first stage in the child's physical
855 and psychological severance from its mother. It has learnt to do without
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PLATE 9

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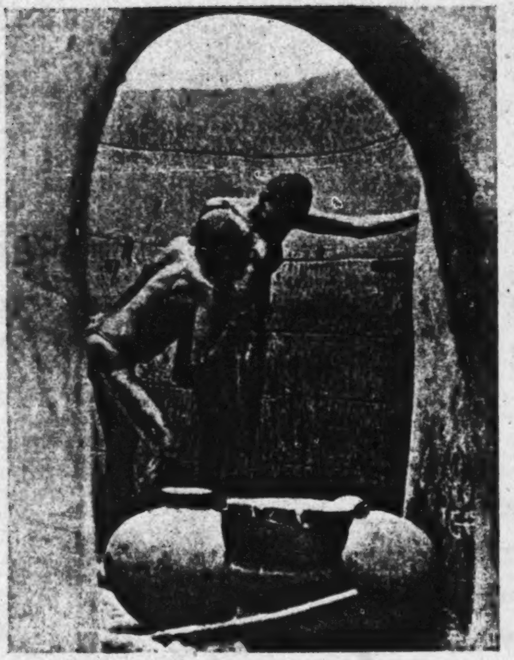

a. The tribulations of motherhood: the daily bath and massage of the mother after childbirth

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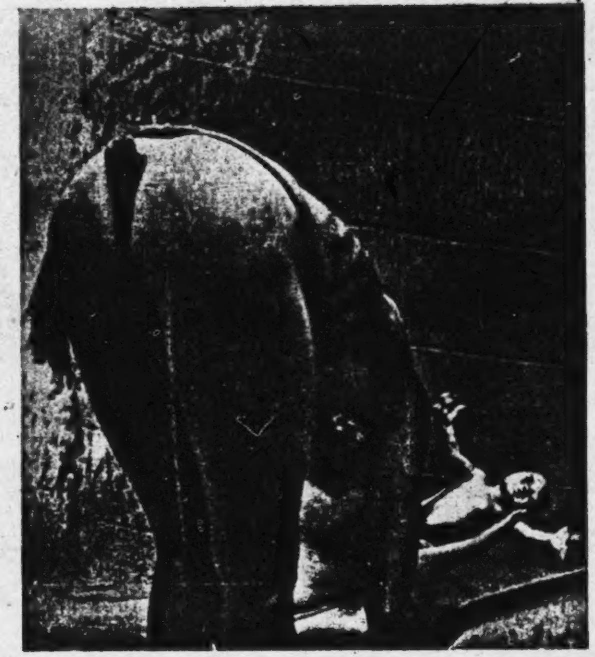

b. The husband's mother and a co-wife of the new mother give her new-born baby its daily bath. The water is so hot that the baby goes rigid with pain

[facing p. 192]

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops is the medicine of twins (*leeba tɛem*) used in purifying the parents of twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)] and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854 ●
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

845 ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive, 851 the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their [783] birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that has occurred.

845 In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which 593 very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye sɔmma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are 593 actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults 571 that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

583 There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should 591 be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her 571 closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

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artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs 854 of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins) 165 were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyeer* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

the child is due, her husband sends a sacrifice for her spirit guardian to 604
her father, to secure the blessing of her patrilineal ancestors on the 843
ordeal she is soon to undergo. When the child is born, a messenger is 431
again dispatched to announce its birth to the girl's parents. He is received with the hospitality due to a bearer of particularly glad tidings. Now the girl's mother sends her four new calabashes. These are the [854]
infant's toilet-vessels—one for giving the infant its daily medicated water to drink, one as a dipper for use when bathing it, one as a slop basin, one for scooping up its excrement. These private toilet utensils are in part a magical protection for the baby. The occasion is also marked, as we have learnt, by a special gift of foodstuffs to the new mother from her father. All these formalities are not necessary for children after the first; it is enough to send a message on the birth of the child. But the woman's paternal relatives are no less interested in these later children than in her first child.

A child makes the acquaintance of its mother's paternal family very 604
early in life. Its mother's sisters and mother's mother, if she is not too old, are frequent visitors to its mother. Its mother's brothers may be frequent visitors too, especially if they are on friendly terms with its father. But it is not till the child reaches the age of about 5 or 6, when it begins to be taken on visits to its *ahəb yiri*, that it clearly distinguishes these relatives. The person who matters most to a small child at its mother's brother's house is its maternal grandmother (*ma-kpeem*), in whose quarters and under whose care the child lives.[1] Old people, both [574]
men and women, love to have their daughters' young children to stay with them, and pet and spoil them quite as much as their sons' children. As will be remembered, grandchildren joke with their maternal grandparents. At harvest time, in particular, old women often have daughters' children to stay for a week or two, so that they can enjoy the good food available at that time. Playing and eating and sleeping with the children of the house, a child learns to regard them as siblings, and partly through imitating them, partly through coming directly under the discipline of his mother's brother, a child thus visiting its *ahəb yiri* learns to think of its *ahəb* as a 'sort of father'. He hears all the gossip of the family. When a domestic sacrifice is performed he is present and receives the portion of the animal—the neck (*naŋgoor*)—prescribed for an *ahəŋ*. I have more than once seen a small boy of perhaps 8 receive the neck of a sacrifice, amid an amused chuckle from his mother's brothers. If a woman dies leaving a young child of less than 5 or 6 years old it is a common thing for the child to be sent to live with its maternal grandmother for a year or two until it is old enough to need only a minimum of maternal care.

Thus, a child learns to think of its *ahəb yiri*, in the strict sense of its mother's brother's homestead, at first, in the more extended sense, later, as a place where it is given food, shelter, affectionate attention, and

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[1] This follows directly from the constitution of the joint family.

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

mothers are busy with some household task. A healthy infant will 868
remain sitting thus, almost motionless, playing with a fragment of calabash, 854
a stick, or the sand—for the idea of giving an infant a toy or some
attractive trinket to occupy it when it is left alone does not occur to
the Tallensi. On the other hand, when an infant clamours for attention
there is always some one of its kinsfolk near at hand to render it.

The native point of view about physical growth was well illustrated 827
in the case of two infants belonging to a single extended family which 856
I knew well. The younger infant was a lively, healthy, inquisitive girl
of about 2½–3 years old already toddling about and exploring the
world. The other infant, a boy about 3 months older, had been puny
and ailing from birth and, though obviously intelligent, was chronically
fretful and dependent and had not yet begun to walk. In Taleland [801]
the number three is symbolical of maleness, four of femaleness. Hence
it is said in their folk-lore that boys begin to walk and talk in their
third year, girls in their fourth. Yet the glaring discrepancy in development
between these two infants caused no anxiety to the parents of
the boy, except about his health. They realized clearly the connexion
between his retardation and his health, but were entirely complacent
about the former. That he would walk and talk in due course was
taken for granted.

The expectation of normal behaviour. It will be evident from these 856
examples that in the cultural idiom of the Tallensi age is not conceived
as a significant factor in psycho-physical or social development. Yet
relative seniority determines status and rights even in children's
groups and their notion of time is explicit and clear. They think of
genetic development primarily in terms of maturity, which is a synthetic
concept embracing both physiological and behavioural signs.
Growing up, in other words, is the evolution of one's social personality
as it approximates closer and closer to the fully grown, mature
adult. Just as this point of view precludes deliberate and standardized
methods of training children in the rudimentary bodily skills such as
walking, talking, and eye-hand co-ordination in eating, so it would
be incompatible with a didactic attitude about bowel and bladder
control or about sexual habits and knowledge.

This point of view gives rise to a factor of great importance in Tale 828
education, the *expectation of normal behaviour*. In any given social

867 857 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 764 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

● [854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly [966] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends [839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4-5 years, suspiciously

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty
to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them.
Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip
of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them.
It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal
about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds
they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and
the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as
far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused
laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for
example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves,
bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all
fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the
buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up
to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread
out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with
legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social
world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think,
still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination
of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from
these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that
which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

596 centripetal pull of the *yir* in the economic sphere that the habit of co-operation and mutual help between the women of the household goes deeper as a rule than their inclination to think of their own *dugət* first. Thus there is a great deal of voluntary mutual aid between the women of the household. The things a woman owns she guards jealously; but she will often lend gladly to another woman of the household on the basis of the true reciprocity that prevails in family affairs. A woman who has prepared a new supply of shea butter, for instance, usually gives some to each of the other women of the household, knowing that some day she will receive gifts of a similar kind from them.

596 854 ● 855 It is in the children of a family that the balance between *dug* and *yir* is most precisely embodied. They represent both the differentiation of *dug* from *dug* and the synthesis of all the *dugət* in the *yir*, in their most significant aspects. Thus, all the children of a man are formally the children of all his wives, and this might include the children of his brothers too. The women of a family, and especially co-wives, usually help one another a great deal in caring for one another's children. This commences with child-birth. As we have seen, the care of a parturient woman falls largely on her co-wives and other women of the same family. A new-born child is not given the breast at once by its mother but by another nursing mother; and a nursing co-wife would be the first person to be called upon. Later, the infant will often be left in the care of a co-wife for an hour or two or a whole day at a time if its mother has to be away from home. If a woman dies leaving young children, they are reared by her co-wives as a rule. When a girl becomes pregnant for the [292] first time, it is one of her mother's co-wives who has the honour and duty of ceremonially girding her with the matron's perineal band. Co-wives often take pride in and show great devotion to one another's children. This is especially true of a senior wife past the age of child-bearing. Such a woman, identifying herself closely with the husband and being herself no longer engrossed in her own young children, mothers the children of her younger co-wives with zealous devotion.

593 736 And yet, as the natives constantly repeat, the relation of mother and child is unique. Its mother's co-wife can never be the same to the child as its own mother. A woman cannot have the same feelings towards her co-wife's child as towards her own child. The lot of an orphan, Tallensi say, even in a household full of women, is always a hard one. An orphan never receives the devoted attention and the selfless love which can be given only by its own mother. It has to depend upon the mercy and the sense of duty of women who are its mothers only in name.

602 736 This is the reason why small children left orphans are sometimes sent to live with their maternal grandmothers until they are big enough to fend for themselves. Some months after his mother's death I met Gundaat, a pathetic little chap of about 9. Talking about various things, we got on to the subject of mothers. Gundaat told me, in a tone of

593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

861 [538] [431] Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of parenthood as *dɔγam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb, 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔγam*)', often quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a 'cow of rearing (*ughug na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian, and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure, only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it. It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and that is the hardest part.

593 855 In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly 78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 861 828 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

593 in illness. She is mainly responsible for their training in habits of cleanliness. She also has to teach her daughters housekeeping skills.

This formal summary is interposed here as a means of orientating our analysis. The reality, we shall find, is not so simple.

Classificatory Parents and Own Parents

Tallensi affirm that no one can wholly take the place of a person's
593 own parents. A child may be brought up by its dead father's brother
•855 or dead mother's co-wife. Outwardly there is nothing to distinguish the relationship of such a child, during its pre-adolescent years, to its
736 proxy parent from that of a child living with its natural parent. Men or women point with pride and affection to orphans in their custody as 'my children'. They claim to care for them as conscientiously and devotedly as for their own children. But, the natives say, there is always something lacking; and observation shows that the affective ties of proxy parent and child are much weaker than those of natural parent and child. Sometimes, indeed, there is an acknowledged emotional barrier between them.

One can see this in young children like Gundaat, whose story is told in a previous chapter (p. 130). A young child is more restrained, more formal, with a proxy parent than with a natural parent. Boys seem to be less amenable to proxy parents than to own parents, especially as they approach adulthood. When young men who have been abroad,
[167] working in Ashanti or the Colony for a period of years, are questioned about their motives for leaving home, the commonest reason they give is the death of a parent. 'My father (*ba*) died, and my junior father (*ba-pit*) took over the house (*die yir*) and so I went away', is the usual formula. One soon discovers that there was always some tension and often friction between the youth and his father's brother. The youth says that his *ba-pit* did not treat him properly; and when one questions his *ba-pit*, he usually says 'the boy did not respect (*nan*) me'. This is a modern development of what is a deeply ingrained feature of Tale social organization. A man will often continue to live and farm with his own father until the latter's death. I know men of 40 and over who are still living with their own fathers. But very rarely does this happen with a father's brother. A dead man's sons break away from the parental home when a father's brother inherits it as soon as they are able to. In such a case there is usually a convergence of different factors of segmentary differentiation in the lineage. The emotional cleavage serves as the catalyst that directs and accelerates the normal processes of splitting along economic and structural lines of cleavage.

This is the negative aspect of the idea that one's natural parents should be one's social parents, as it appears in the classificatory extension of the parent–child relationship. On the positive side it follows from this conception that all those who are socially identifiable with

one's parents and play a part in one's upbringing can, and in certain circumstances must, stand to one in the relation of proxy parents. The rule applies most directly to the men and women of the same domestic unit who are identified with one's parents by generation and by social role—to one's father's brothers (*sunɔɔp*), including his full and half-brothers and first cousins on his father's side, who are his prospective successors; and to one's mother's co-wives (*nentaas*). If these men and women all belong to the same household they are directly concerned with the production of food, the provision of shelter, and the satisfaction of the other wants of the unit upon which the physical welfare and growth of a child depends. If the men belong to relatively autonomous economic units but to the same domestic unit, they will nevertheless have a common interest in the family patrimony, to the inheritance of which they all have rights, and a common ritual dependence on the immediate ancestors of the nuclear lineage. The women will sometimes help in caring for one another's children; the men will sometimes help one another in farming and always act as a unit in ritual and jural matters under the authority of the most senior of them. And the ritual care of a child is of as much importance as its physical care. A child will not thrive (*maan*) if it is not under the spiritual wing of its patrilineal ancestors, as we have learnt. 593 855 736

Outside the domestic unit the terms *ba* (father) and *ma* (mother) and the distinctive modes of behaviour correlated with them, are not extended beyond the expanded family (i.e. the family cluster built up on the inner lineage) in normal circumstances. The only exception is in the case of a uterine kinsman or kinswoman of a parent, who is identified with the foundress of the uterine line and is therefore described as a 'father' or 'mother' irrespective of genealogical distance.[1] 602 613

Within the clan or maximal lineage it is a cardinal rule that generation differences are not recognized beyond the limits of the inner lineage. 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage—*dɔyam pu yakət dug la*' is the Tale maxim. This is correlated with the structural relations of the inner lineage to lineage segments of higher order. The inner lineage is likely to be the widest segment with a common interest in patrimonial land. In relation to the clan or the maximal lineage it is usually the smallest recognized corporate segment, whose members are significant for the clan only as members of the segment. As will be remembered, it is also the unit within which sexual relations with a co-member's wife are definitely sinful. In short, the inner lineage (and the family cluster which is its residential and familial correlate) marks the limit beyond which a person takes part in corporate activities not in his own right and in his personal capacity but as a member of the

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[1] Kinship terms without inverted commas stand for the primary meaning of the terms, e.g. (natural) father; those between inverted commas stand for the extended or derived meaning of the term, e.g. (classificatory) 'father'.

CHAPTER VI

THE MORAL BASIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF PARENT AND CHILD

The Fundamental Axiom of Parenthood

593 BEFORE we try to unravel further the complex strands that unite parents and children we must elucidate an idea which the Tallensi put forward as the fundamental axiom of parenthood. We have mentioned it already in our analysis of the notion of descent, but we have to examine it now from the point of view of the person-to-person relations of parents and children. It is the axiom, clearly stated by the natives and apparent also in Tale values and usages, that the fact of having begotten or borne a child creates an absolute moral bond between it and its parents. This idea is felt by them to be the real ultimate sanction behind right conduct in the relations of parents and children; and there is a very close agreement between ideals and actualities in this province of Tale social life.

593 888 •855 Ignorance of hygiene and medicine, insufficiency of food and clothing, magical ideas, and Tale cultural standards in matters such as cleanliness or ventilation are undoubted handicaps to the child in its struggle to grow up. But sheer, callous neglect of a child by its parents, such as we sometimes hear of in more civilized societies, would be regarded with horror by all Tallensi and is unheard of. Similarly, a person who abandoned an aged parent to destitution would be regarded as a good for nothing (*boŋwari*). It happens occasionally, nowadays, when young men who find life irksome at home can so easily sneak off to foreign parts and stay away for many years. But it is a very rare thing and is universally reviled.

The Tribulations of Parenthood

593 If one asks a native why parents are and should be devoted to their children; or on what grounds they claim to 'own' (*so*) their children and to be entitled to their services, affection, gratitude, and respect; if one asks a girl who is keeping sullenly indoors, because she has been forcibly recovered from the lover she eloped with and beaten into the bargain, why she submitted passively to her father; or if one asks a young man nursing a bitter grievance against a father who has stopped him from marrying the girl he was courting why he does not defy the old man; if one asks any Talɔŋ, man or woman, such questions as these the answer invariably is, 'It is *dɔɣam*'. 'Have you not begotten (or borne) them?' 'Has he not begotten you?' And then, almost always, comes the afterthought which contains the crux of the explanation, '*Dɔɣam pu tɔ?*—Is not begetting (bearing) hard?' The phrase sounds

water lowered. Tallensi think it is essential for the health of the mother 846
and babe, and one important item in it is forcing some of the decoction down the babe's throat. Whether or not it actually has a cleansing or invigorating effect must be left to medical judgement. For the native women it has the double significance of an ordeal, and a prescribed treatment that they would not dream of neglecting.

As we have seen, the care of the child on the ritual side falls on its 854
father. The much more exacting physical care of the child in its parlous passage through infancy is its mother's responsibility. This is stressed when Tallensi insist that it is not on account of a magical taboo but because a child is still partly dependent on the breast until it is about three, that sexual intercourse between a man and his nursing wife is discontinued. They say that a child requires the undivided care of its mother until it can run about and eat solid food by itself, and that it will wilt away through lack of nourishment if she conceives prematurely. Nursing mothers become pregnant only too often through lack of self-control, but this is never condoned by public opinion. The [847]
only time a Tale woman tries to induce an abortion is when such an accident happens, for no sacrifice is too great to preserve her living child.

When Tale parents are asked what were the special difficulties they 854
had to overcome in rearing their children, they always mention sickness first. Mothers especially have a great dread of sickness in their children. 855
One does not notice this in the easy-going, placid atmosphere of a well-conducted family when there is no 'sleeplessness' (*gɔgiŋgara*), to use the apt native euphemism for sickness. But one sees it when a child gets ill. Minor ailments throw its mother into a state of anxiety. Serious illness puts her into a panic or prostrates her with grief. She refuses food—which is always regarded by the natives as a sign of severe illness or great emotional distress—and stops all her work. I have seen illness in adolescent or adult children have this effect on women; and the younger the child the more do they suffer.

It is easy to imagine what the death of a child in infancy or childhood 761
means to its mother. A man is expected to control his emotions, but a woman may express her grief freely. A father's grief is palliated, also, 593
by the active role he takes in the ritual by which the emotional shock is neutralized. A woman's part in this ritual is more passive and she feels the blow more acutely in consequence. A mother remains inconsolable for many days and even weeks over the loss of a child.

The way Tallensi think of a mother's grief over the death of her child was brought home to me when Diŋkaha's little girl of about three died after a lingering and horrible illness. He had been devoted to the child and was greatly distressed, but in a few days he had accepted the diviner's verdict philosophically and was his old bouncing self again. His wife, on the other hand, broke down completely. Then, a couple of weeks later, news came that an older child of hers by a former husband, with

nothing else to do, her babe is at the breast, sucking hungrily or, if it
853 is replete, just playing with the breast with its mouth, its fingers, and its
854 toes. If the mother is away another woman of the household will give
the baby medicated water to drink when it cries or will put it to her
breast for comfort. It may be any woman of the family, but will usually
be a co-wife.

By the age of 18 months a baby's diet is being regularly supplemented
853 with small lumps of porridge, often pre-masticated by its mother. It is
gradually and usually painlessly weaned by increasing its solid food
862 (chiefly porridge), until it is eating the same food as the adults. The only time Tale women have to wean a baby abruptly is if they become pregnant through lack of self-control during the nursing period. Tallensi say that this distresses the baby but that harsh measures are not required as a pregnant woman's milk disgusts a baby. They also say that the premature deprivation of its mother's milk prevents the child from thriving. In fact the premature pregnancy of its mother is probably more of a psychological deprivation for the child than a nutritional loss. By the time a child has its milk teeth and is able to run about, at the age of about 3, it gets no more nourishment from the breast. But its mother's breast is still its chief solace. If it is in pain, or frightened, or just tired and peevish, it cuddles into its mother's arms and clings to her breast for consolation, and a younger baby makes this impossible.

The completion of weaning marks the first stage in the child's physical
●855 and psychological severance from its mother. It has learnt to do without
593 its mother for hours or days at a stretch. It remains contentedly in the
care of an elder sister or other member of the household or even its maternal grandmother, as long as it is well and not hungry. It runs about and plays with other children of the homestead and neighbouring homesteads. It can talk fluently and so communicate its wishes to others. And its independence is increased when its mother becomes pregnant again and it can no longer run to the breast for comfort. Its mother is still the centre of its universe—and will remain so for two or three years more, in the case of a boy, and until marriage, for a girl—but the toddler has begun to glimpse the wider social space into which it is growing. Since it began to crawl it has often been told to 'go to your mother (own mother)', 'go to your mother so-and-so (mother's co-wife)', 'go to your grandfather (or grandmother)', 'go to your father (own father)', 'go to your father so-and-so (father's brother)', 'go to Yin, Tee, Baa (a sibling)' by one or other member of the family. Thus it has learnt to divide the people who come into its social space into 'own mother', 'own father', 'other mothers and other fathers' (who take care of it now and then), and 'other children', those whom it plays with, or eats with, or sees about the house. Own parents stand out clearly to the infant—its mother for obvious reasons, its father, as one man put it, 'because she (his little daughter) is often told and because she sleeps with her mother and sees

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult 593
of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees 855
less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A
baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. 593
I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its 751
mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking,
to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What
discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period
comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until
it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative [515]
from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is
an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain
water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a
decoction of roots (*ŋaɣa*), the generic term for any vegetable products
used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by
the child's spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). After its bath the mother lays the
child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth,
and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It
splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is
poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected 514
to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt
to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside 863
in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may
happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training
or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a
gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications
with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the
adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the 593
child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There 789
is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have
anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. 826
I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic
of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to
nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of
milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt
to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously
affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her
breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

593 covers almost every standard social relationship of siblings in Tale society. Siblings are laterally identified with one another, so to speak; 554 brothers can replace one another in the social structure in a way that gives rise to a minimum of readjustment in the social relations of any other people affected. This contrasts with the vertical identification of parent and child, which rests on the continuity of the descent line not on actual or potential identity of social roles. This is a generalized formula. It leaves out of account a very important item, the effect of the sexual dichotomy of Tale culture. The distinctive social roles imposed on men and women by this factor restrict the identification of brother and sister to a narrow sphere, and the functions of women limit the social equivalence of sisters to their relationship with each other's children.

593 In infancy and childhood the equivalence of siblings is of little consequence. It comes out chiefly in the rule that parents should not 955 discriminate between their children (proxy children as well as own children). Tallensi say that, in practice, one cannot help preferring 577 one son to another or one daughter to another. One child may be more obedient or industrious or better tempered than his brothers and sisters, so one will be inclined to favour him; and there is the admitted bias in favour of younger children, especially the youngest, as we have seen. Moreover, proxy children are rarely as dear to the heart of a parent as own children are. Even a mother, whose love for all her children (except the youngest) is proverbially without bias, sometimes has favourites among them. There is plenty of evidence for these admissions. The Chief of Tongo had well over two-score children; among them his favourites were a son and a daughter of about 18, born soon after he was appointed chief. Nor do such preferences stop with childhood. Tiezien reposed his trust in his late brother's two sons, who had grown up in his care. The only son he had of his own who was old enough to assist him in public affairs was, he said good humouredly, too stupid.

But, say the Tallensi, this is a matter of *feelings*—what 'your heart desires (*i suh mboot*)'. When it is a matter of *rights*, to discriminate between children is bad, almost sinful; it is like rejecting one child for the sake of another. It would be regarded as iniquitous for a man to let some of his children go hungry while others were well fed. With two adult sons, as we have seen, it is considered right for both of them to be assisted to marry before either is allowed to have two wives. It is the same with other things in which there is an element of right or duty; and the majority of natives are very conscientious in this matter, at least as far as their own children are concerned. Nowadays, in particular, as has often been emphasized to me, if a man has two sons and does not deal with them equally, the one who feels himself unjustly treated soon finds an opportunity for running away to seek work abroad. Sensible parents follow this rule conscientiously even in trivial matters. Ɔmara

had two little daughters, aged about 3, by different wives. One day 593
the two children appeared very proudly each wearing a strip of cotton 855
print about the waist. Ɔmara explained that he had bought them these
'skirts', which had to be exactly the same in size and pattern. Had they 577
been different in colour or size, or had he bought the children different
presents, they would have been very upset and their mothers angry.
He would have been accused of discriminating between them.

As this instance suggests, the closer children are in age or parentage 593
or both the more should they be treated alike. The limiting case is
that of twins and this deserves a special note. Twins (*leeba*)[1] are not 845
greeted with joy among the Tallensi; but they are not destroyed; nor 789
are they regarded as sacred in any circumstances; nor is the mother
subject to moral censure or ritual penalties. But no woman desires to
bear twins. One of the most efficacious medicines that can be placed [263]
in a ground-nut plot or among *ma'ana* (*Hibiscus esculentus*), *bɛt* (*H. sabdariffa*), or *bɛris* (*H. cannabinus*) plants—all of which supply favourite
ingredients for sauces[2]—to prevent women from pilfering these crops
is the medicine of twins (*leeba teem*) used in purifying the parents of
twins. Anyone who defies this charm will have twins, it is said. I have
seen women run on catching sight unexpectedly of a twin medicine
charm dangling in a farm.

Tallensi believe that twins may not be 'human (*ninvoo*)'—i.e. complete 845
social beings—at birth. As soon as they are born, a man who owns
twin medicine is asked for medicine to mark their sleeping-place. If 766
one or both die shortly after birth that is proof positive that he or they 776
are *kɔlkpaaris*, malicious bush sprites, not human beings. They are
then buried ignominiously in a special uninhabited place. A twin that 851
survives the first month or so of life is tacitly assumed to be human and
treated as an ordinary child. But if it dies in early infancy it may still
prove to have been a *kɔlkpaarəg*, when the cause of its death is sought
by divination. Its death will cause great distress to its parents, for it
will have been treated with as much affection and devotion as a normal
child, but it will not receive normal burial. Only when it reaches the
age of about 4 [i.e. is old enough to have a following sibling (*nyeer*)]
and is placed under the spiritual guardianship of an ancestor spirit, is
a twin definitely regarded as a complete social being.

Tallensi seem to expect, as a matter of course, that at least one of a 845
pair of twins will die in very early infancy.[3] The survivor then has to be 851

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[1] They are always named *Yin* (Heaven) for the older and *Zuur* (tail) for the younger—*Yin*, 'because he sees the light of day first'; *Zuur* 'because he comes last'.

[2] *Vide* previously cited paper 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', by M. and S. L. Fortes.

[3] I can state with absolute certainty that every effort is made to keep twins 854
alive. But the natives assert that the sheer physical strain of nursing and caring
for twins is too much for most women. This is highly probable considering that 165

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
● 855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

867 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented
857 that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association
764 with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice
855] to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly
[866] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends
[839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4-5 years, suspiciously

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183
merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577
and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868
differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty
to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them.
Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip
of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them.
It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal
about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds
they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and
the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as
far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused
laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem;
and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231]
children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for
example.

Many rules of conduct are observed ' because it is befitting ' (*de* 183
narəmi)—or because non-conformity is ' unbecoming ' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576
i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516
greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves,
bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all
fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the
buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up
to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread
out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with
legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be
admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183
becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291
little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834
A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855
afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854]
to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social
world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think,
still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination
of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from
these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that
which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

CHAPTER VII

THE GENETIC DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

TO complete our analysis of the norms governing the relations of 593
parents and children we must now glance at their development in
the course of the child's life. Different themes are dominant at suc- 183
cessive periods of the child's physical and social maturation. At first
the dominant theme is the love and devotion of the parents; then their
authority and responsibility come to the forefront; later the principle
of reciprocity emerges as a leading idea; and lastly we see the differen-
tiation and hidden opposition between successive generations on the
surface.

Babyhood[1]

Tale babies (*bilie*, pl. *bilies*) are the darlings of the family. Totally 854
naked except for the amulets of their spirit guardians around the neck, 593
they are seldom quite clean. But then, bodily cleanliness is the least of
the virtues amongst the Tallensi. Though I have seen babies at the [751
sitting stage (about a year old) left alone in a shady spot for an hour or 515]
so, it is more usual for them to be in someone's care at all times of the
day. Looking after baby is everybody's job—grandparents, older
brothers and sisters (boys are as tender as girls with a baby), mother's
co-wives, father, and, most important of all, mother.

Up to the time that it is weaned, which occurs towards the end of 853
its third year, a baby (*bilie*) is mainly in its mother's care. For at least
the first year it is wholly dependent on the breast for nourishment. It 854
is given the breast whenever it cries or frets or the mother feels
inclined to nurse it. Whenever the mother sits down to rest or has

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[1] Tallensi distinguish different stages of infancy according to the feeding-habits and level of physical skill reached by the infant. They never count months or years, but a parent is often able to state roughly how many months or years have elapsed since the birth of the child, working it out, most commonly, by reference to harvest and sowing times or to the Great Festivals. A babe in arms is *bilie*; until it is weaned it is described as 'still suckling (*u na mɔɣarme*)'. If it is said to be still suckling but 'eating a little porridge (*u diit saɣabo biel-biel*)' one can infer that it is at least 2. The unweaned infant's stage of development is further specified by stating whether it is crawling (*u bɔɣarme*) or walking (*u kyɛnme*) or already talking (*u vɔlɔmrɔme*). When the child is weaned it is said to 'have left off milk (*u tuk biihim*)'. Lastly comes the stage, at between 3 and 4 years, when it is said to be old enough to have another immediately following sibling (*u saɣa nyɛɛr marɔga*)—an idea we shall explain in a later chapter. The subject-matter of this chapter is supplemented by my paper, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, cit. supra. [856]

593 576 tendencies are reconciled. The liberty to address his father by name is a reassurance, to the child, of the love and solicitude that lie behind the authority his father exercises over him. Perhaps it is also an expression of the identification of father and child by the lineage principle. And the greater deference in his behaviour towards his mother than towards his father is a sign that he recognizes her control, though she seems to have only love and devotion for him. Familiarity in everyday intercourse compensates for the filial piety due to a parent in the more formal, particularly in the jural and ritual aspects, of parent–child relations. The greater overt freedom with the father compensates for the greater emphasis on respect and dependence in the child's relations with him; the franker signs of deference towards the mother compensate for the greater emphasis on her love for her child as against her authority over him.

593 Clearly there is a very high degree of consistency between the social images of the parents projected in the cultural norms of the Tallensi and the actual behaviour of children to parents. The mother is thought of as the food-giver. Her love for her children is subject to no limits or laws and her status in relation to them is almost sacrosanct. Her relations with them are based on love tempered with authority. The father is thought of as the source of discipline, the guardian of good conduct. He is strict without being harsh or tyrannous. His role is of special importance in the face of the community at large and in relation to the spiritual powers that govern human life. His relations with his children are based on his authority over them, his responsibility for them, and justice tempered with love.

Adolescence and the Principle of Reciprocity

883 For a Tale boy the years between about 13 and 20 bring changes in degree rather than in kind in his relations with his parents. There is no affective or social break to mark a transition from childhood to adulthood among the Tallensi. Even among the Hill Talis initiation into the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is not associated with adolescence; it can take place at any age. A boy's social development is a process of gradual advance along lines laid down in early childhood.[1] As he grows older

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[1] 856 Tallensi distinguish the main phases of a boy's development not by chronological age but by two criteria of a broader character, either separately or together, according to the situation. They have a physiological criterion and an economic one. Physiologically they distinguish three major phases, after babyhood, in a boy: (*a*) when he is still a 'small boy (*bumbil*)' with undescended testicles, showing, as they put it, only a 'pale scrotum (*lanzee*)'; (*b*) Pubescence, denoted by the verb *sol*, to mature physically, and marked by the testicles descending (*lana sigɔrɔme*) and the emergence of pubic hair (*saŋkperuŋ kɔbət*). They say 'he has matured completely (*u sol ba'ahme*)' of a boy who has reached puberty and is entering manhood. (*c*) Lastly comes adulthood, when he is a 'grown man (*bonkɔrəg*)'. It is by reference to these physiological phases that men often date events in their life. The second criterion is that of advancing economic proficiency. A 'small boy' is capable only of scaring the birds from the newly

he grows more and more proficient in the economic skills he began to acquire in childhood and better versed in the details of his culture. By the time he is 20 or so he knows most of what is known to his people about farming and animal husbandry, hunting and fishing, and building. He is wholly imbued with the values of his culture and has a good working knowledge of its institutions and customs. It is enough to enable him to play his part as a young man in the life of his community, but there is still much to learn which only years of experience and responsibility will give him. He is, however, an active if unimportant participant in corporate activities of the lineage and clan, and in the management of family affairs, with a right to his own opinions. In step with his growing social maturity a boy's field of social relations increases in range and in depth. His father's authority begins to loom larger, but at the same time his father's responsibilities on his behalf also increase and his own self-differentiation advances; and a theme that was of minor effect in their relationship hitherto comes into prominence. This is the principle of reciprocity. 883

During this period the identification of father and son is greatly deepened. It grows out of the intimacies and co-operation of everyday life. As they work side by side on the farm the father teaches his son farming skills and lore. When he performs a sacrifice at home his son is his assistant, learning from him how to carry out such rites, and what doctrines and beliefs lie behind them. In such situations he learns the names of his ancestors and begins to understand the structure of the lineage system and where he fits into it. He makes the acquaintance of matrilateral and sororal kin who come to take part in rites of this sort. The division between the men of the lineage and the women of the lineage, and the distinction between the father's side of the family and the mother's side become of direct practical relevance to him. Sometimes a man will call his adolescent and adult sons to him and tell them various things they ought to know in case he gets ill or dies. He tells them about his farms and other property, about his debts and those who owe him debts, and, a most important matter, about his ancestor and medicine shrines. In doing this he is, in effect, telling them what he knows of the history and traditions of his lineage and clan. These are matters which a man does not speak about to his daughters or wives. If they learn of them it is only incidentally, through listening to the conversation of the men. Daughters and wives are present at domestic sacrifices to ancestor spirits, but only sons are allowed to share in the cult of a man's private medicine shrines. Most important of all is the responsible 593 883 882

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sown farms or from the ripening grain; a lad of 7 or 8 can be trusted to take care of sheep (*dɔl pihi*); older boys, up to the age of 14 or 15, are cattle herds (*biem nigi*) and already help with the hoeing; after the age of pubescence a boy works on the farm side by side with the men—he farms (*u hɔɔrəme*). These phases are also used to date events, often in conjunction with the physiological criterion. 856●

tion for her remains. He still helps her to cultivate her ground-nut plot, 543 if he has no younger brothers to take this on, and assists her in other 883 ways. Later on, when he marries, his intimacy with his mother will be revived. It is to her *dug* that he brings his wife and in her care that he 882 places the girl.

A girl grows away from her father as she approaches puberty. This [881] is not due to physiological taboos, for there are none connected with a girl's puberty or with menstruation in general. There are no ceremonies to mark a girl's attainment of physiological maturity, nor is there any break in her affective relations with her parents. The only significant break in the steady process of social maturation for a girl is her first marriage. Her growing away from her father is due to the sexual division of labour and the corresponding division of interests in the family. Though there is no barrier to ordinary social intercourse between the sexes in a domestic family, there is the separation of interests and activities that we have mentioned before, and adolescent boys and girls are caught up in it.

A girl of 13 or 14 years and over does not run to her father and cuddle up to him as her 6- or 7-year-old sister might do. She is with her mother and the other women most of the day assisting with the more arduous domestic tasks. She helps to clean the house, to fetch water and collect shea fruit or firewood, to grind the millet, to cook, and to care for the younger children. At harvest time, or when they are beating the floors of their rooms, she does a full day's work with the other women. She is already adept in all these feminine skills and is well versed in all the gossip of the women. A girl of 12 or 13 can be left in charge of the house for a day or two while her mother is away. She goes to market by herself to buy or sell things for her mother; and also, a more important consideration for her personally, to display her charms and flirt with the young men. She accompanies older girls on firewood parties or when they go to dance at funerals.

When a girl approaches puberty her mind is set upon marriage. Tallensi estimate a girl's stage of development before marriage by the [856] appearance of her breasts. Leaving aside betrothal of a girl in childhood, which does not require her consent, a girl is not considered to be mature enough for serious courtship until her breasts are formed (*u biiha n-yi*). She is then called a maiden (*pɔɣasarət*). Before that stage, when her breasts are budding (*u biiha m-pukət*), suitors may already be coming to her or soliciting her parents. A girl may be married before she menstruates (*lu sie*), though it is not considered seemly for her husband to sleep with her until she is capable of child-bearing. When her suitors come to her, probably the only person who knows which of them she likes best is her mother; and if she and her lover decide to elope her mother may help them. As we know, the bonds of affection between mother and daughter remain as strong as ever after the latter's marriage

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spirit, perpetuating, on the religious plane, their common dependence on her in her lifetime. 422

It must not be thought, however, that friction between full siblings never occurs. That would be contrary to human nature, the natives often declare. As amongst most peoples, sibling solidarity conceals a strong element of rivalry. Indeed there is one circumstance in which it is taken for granted that *soog* siblings will be prone to quarrel all their lives, even if they do not set up separate homesteads. Two successive children of the same mother and father are regarded as born rivals. The second of the two children, irrespective of sex, is called the *nyeer* of the first. The first *nye* (verb = immediately precedes) the second, who *taɣal* (verb = immediately follows) the first in birth order. The definition applies strictly to birth sequence, not to survival order. A child is not its older *soog* sibling's *nyeer* if between them their mother had another child who died in infancy, or a miscarriage—for a miscarriage counts as a birth. The concept *nyeer* is regularly used to indicate an infant's degree of maturity. An infant that has a *nyeer*, or is old enough to have a *nyeer*, is entering the second conventionally recognized stage of social development, childhood proper. So if a native is asked about the stage of development reached by a particular child and says, 'It has a *nyeer* (*u mar nyeer*)' or 'It is fit to have a *nyeer* (*u saɣa nyeer marəga*)', one can infer that the child is between 3 and 5 years old—or, to keep to native categories of thought, that it is weaned, no longer needs the constant care of its mother or a nursemaid, and is beginning to fend for itself, to join in children's play-groups, and to become acquainted with the world outside the homestead walls. 593 578 856

A child and its *nyeer* are believed to be rivals almost from the day the *nyeer* is born. This predisposes them to be ill tempered with each other and wrangle on the most trivial provocation. Often when I have noticed two children bickering or annoying each other in some petty way, my companion—a man or an older child perhaps—has said with a laugh, 'There 's someone and his *nyeer* (*nit ni u nyeer nla*)'. Once at a funeral ceremony there was an argument between the two sons of the dead man. It ended with the older giving the younger a buffet across the mouth that drew blood. Relatives intervened and separated them. Then an old woman, their father's *soog* sister, with mingled pleading, protests, and sighs, dragged the younger brother away to attend to his cut lip. He was weeping with injured pride and humiliation, exclaiming, 'If he were not my older brother (*bier*) I would kill him'. The people sitting around commented scathingly on this shameless spectacle. Then someone remarked, 'Oh well, it 's a case of a man and his *nyeer*'. It had all begun, I learnt, from the younger lad's accusing the older of having appropriated something belonging to him and the older losing his temper with him for fussing about ridiculous trifles on such a solemn day. 593 578

shrine they accompany us and listen to what we say. Will they not 869
[thus] get to know it?' His own small son Badiwona (6–7 years) is 861
extremely devoted to him. One day, affectionately patting the child, 828
he said: 'When we come out in the morning, and if he doesn't see [593]
me, he seeks about for me. If he doesn't find me he won't rest. That
is why I had him initiated last year. Whatever I do he also sits and
listens. Will he not get to know it thus? And when I am gone will
he not say that when he was a child he used to go about with his father
and used to see how his father did this and that? This is my child
and I am teaching him uprightness. If he is about to do anything that
is not seemly I tell him, so that when he grows up he will know
upright ways.'[1]

Education, it is clear, is regarded as a joint enterprise in which 861
parents are as eager to lead as children to follow. In consequence of 856●
this attitude adults are very tolerant of children's ways and especially
about their learning. A child is never forced beyond its capacity.
This is seen most clearly in relation to the pivotal economic activity,
agriculture. However skilful a boy may be with his hoe, he will not
be forced to do as much work as an adult. Men often restrain their
sons of 12–14 from joining the adults in hoeing on the grounds that
over-exertion is harmful. Again, women do not take daughters of
9–10 on firewood expeditions to the bush.

That skill comes with practice is realized by all. When adults are 868
asked about children's mimetic play they reply: 'That is how they
learn.' Thus when a boy is 7 or 8 his father buys him a small bow so
that he can go and learn marksmanship in play with his comrades.
Yet the existence of individual differences in ability, both amongst
children and amongst adults, is recognized and cited with reference
to the acquisition of skill. Rapid learning or the acquisition of a new
skill is explained by *u mar nini pam*, 'he has eyes [illegible]markably', that is,
he is very sharp. A friend of mine who was a ca[illegible]aker told me how
he had learnt his craft, as a youth, from a Dagban [illegible] carefully watching
him at work. When he was young, he explained, he had 'very good
eyes'. This conception of cleverness is intelligible in a society where
learning by looking and copying is the commonest manner of achieving
dexterity both in crafts and in the everyday manual activities.

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[1] He learns—*u bamlire*, cognate with *bay*, to know; I teach him—*mpaasumi*.

commits a *faux pas*, or shows lack of understanding, or misbehaves 577
morally the comment is *u ka yam*, 'he has no sense'. The concept
is used to refer both to qualities of personality and to attributes of
behaviour. It is applied also in a genetic sense to describe the social
development of the child. A normal child between the ages of about 856
6 and 9 years is said to 'have sense at length'. It knows how to 577
behave in the social situations which confront it, whereas an infant of
3 or 4 years old does not. Yet a 4-year-old having learned bladder and
bowel control is said to 'have sense' as compared with a 2-year-old.
Similarly Nindoyat, (17–18 years) telling me of his sweethearting,
waxed scornful about his own boyish friendship with girls two years
before. 'I still had no sense then', he explained. The concept, it
will be seen, is generally used relatively to a particular situation.

Children's attitude to education. In Tale society every pupil becomes 861
in some situations a teacher. At the one extreme there are specialized
ritual performances which some men do not learn till they are grey,
and at the other, the toddler leaning over to play with his nursling
brother is teaching the latter something about his environment. This
holds right through the age-scale. Considering also the unity of the
social sphere, one is not surprised to find that children have the same
attitudes about education as their elders. Hence children are rarely
unwilling to learn. As a rule, too, they are not ashamed of confessing
failure, ignorance, or inability to do or make something. Conversely,
children laugh good-humouredly at one another's deficiencies in skill
or knowledge, they never jeer. Ridicule is reserved for the correction [626]
of uncouth manners, disgraceful morals, or aberrant interests.

Fundamental educational relationships. It will be evident from the 861
preceding analysis that Tale children receive their education not only 571
from the adults but also from older children and adolescents who are
always transmitting what they know of the cultural heritage to their
younger brothers and sisters and cousins. From the age of 5 or 6 years
until they become fully absorbed into the economic system children
often go about in small groups. These groups[1] usually consist of

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King*, 1936, for ancillary information about these groups. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix, 1936, for an outline of their structural context.

867 In Taleland an infant remains confined to the house for the first three to six months or even longer. During this period its social space is extremely restricted. It has effective social relationships with its mother, sometimes its grandmother or a co-wife of its mother, or an older sibling or half-sibling, and its father—in this order of frequency [856] and intensity. At the age of 3 to 4, when it is beginning to talk fluently and can run about, its effective range of contacts includes all the members of the joint family and probably those of closely neighbouring related joint families. It is beginning to associate with groups of other related children belonging to its immediate milieu and to know the topography of its parental homestead and its immediate [574] surroundings. By the age of 6 or 7 it is being taken on visits to its mother's brother's house (*ahəb yir*) and begins to incorporate into the texture of its life its relationships with its mother's people and their settlement. A little later it commences to take a share in very simple economic duties. In this way the child's social space is continuously expanding as it grows older. The educational agencies to which it is subjected become more numerous and more diverse and its experiences more variegated as it participates in an ever-increasing range of social situations. With adolescence a great increase in mobility ensues and a new interest emerges—the opposite sex as potential spouses. This coincides with the beginning of real economic responsibility. When [182] he reaches adulthood, the individual's social space is a function of the entire social structure in its complete ecological setting.[1] He should be capable of appropriate behaviour in any social situation which may confront the normal Taləŋa. He is a full citizen—which means that he is actually or potentially subject to the whole gamut of constraints inherent in Tale society.

861 In the evolution of an individual's social space we have a measure of his educational development. In Taleland this is brought about not only by accretion to, but also by differentiation of, his or her field of social activity. Sex, for example, is a differentiating factor of great

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[1] A person's social space is not equivalent to the entire social structure since it is included in the latter, which is never fully known to or acted on by the individual. Take, for instance, the Tale joint family. As a structural unit it can be easily distinguished and described by the anthropologist; but each member's view of the whole is unique—that of the head of the joint family is different from that of his wife or son—yet all derived from the same single unit of structure.

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121 mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145 correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884 of physiological and psychological development and that of social and cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of 182 which social development lags behind psycho-physical development. A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856] ● age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as [582] a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827 ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881 growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812 The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls, which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the ***ultima ratio*** of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma*, *mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

mothers are busy with some household task. A healthy infant will 868
remain sitting thus, almost motionless, playing with a fragment of cala- 854
bash, a stick, or the sand—for the idea of giving an infant a toy or some
attractive trinket to occupy it when it is left alone does not occur to
the Tallensi. On the other hand, when an infant clamours for attention
there is always some one of its kinsfolk near at hand to render it.

The native point of view about physical growth was well illustrated 827
in the case of two infants belonging to a single extended family which 856
I knew well. The younger infant was a lively, healthy, inquisitive girl
of about 2½–3 years old already toddling about and exploring the
world. The other infant, a boy about 3 months older, had been puny
and ailing from birth and, though obviously intelligent, was chronically
fretful and dependent and had not yet begun to walk. In Taleland [801]
the number three is symbolical of maleness, four of femaleness. Hence
it is said in their folk-lore that boys begin to walk and talk in their
third year, girls in their fourth. Yet the glaring discrepancy in development between these two infants caused no anxiety to the parents of the boy, except about his health. They realized clearly the connexion between his retardation and his health, but were entirely complacent about the former. That he would walk and talk in due course was taken for granted.

The expectation of normal behaviour. It will be evident from these 856
examples that in the cultural idiom of the Tallensi age is not conceived as a significant factor in psycho-physical or social development. Yet relative seniority determines status and rights even in children's groups and their notion of time is explicit and clear. They think of genetic development primarily in terms of maturity, which is a synthetic concept embracing both physiological and behavioural signs. Growing up, in other words, is the evolution of one's social personality as it approximates closer and closer to the fully grown, mature adult. Just as this point of view precludes deliberate and standardized methods of training children in the rudimentary bodily skills such as walking, talking, and eye-hand co-ordination in eating, so it would be incompatible with a didactic attitude about bowel and bladder control or about sexual habits and knowledge.

This point of view gives rise to a factor of great importance in Tale 828
education, the *expectation of normal behaviour*. In any given social

understand or to be eager to understand the language of adults, and 868
no one would think of using 'baby talk' to them. 198

As normal behaviour is always expected, no one hesitates to correct 828
a child or adult who behaves inappropriately through ignorance, and 861
the correction is generally accepted with alacrity and ease. If children
are allowed to be present at the activities of adults, they are assumed
to be interested in and to understand what is being said and done.
No one would inhibit his conversation or actions because children
are present, or withhold information upon which adequate social
adjustment depends from a child because it is thought to be too young.
Tallensi, therefore, are not surprised at the comprehensive and
accurate sexual knowledge of a 6-year-old, though direct instruction
in these matters is never given. As with the ordinary skills and
interests of daily life, they expect children to want to know such
things. *Naawun mpaan ba*, 'Heaven teaches them', they say, or, as
we should put it, it is perfectly natural.

It is known that some people learn more quickly and accurately
than others, that variations in skill and ability exist. But the idea of [856]
precocity or retardation as a quality of a child's character has no place
in Tale thought. A child may intrude on a situation where some one
of his or her degree of maturity has no business to be and will be
categorically dismissed then; but it would never be rated for being
'old-fashioned'. Every child is expected to be eager to know and
to do as much as its social space and its stage of psycho-physical
development permits. Hence, though it is clearly recognized that
knowledge, skill, and capacity for social adjustment grow cumulatively,
the Tallensi have no technique of isolating a skill or observance
from the total reality and training a child in it according to a syllabus,
as, for instance, we train children in dancing, the multiplication table,
or the catechism. Tale educational method does not include drill as [876]
a fundamental technique. It works through the situation, which is a
bit of the social reality shared by adult and child alike.

The conceptions and practices we have been considering constitute 861
the significant factors in education by participation in practical tasks
which is often described as the distinctive method of primitive
societies and is as conspicuous in Taleland as in every other preliterate
country. It may be observed that even in Western society the

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183
her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764
shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783]
mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual
uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181
and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867
and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856
moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861
that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

867 amused. When the child's mother tried to soothe her she first
●856 struggled and struck at her, venting her chagrin on her mother. It was
861 fully ten minutes before her mother was able to quieten her by playing with her and distracting her by making her a toy of wet clay. ‘They will laugh at him (or her)’ or ‘His comrades will laugh at him’ is the commonest motive alleged for correct behaviour. If you ask a boy of 6 or 7 why he no longer plays with the little girls he says, ‘If I do my comrades will laugh at me’; and little girls say the same. Adolescents, talking about their sweethearts, who are usually clan
[626] ‘sisters’, explain why they avoid the girls of their own section—‘because our comrades will find out and laugh at us’; and the adult is equally sensitive to public opinion.

183 *The total pattern and its genetic development.* We have seen that these categories of social behaviour are not learnt in isolation one from the other but as patterns in which interests, elements of skill, and observances are combined. The Tale housewife, going several miles into the bush to collect firewood, is using knowledge of the bush tracks and of the best places for firewood acquired over a period of years; but she is impelled also by the sense of duty to her family and her own self-esteem. The Tale farmer's devotion to his agricultural pursuits is due to a passionate interest in land and crops and to a sense of moral responsibility towards his family and his ancestor spirits. His skill is but one of the factors that affect his general efficiency.

183 These total patterns which constitute the texture of Tale cultural
867 behaviour are not built up bit by bit, by addition, during the course
155 of a child's life. They are present as *schemas*[1] from the beginning. My observations suggest that the course of development is somewhat as follows: at first the child acquires a well-defined interest associated with a postural diagram of the total pattern. The postural diagram is, as it were, a contour map, extremely simplified and crude but comprehending the essential elements and relations of the full pattern. Further experience strengthens and amplifies the interest at the same time as it causes the details of the postural diagram to be filled out, making it more and more adaptable and controllable, producing more

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[1] I have taken this concept from Prof. F. C. Bartlett's *Remembering*, pp. 199 ff., though its bald application here hardly does justice to the significance given to it by Prof. Bartlett, and to its value for an understanding of primitive education.

867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the
601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and
602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations
856 in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. FUNDAMENTAL LEARNING PROCESSES

153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning—mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an
828 almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

593 789 826 (*Man daa nye fara dɔyi ki tyəm la ŋwala*)', this is a curse of the most terrible kind. For that reason, no doubt, none of my informants could quote an instance of a mother actually putting this curse on a child. The symbolism is of interest, however, in view of the stress Tallensi lay on the mother as food-giver in their conventional picture of her.

Childhood

857 593 The next three or four years of a child's life are probably its freest and happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the immediate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in being with their parents too. They will hang around their mother in the kitchen and trot around or sit with their father when he is resting under the shade tree. They see and hear everything that is going on in the house and are tolerated at all domestic occasions. In this way, and through their mimetic play, they build up the rudimentary schemas[1] of ideas, manual dexterities, and sentiments out of which grow the skills, interests, and values of later life. Love and indulgence is still the keynote of their parents' and other close relatives' attitude to them. Tallensi say that small children at this stage are still more attached to their mother than to their father because it is she who feeds them. In fact, as we have already mentioned, throughout a Talɔŋ's life he thinks of his mother as the one who gave him food without stint, going hungry herself, if need be, so that her child might be fed.

857 868 593 By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex; and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it still remains free to play for much of its time. But from the age of 7 or so boys and girls are eager to participate in the adult routine of life and they become more and more involved in it. They begin by being given the simplest economic and household tasks such as scaring the birds from the fields of ripening grain, tethering the goats, rounding up the poultry—tasks which children of both sexes perform—or sweeping the house, carrying a tiny pot of water, gathering edible fungi or herbs for the pot, which girls only do. A very common task of both girls and boys at this stage is acting nursemaid to a baby. As this shows, there is very little social differentiation between them as yet.

857 593 462 868 By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division of labour customary among the Tallensi, and with it the corresponding division of social roles and ideals. Boys start following their older brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any. They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12 reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother

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[1] Cf. the discussion of this concept in my Memorandum just cited.

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857
own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home
farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593
chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462
of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of
9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868
plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a house-
wife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and
motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155
their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861
ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it
is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔya yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593
and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and
social maturity permit. Its parents will henceforth assert their authority 867
and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social
and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only
the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

interests of siblings, particularly of brothers, is built up on common 593
upbringing and a common body of affective experience. In the older settlements the children of an expanded family, or even of a group of families based on a medial lineage, grow up together. Hence one finds, as has already been recorded,[1] that any member of an inner lineage knows the life-history of every other member.

This common background of siblings is illustrated in children's play- 593
groups.[2] In the older settlements the play-groups of children under 8
or thereabouts rarely include children who belong to different medial 857
lineages. It is the children of a group of adjacent homesteads, who are *ipso facto* members of the same inner or at most medial lineage, that form regular play-groups. Children of one sex of the same joint family or expanded family between whom there is not a wide age-gap always play together in the same group. Siblings of like sex learn together, and to an important extent from one another, the economic skills and practical knowledge they will need in order to get their livelihood. As nearly common a body of experience as is possible for separate individuals shapes their social personalities and directs their interests, ideals, and purposes towards culturally defined goals and values. In Tale society men or women of equal social maturity tend to think and feel alike in the same situation. Thus the similarity of character marking them out amongst their age-fellows which one very often observes in a pair of brothers or sisters is noteworthy,[3] the more so as differences of temperament and intelligence are not obliterated thereby. It is, indeed, just this uniformity of character that makes it difficult for some brothers and sisters to get on well with each other.

The ties of mutual attachment, loyalty, and solidarity in social matters 593
that unite siblings are graded according to their genealogical closeness. They are closest for full (*soog*) siblings and progressively less close for those who have only a father in common, a paternal grandfather in common, a paternal great-grandfather in common, or more remote connexion.

These differences are laid down in earliest infancy. The intimacy and close mutual identification of full siblings is rooted in their common dependence on their mother in childhood. It is to her that they look for food and emotional security, and a mother's care is given to all her small children equally and in a group. In the hunger months if a woman gets hold of a little grain to cook some food for her children, she calls them all to eat of it and they all sit down together around the dish. The first lessons in sharing equally are learnt in this setting. The 6-year-

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 210.

[2] I have given a short description of these play-groups in my '*Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*', previously cited.

[3] The processes of education that lie behind the formation of social personality among the Tallensi are more fully discussed in the paper just cited.

593 old, admonished sometimes by his mother, tries not to eat too greedily lest his 2-year-old brother or sister eating with him should not have his fill. The 11- or 12-year-old, copying his parents, will take a mouthful or two and then say he has had enough, leaving the dish to be finished by his younger siblings. Thus are the seeds of the concern for each other's welfare commonly found between full siblings planted through the precept and example of the mother.

593 •857 As we have seen, children sleep with their mother in infancy and early childhood. The feeling of emotional security this gives to a child thus becomes associated with his maternal siblings. Tarəmba, aged about 9, was playing with his usual companions of about the same age—four other boys and a little girl. All but one of these children came from the same expanded family. I stopped to chat to them. After a while we got on to the subject of parents. Yindubil said he preferred his father to his mother. Tarəmba interrupted, exclaiming, 'Hee! he 's telling fibs. It 's only because his mother has run away. My mother is dead and so I can't help it, I've got to like my father best. But if you have a mother it 's different. She is the one who gives you food; and when night comes you sleep beside her, and you don't have bad dreams. If [828] you sleep alone you have bad dreams.' For a Taləŋ sleeping badly or having bad dreams is the arch symptom of a state of anxiety. Tarəmba's wistful remarks sum up vividly what a mother means to a Taləŋ as the focus of his sense of security, and this affect adheres to a full sibling. It forms a strong motive in the reluctance of full brothers to part and set up separate households or separate homesteads. Təbəg and Dəbil were full brothers (*saarət*), both middle-aged men with adult children. They lived together and farmed together in great amity. I knew them well and had occasion more than once to discuss with them one of my stock subjects, why *soog* brothers do not, like half-brothers, separate when their families start growing up. 'No', they said, 'thus it is pleasant (*ŋwala m-mah*). Being together thus we help each other. We two sitting here, are we not the children of one mother? He and I, we come from one vulva (*ti yi la pɛn yɛnni na*).' This is the standard explanation given for the lifelong partnership of *soog* brothers.

Soog siblings are generally devoted to each other and always, as far as my observation goes, unquestioningly loyal to each other in relation to other people. One sees this very clearly in the behaviour of young children. Babies and infants are often left by their mothers in the care of older children. A woman may ask one of her co-wives' children to keep an eye on her infant for a little while, but it is not usual for an infant to be left for hours on end, or a whole day, in the care of a half-sibling. So if one sees an infant being carried about by a young girl of 10 or 11 one can be fairly certain that they are either full siblings or that the little nursemaid is the infant's mother's classificatory 'sister' or 'child', whom she has specially brought to live with her

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as nursemaid to the baby. If one sees a boy taking care of an infant one can be certain that the children are *saarət*. A boy will gladly keep an eye on a baby half-brother or half-sister for an hour or so, but he will refuse to take care of the baby for a longer period. Not so with his *soog* sibling. Boys delight in carrying their infant *saarət* about or having them with them in the same play-group. All children are very patient and affectionate with younger *saarət*. A homely sight is that of a little boy or girl of about 6 or 7 kneeling beside a baby sibling on the ground and caressing its face with slightly parted lips.

Tale children often squabble among themselves, with that mixture of earnestness and fantasy that runs through so many of their group activities; but I have never seen a child trying maliciously to hurt another. Between siblings, especially full siblings near to each other in age, squabbling is regarded as a normal habit. It is one of the signs of their equality and familiarity. So one sometimes sees a little boy or girl of 3 or 4 angrily pummelling a sibling of 7 or 8 and the older child playfully warding off the childish blows. Or one sees an infant howling in rage for something and his elder brother or sister patiently soothing him. Yindubil, aged about 8, whose mother had run away, was being brought up by his father's younger wife. Her little son, Mɔɣar-pu-la'at, aged about 4, was very fond of Yindubil and followed him about wherever he went. Said Yindubil, of his half-brother, with a grin, 'He's quarrelsome, always wants to scrap with me. But I don't mind; he's my *soog*[1] and besides he's not greedy. If our mother prepares some food for us he always wa[illegible] for me to come and join him.' Passing Baɣankura's homestead one morning I found his children standing about in front of the gateway. As I came up, the youngest, a boy of about 3, ran to his brother, a lad of 11 or 12, and clung to him. Their half-sister, aged about 9, laughed and said to me: 'He (the infant) is afraid of you, so he runs to his *soog*.' I asked, 'Why didn't he run to you?'—for a small child runs to its mother or older sister more readily than to a brother or its father for protection. 'Oh', she replied, 'he likes his *soog* better than me.' I asked Kyekambɛ, aged about 11 or 12, whom he liked best, his small *soog* brother Badiwona, aged about 6, or his half-brothers who were his constant playmates. 'Badiwona', he said emphatically, 'we are one mother's children, and some day, when I move out to farm on my own, he will come with me, the others won't.' Similarly, Maɛŋya, aged about 12, and his *soog*-brother Tɛndaanbon, aged about 8, were inseparable. They helped each other to hoe their respective ground-nut plots and always went about together. They ate together regularly out of the same dish; they went on errands together.

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[1] Not in the strict sense, of course. But this is a very good example of how being brought up by the same 'mother' creates sentiments of attachment similar to those of true *saarət*. I came across several instances of this.

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Once a smaller boy who was with them hit Maɛŋya. Maɛŋya turned furiously on the small boy; but it was somewhat comical to see Tɛndaanbon equally angry with the assailant. Like many full or half-siblings of about the same age and the same sex, these two boys were extraordinarily alike in character, modelling themselves obviously on their father. They had his blunt and honest habits of speech, his diligence and readiness to oblige, and a sense of responsibility beyond their years.

Until one of them reaches the age of about 9 or 10, and sometimes even after that age, *soog* siblings are frequently together irrespective of sex. That is why one often sees a little girl with a group of small boys, or a little boy with a group of small girls. Between the ages of about 9 and 12 the sexual dichotomy prevailing in Tale culture begins to have a strong influence on the children, as we have seen. Different economic activities divide boys and girls. One rarely finds girls accompanying the herd boys or boys going for firewood with their mothers and sisters. Boys are beginning to share the interests and activities of the men, girls those of the women. Boys go about with their 'mates' (*taab*, sing. *taraan*) or 'chums' (*dɔləntaas*, sing. *dɔləntaa*) of about the same age, and girls with their girl chums. Boys of 11 and 12 are apt to be rather scornful of girls, and girls of this age turn up their noses at their boy contemporaries. Overtly, their attitudes to one another remind one of the latency phase in European children. Children round about 11 to 13 do not play together much in groups except on special occasions. Girls, in particular, are at home a good deal.

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This is the time, therefore, when the sex factor begins to exercise a strong influence on the relations of siblings; age differences also become significant; and with this emerges a distinction between the social aspect of siblingship and the affective, personal aspect. A boy of 11 to 13 may make a boon companion of a half-brother or a classificatory brother from a neighbouring homestead of about his own age, leaving his younger *soog* brother or sister to his or her own devices if the difference between them is considerable. When Kɔyatee came to see me it was always with one of his chums who belonged to a different branch of his medial lineage, never with his younger *soog* brother or sister.

It is the same with girls at this stage. Ba'anzee's best friend was her classificatory 'daughter' of about her own age from the next homestead. They used to come up to the camp to call on my wife, as they generally announced to me, their arms affectionately round each other's neck. Maanyeya's daily playmate was her classificatory sister of about the same age from a neighbouring homestead—until her mother had a baby who wholly absorbed Maanyeya's delighted attention.

This tendency to seek outside friendships, though still chiefly among siblings of the same inner lineage, increases with the approach of adolescence. From the age of about 14 to 16 up to about 18 to 20 many

The meat, already putrescent, is nevertheless enjoyed despite its stench. 262
Fresh eggs, being potential chickens, are never eaten; but addled
eggs are much appreciated by children, who bake them in ashes.
Children also eat field and domestic mice, a species of toad, and harm-
less snakes, all of which they shoot with miniature bows and arrows [224
in the later months of the dry season. These things are despised by 857]
adolescents and adults who, however, appreciate bigger rodents like
moles and water voles. In short, meat supplies are a matter of chance,
vary greatly with the season, as will be clearer later, and though much
desired, form but a small part of the bulk of food consumed.

Fats and Seasonings. Fats and seasonings have a very important 262
place in Tale cookery, and, like vegetables, are the woman's respon- 263
sibility. But they are mainly market commodities and a man will 252
frequently give his wife money to purchase them. The only fat used
is shea butter (*kpaam*). It is obtainable all the year round. It is made
of the nuts of the shea fruit (*kpi*) which are carefully preserved after
the fruits have been eaten.

Dawa-dawa seed balls (*kpɔlug*) are made by boiling the seeds of the dawa-dawa fruits. The balls are sold at prices varying from a tenth of a penny for one the size of a large marble to threepence for one the size of a cricket ball.

The laborious processes of manufacture involved prevent many women from making their own shea-butter and dawa-dawa seed balls. Others, who can command the assistance, e.g. of daughters, often prepare enough to have a surplus for sale.

Red pepper (*nanzuuh*) is grown in small quantities by a few men for sale in the market, and much is imported. It is sold at about a halfpenny for a handful.

Rock salt (*yaarem*) is sold in the market by regular traders who fetch it from the south, a small heap (about ¼lb.) for a halfpenny.

Ziem, the ash of valley grasses, and *bakaa*, the ash of early millet stalks, are prepared by the women and are stored in large baskets or calabashes for their own use and for sale. They are used as salt substitutes.

The Productive Cycle and the Food Cycle. We have seen how 596
the domestic organization of the Tallensi works in relation to the
supply of grain and the other main raw materials of their diet. We

571 861 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 857 *Age and mobility*. Infants still requiring care are often carried about by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate groups.

571 857 462 *Sex*. Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely, accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 857 *The social situation*. Yet none of these children's groups resemble gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 861 858 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is, however, not that of children to children but of children to parents. It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

Plate I

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A young nursemaid, amusing herself and the baby with a *Kinkayax* rattle

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Housekeeping Play. One of the girls combines the duty of looking after an infant with her play. Note the small boy in the party, and the 'utensils'

[facing p.16]

Plate II

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A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

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Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Taləŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adult- 857
hood children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational develop- 82
ment of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

82 9 or 10 the children are thoroughly familiar with the ecological environ-
861 ment of their clan settlements. They know the economically important trees, grasses, and herbs, e.g., a girl of about 9 once named and showed me nine varieties of herbs used for making soup. They have a fair idea of the gross anatomy of the fowl, small field animals, and larger live stock. But apart from these achievements which lead one to infer the existence of an interest in the natural environment, I was able to obtain some direct evidence thereof. The natives say that small children frequently ask questions about people and things they see around them. However, listening to children's talk for 'why' questions,[1] I was surprised to note how rarely they occurred; and the few instances I recorded refer to objects or persons foreign to the normal routine of Tale life. It would seem that Tale children rarely have to ask 'why' in regard to the people and things of their normal environment because so much of their learning occurs in real situations where explanation is generally coupled with instruction, and because they hear so much adult discussion, in terms of cause and effect, as these are understood by the Tallensi, of the things they are interested in. Yet two examples will prove that even quite small children react with exploratory interest to what is new and unusual. I gave some tiny tin figures of animals to a group of small children to play with. A little boy of about 5 looked intently at the figure of a horse. 'Why does he stoop like that?' he asked, speaking to himself rather than to his companions. But immediately he answered his own question, 'He is eating grass.' On another occasion I observed the 3-year-old son of our cook, pointing to the garbage tin, ask the horseboy: 'Why has that got a lid?'

● 857 Again, making clay figures is a favourite diversion of small boys
177 and adolescents. The standard figures ~~are~~ men and women, cows and
532 horses. But a youngster of about 9 or 10 once produced a motorcycle, explaining that he had recently seen the Agricultural Officer arrive on one. Another boy, a little older once made a roan antelope, explaining that some two years previously he had seen one of these animals which, fleeing from a hunting party, had entered the settlement and been surrounded and killed there.

128 I have not attempted to give an exhaustive account of the interests

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[1] See N. Isaacs in *Intellectual Growth of Young Children.*

which Tale children develop in the course of their education. I have 128
tried to indicate only some typical interests and their relation to the educational process.

Skills. The acquisition of skills also commences in early infancy, 868
with the child's first experiments in motor co-ordination and speech. 358
Bodily dexterity provides merely the foundation upon which are 857
subsequently built up the socially important skills of adult life. They include not only the predominantly manual skills, such as are connected with farming and care of live stock, with hunting, fishing, building, thatching, cooking, housekeeping and gardening, and the technology of specialists, but also non-manual skills, such as a knowledge of the kinship system, of ritual and ceremonial, of economically useful herbs and roots and of others used as drugs to cure illness, of buying and selling, of law and custom—in short, of the whole body of cultural definitions which guide the Taləŋa in his daily existence. Such skills are the end-results of education; and it will be obvious that they represent merely the cognitive and motor aspects of activities rooted in developing interests and fostered by the expectation of normal behaviour. Typical skills will be referred to as we proceed, but one general feature must be noted here. Children in Taleland are remarkably free from over-solicitious supervision. They have the maximum freedom and responsibility commensurate with their skill and maturity. On the one hand, they can go where they like and do what they like, on the other they are held fully responsible for tasks entrusted to them. Thus, a 6-year-old is quite often charged with the care of an infant for several hours at a stretch. Girls of 9 or 10 can be seen in large numbers in every market, selling or buying things for their mothers or themselves. Boys of this age and even younger swarm in the markets. One market day I discovered a boy of about 10–11 selling a basketful of leaves used as a food for animals which he had himself collected in the bush near his settlement. He hoped to earn a penny or twopence to buy arrow-heads for himself. Another day a boy of about the same age offered his services to the butcher. He earned a tenth of a penny which he spent on a feed of
locust-bean flour for himself and a friend. Similarly, when there is 868
dancing at a homestead, the children of about 6 years and upwards 853
from the whole neighbourhood congregate there and remain till 535

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868 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would
859 not be sent for to come home.

858 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom
857 allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: 'Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.' 'You'd better run,' one of the others advised, as he
[231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with
882 their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindəl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindəl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindəl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—'The boy has justice on his side'—he said, when he told me the story.

857 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk
858 for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s*. 6*d*. a month
234 is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to
[435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why? His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234
longer drive the cow out to graze.

Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsi- 183
bilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Taləŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and how they are maintained. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale*.

12–13) about when the lad was helping with the housebuilding and 861
even scold him if he bungled a task. This was legitimate technical 593
instruction. But he declared emphatically that he dare not strike the boy, *ɔn ndɔyām la zugu.* From the authority of parent over child is derived that of elder sibling over younger. It is equally absolute. A youth or girl has no hesitation in restraining or correcting a younger sibling with a cuff which often sends the latter off howling at the top of his voice. The authority of seniors in general over juniors is accepted by custom (e.g., among herdboys), though not so absolutely and unquestioningly. It is often maintained by force, or in virtue of superior skill. It is intelligible, therefore, why the Tallensi usually say *ti banam yɛl nla*, 'our forefathers' matter is this' when they are asked to account for an observance, and why their children say, *bunkɔra la yɛl ti la gwala*, 'the grown-ups have told us so'.

Just as all Tallensi, children or adults, recognize the force of 867
authority, even though they sometimes flout it, so they accept the 857
principle of equal rights for equals. One can see this, not only in standardized patterns of behaviour, but, e.g., in the spontaneity with which children share things and activities. When a small boy snares a bird or kills a mouse or lizard he will always share his catch with friends or siblings, apportioning it according to sex and age. A [526]
favourite pastime of boys of all ages, from 5 upwards, is wrestling. Sometimes bigger youths stand by to supervise, but always scrupulous fairness is insisted upon, and thus instilled. It is as correct and even praiseworthy to demand what one is entitled to as it is reprehensible to take what one has no right to. A nice illustration, showing incidentally how such principles are sometimes taught, came to my notice during an evening ceremony which had been unduly dragged out. A dozen or more small boys aged from 5 upwards had gathered at the ceremony to wait for a share of the feast which would follow the religious rites. The food was sent out and distributed by an adult, one or two boys of equal size to a dish. Suddenly an elder called out, 'Where is Zuur?' (a small boy of about 5) and rose to look for him. Zuur lay fast asleep in a corner. The old man shook the child roughly to awaken him, and dragged him towards a dish of food upbraiding him, 'Where do you think you will find food after it has all been eaten? You can't control yourself at all.' Zuur, still

867 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented 857 that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association 764 with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, ' because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed '. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: ' Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly [966] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband [839] or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. ' I will slaughter you if you do so and so ', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4-5 years, suspiciously

[828] 153 524 Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 524 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 867 On a morning in June I found Gɔmna, aged about 7, his half-sister Zɔŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

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857 [1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

524 scaring birds on the home farm. They sat astride the trailing branch
867 of a baobab tree on the boundary of Gɔmna's father's farm and Zoo's
868 father's farm. They slid down to talk to me, and a bigger lad, Tɔŋ,
aged about 10, joined us. Gɔmna had wandered off a few yards and
•857 now came running up with three locusts. He called to his sister and
Zoo. Eagerly they squatted round the locusts. 'These are our cows,'
said Gɔmna, 'let's build a yard for them.' Zoo and the little girl
foraged around and produced a few pieces of decayed bark. The
children, Gɔmna dominant, giving orders and keeping up a running
commentary, set about building a 'cattle-yard' of the pieces of bark.
Tɔŋ, the older boy, also squatted down to help. He and Gɔmna
constructed an irregular rectangle with one side open of the pieces
of bark. Zoo fetched some more pieces of bark which Tɔŋ used to
roof the yard. The little girl stood looking on. Gɔmna carefully
pushed the locusts in, one by one, and declared, 'We must make a
gateway.' Rummaging about, the boys found two pebbles which
they set up as gate-posts, with much argument as to how they ought
to stand. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and Tɔŋ started
putting it up again. The little girl meanwhile had found a pair of
stones and a potsherd and was on her knees, 'grinding grain'.
Suddenly the two small boys dashed off into the growing grain,
shouting to scare the birds. In a minute or two they returned to squat
by the collapsed 'cattle-yard'. They appeared to have forgotten all
about the 'cows', for they were engrossed in a conversation about
'wrestling'. Some one called Tɔŋ, who departed. Zɔŋ, finishing her
'grinding', came up to the boys with the 'flour' on a potsherd and
said, 'Let's sacrifice to our shrine.' Gɔmna said indifferently, 'Let
Zoo do it.' Zoo declared that Gɔmna was senior to him, and an
argument ensued as to who was senior. Eventually Gɔmna asserted,
'I'm the senior.' Zɔŋ meanwhile had put down her 'flour' which
[526] was quite forgotten; for Zoo challenged Gɔmna's assertion. Gɔmna
retorted that he was undoubtedly senior since he could throw Zoo in
wrestling. Zoo denied this, and in a few minutes they were grappling
each other. Gɔmna managed to throw Zoo and rolled over him; but
they stood up in perfectly good temper, panting and proud. Suddenly
with a shout Gɔmna began to scramble up the baobab branch,
followed by Zoo, calling out, 'Let's swing.' For a minute or two

they rocked back and forth on the branch and then descended. Now 524
Gəmna remembered his cows. Vehemently he accused his sister of 867
having taken them, and when she denied this challenged her to 868
'swear'. 'All right,' she said placidly. Gəmna took a pinch of sand 857
in his left hand and put his right thumb on it. Zəŋ licked her thumb and pressed down with it on Gəmna's thumb-nail. He stood still a moment, then suddenly withdrew his thumb. (This is a children's play ordeal.) Gəmna examined his sister's thumb and found sand adhering. 'There you are,' he said, rapping her on the head with a crooked finger. The 'cows' were completely forgotten though, for now they turned their attention to me, asking me various questions. After a while Gəmna, who had been observing my shoes, said, 'Let's make shoes,' and took a couple of pieces of the decayed bark previously used to build the cattle-yard to make shoes. He and Zəŋ found some grass and old string lying about and tried to tie the pieces of bark to the soles of their feet. Gəmna now noticed his 'cows' and picked them up, but he was still trying to make 'shoes'. The 'shoes' refused to hold together so he abandoned them and squatted over his 'cows' for a moment, moving them hither and thither. 'I'm going to let them copulate,' he burst out with a grin, and tried to put one locust on top of another. Looking up, he noticed a flutter of birds' wings. 'Zəŋ,' he cried, jumping to his feet, 'scare the birds!' and he raced into the grain, followed by his companions, shouting and stooping to pick up handfuls of gravel to fling at the birds. For the next five minutes they were engrossed in bird-scaring. The entire episode lasted over half an hour.

The developmental phases of play. Infant play. Up to the age of 6 or 7 524
a good deal of play, especially that of boys, consists in sheer motor 534
exuberance. Small boys run about, leap and prance for the pleasure 857
of it, frequently in a totally unorganized way. But even 3-year-old boys often introduce mimetic themes, spontaneously or in response to suggestions from older children. They 'ride horses', using a long stick as a horse, with a wisp of grass attached as bridle. In the Festival season they love 'playing drums'. Cylindrical tins discarded by our cook and useless as receptacles were in great demand for this purpose. A remnant of goatskin tied over one end with a strip of bark or grass makes a satisfactory diaphragm, and a hooked twig

524 serves as a drumstick. Often an older boy of 8 or 9 manufactures a
534 toy drum for himself or an infant brother. A small discarded calabash
● 857 is covered with a piece of skin—a remnant of goatskin or the skin of
a rat caught by the boy himself and prepared by himself. The skin is cleverly attached to the calabash with strong thorns. Small boys delight in walking round, tapping out a rhythm on a toy drum, sometimes executing a few dance steps. Another instrument they like to copy is the *kolog*, a single-string fiddle. I once saw a boy of about 6 singing to a 'fiddle' which consisted of a large bow made of a green stick and a thread of grass—the 'fiddle'—and a smaller bow of the same materials—the 'bow'. A bow of the very same sort with a short piece of thick reed as arrow is the 4- to 6-year-old's introduction to the handling of bow and arrow. They very soon develop an accurate aim at a dozen yards or so. Play of this kind is generally very egocentric. I have watched groups of children playing side by side—a boy with a 'drum' absorbed in his banging, another lying on his back absorbed in fantasy, a couple of little girls playing at housekeeping—all indifferent to one another's activities.

857 The little girl of 5 to 6 plays in much the same way at times; but
864 she is already being drawn into the family play of slightly older
children, and, like the small boy with the toy bow, she tends to mimic simpler features of older girls' play when she is playing alone. Hence one often sees a little girl of this age sitting and playing at 'grinding millet'—one stone as metate, a smaller stone as muller, and a handful of sand or a potsherd as the grain.

Play in early childhood. Between the ages of about 6 and 10 the play of both sexes becomes more social and more complex. This is the period when the child is beginning to co-operate in real economic activities, subject to real responsibility, and is acquiring a knowledge of his social space. His or her play reflects these experiences and reflects also the interests and activities characteristic of the stage of maturity just ahead of it. There is, in all Tale children's play, this feature of looking ahead, as it were, experimenting tentatively with what lies just beyond the present psychological horizon.

During this period the younger children, both boys and girls, have charge of the goats, scare the birds from the newly planted fields and the crops, run errands, nurse the infants, and so forth. The boys help

in sacrifices to domestic shrines; the girls assist in household tasks 857
such as sweeping and carrying water. Towards the end of this period 868
boys whose fathers own cattle go out with the cattle-herds and girls are beginning to help in the preparation of food. A 10-year-old girl can prepare the majority of usual dishes. At the age of 6 or 7 brothers and sisters often play together; at 9 or 10 the sexual dichotomy has become firmly established.[1]

At this stage the play of infancy develops in three directions. The 857
sporadic motor exuberance is transformed into recreational play—organized group games and dances; the rudimentary mimetic play becomes elaborate and protracted imaginative and constructive play; and the rude toy-making of infancy grows into children's arts and crafts.

Tale children have a great many organized games, passed on from one generation of children to the next by drawing younger ones into the games played by those who already know them. The games are traditional, and often built round themes derived from the cultural idiom—farming, hunting, marriage, chiefs, &c. But their value is predominantly recreational. Children play them for the pleasure of collective singing, rhythmical physical activity, and sensory and bodily stimulation. The ordinary dances of moonlight nights in which both adults and children participate are regarded as 'play' of this kind.

Kuobon is a game of this sort. Both boys and girls from 7–8 to 857
about 15 years play it on moonlight nights in single-sex groups. A 526
group of about the same size forms a ring, clasping each other and standing on one leg. The other leg is extended towards the centre of the ring, and the children arrange themselves so that their extended legs cross one another. The group then commences to revolve, singing as they go round and round, *kuobon, yee-e-e la ŋaah*, 'fruits of farming, yee, how nice'. The game goes on until they are tired and the extended legs begin to drop. It breaks up with much laughter, only to start again after a rest. Similar games are played by boys 857
only and others by girls only; but for both sexes dancing is the 535
supreme recreation. In both the mixed dances and the single-sex

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[1] Nevertheless, this sexual dichotomy is not so absolute as to prohibit a girl or a woman from stepping into a breach if there is no male available for a man's task; and men often undertake women's work in an emergency. [462]

857 535 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 868 224 526 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 153 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

On any day in the dry season or the first half of the rainy season 857
one can find a group of girls playing at housekeeping. Most com- 524
monly they consist of a group of sisters and ortho-cousins—two to 868
four active participants with, perhaps, a couple of infants attached. Often one or two small boys of about 5 or 6 are in their company, sharing in their play or absorbed in their own separate play. In play, as in the simple economic duties, there is as yet no marked sex dichotomy at this age; and small boys are not ridiculed for ' grinding grain ' and ' cooking porridge ', or small girls for ' building houses ' in play. The girls generally constitute a mixed age group, varying from 6 to 10–11 years, for even those who are already capable of real cooking enjoy playing at it. When they are of about equal maturity their play tends to be loosely organized. Each cooks for herself, but they help one another, lending one another ' utensils ', ' grain ', ' firewood ', and exchanging ' dishes of porridge ' like co-wives. When one girl is older than the others she tends to take the lead, and the smaller girls assist her on the pattern of daughter helping mother in real cooking. Infants are ' our children '; and reliable informants have told me that small boys are said to be the ' husbands '—but I have never observed boys being addressed thus, though I have watched housekeeping play very frequently. According to my observation, it is merely implied in the manner of distributing the ' cooked porridge ', which follows the pattern of family feeding. Older girls sometimes introduce dolls as the ' children '—clay figures of people made by themselves or, more usually, for them by their brothers.

The essentials of the play consist in ' grinding flour ', ' cooking sauce ' and ' porridge ', and ' sharing out ' the ' food '. Every feature of the real processes is mimicked, but with the most ingenious imaginative adaptations. A pair of flattish stones or a boulder and a large pebble serve as ' grindstones '. For pots, dishes, calabashes, and ladles various things are used—old sherds chipped into roughly circular pieces the size of a half-crown or crown, fragments of old
calabashes, the husks, whole or bisected, of *mɔlɔmɔk* or *kalɔmpoo*, [824
spherical fruits of common trees varying in size from that of a large 137]
marble to that of a cricket ball, and even old tins or bits of tins, while
some girls make little pots of clay. Pebbles make a fire-place, a thin [177]
piece of millet-stalk is the stirring-stick, some dried grass the firewood.

857 Sometimes a real fire is lit, but usually it is merely imagined. Real
524 grain is never used in such play—it is too valuable to waste thus, as
868 the children themselves would be the first to insist. A piece of potsherd pounded up or a handful of sand serves as grain; but a much more realistic effect is sometimes achieved by using dry baobab stamens. These can be 'winnowed' and the 'grain' ground. Green weeds and leaves are vegetables.

The children play with great zest and earnestness, yet never forget that it is but play. As they grind they hum in a low voice a grinding song they have heard from mother or elder sister. They examine the 'flour' to see that it is fine enough, try to get the right proportion of water, stir the 'porridge' thoroughly, 'dish' it out with scrupulous fairness. There is a constant interchange of conversation and commands to the smaller children: 'Bring me that dish', 'Lend me your broom', 'That's my firewood', 'Don't stir so fast', 'Come and fetch your porridge', and so on. As a rule they play together most amicably. I have observed arguments in such groups about who should do some task or another, but never quarrels. There is real co-operation, based on a distribution of tasks in play.

Such play is occasionally associated with a 'house' built of mud by a brother who often does not share the play, or actually uses the 'house' for his cattle play while his sisters are 'cooking' nearby.
[864] It is said, also, that housekeeping play sometimes branches into sexual play, little boys and girls pretending to be husband and wife and trying to copulate. Detailed inquiry shows that this is not common.
[836] The usual method of sexual experimentation at this stage of development follows the pattern of adolescence. Small boys 'woo sweethearts' with little gifts, and sexual experiments occur in connexion with dancing or by chance opportunities.[1]

Girls' housekeeping play ceases with the beginning of pubescence. Not only are they by then already taking a full share in real housekeeping but their interests are turning to youths and marriage. Housekeeping play, in which the child rehearses the interests which it has as yet neither the skill nor the degree of social development to satisfy, and expresses the wishes which pubescence brings near to realization, has served its purpose.

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[1] See my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

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The corresponding play of boys at this stage is ‘ cattle-keeping ’.
It occurs more sporadically than the girls’ play, particularly with older 868
boys; but as much fantasy and invention go into it. Sometimes, 524
indeed, it seems like an overt day-dream of leisure hours. One boy
alone, or two, usually play. When the group is bigger more boisterous 526
or recreational play ousts it—they wrestle, shoot arrows, gamble with 857
ground-nuts, or at certain seasons pitch bangles and hoops of plaited
reed. Boys of all ages are far less placid than girls.

The ‘ cattle ’ play involves constructing a ‘ house ’ in which the 857
‘ gateway ’ and the ‘ stable ’ are prominently indicated and finding 524
something to serve as ‘ cattle ’—sheep and goats never seem to enter. 868
These activities, and moving the cattle about in and out of the ‘ stable ’, with murmured remarks in monologue or addressed to a companion, constitutes the play. I have never been able to record this accompanying speech as I have always had to watch cattle play from a distance. Boys say that it is ‘ about bulls and cows ’.

‘ Cattle ’ play has more of pure fantasy and less reproduction of real activities than ‘ housekeeping ’ play. Sometimes the ‘ house ’ and ‘ stable ’ are built of mud—a circular ‘ wall ’, 9 or 10 inches in diameter and 2 inches high, with a space left for the ‘ gateway ’, and a smaller circle of mud adjoining it as the ‘ stable ’—to last for a whole dry season. Often it is constructed *ad hoc*—two circles drawn in the sand or made of heaped-up sand may be enough. A great variety of objects serve as ‘ cattle ’. Boys who like modelling may make clay figures of cows and bulls for their play; bits of sticks, leaves of a common shrub which can be opened so as to stand up on their edges, pebbles, and other things are used. Yet despite the meagre materials and the paucity of mimetic content the play fascinates boys from the age of 5 or 6, when they are still too young to go out with the herds, to about 12, when they may be full-blown herd-boys. Even if their families have no cattle and they have never followed a herd regularly, they play at it. The interest and identification are active nevertheless.

At this stage, too, domestic ritual begins to be reflected in the play 857
of boys. A boy’s or girl’s schema of ritual and religious ideology at 524
the age of 9 or 10 includes the main structural principles of the system. 869
As his knowledge has been acquired by attending at sacrifices, he
knows most about the ritual acts and conventional formulas connected

857 with sacrifice and least about the beliefs and theories. He is familiar
524 with all the concepts of Tale religion and magic but cannot assign
869 them accurately to their relevant contexts. He knows that ancestor spirits and medicines are different, and can even describe some of the latter by their functions, but cannot elucidate these differences. He knows also and believes that health, prosperity and success depend on mystical agencies, that sickness, death, and misfortune are caused by them, and that sacrifices must be made to placate them or to expiate offences. He has heard talk of all this and seen consultations of diviners. As an infant, perhaps, he has been called by his mother to get off a partition wall 'lest the spirits push you off', or has seen food put out 'for the spirits' during the ritual festivals. He knows what different types of shrines look like and what are their appurtenances. But it is surface knowledge, confused in details and full of gaps.

857 Ritual is men's business, though women are well versed in it.
524 Hence it emerges mostly in the play of boys and not of girls. Signifi-
869 cantly, it is permitted till pubescence, that is, as long as a boy is not
likely to take a responsible part in real ritual. After that he is liable to
781 have to accept an ancestor spirit demanding real sacrifices and may no
788 longer play at it. At 13 or 14 years of age, when a boy's ritual schemas approximate those of an adult, he fully understands and acquiesces in this prohibition. It suggests, however, that playing at ritual has a different value for children than actual ritual has for adults. Children share the adults' interest in ritual and accept its prescriptions, but not the adults' emotional relationship to ritual. In their play they express this interest and their identifications, rehearse their knowledge, and integrate it with the rest of their educational achievements.

857 Small boys build shrines a few inches high for themselves in a corner
524 of the cattle-yard. They take great pains to achieve verisimilitude and
869 neatness, and their inventiveness is remarkable. *Kalampoo* husks are turned into medicine-pots; fragments of calabash or potsherd represent the hoe-blade which is essential to many ancestor shrines; a pronged twig is a shrine's 'tree'; the tail of a stillborn kid or lamb, tied with string and feathers in the same way as adults do, is a shrine's 'tail', another object commonly dedicated to real shrines. There are 'roots'—of grass—as in adult medicine-pots, and other appurtenances.

Whenever they build miniature houses, during the building season, 857
'shrines' are added and, as in real life, each has his own. 524

Play with these shrines is woven into other play activities, and it 869
revolves around sacrifice. When a small boy goes out hunting for fieldmice or birds, if he happens to have a 'shrine' he will 'give it water', i.e. pour a libation to it. Ashes represent flour, which is stirred up in water as in a real sacrifice. He invokes the shrine, 'My father' (but never mentioning names as in real sacrifice since his own father is probably still alive), 'accept this water and grant that I have successful hunting. If I kill an animal, I will give you a dog.' Some time later he may catch a live mouse, and when he has played with it to satiety he 'sacrifices' it on his shrine—this is the promised 'dog'. A nestling bird found alive is 'sacrificed' as a 'fowl' or 'guinea-fowl'. If he finds a live mouse or bird by chance it will always be taken home and 'sacrificed' thus before it is cut up and eaten. Taboos like those of adults are invented for his shrines. Fetishes, like those of adults, accept only red and black 'fowls'; other shrines only white ones. Siikaɔni, a small boy of about 7 or 8, built him- [778
self a *loo* fetish, which can be dispatched to 'tie up' any one 789]
who might interfere with one's enterprises. Siikaɔni pretended to use his *loo* to keep the parents of his 'sweetheart' out of the way when he went to see her—a frequent use of a real *loo* by young men.

Of the imaginative and constructive play produced as a response 857
to current social activities in which children co-operate, I shall 524
instance only building. During the building season a favourite pre- 868
occupation of the children is to build miniature rooms or houses. It is a co-operative group enterprise, boys and girls frequently working together, led by a boy of about 12–13. It is carried on in the intervals between helping the men. Sometimes they are content to build only walls, a few inches high, but when the leader is keen they undertake a complete replica of a house—walls a foot or more high, several rooms properly arranged, a roof, a beaten inner court, and shrines. The work goes on for days on end and needs planning and organization. The girls and smaller boys make the swish and roll it into pellets, the older boys do the actual building, often with extraordinary skill. When the 'house' is built and roofed and the walls have dried, if the

857

524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers
with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
301 ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
283 and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses.
Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls
524 sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such
delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

883 experimenting without responsibility, though with great earnestness.
868 Two or three years later the play element has vanished. If he culti-
866 vates a personal plot he makes an effort to beg land which is agriculturally good, and works with the avowed purpose of obtaining a crop which, though minute compared with the needs of the family, suffices to buy himself a cap or a loin-cloth. The time he can now devote to his own plot or to his own ground-nuts must be adjusted in accordance with his responsibilities as a contributor to the family economy.

With boys, therefore, as with girls, the completion of their childhood education marks the end of childhood play. Mimetic and imaginative experimentation becomes redundant when the individual attains social responsibility and maturity. The play of Tale children changes, as we have seen, *pari passu* with their advancing maturity, contributing at each stage to the elaboration and integration of those interests, skills, and observances the mastery and acceptance of which is the final result of their education.

VI. Synoptic Chart of Educational Development

In conclusion, and in order to bring the preceding analysis of the education of Tale children to a focus, I append a synoptic chart setting out the main trends of the development of their interests and skills as these are reflected in their economic duties and activities, on the one hand, and in their play on the other. The reader will realize that these norms are necessarily crude and approximate. I have not ventured to include observances in the chart, since the trend of their acquisition cannot easily be analysed into approximate stages.

CHART OF DEVELOPMENT

BOYS

857

Economic Duties and Activities	*Play*
3–6 years	
None at first. Towards end of this period begin to assist in pegging out goats; scaring birds from newly sown fields and from crops; accompany family sowing and harvesting parties; using hoe in quasi-play to glean ground-nuts in company of older siblings.	Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Use mimetic toys (bow, drum, &c.) in egocentric play. Towards end of period social and imaginative play with 'cattle' and 'house-building' commences, often in company of older children of either sex, as well as recreational games and dancing.

857

6–9 years

These duties now fully established. Help in house-building by carrying swish. Assist in sowing and harvesting. Towards end of period begin to go out with the herd-boys, and to care for poultry.

Imaginative 'cattle' and 'house-building' play common, the latter often reflecting current economic activity of adults. Practice with bow and arrow in marksmanship competitions, and 'hunting' with groups of comrades begun. Recreational games and dancing established. Modelling clay figures and plaiting begun. Ritual play begun.

9–12 years

Fully responsible cattle-herding. Care for poultry. Assisting parents in hoeing and care of crops, but without responsibility. Farming own small plots and ground-nuts but in quasi-play. Sons of specialist craftsmen assist fathers in subsidiary capacity—'learning by looking'.

Further development of preceding forms of play, especially of ritual play. Clay-modelling and plaiting established. Recreational games and dancing more skilful. Quasi-play farming.

Sexual dichotomy in work and play established.

12–15 years

Duties as in preceding period but more responsible. Responsible care of poultry, sometimes own property. Leaders of herd-boys. Real farming of own plots and in co-operation with older members of family established by end of period. Sons of specialists experimentally making things.

Imaginative play abandoned. Dancing the principal recreation. Ritual play abandoned. Modelling gradually abandoned. Plaiting for personal decoration mainly. Regular sweethearting commences. 883

GIRLS

Economic Duties and Activities — *Play*

3–6 years

None at first. Towards end of period the same duties as small boys. Frequent nursing of infants. Accompany mothers to water-hole and begin to carry tiny water-pots. Help in simple domestic tasks such as sweeping.

Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Attached to older sisters and drawn into their 'housekeeping' play. Towards end of period begin to take active social part in the latter and begin recreational play and dancing. Often found in mixed sex groups. 857

6–9 years

Duties of previous period established. Responsible co-operation in water-carrying and simpler domestic duties. Help in cooking and in activities associated with food-preparation, such as searching for wild edible herbs. Accompany family parties at sowing and harvesting, giving quasi-playful help. Carry swish at building operations and assist women in plastering and floor-beating, but still with a play element.

'Housekeeping' play usual. Recreational play and dancing established. Begin to learn plaiting. Participate in 'building' play of boys, mimicking current women's activities, e.g. plastering.

9–12 years

857 All domestic duties can be entrusted to them by end of this period—water-carrying, cooking, care of infants, &c. Assisting in building and plastering, &c., more responsibly. Often sent to market to buy and sell. Help in women's part of the work at sowing and harvest times.

'Housekeeping' play continues, gradually fading out at end of this period. Dancing becomes principal recreation. Plaiting both for decoration and use established. Begin to have sweethearts but not yet with serious intent.

Sexual dichotomy in work and play established.

12–15 years

883 Responsible part in all domestic duties of everyday life, and of those associated with ceremonial occasions. Go for firewood and collect shea-fruits in the bush, and help to prepare shea butter. (Marriage a very near prospect.)

Note. Care of infants and children is a duty of girls at all ages. Boys also are frequently entrusted with this task.

Imaginative play abandoned. Dancing the main recreation. Courtship and hetero-sexual interests occupy a great deal of time and attention. Actively participate in the social side of funeral ceremonies, &c., in the role of marriageable girls.

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BY JOHN JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

571 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship
861 from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 *Age and mobility*. Infants still requiring care are often carried about
857 by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate groups.

571 *Sex*. Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently
857 go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely,
462 accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 *The social situation*. Yet none of these children's groups resemble
857 gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is,
861 however, not that of children to children but of children to parents.
858 It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

economic and social activities there is co-operation, friendliness and 593
tolerance, almost equality. This is more marked between father and 861
child than between mother and child. A father is always addressed 858
by his personal name, a mother is always called *mma*, my mother.
Affectively, however, a powerful tension exists between parent and
child. A parent's authority may not be flouted, though he or she is
expected to be affectionate and indulgent. Sin, in Tale ideology, is [673]
primarily an offence against the person, status, or rights of the living
parents, or the parent-images—the ancestor spirits.

The structure of this relationship makes it possible for children 593
to acquiesce immediately in the commands and teachings of their 865
parents or parent-substitutes. Children are, as a rule, very obedient.
If they refuse to carry out an order there is usually some very valid
reason—acknowledged as such by both parents and children—
such as that it is some one else's turn. But the parent-child relationship is educationally fundamental in another sense—it is the paradigm
of all moral relationships.

It is worth noting, by contrast, that the relationship between grand- 603
parent and grandchild is the reverse of that between parent and child.
In this case equality, compatibility and partisanship, as if in league
against the generation between them, are emphasized, more particularly by the joking relationship—mutual ragging among the Tallensi—permitted between grandparent and grandchild.

The social space. How these relationships function in the educational 000
development of a Tale child is determined by its social space.[1] An
individual's social space is a product of that segment of the social
structure and that segment of the habitat with which he or she is in
effective contact. To put it in another way, the social space is the
society in its ecological setting seen from the individual's point of
view. The individual creates his social space but is himself in turn
formed by it. On the one hand, his range of experiences and behaviour
are controlled by his social space, and on the other, everything he learns
causes it to expand and become more differentiated. In the lifetime
of the individual it changes *pari passu* with his psycho-physical and
social development.

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[1] This term is employed here for want of an apter one. It has been used in a different sense by Simmel and others.

which Tale children develop in the course of their education. I have 128
tried to indicate only some typical interests and their relation to the educational process.

Skills. The acquisition of skills also commences in early infancy, 868
with the child's first experiments in motor co-ordination and speech. 858
Bodily dexterity provides merely the foundation upon which are 857
subsequently built up the socially important skills of adult life. They include not only the predominantly manual skills, such as are connected with farming and care of live stock, with hunting, fishing, building, thatching, cooking, housekeeping and gardening, and the technology of specialists, but also non-manual skills, such as a knowledge of the kinship system, of ritual and ceremonial, of economically useful herbs and roots and of others used as drugs to cure illness, of buying and selling, of law and custom—in short, of the whole body of cultural definitions which guide the Taləŋa in his daily existence. Such skills are the end-results of education; and it will be obvious that they represent merely the cognitive and motor aspects of activities rooted in developing interests and fostered by the expectation of normal behaviour. Typical skills will be referred to as we proceed, but one general feature must be noted here. Children in Taleland are remarkably free from over-solicitious supervision. They have the maximum freedom and responsibility commensurate with their skill and maturity. On the one hand they can go where they like and do what they like, on the other they are held fully responsible for tasks entrusted to them. Thus, a 6-year-old is quite often charged with the care of an infant for several hours at a stretch. Girls of 9 or 10 can be seen in large numbers in every market, selling or buying things for their mothers or themselves. Boys of this age and even younger swarm in the markets. One market day I discovered a boy of about 10–11 selling a basketful of leaves used as a food for animals which he had himself collected in the bush near his settlement. He hoped to earn a penny or twopence to buy arrow-heads for himself. Another day a boy of about the same age offered his services to the butcher. He earned a tenth of a penny which he spent on a feed of
locust-bean flour for himself and a friend. Similarly, when there is 868
dancing at a homestead, the children of about 6 years and upwards 853
from the whole neighbourhood congregate there and remain till 535

9

535

868 859 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would not be sent for to come home.

858 857 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: 'Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.' 'You'd better run,' one of the others advised, as he [231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 882 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindəl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindəl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindəl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—'The boy has justice on his side'—he said, when he told me the story.

857 858 234 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s.* 6*d.* a month is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to [435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why? His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234
longer drive the cow out to graze.

Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsi- 183
bilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Taləŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and how they are maintained. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale.*

593 It is useful to keep these general principles in mind in considering the details to which we must now give our attention. Putting it broadly, the relations of parents and children can be grouped in three general categories: relations of identification; of opposition or contra-identification; and of reciprocity; and the pattern in each individual case is the product of the interaction of these three categories. Our interest will lie chiefly in the structurally significant norms which give coherence and consistency to the multifarious variety of actual behaviour.

The Importance of 'Rearing'

181 We know that Tallensi regard the possession of offspring, particularly of sons, as the supreme purpose of life. To live long enough to see one's sons' children—to 'reach grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' as the natives say—is a gift surpassing all material wealth. Tallensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich. We have seen, also, that they hold it to be the ideal of normal parenthood for physiological and social parenthood to coincide. This is more than a question of conferring social status by descent. From the native standpoint the important thing is that a child's natural parents are the right people to rear it, educate it, and control it.

•861 [538] [431] Tallensi say that *ughug*, bringing up a child, is as vital a part of parenthood as *dɔyam*, bearing or begetting. There is a proverb, 'Rearing is more important than bearing (*Ughug n-gaat dɔyam*)', often quoted when they comment on the devotion of a person to a proxy or foster-parent. This is socially recognized in the obligation to give a 'cow of rearing (*ughug na'ah*)' to a foster-father out of the bride-price cattle received for a foster-daughter by her natural parent or guardian, and for a foster-son, when he returns to his natal home. It is, to be sure, only a moral obligation, but no self-respecting native would evade it. It is a recompense for the troubles the foster-father had to endure in bringing up the child. Tallensi feel strongly that it is not enough to bring a child into the world; one must also bring it up successfully, and that is the hardest part.

593 855 In spite of reshufflings due to widows remarrying and the instability of early marriages, the majority of Tale children grow up with their natural parents. A census taken in 1934 showed that of 170 children estimated to be under 16 selected at random in one settlement, nearly 78 per cent. were living with their own parents. Approximately 20 per cent. were in the care of one natural parent and one proxy parent, and only 2 per cent. were orphans cared for by more distant kin.

593 861 428 Tallensi perceive that the social and personal relationships of a particular parent with his or her children are a result very largely of the way the children are brought up. They stress the influence of individual differences in personality in these relationships. There is always a personal bias in the way people interpret the accepted norms

and conform to them. Extreme cases illustrate this best. There is the 593
harsh disciplinarian whose sons fret under his control and often take 861
the first opportunity of running away. Sayɔbazaa was said to have been
a man of this kind—puritanical, industrious, and inclined to be over- 828
strict with his children. Four of his sons left him to seek work abroad. He made his daughters marry men he chose for them, and when one of them ran away with another man he whipped her and sent her back to her first husband. At the opposite extreme are men like Guna'ab and Yɛanbɔrigya. They are casual and irresponsible. Guna'ab's sons were often pointed out as an example of bad parental influence. They did not farm but tried to earn a living by trading in chickens; they were reputed to be lazy and extravagant, and showed no respect to their father or his brothers—'just like their father', people said.

Nevertheless, it is a fundamental axiom that the ties of rearing do 593
not wipe out the absolutely binding ties of procreation (*dɔyam*). Whether
a person is reared by his own parents or not, whether he is badly or well 861
brought up, nothing can erase the binding ties between parents and children. It is desirable for children to be brought up by their natural parents because then there will be no contradiction between the ties of *dɔyam* and the adventitious ties of affection created by upbringing.

By Tale custom, if a woman leaves a husband by whom she has had a child and is properly married to another man, the child lives with her during its infancy. When it is five or six years old it can be claimed by its natural father. This is called 'separating (*pɔhɔg*)' it from its mother. Tallensi think it immoral to separate a child from its mother before it is well able to fend for itself. I once heard a group of elders expostulate angrily with a man for taking his two children, aged about 4 and 7, from their mother who had married another man. The elders said the children would not thrive in the care of another woman; their father was acting out of sheer malice. He would be well advised to leave them with their mother for another three or four years and then claim them. Their prophecy was right, for the children pined away and both died within a year. This is an extreme case. But it is a good illustration of a problem that often arises when men claim the custody of their children from an ex-wife. A compromise between the claims of natural parenthood and jural paternity has to be struck which will not endanger the child's life.

Rights and Duties of Parents

We shall have much to say about the rights and duties of parents and 593
children in this book and it will be useful to list here briefly the most important of them. The central fact is the dominance of the father in all social relations; but this is balanced by the personal equality of the parents in the intimate domestic sphere.

A father's first duty to his children is to provide them with food.

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857 own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593 chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462 of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of 9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868 plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a housewife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155 their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861 ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔɣa yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593 and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and social maturity permit. 867 Its parents will henceforth assert their authority and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

861 through love and solicitude. Tallensi have a maxim. 'If you do not harass
your child it will not acquire sense (*Nyɛn pu mugh i bii la u ku ŋɔɣa yam*).'
593 They do not mean by this that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, as
867 I thought when I first heard it, but that a child must be kept in order
and made to conform to accepted standards or else it will not learn to conduct itself properly. They think of this as being chiefly a father's task. A mother, they say, will not thrash (*bo*) her child for misbehaving; she will only scold and upbraid (*nuom*) it. A father has the strength of will (*suhkpɛ'emər*) to thrash his child for misbehaving, and it is his duty to do so.

593 However, a father does not cease to be tolerant, kindly, and affec-
tionate when his child becomes old enough for discipline. I have never
861 seen a child actually being thrashed by its father, but I have had
many accounts of punishments received by children and by men and women in their childhood, and I have often heard children scolded by a father or mother. From what has been said in the early parts of this chapter it can be surmised that Tallensi are very long-suffering with their children. If they punish them it is in anger admitted by the child to be justified. I have heard of children being punished for disobedience, for neglecting or spoiling a task entrusted to them, for yielding to temptation and breaking a food taboo, for stealing a mother's co-wife's ground-nuts, and for other similar faults. They are punished, that is, either for defying the authority of their parents, or for failing to conform to moral or ritual custom or good manners, or for causing economic loss or damage.

In fact Tale children are not often punished. By the time they are
593 considered to be mature enough to deserve punishment for faults they
867 have learnt to accept the control and authority of their parents and
seniors as a natural thing and have begun to develop an adult's conscientiousness about the standards and values of their culture. It is noteworthy, for instance, that Tale children are rarely disobedient. Even adults rarely defy a parent's commands. A child of 7 or 8 usually keeps totemic taboos as strictly as an adult.[1] A 9- or 10-year-old has watched sacrifices to the ancestors often enough to have a good idea of what they mean. He knows what a ritual sanction is even if he does not yet understand it. His sense of property is well developed. He distinguishes clearly between *tuum* and *meum*. He knows his father's hen or sheep or cow and his father's brother's, and he can trace the boundaries of his father's farm plots. He has begun to take a responsible part, though but a very small one, in the scheme of domestic organization pivoting around his father. This is the root of his submission to his father's authority.

593 Two stories illustrate these points very well. When Naabdiya was
about 8 years old he was lying on a mat in his mother's *dɛndɔŋo* one
863 evening, half asleep, listening to the conversation of his parents. The

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

871 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descen-
[186] dants. Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system, and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a signi-
181 ficant motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from their ancestor cult. Every Talǝŋa desires sons so that there may be some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son, a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious duty to their ancestors.

781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children. It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation. Last year, for instance, Kuwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also
869 frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once
● 861 observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors (*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor
828 shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,' he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?' When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

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[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

shrine they accompany us and listen to what we say. Will they not 869
[thus] get to know it?' His own small son Badiwona (6–7 years) is 861 ●
extremely devoted to him. One day, affectionately patting the child, 828
he said: 'When we come out in the morning, and if he doesn't see [593]
me, he seeks about for me. If he doesn't find me he won't rest. That is why I had him initiated last year. Whatever I do he also sits and listens. Will he not get to know it thus? And when I am gone will he not say that when he was a child he used to go about with his father and used to see how his father did this and that? This is my child and I am teaching him uprightness. If he is about to do anything that is not seemly I tell him, so that when he grows up he will know upright ways.'[1]

Education, it is clear, is regarded as a joint enterprise in which 861
parents are as eager to lead as children to follow. In consequence of 856
this attitude adults are very tolerant of children's ways and especially about their learning. A child is never forced beyond its capacity. This is seen most clearly in relation to the pivotal economic activity, agriculture. However skilful a boy may be with his hoe, he will not be forced to do as much work as an adult. Men often restrain their sons of 12–14 from joining the adults in hoeing on the grounds that over-exertion is harmful. Again, women do not take daughters of 9–10 on firewood expeditions to the bush.

That skill comes with practice is realized by all. When adults are 868
asked about children's mimetic play they reply: 'That is how they learn.' Thus when a boy is 7 or 8 his father buys him a small bow so that he can go and learn marksmanship in play with his comrades. Yet the existence of individual differences in ability, both amongst children and amongst adults, is recognized and cited with reference to the acquisition of skill. Rapid learning or the acquisition of a new skill is explained by *a mar nini pam*, 'he has eyes remarkably', that is, he is very sharp. A friend of mine who was a cap-maker told me how he had learnt his craft, as a youth, from a Dagban by carefully watching him at work. When he was young, he explained, he had 'very good eyes'. This conception of cleverness is intelligible in a society where learning by looking and copying is the commonest manner of achieving dexterity both in crafts and in the everyday manual activities.

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[1] He learns—*a bambra*, cognate with *bay*, to know; I teach him—*mpaamni*.

● 861 At the same time, no one hesitates to punish when it seems to be merited. A child who neglects a task entrusted to him or her may expect to be rebuked or even chastised. Incidents such as the following occur frequently. Strolling through Puhug one morning in June when the early millet was ripening, I stopped to chat with Tampoyar, a young man of 25 or so. Suddenly there came the sound of furious railing from his father's house-top. 'Your ears don't listen. Can't you look after your cattle properly, you good-for-nothings, you things-with-sunken-eyes. . . .' A voice from a neighbouring house-top joined in to the same effect, adding: 'I'll come down and thrash you.' The objects of these fulminations were two small boys, about 9–10 years, who were driving some cattle out to pasture. They were dawdling and their beasts stopped to munch at the millet. The rebuke had the desired effect. Tampoyar's comment was to point to a scar on his body where for the same crime he had been so severely whipped, as a small boy, that a suppurating wound resulted.

Disciplinary punishment is also administered at times. A small boy is told to go and scare the birds from the fields. He refuses. A hard smack on the haunches sends him scampering.

Nevertheless, I have never observed vindictive punishment or malicious bullying, either of children by adults or of young children by older ones. Indeed, punishment appeared to me to be extremely rare among the Tallensi, as compared with ourselves. It is thought to be necessary sometimes to use rough measures in teaching morals and manners, but not in teaching skills. A very intelligent elder once declared *nyɛn pu mugɛ ibii la u ku ŋɔya yam*, 'If you don't harass your child, he will not gain sense.' This view is held by many. But, as the context of conversation showed, what he meant was not so much corporal punishment as that constant supervision is necessary in the training of children for life.

577 *The concept of 'yam'.* Tallensi often use the concept *yam* when discussing social behaviour. It corresponds to our notion of 'sense' when we refer to a 'sensible man', or 'sound common sense'. As the Tallensi use the term it suggests the quality of 'insight'. Its range of usage is wide. If it is said of some one *u mar yam pam*, 'he has a great deal of sense', the implication is that he is a man of wisdom, or is intelligent, or experienced in affairs, or resourceful. If some one

commits a *faux pas*, or shows lack of understanding, or misbehaves 577 morally the comment is *u ka yam*, 'he has no sense'. The concept is used to refer both to qualities of personality and to attributes of behaviour. It is applied also in a genetic sense to describe the social development of the child. A normal child between the ages of about 856 6 and 9 years is said to 'have sense at length'. It knows how to 577 behave in the social situations which confront it, whereas an infant of 3 or 4 years old does not. Yet a 4-year-old having learned bladder and bowel control is said to 'have sense' as compared with a 2-year-old. Similarly Nindɔyat, (17–18 years) telling me of his sweethearting, waxed scornful about his own boyish friendship with girls two years before. 'I still had no sense then', he explained. The concept, it will be seen, is generally used relatively to a particular situation.

Children's attitude to education. In Tale society every pupil becomes 861 in some situations a teacher. At the one extreme there are specialized ritual performances which some men do not learn till they are grey, and at the other, the toddler leaning over to play with his nursling brother is teaching the latter something about his environment. This holds right through the age-scale. Considering also the unity of the social sphere, one is not surprised to find that children have the same attitudes about education as their elders. Hence children are rarely unwilling to learn. As a rule, too, they are not ashamed of confessing failure, ignorance, or inability to do or make something. Conversely, children laugh good-humouredly at one another's deficiencies in skill or knowledge, they never jeer. Ridicule is reserved for the correction [626] of uncouth manners, disgraceful morals, or aberrant interests.

Fundamental educational relationships. It will be evident from the 861 preceding analysis that Tale children receive their education not only 571 from the adults but also from older children and adolescents who are always transmitting what they know of the cultural heritage to their younger brothers and sisters and cousins. From the age of 5 or 6 years until they become fully absorbed into the economic system children often go about in small groups. These groups[1] usually consist of

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King*, 1936, for ancillary information about these groups. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, ix, 1936, for an outline of their structural context.

571 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship
861 from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition
of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 *Age and mobility*. Infants still requiring care are often carried about
857 by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally
speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate groups.

571 *Sex*. Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently
857 go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely,
462 accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and
interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 *The social situation*. Yet none of these children's groups resemble
857 gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize
out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is,
861 however, not that of children to children but of children to parents.
858 It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal
moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

economic and social activities there is co-operation, friendliness and 593
tolerance, almost equality. This is more marked between father and 861
child than between mother and child. A father is always addressed 858
by his personal name, a mother is always called *mma*, my mother.
Affectively, however, a powerful tension exists between parent and
child. A parent's authority may not be flouted, though he or she is
expected to be affectionate and indulgent. Sin, in Tale ideology, is [673]
primarily an offence against the person, status, or rights of the living
parents, or the parent-images—the ancestor spirits.

The structure of this relationship makes it possible for children 593
to acquiesce immediately in the commands and teachings of their 865
parents or parent-substitutes. Children are, as a rule, very obedient.
If they refuse to carry out an order there is usually some very valid
reason—acknowledged as such by both parents and children—
such as that it is some one else's turn. But the parent-child relationship
is educationally fundamental in another sense—it is the paradigm
of all moral relationships.

It is worth noting, by contrast, that the relationship between grandparent 603
and grandchild is the reverse of that between parent and child.
In this case equality, compatibility and partisanship, as if in league
against the generation between them, are emphasized, more particularly
by the joking relationship—mutual ragging among the Tallensi—permitted
between grandparent and grandchild.

The social space. How these relationships function in the educational 000
development of a Tale child is determined by its social space.[1] An
individual's social space is a product of that segment of the social
structure and that segment of the habitat with which he or she is in
effective contact. To put it in another way, the social space is the
society in its ecological setting seen from the individual's point of
view. The individual creates his social space but is himself in turn
formed by it. On the one hand, his range of experiences and behaviour
are controlled by his social space, and on the other, everything he learns
causes it to expand and become more differentiated. In the lifetime
of the individual it changes *pari passu* with his psycho-physical and
social development.

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[1] This term is employed here for want of an apter one. It has been used in a different sense by Simmel and others.

867 In Taleland an infant remains confined to the house for the first
three to six months or even longer. During this period its social space
is extremely restricted. It has effective social relationships with its
mother, sometimes its grandmother or a co-wife of its mother, or an
older sibling or half-sibling, and its father—in this order of frequency
[856] and intensity. At the age of 3 to 4, when it is beginning to talk
fluently and can run about, its effective range of contacts includes all
the members of the joint family and probably those of closely neighbouring
related joint families. It is beginning to associate with groups
of other related children belonging to its immediate milieu and to
know the topography of its parental homestead and its immediate
[574] surroundings. By the age of 6 or 7 it is being taken on visits to its
mother's brother's house (*ahəb yir*) and begins to incorporate into the
texture of its life its relationships with its mother's people and their
settlement. A little later it commences to take a share in very simple
economic duties. In this way the child's social space is continuously
expanding as it grows older. The educational agencies to which it is
subjected become more numerous and more diverse and its experiences
more variegated as it participates in an ever-increasing range of social
situations. With adolescence a great increase in mobility ensues and
a new interest emerges—the opposite sex as potential spouses. This
coincides with the beginning of real economic responsibility. When
[182] he reaches adulthood, the individual's social space is a function of the
entire social structure in its complete ecological setting.[1] He should
be capable of appropriate behaviour in any social situation which may
confront the normal Talɔŋa. He is a full citizen—which means that
he is actually or potentially subject to the whole gamut of constraints
inherent in Tale society.

● 861 In the evolution of an individual's social space we have a measure of his educational development. In Taleland this is brought about not only by accretion to, but also by differentiation of, his or her field of social activity. Sex, for example, is a differentiating factor of great

significance. From childhood on a person's relation to the economic 861 system is chiefly determined by sex. In the kinship system sex operates as a differentiating factor from an equally early age, from the time, in fact, when a child learns to designate like-sex siblings by different terms from opposite-sex siblings. Local, lineage, or family institutions also act as differentiating factors, though not in the same way. This is a consequence in part of the peculiarities of Tale political structure. Local groupings, clans and lineages are asymmetrically linked *inter se* 621 and with communities outside the Tale area proper by political, genea- 648 logical, territorial, or ritual ties. The most striking case of this sort is presented by the Hill Talis who have immemorial ritual links with villages and genealogical groups among Dagomba, Mamprussi, Bulisi (Builsa), Woolisi (Kassena), Mossi, and other neighbouring peoples. Each of the Hill communities has its exclusive associates in these foreign areas. The people of Sii were traditionally associated with the Bulisi, the people of Gorogo with the Woolisi, the Kpata'ar clan with certain villages of Black Dagomba, and so forth. There was in former times, and is even more so now, a constant traffic between the Tong Hills and the outside areas linked with the clans dwelling there—pilgrims coming to the Fertility Shrines in the Hills and Talis paying ceremonial visits to their associates. But the economic and political by-products of this traffic were most important. In this way a range of geographical and social contacts was, and is, available to a member of the Hill clans which no Namoos had, and among the Hill clans themselves the actual contacts varied from clan to clan. The Namoos again have their traditional political associates among the Mamprussi. It is especially interesting to note that the Mamprussi associates of the Hill Talis and the Mamprussi associates of the Namoos belonged to a single political structure; yet the latter would not, a generation ago, have hesitated to overpower and enslave any Hill Talis they encountered defenceless.

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[1] A person's social space is not equivalent to the entire social structure since it is included in the latter, which is never fully known to or acted on by the individual. Take, for instance, the Tale joint family. As a structural unit it can be easily distinguished and described by the anthropologist; but each member's view of the whole is unique—that of the head of the joint family is different from that of his wife or son—yet all derived from the same single unit of structure.

Factors of this sort become significant only after adolescence and 574 more so in the life of men than of women; but they are operative even 191 in childhood. The Black Dagomba guests at a Kpata'ar elder's homestead are familiar figures to his children; and one sign of the interest taken in them by the children is the fact that most Kpata'ar youths understand and easily speak the dialect of the Black Dagomba, whereas other Tallensi do not.

184 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In
867 the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of
463 Puvɔlɔmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tale lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvɔlɔmra.

592 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period
622 of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members
861 of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them —may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned
184 or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

understand or to be eager to understand the language of adults, and 868
no one would think of using ‘ baby talk ’ to them. 178

As normal behaviour is always expected, no one hesitates to correct 828
a child or adult who behaves inappropriately through ignorance, and 861 ●
the correction is generally accepted with alacrity and ease. If children are allowed to be present at the activities of adults, they are assumed to be interested in and to understand what is being said and done. No one would inhibit his conversation or actions because children are present, or withhold information upon which adequate social adjustment depends from a child because it is thought to be too young. Tallensi, therefore, are not surprised at the comprehensive and accurate sexual knowledge of a 6-year-old, though direct instruction in these matters is never given. As with the ordinary skills and interests of daily life, they expect children to want to know such things. *Naawun mpaan ba*, ‘ Heaven teaches them ’, they say, or, as we should put it, it is perfectly natural.

It is known that some people learn more quickly and accurately
than others, that variations in skill and ability exist. But the idea of [856]
precocity or retardation as a quality of a child's character has no place in Tale thought. A child may intrude on a situation where some one of his or her degree of maturity has no business to be and will be categorically dismissed then; but it would never be rated for being ‘ old-fashioned ’. Every child is expected to be eager to know and to do as much as its social space and its stage of psycho-physical development permits. Hence, though it is clearly recognized that knowledge, skill, and capacity for social adjustment grow cumulatively, the Tallensi have no technique of isolating a skill or observance from the total reality and training a child in it according to a syllabus, as, for instance, we train children in dancing, the multiplication table,
or the catechism. Tale educational method does not include drill as [876]
a fundamental technique. It works through the situation, which is a bit of the social reality shared by adult and child alike.

The conceptions and practices we have been considering constitute 861
the significant factors in education by participation in practical tasks which is often described as the distinctive method of primitive societies and is as conspicuous in Taleland as in every other preliterate country. It may be observed that even in Western society the

861 principal method of education is by participation. A child repeating the multiplication table is participating in the practical activity appropriate to and defined by the school; but measured by the total social reality it is a factitious activity, a training situation constructed for that purpose. The Tallensi do not make systematic use of training situations. They teach through real situations which children are drawn to participate in because it is expected that they are capable and desirous of mastering the necessary skills.

000 Corresponding to this contrast in method we can observe a contrast in psychological emphasis. The training situation demands atomic modes of response; the real situation requires organic modes of response. In constructing a training situation we envisage a skill or observance as an end-product at the perfection of which we aim and therefore arrange it so as to evoke only motor or perceptual practice. Affective or motivational factors are eliminated or ignored. In the real situation behaviour is compounded of affect, interest and motive, as well as perceptual and motor functions. Learning becomes purposive. Every advance in knowledge or skill is pragmatic, directed to achieve a result there and then, as well as adding to a previous level of adequacy.

861 The expectation of normal behaviour and organic response operate
828 also in the education of a Western child, e.g. when it is learning speech or manners. *In Taleland it is the most effective factor in the in*culcation of a wide range of social behaviour from bowel and bladder control to ritual notions, and from economic skills to sexual habits.

Interests, skills, and observances. We have seen, now, that a Tale child acquires the interests, skills and observances which comprise the repertoire of adult social behaviour not in discrete categories but in a synthetic combination. But it is necessary, for analytical purposes, to define such categories of behaviour. They refer to forms of overt behaviour and not to the psychological functions or mechanisms subsumed therein.

181 *Interests.* By *interest* I mean simply the observable fact that, according to their level of maturity, Tale children and adults spontaneously show preference for some activities rather than others; that they have a selective orientation in their social space, e.g. reacting to some people more readily than to others; that they obviously seek to satisfy

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Talɔŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adult- 857
hood children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational develop- 82
ment of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

82 ● 861 9 or 10 the children are thoroughly familiar with the ecological environment of their clan settlements. They know the economically important trees, grasses, and herbs, e.g., a girl of about 9 once named and showed me nine varieties of herbs used for making soup. They have a fair idea of the gross anatomy of the fowl, small field animals, and larger live stock. But apart from these achievements which lead one to infer the existence of an interest in the natural environment, I was able to obtain some direct evidence thereof. The natives say that small children frequently ask questions about people and things they see around them. However, listening to children's talk for 'why' questions,[1] I was surprised to note how rarely they occurred; and the few instances I recorded refer to objects or persons foreign to the normal routine of Tale life. It would seem that Tale children rarely have to ask 'why' in regard to the people and things of their normal environment because so much of their learning occurs in real situations where explanation is generally coupled with instruction, and because they hear so much adult discussion, in terms of cause and effect, as these are understood by the Tallensi, of the things they are interested in. Yet two examples will prove that even quite small children react with exploratory interest to what is new and unusual. I gave some tiny tin figures of animals to a group of small children to play with. A little boy of about 5 looked intently at the figure of a horse. 'Why does he stoop like that?' he asked, speaking to himself rather than to his companions. But immediately he answered his own question, 'He is eating grass.' On another occasion I observed the 3-year-old son of our cook, pointing to the garbage tin, ask the horseboy: 'Why has that got a lid?'

857 177 532 Again, making clay figures is a favourite diversion of small boys and adolescents. The standard figures are men and women, cows and horses. But a youngster of about 9 or 10 once produced a motorcycle, explaining that he had recently seen the Agricultural Officer arrive on one. Another boy, a little older, once made a roan antelope, explaining that some two years previously he had seen one of these animals which, fleeing from a hunting party, had entered the settlement and been surrounded and killed there.

128 I have not attempted to give an exhaustive account of the interests

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[1] See N. Isaacs in *Intellectual Growth of Young Children.*

183 867 ing the correct observances has many points in common with learning skills, but there is a significant difference. When a child is learning a skill he has the test of objective achievement to evaluate his progress and to stimulate him to further effort; when he is learning how to behave properly the only test of attainment is the reaction of other people and his own sense of the adequacy or inadequacy of his conduct. [626] One can observe, in consequence, that both children and adults are very sensitive to ridicule of a lapse in manners or morals but are fairly indifferent to ridicule of poor skill. The contrast between observances and skills is evident when we compare the way in which a child learns to model clay figures, gradually perfecting his technique, with the 'all or none' way, associated sometimes with corporal punishment, in which he is taught to respect other people's property, or the way he is taught his totemic taboos.

867 Among the Tallensi, as in many other primitive societies, manners and morals are acquired almost as a by-product of the normal social relations between the growing child and the people who constitute his or her social space. The unity of the social sphere and the expectation of normal behaviour have a correspondingly greater influence than in the acquisition of skills and interests. But the critical factor is the tension inherent in the fundamental educational relationships, the authority of parent over child and of senior over junior.

● 861 593 In Tale ideology this is epitomized in the danger attributed to a parent's resentment. If any one who has reached years of discretion behaves in such a way as to incur the resentment and hostility of a parent, some calamity will certainly befall him or her unless he comes formally to beg forgiveness and the injured parent ritually abjures his or her anger.[1] It very often happens that two children of about the same age and members of a single joint family are related as parent and child. They can be seen playing together amicably, squabbling at times, and working together. But when the 'child' is questioned about his playmate, he will say: *nzorumi, ɔn ndɔyam la zugu,* 'I fear (respect) him, because he begot me.' This is not merely a formula. Sinkawol (aged 23–5) used to order his 'father', Kyekambe (aged

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[1] The connexion between one particular aspect of Tale morality, their notion of incest, and the background of kinship has been discussed in my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

12–13) about when the lad was helping with the housebuilding and 861
even scold him if he bungled a task. This was legitimate technical 593
instruction. But he declared emphatically that he dare not strike the boy, *ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*. From the authority of parent over child is derived that of elder sibling over younger. It is equally absolute. A youth or girl has no hesitation in restraining or correcting a younger sibling with a cuff which often sends the latter off howling at the top of his voice. The authority of seniors in general over juniors is accepted by custom (e.g., among herdboys), though not so absolutely and unquestioningly. It is often maintained by force, or in virtue of superior skill. It is intelligible, therefore, why the Tallensi usually say *ti banam yɛl nla*, 'our forefathers' matter is this' when they are asked to account for an observance, and why their children say, *bunkɔra la yɛl ti la ŋwala*, 'the grown-ups have told us so'.

Just as all Tallensi, children or adults, recognize the force of 867
authority, even though they sometimes flout it, so they accept the 857
principle of equal rights for equals. One can see this, not only in standardized patterns of behaviour, but, e.g., in the spontaneity with which children share things and activities. When a small boy snares a bird or kills a mouse or lizard he will always share his catch with friends or siblings, apportioning it according to sex and age. A [526]
favourite pastime of boys of all ages, from 5 upwards, is wrestling. Sometimes bigger youths stand by to supervise, but always scrupulous fairness is insisted upon, and thus instilled. It is as correct and even praiseworthy to demand what one is entitled to as it is reprehensible to take what one has no right to. A nice illustration, showing incidentally how such principles are sometimes taught, came to my notice during an evening ceremony which had been unduly dragged out. A dozen or more small boys aged from 5 upwards had gathered at the ceremony to wait for a share of the feast which would follow the religious rites. The food was sent out and distributed by an adult, one or two boys of equal size to a dish. Suddenly an elder called out, 'Where is Zuur?' (a small boy of about 5) and rose to look for him. Zuur lay fast asleep in a corner. The old man shook the child roughly to awaken him, and dragged him towards a dish of food upbraiding him, 'Where do you think you will find food after it has all been eaten? You can't control yourself at all.' Zuur, still

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, ' is embarrassing ' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult, the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose the genitals with the word ' boy ' or ' girl '. An infant's excretory processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
863 regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
● 861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
' Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, ' he 's a thief. He stole his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast, is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours, nevertheless, go beyond what is merely ' unbecoming '. They are not nice, *a pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience
rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183
her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764
shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783]
mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual
uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181
and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867
and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856
moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861
that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

867 amused. When the child's mother tried to soothe her she first
856 struggled and struck at her, venting her chagrin on her mother. It was
861 fully ten minutes before her mother was able to quieten her by playing
with her and distracting her by making her a toy of wet clay. 'They
will laugh at him (or her)' or 'His comrades will laugh at him' is
the commonest motive alleged for correct behaviour. If you ask a
boy of 6 or 7 why he no longer plays with the little girls he says,
'If I do my comrades will laugh at me'; and little girls say the same.
Adolescents, talking about their sweethearts, who are usually clan
[626] 'sisters', explain why they avoid the girls of their own section—
'because our comrades will find out and laugh at us'; and the adult
is equally sensitive to public opinion.

183 *The total pattern and its genetic development.* We have seen that these categories of social behaviour are not learnt in isolation one from the other but as patterns in which interests, elements of skill, and observances are combined. The Tale housewife, going several miles into the bush to collect firewood, is using knowledge of the bush tracks and of the best places for firewood acquired over a period of years; but she is impelled also by the sense of duty to her family and her own self-esteem. The Tale farmer's devotion to his agricultural pursuits is due to a passionate interest in land and crops and to a sense of moral responsibility towards his family and his ancestor spirits. His skill is but one of the factors that affect his general efficiency.

183 These total patterns which constitute the texture of Tale cultural
867 behaviour are not built up bit by bit, by addition, during the course
155 of a child's life. They are present as *schemas*[1] from the beginning.
My observations suggest that the course of development is somewhat as follows: at first the child acquires a well-defined interest associated with a postural diagram of the total pattern. The postural diagram is, as it were, a contour map, extremely simplified and crude but comprehending the essential elements and relations of the full pattern. Further experience strengthens and amplifies the interest at the same time as it causes the details of the postural diagram to be filled out, making it more and more adaptable and controllable, producing more

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[1] I have taken this concept from Prof. F. C. Bartlett's *Remembering*, pp. 199 ff., though its bald application here hardly does justice to the significance given to it by Prof. Bartlett, and to its value for an understanding of primitive education.

actions or words of older children or adults with whom they happen 153
to be without rhyme or reason and merely for the sake of 'imitation'. 828
For hours at a stretch mimetic behaviour may be unnecessary, but in certain types of situation it is the child's readiest form of cognitive adaptation.

Mimesis occurs (*a*) as a response to direct stimulation; (*b*) as an 868
adaptation to a situation the child does not know how to deal with 153
on the basis of its attainments at the time; (*c*) in play, when it is rehearsing in fantasy its interests and the life of the world about it. The Tale boy who learns the leatherworkers' or blacksmiths' craft by closely studying his father at his work and listening to his explanations, tentatively repeating the procedure with scraps of leather or iron and gradually perfecting his skill, is no more learning by imitation than our own children do when they learn arithmetic by copying procedures demonstrated on the blackboard. If he does not understand the craftsman's procedure the lad will never learn it.

We have already had examples of mimesis in response to direct stimulation—e.g. when an infant begins to learn to dance. A child's first efforts at talking are constantly stimulated in this way. At the babbling stage its mother or grandmother, or whoever is looking after it, will frequently in playful mockery mimic its babblings, 'What are you muttering there?' says the woman, 'gba-gba-gba-ma-ma . . .', and the infant is thus stimulated to repeat these sounds again and again. I have often observed incidents such as the following: Duun was playing with his little daughter of about 2. He called her, 'Kologo-o-o ee!' and she replied 'm!'; and again he called, and she replied; and so on for about five minutes. Then he said, 'Call the dog, wo-ho, wo-ho!' The infant repeated, 'Wo-wo!' Again he called the dog and the infant repeated the call, and so on several times. Some one spoke to him, and turning his attention from the child, he answered. The infant, still influenced by the set of the game, repeated, as well as she could, a word or two, much to his amusement. As we have seen, the expectation of normal behaviour influences parents to talk to infants as if they understand everything.

When there is a pair or a group of children together, the oldest or 861
most self-possessed generally gives the cues to behaviour which the 153
others follow. This is logical, since collective action must be common

● 861 or co-operative. Tale adults behave in exactly the same way. In an
153 unfamiliar or difficult situation the best adaptation is to copy the actions and words of any one who understands the situation. Small children, whose schemas are still very rudimentary, are peculiarly apt to encounter unfamiliar elements in situations, and therefore readily resort to mimesis. Between the ages of 3 and 6 years, when the child is eagerly exploring its social space, this happens so often that it seems to develop a habit of mimicking older children in whose activities it is trying to participate. Thus, whenever I encountered little groups of children at play, pegging out goats, gleaning ground-nuts, or doing anything else, and asked the youngest, 'What are you doing?', one of the older children would reply, and the youngest repeat this reply in the same words. One evening I met four or five children from a neighbouring compound idling on a path. One was a girl of about 8 who had her brother of about 5 in tow. She noticed another child some way off and called out a message to him. The little brother, equally interested in the other child, called out and repeated the message in the same words and intonation. He was obviously not merely repeating automatically what he had heard, but endeavouring to draw the attention of the distant child and using the same method as his sister. A great deal of language learning goes on in this way.

Mimesis in play will be considered later.

153 *Identification.* A striking feature of social development among the
155 Tallensi is the degree to which children overtly identify themselves with older siblings and parents. It is noticeable in children of 5 and 6 and becomes more marked as they grow older. The parent of the same sex is the model according to which the child regulates its conduct and from which it derives its aspirations and values. Though unwitting, the process is unmistakable. Character appears to run in families. An aggressive, loud-spoken man's children tend to become aggressive and pushing; an industrious man's sons apply themselves to work from early childhood; the dishonesty and unreliability of shifty parents tend to be reproduced in their children; and so forth. The social structure of the Tallensi with its emphasis on family and lineage solidarity, and the unity of the social sphere, encourage such identification. If one asks a child, 'Who are you?' the answer is invariably, 'I'm so-and-so's child', or 'of so-and-so's family', accom-

153 laughing and called to me: 'Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

●861 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's
153 co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activities in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish,[1] for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Taləŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its co-operation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

153 *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrəme*,
524 'they are playing') is well defined and clearly recognized by the

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[1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

1 [A Kind of mud mortar -- Analyst]

But the majority of open names refer to personal, local, family, historical and 551
such like circumstances at the time of the person's birth. Sometimes a proverb
or maxim is aptly turned into a name to suit the event. More usually the father 553
or grandfather invents the name and the allusion may be so personal and obscure that only the family members see it. It is among these names that one finds what corresponds to the literary imagination of the Tallensi wisely, wittily, and often movingly expressed.

So luxuriant is the variety of these names that it is possible to quote only a few from amongst the many hundreds in my notebooks. A rare name is GƆMNA. It was borne by the son of a chief's headman. He was born on what was, for the chief and his headmen, a red-letter occasion that came around only once in two or three years, the day on which the Governor paid a visit to the area. So he was named GƆMNA, the Tale corruption of "Governor". By contrast, take such a name as NƆŊDEM-ZUOYA, literally, poor people abound. This is a proverbial saying used to console someone for a loss, particularly of livestock — as by disease — or other property. The father, in this case, had just suffered such a loss. A similar name is WU'UR-BEMI, literally, the name or renown remains. When the child was born, the father said, he and his brothers were poor and insignificant people. But they had their renown as the descendants of chiefs and as men of good character. Their day would come, he said to himself, quoting the proverbial saying that whatever else might be lacking "the name remains". NA'AB-DIYA, the chief has taken office, was born immediately after his grandfather's election as chief and his name commemorates this event. As he explained to me: "I was born when Kundusoor had just got his chiefship. He said: '*Na'ab diya*, the chief has taken office. If he is a good chief, he stays in office; if he is a bad chief, he stays in office. Nobody can now deprive him of the chiefship.' " This name, therefore, sums up one of the essential laws of Tale chiefship, the law of the inviolability of chiefship. Once installed a chief cannot be unseated. Na'abdiya had a son called SUH-PUDUMƆRA, the heart does not ache. The death of a child had greatly distressed him; but the birth soon afterwards of this son came as a consolation; hence the name.

A very respectable elder had a son of about 25 who bore the name BA-DI-DATA, 551
let them not pull (my ear). When I asked for an explanation there was a burst
of hilarity. The youth's father, grinning reminiscently, told the following story. 553
As a young man, being the son of a chief he was a gay spark. Though already 684
married he had an affair with the young wife of a senior chief. At that time the Administration took a serious view of adultery and treated it as a crime. So our friend found himself summoned to answer the charge of adultery and before the very chief whom he had wronged. The penalty was a heavy fine. Now a euphemistic
way of talking about a court fine is to call it "tugging" or "twisting the ear" — [861]
daraŋ tɔbɔr, an allusion to a practice sometimes resorted to by irate parents in correcting young children. As it happened, the culprit's wife had just born a son. The fine was announced in court but the wronged chief declared that it was not heavy enough, and demanded that it be increased by a sheep and a pot of beer. At this the culprit protested and begged "let them not twist my ear further". This episode is commemorated in the son's name.

853 nothing else to do, her babe is at the breast, sucking hungrily or, if it is replete, just playing with the breast with its mouth, its fingers, and its
854 toes. If the mother is away another woman of the household will give the baby medicated water to drink when it cries or will put it to her breast for comfort. It may be any woman of the family, but will usually be a co-wife.

By the age of 18 months a baby's diet is being regularly supplemented
853 with small lumps of porridge, often pre-masticated by its mother. It is gradually and usually painlessly weaned by increasing its solid food
●862 (chiefly porridge), until it is eating the same food as the adults. The only time Tale women have to wean a baby abruptly is if they become pregnant through lack of self-control during the nursing period. Tallensi say that this distresses the baby but that harsh measures are not required as a pregnant woman's milk disgusts a baby. They also say that the premature deprivation of its mother's milk prevents the child from thriving. In fact the premature pregnancy of its mother is probably more of a psychological deprivation for the child than a nutritional loss. By the time a child has its milk teeth and is able to run about, at the age of about 3, it gets no more nourishment from the breast. But its mother's breast is still its chief solace. If it is in pain, or frightened, or just tired and peevish, it cuddles into its mother's arms and clings to her breast for consolation, and a younger baby makes this impossible.

The completion of weaning marks the first stage in the child's physical
855 and psychological severance from its mother. It has learnt to do without
593 its mother for hours or days at a stretch. It remains contentedly in the care of an elder sister or other member of the household or even its maternal grandmother, as long as it is well and not hungry. It runs about and plays with other children of the homestead and neighbouring homesteads. It can talk fluently and so communicate its wishes to others. And its independence is increased when its mother becomes pregnant again and it can no longer run to the breast for comfort. Its mother is still the centre of its universe—and will remain so for two or three years more, in the case of a boy, and until marriage, for a girl—but the toddler has begun to glimpse the wider social space into which it is growing. Since it began to crawl it has often been told to 'go to your mother (own mother)', 'go to your mother so-and-so (mother's co-wife)', 'go to your grandfather (or grandmother)', 'go to your father (own father)', 'go to your father so-and-so (father's brother)', 'go to Yin, Tee, Baa (a sibling)' by one or other member of the family. Thus it has learnt to divide the people who come into its social space into 'own mother', 'own father', 'other mothers and other fathers' (who take care of it now and then), and 'other children', those whom it plays with, or eats with, or sees about the house. Own parents stand out clearly to the infant—its mother for obvious reasons, its father, as one man put it, 'because she (his little daughter) is often told and because she sleeps with her mother and sees

own efforts in time of scarcity. Each woman cares for her own 264
children only. She keeps food for an absent child, but will offer some 595
to a co-wife's child only if it asks her for it. But the man will give
food to all his children. As a rule, he eats the portion sent in by his
senior wife and tastes a little from each dish brought in by the others.
When he has had his fill he calls his children to come and eat the rest,
always remembering those who have not had enough. Thus the
discrepancy in the distribution of grain, where each woman gets the
same share irrespective of the number of mouths she has to feed, is
adjusted by the man in his fair re-distribution of the cooked food.

This general pattern is not a rigid one, but is adapted to the structure
of every household and to its special circumstances, e.g. a man would [576]
eat with his wife and small children from a common dish if they
happened to be alone in the compound. To do so if another wife were
present would cause envy and quarrelling between the women; these
arrangements are a matter of etiquette and not of taboo.

The natives account for the custom of a man's eating with his 264
'youngest' child on the grounds that a child must eat properly in order
to grow and must be taught to do so. They say, also, that it thus
learns to know its father, and not only its mother whom it is always
following about. We have not sufficient material to judge the validity
of this interpretation; it is quoted here to indicate the native valuation
of the sharing of food in the family.

Infants are given morsels of porridge as soon as they can swallow 853
solid food, and by the age of 18 months can feed themselves dexter-
ously. They are weaned by the age of three not by a forcible or harsh 862 ●
separation from the breast, but by gradual habituation to adult food. 264
The emphasis on the adequate feeding of children is shown, also,
in the manner in which *sayakɔrət*, left-over porridge, is reserved for
them. Porridge remaining after the noon meal is stirred into the
porridge cooked at sunset; if it is left after the evening meal it is given
to children cold for breakfast next day. Only after they have eaten
their fill will adults have some. In the months of plenty children
often have a morning meal of *sayakɔrət*; at other times a handful of
ground-nuts, or a dish of flour-water or of dawa-dawa powder must
suffice.

Flour-water (*zɔmkuom*) deserves a note to itself. There are two ways 272

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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'. 593

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking, to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a decoction of roots (*ŋaɣa*), the generic term for any vegetable products used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by the child's spirit guardian (*sɛɣər*). After its bath the mother lays the child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth, and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is poured down its throat relentlessly. 855 593 751 [515]

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling. 514 863

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me 593 789 826

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[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

861 through love and solicitude. Tallensi have a maxim. 'If you do not harass
your child it will not acquire sense (*Nyɛn pu mugh i bii la u ku ŋɔɣa yam*).'
593 They do not mean by this that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, as
867 I thought when I first heard it, but that a child must be kept in order
and made to conform to accepted standards or else it will not learn to
conduct itself properly. They think of this as being chiefly a father's
task. A mother, they say, will not thrash (*bo*) her child for misbehaving;
she will only scold and upbraid (*nuom*) it. A father has the strength of will
(*suhkpɛ'emər*) to thrash his child for misbehaving, and it is his duty to do so.

However, a father does not cease to be tolerant, kindly, and affec-
593 tionate when his child becomes old enough for discipline. I have never
861 seen a child actually being thrashed by its father, but I have had
many accounts of punishments received by children and by men and
women in their childhood, and I have often heard children scolded by
a father or mother. From what has been said in the early parts of this
chapter it can be surmised that Tallensi are very long-suffering with
their children. If they punish them it is in anger admitted by the child
to be justified. I have heard of children being punished for disobedience,
for neglecting or spoiling a task entrusted to them, for yielding to
temptation and breaking a food taboo, for stealing a mother's co-wife's
ground-nuts, and for other similar faults. They are punished, that is,
either for defying the authority of their parents, or for failing to conform
to moral or ritual custom or good manners, or for causing economic loss
or damage.

In fact Tale children are not often punished. By the time they are
593 considered to be mature enough to deserve punishment for faults they
867 have learnt to accept the control and authority of their parents and
seniors as a natural thing and have begun to develop an adult's con-
scientiousness about the standards and values of their culture. It is
noteworthy, for instance, that Tale children are rarely disobedient.
Even adults rarely defy a parent's commands. A child of 7 or 8 usually
keeps totemic taboos as strictly as an adult.[1] A 9- or 10-year-old has
watched sacrifices to the ancestors often enough to have a good idea of
what they mean. He knows what a ritual sanction is even if he does not
yet understand it. His sense of property is well developed. He dis-
tinguishes clearly between *tuum* and *meum*. He knows his father's hen or
sheep or cow and his father's brother's, and he can trace the boundaries
of his father's farm plots. He has begun to take a responsible part,
though but a very small one, in the scheme of domestic organization
pivoting around his father. This is the root of his submission to his
father's authority.

593 Two stories illustrate these points very well. When Naabdiya was
about 8 years old he was lying on a mat in his mother's *dɛndɔŋo* one
● 863 evening, half asleep, listening to the conversation of his parents. The

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

593 desire to urinate overcame him and being drowsy he wetted the mat.
His father saw this and flew into a rage. 'You, a big lad, and you do
●863 this,' he stormed. 'You yourself will wipe the mat with your body'; and he commanded the child to roll in the urine so as to wipe it up. 'I wept', said Naabdiya, 'and I was afraid, but I began to roll in the urine. Then my mother cried out to my father to leave me alone. "Do you want to kill the child? (she cried) I suffered to bear a child and you want to kill him. I myself will wipe it up." But my father did not allow her to do it. A woman's heart is soft because she has borne the child. Thus my father taught me wisdom (*paalɔm yam*).' The moral drawn by Naabdiya needs no comment.

593 The other story shows the strength of paternal authority and the degree to which a boy of 10 or 11 has become imbued with the values of his culture. The boy is Yindɔl, the first-born son of Zaŋ. In 1936 his father went to Kumasi for some months. Before leaving he put aside a small quantity of grain for the family's needs and gave orders that on no account should anybody go into the granary to take any more grain until his return. The supplies he had put aside were soon exhausted. With the help of small gifts from her kinsfolk his wife managed to scrape a meal every other day for her three children. She herself lived almost entirely off wild vegetables which she cooked to supplement the children's porridge. But though they were practically starving neither she nor Yindɔl would go to the granary, because, as Yindɔl said when he told me of their plight, Zaŋ had forbidden it, and in any case he, as a first-born, could not go into his father's granary. Why did his mother not ask her husband's brother to get her some grain from Zaŋ's granary? I asked. 'Oh no', said the boy, speaking as if he were the head of the house in his father's absence, 'she dare not do that. Besides, we shall need that grain for the farming season.'

593 But at the same time as the child is learning to take the authority of
his father for granted and fitting himself into the configuration of
866 domestic relations, a contrary process is emerging. This process springs from the psychological and social cleavage that underlies the strong ties of duty, affection, and common interest between parents and children, the universal cleavage between successive generations. The structure of the family gives this process its form; and it is expressed through the economic organization and in ritual values. The 12-year-old is becoming differentiated as a person in his or her own right. Indeed, with boys this process commences at an earlier age, and its first sign is a small boy's refusing to sleep in his mother's room. Girls often continue to sleep with their mother until they are approaching puberty, unless there is a grandmother in the house; then they will go to sleep with her when they are about 6 or 7. A boy, however, is ridiculed by his playmates if he still sleeps in his mother's room after the age of 7 or 8. Generally boys of that age sleep with a grandparent or with the older boys in their

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another [183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact 876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?' 868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of 198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules [576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete 514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, 'is embarrassing' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous
for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a
loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and
his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of
shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of
which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult,
the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose
the genitals with the word 'boy' or 'girl'. An infant's excretory
processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
863 regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due
course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a
nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would
dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all
matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions
as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the
expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen.
'Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said
Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, 'he's a thief. He stole
his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied
him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast,
is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance
and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child
for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours,
nevertheless, go beyond what is merely 'unbecoming'. They are not
nice, *a-pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but

593 *doo*, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep
in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children
866 over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come
to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older
children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night
when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the
•[864] suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations
between their parents.

As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his
868 mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of
866 which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut
plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for
602 instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a
loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them
in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too,
as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding
from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be
given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already
has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition
by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize,
inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his
matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*)
or uncle (*ahəb*), but sometimes his father's *ahəb* or some other kinsman
of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal
uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Taləŋ
can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of
selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was
bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from
the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to
[782] take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage
bɔyar as a thank-offering.

The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as
866 a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition
593 to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral
kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the
yir in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at
animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation
of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads,
at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that
time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build
on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at
a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants
and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

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[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

Parents and Children in Everyday Intercourse

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One of the most interesting things about the relations of parents and children among the Tallensi is their conduct to one another in the intercourse of everyday life. It brings out, incidentally, the distinction always clearly made between own parents and proxy parents. There is a familiarity, almost a camaraderie, between parent and child that makes the observer wonder how the authority of the parent can be as effective, and the respect and obedience of the child as sincere as the evidence of custom and belief show them to be. In this matter the Tallensi resemble us more closely than they do some other primitive peoples. It is most striking in the case of the father. From babyhood up, Tallensi address their father, both own father and classificatory father, by his name. The term *ba* (pl. *banam*), father, is used to refer to one's father or classificatory father but never in addressing him, while he is alive. After his death it is often used in addressing him in prayer as an expression of reverence. It is also used as a term of respect when addressing someone from whom one is begging a favour, or to show particular deference or courtesy, chiefly to old men. A passer-by greeting an old man not closely related to him or her, or a person of rank such as a chief's brother, addresses him as father; a person asking a small boy not closely related to him or her, for a drink, says, 'Bring me the water, oh my father'; a man who has come to intercede with a friend on behalf of the friend's son pleads, 'Desist, oh my father, desist'. Similarly, parents speak of a child as *m-bii*, 'my child', of a son as *n-dawoo* (pl. *dawoos*), 'my son', of a daughter as *m-pɔγawoo* (pl. *pɔγawoos*), 'my daughter', but always address a child by name.

With this mode of address goes great freedom of speech and behaviour towards a father, particularly one's own father. If children are asked about their attitudes to their parents they always say that they do not 'fear' (*zo*—in the sense of 'to stand in awe of') their own father as much as they 'fear' their father's older brother. Children will speak directly to their father, argue with him, contradict him politely, if necessary, laugh with him. No topic of conversation is tabooed or barred by etiquette.[1] No one can tell from the behaviour to each other in ordinary intercourse of a man and his adult son or married daughter that they are parent and child. In fact, the greater the apparent comradeship of a young adult with an old man, the more likely is it that they are own father and child.

One's mother, on the other hand, is never addressed by name but always as '*ma*, mother'; but a mother's co-wife is commonly addressed by the name used for her by her in-laws. There is also more restraint in the manner in which a person speaks to his mother than in his manner

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[1] Sex matters, for instance, are freely discussed between parents and adult children, subject only to the rules of polite conversation.

593 best is this. A 12-year-old is conscious of his seniority (*kpemət*) in
578 relation to his younger siblings. He orders them about and pulls them up if they are not behaving properly. But whereas he would not hesitate for a moment to smack a younger *soog*, he will not go further than scolding a younger half-sibling for the same offence. Tallensi say that if you strike your younger *soog* it does not matter; your mother or your father may rebuke you afterwards and the affair is forgotten. But if you strike a half-sibling—even if the child has behaved so disgracefully that public opinion will be on your side—you cause friction in the family. The child's mother gets annoyed with you and with your mother and quarrels arise.

593 There is another interesting indication of this. As has been previously mentioned, Tallensi do not designate incest between brother and sister
835 as sinful. When they say it is forbidden (*kih*), as they sometimes do, they mean it rather in the sense that it is disgraceful, scandalous, and unnatural than in the narrower ritual sense. If they are asked why then it is so uncommon, considering the many opportunities and temptations that surely offer, they explain it by the intimacy of siblings in childhood and adolescence. They deny that the temptation exists. 'Look', said Sinkawol, arguing this point with me, 'my sister, is she not marriageable? And here am I, however attractive she is, I do not even notice it; I am never aware that she has a vagina; she is just my sister and someone will one day come and marry her and I will give her to him and get my cows. You and your sister grow up together, you quarrel and make it up, how can you desire to have intercourse with her?' This is a stock argument with the Tallensi.

At the same time the natives are the first to point out that sexual
593 play in childhood generally begins with a classificatory sibling. Family play is a regular thing in the under-8 play-groups; and the final realistic
•864 touch is for the 'husband' and 'wife' to pretend to have coitus. This is common knowledge, and adults laugh at it. A standing joke is to tease a small boy about his so-called sweethearts. As we have seen, Tallensi say that small children 'have no sense (*ka yam*)', and therefore it is not a breach of propriety or morals for them to play at coitus with a sibling. Every man I questioned on the subject told me, with a grin of amusement, that his first sweetheart was a 'sister', sometimes of the same expanded family, more often of the same inner or medial lineage. 'We were very small and didn't know better', they said.

But Tallensi maintain stoutly that even small boys of 6 or 7 do not play at coitus with their *soog* sisters or half-sisters. There are exceptions, of course, they readily admit. There are stupid children, precocious children, and badly brought up children. Among such children instances of brothers copulating with sisters are bound to occur. It has been known to happen even with adolescents, who are presumed to 'have sense'. If it is found out, the culprits are given a severe thrashing

and are taunted for months afterwards by their fellows. But these are 593
not the reasons why children so rarely commit this impropriety. It is
because of the intimacy, the closeness to each other in daily life, of 864
brother and sister. Children do not need to be told that it is wrong to
copulate with a sibling of the same joint family; they know it themselves.
And, in fact, children from the age of 6 or 7 and upwards always say,
with an expression of disgust, that sexual play with one's own siblings
is wrong. Moreover, though they are not taught it as an avoidance, they
are well aware of the conventional attitudes on the subject from listening
to adult conversation.[1]

Incidentally, there are no taboos on conversation on sex matters 521
among the Tallensi. Men, women, and children are all outspoken about 831
sexual matters, though young women are apt to use euphemisms and
to talk more circumspectly than men. Some men also say that it is 593
embarrassing to talk about sexual subjects in front of young wives or
female relatives-in-law. But no native hesitates to discuss these subjects
in the presence of his sister.

These ties of mutual affection and devotion between *soog* siblings 593
last throughout life and are extended to their children too. One sees
this most dramatically in the grief people show, and especially women, 761
over the death of a *soog* sibling. Tallensi say that very often the loss
of a full brother is a greater shock to a woman than the death of her
husband. A husband is replaceable, a full brother not, they add. When
Kpe'emi died his wife fainted and afterwards sat about disconsolately,
weeping at intervals for days. His *soog* sister also fainted, but, the men
said, it had been much more difficult to revive her than her sister-in-law
and she became ill with grief. Seeing the two young women together
one could not doubt that it was the sister who felt the blow worst.

Another vivid demonstration of the strength of this tie between 593
full siblings occurred when Tendaan Teroog performed the succession
ceremony on succeeding to the custody of his maximal lineage *bɔɣar*. 793
A large crowd had gathered, chiefly men—clansmen, and neighbours and
matrilateral kinsmen of Teroog's maximal lineage. Amongst them my

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[1] The psychological undercurrents of these conventional attitudes do not concern us here, but it may be remarked that there is probably a strong and partly overt sexual component in the affective relations of brother and sister. I was struck by this when I once had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of Yamzooya (aged about 11) and his *soog* sister (aged about 8) who were playing together in a corner of the room where I was chatting to their father. The children, who were quite naked, stood embracing each other, the boy with his legs round his sister's, and they twisted and wriggled about as if they were engaged in a mixture of an orgiastic dance and a wrestling-match. They were both in a state of high excitement, panting and giggling and muttering to each other, with obvious sexual pleasure. They seemed to be oblivious of their surroundings. This game went on for about twenty minutes after which they separated and lolled back as if exhausted. These two children were most attached to each other.

857 Sometimes a real fire is lit, but usually it is merely imagined. Real
524 grain is never used in such play—it is too valuable to waste thus, as
868 the children themselves would be the first to insist. A piece of potsherd
pounded up or a handful of sand serves as grain; but a much more realistic effect is sometimes achieved by using dry baobab stamens. These can be 'winnowed' and the 'grain' ground. Green weeds and leaves are vegetables.

The children play with great zest and earnestness, yet never forget that it is but play. As they grind they hum in a low voice a grinding song they have heard from mother or elder sister. They examine the 'flour' to see that it is fine enough, try to get the right proportion of water, stir the 'porridge' thoroughly, 'dish' it out with scrupulous fairness. There is a constant interchange of conversation and commands to the smaller children: 'Bring me that dish', 'Lend me your broom', 'That's my firewood', 'Don't stir so fast', 'Come and fetch your porridge', and so on. As a rule they play together most amicably. I have observed arguments in such groups about who should do some task or another, but never quarrels. There is real co-operation, based on a distribution of tasks in play.

Such play is occasionally associated with a 'house' built of mud by a brother who often does not share the play, or actually uses the
'house' for his cattle play while his sisters are 'cooking' nearby.
[864] It is said, also, that housekeeping play sometimes branches into sexual
play, little boys and girls pretending to be husband and wife and
trying to copulate. Detailed inquiry shows that this is not common.
[836] The usual method of sexual experimentation at this stage of development follows the pattern of adolescence. Small boys 'woo sweethearts' with little gifts, and sexual experiments occur in connexion with dancing or by chance opportunities.[1]

Girls' housekeeping play ceases with the beginning of pubescence. Not only are they by then already taking a full share in real housekeeping but their interests are turning to youths and marriage. Housekeeping play, in which the child rehearses the interests which it has as ~~yet~~ neither the skill nor the degree of social development to satisfy, and expresses the wishes which pubescence brings near to realization, has served its purpose.

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[1] See my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

593 siblings whose mothers are or were classificatory or clan sisters have stronger bonds than those whose mothers were not kin. Such ties, intersecting those of patrilineal kinship, are very common. The children of a woman and her *pɔɣasoog*[1] (a 'sister' or other kinswoman she brings into the family as a child to look after her baby, and who later marries her husband or another man of the family) feel almost as close to each other as if they were full sisters' children. Most common, however, are cases such as that of Naabdiya and Barimoda, who trace their long-lasting amicable association back to the excellent personal relations of their mothers.

After adolescence, with the attainment of greater economic responsibility, the cleavage between *sunzɔ* siblings becomes more apparent, though it is still largely masked by membership of the same domestic and economic unit. Paternal control and the common needs of the unit hold their divergent interests in check. Sex differences become significant in the same way as with *soog* siblings; but brothers are usually partners in work and often comrades in leisure.

At this time the pattern of their future relations emerges clearly. Its
593 keynote is a free-and-easy comradeship on terms of equality. Differ-
865 ences of age, formally recognized in the terminology of kinship and
socially significant as they are in the distribution of authority, rights, and duties, hardly influence the personal relations of brothers in young manhood, or even later. No Talɔŋ, man, woman, or child, will submit to arbitrary authority without resistance. If any demand made on another person in virtue of superiority of generation, age, or sex is felt to be unreasonable or unjust it will be resisted. Quite small children, obedient as they are, jib at commands from parents or older siblings if they think them unreasonable or unfair.

593 This attitude is particularly strong among siblings. The basis of their social and personal relationships is the principle of sharing (*tɔt*). This principle underlies the social relations of siblings of any degree as well as of corporate units whose relative standing is assimilated to those of siblings, such as co-ordinate lineage segments. As we have noted earlier, it is one of the chief contrasts between the relations of father and son and those of brother and brother. It is summed up in the maxim: 'A man and his father do not share; a man and his brother share (*Nit ni u ba pu tɔta; nit ni u mabiig ntɔt*).'

As will be recollected, this maxim is most clearly illustrated in the
593 rules of inheritance. Brothers are coheirs, even though the effective
428 management of the lands and chattels they inherit from their father is
vested in the oldest of them at any given time. Hence if a man has
423 only 'sons' to consider in dealing with property that has come to him by inheritance from his father or brother, he is in theory free to dispose of it as he pleases. But if he is merely the oldest of a group of brothers

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[1] Cf. Ch. IV. above.

economic and social activities there is co-operation, friendliness and 593
tolerance, almost equality. This is more marked between father and 861
child than between mother and child. A father is always addressed 858
by his personal name, a mother is always called *mma*, my mother.
Affectively, however, a powerful tension exists between parent and
child. A parent's authority may not be flouted, though he or she is
expected to be affectionate and indulgent. Sin, in Tale ideology, is [673]
primarily an offence against the person, status, or rights of the living
parents, or the parent-images—the ancestor spirits.

The structure of this relationship makes it possible for children 593
to acquiesce immediately in the commands and teachings of their 865
parents or parent-substitutes. Children are, as a rule, very obedient. If they refuse to carry out an order there is usually some very valid reason—acknowledged as such by both parents and children—such as that it is some one else's turn. But the parent-child relationship is educationally fundamental in another sense—it is the paradigm of all moral relationships.

It is worth noting, by contrast, that the relationship between grand- 603
parent and grandchild is the reverse of that between parent and child. In this case equality, compatibility and partisanship, as if in league against the generation between them, are emphasized, more particularly by the joking relationship—mutual ragging among the Tallensi—permitted between grandparent and grandchild.

The social space. How these relationships function in the educational 000
development of a Tale child is determined by its social space.[1] An individual's social space is a product of that segment of the social structure and that segment of the habitat with which he or she is in effective contact. To put it in another way, the social space is the society in its ecological setting seen from the individual's point of view. The individual creates his social space but is himself in turn formed by it. On the one hand, his range of experiences and behaviour are controlled by his social space, and on the other, everything he learns causes it to expand and become more differentiated. In the lifetime of the individual it changes *pari passu* with his psycho-physical and social development.

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[1] This term is employed here for want of an apter one. It has been used in a different sense by Simmel and others.

593 desire to urinate overcame him and being drowsy he wetted the mat.
His father saw this and flew into a rage. 'You, a big lad, and you do
863 this,' he stormed. 'You yourself will wipe the mat with your body'; and
he commanded the child to roll in the urine so as to wipe it up. 'I wept', said Naabdiya, 'and I was afraid, but I began to roll in the urine. Then my mother cried out to my father to leave me alone. "Do you want to kill the child? (she cried) I suffered to bear a child and you want to kill him. I myself will wipe it up." But my father did not allow her to do it. A woman's heart is soft because she has borne the child. Thus my father taught me wisdom (*paalɔm yam*).' The moral drawn by Naabdiya needs no comment.

593 The other story shows the strength of paternal authority and the degree to which a boy of 10 or 11 has become imbued with the values of his culture. The boy is Yindɔl, the first-born son of Zaŋ. In 1936 his father went to Kumasi for some months. Before leaving he put aside a small quantity of grain for the family's needs and gave orders that on no account should anybody go into the granary to take any more grain until his return. The supplies he had put aside were soon exhausted. With the help of small gifts from her kinsfolk his wife managed to scrape a meal every other day for her three children. She herself lived almost entirely off wild vegetables which she cooked to supplement the children's porridge. But though they were practically starving neither she nor Yindɔl would go to the granary, because, as Yindɔl said when he told me of their plight, Zaŋ had forbidden it, and in any case he, as a first-born, could not go into his father's granary. Why did his mother not ask her husband's brother to get her some grain from Zaŋ's granary? I asked. 'Oh no', said the boy, speaking as if he were the head of the house in his father's absence, 'she dare not do that. Besides, we shall need that grain for the farming season.'

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his father for granted and fitting himself into the configuration of
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from the psychological and social cleavage that underlies the strong ties of duty, affection, and common interest between parents and children, the universal cleavage between successive generations. The structure of the family gives this process its form; and it is expressed through the economic organization and in ritual values. The 12-year-old is becoming differentiated as a person in his or her own right. Indeed, with boys this process commences at an earlier age, and its first sign is a small boy's refusing to sleep in his mother's room. Girls often continue to sleep with their mother until they are approaching puberty, unless there is a grandmother in the house; then they will go to sleep with her when they are about 6 or 7. A boy, however, is ridiculed by his playmates if he still sleeps in his mother's room after the age of 7 or 8. Generally boys of that age sleep with a grandparent or with the older boys in their

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868 As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of
866 which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for
602 instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too, as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize, inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*) or uncle (*ahəb*), but sometimes his father's *ahəb* or some other kinsman of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Taləŋ can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from
[782] the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage *bəyar* as a thank-offering.

866 The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition
593 to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the *yir* in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads, at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

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[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

The economic self-differentiation is both a sign of his psycho-

logical and social self-differentiation from his father and a stimulus to it. 866 Naturally it results in conflict at times.[1] For example, Kpana-Tee took 573 his grandson, a boy of about 14, to live with him because the boy had quarrelled with his father, Kpana-Tee's oldest son, who was farming on 578 his own in one of the peripheral settlements. The youngster had two hens which he had bred from a hen given to him by his *ahəb*. He wanted to sell one in order to buy a loin-cloth for the Gɔlib Festival. His father said this was extravagance and forbade it. But the boy, supported by his mother, insisted that he could do what he liked with his 'things' (*bon*). This angered his father so much that he thrashed him. Thereupon the boy ran away to his grandfather, who took his part, and told him not to go back home for the present. As a man grows older the chances of such conflicts due to the clash between paternal authority and filial self-determination increase and are only kept in check by the sanctions of filial piety.

The process of incipient self-differentiation at this stage is distinctive 866 of boys. It does not occur with girls before pubescence. Until that stage their relations with their parents continue to have a more childish stamp 593 than is the case with their brothers. Whereas a 10-year-old boy would be ashamed to be found hanging round his mother when she is busy in the kitchen, a 10-year-old girl still enjoys sitting among the infants listening to her father in conversation with other men at the *zanɔne*. One notices that little girls of about this age are more quiet and docile than boys. Attached as they are to their mothers, they do not yet show that diffidence towards their fathers in public which another two or three years will bring. They do not feel the weight of the father's authority yet, beyond the ordinary discipline he exercises over their manners and habits. But there is a rapid change as they get nearer to puberty and at the same time become more proficient in women's work and more absorbed in the social world of the women. A 12-year-old girl shows more respect to her father in public than her brother does. Like her mother she will always stoop or crouch to greet a male visitor of her father's or when she is offering her father food. With her mother she is to all appearances on intimate and friendly, almost sisterly, terms. She may still be sleeping with her mother, especially if the latter is past child-bearing age.

Between the age of about 7 and the beginning of pubescence at about 593 12 to 14 years of age, the pattern of parent–child relations crystallizes 867 out in the form it will have for the rest of the child's life. Proxy parents and classificatory parents are correctly discriminated and set in proper relation to own parents. Kinship sentiments are finally formed.

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[1] But this is not associated with overt signs of 'adolescent instability', nor is there an institutionalized group revolt of adolescents against the generation of the fathers. Cf. my previously cited Memorandum.

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalaŋ*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

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[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

F. [See cat. 116, p241 —Analyst.]

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarəmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarəmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pohg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

867 851 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 764 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affec- [966] tionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends [839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4–5 years, suspiciously

system and his or her gradual acquisition of a responsible status in 883
the social structure. By the age of 14 or 15 most girls are already 868
married or being courted in marriage. They take their household
duties more lightly perhaps than older women with children, but 866
their childhood education is complete. Their education in the duties and responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood lies outside the scope of this paper. 'To play' now means to join in the dance or to dress up and go to market, there to gossip and flirt. These are recreations merely, like conversation in the evening after a good meal, when the whole family sits or sprawls about in one of the inner courts or in front of the gateway. Such 'play' is educative in quite a different sense to that of childhood.

Boys, too, between the ages of 12 or 13 and 16 to 18 are at the stage of transition from childhood to young manhood. The imaginative play still prominent at the beginning of this period is given up by degrees and usually altogether abandoned when puberty is established. Like the adolescent girl, the boy of 16 or so finds his principal recreation in the dance at certain seasons. He, too, begins to frequent markets [584]
when time permits, for he is greatly preoccupied with the opposite sex, with courtship and flirtations and even transient love affairs, and there is no place like the market for pretty girls. An adolescent youth is already applying the deftness and skill acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. A 16-year-old takes an active part in building and thatching and in the manufacture of bows and arrows, or in the practice of crafts like leatherwork or the forging of tools and implements.

The transition from boyhood to manhood can readily be observed in the development of farming interests and skill during this period. The boy of 10 to 12 is extremely keen to plant, hoe and weed. Helping his father, he sows ground-nuts for himself amongst his father's early millet. Frequently he has a small plot of cereals, a few yards square, in a useless corner of one of his father's fields. He hoes and plants and weeds his plot with great energy and zest, though somewhat crudely, borrowing one of his father's discarded hoes for this purpose. He assists his mother to farm her ground-nuts and beans. But his efforts make no difference to the family commissariat or to the care and sustenance given him by his parents. He is still

883 experimenting without responsibility, though with great earnestness.
868 Two or three years later the play element has vanished. If he culti-
● 866 vates a personal plot he makes an effort to beg land which is agriculturally good, and works with the avowed purpose of obtaining a crop which, though minute compared with the needs of the family, suffices to buy himself a cap or a loin-cloth. The time he can now devote to his own plot or to his own ground-nuts must be adjusted in accordance with his responsibilities as a contributor to the family economy.

With boys, therefore, as with girls, the completion of their childhood education marks the end of childhood play. Mimetic and imaginative experimentation becomes redundant when the individual attains social responsibility and maturity. The play of Tale children changes, as we have seen, *pari passu* with their advancing maturity, contributing at each stage to the elaboration and integration of those interests, skills, and observances the mastery and acceptance of which is the final result of their education.

VI. Synoptic Chart of Educational Development

In conclusion, and in order to bring the preceding analysis of the education of Tale children to a focus, I append a synoptic chart setting out the main trends of the development of their interests and skills as these are reflected in their economic duties and activities, on the one hand, and in their play on the other. The reader will realize that these norms are necessarily crude and approximate. I have not ventured to include observances in the chart, since the trend of their acquisition cannot easily be analysed into approximate stages.

CHART OF DEVELOPMENT

BOYS

857 *Economic Duties and Activities*	*Play*
3–6 years	
None at first. Towards end of this period begin to assist in pegging out goats; scaring birds from newly sown fields and from crops; accompany family sowing and harvesting parties; using hoe in quasi-play to glean ground-nuts in company of older siblings.	Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Use mimetic toys (bow, drum, &c.) in egocentric play. Towards end of period social and imaginative play with 'cattle' and 'house-building' commences, often in company of older children of either sex, as well as recreational games and dancing.

started and transmitted them. Custom is not inviolable in its own right. 173
It is compelling because it is the legacy of the ancestors.

These notions are perfectly explicit in the behaviour and thought of 178
the natives, for whom they have a profound moral value. *Banam ndaa ɛŋ de, yaanam ndaa ɛŋ de*—our forefathers used to do it, our ancestors used to do it, is a recurrent formula in every ceremonial speech or ritual invocation during the Great Festivals. So the Samiitna'ab protesting his loyalty to traditional values and to the Kpata'arna'ab, in the latter's feud with the Gɔlibdaana, exclaimed: 'It is the young men who are causing the trouble. They desire their cloths and their caps; but I know only what my ancestors did (*man mi la n-yaanam ndaa ɛŋ siem*). My ancestor (*n-yaab*) wore a skin and I, too, wear a skin; my ancestor knew nothing of cloth. I know only my forefathers' path and I adhere to that (*man mi la mbanam suor, man dɔla dɛni*).'

In the same way, and because their social system engenders so strong 181
a sense of the continuity and stability of their culture and social organiza- 867
tion, Tallensi always stress the importance of passing on to their descendants the way of life bequeathed to them by their forefathers. At ceremonies or when disputes are argued out before a chief or a lineage head, it is not uncommon to hear the old men praise the young men who attend. 'Thus,' the old men say, 'they (the young men) will learn the customs (*yɛla*) of our ancestors.' Tallensi place an extremely high value on their social order. An individual or a particular corporate group might desire to alter his or its position in the society. A man might desire to have greater prestige or more power than his neighbours. A clan might strive to assert its supremacy over other clans, whether or not it is entitled to do so. No one would dream of trying to overthrow the whole social order or of agitating against the existing customs and values.

This does not mean that Tale customs never change, or that the Tallensi 178
believe this to be the case, or invariably resist cultural changes. There 184
have been many shifts in custom and usage during the past two decades. The imposition of peace and an embryonic judicial system have diminished the tensions that kept unrelated clans apart and so have made it unnecessary for them to over-emphasize the emblems and symbols of their separateness. Fifteen years ago men of a tendaana's clan used to observe strictly the taboo against wearing gowns and trousers, the distinctive garments of chiefs and men of chiefly (i.e. Namoo) clans. To-day the young men of tendaanas' clans all wear such clothes outside the territory with which they have direct ritual ties. By this simple compromise they make the best of both worlds, the old world of strictly defined local, genealogical, and politico-ritual exclusiveness and the new world of free movement, unrestricted social intercourse with all and sundry, and cheaper clothes. They wear the ancient prescribed garb of a skin and a loin-cloth on ritual occasions, especially during the Great Festivals, when they take a pride in advertising their politico-ritual status. This change of custom does not cut athwart the basic values and principles of Tale social organization. It has arisen because the young men of tendaanas' clans are as eager to display themselves in fine clothes as the young men of other clans, and because the wearing of clothes is economically easier to attain than

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857
own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home
farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593
chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462
of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of
9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868
plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a housewife. She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155
their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861
ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it
is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔya yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593
and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and 867
social maturity permit. Its parents will henceforth assert their authority and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

861 through love and solicitude. Tallensi have a maxim. 'If you do not harass
your child it will not acquire sense (*Nyɛn pu mugh i bii la u ku ŋɔɣa yam*).'
593 They do not mean by this that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, as
867 I thought when I first heard it, but that a child must be kept in order
and made to conform to accepted standards or else it will not learn to
conduct itself properly. They think of this as being chiefly a father's
task. A mother, they say, will not thrash (*bo*) her child for misbehaving;
she will only scold and upbraid (*nuom*) it. A father has the strength of will
(*suhkpe'emər*) to thrash his child for misbehaving, and it is his duty to do so.

593 However, a father does not cease to be tolerant, kindly, and affec-
tionate when his child becomes old enough for discipline. I have never
861 seen a child actually being thrashed by its father, but I have had
many accounts of punishments received by children and by men and
women in their childhood, and I have often heard children scolded by
a father or mother. From what has been said in the early parts of this
chapter it can be surmised that Tallensi are very long-suffering with
their children. If they punish them it is in anger admitted by the child
to be justified. I have heard of children being punished for disobedience,
for neglecting or spoiling a task entrusted to them, for yielding to
temptation and breaking a food taboo, for stealing a mother's co-wife's
ground-nuts, and for other similar faults. They are punished, that is,
either for defying the authority of their parents, or for failing to conform
to moral or ritual custom or good manners, or for causing economic loss
or damage.

In fact Tale children are not often punished. By the time they are
593 considered to be mature enough to deserve punishment for faults they
867 have learnt to accept the control and authority of their parents and
seniors as a natural thing and have begun to develop an adult's con-
scientiousness about the standards and values of their culture. It is noteworthy, for instance, that Tale children are rarely disobedient. Even adults rarely defy a parent's commands. A child of 7 or 8 usually keeps totemic taboos as strictly as an adult.[1] A 9- or 10-year-old has watched sacrifices to the ancestors often enough to have a good idea of what they mean. He knows what a ritual sanction is even if he does not yet understand it. His sense of property is well developed. He distinguishes clearly between *tuum* and *meum*. He knows his father's hen or sheep or cow and his father's brother's, and he can trace the boundaries of his father's farm plots. He has begun to take a responsible part, though but a very small one, in the scheme of domestic organization pivoting around his father. This is the root of his submission to his father's authority.

593 Two stories illustrate these points very well. When Naabdiya was
863 about 8 years old he was lying on a mat in his mother's *dɛndɔŋo* one
evening, half asleep, listening to the conversation of his parents. The

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

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593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal
593 treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for
578 the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are
584 married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *sunzɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbɔm. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbɔm.

The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations
593 of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are
613 quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood,
593 first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the
● 867 children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

of distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this pattern. 593 867

The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family. 593 613

As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course, in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action. 593 602

The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences, postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land. 593

We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity. 593 884

The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the 593 884 578

184 326 565 463 compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

184 Yet it is necessary to [illegible] that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the [784] Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

156 This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

● 867 243 1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]

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[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 942
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't [illegible] of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they b[illegible]e
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? [illegible]o
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pɔhg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

● 867 In Taleland an infant remains confined to the house for the first
three to six months or even longer. During this period its social space
is extremely restricted. It has effective social relationships with its
mother, sometimes its grandmother or a co-wife of its mother, or an
older sibling or half-sibling, and its father—in this order of frequency
[856] and intensity. At the age of 3 to 4, when it is beginning to talk
fluently and can run about, its effective range of contacts includes all
the members of the joint family and probably those of closely neighbouring
related joint families. It is beginning to associate with groups
of other related children belonging to its immediate milieu and to
know the topography of its parental homestead and its immediate
[574] surroundings. By the age of 6 or 7 it is being taken on visits to its
mother's brother's house (*ahəb yir*) and begins to incorporate into the
texture of its life its relationships with its mother's people and their
settlement. A little later it commences to take a share in very simple
economic duties. In this way the child's social space is continuously
expanding as it grows older. The educational agencies to which it is
subjected become more numerous and more diverse and its experiences
more variegated as it participates in an ever-increasing range of social
situations. With adolescence a great increase in mobility ensues and
a new interest emerges—the opposite sex as potential spouses. This
coincides with the beginning of real economic responsibility. When
[182] he reaches adulthood, the individual's social space is a function of the
entire social structure in its complete ecological setting.[1] He should
be capable of appropriate behaviour in any social situation which may
confront the normal Taləŋa. He is a full citizen—which means that
he is actually or potentially subject to the whole gamut of constraints
inherent in Tale society.

861 In the evolution of an individual's social space we have a measure of his educational development. In Taleland this is brought about not only by accretion to, but also by differentiation of, his or her field of social activity. Sex, for example, is a differentiating factor of great

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[1] A person's social space is not equivalent to the entire social structure since it is included in the latter, which is never fully known to or acted on by the individual. Take, for instance, the Tale joint family. As a structural unit it can be easily distinguished and described by the anthropologist; but each member's view of the whole is unique—that of the head of the joint family is different from that of his wife or son—yet all derived from the same single unit of structure.

184 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In
867 the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of
463 Puvalɔmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tale lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvalɔmra.

592 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period
622 of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members
861 of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them —may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

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867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

or passed adolescence, have a wider range of direct contact with 134
the social structure and their culture than their less privileged con- 867
temporaries. In Taleland, it is true, these differences tend to get smoothed out in the course of a person's lifetime owing to the uniformity of the culture and the homogeneity and cohesion of the social structure. Every lineage or clan member is at home in the house of the head, and important affairs are never discussed unless every branch of the grouping is represented. Again, eldership and office circulate from sublineage to sublineage, and the classificatory kinship system spreads the range of identification between the units of the structure widely. Nevertheless, the differential influence of this factor is significant from the educational point of view since our emphasis is on the stage of an individual's life-history at which it operates. The effects are strikingly observable both at the time it is operating and especially in the character of the mature man or woman. An amusing instance of the former is the following: Deɔmzeet of Puhug was elected elder under somewhat dramatic circumstances. Next morning, near his homestead I met his small grandsons of about 6–7 years old. Quite spontaneously they started telling me the story of the exciting events of the past two or three days, obviously repeating the talk that they had heard and only half understood in the family circle. They told me what the other elders had said and what the chief had said and how Deɔmzeet had summoned a diviner to consult. 'Deɔmzeet is the father of all of us,' said one of them, 'and he has a big farm.' They ran off to show me the boundaries of the farm he had recently inherited as head of the sublineage. As we passed the family graves they pointed out, solemnly, the tomb of Deɔmzeet's predecessor, who had no doubt been frequently referred to in the last few days. These were all matters which would normally not have occurred within the purview of children of their age.

Instances of the effect on his adult character of such an expansion of an individual's social space during his youth were so numerous as to suggest a general rule. I always found that, allowing for variation in ability and personality, men whose fathers had been elders or office-holders at a time when they themselves were old enough to take an interest in public affairs as spectators or participants were better informed than the average person, and tended to assume the lead in

184 social and ritual activities. The natives themselves recognize this.
867 It often happens that a man who has not had the advantage of such a training succeeds to eldership or office and has to depend upon the advice and assistance of younger men who have been more fortunate in this respect

IV. THE DYNAMIC CHARACTERS OF TALE EDUCATION

121 Learning and teaching proceeds within the structural framework and subject to the cultural conceptions outlined in the preceding pages. We must now investigate its dynamic characters. The educational development of a Tale child may be regarded as the gradual acquisition of an ensemble of *interests*, *observances* and *skills*. What these are and how they are acquired constitutes our next inquiry. It is basically a psychological problem, tantamount, up to a point, to analysing the observations already recorded at a different level of behaviour.

An exhaustive investigation will not be attempted in this paper. The detailed exposition of Tale child psychology which should be the foundation of such an investigation cannot be undertaken here, nor would it be practicable to try to follow out the complex pattern of Tale education in all its ramifications in a limited space. I propose, therefore, to discuss only a few of the major trends and significant processes. Learning and teaching is a composite process, a network of interacting factors. For the purpose of analysis it will be necessary to isolate some of the variables, but it will have to be borne in mind that in the actual life-history of a Tale man or woman they occur only in interaction with one another and with numerous others.

The determinants of social behaviour. From the genetic point of view social behaviour is determined by four groups of factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural. If we observe a child learning to walk, we can easily distinguish these factors. It cannot start walking until it has reached a certain degree of physiological maturity. As it practises it learns to plan its efforts so as to avoid falls or trying to accomplish too much at a time—a psychological achievement, depending partly on its level of intelligence. Again, a child learns to walk in response, partly, to stimulation, encouragement and even training given by some or all of the people who come

aims and desires in their activities and show a sense of purpose and 181
sustained effort. Food, for example, is one of the dominant interests of 181
Tale children. In 1936 the ground-nut crop surpassed all anticipations 152
in some districts. An elder, referring to this in conversation a week
or two before the crop was harvested, said: 'We have a surfeit of
ground-nuts this year. Look at the children. They don't care about
their mothers, they don't care about their fathers.' When food is [261]
scarce, he explained, children are for ever running in to their mothers
clamouring for something to eat. Now they are out all day, and if
they feel hungry they simply pull up a handful of ground-nuts to chew
and are satisfied. Food, indeed, remains one of the dominant interests
of a Talɔŋa from childhood to old age, and with the confluence of other
interests and motives has a great effect on Tale economic life. Between
the ages of 6 and 14 the interest of boys in food becomes linked up
with other interests which have been developing during that period,
e.g. in learning to use the bow and arrow, in the comradeship of boys
of about the same size, in primary economic and technical processes
such as herding and hoeing, in exploring the environs of the settlement,
and so forth. Thus, a group of boys out herding cattle often have
their bows and arrows with them, and when the cattle are grazing
quietly they will search around for cane rats or birds to shoot as titbits.

From a very early age—before they can walk or talk—until adult- 857
hood children show a marked and explicit interest in the activities of 867
their parents and older siblings and other adults with whom they come
in contact. This is due, in part, to the unity of the social sphere. The
children thus begin to adopt the cultural values of their society in
infancy, as has been indicated above in our discussion of the social
sphere. It may, however, be worth while repeating that children
express a keen interest in farming, in livestock, in ceremonies, dances
and recreations, and in the conspicuous current activities of their
households, in their kinship relationships, and so forth, from the age
of 3 upwards, long before they can actively participate in these affairs.
But it is shown quite clearly in their attitudes when they are allowed
to be present at adult activities, and in their fantasies as revealed in
their talk and play, which revolve round the themes of adult social life.

Another group of interests significant for the educational develop- 82
ment of Tale children is connected with their habitat. By the age of 861

used always to milk the cow during the day, in the pasture, when he 857
became hungry; but if he was not going to be allowed to do this 858
because the white man must be supplied with milk, he would no 234
longer drive the cow out to graze.

183 Increasing skill and maturity, therefore, bring increasing responsibilities but also concomitant rewards—that is, ever closer integration into the system of co-operation and reciprocity which is the basis of Tale domestic economy.[1] The unity of the social sphere, the interest of children in the world of adult activities, and the rapidity with which each advance in educational achievement is socially utilized constitute a ring of incentives which help to explain the eagerness of Tale children to grow up and take their full place in adult life.

Observances. Finally, there are the observances which every Talɔŋa 128
has to learn in the course of his or her life. These comprise ritual, 183
moral and ethical values, norms and obligations, as well as rules of 577
etiquette and standards of correct conduct in general. Some of these types of observances can be readily identified in Tale culture. It is not so easy to determine what exactly are moral and ethical norms and obligations and their place in this culture. Certainly an exhaustive study of this, the most recondite and perhaps fundamental aspect of Tale education, could not be ventured without first precisely establishing the nature of these observances and how they are maintained. For the limited purpose of this paper it will be sufficient to select some representative examples of rules of conduct the violation or neglect of which is repugnant to the cultural idiom of the Tallensi or, otherwise expressed, would be considered blameworthy or disgraceful, sinful or wicked, uncouth or embarrassing to others. To ask how they are learnt is to ask how they are experienced by the growing child at different stages of its development.

To the native these norms have an arbitrary quality as if they require 183
no validation, other than the fact that normal and equable social 867
relations would be impossible without them, that they are indispensable for satisfactory social adjustment.[2] In Taleland, it is true, learn-

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[1] See M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', loc. cit., for a more detailed description of this.

[2] The argument of this section owes much to the stimulus of Durkheim's *L'Éducation morale*.

183 ing the correct observances has many points in common with learning
867 skills, but there is a significant difference. When a child is learning a skill he has the test of objective achievement to evaluate his progress and to stimulate him to further effort; when he is learning how to behave properly the only test of attainment is the reaction of other people and his own sense of the adequacy or inadequacy of his conduct.
[626] One can observe, in consequence, that both children and adults are very sensitive to ridicule of a lapse in manners or morals but are fairly indifferent to ridicule of poor skill. The contrast between observances and skills is evident when we compare the way in which a child learns to model clay figures, gradually perfecting his technique, with the 'all or none' way, associated sometimes with corporal punishment, in which he is taught to respect other people's property, or the way he is taught his totemic taboos.

867 Among the Tallensi, as in many other primitive societies, manners and morals are acquired almost as a by-product of the normal social relations between the growing child and the people who constitute his or her social space. The unity of the social sphere and the expectation of normal behaviour have a correspondingly greater influence than in the acquisition of skills and interests. But the critical factor is the tension inherent in the fundamental educational relationships, the authority of parent over child and of senior over junior.

861 In Tale ideology this is epitomized in the danger attributed to a
593 parent's resentment. If any one who has reached years of discretion behaves in such a way as to incur the resentment and hostility of a parent, some calamity will certainly befall him or her unless he comes formally to beg forgiveness and the injured parent ritually abjures his or her anger.[1] It very often happens that two children of about the same age and members of a single joint family are related as parent and child. They can be seen playing together amicably, squabbling at times, and working together. But when the 'child' is questioned about his playmate, he will say: *nzorumi, ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*, 'I fear (respect) him, because he begot me.' This is not merely a formula. Sinkawol (aged 23-5) used to order his 'father', Kyekambe (aged

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[1] The connexion between one particular aspect of Tale morality, their notion of incest, and the background of kinship has been discussed in my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

12–13) about when the lad was helping with the housebuilding and 861
even scold him if he bungled a task. This was legitimate technical 593
instruction. But he declared emphatically that he dare not strike the
boy, *ɔn ndɔyam la zugu*. From the authority of parent over child is
derived that of elder sibling over younger. It is equally absolute.
A youth or girl has no hesitation in restraining or correcting a younger
sibling with a cuff which often sends the latter off howling at the top
of his voice. The authority of seniors in general over juniors is
accepted by custom (e.g., among herdboys), though not so absolutely
and unquestioningly. It is often maintained by force, or in virtue of
superior skill. It is intelligible, therefore, why the Tallensi usually
say *ti banam yɛl nla*, 'our forefathers' matter is this' when they are
asked to account for an observance, and why their children say,
bunkɔra la yɛl ti la ŋwala, 'the grown-ups have told us so'.

Just as all Tallensi, children or adults, recognize the force of 867
authority, even though they sometimes flout it, so they accept the 857
principle of equal rights for equals. One can see this, not only in
standardized patterns of behaviour, but, e.g., in the spontaneity with
which children share things and activities. When a small boy snares
a bird or kills a mouse or lizard he will always share his catch with
friends or siblings, apportioning it according to sex and age. A [526]
favourite pastime of boys of all ages, from 5 upwards, is wrestling.
Sometimes bigger youths stand by to supervise, but always scrupulous
fairness is insisted upon, and thus instilled. It is as correct and even
praiseworthy to demand what one is entitled to as it is reprehensible
to take what one has no right to. A nice illustration, showing incidentally how such principles are sometimes taught, came to my
notice during an evening ceremony which had been unduly dragged
out. A dozen or more small boys aged from 5 upwards had gathered
at the ceremony to wait for a share of the feast which would follow
the religious rites. The food was sent out and distributed by an
adult, one or two boys of equal size to a dish. Suddenly an elder
called out, 'Where is Zuur?' (a small boy of about 5) and rose to
look for him. Zuur lay fast asleep in a corner. The old man shook
the child roughly to awaken him, and dragged him towards a dish of
food upbraiding him, 'Where do you think you will find food after it
has all been eaten? You can't control yourself at all.' Zuur, still

867 857 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 764 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly [966] it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends [839] to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4-5 years, suspiciously

telling me one day about his dead mother. 'I want them to complete 183
her funeral', he said at length, sadly, 'so that I can have my head 764
shaved' (a ritual obligation). 'Why?' I asked. 'Well, is it not my [783]
mother?' he said. 'If I don't have my head shaved it is dirt' (ritual
uncleanness).

This is typical also of the moral attitudes to the living, to parents 181
and siblings, engendered in the normal course of family life. That is how children learn to be obedient, considerate of others, ready to co-operate, careful of household property, and so forth.

It is evident from the above examples that adjustment to authority 867
and adjustment to equals act together in the child's acquisition of 856
moral observances. But my observations have led me to conclude 861
that authority is effective from an earlier age than the pressure of opinion from equals. From earliest infancy commands, accompanied by acts or gestures, are constantly being addressed to children. 'Go to your father', 'Take this', 'Come here'—as the child is lifted up, or pulled away from some object it must not touch. Until the age of 3–4, when they are walking and talking well, children appear to be indifferent to the presence of other children or indeed of adults other than their parents and members of their own family. I have watched two infants of 2–2½ years old, both walking, remain for over an hour within a few feet of each other without showing the least interest in each other. By the age of 3½–4 the Tale infant has emerged from this stage of egocentricity (as Piaget has termed it).[1] It will now run to join another child of this age or older, and likes to play with younger infants. It has now also become sensitive to public opinion to a degree not far short of an adult, and therefore capable of adjustment to others, as the following incident illustrates: I was chatting with Ɔmara and a few other adult members of his house when his little daughter Sampana, aged about 3½ years, who knew me as a familiar and friendly visitor, ran out to see me. 'Give me some money,' she asked; and her manner, intonation, and posture were so like those of the grown-up women who often half-playfully asked me for money, that the whole company burst spontaneously into loud laughter. Sampana, obviously taken aback, turned tail and fled indoors where we found her sobbing with chagrin. 'She is ashamed at our laughter,' said Ɔmara, still

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[1] J. Piaget, *Language and Thought of the Child.*

● 867 amused. When the child's mother tried to soothe her she first
856 struggled and struck at her, venting her chagrin on her mother. It was
861 fully ten minutes before her mother was able to quieten her by playing
with her and distracting her by making her a toy of wet clay. 'They
will laugh at him (or her)' or 'His comrades will laugh at him' is
the commonest motive alleged for correct behaviour. If you ask a
boy of 6 or 7 why he no longer plays with the little girls he says,
'If I do my comrades will laugh at me'; and little girls say the same.
Adolescents, talking about their sweethearts, who are usually clan
[626] 'sisters', explain why they avoid the girls of their own section—
'because our comrades will find out and laugh at us'; and the adult
is equally sensitive to public opinion.

183 *The total pattern and its genetic development.* We have seen that these categories of social behaviour are not learnt in isolation one from the other but as patterns in which interests, elements of skill, and observances are combined. The Tale housewife, going several miles into the bush to collect firewood, is using knowledge of the bush tracks and of the best places for firewood acquired over a period of years; but she is impelled also by the sense of duty to her family and her own self-esteem. The Tale farmer's devotion to his agricultural pursuits is due to a passionate interest in land and crops and to a sense of moral responsibility towards his family and his ancestor spirits. His skill is but one of the factors that affect his general efficiency.

183 These total patterns which constitute the texture of Tale cultural
867 behaviour are not built up bit by bit, by addition, during the course
155 of a child's life. They are present as *schemas*[1] from the beginning.
My observations suggest that the course of development is somewhat as follows: at first the child acquires a well-defined interest associated with a postural diagram of the total pattern. The postural diagram is, as it were, a contour map, extremely simplified and crude but comprehending the essential elements and relations of the full pattern. Further experience strengthens and amplifies the interest at the same time as it causes the details of the postural diagram to be filled out, making it more and more adaptable and controllable, producing more

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[1] I have taken this concept from Prof. F. C. Bartlett's *Remembering*, pp. 199 ff., though its bald application here hardly does justice to the significance given to it by Prof. Bartlett, and to its value for an understanding of primitive education.

discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with 867
other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total 155
pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's 868
learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants 535
just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same 867
way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected 601
in the 3–4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non- 602
kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

867 'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the
601 idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and
602 genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

183 Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations
856 in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

153 In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning —mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

153 *Mimesis.* Writers on primitive education have often attributed an
828 almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the

panied by a manner or posture which leaves no doubt in one's mind 153
as to who is his father or her mother. Nindɔɣat of Zubiung, for 155
instance, was notorious for his selfishness, his arrogance, and his
insincerity. His son Sapak, aged 6, was his father in miniature—self-assertive, greedy, combative and refractory. Lɔɣani, clansman and
near neighbour of Nindɔɣat, was a complete contrast to him and the
most popular man in the clan. His children were among the quietest,
most respectful, and most good-tempered I knew. Once they were
visiting me when Sapak thrust himself upon us. Within ten minutes
he had managed to offend one of the other boys and but for my
presence they would have come to blows. A similar contrast in
character existed between Nenaab's small daughters and Saandi's.
Indeed, it would be possible to cite a dozen examples of the way
parental character reappeared in children, if space permitted.

A child says, 'This is *our* dog, *our* sheep, *our* land, *our* child, 153
our wife', identifying himself completely with his family. Some 867
of the examples given in our discussion of the unity of the social 155
sphere show how identification operates to constitute that unity.
It is, obviously, the mechanism mainly responsible for the child's
acquisition of interests, and therefore generates powerful motives for
following out these interests derived from the world of adult activity.
Hence Tale children all want to grow up. I often asked boys of 10
to 12 why they were so keen on hoeing though it was far more
arduous than herding or playing about with their friends. The
question puzzled many, though they were always emphatic about
preferring work on the farm to herding or play. But discussion
generally resolved their motives into this: 'We want to hoe because
we want to be among the men and help to bring in more food';
and girls have the same attitude about domestic work and child-bearing. One day I found a small boy of about 5 struggling with a
large goat. 'Where's your father?' I asked. 'Hoeing his bush farm,'
he said. 'What about you,' I said, 'can you hoe?' 'Of course I
can,' he replied proudly, 'didn't I hoe the whole compound farm?'
I teased him a bit, asking him about the details of farming, and eventually he said, 'No, I can't hoe. I'm still too small.' Similarly, a little
girl of about 8 told me that she had accompanied some older girls
to the bush for firewood the previous day. Her mother burst out

153 laughing and called to me: ' Don't believe her, she's much too small.'
● 867 But these innocent fabrications illustrate the contents of children's
155 identifications with adults.[1]

861 *Co-operation.* Mention has previously been made of children's
153 co-operation in the ordinary social and particularly economic activities in a manner and to an extent commensurate with their maturity at the time. But it must be referred to again in order to emphasize why it is specially important for children's learning. The little girl who goes with her mother to the water-hole and is given a tiny pot of water to carry is making only an infinitesimal contribution to the household's water supply. Yet it is a real contribution. She learns to carry her little pot of water in relation to a real need of the household. The boy at a sacrifice called to hold the leg of a carcass while it is skinned not only receives his first lessons in anatomy thus; he is performing a task necessary for the completion of the ceremony. The children summoned to carry balls of swish[1] for the men building a house are contributing valuable labour. The child's training in duty and skill is always socially productive and therefore psychologically worth while to him; it can never become artificial or boring.

Yet as long as the child's co-operation is limited to subsidiary assistance—that is, until he reaches adolescence—it includes an element emanating from the child's own psychology, an element of play. Upon the adult Talɔŋa the economic system bears down with a disciplinary and constraining effect. The house must be built, plastered, and thatched in time, before the rains come; the crops must be planted, hoed, harvested at the right moment, and the penalty for negligence is severe. The child cannot yet experience this. Its co-operation is still partly wish-fulfilment and has for it the attractions of an imaginative experiment. Thus, whenever there is building in progress, they play at building as well as help carrying swish; and the play part is for the child of equal importance with the work.

153 *Play in relation to social development.* The concept of play (*ba deemrɔme,*
524 ' they are playing ') is well-defined and clearly recognized by the
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[1] This exposition of identification is over-simplified in order not to burden the general argument. In Taleland, as elsewhere, it is not the sole determinant of character formation. It has been stressed here in order to underline its educational importance.

[1] [A Kind of mud mortar --Analyst]

[828] Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges
153 partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in
524 itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play
524 of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 On a morning in June I found Gɔmna, aged about 7, his half-sister
867 Zɔŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

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857 [1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

524 scaring birds on the home farm. They sat astride the trailing branch
●867 of a baobab tree on the boundary of Gomna's father's farm and Zoo's
868 father's farm. They slid down to talk to me, and a bigger lad, Tɔŋ,
aged about 10, joined us. Gɔmna had wandered off a few yards and
857 now came running up with three locusts. He called to his sister and
Zoo. Eagerly they squatted round the locusts. 'These are our cows,'
said Gɔmna, 'let's build a yard for them.' Zoo and the little girl
foraged around and produced a few pieces of decayed bark. The
children, Gɔmna dominant, giving orders and keeping up a running
commentary, set about building a 'cattle-yard' of the pieces of bark.
Tɔŋ, the older boy, also squatted down to help. He and Gɔmna
constructed an irregular rectangle with one side open of the pieces
of bark. Zoo fetched some more pieces of bark which Tɔŋ used to
roof the yard. The little girl stood looking on. Gɔmna carefully
pushed the locusts in, one by one, and declared, 'We must make a
gateway.' Rummaging about, the boys found two pebbles which
they set up as gate-posts, with much argument as to how they ought
to stand. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and Tɔŋ started
putting it up again. The little girl meanwhile had found a pair of
stones and a potsherd and was on her knees, 'grinding grain'.
Suddenly the two small boys dashed off into the growing grain,
shouting to scare the birds. In a minute or two they returned to squat
by the collapsed 'cattle-yard'. They appeared to have forgotten all
about the 'cows', for they were engrossed in a conversation about
'wrestling'. Some one called Tɔŋ, who departed. Zɔŋ, finishing her
'grinding', came up to the boys with the 'flour' on a potsherd and
said, 'Let's sacrifice to our shrine.' Gɔmna said indifferently, 'Let
Zoo do it.' Zoo declared that Gɔmna was senior to him, and an
argument ensued as to who was senior. Eventually Gɔmna asserted,
'I'm the senior.' Zɔŋ meanwhile had put down her 'flour' which
[526] was quite forgotten; for Zoo challenged Gɔmna's assertion. Gɔmna
retorted that he was undoubtedly senior since he could throw Zoo in
wrestling. Zoo denied this, and in a few minutes they were grappling
each other. Gɔmna managed to throw Zoo and rolled over him; but
they stood up in perfectly good temper, panting and proud. Suddenly
with a shout Gɔmna began to scramble up the baobab branch,
followed by Zoo, calling out, 'Let's swing.' For a minute or two

they rocked back and forth on the branch and then descended. Now 524
Gəmna remembered his cows. Vehemently he accused his sister of 867
having taken them, and when she denied this challenged her to 868
'swear'. 'All right,' she said placidly. Gəmna took a pinch of sand 857
in his left hand and put his right thumb on it. Zəŋ licked her thumb and pressed down with it on Gəmna's thumb-nail. He stood still a moment, then suddenly withdrew his thumb. (This is a children's play ordeal.) Gəmna examined his sister's thumb and found sand adhering. 'There you are,' he said, rapping her on the head with a crooked finger. The 'cows' were completely forgotten though, for now they turned their attention to me, asking me various questions. After a while Gəmna, who had been observing my shoes, said, 'Let's make shoes,' and took a couple of pieces of the decayed bark previously used to build the cattle-yard to make shoes. He and Zəŋ found some grass and old string lying about and tried to tie the pieces of bark to the soles of their feet. Gəmna now noticed his 'cows' and picked them up, but he was still trying to make 'shoes'. The 'shoes' refused to hold together so he abandoned them and squatted over his 'cows' for a moment, moving them hither and thither. 'I'm going to let them copulate,' he burst out with a grin, and tried to put one locust on top of another. Looking up, he noticed a flutter of birds' wings. 'Zəŋ,' he cried, jumping to his feet, 'scare the birds!' and he raced into the grain, followed by his companions, shouting and stooping to pick up handfuls of gravel to fling at the birds. For the next five minutes they were engrossed in bird-scaring. The entire episode lasted over half an hour.

The developmental phases of play. Infant play. Up to the age of 6 or 7 524
a good deal of play, especially that of boys, consists in sheer motor 534
exuberance. Small boys run about, leap and prance for the pleasure 857
of it, frequently in a totally unorganized way. But even 3-year-old boys often introduce mimetic themes, spontaneously or in response to suggestions from older children. They 'ride horses', using a long stick as a horse, with a wisp of grass attached as bridle. In the Festival season they love 'playing drums'. Cylindrical tins discarded by our cook and useless as receptacles were in great demand for this purpose. A remnant of goatskin tied over one end with a strip of bark or grass makes a satisfactory diaphragm, and a hooked twig

593 (*Man daa nye fara dɔɣi ki ɛŋəm la ŋwala*)', this is a curse of the most
789 terrible kind. For that reason, no doubt, none of my informants could
quote an instance of a mother actually putting this curse on a child.
826 The symbolism is of interest, however, in view of the stress Tallensi lay on the mother as food-giver in their conventional picture of her.

Childhood

The next three or four years of a child's life are probably its freest and
857 happiest. Its energies are spent in play or in roaming around the imme-
593 diate neighbourhood of the homestead in the company of slightly older
siblings and classificatory siblings. But children of this age delight in being with their parents too. They will hang around their mother in the kitchen and trot around or sit with their father when he is resting under the shade tree. They see and hear everything that is going on in the house and are tolerated at all domestic occasions. In this way, and through their mimetic play, they build up the rudimentary schemas[1] of ideas, manual dexterities, and sentiments out of which grow the skills, interests, and values of later life. Love and indulgence is still the keynote of their parents' and other close relatives' attitude to them. Tallensi say that small children at this stage are still more attached to their mother than to their father because it is she who feeds them. In fact, as we have already mentioned, throughout a Taləŋ's life he thinks of his mother as the one who gave him food without stint, going hungry herself, if need be, so that her child might be fed.

By the age of 7 or 8 the child's world is becoming much more complex;
857 and the shadow of discipline and authority is creeping over it. Until it
●868 reaches the threshold of adolescence, at about 12 to 14 years of age, it
868 still remains free to play for much of its time. But from the age of 7 or
593 so boys and girls are eager to participate in the adult routine of life and
they become more and more involved in it. They begin by being given the simplest economic and household tasks such as scaring the birds from the fields of ripening grain, tethering the goats, rounding up the poultry—tasks which children of both sexes perform—or sweeping the house, carrying a tiny pot of water, gathering edible fungi or herbs for the pot, which girls only do. A very common task of both girls and boys at this stage is acting nursemaid to a baby. As this shows, there is very little social differentiation between them as yet.

857 By the age of about 9 or 10 children begin to adopt the sexual division
of labour customary among the Tallensi, and with it the corresponding
593 division of social roles and ideals. Boys start following their older
462 brothers and take their turn at herding their father's cattle if he has any.
They are becoming more skilful with the hoe and by the age of about 12
868 reach a high degree of proficiency. A 12-year-old boy helps his mother

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[1] Cf. the discussion of this concept in my Memorandum just cited.

to hoe her ground-nut plot and may have a small ground-nut plot of his 857
own. Sometimes he will work short spells with his father on the home
farm. He may have a fowl or two of his own and will be trying to breed 593
chickens and guinea-fowl. He is thinking of farming and of the breeding 462
of poultry and livestock in the same terms as his father does. A girl of
9 or 10 is learning from her mother how to cook, how to beat floors and 868
plaster walls, how to carry out all the routine domestic duties of a housewife.
She is acquiring the woman's view of life centred on marriage and
motherhood.

On the economic side the child's world has become differentiated into two divisions in accordance with the sexual division of labour. It has become correspondingly differentiated on the structural side into a sphere of masculine interests and dominance and a sphere of feminine interests and dominance—overlapping spheres, it is true, but still with differences of major emphasis. At sowing time and harvest time, when a house is being built, a funeral made, or a sacrifice carried out, a boy is with the men, sometimes lending a hand and so acquiring the right ways of doing things, as often as not weaving himself in and out of the activity, together with his friends, in play.

It is striking to see how boys at this stage identify themselves with 155
their fathers in speech, gesture, and behaviour, and this gives a bias to their character for life. Nindɔyat of Zubiuŋ's three boys, from the oldest, aged about 20, to the youngest, aged about 7, had their father's arrogant, vulgar egotism. Ɔmara's three sons, covering about the same age range, were, like their father, quiet, modest, and self-effacing. Samane's two small boys of about 7 or 8, who always followed him about like two pups, had his engaging swagger and blunt self-confidence. And one sees it, also, in the way a small boy will hector his mother—for instance, when the family is out sowing or lifting ground-nuts—in exactly the tone of voice and manner that his father uses. Little girls identify themselves in the same way with their mothers both in the work they do and in their ways of behaving. I used to learn a great deal about the opinions and personal attitudes of men and women from the gossip brought to me by their children. By the age of 8 or 9 a girl feels herself to belong to the women. She talks with disdain of her 5-year-old playmate or sister who still eats fowl and she is full of the women's gossip of babies and pregnancies and marriages.

Up to the age of about 5 a child is allowed much latitude in conform- 861
ing to the standards and values of Tale culture. By the age of 8 or 9 it
is 'acquiring sense (*ŋɔŋ'a yam*)', beginning to understand these standards 593
and values and is expected to conform to them as far as its physical and 867
social maturity permit. Its parents will henceforth assert their authority
and exercise discipline to assure this, and thence comes a further social
and emotional differentiation of the parents. Properly speaking it is only
the father who exercises authority over a child; a mother rules her child

593 *doo*, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep
in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children
866 over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come
to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older
children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night
[864] when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the
suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations
between their parents.

As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his
•868 mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of
866 which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut
plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for
602 instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a
loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them
in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too,
as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be
given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already
has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition
by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize,
inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his
matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*)
or uncle (*ahəb*), but sometimes his father's *ahəb* or some other kinsman
of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal
uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Taləŋ
can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of
selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was
bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from
[782] the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to
take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage
bɔyar as a thank-offering.

The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as
866 a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition
593 to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the
yir in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at
animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation
of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads,
at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that
time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build
on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at
a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants
and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

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[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

shrine they accompany us and listen to what we say. Will they not 869
[thus] get to know it?' His own small son Badiwona (6–7 years) is 861
extremely devoted to him. One day, affectionately patting the child, 828
he said: 'When we come out in the morning, and if he doesn't see [593]
me, he seeks about for me. If he doesn't find me he won't rest. That is why I had him initiated last year. Whatever I do he also sits and listens. Will he not get to know it thus? And when I am gone will he not say that when he was a child he used to go about with his father and used to see how his father did this and that? This is my child and I am teaching him uprightness. If he is about to do anything that is not seemly I tell him, so that when he grows up he will know upright ways.'[1]

Education, it is clear, is regarded as a joint enterprise in which 861
parents are as eager to lead as children to follow. In consequence of 856
this attitude adults are very tolerant of children's ways and especially about their learning. A child is never forced beyond its capacity. This is seen most clearly in relation to the pivotal economic activity, agriculture. However skilful a boy may be with his hoe, he will not be forced to do as much work as an adult. Men often restrain their sons of 12–14 from joining the adults in hoeing on the grounds that over-exertion is harmful. Again, women do not take daughters of 9–10 on firewood expeditions to the bush.

That skill comes with practice is realized by all. When adults are 868
asked about children's mimetic play they reply: 'That is how they learn.' Thus when a boy is 7 or 8 his father buys him a small bow so that he can go and learn marksmanship in play with his comrades. Yet the existence of individual differences in ability, both amongst children and amongst adults, is recognized and cited with reference to the acquisition of skill. Rapid learning or the acquisition of a new skill is explained by *u mar nini pam*, 'he has eyes remarkably', that is, he is very sharp. A friend of mine who was a cap-maker told me how he had learnt his craft, as a youth, from a Dagban by carefully watching him at work. When he was young, he explained, he had 'very good eyes'. This conception of cleverness is intelligible in a society where learning by looking and copying is the commonest manner of achieving dexterity both in crafts and in the everyday manual activities.

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[1] He learns—*u bamkera*, cognate with *bay*, to know; I teach him—*mpasammi*.

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
● 868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic,
interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort
to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is
allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister,
brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is
supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or
any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such
thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an
infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological
development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of
the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the
moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma, mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the
house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to
her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk
back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back
encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one
member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and
other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids.
A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its
fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn
to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations
of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left
sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

mothers are busy with some household task. A healthy infant will 868
remain sitting thus, almost motionless, playing with a fragment of cala- 854
bash, a stick, or the sand—for the idea of giving an infant a toy or some attractive trinket to occupy it when it is left alone does not occur to the Tallensi. On the other hand, when an infant clamours for attention there is always some one of its kinsfolk near at hand to render it.

The native point of view about physical growth was well illustrated 827
in the case of two infants belonging to a single extended family which 856
I knew well. The younger infant was a lively, healthy, inquisitive girl of about 2½–3 years old already toddling about and exploring the world. The other infant, a boy about 3 months older, had been puny and ailing from birth and, though obviously intelligent, was chronically fretful and dependent and had not yet begun to walk. In Taleland [801]
the number three is symbolical of maleness, four of femaleness. Hence it is said in their folk-lore that boys begin to walk and talk in their third year, girls in their fourth. Yet the glaring discrepancy in development between these two infants caused no anxiety to the parents of the boy, except about his health. They realized clearly the connexion between his retardation and his health, but were entirely complacent about the former. That he would walk and talk in due course was taken for granted.

The expectation of normal behaviour. It will be evident from these 856
examples that in the cultural idiom of the Tallensi age is not conceived as a significant factor in psycho-physical or social development. Yet relative seniority determines status and rights even in children's groups and their notion of time is explicit and clear. They think of genetic development primarily in terms of maturity, which is a synthetic concept embracing both physiological and behavioural signs. Growing up, in other words, is the evolution of one's social personality as it approximates closer and closer to the fully grown, mature adult. Just as this point of view precludes deliberate and standardized methods of training children in the rudimentary bodily skills such as walking, talking, and eye-hand co-ordination in eating, so it would be incompatible with a didactic attitude about bowel and bladder control or about sexual habits and knowledge.

This point of view gives rise to a factor of great importance in Tale 828
education, the *expectation of normal behaviour*. In any given social

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another [183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact 876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?' 868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of 198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules [576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete 514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

understand or to be eager to understand the language of adults, and 868
no one would think of using 'baby talk' to them. 198

As normal behaviour is always expected, no one hesitates to correct 828
a child or adult who behaves inappropriately through ignorance, and 861
the correction is generally accepted with alacrity and ease. If children are allowed to be present at the activities of adults, they are assumed to be interested in and to understand what is being said and done. No one would inhibit his conversation or actions because children are present, or withhold information upon which adequate social adjustment depends from a child because it is thought to be too young. Tallensi, therefore, are not surprised at the comprehensive and accurate sexual knowledge of a 6-year-old, though direct instruction in these matters is never given. As with the ordinary skills and interests of daily life, they expect children to want to know such things. *Naawun mpaan ba*, 'Heaven teaches them', they say, or, as we should put it, it is perfectly natural.

It is known that some people learn more quickly and accurately than others, that variations in skill and ability exist. But the idea of [856]
precocity or retardation as a quality of a child's character has no place in Tale thought. A child may intrude on a situation where some one of his or her degree of maturity has no business to be and will be categorically dismissed then; but it would never be rated for being 'old-fashioned'. Every child is expected to be eager to know and to do as much as its social space and its stage of psycho-physical development permits. Hence, though it is clearly recognized that knowledge, skill, and capacity for social adjustment grow cumulatively, the Tallensi have no technique of isolating a skill or observance from the total reality and training a child in it according to a syllabus, as, for instance, we train children in dancing, the multiplication table, or the catechism. Tale educational method does not include drill as [876]
a fundamental technique. It works through the situation, which is a bit of the social reality shared by adult and child alike.

The conceptions and practices we have been considering constitute 861
the significant factors in education by participation in practical tasks which is often described as the distinctive method of primitive societies and is as conspicuous in Taleland as in every other preliterate country. It may be observed that even in Western society the

which Tale children develop in the course of their education. I have 128
tried to indicate only some typical interests and their relation to the educational process.

Skills. The acquisition of skills also commences in early infancy, 868
with the child's first experiments in motor co-ordination and speech. 858
Bodily dexterity provides merely the foundation upon which are 857
subsequently built up the socially important skills of adult life. They include not only the predominantly manual skills, such as are connected with farming and care of live stock, with hunting, fishing, building, thatching, cooking, housekeeping and gardening, and the technology of specialists, but also non-manual skills, such as a knowledge of the kinship system, of ritual and ceremonial, of economically useful herbs and roots and of others used as drugs to cure illness, of buying and selling, of law and custom—in short, of the whole body of cultural definitions which guide the Taləŋa in his daily existence. Such skills are the end-results of education; and it will be obvious that they represent merely the cognitive and motor aspects of activities rooted in developing interests and fostered by the expectation of normal behaviour. Typical skills will be referred to as we proceed, but one general feature must be noted here. Children in Taleland are remarkably free from over-solicitious supervision. They have the maximum freedom and responsibility commensurate with their skill and maturity. On the one hand they can go where they like and do what they like, on the other they are held fully responsible for tasks entrusted to them. Thus, a 6-year-old is quite often charged with the care of an infant for several hours at a stretch. Girls of 9 or 10 can be seen in large numbers in every market, selling or buying things for their mothers or themselves. Boys of this age and even younger swarm in the markets. One market day I discovered a boy of about 10–11 selling a basketful of leaves used as a food for animals which he had himself collected in the bush near his settlement. He hoped to earn a penny or twopence to buy arrow-heads for himself. Another day a boy of about the same age offered his services to the butcher. He earned a tenth of a penny which he spent on a feed of
locust-bean flour for himself and a friend. Similarly, when there is 868
dancing at a homestead, the children of about 6 years and upwards 853
from the whole neighbourhood congregate there and remain till 535

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868 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would
859 not be sent for to come home.

858 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom
857 allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: 'Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.' 'You'd better run,' one of the others advised, as he
[231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with
882 their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindɔl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindɔl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindɔl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—'The boy has justice on his side'—he said, when he told me the story.

857 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk
858 for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s.* 6*d.* a month
234 is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to
[435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why?
His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

Like ourselves, the Tallensi recognize that some observances are 183 merely matters of convention, others are matters of conscience, 577 and a great many have elements of both. Their emphasis, however, 868 differs conspicuously from ours. For example, the notion of cruelty to animals as delinquent or reprehensible would never occur to them. Small boys often catch mice or birds and keep them, tied with a strip of strong grass, to play with for days and eventually kill and eat them. It is, indeed, a crude form of nature study, for they learn a great deal about the habits, the anatomy, and physiology of the animals and birds they ostensibly maltreat in this way. They are never checked, and the suggestion that this was bad (the Tallensi have no expression, as far as I am aware, for our notion of cruelty) was received with amused laughter. It is a natural interest of children and not a moral problem; and it does not produce a general attitude of cruelty to animals. Both [231] children and adults often show great affection for domestic dogs, for example.

Many rules of conduct are observed 'because it is befitting' (*de* 183 *narəmi*)—or because non-conformity is 'unbecoming' (*de pu narəmi*)— 576 i.e. it rouses embarrassment or ridicule or public criticism. Thus when 516 greeting a superior, a man must sit with legs flat, crossed at the calves, bare-headed, eyes lowered, whereas a woman must crouch on all fours or sit with thighs close together and legs tucked under the buttocks. This latter posture in women is a matter of modesty. Up to about 9 or 10 years of age a little girl can sit in any way, legs spread out if she wishes, although from babyhood she has learnt to sit with legs tucked under. As she approaches puberty she will often be admonished 'sit properly' if she does not sit decorously. It is un- 183 becoming for women to eat the domestic fowl, and I have often heard 291 little girls of 9 or 10 boast that they are already refraining from it. 834 A woman goes naked until she is advanced in her first pregnancy.

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eyeing me from the security of his mother's lap, was heard to say that he was [855 afraid I might cut off his penis. The Tale infant, in short, appears to be permitted 854] to gratify all its wish impulses without restraint; yet it must do so in a social world over which it has no control, in which it is a weak dependant. Here, I think, still speaking in terms of superficial psychology, is the germ of the later domination of respect for authority in the child's moral development. It seems probable, from these observations, that the deeper psychology of the process is not unlike that which has been recorded by students of our own children, such as Dr. S. Isaacs.

discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with 867
other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total 155
pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's 868 ●
learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants 535
just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same 867
way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected 601
in the 3-4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non- 602
kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

actions or words of older children or adults with whom they happen 153 to be without rhyme or reason and merely for the sake of 'imitation'. 828 For hours at a stretch mimetic behaviour may be unnecessary, but in certain types of situation it is the child's readiest form of cognitive adaptation.

Mimesis occurs (*a*) as a response to direct stimulation; (*b*) as an 868 adaptation to a situation the child does not know how to deal with 153 on the basis of its attainments at the time; (*c*) in play, when it is rehearsing in fantasy its interests and the life of the world about it. The Tale boy who learns the leatherworkers' or blacksmiths' craft by closely studying his father at his work and listening to his explanations, tentatively repeating the procedure with scraps of leather or iron and gradually perfecting his skill, is no more learning by imitation than our own children do when they learn arithmetic by copying procedures demonstrated on the blackboard. If he does not understand the craftsman's procedure the lad will never learn it.

We have already had examples of mimesis in response to direct stimulation—e.g. when an infant begins to learn to dance. A child's first efforts at talking are constantly stimulated in this way. At the babbling stage its mother or grandmother, or whoever is looking after it, will frequently in playful mockery mimic its babblings, 'What are you muttering there?' says the woman, 'gba-gba-gba-ma-ma . . .', and the infant is thus stimulated to repeat these sounds again and again. I have often observed incidents such as the following: Duun was playing with his little daughter of about 2. He called her, 'Kologo-o-o ee!' and she replied 'm!'; and again he called, and she replied; and so on for about five minutes. Then he said, 'Call the dog, wo-ho, wo-ho!' The infant repeated, 'Wo-wo!' Again he called the dog and the infant repeated the call, and so on several times. Some one spoke to him, and turning his attention from the child, he answered. The infant, still influenced by the set of the game, repeated, as well as she could, a word or two, much to his amusement. As we have seen, the expectation of normal behaviour influences parents to talk to infants as if they understand everything.

When there is a pair or a group of children together, the oldest or 861 most self-possessed generally gives the cues to behaviour which the 153 others follow. This is logical, since collective action must be common

[828] 153 524 Tallensi. The play of Tale children, it has been pointed out, emerges partly as a side-issue of their practical activities. It is also an end in itself, and has a noteworthy role in their social development. In his play the child rehearses his interests, skills, and obligations, and makes experiments in social living without having to pay the penalty for mistakes. Hence there is always a phase of play in the evolution of any schema preceding its full emergence into practical life. Play, therefore, is often mimetic in content, and expresses the child's identifications. But the Tale child's play mimesis is never simple and mechanical reproduction; it is always imaginative construction based on the themes of adult life and of the life of slightly older children. He or she adapts natural objects and other materials, often with great ingenuity, which never occur in the adult activities copied, and rearranges adult functions to fit the specific logical and affective configuration of play.[1]

128 524 *A typical play situation.* How vividly these motifs appear in the play of Tale children will be evident to the reader if I describe shortly an actual play situation as I observed and recorded it. I shall describe a typical play episode among children at the transition from infantile egocentricity and dependence to social play and participation in peripheral economic activities. It will be noted how recreational and imaginative play are interwoven with practical activities and how infantile habits still persist. The children's interests fluctuate from moment to moment, egocentric attitudes alternate with co-operative play, and the economic task receives only sporadic attention. Later on we shall consider these factors in relation to the phases of development of children's play.

524 867 ●868 857 On a morning in June I found Gɔmna, aged about 7, his half-sister Zɔŋ, aged about 6, and his friend Zoo of about the same age out

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[1] In this respect Tale children resemble our own children; cf. S. Isaacs, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 99–102. She sums up: 'Imaginative play builds a bridge by which the child can pass from the symbolic values of things to active inquiry into their real construction and real way of working. . . . In his imaginative play the child recreates selectively those elements in past situations which can embody his emotional and intellectual need of the present, and he adapts the details moment by moment to the present situation. . . .' Cf. also the same author's *Social Development in Young Children*, p. 425, 'Play . . . is supremely the activity which brings him [the child] psychic equilibrium in the early years.'

Plate IV

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Building Play. In the background a newly built room. On the right of the group a big boy demonstrating to a small boy. Behind them part of a 'house' they have finished. On the left, girls making the swish and explaining the process to the ethnographer's wife.

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●868

Learning Marksmanship. Note how intently the two smaller boys, who have only recently acquired real bows, are watching the technique of their older companion

[FACING p. 49]

524 scaring birds on the home farm. They sat astride the trailing branch
867 of a baobab tree on the boundary of Gɔmna's father's farm and Zoo's
•868 father's farm. They slid down to talk to me, and a bigger lad, Tɔŋ,
857 aged about 10, joined us. Gɔmna had wandered off a few yards and
now came running up with three locusts. He called to his sister and
Zoo. Eagerly they squatted round the locusts. 'These are our cows,'
said Gɔmna, 'let's build a yard for them.' Zoo and the little girl
foraged around and produced a few pieces of decayed bark. The
children, Gɔmna dominant, giving orders and keeping up a running
commentary, set about building a 'cattle-yard' of the pieces of bark.
Tɔŋ, the older boy, also squatted down to help. He and Gɔmna
constructed an irregular rectangle with one side open of the pieces
of bark. Zoo fetched some more pieces of bark which Tɔŋ used to
roof the yard. The little girl stood looking on. Gɔmna carefully
pushed the locusts in, one by one, and declared, 'We must make a
gateway.' Rummaging about, the boys found two pebbles which
they set up as gate-posts, with much argument as to how they ought
to stand. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and Tɔŋ started
putting it up again. The little girl meanwhile had found a pair of
stones and a potsherd and was on her knees, 'grinding grain'.
Suddenly the two small boys dashed off into the growing grain,
shouting to scare the birds. In a minute or two they returned to squat
by the collapsed 'cattle-yard'. They appeared to have forgotten all
about the 'cows', for they were engrossed in a conversation about
'wrestling'. Some one called Tɔŋ, who departed. Zɔŋ, finishing her
'grinding', came up to the boys with the 'flour' on a potsherd and
said, 'Let's sacrifice to our shrine.' Gɔmna said indifferently, 'Let
Zoo do it.' Zoo declared that Gɔmna was senior to him, and an
argument ensued as to who was senior. Eventually Gɔmna asserted,
'I'm the senior.' Zɔŋ meanwhile had put down her 'flour' which
526 was quite forgotten; for Zoo challenged Gɔmna's assertion. Gɔmna
retorted that he was undoubtedly senior since he could throw Zoo in
wrestling. Zoo denied this, and in a few minutes they were grappling
each other. Gɔmna managed to throw Zoo and rolled over him; but
they stood up in perfectly good temper, panting and proud. Suddenly
with a shout Gɔmna began to scramble up the baobab branch,
followed by Zoo, calling out, 'Let's swing.' For a minute or two

they rocked back and forth on the branch and then descended. Now 524
Gɔmna remembered his cows. Vehemently he accused his sister of 867
having taken them, and when she denied this challenged her to 868
'swear'. 'All right,' she said placidly. Gɔmna took a pinch of sand 857
in his left hand and put his right thumb on it. Zɔŋ licked her thumb
and pressed down with it on Gɔmna's thumb-nail. He stood still a
moment, then suddenly withdrew his thumb. (This is a children's
play ordeal.) Gɔmna examined his sister's thumb and found sand
adhering. 'There you are,' he said, rapping her on the head with a
crooked finger. The 'cows' were completely forgotten though, for
now they turned their attention to me, asking me various questions.
After a while Gɔmna, who had been observing my shoes, said, 'Let's
make shoes,' and took a couple of pieces of the decayed bark previously used to build the cattle-yard to make shoes. He and Zɔŋ found
some grass and old string lying about and tried to tie the pieces of
bark to the soles of their feet. Gɔmna now noticed his 'cows' and
picked them up, but he was still trying to make 'shoes'. The 'shoes'
refused to hold together so he abandoned them and squatted over his
'cows' for a moment, moving them hither and thither. 'I'm going
to let them copulate,' he burst out with a grin, and tried to put
one locust on top of another. Looking up, he noticed a flutter of
birds' wings. 'Zɔŋ,' he cried, jumping to his feet, 'scare the birds!'
and he raced into the grain, followed by his companions, shouting and
stooping to pick up handfuls of gravel to fling at the birds. For the
next five minutes they were engrossed in bird-scaring. The entire
episode lasted over half an hour.

The developmental phases of play. Infant play. Up to the age of 6 or 7 524
a good deal of play, especially that of boys, consists in sheer motor 534
exuberance. Small boys run about, leap and prance for the pleasure 857
of it, frequently in a totally unorganized way. But even 3-year-old
boys often introduce mimetic themes, spontaneously or in response
to suggestions from older children. They 'ride horses', using a long
stick as a horse, with a wisp of grass attached as bridle. In the
Festival season they love 'playing drums'. Cylindrical tins discarded
by our cook and useless as receptacles were in great demand for this
purpose. A remnant of goatskin tied over one end with a strip of
bark or grass makes a satisfactory diaphragm, and a hooked twig

524 serves as a drumstick. Often an older boy of 8 or 9 manufactures a
534 toy drum for himself or an infant brother. A small discarded calabash
857 is covered with a piece of skin—a remnant of goatskin or the skin of a rat caught by the boy himself and prepared by himself. The skin is cleverly attached to the calabash with strong thorns. Small boys delight in walking round, tapping out a rhythm on a toy drum, sometimes executing a few dance steps. Another instrument they like to copy is the *kolog*, a single-string fiddle. I once saw a boy of about 6 singing to a 'fiddle' which consisted of a large bow made of a green stick and a thread of grass—the 'fiddle'—and a smaller bow of the same materials—the 'bow'. A bow of the very same sort with a short piece of thick reed as arrow is the 4- to 6-year-old's introduction to the handling of bow and arrow. They very soon develop an accurate aim at a dozen yards or so. Play of this kind is generally very egocentric. I have watched groups of children playing side by side—a boy with a 'drum' absorbed in his banging, another lying on his back absorbed in fantasy, a couple of little girls playing at housekeeping—all indifferent to one another's activities.

857 The little girl of 3 to 6 plays in much the same way at times; but
●864 she is already being drawn into the family play of slightly older children, and, like the small boy with the toy bow, she tends to mimic simpler features of older girls' play when she is playing alone. Hence one often sees a little girl of this age sitting and playing at 'grinding millet'—one stone as metate, a smaller stone as muller, and a handful of sand or a potsherd as the grain.

Play in early childhood. Between the ages of about 6 and 10 the play of both sexes becomes more social and more complex. This is the period when the child is beginning to co-operate in real economic activities, subject to real responsibility, and is acquiring a knowledge of his social space. His or her play reflects these experiences and reflects also the interests and activities characteristic of the stage of maturity just ahead of it. There is, in all Tale children's play, this feature of looking ahead, as it were, experimenting tentatively with what lies just beyond the present psychological horizon.

During this period the younger children, both boys and girls, have charge of the goats, scare the birds from the newly planted fields and the crops, run errands, nurse the infants, and so forth. The boys help

in sacrifices to domestic shrines; the girls assist in household tasks 857
such as sweeping and carrying water. Towards the end of this period 868●
boys whose fathers own cattle go out with the cattle-herds and girls are beginning to help in the preparation of food. A 10-year-old girl can prepare the majority of usual dishes. At the age of 6 or 7 brothers and sisters often play together; at 9 or 10 the sexual dichotomy has become firmly established.[1]

At this stage the play of infancy develops in three directions. The 857
sporadic motor exuberance is transformed into recreational play—organized group games and dances; the rudimentary mimetic play becomes elaborate and protracted imaginative and constructive play; and the rude toy-making of infancy grows into children's arts and crafts.

Tale children have a great many organized games, passed on from one generation of children to the next by drawing younger ones into the games played by those who already know them. The games are traditional, and often built round themes derived from the cultural idiom—farming, hunting, marriage, chiefs, &c. But their value is predominantly recreational. Children play them for the pleasure of collective singing, rhythmical physical activity, and sensory and bodily stimulation. The ordinary dances of moonlight nights in which both adults and children participate are regarded as 'play' of this kind.

Kuobon is a game of this sort. Both boys and girls from 7–8 to 857
about 15 years play it on moonlight nights in single-sex groups. A 526
group of about the same size forms a ring, clasping each other and standing on one leg. The other leg is extended towards the centre of the ring, and the children arrange themselves so that their extended legs cross one another. The group then commences to revolve, singing as they go round and round, *kuobon, yee-e-e la ŋaah*, 'fruits of farming, yee, how nice'. The game goes on until they are tired and the extended legs begin to drop. It breaks up with much laughter, only to start again after a rest. Similar games are played by boys 857
only and others by girls only; but for both sexes dancing is the 535
supreme recreation. In both the mixed dances and the single-sex

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[1] Nevertheless, this sexual dichotomy is not so absolute as to prohibit a girl or a woman from stepping into a breach if there is no male available for a man's task; and men often undertake women's work in an emergency. [462]

857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
● 868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

On any day in the dry season or the first half of the rainy season 857 one can find a group of girls playing at housekeeping. Most commonly 524 they consist of a group of sisters and ortho-cousins—two to 868 ● four active participants with, perhaps, a couple of infants attached. Often one or two small boys of about 5 or 6 are in their company, sharing in their play or absorbed in their own separate play. In play, as in the simple economic duties, there is as yet no marked sex dichotomy at this age; and small boys are not ridiculed for ' grinding grain ' and ' cooking porridge ', or small girls for ' building houses ' in play. The girls generally constitute a mixed age group, varying from 6 to 10–11 years, for even those who are already capable of real cooking enjoy playing at it. When they are of about equal maturity their play tends to be loosely organized. Each cooks for herself, but they help one another, lending one another ' utensils ', ' grain ', ' firewood ', and exchanging ' dishes of porridge ' like co-wives. When one girl is older than the others she tends to take the lead, and the smaller girls assist her on the pattern of daughter helping mother in real cooking. Infants are ' our children '; and reliable informants have told me that small boys are said to be the ' husbands '—but I have never observed boys being addressed thus, though I have watched housekeeping play very frequently. According to my observation, it is merely implied in the manner of distributing the ' cooked porridge ', which follows the pattern of family feeding. Older girls sometimes introduce dolls as the ' children '—clay figures of people made by themselves or, more usually, for them by their brothers.

The essentials of the play consist in ' grinding flour ', ' cooking sauce ' and ' porridge ', and ' sharing out ' the ' food '. Every feature of the real processes is mimicked, but with the most ingenious imaginative adaptations. A pair of flattish stones or a boulder and a large pebble serve as ' grindstones '. For pots, dishes, calabashes, and ladles various things are used—old sherds chipped into roughly circular pieces the size of a half-crown or crown, fragments of old calabashes, the husks, whole or bisected, of *mɔləmɔk* or *kaləmpoo*, [824 spherical fruits of common trees varying in size from that of a large 137] marble to that of a cricket ball, and even old tins or bits of tins, while some girls make little pots of clay. Pebbles make a fire-place, a thin [177] piece of millet-stalk is the stirring-stick, some dried grass the firewood.

857 Sometimes a real fire is lit, but usually it is merely imagined. Real
524 grain is never used in such play—it is too valuable to waste thus, as
868 the children themselves would be the first to insist. A piece of potsherd pounded up or a handful of sand serves as grain; but a much more realistic effect is sometimes achieved by using dry baobab stamens. These can be 'winnowed' and the 'grain' ground. Green weeds and leaves are vegetables.

The children play with great zest and earnestness, yet never forget that it is but play. As they grind they hum in a low voice a grinding song they have heard from mother or elder sister. They examine the 'flour' to see that it is fine enough, try to get the right proportion of water, stir the 'porridge' thoroughly, 'dish' it out with scrupulous fairness. There is a constant interchange of conversation and commands to the smaller children: 'Bring me that dish', 'Lend me your broom', 'That's my firewood', 'Don't stir so fast', 'Come and fetch your porridge', and so on. As a rule they play together most amicably. I have observed arguments in such groups about who should do some task or another, but never quarrels. There is real co-operation, based on a distribution of tasks in play.

Such play is occasionally associated with a 'house' built of mud by a brother who often does not share the play, or actually uses the 'house' for his cattle play while his sisters are 'cooking' nearby.
[864] It is said, also, that housekeeping play sometimes branches into sexual play, little boys and girls pretending to be husband and wife and trying to copulate. Detailed inquiry shows that this is not common.
[836] The usual method of sexual experimentation at this stage of development follows the pattern of adolescence. Small boys 'woo sweethearts' with little gifts, and sexual experiments occur in connexion with dancing or by chance opportunities.[1]

Girls' housekeeping play ceases with the beginning of pubescence. Not only are they by then already taking a full share in real housekeeping but their interests are turning to youths and marriage. Housekeeping play, in which the child rehearses the interests which it has as yet neither the skill nor the degree of social development to satisfy, and expresses the wishes which pubescence brings near to realization, has served its purpose.

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[1] See my paper on 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy', loc. cit.

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boys; but as much fantasy and invention go into it. Sometimes, 524
indeed, it seems like an overt day-dream of leisure hours. One boy
alone, or two, usually play. When the group is bigger more boisterous 526
or recreational play ousts it—they wrestle, shoot arrows, gamble with 857
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reed. Boys of all ages are far less placid than girls.

The 'cattle' play involves constructing a 'house' in which the 857
'gateway' and the 'stable' are prominently indicated and finding 524
something to serve as 'cattle'—sheep and goats never seem to enter. 868
These activities, and moving the cattle about in and out of the 'stable', with murmured remarks in monologue or addressed to a companion, constitutes the play. I have never been able to record this accompanying speech as I have always had to watch cattle play from a distance. Boys say that it is 'about bulls and cows'.

'Cattle' play has more of pure fantasy and less reproduction of real activities than 'housekeeping' play. Sometimes the 'house' and 'stable' are built of mud—a circular 'wall', 9 or 10 inches in diameter and 2 inches high, with a space left for the 'gateway', and a smaller circle of mud adjoining it as the 'stable'—to last for a whole dry season. Often it is constructed *ad hoc*—two circles drawn in the sand or made of heaped-up sand may be enough. A great variety of objects serve as 'cattle'. Boys who like modelling may make clay figures of cows and bulls for their play; bits of sticks, leaves of a common shrub which can be opened so as to stand up on their edges, pebbles, and other things are used. Yet despite the meagre materials and the paucity of mimetic content the play fascinates boys from the age of 5 or 6, when they are still too young to go out with the herds, to about 12, when they may be full-blown herd-boys. Even if their families have no cattle and they have never followed a herd regularly, they play at it. The interest and identification are active nevertheless.

At this stage, too, domestic ritual begins to be reflected in the play 857
of boys. A boy's or girl's schema of ritual and religious ideology at 524
the age of 9 or 10 includes the main structural principles of the system. 869
As his knowledge has been acquired by attending at sacrifices, he knows most about the ritual acts and conventional formulas connected

Whenever they build miniature houses, during the building season, 857
'shrines' are added and, as in real life, each has his own. 524

Play with these shrines is woven into other play activities, and it 869
revolves around sacrifice. When a small boy goes out hunting for fieldmice or birds, if he happens to have a 'shrine' he will 'give it water', i.e. pour a libation to it. Ashes represent flour, which is stirred up in water as in a real sacrifice. He invokes the shrine, 'My father' (but never mentioning names as in real sacrifice since his own father is probably still alive), 'accept this water and grant that I have successful hunting. If I kill an animal, I will give you a dog.' Some time later he may catch a live mouse, and when he has played with it to satiety he 'sacrifices' it on his shrine—this is the promised 'dog'. A nestling bird found alive is 'sacrificed' as a 'fowl' or 'guinea-fowl'. If he finds a live mouse or bird by chance it will always be taken home and 'sacrificed' thus before it is cut up and eaten. Taboos like those of adults are invented for his shrines. Fetishes, like those of adults, accept only red and black 'fowls'; other shrines only white ones. Siikaɔni, a small boy of about 7 or 8, built him- [778
self a *loo* fetish, which can be dispatched to 'tie up' any one 789]
who might interfere with one's enterprises. Siikaɔni pretended to use his *loo* to keep the parents of his 'sweetheart' out of the way when he went to see her—a frequent use of a real *loo* by young men.

Of the imaginative and constructive play produced as a response 857
to current social activities in which children co-operate, I shall 524
instance only building. During the building season a favourite pre- 868
occupation of the children is to build miniature rooms or houses. It is a co-operative group enterprise, boys and girls frequently working together, led by a boy of about 12–13. It is carried on in the intervals between helping the men. Sometimes they are content to build only walls, a few inches high, but when the leader is keen they undertake a complete replica of a house—walls a foot or more high, several rooms properly arranged, a roof, a beaten inner court, and shrines. The work goes on for days on end and needs planning and organization. The girls and smaller boys make the swish and roll it into pellets, the older boys do the actual building, often with extraordinary skill. When the 'house' is built and roofed and the walls have dried, if the

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524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
301 ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
283 and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses. Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
524 other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

system and his or her gradual acquisition of a responsible status in 883
the social structure. By the age of 14 or 15 most girls are already 868 ●
married or being courted in marriage. They take their household
duties more lightly perhaps than older women with children, but 866
their childhood education is complete. Their education in the duties and responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood lies outside the scope of this paper. 'To play' now means to join in the dance or to dress up and go to market, there to gossip and flirt. These are recreations merely, like conversation in the evening after a good meal, when the whole family sits or sprawls about in one of the inner courts or in front of the gateway. Such 'play' is educative in quite a different sense to that of childhood.

Boys, too, between the ages of 12 or 13 and 16 to 18 are at the stage of transition from childhood to young manhood. The imaginative play still prominent at the beginning of this period is given up by degrees and usually altogether abandoned when puberty is established. Like the adolescent girl, the boy of 16 or so finds his principal recreation in the dance at certain seasons. He, too, begins to frequent markets [584]
when time permits, for he is greatly preoccupied with the opposite sex, with courtship and flirtations and even transient love affairs, and there is no place like the market for pretty girls. An adolescent youth is already applying the deftness and skill acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. A 16-year-old takes an active part in building and thatching and in the manufacture of bows and arrows, or in the practice of crafts like leatherwork or the forging of tools and implements.

The transition from boyhood to manhood can readily be observed in the development of farming interests and skill during this period. The boy of 10 to 12 is extremely keen to plant, hoe and weed. Helping his father, he sows ground-nuts for himself amongst his father's early millet. Frequently he has a small plot of cereals, a few yards square, in a useless corner of one of his father's fields. He hoes and plants and weeds his plot with great energy and zest, though somewhat crudely, borrowing one of his father's discarded hoes for this purpose. He assists his mother to farm her ground-nuts and beans. But his efforts make no difference to the family commissariat or to the care and sustenance given him by his parents. He is still

883 experimenting without responsibility, though with great earnestness.
868 Two or three years later the play element has vanished. If he culti-
866 vates a personal plot he makes an effort to beg land which is agriculturally good, and works with the avowed purpose of obtaining a crop which, though minute compared with the needs of the family, suffices to buy himself a cap or a loin-cloth. The time he can now devote to his own plot or to his own ground-nuts must be adjusted in accordance with his responsibilities as a contributor to the family economy.

With boys, therefore, as with girls, the completion of their childhood education marks the end of childhood play. Mimetic and imaginative experimentation becomes redundant when the individual attains social responsibility and maturity. The play of Tale children changes, as we have seen, *pari passu* with their advancing maturity, contributing at each stage to the elaboration and integration of those interests, skills, and observances the mastery and acceptance of which is the final result of their education.

VI. Synoptic Chart of Educational Development

In conclusion, and in order to bring the preceding analysis of the education of Tale children to a focus, I append a synoptic chart setting out the main trends of the development of their interests and skills as these are reflected in their economic duties and activities, on the one hand, and in their play on the other. The reader will realize that these norms are necessarily crude and approximate. I have not ventured to include observances in the chart, since the trend of their acquisition cannot easily be analysed into approximate stages.

CHART OF DEVELOPMENT

BOYS

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Economic Duties and Activities	*Play*
3–6 years	
None at first. Towards end of this period begin to assist in pegging out goats; scaring birds from newly sown fields and from crops; accompany family sowing and harvesting parties; using hoe in quasi-play to glean ground-nuts in company of older siblings.	Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Use mimetic toys (bow, drum, &c.) in egocentric play. Towards end of period social and imaginative play with 'cattle' and 'house-building' commences, often in company of older children of either sex, as well as recreational games and dancing.

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 842
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pɔhg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother-child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

871 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descen-
[186] dants. Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system,
and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a signi-
181 ficant motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from their ancestor cult. Every Talɔŋa desires sons so that there may be some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son, a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious duty to their ancestors.

781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children. It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation. Last year, for instance, Kuwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also
869 frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once
861 observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors
(*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor
828 shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,' he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?' When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

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[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

shrine they accompany us and listen to what we say. Will they not 869
[thus] get to know it?' His own small son Badiwona (6–7 years) is 861
extremely devoted to him. One day, affectionately patting the child, 828
he said: 'When we come out in the morning, and if he doesn't see [593]
me, he seeks about for me. If he doesn't find me he won't rest. That
is why I had him initiated last year. Whatever I do he also sits and
listens. Will he not get to know it thus? And when I am gone will
he not say that when he was a child he used to go about with his father
and used to see how his father did this and that? This is my child
and I am teaching him uprightness. If he is about to do anything that
is not seemly I tell him, so that when he grows up he will know
upright ways.'[1]

Education, it is clear, is regarded as a joint enterprise in which 861
parents are as eager to lead as children to follow. In consequence of 856
this attitude adults are very tolerant of children's ways and especially
about their learning. A child is never forced beyond its capacity.
This is seen most clearly in relation to the pivotal economic activity,
agriculture. However skilful a boy may be with his hoe, he will not
be forced to do as much work as an adult. Men often restrain their
sons of 12–14 from joining the adults in hoeing on the grounds that
over-exertion is harmful. Again, women do not take daughters of
9–10 on firewood expeditions to the bush.

That skill comes with practice is realized by all. When adults are 868
asked about children's mimetic play they reply: 'That is how they
learn.' Thus when a boy is 7 or 8 his father buys him a small bow so
that he can go and learn marksmanship in play with his comrades.
Yet the existence of individual differences in ability, both amongst
children and amongst adults, is recognized and cited with reference
to the acquisition of skill. Rapid learning or the acquisition of a new
skill is explained by *u mar nini pam*, 'he has eyes remarkably', that is,
he is very sharp. A friend of mine who was a cap-maker told me how
he had learnt his craft, as a youth, from a Dagban by carefully watching
him at work. When he was young, he explained, he had 'very good
eyes'. This conception of cleverness is intelligible in a society where
learning by looking and copying is the commonest manner of achieving
dexterity both in crafts and in the everyday manual activities.

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[1] He learns—*u bamlera*, cognate with *bay*, to know; I teach him—*mpaamuni*.

which children of 9 or 10 are fully familiar with and the compulsion 183
of which they experience to the same degree as the adults; and there is the whole body of implicit moral norms which regulate the day-to-day life of the family and emerge in the duties of children to one another and to their parents.

I have already mentioned the prohibition in some clans against the 784
eating of fowl by first-born children. By contrast with the voluntary 688
abstention from fowl meat practised by women, this is a taboo of 869
supreme mystical value for these clans and is exactly parallel to the totemic avoidances of other clans. The Hill Tallis, for instance, may not eat tortoise, some may not eat crocodile or python, and others taboo dog. A 5-year-old knows his or her personal or clan taboo, and can state it emphatically. The remedy for a chance infringement of such a taboo is extremely simple—e.g., in the case of the fowl, crushing some fowl droppings in water and giving the child the fluid to drink. Again the supernatural penalty for a breach is of a vague and general kind. In some cases it is thought that it would lead merely to an eruption of scabies on the head; in others it is said that the offender would slowly lose health and strength. These sanctions, however, are not the effective agencies maintaining the observances. Breaches of these rules are exceptional, both among children and among adults. A Taləŋa submits to a food taboo in virtue of a configuration of positive habits and dispositions built up in childhood, not through fear of the sanctions. From the time that it is a babe in arms a child is prevented from tasting or even touching any food which it is prohibited from eating. Later it will be called away from where its companions are sitting over a fire roasting titbits of food forbidden to it—'Come here, you mustn't eat that; it is forbidden.' I once observed a child of about 5 standing aloof while a group of his brothers and sisters were consuming a dish of python meat—a prized delicacy. 'I don't eat python, it is my taboo,' he explained, with an expression of complete aversion.

A vivid example of how food taboos are inculcated was provided 262
by a biographical reminiscence of the chief of Tongo who, as a first- 869
born, may not eat fowl. There was talk in his court-room of crops and famine in the old days, when an elder wondered if a man would eat a forbidden animal if he were starving. The chief, holding with

262 869 some of his elders that it would be too repugnant even for a starving man to do so, told this story of how he had himself, on two occasions, violated his taboo. When he was a child of perhaps 5 or 6 he was the favourite of his grandfather, as often happens. Some one brought the old man a gift of eggs which he promptly had roasted. He had to go outside to attend to some matter and he left his small grandson to see that no one purloined the eggs. Now an egg is a potential fowl, and is therefore equally taboo with the latter. The chief described how there was a brief struggle between his conscience and his desire, and how he succumbed and ate the eggs. His grandfather was furious when he returned and the child in trepidation lied, accusing a girl who was in the next room. The girl denied the accusation and the small boy's father was called in to adjudicate. He at once suspected his son, but the grandfather angrily defended the boy, who was now too terrified even to speak. The matter was dropped; but the small boy, afraid of his father, remained with his grandfather till nightfall. Then he slunk out, only to be caught at once by his father, who had been waiting for him. His father said nothing, but grimly called for a feather and a large gourd of water. 'Drink,' he commanded, and compelled the child, now sobbing with terror, to swallow the whole gourdful of water. 'Open your mouth,' said the father, and began to tickle the child's throat with the feather until he vomited. 'And now,' said the father, grasping the child's arms tightly and striking him right and left, on buttocks, back and head, 'I'll teach you to eat fowl and steal and tell lies.' 'That was how I learnt not to eat fowl,' the chief concluded amid general laughter. But, he continued, many years later, at the time of the great famine, he with two companions was on his way to a neighbouring district and stopped for the night *en route*. They were extremely hungry, not having had a proper meal for days, and when they were offered porridge and a cooked fowl ate ravenously. Now two of them tabooed the fowl, but they were too hungry to resist. The meal finished, they rose, when suddenly the other man who was not allowed to eat fowl was overcome with nausea and began to vomit. Immediately he himself also began to vomit. They had not, after all, been able to stomach the fowl.

183 764 How strongly quite young children feel the compulsion of a ritual obligation was brought home to me when a boy of about 10–11 was

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At this stage, too, domestic ritual begins to be reflected in the play 857
of boys. A boy's or girl's schema of ritual and religious ideology at 524
the age of 9 or 10 includes the main structural principles of the system. 869
As his knowledge has been acquired by attending at sacrifices, he
knows most about the ritual acts and conventional formulas connected

857 with sacrifice and least about the beliefs and theories. He is familiar
524 with all the concepts of Tale religion and magic but cannot assign
869 them accurately to their relevant contexts. He knows that ancestor spirits and medicines are different, and can even describe some of the latter by their functions, but cannot elucidate these differences. He knows also and believes that health, prosperity and success depend on mystical agencies, that sickness, death, and misfortune are caused by them, and that sacrifices must be made to placate them or to expiate offences. He has heard talk of all this and seen consultations of diviners. As an infant, perhaps, he has been called by his mother to get off a partition wall 'lest the spirits push you off', or has seen food put out 'for the spirits' during the ritual festivals. He knows what different types of shrines look like and what are their appurtenances. But it is surface knowledge, confused in details and full of gaps.

857 Ritual is men's business, though women are well versed in it.
524 Hence it emerges mostly in the play of boys and not of girls. Significantly,
869 it is permitted till pubescence, that is, as long as a boy is not
likely to take a responsible part in real ritual. After that he is liable to
781 have to accept an ancestor spirit demanding real sacrifices and may no
788 longer play at it. At 13 or 14 years of age, when a boy's ritual schemas approximate those of an adult, he fully understands and acquiesces in this prohibition. It suggests, however, that playing at ritual has a different value for children than actual ritual has for adults. Children share the adults' interest in ritual and accept its prescriptions, but not the adults' emotional relationship to ritual. In their play they express this interest and their identifications, rehearse their knowledge, and integrate it with the rest of their educational achievements.

857 Small boys build shrines a few inches high for themselves in a corner
524 of the cattle-yard. They take great pains to achieve verisimilitude and
869 neatness, and their inventiveness is remarkable. *Kalompoo* husks are turned into medicine-pots; fragments of calabash or potsherd represent the hoe-blade which is essential to many ancestor shrines; a pronged twig is a shrine's 'tree'; the tail of a stillborn kid or lamb, tied with string and feathers in the same way as adults do, is a shrine's 'tail', another object commonly dedicated to real shrines. There are 'roots'—of grass—as in adult medicine-pots, and other appurtenances.

Whenever they build miniature houses, during the building season, 857
'shrines' are added and, as in real life, each has his own. 524

Play with these shrines is woven into other play activities, and it 869
revolves around sacrifice. When a small boy goes out hunting for
fieldmice or birds, if he happens to have a 'shrine' he will 'give it
water', i.e. pour a libation to it. Ashes represent flour, which is
stirred up in water as in a real sacrifice. He invokes the shrine, 'My
father' (but never mentioning names as in real sacrifice since his own
father is probably still alive), 'accept this water and grant that I have
successful hunting. If I kill an animal, I will give you a dog.' Some
time later he may catch a live mouse, and when he has played with it
to satiety he 'sacrifices' it on his shrine—this is the promised 'dog'.
A nestling bird found alive is 'sacrificed' as a 'fowl' or 'guinea-
fowl'. If he finds a live mouse or bird by chance it will always be
taken home and 'sacrificed' thus before it is cut up and eaten.
Taboos like those of adults are invented for his shrines. Fetishes,
like those of adults, accept only red and black 'fowls'; other shrines
only white ones. Siikaɔni, a small boy of about 7 or 8, built him- [778
self a *loo* fetish, which can be dispatched to 'tie up' any one 789]
who might interfere with one's enterprises. Siikaɔni pretended to
use his *loo* to keep the parents of his 'sweetheart' out of the
way when he went to see her—a frequent use of a real *loo* by
young men.

Of the imaginative and constructive play produced as a response 857
to current social activities in which children co-operate, I shall 524
instance only building. During the building season a favourite pre- 868
occupation of the children is to build miniature rooms or houses.
It is a co-operative group enterprise, boys and girls frequently working
together, led by a boy of about 12–13. It is carried on in the intervals
between helping the men. Sometimes they are content to build only
walls, a few inches high, but when the leader is keen they undertake
a complete replica of a house—walls a foot or more high, several
rooms properly arranged, a roof, a beaten inner court, and shrines.
The work goes on for days on end and needs planning and organization.
The girls and smaller boys make the swish and roll it into pellets,
the older boys do the actual building, often with extraordinary skill.
When the 'house' is built and roofed and the walls have dried, if the

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. 867
I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys 243
stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why
did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he
replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate 866
desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. 867
If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the
same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things'
(*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed
chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the
goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the
sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you
can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten 869
none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When 942
they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of
the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become
sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who
wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Tarəmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of 867
the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. 587
Tarəmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the 851
latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their
father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an
adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran
away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father]
and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore
another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it
[*pɔhg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were
thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child
attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at
this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely un- 871
witting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed over- [186]
determined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that 181

871 [186] 181 its continuity depends upon adequate transmission to their descendants. Their social structure, which is built up on the lineage system, and their economic organization put a premium on this, and a significant motive for stressing the continuity of their culture arises from their ancestor cult. Every Talɔŋa desires sons so that there may be some one left to pour libations and make sacrifices to him after his death. The ancestor cult and family morality combine to imbue every man and woman with an intense sense of their continuity, both physical and psychological, with their parents on the one hand and their children on the other. A man feels a moral compulsion to pass on his private possessions, his craft, tools, and knowledge to his son, a woman to her daughter. He has the same feeling about carrying on a craft or cult which had been practised by a parent. Ironwork is not merely a profitable craft to the blacksmiths of Sakpee; it is a religious duty to their ancestors.

781 The most conspicuous affective moment in the religious system of the Tallensi is this sense of moral obligation to parents and children. It is the counterpart of the notion that the sins of the fathers will be visited on the offspring even unto the third and fourth generation. Last year, for instance, Kuwaas had to promise heavy sacrifices to expiate the sin of his grandfather, who was responsible, three generations ago, for the ravaging of his clan settlement by the Hill Talis.

The idea of education is, therefore, not only understood but also 869 frequently formulated in discussions and conversations. A chief once 861 observed to me that children learn who their fathers and ancestors 828 (*banam ni yaanam*) were by listening at sacrifices. 'Our ancestor shrines are our books', he said. Nyaaŋzum, a man of 45–50, put these conceptions neatly and precisely one day when we were discussing some particularly secret ritual matters. His 'grandson',[1] a youth of about 25, was with us. 'Shall we send him away?' I asked. 'No,' he replied, 'if he listens it doesn't matter. He will not gossip to any one. And when some day I am no longer here, is it not he who will take it on? If he listens will he not know, will he not acquire wisdom?' When children are very small, he explained, they know nothing about religious things. 'They learn little by little. When we go to the

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[1] Kinship terms placed between inverted commas are translations of native terms indicating classificatory kin.

177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
●872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or Tamale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolɔga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
648 factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another
[183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact
876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?'
868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of
198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

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[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules
[576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete
514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

understand or to be eager to understand the language of adults, and 868
no one would think of using 'baby talk' to them. 198

As normal behaviour is always expected, no one hesitates to correct 828
a child or adult who behaves inappropriately through ignorance, and 861
the correction is generally accepted with alacrity and ease. If children are allowed to be present at the activities of adults, they are assumed to be interested in and to understand what is being said and done. No one would inhibit his conversation or actions because children are present, or withhold information upon which adequate social adjustment depends from a child because it is thought to be too young. Tallensi, therefore, are not surprised at the comprehensive and accurate sexual knowledge of a 6-year-old, though direct instruction in these matters is never given. As with the ordinary skills and interests of daily life, they expect children to want to know such things. *Naawun mpaan ba*, 'Heaven teaches them', they say, or, as we should put it, it is perfectly natural.

It is known that some people learn more quickly and accurately than others, that variations in skill and ability exist. But the idea of [856] precocity or retardation as a quality of a child's character has no place in Tale thought. A child may intrude on a situation where some one of his or her degree of maturity has no business to be and will be categorically dismissed then; but it would never be rated for being 'old-fashioned'. Every child is expected to be eager to know and to do as much as its social space and its stage of psycho-physical development permits. Hence, though it is clearly recognized that knowledge, skill, and capacity for social adjustment grow cumulatively, the Tallensi have no technique of isolating a skill or observance from the total reality and training a child in it according to a syllabus, as, for instance, we train children in dancing, the multiplication table, or the catechism. Tale educational method does not include drill as [876] ● a fundamental technique. It works through the situation, which is a bit of the social reality shared by adult and child alike.

The conceptions and practices we have been considering constitute 861
the significant factors in education by participation in practical tasks which is often described as the distinctive method of primitive societies and is as conspicuous in Taleland as in every other preliterate country. It may be observed that even in Western society the

tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the 794 taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs 784 to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔyar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔyar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔyar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔya*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of 184 Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of 794 the same External *Bɔyar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔyar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the 769 notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It empha- 794 sizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as 881 we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant [688] wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔyar* or the coercion of an adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult to 776 which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External 788 *Bɔyar* can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛyər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-ŋovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛyəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔyar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔyar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔyar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618x
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔɣar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618x
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔɣar*.

The External *Bɔɣar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔɣar*, parallel to 618x
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans 778
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794
each External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Talaŋ (*u pana baŋ Talɔŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Talaŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔɣar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔɣar*, and often invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔɣar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

769 aegis. Initiation into the *Bɔyar* cult binds the individual by the most
778 solemn covenant known to the natives to uphold the social order be-
881 queathed to the living by the Ancestors; and this is a bond that transcends the lineage. It requires the interests of the lineage to be subordinated to those of the wider community in particular circumstances.

627 That this is so can be seen from the fact that the most solemn oath of
794 the Hill Talis is the oath by the External *Bɔyar*—'(By) my Ancestor Tɔŋna'ab and his late-millet flour water (*Nyaab Tɔŋna'ab ni u za zɔm*
881 *kuom*)'. It is strictly forbidden to use late-millet flour in sacrifices at the External *Bɔyar*. The climax of the initiation ceremony is the administration of this oath to the novices at the *Bɔyar*, pledging them, in the name of a thing sternly excluded from its rites, to observe the tenets of the cult and keep the secret of its rites. This oath, in contrast to the oath by the totem animal, is a matter of the utmost gravity. 'If we swear thus', an elder of one of the Hill clans explained to me in tones of obvious awe, 'we all who are Talɔŋ, you know we are speaking the truth. If you swear thus and lie you will die.' It is an oath which would be resorted to only in an extremely serious matter; and its gravity for the Hill Talis is known all over Taleland.

688 The sanction of the oath is the covenant entered into by a man when
627 he is initiated. The *Bɔyar* destroys a perjurer. 'Will you not be going into the *Bɔyar* to sacrifice, and eat of the (sacrificial) flour and (sacrificial)
881 fowl? This is what kills you (if you swear falsely)', a ritual functionary of the cult declared. It is not even a question of literal participation in the ritual of worship at the *Bɔyar*. A man who has offended it cannot offer sacrifice to his own dead father at his own home; for his father had, in his lifetime, taken part in the sacraments of the cult, and was joined to all the ancestors, whose common shrine is the *Bɔyar*, on his death. By the same reasoning even uninitiated members of clans that belong to a *Bɔyar* congregation can validly use the oath, though they would be unlikely to do so. For they are also 'the children of the *Bɔyar*'; their life, too, is 'in the keeping' of the ancestors who abide there. They will become initiated members of the cult if they are men, and they are members of the lineages incorporated into the cult if they are women.

182 When Hill Talis are asked how their totemic taboos are connected with
771 the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. they say 'they belong together (*ba tɔŋa taaba*)'. The phrase implies that the two things are different but intrinsically related. In fact, the Hill Talis think of all their ritual institutions as being somehow connected with the *Bɔyar* cult. For behind all of them stands the sanction of the ancestor spirits. Totemic taboos hold independently of the *Bɔyar* cult. Breach of them, or a false oath by the totem animals, does not provoke the wrath of the *Bɔyar*. Fines are paid to the *Bɔyar* for a breach of totemic taboos because it is the supreme manifestation of the ancestors. If a person transgresses an obligation that falls on him by virtue of his descent, it is obviously necessary to appease the ancestors. On the same principle, the Hill Talis hale an adulterous wife to the External *Bɔyar* in order to force her to confess; for her sin endangers the life of her husband and children and thus jeopardizes their line of descent. This is a matter of concern to the ancestors, not only

tion for her remains. He still helps her to cultivate her ground-nut plot, 543
if he has no younger brothers to take this on, and assists her in other 883
ways. Later on, when he marries, his intimacy with his mother will be
revived. It is to her *dug* that he brings his wife and in her care that he 882
places the girl.

A girl grows away from her father as she approaches puberty. This [881]
is not due to physiological taboos, for there are none connected with a girl's puberty or with menstruation in general. There are no ceremonies to mark a girl's attainment of physiological maturity, nor is there any break in her affective relations with her parents. The only significant break in the steady process of social maturation for a girl is her first marriage. Her growing away from her father is due to the sexual division of labour and the corresponding division of interests in the family. Though there is no barrier to ordinary social intercourse between the sexes in a domestic family, there is the separation of interests and activities that we have mentioned before, and adolescent boys and girls are caught up in it.

A girl of 13 or 14 years and over does not run to her father and cuddle up to him as her 6- or 7-year-old sister might do. She is with her mother and the other women most of the day assisting with the more arduous domestic tasks. She helps to clean the house, to fetch water and collect shea fruit or firewood, to grind the millet, to cook, and to care for the younger children. At harvest time, or when they are beating the floors of their rooms, she does a full day's work with the other women. She is already adept in all these feminine skills and is well versed in all the gossip of the women. A girl of 12 or 13 can be left in charge of the house for a day or two while her mother is away. She goes to market by herself to buy or sell things for her mother; and also, a more important consideration for her personally, to display her charms and flirt with the young men. She accompanies older girls on firewood parties or when they go to dance at funerals.

When a girl approaches puberty her mind is set upon marriage.
Tallensi estimate a girl's stage of development before marriage by the [856]
appearance of her breasts. Leaving aside betrothal of a girl in childhood, which does not require her consent, a girl is not considered to be mature enough for serious courtship until her breasts are formed (*u biiha n-yi*). She is then called a maiden (*pɔyasarət*). Before that stage, when her breasts are budding (*u biiha m-pukət*), suitors may already be coming to her or soliciting her parents. A girl may be married before she menstruates (*lu sie*), though it is not considered seemly for her husband to sleep with her until she is capable of child-bearing. When her suitors come to her, probably the only person who knows which of them she likes best is her mother; and if she and her lover decide to elope her mother may help them. As we know, the bonds of affection between mother and daughter remain as strong as ever after the latter's marriage

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121
mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be
culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining
a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably intercorrelated. 145
In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884
of physiological and psychological development and that of social and
cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of 182
which social development lags behind psycho-physical development.
A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but
has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and
social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she
is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight
in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that
he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four
or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological
development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower
than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily
be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856]
age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single
words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are
used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one
can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at
about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as
a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582]
they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social development 827
is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881
growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812
The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage
from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West
African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls,
which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality
as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the
body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical
and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural
emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

827 *Naawun*, Heaven, the *ultima ratio* of Tale philosophy, corresponding
881 in this context to our notion of Nature.

812 In keeping with this conception of physical growth, children are
expected to acquire, in due course, the elementary bodily skills—sitting,
868 crawling, walking, running, hand-eye-mouth co-ordination in eating,
855 and so forth. There is no deliberate training in these skills. Parents
856 and older siblings take an affectionate and attentive, though sporadic, interest in an infant's psycho-physical development, but do not resort to special methods of fostering it. An infant beginning to crawl is allowed to practise more or less at will, watched by mother or sister, brother or father, lest it injure itself. An infant beginning to walk is supported for a bit, now and then, by an older child, or a parent, or any one to whose care it happens to be entrusted. There is no such thing as regular training in these skills. The attention given to an infant in these respects is a function not only of its stage of physiological development, but even more so of the practical exigencies of the situation with which the parent or older child has to cope at the moment. It is quite usual to see incidents such as this: a woman is
[313] gathering guinea corn-stalks for her fire some 20–30 yards from the
homestead. Her infant son of about 2½ years totters along the path
to her calling out *mma*, *mma* (my mother). She appears to take no
[516] notice until he reaches her. He stands beside her, clutching her thigh
tightly, while she finishes tying the bundle of guinea corn-stalks. She
[482] puts the bundle on her head and, as she wants to get back into the house as quickly as possible, swings the infant—by one arm—up to her hip and marches off. If she were not in a hurry she might walk back slowly, allowing the infant to follow her and throwing back encouraging remarks to him.

868 Since nobody thinks infants need special training by particular
854 persons, the natives have a habit of bandying them about from one member of a family to another, though grandparents, co-wives, and other children of the same mother are the most usual nursemaids. A Tale child must, from earliest infancy, learn to co-operate to its fullest capacity with the demands of practical necessity: it must learn to adapt itself to such facts of reality as the economic preoccupations of its mother. I have often seen children of about 12–18 months left sitting in the shade for half an hour or longer, quite alone, while their

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate 182
and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of 578
the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the 796
following moon, Bɔγaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival
of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival 778
translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. 769
Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries
at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔγar,
after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all
the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied
development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their
own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔγar may be a grove of trees,
a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders.
It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in
the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔγar's communicants generally
comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints
one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔγar cult is built up on the notion
of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at
every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants
must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔγar. The
bɔγar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors
of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral,
like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent
ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it
can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its
communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I 778
had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The
Namoos know the dates of Bɔγaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they 881
had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed
they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear
and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me
against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the
sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted
by the bɔγar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the
Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their
cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even
Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔγaraam ritual is at the same time communion,
initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔγar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔγaraam on 796

796 successive days, starting from the first day of the moon. The order of entry is fixed by tradition, and claims to precedence in rank are based in part on this. But preliminary sacrifices, consultations of diviners, collection of the chickens and guinea fowls which will be required, and finally ritual preparation of beer, usher in the festival. From the "Moon of Waters" on, every head of a joint family must eat out of special vessels, lest his food or water be contaminated by the newly harvested guinea corn flour, ground beans, or ocra. None of these foods are prohibited to women and younger members of the family. The taboo depends not upon some notions of the magical danger of eating unconsecrated first fruits, but upon the relationship of the communicants to the bɔγar, who has the prerogative of tasting them first.

796 I can not describe the esoteric rites of Bɔγaraam in detail. The main
events take place during one night and the next day. The initiand youths,
●881 selected simply by the fact that their fathers can afford the numerous fowls and guinea fowls and the beer necessary for the rites, are pounced upon at night, undressed, and segregated throughout the rites. The communicants wear skins, the ritual garb of the Tallis. Women and uninitiated boys are rigorously excluded from earshot. Each elder brings fowls, guinea fowls, guinea corn flour, and cooked ground beans, and sacrifices are made in great numbers both at the houses of the Tendaanas and inside the bɔγar. The ancestors are called upon and the bɔγar is invoked. "Your day has come round again. We are about to eat the new guinea corn. Hence we bring you this offering of guinea corn and beans and these, your bɔγaraam chickens. Grant us untroubled sleeping. May our wives bear children, and may we sow early millet successfully and meet again next year." This is the theme of the sacrificial invocations. Every chicken thus slaughtered is observed with concentrated anxiety. It must come to rest on its back, else the doner has sinned in some way and must at once go to a diviner to discover how. For the initiands long life, success in marriage and in farming, and safety from enemies is begged. It is a very serious thing if an initiand's fowl is rejected by the ancestors; and all proceedings are suspended until the sin is traced and atonement made.

The ritual is sensationally dramatic, and entirely different in style and emphasis from Namoos ritual. There is a constant interweaving of the three motifs, of communion, initiation, and first fruit offerings. The tone fluctuates between intense and almost terrified ritual participation and casual conviviality, when the beer is being divided.

The bɔγar is first entered mysteriously in pitch darkness; but the "high spot" is what might be called the administration of the sacrament to the

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, 796
like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to
the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the 881
initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar.
Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of
one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough
stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If
I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of [784]
the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return 796
home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who
have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing 574
follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the 535
Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social
interest as Gingauŋ. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may
not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous 171
with the Gingauŋ and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its
calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and 796
elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of responsibility 182
for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of
lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of
jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion
in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual
of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special
emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these 182
festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand
it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by
the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

he grows more and more proficient in the economic skills he began to acquire in childhood and better versed in the details of his culture. By the time he is 20 or so he knows most of what is known to his people about farming and animal husbandry, hunting and fishing, and building. He is wholly imbued with the values of his culture and has a good working knowledge of its institutions and customs. It is enough to enable him to play his part as a young man in the life of his community, but there is still much to learn which only years of experience and responsibility will give him. He is, however, an active if unimportant participant in corporate activities of the lineage and clan, and in the management of family affairs, with a right to his own opinions. In step with his growing social maturity a boy's field of social relations increases in range and in depth. His father's authority begins to loom larger, but at the same time his father's responsibilities on his behalf also increase and his own self-differentiation advances; and a theme that was of minor effect in their relationship hitherto comes into prominence. This is the principle of reciprocity. 883

During this period the identification of father and son is greatly deepened. It grows out of the intimacies and co-operation of everyday life. As they work side by side on the farm the father teaches his son farming skills and lore. When he performs a sacrifice at home his son is his assistant, learning from him how to carry out such rites, and what doctrines and beliefs lie behind them. In such situations he learns the names of his ancestors and begins to understand the structure of the lineage system and where he fits into it. He makes the acquaintance of matrilateral and sororal kin who come to take part in rites of this sort. The division between the men of the lineage and the women of the lineage, and the distinction between the father's side of the family and the mother's side become of direct practical relevance to him. Sometimes a man will call his adolescent and adult sons to him and tell them various things they ought to know in case he gets ill or dies. He tells them about his farms and other property, about his debts and those who owe him debts, and, a most important matter, about his ancestor and medicine shrines. In doing this he is, in effect, telling them what he knows of the history and traditions of his lineage and clan. These are matters which a man does not speak about to his daughters or wives. If they learn of them it is only incidentally, through listening to the conversation of the men. Daughters and wives are present at domestic sacrifices to ancestor spirits, but only sons are allowed to share in the cult of a man's private medicine shrines. Most important of all is the responsible 593 883 882

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sown farms or from the ripening grain; a lad of 7 or 8 can be trusted to take care of sheep (*dɔl pilu*); older boys, up to the age of 14 or 15, are cattle herds (*kiem nigi*) and already help with the hoeing; after the age of pubescence a boy works on the farm side by side with the men—he farms (*u kɔɔrəme*). These phases are also used to date events, often in conjunction with the physiological criterion. 856

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part an adolescent begins to play in the household economy. His work becomes an essential contribution to its welfare and hence he has a voice in its management.

A man who grew up under his own father's direct tutelage and learnt the arts of life from him in this way is said to be one who 'reached' (*paa*)—that is, knew in person—his father. Tallensi perceive that this is a mechanism of primary importance not only for maintaining the cohesion of the family and the lineage, but also for the transmission of their culture to their offspring. A man quoting precedents from the past for instance, in support of a claim to a debt or to a right to succeed to a particular office, bases his argument on the statement, 'I reached my father and saw such and such things', or, 'I reached my father and he told me this or that'. A man well versed in the details of the social structure, of ceremonial activities, or of economic lore, or in the finer points of etiquette, morals, traditions, and beliefs, says proudly, in explanation of his knowledge, 'Did I not reach my father?'; and a common excuse offered for ignorance is that the person concerned 'did not reach his father'.

The identification of father and son becomes of considerable social importance at this stage and henceforth. Thus it is a very common thing for youths of 18 and upwards to represent their fathers in jural and ceremonial affairs that do not demand their fathers' personal presence. If a man is asked by a clansman to act as intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) in a marriage transaction, he will often send his son as his deputy. And if the intermediary chosen is a young lad, his father will act for him. So also a man sends his sons with the customary gifts he is obliged to contribute to his father-in-law's or mother-in-law's funeral. Old men always delegate their sons to act for them in political matters and often in jural affairs. In disputes about wives it is a common thing to see a man's son coming to the tribunal as his father's representative to answer for the actions of the brother whom he accompanies. In jural and ceremonial situations the identification of father and son is coextensive with the range of recognized generation differences within the inner lineage.

We have previously remarked that the identification of father and son is a fundamental element in the structure of the lineage. It is also, and more significantly from our present point of view, a fundamental feature of the normal personal relations of father and son. This is seen most simply in the affection and devotion so often found between father and son and in the strength of the sentiments and religious values associated with the father's original home.

The relationship of mother and son also changes during this phase, but again there is no abrupt break. As a boy approaches manhood he becomes more and more absorbed in the activities and interests of men and sees less of his mother in everyday intercourse. But his affec-

tion for her remains. He still helps her to cultivate her ground-nut plot, 543 if he has no younger brothers to take this on, and assists her in other 883 ways. Later on, when he marries, his intimacy with his mother will be 882 revived. It is to her *dug* that he brings his wife and in her care that he places the girl.

A girl grows away from her father as she approaches puberty. This [881] is not due to physiological taboos, for there are none connected with a girl's puberty or with menstruation in general. There are no ceremonies to mark a girl's attainment of physiological maturity, nor is there any break in her affective relations with her parents. The only significant break in the steady process of social maturation for a girl is her first marriage. Her growing away from her father is due to the sexual division of labour and the corresponding division of interests in the family. Though there is no barrier to ordinary social intercourse between the sexes in a domestic family, there is the separation of interests and activities that we have mentioned before, and adolescent boys and girls are caught up in it.

A girl of 13 or 14 years and over does not run to her father and cuddle up to him as her 6- or 7-year-old sister might do. She is with her mother and the other women most of the day assisting with the more arduous domestic tasks. She helps to clean the house, to fetch water and collect shea fruit or firewood, to grind the millet, to cook, and to care for the younger children. At harvest time, or when they are beating the floors of their rooms, she does a full day's work with the other women. She is already adept in all these feminine skills and is well versed in all the gossip of the women. A girl of 12 or 13 can be left in charge of the house for a day or two while her mother is away. She goes to market by herself to buy or sell things for her mother; and also, a more important consideration for her personally, to display her charms and flirt with the young men. She accompanies older girls on firewood parties or when they go to dance at funerals.

When a girl approaches puberty her mind is set upon marriage. Tallensi estimate a girl's stage of development before marriage by the [856] appearance of her breasts. Leaving aside betrothal of a girl in childhood, which does not require her consent, a girl is not considered to be mature enough for serious courtship until her breasts are formed (*u biiha n-yi*). She is then called a maiden (*pɔγasarət*). Before that stage, when her breasts are budding (*u biiha m-pukət*), suitors may already be coming to her or soliciting her parents. A girl may be married before she menstruates (*lu sie*), though it is not considered seemly for her husband to sleep with her until she is capable of child-bearing. When her suitors come to her, probably the only person who knows which of them she likes best is her mother; and if she and her lover decide to elope her mother may help them. As we know, the bonds of affection between mother and daughter remain as strong as ever after the latter's marriage

593 and are kept alive by frequent interchange of visits and of gifts. Thus, in the shea fruit season it is a common sight to see a young woman 882 carrying a basket of shea nuts to her mother or fetching one from her 883 mother. Even if a girl marries someone her mother dislikes, this seldom estranges them. If a woman with a young child has to go away for a few days and her mother is near, she usually choose to leave the child with her mother rather than with a co-wife. Thus during pubescence a girl's intimacy and identification with her mother deepens both in terms of her social personality and on the affective level. This is the genetic basis in behaviour and sentiment of the social tie conceptualized in the notion of *soog*.

It must not be thought, though, that a father's affection for his daughter fades away as she approaches marriageable age. Far from it. But it is inevitably biased by the expectation that she will sooner or later leave his household to marry, bear children for another clan, and cease to be a daily care and concern to him. Hence the saying that girl children are of no profit (*ka ŋoori*). Tale women are as proud as their brothers of their paternal ancestry. As we know, they never lose their bonds with their lineage kin; but they come, in time, to identify themselves primarily with their husbands' interests and not with their fathers'. Her divided interests and sentiments bring it about that when a girl reaches womanhood the element of antagonism in her relations with her father may become prominent. I have never seen it overt in relation to the mother.

As we have already recorded, a father's authority over his daughter is most conspicuous in connexion with her marriage, and it is this that often creates conflict between them. This is due largely to the fact that self-differentiation for a woman, both in economic terms and in status, comes through marriage. In principle, as we know, a man can dispose of his daughter's hand as he pleases, resorting to corporal punishment, if need be, to force her to comply with his wishes. Principles and practice often coincide, but, as we have seen, a good father tempers his autocratic rights with consideration for his daughter's wishes and welfare, particularly if, as is frequent, she is supported by her mother.

593 Usually, however, a man has much affection for a married daughter, and a woman, particularly in the early years of marriage, often remains greatly attached to her father. For instance, Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan, perhaps because he had lost most of his children, was greatly attached to his two married daughters. When one of them was attacked by a mysterious lingering illness he himself went to fetch her home and insisted that she should stay with her mother until she became well again. But a man's attachment to his sons is very much greater as a rule. A man may be greatly distressed at the death of a young married daughter, but it is as nothing compared with his grief over the death of a young adult son. And this applies to women too, though they suffer great grief at the death of a married daughter.

These affective divergencies spring from the different social relations 573 of father and son on the one hand, and father and daughter on the other. Though a woman's ties with her paternal family are never severed, a man's jural responsibilities for his daughter cease with her marriage. He never loses the moral and religious authority of a father, however, or the corresponding ritual responsibilities for her. His curse is as potent as ever. The shrine of her spirit guardian is in his keeping and he sacrifices to it on her behalf when her husband requests him to do so. His chief ritual responsibility arises if she is persecuted by [789] an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*). It is his duty to have the rites of exorcism performed so that she can bear children and fulfil satisfactorily her role as a wife. He is obliged to send ceremonial gifts to the funeral if she or his son-in-law dies; and he must 'fetch her funeral home (*die koor*)' and carry out the rites that bring her spirit back to her ancestral fold when she is dead. He has a very definite social and personal interest in her children too. When a woman bears her first child her husband must 593 431 send immediately to tell her parents and they demonstrate their continued affection and concern for her and her children by sending her gifts of food and other necessaries as generous as their means allow. A poor man might send only a basket of unthreshed guinea corn or millet and a couple of guinea-fowls, while his wife sends some shea butter, vegetables, and firewood. A rich chief I knew, when his first-born daughter had her first baby sent a procession of his younger wives bearing an assortment of gifts, including a 25-lb. bag of salt, several baskets of grain, a sheep, six guinea-fowls, and various luxury articles. Throughout her life a woman has a right to substantial gifts of grain from her father's house at harvest time, and to a home if she is left homeless. Women make a special point of collecting these gifts of grain at harvest time whether they are in want or not. As Tanzoo, the wife of a well-to-do man with enough grain and to spare, said when she received a large basket of early millet from her brother, 'I should feel ashamed not to fetch this grain. My co-wives would scoff saying I have no brother, no father.' Thus it is a source of pride, a test of family solidarity and, most important, a recurrent demonstration of a right to share in the products of the patrimonial estate which they might have owned if they had been born men.[1] These duties that a man has towards his daughter are the nucleus of his relations with her children. They are socially prescribed and fall upon his heirs when he dies.

From Adolescence to Adulthood

Let us return to the relations of father and son during this phase of 593 882 the latter's growth and study it more closely. The son is a member of

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 178.

593 his father's household making an essential contribution to its economy
●882 by his labour and skill; he is his father's future heir; he will one day sacrifice to his father's spirit; above all, it is through him that his father's agnatic line is socially and physically perpetuated. And yet there is the cleavage of successive generations between them and the self-differentiation of the son which begins in childhood.

From adolescence onwards economic co-operation is the sheet anchor
593 of the relationship between a youth and his father. The guiding prin-
421 ciple is the rule that all those who work together to supply the needs of the household are entitled to a just share in the products of their common labour, and its corollary that the fruits of individual labour belong to the individual. But the working of this rule is complicated by the fact that the head of the household owns the land and 'owns' (that is, has authority over and responsibility for) his dependants. Thus a man 'owns' his son's labour and the products of it. Strictly speaking, a son cannot own property of any kind while his father is alive, and a father can dispose of a son's property as he pleases. By this rule a man does not even 'own' his children if his father is alive; and this means proxy father as well as own father. Tallensi assert this rule very emphatically, both in speech and in act, for they hold it to be the crucial sign of a father's authority. Though this authority arises automatically from the fact of begetting, its most concrete expression is found in the economic relations of father and son. When I asked the Chief of Tongo how many cattle he had he replied soberly that he had none; all his cattle belonged to his old father Nakyɛna'ab. Though, in practice, Nakyɛna'ab will not forbid the chief from doing what he pleases with these cattle, the chief never disposes of a cow, either in ritual or by sale or in jural transactions such as the payment of bride-price, without telling his father and obtaining the old man's formal consent.

The Tallensi regard the economic relations, the jural relations, and the moral and ritual relations of father and son as different aspects of the same thing. Each of these categories of relations has a binding force on the other categories. A man 'owns' his son because he begot him; but he sometimes says that he has authority over his son because the latter is dependent on him and that he has responsibilities for his son because the latter works for him. In the same way a son must work for his father as an obligation of filial piety; but his work is also the return he makes for his father's economic support and for the ritual and jural responsibility his father bears on his behalf. Just which factor is emphasized depends on the particular situation. The different elements of this configuration are linked together by the principle of reciprocity. Its essence is the idea that duties imply equivalent rights for the *tarəm*, the junior or inferior person, as well as for the *kpeem*, the senior or superior.

This configuration is not peculiar to the relations of own father and son. It is the general pattern prevailing between the head of a household

868 858 dawn. They might tell their parents where they are going, but would not be sent for to come home.

858 857 Numerous instances could be added to illustrate further the freedom allowed to children. Of the responsibility allotted to them in applying their skills and their appreciation of it, one good example may be quoted. I was chatting with a group of boys, aged about 7–11 years, at sunset one day, when Duunbil, the oldest of them, suddenly exclaimed, clasping his hands in a gesture expressing both amusement and consternation: ‘ Ma! I've forgotten to untie the goats; I'll get a whipping.’ ‘You'd better run,’ one of the others advised, as he [231] dashed away. His companions explained that he had pegged his father's goats out in the morning to graze and that it was his duty to bring them home again. Goats cannot be left out all night lest hyenas catch them. A few days later I met Duunbil again and he told me, with a grin, that he had not managed to bring the goats in till after dark, but that he had been let off with a mild beating.

858 882 Children and adolescents share economic tasks in accordance with their skill and maturity, and they have a strong sense of the rights to which they are entitled in consequence. An adolescent has the right to be adequately fed and supported by his or her parents in return for co-operation in agricultural or domestic work. I have known of youths running away from home when they considered themselves to be badly treated in these respects. Children expect to have their services acknowledged in a similar way. Yindəl, aged about 11, an intelligent and enterprising lad, was already giving his father valuable assistance, both in the care of live stock and in farming. When the great dances came round, Yindəl wanted a new loin cloth. His father refused to buy him one, whereupon Yindəl went on strike, neglected the chickens, the donkeys, the goats and refused to go to the bush farm even after a beating. In the end his father had to yield. *Bii la mar buurt*—‘ The boy has justice on his side ’—he said, when he told me the story.

857 858 234 A similar incident occurred with a man who supplied us with milk for a short while. Money is scarce in Taleland and 2*s.* 6*d.* a month is an enviable addition to family resources. Yet one day he came to [435] tell me apologetically that he could no longer sell me milk. Why? His small son, whose job it was to herd the cow, had rebelled. He

593 tendencies are reconciled. The liberty to address his father by name is a reassurance, to the child, of the love and solicitude that lie behind the 576 authority his father exercises over him. Perhaps it is also an expression of the identification of father and child by the lineage principle. And the greater deference in his behaviour towards his mother than towards his father is a sign that he recognizes her control, though she seems to have only love and devotion for him. Familiarity in everyday intercourse compensates for the filial piety due to a parent in the more formal, particularly in the jural and ritual aspects, of parent–child relations. The greater overt freedom with the father compensates for the greater emphasis on respect and dependence in the child's relations with him; the franker signs of deference towards the mother compensate for the greater emphasis on her love for her child as against her authority over him.

Clearly there is a very high degree of consistency between the social 593 images of the parents projected in the cultural norms of the Tallensi and the actual behaviour of children to parents. The mother is thought of as the food-giver. Her love for her children is subject to no limits or laws and her status in relation to them is almost sacrosanct. Her relations with them are based on love tempered with authority. The father is thought of as the source of discipline, the guardian of good conduct. He is strict without being harsh or tyrannous. His role is of special importance in the face of the community at large and in relation to the spiritual powers that govern human life. His relations with his children are based on his authority over them, his responsibility for them, and justice tempered with love.

Adolescence and the Principle of Reciprocity

For a Tale boy the years between about 13 and 20 bring changes in 883 degree rather than in kind in his relations with his parents. There is no affective or social break to mark a transition from childhood to adulthood among the Tallensi. Even among the Hill Talis initiation into the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is not associated with adolescence; it can take place at any age. A boy's social development is a process of gradual advance along lines laid down in early childhood.[1] As he grows older

he grows more and more proficient in the economic skills he began to acquire in childhood and better versed in the details of his culture. By the time he is 20 or so he knows most of what is known to his people about farming and animal husbandry, hunting and fishing, and building. He is wholly imbued with the values of his culture and has a good working knowledge of its institutions and customs. It is enough to enable him to play his part as a young man in the life of his community, but there is still much to learn which only years of experience and responsibility will give him. He is, however, an active if unimportant participant in corporate activities of the lineage and clan, and in the management of family affairs, with a right to his own opinions. In step with his growing social maturity a boy's field of social relations increases in range and in depth. His father's authority begins to loom larger, but at the same time his father's responsibilities on his behalf also increase and his own self-differentiation advances; and a theme that was of minor effect in their relationship hitherto comes into prominence. This is the principle of reciprocity. 883

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[1] Tallensi distinguish the main phases of a boy's development not by 856 chronological age but by two criteria of a broader character, either separately or together, according to the situation. They have a physiological criterion and an economic one. Physiologically they distinguish three major phases, after babyhood, in a boy: (*a*) when he is still a 'small boy (*bumbil*)' with undescended testicles, showing, as they put it, only a 'pale scrotum (*lanzee*)'; (*b*) Pubescence, denoted by the verb *sol*, to mature physically, and marked by the testicles descending (*lana sigarɔme*) and the emergence of pubic hair (*saŋkperuŋ kɔbɔt*). They say 'he has matured completely (*u sol ba'ahme*)' of a boy who has reached puberty and is entering manhood. (*c*) Lastly comes adulthood, when he is a 'grown man (*bonkɔrag*)'. It is by reference to these physiological phases that men often date events in their life. The second criterion is that of advancing economic proficiency. A 'small boy' is capable only of scaring the birds from the newly

During this period the identification of father and son is greatly deepened. It grows out of the intimacies and co-operation of everyday life. As they work side by side on the farm the father teaches his son farming skills and lore. When he performs a sacrifice at home his son is his assistant, learning from him how to carry out such rites, and what doctrines and beliefs lie behind them. In such situations he learns the names of his ancestors and begins to understand the structure of the lineage system and where he fits into it. He makes the acquaintance of matrilateral and sororal kin who come to take part in rites of this sort. The division between the men of the lineage and the women of the lineage, and the distinction between the father's side of the family and the mother's side become of direct practical relevance to him. Sometimes a man will call his adolescent and adult sons to him and tell them various things they ought to know in case he gets ill or dies. He tells them about his farms and other property, about his debts and those who owe him debts, and, a most important matter, about his ancestor and medicine shrines. In doing this he is, in effect, telling them what he knows of the history and traditions of his lineage and clan. These are matters which a man does not speak about to his daughters or wives. If they learn of them it is only incidentally, through listening to the conversation of the men. Daughters and wives are present at domestic sacrifices to ancestor spirits, but only sons are allowed to share in the cult of a man's private medicine shrines. Most important of all is the responsible 593 883 882

sown farms or from the ripening grain; a lad of 7 or 8 can be trusted to take care of sheep (*dɔl pihi*); older boys, up to the age of 14 or 15, are cattle herds (*kiem nigi*) and already help with the hoeing; after the age of pubescence a boy works on the farm side by side with the men—he farms (*u kɔɔreme*). These phases are also used to date events, often in conjunction with the physiological criterion. 856

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part an adolescent begins to play in the household economy. His work becomes an essential contribution to its welfare and hence he has a voice in its management.

A man who grew up under his own father's direct tutelage and learnt the arts of life from him in this way is said to be one who 'reached' (*paa*)—that is, knew in person—his father. Tallensi perceive that this is a mechanism of primary importance not only for maintaining the cohesion of the family and the lineage, but also for the transmission of their culture to their offspring. A man quoting precedents from the past for instance, in support of a claim to a debt or to a right to succeed to a particular office, bases his argument on the statement, 'I reached my father and saw such and such things', or, 'I reached my father and he told me this or that'. A man well versed in the details of the social structure, of ceremonial activities, or of economic lore, or in the finer points of etiquette, morals, traditions, and beliefs, says proudly, in explanation of his knowledge, 'Did I not reach my father?'; and a common excuse offered for ignorance is that the person concerned 'did not reach his father'.

The identification of father and son becomes of considerable social importance at this stage and henceforth. Thus it is a very common thing for youths of 18 and upwards to represent their fathers in jural and ceremonial affairs that do not demand their fathers' personal presence. If a man is asked by a clansman to act as intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) in a marriage transaction, he will often send his son as his deputy. And if the intermediary chosen is a young lad, his father will act for him. So also a man sends his sons with the customary gifts he is obliged to contribute to his father-in-law's or mother-in-law's funeral. Old men always delegate their sons to act for them in political matters and often in jural affairs. In disputes about wives it is a common thing to see a man's son coming to the tribunal as his father's representative to answer for the actions of the brother whom he accompanies. In jural and ceremonial situations the identification of father and son is coextensive with the range of recognized generation differences within the inner lineage.

We have previously remarked that the identification of father and son is a fundamental element in the structure of the lineage. It is also, and more significantly from our present point of view, a fundamental feature of the normal personal relations of father and son. This is seen most simply in the affection and devotion so often found between father and son and in the strength of the sentiments and religious values associated with the father's original home.

The relationship of mother and son also changes during this phase, but again there is no abrupt break. As a boy approaches manhood he becomes more and more absorbed in the activities and interests of men and sees less of his mother in everyday intercourse. But his affec-

tion for her remains. He still helps her to cultivate her ground-nut plot, 543
if he has no younger brothers to take this on, and assists her in other 883 ●
ways. Later on, when he marries, his intimacy with his mother will be
revived. It is to her *dug* that he brings his wife and in her care that he 882
places the girl.

[881] A girl grows away from her father as she approaches puberty. This is not due to physiological taboos, for there are none connected with a girl's puberty or with menstruation in general. There are no ceremonies to mark a girl's attainment of physiological maturity, nor is there any break in her affective relations with her parents. The only significant break in the steady process of social maturation for a girl is her first marriage. Her growing away from her father is due to the sexual division of labour and the corresponding division of interests in the family. Though there is no barrier to ordinary social intercourse between the sexes in a domestic family, there is the separation of interests and activities that we have mentioned before, and adolescent boys and girls are caught up in it.

A girl of 13 or 14 years and over does not run to her father and cuddle up to him as her 6- or 7-year-old sister might do. She is with her mother and the other women most of the day assisting with the more arduous domestic tasks. She helps to clean the house, to fetch water and collect shea fruit or firewood, to grind the millet, to cook, and to care for the younger children. At harvest time, or when they are beating the floors of their rooms, she does a full day's work with the other women. She is already adept in all these feminine skills and is well versed in all the gossip of the women. A girl of 12 or 13 can be left in charge of the house for a day or two while her mother is away. She goes to market by herself to buy or sell things for her mother; and also, a more important consideration for her personally, to display her charms and flirt with the young men. She accompanies older girls on firewood parties or when they go to dance at funerals.

[856] When a girl approaches puberty her mind is set upon marriage. Tallensi estimate a girl's stage of development before marriage by the appearance of her breasts. Leaving aside betrothal of a girl in childhood, which does not require her consent, a girl is not considered to be mature enough for serious courtship until her breasts are formed (*u biiha n-yi*). She is then called a maiden (*pɔɣasarət*). Before that stage, when her breasts are budding (*u biiha m-pukət*), suitors may already be coming to her or soliciting her parents. A girl may be married before she menstruates (*lu sie*), though it is not considered seemly for her husband to sleep with her until she is capable of child-bearing. When her suitors come to her, probably the only person who knows which of them she likes best is her mother; and if she and her lover decide to elope her mother may help them. As we know, the bonds of affection between mother and daughter remain as strong as ever after the latter's marriage

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and are kept alive by frequent interchange of visits and of gifts. Thus, in the shea fruit season it is a common sight to see a young woman carrying a basket of shea nuts to her mother or fetching one from her mother. Even if a girl marries someone her mother dislikes, this seldom estranges them. If a woman with a young child has to go away for a few days and her mother is near, she usually choose to leave the child with her mother rather than with a co-wife. Thus during pubescence a girl's intimacy and identification with her mother deepens both in terms of her social personality and on the affective level. This is the genetic basis in behaviour and sentiment of the social tie conceptualized in the notion of *soog*.

It must not be thought, though, that a father's affection for his daughter fades away as she approaches marriageable age. Far from it. But it is inevitably biased by the expectation that she will sooner or later leave his household to marry, bear children for another clan, and cease to be a daily care and concern to him. Hence the saying that girl children are of no profit (*ka ŋoori*). Tale women are as proud as their brothers of their paternal ancestry. As we know, they never lose their bonds with their lineage kin; but they come, in time, to identify themselves primarily with their husbands' interests and not with their fathers'. Her divided interests and sentiments bring it about that when a girl reaches womanhood the element of antagonism in her relations with her father may become prominent. I have never seen it overt in relation to the mother.

As we have already recorded, a father's authority over his daughter is most conspicuous in connexion with her marriage, and it is this that often creates conflict between them. This is due largely to the fact that self-differentiation for a woman, both in economic terms and in status, comes through marriage. In principle, as we know, a man can dispose of his daughter's hand as he pleases, resorting to corporal punishment, if need be, to force her to comply with his wishes. Principles and practice often coincide, but, as we have seen, a good father tempers his autocratic rights with consideration for his daughter's wishes and welfare, particularly if, as is frequent, she is supported by her mother.

593 Usually, however, a man has much affection for a married daughter, and a woman, particularly in the early years of marriage, often remains greatly attached to her father. For instance, Tɔŋ-Yikpemdaan, perhaps because he had lost most of his children, was greatly attached to his two married daughters. When one of them was attacked by a mysterious lingering illness he himself went to fetch her home and insisted that she should stay with her mother until she became well again. But a man's attachment to his sons is very much greater as a rule. A man may be greatly distressed at the death of a young married daughter, but it is as nothing compared with his grief over the death of a young adult son. And this applies to women too, though they suffer great grief at the death of a married daughter.

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524 enthusiasm for building still lasts, the girls plaster the walls and beat
868 the inner court in the way they have learnt by assisting their mothers
with these tasks in connexion with the real house.

857 Children's arts and crafts have a play value in that they are practised
524 purely for pleasure and have a seasonal incidence. But they demand
868 considerable skill of eye and hand, and individual differences in
301 ability are noticeable. Towards the end of the rainy season a strong
283 and supple reed springs up in profusion along the watercourses.
Young people and children pluck these reeds to plait bangles, necklets, small panels to hang over the chest as decorations, and waistbands. These things are worn by young and old at the festival dances. But whereas the young men and women plait sporadically a few things for themselves, their sweetheart, or a child, children do so continuously and absorbedly. From July to September one sees them sitting about or strolling about in small groups, plaiting reed decorations. The boys have a game played by tossing or bowling the reed bangles and waistbands at a mark. A group plays, and the winner collects all. Girls of all ages love decking themselves from head to foot in this reedware. The technique of plaiting these articles, which is the same as that employed in the manufacture of a number of utilitarian objects, is fairly elaborate. It is gradually learnt between the ages of about 8 and 11.

857 Less widely practised is the art of modelling clay figures. Girls
524 sometimes model, but it is chiefly a diversion of boys. Cattle and
other animals, humans, horses accoutred and with riders astride are
868 the usual subjects. A taste for modelling appears to depend on talent
532 to a great extent. Many boys never acquire the art; others take such
delight in it that they devote the whole dry season to producing dozens of clay figures for themselves, brothers and sisters, and friends. Gifted boys model extremely cleverly. I knew two boys of 12 or 13, sons of a chief, who made clay horses and manufactured saddlery and trappings of old rags and bells and ornaments of pieces of tin to adorn the figures. Older boys or youths teach small boys by correcting errors they make in modelling; but I have never found a boy of under 8 or 9 years able to model well.

883 *Play from pubescence to adolescence.* The last stage of childhood
868 coincides with the rapid absorption of the child into the economic

system and his or her gradual acquisition of a responsible status in 883 ●
the social structure. By the age of 14 or 15 most girls are already 868
married or being courted in marriage. They take their household
duties more lightly perhaps than older women with children, but 866
their childhood education is complete. Their education in the duties and responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood lies outside the scope of this paper. ' To play ' now means to join in the dance or to dress up and go to market, there to gossip and flirt. These are recreations merely, like conversation in the evening after a good meal, when the whole family sits or sprawls about in one of the inner courts or in front of the gateway. Such ' play ' is educative in quite a different sense to that of childhood.

Boys, too, between the ages of 12 or 13 and 16 to 18 are at the stage of transition from childhood to young manhood. The imaginative play still prominent at the beginning of this period is given up by degrees and usually altogether abandoned when puberty is established. Like the adolescent girl, the boy of 16 or so finds his principal recreation in the dance at certain seasons.
He, too, begins to frequent markets [584]
when time permits, for he is greatly preoccupied with the opposite sex, with courtship and flirtations and even transient love affairs, and there is no place like the market for pretty girls. An adolescent youth is already applying the deftness and skill acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. A 16-year-old takes an active part in building and thatching and in the manufacture of bows and arrows, or in the practice of crafts like leatherwork or the forging of tools and implements.

The transition from boyhood to manhood can readily be observed in the development of farming interests and skill during this period. The boy of 10 to 12 is extremely keen to plant, hoe and weed. Helping his father, he sows ground-nuts for himself amongst his father's early millet. Frequently he has a small plot of cereals, a few yards square, in a useless corner of one of his father's fields. He hoes and plants and weeds his plot with great energy and zest, though somewhat crudely, borrowing one of his father's discarded hoes for this purpose. He assists his mother to farm her ground-nuts and beans. But his efforts make no difference to the family commissariat or to the care and sustenance given him by his parents. He is still

883 experimenting without responsibility, though with great earnestness.
868 Two or three years later the play element has vanished. If he culti-
866 vates a personal plot he makes an effort to beg land which is agriculturally good, and works with the avowed purpose of obtaining a crop which, though minute compared with the needs of the family, suffices to buy himself a cap or a loin-cloth. The time he can now devote to his own plot or to his own ground-nuts must be adjusted in accordance with his responsibilities as a contributor to the family economy.

With boys, therefore, as with girls, the completion of their childhood education marks the end of childhood play. Mimetic and imaginative experimentation becomes redundant when the individual attains social responsibility and maturity. The play of Tale children changes, as we have seen, *pari passu* with their advancing maturity, contributing at each stage to the elaboration and integration of those interests, skills, and observances the mastery and acceptance of which is the final result of their education.

VI. SYNOPTIC CHART OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In conclusion, and in order to bring the preceding analysis of the education of Tale children to a focus, I append a synoptic chart setting out the main trends of the development of their interests and skills as these are reflected in their economic duties and activities, on the one hand, and in their play on the other. The reader will realize that these norms are necessarily crude and approximate. I have not ventured to include observances in the chart, since the trend of their acquisition cannot easily be analysed into approximate stages.

CHART OF DEVELOPMENT

BOYS

857 *Economic Duties and Activities*	*Play*
3–6 years	
None at first. Towards end of this period begin to assist in pegging out goats; scaring birds from newly sown fields and from crops; accompany family sowing and harvesting parties; using hoe in quasi-play to glean ground-nuts in company of older siblings.	Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Use mimetic toys (bow, drum, &c.) in egocentric play. Towards end of period social and imaginative play with ' cattle ' and ' house-building ' commences, often in company of older children of either sex, as well as recreational games and dancing.

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6–9 years

These duties now fully established. Help in house-building by carrying swish. Assist in sowing and harvesting. Towards end of period begin to go out with the herd-boys, and to care for poultry.

Imaginative 'cattle' and 'house-building' play common, the latter often reflecting current economic activity of adults. Practice with bow and arrow in marksmanship competitions, and 'hunting' with groups of comrades begun. Recreational games and dancing established. Modelling clay figures and plaiting begun. Ritual play begun.

9–12 years

Fully responsible cattle-herding. Care for poultry. Assisting parents in hoeing and care of crops, but without responsibility. Farming own small plots and ground-nuts but in quasi-play. Sons of specialist craftsmen assist fathers in subsidiary capacity—'learning by looking'.

Further development of preceding forms of play, especially of ritual play. Clay-modelling and plaiting established. Recreational games and dancing more skilful. Quasi-play farming.

Sexual dichotomy in work and play established.

12–15 years

Duties as in preceding period but more responsible. Responsible care of poultry, sometimes own property. Leaders of herd-boys. Real farming of own plots and in co-operation with older members of family established by end of period. Sons of specialists experimentally making things.

Imaginative play abandoned. Dancing the principal recreation. Ritual play abandoned. Modelling gradually abandoned. Plaiting for personal decoration mainly. Regular sweet-hearting commences. 883

GIRLS

Economic Duties and Activities | *Play*

3–6 years

None at first. Towards end of period the same duties as small boys. Frequent nursing of infants. Accompany mothers to water-hole and begin to carry tiny water-pots. Help in simple domestic tasks such as sweeping.

Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Attached to older sisters and drawn into their 'housekeeping' play. Towards end of period begin to take active social part in the latter and begin recreational play and dancing. Often found in mixed sex groups. 857

6–9 years

Duties of previous period established. Responsible co-operation in water-carrying and simpler domestic duties. Help in cooking and in activities associated with food-preparation, such as searching for wild edible herbs. Accompany family parties at sowing and harvesting, giving quasi-playful help. Carry swish at building operations and assist women in plastering and floor-beating, but still with a play element.

'Housekeeping' play usual. Recreational play and dancing established. Begin to learn plaiting. Participate in 'building' play of boys, mimicking current women's activities, e.g. plastering.

9–12 years

857 All domestic duties can be entrusted to them by end of this period—water-carrying, cooking, care of infants, &c. Assisting in building and plastering, &c., more responsibly. Often sent to market to buy and sell. Help in women's part of the work at sowing and harvest times.

'Housekeeping' play continues, gradually fading out at end of this period. Dancing becomes principal recreation. Plaiting both for decoration and use established. Begin to have sweethearts but not yet with serious intent.

Sexual dichotomy in work and play established.

12–15 years

● 883 Responsible part in all domestic duties of everyday life, and of those associated with ceremonial occasions. Go for firewood and collect shea-fruits in the bush, and help to prepare shea butter. (Marriage a very near prospect.)

Note. Care of infants and children is a duty of girls at all ages. Boys also are frequently entrusted with this task.

Imaginative play abandoned. Dancing the main recreation. Courtship and hetero-sexual interests occupy a great deal of time and attention. Actively participate in the social side of funeral ceremonies, &c., in the role of marriageable girls.

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BY JOHN JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

619 gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pɛhug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tɛndaana.

764 Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have
[884] begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*waləg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teeləg lineages, use only a piece of string

619 The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin
184 has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

173 Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Wooləga country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teeləg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

577 The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the
764 lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihər*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihər*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that 613
define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, 618X
they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is
through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social
order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community
of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and
looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one
belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based
on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by
common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social
personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and
of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant.
In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual
fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the
lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔɣar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their 618X
validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular 778
known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the
Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔɣar*.

The External *Bɔɣar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔɣar*, parallel to 618X
the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and 778
the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans
and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, 794
each External *Bɔɣar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans 182
and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single 884
cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔɣar* 881
maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of
maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental
common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social
identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been
initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Taləŋ
(*u pana baŋ Taləŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Taləŋ
has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child';
now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to
indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member
of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider
community.

The *Bɔɣar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It 769
symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, 778
one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of 881
ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔɣar*, and often
invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical,
anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔɣar* symbolizes the ritual value of
the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis
to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It
symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought
into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

593 the other taboos of first-born children. Its meaning is plain if we bear
in mind what the gateway and the *zɔŋ* symbolize in the structure of the
518 family and the lineage.[1] Significantly enough, a first-born daughter does
not observe it.

Eventually, when the son's older children are reaching adolescence, the opposition between his father and himself culminates in his formal separation from his parental family. We have noticed before that fission in the joint family is basically due to structural and economic factors. In the case of an eldest son's hiving off, Tallensi say that it is often brought about by the jealousies of the womenfolk. The son's wife or wives complain that they are not getting a fair deal in the distribution of food-supplies in the joint family. They are always nagging at their husband on that account. So when a son 'goes out on his own (*yi u kɔkɔ*)' natives say it is in order the better to support his wives and children. But the separation is actually due as much to the relations between the man and his father as to the purely economic causes. It is an instance of the convergence and congruence of structural principles and economic necessities.

Most commonly an eldest son separates off formally by cutting a
593 new gateway for himself in the family homestead. The native phrase
518 is *bit u zanɔr* ('slit his gateway'), and it describes precisely what happens.
The wall of the homestead is cut through so as to make an extra gateway
884 leading into the son's quarters. Though he and his wife and children will very often use the main gateway, he is by status the owner of his own subsidiary gateway and cannot formally clash with his father. At the same time he achieves a considerable measure of economic independence. He will have his own bush farm and small home farm and be responsible for providing the bulk of the food required by his wife and children. But he still helps his father and younger brothers with their farm work, and receives some food-supplies from his father in return if his own supplies are insufficient for his needs. Sometimes, however, an eldest son moves out altogether. His father may let him build a homestead on a bush farm belonging to the family, or he may migrate to one of the peripheral settlements. As we have seen, it usually takes a few years for a son to achieve this step. I have heard young men who were pressing their claims for a separate gateway express impatience with an obstinate old father and even resentment against his apparent tyranny. But when the parting comes it is usually amicable, and father and son continue to be on excellent and intimate terms thereafter. The son is still under his father's final authority in jural and ritual matters.

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The Native Theory of the Tension between the Generations

518 Tallensi explain the rivalry between father and son by means of the
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[1] Cf. Ch. III above.

of distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have 593
seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are
sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this 867
pattern.

The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the 593
genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is
into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; 613
then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family.

As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic 593
of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course,
in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally 602
relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action.

The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences,
postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one 593
another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land.

We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full 593
economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his
self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no 884
inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity.

The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately 593
with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the 884
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593 ● 884 578 cleavages between *sunzɔ* siblings, both on the level of jural and economic relations and in sentiment, more prominently to the fore. It is the starting-point of those intra-familial tensions that, according to native views, stir up jealousies between co-wives who are wives of brothers. As we know, these tensions are said to culminate, very often, in quarrels over alleged unfairness in the apportionment of food-supplies, or over the treatment of children, or other ostensible acts of discrimination between co-wives. This is one of the reasons most often adduced for a man's leaving the paternal homestead to farm on his own. From these tensions arise also those disagreements between brothers over petty trespasses on one another's property or independence, summed up in the conventional formula of 'quarrels about chickens and eggs'. The stage is thus set for the typical process of residential and economic fission in the joint family along the genealogical lines of cleavage inherent in it. The equality in status and rights of brothers in relation to one another within the lineage thus attains its maximum emphasis in the social structure. The natives are well aware of the economic pressures behind this process; but they also see that these pressures would not work out in just the way they do if it were not for the inherent dichotomy in the structure of the family and the lineage. These two factors mutually determine and reinforce each other.

593 578 613 This brings up a point of some importance. It is conceivable that tension between brothers, whatever it is a symptom of, might result in young men separating after the death of their father, or after marriage, to take up land wherever they can find any. Thus a group of brothers would be scattered without respect to their lineage ties; and this process would in a few generations lead to the disintegration of the present highly localized lineage structure, and the emergence of a system of dispersed intermingled clans such as is found in many West African societies.[1] In fact, as previous chapters have shown, there is a slow process of dispersion in progress among the Tallensi all the time, but it has not led to a breakdown of the lineage system. The lineage ramifies, it does not break up into independent units that sever their genealogical ties with the main branch.

The basis of this is the fact that brothers separate but do not thereby relinquish membership of their maximal lineage. They do not sever their social and personal bonds with one another; which means that they do not forfeit any of their rights or relinquish any of their duties as sons and brothers. They are independent only within the bounds set by the corporate unity and the common interests of the lineage system. For it is only through his position in the lineage system that a Taləŋ is able satisfactorily to secure his rights and perform his duties as a

also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Təŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sɔk—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sɔk; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence. 601 602

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[1] This would appear to be the case among the Ashanti (cf. R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, ch. viii) and the Jukun (cf. C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom*, ch. ii), to cite only two widely separated examples.

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1] 604

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u ŋman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u ŋman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl with a perineal band (*suol voog*). This is a proud moment for her, as the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have entered the ranks of the matrons (*pɔγaŋaaŋ*, pl. *pɔγaŋaas*). Then, before 2/1 604 843 431 [884]

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[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

2/1 [Text continued on p. 301.-Analyst]

into its social space. The most important of these is, universally, its 121
mother or some one who acts as mother. Finally, there will be culturally defined ways of encouraging and stimulating or restraining a child in these efforts.

In Taleland these factors of social behaviour are notably inter- 145
correlated. In general there is a marked parallelism between the trend 884 ●
of physiological and psychological development and that of social and 182
cultural development—unlike our own society in certain strata of which social development lags behind psycho-physical development. A girl of 16 or so in Taleland is not only physiologically mature but has accepted the role of a mature woman in the psychological and social sense. She is married, she has economic duties to perform, she is socially responsible. A boy of the same age is pulling his full weight in the economic system, and it is regarded as entirely reasonable that he should be thinking of marriage and sex life, though it may be four or five years before he finds a wife. It should be added that physiological development among the Tallensi is probably somewhat slower than among ourselves. Accurate age norms could not, as will readily be appreciated, be established, but I have estimated that the average [856]
age of walking is about 2 years, of talking about 3 years (though single words like *mma*, my mother, and names of members of the family are used with infantile approximation at about 2 years). As far as one can judge by somatic indications, pubescence in boys commences at about 14 years. Girls, according to my wife's observations, do not as a rule menstruate before the age of about 15–16 years, by which time [582]
they have frequently been married for a year or two.

This close correlation between psycho-physical and social develop- 827
ment is reflected in the notion held by the natives that physiological 881
growth is a natural process, like the growth of plants and animals. 812
The Tallensi have no elaborate transition rites to mark the passage from one stage of growth to another. Unlike many other West African peoples, they accept the onset of puberty in boys and girls, which they recognize by special terms, with the same casual rationality as they accept the cycle of time itself. Health and well-being of the body must be safeguarded with all the resources of their empirical and magical knowledge, but growth in itself is not a matter of cultural emphasis. It is of the very nature of human life. It emanates from

ma-kpeem, fem.) are a foil to those of parents and children. It is convenient here to state the range within which grandparents are acknowledged. On both the mother's side and the father's side grandparents are primarily one's own parent's own parents. The terms are extended to own grandparents' siblings (in particular to a grandfather's brothers) and their wives, but rarely beyond that limit, and never, in my experience, beyond a grandfather's agnatic cousin. This is correlated with the cycle of development of the joint family. By the time a man has grandchildren he is not likely to be still sharing a homestead with his brother, let alone cousin, and his classificatory siblings will have only a formal interest in his grandchildren. 603

The diagram on p. 148 sums up this discussion of the range of parenthood acknowledged by the Tallensi.

The Significance of 'Having no Father alive'

Clearly the formula 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage' covers a complicated tissue of social relationships. Another aspect of it appears in the significance Tallensi attach to whether or not one's father is alive. 593

This is a matter of considerable practical importance, more particularly for men, but also for women. A person's status in his clan, and in every segment of it to which he belongs, depends largely on whether 'his father is alive (*u ba bɛ*)' or not (*u ba ka*). It is correlated with the distribution of jural and ritual authority and responsibility in the lineage. During his own father's lifetime a person's status is submerged in that of his father for jural and ritual purposes. He comes directly under his father's authority, as we shall see presently. He attains his first degree of independence only on the death of his own father. This is shown to some extent in every department of his life, but most significantly in the sphere of ritual. A man cannot make sacrifices to his patrilineal ancestors in his own right while his own father is alive. His father does this on his behalf. It is only when his father dies that a man can sacrifice directly to his ancestors; for such sacrifices can only be offered through the medium of his father's spirit. 593 885● [782]

This marks a very important stage in a man's social maturation, whatever his chronological age may be. Henceforth the responsibility for keeping the goodwill of his ancestors rests directly on his own shoulders. It will be he himself, for instance, not his father, who decides whether a sacrifice demanded by such-and-such an ancestor should be offered at once or postponed. And with this first stage of ritual responsibility usually goes some degree of autonomy in jural and economic matters, as we shall see presently. Nevertheless, no man attains full autonomy within the limits of the lineage system until he is altogether 'fatherless'. While he has a proxy or classificatory father alive he is still to some extent under paternal authority. It is worth

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight into the working of the classificatory principle. 593

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves. 764 784

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers. 613 602 [601]

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

601 the lineage often leads to conflict and it is in these conflicts that the
process of fission is often completed. They arise chiefly in connexion
613 with the inheritance of widows and the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar*
178 (that is, to the headship of the lineage)—the two situations in which consistency between the corporate unity of the inner lineage and the recognition of generation differences is most severely tested. What happens is that the heads of what were previously regarded as the component segments of an inner lineage advance contradictory claims to the custody of the lineage *bɔɣar*. One may claim it on the grounds of seniority of generation—being the classificatory father of the other—while his opponent refuses to admit this and claims seniority by age. It is a conflict between 'seniority of begetting (*dɔɣam kpɛmət*)' (i.e. by generation) and 'seniority of predestiny' or, as we might say, chance (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*) (i.e. by age). The long-drawn-out quarrel between Yinyɛla and the other elders of Tɔŋ-Puhug turned on a point of this kind. Yinyɛla claimed to be a generation superior to the heads of all the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri,[1] but the other elders would not admit the validity of this claim. The genealogical evidence supported Yinyɛla, and the precedents he quoted from the days of his father and grandfather were probably accurate. But that was not the question; the relations of the segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri had changed in the last two generations and, as the elders put it, 'begetting has died out (*dɔɣam kpiya*)'.

An earlier stage in the fading out of classificatory kinship appeared in the controversy over Baroog's widows. Nindɔɣat's eldest son was discovered to be secretly courting one of the women and Baroog's father immediately raised an outcry. Nindɔɣat, he protested, was his 'son' and Baroog's 'brother', hence Nindɔɣat's son would be committing incest if he married Baroog's widow, his classificatory mother. But Nindɔɣat stood by his son, arguing that they were no longer members of a single inner lineage but of two separate inner lineages. 'We are each our own *dug* (*ti a ti dug ti dug*),' he said. The weight of public opinion in the clan was against him, however, and the woman in the case took fright. But a split in the lineage is inevitable, though it may take a generation to complete.

Change of Status Due to Death of 'Father' Shown in Property Relations

613 There is more to be said about the social consequences of having or
●885 not having a father alive, and we shall revert to the subject later from another point of view. What is so far clear is that a man's social status, particularly in jural and ritual matters, but also in economic affairs, advances step by step with the dying off of his fathers. Strictly speaking, he is not altogether autonomous until he has no more fathers within the range of the inner lineage, but in practice he is free of effective

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 196.

paternal control when he has no more fathers in the nuclear lineage. 613
The death of his own father marks the beginning of what might be
called this process of emancipation, though it is not overtly felt to be 885
that by the natives. As previous references have shown, this is usually the thin end of the wedge that in due course splits the joint family economically and eventually gives the sons jural and ritual independence. It is not too much to say that the cycle of fission and reintegration in the joint family, with its co-ordinate processes of ramification in the lineage, is kept in motion by the deaths of fathers. That is one reason why the relations of successive generations are most conspicuously symbolized in funeral rites and ceremonies.

Underlying all changes in status due to the extinction of particular 421
social relationships are changes in property relations which include, for the Tallensi, both rights over people and rights over material objects and economic resources. These rights pass from one generation to the next by inheritance or succession. There are rights over farm-land, the basic capital resource of the natives, and over homesteads; rights of disposal over livestock and other valuables, as well as over services and social bonds that have been created in exchange for valuables; rights over the working power and allegiance of men, women, and children; and last but not least, rights to the custody of ancestor shrines and other religious objects and to the politico-ritual offices that go with some of them.

All these property relations are tied directly to the lineage structure; 613
they are graded and interlocked with one another in conformity with
that structure. They fall into two major categories: patrimonial rights 421
and property, for which the Tallensi have a specific term, *faar*; and individual rights and property, for which there is no specific term. Looking at it through native eyes, in terms of the continuity of the lineage and the march of the generations, we can see why this is so. *Faar* belongs to the lineage—it may be only the nuclear lineage or it may be the maximal lineage. All the members of the lineage are potential heirs to it. But the man who is in possession at a given time has complete freedom in using it—though not in disposing of it. On the other hand, individually acquired property and rights belong to the individual. A 'fatherless' man is free to use, dispose of, or destroy his individually acquired property—be it a piece of land, an animal, a garment, money, or whatnot—as he wishes. A man subject to some degree of paternal authority is in theory obliged to be ruled by his 'father' in the use and disposal of his individual property, though in practice he has a very large measure of freedom in this matter. But the crucial point is this. Individual property becomes patrimonial property when, as inevitably happens on the death of the original owner, it is inherited. In this way it comes about that every segment of a lineage tends to have its own transmissible *faar*.

621 613 177 loyal to the interests of these clan settlements. But the political structure of the newer settlements is rapidly crystallizing out, on the basis of a territorial unity reinforced by inter-individual kinship ties. This process has been greatly accelerated under the influence of British rule, with its stress on the territorial definition of political units and the support it gives to chiefs and headmen in the exercise of administrative and judicial functions.

Seniority and Authority in the Lineage

613 182 In the course of our morphological analysis of the lineage system from within, we have made many references to the corporate activities in which this system emerges. As in our study of clanship, it has been convenient to speak as if the lineage structure exists and persists apart from the activities in which it emerges. But this is only an analytical device which we shall consider more fully presently. The implied distinction between the structure of the lineage and its functions does, however, bring out the important fact that the lineage structure is more than any of its functions. It is the integral of what is common to all Tale institutions in which the patrilineal line operates as an organizing principle. It is the general factor of consistency, coherence, and continuity in the social structure.

613 The concept of social structure essentially implies ordered extension *in time* as well as ordered articulation *at a given time*. This is often overlooked in the study of primitive society. Among the Tallensi the lineage system enables us to see the operation of the time factor in social structure in a very concrete way.[1] We see how the lineage structure at a given time incapsulates[2] all that is structurally relevant of its past phases and at the same time continually thrusts its growing-points forward. The dynamic equilibrium of a lineage is an equilibrium in time.

The key position, whenever a lineage emerges in function—and this applies to lineages of any span and all orders of segmentation—is that of the lineage head (*kpeem*). He is, to revert to an analogy previously used, the keystone of the arch. He does not stand above the lineage; he is part of it. *Kpeem* literally means 'senior': a *kpeem* is a senior, an elder. The head of the lineage is the most senior male of the group. The head of a lineage and his age or generation equals in the lineage are collectively designated 'the elders (*kpɛm*)'. They are for the most part the heads of the component segments of the lineage.

613 888 The rule of seniority, as might be expected in so homogeneous and equalitarian a society, plays an important part in all Tale social relations. When a group of boys are out herding cattle the oldest among them are in charge. The women of a household defer to the most senior by generation, age, or marital status among them. In all collective activities of men the places of honour are taken by the most senior men, the *kpɛm*. Seniority commands deference at all times.

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[1] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *cit. supra*; also Forde, op. cit. and his previous papers cited there; and a brilliant discussion of this point in E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, ch. 3.

[2] I owe this valuable concept to R. G. Collingwood's *Autobiography*.

593 578 basic dichotomy of *dug* and *yir* crystallizes. The comradeship which grows up gradually between husband and wife with the lapse of time is the obverse, paradoxical as it may seem, of a process of gradual emancipation of the wife. As her children grow up, the centre of gravity of her life shifts more and more to them and away from her husband. If she has a grown-up son, her interests and emotions become centred more and more on him and his family by marriage. They constitute her *dug*, in which she is secure, honoured, and titularly, if not effectively, supreme. It is her son and grandson who will honour her spirit and commemorate her in worship after her death. Her son has become the effective breadwinner, and she looks to him for sustenance. If a young woman loses her husband, her grief is aggravated because she realizes that she has lost the head and pivot of her young family and must face uprooting and readjustment to a new partner. An old woman mourns the death of her husband greatly, too, but her grief is mitigated, if she ●888 has a son, by her feeling of security and of fulfilment. The death of an adult son, especially an only son, is an irreparable tragedy to her.

593 Thus it happens that a woman who has been twice married often lives, in her old age, with the oldest son of her first marriage, rather than with her husband. This was the case with Tiezien's old wife, Naaho; and the reason Tiezien and Naaho's son, Nyaaŋzum, gave for this brings out a point of the first importance. Laughing, they said, 'She is no use any longer as a wife, she can't cook; and she has no vulva now (*u le ka pɛn yaha*)—that is, her reproductive powers are finished. And they laid special stress on the last point.

A woman attains her fullest freedom in the family when she ceases to have sexual value, that is, from the native point of view, when she ceases to be reproductive.

The Sexual Relationship in Marriage

831 836 The sexual relationship is the corner-stone of Tale marriage. At first sight this is puzzling to the observer, for the Tallensi have a thoroughly matter-of-fact attitude about sex. They regard sex as a normal and natural appetite. Any aspect of the generative functions can be discussed without circumlocution in the presence of men, women, or children. A young woman, or a girl, may show signs of shyness or coyness, but no one ever shows any real embarrassment. Bawdy or salacious talk about sex is common amongst men; very rarely does it verge on the obscene. The Tallensi take it for granted that children will indulge in sexual play, and attach no value to prenuptial chastity. In the ritual of the Arrow Medicine (*Peentèe*) for protection in war, the services of a virgin boy and virgin girl are required. These children are bound to the medicine by a taboo of chastity in early childhood; but they are released as soon as they approach puberty; for by that time, the natives say, they cannot be expected to resist sexual temptation. Tallensi say

613 622 554 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed, some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔɣa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

778 554 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔne*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps ● [888] the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

601 613 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 554 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

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[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have 613 a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser im- 593 portance of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social 784 status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. The range within which classi- 601 ficatory 'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso 613 both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies, 601 Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head [765] shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother 888 and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VI

THE MORAL BASIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF PARENT AND CHILD

The Fundamental Axiom of Parenthood

593 BEFORE we try to unravel further the complex strands that unite parents and children we must elucidate an idea which the Tallensi put forward as the fundamental axiom of parenthood. We have mentioned it already in our analysis of the notion of descent, but we have to examine it now from the point of view of the person-to-person relations of parents and children. It is the axiom, clearly stated by the natives and apparent also in Tale values and usages, that the fact of having begotten or borne a child creates an absolute moral bond between it and its parents. This idea is felt by them to be the real ultimate sanction behind right conduct in the relations of parents and children; and there is a very close agreement between ideals and actualities in this province of Tale social life.

593 •888 855 Ignorance of hygiene and medicine, insufficiency of food and clothing, magical ideas, and Tale cultural standards in matters such as cleanliness or ventilation are undoubted handicaps to the child in its struggle to grow up. But sheer, callous neglect of a child by its parents, such as we sometimes hear of in more civilized societies, would be regarded with horror by all Tallensi and is unheard of. Similarly, a person who abandoned an aged parent to destitution would be regarded as a good for nothing (*boŋwari*). It happens occasionally, nowadays, when young men who find life irksome at home can so easily sneak off to foreign parts and stay away for many years. But it is a very rare thing and is universally reviled.

The Tribulations of Parenthood

593 If one asks a native why parents are and should be devoted to their children; or on what grounds they claim to 'own' (*so*) their children and to be entitled to their services, affection, gratitude, and respect; if one asks a girl who is keeping sullenly indoors, because she has been forcibly recovered from the lover she eloped with and beaten into the bargain, why she submitted passively to her father; or if one asks a young man nursing a bitter grievance against a father who has stopped him from marrying the girl he was courting why he does not defy the old man; if one asks any Taləŋ, man or woman, such questions as these the answer invariably is, 'It is *dɔɣam*'. 'Have you not begotten (or borne) them?' 'Has he not begotten you?' And then, almost always, comes the afterthought which contains the crux of the explanation, '*Dɔɣam pu tɔ?*—Is not begetting (bearing) hard?' The phrase sounds

of his dead mother's spirit; she is not tied to the lineage home in the 577
same way as a father's spirit is and can be 'given water' more easily 593
wherever the man happens to be. Nevertheless, his welfare and that of 769
his dependants rests as much on his maintaining good relations with her spirit as with his father's spirit.

Filial piety among the Tallensi is a great deal more than a customary 577
injunction to honour and respect one's parents. Psychologically it is
a very complex sentiment. Even during their lifetime parents have 593
quasi-mystical attributes, as we shall see more clearly when we consider
the relations of parents and first-born children, and these dominate the 789
sentiment. A parent can bless or curse a child. A parent's curse, in particular, is greatly dreaded, as we have previously noted, and, in consequence, only resorted to in case of gross affront or unforgivable defiance on the part of a child. If a parent expresses or merely feels resentment against a child, that is equivalent to a curse which may cause it illness or other harm. Thus one element in the sentiment of filial piety is respect for the blessing and fear of the curse of a parent. That is why, men say, it is sometimes embarrassing to have an old mother in one's house, though one is bound to keep her, both in duty and out of
affection. For old women become completely egoistic. All they think [889]
of is having enough to eat and being comfortable, and if they are crossed they are apt to curse anybody incontinently.

In a large joint family one often finds a young man with a growing family of his own torn between his devotion to his father and his desire to be economically independent so as to provide for his wife and children more satisfactorily. He cannot go out to farm on his own without his father's blessing and consent else his venture will surely fail. He begins to drop hints or makes a tentative approach to his father. But if the latter shows displeasure he retreats at once. I have seen this happen more than once. When Tɔɣalbɛrɔgu wanted to go out to farm on his own, his father Naabdiya reproached him, saying that *he* had not deserted *his* father as Tɔɣalbɛrɔgu now wished to desert *him*. Tɔɣalbɛrɔgu apologized and withdrew. But, as Naabdiya told me, 'I still had resentment in my heart and he still secretly cherished his plan'. A couple of weeks later Tɔɣalbɛrɔgu developed a large boil in the armpit. In panic he begged an elder to ask Naabdiya to forgive him and formally withdraw his implicit curse, which, he was certain, was the cause of the boil. It was the same with Yinyɛla's son Duun. Though as an eldest son he felt entitled to start farming on his own, he dared not ask that hard old man's permission for fear that it might arouse his resentment.

It is an interesting point that when a young man who has been living 577
and farming with his dead father's brother, for example, sets up in his 593
own homestead, the pretext for the separation is often not an economic one. It is commonly recognized that the young man moves out because he needs more land and freedom to provide for his family by himself.

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can 593
match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so. 765

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride in one's parents among the Tallensi. They always show off an old 593 parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often 577 been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man 888 or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old [777] people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck (*zusɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full? (*U pu di ŋɔɔɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and senile, as Doohraan was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage, the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among 593 the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect, 577 affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relationships. A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from 577 his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from 613 his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion, and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

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[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

The Duty of Supporting the Parents in Old Age

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Parents retain their rights and authority over their children throughout their lives. A man may be so senile that he can take no active part in household or public affairs. He is still the father of his children and the head of the household, the owner of the farms and livestock that belong to the household. Any of his sons living with him is automatically bound to farm for him. On this basis alone, and apart from the dictates of filial piety, an old man who has a son need not lack economic support. It is the same with an old woman who has a son. In her case, however, the stress is on the duty—a duty which is felt to be in part a privilege—of a son to care for his old mother, since she does not own any land.

An old man who has no adult sons need not necessarily lack food or shelter. He either has land of his own or can obtain some from a kinsman, and it is a question then of securing labour to work it. This, however, is no easy matter. Sporadic assistance can be obtained from kinsmen and neighbours, but it is impossible to get regular full-time labour. No one would go and work another man's farms for a whole farming season, either for a wage or as a kinship obligation. Thus an old man in this position is not likely to have more than the minimum of food and other necessaries. Tendaan Teroog was in this position. His only adult son was not living with him and he was dependent on others for the cultivation of his land. When his neighbours and kinsmen were too busy with their own farms to help him, his wife did the weeding in a rough-and-ready way. If it were not for the gifts of grain sent to him by his adult son from Mampurugu, Teroog and his family would have lived at starvation level right through the year. As it is they were just managing to subsist.

Cases like that of Teroog are not numerous, simply because the number of old men who are incapable of doing some work for themselves is small. In the whole of Tongo I knew only six old men (apart from chronic invalids) who were completely incapable of work. Another ten or fifteen (according to the criterion of efficiency employed[1]) could work, but would probably not have been able to support themselves and their wives without assistance.

A somewhat different and less frequent case is that of Sabaalug. He is an old bachelor living with his half-brother. But he does not help with the farming and so is not entitled to be supported by his brother. He keeps himself by 'scrounging' (*bimh*) a bit of food or a basket of millet, a few pence or an old garment from his matrilateral kinsmen and friends. A childless old woman like Tɔŋ, who lives with a 'son' of her long dead husband ekes out a poor existence in the same way. Tallensi are very

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[1] Kuwaas, for example, might have done much more work if he had not had two adult sons; Vɔŋraan-Tee would certainly have worked less if he had had a son to help him; Ta'aŋ spent so much time on ritual and communal affairs that he did less work on his farms than he was capable of.

tolerant of such old folk, but they consider their mode of life a pitiable 988
one, not so much from the purely material aspect as from the social side. 577
'Who will mourn his death? Who will give him a proper funeral?' they
say. But such cases serve as examples for an argument they often put 573
forward. I once heard it very well put in a comment on life in the coast towns. There, said the speaker, you starve if you have no money. Here, at home, no one need die of destitution. If he has no children he can always find a roof with a kinsman, either one of his close agnates or his mother's brother's people, and keep himself alive by the gifts of food he gets from kinsfolk and friends. Though a man is not bound to be overgenerous, and he is not compelled to feed a kinsman living with him who does not contribute to the common pool, it is an offence against the ancestors to refuse food to a kinsman in straits.

Still rarer are instances of people who come to live with a daughter in their old age. I knew of only two cases, one that of an old man, the other of a woman. It is considered to be unbecoming for a man or woman to live with a married daughter. It is not compatible with 'in-lawship' (*deen*) and Tallensi say it causes friction. A married daughter contributes to her parents' material welfare indirectly. Her chief contribution is through the bride-price paid for her. A cow received for a daughter's bride-price may be the starting-point of the accumulation of more livestock. In times of severe shortage a bride-price animal may be used to purchase grain and so save the family from starvation. Most important, however, is the use of a daughter's bride-price to pay off bride-price debts of her natal family. It helps, therefore, to add to the woman-power of her father's household upon which a large part of the household's productivity depends. The occasional assistance given to a man by his daughter's husband in farming, house-building, thatching, and so forth is a small item relatively to the total labour required to maintain a household, but it is enough to turn the scales in a difficult year. Many of the homesteads that were being built on the Tong Hills in 1936 would not have been completed that dry season if the owners' sons-in-law from other parts of the country had not come to their aid.

In short, a native's chief economic asset in old age (and this applies to sickness too) lies in the possession of sons, best of all own sons, but also proxy sons, that is, all those who have an interest in the patrimonial land which is for the time being in his keeping. As we already know, more distant 'sons' than those of the nuclear lineage are very unlikely to live with and work for a man whom they recognize as a classificatory father. Tallensi say that one of the reasons why sons are preferred to daughters is because they will farm for one when one is old. Women are even more apt than men to emphasize the insurance value of sons just because they are more dependent on a son's sense of moral obligation to care for them.

Yet Tallensi do not explicitly state it as one of the duties of a son to

888 577 593 support an old father economically. They assume support of an old father to follow automatically from the economic and jural relations of parents and children and from the moral obligations of filial piety. It is simply an aspect of co-operative production and joint consumption in the household under the household head's management, and a result of the principle of reciprocity. If a man's only son, for example, were living in his native settlement and refused to have his father or proxy father in his homestead, it would be a monstrous breach of ethics. He would lay himself open to immediate punishment by the ancestors; he would, indeed, be unable to participate in the life of the community since he could not act for himself in ritual or jural affairs.

888 593 577 167 This is an hypothetical instance, for I know of no such case. But nowadays the question of supporting an aged parent does occasionally arise when men emigrate from their native settlements to seek work abroad or to farm outside Taleland. Cases are occurring of men who stay away abroad and postpone their return home from year to year, leaving an aged parent to struggle on alone. They are far from numerous —I knew of some six or seven only, counting two cases where the sons had genuine grounds for their absence.

Native opinion about these absentees is illuminating. They are not criticized for neglecting to send money home regularly. Tallensi do not expect regular remittances from relatives working abroad and still tend to regard the occasional remittances that are sent home as windfalls. Absentee sons are censured rather for deserting their parents, for leaving them without the companionship and the social support of a son. Tendaan Teroog's son used to send baskets of guinea corn and maize to his father from Mampurugu. Nevertheless, the old man kept pressing him to return home; and when the son died suddenly people said it was because he had 'rejected' (*zaɣah*) his father. He should have come home long ago to be his father's companion (*kɔɣal*, vb.), to act for him in jural matters, assist him in ritual activities, and manage the household for him. The same sentiment was uppermost in Maantiya's mind when he explained why he could not leave his proxy father Saantarɔba, though the latter was able to support himself and his wife with occasional assistance from kinsmen. Maantiya went down to the coast every dry season carrying fowls to sell and usually stayed away three or four months. He was always home again before the rains began. He said: 'I cannot abandon my father. He has no one else.' When I was going home in 1937 a number of men asked me to find their absent sons in Kumasi or Accra or elsewhere in the south, and to try to persuade them to return home. 'Tell them', said one old man, 'that we do not care about the money or things, but we want them to come home.'

888 593 577 We have said that there is a more definite emphasis on the duty of a son to provide for his mother. There was an old woman at Kpata'ar whose only son had been abroad for some years. She sent him many

messages begging him to return, but to no avail. 'That good-for-nothing', said Tiezien, contemptuously, telling me about this youth. 'He leaves his mother to starve here while he goes wandering abroad. He is no person (*u ka nit*).'[1] 888 593 577

This feeling that it is a son's bounden duty to support an aged mother is strongly marked in the case of one's own mother. It sometimes happens that a woman is widowed while still young and is left with one or two young children. She remarries into her late husband's clan and has children by her second husband. When she gets past child-bearing age, even if her second husband is still alive, she usually goes to live with her oldest son of the first marriage. Tallensi say that the right person to support such a woman is this son, as her second husband has no further interest in her after she ceases to be able to bear children.

Any surviving widow of one's own father or proxy father (i.e. a close co-wife of one's own mother) is felt to be entitled to support, but in this case a ritual sanction enters the picture. Tallensi say a man is bound to support his own mother 'because she bore you (*ɔn n-dɔγi la zugu*)' It is a direct moral duty to her. But one has to support a mother's widowed co-wife because she was one's father's wife and he would be angry if one did not. This rule applies only to widows of fathers of one's own nuclear lineage. Outside that range no obligation is felt to support an old widow whom one's mother would have called her co-wife. It now becomes a question of more abstract ethical values summed up in the concept *duləm*. There is no exact equivalent for this concept in English. According to Tale ethics, any act of deliberate malice or even thoughtlessness that causes trouble or suffering to another person through no fault of his own is immoral. For example, deliberately giving a person wrong information that leads him into trouble; or refusing to give or lend a person something that can well be spared, and so causing him to suffer a serious loss; or if one is in a position to prevent a person getting hurt and makes no effort to do so—all such actions come into this category of moral delinquency. They incur *duləm*. The concept covers both the sufferer's resentment and the ethical stigma attaching to the wrong done to him by allowing evil to befall him. The native phrase is 'it brings (or is) *duləm* (*de mar duləm*)'; and *duləm* bears mystical retribution in its track.

Tallensi say that if an old woman whom one calls 'mother' (either because she is the widow of a classificatory father, or out of courtesy, because she belongs to one's mother's generation of wives of the clan) has no one to support her and appeals to one, it is *duləm* to refuse her. *Duləm* is one of the reasons why one cannot refuse food to a kinsman in need. It was the reason Kuŋaaŋba gave for allowing his old 'mother'

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[1] This expression of contempt contains a wealth of meaning for the native. It means, broadly, someone who has no sense of decency or is oblivious of his social responsibilities.

● 888 Tɔŋ to stay with him. Banɔrəg furnished another instance. One afternoon he looked in on his way home from the market and found two
593 elders with me. He told us he was having some trouble with Ziba, a
577 young man of his inner lineage. Ziba had an old woman, whom he called 'mother', living with him; but he had suddenly decided to get rid of her. Banɔrəg told us how he had expostulated with the heartless young man. 'It is an evil thing to do', he concluded, amid murmurs of assent from the two elders. 'A man who drives out an old woman to starve becomes blameworthy before Heaven (*u kpera Naawun taale*); it is *duləm*.' Banɔrəg's efforts, in this case, were in vain since he had no paternal authority over Ziba. The intervention of an older kinsman does not always check disgraceful treatment of domestic relatives, and public opinion only takes notice of it after the event and then often has no power to make the culprit remedy it.

A Methodological Point

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181 The cases we have quoted in the preceding pages are précis of statements, opinions, and explanations given to me by Tallensi themselves. If space allowed, a score of cases could be quoted for each one I have recorded. I mention this because it might seem incredible, to anyone who has not lived amongst the Tallensi, that a people so primitive in their mode of livelihood should balance up rights and obligations in the most commonplace activities of their lives in so calculating a fashion. But the picture I have sketched is not a distortion. Description and analysis inevitably reduce human action to slow motion and men's motives to a seemingly mechanical pattern. In reality Tale parents commonly act as spontaneously and generously as parents in any other country and their children respond as spontaneously and sincerely. But even the most spontaneous actions and feelings of the natives occur within the framework of their social organization and subject to the values postulated in their culture. Social organization and cultural values allow of alternative forms of action and affect in any particular situation, but not of infinitely numerous alternatives. Where the relations of parents and children are involved these alternatives are not unlimited; and allowing for differences of personality and character, as the natives themselves do, we can say that the alternative that will be selected in a particular situation is determined by the structural relations of the individuals concerned. Men's motives and their social relations are closely integrated with one another among the Tallensi, as we have emphasized before. In their actual social behaviour Tallensi do not have to stop and think out every situation before they act. The individual's ideas and attitudes have been shaped by the social structure and the cultural norms. The framework of his social relations is as much a part of him as he is a part of it. He automatically evaluates every situation in terms of his social relations. To put it crudely, every Taləŋ carries a set of

may do so for himself. She, again, may eat an animal he avoids, but would hardly find it feasible to cook it in her own kitchen. 262

The occasions for which special foods are customary are few. A woman in her first pregnancy must eat food 'which is good for her', such as meat and highly seasoned soup and avoid unsuitable foods such as thinly mixed flour-water (*zɔmsaka*), left-over porridge, or too many sweet potatoes or frafra potatoes. Nor may she eat cold food or drink too much cold water. 'Sweet' food (i.e. luxury foods such as sold in the market) is not encouraged, while honey is prohibited for magical reasons. A woman found eating the latter is severely reprimanded and a special rite has to be carried out on the birth of the child or it will have a blocked nose. During confinement a woman is given porridge with highly seasoned soups and a generous allowance of fish or meat to make her strong. [843]

There is no specific food for sick people, except that fresh porridge and pungent soup are considered strengthening. The prognosis is very grave if a sick person refuses food. In the prostration of grief, too, people refuse food and their relatives try to tempt their palate with delicacies. 262 778

Old and toothless people in time of food shortage are given crushed ground-nuts (*sukpabugra*) to drink down with water. 262 888

We have attempted, in this paper, to give an outline of the domestic commissariat of the Tallensi. Our interest has been focussed on the principles according to which the domestic groupings of Tale society organize and sustain the social activities customary for the production of raw foodstuffs, their preservation, and their conversion into and consumption as edible food. We have observed how the ever-changing, developing structure of the joint family determines these activities; how Tale culture defines the values and norms by which these activities are regulated and directed; how these values and norms, on the one hand, and seasonal conditions, on the other, control the annual cycle of food production and consumption; and finally, how the convergent influence of family structure, cultural norms and values, and seasonal exigencies determine the crucial situation of the series, the translation of the product of natural resources and culturally organized labour into the edible food in the kitchen. 000